

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

■ Indicates when implementation should begin.

	Status	Potential Partners	Timeframe				
			Ongoing	Month 0 - 6	Month 6 - 12	Year 2	Years 3 - 5
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.		NWIF, LEDOs		■			
1.1.2. Establish a clear set of regional protocols and procedures for sharing investment leads, submitting proposals, and working with prospects.		NWIF, LEDOs, IEDC		■			
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.		NWIF,			■		
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.		NWIF, LEDOs				■	
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.		NWIF				■	
1.3.3. Develop creative incentives designed to attract and retain talent.		Cities				■	
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.		NWIF, LEDOs		■			
1.4.2. Generate editorial content in targeted regional publications (Indiana and Chicago) that spotlights activities and successes in Northwest Indiana.		NWIF, LEDOs, Chambers			■		
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.		NWIF		■			
1.5.2. Join and participate in selected trade or industry associations for the priority target sectors.		NWIF		■			
1.5.3. Attend selected conferences and trade shows to build relationships with business executives.		NWIF		■			
1.5.4. Conduct domestic call trips/marketing missions to meet with company executives in regions where each target industry concentration is the highest.		NWIF		■			
1.5.5. Cultivate business contacts through existing Northwest Indiana companies in target industries to recruit new expansion projects.		NWIF		■			
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.		NWIF			■		
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.		NWIF			■		
1.6.3. Continue maintaining and updating information typically of interest to commercial and industrial site selectors on the NWIF website.		NWIF		■			
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.		NWIF, LEDOs, IEDC				■	
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.		NWIF, LEDOs, Chambers			■		
1.7.2. LEDOs and chambers of commerce should commit to sharing BRE efforts, successes, and metrics through an annual regional business report.		LEDOs, Chambers				■	
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.		NWIF, LEDOs, Chambers				■	
1.7.4. Coordinate incentives and infrastructure needs of specific employers with local/state officials and utilities.		NWIF, LEDOs, Chambers				■	
1.7.5. Identify and incorporate additional outreach partners within the region for increased collaboration, resource sharing, and reach.		NWIF, LEDOs, Chambers				■	
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.	NWIF					■
1.8.2. Develop an “elevator pitch” with key messages to use when promoting the region.	NWIF				■	
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.	NWIF		■			
1.8.4. Work with LEDOs, local chambers, cities, and other business organizations to identify local business success stories.	NWIF, LEDOs, Chambers		■			
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.	NWIF, Universities		■			
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.	SSCVA, Indiana Dunes Tourism, LaPorte County Tourism, NWIF, LEDOs					■
1.9.2. Work to secure the development of a new convention center in Lake County.	SSCVA, RDA, NWIF	■				
1.9.3. Leverage tourism assets to distribute business marketing messages.	SSCVA, Indiana Dunes Tourism, LaPorte County Tourism, NWIF, LEDOs					■
1.9.4. Pursue federal and foundation grants to support the region’s tourism infrastructure needs.	SSCVA, Indiana Dunes Tourism, LaPorte County Tourism					■
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.	NIRPC		■			
1.10.2. Work with the EDA to schedule an EDA-hosted regional economic development plan summit in the region.	NIRPC, NWIF			■		
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.	NIRPC, K-IRPC					■
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, NWIF				■	
2.1.2. The coalition should regularly travel to Chicago to speak to other entrepreneurship networks and venture capital (VC)/angel investment groups.	SOI, NWIF					■
2.1.3. Leaders of Chicago-based networks should be invited to Northwest Indiana to speak at gatherings of the coalition.	SOI, NWIF					■
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.	SOI				■	
2.2.2. Market the asset map to both internal and external audiences.	SOI, SBDC					■
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				■	
2.3.2. Encourage entrepreneurial role models to participate in events and campaigns designed to inspire a new generation of entrepreneurial talent.	SOI					■
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.	SOI					■
2.4.2. Market the region to risk capital funds in Chicago.	SOI					■
2.4.3. Develop an annual report documenting the successful VC investments in Northwest Indiana and disseminate it to VC investors.	SOI					■
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.	SOI					■
2.5. Develop an entrepreneurship policy agenda and advocate to the state on policies needed to support the entrepreneurship ecosystem.						
	SOI, NWIF					■

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.		One Region					■
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.		RDA					■
5.1.2. The Northwest Indiana RDA and NIRPC should provide some technical guidance to communities for TOD planning.		RDA, NIRPC, One Region		■			
5.1.3. The region should pursue competitive funding grants from the Federal Transit Administration to help pay for TOD planning.		RDA, One Region			■		
5.1.4. Explore TOD opportunities in rural areas of the region.		RDA, One Region, NIRPC, K-IRPC					■
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.		Cities, LEDOs, One Region					■
5.2.2. Continue to assess the local regulations to ensure they are supportive of desired developments.		Cities, LEDOs					■
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.		Cities, LEDOs					■
5.2.4. Participate in public-private partnerships that facilitate significant infrastructure improvements and quality development projects.		Cities, LEDOs, One Region					■
5.2.5. Encourage the expansion or relocation of businesses in targeted development areas to stimulate commercial activity.		Cities, LEDOs, One Region					■
5.2.6. Identify anchor projects that can bring in the type of traffic and uses needed to catalyze development.		Cities, LEDOs					■
5.2.7. Work with developers and entrepreneurs to develop more coworking spaces in the region.		Cities, One Region					■
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.		Cities, LEDOs		■			
5.3.2. The four southern counties in the region should explore partnering to establish a multicounty housing authority to increase the stock of workforce housing in rural areas.		Counties, LEDOs					■
5.4. Support the ongoing initiative to establish a healthcare residency program in Northwest Indiana.							
		IUN		■			
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.		SBDC					■
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.		Cities					■
5.5.3. Utilize farmers' markets as tools to promote placemaking to retain people in and attract people to the region.		Cities, LEDOs					■
5.6. Incorporate the site location needs of target industries into local and regional planning and placemaking strategies.							
5.6.1. Local and regional planning and transportation organizations should meet regularly and consult with economic development officials and with the sector councils to learn of target industry site selection needs and incorporate those needs into planning efforts.		NWIF, One Region			■		
5.7. Continue regional and local efforts to expand cultural, arts, entertainment, and recreational infrastructure and amenities.							
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.		SSCVA, Indiana Dunes Tourism, LaPorte County Tourism, One Region				■	

