

Jay County

Economic Development Plan



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Introduction

Jay County, IN — population 21,046 (in 2016)—was built on the core values of hard work and a strong commitment to community. For more than 75 years, Jay County has boasted a rich heritage in manufacturing, where 65 percent of all U.S. markets are no more than a 24-hour drive away. Residents enjoy a low cost of living, low crime rate, and small town feel close to major cities. Jay County offers several local community centers with activities for all ages, an exhilarating arts community, and access to public schools with some of Indiana’s highest test scores.

Although Jay County residents benefit from the assets mentioned above, there are deficits that need to be addressed and improved. For instance, the county’s population decreased from 21,806 in 2000 to 21,046 in 2016 (a 3.5 percent decrease) primarily due to domestic migration (people moving out of the county to other parts of Indiana or the United States). Another concern is the county’s low educational attainment rate, with 64 percent of residents holding only a high school diploma.

With both the pros and the cons firmly in mind, Jay County Development Corporation (JCDC)’s Board of Directors and Executive Director struck out in mid-2017 to set strategic priorities for the next five years. JCDC, launched in 1985, exists to support the community and economic vitality of the county. In some cases, this may mean helping out in the area of industrial recruitment. In other cases, the JCDC will assist with business retention and expansion. (See *Understanding Community Development: Some Theoretical & Practical Perspectives*, Appendix A). Since its inception, Jay County Community Development (JCCD), JCDC’s partner agency, has successfully secured over \$18 million dollars in grant funding for workforce development initiatives, regional planning, transportation, and health and safety projects. These dollars directly benefit county residents.

In 2011, Jay County joined the East Central Regional Planning Partnership. This organization has elevated the county’s thinking to the regional level, added a mixture of tools to the kit, and provided additional partners with whom to collaborate. While Jay County is located between different regions, it was determined that East Central Regional Planning Partnership may be the best fit, based on Jay County’s commuting patterns and its top five industry clusters (manufacturing, 28 percent; government, 14 percent; agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, 10 percent; retail trade eight percent; and construction, seven percent). The Purdue Center for Regional Development (PCRD) provided technical assistance in helping JCDC determine—based on high-quality data—which region best aligns with our county (see Appendix F for the Regional Dashboards).

The primary reason JCDC opted to pursue strategic planning with Purdue Center for Regional Development was due to the attention it gives to a step-by-step, asset-based, capacity-building process:

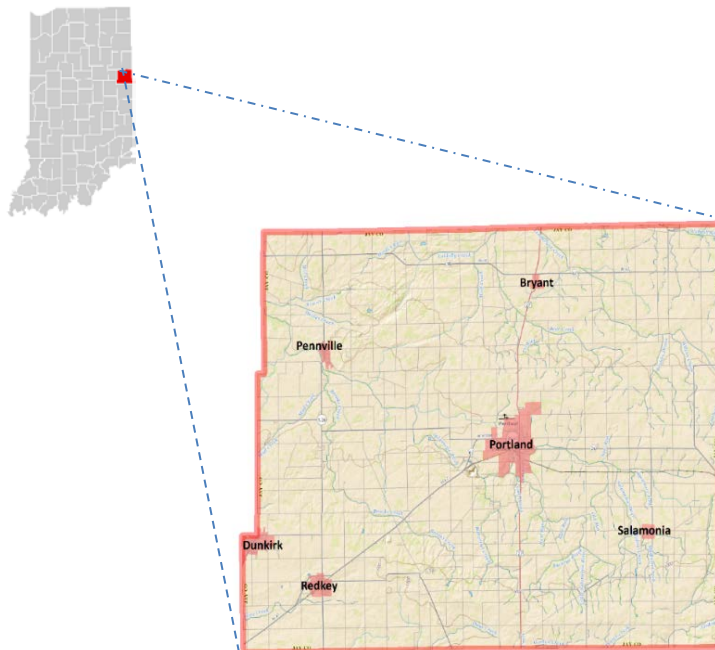
1. Building collaboration between communities within the county,
2. Providing economic data analysis tailored to help inform the county of its current or emerging clusters and comparative economic advantages, and
3. Accessing technical assistance made available by the state’s land-grant university system.

This resulting plan is intended to help board members, organizational stakeholders, and local community leaders steer the organization towards its best course for future success.



JCDC Executive Summary

The Jay County Development Corporation (JCDC) Community and Economic Development Strategic Plan is the result of a collaborative effort of elected officials, community and economic development organizations, and local business leaders. Throughout this strategic plan, these stakeholders have demonstrated their dedication and commitment to building a stronger economy and community in Jay County.



This 2019-2023 plan is intended to serve as the new five-year plan for the county, giving JCDC Board Members and Director an action plan against which to check progress at each meeting. This new plan is the culmination of a year-long effort to re-evaluate the JCDC and encourage stronger engagement by community leaders. The strategic plan identified these four goals as key focus areas to grow, diversify and strengthen the county:

- community/economic development;
- housing;
- physical infrastructure; and,
- workforce development.

The following SMART objectives (delineated under each of the four goals) are supported by sound data analysis and are designed to build on county assets and address potential barriers:

1. Complete downtown revitalization planning and initiate/expand the Main Street program;
2. Create a supportive system for nurturing and growing entrepreneurial activities;
3. Enhance the targeted business retention and expansion program in the county;
4. Examine and pursue value-added agricultural opportunities in the county and/or region;
5. Develop a detailed profile of Jay County's housing characteristics;
6. Develop plan to expand the diversity of market rate housing that aligns with resident needs;
7. Work with a coalition of key individuals and organizations to improve, expand, and attract housing;
8. Complete existing infrastructure projects that have been approved and funded;
9. Plan for new funding to address existing infrastructure needs in the county;
10. Explore the feasibility of addressing specialized infrastructure needs;
11. Profile the industry and occupational make-up of Jay County;
12. Determine the workforce development-related needs of priority employers in Jay County;
13. Provide workforce development training for youth and adults of targeted employers.

JCDC and its partners will use this action plan to further support the competitiveness of the county by guiding its future investments of time and financial resources in its economic future.



Local Collaboration

The Process

The entire process of strategizing for the future activities of the Jay County Development Corporation (JCDC) had four elements:

1. Three speakers from different parts of Indiana visited to discuss future community and economic development options to consider;
2. Four focus group sessions were conducted with community leaders;
3. Ninety-one Jay County residents responded to a survey about their attitudes toward and knowledge of local economic and community development efforts; and
4. The Board of Directors guided the development of an action plan based on these inputs.

Speaker Series

It was the purpose of this segment to listen to expert voices in the state of Indiana regarding economic and community development. The series started with Dan Zuerner of the Garmong Corporation (Terre Haute, Indiana). Dan presented a traditional view of economic development recruiting, retention and expansion. He discussed the core activities a company looks at in a community and how they relate to the decision-making process for a company.

Dr. Michael Hicks of Ball State University offered an innovative and informative view of economic and community development. Dr. Hicks discussed talent attraction and the importance of the amenities of a community. He emphasized the thought that many more jobs will be replaced by automation rather than off-shoring. His focus on “Primacy of Place” emphasizes the importance of human capital in order to compete for high value-added economic development.

Finally, the former Dean of Economics from Indiana University, Dr. Morton Marcus, visited Portland. Morton talked about the importance of involving younger people in the process of making decisions about their community. His message was clear: “Take care of what you have rather than trying to find something new.” Retention and expansion were emphasized.

All of the speakers had a different “spin” on the craft of economic development, which broadened the Board’s perspective.

