

VISION

Scott County VISION PLAN



APRIL 2022

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Scott County Vision Plan was developed through community leaders, local elected officials, businesses, and community organizations working together to shape Scott County's vision and identify community goals for the future. The plan was initiated by the Scott County Community Foundation and funding received through the Lilly Endowment Inc.

Unless otherwise noted, photos within this plan were provided through the Scott County Community Foundation.



Scott County
Community Foundation

CONSULTANT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

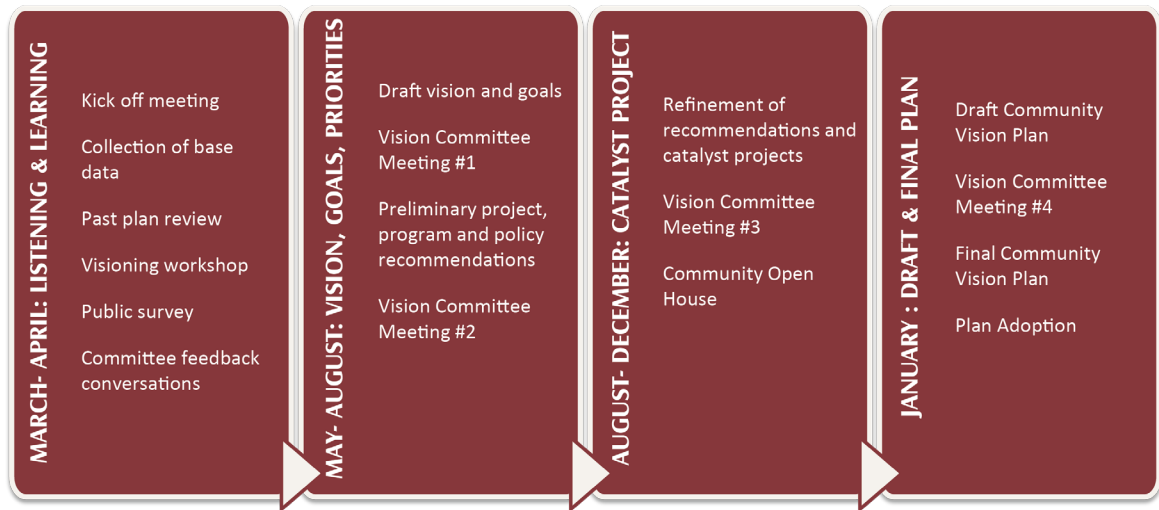
- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** **4**
- What Is The Scott County Vision Plan? 4
- What Was The Planning Process? 5
- Who Was Involved? 6
- How Should The Plan Be Used? 7

- SCOTT COUNTY TODAY** **8**
- What Is Changing In Scott County? 8
- What Strategic Planning Efforts Exist Within Scott County? 9

- SCOTT COUNTY TOMORROW** **10**
- Vision & Goals 10
- How Were Action Items Identified? 12
- Supporting Our Economy 16
- Empowering Health & Wellness 24
- Strengthening Our Educational Programs 32
- Improving Our Housing Opportunities 40
- Expanding Our Arts & Recreational Opportunities 48
- Coordinating Public and Private Initiatives 56
- Tools, Funding & Resources 60

WHAT WAS THE PLANNING PROCESS?

The creation of the Scott County Vision Plan started with a Vision Committee that included community leaders and experts on issues impacting the county. The foundation for the plan also relied on identification and analysis of all existing comprehensive, strategic, and local organization/community plans within Scott County. The review of existing plans helped the Vision Committee identify ongoing efforts which aligned with assets and challenges described in the *Forward Together* plan. The Vision Committee met three separate times during the process and provided feedback during key stages of the planning process.



Once a number of ongoing goals and initiatives within the county’s multiple plans had been identified, the Vision Committee worked alongside the public and Scott County organizations to determine what items should be focused priorities. These prioritized action items consist of initiatives with regional impact, improve the overall quality of life within the county, and items which are a focus for multiple organizations and jurisdictions within the county. During this phase of the project, an online survey and two public workshops were held to accurately gauge if the community’s needs have shifted since the *Forward Together* asset plan. Feedback from the public was used to support the prioritization of initiatives made by the Vision Committee and gain an understanding on what Scott County residents deemed as high-priority for their community.

WHO WAS INVOLVED?

There were multiple organizations, local government officials, and businesses represented during the creation of the Scott County Vision Plan through direct participation or through online surveys and social media. Various committees within the county were also asked to provide feedback and their expertise; these committees covered housing, early childhood education, arts and recreation, health and wellness, and quality of life. Representation from a range of groups within Scott County led to more diverse feedback and better prioritization of ongoing projects and initiatives within the community.

The public also played a crucial role in identifying and prioritizing goals and action items within the Scott County Vision Plan. Scott County residents were able to provide feedback through an online survey, two separate public workshop events, and the Community Foundation's social media pages. Public involvement was not only important for identification of priority action items but is often the first step in introducing a plan to residents and gaining their support on future projects.

The groups involved within the planning process include, but are not limited to:

- Building Blocks
- CEASE of Scott County
- Centerstone
- Child and Family Advocacy
- Citizens Community Corporation
- City of Austin
- City of Scottsburg
- Early Childhood Committee
- Get Healthy Scott County
- Greater Scott County Chamber of Commerce
- Indiana Youth Institute
- Ivy Tech
- Kiwanis Club of Scott County
- LifeSpring Health Systems
- Local Businesses
- Mid-America Science Park
- River Hills Economic Development District
- Ross Theater
- Scott County Government
- Scott County Community Foundation
- Scott County Herald
- Scott County Heritage Center & Museum
- Scott County Partnership
- Scott County School Districts 1 & 2
- Scott County Visitors Commission
- Town of Lexington
- United Way of Scott County

HOW SHOULD THE PLAN BE USED?

The Scott County Vision Plan is unique when compared to other strategic planning efforts within the community. This plan does not necessarily propose new goals. Instead, it identifies initiatives within the county that should be a focus for community leaders and outlines next steps for the highest priority items. The Vision Plan provides guidance to community leaders as funding and other resources becomes available for projects support for community organizations who could successfully implement many of the initiatives within the plan.

The Vision Plan is not static; it is a flexible document which should be reviewed and updated regularly to adjust to needs of the community. As action items are completed and new priorities are identified, the plan should be updated to reflect those changes. Annual assessments should occur as projects are checked off the list, new resources become available, or new community-wide initiatives emerge within the county.

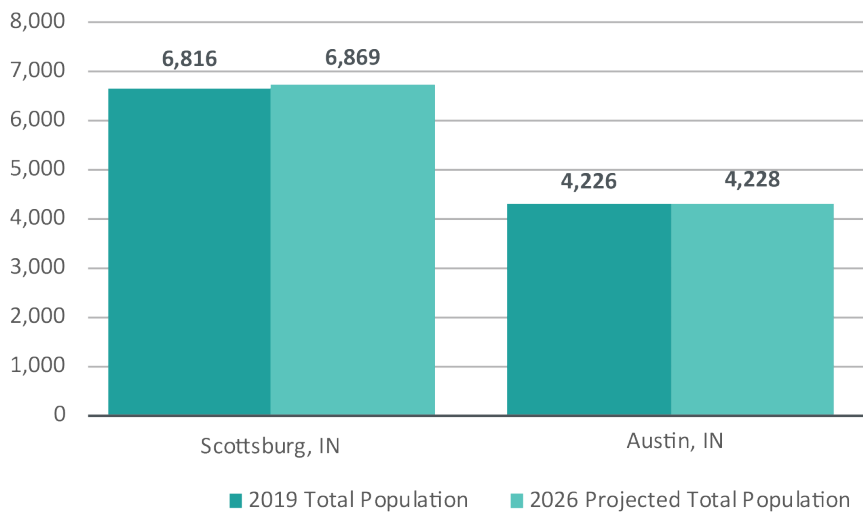


Source: TSWDG

SCOTT COUNTY TODAY

WHAT IS CHANGING IN SCOTT COUNTY?

The creation of the Scott County Vision Plan was in response to the quickly changing economic and social landscape of Scott County and Southern Indiana. In the last decade, the region surrounding Scott County has experienced population growth, rising wages, new housing development, and expanding public amenities. While the region is outpacing many other areas within the state, Scott County has experienced limited growth. An aging population, slow housing growth, and limited recreational amenities are a challenge for the community when working to attract new residents and businesses to the county.



Another shift within the region which necessitates the creation of a unified vision for Scott County is the impact from COVID-19. The pandemic that swept the nation and world in 2020 resulted in people rethinking the way they work, live, and play. Housing demand saw major increase as people began working remotely and upgrade or downsize their housing based on preferences and their current place in life. This not only increased the demand for new housing but the type and size of housing units as well. A shift from commuting to the office to working from home took place, prompting the need for communities to invest in the infrastructure needed to support remote workers. The ability to work from home removed the need for many people to live and work in the same community allowing them to relocate to more affordable towns and cities with desired amenities.

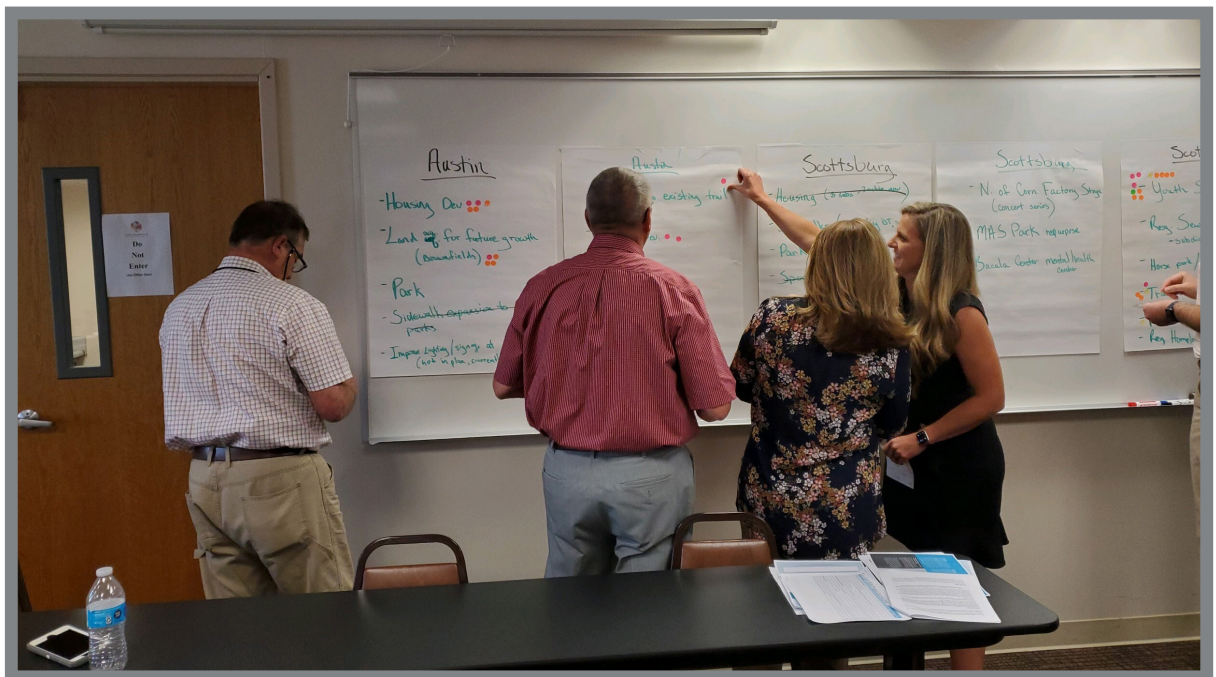
A final change in Scott County's landscape was the availability of READI funding, a grant program meant to promote strategic investments within a community that lead to talent attraction and economic growth. The Southern Indiana Region's success in applying for READI funding will allow Scott County to capitalize on future projects within the region, leveraging new regional development and programming to create local growth for the community. The Scott County Vision Plan takes READI funded projects into account when identifying the goals and catalyst projects within the plan.

