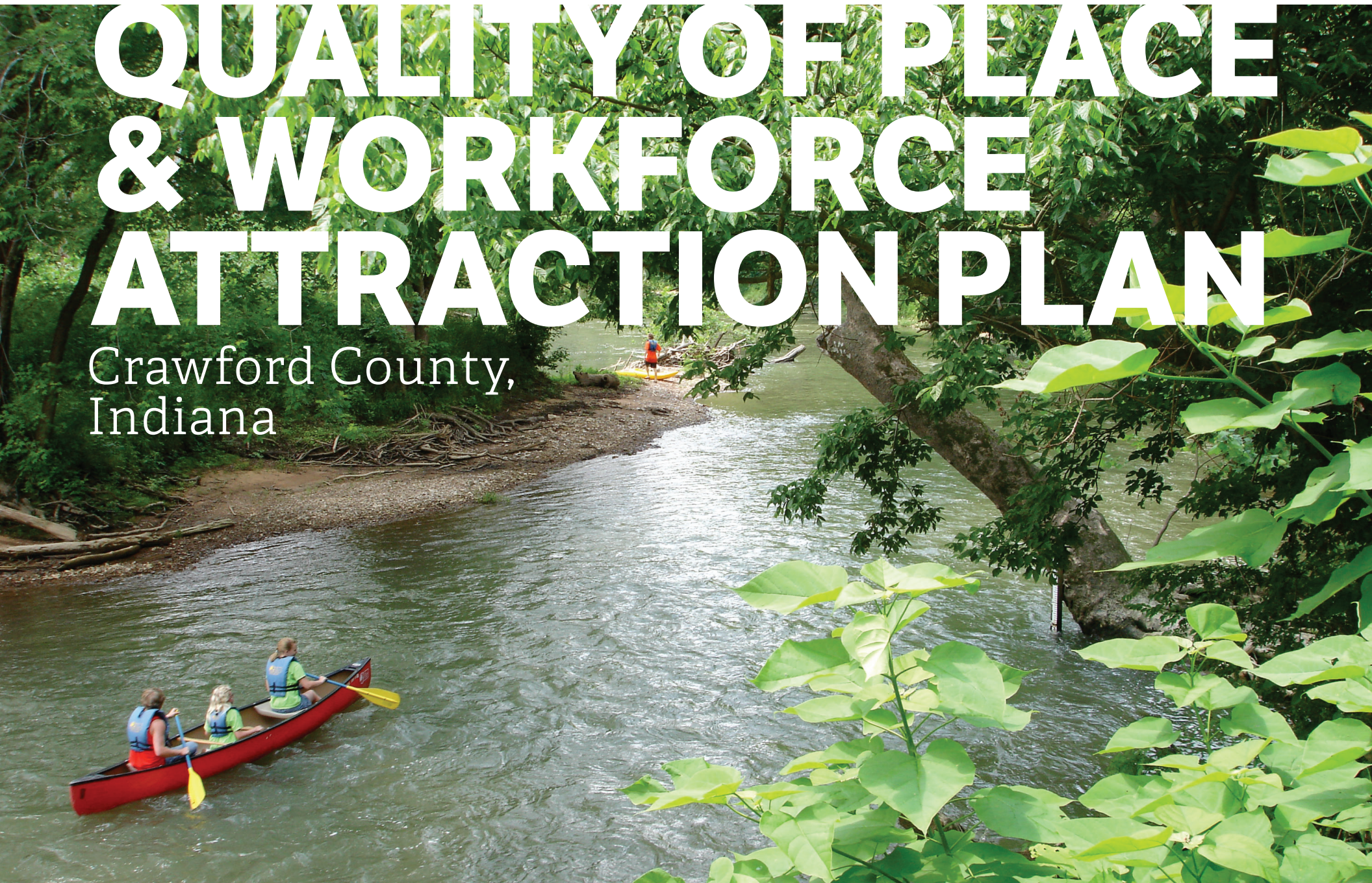


# QUALITY OF PLACE & WORKFORCE ATTRACTION PLAN

Crawford County,  
Indiana





**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER CRAWFORD COUNTY**

715 JUDICIAL PLAZA • ENGLISH, INDIANA 47118

(812) 338-2142 • WWW.SELECTCRAWFORDCOUNTY.COM

Regional Opportunity Initiatives, Inc.  
Indiana Uplands  
100 S. College Avenue Ste. 240  
Bloomington, IN 47404

Greetings ROI;

We write this cover letter in unison to support the Ready Communities Program with your generous gift to the Crawford County Partnership for planning in terms of Quality of Place and Workforce Attraction.

We view this plan as the keystone to all other planning efforts currently undergoing in our communities and would like to convey how each plan fits and is in congruence with each other. The Crawford County leadership has been continually informed by our membership on the Wisdom Council of the process and we are very pleased with the core partnership who have worked diligently to facilitate the voice of our people that will translate to potential initiatives and projects.

Crawford County has seen a great momentum shift in the past year as we think about our future and prioritize community economic development as a top priority in our growth in the region. The southern gateway is never better to welcome everyone to the beautiful ROI and Radius region. We will build capacity on I-64 and have tangible projects to implement with thanks to you for this gift of the plan.

With this plan we also have validity to similar items identified with the OCRA-HCI program for which the data has been included in this plan. Our economic development corporation has commissioned a cluster study which allows us to take aim at the industries that make sense to grow our workforce and is included in this plan. We are also pleased to see efforts underway between the school and industry to seek ways to train our youth for local jobs and for us to stand up a venue for workforce and business development. We are also grateful for the regional housing study to identify the needs and to identify how we might overcome the challenges.

The time is never better to be part of the movement and we are proud to be a partner in this region.

Gratefully;



Morton Dale, Commissioner (President)



Daniel Crecelius, Commissioner



Larry Ingle, Commissioner

February 2019

Prepared for  
Crawford  
County  
Economic  
Development  
Corporation

Prepared by  
Group Stellar  
& kglobal

Funded by  
Regional  
Opportunity  
Initiatives, Inc.



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# OUR STORY

**Crawford County** is the Southern Indiana Gateway to the Uplands region. Nestled in the hills along the Ohio River, we are ideally positioned along Interstate 64 with four state highways and rail providing connectivity for industry, opportunity for residents, and accessibility for tourists. Our natural beauty and breathtaking landscapes appeal to natives and attract visitors from the Midwest and the South. Residents love living here because of our rich history, unspoiled land and our new perspective on smart, intentional community growth. Visitors love traveling down our winding roads, hiking our rugged trails, and camping or boating at our parks, lakes and caves.

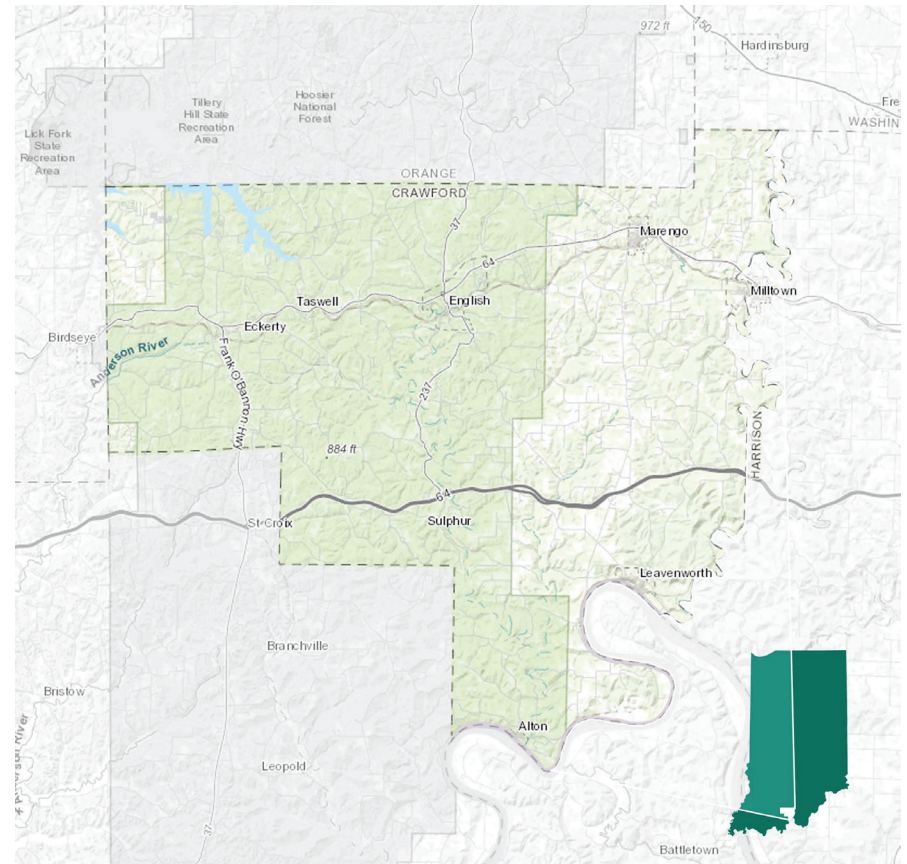


The Community Foundation of Crawford County, Crawford County Chamber of Commerce, Crawford County Community Schools, Crawford County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC), Crawford County Tourism Board and Purdue Extension of Crawford County have joined forces to create the Crawford County Partnership (Partnership). The Partnership will support and guide the community through the countless opportunities made available by Regional Opportunity Initiatives, Inc.

A renewed sense of community and hope for the future is flourishing through the county. Crawford County residents have undoubtedly experienced a number of setbacks and hardships over the years, but the general consensus now is that the community is excited for new possibilities and leaders are willing take the necessary steps for county-wide prosperity. This Quality of Place and Workforce Attraction plan will serve as the county's road map as it identifies action items for the immediate future, as well as potential solutions over the next ten years.

Crawford County is one of the least populated counties in the state—10,000 residents call it home. The county has five incorporated towns including English (the county seat), Marengo, Milltown, Leavenworth, and Alton. A large percentage of the land is designated as state and national parks. While the beautiful scenery is a benefit to the tourism market, the lack of non-government land negatively impacts the local tax base. In addition to available land restrictions, Crawford County also lacks access to high-speed internet and is the lowest ranking county in the entire state for internet accessibility.

Crawford County's major employers include the county government and the school corporation, as well as Jasper Engines and Transmissions and Mulzer Crushed Stone.



Tourism is a driving factor to the local economy and it is supported by the robust opportunities for outdoor recreation.

A large percentage of Crawford County residents commute out of the county for work, but only a small number of people commute into the county for work (STATS Indiana)

The population is slowly declining and employers have expressed their dissatisfaction with the outflow of talent and the lack of training options for prospective and existing employees.



Crawford County School Corporation is the only school system in the county, and it has experienced significant changes over the last several years. Recently, a number of schools were closed, consolidated or converted due to declining attendance and budget cuts. Crawford County is now served by one high school, one middle school, and three elementary schools. And the effects from these changes are still at the forefront of many residents' minds.

Crawford County is located within an hour of Louisville, Evansville, and Bloomington and is within three hours of Nashville, St. Louis, Indianapolis, and Cincinnati. The county's transportation infrastructure is an asset that will support and benefit future industrial growth. Leaders are encouraged about the steps being taken to support smart growth and breathe new life into the local economy.

Crawford County looks at the Ready Communities opportunity as the catalyst to become the Southern Indiana Gateway to the Indiana Uplands and beyond. Leaders here believe that a rising tide lifts all boats and are steadfastly committed to opportunities for creative regional partnerships and strategic thinking.

Crawford County believes in scalable, high-impact improvements and is committed to adopting the recommended findings—now and in the years to come—to improve the quality of life for existing residents, while attracting future residents and encouraging new economic growth.

## INDIANA UPLANDS











# ENGAGEMENT

**In developing the Quality of Place & Workforce Attraction Plan,** Crawford County conducted a number of leadership discovery activities, stakeholder engagement initiatives, and asset analyses. We assessed place-based advantages through two community input sessions and twelve stakeholder meetings, examined existing quantitative and qualitative data sources, conducted a county-wide electronic survey to prioritize projects and held a town hall to unveil the plan's content. University of Southern Indiana (USI) completed a feasibility study and community members were encouraged to contact consultants anytime throughout the planning period to provide input.



## ACTIVITIES

### ONGOING

QPAT Wisdom  
Council Meetings

### ONE

Planning Grant  
Workshop

### TWO

County-Wide  
Input Sessions

### ONE

Town Hall

### ONE

County-Wide  
Survey

### UNLIMITED

Constituent  
Phone Calls

### TWELVE

Stakeholder  
Strategy  
Meetings

## QUALITY OF PLACE TEAM

### STEERING COMMITTEE

Jesse Belcher, Crawford County Chamber of Commerce  
Brian Dale, Jasper Engines & Transmissions  
Morton Dale, Crawford County Commissioners  
Christine Harbeson, Community Foundation of Crawford County  
Brandon Johnson, Crawford County High School Principal  
Gail Pietzemeier, Purdue Extension  
Michael Thissen, Crawford County Economic Development Corporation  
Sharon Wilson, Crawford County Tourism Director / County Council

### WISDOM COUNCIL

William Breeding, Crawford County Council  
Daniel Crecelius, Crawford County Commissioners  
Michael Benham, English Town Council  
Michael Haverstock, Marengo Town Council  
Whitney Timberlake, Leavenworth Town Council  
Patricia Hahus, Town of Alton  
Monty Garrett, Milltown Town Council  
Marlin Heinlein, IHCCW Inc.  
Michael Key, Crawford County Community School Corporation  
Mark Stevens, Crawford County Board of Tourism  
Jackie James, WorkOne, Region 10 Workforce  
Gerald Ramsey, Crawford County Revolving Loan Fund  
Lisa Gehlhausen, Indiana 15 Regional Plan Commission  
State Representative Steve Bartels, Patoka Lake Winery  
Bob Sawtelle, O'Bannon Woods  
Missy Bush-Sawtelle, Business Owner/Property Developer  
Paula Graef, Jasper Engines  
Tina Bryson, Backroads Market Indiana  
Abby Taylor, Backroads Market Indiana

## PARTICIPANTS

### ORGANIZATIONS

Alton Town Council  
Clarion News  
Corn Real Estate  
Crawford County Chamber of Commerce  
Crawford County Commissioners  
Community Foundation of Crawford County  
Crawford County Community Schools  
Crawford County Council  
Crawford County Economic Development  
Crawford County High School  
Crawford County Partnership  
Crawford County Tourism  
English Town Council  
IHCCW Inc.  
IN Office of Community and Rural Affairs  
Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
Jasper Engines and Transmissions  
Leavenworth Town Council  
Mainstream Fiber  
Marengo Town Council  
Marengo Warehouse & Distribution Center  
Meake Trucking  
Milltown Town Council  
O'Bannon Woods State Park  
Office of Sen. Todd Young  
Patoka Lake Winery  
Purdue Extension Educator  
Radius Indiana  
Regional Opportunities Initiative  
Revolving Loan Fund  
The Happy Hive  
University of Southern Indiana  
Wyandotte Cave

### INDIVIDUALS

Chris Adams  
David Allen  
Myra Allen  
Terry Allen  
Cheri Banet  
Steve Bartels, State Representative  
Cindy Belcher  
Jesse Belcher  
Mike Benham

### INDIVIDUALS

Bill Breeding  
Jerry Brewer  
Tina Bryson  
Missi Bush-Sawtelle  
Bill Byrd  
Kendra Corrigan  
Daniel Crecelius  
Brian Dale  
Morton Dale  
Barbara Fleck  
Bryan Gabriel  
Monty Garrett  
Lisa Gehlhausen  
Brenda Goff  
Paula Graef  
Patricia Hahus  
Christine Harbeson  
Michael Haverstock  
Marlin Heinlein  
Erin Houchin, State Senator  
Larry Ingram  
Jackie James  
Brandon Johnson  
Mike Key  
Robin Morgan  
Gail Pietzemeier  
Jeff Quyle  
Gerald Ramsey  
Chad Riddle  
Ranger Bob Sawtelle  
Emily Siler  
Nick Siler  
Zach Stephols  
Mark Stevens  
Steven Stump  
Abby Taylor  
Frank Taylor  
Laura Taylor  
Mike Thissen  
R. Whitney Timberlake  
Lauren Travis  
Jennifer Voris  
Sharon Wilson



# TOWN HALL

Crawford County's Town Hall was held January 22, 2019 at Crawford County Middle School in Marengo. Participants gave direct feedback on community strengths, improvement opportunities and possible solutions. This feedback was gathered during Quality of Place, Workforce Attraction & Development and Amenities & Attributes breakout sessions.