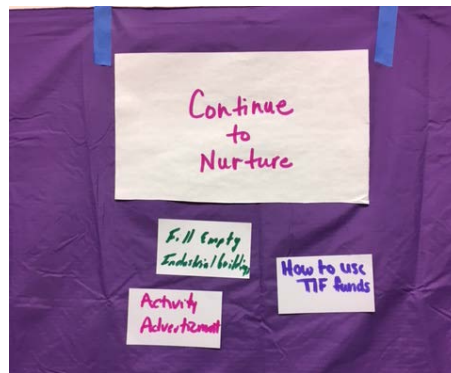
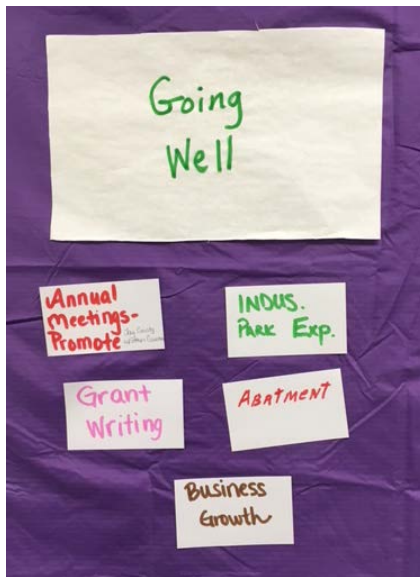
Survey Monkey Tool

A survey tool to measure attitudes about economic and community development was developed with 14 questions and subsequently e-mailed or mailed to about 250 people. A total of 91 responses were received with answers to the various questions and written comments. A majority of responses tended to be in the middle on various questions, with a few on both extremes. Essential to the process was the feedback on thoughts and ideas regarding the future activities of the JCDC. The results of the survey are summarized in Appendix D of this document.



Focus Groups

It is the desire of leadership to hear as many diverse voices as possible in the community and listen to them regarding their goals and aspirations for economic and community development. We scheduled, under the leadership of the Purdue Center for Regional Development, four groups of people in the community: business leadership, political leadership, industrial leadership and a cohort of those under 40 years of age. Each session was about 1 ½ to two hours in duration. A total of 61 participants contributed feedback during the four sessions. Below is the young adult focus group's ranking of priorities for the JCDC in terms of what areas are "going well," what areas JCDC needs to "continue to nurture," and what areas "need improvement."



*Generated by the group having a diverse set of thoughts and opinions, which are summarized in Appendix B (Focus Group Survey Highlights).

Development of the Plan

The Board met in three planning sessions. The Purdue Center for Regional Development led the group in an examination of the county. Demographic trends were presented to the group along with general future trends. The group studied the responses from the focus group sessions and the survey, along with the comments from the three speakers. A plan of action took shape as a product of this process.

Elected officials, industry leaders, business owners, and young adults county-wide contributed extensive input (Appendix C: Priorities Matrix), as did 91 survey respondents (Appendix D: Survey Monkey Results). The JCDC Board of Directors (listed below) explicitly agreed to support the plan's implementation upon approval at some point in mid-to-late 2018.



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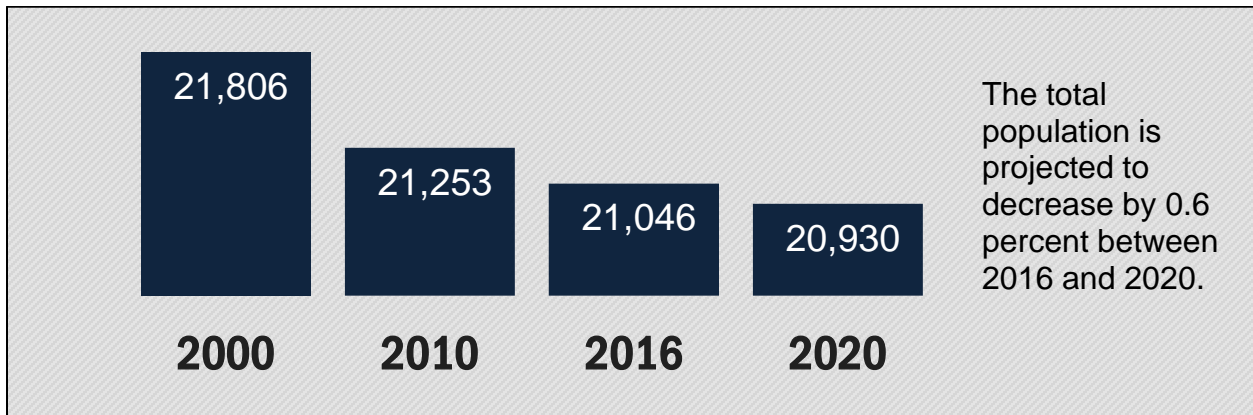


Evidence Basis for Plan

Jay County Development Corporation (JCDC) carefully examined data provided by the Purdue Center for Regional Development (PCRD) to guide the direction of this strategic plan. The demographic data on population reveals that Jay County’s population is declining, primarily as a result of net domestic migration (number of people moving in from elsewhere in the state/nation minus the number moving out to other places in the state or nation). Of those remaining in the county, 64 percent have a high school diploma or less, an educational credential that can be a major workforce challenge since more jobs are requiring people with higher levels of education. That may be a reason why 75 percent of the county’s workforce is drawn from several counties, aside from Jay County. These include Randolph, Delaware, Blackford and Adams counties in Indiana and Mercer County in Ohio. The data profile provides valuable insights as to Jay County’s strengths and weaknesses, and it offers concrete areas where the Board of Directors and local economic development professionals can focus their energies.

Jay County Demographic Data

Population Trends: Past, Current and Future Population



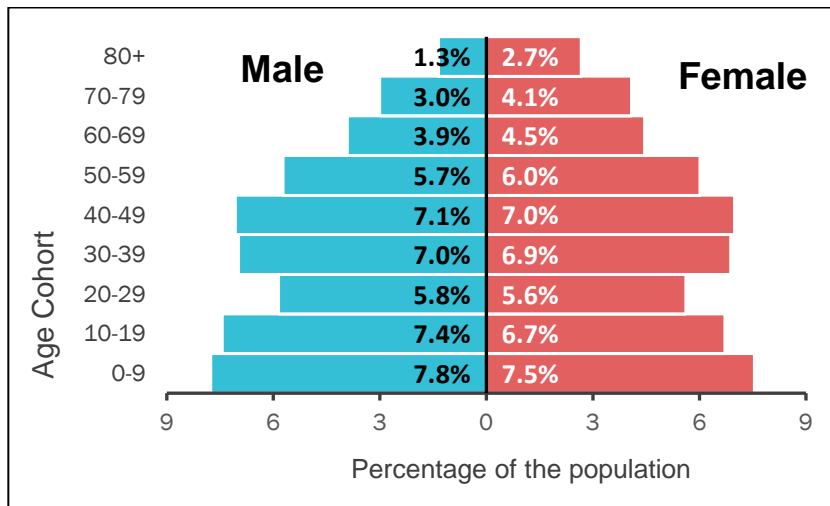
Jay County’s total population decreased by 3.5 percent between 2000 and 2016. The key contributor to that decrease was domestic migration (number of people moving into the county from Indiana or the U.S. minus the number moving out of the county to other parts of U.S.), suffering a net loss of 2,462 individuals. Natural increase (births minus deaths over that span of time) and international migration (the number of people moving in from outside the U.S. versus the number moving to outside the U.S.) added 1,269 and 278 individuals, respectively, over the 2000 to 2016 period.