WHAT STRATEGIC PLANNING EFFORTS EXIST WITHIN SCOTT COUNTY?

The Scott County Vision Plan pulls information from various strategic, community, and organization plans currently active within Scott County. The Vision Plan does not replace these plans and they should still be followed and implemented as intended. However, this plan does strive to consolidate and prioritize all of the various strategic initiatives.

The following community and organization plans were reviewed as part of this planning process:

- CEASe of Scott County's Comprehensive Community Plan
- Early Childhood Committee Strategic Plan
- Forward Together, Community Assets and Challenges
- Get Healthy Scott County (physical health, mental health, enrichment opportunities)
- Our Region, Our Plan Regional Economic Development Plan
- Scott County Community Foundation Strategic Plan
- Scottsburg Downtown Revitalization Plan
- Scott County Partnership Strategic Plan



SCOTT COUNTY TOMORROW

VISION STATEMENT

A vision statement should reflect the ideals and values of a community and articulate the desired long-term direction for the community. A vision statement is broad and future-oriented to set the stage for the plan's goals and action items.

“The Scott County Vision Plan will guide our decisions, resources, and direction as a community in order to maintain a high quality of life for all residents and visitors.”

Together, our local governments and community organizations will work to ensure that Scott County remains a vibrant, safe, healthy, and welcoming community by: **supporting our economy**, **improving our health and wellness**, **strengthening our educational programs**, **improving our housing opportunities**, **expanding our arts and recreational opportunities**, and **coordinating public and private initiatives**.



GOALS

The goals within the Scott County Vision Plan were influenced by the major themes presented in *Forward Together*; this report identified multiple themes based on challenges and assets within the county. This plan's goals begin to focus the community's vision by leading the way for specific projects and programming.

Economy

Together we will support local small business development by providing services that advance business attraction, mentorship, and retention.

Health & Wellness

Together we will build a community with strong, high-quality mental, physical, and social health programs.

Education

Together we will provide and increase access to affordable, high-quality child care, and early childhood education, while continuing to enhance the county's K-12 educational programs.

Housing

Together we will ensure that Scott County residents have access to achievable, safe, and high-quality housing opportunities for all lifestyles and income levels.

Arts & Recreation

Together we will establish more opportunities for residents to safely engage in recreation, healthy activities, and entertainment through facilities, education, and enrichment programs.

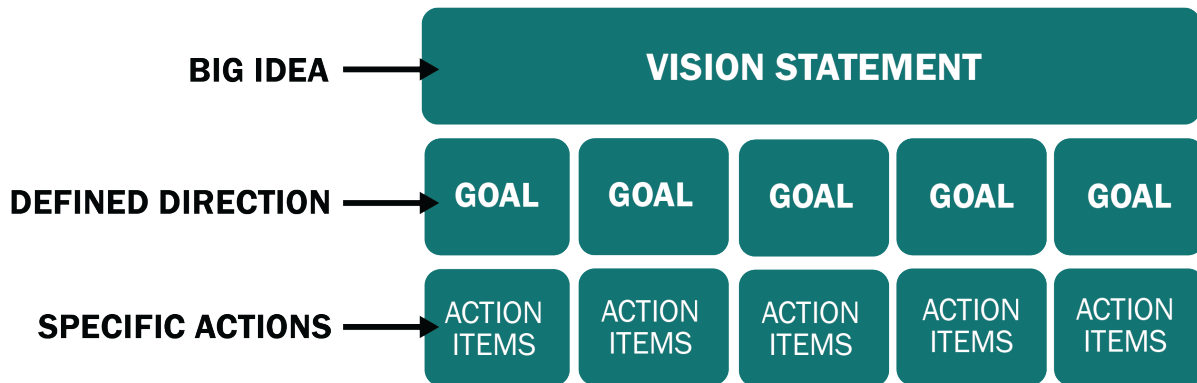
Coordination

Together we will work across surrounding counties, public agencies, and private organizations to strengthen partnerships and expand available resources.

HOW WERE ACTION STEPS IDENTIFIED?

The action items within the following sections were identified through the Vision Committee and public involvement and build upon initiatives within existing strategic plans. *Forward Together* played a crucial role in the identification of goals and action items as the report detailed the challenges unique to Scott County and how the community could take steps in overcoming them. Once a list of action items for each goal were identified, they were vetted through multiple Vision Committee meetings, online worksheets, and public meetings.

While the action items were vetted, a number of initiatives emerged that were identified as a higher priority. These higher priority initiatives were identified as Catalyst Projects that are ongoing projects and programming within Scott County that should be addressed first, support vulnerable populations, create a regional impact, or build momentum for future projects. Many of these projects rely on multi-organizational efforts for successful implementation and require cooperation to secure funding, staffing, and other resources necessary for each project.





Source: Eyes of the Heart Photography



ECONOMY



DAIRY

SUPPORTING OUR ECONOMY

“Together we will support local and small business development by providing services that advance business attraction, mentorship, and retention.”

Supporting the existing businesses within the community and creating a culture of entrepreneurship is vital to growing Scott County’s economy and attracting new residents. Business support can encompass initiatives such as tax abatement for companies to promotional material highlighting destinations within the community to expanding broadband infrastructure to increase digital connectivity.

Supporting businesses within Scott County is just one piece of economic resiliency within the community. Directing redevelopment to areas of the county which have experienced disinvestment, developing new wayfinding for visitors, and supporting those interested in pursuing alternative education are all elements Scott County organizations are currently working towards. Collaboration between public, private, and non-profit entities is vital for the success of these current initiatives as a healthy economy encompasses everyone within the county.

WHY IS THIS GOAL IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

- Small businesses accounted for 99.4% of businesses within Indiana in 2019 and employed 44.9% of Indiana’s employees.
- More than a quarter of Scott County’s employment is tied to manufacturing (25.8%), a decrease from 1970 (35%).
- Support for small businesses and new industries within Scott County can help offset the decline of manufacturing jobs seen within rural Indiana over the last decade.
- Business development can help Scott County become more competitive with its urban neighbors.

HOW CAN WE MOVE THIS GOAL FORWARD?

The following action items work towards the goal of supporting a strong economy through creating businesses which serve as anchor destinations, expanding broadband infrastructure, and providing training for students and adults entering the workforce. Some of these items are currently being addressed by one or more organizations while other action items were identified as gaps that need to be solved. Two catalyst projects were identified for Supporting Our Economy that will build momentum, address critical and immediate needs, and create a sound base for future action steps.

Action Items

1. Increase support and encouragement for pursuing trade certificates through partnerships with high schools and Mid-America Science Park.

2. Work with providers to expand broadband infrastructure to areas prime for development.

*Catalyst
Project*

3. Incentivize anchor businesses to reinforce and support the county as a destination.

4. Provide ongoing training that aligns with the needs of the area's employers and industries.

5. Explore the feasibility and development of a regional youth sports complex.

*Catalyst
Project*

6. Incentivize development of targeted businesses and industries which can fill gaps in services demanded by residents.

7. Develop online and print promotional materials that highlight tourist attractions within the region.

8. Identify funding opportunities and incentives to spur redevelopment of blighted properties.

9. Enforce existing ordinances that impact how the community looks, such as the existing trash ordinance or building/property maintenance.

10. Develop a Facade Improvement Program that could be used for improvements to commercial or highly visible properties.

11. Develop a wayfinding sign system specific to the county and each community that highlights local history and culture.

12. Direct redevelopment to areas within the county which have experienced disinvestment or have shown signs of blight.

13. Create a business mentorship program within the county to promote entrepreneurial growth.

CATALYST PROJECT - ACTION ITEM 2: Work with providers to expand broadband infrastructure to areas prime for development.

A barrier impacting many rural communities in their efforts to attract new businesses, industries, and residents is lack of broadband infrastructure. Online connectivity is a crucial aspect for successful businesses in today's economic environment, allowing them to reach supply chains, vendors, and consumers locally and across the nation. Fast and reliable internet is also a key factor many residents consider when determining where to live. With the significant increase in remote working and online education, broadband is needed to allow work to occur and also provide competitive education to youth and adults. Due to its necessity, broadband has become a public utility in many places across the country and is a key incentive for communities attempting to attract new residents and employers.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

According to Rural Stats Indiana, Scott County's current broadband speeds show a 25 Mbps download / 5 Mbps upload rate across the county, but 28.9% of Scott County residents do not subscribe to internet within their homes and 19.4% of residents do not have a computing device within their homes. These numbers indicate Scott County has a vulnerable population who may not be able to access the same online resources as their more urban neighbors, negatively impacting their quality of life.

While broadband infrastructure is typically extended by the provider and not an individual town or city, Scott County is unique because the City of Scottsburg provides internet services through the town utility department. This provides an opportunity to work with the city to expand their current service area while also partnering with other providers in the more rural areas. For example, within the rural areas Scott County can identify incentives and policies which directly impact the private sector's ability to expand their infrastructure network. These incentives can include utilizing county facilities and staff when placing broadband infrastructure, streamlining approvals and fees, or implementing a 'dig-once' policy which allows cables to be laid during routine public infrastructure projects.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Create a "road map" that prioritizes areas for broadband expansion to reduce the county's "digital divide."
- Coordinate improvements with various service providers and identify needed financial support that is needed.
- Expand broadband access throughout the county for residents and businesses.
- Attract new businesses, industries, and residents based upon high-speed broadband connections.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

1. **Immediate:** A five-county Broadband Readiness Plan was included in the Our Southern Indiana's READI Work Plan. Scott County should play an active role in this plan to ensure its needs are met.
2. **Short:** Work with the city utility and private providers to apply for Next Level Connections to expand infrastructure within the county and/or region based upon the findings and outcome of the Regional Broadband Readiness Plan.
3. **Short:** Adopt local policies, such as a dig-once or climb-once policy, that streamline infrastructure installation throughout all communities and the greater county.

