

**RURAL INDIANA
STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE:**

**THE SPIRIT AND QUALITY OF PLACE:
A 2020 VISION FOR THE INDIANA COUNTRYSIDE**

Draft Report Compiled By and For Hoosiers

At the Request of

Lt. Governor Becky Skillman

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page Number
RISE 2020 Executive Summary	
Vision and Overview	3
The Foundation and Seven Pillars of RISE 2020	5
The RISE 2020 Foundation	6
The RISE 2020 Pillars	6
Introduction and Background	
Context: Rural Matters	9
What is Rural?	10
Rural Indiana: A Statistical Overview	
Metropolitan-Nonmetropolitan Comparisons	12
The Indiana Rural Poll	13
History and Process of RISE 2020	14
Environmental Scan	17
Metrics	17
The Future: Vision, Foundation, Pillars and Strategies	
A 2020 Vision for the Indiana Countryside	18
The RISE 2020 Foundation	19
The RISE 2020 Seven Pillars and Priority Strategies	21
Next Steps	37
Appendices	
A. Rural Indiana at a Glance	A1 - A16
Addendum: Metro / Non-Metro Counties	A17
B. Environmental Scan / Work Groups	
Environmental Scan	B1 - B4
Summary Statement from Each Group	B5 - B21
C. Roster of Participants	C1 - C4

RURAL INDIANA STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE (RISE 2020)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vision and Overview

I envision a rural Indiana that is characterized by genuine economic opportunity, responsible stewardship of natural resources, and strong, sustainable communities that provide a high quality of life for those who call rural Indiana home. We cannot become a state of haves and have-nots. Achieving this vision will benefit all Hoosiers.

▪ **Lt. Governor Becky Skillman**

In July 2005, Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman initiated an effort to assist the Daniels-Skillman Administration in creating a vision and strategic framework for rural Indiana's future. Although this framework would help guide the Indiana Office of Rural Affairs, it would be much more than that. It would link governmental efforts with other public, private, academic, and philanthropic initiatives to enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of Indiana's rural countryside, including the many towns and small cities that help to comprise rural Indiana.

In the ensuing six months, over 150 Hoosiers, representing the broad diversity of institutions, organizations, governments and constituencies of our state, have worked diligently to create a contemporary, dynamic vision for the future of rural Indiana. They also began to build the platform and mobilize the constituencies necessary to begin the common journey toward this future.

This was a very dynamic and transparent process. Commitment from all sectors was phenomenal, involving many meetings, conference calls, and email exchanges. Final decisions were, surprisingly, almost totally consensus-based. This effort included establishing eight work groups, which met independently and then integrated their sector approaches into a broader, more meaningful mosaic. These eight sector groups included community capacity, cultural assets, economic development, education and workforce, health and human services, finance, natural resource assets, and transportation.

RISE 2020 Draft Report

No other state has consciously set about to create this type of stakeholder base and Indiana aspires to be the national leader and model in how this can be achieved. One of the key premises in the Lieutenant Governor's approach is that this stakeholder base must be broad-based. It cannot be restricted only to those who live and/or work in rural Indiana. Similarly, the needs and opportunities far exceed the capacity and mission of government. The private sector, nonprofit, academic, and philanthropic communities are key to a sustainable long-term movement that will transcend any particular administration. This effort emphasizes collaboration – collaboration between the state and towns, between civic groups and counties, between individuals and regional associations, between one part of the state and others. RISE 2020 is inclusive above all else.

These two factors—the grass-roots approach and calling upon both government and nongovernmental sectors—have important implications for the RISE 2020 report. Ultimately, it means RISE 2020 is incomplete – and, intentionally so. Everything done so far creates a framework for future decisions and actions. The report identifies key issues and opportunities that rural Indiana faces now and will face into the foreseeable future. And the process of taking stock of rural Indiana's strong points and its challenges has begun. Finally, an innovative and creative framework built around seven strategic pillars will serve rural Indiana well over both the short and long terms. However, RISE 2020 avoids defining precise action steps, timelines and points of responsibilities. Specific ways of dealing with problems will differ by county and region, and all rural communities will change over time. Agencies, organizations and institutions that have an opportunity to contribute to RISE 2020 will also change directions from time to time. RISE 2020 does not provide the specific details for the same reason that it will never be obsolete. It is a basic frame of reference that can be adjusted to time and place. Where will the details come from? The public. As Lieutenant Governor Skillman introduces RISE 2020 throughout Indiana, she will ask each community how it can bring the plan into action in that region and vicinity. Regional and statewide agencies, institutions and organizations will also be asked how they can best make a meaningful contribution to RISE 2020. The specifics will come from the comments received, the resources available in each area, and the particular dimensions of these various issues that are unique to that place and region. The people, and the organizations and institutions that have a stake in and commitment to rural Indiana will breathe life into RISE 2020 by using it in ways that make sense to them, their families, and their communities. It is this dynamic generality that gives RISE 2020 its vitality, its potential for good, and its promise for the future. One of the most important goals of the Lieutenant Governor, and the RISE 2020 participants, is to empower those who have a stake in rural Indiana to take action.

Finally, it is essential to note that many programs and resources are already in place in the public, private and philanthropic sectors to help rural people and places. These efforts need to be continually strengthened by all involved. The Daniels-Skillman administration is committed to strengthening state government efforts and has also introduced a number of new statewide policies, programs and initiatives. Those initiatives not specifically targeted to rural Indiana must be sensitive to and respectful of the unique needs of rural Indiana. Rural stakeholders have a special responsibility to make sure their voices are heard as discussions and debate on broader statewide initiatives occur. Other sectors—private, philanthropic and local and Federal governments—must also do their share. Many of the specific suggestions in the RISE 2020

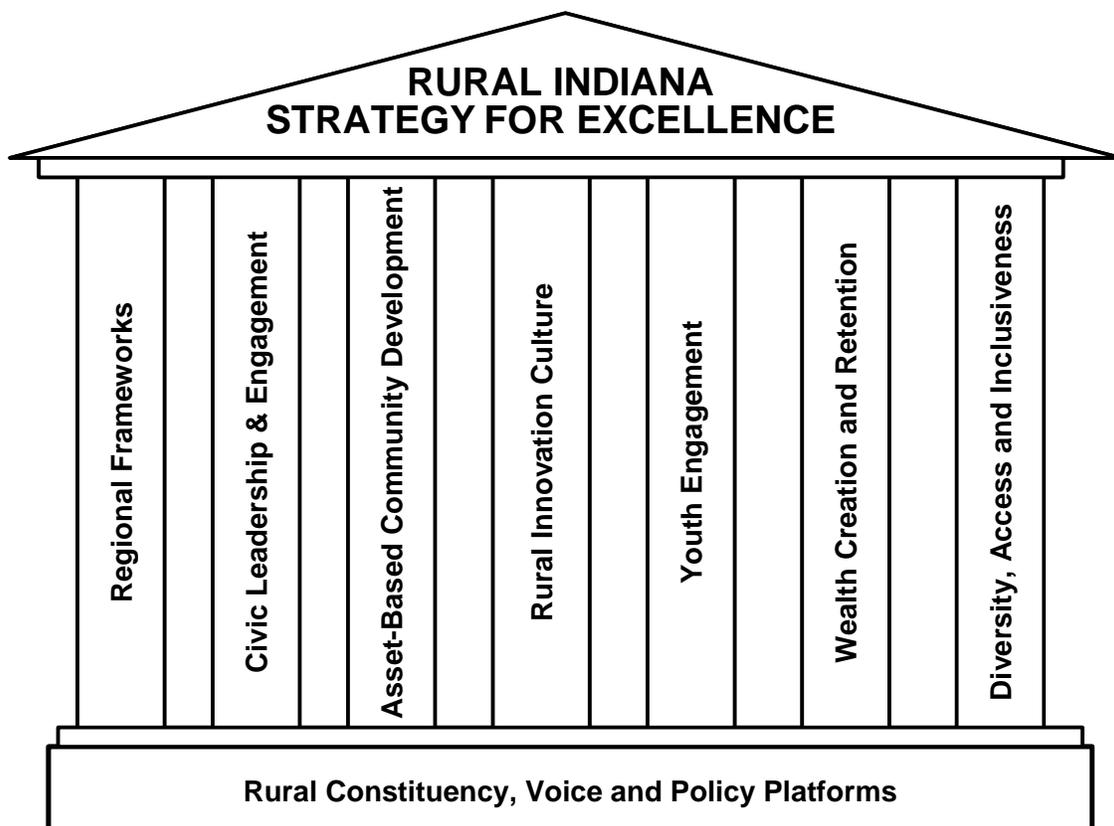
RISE 2020 Draft Report

report help identify those areas of opportunity and concern where the rural perspective is of particular importance. Simultaneously, those in rural areas must take advantage of the opportunities availed to them by state and federal governments, other public and private institutions and the philanthropic sector. The new Office of Rural Affairs can be most helpful to rural communities in this regard but the communities themselves must show leadership and initiative and take the first step of reaching out for such assistance and support.