Sources: STATSIndiana, U.S. Census Bureau – 2000 Decennial Census, 2010 Decennial Census, 2016 Estimates, Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change

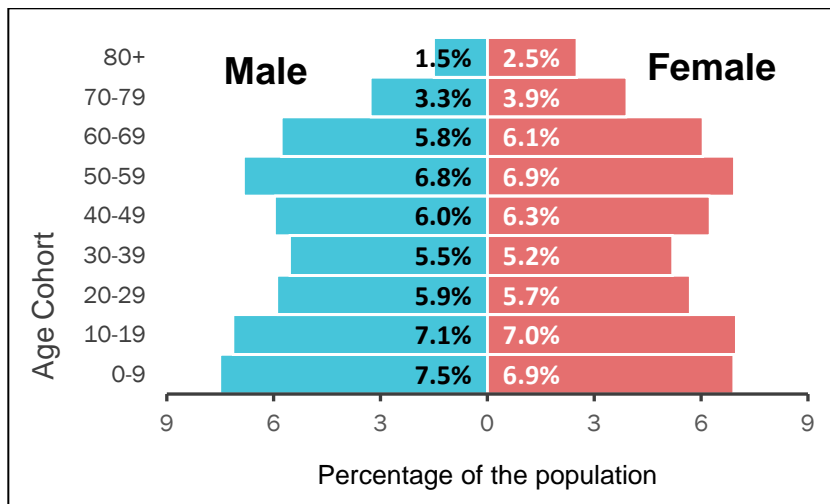


Age Distribution

2000



2016



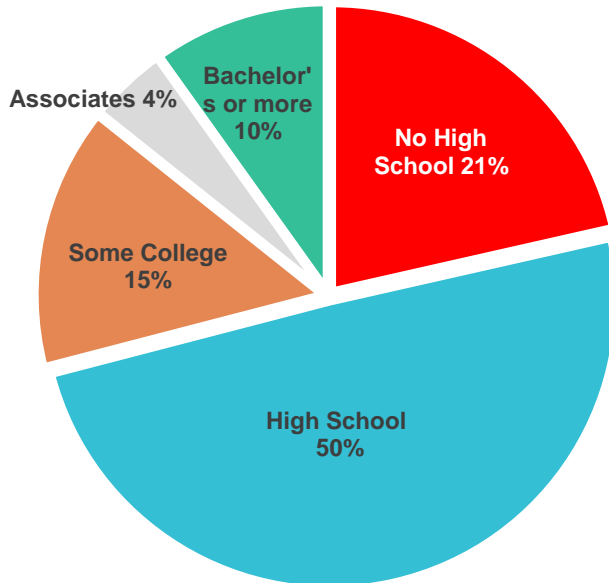
Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 2000 Decennial Census and 2016 Annual Population Estimates

The proportion of people (males and females) 50 years of age and older expanded from 31.2 percent to 36.9 percent from 2000 to 2016. Several other age groups suffered a decline in Jay County. The percentage of people under 20 years old fell slightly from 29.5 percent to 28.6 percent from 2000 to 2016. Among them, individuals under 10 years old (age 0-9) shrank from 15.3 percent to 14.4 percent. Those individuals of prime working age between 20-49 years old experienced a downturn from 39.4 percent to 34.6 percent over the 2000-2016 time span. The loss of people of prime working age should be of concern since the pool of able-bodied workers could impede plans to attract new businesses to, or expand existing companies in, the county. The proportion of males and females in Jay County changed marginally between 2000 and 2016. About 51 percent of the population was female in 2000, with 11,111 individuals, and that number decreased to 10,622 individuals in 2016 (to 50.5%).

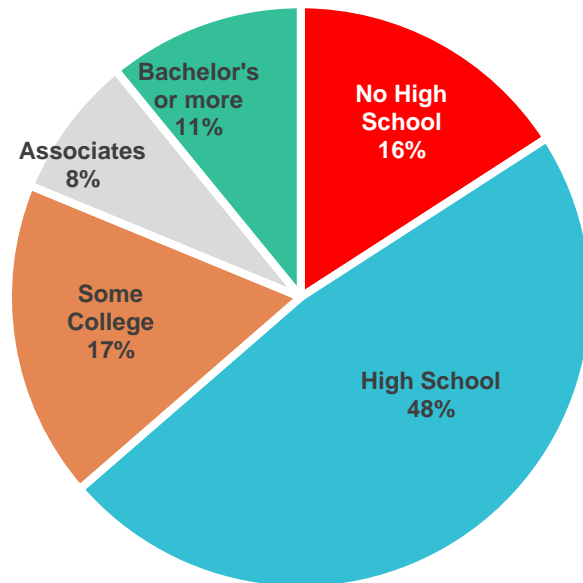


Educational Attainment

2000



2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 2000 Decennial Census and 2016 ACS

Jay County's share of adults with a bachelor's degree or higher increased by one percent from 2000 to 2016, while the proportion of adults with a high school education decreased by two percent. Residents with less than a high school education dipped by almost five percent over this period. There were 3,064 adult individuals who did not have a high school diploma in 2000—and that number dropped to under 2,211 by 2016. The percentage of adults with an associates degree increased by four percent, while adults with some college education increased by two percent.

Journey to Work & Commute Shed

Jay County has more workers commuting out than commuting into the county for work. Net commuting is negative in Jay County with a deficit of 2,051 commuters. This suggests that the county is not serving as a job center for the region. For every 100 employed residents, Jay County has 78 jobs.

More than 53 percent of employed residents in Jay County commute to jobs located outside of the county. Delaware County, Indiana, is the destination that has the most commuters from Jay County, accounting for almost nine percent of its total employed residents. Adams and Marion counties, Indiana, as well as Mercer County, Ohio, follow as the second, third, and fourth largest destinations with 6, 5, and 4.7 percent of commuters, respectively. There are 26.4 percent of commuters working in counties that are adjacent to Jay County.



	Count	Proportion
Employed in Jay County	7,406	100.0%
Both employed and living in the county	4,134	55.8%
Employed in the county but living outside	3,272	44.2%
Living in Jay County	9,457	100.0%
Both living and employed in the county	4,134	43.7%
Living in the county but employed outside	5,323	56.3%

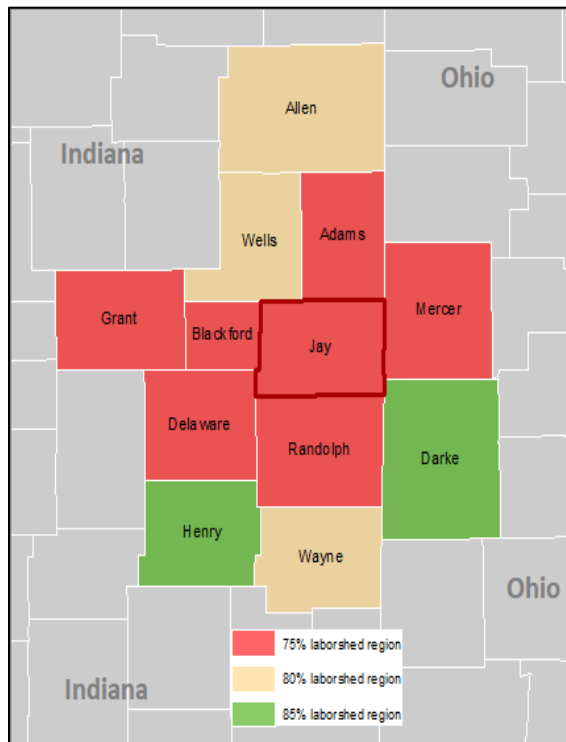
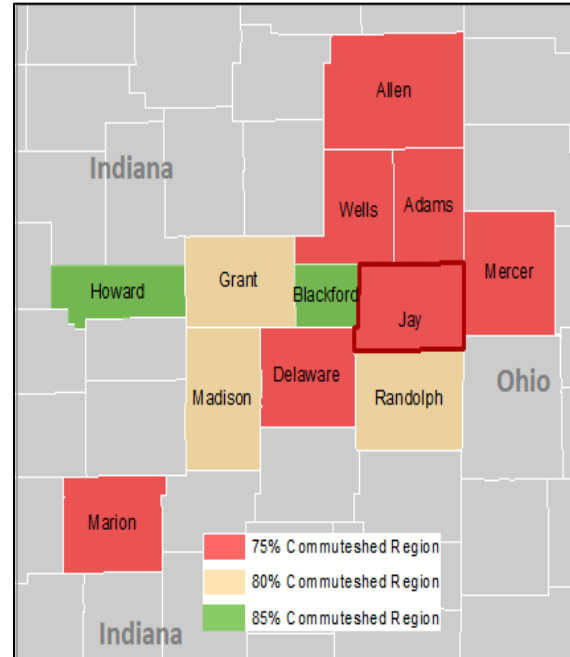
In addition, more than 30 percent of in-commuters reside in counties adjacent to Jay County. Randolph County, Indiana, is the top-ranked county among all the adjacent neighboring counties in terms of its adult working population employed in Jay County.