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

City of Scottsburg Government: This group will evaluate, prioritize, and expand broadband services to geographic areas that are feasible.

Broadband Providers: These group will evaluate, prioritize, and expand broadband services to geographic areas that are feasible.

Local Governments of Austin, Lexington, and Scott County: These organization will identify and prioritize areas for broadband expansion and work with private providers to secure grant funding as well as local financial incentives.

Scott County Community Foundation: Provide coordination between the multiple organizations and entities within the county to ensure everyone is working together to expand broadband.

Scott County Schools / Businesses and Industries / Anchor Institutions : These groups will work with the local governments and other organizations in developing the Regional Broadband Readiness Plan.

HOW HAS THIS BEEN DONE SUCCESSFULLY?



Source: Andrew Moore-Crispin

Indiana is investing \$270 million toward improving broadband access and adoption in Indiana. The Indiana Next Level Connections Broadband Program offers grants for broadband infrastructure to provide service to underserved end users, which include households, businesses, and community anchor institutions such as schools and health clinics. Areas with poor broadband coverage (less than actual speeds of 25 Mbps downstream), poor quality broadband, and a compelling need may qualify

for this funding. A minimum match of 35% is required and up to \$5 million can be awarded per project. Project costs covered through the grant program include design, engineering, permitting, construction of “last mile” infrastructure expenses, and service-related validation costs. Additionally, recent American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds that were allocated from Congress as a response to COVID-19 may be used for broadband infrastructure as well.

CATALYST PROJECT - ACTION ITEM 5: Explore the feasibility and development of a regional youth sports complex.

Communities across the state who are investing in quality-of-life initiatives often focus on facilities and programming for their youth. Youth sports plays an important role in being more active and working as a team as well as offering safe and structured activities for youth and their families. Sport activities often play an integral part in local economic development by attracting families from not only nearby communities but also a multi-state region, and also positively impact a community's quality of life. While the complex may be most active during traditional sporting seasons, there are forms of programming which could be implemented within a publicly-owned park to keep the space activated throughout the year. Developing a sports complex within Scott County could capitalize on existing youth sports programming while also creating a regional attraction within Southern Indiana and beyond.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

A regional sports complex does not currently exist within Southern Indiana. Regional sports complexes can be major economic and tourism drivers for a local economy that produce direct tax revenues but also support the hospitality industry. Restaurants, hotels, and other local businesses can benefit from the increase in traffic produced by a sports complex and the tourists it brings to a community. It can also provide the needed customer base for new dining and entertainment businesses that are desired within Scott County but are not always financially feasible due to the number of residents.

Nearly 180 million people traveled to a sports event within the US in 2019, generating 69 million room stays, over \$45 billion in travel and event-related expenses, and more than \$103 billion in business sales (Sports Events & Tourism Association, 2019 Industry Report). The Southern Indiana Youth Sports Complex at Scott County is anticipated to generate over \$3.4 million in new tax revenues and an additional \$16.8 million in economic output over the first ten years as well as over 260 new direct and indirect jobs with about \$5.6 million in new wages.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Develop a complex which can support a variety of sports programming and become a unique tourism draw from Southern Indiana and the larger Midwest region.
- Increase housing and property values and school enrollment through new residents.
- Improve community health (decrease rates of obesity, increase physical activity, etc.).
- Leverage the park to influence new dining, entertainment, and commercial development within Scott County that many residents desire and can improve quality of life/place.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

1. **Immediate: Conduct a needs and feasibility analysis to:**
 - Determine the ability to successfully draw regional tournaments including an inventory of sports complexes within the Midwest;
 - Identify the types of facilities, sports, and programming needed; and
 - Fulfill needs of the schools and local sports leagues.
2. **Short: Secure required local funding as a match for the Our Southern Indiana RDA's READI grant.**
3. **Short: Evaluate existing conceptual plans and costs estimates against the needs and feasibility analysis and begin schematic design of funded phases of the sports park.**

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

Local Governments of Austin, Lexington, Scottsburg and Scott County / Scott County Schools: These organizations will provide direction on the project development, funding, and maintenance of the project once complete.

Scott County Community Foundation: This organization will serve as the coordination point for the multiple communities and organizations as well as provide funding for the local public match for READI.

Scott County Family YMCA / Township Trustees / Scott County Visitors Commission: These groups will provide support and funding for the project as well as aid in marketing the new complex for tourism.

Local Businesses and Industries / Sports Leagues: These organization will provide support through new development as well as donations for project funding.

WHERE HAS THIS BEEN DONE SUCCESSFULLY?



The Elizabethtown Sports Park in Elizabethtown, Kentucky is a 150-acre development which includes baseball/softball, soccer, lacrosse, and football fields as well as event space, walking trails, playgrounds, and Wi-Fi. The park hosts about 50 tournaments each year which attract tens of thousands of players, families, and casual viewers to the city from across the country. This has not only brought new visitors and tourists to Elizabethtown but has led to the development of new hotels and restaurants. According to a study performed

on the park's impact in 2019, the sports park has contributed nearly \$20 million per year to the local economy, with approximately 60,000 families visiting the park annually.

A regional complex could provide space for local sports leagues and also give the county an economic advantage within the region by attracting tourism-related businesses, hotels, restaurants, and shopping that would serve visitors and residents.



HEALTH & WELLNESS



EMPOWERING HEALTH & WELLNESS

“Together we will build a community with strong, high-quality mental, physical, and social health programs.”

A community’s health is tied to the collective well-being of its residents, including the physical, social, and mental aspects of their lives. Focusing on a community’s health and wellness can impact educational achievement, safety and crime, financial well-being, life expectancy, and the overall happiness of residents. The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion also found that the impact of health on quality of life does not just stop at the individual, but it can also lead to higher participation in civic duties including voting, social functions, and leisure activities. Communities which are attentive to the health and wellness of their residents can even help reduce inequality by reducing the gaps in healthcare services which may be caused by location, social status, income, ethnicity, and other factors that impact healthcare access.

Improving the health and well-being of Scott County is not limited to existing healthcare providers but should include the various public and private organizations within the greater community. While it may ultimately fall on those healthcare providers to increase the number of services available to residents, local governments, schools, businesses, and non-profits can coordinate efforts which improve access to healthcare facilities or expand programming and infrastructure which supports active living. Trauma training for teachers and childcare workers, new bike routes connecting destinations within the county, and awareness campaigns about the dangers of substance abuse are all components which can be achieved through partnerships and collaboration.

WHY IS THIS GOAL IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

- Scott County ranks 90 of 92 Indiana counties for health outcomes, 80 of 92 for health factors, and 91 of 92 for length of life.
- 19% of Scott County residents are in poor or fair health.
- In 2015, Scott County had the largest HIV outbreak the U.S. has seen in a rural community, with a 5% infection rate.
- Research shows that people with multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (from among the list of 10 ACEs) are more likely to experience a wide range of negative outcomes in education, employment, health, and mental health.
- Increased access to affordable, high quality, trauma informed mental health care is needed to address negative health issues, disease prevention, and drug use in the county.

HOW CAN WE MOVE THIS GOAL FORWARD?

Many organizations and groups are working towards improving health within Scott County. The following action items work towards the goal of a strong health system that addresses mental, physical, and social aspects. Some of these items are currently being addressed by one or more organizations while other action items were identified as gaps that need to be solved. Two catalyst projects were identified for Health and Wellness that will build momentum, address critical and immediate needs, and create a sound base for future action steps.

Action Items

1. Continue coordination to help limit the use of controlled substances and alcohol through educating students on the dangers of substance abuse.

2. Identify strategies for better prevention and response to substance abuse and related crime.

- 3. Work with local healthcare providers to expand services offered within the community.**

4. Work with regional partners to identify and build trails within Scott County that connect destinations and allow for recreation.

5. Work with local healthcare providers to develop programs, treatment options, and support networks centered on mental health within the county, including depression and co-occurring diagnosis, for all age groups.

6. Expand training and programs for childhood mental wellness and early childhood health initiatives.

- 7. Construct sidewalks to connect neighborhoods, local destinations, and downtown areas to improve physical activity, emphasizing ease of access and safety.**

8. Expand programs that focus on nutrition and provide access to healthy food options.

9. Provide trauma-informed training and care to healthcare providers, emergency response crews, social workers, and the larger community.

10. Develop bicycle infrastructure, including bicycle lanes and bicycle parking areas connecting key destinations within the county.

Catalyst
Project

Catalyst
Project

CATALYST PROJECT - ACTION ITEM 3: Work with local healthcare providers to expand services offered within the community.

Rural residents often encounter barriers to healthcare that may limit their ability to obtain the care they need, such as primary care, dental care, emergency services, and mental healthcare. These barriers are often related to lack of facilities and longer travel times to regional healthcare centers. Even when there are adequate healthcare facilities within a community, other factors can become barriers to receiving services. Healthcare can be hampered by financial difficulty, insurance coverage, or health literacy and can all contribute to gaps in services. Improving quality healthcare within Scott County can help reduce poor health behaviors, such as excessive drinking, drug use, smoking, physical inactivity, obesity, and teen birth rates.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

Health and wellness impact every aspect of a resident's physical, social, and mental health. Access to quality primary care services plays a key role in preventative services and improves a community's health. Primary care often serves as an entry point into the health system, which can be crucial to rural residents and minorities who may experience barriers to accessing healthcare. Scott County currently falls behind state levels in access to providers with 2,387 residents per Primary Care Physician (1,511 per physician at the state level), 2,171 residents per mental health provider (623 per for the state), and 3,980 residents per dentist (1,777 for the state).

Reducing the barriers to healthcare within a community is crucial for the overall health of residents. Working with local providers to expand services and locations within the community can help provide additional healthcare options for residents while cutting costs associated barriers. Alternatives could include a wide variety of programs such as a mobile clinic or telehealth services but efforts should also include creating a trauma-informed community. A trauma-informed community can benefit not only physical and mental health of residents, but it can also reduce long-term reliance on social assistance.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Improve the overall health of the community through more quality primary care services, providers, and programs within Scott County with a priority on mental health and substance abuse.
- Create a trauma-informed community.
- Reduce poor health behaviors, such as excessive drinking, drug use, smoking, physical inactivity, obesity, and teen birth rates.
- Improve access to health food options and physical fitness options.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

1. **Immediate:** Identify the current gaps in healthcare services in Scott County with a focus on treatment options/facilities for substance abuse, mental health services, and transitional housing.
2. **Short:** Partner with local providers and gauge their ability and expand the missing programs and services in the community. Identify incentives that can be provided by the local governments to attract these services and professionals to the county.
3. **Short/Mid:** Identify ways to market these services county-wide through trusted networks (such as faith-based organizations or minority groups) with a focus on the most vulnerable populations.

