



**VISION  
2027**



Muncie-Delaware County, Indiana  
Economic Development Alliance

MUNCIE-DELAWARE COUNTY, INDIANA

# **FIVE-YEAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**



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*The Vision program, established in 1983 and led by the Muncie-Delaware County Economic Development Alliance, founded on public/private partnerships represents the most comprehensive and successful economic development program in the history of Delaware County.*

*Vision 2027 is the Alliance's current comprehensive five-year economic development program.*







***Vision 2027 seeks to not only reinforce that Delaware County, Indiana, is a great place to work, but it is also a great place to live.***

Colleagues:

When out and about in the community we both love, we often hear, “What exactly does the Economic Development Alliance DO?” That is a great question – and one we need to be concisely answering better to our stakeholders and members of our community. As such, when we started the planning process for the Vision 2027 campaign, the steering committee knew we needed to not only develop the next five-year economic development plan that reflects the priorities of Delaware County, but we also needed to communicate that plan well, so all stakeholders know exactly what the Economic Development Alliance does. The Vision 2027 plan you hold in your hands highlights four goals. To steal verbiage from the last Vision plan, the goals are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. In short, they are SMART.

Through the four goals, the Muncie-Delaware County Economic Development Alliance (EDA) will continue to do what we are most known for doing – helping our existing businesses expand as well as attracting new businesses to our community. We will also be focusing on lesser known, but equally important goals such as local revitalization of our community, promoting a county-wide culture of education, and preparing for our community’s future growth. While the EDA is not always the lead for all these goals, we are often the key collaborator and/or facilitator.

The plan incorporates what we all hope for our community: job growth; housing growth; growth for minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses; an increase in child-care centers; an increase in high school graduation rates, support of our trail systems, an increase in tourism to our community, and support for our many amenities that enhance the quality of our lives here. In short, Vision 2027 seeks to not only reinforce that Delaware County, Indiana, is a great place to work, but it is also a great place to live.

On a personal note, both of us enthusiastically support Vision 2027, not because it is our job to do so, but because we both live here. We are raising families here, working here, and spending our free time here. We each serve on multiple boards and committees striving to make Delaware County a better place to live and we believe Vision 2027 will indeed do just that. We encourage you to jump in, wherever you are able, to help us make our community a better place to live, learn, and work. Afterall, we truly are all in this together.

With gratitude,



Jeff Parsons  
Vision 2027 Chairman



Elizabeth Rowray, President & Chief  
Economic Development Officer





## The Process

In January 2020, the Community Foundation of Muncie and Delaware County, Inc. engaged a consulting firm, Community Solutions, Inc., to conduct a thorough review of two important community plans in Muncie and Delaware County – *Muncie Action Plan 3* (MAP3) and *Vision 2021*. The purpose of the review was to identify shared, high-level goals, as well as gaps in priorities and interests.

In January 2022, the Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Planning Commission released a long-range, comprehensive plan (*Together DM*). Along with MAP3 and *Vision 2021*, this planning process was backed by hundreds of hours of community input.

With the release of the new comprehensive plan, the Foundation again engaged Community Solutions to incorporate *Together DM* into the 2020 Community Priority Crosswalk Analysis. As a result, a comparative analysis of *Vision 2021*, MAP3, and *Together DM* was created.

In general (and as anticipated), *Vision 2021* focused almost exclusively on economic development priorities, while MAP3 and *Together DM* included a broader set of goals. Despite this difference, many of the objectives within *Vision 2021* overlapped with those identified in MAP3. Each of the Plans' goals or objectives was mapped to each other and organized into focus areas.

The Crosswalk Analysis has helped to inform the goals and objectives of the *Vision 2027 Five-Year Economic Development Plan*. The Crosswalk, along with staff expertise, input from the planning firm Taylor Seifker Williams Design Group, and current economic development best practices helped to shape the plan while ensuring that gaps are filled and redundancies eliminated.



## Our Role

The Muncie-Delaware County Economic Development Alliance (EDA) is dedicated to the growth and prosperity of Muncie-Delaware County, Indiana.

Our role is to promote investment throughout Muncie-Delaware County by providing select economic development services that aim to sustain and enhance economic growth, vitality, and the global competitiveness of the County. The EDA's administrative entities are Delaware Advancement Corporation and the Muncie-Delaware County Chamber of Commerce.



