



IGNITE THE REGION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

	Notes
1. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING: Promote robust and sustainable growth by engaging in a proactive, economic development program that supports business retention, expansion, creation, and attraction.	
1.1. More closely align and coordinate regional economic development efforts.	
1.1.1. Adopt a code of ethics similar to the code implemented by the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership and its LEDO Council.	Completed
1.1.2. Establish a clear set of regional protocols and procedures for sharing investment leads, submitting proposals, and working with prospects.	Have a set of agreed upon guidelines to move forward with
1.2. Design a regional economic development brand that emphasizes and reflects the attractive qualities in the region.	
1.2.1. Engage creative marketing and branding specialists in the region to help create a regional brand.	In Progress - Have new folder and marketing pieces. Regional Brand will have to grow a little more organically
1.3. Enhance the economic development tools and incentives available to the region.	
1.3.1. Capitalize on the Opportunity Zone designations in the region.	In Progress - Have OZ map. Kay spoke at OZ conference in June. Projects happening in East Chicago, Michigan City and Valparaiso. Working to try to find funds to market to.
1.3.2. Work with the state legislature, other regional EDOS, and local officials to secure funds for a deal closing fund and gap financing for critical economic development projects.	Presented to Public Policy Committee. Would like to put it on our agenda for 2021 session however with pandemic restrictions on the budget, it is unlikely to get passed
1.3.3. Develop creative incentives designed to attract and retain talent.	Working on Veterans Initiative with the IEDA to continue to add them to our talent pool.
1.4. Aggressively market and promote Northwest Indiana as a destination for new investment and employment.	
1.4.1. Coordinate a business attraction and marketing campaign with LEDOs.	The 2019 plan was a great success. 24 Trips, 400 Business, Site Selectors and Developers met. 2020 23 trips planned and a few in market events.
1.4.2. Generate editorial content in targeted regional publications (Indiana and Chicago) that spotlights activities and successes in Northwest Indiana.	Doing quarterly newsletter talking about successes in NWI, Working with Crain's Chicago Business on 2020 Events and Marketing.
1.5. Cultivate relationships and networks with business executives for the recruitment of new businesses to Northwest Indiana, especially in target clusters and sectors.	
1.5.1. Compile and maintain resource information for each target market cluster and key subsectors.	In progress - Stephen working with University and EconDev Partners to compile target market data - supply chain profiles, national business locations, NWI workforce correlation, etc. First draft has been provided by CWI.
1.5.2. Join and participate in selected trade or industry associations for the priority target sectors.	Created a list, have done nothing with it yet.
1.5.3. Attend selected conferences and trade shows to build relationships with business executives.	Did shows in 2019 found executives hard to reach. May try to do with a consultant partner in the future
1.5.4. Conduct domestic call trips/marketing missions to meet with company executives in regions where each target industry concentration is the highest.	2020 will allow for us to meet with 6 companies headquarters in Japan