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

Scott County Community Foundation / Health Department: These organizations will assist in and lead coordination efforts between entities within Scott County who will be part of this catalyst project and work to draw new professionals to the county.

Scott Memorial Health / Private Healthcare Providers: These groups will help promote the various service options for residents within the county and work to expand their availability.

Community Organizations / Non-Profits: These groups will coordinate with other organizations to help fill the gaps in Scott County's healthcare needs.

Scott County Schools / Local Governments: These organizations will provide assistance in initiatives focused on improving the health of their communities through promotion and access to services.

Get Healthy Scott County / CEASe: These organizations are already heavily involved in improving health within the community and will continue to provide support through their specific services.

WHERE HAS THIS BEEN DONE SUCCESSFULLY?



Mobile health clinics work to bring services directly to patients and reduce the amount of traveling required for the patient. This form of clinic is not only helpful for those who may be unable to travel, but it also allows healthcare providers to target low-income or minority populations who are hesitant or unable to visit a traditional clinic.

The McNabb Center in Knoxville, Tennessee is working to overcome the issues of distance and lack of resources within rural Tennessee counties using mobile health clinics. The program uses a renovated bus to bring doctor's office services to underserved counties in the region. The mobile unit provides necessary medical, mental, and substance abuse care and

allows staff to assess the needs of each patient to determine if treatment can be done within the mobile unit or if additional services will be needed at a later date. The program is funded by the state Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services through a federal grant provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Many hospitals are taking the initiative to improve accessibility to services and bring rural residents the care they need. Indiana also took a similar approach to deploy COVID vaccinations to rural areas, and similar programs could be used within Scott County and the Southern Indiana region.

CATALYST PROJECT - ACTION ITEM 7: Construct sidewalks to connect neighborhoods, local destinations, and downtown areas to improve physical activity, emphasizing ease of access and safety.

One of the ways rural communities are beginning to capitalize on their natural assets and destinations while working towards improving the health of residents is through sidewalks, trails, and greenways. Sidewalks and trails bring often overlooked benefits to a community in terms of personal wellness, entertainment, and economic impact and allow for residents and visitors to safely access various destinations without the need of a car. They can be used to connect destinations within Scott County and the greater region, such as cultural assets, recreational areas, downtowns, retail centers, healthcare, centers of employment, and residential neighborhoods.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

The economic benefits from well-connected, regional trail systems can be seen across the state and nation by increasing visitors traveling to use the trail systems and bringing outside dollars into the community. Scott County has the opportunity to draw upon visitors from throughout Southern Indiana, bringing tourists to the community and boosting the local economy. Sidewalks and trails are also often crucial recreational and quality of life amenities used to attract and retain residents and businesses, and they can become drivers of economic growth within a region and allow people to access destinations and amenities without the need of a vehicle.

Additionally, sidewalks and trails bring a number of recreational, entertainment, and environmental benefits and can even promote a community's history and culture. Greenways protect important habitats, provide corridors for both people and wildlife, and reduce pollution by encouraging more people to walk or bike. They also have the power to connect people of all ages to their local heritage by preserving historic sites and allowing for quick and easy access.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Connect destinations within Scott County and the larger region, such as cultural assets, recreation areas, downtowns, retail centers, healthcare, and neighborhoods.
- Improve the health of the county by providing active recreation options.
- Provide an entertainment option for all ages.
- Protect natural and environmentally sensitive areas.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

1. **Immediate:** Create a county-wide trails plan that connects destinations and residential areas within the county and identifies connections to adjacent counties.
2. **Immediate/Short:** Actively participate in the READI Regional Trails Master Plan to ensure that destinations within Scott County are connected to the larger region.
3. **Short/Mid:** The creation of a Scott County Trails Plan should be developed based upon the READI Regional Trails Master Plan, building the local connections a regional plan may miss.
4. **Mid/Long:** Prioritize segments of the Scott County Trails Plan that provide the most benefit and connections for design and construction.

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

Scott County Community Foundation: This organization will assist in and lead coordination efforts between entities within the Scott County who will be part of this catalyst project.

Align Southern Indiana: This group will assist in regional coordination efforts to connect local trail systems to other destinations within Southern Indiana.

Local Governments of Austin, Lexington, and Scottsburg: These groups will coordinate with county-wide organizations to link their own trail and sidewalk infrastructure to other communities and regional destinations.

Scott County Schools / Scott Memorial Health: These organizations will provide assistance in initiatives focused on expanding trail and sidewalk access within their communities.

WHERE HAS THIS BEEN DONE SUCCESSFULLY?



The Indiana-Michigan River Valley Trail is an example of how a trail network can be used to connect a community. The 17-mile-long trail network links Mishawaka, South Bend, and Niles, Michigan, passing through numerous recreational sites and linking residents and visitors to urban and rural destinations. The trail system also connects schools and universities, hospitals and healthcare facilities, historic and cultural sites, entertainment venues and downtowns. The trail connections between the three communities funnel residents and visitors into each city, collectively growing the potential for tourism and new businesses along the system. The trail has been an ongoing effort since 2008 and is supported by residents, businesses, and local officials from all three cities and the counties.

Scott County has the potential to create a similar network that links each community within the county and connect to a larger regional system in Southern Indiana and Kentucky, allowing residents and visitors to travel freely across the region. Collaboration between the various partners within Scott County, as well as those within the larger region, are needed to develop a regional trail network that would link Scott County to regional destinations and bring in new residents and visitors. The Our Southern Indiana READI Work Plan included a five-county regional trails master plan for Scott, Clark, Floyd, Jefferson, and Washington counties.



EDUCATION



STRENGTHENING OUR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

“Together we will provide and increase access to affordable, high-quality child care, and early childhood education, while continuing to enhance the county’s K-12 educational programs.”

One of the key drivers of economic and social growth within a community is their high-quality educational programs and facilities. Educated communities are often targeted by developers and industries looking to relocate because the workforce is typically better aligned with higher wages jobs. While education on any level is important, the base of a well-educated community begins with early education (preschool) and primary, intermediate, and secondary education (K-12). The continual improvement and expansion of programs can not only increase educational attainment in Scott County, but can also open additional career pathways for students to explore. These programs, combined with training to assist teachers in identifying mental and behavioral issues, can assist schools in supporting students for lifelong success.

Supporting educational programming within the community can lead to more successful students and ultimately improve the quality of life for residents within Scott County. More educated populations often have higher wages, diverse backgrounds through learning, and are more likely to pursue their passions outside of the workplace. Educational programming is not limited to just schools but can be expanded to local libraries, daycares, youth sports leagues, and even senior centers. Learning does not stop after high school and providing the opportunity for adults and seniors to continually learn new skills or hobbies is another important facet of education.

WHY IS THIS GOAL IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

- Economic diversification and growth require a sound educational base and diverse vocational training options.
- A higher percentage of Scott County residents (44.2%) stop their education with a high school diploma when compared to the state (33.5%) and nation (27.1%).
- Early education and K-12 programs are a critical factor in the early development of children, and this is directly correlated with their future success.
- In 2017, 70% of Scott County children with both parents in the labor force did not enroll in a registered, licensed, or state-rated child care program.
- Attracting and retaining talented staff is a concern for residents of Scott County with children currently enrolled in school.

HOW CAN WE MOVE THIS GOAL FORWARD?

Many organizations and groups are working towards improving education within Scott County. The following action items work towards developing educational programs for all ages and stages of development. Some of these items are currently being addressed by one or more organizations while other action items were identified as gaps that need to be addressed. Two catalyst projects were identified for Educational Programs that will build momentum, address critical and immediate needs, and create a sound base for future action steps.

Action Items

- 1. Develop partnerships to expand affordable high-quality education for all children under the age of five.**
- 2. Support infrastructure and facility improvements for Scott County Schools to ensure they can attract new talent, support new students, and adapt to online teaching strategies.**
3. Encourage all early childhood providers to include a program that addresses social and emotional skill development areas.
4. Identify best practices and program options that addresses the five early childhood developmental areas (adaptive, motor, cognitive, communication and social-emotional).
5. Expand and sustain the kindergarten readiness pilot program.
6. Work with teachers and school staff to establish ways of identifying and addressing student behavior issues stemming from stress and mental fatigue.
7. Encourage more parental involvement in youth activities throughout the county.
8. Achieve 100% registration of children under five years of age in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.
9. Evaluate the feasibility of building an early childhood education center that can house programs, childcare, and health services.
10. Increase the number of and enrollment in quality daycare/preschool options that are available to all children in Scott County.
11. Identify funding sources for increased youth and senior programming, including senior mentorship programs connecting them to youth in the community.
12. Provide information to parents about how to find and choose a quality childcare or early childhood education program, including guidance on state certification and Indiana's Paths to Quality program.

Catalyst
Project

Catalyst
Project

CATALYST PROJECT - ACTION ITEM 1: Develop partnerships to expand affordable high-quality education for all children under the age of five

Childhood education is a critical factor in the early development of children and directly contributes to their future success. Quality programming at a young age provides a base for education throughout life and also a base for social interactions and experiences which may not be possible at home. It is important to not only provide quality early childhood education and programming within Scott County but also ensure that it is accessible for all families. Supporting the expansion of programming throughout the county and encouraging parents to become more involved in their children's early learning can set the stage for success down the road. This can occur through existing providers or through the education of trained providers and development of new facilities, such as an early childhood center. It can also include providing technical assistance to local providers to find grant funding and developing partnerships to expand needed services.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

Quality early childhood education programs are often limited in rural communities and can be expensive for families. Expanding access to quality programming and supporting existing providers can help reduce costs and increase enrollment within the county. Early education facilities and programs provide critical development skills and provide safe environments for children whose parents work and are unable to be home throughout the day. Increasing the quality and number of options can help change the negative view Scott County residents current have on access to early education programs in the county.

