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For more than 40-years, the Indiana Enterprise Center (IEC), one of the nation’s best kept development secrets, has been steadily expanding in St. Joseph County, Indiana. Driven by its proximity to highways, rail, air, and maritime facilities, the area has grown into 2,200-acres of active and thriving businesses, employing 1,536 people across 32 businesses that generate nearly $459 million of annual sales revenue. With the recent addition of the St. Joseph County Energy Center, a 700 MW natural gas fired power plant, as well as heightened interest in rail access by various Class I and short line railroads, the Indiana Enterprise Center has become a focal point for site selectors across the country. Recognizing the challenges such a large area of activity presents to internal operations and to adjacent communities, St. Joseph County (“County”) worked with a team of consultants (“Project Team”) to develop this Indiana Enterprise Center Area Management Plan. The goal is to allow area landholders to participate in development opportunities (nearly 400-acres is currently being marketed as of this report) while protecting the character of the community and the agricultural resources throughout the area. This planning document seeks to balance these interests in a way that maximizes the ability of each to thrive.
The Indiana Enterprise Center Area Management Plan details a vision for approximately 7,200 acres in the New Carlisle area in northwest St. Joseph County, Indiana (Figure 1.1). The plan seeks to put New Carlisle, St. Joseph County, and the greater South Bend Region on a path towards sustainable prosperity, connectivity, and resilience through coordinated land use, capital improvement, and economic development strategies within the IEC. This plan articulates a vision and guiding principles in a cohesive and comprehensive plan, while also prioritizing implementation strategies. The purpose of the plan is to provide a managed development process that can be implemented incrementally and as opportunities arise. As such, this Area Management Plan should be considered a living document that may shift over time and should be updated on a periodic basis.

Coordinated land use and economic development in the New Carlisle area has been a priority for St. Joseph County for nearly 50 years. In 1972, the New Carlisle Business and Professional Association published a study that called for a “New Carlisle Industrial Park” and “initiating an industrial development program in the town of New Carlisle as a stimulus to its economy.” In 1987, the County established the St. Joseph County Economic Development District #1 in response to the I/N Tek and I/N Kote development opportunities. Since then, the County has updated and refined the boundaries of the New Carlisle Economic Development Area (NCEDA) several times to position the County to respond to increasingly larger development prospects (Figure 1.2).

Since that time, businesses have been increasingly drawn to the New Carlisle area due to its locational, economic, and community strengths, including:

- Access to key road, rail, air, and water transportation corridors and assets;
- Ample developable land;
- High utility capacities;
- Proximity to major markets;
- Labor force availability;
- Diverse industry base;
- Competitive tax environment; and,
- Unique community character and livability.

New business investments can potentially create thousands of jobs and significant economic opportunities for the region. However, this investment could also go unrealized or occur in a way that threatens the area’s strengths and character if proper planning is not in place. To address these risks, the St. Joseph County Department of Infrastructure, Planning, and Growth initiated this area management planning effort, on behalf of the Redevelopment Commission and Board of Commissioners. In 2017, the County initiated the Indiana Enterprise Center Area Management Plan process in response to increased development interest in the New Carlisle area. This Plan is intended to ensure that new development occurs in a way that is coordinated with local and regional priorities; directs development to appropriate locations; and minimizes impacts to the surrounding communities, including agricultural lands and natural areas. The goal is to recognize industrial interest; minimize impacts; and allow for participating landowners and industries to benefit in an appropriate and sustainable manner.

In developing this Area Management Plan, the County worked with local partners to conduct extensive research, complete technical reports and studies, and engage residents and community stakeholders throughout the New Carlisle area and St. Joseph County. The IEC planning process consisted of a wide range of planning, engineering, and community engagement activities. These activities were part of a highly collaborative, multidisciplinary, and iterative planning process designed to discover, plan, and deliver the IEC Area Management Plan.
The goal of the Area Management Plan is to put New Carlisle and St. Joseph County on a path towards greater prosperity, connectivity, and resilience through coordinated and sustainable development within the IEC. Toward that end, the IEC Area Management Plan builds on and aligns with several other local and regional plans and studies, including (See Appendix A):

- Town of New Carlisle Master Plan (in progress)
- South Bend International Airport Logistics Park Master Plan (in progress)
- MACOG Michiana on the Move: 2045 Transportation Plan (2019)
- Indiana Enterprise Center Economic Opportunities Analysis (2019)
- Indiana Enterprise Center Marketing Strategy (2019)
- New Carlisle Station Feasibility Study for NICTD (2019)
- St. Joseph County Rail Opportunity Plan (2018)
- Indiana Agritourism Strategy (2017)
- A Plan for Prosperity, Growth and Inclusion: Version 1.0 (2016)
- Proposed New Carlisle Industrial Park (1972)

Key outcomes of the IEC Area Management Planning Process include:

- A vision for a more prosperous, connected, and resilient future
- Guiding principles for future planning and development
- An integrated land use and transportation plan for the IEC Planning Area
- A prioritized Capital Improvement Plan
- Increased coordination between local and regional stakeholders

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 community. Additionally, it will preserve agricultural land, one of the unique elements of the region, and create a sustainable industrial facility for the 21st Century economy. The Plan is intended to be used by County officials as well as the numerous public and private stakeholders involved in the planning process.

**VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The following vision statement and guiding principles have been developed and refined throughout this Area Management Planning Process. This vision statement and the corresponding guiding principles inform the recommendations contained in this plan and will guide ongoing efforts to develop the IEC.

**Vision Statement and Guiding Principles**

Development within the Indiana Enterprise Center will put the region on a path towards greater prosperity, connectivity, and resilience. This will be accomplished through the coordinated implementation of recommended actions that align with the following guiding principles:

1. **Strong Economy.** A strong economy is essential for the wellbeing of residents, businesses, and the community. Economic development efforts can increase and diversify employment opportunities, increase household incomes and local tax bases, and strengthen the region’s competitive advantages. Investment within the IEC will improve the region’s economic performance in a way that strengthens and connects the region’s natural and cultural assets. The IEC will create a mutually reinforcing cycle of business and community investment.

2. **Enhanced Mobility.** An easy-to-use transportation network that enables multiple choices for travel supports a strong economy, community resilience, and a flourishing environment. Development within the IEC will coincide with the implementation of high-priority, multimodal transportation projects that connect the area to local, regional, national, and global transportation networks.

3. **Thriving Environment.** A thriving natural environment is essential to the physical and mental wellbeing of the area’s residents and workers as well as the IEC’s ability to support future growth. Valuable land and water resources will be protected and connected through a network of green infrastructure comprised of conservation buffers, park expansions, trails, and more. Clean, efficient, energy sources will power the IEC.

4. **Community Resilience.** This references the ability for communities and systems to survive and thrive no matter what shocks or stresses they encounter. Robust, redundant, adaptive, and integrated infrastructure systems will ensure that the IEC is well-prepared for the future. The IEC is home to local power sources like the St. Joseph Energy Center that makes the community more resilient and independent.

5. **Livable and Healthy Community.** The IEC will coexist in harmony with the Town of New Carlisle. New Carlisle’s small-town charm and agricultural character will be preserved and celebrated. Community events, placemaking, and other investments will foster community cohesion and strengthen assets that make New Carlisle a desirable place to live, work, and play.

6. **Coordination and Collaboration.** Ongoing efforts to develop the IEC will occur in a way that is coordinated and aligned with local and regional priorities and initiatives (e.g., New Carlisle Master Plan). Community stakeholders will have a voice in ongoing implementation efforts where possible. The County will pursue effective public-private partnerships to ensure that project risks and rewards are shared equitably.
PLANNING PROCESS

The IEC Area Management Plan was developed through a two-year collaborative, research-driven process that enabled a diverse group of stakeholders to collectively discover, plan, and deliver this document. The Planning Process consisted of a wide range of planning, engineering, community, and stakeholder engagement activities as shown in Figure 1.3 and discussed below.

DISCOVER

The County retained a Project Team consisting of Antero Group; Christopher B. Burke Engineering; DLZ Indiana, LLC; Donohue & Associates; Lawson Fisher Associates; Lehman & Lehman; and Lochmueller Group to facilitate the Planning Process and develop technical reports on the various components of the project. During the discovery phase, the Project Team initiated the project (e.g. defined project scope, planning areas, goals); conducted site visits; collected baseline data; reviewed prior plans and studies; interviewed stakeholders; and conducted an existing conditions analysis.

A key output of the discovery phase was a redefined boundary for the IEC’s Core Development Area and clarification of other geographies, which are as follows:

- **Study Area (102,000 acres).** The Study Area encompasses a large portion of St. Joseph County and spans west-to-east from LaPorte County to the City of South Bend, and north-to-south from the state line to the Kankakee River. This area was used for collecting and analyzing socioeconomic data for the Project, as well as gathering relevant past and current plans and studies that apply to this region.

- **Planning Area (22,000 acres).** The Planning Area is roughly bounded by the Indiana state line to the north; the Kankakee River to the south; Timothy Road and Willow Road to the west; and Tulip Road to the east. The southeast portion of the Planning Area was refined to avoid floodplain areas. The Planning Area delineated was used for the purposes of analyzing surrounding land uses and utility systems and planning potential future transportation connections to the IEC.

- **Core Development Area (7,200 acres).** The IEC is comprised of a 7,200-acre Core Development Area (CDA). The CDA is the focus area for this Area Management Plan. At 7,200-acres, the IEC is the ninth largest industrial megasite in the US.