1.5.5. Cultivate business contacts through existing Northwest Indiana companies in target industries to recruit new expansion projects.	In progress - LEDOs have been tasked with contacting local businesses for purpose of providing targeting feedback as well as participating in recruitment activities.
1.6. Build awareness of the region among site selection consultants and commercial brokers.	
1.6.1. Call on site consultants in targeted metropolitan areas, particularly Chicago.	In progress - Continual NWI Forum activity.
1.6.2. Compile a detailed package of promotional materials aimed at real estate brokers, describing the attractive environment in Northwest Indiana for business relocation.	Marketing Folder and internal sheets complete
1.6.3. Continue maintaining and updating information typically of interest to commercial and industrial site selectors on the NWIF website.	In progress. Continual NWI Forum activity.
1.6.4. Periodically host events and familiarization tours in Northwest Indiana that showcase specific assets, such as available land and buildings or new projects.	Had some great events in 2019 working on 3 for 2020, Select Chicago, Cubs/Sox Experience, and CIP Indiana
1.7. Increase collaborative business retention and expansion (BRE) efforts across the region.	
1.7.1. Where appropriate, LEDOs should engage the NWIF to assist in BRE support and visits with companies within the region's target industry clusters.	Have reinvested in software to organize the BRE efforts and training went well. Looking forward to results from visits. Will gage effectiveness at the end of 2020
1.7.2. LEDOs and chambers of commerce should commit to sharing BRE efforts, successes, and metrics through an annual regional business report.	Program to kick off in August with Erica leading the charge
1.7.3. Forge stronger relationships with off-site leadership of major employers operating in the region. On an annual basis, invite these individuals to a hospitality function in conjunction with a regional or community event.	Working on a meeting with US Steel in Pittsburg before the year is over. Meeting with Kurarary-Monosol, Hitachi-Sullair, Mitsubishi Life Sciences, Itochu-Enprotech and Okaya-Okaya on Japan trip
1.7.4. Coordinate incentives and infrastructure needs of specific employers with local/state officials and utilities.	on going
1.7.5. Identify and incorporate additional outreach partners within the region for increased collaboration, resource sharing, and reach.	on going
1.8. Educate public officials and the public about Northwest Indiana's economic issues and the importance of economic development.	
1.8.1. Organize an annual Northwest Indiana economic summit that raises awareness of key regional economic development activities, successes over the past year, and future endeavors.	Ignite summit happening annually. Doing ED Bootcamp in February and March 2020
1.8.2. Develop an "elevator pitch" with key messages to use when promoting the region.	In progress
1.8.3. Create a one-page profile promoting the region's positive business aspects to be used by LEDOs, public officials, and business leaders for internal and external word-of-mouth marketing.	Done moving it to new marketing format
1.8.4 Work with LEDO's, local chambers, cities and other business organizations to identify local business success stories	Raeann is working with Northwest Indiana Business Quarterly to share these stories.
1.8.5. Maintain an agreed-upon set of regional economic indicators and then use multiple communication channels in the region to promote those under the theme of ongoing collaborative economic development efforts.	in progress- Tony Sindone and Micha Pollak are working on this along with the dashboard for continuall report out
1.9. Expand and leverage tourism to support industry and talent attraction.	
1.9.1. Establish a conference and meeting strategy linked to target sector opportunities.	2019 plan was a success, 2020 should be wonderful as well.

1.9.2. Work to secure the development of a new convention center in Lake County.	several sites still in the running for consideration- it's a slow moving process
1.9.3. Leverage tourism assets to distribute business marketing messages.	
1.9.4. Pursue federal and foundation grants to support the region's tourism infrastructure needs.	Working on federal dollars to reinforce the shoreline
1.10. Establish an economic development district (EDD) to serve as a facilitator of regional initiatives and a conduit for additional funding sources in Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties.	
1.10.1. Regional partners should support and assist NIRPC in its efforts to receive EDD designation.	EDD Designation Received!
1.10.2. Work with the EDA to schedule an EDA-hosted regional economic development plan summit in the region.	Summit was held on May 1st. It went well and others will follow.
1.10.3. NIRPC should work with the Kankakee–Iroquois Regional Planning Commission (K-IRPC) on identifying and pursuing economic development projects that would positively affect all seven counties in the region.	

2. ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION: Foster robust entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems to propel future economic growth.