# SURVEY RESULTS

The anonymous prioritization survey was shared with county residents through the Clarion News, employer networks, email distribution and word-of-mouth. 110 residents participated in the survey. 65 of those respondents were local high school students.

## QUALITY OF PLACE:

**Please rank the following in priority order, from most important (1) to least important (6).**

Overall Rank (Residents)	Overall Rank (Students)	Initiative	Overall Rank (Combined)
1	1	Market our community and develop our brand	1
2	3	Collaborate on tourism efforts across the county and region	2
3	2	Identify leisure activities and promote recreation opportunities	3
5	4	Expand existing biking, hiking, and walking trails and develop new trails	4
6	5	Identify and develop common meeting places	5
4	6	Develop a community calendar for all events, announcements, etc.	6

### WORKFORCE ATTRACTION:

Please rank the following in priority order, from most important (1) to least important (5).

Overall Rank (Residents)	Overall Rank (Students)	Initiative	Overall Rank (Combined)
1	1	Improve employer attraction, retention, and expansion efforts	1
2	2	Strengthen entrepreneur and startup development and recruiting efforts	2
4	3	Increase availability of commercial lease space for new businesses	3
3	5	Build Workforce Development & Business Resources Center	4
5	4	Grow K-12 STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) initiatives	5

### AMENITIES & ATTRIBUTES:

Please rank the following in priority order, from most important (1) to least important (5).

Overall Rank (Residents)	Overall Rank (Students)	Initiative	Overall Rank (Combined)
1	1	Expand broadband and WiFi access	1
2	2	Develop connectivity and infrastructure across the county	2
3	3	Increase affordable housing options	3
4	4	Grow recycling and beautification efforts	4
5	5	Adopt land use plans	5





**The following data was gathered** from STATS Indiana Public Data Utility data report, covering various socioeconomic factors that impact the context and solutions in the Quality of Place & Workforce Attraction Plan. See additional household, economic, demographic, education and workforce data in the Appendix.

The outflow of Crawford County residents presents challenges to improving quality of place. The data points shown below (and listed in the appendix) demonstrate the need to engage youth and offer residents innovative workforce development opportunities to keep them in Crawford. The high rates of poverty and below-average

educational attainment percentages reveal a need to focus on the improvement of county resources and amenities. Collectively, the data confirm the importance of building regional capacity, attracting new residents through workforce training and entrepreneurship efforts, and strengthening community cohesion.

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

**16.8%**

POPULATION WITH  
ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE OR  
HIGHER

33.24% of Indiana's population has attained an associate's degree or higher (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census and 2010 American Community Survey*)

**86.0%**

GRADUATION RATE FOR  
PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS

In 2018, Indiana's waiver graduation rate was 88.1 percent, and the non-waiver rate was 80.78 percent. (*Indiana Department of Education*)

## INCOME & POVERTY

**\$46,210**

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Indiana's Median Household Income: \$52,182 (2013 – 2017 *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*)

**\$32,906**

PER CAPITA ANNUAL INCOME

Indiana per capita income (adjusted for inflation): \$47,104 (*US Bureau of Economic Analysis*)

**26.2%**

OVERALL POVERTY RATE

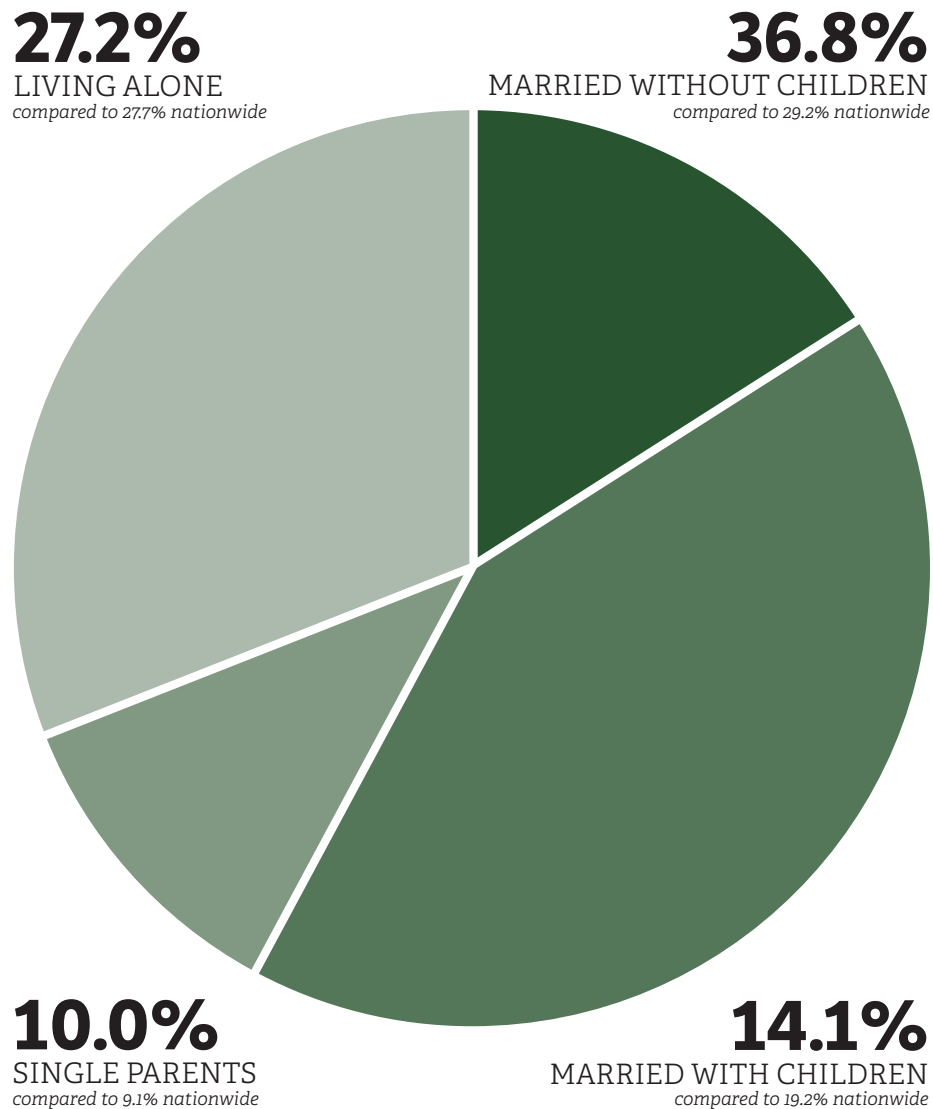
14.6% of all Hoosiers live below the poverty rate (2013-2017 *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*)

**17.2%**

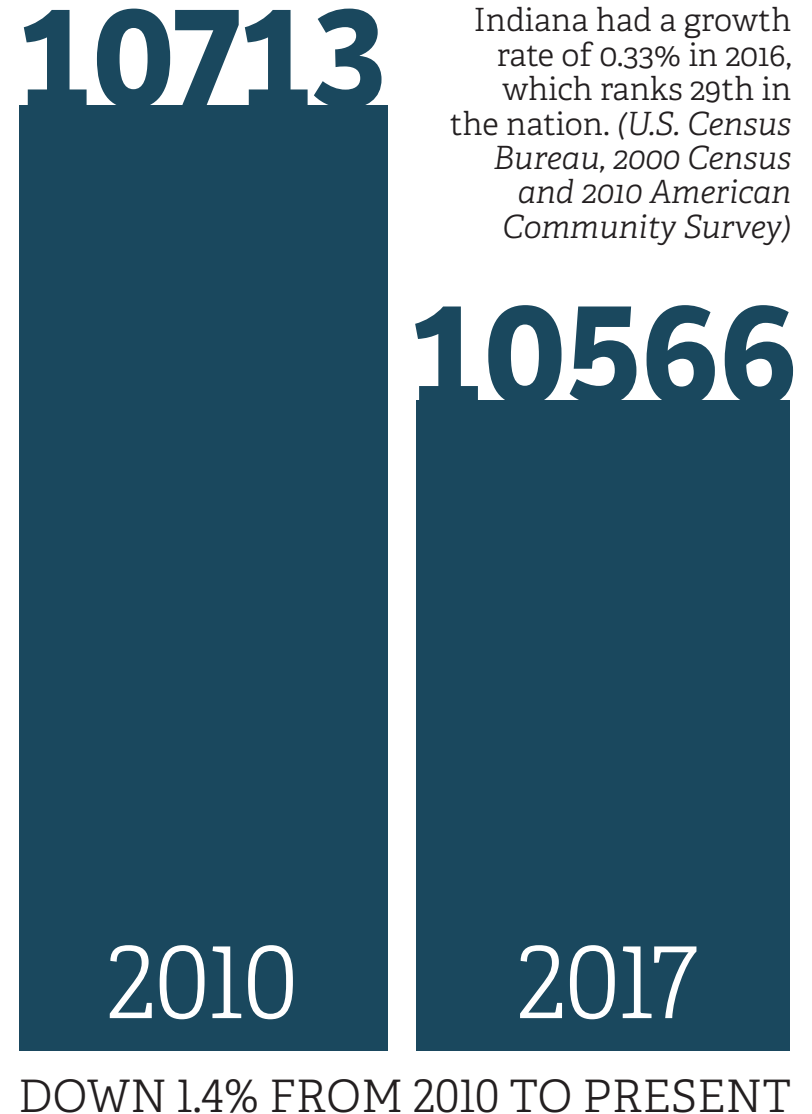
POVERTY RATE AMONG CHILDREN



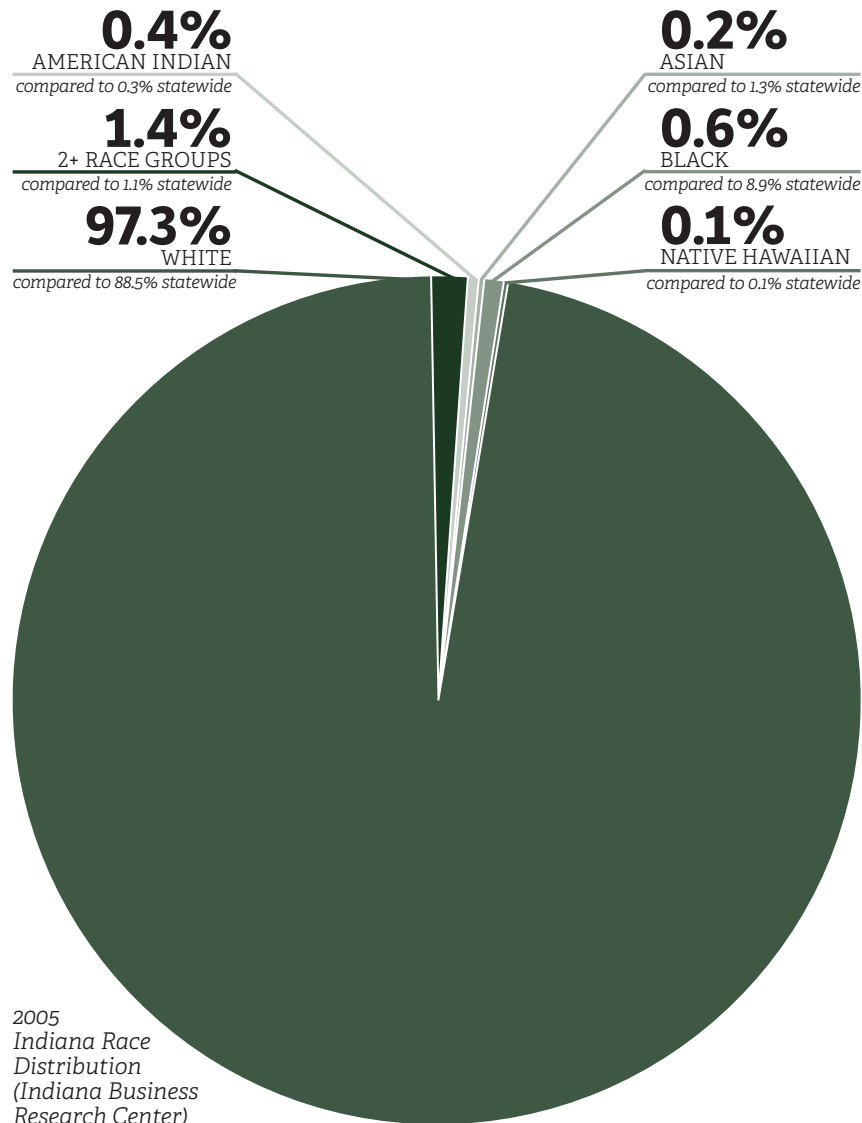
# HOUSEHOLD TYPE



# POPULATION CHANGE

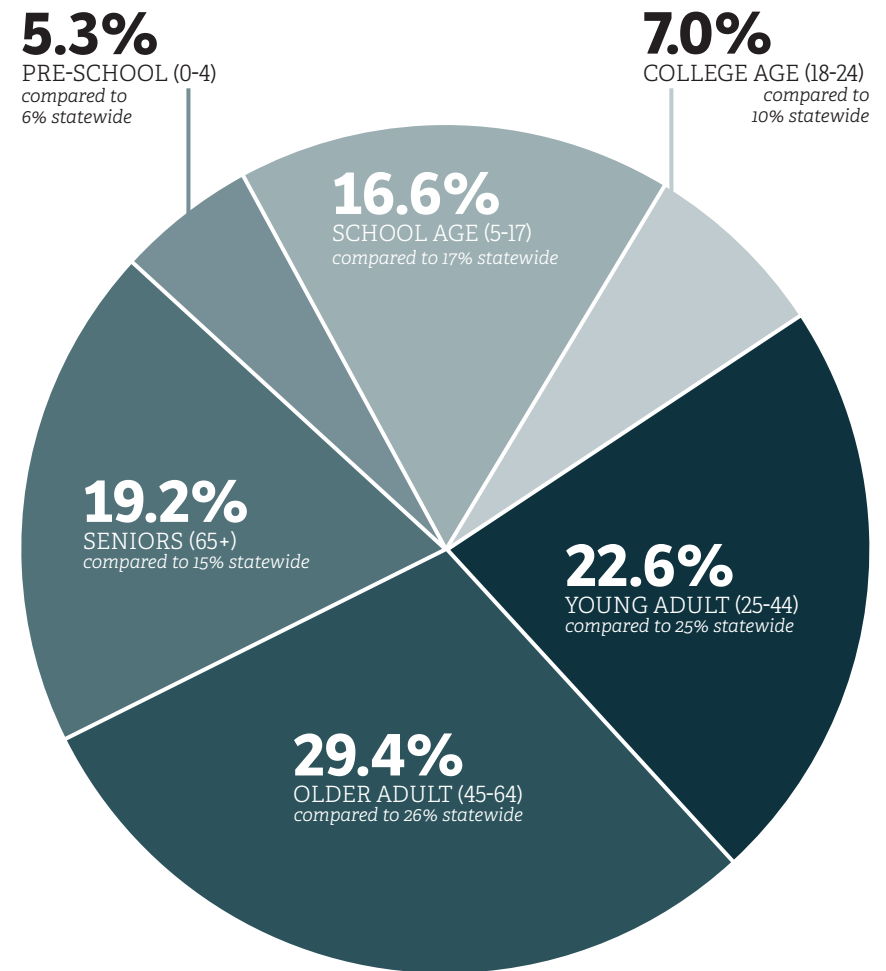


# RACE DISTRIBUTION



# AGE DISTRIBUTION

MEDIAN AGE: 44 YEARS



Indiana's 2017 age distribution (US Census Bureau)





**Crawford County offers** more than 300 miles of unmatched beauty spanning the southern-most region of the Indiana Uplands. The county's outdoor recreation activities and community events afford opportunities for civic engagement, tourism, and family entertainment. The county seeks to improve infrastructure and leverage its aesthetic beauty and untapped entrepreneurial spirit to improve quality of life and increase overall prosperity. County leadership hopes to revitalize community cohesion through place-based workforce development initiatives and further leverage natural amenities like Patoka Lake and Marengo Cave to attract visitors.