The Foundation and Seven Pillars of the RISE 2020 Vision

During the first statewide meeting in July, two interrelated components surfaced which were reinforced continually and framed all ensuing discussions.

- The RISE 2020 vision can only be achieved if all the various stakeholders come together to form a common constituency and voice. This is the ultimate base or “foundation” of RISE 2020.
- Upon this foundation, seven strategic pillars must be erected and embraced. These pillars form a holistic framework for how rural Indiana must approach its future; and represent the unifying thread for moving from vision to action whether the area of focus is economic development, health and human services, transportation or any other sector concern.



The RISE 2020 Foundation

Priority #1: *Create the constituency, voice and platform necessary to execute the Rural Indiana Strategy for Excellence (RISE 2020) and achieve “The Spirit and Quality of Place: A 2020 Vision for the Indiana Countryside.”*

To ensure this vision emanates from, is owned by, and is stewarded through execution by a broad Indiana constituency, representing urban and suburban, as well as rural citizens, interests, and communities, this effort must ensure all these constituencies remain engaged throughout the process.

The RISE 2020 Pillars

- I. Nurture Regional Frameworks. Establish appropriate regional frameworks to optimize rural competitive advantage in a rapidly changing global economy, building connectivity across public, private, nonprofit and academic sectors and institutions.***

Indiana must encourage cooperation, collaboration and sharing across jurisdictional and geopolitical boundaries, recognizing that cities and counties working regionally can generate more resources and act more effectively on most common challenges. Nowhere is this more needed than in the case of economic development. In today’s highly competitive global economy, communities must cooperate in order to compete. Rural communities must understand they are part of a larger regional economy. In addition to geopolitical boundaries, the same urgency for cooperation, collaboration and sharing must lead to meaningful and creative partnerships among public, private, nonprofit, and academic sectors and institutions.

- II. Advance Civic Leadership and Engagement. Achieve a rural leadership renaissance, to broaden and deepen civic leadership and engagement and reinvigorate civic processes.***

To meet the multiple challenges facing rural Indiana, a “renaissanced” rural leadership will be needed, to reinvigorate and recommit civic processes. Indiana must provide technical assistance, resources, and support for civic leaders, to better inform their decision-making, encourage all voices to be heard in civic affairs – tapping into the wisdom of long-established residents, and into the skills and experiences of newcomers, and explore new technologies to encourage broader participation of rural people in civic affairs.

- III. Support Asset Based Community Development. Invest in rural Indiana’s unique, place-based assets, to fully optimize and enhance our diverse natural resources, the heritage, history, arts and cultures of our people and places, the integrity of our rural communities, and the human and social capital of all Hoosiers.***

Every community has some combination of human, social, economic, cultural, and natural assets that can be translated into opportunities for revitalization. Indiana must foster a new public and civic attitude toward the rural landscape, which emphasizes the identification and

RISE 2020 Draft Report

optimization of our unique rural assets and which provides tools and resources which enable rural communities to identify and take advantage of these assets but without compromising them for use and enjoyment by future generations.

IV. *Promote a Rural Innovation Culture. A “Rural Innovation Culture” is needed to enhance public and private entrepreneurship and build collaborative systems which sustain public, private and philanthropic commitments to achieve this goal.*

The environment, infrastructure, and resources to encourage and support rural Hoosiers as they create their own enterprises must be provided, to generate income and jobs and provide services to improve the quality of life in their communities. Indiana also promotes entrepreneurship as a viable economic development strategy, and not rely solely on recruitment of outside companies to provide economic opportunities for rural residents. Entrepreneurship in the public and nonprofit sectors is equally important. Those who work in these sectors must see themselves as agents of change and creativity, rather than as protectors of the status quo. This type of civic entrepreneurship is critical if Indiana’s communities and regions—rural and urban alike—are to thrive and to become magnets for others who want to live and work in a state that can become known for this type of civic culture and dynamism.

V. *Foster Youth Engagement. Engage the youth and young adults of rural Indiana in achieving the RISE 2020 vision, so they build a rural countryside in which they wish to stay, and to which other young people wish to come.*

The voices and talents of young people are too often overlooked or undervalued, ignoring the fact that they represent the future of rural Indiana. Rural Indiana must engage youth directly in civic decision-making, provide them with skills and opportunities for personal development, and channel their energies into constructive action to execute this vision.

VI. *Increase Wealth Creation and Retention. Ensure that rural Indiana’s substantial wealth is retained, enhanced, and harnessed, to generate new wealth and capture emerging economic opportunities for all Hoosiers.*

Contrary to conventional wisdom, substantial wealth already exists in rural Indiana, but it must be harnessed, protected, and enhanced for sustained economic well-being, so all rural people and families can save and invest for their future – to buy or repair a house, to pay for their own or their children’s higher education and training, to start their own business, to create a rainy day fund to pay for medical and other emergencies, or provide for retirement. This wealth must also support civic efforts to sustain and build rural communities and regions, through local community foundations or other community financial intermediaries, as repositories for retaining wealth in rural communities.

VII. *Ensure Diversity, Access and Inclusiveness. Ensure all rural Hoosiers are engaged in achieving this vision and advantaged in its outcomes, by embracing approaches which specifically address the challenges faced by the poor, minorities, and those undervalued or with special needs and which ensure all Hoosiers have reasonable access to basic human and social services and are authentically included in community decision-making.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

To access all available assets, rural communities must embrace and act upon a realization that all people can make a positive contribution to rural community life and that no community can fully prosper if there are some who are excluded and disenfranchised. Rural community decision-making and action must directly engage minorities, the poor, and the invisible; and must also insure that these populations have access to basic human and social services.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Context: Rural Matters

Rural Indiana, however defined, is a treasure and an asset to the entire state and to all who reside in Indiana. The Indiana countryside is home to tens of thousands of Indiana's residents, is dotted with hundreds of towns and small cities and encompasses a huge proportion of the state's geography, including some of the state's most productive natural resources and spectacular scenery, wildlife and recreational areas. Although rural, urban and suburban areas are intimately connected economically, socially and culturally, rural Indiana also has unique issues, opportunities and challenges. All of Indiana benefits when rural Indiana is thriving and vice versa. Indeed, rural Indiana is the very landscape that serves as the connecting point among the state's urban areas. A strategic vision for the future and a statewide call to action is essential if all residents of Indiana are to fully understand and benefit from what rural Indiana aspires to in the year 2020.

The reality of today's rural Indiana is far different from the past. For example, agriculture, while still important, is just one piece of today's Indiana rural economy. Manufacturing and other types of businesses—small and large alike—have gained in importance. Similarly, the people and places of rural Indiana have changed dramatically. Many of the commonalities that existed when rural Indiana was much more agrarian in character are no longer as apparent. For example, the basic racial and ethnic profile of many rural communities in Indiana has not changed in 100 years, but in other rural communities this profile bears little resemblance to the very recent past. In other words, "If you have seen one rural community....you have seen only one rural community!"

It is against this background of change and opportunity that Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman has championed the need for a thoughtful long-term vision for the Indiana countryside. Equally as important as the strategic vision is the mobilization of a statewide stakeholder support base that can move the RISE 2020 vision to action. No other state has consciously set about to create this type of stakeholder base and Indiana aspires to be the national leader and model in how this can be achieved. One of the key premises in the Lieutenant Governor's approach is that this stakeholder base must be broad-based. Above all else, RISE 2020 is about inclusiveness. It cannot be restricted only to those who live and/or work in rural Indiana. Similarly, the needs and opportunities far exceed the capacity and mission of government. The private sector, nonprofit, academic, and philanthropic communities are key to a sustainable long-term movement that will transcend any particular administration and must make a serious commitment to work together. This commitment must also include collaboration between the state and towns, between civic groups and counties, between individuals and regional associations, between one part of the state and others. Meaningful collaboration—not just communication and cooperation—across these institutions, geo-political units and geography are absolutely essential if rural communities and regions are to realize their dreams and aspirations.