2.1. Cultivate and convene networks of entrepreneurs.	
2.1.1. Establish a Northwest Indiana entrepreneurial coalition to serve as a formalized regionwide network of entrepreneurship and innovation service providers and experts.	SOI's completed strategic was approved by its Board of Directors. SOI hired a full-time Assistant Director, Jason Williams, who will be dedicated to helping implement the plan and grow SOI's network.
2.1.2. The coalition should regularly travel to Chicago to speak to other entrepreneurship networks and venture capital (VC)/angel investment groups.	Carol Podolak has developed a list of entities to meet with and potentially partner with
2.1.3. Leaders of Chicago-based networks should be invited to Northwest Indiana to speak at gatherings of the coalition.	
2.2 Build a regional entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem asset map to help entrepreneurs, startup companies, and investors to navigate the state's existing resources and networks.	
2.2.1. Resources in Chicago should be included in the asset map.	Lorri continuing to update the entrepreneurial asset map and working with Raeann on a design for a webpage with categories of resources for entrepreneurs. List of Chicago resources provided by Carol Podolak will be added. Lorrie submitted web page mock up of regional resources.
2.2.2. Market the asset map to both internal and external audiences.	
2.3. Raise awareness of regional entrepreneurial success stories.	
2.3.1. Develop a media strategy for publicizing entrepreneurship success stories in traditional and social media.	SOI to launch its newsletter in August that will include news & stories of Northwest Indiana innovators and entrepreneurs.
2.3.2. Encourage entrepreneurial role models to participate in events and campaigns designed to inspire a new generation of entrepreneurial talent.	Focusing on the big idea of an Accelerator, offering space and resources to support Start-ups that would be a focal point where investors and professional resources could come a la Plug and Play Tech Center or Launch Fishers.
2.4. Increase access to capital for Northwest Indiana entrepreneurs.	
2.4.1. Encourage the formation of angel investment networks focused on providing startup capital to regional entrepreneurs.	Gary Johnson drafted and is refining a model for funding of scalable start-ups. Gary presented overview at IGNITE implementation meeting.
2.4.2. Market the region to risk capital funds in Chicago.	

2.4.3. Develop an annual report documenting the successful VC investments in Northwest Indiana and disseminate it to VC investors.	
2.4.4. Work with other angel investment networks in Chicago to form a syndication network to improve deal flow for Northwest Indiana companies and investors.	
2.4.5 Develop Microfinance Loan Options for Main Street Business	
2.5. Develop an entrepreneurship policy agenda and advocate to the state on policies needed to support the entrepreneurship ecosystem.	
2.6. Develop youth entrepreneurship programs to foster a culture of entrepreneurship.	Will start conversations with StartEd Up Foundation about possible NW Indiana visits/events (https://startedupfoundation.org/) - *Society started conversation with AgriNovus Indiana to host AgTech Innovation Day in NWI (daylong hackathon for HS students), getting pushed to 2021 spring semester because of COVID19
1) Innovate Within High school business pitch competition sponsored by IEDC will have a March 7th regional event at PNW Hammond. SOI has marketed this to our members as well as Leadership Institute members and school partners.	
2) 2 area Junior Achievement organizations as well as the Leadership Center youth group SLYCE offer youth programs	
3) Jason Williams; Centric' s board chair; has joined the SOI	
2.7. Develop new spaces for entrepreneurs and innovators.	
	Big Idea is an accelerator space for entrepreneurial start ups with necessary business support resources located in an urban center close to a university with potential resources, research capacity, support and synergies.5K in prize money!
2.8. Target and recruit growing early stage firms in the Chicago market.	
2.8.1. Join and engage with Chicago-area entrepreneurship networks, talent networks, and industry associations to identify new companies.	SOI to explore membership in Chicago Innovation and Chicago Ideas Week for 2020
2.8.2. Target emerging and “gazelle” companies in business incubators/accelerators in these markets.	
2.8.3. Track venture capital firms in Chicago that have recently funded high-growth, innovative businesses.	
2.8.4. Engage experienced or serial entrepreneurs with a track record of starting and growing companies.	Innovation has been added to the learning objectives and content offering of the redesigned Leadership Northwest Indiana (LNI) program for business professionals across all regional economic sectors.
2.8.5. Promote investment opportunities in local firms that have been awarded small business innovation research (SBIR) and small business technology transfer (STTR) grants.	Mont Handley at PNW working to become an SBIR grant trainer
2.9. Promote rural entrepreneurship.	
	Start a conversation Neil Mylet (Delphi, IN) who is launching a rural/community innovation center in Carroll County. Will also start a conversation with AgriNovus Indiana about programs/resources for NW Indiana (agrinovusindiana.com)
2.10. Support innovation within existing companies.	

