

Constellation of Starke

*OCRA 2019 Stellar Communities Designation
Program*

Starke County Economic Development Foundation

Mr. Larry Wickert
1915 S Heaton St.
Knox, IN 46534

O: 574-772-5627

Mrs. Jessica LeAnne Martinovic

PO Box 563
Knox, IN 46534

starke@nicf.org
O: 574-772-3665
M: 574-249-0808

Application Form

Before You Begin

Welcome! Be sure to review the guidelines for this program to ensure eligibility, and that you understand the program's focus and requirements.

- If you have questions regarding any areas of the content within the application, please contact Indiana Stellar Communities staff at stellarcommunities@ocra.in.gov
- If you experience technical issues with the online system, please contact Deanna Poelsma at 317-232-1283.

Application Deadline: September 20, 2019, 4:00 p.m. EST

Before starting, please note the following:

- The system auto-saves after every 100 characters typed or every time you click into a new question; however there is also a "Save" button at the bottom of the page.
- If you do not provide an answer for one of the required questions, you will not be able to submit your application.
- Remember to click "Submit Form" when you are finished. Once your application has been submitted it is no longer available for editing.
- **Privacy Consideration:** All documents submitted to the Indiana Arts Commission and OCRA are public and subject to a public information request. All grant applications are considered public documents and are reviewed and discussed in a public meeting. Applicants should therefore not include any information in the content of their application that they would not want shared during the panel discussion.

General Information

Region Name*

Please enter the name of your region.

Constellation of Starke

Region Mission/Vision Statement*

Create a mission or vision statement for your Region. Utilize this document for reference.

The Constellation of Starke intends to create a region that is engaged, vibrant, and growing.

Relevant Contact Information*

Please provide the name, phone number, and email address for the individual(s) that you would like Stellar staff to contact with any questions regarding the RDP.

Larry Wickert, Project Coordinator
Starke County Economic Development
Executive Director
execdir@scedf.biz
(574) 595-5329

Jessica Martinovic, Creative Director
Starke County Community Foundation
Director of Development
starke@nicf.org
(574) 772-3665

Region Creation Questions

Discuss the Creation of your region in the following questions:

Region Creation #1*

What circumstances or series of events led to the creation of this region?

The Constellation of Starke (COS) is a natural coalition of the communities of the Grand Kankakee Marsh Region south of the Kankakee River. We share the same landscape, a common cultural heritage, and similar challenges and opportunities. Most of all, we agree that by working together, we can get more accomplished.

While the organization, Constellation of Starke, is relatively young, the region has been working together for many years. Examples include Moving Starke County Forward, Young Professionals Group, Leadership Starke County, Merit Foundation, The Hive ladies' giving circle, SCILL Center, Economic Development Foundation, Starke County Community Foundation, local governments, and Starke County Chamber of Commerce.

Each of these groups worked in relative seclusion, but all had the same purpose—to create an engaged, vibrant, and growing community. While researching the Stellar program, our leaders realized there was a way to combine these efforts to create an even stronger force that would promote and grow the region. The Constellation of Starke was formed and has provided an avenue for these working groups to come together and utilize one another's strengths to develop one vision propelling us forward.

Region Creation #2*

How do your communities currently work together? How do you believe each community compliments each other within your region? How do you plan to resolve potential disagreements?

The organizations and groups mentioned above are excellent examples of how our communities are working together. Moving Starke County Forward is working to promote health and wellness in the region by holding annual county-wide walking challenges. The Young Professionals Group is giving Starke County young professionals a voice and ownership in their community. Leadership Starke County is a nine-month

class geared toward teaching about Starke County's history, assets, and programs, while also encouraging participants to become local leaders. The Merit Foundation is working to improve the county's health statistics by completing six major projects in the next several years. The SCILL Center is providing Starke County with customized training for area industries to meet their specific needs, vocational high school programs in automotive and welding technology, an adult program in welding technology, computer software training, and literacy programs. We also have an excellent library system that partners with local agencies to provide exceptional services to residents throughout the county.

Previously, many of our groups have worked individually to accomplish their own goals. The Constellation of Starke has brought these leaders together to work in collaboration. Our region realized that we all have similar visions that we can best accomplish together while each keeping our own identity. Knox, North Judson, and Hamlet are each in need of housing. We need workforce housing for our young families to grow and prosper, while we also need opportunities for those just beginning. And we want those people to live here, in Starke County. Through the COS and the creation of our housing subcommittee, we are now working together to create three unique housing opportunities that will be described later in our Plan.