These two factors—the grass-roots approach and calling upon both government and nongovernmental sectors—have important implications for the RISE 2020 report. Ultimately, it

RISE 2020 Draft Report

means RISE 2020 is incomplete – and, intentionally so. Everything done so far creates a framework for future decisions and actions. The report identifies key issues and opportunities that rural Indiana faces now and will face into the foreseeable future. And the process of taking stock of rural Indiana’s strong points and its challenges has begun. Finally, an innovative and creative framework built around seven strategic “pillars” will serve rural Indiana well over both the short and long terms. However, RISE 2020 avoids defining precise action steps, timelines and points of responsibilities. Specific ways of dealing with problems will differ by county and region, and all rural communities will change over time. Agencies, organizations and institutions that have an opportunity to contribute to RISE 2020 will also change directions from time to time. RISE 2020 does not provide the specific details for the same reason that it will never be obsolete. It is a basic frame of reference that can be adjusted to time and place. Where will the details come from? The public. As Lieutenant Governor Skillman introduces RISE 2020 throughout Indiana, she will ask each community how it can bring the plan into action in that region and vicinity. Regional and statewide agencies, institutions and organizations will also be asked how they can best make a meaningful contribution to RISE 2020. The specifics will come from the comments received, the resources available in each area, and the particular dimensions of these various issues that are unique to that place and region. The people, and the organizations and institutions that have a stake in and commitment to rural Indiana will breathe life into RISE 2020 by using it in ways that make sense to them, their families, and their communities. It is this dynamic generality that gives RISE 2020 its vitality, its potential for good, and its promise for the future. One of the most important goals of the Lieutenant Governor, and RISE 2020, is to empower those who have a stake in rural Indiana to take action.

What is Rural?

Before a vision can be created for the Indiana countryside, there needs to be some sense of what piece of geography is at stake. Conceptually, almost everyone agrees that the Indiana countryside includes both people and places, and what is increasingly called our “working landscape”. The latter refers to the abundant natural resource base of the countryside: the fertile soil, forests, coal, lakes, rivers, fish, scenery and wildlife. Many residents, including farmers, live and work on this landscape; but even more rural residents reside in the hundreds of towns and small cities scattered throughout the countryside.

Although it is possible to reach consensus on the concept and importance of the Indiana countryside, providing more precise parameters is more challenging. For example, policy makers, researchers and others do not have a common definition of *rural*. This is not necessarily problematic nor is it necessary to spend inordinate amounts of time and energy debating the pros and cons of the plethora of definitions. There are, however, two points that need to be articulated. First, the single most important characteristic differentiating *rural* from *urban* is that of population size and density. In other words, most people associate rural with relatively small population centers (i.e., towns and small cities) and the open countryside. Second, what is *relatively small* depends largely on one’s point of reference and involves a psychological dimension. For example, in Indiana, the city of Anderson may not be viewed as a big city, but if it were moved to Wyoming, it would be that state’s largest city and would likely be viewed quite differently.

RISE 2020 Draft Report

Despite the absence of a singular consensus definition, there are several commonly used approaches to differentiating between rural and urban that are quite acceptable. One of the more commonly used approaches has been developed by the U. S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). It classifies entire counties as either metropolitan and nonmetropolitan; and further subdivides nonmetropolitan counties into two categories: micropolitan and noncore. Because so much data from the U. S. Census and other sources is so readily available at the county-level, the OMB approach makes it easy to make comparisons between metro and nonmetro counties. However, this advantage is also the greatest weakness of the OMB definition. Specifically, the county based approach effectively ignores what most people would consider rural areas that fall within metropolitan counties. For example, it is instructive to note that Allen County (Ft. Wayne), one of the state's most populated metropolitan counties, also has the second highest number of farms of any county in Indiana. Similarly, the city of Indianapolis in Marion County has more farms than any other city of its size in the United States.

Despite the limitations of the OMB approach, we share it as one point of reference and also because of the ease by which data can be made available. However, this does not represent Indiana's official definition of rural; and because it is county based it almost certainly understates the magnitude or scope of what most people in Indiana would consider rural. It would be useful if additional analyses and comparisons were made that used townships or some other sub-county unit to provide more precision when comparing rural and urban Indiana.

Metropolitan—counties in which there is at least one urbanized population center of 50,000 and any surrounding counties, regardless of population, that have a high degree of economic and social integration with the urbanized center/county. For example, Hendricks County is classified as a metropolitan county because of its economic and social integration with Marion County. Currently, 46 counties – exactly one-half of Indiana's counties – are classified as metropolitan by OMB. (See Appendix A for map and complete listing)

Micropolitan—nonmetropolitan counties that have at least one urban cluster with a population of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 and any surrounding counties that have a high degree of economic and social integration with the central county. Currently, 26 counties are classified as micropolitan by OMB. (See Appendix A for map and complete listing)

Noncore—nonmetropolitan counties not classified as micropolitan, i.e., counties in which there is no urban cluster of at least 10,000 population and in which there is an absence of economic and social integration with such a county. Currently, 20 counties fall into the noncore category as defined by OMB. (See Appendix A for map and complete listing)

Rural Indiana: A Statistical Overview

Metropolitan-Nonmetropolitan Comparisons: The data profile in Appendix A provides a statistical overview of Indiana's counties based on the metropolitan and nonmetropolitan definitions noted above. Again, these are county-level comparisons based on the OMB classification of counties. In comparing Indiana's metropolitan and nonmetropolitan counties, some important observations follow:

Population Change

- The rate of population growth in metropolitan counties has consistently exceeded that of nonmetropolitan counties.
- Between 2000 and 2004, 26 Indiana counties lost population. Of these, 17 were nonmetropolitan counties.
- During the 1990s the Hispanic population doubled in 56 of Indiana's 92 counties, including 20 nonmetropolitan counties.
- Nonmetropolitan counties have a greater proportion of the population that is age 65 or older (14 percent compared to 11.9 percent). Conversely, metro counties have a larger proportion of the population in the 15-44 year age range (42.9 percent compared to 40.1 percent).

Education

- In metropolitan counties, approximately 45 percent of those over the age of 25 have attended college with nearly one in five holding at least a bachelor's degree. In nonmetropolitan counties the corresponding figures are approximately 35 percent and 12 percent, respectively.

Income

- Incomes tend to be greater in metropolitan counties. In 2003, per capita income in metropolitan counties was \$5,000 more than in Indiana's nonmetropolitan counties (\$29,970 compared to \$24,954). Fourteen Indiana counties had per capita income above \$30,000, but only one of these was a nonmetropolitan county.
- The percent of the population in poverty ranged from 3.5 percent in Hamilton County to 13.9 percent in Vigo County. The average for Indiana's nonmetropolitan counties was 9.6 percent, compared to 8.6 percent for the state's metropolitan counties.

Employment and Industry Structure

- In 2004, the unemployment rate ranged from 3.1 percent in Hamilton County to 8.3 percent in Grant County. The average for Indiana's nonmetropolitan counties was 5.6 percent, compared to 5.2 percent for the state's metropolitan counties.

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- The employment structure in nonmetropolitan areas is dominated by manufacturing followed by government, other services, accommodation and food services, construction, and farming.
- The employment structure between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan counties varies quite dramatically. Although both areas are heavily dependent upon the manufacturing sector, nonmetropolitan counties are nearly twice as dependent upon this sector. In relative terms the metropolitan economy is more reliant on the following sectors: construction; wholesale and retail trade; information; finance and insurance; real estate; administrative services; and accommodation and food services. Only government and farming have relatively more employment in nonmetropolitan than metropolitan areas. [Note: Metro and nonmetro comparisons cannot be made in some sectors, including forestry, mining, utilities and transportation. This is because data are not available publicly when only a small number of firms are involved].

Comparisons Across Nonmetro Counties

- Within nonmetropolitan counties – noncore counties – in comparison to micropolitan counties—tend to have a somewhat: slower population growth; smaller proportion of racial and ethnic minorities; higher proportion of those age 65 and over; lower educational levels; a higher poverty rate; and a lower per capita income.

The Indiana Rural Poll: The Indiana Rural Development Council funded a statewide rural poll in 2005. The poll, using a mixed mode of telephone and online surveys, was conducted by Purdue University’s Social Research Institute and Center for Regional Development. The statistical sample was drawn from residents living outside of Indiana’s urban centers, i.e., Anderson, Bloomington, Columbus, Elkhart, Evansville, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Kokomo, Lafayette, Michigan City, Muncie, South Bend, and Terre Haute; and those portions of the Chicago, Cincinnati, and Louisville urbanized areas that spill over into Indiana.

Although the final statistical analysis and report are not complete, preliminary data provide insights into the views of Indiana’s rural residents. Selected findings from the 2005 Rural Poll include:

- The area of greatest priority was economic development, including job growth. Nearly 95 percent of the respondents rated economic development as a top priority. The next tier of priorities (rated as a priority by 70-92 percent of the respondents) were child abuse, teen drug abuse and pregnancy, spousal abuse, environmental issues, improving and maintaining infrastructure, workforce retraining, retaining Indiana’s college graduates, expanding post-secondary education, improving local government, property tax revision and change, and rural poverty. Also, 50-69 percent of the respondents identified the following priority issues: terrorism; rural crime; lack of health care and services; funding for full-day kindergarten; tourism development; rural internet and telecommunications access; rural wastewater and stormwater management; suburban growth; and expanding local control over community affairs.

