

North Central READI – Press Release

July 22, 2021

North Central Indiana has kicked-off a six-county regional collaboration to pursue the Indiana Economic Development Corporation's (IEDC) Regional Economic Acceleration & Development Initiative (READI). The North Central Indiana Regional Planning Council (NCIRPC) has applied on the behalf of Cass, Clinton, Fulton, Howard, Miami and Tipton counties to seek up to \$50 million of State funding to complete transformational community development projects across the region.

Building on its past success, the North Central region has started work on a comprehensive READI strategy to create a regional vision and identify common goals and objectives. The strategy will ultimately lead to innovative, regional solutions to address talent attraction and development, to enhance the quality of place and life, and to lead economic growth. "Our six-counties have a long history of working together and we are uniquely prepared to leverage the READI program. Our existing regional partnerships with elected officials, business leaders, non-profit, education and workforce leaders will drive the planning process," says Steven Ray, Executive Director of NCIRPC.

Governor Eric Holcomb announced the \$500 million READI program in early May. Self-designated regions will submit regional strategies by August 31 for IEDC's review. IEDC expects to fund a minimum of 10 Indiana regions to support investments that strengthen population and economic growth opportunities. READI awards are expected by the end of the year.

"There is a very quick timeline for this opportunity, but I'm excited and encouraged by the level of collaboration of the regional partners. We are seeing common issues across each of our counties, and we are building regional strategies to address those issues," states Paul Wyman, Howard County Commissioner. "Our region has a history of success in working together and this READI initiative gives us the opportunity to achieve truly transformational projects here in North Central Indiana." he added.

Residents of the North Central region are encouraged to participate in the READI survey and help define the regional vision. For more information on the North Central Indiana READI project, please visit www.northcentralREADI.com or contact Paul Wyman, Chairman, North Central Indiana Regional Planning Council – 765-419-1021.