# QUALITY OF PLACE

Crawford County seeks to establish a brand rooted in outdoor recreation that will bring visitors to the county and the surrounding region. County residents feel that becoming a known hub for outdoor experiences would boost the profile of the entire Uplands region. Crawford will leverage its position as the “Southern Indiana Gateway” to incentivize industrial growth and draw businesses and visitors from neighboring southern areas like Louisville and Nashville to the Uplands region.

## ASSETS

Crawford County’s local attractions include artisanal festivals, music, hiking and biking trails, boating, theater and historical and natural landmarks. Crawford hopes to amplify these quality of place assets to attract visitors and further engage current residents.

Marengo Cave	Hiking & Biking Trails
Wyandotte Cave	Horseback Riding Trails
Patoka Lake	Yellow Birch Ravine
Camp Sites	Sycamore Springs Park
Nature Center	The Ohio River
Pioneer Farmstead	Hoosier National Forest
Harrison-Crawford State Forest	Hemlock Cliffs
Horseshow Bend Overlook	Little Blue River

## OPPORTUNITIES & OBJECTIVES

### PLACE-BRANDING & ASSET PROMOTION

Crawford County will seize upon untapped tourism opportunities by effectively promoting outdoor recreation activities like kayaking, cycling, and hiking through place branding and targeted asset promotion. The county’s brand—its identity, differentiators, and values—will bind job-creation strategies and guide tactical decisions about types of businesses to incentivize, educational programs to develop, and infrastructure projects to support. The Crawford County brand should firmly encapsulate the value of the area’s businesses and workforce, its history, its magnitude, and promote what the county stands for in a compelling, attributable way.

Crawford County’s memorable tourism slogan, “We Are Outdoor Recreation,” needs strategic promotion in order to increase county-wide sight-seeing and recreational travel. Residents seek to promote not only the slogan, but the natural and economic assets behind it. Crawford County’s brand strategy and marketing campaigns will support both the county’s tourism goals and economic development efforts.



# QUALITY OF PLACE

## OPPORTUNITIES & OBJECTIVES

**TOURISM:** The county's tourism agency needs a brand to support its slogan. Crawford County's brand narrative should summarize the area's qualities in a dynamic, relevant way in order to convey benefits and to stimulate interest—both locally and across county borders.

The tourism marketing plan will build upon branding and tactical strategies to promote outdoor recreational assets. The plan will outline opportunities to pool marketing resources and coordinate events, helping service and lodging providers to draw more tourists for longer visits.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Crawford County's brand development initiative will serve to connect growth strategies and workforce initiatives that ensure the Crawford County Economic Development Corporation has a cohesive approach to business recruitment and expansion efforts in the county and, more broadly, the Uplands region. The county will use the brand as a foundation to develop a marketing plan for economic development, to include strategies for the build-out of the county's industrial park, a stellar (though currently underexploited) economic asset. The economic development marketing plan will outline strategies to strengthen the Southern Indiana Gateway message and better leverage the county's strategic location on I-64, as well as its proximity to major manufacturing hubs like Louisville, Kentucky.

**Objective:** Develop brand messages, a brand identity, and brand narratives that support digital and traditional marketing campaigns to increase tourism and support business attraction and expansion initiatives.

### INTERNAL COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS

"It is easy to find information about activities and events occurring in our community."

**51%**

**CRAWFORD COUNTY RESIDENTS SOMEWHAT DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Crawford County offers a multitude of community events showcasing the area's heritage, arts culture, and natural beauty. A 2017 HCI survey of Crawford County residents showed that more than 50 percent of respondents believe it is not easy to find information about activities and events occurring in our community.

The county requires more refined internal communication coordination to improve community cohesion, unite tourism efforts, engage youth, and support a sustainable tourism ecosystem. Improving county communications would allow for the coalescence of recreation suppliers (event coordinators, food and beverage vendors, hotel and lodging providers, and canoe/kayak/bicycle rental organizations) to combine, improve, and grow existing events.

**Objective:** Improve county communications to increase visibility of community events and combine tourism efforts.

## ARTS CULTURE

Crawford County's arts culture is experienced through annual, community-organized festivals. Arts and crafts vendors gather during 4H fairs, town jubilees, and holiday gift shows to promote, sell and trade arts and crafts throughout the year. Residents have expressed interest in assembling a formal group to facilitate the growth of Crawford County's arts culture, coordinating regularly occurring arts-based events, and promoting the county's folk heritage.

A formal arts association would also play a principal role in the development of a regional hospitality training program that could provide long-term support for the tourism industry and the promotion of arts culture.

Arts programming has been utilized by numerous small towns across the US, and additional information on leading practices can be found via the Citizens Institute for Rural Design, Main Street programs, and other arts advocacy groups. Successful efforts have sought to attract artists (Paducah, Kentucky), promote arts and culture focused-trails (Handmade in America), and built arts incubators and centers (Tamarack, West Virginia), among other strategies.

**Objective:** Support a budding arts culture through the creation of formal art associations. Research best-practices for regional hospitality and tourism management programs.

## PERFORMING ARTS & MUSIC VENUE

Crawford County residents have expressed interest in researching the costs and benefits associated with a

permanent indoor theatre or outdoor amphitheater to showcase the culture and heritage of the county and to support the Uplands' arts more broadly. Arts and music venues, if done right, can bring great benefits to residents and visitors. The list of successful venues in rural locales is massive and includes well-known venues such as Tanglewood (Mississippi) and Ashland Oregon's Shakespeare Festival, and southwest Virginia's Crooked Road country music heritage trail.

**Objective:** Research the feasibility of developing an arts/music venue through a cost-benefit analysis.





# QUALITY OF PLACE

## OPPORTUNITIES & OBJECTIVES

### TRAIL CONNECTIVITY & ENHANCEMENTS

Residents feel the county's biking, hiking, and horseback riding trails are among the best in the country. Crawford County would benefit from a connective build-out of the entire trail system in order to better leverage these assets for tourism and quality of place initiatives. Crawford County hopes to create a volunteer group to work alongside state agencies charged with trail maintenance and cleanup efforts.

With its hills, thick forests and sprawling fields, the region possesses the perfect topography for ATV, dirt-bike, and BMX cycling trails. Crawford County seeks to develop an off-road park to increase outdoor recreation tourism and provide opportunities for youth to experience the county's natural beauty.

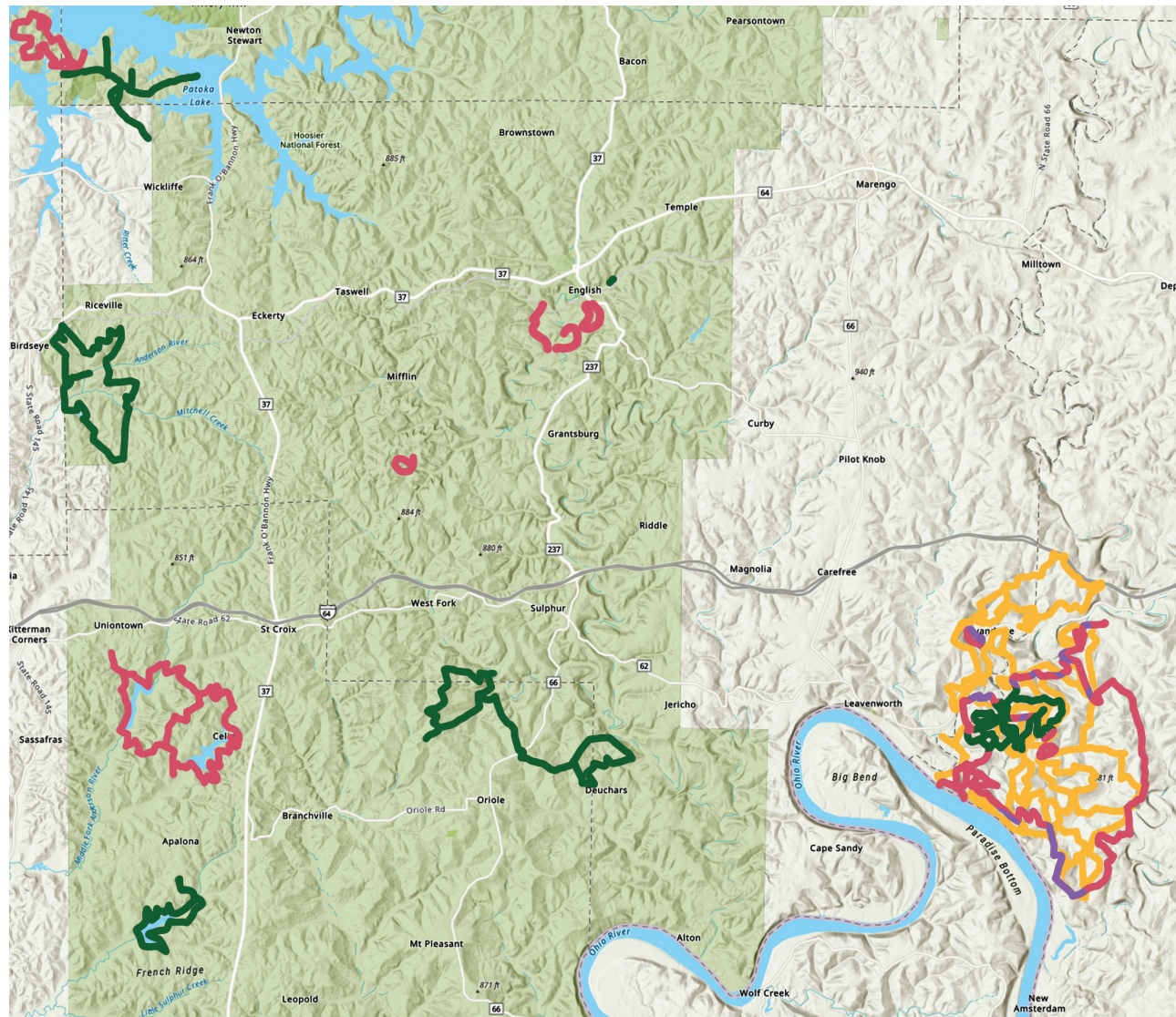
Numerous communities around the US have successfully stimulated economic development via promotion of local trail systems and lakes/rivers as recreational assets for both visitors and local residents. For example, the Pennsylvania Wilds program has developed a series of destinations and promotional programs to attract visitors to the East Coast's most rural region of Northern Pennsylvania. Activities include hiking, snowmobiling, hunting, and stargazing in

some of the state's best night skies. In Southwest Virginia, the Spearhead Trails system attracts ATV users from around the US. Across Pennsylvania, dozens of small towns have banded together under the umbrella brand of River Towns, generating significant local and statewide interest. Numerous towns across the US are using mountain biking as a core component of their economic development strategies.

Wyandotte Cave is an ideal location to provide residents and tourists with information and interpretive experiences about Crawford County's natural and cultural resources.

**Objective:** Amplify the "We are Outdoor Recreation" brand through the clean-up, expansion, connection and promotion of the Uplands regional trail system. Research the feasibility of developing an off-road recreational park. Build an interpretive center at Wyandotte Cave to connect the trail system from O'Bannon Woods to Leavenworth.

# CRAWFORD COUNTY TRAILS MAP



- Hiking / Walking Trails
- Horseback Riding Trails
- Hiking / Walking + Biking Trails
- Hiking / Walking + Horseback Riding Trails





# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ATTRACTION

Crawford County hopes to seize upon the area's entrepreneurial spirit and engage youth through start-up support and training initiatives. The CCEDC is researching the feasibility of developing a workforce development and business resource center to help existing businesses grow. The county plans to partner with community organizations, schools, and business leaders to create high school industry exposure initiatives to introduce regional employment opportunities and provide work-based opportunities for young residents.

## ASSETS

Location  
"The Southern Indiana Gateway"

Industrial Park with  
Shovel-Ready Sites

Purdue Extension

## OPPORTUNITIES & OBJECTIVES

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER

The county hopes to make strides toward creating a Workforce Development and Business Resources Center. Leadership imagines having a one-stop shop for training and educational opportunities for young people and adults, as well as providing support to prospective and current business owners. Save for ad-hoc meetings with the CCEDC, existing businesses and entrepreneurs lack resources to create business plans, incubate, ideate, and grow. A 2017 HCI county-wide survey shows that 379 of 591 respondents (64%) strongly disagree or somewhat disagree with the following statement—"Our community promotes and provides training, technical assistance, or other business services to support existing business owners and start-ups." Just 14% agreed with the above statement.

"Our community promotes and provides training, technical assistance, or other business services to support existing business owners and start-ups."

**64%**  
OF CRAWFORD  
COUNTY  
RESIDENTS  
SOMEWHAT  
DISAGREE OR  
STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

The Business Resource Center will be a physical asset that enables youth and adults to obtain resources for training, understand employment options, connect to local industry, and prepare for entering or transitioning into an employment field. Of the over 10,000 residents of Crawford County, 52% are between the ages of 25 and 64 (2018 BITEC Feasibility Study, University of Southern Indiana). This represents the most likely cohort to use the Business Resource Center as an incubator for their startup or to solicit the services of other tenants for business development and planning assistance.

There is a notable lack of talent and companies in areas such as software development and technology fields. With the understanding of more advanced manufacturing firms moving towards automation, and the onset of the Internet of Things (IoT) and online applications, this growing market is relatively untapped in this region and the Business Resource Center could position itself to uniquely serve this market segment. Training resources would be concentrated around industry clusters with high regional location quotients like: Warehousing and Distribution, Logistics, Advanced Manufacturing, Automotive Supply Chain Management, Outdoor Recreation, Hospitality, and Agriculture.

A number of communities have deployed programs similar to that envisioned for the Business Resource Center. While these efforts have enjoyed some success, extensive planning to assess long term program costs and local demand are essential. The program mix for these facilities can vary greatly, and they often include incubator space, training rooms, and one-stop shops for various government services.

## INDUSTRY CLUSTERS WITH HIGH REGIONAL LOCATION QUOTIENTS

Warehousing &  
Distribution

Agriculture

Logistics

Outdoor Recreation

Advanced  
Manufacturing

Hospitality

Automotive Supply Chain Management

Potential models to review could include the following:

- Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (Danville, VA)
- Center for Rural Development (Somerset, KY)
- John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (Mason City, IA)
- Westmoreland County Community College Advanced Technology Center (Mt. Pleasant, PA)

These centers were funded through a variety of sources, including non-profit organizations, state and federal appropriations, universities, and private sector investments.