2.10.1. Encourage local entrepreneurs and innovators to tap into federal funding in the SBIR and STTR grants.	
2.10.2. Look for opportunities to establish additional centers of excellence in the region.	
2.11. Bolster federal, state, and private investments in higher education, emphasizing the science and technology fields, engineering, and entrepreneurship programs.	
2.11.1 Advocate for allowing regional universities to establish doctoral programs, especially in science, engineering, technology, and healthcare fields.	The Indiana Commission on Higher Education (ICHE) has reexamined the restriction related to doctoral programs at "Regional" universities. After significant effort, PNW has successfully promoted a provision to allow applied doctoral programs at regional universities. However, the revised constraint suggests that this can only happen under exceptional circumstances. ICHE has not yet fully defined exceptional circumstances. That said, it appears that PNW will be able to award the Doctorate in Nursing Practice soon. Work is underway for an Applied Doctorate in Psychology, an Applied Doctorate in Engineering, and an Applied Doctorate in Technology. Support of the Forum and its members will be needed to convince ICHE that these are needed degrees.
2.11.2. Pursue R&D catalyst projects that leverage the components of the region's universities.	PNW has been discussing components of international trade attraction/investment to the region and potential development of a working task force to attract and develop international trade opportunities in the region.

3. INFRASTRUCTURE: Ensure that Northwest Indiana's infrastructure meets the needs of a 21st-century economy.

3.1. Work with private landowners and communities in the region to expand real estate product available for industrial and commercial use.	
3.1.1. Consider the use of land banks to stimulate the reuse of tax-delinquent or abandoned industry properties that require some level of environmental remediation.	The Lake County Land Bank initiative is working to finalize their documents. HB 1370 opens an opportunity for RDAs and/or MPOs (NIRPC) to create Land Banks - this is a new tool.
3.1.2. Enhance the availability and utilization of New Market Tax Credits in the marketing of industrial/commercial properties in the region.	<i>New Market Tax Credits committee in place. Progress is being made determining options and next steps. Work continues on Opportunity Zones and funding options based upon lessons learned at the EPA Brownfield Conference.</i>
3.1.3. Support the efforts of the Port of Indiana–Burns Harbor to increase port capacity for rail and multimodal traffic.	\$20M in grants awarded, work has been initiated for the Ports projects. 5 projects are scheduled for completion by 2022. New rail yards begin in 2020 - June start date for east side, December start date for west side. New (2nd) bridge consisting of 2 lanes is to be constructed west of existing bridge. Contract will be let in 2021 with 1 year construction schedule.
3.1.4. Implement regional mapping process to identify at a minimum, transportation corridors supportive of industrial and commercial property development in conjunction with long range transportation planning and funding.	NIRPC has initiated a project meeting with individual municipalities to determine available properties potential use for Logistics related development to coordinate with Transportation planning.
3.2. Accelerate brownfield redevelopment and recover lands for reuse.	
3.2.1. Build a university network to determine strengths, weaknesses and opportunities to identify student/research based brownfield redevelopment activities.	NIRPC has selected the consultant who will be integral to the Grant assessment work. A future educational event will be in late April or early May.

<p>3.2.2. Build a pipeline of regional brownfield projects eligible for inclusion at U.S. Environmental Protection Agency National Brownfield Conference</p>	
<p>3.2.3. Identify top 3, at a minimum, properties located within diverse incentivized zones for regional mapping initiative.</p>	
<p>3.3. Develop the market potential of the Gary/Chicago International Airport (GYI) as a corporate/general aviation, air cargo, and industrial asset for the region.</p>	
<p>3.3.1. GYI should strengthen its relationship with the Chicago general aviation and corporate business market to generate new business development opportunities.</p>	<p>NO UPDATE HAS BEEN RECEIVED. Airport representatives will be presenting a PowerPoint at the September Forum Managing Board meeting. Identification of additional venues will be developed. Presentation dates will be scheduled. PPT presentation would be approximately 20 minutes in length plus Q&A sessions. Brief document on cargo opportunities is under development.</p>
<p>3.3.2. Over the long term, GYI and regional partners should explore the potential of GYI as an industrial/cargo asset.</p>	<p>Airport Infrastructure Improvements are complete and ongoing; we are completing "punch list" items for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runway 12-30 Rehab (4,300 ft. completed in 2018 and 3,100 ft. completed in 2019) • Phase I-III of the Apron Rehab complete (punch list items) • ARFF Rehab ongoing (Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Facility) • Landscaping upgrades ongoing • Airport Road Rehab (Clark Road to Cline Ave) • Navigation Aid upgrade (MALSR: Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator) • Air Traffic Control Tower (upgrades ongoing)
<p>3.3.3 GYI partner with regional mapping initiative to expand air side(within airport footprint) and land side (external airport boundaries) sites available for development opportunities of e-commerce and general warehouse locations based on airport cargo</p>	<p>Capital Improvement Plan (FAA Discretionary funding for various projects FISCAL YEARS 2019 - 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxiway Alpha Rehabilitation (design and construct) • Rehabilitate HIRL – Runway "12-30" (High Intensity Runway Lighting) • Construct Electrical Vault • Snow Equipment replacement (Truck/Plow and Broom) • Taxiway Bravo Rehabilitation (design and construct) • Construct East Deicing Apron • Install Runway Incursion Lights • Rehabilitate Runway "2-20" & Taxiway Bravo North • SRE Building Expansion (snow removal equipment) <p>New Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Customs and Border Patrol Facility now open since Oct. 2018 (over 50 international flights from 14 different countries) • New East Corporate Hanger (in use)

