The IEC has been steadily expanding in St. Joseph County, Indiana over the last 40 years thanks to the site’s access to major Midwest and East Coast markets, extensive transportation and logistics advantages, robust regional workforce, and other competitive advantages. Recognizing the need for a shared vision and thought out plan for the 7,200-acre site, St. Joseph County launched an ambitious effort to develop this Indiana Enterprise Center Area Management Plan. The Indiana Enterprise Center Area Management Plan details a vision and plan that seeks to put St. Joseph County and the region on a path towards greater economic prosperity, regional connectivity, and community resilience. The vision, guiding principles, and recommendations included in this plan integrate local character, market demand, and area conditions to optimize opportunities, address challenges, and to ensure the area remains a safe and prosperous segment of the local economy for generations to come.
The goal of the IEC planning process has been to develop a forward-looking area management plan that positions the County and other stakeholders to realize the IEC’s full economic development potential in a way that also promotes a range of community and environmental benefits. The planning process began with a detailed analysis of the IEC’s existing land use, transportation, utility, and environmental conditions. Concurrent to existing conditions analysis, the project team engaged area residents, farmers, business representatives, elected officials, and other local and regional stakeholders in a variety of public outreach activities. This existing conditions analysis and community input informed the plan’s guiding principles, including:

1. Strong Economy;
2. Enhanced Mobility;
3. Thriving Environment;
4. Community Resilience;
5. Livable and Healthy Communities;
6. Coordination and Collaboration.

The Area Management Plan illustrates how these guiding principles can be activated through a variety of strategies that promote three target industries, namely, Smart Logistics, Agribusiness, and Advanced Manufacturing. To build upon and enhance these sectors, this plan proposes expanding freight rail access, implementing multimodal transportation improvements; leveraging existing utility networks and strategically expanding utility capacities; connecting the region’s natural areas through greenways and trails; and preserving agricultural lands. To provide the County with additional guidance, these strategies were illustrated as conceptual development areas and translated into specific projects, policies and programs.

Successful implementation of this plan will result in increased diversification of the local and regional economy, strengthening the county’s competitive advantages, the creation of new and higher paying job opportunities, increased household incomes, and an expanded tax base for the St. Joseph County and the New Carlisle communities. Additionally, it will preserve agricultural land, connect public parks and trails, and create a sustainable industrial facility for the 21st Century economy. The Indiana Enterprise Center Area Management Plan serves to ensure safety of the area’s assets, while allowing for economic growth to advance as opportunities and interest continue to arise.