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ATTRACTION

The CCEDC has worked with the USI to gather qualitative and quantitative insights through surveys, data analysis, and interviews to determine if a Business Resource Center is feasible in Crawford County. See the BITEC feasibility study in the appendix on page 44 for more information.

**Objective:** Use workforce development feasibility study to inform future implementation efforts for a Workforce Development and Business Resource Center. Attempt to utilize vacant school building for STEAM learning operations.

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT & STEAM LEARNING INITIATIVES

“Young people in our community are aware of the employment opportunities in our region.”

**60%**

**CRAWFORD COUNTY  
RESIDENTS DISAGREE**

Crawford County lacks innovative student engagement and industry exposure initiatives that would prepare young people for a 21st century career. Crawford County residents are striving for higher educational attainment levels and better paying jobs. The county has not been successful in retaining post

high school students (age 20-29) to remain in, return to or move to the area for employment after they complete their education. A 2017 HCI county survey shows that 60 percent of Crawford County residents do not think young people in the community are aware of the employment opportunities in the region.

Crawford County needs to address job skills training gaps and incorporate practical workforce training to better support the Upland region's employers—both large and small—and engage the county's youth. The county seeks to develop regional industry partnerships to provide exposure and training through co-op programs, facility tours, job shadowing programs and mentorship projects.

Crawford County seeks to develop a STEAM-focused learning program, potentially centered around vocational certifications and opportunities within emerging sectors like cybersecurity, biomedical, and blockchain to develop its workforce from within and attract young professionals.

“Our community would benefit from a leadership development and training programs.”

**77%**

**CRAWFORD COUNTY  
RESIDENTS AGREE**

*2017 HCI survey*

**Objective:** Build upon the success of the Boys and Girls Club, 4H, Purdue Extension, and robotics clubs to develop sustainable STEAM learning programs. Develop small business and industry partnerships, as well as mentorship programs, to expose students to local and regional employment opportunities.

## RESOURCE CONSOLIDATION

In the future, Crawford County seeks to have multiple organizations, such as the CCEDC, the Purdue Extension, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Tourism Department operating within the same physical space. Consolidating resources not only saves money, but could also provide an extra convenience for taxpayers who need to meet with multiple organizations in one trip, rather than having to crisscross the county.

**Objective:** Co-locate county organizations to better serve Crawford County residents.





# AMENITIES & ATTRIBUTES

## ASSETS

Crawford County plans to improve infrastructure to support future community cohesion and workforce attraction initiatives.

Sorghum Festival	Crawford County 4H Fair
Lucas Oil Golf Course	Autumn Music Festival
Flintknapping & Primitive Arts Festival	Back Roads Market
Sugar Creek Arts Festival	Old Eckerty Days
Peacock Children's Theater	Holiday Gift Shows
English Reunion Festival	Thunder Over Patoka
Marengo Labor Day Celebration	Marengo Underground 5k

## OPPORTUNITIES & OBJECTIVES

### LAND USE

Crawford County does not have commercial or residential land-use designations. Many county residents feel the lack of land-use categories presents economic development hurdles, particularly with site selectors. In addition, residents feel strategic land-use planning would help with the encouragement and enforcement of blight clean-up. Community input session attendees expressed interest in commissioning an analysis of rural land-use related to economic development and quality of life.

Lodging options are at maximum occupancy; hotels, motels, and camp sites routinely fill up during the spring and summer. Crawford County will research the level of effort required to designate land near the Harrison-Crawford State Forest for RV hookups and traditional camp sites to offer more tourism accommodation options.

**Objective:** Conduct a cost-benefit analysis study that outlines the pros and cons of residential and commercial land-use designation adoption. Organize annual Clean-Sweep initiatives for blight and trash cleanup. Research county RV and campsite options.

## CHILD CARE

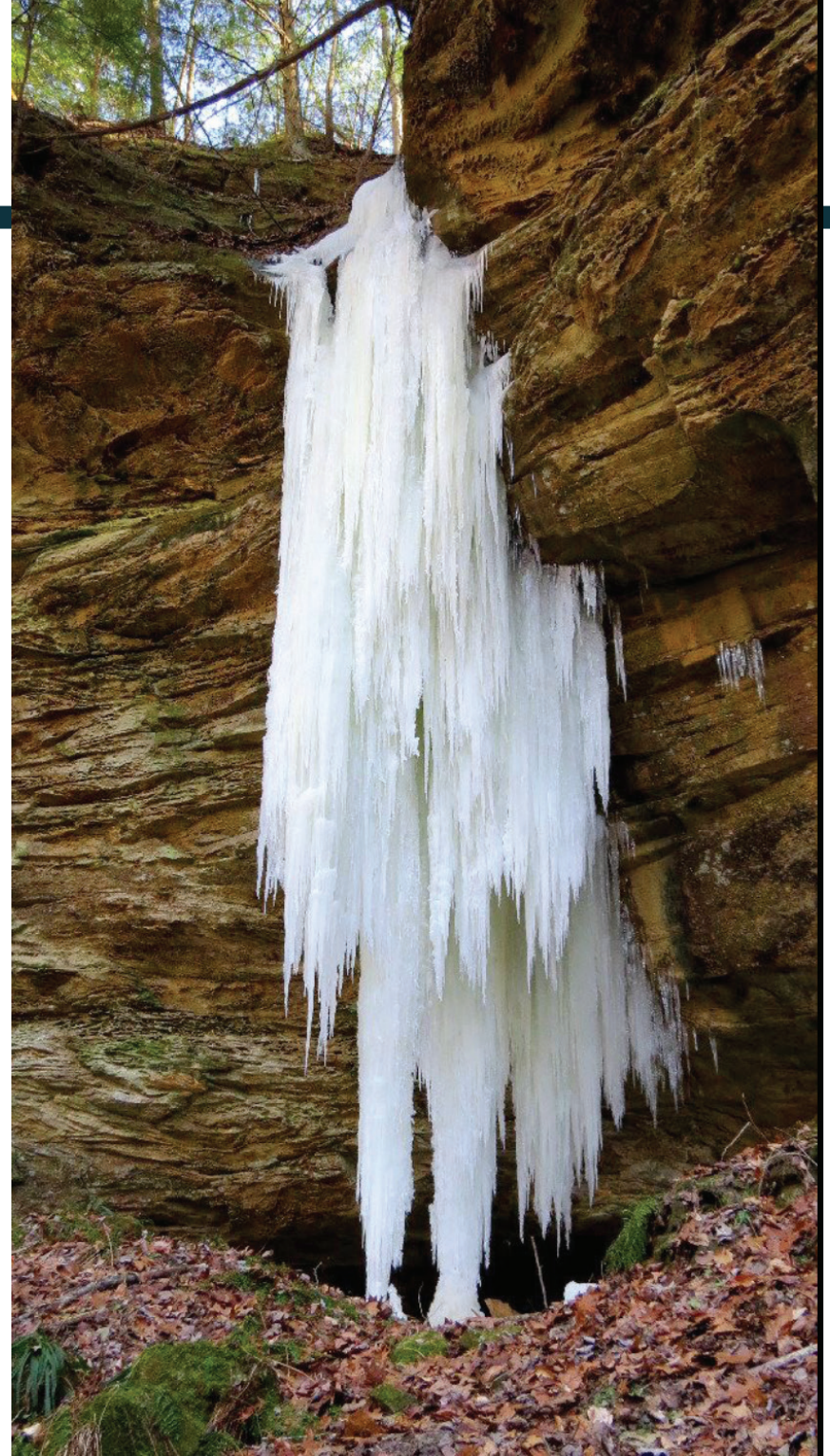
Crawford County lacks certified childcare centers that offer a comprehensive approach to school readiness. (See “Available Childcare Programs (2017)” chart in the appendix on page 39.) The Boys and Girls Club is well respected in the community for its after-school programs, but the county currently has just one Head-Start program—the Lincoln Hills Development Corporation serves children from birth to 5 years old—and too few licensed daycares, most of which operate out of private residences. Many working adults express dissatisfaction with the lack of high quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood learning options throughout the county and see the issue as a hindrance for advancing workforce attraction.

**Objective:** Increase options for quality child care. Research incentives and best-practices to provide Crawford County families with resources and support for birth-to-five health and safety initiatives.

## WATER

Not all of Crawford County’s residents have access to clean, running water, which negatively impacts quality of life and severely limits attraction and economic development proposals. Scarcity issues exist because of intensive use and lack of developed water supply facilities. The county needs to research federal and state infrastructure funding opportunities to build a more robust, county-wide water supply system.

**Objective:** Research federal and state rural water infrastructure funding opportunities.





# AMENITIES & ATTRIBUTES

## OPPORTUNITIES & OBJECTIVES

### HOUSING

Like much of the Uplands region, Crawford County's housing stock is quickly aging. There is a strong need for quality, diverse, and affordable housing to attract new residents. The county seeks to first address the housing shortage for working families.

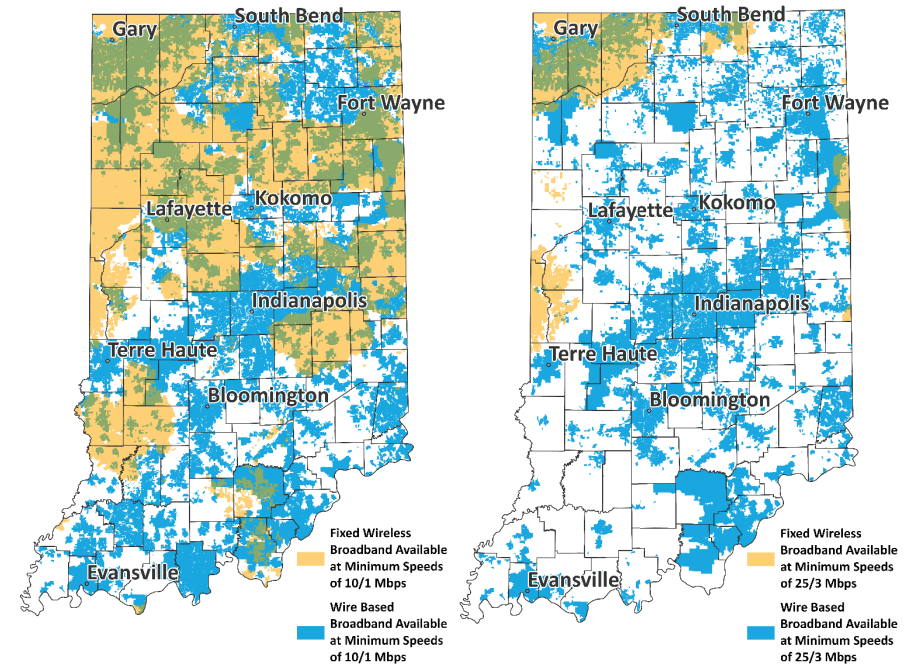
**Objective:** Use findings of ROI regional housing study to assess supply and demand needs and develop plans to incentivize residential construction. Promote state revitalization tax incentives for the restoration of older homes.

### BROADBAND ACCESSIBILITY

Broadband internet access is absolutely necessary to advance quality of life and improve business and educational opportunities for Crawford County residents. 99 percent of residents are without access to fixed broadband of at least 25 mbps down and 3 mbps up (2016 *Digital Divide Profile* data sheet).

County-wide broadband is critical to further develop the community cohesion initiatives outlined in this plan. Residents feel pre-school and K-12 students are under-prepared for college and vocational careers due to the lack of quality internet throughout the county. The county schools have expressed dissatisfaction with the level of service, reliability, and internet speed. Existing businesses and entrepreneurs are at a disadvantage without reliable

**Maps 1 & 2: Comparison of Broadband Availability at Minimum Speeds of 10/1 mbps vs. 25/3 for Wire-Based & Fixed Wireless Broadband**



2018 Report on the Indiana Universal Service Fund & Broadband Deployment In Indiana, Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission Staff, October 2018

broadband access; many residents are forced to leave the county when working from home.

The CCEDC will use the results of a pending IN Office of Community Affairs (OCRA) broadband feasibility study to improve broadband for schools, businesses, and residents to advance economic development and workforce attraction

efforts. Crawford County is also participating in an OCRA rural internet pilot program that will explore options for county-wide high-speed internet.

**Objective:** Use findings of a pending state broadband feasibility study to assess action items to bring broadband internet to Crawford County residents.

**99%**

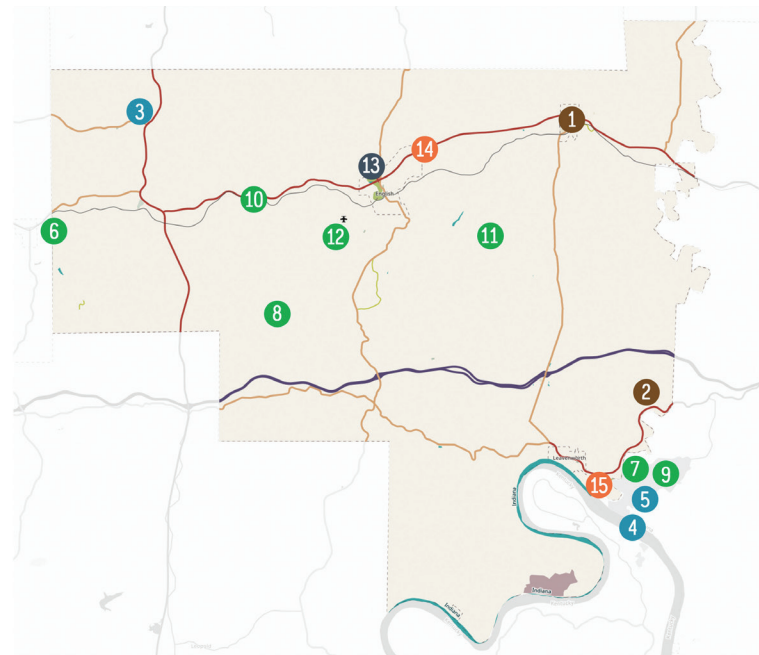
of residents are without access to fixed broadband of at least 25 mbps down and 3 mbps up. (2016 Digital Divide Profile data sheet)

## COUNTY-WIDE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Developing community-minded leaders who understand both issues facing Crawford County and solutions to resolve them is critical. To equip new and emerging leaders, Crawford County should educate and engage youth and adult participants from different career, educational and cultural backgrounds from across the county.

**Objective:** Use community leadership development best practices to create sustainable programming that attracts, develops and fosters future Crawford County leaders.

## SELECT COUNTY ASSETS



### Caverns

- 1 Marengo Cave
- 2 Wyandotte Cave

### Lake / River

- 3 Patoka Lake
- 4 The Ohio River
- 5 Blue River

### Trails / Parks / Preserves

- 6 Birdseye Trail
- 7 Pioneer Farmstead
- 8 Hemlock Cliffs
- 9 Harrison-Crawford State Forest
- 10 Yellow Birch Ravine
- 11 Hoosier National Forest
- 12 Sycamore Springs Park

### Golf

- 13 Lucas Oil Golf Course

### Commercial

- 14 Crawford Industrial Park
- 15 Back Roads Market





# SOLUTIONS

**Crawford County has outlined** programs, projects and systems to address workforce gaps, amplify quality of place assets, and improve community amenities over the next two, five, and ten years.

