



2020-2021 Action Plan

Board Approved: December 17, 2019

Mission: Building Business. Building Community.

Vision: Terre Haute will be a vibrant, growing and sustainable business economy for West Central Indiana, providing prosperity and quality of life in our region.

Strategic Goals:

- **See You In Terre Haute 2025 - Terre Haute/Vigo County Community Plan Goals**
 - **Halt population decline**
 - By 2035, the projected population loss is 1.8%
 - Move projected population loss to a negligible number by 2025
 - **Reverse the trend of declining per capita personal income**
 - Terre Haute – Vigo County's average per capita income is 81% of the current state average of \$43,097.
 - By 2025, move the average per capita income to 85% of state average
- **Chamber-Specific Goals**
 - **Increase Chamber market share by .5% in county, .5% in region**
 - Current Chamber members = 675, Goal by end of 2021 = 700
 - Businesses in Vigo County = 3,989 (17% market share)
 - Businesses in West Central region = 7,468 (9% market share)
 - **Identify and attract \$50M in new investment into West Central Indiana**

Four Pillars for Strategic Focus:

- Advancing Advocacy for Impact
- Advancing Business Development
- Promoting Community Vibrancy and Quality of Life
- Providing Excellent Service to Members

Advancing Advocacy for Impact

The impacts from advocacy efforts will be measured through membership awareness of issues supported by the Chamber, membership engagement and participation at forums, and identification and acquisition of new funding coming into West Central Indiana from state and federal sources.

Strategic Initiative #1: Identify, communicate and provide education on issues critical to West Central business community

Primary Staff Responsible: President, Advocacy Consultant

Committee(s) Engaged: Advocacy, West Central 2025, CP: [Resource Development](#)

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Develop diverse advocacy committee to provide insight on key legislative issues impacting business community
 - Host advocacy educational forums to engage businesses on issues
 - Host government and policy-related events for in-depth analysis and engagement with state and federal legislators/agencies
 - Host at least one regional event focused on specific issue in conjunction with West Central 2025 initiative
- Measures of Success:
 - Membership engagement as measured through awareness of issues and attendance at events
 - [Development of an action plan to secure new state and federal funding resources into West Central Indiana](#)
- Y2 Action Items:
 - Continue advocacy educational forums and regional event
 - Activate action plan to secure new state and federal funding

Strategic Initiative #2 - Establish presence at state and federal levels as representative for business in West Central Indiana. Provide opportunities for businesses to engage with state and federal level representatives.

Primary Staff Responsible: President, Advocacy Consultant
Committee(s) Engaged: Advocacy

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Develop and Distribute Legislative Priorities Guide annually
 - Host high-level state and federal officials throughout the year
 - Complete DC Fly-In and Indy Drive-In events annually
- Measures of Success:
 - Member engagement as measured through attendance at events
 - Positive member feedback in that opportunities are valuable for the growth and success of their business
 - Increase of advocacy-related membership growth
- Y2 Action Items:
 - Continue legislative guide, hosting officials and events
 - Create public forum/event for announcement of legislative platform

Strategic Initiative #3 - Grow defense-related economic opportunities in West Central region

Primary Staff Responsible: President, Advocacy Consultant
Committee(s) Engaged: West Central Indiana Defense Network, CP: Talent Attraction/Retention Task Force

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Promote West Central Indiana Defense network as a way to better understand, capitalize upon and inventory our defense assets
 - Create action plan to best utilize these assets for positive economic growth and development
 - Work with Indiana Economic Development Corporation to promote these assets as part of a state-wide promotion campaign
- Measures of Success:
 - Region-wide participation in West Central Defense Network
 - Completed asset inventory available online at wcidefense.com
 - Statewide awareness of initiative
- Y2 Action Items:
 - Continue promotion of all defense-related resources as an economic driver of growth and talent acquisition
 - Continue to identify legislative priorities and opportunities to connect defense assets to the community in preparation for any proposed realignment activities at the federal level

Strategic Initiative #4 - Encourage engagement in the political process, specifically within Leadership Connect community