In order to have a vibrant community where these young families want to live, we must encourage creatives and provide diverse and artistic opportunities to develop the natural talents within the region. The Constellation of Starke Creatives' Network was established to encourage communication and collaboration among our creatives and provide opportunities for them through events such as Arts in the Park. Knox, North Judson, and Koontz Lake are developing a monthly concert series that complements and promotes one another, rather than competing, using the exciting new outdoor amphitheaters in the parks.

Bass Lake and Koontz Lake are key attractions in the region, but need to be re-energized for the 21st century, with improvements that appeal to residents and visitors alike. For Bass Lake, significant improvements to the beachfront county park include a new event center, café, and floating water park. For Koontz Lake, a new community center will provide more space and amenities for larger and diverse community events.

Each of our communities have unique qualities, but collectively each can benefit from improved connectivity. By connecting our communities through trails, broadband services, healthy initiatives, and improved communication, we can become the engaged, vibrant, and growing community of our vision.

As we move down this collaborative path, we have encountered few disagreements. We all share the same goals. However, we realize that may not always be true. We will be guided by the principle that each community's individuality is to be valued and preserved. We place a strong emphasis on our RDP, but also on the other plans that have been adopted by each community as their vision. By adhering to those plans and our RDP, the Rapid Response Team (to be created under the pending Interlocal Agreement) will handle most disputes. When necessary, final decisions will be made by the COS Executive Committee, composed of a diverse set of community representatives from governmental agencies, private, and public individuals.

Region Creation #3*

Describe any successful projects or collaboration that your region has experienced by working together.

The establishment of the Constellation of Starke is a vehicle that enables the region to work together with many different groups, but there have been many examples of collaboration.

The Prairie Trails Club had humble beginnings in 2005, but has blossomed into a region-wide organization. Its mission is to create, expand, and maintain public free-access trails throughout the region and beyond. Continued trail maintenance and the recent NextLevel Trails award for Erie Trail Phase III is being collaboratively supported by multiple local entities, including the Starke County Economic Development Foundation, Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum, the Starke County Community Foundation, North Judson, and

the Starke County Commissioners. The Hive (a ladies' giving circle for Starke County) has also awarded dollars and promoted volunteerism for the trail.

The SCILL Center (Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning) was established in 1998 as a county-wide initiative through collaboration of the Economic Development Foundation with local schools, potential employers, local government, and a variety of funding organizations, including the Community Foundation.

The Ken Craig Community Garden in Knox displays superior collaboration of our communities as well. The garden is run by local volunteers from different parts of Starke County. They work with other organizations to provide programming. For example, Bella Vita Pregnancy Resource Center works with the community garden to teach its clients how to cook healthy food. The community garden also donates produce to Community Services of Starke County to be used in the food pantry, which serves our entire county.

The Starke County Justice Center has been a valuable resource to our community, not only through the employment of staff members from across the region, but also by rehabilitation of local offenders. Oftentimes, the people serving time in jail are disregarded when it comes to discussing community members. However, at the Justice Center there is a focus on the fact that these individuals will eventually reintegrate into our communities, so there is a concentrated effort to provide them with a sense of pride and give them skills that will continue to assist them once their incarceration ends.

A therapeutic community titled the Fostering a Recovery Mentality (F.A.R.M) program is in place at the facility which incorporates substance abuse classes, gardening, woodworking, and painting. The program offers regular community events where non-violent offenders sell produce and plants grown in the garden as well as wooden furniture and decorations they create. It gives trustees interaction with their families and others to provide them with a sense of belonging. The F.A.R.M.'s impact has also been reaching across county lines. Program participants collaborated with inmates from Jasper County's gardening program for the first time this year.

The facility has also coordinated with Grace College and the Purdue Extension Office to offer certification courses in hospitality and horticulture, respectively. A recently established welding program provides trustees with employable skills through onsite job training at a factory located near the Justice Center. Individuals who participate in the program carry those skills into the various parts of the region upon release.

Other projects that have been made possible by regional collaboration include the creation of the Starke County Forest, the Starke County 4-H Fair, our movie in the park program, the Starke County Leadership Class, and many more.

Region Creation #4*

How do you plan to ensure all participating communities benefit from the project in a fair and meaningful way?

Our Regional Development Plan ("RDP") was drafted to ensure that all the COS communities receive their fair share of the benefits of the Stellar designation. Projects are distributed throughout the region, and our trails projects were designed to improve the accessibility of our key placemaking projects from all corners of the region.