Potential projects outlined in the Solutions grid were created by analyses of previously developed strategic plans developed by Crawford county community organizations, government entities, and non-profits. Stakeholder input (listen-and-learn sessions, town halls and digital surveys) was gathered to validate and/or challenge the importance of these projects and to prioritize implementation efforts. If the projects

are successfully implemented, the Uplands region would experience an increase in regional capacity (through a well-trained workforce and strengthened community cohesion) population growth, enhanced aesthetic beauty (through clean-up efforts and trail connections) and improved attributes and amenities that make Indiana Uplands a desirable place to live, work and play.

## 1. QUALITY OF PLACE ENHANCEMENTS

Short-Term Projects: Solutions to be developed and executed over the next two years

	PROJECT	IMPLEMENTATION CATEGORY	ACTION STEPS	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
1.1.1	Place Branding and Asset Promotion	Aesthetics & Beautification Enhancements	Develop the We Are Outdoor Recreation and Southern Indiana Gateway brands to enable county leaders and community organizations to showcase tourism assets, highlight economic differentiators, and effectively tell the Crawford County story.	Develop support materials, identify target audiences, conduct asset analysis, identify appropriate outreach tactics	Crawford Tourism Department, Recreational Providers, Radius Indiana, CCEDC, Crawford Chamber of Commerce, Crawford County School Corporation, Community Foundation of Crawford County	
1.1.2	Internal Communications	Community Cohesion & Support	Create a plan for communicating county events more effectively and connecting service providers and event facilitators. Develop a Business Resource guide indexing county businesses.	Convene working group, create an online community events calendar, meet with Chamber to catalogue businesses in the community	Crawford Chamber of Commerce, Community Foundation of Crawford County, Crawford County School Corporation	



# 1. QUALITY OF PLACE ENHANCEMENTS

Mid-Term Projects: Solutions to be developed and executed over the next five years

	PROJECT	IMPLEMENTATION CATEGORY	ACTION STEPS	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
1.2.1	Wyandotte Cave Interpretive Center	Connectivity Infrastructure Development	Build structure, provide educational programming, connect trail system from O'Bannon Woods to Leavenworth	Feasibility, funding review, develop educational programming	IN Department of Natural Resources, CCEDC, Crawford County Tourism	IN Department of Natural Resources
1.2.2	Performing Arts Venue	Aesthetics & Beautification Enhancements	Research the feasibility of developing an arts/music venue.	Complete community survey of interest in new venue, develop feasibility study	University of Southern Indiana, Crawford County Chamber of Commerce	Music Think Tank
1.2.3	Trail Connectivity & Enhancements	Connectivity Infrastructure Development	Provide trail maintenance, promote the trail system, connect Crawford trails to others across the Uplands region.	No. of volunteers, investment in trail upkeep/ maintenance, media hits about trail usage and system	IN Department of Natural Resources, Crawford Tourism Department, Recreational Providers, CCEDC, Community Foundation of Crawford County	IN Department of Natural Resources; Next Level Trails Program
1.2.4	Arts Culture	Community Cohesion & Support	Support Arts Culture through the creation of a formal arts association. Develop a tourism and hospitality training program.	Chartering of new organization	Ivy Tech, IN Office of Tourism Development, IHCD	NEA, Citizens Institute for Rural Design

## 2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND ATTRACTION INITIATIVES

Mid-Term Projects: Solutions to be developed and executed over the next five years

	PROJECT	IMPLEMENTATION CATEGORY	ACTION STEPS	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
2.2.1	Workforce Development & Business Resource Center	Community Cohesion & Support	Develop a workforce development and business resource center to help existing businesses grow and provide training and support for start-ups.	Assess findings of pending feasibility study, development of workforce coalition, funds raised	Crawford County School Corporation, CCEDC, Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, Center for Rural Development; University of Southern Indiana, Purdue Extension	EDA, NASE, Non-Profit Organizations (Kauffman, Coleman)
2.2.2	Student Engagement & STEAM learning initiatives.	Community Cohesion & Support	Develop STEAM learning initiatives through school and industry partnerships.	Create one focused industry partnership, survey members to assess workforce needs	Crawford County School Corporation, CCEDC, Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, Center for Rural Development, Purdue Extension	US DOL, Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce

Long-Term Projects: Solutions to be developed and executed through 2030

	PROJECT	IMPLEMENTATION CATEGORY	ACTION STEPS	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
2.3.1	Resource Consolidation	Community Cohesion & Support	Co-locate county organizations to better serve Crawford residents.	Assess vacant buildings to house multiple departments	CCEDC, Purdue Extension, Crawford County Chamber of Commerce, Crawford Tourism Department	



### 3. AMENITIES AND ATTRIBUTES ENHANCEMENTS

Short-Term Projects: Solutions to be developed and executed over the next two years

	PROJECT	IMPLEMENTATION CATEGORY	ACTION STEPS	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
3.1.1	Land Use : Commercial & Residential	Community Cohesion & Support	Research best practices in rural land-use policy. Organize annual "clean sweep" blight clean up initiatives.	Conduct a study outlining costs and benefits associated with residential and commercial land-use policy implementation, No. of residents participating in Clean Sweep initiatives	CCEDC, Purdue Extension, Crawford County Chamber of Commerce, Crawford Tourism Department, Crawford County Council, Township Trustees	
3.1.2	Land Use: Recreational	Connectivity & Infrastructure Development	Develop RV sites and plan for the establishment of more camp sites.	Complete local inventory of potential local sites for RV parks and additional camp sites, survey residents to determine ideal locations	CCEDC, Boys and Girls Club, Community Foundation of Crawford County, 4H, Recreational Providers,	
3.1.3	County-Wide Leadership Institute	Community Cohesion & Support	Convene county-wide youth and adult leadership development program.	Identify participants, sustainability, subject matter experts, and program timeline	Community Foundation of Crawford County, CCEDC, Crawford County School Corporation	

Mid-Term Projects: Solutions to be developed and executed over the next five years

	PROJECT	IMPLEMENTATION CATEGORY	ACTION STEPS	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
3.2.1	Child Care	Community Cohesion & Support	Research incentives and best-practices to provide Crawford families with resources and support for birth-to-five health and education initiatives.	Development of childcare training programs, No. of childcare certifications, No. of new Head Start programs	Boys & Girls Club, Lincoln Hills Development Corp., Community Foundation of Crawford County	USDA, Indiana FSSA, HHS, ACF, OHS
3.2.2	Water Accessibility	Connectivity Infrastructure Development	Research state and federal rural water infrastructure funding opportunities.	Conduct needs assessment to take stock of availability of water, identify residential and commercial infrastructure needs	CCEDC, IEDC	USDA, EDA

Long-Term Projects: Solutions to be developed and executed through 2030

	PROJECT	IMPLEMENTATION CATEGORY	ACTION STEPS	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
3.3.1	Housing	Community Cohesion & Support	Provide affordable, diverse housing options and promote state revitalization incentives.	Review of ROI housing study, assessment of rural land-use best practices, development of housing coalition	ROI, CCEDC, IHCDA	USDA, IEDC
3.3.2	Broadband	Connectivity Infrastructure Development	Provide residents and county businesses with reliable internet access.	Assessment of Broadband Feasibility Study, participation in OCRA broadband pilot program, meetings with broadband providers	ROI, CCEDC, OCRA, Radius Indiana, Broadband Providers, University of Southern Indiana, Crawford County School System	OCC, USDA, NTIA, DOE, FCC





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## ABOUT CRAWFORD COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Crawford County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) focuses on the betterment of the entire county. CCEDC provides training and education opportunities for both young people and adults. CCEDC works to improve infrastructure, including broadband internet and cell phone service, for businesses and residents. CCEDC recruits businesses to the Industrial Park, but also to other areas of the county, including English, Marengo, Milltown, and the State Road 37 corridor between Interstate 64 and French Lick. CCEDC is instituting a Business Retention and Expansion Program because it is sensitive to the needs of our existing businesses and recognize the opportunity to retain and grow them.

CCEDC believes in collaboration and has a successful track record of making concentrated efforts to bring people and organizations together in the effort to improve Crawford County.

CCEDC is represented by each of the incorporated town councils, a representative from the Crawford County Board of Commissioners, the Crawford County Council, the Crawford County School Corporation's School Board, Crawford County Redevelopment Commission, the Chamber of Commerce, and five at-large positions that are voted on by member businesses within the county. CCEDC has spearheaded bringing the Duke Energy Site Readiness Grant to the Industrial Park, allowing the site to be independently assessed by a site selector. CCEDC works with the Redevelopment Commission, local and



state elected officials, Radius, and many others on a variety of local businesses issues and community development initiatives.

CCEDC led the effort to get a Broadband Planning Grant for the towns of English, Marengo, and Milltown, and also participated in the Hometown Collaboration Initiative within the county.

CCEDC worked with Radius, the town of Leavenworth, the county government, Duke Energy, and the IEDC to help develop an incentive package and complete a deal that recently resulted in a new business being located in the Industrial Park.

CCEDC established partnerships with the below organizations to pursue the Ready Communities program:

- Community Foundation of Crawford County
- Purdue Extension of Crawford County
- The Crawford County Chamber of Commerce
- The Crawford County Tourism Board
- Crawford County Community Schools



## GROUP STELLAR & KGLOBAL PROJECT TEAM

NAME	TITLE	PROJECT ROLE
Carlos Carmonamedina	Art Director	Graphic Designer
Parry Carter	Account Director	Project Manager
Elliot Carter	Senior Account Executive	GIS Coordinator
Randy DeCleene	Partner	Project Principal
Brian Green	Account Director	Researcher/Review Team
Sara Hijaz	Account Supervisor	Researcher/Review Team
Amanda Jada	Research Associate	Researcher/Review Team
Rachel Lott	Vice President	Designer/Planning Team
Jamie Medlock	President/CEO	Project Principal
Erik Pages	President, EntreWorks	Subject Matter Expert/Review Team
Quinn Slaven	Research Associate	Researcher/Review Team

group stellar

Group Stellar is a communications agency specializing in public relations, stakeholder engagement, and community cohesion initiatives. We develop long-term plans and key messages that leverage competitive advantages.

www.groupstellar.com  
13598 East WestGate Drive  
Odon, IN 47562

kglobal

kglobal is a communications firm specializing in economic and workforce development. We work with states and localities to build brands, market assets, and develop strategic plans for diverse growth.

www.kglobal.com  
2001 L Street NW, Suite 650  
Washington, DC 20036

# HOUSEHOLD DATA

2017 Residential Building Permits	Crawford		
		% Dist. In County	% Dist. In State
Total Permits	0	NA	-
Single-Family	0	NA	74.20%
2-Family	0	NA	2.00%
3- and 4- Family	0	NA	0.40%
5+ Family	0	NA	23.40%

Reference: "STATS Indiana Public Data Utility" data sheet

	Crawford	Indiana
Children living in households where all parents work (2015)	59.0%	65.0%
% of income a single parent in poverty pays for high quality care (2017)	43.0%	54.0%

Reference: "2018 ELAC Dashboard County Profile" data sheet

2016 Data	Crawford	INDIANA
Population	10,582	-
Households	4,076	-
Median Household Income	\$41,173	\$52,314
Unemployment Rate	6.30%	5.00%
ALICE Households	28%	25%
Households in Poverty	18%	14%

Reference: "ALICE in XX County" data sheet

	Crawford
Self-sufficient working hours <sup>1</sup>	~92
Self-sufficient working hours <sup>2</sup>	56
Self-Sufficiency Standard Wage is XX% of the Minimum Wage	230%
Self-Sufficiency Standard Wage is XX% of the Federal Poverty Line	175%

\*1 = How much time one minimum-wage employee must work in one week in order to sustain a family consisting of 1 adult, 1 preschooler, and 1 school-aged kid.

\*2 = How much time two minimum-wage employees must work in one week in order to sustain a family consisting of 2 adult, 1 preschooler, and 1 school-aged kid.

Resource: Indiana Institute for Working Families Data Sheet

2016 Household Type Data	Crawford			
		Rank	% Dist. In County	% Dist. In State
Married with Children	576	90	14.10%	19.00%
Married without Children	1,501	86	36.80%	30.00%
Single Parents	407	83	10.00%	9.70%
Living Alone	1,110	87	27.20%	28.20%

Reference: "STATS Indiana Public Data Utility" data sheet

2016	Crawford
Poverty	18%
ALICE	28%
Above ALICE Threshold	54%

Reference: "ALICE in XX County" data sheet

2016 Single or Cohabiting Household	Crawford
Poverty	15%
ALICE	30%
Above ALICE Threshold	55%

Reference: "ALICE in XX County" data sheet

2016 Families w/ Children Household	Crawford
Poverty	25%
ALICE	14%
Above ALICE Threshold	61%

Reference: "ALICE in XX County" data sheet

2016 65 and Over Household	Crawford
Poverty	16%
ALICE	36%
Above ALICE Threshold	48%

Reference: "ALICE in XX County" data sheet

Brown	Crawford
Nashville - 54%	English - 67%
Washington - 40%	Milltown - 62%
Jackson - 39%	Margeno - 61%

Reference: "ALICE in XX County" data sheet



## DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

2017	Crawford			
	Rank	% Dist. In County	% Dist. In State	
American Indian	47	83	0.40%	0.40%
Asian Alone	19	92	0.20%	2.40%
Black Alone	60	89	0.60%	9.70%
Native Hawaiian	9	59	0.10%	0.10%
White	10,281	87	97.30%	85.40%
Two or More Race Groups	150	83	1.40%	2.10%

Reference: "STATS Indiana Public Data Utility" data sheet

2018	Crawford		IN Uplands	
	#	%	#	%
Total Population	10,566	100.0%	404,408	100.0%
0-4	557	5.3%	22,219	5.5%
5-18	1,750	16.6%	60,987	15.1%
18-24	741	7.0%	58,752	14.5%
25-44	2,384	22.6%	94,843	23.5%
45-64	3,107	29.4%	101,861	25.2%
65+	2,027	19.2%	65,746	16.3%

Reference: "Indiana Uplands Data - At a Glance" data sheet

	Crawford	
	Rank	
Population 2010	10,713	86
Population 2017	10,566	87
Population 2020	10,652	87
%Change 2010-Today	-1.40%	51

Reference: "STATS Indiana Public Data Utility" data sheet

2017	Crawford			
	Rank	% Dist. In County	% Dist. In State	
Preschool (0-4)	557	88	5.30%	6.30%
School Age (5-17)	1,750	87	16.60%	17.30%
College Age (18-24)	741	87	7.00%	9.90%
Young Adult (25-44)	2,384	87	22.60%	25.30%
Older Adult (45-64)	3,107	86	29.40%	25.90%
Seniors (65+)	2,027	86	19.20%	15.40%
Median Age	44	-	-	37.7

Reference: "STATS Indiana Public Data Utility" data sheet

2018	Crawford	IN Uplands
% of 25+ Population with Associates Degree or Higher	17.0%	32.0%

Reference: "Indiana Uplands Data - At a Glance" data sheet

Population Change 2012-2016	Crawford
	-111

Reference: "IN Office of Community and Rural Affairs - Community Vitality Indicators" data sheet

2016	Crawford
Population ages 65+	17.3%
% of individuals in poverty	19.5%

Reference: "2016 Digital Divide Profile" data sheet

Various years	Crawford	Indiana
Young children ages 0-5 (2016)	696	-
Young children ages 0-5 who need care (2016)	404	-
Young children living in poverty (2015)	32.0%	25.0%

