

MARION COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

What is the Benefit of an Economic Development Strategy?

#1: Document a Playbook

#2: Identify Specific Actions and Metrics

Our Values

Partners - Marion County will create a culture of collaboration and convene partners to foster opportunities and derive solutions that break down barriers that impede growth.

Natural Resource Innovation - Marion County's agricultural and forestry industries provide significant employment opportunities in both urban and rural areas. The future of these industries depends on the integration of new technologies and innovation. The county will foster collaboration within the agriculture and technology industries to build a modern and distinct economy.

People - Marion County's actions will have a direct impact on the health, vibrancy, and job opportunities for county residents. Access to employment is a fundamental need for residents. This access is achieved by enhancing the skills of the workforce through training, as well as physically supporting access through the provision of affordable housing and transportation options. Finally, it is important to provide opportunities to start a new business to empower residents and diversify the economic base, especially in rural areas.

Place - Marion County will celebrate and enhance its diverse geographic and demographic assets that offer a range of opportunities for businesses and residents in both rural and urban areas. Additionally, it will focus on creating distinct places, which is an important factor in attracting and retaining a talented workforce.

GDP and Revenue - At its core, local economic development efforts are about increasing the prosperity of the citizens and the ability to provide an array of public services.

Marion County's Role

Marion County has a unique role in that it can **bridge rural and urban communities** through the identification and implementation of goals and actions to achieve a common vision. Economic development stakeholders want and need the county to **serve as a convener** and manager of the Economic Strategy and Action Plan to ensure that multiple stakeholders are engaged and working toward the common vision. Marion County's role will include the following elements:

- Invest grant dollars in alignment with the strategic goals
- Drive and encourage innovative and collaborative solutions
- Monitor and implement the action plan
- Influence policy tied to the strategic goals
- Convene and coordinate opportunities
- Manage the land inventory

Goal 1: BUILD ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Objective 1.1 Align the governance and management model with the Strategy

Objective 1.2 Collaborate among departments to remove barriers to business growth

Objective 1.3 Define alignment of stakeholder strategies with the Strategy

Goal 2: STRATEGICALLY USE LAND

Objective 2.1 Define developable land inventory

Objective 2.2 Build strategic infrastructure

Goal 3: CREATE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

The county will focus on small business, start-ups, and micro-enterprises in key industries:

- Forestry & Wood Products
- Agriculture, Food & Beverage Products
- Natural Resource Innovation
- Metals, Machinery & Equipment (including electrical)

Objective 3.1 Enhance existing industry cluster

Objective 3.2 Support a healthy workforce

Objective 3.3 Foster a startup ecosystem

Goal 4: ENHANCE NATURAL RESOURCE INNOVATION

Objective 4.1 Encourage innovations and R&D

Objective 4.2 Define and promote market opportunities

Goal 5: FOSTER A GREAT PLACE

Objective 5.1 Support and promote agri-tourism, rural downtowns, and recreation destination development

Objective 5.2 Support and promote urban places

Objective 5.3 Tell the Marion County story of place to attract a skilled workforce