3.3.4 Foreign Trade Zone - update and maintain; provide educational outreach on use/value to regional leaders

Master Plan

- Technical Advisory Committee (reviewing and assessment of alternatives ongoing)
- Runway Length Justification (RWY "2-20")
- RPZ Analysis (runway projection zone)
- Public Hearings (Fall 2019)
- FAA final review (Fall 2019)

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New Development

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- New East Corporate Hanger (in use)

Capital Improvement Plan (FAA Discretionary funding for various projects FISCAL YEARS 2019 - 2023):

- Taxiway Alpha Rehabilitation (design and construct)
- Rehabilitate HIRL – Runway "12-30" (High Intensity Runway Lighting)
- Construct Electrical Vault
- Snow Equipment replacement (Truck/Plow and Broom)
- Taxiway Bravo Rehabilitation (design and construct)
- Construct East Deicing Apron
- Install Runway Incursion Lights
- Rehabilitate Runway "2-20" & Taxiway Bravo North
- SRF Building Expansion (snow removal equipment)

3.4. Enhance the region’s multimodal infrastructure by expanding connections among rails, highways, ports, and airports.

3.4.1. Demonstrate current and future industrial needs and the impact on the state’s tax base to make the case for greater state infrastructure investment in the region.

Port has provided Maritime economic study for review.

3.5. Broaden inclusion to multiple jurisdictional economic development links within regional marketing venues

This project was interrupted during 1st quarter of 2019. Additional new focus is working with all communities to apply for Broadband Readiness certification.

3.6. Strengthen collective efforts to improve and expand the region’s transportation and mobility infrastructure.

3.6.1. Regional and local economic development partners should support and participate in the region’s long-term comprehensive planning projects.

NO UPDATE HAS BEEN RECEIVED. NIRPC 2050 plan was adopted in May 2019.

3.6.2. Expand commuter rail and public transportation options in the region.

NIRPC NOFA for regional transit study has been submitted but not yet funded. NIRPC moving forward with Scoping Phase in preparation.