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- The respondents were generally satisfied with their public services and facilities such as library services, housing, parks and recreation and basic medical services. The lack of availability or low satisfaction was focused on the following services: rail, bus, taxi and airline services; county roads and bridges; city/town government; and streets.
- Considerable support was expressed for consolidating county governments and consolidating city with county governments.
- The most acceptable ways for generating new public revenues were from increasing liquor and cigarette taxes.
- Respondents were positive about the future of their communities in that nearly 70 percent felt their community had a bright future. However, only 28 percent of the respondents were content with the current conditions in their communities. Over 80 percent of the respondents felt the people in their community were friendly and felt residents have a sense of belonging.

History and Process of RISE 2020

On July 28-29, 2005, Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman brought together over 80 key stakeholders and leaders from across Indiana to (a) strategize about the future of rural Indiana; (b) lay the groundwork for creating a meaningful long-term rural vision; and (c) begin building and mobilizing a rural constituency and platform that would be sustainable and move from vision to action. During this meeting, the group exchanged views and ideas with one another and with the following national and international rural development authorities:

Mark Drabentstott, Vice President and Director, Center for the Study of Rural America, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City

Charles W. Fluharty, Director of the Rural Policy Research Institute

Maxine Moul, President Emeritus, Nebraska Community Foundation and former Lieutenant Governor of Nebraska

Bobby Gierisch, Director of State Policy Programs, Rural Policy Research Institute

Several key outcomes resulted from this intensive two-day meeting:

- The beginning elements of a vision statement for the year 2020.
- The preliminary identification of several key principles (subsequently refined and called “pillars”) needed to guide specific actions, policies, programs and resource allocations if the vision for the year 2020 is to be attained.
- The recognition that a rural renaissance by the year 2020 will require a strong and sustainable coalition of forces representing the private sector, government at all levels, and the nonprofit, academic, and philanthropic communities.
- A consensus that the creation of a Rural Indiana Strategy for Excellence (RISE 2020) will create a framework from which communities, state agencies, educational

RISE 2020 Draft Report

institutions, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and other interested stakeholders can contribute to the attainment of the 2020 vision for the Indiana countryside.

The presentations by the national rural development speakers and a summary of this two-day event can be found at the Purdue Center for Regional Development's website <http://www.purdue.edu/pcrd/RISE2020/index.htm>

In early October 2005, a smaller group, including key representatives from the July meeting, was brought together for additional reflection and planning. The full group that was convened in July 2005 was re-convened on November 7, 2005. Outcomes from the November meeting included:

- The draft version of the RISE 2020 vision statement.
- The draft language for the foundation and seven pillars that under gird the entire RISE 2020 initiative.
- A request that Purdue's Center for Regional Development, in collaboration with the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI), facilitate the further development of the RISE 2020 initiative (with operational and organizational support coming from the Office of Rural Affairs).
- The establishment of the following eight Work Groups(see Appendix B for work group reports) to identify more specific issues, needs and opportunities facing rural Indiana:

- Community Capacity, Chaired by William Graham, Mayor of Scottsburg
- Cultural Assets, Chaired by Brian Blackford, Indiana Office of Tourism Development
- Economic Development, Chaired by Greg Wathen, Perry County Development Corporation
- Education and Workforce Development, Chaired by Ty Handy and Steve Daily, Ivy Tech Community College
- Health and Human Services, Chaired by Shawna Girgis, Indiana Rural Health Association
- Financial Resources, Chaired by Joe DeHaven, Community Bankers Association of Indiana
- Natural Resource Assets, Chaired by Lynn Dennis, The Nature Conservancy in Indiana
- Transportation, Chaired by David Lips, Indiana Economic Development Corporation

These eight sectoral areas are consistent with many of the indicators of rural needs, including information generated from the Indiana rural poll and the census data noted earlier.

Mayor William Graham, Scottsburg, serves as Chair of the Indiana Rural Development Council and is Lieutenant Governor Skillman's designee to serve as Chair of the RISE 2020 initiative.

Nearly 150 Hoosiers from across Indiana and from all walks of life participated in one of the eight work groups (see Appendix C). The work groups met in December 2005 and January 2006 and identified key issues, challenges and strategies for addressing economic development and

RISE 2020 Draft Report

quality-of-life issues in rural communities. The chairs of these eight work groups and four other “at large” members are now leading the RISE 2020 initiative as the Coordinating Committee. This Committee is assisting in the (a) the development of a long-term organizational framework for RISE 2020 and (b) the implementation of RISE 2020, including the articulation of the seven pillars as the fundamental framework for moving rural Indiana forward.

The RISE 2020 initiative was purposefully designed to provide a long-term vision, strategic framework and a sense of shared responsibility that far exceed the capacity and mission of state government. At the same time, state government is a critical player, especially with many of the new initiatives of the current administration. Hence, every effort has been made to maintain close coordination, communication and alignment with the initiatives of the Daniels-Skillman administration; and representatives from various state agencies were included the planning process.

Environmental Scan

In any futuristic strategic activity it is important to identify several key elements:

Megatrends—What are the broad social and economic forces that have important implications for rural Indiana? How can rural Indiana best position itself with respect to these megatrends?

Strengths and Opportunities—What future opportunities exist for rural Indiana and what are the strengths that are in place to take advantage of these opportunities?

Challenges—What are the external challenges and limitations facing rural Indiana that need to be recognized and addressed?

At several different junctures, the participants in RISE 2020 have addressed the issues of megatrends, strengths, opportunities and challenges. The individual work groups identified these elements that were specific to their particular sector or area of focus. However, a more generic set of factors also emerged that were not specific to a particular work group. Those cross-cutting megatrends, strengths and opportunities, and challenges are included in Appendix B.

Metrics

The following metrics reflect important areas in which rural people and places are currently disadvantaged relative to their urban counterparts. Progress toward closing this differential needs to be measured over time, with the expectation that this differential is eliminated by 2020.

- Per capita income
- Proportion of households below the official poverty level
- The unemployment rate
- The proportion of those over age 25 who have attended college
- The proportion of those over age 25 who have at least a bachelor's degree
- The rates of population immigration and outmigration

The above metrics are largely linked to socio-economic measures. Although improvements in socio-economic status typically contribute to a higher quality of life for both individuals and communities, additional metrics tied directly to quality of life issues also need to be developed and used. Examples of areas in which metrics need to be developed and used, include environmental measures, health indices, crime rates, and measures of wealth and income gaps. Additionally, it is recommended that a biennial rural poll be commissioned. This poll would include measures and scales on how nonmetropolitan residents evaluate various aspects of their community and quality of life.

The Future: Vision, Foundation, Pillars and Strategies

The data and information in the previous section beg the question: where do we go from here? More specifically, what kind of a future do we want to create for those who choose to live and work in rural Indiana; and for those who have a stake in rural Indiana regardless of where they live? One answer to this question is reflected in the following:

I envision a rural Indiana that is characterized by genuine economic opportunity, responsible stewardship of natural resources, and strong, sustainable communities that provide a high quality of life for those who call rural Indiana home. We cannot become a state of haves and have-nots. Achieving this vision will benefit all Hoosiers.

~ Lt. Governor Becky Skillman

RISE 2020 participants applaud and embrace this dynamic and compelling statement and suggest that certain core values are implied in such a vision. These core values are embodied in the following:

In 2020, rural Indiana is our nation's most dynamic, globally-competitive countryside,
comprised of sustainable regions and communities,
in which all natural resources are responsibly stewarded,
and all place-based assets are fully enhanced and optimized.

This countryside is welcoming and inclusive, exhibiting an unparalleled rural quality of life,

where the integrity of rural communities is maintained,
new and different voices are acknowledged and heard,
human and social capital is inspired and enhanced,

and the heritage and history of Hoosier people and places,
united with the promises of new peoples and voices,
forge a shared future,

committed to by all,
especially the young,
and infused with a common understanding of the
interdependence of all Hoosiers—rural, urban and suburban.

RISE 2020 Draft Report

This section of the report is the roadmap for moving from vision to action. There are three key components to this roadmap: a foundation; seven pillars; and proposed strategies and activities associated with both the foundation and the seven pillars.

The RISE 2020 Foundation

Those involved in the RISE 2020 initiative believe the top overall priority is to nurture the development and empowerment of a sustainable constituency that focuses on rural issues and opportunities. Historically in Indiana, in other states and nationally, there has not been a strong and well organized constituency to focus on the broad scope of rural issues, challenges and opportunities. Contrast this situation, for example, to that of the agricultural industry in which multiple agencies, organizations and institutions exist to help address the challenges and opportunities of that particular constituency, such as the plethora of farm organizations, state and federal departments of agriculture, and a national network of colleges of agriculture. Achieving the RISE 2020 vision requires a broad and sustainable rural constituency.