- **New Carlisle Economic Development Area (6,200 acres).** The New Carlisle Economic Development Area (NCEDA) is a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District that was established in 1987 to help facilitate a major economic development project for construction on several hundred acres of land adjacent to the Norfolk-Southern (NS) and Chicago South Shore Freight (CSS) Railroad corridors in western St. Joseph County near the Town of New Carlisle. The boundaries of the NCEDA have been refined several times since 1987.

These geographies are shown in Figure 1.4.

PLAN

Once baseline information was collected and IEC geographies were defined, the Project Team iteratively mapped different land use, utility, and transportation scenarios for the IEC. Utility demands, traffic impacts, and socioeconomic impacts of the different land use and transportation scenarios were analyzed and evaluated. Using feedback from this process, the Project Team then developed technical memos characterizing the existing conditions, proposed improvements, and future demands and impacts associated with the water, sanitary, transportation, and utility infrastructure in the IEC Planning Area. A detailed study of the IEC’s potential impact on the region’s water resources was also completed during this phase, as was an Economic Opportunities Analysis and Marketing Strategy. This planning process was utilized to understand how to optimize the functionality for the various stakeholders and potential users of the IEC.

DELIVER

The last phase of the Planning Process is the delivery and approval of this IEC Area Management Plan. Moving forward, the County is taking steps to implement plan recommendations and advance priority projects. The County and other regional stakeholders continued to advance priority projects as grant funding and other implementation opportunities arise. An implementation development framework will be created based on input gathered through the draft IEC Area Management Plan review process.
COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Community and stakeholder engagement were a key focus throughout each phase of the IEC planning process. Early in the process, the County established a Steering Committee consisting of a diverse group of local and regional stakeholders from the public and private sectors, to review and provide feedback on preliminary outputs. The Steering Committee met for the first time in November 2017 and convened periodically throughout the Planning Process to provide input and strategic guidance at key pivot points. An Executive Committee was also established with representatives from the St. Joseph County Board of Commissioners; Department of Infrastructure, Planning, and Growth; the Town of New Carlisle; the South Bend Regional Chamber of Commerce; and American Electric Power (AEP).

The following community and stakeholder engagement activities were completed as part of this planning process:

- Steering Committee Meetings
- Executive Committee Meetings
- Redevelopment Commission & Board of Commissioner Meetings
- Community Workshops
- Local Business Meetings
- Stakeholder Meetings and Focus Groups
- Public Comment Meetings
- Publication of Monthly Progress Updates and Reports

These meetings, workshops, focus groups, and surveys were useful in identifying community opportunities and concerns from a wide range of stakeholders. Approximately 250 stakeholders, including residents, business owners, elected representatives, utility companies, government agencies, and other local and regional partners were engaged in the Planning Process. Figure 1.5 provides a summary of the community opportunities and concerns gathered through the engagement activities listed above.

Throughout this process, some community concern about the development of the area has been expressed. There is considerable investment in the land and character of the community, with a strong desire to retain a rural agricultural character, particularly for the Town of New Carlisle. In May 2018, members of the Executive Committee and the Project team met with representatives from the Open Space and Agricultural Alliance of St. Joseph County (OSAA)¹ to discuss some of the concerns related to the IEC. Issues discussed included the general planning and community engagement process, potential environmental and agricultural impacts, and fiscal stewardship. The County took several steps to address the concerns raised through this meeting and other community engagement efforts, including:

- Providing a written response to questions provided by OSAA (See Appendix B)
- Commissioning a Hydrogeological Background Study to investigate the potential impacts of future development on area groundwater resources
- Publication of IEC-related presentations, maps, budgets
- Monthly progress updates on the County’s website
- Adding additional opportunities for public input to the Planning Process

Feedback gathered through this meeting and other community engagement efforts informed the guiding principles and recommendations for this plan.

¹ OSAA was originally called Environmental Network of Northern Indiana (ENNI)
Introduction.

Chapter 1 provides a brief overview of the IEC Area Management Plan, including the project background, vision and guiding principles, planning process, and document structure.

The IEC in Context.

Chapter 2 describes historical and recent development efforts within the IEC and the need for a coordinated plan. This chapter also provides a detailed description of the IEC’s competitive advantages.

Existing Conditions.

Chapter 3 summarizes the IEC’s existing land use, transportation, utility, and environmental conditions.

The Area Management Plan.

Chapter 4 synthesizes the vision statement, guiding principles, existing conditions, and economic development strategy into a comprehensive area management plan that can be used to guide future planning and development efforts.

Conclusion.

Chapter 5 provides an overview of the IEC Area Management Plan.

Appendices.

The Appendices section provides a wealth of more detailed references and supporting information, including technical memos on specific elements of the IEC.

The following chapter provides additional context for the IEC and surrounding area. Establishing a strong understanding of the region’s development and competitive advantages will help outline how such a substantial industrial complex, developed in a largely rural area with little planning and discussion, will be advantageous to the region.

This Area Management Plan addresses these concerns throughout the document. See Appendix C for a more complete record of community input.