The success of students in elementary school is often directly tied to the education they received prior to entering, which is a reason quality programs may be highly competitive in rural communities. Growing the number of quality programs which provide a comprehensive approach to child education, and meet health and safety requirements, is important if Scott County wishes to increase the educational success of youth within the community.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Expand quality educational options for young children within Scott County through partnerships with schools, local governments, and community organizations.
- Improve affordability and accessibility of educational programming.
- Increase the number of licensed and registered child care facilities within the county by providing technical assistance for existing and new providers.
- Better prepare children for kindergarten in order to set the stage for future success.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

1. **Immediate: Progress the actions outlined in the Early Childhood Committee Strategic Plan for 2022.**
2. **Immediate: Assist existing and new local childhood education providers in applying for local and state grants to assist in expansion or new facilities and programs.**
3. **Short: Evaluate local zoning regulations that may limit in-home providers from operating.**
4. **Short/Mid: Create a technical assistance program to help providers understand and meet state standards required to become a licensed in-home child care center.**
5. **Mid/Long: Create a training program within the high schools and/or Mid-America Science Park for those interested in entering the child care field or starting a child care business.**

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

Scott County Early Childhood Committee: The committee can lead efforts in ensuring providers are fully addressing the developmental needs of children and identify gaps in needed services within Scott County.

Local Child Care Providers: Individual providers can identify challenges and barriers impacting their ability to expand programming and work with local governments and organizations on how these can be overcome.

Scott County Schools & Education Providers: The school districts within the county and/or Mid-America Science Park can help provide facilities and technical assistance for expanding early childhood educational training and child care programming in the county.

Scott County Community Foundation: The community foundation can assist in and lead coordination efforts between entities within Scott County who will be part of this catalyst project and work to assist in identifying funding and technical resources for existing facilities and programs.

Local Governments: These entities can help provide assistance to existing programs and identify ways zoning regulations and other factors at the local level may be impeding the creation of new child facilities.

WHERE HAS THIS BEEN DONE SUCCESSFULLY?



Parents rely on their child care providers to ensure their child is safe, healthy, and learning. In order to improve the quality of programs across and give families an easy tool to identify quality child care providers, the state has introduced Paths to QUALITY, a system that provides an accountability measure for funding and creates an alignment between the different factors impacting child care. Paths to QUALITY validates child care programs and provides incentives and awards for success,

with four levels of attainment. These levels range from basic care of a child being met, to a program which meets and exceeds national accreditation. While these programs are already known to many within the community, it can be difficult for providers to meet criteria due to facilities, funding, or technical issues. Supporting local providers and their attempts to meet state standards can help increase options available and improve overall quality of care.

CATALYST PROJECT - ACTION ITEM 2: Support infrastructure and facility improvements for Scott County Schools to ensure they can attract new talent, support new students, and adapt to online teaching strategies.

Schools are often a major draw for new residents to a community, with highly rated schools attracting families and talent from outside a community. Continually attracting a talented workforce and making necessary upgrades to classrooms, sports facilities, and other building amenities can improve learning conditions and create healthy teaching environments. Supporting improvements within Scott County schools relies on cooperation between many organizations and can also occur outside of the classroom. Local governments can work with schools to improve broadband networks, aid online learning, improve pedestrian connections and safety for students walking to school, develop quality of place amenities, and support diverse housing options in order to attract and retain a skilled workforce and new students.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

Schools are a major influence to the economic, cultural, and social aspects of a community. They are where the majority of youth spend their time during the day, rallying points for the community to gather for cultural and sporting events, and are sources of pride in a community. While schools provide many benefits, their main goal is to educate students and prepare them for their next steps in life. High quality facilities, curriculum, and teaching strategies which match or exceed national trends can be the key to a student's success in school and when entering the workforce.

Improvements to Scott County Schools can include infrastructure and facilities updates which ensure the safety of both students and lead to the attraction of a high-quality workforce. Improving facilities could include things like new cafeteria equipment and lunches, better lighting and airflow in the classroom, or the addition of lab equipment. These improvements can also be used in the attraction of talent and even teachers. Staff who are able to communicate well with students and help guide not only their education, but their growth as adults, are major assets to any school district. Staff members can help influence a student's decisions after high-school and guide their career pathway.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Increase the competitiveness of Scott County schools through adapting to new technology and upgrading outdated facilities for learning and extra-curricular activities.
- Attract new residents and a talented workforce to Scott County.
- Expand programs and opportunities for arts and extra-curricular options for students.
- Develop unique facilities which attract and accommodate new students and families.
- Better broadband infrastructure to serve schools and online education.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

1. Promote coordination between school districts and local government on prioritizing facility improvements and how they can be addressed through partnerships and outside funding sources.
2. Determine facility improvements needed to achieve national standards in terms of classroom/lab equipment, sports facilities, counseling space, and extra-curricular activities.
3. Identify local partnerships (non-profits, economic development corporation, chamber of commerce, etc.) to pool resources for needed facility and programming improvements.
4. Partner with local artists and others to create or expand arts programming within the schools.

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

Scott County Schools: The school districts within the county can take the lead approach on identifying potential facility projects and continually update curriculums to ensure Scott County students are receiving the highest level of education possible.

Scott County Community Foundation: The community foundation can assist each school district in identification of outside funding opportunities and serve as a link between the schools and partnerships with local community organizations.

Local Governments: These entities can provide assistance to school districts for this catalyst project through the expansion of public utilities needed for facility expansion and acquisition of land for future needs.

WHERE HAS THIS BEEN DONE SUCCESSFULLY?



Years of research has found that school facilities impact teaching and learning in multiple ways. While the major issues with outdated facilities in schools are typically a lack of instructional space, noise levels, air quality, lighting, and classroom temperature all play a role in advancing or inhibiting a student's ability to learn. Updates to school facilities can create a safer environment and improve a student's retention of material in the classroom.

These types of improvements can often be costly for the district to complete but there are many cases of local governments stepping in

to help cover costs through funding such as TIF for facility updates and equipment purchases. An example of this type of support includes Ivy Tech Princeton Instructional Center, where the Gibson County Redevelopment Commission gave Ivy Tech \$600,000 in TIF funding to build 12 new welding labs. These labs have expanded the school's ability to take on new students and has vastly improved their learning environment. Scott County could look at similar avenues when making needed adjustments and updates to create conducive learning environments for students.



HOUSING



IMPROVING OUR HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

“Together we will ensure that Scott County residents have access to achievable, safe, and high-quality housing opportunities for all lifestyles and income levels.”

Housing development is necessary for healthy economic development and population growth within a community. It can attract new residents to a region and is a factor many industries consider when deciding to relocate to a community. While housing growth is needed within Scott County, it is important that the county also diversifies the types of housing to ensure all residents of all income levels have access to safe and high-quality housing options. Diversifying the housing within Scott County does not just mean building workforce housing or rental units; it also includes housing where seniors can age within a house, higher-end housing for corporate and working professionals, and starter homes for families looking to purchase their first house.

Developing multiple types of housing can attract a diverse population in terms of age, income-level, family structure, and ethnic backgrounds. This can be more attractive to new residents and typically creates a more resilient community through recessions and demographic shifts. Scott County has the unique opportunity to capitalize on residents wanting to live in a rural setting as well as those who want to maximize what they can purchase while still commuting to the greater Louisville area. Diversification of housing also helps retain those currently living in the community, helping keep recent graduates living in Scott County and providing accommodations for elderly looking to downsize. The median housing price in Scott County is lower than neighboring counties, areas around Scottsburg have quality broadband access, local public schools are strong, and commuting to major employment hubs in the larger Louisville region is convenient.

WHY IS THIS GOAL IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

- Quality housing that is more affordable than nearby communities in Clark County could be a key factor in population growth for Scott County.
- Scott County has the potential to capture residential growth from northern Clark County for those who commute to jobs within the larger Louisville/Southern Indiana region.
- An estimated 38% of households within Scott County earn less than \$35,000, which is less than the average income needed to afford to buy or rent a home within the county. Housing for all income levels should be considered as growth occurs.
- If Scott County continues to grow, more housing options (types and price points) will be needed to meet the needs and demands of residents.
- Redevelopment of vacant or abandoned housing structures can improve housing quality, overall community aesthetics, and visitor perception.
- Retention of young adults is often directly tied to diverse housing within a community, as recent graduates may not be able to afford a traditional house and opt for renting directly after school.

HOW CAN WE MOVE THIS GOAL FORWARD?

Many organizations and groups are working towards improving health within Scott County. The following action items work towards the goal of improving housing quality and availability within the county. Some of these items are currently being addressed by one or more organizations while other action items were identified as gaps that need to be solved. Two catalyst projects were identified for Housing that will build momentum, address critical and immediate needs, and create a sound base for future action steps.

Action Items

1. **Develop a sustainable plan for new housing that protects the area's natural resources and amenities.**
2. **Replace and/or rehabilitate damaged and neglected housing.**
3. Identify incentives and amendments to the zoning regulations that promote a wider range of housing that can better accommodate first time home buyers, growing families, and the elderly.
4. Consider creating a county-wide rental registration program to protect tenants and ensure renter-occupied housing units are being properly maintained.
5. Identify aspects in the community which may inhibit "aging in place" and work with local partners and organizations to create programming to overcome these challenges.
6. Consider creating a housing revitalization and education program which targets first-time home owners.

Catalyst
Project

Catalyst
Project

CATALYST PROJECT - ACTION ITEM 1: Develop a sustainable plan for new housing that protects the area's natural resources and amenities.

While new housing is needed, it is important that new development does not negatively impact the community's sensitive environment and natural resources. Creating a plan for new housing which protects these resources is the first step in that effort. A sustainable housing plan balances the need for development with the preservation of natural resources, open spaces, and agricultural land. The plan should take advantage of compact development, create a range of housing types which fit current and future needs, preserve natural resources and farmland, ensure new development is fiscally reasonable for the community, and encourage social interaction. A housing plan identifies prime locations for new residential development, the type of housing and price points that could be absorbed by the market, outlines best practices, and identifies potential incentives that could be used to implement the plan.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

Projected population growth within the region will increase demand for housing and other supporting development. Creating a plan that balances new housing development while preserving the rural character can help identify areas for growth and housing types that can be supported by current and future population. Sustainable practices can also be identified within a plan which can help minimize waste during construction and limit pollution, both of which help protect the county's natural resources and save up-front costs.

The county has multiple natural assets which could be affected by new housing development such as prime farmland, woodlands, and natural wetlands. The county's unique natural assets are part of the community's character and can be used by residents and visitors for both active and passive recreation purposes. Zoning incentives can be one way to encourage the compact development needed to preserve these resources, allowing developers to construct more units per acre than normally allowed by zoning regulations if certain conditions are met (such as preserving open space or farmland). This would allow housing construction to meet current demands while providing natural spaces and passive recreation opportunities within new residential subdivisions.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Grow the county's housing stock through planned growth and sustainable practices.
- Limit the impact of new housing development on the county's rural areas and prime farmland.
- Preserve more prime farmland, woodlands, and natural wetlands through compact development.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

1. **Short:** Identify changes within local zoning and subdivision ordinances to balance development needs with the county's natural assets and incentivize sustainable development practices.
2. **Short:** Determine incentives (such as zoning incentives or tax incentives) that should be implemented to spur workforce housing development.
3. **Short/Mid:** Update local comprehensive plans to identify areas most appropriate for residential land uses and the types of housing development needed to satisfy growth.
4. **Mid:** Complete a housing study to analyze current housing stock and determine future needs based upon local and regional trends.