	Commuters	Proportion
Jay County, IN	4,134	43.7%
Delaware County, IN	821	8.7%
Adams County, IN	568	6.0%
Marion County, IN	470	5.0%
Mercer County, OH	442	4.7%



Commuteshed in 2015

Around 75 percent of Jay County’s working residents are employed in Jay, Delaware, Adams, Marion, Allen, and Wells counties in Indiana and Mercer County in Ohio. Another five percent of workers commute to Randolph, Madison and Grant counties in Indiana. An additional five percent of workers commute to jobs in Howard and Blackford counties in Indiana. Collectively, these 12 counties represent roughly 85 percent of the commuteshed for Jay County.



Laborshed in 2015

Nearly 44 percent of individuals working in Jay County commute from other counties. Randolph County, Indiana, is the largest source of workers, contributing 8.7 percent of the total employees in Jay County. Delaware and Blackford counties in Indiana and Mercer County in Ohio complete the top five sources of outside workers in Jay County.

Seventy-five percent of Jay County’s workforce is drawn from Jay, Randolph, Delaware, Blackford and Adams counties in Indiana and Mercer County in Ohio. Another five percent is drawn from Grant and Wells

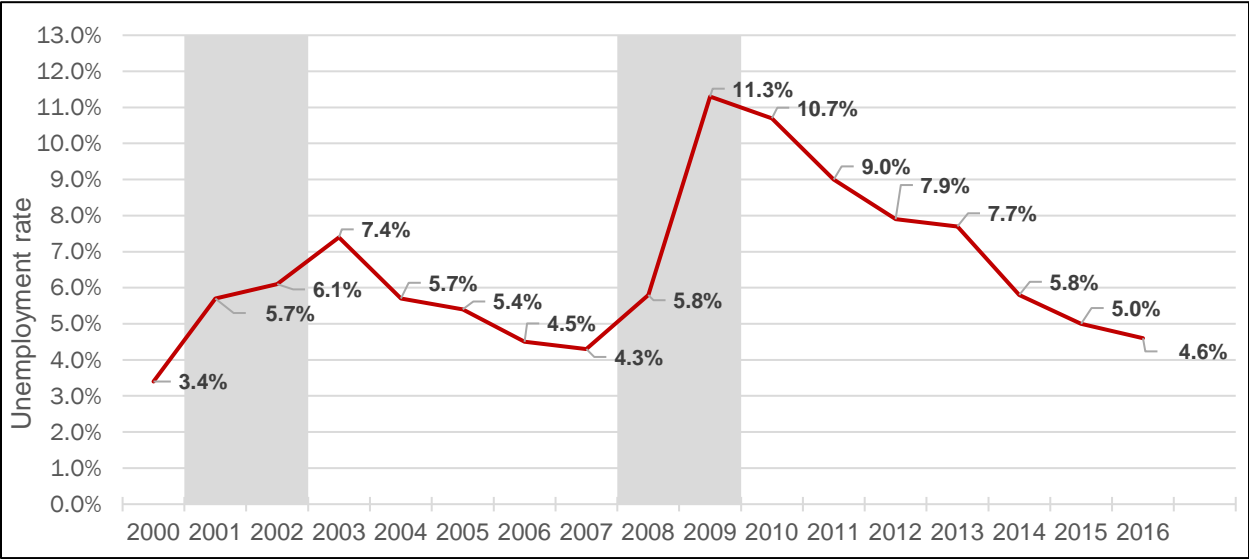
counties in Indiana. An additional five percent commute from Allen, Wayne and Henry counties in Indiana and Darke County in Ohio. Combined, these 12 counties represent 85 percent of Jay County’s laborshed.

Jay County Economic Data

The county’s economic data highlights critical trends affecting quality of life for residents. For instance, the total population in poverty increased by 4.1 percentage points between 2000 and 2016. Child poverty grew at an even faster pace, expanding by 6.6 percentage points during this same time period. The 2016 county unemployment rate is nearing full-employment levels, leaving employers struggling to find qualified workers. Economic diversification and focused educational attainment strategies could be key drivers to reduce the impact of economic downturns, promote higher wages and reduce the poverty rate across the region.



Unemployment Rates



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics – Local Area Unemployment Statistics (2000-2016 Annual Data Release)

The unemployment rate in Jay County increased dramatically after 2007, peaking at 11.3 percent in 2009. Since that time, the rate has been on a steady decline, dropping to 4.6 percent in 2016.

Income & Poverty

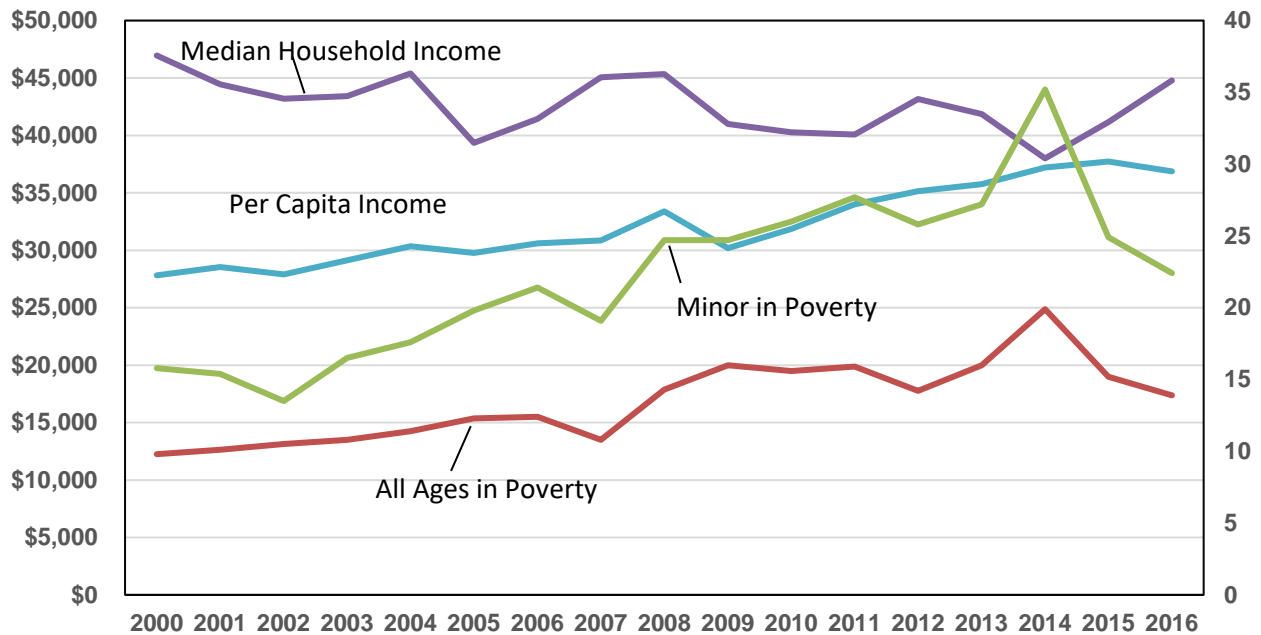
	2000	2008	2016
Total Population in Poverty	9.8%	14.3%	13.9%
Minors (Under Age 18) in Poverty	15.8%	24.7%	22.4%
Real Median Household Income (2013)*	\$46,957	\$45,336	\$44,794
Real Per Capita Income (2013)*	\$27,818	\$33,386	\$36,869

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) and U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis – Regional Personal Income Summary



Median household income in Jay County dropped by \$2,163 between 2000 and 2016 in real dollars (that is, adjusted for inflation), while average income per person increased by \$9,050 in real dollars over the same period. What these data suggest is that there is a growing income inequality that may be taking place in the county. Median income refers to an income level in which 50 percent of the population has income that exceeds that number and 50% falls below that number. So, if real median income goes down, that suggests that 50 percent of the population is now earning less than they did than they did in 2000, adjusted for inflation. The total population in poverty increased by 4.1 percentage points between 2000 and 2016, another factor that could have contributed to the decline in median income. As for child poverty, it grew at an even faster pace, expanding by 6.6 percentage points during this same time period.