Primary Staff Responsible: President, Director of Operations

Committee(s) Engaged: Advocacy, Leadership Connect Advisory Board

- Y1 Action Items:
 - In conjunction with Leadership Connect, develop Candidate School through which potential candidates for local office can learn more about the political process, specifically campaigns
 - Encourage engagement in local government via appointment on boards and other entities
- Measures of Success:
 - Host at least one Candidate School with at least 3 participants being emerging leaders
- Y2 Strategies:
 - Continue to build participation in Candidate School
 - Create system through which business-friendly candidates can be identified via Candidate Report Cards

Promoting Community Vibrancy and Quality of Life

The impacts from Quality of Life will be measured based on overall community engagement, including the number of individuals participating in each initiative outlined below. Additionally, funding received for community enhancement related projects will also be tracked.

Strategic Initiative #5 - Drive creation and implementation of [See You in Terre Haute 2025 - Terre Haute/Vigo County Community Plan](#)

Primary Staff Responsible: Director of Community Development

Committee(s) Engaged: [Community Planning Task Forces](#)

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Engage pillar co-chairs to lead action-oriented teams to address priority action items
 - Seek opportunities for greater consolidation of resources/efforts among all planning groups in Terre Haute
 - Create Dashboard to track all relevant community plan metrics
 - Provide public updates on plan progress at least quarterly
 - Work with Foundation created through Local Development Agreement to identify specific future funding needs
- Measures of Success:
 - Community dashboard and update report receives at least 1500 visits
 - All task forces meeting regularly and making progress towards Y1 goals
 - Release quarterly updates
- Y2 Action Items:
 - Conduct assessment of annual plan and make necessary changes
 - Continue to build awareness and engagement in plan

Strategic Initiative #6 - In conjunction with community plan task force, convene all quality of life-related entities in the West Central Indiana region and create system through which all can contribute towards relevant economic development

Primary Staff Responsible: President, Director of Community Development

Committee(s) Responsible: Community Planning Task Forces, West Central 2025 Advisory Board, [CP: Economic Development, Talent Attraction and Retention, Quality of Life](#)

- Y1 Action Items:

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- Continue to develop West Central 2025 as regional QOL development entity under Chamber Foundation, including revision of bylaws and other necessary organizational framework (**Economic Development Task Force**)
- Develop West Central 2025 action plan and release annual quality of life report (**Quality of Life Task Force**)
 - Implement regional branding strategy
 - Create regional opportunities surrounding Tourism
 - Develop strategies to extend broadband coverage throughout region
 - Assess workforce housing shortage and identify regional opportunities for collaboration to overcome challenges
 - Achieve 21st Century Talent Region state designation with the intent of positioning West Central Indiana for additional funding opportunities related to population growth. (**Talent and Attraction Task Force**)
- Measures of Success:
 - At least 3 individuals from each county in the region is represented on WC2025 Advisory Board
 - 21st Century Talent Region designation awarded by December 2020
- Y2 Action Items:
 - Create organizational framework for West Central 2025 structure in anticipation of funds being received in 2022

Strategic Initiative #7 - Solidify downtown Terre Haute organization's presence as critically important to community

Primary Staff Responsibility: President, Office and Program Coordinator
Committee(s) Responsible: Downtown Advisory Board, **CP: Tourism**

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Develop First Friday events
 - Work with Advisory Board to develop Downtown Action Plan with key objectives and action items.
 - Cultivate new investments in the downtown area
 - Provide support and resources for existing businesses
 - Regularly scheduled downtown First Friday events
 - Creation of a downtown map highlighting tourism and business assets
- Measures of Success:
 - Attendance at downtown First Friday events
 - Diverse, engaged Advisory Board representing many segments of downtown population (business, non-profit, retail, restaurant, student)
- Y2 Action Items:
 - **Create opportunities for collaboration among regional Main Street entities**

Providing Excellent Service to Members

The quality of service provided to our members is critical for the long-term sustainability of the organization. The success of this pillar will be measured through membership revenue growth, assessing the overall satisfaction of the membership, along with constant benchmarking against other Chambers and membership-based organizations.