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

Local Governments: These organization can identify updates to local zoning regulations, subdivision control ordinances, strategic/comprehensive plans, and development incentives which will allow for more compact development and focus on preservation of natural assets and prime farmland.

Building and Development Association of Southern Indiana (BDASI) and Developers: These groups can help identify and advocate for regulatory updates and new incentives which increase the viability of developing compact housing development, workforce housing, and limit impacts to the environment.

HOW HAS THIS BEEN DONE SUCCESSFULLY?



Source: Keefe Real Estate

Conservation subdivisions provide protection to natural areas while allowing for condensed housing development to occur. These types of subdivision can be found in communities where preservation of natural resources or creation of recreational space is needed. Conservation focused subdivisions do not necessarily indicate a low-density development and can vary in size depending on access to utilities and existing infrastructure. These subdivisions have

the ability, with proper policy, to support the same number of housing units as a traditional single-family subdivision on only a fraction of the land. Scott County could mimic these conservation subdivision types, which are already being utilized by Clark County to the south, to preserve natural resources while allowing developers to construct a typical number of units.

CATALYST PROJECT - ACTION ITEM 2: Replace and/or rehabilitate damaged and neglected housing.

Replacing and/or rehabilitating damaged and neglected housing within a community not only improves the visual aesthetics of a community but also helps introduce houses back into the market. Rehabilitation efforts can be initiated by local governments, developers, or property owners, increasing the chances properties and building could be repurposed. However, it can be a difficult and lengthy process for communities or individuals wanting to improve a neglected home, and it may require multiple partners and funding sources to complete a project. Local governments have the ability to assist in these efforts, and Scott County communities should begin identifying what resources are available for them to use in order to progress the redevelopment or demolition of issue sites within the county.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

Rehabilitating or replacing housing structures within a community can improve substandard housing and increase property values in the surrounding area. Often times rehabilitation of housing structures can create new housing options, turning single-family homes into duplexes and developing multi-family units on previously vacant property or bringing a vacant house back into the housing stock. Diversifying housing through rehabilitation efforts opens the unit back up for a new occupant and helps meet the needs of residents who may be looking to downsize, rent, or buy their first home. It can also help improve the quality of life for those living in housing that doesn't meet current building standards.

Neglected housing can create a negative image within a community with visual impacts which may stand out to residents or visitors. Abandoned properties can lead to potential neighborhood blight within a community as surrounding properties begin losing value and owners attempt to move away or leave their homes entirely. Identifying these issue properties and finding ways to incentivize their redevelopment or rehabilitation is a first step for local governments working to expand their housing options while providing safe living conditions, improving visuals, and enhancing the overall quality of life within the community.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Reduce the number of vacant or abandoned buildings within the county.
- Introduce rehabilitated homes back into the market with a focus on workforce housing.
- Improve the visual appearance and image of the county.
- Provide safe living conditions within the county.
- Improve access to health food options and physical fitness options.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

1. **Immediate:** Determine the feasibility of creating a county-wide land bank to manage abandoned housing.
2. **Short:** Locate and prioritize abandoned properties and significantly dilapidated houses throughout the county, and identify partners that can aid in improvements or rehabilitation.
3. **Short:** Evaluate local property maintenance ordinances to determine if additional regulations and/or enforcement is needed.
4. **Short/Mid:** Create a database of local, state, and federal funding sources available for property owners wanting to rehabilitate a house.

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

Local Governments: These entities should identify vacant or abandoned properties within the community and determine if rehabilitation or demolition is needed. They can also evaluate current property maintenance regulations and enforcement efforts.

Local Economic Development Organizations: Local economic development corporations can work with local governments and other partners to create a land bank for abandoned and blighted housing throughout the county.

Scott County Community Foundation: The foundation can help coordinate the multiple organizations and entities within the county the who are actively working to rehabilitate or reduce the community's vacant or abandoned properties.

Developers and Property Owners: These groups can work with local governments and other organizations in efforts to acquire blighted properties and identify potential new uses for each.

WHERE HAS THIS BEEN DONE SUCCESSFULLY?



The Detroit Land Bank Authority created a program, Rehabbed & Ready, which stabilizes neighborhoods by rehabilitating homes through a community fund and selling them back to new home buyers at market rate. Rehabbed & Ready helps bridge the gap between home value and repair expenses, an issue many potential home buyers may not be able to overcome. Investments typically include high-cost fixes such as HVAC systems, windows, and utilities. The program has strengthened neighborhood housing markets, restored home equity, and made it easier for future home buyers to access financing.

While Scott County may not have the ability to fund multiple rehabilitation efforts within the community, the ability to form a land bank to identify and purchase issue properties is a possibility. A land bank would help the county acquire property and transfer it to potential developers or those looking to personally rehabilitate a home for renting purposes or their own personal use.



...ped out into
...ight from the
...of the movie
... only two things
...nd. Paul Newman
... a ride home."

The Outsiders
by S.E. Hinton

MID-AMERICA
science park

ARTS & RECREATION



EXPANDING OUR ARTS AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

“Together we will establish more opportunities for residents to safely engage in recreation, healthy activities, and entertainment through facilities, education, and enrichment programs.”

Arts and recreational opportunities can account for a significant portion of a community’s entertainment options and culture. The value of supporting initiatives related to arts and recreation go far beyond economic benefits, improving physical and mental well-being, emotional health, and social relationships of residents. Related programming can be catered towards education for the county’s youth, activities for seniors, and community-wide events for families and could include theater, historic tours, concerts, or hiking. These types of community activities can be low cost and can greatly benefit families of all income levels by being able to find entertainment locally.

Supporting the expansion of arts and recreation within Scott County can not only provide entertainment options and promote healthier lifestyles, but it can also support the economic vitality of the community by serving as attractions. Additionally, arts and recreational programming provides residents of Scott County a base to enhance tourism efforts and draw visitors. Event venues and trail networks can be regional draws for a community potentially offering activities which are not available nearby, while local historic and cultural amenities can become educational and enrichment opportunities for visitors and students. Leveraging these assets can encourage development of similar programming and spaces and also attract retail and service-oriented development desired by residents and visitors alike.

WHY IS THIS GOAL IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

- Arts can form a foundation of culture within a community and be leveraged to attract new residents and visitors.
- Scott County residents believe existing recreation spaces can be better utilized and leveraged to influence tourism and new development.
- Quality of life and quality of place are heavily influenced by the entertainment options that arts and recreation bring to a community.
- Fostering art and creative expression in the county’s youth is essential in developing strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

HOW CAN WE MOVE THIS GOAL FORWARD?

Many organizations and groups are working towards enhancing arts and recreation within Scott County. The following action items work towards the goal of building upon and expanding existing arts and recreation programming within the county. Some of these items are currently being addressed by one or more organizations while other action items were identified as gaps that need to be solved. Two catalyst projects were identified for Arts and Recreation that will build momentum, address critical and immediate needs, and create a sound base for future action steps.

Action Items

Catalyst
Project

Catalyst
Project

1. **Build upon school-based theater, community theater groups, and performing arts programs through a performing/visual arts center.**

2. **Increase the number of in-school and after-school programs including art programs, youth sports, clubs, and volunteer opportunities.**

3. Expand recruiting efforts to gain additional volunteers and leaders for in-school, after-school, and community clubs, recreation activities, and arts programs.

4. Use local libraries and public parks to support increased access to arts and cultural, physical, and civic activities.

5. Create a public arts commission that identifies permanent art opportunities, temporary art exhibits, and builds an online arts presence.

6. Identify funding, space, and programs for an arts and music program in every elementary school as well as scholarship programs for students pursuing art after high school.

7. Establish a community theatre non-profit group that focuses on youth and adults.

8. Create new programs and increase participation in celebrating local history and culture.

9. Install infrastructure to support events in towns, such as speaker systems, electricity/water hookups, or event spaces that could be used year-round.

CATALYST PROJECT - ACTION ITEM 1: Build upon school-based theater, community theater groups, and performing arts programs through a performing/visual arts center.

There was an overwhelming consensus by residents that Scott County is lacking in the arts. Youth and adults greatly value the programs available through Scott County Schools, Ross Theater, and Scott County Heritage Center and Museum and see the potential of expanding these programs and facilities. The arts can be a crucial part of instilling entrepreneurship and innovation in children, allowing them to explore new creative careers outside of more typical options. Theater groups and performing arts programs are also a key component of Scott County's quality of life, building community through shared experiences, offering entertainment options, and contributing to the community's cultural experiences. Development of a specialized space through new development or expansion of existing facilities can support the growth of these programs within the county.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

Theater and performing arts provide educational, economic, cultural, and entertainment benefits to the community, enriching the lives of students, residents, and visitors of all ages. A facility dedicated to these types of programs would not only allow for their expansion, but it could lead to greater economic impacts within the county. More seating and easier accessibility could increase attendance at events, which may lead to an increase in dollars being spent within the community. In addition, performing arts programs provide entertainment and social elements for many students within the county, offering a way for them to stay engaged with friends outside of school hours.

A performing/visual arts center could also be used for additional programming as well as event rental space. Classes and workshops could be held to introduce students and adults within the community to unique experiences which may lead to a career or hobby in the performing arts or related fields. The building could also hold social gatherings, such as weddings or family reunions, and other community events held by the organizations with the county who may not have space for such activities.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Expand the community's theater and performing arts presence to include new avenues of artistic expression.
- Establish a new performing arts/visual arts center in partnership with Scott County Schools that builds from the success of existing programming within the county.
- Create new programming within the county which celebrates the community's culture.
- Promote new programming as a tourist attraction for the region.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

1. **Immediate:** Complete a feasibility study to inventory existing facilities/programs, identify school facility and programming needs, and analyze the financial feasibility of implementation.
2. **Short:** Identify additional partners to implement performing arts programs throughout the county and within local schools.
3. **Mid/Long:** Work with local partners to determine costs in improving local cultural amenities and developing new programming within the community focused on arts and theater in downtown Scottsburg.

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

Scott County Schools: The school districts could provide financial and technical support in the creation of a performing/visual arts center to fulfill the needs of students and arts-based programming, potentially expanding their own facilities.