The following chart takes a longer historical view of income and poverty in Jay County. The data reveal that median household income in Jay County has been fluctuating for the past 16 years. Real per capita personal income has increased at a moderate pace since 2010. The overall poverty rate for all ages and among individuals under 18 years of age has been increasing since 2000, but both have begun to decline after 2014.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) and U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis – Regional Personal Income Summary

Jay County Assets

One of the most informative work sessions in the development of this plan was the identification of county assets that are available to successfully achieve each of the plan’s goals and objectives. These assets transcend those found in typical development strategies, usually identified through the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) analysis. Discovered through the Community Capitals framework, these assets within the county include not only physical and natural, such as



highway, airports, water supply, climate, etc., but also human, social, cultural, and financial assets that incorporate, relationships, partnerships, and professional experience.

Below is a summary of the assets identified as a result of the focus group sessions that were held, which involved a total of 61 participants. Assets should be reviewed and utilized to the extent practical to overcome potential barriers (also identified in the plan below) to achieve success.



Focus group participants said they “like” these attributes of Jay County:

1. Small town atmosphere, take care of one another, everybody knows your name
2. Open community, welcoming to newcomers, generous people, festivals
3. Agriculture roots and manufacturing base, diversity of industries, plentiful jobs, good wages
4. Low property taxes, low crime, low cost of living, lack of traffic/short commute
5. Not a lot of separation between social classes, more mingling/comradery
6. Located close to other metro regions, access to countryside

Potential Barriers

During the process of identifying the main goals and strategic objectives outlined in the plan, there were several potential barriers that could have an impact on the timely and effective implementation of various facets of the plan. Therefore, during the development of goals and objectives, potential barriers were taken into account to ensure they would not block the achievement of key county-level initiatives.

Some barriers can be overcome or addressed during the actual implementation of the goals or strategies outlined in this plan, while other barriers may require a separate sub-goal or objective to address potential impacts on the county. In some cases, these barriers may need to be tackled prior to the pursuit of some of the goals in order to ensure that they can be completed in an efficient and effective manner.

Focus group participants said they were concerned about these issues in Jay County:

1. Future leadership—older generation won’t relinquish power and younger generation isn’t interested in stepping up in the same way; millennials have interest in social media
2. Service clubs struggle to recruit young people, who are more apt to “do” than “talk”



3. Aging workforce—young people are leaving (44% fewer here than in 1975)
4. Workforce diminishing, increasing poverty
5. Need family-oriented events/more communication regarding upcoming special events
6. Huge gap between hard workers (at the end of their careers) and younger workers with different priorities
7. Jay County has the 3rd highest personal income tax in the state
8. Drug issues—workers can't pass drug screening, causing chaos in the workplace
9. Geographically challenged for retail competition, positioned between two cities
10. School systems have declining enrollment that could hurt Jay County's ability to attract workers/young professionals, who choose to work here but not live here
11. Poor "quality of place" in Portland, makes difficult to recruit college grads not born here

How Healthy is the Jay County Local Economy?

Focus group participants shared these thoughts when prompted regarding the local economy:

1. On par with other rural communities, but sub-par to urban centers and sub-par to Mercer, Ohio
2. Smaller communities like Dunkirk are dying, follows schools issue like chicken/egg
3. Manufacturing is doing well, but limited by workforce, low wages aren't a motivator, wage gap
4. Seems like all employers are hiring, but there's a lot of employee turnover
5. Younger generation has different view of work, save up money & take mini-vacations, then take a new job, if necessary
6. Specific industries reported out their anecdotal estimates of who lives/works in Jay County:
 - Majority of workforce lives/works in Jay County
 - Over 50% live in Jay County and others live in neighboring counties
 - 50% of workers reside in Jay Co. (150 Burmese workers are bussed in from Ft. Wayne)
 - 60-70% of workers are local
 - Just a handful of workers drive in from Randolph County, the rest are local
 - 100% of (one employer's) 10 employees live in Jay County
7. Businesses are supported locally, but struggle to find customers for their products/services
8. Retail is struggling because even though there is local support, residents shop in bigger markets
9. Local restaurants, for the most part, are doing well, but we don't have varied downtown retail
10. People head to Delaware, Adams & Allen counties to dine/spend their disposable income
11. Limited grocery store choices (one just closed, left with only Wal-Mart)
12. Shortage of quality housing, construction industry is backed up in production, flooding issue
13. Vacant Walmart & Mexican restaurant give bad first impression of the town
14. There is some entrepreneurial activity, but not a lot of resources for owners nor renovators
15. Don't feel welcomed here when you open a business and no one attends the ribbon-cutting
16. Grant writing is critical, afraid we are not getting our fair share of state grant dollars



Regional Economic & Community Development Plan

This section of Jay County’s economic and community development plan lays out the overarching goals and SMART objectives (supported by detailed strategies) that will serve as the organization’s plan of work from the years 2019 through 2023. Each of the strategies outlines the responsible party, available assets, measurements to be used, and timeline for completion. Common to these goals and objectives are the key partners who will collaborate over the next five years to implement them (see the list of key partners included below each goal’s rationale).

Goal 1: Economic Development

Build a diversified community and economic development blueprint for Jay County

Goal Rationale

This goal acknowledges that in order to succeed in continued economic growth, the region needs to continue to partner and connect partners throughout the county and region.

Key Partners

Ball State University	Jay County Development Corporation
Jay/Portland Building & Planning	-Economic Development
Century Link	-Community Development
Chamber of Commerce	John Jay Center for Learning
City of Dunkirk/DIDC	Local banks
City of Portland/PIDC	Local businesses/industries
Community Fiber Solutions	Local Governmental Units (LUGs)
Community Leaders/Stakeholders	Local and regional real estate developers
Contractors	Manufacturing Council
Jay County County Engineer	Office of Community & Rural Affairs
Department of Workforce Development	Pennville Town Council/Leaders/PIDC
Engineering Firms	Portland Main Street
Educational Partners	R&B Architects
Elected officials	Realtors
IN Economic Development Association	Redkey Town Council/Leaders/REDC
IN Housing and Community Dev Authority	REMC
IN Dept of Transportation	Region 6 & State
Indiana Michigan Power	Residential mortgage officers/bankers
Indiana State Department of Agriculture	Small Business Administration
Indiana Main Street	State Revolving Loan Fund
Indiana Small Business Development Center	Town of Redkey Main Street
Industry Leadership Group (by sector)	Transform Consulting
Jay County Commissioners	United Way of Jay County
Jay County School Corporation	US Department of Agriculture



Target Outcomes

S: Short-Term (1-2 years): Work together on creating a shared vision in Jay County communities.

M: Medium-Term: (2-3 years): Identify and work on ways to accomplish community downtown and economic growth goals.

L: Long-Term (5+ years): Increased investment and activity in the downtown and general community areas to stabilize and build the economy of each community and Jay County, as a whole.

Objective A:

Complete downtown revitalization planning and initiate/expand the Main Street program in target communities

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Complete the in-progress Redkey Downtown Revitalization Planning Study and apply to become a Main Street Community	Town of Redkey, JCDC – CD, Steering Committee of Downtown Business Owners	JCDC - CD, Remenschneider and Associates, and Town of Redkey Main Street Group	Indiana Main Street, Historic Redkey Group	2015	2022	S: Completed Study M: Redkey becomes an Indiana Main Street Community L: Increased # of thriving establishments and retail traffic to the downtown
Apply for the City of Portland to become a Main Street Community	City of Portland, JCDC – CD, Downtown Business Community	JCDC – CD, Indiana Main Street, Portland Main Street Group	Leadership from local businesses	2018	2022	S: Application submitted M: Portland becomes an Indiana Main Street Community L: Increased assessed value of downtown properties
Fund Portland's Downtown Revitalization Plan (contingent on Main Street application)	City of Portland, JCDC – CD, Community Leaders	City of Portland, Portland Main Street, Local Leaders, Businesses, R&B Architects	Leadership, Local matching funds, buildings for growth, upcoming funding opportunities	2018	2022	S: Revitalization Plan is completed M: Portland downtown revitalization begins L: Increased assessed value of downtown properties and a prosperous downtown
Fund a planning study for the Town of Pennville	JCDC – CD, Community Leaders, Pennville Council	Pennville Leaders, Pennville Council, Jay County Commissioners	Community Leaders, Town Council, buildings for growth options	2018	2022	S: Pennville plan is funded M: Pennville implements plan as funding becomes available L: Capture and celebrate community successes as they occur