Strategic Initiative #8 - Provide targeted services based on segmented audiences, i.e. Interest Areas

Primary Staff Responsible: Director of Membership and Communications

Committee(s) Responsible: Business Councils

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Determine list of benefits that would appeal to specific membership segments
 - Actively engage each interest area via targeted communications, events
 - Create a series of councils to connect similar businesses as a way to collectively solve problems
 - Better Health Wabash Valley Council
 - Manufacturing Council
 - Retail Council
 - Restaurant Council
- Measures of Success:
 - At least 75% of all members are participating in Interest Area contributions
 - Interest area participants report value in communications received
 - Perceived member value from participation in council
- Y2 Action Items:
 - Implement tiered membership dues schedule with expanded interest areas
- Measures of Success:
 - Net gain of 25 members per year

Strategic Initiative #9 - Cultivate broad-based Chamber support within community and region

Staff Responsible: Director of Membership and Communications, Director of Operations

Committee(s) Responsible: Marketing Plan, Advocacy

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Develop a system to ensure all employees within a member organization are engaged, including constant monitoring of database contacts
 - Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan including key messaging towards non-members

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- Create regional Chamber network
- Measures of Success:
 - At least 5 emails for small members and 10 emails for larger members are included in the CM database
 - Convene regional Chamber entities at least 4 times annually
- Y2 Action Items:
 - Formalize regional Chamber partnership with investment in Advocacy services

Strategic Initiative #10 - Develop continuous feedback loop to monitor board engagement, member engagement and overall business needs

Primary Staff Responsible: Director of Membership and Communications
Committee(s) Responsible: Nominating, Marketing Plan

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Through annual Nominating Committee process, develop a pipeline of engaged business community members for board appointments
 - Conduct annual surveys of members and non-members
 - On-premises visit plan for staff and volunteer leadership
- Measures of Success:
 - At least 75% of members participate in annual survey
 - Member visits with at least 25% of membership

Strategic Initiative #11 - Ensure Chamber's physical location provides maximum access to services

Primary Staff Responsible: President
Committee(s) Engaged: Property, Executive, CP: [Economic Development](#)

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Assess specific needs for creating a [regional business hub](#)
 - Convene property committee to discuss vision, potential partners, vision
- Measures of Success:
 - Vision of regional business hub physical space created
- Y2 Action Items:
 - Secure new space that meets with vision and move into by end of year
 - Finalize details with partners

Advancing Business Development

A strong, thriving business community is the backbone of a community's success. The Chamber will successfully inform, educate and connect businesses in the West Central region for increased cost-savings opportunities and collaboration. Our success will be measured by increasing the number of businesses we serve and increasing engagement from the business community.

Strategic Initiative #12 - Serve as the source of relevant information to the business community

Primary Staff Responsible: Director of Membership and Communications, Director of Operations

Committee(s) Engaged: Marketing Plan

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Maximize effectiveness of communications, including delivering relevant and timely business news
 - Develop system for constant monitoring of email effectiveness
 - Host educational forums and seminars throughout the year on relevant business topics
- Measures of success:
 - Increased member engagement
 - Higher attendance at events
 - Average open rate of 30% on all Chamber communications
- Y2 Action Items:
 - Create West Central Business News platform for reporting of timely, relevant news matters

Strategic Initiative #13 - Promote efficiency among members

Primary Staff Responsible: Director of Operations

Committee(s) Engaged: Event Task Forces, CP: [Talent Attraction and Retention](#)

- Y1 Action Items:
 - Develop bundled cost-savings opportunities via member-to-member discount program
 - Host networking opportunities
 - [Develop intern-focused professional development series, available for all businesses throughout the West Central region](#)
 - [High school workforce-ready certification in conjunction with Vigo County School Corporation](#)

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- Measures of Success:
 - Increased value in overall membership
 - Participation in internship/certification programs

- Y2 Action Items:
 - TBD