The Constellation of Starke Executive Committee ("COS-EC") exercises formal oversight for major expenditures and policy decisions and acts as the Steering Committee. The COS-EC is drawn from throughout the region and includes representatives from each of the member municipal units and representatives from non-governmental agencies.

A non-voting advisory council assists the COS-EC by representing villages and neighborhoods in the unincorporated areas throughout the region. The advisory council includes important, region-wide

stakeholders who have expertise in areas such as arts and culture, housing, outdoor recreation, agriculture, and education. (For details see Section 5, Engagement Process)

The COS-EC approved and adopted the Regional Development Plan; the plan will provide primary guidance in all future decisions. The comprehensive plan documents of the region member units will provide additional guidance, especially for activities within their respective territories.

Citizens residing throughout the region have been intimately involved with the development of the COS vision as expressed in our RDP. Concerted outreach efforts to engage the outlying portions of the region ultimately proved successful, resulting in broad support and participation in the COS initiative, even in areas where people have in the past expressed the feeling of being overlooked. Bringing greater engagement to these outlying areas is one of the major successes the COS initiative has already achieved.

So far, the relationships among the region's neighborhoods have remained consistently harmonious, but disagreements may arise, and unforeseen contingencies may require quick decisions. As a term of the Interlocal Agreement to be executed in October, a four-person Constellation of Starke Rapid Response Team (the RRT) will be populated by one representative from each of the municipal units participating on the COS team: Knox, North Judson, Hamlet, and Starke County. Seats on the RRT will be filled by appointment of the Executive Body of the respective municipal units. The RRT will be authorized to make quick decisions about day-to-day issues that arise during construction or implementation of new services. In the event the RRT is unable to agree on the appropriate course of action, the decision will go before the full Executive Committee, and for major decisions, to the executive authority in the respective member governmental units. The RRT will help ensure that no one municipality or neighborhood will enjoy more than its fair share of the benefits of the Stellar designation.

Region Creation #5*

Describe the ultimate outcome(s) for the Stellar Community proposal. What challenge(s) is your region attempting to overcome through the Stellar Communities process?

The Constellation of Starke intends to create an engaged, vibrant, and growing community. We plan to significantly improve livability, increase social viability, and create a healthier and more educated community. We intend to improve the attractiveness and, ultimately, the per-capita income of the region.

The region is faced with a changing economy and labor market and many other challenges typical of the rural Midwest. Our region has an aging population, lower education attainment rates, aging housing stock, and an opioid abuse crisis. We will confront these challenges from many different directions with our diverse plan, which engages our community, creates vibrancy through the region, and grows our natural and existing assets.

We're working to attract more young people by promoting regionalism and togetherness. We are providing arts & culture opportunities, modernized housing, access to high-quality daycare, enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities, and increased resources for those struggling with addiction.

Region Creation #6*

Describe the readiness of your region to be awarded a Stellar Communities designation based on the following core competencies:

Leadership

Communication
Capacity
Collaboration
Marketing
Community Input

Leadership – The Constellation of Starke rivals the strongest leadership and support of any midwest community. The majority of our governmental leaders are serving their second or more term and have the experience needed to implement the responsibilities of the Stellar Designation. The members of our Constellation of Starke team are leaders in our community and have shown their leadership capacity in their various roles by completing projects such as the new Jail & Justice Center, major enhancements to the Starke County EMS system, major upgrades to trucking routes and highway intersections serving our industrial parks, Broadband Planning, and two Erie Trail expansions. Under the leadership in the Starke County Highway Department, the County has gone from having Indiana’s worst rated bridges to one of the best. Our Community Foundation has distributed more than \$4.4 million in grants and scholarships. The time is now for the Constellation of Starke. We have the experienced leadership to fully employ our plan and reach our goals. For details about our Executive Committee, see Section 4, Capacity.

Communication – The COS strives to engage the public at every opportunity. We developed a communication plan that implements multiple strategies through radio, news outlets, social media, and dialogue with community members. We understand that it is important to bring opportunities to where the people are and our COS team members have successfully reached out to the region at many community events, including the 4-H Fair, the Koontz Lake Association’s annual property owners’ meeting, the Bass Lake Festival, North Judson’s Mint Festival, the Yellowstone Trail Festival in Hamlet, and the annual Back-to-School Health Fair in Knox. The first survey conducted as part of the Stellar program indicated that 60% of those who responded to the survey were unaware of the plans within the region. In August, we asked the same question and found that nearly 100% of those surveyed were aware of the developing plans, indicating that our communication plan is working.