Reference: "2018 ELAC Dashboard County Profile" data sheet

## ECONOMIC DATA

Income and Poverty	Crawford			
	Rank	% of State	Indiana (state)	
Per Capita Annual Income (2016)	\$32,906	88	76.40%	\$43,097
Median household Income (2016)	\$46,210	76	88.40%	\$52,289
Poverty Rate (2016)	17.20%	10	122.90%	14.00%
Poverty Rate among Children (<18)	26.20%	6	137.20%	19.10%
TANF Monthly Avg Families (2017)	11	83	0.20%	6,790
Food Stamp Recipients (2017)	1,181	83	0.20%	656,297
Free and Reduced Fee Lunch Recipients 2016/17	951	85	0.20%	495,330

Reference: "STATS Indiana Public Data Utility" data sheet

2016	Crawford
Community Vitality Indicator Score Rank	92

Reference: "IN Office of Community and Rural Affairs - Community Vitality Indicators" data sheet

# EDUCATION DATA

Available Child Care Programs (2017)	Crawford			
	Child Care Centers	School-Based	Registered Ministries	Family Child Care
Known	3	4	0	3
On PTQ	2	0	0	1
High-Quality	1	0	0	0

Reference: "2018 ELAC Dashboard County Profile" data sheet

2017	Crawford	Indiana
Average Cost	\$6,970	\$8,818
Preschool	\$6,588	-
Toddler	\$7,026	-
Infant	\$7,374	-

Reference: "2018 ELAC Dashboard County Profile" data sheet

Public Assistance Available to Support Families	Crawford
Total Available Assistance	\$699,036
CCDF	\$13,846
Head Start	\$390,320
Early Head Start	\$208,406
OMW	\$0
EEMG	\$0
Special Ed.	\$86,465
Title I	\$0
\$ Needed to fund high-quality care for young children living under 100% of FPL	\$1,498,550

Reference: "2018 ELAC Dashboard County Profile" data sheet

High School Graduate Enrollment by College Type (2016)	Crawford	
	# of HS Graduates	% of Total HS Graduates
Indiana Public College	38	42.2%
Indiana Private College (nonprofit)	4	4.4%
Indiana Private College (for-profit)	0	0.0%
Out-of-State Public College	1	1.1%
Out-of-State Private College (nonprofit)	2	2.2%
Out-of-State Private College (for-profit)	0	0.0%
Non-degree Granting School	0	0.0%
Did Not Enroll in College	45	50.0%

Reference: "Indiana College Readiness Reports" data sheet

2016/2017	Crawford		State AVG
	Rank		
Public School Enrollment	1,555	87	-
Adults (25+ in 2016 ACS)	7,413	86	-
Adults with HS diploma or higher	82.70%	87	88.10%
Adults with BA, or higher	9.80%	90	24.60%

Reference: "STATS Indiana Public Data Utility" data sheet

2016	Crawford
Public School Enrollment (as a % of <18 Population)	67.5%
Public High School Graduation Rate	86.0%
% of Population w/ Associates Degrees or Higher	16.8%

Reference: "IN Office of Community and Rural Affairs - Community Vitality Indicators" data sheet

2016	Crawford
% of Population ages 25+ with less than a HS degree	17.3%

Reference: "2016 Digital Divide Profile" data sheet

High School Graduates Enrolling in College (2016)	Crawford		
	# of HS graduates	# Enrolled in College	% Enrolled in College
HS diploma - Honors	21	NA	NA
HS diploma - Core 40	61	26	43%
HS diploma - General	8	NA	NA
Took and passed an AP Test	11	9	82%
Took but did not pass an AP Test	14	13	93%
Did not take AP Test	65	23	35%
Free or Reduced Lunch	43	24	56%
Non Free or Reduced Lunch	47	21	45%
ALL STUDENTS	90	45	50%

Reference: "Indiana College Readiness Reports" data sheet

Indiana Public College Enrollment Data (2016)	Crawford	
	# Enrolled in IN Public College	% of Total Enrolled in IN Public College
Bachelor's Degree (4 year)	23	60.5%
Associate Degree (2 year)	13	34.2%
Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	2	5.3%
Award of less than 1 academic year	0	0.0%
Unclassified undergraduate	0	0.0%
Arts and Humanities	3	8%
Business and Communication	5	13%
Education	2	5%
Health	8	21%
STEM	12	32%
Social and Behavioral Sciences and Human Services	5	13%
Trades	2	5%
Undecided	1	3%

Reference: "Indiana College Readiness Reports" data sheet

	Crawford	Indiana
Children Enrolled in known programs (2017)	150	-
Children enrolled in high quality programs (2017)	17	-
High-Quality enrollment in known programs (2017)	11.0%	37.0%
High-quality enrollment available for children with all parents working (2017)	4.0%	15.0%
Early childhood care and education workforce (2017)	28	-
Annual median salary for preschool teachers (2016)	\$31,245	\$23,370
Children enrolled in kindergarten (2017)	93.5%	90.7%
Children retained in kindergarten (2017)	5.8%	4.4%
Cost of retention (2017)	\$41,220	-

Reference: "2018 ELAC Dashboard County Profile" data sheet

Children Enrolled in High-Quality Programs by age (2017)	Crawford
Infants	0
Toddlers	0
Preschoolers	17

Reference: "2018 ELAC Dashboard County Profile" data sheet



# WORKFORCE DATA

2018	Total Pop 16+	Labor Force	Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR)	LFPR Rank (out of 92 counties)
Crawford	8,493	4,629	54.50%	87

Reference: "Indiana Career Connections and Talent" data sheet

2018	% of County residents that work in-county	% of County workers that live in-county
Crawford	18%	37%

Reference: "Indiana Career Connections and Talent" data sheet

2018	Unemployment Rate	Rank (lowest out of 92 counties)
Crawford	4.80%	89 <sup>th</sup>

Reference: "Indiana Career Connections and Talent" data sheet

2017	Crawford		
		Rank	State AVG
Total Labor Force	4,923	88	-
Employed	4,705	88	-
Unemployed	218	84	-
Annual Unemployment Rate	4.4	7	3.5

Reference: "STATS Indiana Public Data Utility" data sheet

Commuting (2016)	Crawford
Number of people who live in county but work outside county	2,429
Number of people who live in another county but work in county	606
Top County sending workers into county	Harrison - 216
Top County receiving workers from county	Harrison - 572

Reference: "STATS Indiana Annual Commuting Trends Profile" data sheet

2016	Crawford
Avg Maximum Advertised Download Speed in Mbps	9.447
Avg Maximum Advertised Upload Speed in Mbps	1.962
% of Households with a 10/1 broadband connection	0.1-20.0%
% of people without access to fixed broadband of at least 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up	99.0%

Reference: "2016 Digital Divide Profile" data sheet

Workforce (2016)	Crawford
Implied resident labor force	6,603
Number of people who live and work in county	4,174
Total number of people who work in county	4,780

Reference: "STATS Indiana Annual Commuting Trends Profile" data sheet

## EXISTING PLANS & STUDIES REFERENCED

- Indiana Broadband Coverage Report, 2019 – IN.GOV
- Hometown Collaboration Initiative Crawford County Report and Survey, 2017 – Purdue Center for Regional Development
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2018 – Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission
- Crawford Industry Cluster Study, 2018 – Crawford County Economic Development Corporation

## PARTNER & RESOURCE ACRONYMS

- NEA: National Endowment for the Arts
- EDA: Economic Development Administration
- NASE: National Association for the Self-Employed
- US DOL: United States Department of Labor
- USDA: United States Department of Agriculture
- FSSA: Family and Social Services Administration
- HHS: Department of Health and Human Services
- ACF: Administration for Children and Families
- OHS: Office of Head Start
- IEDC: Indiana Economic Development Corporation
- OCC: Office of the Comptroller of the Currency
- NTIA: National Telecommunications and Information Administration
- DOE: Department of Energy
- FCC: Federal Communications Commission
- IHCD: Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority



The BITEC feasibility study outlines opportunities for residents to upskill through workforce training, the development of business plans, and collaboration with other local business owners. The report provides a SWOT analysis of the county to demonstrate viability, a high-level marketing strategy for informing residents of the Center, and a cost/funding assessment for construction.



## BITEC FEASIBILITY STUDY

February 2019



Prepared for:

**Crawford County  
Economic Development Corporation**

USI Researcher:

**Steven Stump, MBA**

Assistant Director, Center for Applied Research

Funded by a planning grant from ROI/Indiana Uplands



Prepared under the auspices of the USI Center for Applied Research

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## BITEC FEASIBILITY STUDY

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Crawford County, Indiana, represents a primarily rural area of the state in which high-paying careers are lacking. With a large portion of the county's revenue coming from tourism activities, few employers exist that can offer high-skill, high-wage jobs to the county's high school graduates. As these students matriculate to surrounding areas to pursue higher education, few opportunities exist to draw them back to their hometown to establish roots and careers.

In an effort to encourage economic development and small business growth, it was conceived that the county needed a facility that would provide training, education, and incubation space while fostering a creative, innovative environment. With a structure of this kind being very unique to the county, a feasibility study was necessary to explore local demographic data, validate demand, and provide a solution that could be self-sustaining within 5 years.

Under the direction of the Center for Applied Research at the University of Southern Indiana, data was gathered and multiple solutions were proposed. Options were narrowed to arrive at what was determined to be the most effective space, location, and programming to provide local residents and businesses with the tools needed to spark new ideas and take them to market, with the ultimate goal of creating net new jobs for the county. The following pages explore the demographic breakdown of Crawford County compared to surrounding counties, and a detailed plan for the space, programming, marketing, and financial success of a local training and entrepreneurship center.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Crawford County Indiana is an area of Southern Indiana that is rural and remote in areas that are rugged. While the area is considered rural, the Southwestern part of the county has an Interchange on I-64 that is 35 minutes away from the Louisville, KY Metropolitan Market and 45 minutes to the UPS World Port. The county citizens are job seekers and entrepreneurs. At issue is where the residents may be able to go to should they want to seek employment or launch a new business. Some of the current local businesses want to expand. The K-12 students would like to take advantage of programming that does not require commute of sometimes over 1 hour.

The Crawford County Business, Innovation, Talent & Entrepreneurship (BITEC) center will be a place for people in the immediate and surrounding rural areas to come for collaboration, training, and jobs.

The lead group is a partnership between the following entities led by the Crawford County Economic Development Partnership Corporation (CCEDC):

- The Community Foundation of Crawford County
- The Crawford County Chamber of Commerce
- The Crawford County Community School Corporation
- The Crawford County Tourism Board
- Jasper Engines (Anchor Industry)
- Purdue University Extension

The partnership above has agreed to work together in building capacity of Crawford County residents with support from the local units of government who are serving, along with key stakeholders, as a steering council.

At issue is the amount of distance there is between the people needing business and workforce services and the physical places from which services are rendered. Over the past year, the partnership has worked on flipping the dynamic where the services have now committed to coming to Crawford County. While this is good news and jobs have been created as a result, there is still a need to have a physical asset in the county to have trainings and services.

Example: The official SBDC office for the region is in Bloomington, IN; 75 miles away and 1 hour 46 minutes via two-lane roads. The Economic Development Partnership has brokered an agreement for committed hours at the space-challenged economic development office.

Throughout the past 8 months the SBDC is now for the first time working with 9 companies and launched 2 for a net gain of 17 jobs. This has been tied as a requirement for the county's Revolving Loan Fund in order to provide more resources for these companies. There is a need for a new asset, with new construction, to rally the community so they know they have a place to go for resources to find a job, get the needed training, or start/grow a business.

### **LOCAL POPULATION**

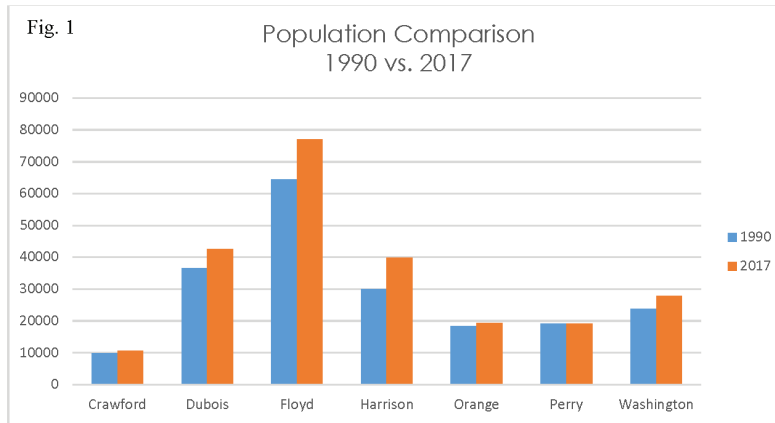
The primary factor in determining the value of the BITEC to the local community is the amount of local demand for the services and amenities offered in the facility. Beginning with demographic data, an analysis of the residents of Crawford County reveals:

The population of Crawford County has remained relatively consistent from 1990 to 2017, seeing only a 7% increase during this time period (Figure 1). Adjacent counties have been experiencing increases in population ranging from 6% to 33%, with Perry County being the



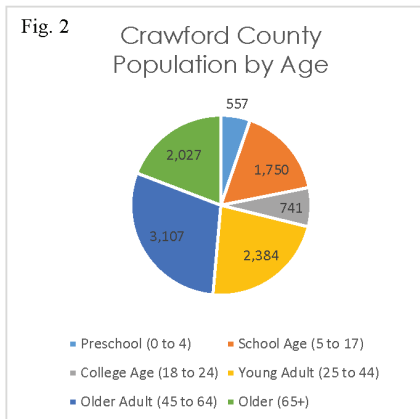
## Business Innovation, Talent & Entrepreneurship Center

exception, showing a decrease of less than 1%. However, Perry County has close to twice the number of residents as Crawford. Not only does this show the challenge Crawford County has due to its smaller population base, but also in the fact that surrounding counties are attracting more residents at a faster pace, thus putting Crawford County at an increasing disadvantage in terms of available workforce.



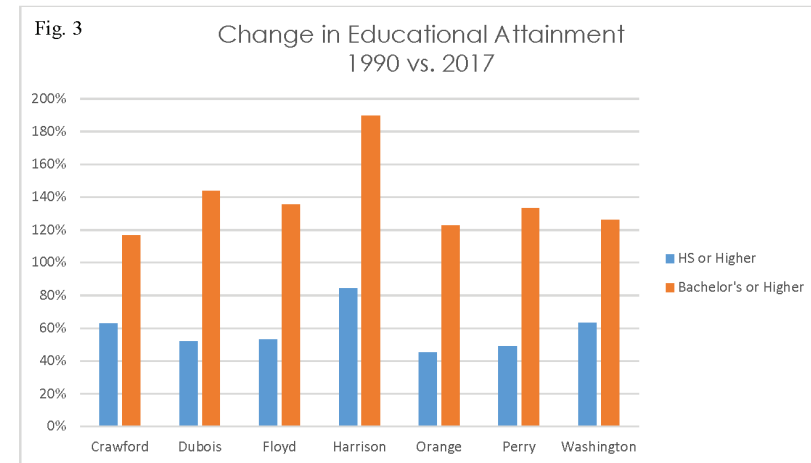
Source: US Census Bureau / stats.indiana.edu

Of the 10,566 residents of Crawford County, 52% are between the ages of 25 and 64 (Figure 2). This represents those most likely to use the BITEC as an incubator for their business startup or to solicit the services of BITEC tenants for business development and planning assistance. An additional population segment, school and college (5 to 24) comprises 24%, indicating that almost one fourth of the local population could benefit from use of the facility as an educational tool. Exposing this segment to the entrepreneurial career pathways associated with the capabilities of the BITEC increases the likelihood of additional postsecondary credentials in technical areas such as software coding, electrical engineering, and advanced manufacturing processes.