Review and update the City of Dunkirk Planning study from 2009	City of Dunkirk, JCDC – CD, Community Leaders	Consultant, Community Leaders, Jay County Commissioners	Community Leaders	2018	2022	S: Planning study is updated and/or new plan is ready to go M: City of Dunkirk is better positioned for opportunities L: Increased investment as measured by assessed value
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Objective B:

Create a supportive system for nurturing and growing entrepreneurial activities

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Conduct an analysis of the county's resources offered to potential entrepreneurs and retailers	JCDC - ED	City of Portland, Leadership Jay County, SBA, ISBDC, Jay County Chamber of Commerce	Community Leadership, Banking, Community, ISBDC	2018	2020	S: Map of the ecosystem M: Directory of resources made available throughout Jay County L: Fill gaps by offering additional services to local entrepreneurs
Convene local stakeholders to discuss the availability of consulting support for current and emerging entrepreneurs (to fill the gaps and create a no-wrong-door system)	JCDC - ED	Local Banks, Indiana Small Business Development Center, Chamber of Commerce	ISBDC, knowledge held by key partners, Chamber's youth entrepreneurship efforts	2018	Ongoing	S: Increase in # of viable loan applications M: Increase in active mentorship opportunities L: Increase in # of local successful entrepreneurs



Objective C:

Enhance the targeted business retention and expansion program in the county

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Establish a Business Retention and Expansion Task Force	JCDC - ED (appoint a BR&E Task Force)	Board, elected officials, other service providers	Executive Pulse Qualtrics Banking community Local government officials	2019	2022 (and ongoing)	S: List of company needs and community issues M: List of growth impediments L: Increased business project investments and activity
Develop and implement a plan to target businesses within communities to be part of the BR&E program	JCDC - ED (appoint a BR&E Task Force)	JCDC Board/Directors, Elected Officials, Service Providers, Chamber of Commerce	Established BR&E Program, Relationships built within the county	2019	2022	S: Prioritized list of key sectors being targets M: Interaction between businesses and community increases L: New or expanded businesses locate in Jay County
Address policies or programs that can help remove impediments to business growth in the county ("red flags") as well as opportunities ("green flags") that can help move business growth forward	JCDC - ED (appoint a BR&E Task Force)	JCDC Board/Director, elected officials, service providers, Chamber of Commerce	Established BR&E Program, led by community Task Force Relationships built within the county Human capital of the BR&E Task Force	2019	2022	S: Prioritized list of policies/programs identified M: Specific projects implemented as a response to "red flags" and "green flags" L: # of businesses retained, increased sales, production, and profit



Objective D:

Examine and pursue value-added agricultural opportunities in the county and/or region

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Conduct a data-driven assessment of the Agricultural assets of the Jay County and the East Central Indiana Region	JCDC - ED, Rex Journey	To be determined.	Data Snapshot ANR Advisory Committee	2019	2020	S: Update Plan M: Results reviewed and action taken L: Results inform feasibility study
Determine the economic leakages existing in the Agricultural Sector in the county and/or region; explore the feasibility of pursuing value-added Agricultural Enterprises	JCDC - ED, Rex Journey	To be determined.	Data Snapshot ANR Advisory Committee	2019	2020	S: Identify key areas of leakage M: Companies are recruited or existing companies are expanded to fill leakages L: More supply chain inputs are regionally sourced; more value-added activities in local economy

Objective E:

Prepare to capitalize on the needs of existing company expansion/ new company location

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Assess the current status of land under control and “shovel ready” sites in each community	JCDC - ED	Local units of government, local Economic Development Corps, IEDA	Assessor, Local units of government, local economic development corps	2019	2020	S: Update Industrial Land Status M: Work for “shovel ready” status in each Industrial Park L: More sites utilized for new development throughout Jay County
Integrate into overall community infrastructure plan and establish priorities	JCDC – ED	Cities, Towns, County, Economic Development Corps	Existing Industrial Parks, Land site control, economic development corps	2019	Ongoing	S: Review assessment of Industrial Parks M: Make a plan for each Industrial Park so each reaches the local set goals L: Increased marketability of each Industrial Park



Integrate each community infrastructure plan into a county-wide plan for industrial site development	JCDC - ED	Cities, Towns, County, Economic Development Corps, County Engineer, Utilities		2019	2020	<p>S: Determine costs to reach plan goals</p> <p>M: Seek funding and grants according to the plans</p> <p>L: Market shovel-ready sites to existing and potential companies</p>
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Goal 2: Housing

Increase the quality and diversity of housing in Jay County

Goal Rationale

This goal recognizes the history and future importance of housing in the county in retaining and growing its population and workforce and seniors aging in place. The goal identifies objectives and subsequent strategies to increase the number of quality housing opportunities in Jay County.

Key Partners

Jay/Portland County Building & Planning
Century Link
City of Dunkirk
City of Portland
Community Leaders/Stakeholders
Contractors
Jay County Development Corporation
 -Economic Development
 -Community Development
Jay County County Engineer
Jay County and Local Elected Officials
IN Housing & Community Development
Authority
Indiana Michigan Power
Jay County Commissioners
Jay County Community Development

Jay County Development Corporation
Local banks
Local Governmental Units (LUGs)
Local businesses/industries
Local Leaders
Local and regional real estate developers
Manufacturing Council
Office of Community & Rural Affairs
Ohio Valley Gas Corporation
Purdue Center for Regional Development
Purdue Extension Community Development
Realtors
REMC
Residential mortgage officers/bankers
Small Business Administration
US Department of Agriculture



Target Outcomes

S: Short-Term (1-2 years): Gather surveys, studies, and secondary data on housing in Jay County.

M: Medium-Term (2-3 years): Form a housing coalition and using data gathered to identify gaps in housing demand and form a housing plan.

L: Long-Term (5+ years): Attract new housing of all sorts to Jay County consistent with the economic and community development needs of the county.

Objective A:

Develop a detailed profile of Jay County's housing characteristics

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Analyze comprehensive profile of housing in the county drawn from secondary data resources	JCDC – ED & CD	Cities, Towns, County	Housing study completed by National Land Institute	2019	2019	S: Identify key issues that emerged from study M: Form a plan to work towards bridging the housing gaps discovered L: Work long term to implement the plan to address housing needs in Jay County
Work with key employers to have a survey of housing needs distributed to their employees	JCDC – ED & CD	Local Businesses/Industry, TBD	PCRD's housing survey West side senior housing study	2019 (spring)	2020	S: Identify survey tool and survey group M: Analyze the survey results L: Work on a plan with results from the survey
Conduct focus group meetings with key informants who have an understanding of housing in the county	JCDC – ED & CD	Local businesses and TBD	Potentially PCRD's housing focus group protocol, Relationships with former focus group participants	2019 (fall/winter)	2020	S: Decide focus group members and key informants M: Host focus groups and analyze information L: Implement results into the Plan



Objective B:

Develop a plan to expand the diversity of market rate housing that aligns with the needs of current and potential residents as prioritized by the local units of government and JCDC.