Priority #1: Create the constituency, voice and platform necessary to execute the Rural Indiana Strategy for Excellence and achieve “The Spirit and Quality of Place: A 2020 Vision for the Indiana Countryside.”

- Ensure that RISE 2020’s vision emanates from, is embraced by, and is stewarded through implementation by a broad Hoosier constituency, representing rural, urban and suburban citizens, communities, and interests.
 - ✧ *Communicate the RISE 2020 purpose, expected outcomes, and action steps.*
 - ◆ *Citizens, both rural and urban*
 - ◆ *Local, state, and federal elected officials*
 - ◆ *Appointed and career government professionals*
 - ◆ *Non-governmental organizations*
 - ◆ *Academic institutions*
 - ◆ *Private industry*
 - ✧ *Engage individuals, communities, and constituencies to establish a broad based partnership.*
 - ✧ *Ensure local leaders participate in regional listening sessions and provide input to the RISE 2020 Report.*
 - ✧ *Utilize peer challenging and strong advocates.*
- Identify specific policies, programs, and practice opportunities that offer strategic advantages in achieving the principles, values and goals of the RISE 2020 foundation and pillars.
 - ✧ *Convene rural constituencies and service providers to stimulate conversations, expand the capacity to lead and strengthen Indiana’s rural culture.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ◆ *Assemble expanded RISE 2020 Work Groups at least twice annually to ensure conversations across sectors*
- ◆ *Convene groups on existing and emerging rural issues*
- ◆ *Provide safe places and effective facilitation for communities and sectors to hold conversations*
- ◆ *Pursue intergovernmental solutions by working intra- and inter-regionally*
- ◆ *Lead the effort with the 2006 Rural Summit and Rural Forums hosted by the Purdue Center for Regional Development*
- ◆ *Continue hosting a Rural Summit to convene rural constituencies and service providers to cross-walk rural needs, track progress of the strategy and identify additional strategies to implement RISE 2020*
- ◆ *Explore the desirability of creating a rural caucus in the General Assembly as in other states and the U.S. Congress*

- ⊘ *Identify local champions, such as local economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, community foundations, to enable local communities to align their programs with RISE 2020.*

- ⊘ *Enlist support for RISE 2020's "social contract" at key community events, such as fairs, festivals, etc.*

- ⊘ *Integrate RISE 2020's foundation and pillars into strategic planning efforts, organizational meetings, and plans of work of partner organizations.*

- ⊘ *Ensure that the Indiana Office of Rural Affairs and other related parts of government use RISE 2020 to guide policies, programs and resource allocation.*

- ⊘ *Market RISE 2020 through a partnership of business, non-governmental, governmental, and academic organizations.*
 - ◆ *Develop a series of articles that explains RISE 2020 and each of its pillars to be published and distributed by the consortia's members and public channels*

- *Ensure rural constituencies, community leaders and service providers continue to support RISE 2020 and its Vision for the Indiana Countryside.*
 - ⊘ *Create a leadership team to promote, monitor and help Indiana's rural culture evolve throughout the life of RISE 2020.*
 - ◆ *Maintain and expand the consortium of existing rural constituency organizations, non-governmental organizations, governments, businesses and academic interests, to implement RISE 2020*
 - ◆ *Maintain the Working Group Chairs Committee as the RISE 2020 Coordinating Committee to provide leadership for the initiative.*
 - ◆ *Develop regional rural strategy boards to include all local leaders as well as the general public in local conversations*
 - ◆ *Coordinate existing rural organizations and service providers to emerge as a visible rural constituency to advance RISE 2020*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ✧ *Assemble a management group to support RISE 2020 and its leadership team.*
 - ◆ *Serve as a strong day-to-day intermediary for RISE 2020 and provide its institutional home*
 - ◆ *Coordinate the management for implementation with the organizations in the initial RISE 2020 leadership consortium*

The RISE 2020 Seven Pillars and Priority Strategies

Upon this foundation, seven strategic pillars must be erected and embraced. These pillars form a holistic framework for how rural Indiana must approach its future; and represent the unifying thread for moving from vision to action whether the area of focus is economic development, health and human services, transportation or any other sector concern. The identification and articulation of these pillars are based on research and best practices in community and rural development in the U. S. and elsewhere, and through the deliberations of those involved in the RISE 2020 initiative.

Selected strategies from the eight work groups have been synthesized and placed underneath the most appropriate pillar (see Appendix B for a complete list of potential strategies and actions developed by each work). Not all of the priority strategies make specific mention of rural, but the rural connection is always implied. Because RISE 2020 is designed to guide decisions, policy and resource allocations for the next 15 years, specific strategies, tactics and action steps will need to be continuously assessed and modified; and additional specifics such as timelines and points of responsibility will need to be developed. This is the one of the most important roles of the organized constituency that is being created and nurtured, led initially by the RISE 2020 Coordinating Committee. The priority strategies and tactics will also need to be vetted among rural residents as part of the Rural Community Input Sessions to be held during March and April (see *Next Steps* section of this report). Specific actions, timelines and tactics will often vary from locale to locale and will certainly change over time. The seven pillars, however, will not change, but will stand the test of time to 2020...and beyond.

Finally, it is essential to note that many programs and resources are already in place in the public, private and philanthropic sectors to help rural people and places. These efforts need to be continually strengthened by all involved. The Daniels-Skillman administration is committed to strengthening state government efforts and has also introduced a number of new statewide policies, programs and initiatives. Those initiatives not specifically targeted to rural Indiana must be sensitive to and respectful of the unique needs of rural Indiana. Rural stakeholders have a special responsibility to make sure their voices are heard as discussions and debate on broader statewide initiatives occur. Other sectors—private, philanthropic and local and Federal governments—must also do their share. Many of the specific suggestions in the RISE 2020 report help identify those areas of opportunity and concern where the rural perspective is of particular importance. Simultaneously, those in rural areas must take advantage of the opportunities available to them by state and federal governments, other public and private institutions and the philanthropic sector. The new Office of Rural Affairs can be most helpful to

rural communities in this regard but the communities themselves must show leadership and initiative and take the first step of reaching out for such assistance and support.

I. Establish appropriate regional frameworks to optimize rural competitive advantage in a rapidly changing global economy, building connectivity across public, private, nonprofit and academic sectors and institutions.

New economic realities demand that the people and communities of Indiana—rural and urban alike—must work together to create their own destiny. In other words they must cooperate in order to compete. Communities need visionary, risk-taking leaders and others who will:

- Collaborate across jurisdictional boundaries, recognizing that cities and counties working regionally can generate more resources and act more effectively on most common challenges.
- Cooperate across public, private, nonprofit and academic sectors and institutions, for mutual and regional advantage.

Priority Strategies and Considerations:

- Increase regional economic collaboration by developing tools and reducing restrictions.
 - ✧ *Enact legislation to establish regional industrial and technology parks, which allow for the sharing of property, sales, and income taxes.*
 - ✧ *Enhance public and private investment in regional industrial and technology parks for new and sustainable job creation and development.*
 - ✧ *Develop regional frameworks that enable public, private and philanthropic financial institutions to work together regionally to provide investment capital to businesses and communities.*
 - ✧ *Improve understanding of government structures and processes at all levels to build support for modernizing services and their delivery.*
- Create a world-class workforce, focused on place-based assets and utilizing partnerships between business and education, which is recognized globally as a key Indiana asset.
 - ✧ *Develop educational processes that focus upon the importance of regional approaches in a competitive global economy.*
 - ✧ *Increase cooperation between public and private P-12 schools and colleges and universities in the same regions to maximize educational outcomes.*
 - ✧ *Leverage community adult learning centers to strengthen regional collaboration through educational and other initiatives.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- Create a dynamic, integrated statewide transportation plan that embraces technological advances, serves economic and community development needs, and maximizes Indiana's advantage as the Crossroads of America.
 - ⌘ *Modernize the decision-making procedures to provide:*
 - ◆ *Knowledge-based strategies, including awareness of service gaps*
 - ◆ *Sophisticated modeling tools*
 - ◆ *Processes that embrace land use standards and natural resource uses*
 - ◆ *Technical assistance*
 - ◆ *Financial resources and asset commitments*
 - ⌘ *Examine structural changes in the way Indiana's highways are funded by linking taxes to use (e.g., miles traveled and weight).*
- Develop local understanding of all transportation system components.
 - ⌘ *Recognize the importance of intermodal transportation development, which links rural communities and opportunities into the larger statewide framework.*
 - ⌘ *Leverage the interstate and intrastate transportation systems as supply chain assets.*
 - ◆ *Design an integrated highway plan representing all connecting jurisdictions*
 - ◆ *Connect every county seat to an Interstate highway by a four-lane limited access highway*
 - ◆ *Promote intermodal development*
 - ⌘ *Leverage regional frameworks for planning and prioritization for passenger transit and freight movement.*
 - ◆ *Foster dialogue among local, state and federal transportation authorities*
 - ◆ *Develop regional transportation networks to insure that all Hoosiers have reasonable access to public/private transportation*
 - ⌘ *Promote the Small Aircraft Transportation System (SATS) program to more fully utilize the capacity of Indiana's network of small, predominantly rural, airports.*
 - ⌘ *Maximize the existing railroad system, including short-lines, to leverage freight movement and pursue passenger movement opportunities.*
 - ◆ *Explore government incentives for maintenance*
 - ◆ *Offer tax credits for maintenance similar to an Iowa program*
 - ◆ *Preserve abandoned right of way areas or if there is a rails-to-trails initiative, reserve the right to reenact the easement*
 - ◆ *Examine INDOT upgrade of railroad crossings (based on freight miles) and ensure that rural communities are included*
 - ⌘ *Improve the understanding and value of electric grid transmission, communication, and underground pipeline systems in rural communities.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- Initiate Quality-of-Life programs that optimize the ability of communities and regions to maximize competitive advantages and provide for the well-being of all residents.
 - ✧ *Construct a nationally recognized health and human service delivery system that addresses the special needs and circumstances of citizens living in rural areas.*
 - ✧ *Maximize regional approaches and strategies to further the needs of the Indiana tourism, arts, culture and heritage tourism (TACH) community, such as Regional Quality of Life Councils throughout Indiana.*

