

INDIANA RURAL FORUMS

MODULE #5 ***REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS*** ***(March 22, 2007)***

***Indiana Rural Forums modules are based upon the work of the Rural
Indiana Strategy for Excellence (RISE) 2020 Strategic Framework***

Overview of RISE 2020 and the Strategic Options Report

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

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

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

The strategic roadmap that resulted from this dynamic grassroots initiative contains three key components - a foundation, seven pillars, and their associated strategic options. The **Strategic Options Report**, used by the Indiana Rural Forums as the framework for regional discussions, is the result of the recommendations made by the work groups, and the input received from rural residents and service providers at public input meetings.

Indiana Rural Forums - Module Packets

The module packets presented and utilized during the Indiana Rural Forums are based upon the seven pillars of the RISE 2020 initiative. These pillars include:

- Asset Based Community Development
- Civic Leadership and Engagement
- Wealth Creation and Retention
- Regional Frameworks
- Rural Innovation
- Foster Youth Engagement
- Diversity, Access and Inclusiveness

Regional discussions will revolve around the strategies and approaches recommended for each pillar in the **Strategic Options Report**.

RISE 2020 Strategic Options Report and Regional Discussion Questions

On behalf of the Purdue Center for Regional Development, USDA-Rural Development and Purdue Extension Service we would like to welcome you to the Indiana Rural Forums and especially this regional discussion. Your conversation today is being facilitated by representatives of the Purdue Extension Service and USDA-Rural Development. This regional dialogue will be approximately thirty minutes in length and, at the conclusion of the discussion, all thirteen locations will join back up with the main studio where each location will give a brief report of their discussion. To begin this discussion:

- **Introduce yourself and indicate what organization you work for and your role.**

- **Please review and reflect on the following questions:**
 - a. What are three challenges facing your community that are also facing a neighboring community? How can the communities begin working together to find a common solution and share resources to address them?
 - b. To succeed in the twenty-first century rural communities will need to improve their broadband technology, water resources, sewer and drainage, energy generation/distribution and transportation systems. How do we develop regional frameworks that address these types of infrastructure needs?
 - c. How do we increase regional economic collaboration? What types of organizational support do you need for regional economic collaboration to occur?
 - d. How do we initiate quality-of-life programs that optimize the ability of communities and regions to maximize competitive advantages and provide for the well-being of all residents?
 - e. How do we encourage the development of state government policies and programs, including funding that support regional frameworks?

- **Review the Strategic Options Report section included in this module. Is there at least one action or initiative that your discussion group would like to address on a regional basis? If so, how can the Purdue Center for Regional Development, USDA-Rural Development, and the Purdue Extension Service assist your group with those follow-up actions?**

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

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

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

As our society and markets go global, we must find new ways for our communities to stay relevant. This can be done if we work together within new regional frameworks. However, these regions need to be determined by the issue – transportation, health care, arts, or economic development – not by lines around traditional county lines or outsiders' view of a region. 19th century surveyors drew communities and governments into squares, while we live in circles and corridors.

Regional opportunities exist through collaboration and connectivity on common issues and needs. We must optimize our competitive advantages – Central Indiana will not be a hardwood Mecca, but southern Indiana can. Life Sciences or logistics certainly have natural advantages in some regions, but not others. Regional initiatives can work if leaders from all sectors are willing to work beyond their geographic boundaries and across traditional sectors. Regional collaboration requires giving up a little, but getting a lot more in return.

STRATEGIC OPTIONS:

- Increase regional economic collaboration by developing tools and reducing restrictions.
 - ✧ *Enact legislation to establish regional industrial and technology parks, which allow for the sharing of property, sales, and income taxes.*
 - ✧ *Enhance public and private investment in regional industrial and technology parks for new and sustainable job creation and development.*
 - ✧ *Develop regional frameworks that enable public, private and philanthropic financial institutions to work together regionally to provide investment capital to businesses and communities.*
 - ✧ *Improve understanding of government structures and processes at all levels to build support for modernizing services and their delivery.*
 - ◆ *Work to eliminate cross-county barriers that hinder collaboration*

- ◆ *Develop initiatives that enable communities to capitalize on regional advantage without losing local identities*
- ⌘ *Develop incentives for collaboration along corridors to improve connectivity within unique regions*
 - ◆ *Transportation, Cultural, Educational, Economic and others*
- **Create a world-class workforce, focused on place-based assets and utilizing partnerships between business and education, which is recognized globally as a key Indiana asset.**
 - ⌘ *Develop educational processes that focus upon the importance of regional approaches in a competitive global economy.*
 - ⌘ *Increase cooperation between public and private P-12 schools and colleges and universities in the same regions to maximize educational outcomes.*
 - ⌘ *Leverage community adult learning centers to strengthen regional collaboration through educational and other initiatives.*
- **Create a dynamic, integrated statewide transportation plan that embraces technological advances, serves economic and community development needs, and maximizes Indiana's advantage as the Crossroads of America.**
 - ⌘ *Modernize the decision-making procedures to provide:*
 - ◆ *Knowledge-based strategies, including awareness of service gaps*
 - ◆ *Sophisticated modeling tools*
 - ◆ *Processes that embrace land use standards and natural resource uses*
 - ◆ *Technical assistance*
 - ◆ *Financial resources and asset commitments*
 - ⌘ *Examine structural changes in the way Indiana's highways are funded by linking taxes to use (e.g., miles traveled and weight).*
- **Develop local understanding of all transportation system components.**
 - ⌘ *Recognize the importance of intermodal transportation development, which links rural communities and opportunities into the larger statewide framework.*
 - ⌘ *Leverage the interstate and intrastate transportation systems as supply chain assets.*
 - ◆ *Design an integrated highway plan representing all connecting jurisdictions*
 - ◆ *Connect every county seat to an Interstate highway by a four-lane limited access highway*
 - ◆ *Promote intermodal development*
 - ◆ *Develop and utilize corridor incentives to create linear business clusters*