Scott County Community Foundation: The foundation can provide coordination between the multiple organizations and entities within the county who have similar interest and intent in creating a new performing/visual arts center.

Local Governments: These entities could provide financial and technical assistance for the creation of a center (such as tax abatement or even funding) and could also identify potential properties and existing structures which could be utilized or expanded.

Businesses and Industries / Anchor Institutions: These groups can work with the local governments, school districts, and other organizations in supporting a center's creation and developing supporting amenities.

WHERE HAS THIS BEEN DONE SUCCESSFULLY?



Plainfield, Indiana recently approved the plans for the construction of a new performing and fine arts center. This development had the goal of attracting and cultivating talent in art, music, theater, and dance. The \$27 million investment will become a new anchor of the city's downtown, sitting next to various restaurants, retail, and other entertainment venues. The new building will not only create space for existing programming, but it is intended to draw local and national performers.

If Scott County, school districts, and other partners wish to develop a new performing arts theater, community and school leadership should identify what other uses could be held within the center. Allowing for additional uses within the center could maintain its use year-round and help offset costs. Social events and private rentals can also expand access to more residents of the county.

CATALYST PROJECT - ACTION ITEM 2: Increase the number of in-school and after-school programs including art programs, youth sports, clubs, and volunteer opportunities.

After school programs provide enrichment and entertainment options for children and teens. These programs provide a safe social environment for students and are beneficial for parents who may work later in the afternoon and are unable to be home before the end of classes. After-school programs are also ways to teach students items outside of the curriculum and get them involved with the community. This helps foster new interests and hobbies in children and teens, gets them active, builds friendships and confidence, and improves their focus on academics. Although after-school activities bring multiple benefits to the table, they are often impacted by lack of funding, transportation, and available staff.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

One of the major benefits of after-school programs are their ability to increase social connections and physical activity in students through expanding the curriculum past normal school hours. After-school programs can also include academic support, allowing students to explore educational topics not taught during regular class time. Perhaps most importantly, these activities allow children to interact with one another in a non-school setting and create a sense of community between everyone involved. These interactions may be extremely valuable to youth who have difficulties functioning in a typical classroom setting or those with difficult home lives and benefit from social interaction with their peers.

After-school programs also benefit families where both parents are working by providing supplemental child care in the place of traditional, often more expensive, methods. Extending a student's time at school can be the difference between a parent being forced to find child care or children being home alone. These types of programs do not need to be located at a school specifically and can include affiliated organizations which serve similar needs. In either situation, transportation often becomes a barrier to these programs. After-school programs such as these are especially beneficial to vulnerable populations where neither parent is able to stay at home.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Increase the availability and participation in after school programs within the county.
- Increase transportation options for children for after school programs.
- Increased partnerships between schools and community organizations to better serve the needs of children and their parents.

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

1. **Immediate:** Inventory existing organizations and programs within the county that provide after school programming and determine gaps in services, transportation, and facilities.
2. **Short:** Identify partnerships between county schools and community organizations who can provide after school services.
3. **Short/Mid:** Prioritize underserved areas and vulnerable populations and work with local partners, funders, and Indiana Afterschool Network (IAN) to secure funding for continued or new programming.

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

Scott County Schools: The schools could partner with outside organizations to develop new programming for students who need to stay after school for educational purposes or due to working parents.

Scott County Community Foundation: The foundation can provide coordination between the multiple organizations and entities within the who assist in running and developing after-school programming for the county's youth.

Non-Profit Organizations: These groups could assist in planning, financing, and running after school programs within the county which may not be covered by schools or are specific to certain populations.

Early Childhood Committee: This group could work with schools in developing programming which could assist in expanding child care options and support whole child learning.

WHERE HAS THIS BEEN DONE SUCCESSFULLY?



One of the major barriers of developing after school programs is funding, staffing, and technical resources. While there are other potential funding sources available, the Indiana Afterschool Network (IAN) is an organization dedicated to connecting after school programs with the resources they need. IAN provides assistance for those looking to start an after-school program, acquire professional training for youth education, and other critical resources. In addition to funding, IAN also assists in curriculum creation, digital

learning, resources for families, and COVID-19 programming. IAN has assisted hundreds of organizations, schools, and individuals over the last 20 years.

Forming partnerships at the local and state level may be needed in order to expand after-school programming for youth in Scott County. These partners can provide outside funding and hold experience in developing and implementing programming which targets students and children in rural areas.



COORDINATION



COORDINATING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INITIATIVES

“Together we will work across surrounding counties, public agencies, and private organizations to strengthen partnerships and expand available resources.”

While a primary goal of this plan is to identify and prioritize ongoing initiatives within Scott County, the coordination between organizations for each initiative is equally as important. With numerous organizations and people trying to address issues and support initiatives, a lack of communication between government entities, public organizations, non-profits and community organizations, private businesses, and the general public can result. This lack of communication between groups can lead to duplicated efforts and a waste of resources. Ongoing discussions on community needs and upcoming initiatives should be discussed to identify ways each group can support those needs and how resources could be pooled to achieve a higher rate of success.

Improving coordination within the county also includes supporting the local governments and non-profits in their attempts to receive grant funding. Many of the action items outlined within this plan likely require outside funding sources since local dollars and revenue may not be able to fully support the project. Providing assistance to these groups could help them overcome financial obstacles and implement the initiatives needed by residents within the county. Assistance for these groups does not have to come from a single source but can be a collaboration between multiple groups within the county who have dealt with similar applications or have trained staff who could provide technical support.

Promoting collaboration and coordination between the organizations within Scott County can help identify barriers within the county, pool resources between separate organizations, and lead to the successful implementation of action items and catalyst projects. This has already begun through coordinating with community-based committees, integrating their goals surrounding housing, early childhood development, health and wellness, and arts and recreation into the Vision Plan. These committees will be able to build upon the projects outlined within the Vision Scott County plan and guide their successful completion.

WHY IS THIS GOAL IMPORTANT TO SCOTT COUNTY?

- Lack of coordination between organizations within the county can lead to replication of efforts and waste of resources.
- Pooling resources and staff can often be used to leverage additional funding and lead to successful implementation.
- Community organizations are often able to provide services needed within a community but often lack funding or technical know-how.
- Non-profit and community organizations can often fill the gaps in municipal services.
- Collaboration is key to the advancement of priority initiatives and goals of all strategic plans within the community.

HOW CAN WE MOVE THIS GOAL FORWARD?

Many organizations and groups within Scott County would benefit from increasing coordination between one another. The following action items work towards the goal of building partnerships and better communication between organizations within the county. Some of these items are currently being addressed by one or more organizations while other action items were identified as gaps that need to be solved. A single catalyst project was identified for Coordination that will build momentum, address critical and immediate needs, and create a sound base for future projects within the county.

Action Items

Catalyst
Project

1. **Support municipal agencies and nonprofit organizations by identifying and applying for grant opportunities.**
2. Encourage ongoing discussions on community needs and provide technical support for municipal agencies and nonprofit organizations which aim to address those needs.
3. Provide quarterly updates to City and County officials as well as partner organizations regarding plan progress and report those findings to the community.

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL PARTNERS?

Scott County Community Foundation/River Hills: These organizations can help identify grants for local organizations and governments and take an administrative role for funding disbursement.

Non-Profit Organizations: These groups can apply for and receive grant funding in collaboration with local and regional administrative bodies.

Local Governments: Local governments can receive grant assistance from local and regional groups while also searching and applying for individual funding opportunities.

Existing Community Committees/Coalitions: These community-based committees/coalitions can help progress major community projects and work alongside local organizations and governments to increase community collaboration.

The background features a photograph of a building with a corrugated metal roof and a chain-link fence. An American flag is visible on the left. In the background, there are green trees and two large white cylindrical water tanks. The sky is a clear, bright blue. In the top-left corner, there are two overlapping geometric shapes: a teal triangle and a maroon triangle, both with white borders.

TOOLS, FUNDING & RESOURCES



AIR LIQUIDE



TOOLS, FUNDING & RESOURCES

The following pages list the various funding sources, tools, and other resources Scott County could potentially use while working to implement specific strategies. This is not an exhaustive list but is meant to highlight resources the community can leverage for implementation.

LOCAL FINANCING TOOLS:

Bonds

Bonds are backed by the credit and taxing power of the issuing jurisdiction. A bond is a government debt issued in order to raise money for needed capital improvements. Its retirement is paid for by property tax and other predictable forms of local income.

Developer Funded Infrastructure

Similar to impact fees, communities can also fund infrastructure improvements by having the developer cover those costs directly. These can include roadway improvements, stormwater infrastructure, and other related utilities that may need expanded due to development. However, the improvement must be directly related to and proportionate to the new development's impact.

Impact Fees

An impact fee is a charge on new development to pay for the cost of infrastructure and related services that are necessitated by and benefit the new development. The fee is based on the type of development assessed for the increase in the burden on infrastructure. Fees contribute to a non-reverting fund and can be used for infrastructure improvements and amenities including park and recreation and multi-modal projects.

Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund

This revolving loan fund can be used to provide low interest loans for infrastructure projects that facilitate economic development.

Residential Tax Increment Financing

Effective July 2019, new legislation was signed by Governor Holcomb to allow TIF for residential property (SEA 566). This legislation is targeted at rural communities to fund infrastructure for single-family housing growth. Residential TIF must be executed through a Redevelopment Commission.

Tax Abatement

Tax abatement is a phase-in of property taxes and is intended to encourage development in areas that would not otherwise develop. Tax abatement is one of the tools widely used by municipal governments to attract new businesses to the community. It encourages investment in new equipment or facilities that will improve the company, while stabilizing the community's economy. Communities may develop procedures for abatement application and policies regarding the amount and length of the abatement that will be approved. Procedures may also be developed to ensure compliance with the terms in the statement of benefits.

Tax Increment Financing

A Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district used by many communities to fund local infrastructure improvement projects. Tax rates for developments within the district are locked at a set rate, and as property values rise within the district, any additional tax revenue generated is used to fund improvement projects within the district instead of using it for typical purposes. TIF can be very effective at directing new development to an area.

RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS:

Accelerate Indiana Municipalities (AIM)

AIM works as an official voice for municipal government within Indiana, with more than 460 cities and towns as members. The organization works to foster, promote, and advocate for the success of Indiana municipalities as hubs of innovation and talent, and as the driving forces of the state's economy.

Indiana Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (INAFSM)

The Indiana Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management was founded in 1996 by professionals interested in and responsible for floodplain and stormwater management in the State of Indiana. INAFSM members include federal, state, and local agency staff, engineers, consultants, planners, elected officials, members of academia, students, and floodplain residents.