II. Achieve a rural leadership renaissance, to broaden and deepen civic leadership and engagement and reinvigorate civic processes.

To meet the multiple challenges facing rural Indiana, new and improved rural leadership will be needed, to reinvigorate and recommit civic processes. Such leadership and civic processes are essential. For example, recent research suggests that strong leadership and civic engagement is a precursor to—not a follower of—economic growth and development. Creation of this type of leadership will require:

- ❑ Providing intelligence, resources, and support for civic leaders, to better inform their decision-making.
- ❑ Encouraging all voices to be heard in civic affairs—tapping into the wisdom of long-established residents, and into the skills and experiences of newcomers.
- ❑ Exploring new technologies to encourage broader participation of rural people in civic affairs.

Priority Strategies and Considerations:

- Develop educational initiatives to enhance civic engagement in rural Indiana and produce the next generation of active citizens and leaders serving rural communities and regions.
 - ✧ *Strengthen public and private leadership programs, including higher education and nongovernmental organizations, which will:*
 - ◆ *Increase awareness of rural issues and opportunities, especially with decision makers*
 - ◆ *Insure that all communities in Indiana have access to a vibrant cultural and collaborative environment*
 - ◆ *Generate additional and sustainable financial resources to fund local and regional leadership development*
 - ✧ *Encourage public, private and philanthropic financial institutions and service companies to support and participate in community and regional leadership development programs.*
- Increase the leadership capacity of local leaders and champions who are knowledgeable and influential about future workforce and education needs, opportunities and strategies.

- ✧ *Create shared leadership and responsibility for workforce development in which individuals, families and communities value education.*
 - ◆ *Promote the development of marketable skill sets*
 - ◆ *Encourage career advancement and business development*
 - ◆ *Embrace a globally diverse workforce*
- ✧ *Cultivate innovative and entrepreneurial leadership in rural Indiana through the development of entrepreneur networks and investment of additional resources.*

III. Invest in rural Indiana’s unique, place-based assets, to fully optimize and enhance our diverse natural resources, the heritage, history, arts and cultures of our people and places, the integrity of our rural communities, and the human and social capital of all Indiana citizens.

Rural communities are rich in many ways, but, too often, the rural mindset is “woe is me”. This emphasis on deficiencies and shortcomings is very problematic if rural Indiana is to move forward. Every community has some combination of human, social, economic, cultural and natural assets that can be translated into opportunities for revitalization. This can happen by:

- ☐ *Fostering a change in public and civic attitudes, from emphasizing deficiencies in rural areas to identifying and building upon unique rural assets.*
- ☐ *Providing the tools and resources to enable communities to identify and take advantage of these assets, in ways that protect and nurture them for future generations*

Priority Strategies and Considerations:

- *Assist rural communities and regions in identifying their comparative and competitive advantages for use in developing economic growth strategies.*
 - ✧ *Design and pursue economic development strategies that leverage Indiana’s and its regions’ geographic locations.*
 - ✧ *Support Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) analyses by helping rural communities and regions:*
 - ◆ *Collect and analyze data*
 - ◆ *Utilize new and existing development tools*
 - *GPS/GIS and other spatial planning tools*
 - *Cutting-edge technologies*
 - ◆ *Assemble strategic intelligence*
 - ◆ *Provide opportunities to capitalize upon regional advantages*
 - ◆ *Develop and disseminate ABCD information*
 - ✧ *Advance a rural Indiana culture built upon self-reliance, forward thinking, being asset-rich and proud.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ✧ *Position rural communities as ideal environments for welcoming and stimulating creativity and innovation.*
 - ◆ *Establish incentives for new and emerging businesses to locate in rural communities.*
 - ◆ *Encourage NGOs such as local economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, community foundations and service groups to work across traditional boundaries to capture economic potential*
 - ◆ *Develop a plan to engage Hoosier expatriates to reconnect with Indiana and their hometown communities for business creation and investment*
- **Modernize rural Indiana’s physical infrastructure to meet the needs of citizens and empower communities to pursue economic growth.**
 - ✧ *Ensure that every community has access to high-speed connectivity and communications technologies, including the option of creating local finance authorities to achieve this goal.*
 - ✧ *Design and implement an integrated state land use strategy to make the best use of Indiana’s diverse natural resources, heritage, cultures, people and place-based assets.*
 - ◆ *Encourage the adoption of responsible local and state land use policies that will support and sustain economic development, heritage and culture amenities*
 - *Work with land use experts to develop standards and definitions that cross geo-political boundaries, i.e. a zoning designation in one area should mean the same in all jurisdictions*
 - *Create uniform public sector capacity for decision-making through the use of staff professionals*
 - *Encourage the creation of Rural Regional Planning Organizations to mirror Regional or Metropolitan Planning Organizations*
 - ◆ *Protect biodiversity and manage existing natural resource assets in a sustainable fashion, through improvement and maintenance of ecological health*
 - *Provide the opportunity for all landowners to participate in conservation and protection initiatives*
 - *Strengthen the network of regional and local land trusts protecting and enhancing natural amenities*
 - *Increase public ownership of Indiana’s natural resource base, e.g. greenways, hiking trails, statewide bicycle routes, and related types of public uses*
 - ✧ *Enhance private investment in transportation systems.*
 - ✧ *Build a disaster management framework where communities help communities that will enhance Indiana’s capacity to respond and adjust to catastrophic events and losses.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- Capitalize on Indiana’s natural resources base for new and sustainable job creation and economic development, such as value-added agriculture, energy sources and agri-tourism.
 - ✧ *Foster political inspiration and courage to protect Indiana’s natural resources.*
 - ✧ *Facilitate rural leadership capacity to manage natural resources and other placed-based assets.*
 - ✧ *Recognize and embrace extraction industries, such as timber and mining, and renewable agricultural production with stewardship practices consistent with Indiana’s goals and opportunities.*
 - ✧ *Expand Indiana’s natural resource based tourism industry and provide incentives for small business development in this area.*
 - ✧ *Assist in the development of at least one conservation club or its equivalent in each of Indiana’s 92 counties.*
- Capitalize on Indiana’s tourism, arts, culture, and heritage (TACH) assets for job creation and economic development.
 - ✧ *Market Indiana’s unique arts, culture, heritage and tourism assets to attract and retain people and businesses.*
 - ◆ *Utilize a public and private development investment model*
 - ◆ *Establish or expand Cultural Arts Districts*
 - ◆ *Foster an environment of historic preservation*
 - ◆ *Provide economic development incentives and related programs, such as tax abatements and the Community Development Block Grant Program*
 - ◆ *Allocate a portion of cultural, arts, heritage and tourism organizations’ technical assistance grants to further the development of collaborative and regional prototype grants that focus on or include rural communities.*
 - ✧ *Create a vibrant cultural environment for all rural communities.*
 - ◆ *Create a system for developing cultural and historical maps for Indiana such as heritage trails, wine trails and cuisine tours*
 - ◆ *Create rural Indiana artist cooperatives and incubators to assist members with marketing and business management*
 - ◆ *Sustain a population base in rural Indiana that is capable of supporting a quality rural health and human service delivery system, cultural and art initiatives, and other quality-of-life amenities*
 - ◆ *Create an effective branding and marketing strategy that highlights Indiana’s assets, including the economic, natural resources and quality of life amenities found in rural Indiana*
 - ◆ *Pursue opportunities associated with a “Made In Indiana” program*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ✧ *Establish the rural arts community as a leader and an integrative intermediary in celebrating and embracing all types of diversity.*
 - ◆ *Create a 21st century, system-based, data framework to support the advancement of the Indiana tourism, arts, culture, and heritage.*
 - ◆ *Maximize regional assets by improving communication and cooperation among tourism, heritage, natural resources, arts and cultural organizations and agencies.*
- Promote public awareness and utilization of place-based assets for their economic and quality-of-life value. These include, but are not limited to:
 - ✧ *Promote the use of agriculturally-based renewable fuels, green materials, biodegradable products, and recycling to protect and conserve resources.*
 - ✧ *Utilize rural Indiana's working spaces, greenspaces and open spaces to capture economic and quality-of-life opportunities.*
 - ✧ *Utilize undervalued community assets such as rural airports, school facilities, historic structures, and brownfields.*
 - ✧ *Integrate tourism, arts, cultural, and heritage into the K-12 curriculum and activities beyond the school system that engage youth.*
 - ◆ *Coordinate youth exchanges that focus on the arts*
 - ◆ *Conduct a K-12 "university tour" focusing on the arts*
 - ✧ *Ensure that the Indiana arts community is reaching into rural areas with its programs and resources.*
 - ◆ *Include artists in residence programs*
 - ◆ *Ensure rural youth have reasonable access to arts and cultural opportunities comparable to those in Indiana's urban areas*
 - ✧ *Promote the arts, cultural, heritage and tourism with programs and exhibits at various sector and cross sector venues.*
- Increase local, state, and federal funding to maximize the economic and quality of life place-based assets impacting Indiana's human capital, social capital, natural resources, heritage, history, arts, and places.
 - ✧ *Increase state, federal and private funding for Indiana programs through:*
 - ◆ *Grants*
 - ◆ *Collaborative agreements between diverse organizations*
 - ◆ *Equitable distribution of dollars to rural and urban areas*
 - ◆ *Elimination of the urban bias associated with state statute match requirements*
 - ✧ *Capture a greater share of Indiana citizens' federal tax dollars for Indiana projects by creating a pool of matching funds and other innovative options.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ◆ *Focus efforts of Indiana’s congressional delegation to insure the state gets a greater share of federal dollars to maintain, enhance and expand its transportation needs*
- ◆ *Create long-term public and private funding streams to strengthen multiple-year transportation planning and project development*
- ⌘ *Increase the local funding base through creative taxing mechanisms to fund natural resource conservation and education, such as impact fees and water park fees.*
- ⌘ *Create matching funds to leverage federal dollars for natural resource conservation, technical assistance and organizational support for communities.*