Source: US Census Bureau / stats.indiana.edu

There has been a measurable increase in the number of high school diplomas and postsecondary degrees earned by residents age 25 and older since 1990. This population segment has grown by 19% between 1990 and 2017, totaling 1,172 residents (Figure 3). However, the number of these individuals possessing a high school diploma or greater has increased by 2,364 during that same time period. Likewise, the number of those with a Bachelor's degree or higher has increased from 359 in 1990 to 779 in 2017.

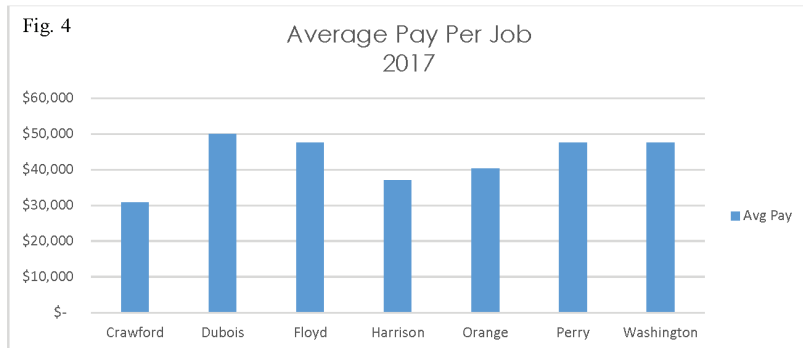


Source: US Census Bureau / stats.indiana.edu

This data indicates that Crawford County residents are striving for higher educational attainment levels and better paying jobs. While the percentage increase in postsecondary degrees is behind the five adjacent counties, the BITEC presents an opportunity for further growth and expertise in technical fields such as advanced manufacturing, engineering, and software coding. This education and training can be obtained in the form of postsecondary credentials other than four-year degrees, which would be a logical transition for the increased number of Crawford County residents who are earning high school diplomas but are experiencing limitations in advancing to Bachelor degree programs. Certificate and non-degree programs offered through the BITEC will provide local access to specific technical skills and business acumen to promote entrepreneurship within the county and surrounding region.

In terms of wages earned in Crawford County, the average job in Crawford County pays annual wages of \$30,854. This is over \$6,000 per year less than Harrison County, the nearest average from the adjacent five counties (Figure 4). Workers in Dubois County average annual wages of \$49,980, over 60% higher than Crawford County's average. This implies that Crawford County's local economy could benefit from skilled workers in high-demand fields who could start their own businesses or find high-paying jobs in nearby counties.

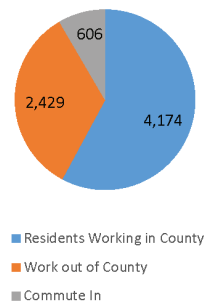
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Source: US Census Bureau / stats.indiana.edu

Upon closer examination of annual commuting trends, it is revealed that approximately one-third of Crawford County residents (37%) are employed and work in locations outside of the county. Of these 2,429 workers, many are finding employment in the counties of Harrison (572) and Dubois (529), with 376 crossing state lines to work in Kentucky.

**Fig. 5** Crawford County Commuting Trends



Source: US Census Bureau / stats.indiana.edu

At a glance, we can see that, while the majority of residents are working in-county, Crawford County is exporting more workers (orange) than it is bringing in (grey)(Figure 5). While increased skills and credentials would help these workers advance in their current positions, the goal for Crawford County would be to, via the BITEC, encourage more startup companies within the county that could scale up and employ more county residents and, over the long-term, create a more skilled workforce that could also attract larger employers to the county. This would reduce commuting time/expense for many Crawford County residents, and the higher-paying jobs they would receive from these startup and established firms would increase the county tax base for further economic development.

### LOCAL DEMAND

The primary tenants and clients of the BITEC will be local residents seeking to establish their own operations in Crawford County and the surrounding region. These individuals will participate in training courses and work with tenants who specialize in business consulting to increase their management and technical skills. These residents will then be positioned to



## Business Innovation, Talent & Entrepreneurship Center

establish their own companies, begin operations in the coworking portion of the BITEC, and scale up to another location within the county and employ other county residents.

Currently, the regional area surrounding Crawford County has significant business potential in multiple related industries. The following figures represent the current business being conducted by regional companies in the regional and national markets:

- a. Hospitality > \$231k / \$3.0 million
- b. Agriculture > \$1 million / \$10.2 million
- c. Outdoor Recreation > \$154k / \$1.3 million
- d. Advanced Manufacturing > \$10.5 million / \$95 million
- e. Auto, Manufacturing and Supply > \$84k / \$1 million
- f. Warehouse & Distribution > \$1.4 million / \$14.4 million
- g. Trucking > \$1 million / \$9.6 million

There is a notable lack of talent and companies in areas such as software development and technology fields. With the understanding of more advanced manufacturing firms moving towards automation, and the onset of the Internet of Things (IoT) and online applications, this growing market is relatively untapped in this region and the BITEC could position itself to uniquely serve this market segment.

### **PROGRAMMING... for BUSINESS**

Partners: Chamber of Commerce, Indiana 15 Regional Plan Commission, the Small Business Development Center, University Partners

Need; Business have needs and we have partnered with the SBDC to deliver business services. Moreover, the county has improved the application process for Revolving Loan Funds through Economic Development Authority and the USDA to assist businesses with job growth.

The Economic Development Partnership will staff a resource to evaluate business plans and refer resources to assist that business. There will be a coordinated approach to schedule and supply technical assistance with the monthly SBDC visits.

Businesses have a demand for a trainable workforce. The BITEC would provide much-needed space for classes in certifications and credentials to expedite delivery of qualified employees. Example: There are many electrical companies on the east side of the county. Along with the electrical companies, there is a demand for OSHA certification and other trade credentials. The Economic Development Partnership has an agreement in place with Vincennes University to travel and teach employees so they can become certified.

There will be open concept meeting space for businesses to meet and confer along with value-add Chamber events such as:

- Networking after hours
- Financial Health seminars
- Effective Business Planning seminars
- Succession Planning
- Marketing and Branding

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### ...for INNOVATION

Partners: Purdue Research Foundation, University of Southern Indiana, Crawford County Schools, Crawford County Economic Development Corporation

The CCEDC has completed a cluster study of industries for business development and attraction. There are also entrepreneurs in Crawford County that are developing new innovations in the identified clusters. Currently there are two companies that have innovations working with economic development.

The BITEC will be the space where people can go for “Creating and Growing the Innovation Ecosystem”. This location will host events such as:

- Pitch Competitions
- Technology Hack-a-Thons
- Startup Blitzes

### ...for TALENT

Partners: Department of Workforce Development, Vincennes University, Mentorship & Leadership Network

Talent is the most critical element of the local population. The BITEC will serve as the place for job referrals, networking, and training for local business and industries.

The CCEDC will provide the space and resources for classes in specific industry credit programs with an agreement through Vincennes University to provide the accredited training.

Programs to include:

- OSHA 10 & 30 Training
- Soft Skills & CRM
- Basic electricity
- Coding
- Computer Basics MSOffice and AppleSuite
- Salesforce training from a certified trainer.

The building will be open to the community for lifelong learning opportunities and life enhancing skills.

Commitment from Indiana WorkOne to supply an employment specialist for our para-professional labor shed.

### ...for ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Partners: Purdue Research Foundation, Economic Development, Elevate Ventures

There are many of residents in Crawford County who tinker in their garages. The goal of the BITEC is to encourage these entrepreneurs to collide in a space that will bring ideas to fruition and spark new innovations. The coworking space will allow facilitation and idea development to

#### Business Innovation, Talent & Entrepreneurship Center

a degree of readiness for Purdue to provide technical assistance, ultimately aiding these entrepreneurs with getting their products to market. In addition to product development, a place is also needed for office meetings/presentations for potential investors and venture capitalists.

The space will also network with existing programming in Southern Indiana including the Evansville Meetup ecosystem, Purdue@WestGate Spirited Entrepreneur and Firebox activity and the Louisville E-Leader program and FirstBuild.



### **TARGET MARKET**

Two segments exist as the target customer for the BITEC: start-up companies and established firms. The proper mix will provide a steady revenue stream that will lead to long-term sustainability.

#### **Start-Up Companies**

As a business incubator, the BITEC has the potential to accommodate multiple start-up companies simultaneously. The primary target for this purpose would be residents age 18 to 64 who seek to establish their own companies or enhance their technical and teamwork skills. These individuals would pay training and membership fees to the BITEC to participate in various training courses offered on site as well as use of office and conference spaces to conduct their business until they accrue enough steady revenue to open their own facility or office location.

#### **Established Firms**

Given the limitation of supply for potential start-up businesses (10-20 clients annually), it is recommended that the bulk of revenue for the BITEC be generated through training and education programs. Established firms would have a vested interest in the success of the center when used to build a talent pipeline for surrounding industry. Customized training courses would be offered to local employers by vendors on a variety of technical skills and soft-skill/team-building topics. This would provide a steady revenue stream from the clients to sustain the facility. In addition, aspiring entrepreneurs in the BITEC could establish industry contacts through this clientele that could lead to contract work for the entrepreneurs' start-up companies.

### **LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY**

The key to achieving long-term sustainability through the center is to have enough different revenue streams to fund all aspects of the operations. Multiple funding sources need to be considered in order to establish the center and insure long-term success:

1. Grant funds – to aid in the initial startup and construction costs.
2. Rent from clients –trainers/consultants who wish to have a regular presence within the BITEC will rent office space on a weekly, monthly, or annual basis. This will be discounted for nonprofit organizations and startup companies.
3. Membership fees from coworkers – members of the coworking space will pay a monthly or annual fee to the BITEC for regular access to the facility and its resources.
4. Fees for training courses – fees paid to the BITEC for participating in the training courses that will be offered by tenant and outside training providers.
5. Sponsorships from local organizations – local companies and organizations will be approached about sponsoring sections of the building, including offices and conference/meeting spaces.

#### **BUSINESS PLAN**

Given the business potential in the area for the aforementioned services, it is recommended that the BITEC focus its operations primarily on building the talent pipeline for startups and business incubation, with a secondary purpose of attracting larger industry employers.

#### **SWOT ANALYSIS - STRENGTHS**

The uniqueness of the BITEC is its location relative to alternate service providers. Being easily accessible just north of I-64 provides convenience for clients from adjacent counties. Having an open, collaborative working space for entrepreneurs promotes community and sharing of ideas. It also encourages team-based projects for clients needing services or for company meetings/retreats. Another unique feature of the facility is the mix of services offered, including consultation, office space, training space and collaborative work space.

Based on data gleaned from STATS Indiana, the gap in educational attainment compared to surrounding counties and the commuting patterns of workers suggests that Crawford County could significantly benefit from home-grown, local talent. Startups that can scale up and stay headquartered within the county will help increase the local tax base and provide Crawford County with more resources to improve quality of place.

#### **WEAKNESSES**

Being in a rural community, the BITEC will be surrounded primarily by small businesses and sole proprietorships. This creates a disadvantage in not having a local corporate base to serve as sponsors and supporters of the facility. However, relationships established through the Crawford County Economic Development Corporation with surrounding counties and government agencies should help provide the support needed to launch and sustain the BITEC in the short-term.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

The BITEC can benefit from having strong partnerships with neighboring educational institutions. Having a relationship with an entity that can expose the members to additional learning opportunities and possible credentials could strengthen the credibility of the BITEC and create a stronger draw for potential members. This could include the adoption or creation of certificate and credentialed/for-credit programs with institutions of higher learning.

The BITEC should consider alternative uses of the facility. With the major focus being on incubation services, other sources of revenue could be gained through activities such as meeting spaces, STEM camps/competitions, educational tours, and accelerator activities.

#### **REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

The only other options that exist near Crawford County are located at Innovation Pointe in Evansville, WestGate at Crane, Current Blend in Huntingburg, The Root in New Albany, and FirstBuild in Louisville, Kentucky.

Innovation Pointe recently opened Cowork Evansville, a coworking space that provides tenants with work space and amenities to assist them with establishing and growing their businesses until

#### Business Innovation, Talent & Entrepreneurship Center

they are able to scale up to dedicated office space. Monthly and annual membership fees are available for members to access facilities at their discretion during regular business hours.

WestGate at Crane offers various meeting spaces to promote collaboration amongst regional organizations. Users can access the meeting spaces at WestGate at no charge. Purdue University currently has a presence at WestGate to conduct their Firestarter entrepreneurship program, which could directly compete with the BITEC.

Current Blend offers collaborative spaces in Huntingburg with a variety of membership rates, from single day rates to full-time members. The facility provides high-speed WiFi and 24/7 key card access. It hosts a variety of workshops and presentations for entrepreneurs, including how-to seminars, networking events, and pitch competitions. It is also a member organization of the Indiana Coworking Passport program, allowing members to gain access to other member sites throughout Indiana.

The Root is a brand-new space in New Albany that is scheduled to launch in the first quarter of 2019. It is currently unknown what specific amenities will be offered, but it is assumed that it will be similar to Cowork Evansville and Current Blend.

FirstBuild is a proof-of-concept facility sponsored by General Electric in Louisville, Kentucky. Less than an hour from Marengo, FirstBuild provides a collaborative makerspace and innovation activities designed to support the entrepreneurial community in and around Louisville. More focused on specific product designs and team projects, it does not have the same training and business development focus as the BITEC, but could still be viewed as a competitor in that it could pull potential BITEC clients away.

Other private businesses offer training and consultation. Many of these entities prefer large groups and long-term contracts to make the activities more financially feasible. Location and group size will make the BITEC audience less attractive to these firms, giving the BITEC a competitive advantage. The BITEC could counter this threat by partnering with these firms to be consultants who rent office space for a regular presence on site, or to be training service providers to the local clientele.



### **MARKETING PLAN**

The market for BITEC clientele spans a wide range of businesses, from entrepreneurs and sole proprietorships to large corporations. Looking beyond adjacent counties to a more regional footprint for accelerating innovation and technology commercialization, a total of 10 counties in Indiana and Kentucky can be considered target customers, including Clark, Crawford, Dubois, Floyd, Harrison, Jefferson (KY), Meade (KY), Orange, Perry, and Washington. This region is home to an estimated 1,152,712 residents, only 18.5% of whom possess a Bachelor's degree or higher and a median household income of \$50,888 (compared to the national average of 28.8% with a Bachelor's degree or higher and a median household income of \$53,046). This region is also home to 27,687 employer establishments ([www.census.gov/quickfacts](http://www.census.gov/quickfacts)).

#### **Target Clientele – Entrepreneurs**

The most logical target client for the BITEC is the entrepreneur. Like any community, Crawford County seeks to provide better-paying jobs within the county for its residents. The traditional solution to this is to attract large, successful employers to relocate or expand their business into Crawford County. Given the current state of educational attainment and amount of commuting that takes place, the first step in this process will be raising skill and educational levels of the local workforce. However, doing so will likely encourage them to seek employment with larger companies outside of the county, further increasing the number of individuals who live in but work outside of the county. By encouraging a spirit of entrepreneurship and providing training and consulting on technical and business skills, Crawford County can use the BITEC as an incubator for startups and new businesses.

#### **Manufacturers**

As more residents participate in the training activities and become employed by these entrepreneurs, an increase will be seen in in-county employment and skill levels of the local workforce. The increased skills amongst the local population increases the probability of attracting more manufacturers and technology companies to the county. Attracted by the skills of the local workforce and the logistics of being within 15 minutes of an Interstate and less than an hour from Louisville, KY and its airport, having these employers based in Crawford County will provide a solid mix of large and small businesses to fuel the local economy.