Indiana Chapter of the American Planning Association

APA-IN promotes vision and leadership that fosters better planning in Indiana by building public and political support and providing its members and communities with the tools to achieve future needs and create vital communities. Citizen planning training is one event that may be appropriate for a newly formed plan commission offered by APA-IN.

Indiana Finance Authority (IFA)

In order to provide economic efficiencies and management synergies and enable the State of Indiana (“State”) to communicate as one voice with the various participants in the financial markets, the Indiana Development Finance Authority, the State Office Building Commission, the Indiana Transportation Finance Authority, the Recreational Development Commission, the State Revolving Fund Programs and the Indiana Brownfields Program were consolidated into a new and separate entity called the Indiana Finance Authority (“IFA”) on May 15, 2005. The Indiana Health and Educational Facilities Finance Authority was also merged into the IFA, effective July 1, 2007. As the successor entity to these formerly separate debt-issuing entities, the IFA is authorized to issue revenue bonds payable from lease rentals under lease agreements with various state agencies and to finance or refinance the cost of acquiring, building and equipping structures for state use including state office buildings, garages, highways, bridges, airport facilities, correctional facilities, state hospitals and recreational facilities related to State parks. The IFA also manages the Wastewater and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loan Programs and the Indiana Brownfields Program.

Indiana Small Business Development Center

The Indiana Small Business Development Center offers technical support and entrepreneurial guidance through regional partners to assist small business growth and sustainability within the state. On top of offering workshops throughout the state, they also provide market research, business planning, and valuation services for small businesses.

Prosperity Indiana

The Indiana Association for Community Economic Development (Prosperity Indiana) is a statewide membership organization that seeks to fund members, build and retain relationships, and address local and national issues which may impact Indiana communities. Prosperity Indiana provides tools, research, online resources, and technical assistance for housing rehabilitation and construction, real estate development, industrial and business development, social services, and employment generating activities.

Redevelopment Association of Indiana (RAI)

This is a membership organization for redevelopment board members and staff representing 460 cities, towns, and counties in Indiana. The Redevelopment Association operates under the premise that while there are legally mandated action and commonly adopted practices, there also is abundant room for local innovation and Indiana ingenuity. One of the association’s principal missions is to serve as an informational and educational resource for existing redevelopment commissions and units of government considering the establishment of a redevelopment commission. Redevelopment Association members are available to share their experiences.

FUNDING AND GRANTS:

Indiana Arts Commission (IAC)

This state program works to positively impact the cultural, economic, and educational climate of Indiana by providing opportunities to enhance the artistic resources of Indiana communities. The organization provides multiple supporting programs and grants to support the growth of arts in local settings and provide resources for regional or local organizations trying to influence and culture of arts in their community.

Arts Organization Support (AOS)

The Arts Organization Support (AOS) provides annual operating support for the ongoing artistic and administrative functions of eligible arts organizations that align with the Indiana Arts Commission's Public Funding Imperatives. It is a two-year grant commitment.

Arts Project Support (APS)

Arts Project Support (APS) grants provide funding to Indiana arts and non-arts organizations to support a distinct aspect of the organization's arts activities, such as a one-time event; a single production; an exhibition; an educational seminar; or series of related arts activities, such as art classes or training sessions.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

The mission of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources is to protect, enhance, preserve, and wisely use natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the benefit of Indiana's citizens through professional leadership, management, and education.

Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC)

This statewide organization offers programs and initiatives for companies creating jobs in Indiana. They actively work to improve the state's quality of place, infrastructure, and developable sites to build economic strength by attracting new businesses and talent. The organization offers a number of incentives and programs for new or expanding businesses, which includes technical support and data collection.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

LWCF federal grants can be used to protect important natural areas, acquire land for outdoor recreation and develop or renovate public outdoor recreation facilities such as campgrounds, picnic areas, sports/playfields, swimming facilities, boating facilities, fishing facilities, trails, natural areas and passive parks. It provides grants for 50% of the cost of acquisition and/or development. To be eligible, the group must be a legally established park board and have a current 5-year park and recreation master plan on file in the Division of Outdoor Recreation. The minimum grant request is \$50,000 and the maximum request is \$500,000 with a local match requirement.

Indiana Trails Program (ITP)

Matching assistance program that provides funding for the acquisition and/or development of multi-use recreational trail projects. Minimum funding available is \$10,000 and maximum funding available is \$200,000 and a 20% match is required. Both motorized and non-motorized projects may qualify for assistance. This program was formally recognized as the “Recreational Trails Program”, but was been changed to reflect the change from federal to state funding in 2021.

Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)

INDOT’s mission is to plan, build, maintain, and operate a transportation system that encourages safety, mobility, and economic growth, they provide assistance to smaller communities through Local Public Agency (LPA) Programs, Community Crossings grants for paving projects, and Transportation Alternative funding for roadway, sidewalk, trail, and streetscape projects.

Community Crossings Matching Grant Fund Program

In 2016 this program provided a 1-1 match for eligible projects up to \$1 million. In the second year (2017), INDOT funded 75% of the project of communities under 10,000. Eligible projects included bridge and road preservation type projects along with ADA sidewalk projects that intersect with any road project, roundabouts and road reconstructions. Trails and enhancement type projects are not eligible and only construction costs are eligible. In the upcoming years, this program is expected to change and the community should reference INDOT’s website for more information.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

The main goal of the CMAQ Program is to fund surface transportation improvement projects with the goal of reducing overall congestion and improving air quality. These funds are released in collaboration between INDOT and local Indiana MPOs and can be used for a variety of projects includes, but not limited to, acquiring alternative fuel vehicles for public transit applications, purchasing alternative fuels, and establishing publicly-owned alternative fueling stations and other needed infrastructure.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

The Highway Safety Improvement Program goal is to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads through the implementation of infrastructure-related highway safety improvements. There are a number of improvements this program helps fund, such as improving the visibility of curves through signs and markers, installing emergency power battery backups at traffic signals, installing raised medians, upgrading guardrails to meet current standards and more.

Local Public Agency (LPA) Program

INDOT shares gas tax revenue from the state Motor Vehicle Highway Fund and Local Road and Street Fund with LPAs towards capital improvement needs. Communities must have a local employee in charge with ERC training, projects must be ADA compliant, provide matching funds and meet project eligibility.

Transportation Alternatives Funding

The Transportation Alternatives (TA) program will receive about \$780 million to carry out all TA projects, including SRTS and RTP projects across the country, which represents about a 35% reduction from the current \$1.2 billion spent on these programs. Under the bill, states will sub-allocate 50% of their TA funds to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and local communities to run a grant program to distribute funds for projects. States could use the remaining 50% for TA projects or could spend these dollars on other transportation priorities.

Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority (IHCDA)

IHCDA's partners with developers, lenders, investors, and nonprofit organizations that serve low- and moderate-income Indiana families. They provide government and private funds to invest in well-designed projects that will benefit communities and those living within. IHCDA provides funds, incentives, data collection, and educational services.

Development Fund

This program provides a loan of up to \$500,000 (or a grant in limited special circumstances) for eligible activities for low- and moderate-income housing.

Emergency Solutions Grant Rapid Re-housing (ESGRR)

This program provides emergency shelters and transitional housing through services and rental assistance for homeless individuals and families.

HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

This program strives to provide habitable and affordable housing for low- and moderate-income persons by improving the quality of existing housing stock.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

This program is a dollar-for-dollar federal tax credit that incentivize the investment of private equity in the development of affordable housing. The project owner must agree to comply with Chapter 42 regulations and maintain an agreed open percentage of low-income units, as well as meet requirements for a 15-year compliance period and a subsequent 15-year extended use period. Maximum request is \$1.2 million tax credits.

Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Pilot Program (OOR)

This program uses Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for rehabilitation of owner-occupied housing for low- and moderate-income households. There is a local match required.

The Housing Trust Fund (HTF)

This is a new affordable housing production program that will complement existing federal, state and local efforts to increase and preserve the supply of decent, safe, and sanitary affordable housing for extremely low- and very low-income households (persons at or below 30% of the Area Medium Income), including homeless families.

Indiana Humanities

Indiana Humanities is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the public humanities through partnerships, grants, and facilitation. This organization supports using literature, history, philosophy, and shared cultural heritage to help Hoosiers and their communities understand themselves and the world around them. They provide small grants to local nonprofits that help support their mission within communities. The grants range from research on socioeconomic conditions within a community, to funding for libraries to expand their collection to better represent the cultures of the residents it serves.

Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA)

OCRA works with local, state and national partners to provide resources and technical assistance to aid communities in shaping and achieving their vision for community and economic development. They award grants to fund projects including, but not limited to, public gathering places, water/sewer infrastructure, restoration of historic structures, community facilities, broadband infrastructure, and revitalizing commercial districts. They have a focus on infrastructure, quality of place, economic development, and capacity building. Some of the programs include:

- Planning Grants
- Public Facilities Program (PFP)
- Stormwater Improvement Program (SIP)
- Wastewater and Drinking Water Program
- Blight Clearance Program (BCP 2.0)
- Broadband Readiness Pilot Planning Grant
- Next Level Connections (for broadband)

Indiana Office of Tourism Development (IOTD)

The Indiana Office of Tourism Development offers matching grant to cities, towns, counties and nonprofit entities located in Indiana that are involved with tourism promotion and development.

Destination Development Grant Guidelines

Eligible projects include those that enhance Indiana’s tourism profile. Large-scale projects will be viewed favorably and the project category should include spectator sports/participation sports/outdoor recreation, cultural/agricultural activities, heritage/historical experiences, or arts and culture. Grants are between \$50,000 and \$250,000 and be matched 1:1.

Marketing Asset Grant

IOTD offers matching grants to entities located in Indiana that demonstrate financial need and are focused on tourism promotion and development. Proposals must focus on either sports tourism/outdoor recreation, culinary and agritourism, heritage tourism, or arts and cultural tourism. Project eligibility includes tourism infrastructure, technology that improve marketing efficiency and effectiveness, collaborative marketing initiatives that strategically align assets, attractions, destinations and regions. Grant awards will not exceed \$20,000 and must be matched 1:1.

National Endowment for the Arts – Our Town Program

Our Town Program supports creative place-making projects that help transform communities into lively, beautiful, and resilient places with the arts at their core. They offer support in two areas, projects that are focused on representing the distinct character and quality of their communities (Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects), and projects that provide technical assistance for place-based work (Projects that Build Knowledge about Creative Place-making).

State and Federal Tax Credits

Many state and federal tax credit programs are administered by IEDC including: Community Revitalization Enhancement District Tax Credit; Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) - Payroll Tax Credit; Hoosier Business Investment Tax Credit (HBI); Industrial Development Grant Fund; Industrial Recovery Tax Credit; and Venture Capital Investment Tax Credit (VCI).



VISION

Scott County VISION PLAN