IV. Build a “Rural Innovation Culture” to enhance public and private entrepreneurship and build collaborative systems which sustain public, private and philanthropic commitments to achieving this goal.

Innovation and entrepreneurship go hand and hand. Neither is restricted to the private sector and neither is restricted to urban areas. A “rural innovation culture” must be created in Indiana which will require:

- ❑ Incorporating entrepreneurship learning into school curricula, to foster abilities to think creatively, plan effectively, marshal resources, and make things happen.
- ❑ Developing an environment, infrastructure, and resources to encourage and support Hoosiers as they create their own enterprises, either to generate income and jobs or to provide services to improve the quality of life in their communities.
- ❑ Providing and supporting rural citizens, firms, and institutions to pursue innovation in products, processes and services that may attract venture capital and ultimately increase productivity and job creation in rural regions.

Priority Strategies and Considerations:

- Cultivate an entrepreneurial environment so rural Indiana’s regions, communities and individuals can compete in today’s innovation and knowledge-based economy.
 - ⌘ *Promote an Indiana culture that embraces change and rewards risk-taking.*
 - ◆ *Create awareness and capitalize on international market opportunities, such as production, processing and selling, that puts Indiana in a leadership role in the emerging innovation and knowledge-based economy*
 - ◆ *Develop educational systems and support networks that foster lifelong learning for workforce needs and entrepreneurial pursuits*
 - ⌘ *Incorporate entrepreneurial training in public and private educational systems:*
 - *K-12 schools*
 - *Post-secondary institutions*
 - *Youth organizations with business focuses*
 - *NGOs collaboration*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ◆ *Initiate a statewide secondary entrepreneurial business competition whereby teams from every school system in Indiana can compete for school and student venture capital*
- ◆ *Every college or university that has a school or department of business should work to insure that entrepreneurship courses and certification programs are available to all students regardless of their course of study*
- ⌘ *Introduce processes that guide state and local governments toward a more common strategic vision for Indiana.*
 - ◆ *Improve federal, state and local governmental effectiveness and outcomes by:*
 - *Aligning the strategic plans of state government agencies*
 - *Reducing agency overlap and duplication*
 - *Changing regulations that limit the flexibility of local jurisdictions*
 - *Creating incentives for local governments to coordinate public services*
 - *Develop and utilize a rural differential tool to assess state regulations to ensure equitable services to rural citizens.*
- *Advance business creation and entrepreneurship as a key economic development strategy for rural Indiana.*
 - ⌘ *Build an understanding that economic development is part of a broader community development process.*
 - ◆ *Require and provide economic and community development training for all state employees involved in economic and community development, such as the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Indiana Department of Transportation, Office of Rural Affairs, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Department of Workforce Development and other state agencies, so as to reinvent the culture of state government*
 - ◆ *Develop new metrics that capture the scope of community development activities, quality-of-life efforts, economic development initiatives*
 - ⌘ *Extend high-speed broadband service to underserved rural communities, regional industrial and technology parks, and citizens to minimize the digital divide which is creating economic, educational and quality-of-life hardships.*
 - ⌘ *Foster community leadership training that improves understanding of entrepreneurs' needs and wants.*
 - ⌘ *Create a support mechanism to assist and track entrepreneurs as they work through the public and private service provider network.*
- *Retain and attract our best and brightest young people in rural communities by providing economic opportunities and quality of life amenities.*
- *Create regional and statewide venture capital funding programs and initiatives to promote public and private entrepreneurship.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ✧ *Expand the scope of local philanthropic sources, such as United Way, community foundations, charitable organizations and others, to promote and support economic development efforts.*
- ✧ *Capture a percentage of employee state withholdings (taxes) from new or start-up companies for growth needs such as allowing companies to use the captured funds for a defined period to offset borrowing monies.*
- ✧ *Increase entrepreneurial spin-offs and new businesses directly related to investments in education and workforce training.*
- **Expand an integrated post-secondary education network of public and private institutions, which is easily accessible, marketed well, and focuses on emerging workforce and economic development needs.**
 - ✧ *Provide state funding to encourage state colleges and universities to offer one or two economic development services that would be regional or statewide in nature.*
 - ✧ *Create a seamless, user-friendly system of articulation and credit transfer among institutions of higher education, including greater use of dual credit and concurrent enrollment programs.*
 - ◆ *Increase Advanced Placement and college credit courses into high schools' curricula*
 - ◆ *Expand access to college course work through high speed internet in rural areas*
 - ✧ *Construct a central portal for education information and opportunities supported by public and private institutions.*
 - ✧ *Create and enhance admission strategies and incentive programs, including community based scholarship programs that are designed to fill worker shortages in key areas, such as health care professionals entering primary care, regional industrial and technology parks, or working in rural Indiana.*
 - ✧ *Improve salary and training of teachers to attract more people into the profession, especially in the areas of math, science and foreign languages..*
 - ◆ *Recruit more students into career tracks for math, science and foreign language teachers*
 - ◆ *Expand upon Indiana's nationally-recognized Workforce Teacher Training program*
- **Develop a “best practice” learning culture across sectors, communities and regions.**
 - ✧ *Create awareness and sharing of existing successes.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ✧ *Build upon existing models and introducing new pilot projects which encourage risk-taking and creative approaches (supported by public and private funds) and funded by government and non-government organizations.*
- ✧ *Enhance and create networks of existing and potential entrepreneurs.*
- ✧ *Expand education and workforce development initiatives in rural Indiana, such as community based learning centers, distance education technologies and online learning campuses and educational opportunities specific to the needs of regional industrial and technology parks.*
- ✧ *Encourage the use of efficient and effective learning models and partnerships for future successes of rural Indiana communities through inter-agency and cross-sector cooperation.*
- Integrate the RISE 2020 pillars, strategies, and rural policy needs into Legislative and Congressional initiatives, such as the 2007 Farm Bill.

V. Engage the youth and young adults of rural Indiana in achieving the RISE 2020 vision, so they build a rural countryside in which they wish to stay, and other young people wish to come.