3.6.3. The two regional planning commissions (NIRPC and K-IRPC) should work in partnership to leverage state and federal funding for transportation infrastructure-related improvements, including public transit and connecting highways systems.	KIRPC & NIRPC's next NOFA applications will be 2020.
3.6.4. Northwest Indiana communities should support the planning for and development of local and regional bicycle and trail networks.	Need to engage Mitch Barloga.
3.6.5. Monitor and support initiatives to expand and improve transportation and freight connectivity with neighboring	NIRPC held the first meeting of the Rail Crossings Task Force in May.
3.6.6. Expand and implement alternative fuel technologies use and distribution network opportunities	KIRPC & NIRPC's next NOFA applications will be 2020.
3.7. Explore the adoption and testing of emerging “smart” technologies into the region’s transportation infrastructure.	
3.7.1. Identify opportunities to demonstrate smart city technologies through pilot projects in the corridor.	NIRPC held the first meeting of the Rail Crossings Task Force in May.
3.7.2. Expand the concept and adoption of innovative technologies to improve other critical infrastructure needs in the region, such as energy, water/wastewater, and broadband/digital.	2019 Legislation was successful and will provide additional \$20M state funding for the Revolving Loan Fund for water/wastewater projects.
3.8. Develop a regional broadband strategy.	
3.8.1. Assess the findings of the study and determine how to apply the data and recommendations to extending broadband coverage to rural areas of the region.	2019 Legislation was successful and will provide additional \$20M state funding for the Revolving Loan Fund for water/wastewater projects.
3.8.2. Pursue funding grants from the state of Indiana to enhance the region’s rural broadband infrastructure.	Successful 2019 legislation to address rural broadband infrastructure operational costs & incentives.
3.8.3. Communities in the region should consider utilizing the IEDC Broadband Ready Communities Development Center, which serves as an information resource and certifies local communities as broadband ready.	Study underway for regional status.
3.9. Preserve and enhance the region’s agricultural infrastructure.	
3.9.1 Identify and map prime agricultural land in urbanized areas, environmental justice areas, as well as access to fresh, local foods.	
3.9.2 Design a unified conservation land map delineating natural resources and agriculture focus for the Northwest Indiana counties	
3.9.3 Develop a virtual local food hub for 7 counties	
3.9.4 Establish a Good Food Purchasing Program, or equivalent program	
3.10 Maximize the Economic Development Districts Tools	
3.10.1 Seek Economic Development Administration funds for public works and infrastructure projects to retain or create high quality jobs and to diversify the economy	
3.10.2 Develop and Economic Resiliency Plan to address short-term and long-term economic development impacts and to serve as a regional guide to prepare for future pandemics and disasters and to aid in economic recovery	
3.10.3 Establish a Revolving Loan Fund for Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties as a tool to provide gap financing for businesses.	

3.10.4 Maintain and update on quarterly basis the Comprehensive Economic Development Study(CEDS)

4. TALENT: Expand the talent assets of Northwest Indiana and strengthen connections to the region's employers.A122:C133

4.1. Expand and deepen sector partnerships focused on addressing workforce needs of specific industries.

4.1.1. Establish a sector partnership for the information technology (IT) sector.

CWI has published the Technology Report with developed framework including definitions of the sector, specify jobs, skills, credentials required, comparison with existing labor market knowledge, assets currently in place, projecting what might need to be incorporated in education and skills training to support career pathways in the industry.

4.2. Enhance the efforts of the region's education and training institutions to strengthen Northwest Indiana's talent pipeline.

4.2.1. Build on the work of READY NWI K-12 educators in the region to connect employers to students at all grade levels in alignment with the state of Indiana's new Graduation Pathways Policy.

* Work continues by READY NWI educators who are continuing to build awareness, individually and collectively, on the new requirements for high school graduation.
*Strengthen awareness and recognition for Pre-K learning as a foundation to graduation and careers enabling business, community, and state support.

* First presentation made on March 28th to group of business leaders - Northwest Indiana Workforce Board.
* Working on short animation of "Graduation Requirements 101" for employers and public. Suitable for multiple business and community venues. Target is the start of fall of 2019 school year with messages from the individuals, schools, and the broader community.
* READY NWI educators are continuing to build awareness, individually and collectively, on the new requirements for high school graduation, as the first class that will have to meet these requirements enters high school in Fall 2019.
* This year's READY NWI Summer Institute 2019 (8th Annual) will assemble over 100 educators in NWI and will focus on strategies for student success under the new requirements. * Several presentations on Graduation Pathways for both the LEDO's and employer audiences as an informational piece and a call to action have been completed.

4.2.2. Foster greater awareness of and support for the region's universities and colleges.

* Colleges and universities are to work on the development of database from various disciplines which identifies the number of students starting and graduating in the pipeline. Work in progress.
* Universities and Colleges to present to LEDO's their respective programs which align with the current economic development strategy by sector and will feature programming with numerous students as consideration for other economic development focus.* Pending.

4.2.3. Create a coordination plan among the region's colleges and universities aimed at helping students to achieve on-time completion and to make connections with regional employers.