## Our Mission

Through community advocacy, organizational support, and focused actions, we seek to grow and diversify the local population, provide quality job opportunities to our residents, and enhance the quality of life within our county to ensure that businesses in Delaware County have the talent they need to be successful.

Together, with our City, County, philanthropic, business, and education partners, we are committed to making advancements towards each of the components listed on page 5 that make up the Delaware County community.



## Our Building Blocks



**Communities**  
Local revitalization  
and enrichment.



**Businesses**  
Growing our local and  
regional economy.



**Learning**  
A county-wide  
culture of education.



**Growth**  
Preparing for the  
future.



## COMMUNITIES

Local Revitalization  
Recreation and Trails  
Housing  
Downtown  
Health & Wellness

## Our Goal

### Local revitalization and enrichment.

- *We will promote the physical and cultural assets of our area.*
- *We will support the development of diverse and attainable housing.*
- *We will support the redevelopment of downtowns and commercial corridors.*
- *We will connect and support the development of trail systems and amenities.*





## Our Actions

1. Support the Muncie-Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, Muncie-Delaware County Visitors Bureau, East Central Indiana Regional Partnership and others by cross-promoting information on local offerings and opportunities.
2. Develop and facilitate a Housing Summit to share information and develop shared action items.
3. Stay current on urban and rural housing trends and strategies in partnership with the City and County.
4. Provide continued support to residential developers as they secure funding and incentives for ongoing development projects and assist with land procurement.
5. Provide support to planning and policy efforts aimed at identifying local housing needs and implementation strategies.
6. Partner with Muncie Downtown Development Partnership and the Towns of Albany, Daleville, Eaton, Gaston, Selma, and Yorktown to encourage and promote growth and activation.
7. In collaboration with the City of Muncie, Muncie Redevelopment Commission, and Delaware County Redevelopment Commission, identify, acquire and hold blighted and vacant properties within strategic redevelopment areas.
8. Support the development of trails by supporting local bicycle and pedestrian organizations in developing and securing funding for implementation.
9. Provide meaningful participation in Next Muncie planning and implementation activities.

## Our Metrics

### Who will we help?

Incorporated communities  
Chambers of Commerce  
Visitors Bureau  
East Central Indiana Regional Partnership  
Residential developers and builders  
City and County Staff  
City and County Commissions and Boards  
Downtown districts and partners  
Cardinal Greenways and other trail systems  
Bicycle and pedestrian advocates

### How will we participate?

Housing summit creation and facilitation  
Provide data on housing metrics and trends  
Ongoing education and outreach with developers  
Participation in allied organizational efforts  
Property acquisition and ownership  
Trail planning and implementation

### What changes will we see?

Cross promotion of materials and announcements through muncie.com and other publications  
Increase in local housing units  
Reduction in downtown vacancy rates  
Reduction in blighted/ vacant properties  
Increase in constructed miles of trail



## BUSINESSES

Economic Growth  
Business Retention  
Pro-business Environment  
Workforce Development

## Our Goal

### Growing our local and regional economy.

- *We will support the development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem that is diverse and equitable.*
- *We will collaborate with our partners to meet the education and training demands of the marketplace.*
- *We will support efforts to retain, expand and attract both businesses and high-quality jobs that align and complement our existing and targeted industries.*
- *We will build awareness of our economic opportunities through education, recognition, and grant opportunities.*
- *We will market Muncie-Delaware County as a regional economic hub.*





## Our Actions

1. Build an accurate database of financial resources available to local businesses.
2. Support the Innovation Connector, Co:Lab, Madjax, the Small Business Development Center, and the Ball State Entrepreneurial Center by promoting organizational offerings across all communication platforms.
3. Provide resources to local businesses so that they can achieve women, minority, and veteran-owned business credentials and certifications.
4. Support businesses as they work to understand, interpret, and comply with federal, state, and local policies and regulations.
5. Connect with 80-100 businesses per year to determine individual needs.
6. Cultivate and maintain relationships with utility companies, property brokers, site consultants, and financing partners to advance business attraction and growth efforts.
7. Provide grant information and opportunities to businesses interested in training grants.
8. Solicit requests for proposals and/or qualifications to identify development opportunities and establish development agreements with private partners.
9. Facilitate and host community tours and site visits with business leaders and leaders from across the region, state and nation.
10. Provide assistance to businesses wishing to move out of incubation spaces and facilities.
11. Maintain a database of available office, industrial, and commercial sites and facilities across the County.
12. Develop and maintain information on regional and county-wide targeted industries for marketing outreach.
13. Provide ongoing support to business leaders as they secure funding and incentives for business relocation, expansion or start up efforts.
14. In partnership with the City of Muncie and Delaware County, establish and promote shovel-ready sites and shell buildings.
15. Be recognized as an Accredited Economic Development Organization by the International Economic Development Council.