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Increase single family housing resources in the county	JCDC - ED	County engineer Building/planning director Local and regional real estate developers	Available land for site development	2020	2022	S: Investigate IHADA housing and tax incentives M: Leverage federal and state resources to incentivize development L: Increase quantity and quality of single family housing in Jay County
Increase rental and condo availability in the county	JCDC - ED	County engineer Building/planning director Local and regional real estate developers	Available land for site development	2020	2022	S: Investigate IHADA housing and tax incentives M: Leverage federal and state resources to incentivize development L: Increase quantity and quality of rentals and condos in Jay County
Increase senior/assisted living housing options in the county	JCDC - CD	County engineer Building/planning director Local and regional real estate developers	Available land for site development	2020	2022	S: Investigate IHADA housing and tax incentives M: Leverage federal and state resources to incentivize development L: Increase quantity and quality of senior/assisted living housing in Jay County



Objective C:

Work with a coalition of key individuals and organizations to improve, expand, and attract housing in Jay County

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Establish a Housing Task Force that will work on attracting new housing developments and revitalizing the existing stock of housing	JCDC - ED Board-appointed housing task force Local Units of Government (LUGs)	Realtors Residential Mortgage officers/bankers Community stakeholders	Available venues for housing summit (John Jay Center for Learning and Community Center)	2019	2021	S: Invite STP without PMS M: Engage community stakeholders in planning activities L: Increase number of new and revitalized homes in Jay County
Explore incentives to improve or revitalize existing housing stock	JCDC - ED Board-appointed housing task force Local Units of Government (LUGs)	Realtors Residential mortgage officers/bankers Community stakeholders		2019	2021	S: Review available options M: Apply for potential funding opportunities L: Secure funding for increased housing in Jay County
Attract new housing developments in the county	JCDC - ED Board-appointed housing task force Local Units of Government (LUGs)	Realtors Residential mortgage officers/bankers Community stakeholders		2019	2021	S: Identify potential building sites and demonstrate demand M: Establish relationships with local/regional developers L: Increase number of new and revitalized homes in Jay County



Goal 3: Infrastructure

Improve the Physical Infrastructure of Jay County

Goal Rationale

This goal seeks to address the physical features and growing infrastructure needs to retain and attract industry, people, and amenities to Jay County.

Key Partners

Century Link	John Jay Center for Learning
City of Dunkirk	Leadership Jay County
City of Portland	Local banks
Community Fiber Solutions	Local Governmental Units (LUGs)
Community Leaders/Stakeholders	Local businesses/industries
Jay County Engineer	Local Leaders
Department of Workforce Development	Local and regional real estate developers
Educational Partners	Manufacturing Council
Local Elected officials	IN Office of Comm & Rural Affairs
IN Economic Development Association	Pennville Council/Leaders
IN Housing & Comm Development Authority	Portland Main Street
IN Department of Transportation	R&B Architects
IN State Department of Agriculture	Realtors
Indiana Main Street	REMC
Indiana Small Business Development Center	Region 6 & State
Industry Leadership Group (by sector)	Residential mortgage officers/bankers
Jay County Commissioners	Small Business Administration
Jay – Portland Building & Planning	State Revolving Loan Fund
Jay County School Corporation	Transform Consulting
Jay County Development Corporation	United Way
-Economic Development	US Department of Agriculture
-Community Development	Workforce Task Force
	Work One



Target Outcomes

S: Short-Term (1-2 years): Identify needed projects in each community and rural areas of the county and establish priorities.

M: Medium-Term (2-3 years): Identify and apply for funding as available to address community needs.

L: Long-Term (5+ years): Projects funded leverage local funds and are implemented on schedule.

Objective A:

Complete existing infrastructure projects that have been approved and funded

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
<p>Complete funded INDOT Projects:</p> <p>2021: Portland Blaine Pike sidewalk and paving</p> <p>2021: Portland High/Middle St. sidewalk</p> <p>2021: Redkey Mooney St. sidewalk</p> <p>2021: Dunkirk Highland St. sidewalk</p> <p>2018: Redkey Community Crossings for paving 9 street segments</p> <p>2022: Portland Votaw St. sidewalk</p>	<p>LUG point person</p> <p>JCDC - CD</p> <p>Mayors or City Councils</p>	<p>INDOT, LUGs, Choice One Engineering, FV Engineering, BLN Engineering</p>	<p>Local matching funds, asset management plan</p>	<p>2018</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>S: Funding in place</p> <p>M: # of dollars matched/leveraged and brought into Jay County</p> <p>L: Projects completed</p>
<p>Complete Redkey Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Project in 2018</p>	<p>Redkey Council President, JCDC - CD, FV</p>	<p>USDA, FV, Contractors</p>	<p>Funding, Local Leadership, Capable engineers</p>	<p>Started</p>	<p>Spring 2018</p>	<p>M: Projects completed</p> <p>L: IDEM compliant</p>
<p>Eliminate blight/abandoned homes in the City of Dunkirk</p>	<p>Dunkirk Council president, JCDC - CD</p>	<p>Jack Robbins, Jay County Commissioners, IHEDA</p>	<p>Blighted homes, IHEDA funding, local contractors, interest in properties when its complete</p>	<p>Started</p>	<p>End of 2018</p>	<p>M: 20 blighted homes torn down</p> <p>L: # of lots repurposed, sold to adjacent property owners or interested parties</p>



Objective B:

Plan for new funding to address existing infrastructure needs in the county and its communities

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Pave streets, create trails, and repair sidewalks in targeted communities	JCDC - CD and local communities	Each community and council in Jay County, INDOT	Street Department Supervisors, community leaders, local foundations, countywide master trail plan	2018	Ongoing	S: Increase awareness of opportunities M: Prepare appropriate proposals for interested communities L: Secure funding for interested communities
Assist Jay County communities in infrastructure needs such as wastewater, water, and other needs.	JCDC - CD and local communities	Each community in and council in Jay County, OCRA, IHCDA, SRF, USDA, etc.	Potential local matching funds, future trail master plan, Dunkirk master plan, Portland long-term control plan	2018	Ongoing	S: Increase awareness of opportunities M: Prepare appropriate proposals for interested communities; leverage existing financial resources L: Communities are positioned for growth with strong infrastructure

Objective C:

Explore the feasibility of addressing specialized infrastructure needs

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Assess the need for establishing an Early Childhood Development Center in Jay County	Jay Schools, Youth Service Bureau, United Way, The Portland Foundation, JCDC - CD	Jay Schools, Youth Service Bureau, United Way, Transform Consulting, The Portland Foundation	School buildings, partners, consultant hired, strong local need, The Portland Foundation	2018	Ongoing	S: Complete Feasibility Study (follow recommendations) M: Analyze results L: Use results to inform next step
Explore funding options for establishing an Early Childhood Development Center in the county	Jay Schools, Youth Service Bureau, United Way, The Portland Foundation, JCDC - CD	Jay Schools, Youth Service Bureau, United Way, Transform Consulting	Jay School Corp. The Portland Foundation	2018	Ongoing	S: Identify gaps in funding M: Identify funding options L: Funding secured (based upon feasible funding resources)



Assess the current state of broadband access in the county with a mapping project	Jay County commissioners, JCDC - ED, subcommittee appointed by board	John Moore Century Link Community Fiber Solutions REMC	Wind farm Utility companies	2018	2020	S: Completed mapping study M: Validate secondary (FCC) data with local ISP information L: Plan for strategic investment in geographies that overlay/extend just beyond the existing broadband footprint
Identify viable strategies and programs for expanding broadband access to households and businesses in the county	JCDC – ED & CD	Utility companies like Century Link and Community Fiber Solutions (ISPs), REMC	Utility companies End users	2018	Ongoing	S: Form a small group to work on this goal and solutions to lack of broadband throughout Jay County M: “Connect the dots” across Jay County as funding becomes available L: Increase in access in the areas serviced
Launch a series of programs and/webinars to help promote adoption of broadband by local businesses	JCDC – ED & CD, Purdue Extension Community Development	Local businesses Utility companies like Century Link and Community Fiber Solutions (ISPs), REMC	Digital Ready curriculum through PCRD/Purdue Extension	2018	Ongoing	S: Program launch M: Businesses implement digital ready strategies L: Businesses expand online markets and revenues



Goal 4: Workforce

Expand and strengthen the workforce pipeline in Jay County

Goal Rationale

This goal seeks to address weaknesses identified in the workforce that can be strengthened as key local partners collaborate, such as bringing education and industry together to plan for future needs.

Key Partners

Ball State University	John Jay Center for Learning
Century Link	Leadership Jay County
City of Dunkirk	Local banks
City of Portland	Local businesses/industries
Community Fiber Solutions	Local Governmental Units (LUGs)
Community Leaders/Stakeholders	Local Leaders
Jay County Engineer	Local and regional real estate developers
Department of Workforce Development	Manufacturing Council
Educational Partners	Pennville Council/Leaders
Elected officials	Portland Main Street
IN Economic Development Association	Purdue Center for Regional Development
IN State Department of Agriculture	Purdue Extension Community Development
Indiana Small Business Development Center	REMC
Industry Leadership Group (by sector)	Region 6 & State
Jay County Commissioners	United Way
Jay County School Corporation	US Department of Agriculture
Jay County Development Corporation	Work Force Development
-Economic Development	Workforce Task Force
-Community Development	Work One
	Youth Service Bureau



Target Outcomes

S: Short-Term (1-2 years): Compile data profiles to support data-driven decision-making.