Formation of a sub-group of college Career Services leads from our regional colleges to work on sharing data related to first jobs after graduation (by geography, type of job, type of major) and explore relationships with regional employers on connecting our graduating college students to them. Work in progress.
* Survey of our regional colleges to catalogue the approaches being taken to advance student retention and increase the rate of on-time completers from colleges. Work

4.3. Build greater awareness of Northwest Indiana’s job opportunities and strong manufacturing employment base.	
4.3.1. Compile and maintain key regional economic data, a list of job postings that includes high-demand skills, certifications, and major employers by sector.	PNW, IUN, and CWI presenting and maintaining key data. CWI is developing and posting the lists of high-demand skills, certifications, and major employers as a starting point. Regional and county based data ready to be posted on IGNITE website.
4.3.2. Distribute this information through various channels that will reach residents and prospective recruits.	Career and labor market information be collected or developed to distribute.
4.3.2. Distribute this information through various channels that will reach residents and prospective recruits.	* A larger cohort of volunteers will be convened to determine their interest and willingness to distribute information and to promote opportunities to the community at large. There are a number of Faith-based, Community-based, and Civic Organizations, that may be willing to distribute information and promote opportunities. Most information will be easily accessible on IGNITE website.
4.4. The region’s LEDOs should utilize the Center of Workforce Innovations (CWI) to a greater degree when working with investment prospects.	
4.4.1. When appropriate, include CWI as part of a local or regional site visit team. CWI offers a wealth of data and knowledge about regional, state, and federal workforce programs that employers can take advantage of.	* CWI, the SBDC and the RDA presented to the LEDO Council to better familiarize them with each of these services.
4.5. Build on the “The Grass Is Greener on the Other Side!” initiative to develop a more comprehensive, talent-attraction campaign.	
4.5.1. Build on the website to create an expanded online talent portal that provides relocation information about working and living in the region.	* Link Indiana Career Connect to IGNITE. Regional and county based data available through IGNITE website.
4.5.2. Launch new talent attraction initiatives aimed at former residents and alumni to support employers in talent-recruitment efforts.	From the survey and collaboration with the marketing pillar, we will be able to develop the #/marketing piece at the 6/20 meeting. Updated surveys will be provided in the next meeting.
4.5.3. Create a digital ambassadors program that utilizes a network of “connectors” who share positive stories about Northwest Indiana online and through social media.	Work is occurring to identify and recruit young leaders or young professionals to share the "good news" online and through social media. 6/12 the idea is to create a Young Professionals Profile page. An example of what the Ignite webpage would look like was shared. *Stalled due to COVID.
4.6. Support the talent recruitment efforts of large regional employers.	
4.6.1. Provide regional employers with promotional materials to more effectively promote Northwest Indiana to potential employees.	* Marketing Pillar will take the lead.
4.6.2. Provide PowerPoint presentation templates containing pertinent regional data for employers to use for their recruitment events.	Available PowerPoint presentation with the foundation of this piece was shared. As more ideas and creative comes out of the meetings, we can add to or tailor this. *Stalled due to COVID.
4.7. Establish a region-wide young professionals (YP)/civic leadership program connecting existing leaders and providing a regional perspective with a focus on economic development.	
4.7.1. Build on the work of the South Shore Leadership Center (SSLC), Michigan City NOW, Full Circle Young Professionals, and One Region to engage young leaders.	This will be a page similar to the YP profile page. It will include the young professional/group with the logo, description of the organization, mission, meeting dates and a main contact. *Stalled due to COVID.