## Our Metrics

### Who will we help?

Large and small business owners  
Entrepreneurs  
Disadvantaged business owners  
(MBE, WBE and VBE)  
Employees  
Young professionals  
Site selectors  
Incorporated communities

### How will we participate?

Research and data collection  
Ongoing education and outreach through muncie.com and other publications  
Participation in allied organizational efforts  
Business connections and conversations  
Grant administration  
Partner with and provide referrals to the Small Business Development Center  
Facilitating community tours  
Catalog of available sites, facilities and targeted industries  
International Economic Development Council accreditation

### What changes will we see?

Cross promotion of materials and announcements  
Increase in minority, women, and veteran-owned certified businesses  
Increase in grant awards  
Reduction in office and industrial vacancies  
Increase in employee recruitment and relocation



## LEARNING

Kindergarten Readiness  
Education and Community Growth  
Post- Secondary Attainment

## Our Goal

### A county-wide culture of education.

- *We will collaborate with our partners to increase the number of certified childcare facilities.*
- *We will support the development of learning systems to increase educational attainment.*
- *We will build awareness of the link between education and community growth.*
- *We will enhance learning and mentorship opportunities within our local business community.*





## Our Actions

1. In collaboration with Delaware County stakeholders, convene business leaders to address the childcare and early education needs of the local workforce.
2. Promote BY5 activities and resources in an effort to increase the number of licensed childcare centers across the county.
3. Participate in meetings and activities of the East Central Indiana Talent Collaborative.
4. Share educational materials that emphasize vocations and careers that require a high school diploma and/or post-secondary training.
5. Partner with school districts to provide career and vocational materials to high school students.
6. Promote the Muncie Young Professionals organization across all communication platforms.
7. Reinstate and continue the Muncie INtern Collaborative to provide professional development and social opportunities to young professionals.
8. Convene organizations such as the Muncie-Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, Ball State University, and Ivy Tech to discuss opportunities around the creation of programs that assist displaced workers transitioning to high-demand industries and positions.

## Our Metrics

### Who will we help?

Large and small business owners  
Entrepreneurs  
Disadvantaged business owners  
(MBE, WBE and VBE)  
Employees  
Young professionals  
Displaced employees  
Incorporated communities  
High school students

### How will we participate?

Research and data collection  
Ongoing education and outreach through muncie.com and other publications  
Participation in allied organizational efforts  
Childcare and early education roundtable discussions  
Sharing of post-secondary career materials  
BY5 board appointment  
High-demand industries and position roundtable discussions

### What changes will we see?

Cross promotion of materials and announcements  
Increase in licensed child care centers  
Increase in high school graduation rates  
Increase in post-secondary education attainment rates



## GROWTH

Broadband Connectivity  
Alternative Energy  
Strategic Alignment  
Strengthen Regionalism

## Our Goal

### Preparing the community for the future.

- *We will support the development of affordable high-speed broadband access in our rural and urban areas.*
- *We will support the development of alternative infrastructure systems that combat climate change.*
- *We will support business and community leaders as they modernize their facilities and systems.*
- *We will provide leadership on local and regional economic and policy issues.*
- *We will support the planning and implementation of strategic efforts projects, programs, and events that align with Vision 2027.*





## Our Actions

1. Provide support to planning and policy efforts aimed at implementing broadband strategies as a part of Innovate Delaware County.
2. Identify an accurate listing of funding opportunities for the implementation of alternative energy systems and solutions.
3. Support the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in strategic locations across the county.
4. Provide ongoing support through data collection and administration services to communities and businesses.
5. Attend available educational classes to stay current on trends related to transportation, energy, and industrial processes.
6. Maintain memberships with professional organizations such as the International Economic Development Council and the Indiana Economic Development Association to remain current on trends and strategies.
7. Support the implementation of regional projects and programs by serving on the East Central Indiana Development Council.
8. Support the implementation of projects and programs that align with Vision 2027 by serving on boards and commissions.
9. Participate in the development and implementation of the East Central Indiana Regional Partnership Strategic Plan.
10. Partner with the East Central Indiana Regional Partnership to develop, deploy and maintain a unified, regional business attraction marketing strategy that targets attracting people, industry clusters and targeted sectors.
11. Convene stakeholders from Delaware County allied organizations and local municipalities to determine opportunities for continued strategic planning alignment.