M: Medium-Term (2-3 years): Conduct workshop and develop next-steps plan by industry sector and between sectors.

L: Long-Term (5+ years): Implement workforce pipeline improvement programs and track results by total number of positions filled in critical industry sectors.

Objective A:

Profile the industry and occupational make-up of Jay County

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Update 2016 secondary data analysis of the industry and occupational make-up and commuter data of Jay County	JCDC - ED	Purdue Center for Regional Dev. (PCRD) WFD – Region 6 & State – WF Task Force	EMSI State Data Base	3/1/18	6/1/18	S: Data profiles/documents are completed
Analyze data profiles to determine strengths and limitations in industry sectors, occupations and workforce commuting patterns for county	JCDC - ED	Purdue Center for Regional Dev. (PCRD) WFD – Region 6 & State – WF Task Force	Wage Rates Employment Levels Tax Records Capital investment	3/1/18	6/1/18	S: Document/minutes that list strengths & limitations
Determine industries that are best positioned to the county's economic well-being and that align with local priorities	JCDC – ED	Purdue Center for Regional Dev. (PCRD) WFD – Region 6 & State – WF Task Force		3/1/18	6/1/18	S: Data profile document by PCRD
Review and establish priority industry sectors based on contribution to Jay County's economic well-being to target for further investigation of their workforce needs	JCDC - ED	Purdue Center for Regional Dev. (PCRD) WFD – Region 6 & State – WF Task Force		7/1/18	8/15/18	S: Minutes of meeting with key JCDC staff and local leaders



Share general highlights of findings and next steps with key partners	JCDC - ED	Governmental Units JCDC BOD Educational Partners		9/1/18	9/30/18	S: Documentation of meetings held with partners.
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Objective B:

Determine the workforce development-related needs of priority employers in Jay County

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Classify Jay County employers within priority industry sectors and determine priority rank within sector and between sectors	JCDC - ED	Purdue Center for Regional Dev. (PCRD) WFD – Region 6 & State	WF Task Force	10/1/18	11/1/18	S: Priority sectors and industries identified
Determine top 3 priority industry sectors in rank order	JCDC - ED	WF Task Force	Information generated from Objective 1			S: Data from most recent Jay County snapshot consulted
Identify industry leadership group by sector for top three sectors	JCDC - ED	JJCL JCDL ED & CD WF Task Force		10/1/18	10/31/18	S: Secure industry leadership
Determine information needed from employers during information gathering phase. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess present and future skill needs; Required educational credentials; Percent of workforce commuting from outside of county. Preferred provider and career pathways used to secure skilled workers in the company; Trends for hiring from specific feeder 	JCDC	Industry Leadership Group by sector JCDC – ED JCDC – CD	WF Task Force	10/1/18	11/15/18	S: Survey developed



employers or receiver employers. Etc.						
Survey targeted employers	JCDC	JCDC Staff	JCDC Interviews Survey Monkey Hoosier Opportunities Manufacturing Council	11/15/18	3/1/19	S: Survey completed and data compiled
Conduct workshop with key education/workforce development leaders, agencies and organizations to discuss survey findings and determine next steps to support the employer need	JCDC	WF Task Force Jay School Corporation JJCL	Purdue Center for Regional Dev. (PCRD) Region 6 WorkOne	3/1/19	6/30/19	M: Conduct workshop and develop next-steps plan by industry sector and between sectors
Identify incentive programs that local employers are using (or may use) to attract and retain workers. Implement the program(s) deemed most viable by key local employers	JCDC and its workforce development task force	Department of Workforce Development / Work One Purdue Center for Regional Development	Local industries & businesses Other communities that have launched employer incentive programs			M: Document that highlights strategies for attracting and retaining talent L: Implementation of programs / policies to attract / retain workers



Objective C:

Provide workforce development training for youth and adults of targeted employers

Strategies	Responsible Party	Key Partners	Available Assets	Timeline		Measurements to be used
				Start	End	
Implement one new high school-based career preparation program based upon priority industry sectors	Jay School Corporation	JJCL JCDC Workforce Development	Industry Sector Workforce Task Force HOE	7/1/19	7/31/19	L: Implementation of new or revised curriculum
Co-host Manufacturing Day in partnership with local high school and manufacturers	JCDC and Jay County School Corporation	Local industries	Information generated from Objective 1			M: Manufacturing Day held and active engagement by schools, students and parents
Explore Next Level training program and Purdue Skills for Success Manufacturing Program for implementation to supplement or refine current manufacturing curriculum	JJCL	Purdue Center for Regional Dev. (PCRD) JJCL Manufacturing Council	Purdue MEP	7/1/19	7/31/19	M: Hold education workshop on available resources to determine if they merit implementation
Identify career pathway to selected industry sectors and employers, including nesting employers	JCDC	WF Task Force	Jay County High School JJCL Workforce Development	7/1/19	12/31/19	M: Career Pathways completed for selected employers
Develop an implementation plan and budget as appropriate	JCDC	WF Task Force	State and National Best Practices Research	8/1/19	9/30/19	M: Implementation plan developed



Identify appropriate funding sources	JCDC	JCDC	OCRA Manufacturers Foundations Workforce Development EDIT	8/1/19	9/30/19	M: Plan for potential sources to match funding needs
Seek funding through various organizations, grants, fees, etc. according to plan	JCDC	Jay School Corporation JJCL Workforce Development JCDC - CD	Governor's Next Level Program Economic Development Funds Grant Agencies Foundation	As determined		M: Completion of funding request/grant applications as appropriate according to funding source deadlines



Evaluation Plan

Key Measures and Strategies to Track Progress

Jay County will monitor the progress of its economic development plan by tracking the trends of the following indicators that are part of the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) “Community Vitality Index” (<https://pcrd.purdue.edu/ruralindianastats/>). The measures, when taken as a whole, are intended to track measurable improvements in the well-being of counties.

- **Gross Assessed Valuation (GVA):** total dollar value of all real property and improvements and personal property. GVA serves to comprehensively measure the effectiveness of the Jay County plan. If the plan is successfully deployed, then gross assessed valuation of properties should increase.
- **Average Wage Per Worker:** total annual income divided by total population of workforce. The county plan is intended to help improve the availability of good paying jobs for the local labor force.
- **Total Number of Establishments:** total number of businesses in the county. The intent is to retain and grow more businesses in the area and to attract those companies that add strength to the economic drivers of the county.
- **Population Growth:** the change in population. Population growth serves to comprehensively measure the overall effectiveness of the Jay County goals. The goal is to stem the loss of population and begin seeing positive growth in the county’s population.
- **Educational Attainment:** the measurement of post-secondary attainment by age and level of completion. Increasing the number of people with post-secondary education is one of the major outcomes being pursued in order to fill and attract middle- and higher-skilled jobs.

As noted above, these metrics are intended to track the overall effectiveness of the strategies and action steps outlined in this plan over time and are viewed as “global metrics.” At same time, more granular measurements are outlined in the the tables next to each strategy. These serve as the “local metrics” that should reveal positive movement over a shorter-term period than the OCRA community vitality measures, which often take much longer to witness any appreciable changes. Both global and local metrics will be tracked and presented to the JCDC Board of Directors meeting at least semi-annually.



Acknowledgements

The Jay County Development Corporation (JCDC) would like to thank its Board of Directors, local community stakeholders who participated in focus groups, local county residents who took the survey, and the Purdue Center for Regional Development (PCRD) for its data compilation and analysis work. We would also like to show our appreciation to the elected officials, industry leaders, non-profit directors, educational professionals, and business owners of Jay County for their invaluable insight and ideas that led to the creation of this plan.

Since 2011, when Jay County joined the East Central Indiana Regional Partnership, JCDC has added a number of tools to its kit and collaborated with new partners. These partnerships continue to grow and bring new opportunities to the region.

Planning for success,

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