5. PLACEMAKING: Create the amenities and places that enhance Northwest Indiana's appeal to diverse groups of people.

5.1. Maximize the transit-oriented development (TOD) potential associated with the South Shore Line Double Track NWI and West Lake Corridor rail projects	
5.1.1. The Northwest Indiana RDA should consider requiring communities that receive funding for transit development districts along the rail lines to conduct formal planning to prepare for TOD.	Gary, Portage, Ogden Dunes, Beverly Shores and Michigan City meet quarterly during Transit Development District Steering Committee meetings to receive updates & review processes
5.1.2. The Northwest Indiana RDA and NIRPC should provide some technical guidance to communities for TOD planning.	NIRPC is in the planning stages for Planning Commissioner Training across the region, which will include fostering an understanding of what goes into TOD.
5.1.3. The region should pursue competitive funding grants from the Federal Transit Administration to help pay for TOD planning.	NICTD announced on Feb 26 that it is able to begin the final engineering phase of the Double Track Northwest Indiana Project after receiving approval to enter the New Starts Engineering phase of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Capital Investment Grant Program.
5.1.4. Explore TOD opportunities in rural areas of the	Utilize abandon rail lines for walking & bike paths. Stephen
5.2. Support the development of vibrant downtowns and distinct neighborhoods and districts.	
5.2.1. Encourage communities to adopt land-use policies that promote high-density uses and foster high-quality development.	Work with Infrastructure Group on tier Land banks big idea
5.2.2. Continue to assess the local regulations to ensure they are supportive of desired developments.	As above in 5.1.2, NIRPC is developing a Planning Commissioner Training curriculum that includes fostering an understanding of what goes into a TOD and how existing local land use regulations may need modification to promote a denser development pattern.
5.2.3. Utilize specialized toolsets, such as tax increment financing (TIF) districts, overlay districts, and other mechanisms, to encourage desired development in targeted areas.	Northwest Indiana's Opportunity Zone map development
5.2.4. Participate in public-private partnerships that facilitate significant infrastructure improvements and quality development projects.	Hammond's releases RFP for Redevelopment Proposals for Vacant Land in downtown area
5.2.5. Encourage the expansion or relocation of businesses in targeted development areas to stimulate commercial activity.	NIRPC is currently studying the effects of e-commerce on land use patterns and future development
5.2.6. Identify anchor projects that can bring in the type of traffic and uses needed to catalyze development.	
5.2.7. Work with developers and entrepreneurs to develop	work with innovation & Entrepreneurship Big idea on impact Labs
5.3. Ensure the region encourages and promotes the development of diverse and affordable housing options.	
5.3.1. Promote the development of more multifamily housing in the region, especially around TOD nodes.	Placemaking Group continues to work with RDA, One Region via Transit Development District Steering Committee
5.3.2. The four southern counties in the region should	
5.4. Support the ongoing initiative to establish a healthcare residency program in Northwest Indiana.	
5.5. Create a regional approach to developing and promoting the farm-to-fork sector in the region.	
5.5.1. Work with the region's agricultural sector and existing farmers' markets to establish a collaborative effort to promote the ongoing success and growth of locally grown agriculture products.	Legacy Foundation collaborative efforts with NWI Food Council, Purdue Co-op Extension and US Dept of Agriculture. Southern EDC forming collaborative on agri-business strategy

5.5.2. Identify gaps in the region's farmers' markets that can be filled by the establishment of new, larger, or more permanent farmers' markets.	Lake County Eats Local to begin weekly farmers markets in June to address food accessibility in East Chicago & Gary. Program funded by USDept of Agriculture in partnership with East Chicago, Gary, Legacy Foundation, NWI Food Council & Purdue Co-op Extension
5.5.3. Utilize farmers' markets as tools to promote placemaking to retain people in and attract people to the	County Tourism websites provided detailed information on farmers markets through NWI
5.6. Incorporate the site location needs of target industries into local and regional planning and placemaking strategies	Placemaking group attends RDA Quarterly TDD Steering Committee Updates to receive project team updates &
5.6.1. Local and regional planning and transportation organizations should meet regularly and consult with	Placemaking group attends RDA Quarterly TDD Steering Committee Updates to receive project team updates &
5.7. Continue regional and local efforts to expand cultural, arts, entertainment, and recreational infrastructure and amenities	Research regional wide map program - Stephen has examples of an interactive map - will partner with B&M pillar group to include in their marketing plan
5.7.1. Develop a regional quality-of-place asset map (online) that identifies the large array of amenities available to residents and visitors to the region.	Research regional wide map program - Stephen has examples of an interactive map - will partner with B&M pillar group to include in their marketing plan
5.7. Continue regional and local efforts to expand cultural, arts, entertainment, and recreational infrastructure and amenities.	Calumet Collaborative working to integrate branding & wayfinding signage for Calumet Heritage Area Identity with partner organizations

	In process
	Complete
	Stalled