#### **K-12 Education Partners**

The Crawford County Economic Development Corporation has existing relationships with local school corporations, and the setup of the BITEC is designed to encourage middle/high school students to adopt an innovative and entrepreneurial mindset. As such, there will be programming specifically targeted to this age group on a regular basis. These activities include teaching third-through-twelfth grade students the basics of the plastics industry and 3D design, STEM workshops, and 4-H project days, among others.

### **MARKETING STRATEGIES**

Marketing is critical to the growth of any business. It is a rare instance that any product or service can sell itself, and proper marketing that is specifically focused can help grow a business exponentially. The BITEC represents the first time a building like this has ever been constructed in Crawford County; in addition, this would be the first construction in this area in the past 20 years. It will be vital to the success of the facility for it to be properly positioned and explained to

## Business Innovation, Talent & Entrepreneurship Center

the regional community.

### Objectives

Two primary objectives exist for the marketing efforts of the BITEC. The first is to raise awareness of the facility amongst the regional business community, highlighting the capabilities and services for training and certification. The second objective is to provide resources for the entrepreneurs who are members of the coworking facility to properly attract and grow talent. Having a strong talent pool of coworking members will enhance the reputation and capabilities of the center that can then be promoted to regional businesses. With the BITEC being a brand-new facility, proper positioning with the residential and business community will be critical. Once these have been established, many of the stakeholders can then assist with promoting it to external audiences through word of mouth.

### Available Channels

Multiple channels exist for the marketing of the BITEC within and beyond the service area. While the BITEC will be featured in all CCEDC promotional materials, the list below explores the pros and cons of these various channels.

1. Radio/Television Pros: both forms of broadcast media offer excellent reach and penetration. Cons: very cost prohibitive, difficult to target a specific BITEC customer type

Recommendation: seek out free opportunities with either channel that are available to nonprofits.

2. Newspaper ads Pros: can allow for individual messages for various counties. Cons: expensive, penetration rates declining for most newspapers

Recommendation: ads immediately prior to the grand opening could be an effective way to initially build brand recognition. Consider papers in Crawford, Dubois, Floyd, Harrison, Orange, and Perry Counties. Others could be added based on cost.

3. Newspaper press releases Pros: no charge to submit to various newspapers, keeps manufacturers and entrepreneurs (as well as the rest of the community) informed of current events related to the BITEC. Cons: penetration rates declining for most newspapers

Recommendation: based on the amount of activity in the center, a goal of 4-6 per year would maintain top-of-mind awareness amongst readers. This could include press releases for site selection, groundbreaking, confirmed members/clients/sponsors, ribbon cutting, and notable clients or achievements thereafter.

4. Online/Social Media

- a. CCEDC website Pros: full control of content, targeted messaging, and CCEDC is unveiling a new marketing program with a new logo and brand targeting cluster industries Cons: requires audience to specifically visit the site, less direct

Recommendation: driving online traffic to the CCEDC's website will ensure proper explanation and positioning of the BITEC and its relationship with the CCEDC. If

interest and activity grow to the point that a standalone website or Facebook page for the BITEC is merited, such portals could be created at that time.

5. Mass E-mail – quarterly e-mails sent to target groups in and outside of the service area  
Pros: inexpensive, targeted, personalized communication. Cons: dependent upon audience's use of e-mail and having accurate addresses; must be limited (quarterly or less), otherwise customers will feel bombarded if contacted too frequently.  
  
Recommendation: to reinforce the connection between the BITEC and CCEDC, and to manage email communication more efficiently, CCEDC should include relevant news about the BITEC on its website and in any regular e-newsletters. Much like online media, a standalone BITEC e-newsletter could be created based on demand.
6. Public/Networking Events Pros: networking at public events allows for direct conversation about a potential project; BITEC/CCEDC representatives can address specific capabilities. Cons: reach will be limited to the number of conversations representatives can generate at a given event
7. Recommendation: BITEC representatives should be utilizing all public events to promote the facility to the community. In addition, BITEC representatives should have a presence at technology-centered events, such as regional high school competitions. While the BITEC is not large enough to host such a competition, BITEC representatives could volunteer at these events and promote the facility and its capabilities to participating schools. Finally, the BITEC should consider hosting an annual event, such as an open house or fundraising event, to bring traffic into the building and showcase its resources.
8. Direct Mail – quarterly mailings to target groups Pros: excellent way to provide detailed information about BITEC capabilities on a regular basis; can be targeted to existing and new customers. Cons: could be expensive to produce/distribute
9. Recommendation: considering the traditional cost and low response rate of direct mail, this channel should be reserved for event invitations and other date-specific activities to targeted audiences.
10. Outdoor – billboards along nearby highways and I-64 Pros: excellent visibility in high-traffic areas, ensuring high exposure. Cons: expensive and challenging to execute effectively; must align with other marketing efforts to achieve impactful branding and messaging.
11. Recommendation: given the cost of outdoor, billboards should be considered a low priority. The safest method for investing in outdoor would be to post billboards just east and west of Marengo along I-64, indicating that the BITEC is located at the next exit.



#### **CLIENT & MEMBER ACCESS POLICY**

BITEC coworking members will have a fee schedule associated with their access to the facility on a monthly or annual basis. Members will have access during regular business hours (8:00am to 10:00pm). The building will be made available during hours of operation by CCEDC staff who will have key access to all doors and exits. Clients will be able to access the facility during regular business hours unless otherwise scheduled with team members.

#### **COWORKING MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM**

The Coworking Membership Program for the BITEC is designed as a renewable annual subscription to access the facility and its resources. Based on desired usage, a tiered scale has been drafted to provide flexibility. Members who wish to utilize this facility itself will be billed at a rate of \$25 per month or \$200 annually. This membership fee covers the following services:

1. Access to the BITEC during normal and extended hours of operation
2. Use of the coworking space and associated resources, including Internet access, open workspace, restrooms, and kitchen area.

#### **BUSINESS ASSISTANCE POLICY**

For tenants who are startup companies, the BITEC can provide private office space in which the tenant can store basic supplies and equipment in a secure environment. Inexpensive rent at the facility and direct access to business consultants will provide an efficient communication and organizational process that can help tenants scale up their business more quickly. It is anticipated that these tenants would have an incubation period at the BITEC of a maximum of 36 months, after which it is anticipated that the business will be established well enough to merit new office space outside of the BITEC. For office space, tenants will be billed at a rate of \$150 per month for each 144-square-foot office (in research of rent for office space across the country, the price for office space in major metropolitan areas ranges between \$20.97 and \$74 per square foot, according to marketwatch.com)

In addition to having direct access to the BITEC facilities and resources, tenants will also receive support from the Crawford County Economic Development Corporation. These tenants will be advertised on the CCEDC website and through social media. Tenants will also be positioned to receive referrals from the CCEDC through its network of local and regional contacts.

#### **STAFFING PLAN**

A full-time Site Manager and part-time Project Specialist will oversee basic operations of the facility. These individuals will be responsible for:

- All bookkeeping activities (invoicing and collections to coworking members for monthly/annual fees and tenants/vendors for rent)
- Scheduling for the training center and conference rooms
- Promotion/PR of the BITEC
- Hosting open houses/tours
- Part-time receptionist for greeting guests
- Tidying up kitchen area

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In addition, CCEDC has retained the services of Rodefer Moss & Co. CPA's to provide annual external audit services. Custodial services and groundskeeping will also be provided by external vendors.

#### PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PLAN

The Site Manager will assist in compiling regular reports for the CCEDC. Included in these reports will be metrics to assess the performance of the BITEC as a self-sustaining operation and economic growth engine. Success of this performance will be measured by:

1. The number of paying coworking members (monthly and annual)
2. Number of clients receiving services from coworkers and tenants
3. Number of tenants renting office, training, or conference space
4. Revenue generated by the BITEC from rent and membership fees
5. Revenue generated by coworking members for services delivered

The CCEDC will review reports from the Site Manager to gauge the facility's effectiveness in sustainability and regional business growth. Operations, policies, and procedures can be updated and revised at the discretion of the CCEDC to ensure optimal fiscal performance.

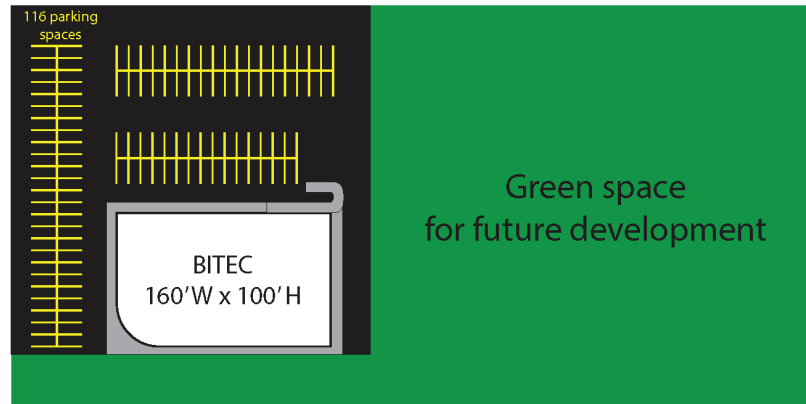
#### OVERSIGHT POLICY

The coworking members will be considered a client of the BITEC. As such, they will have primary responsibility for the brand and reputation of their services to the community. Any issues or concerns arising from BITEC use and access will be dictated by the Site Manager. In extreme cases, major issues can be taken to the CCEDC for review.

### **PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS**

#### Grounds

The space identified for the BITEC includes a lot that is 300' deep and 600' wide along Highway 66 in Carefree, Indiana. This location is State Certified shovel ready and includes access to utilities. The portion of the lot recommended for the BITEC is a square lot approximately 260' wide. Within this space, the 2-floor BITEC will occupy a footprint of approximately 100' x 160', with a surrounding parking lot large enough for 116 parking spaces.

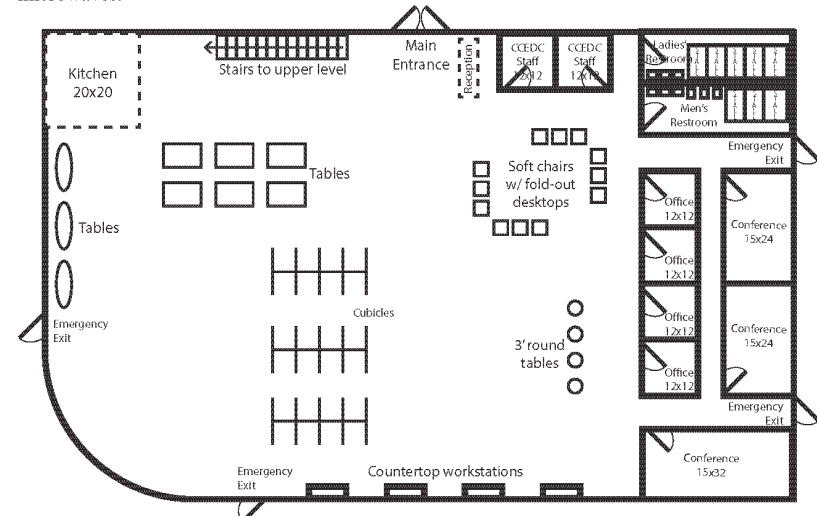




## Business Innovation, Talent & Entrepreneurship Center

### First Floor

The first floor of the BITEC will consist primarily of coworking space for the coworking members. This is intended to be an open-concept working space with various tables, countertop spaces, and a few cubicles to promote individual and collaborative work. Two 12'x12' offices will be reserved for CCEDC staff to oversee the space, as well as a reception area at the main entrance. Four 12'x12' offices will be available for rent by service providers or entrepreneurs, along with 3 large conference rooms that are also available for rent. The northeast corner of the building will feature a small kitchen area, including a refrigerator, stove, sink, and several microwaves.

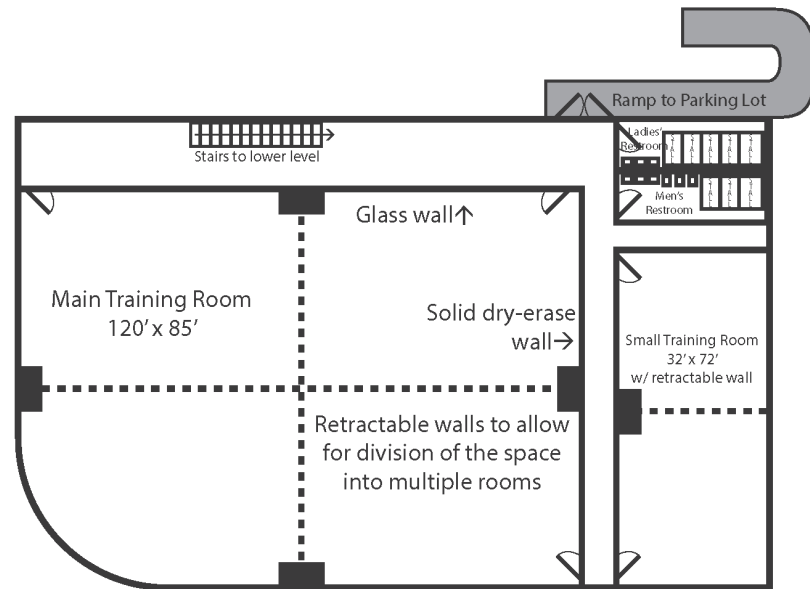


Two emergency exits will be included on the south wall. This wall, however, is designed to be made in a way that will allow for easy expansion as additional businesses move to this location and wish to connect their establishment directly to the BITEC.

## Business Innovation, Talent & Entrepreneurship Center

### Second Floor

The second floor of the BITEC will be primarily open and serve as the main training/event space. This 120' x 85' space will have partition walls that can be extended, thereby dividing the room into four separate spaces. The walls of the main training room will be constructed of tempered glass (except for the columns necessary to store the retractable partitions) so as to keep the feeling of openness and a view of the surrounding countryside. A small training room will also be available along the south wall for smaller workshops and presentations.



Both floors will feature separate ADA compliant restrooms for men and women in the southeast corner of the building. A concrete ramp will be included to give access directly to the second floor from outside the building.

Business Innovation, Talent & Entrepreneurship Center

**5-Year Pro Form (2019-2023)**

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>					
Office Rent (\$150/month each)	\$ 1,800	\$ 3,600	\$ 5,400	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200
Memberships	\$ 2,125	\$ 3,150	\$ 4,150	\$ 5,150	\$ 6,150
Monthly (\$25/month)	5	6	6	6	6
Annual (\$200/yr)	10	15	20	25	30
Grants	\$ 1,000,000				
Sponsorships	\$ 50,000*	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,053,925</b>	<b>\$ 16,750</b>	<b>\$ 19,550</b>	<b>\$ 22,350</b>	<b>\$ 23,350</b>
<b><u>EXPENSE</u></b>					
Initial Construction	\$ 950,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Site Manager <sup>+</sup>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Project Specialist <sup>+</sup>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Utilities	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
Maintenance	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Janitorial Service	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Groundskeeping	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Sanitation Service	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
<b>Gross Expense</b>	<b>\$ 967,500</b>	<b>\$ 17,500</b>	<b>\$ 17,500</b>	<b>\$ 17,500</b>	<b>\$ 17,500</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 86,425</b>	<b>\$ (750)</b>	<b>\$ 2,050</b>	<b>\$ 4,850</b>	<b>\$ 5,850</b>

\*Year one includes a sponsorship in the form of a \$50,000 named space

<sup>+</sup>Staffing costs will be absorbed by the Crawford County Economic Development Corporation





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812.461.5442 ▶ [appliedresearch@usi.edu](mailto:appliedresearch@usi.edu) ▶ [USI.edu/car](http://USI.edu/car)