Too often, the voices and talents of young people are overlooked or undervalued, ignoring the fact they represent the future of rural Indiana. Rural youth must be actively and meaningfully involved by:

- ❑ Engaging youth directly in civic decision-making, providing them with the skills and opportunities for personal development and the desire to return to their home communities after experiencing the outside world.
- ❑ Channeling the energies of young people into constructive action within and for their communities.

Priority Strategies and Considerations:

- Involve youth and young adults in policy development, leadership, educational initiatives and programs impacting their families, communities, and regions.
- ✧ *Provide economic opportunities and quality of life amenities that encourage young people to remain in and attract other young people to rural Indiana communities.*
 - ◆ *Develop business clusters to concentrate resources around regional assets*
 - ◆ *Encourage young people to develop innovative strategies for the delivery of public goods and services*
 - ◆ *Create an environment in which adults encourage and allow young people to bring forth new ideas that can reinvent and refresh Indiana's rural culture*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ✧ *Cultivate business entrepreneurship among young people in rural Indiana.*
 - ◆ *Integrate entrepreneurship into K-12 and post-secondary curricula*
 - ◆ *Work with youth organizations to promote entrepreneurship and place-based businesses*
 - ◆ *Establish a specialty loan program, in partnership with schools, to create new businesses by young people*
- ✧ *Enrich Indiana's human capital and transform it into a world-class workforce and a progressive civic society.*
 - ◆ *Foster civic engagement through community service projects and organizations*
 - ◆ *Provide challenge grants for youth groups to pursue civic change*
 - ◆ *Create and fund prototype programs in schools for civic engagement*
- Promote youth engagement in the civic structures of their communities, such as serving on government and non-governmental councils and boards.

VI. Ensure that rural Indiana's substantial wealth is retained, enhanced, and harnessed, to generate new wealth and capture emerging economic opportunities for all citizens.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, substantial wealth already exists in rural Indiana, but it must be harnessed, protected, and enhanced for sustained economic well-being. This can be achieved by:

- Providing the means by which all rural people and families can save and invest for their future—to buy or repair a house, to pay for their own children's higher education and training, to start their own businesses, to create a rainy day fund to pay for medical and other emergencies, or provide for retirement.
- Protecting the assets rural people already have by providing affordable financial services, and reducing predatory lending practices.
- Making greater use of local community foundations or other community financial intermediaries to be repositories for retaining wealth in rural communities.

Priority Strategies and Considerations:

- Generate and retain local and regional wealth to develop economic opportunities and quality-of-life amenities for rural Indiana communities.
- ✧ *Generate and effectively use the broad range of capital found in Indiana---human and intellectual capital, social capital, and financial capital.*
- ✧ *Create a dynamic financial system that is built upon private, public and philanthropic capital sources, which provides reasonable access to capital for the full range of business types, sizes and stages of growth.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ✧ *Enhance community and economic development efforts through strategic development of Indiana's philanthropic capacity.*
- ✧ *Enhance rural technology transfer through research, adaptation, and commercialization.*
- ✧ *Produce companies that meet key economic growth indicators, such as the Fortune 500, Inc. 200, etc.*
- Expand access to financial resources to support Indiana's entrepreneurs.
 - ✧ *Enhance and publicize early stage capital investment programs for new and emerging businesses.*
 - ✧ *Build a strategy to fund and encourage youth entrepreneurship in rural Indiana.*
 - ✧ *Increase funding for venture capital, research and development, economic development initiatives and college scholarships:*
 - ◆ *Obtain revenues by targeting a one percent (1%) increase in the state sales tax*
 - ◆ *Develop a 401(k) investment option to fund the development of a state venture capital pool*
 - ✧ *Exploit federally-designated HubZones (historically underutilized business zones) by encouraging businesses to become certified and gain preferential treatment when bidding on some contracts and to increase awareness of contract opportunities. Identify and market the communities which are within these zones.*
 - ✧ *Maximize micro-enterprise and micro-loan programs to optimize the creative ingenuity in Indiana, especially among entrepreneurs.*
 - ◆ *Train local foundations, Community Action Agencies and NGOs to initiate these services*
 - ◆ *Improve the marketing of existing programs to expand their use in local communities*
- Minimize the rural differential of rules, regulations and other barriers that hinder banks and other institutions from providing capital to rural businesses and communities.
 - ✧ *Raise the cap on the state rehabilitation tax credit to enable more funds to be available to support arts, culture and heritage initiatives.*
 - ✧ *Develop structures that make it easier for community banks to be an intermediary for loan guarantees and other types of state and federal programs and incentives designed to stimulate local business development.*
- Develop an economic structure and climate in which adequate wages are available to support workers and their communities.

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ✧ *Enrich Indiana's human capital and transform it into a world-class workforce and a progressive civic society.*
- ✧ *Create and leverage additional funding to support investments in education and workforce training.*
 - ◆ *Leverage additional philanthropic support*
 - ◆ *Secure more federal funds*
 - ◆ *Leverage science and technology initiatives*
 - ◆ *Maximize tuition credits and teacher training*
- ✧ *Foster a responsive education and training system that generates a world-class workforce while simultaneously building career and economic ladders for the Indiana's workforce.*
 - ◆ *Support the direction of the Department of Workforce Development in restructuring Workforce Investment Boards and the use of competition as a community tool*
- ✧ *To establish and reach the following goal: at least 50% of Indiana residents 30 years of age will graduate from a post-secondary institution.*

VII. Ensure all rural residents are engaged in achieving this vision and advantaged in its outcomes, by embracing approaches which specifically address the challenges faced by the poor, minorities, and those undervalued or with special needs and which ensure all citizens have reasonable access to basic human and social services and are authentically included in community decision-making.

If communities only tap into part of their community resource, they will not have all that it takes to compete economically. To access all available assets, communities must find ways of:

- Embracing the idea that all people can make a positive contribution to rural community life and that no community can fully prosper if there are some who are excluded and disenfranchised.
- Promoting community decision-making and action that directly engages ethnic and racial minorities, the poor and the invisible.

Additionally, basic human and social services should not be rationed on the basis of where one happens to live or on the basis of economic means.

Priority Strategies and Considerations:

- Ensure that all citizens, including the poor, minorities, and those with special needs, have equal opportunity and access to employment, social services and quality-of-life amenities.
 - ✧ *Reduce human inequality in Indiana, such as cultural discrimination, economic disparity, digital divide, and access to quality of life amenities.*

RISE 2020 Draft Report

- ✧ *Ensure that all residents of Indiana have reasonable geographic and financial access to basic medical care, mental health preventative and oral health services.*
 - ◆ *Utilize a comprehensive family assessment to determine the needs and provide coordinated delivery of health, wellness and human services to low resource families*
 - ◆ *Remove barriers and create financial incentives to assure Medicaid-supported services can be offered and supported by all providers, including primary care physicians, physician specialists, advanced practice nurses and physician assistants*
 - *Minimize Medicaid changes that may cause rural health care providers to end their participation in the program*
 - ◆ *Insure that adequate and affordable in-home support services are available to the disabled and elderly*
- Create a health and human service delivery system that improves the quality of life that attracts innovative businesses and talented people.
- Ensure every county has adequate public transportation to meet the special needs of those who are geographically isolated or unable to access local health and human services.
- Celebrate and embrace a multi-cultural Indiana premised upon the unique gifts and values inherent within diverse cultures.
- Implement innovative mechanisms to address the special needs of the homeless and to help all Hoosiers gain access to affordable housing.
 - ✧ *Increase financial support for the Housing Trust Fund to insure all Hoosiers have access to safe and affordable housing*
 - ✧ *Utilize small real estate transaction fees to supplement homeless programs funding*

NEXT STEPS

This document is a **DRAFT** report requested by Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman. Although it has involved the vision, hard work and energy of nearly 150 Hoosiers, much additional reflection, input and refinement is needed. To that end, the Lieutenant Governor is releasing this draft on March 21 and is encouraging in-depth and vigorous community conversations and discussion across Indiana through the end of April.

Those who have been involved in the RISE 2020 project will be helping to organize listening sessions and community input sessions. Perhaps you are interested in having a representative from the RISE 2020 project come to your community or to an organization to which you belong; or to have this draft report discussed with your co-workers and personal and professional networks. If so, arrangements can be made by contacting either:

Phil Anderson, Executive Director, Indiana Rural Development Council (317-232-8776;
panderson@ora.in.gov)

Sam Cordes, Co-Director, Purdue Center for Regional Development (765-494-7273;
smcordes@purdue.edu)

David Terrell, Director, Office of Community and Rural Affairs (317-232-8917;
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Input and suggestions from the listening session phase of this effort will then be incorporated into a final report to be released in May.