## Our Metrics

### Who will we help?

Incorporated communities  
Large and small business owners  
Entrepreneurs  
Disadvantaged business owners (MBE, WBE and VBE)  
Employees

### How will we participate?

Research and data collection  
Ongoing education and outreach through muncie.com and other publications  
Participation in allied organizational efforts  
Local, regional, and statewide policy development  
Stakeholder and allied organization roundtables

### What changes will we see?

Cross promotion of materials and announcements  
Increase in broadband speeds  
Increase use of alternative energy systems and solutions  
Increase in grant awards  
Increase in regional partnerships

## GOAL PARTNERS

8twelve coalition  
Ball State University  
Building Better Neighborhoods  
Business Education Partnership  
BY5  
Cardinal Greenway  
Childcare Operators  
Church Leaders  
Co: Lab  
Community and Business Leaders  
Community Attractions  
Community Enhancement Projects  
Community Schools K-12  
Cradle to Career Muncie  
Delaware County Redevelopment Commission  
Delaware County Wellness Professionals  
East Central Indiana Development Council  
East Central Indiana Regional Partnership  
East Central Indiana Talent Collaborative  
Eastern Indiana Works  
ECI Regional Planning District  
ecoREHAB of Muncie, Inc.  
Elected Officials  
Existing Businesses  
Financial Institutions  
Foundations  
Habitat for Humanity  
Higher Education/Vocational Training Facilities  
Horizon Convention Center  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
Indiana Department of Transportation  
Indiana Economic Development Corporation  
Innovation Connector  
Ivy Tech Community College  
Land and Business Developers  
Libraries  
Local Government  
Local Media Outlets  
Local Utility Companies  
MADJAX  
Muncie Action Plan  
Muncie Arts and Culture Council  
Muncie Delaware Metropolitan Plan Commission  
Muncie Downtown Development Partnership  
Muncie Land Bank  
Muncie Manufacturers Alliance  
Muncie Redevelopment Commission  
Muncie Visitors Bureau  
Muncie Young Professionals  
Muncie-Delaware Clean & Beautiful  
Muncie-Delaware County Black Chamber of Commerce  
Muncie-Delaware County Chamber of Commerce  
Museums  
Neighborhood Associations  
Neighborhood Investment Committee  
Neighborhood Leaders  
Organized Labor and Trades  
Professional Associations  
Project Leadership  
Real Estate Professionals  
Service Clubs  
Shafer Leadership Academy  
Small Business Development Center  
Social Service Agency Leaders  
United Way and its Partners  
YMCA  
YWCA  
Yorktown Chamber of Commerce





## THANK YOU

### Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

Jeff Bird	Allison Robbins
Stephen Brand	Angie Rogers-Howell
Jason Brooks	Frank Scott
Kevin Carpenter	Jeff Scott
Garrett Doan	Randy Stoops
Martin Hillery	Nick Tokar
Keith O'Neal	Paaige Turner
Scott Riggs	

### Delaware Advancement Corporation Board of Directors

Scott Alexander	Andrew Popp
Bryan Ayars	Dan Ridenour
Joe Barr	Sherry Riggan
Jennifer Gasiorek	Susana Rivera-Mills
Jennifer Gibson	Sara Shade Hamilton
Jeff Huff	Mike Tschuor
Rob Keisling	Rhonda Ward
Mike O'Connell	Pete Voss
Jeff Parsons	

### Vision 2027 Steering Committee

Stephan Brand	Karon Nowakowski
Jennifer Gibson	Jeff Parsons
David Heeter	Frank Scott Sr.
Jeff Howe	Sara Shade Hamilton
Rob Keisling	Randy Stoops
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