Capacity – The COS team has taken the initiative to improve its capacity to carry out this endeavor through efforts such as attending the Main Street Now Conference in Seattle and the Regional Main Street Conference in South Bend. Our RDP has been significantly influenced by the best practices we learned at both conferences. The COS and Starke County plan to re-task an existing position from the highway department to be our Project Coordinator for Stellar. The person would be employed by the County but will be tasked with Special Projects for the entire region—another example of our collaboration. Our capacity is further enhanced by our partnerships with local organizations, such as the Community Foundation, which is providing additional planning funds through its GIFT VII opportunities with Lilly Endowment, Inc. The COS has also hired an engineering firm to develop initial project layouts and handle technical details.

Collaboration – As stated, our COS team is a composition of representatives from each of our participating communities and other local key organizations. Our executive committee meets weekly, and the sub-committees also meet regularly. The region plans to dedicate a Special Projects Coordinator, an employee of Starke County, to carry out the RDP. This position will collaborate directly with the COS executive team and proves our dedication to improving the region as a whole.

Marketing – Recognizing the existing talent within the region, the COS established a working relationship with graphic designers & videographers, Mirth & Whimsy, LLC. With their assistance, we created the “Constellation of Starke” concept, logo, and videos that showcase our existing assets and vision for our future. We reached into the community to garner sponsors for the COS. Sponsors are proudly displaying our logo throughout the region.

Community Input – Community input is a key to becoming a vibrant, engaged, and growing Constellation of Starke. While developing the RDP, many of our communities have simultaneously been developing their comprehensive plans. This dual process has provided more opportunities for community input than ever seen in the region. We have conducted several public input meetings dedicated to the Stellar program and

have been overwhelmed by the participation. We intend to continue to involve the community throughout the design process as we develop the projects they have chosen. The excitement the public meetings and outreach have generated will continue to build.

Region Creation #7*

Which of the region's previously completed plans address the following areas?

Transportation

Housing

Quality of Place/Placemaking

Health

Workforce

Education

Arts

Economic Development

Transportation

- Knox Pavement Management Plan
- North Judson Pavement Management Plan
- Starke County Pavement Management Plan
- Starke County Bridge Improvement Plan
- Hamlet Pavement Management Plan

Housing

- Knox Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Plan

Quality of Place/Placemaking

- Starke County Park Plan
- Knox Park Plan
- Prairie Trails Club Future Vision Plan
- Starke County Community Foundation Strategic Plan
- Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum Plan
- Koontz Lake Regional Sewer District Plan
- Bass Lake Conservancy District Plan

Health

- Merit Foundation Plan
- Starke County Community Foundation Strategic Plan

Workforce

- 5 Year Strategic CEDIT Infrastructure Plan

Education

- Each school corporation has a plan
- SCILL Plan
- Starke County Community Foundation Strategic Plan

Arts

- Constellation of Starke – Creatives' Network Plan
- Knox Park Plan

Merit Foundation Plan

Economic Development
Starke County Economic Development Foundation Plan

Regional Development Plan

Section 1: Current State of the Region

Geographic Boundaries*

Describe the geographic boundaries of the region. List all counties, cities and towns that are actively a part of the RDP.

The Constellation of Starke region encompasses all of Starke County, Indiana. Included in the region and actively part of the RDP are the following incorporated communities:

- City of Knox
- Town of North Judson
- Town of Hamlet

Also included are the following census designated areas:

- Bass Lake
- Koontz Lake
- San Pierre

Rural Starke County also includes many named villages and neighborhoods, including Grovertown, Brems, Ora, Toto, Ober, Aldine, English Lake, Lomax, Hartz Lake, and Born’s Acres. All are part of the COS region under the auspices of Starke County.

Key Features of the Region*

Provide a demographic and economic summary assessment for the region.

Starke County Unemployment Rate: 4.4% (July 2019)

Area	Population1	Median Household Income1	Per Capita Income2	Poverty Rate1	Median House Value2
Starke	22,935	\$ 46,940	\$ 34,014	17.1%	\$ 105,602
80.2% Knox	3,704	\$ 33,709	\$ 21,572	21.5%	\$ 85,356
82.3% North Judson	1,772	\$ 41,250	\$ 20,864	20.1%	\$ 90,684
90.9% Hamlet	800	\$ 41,875	\$ 17,588	16.0%	\$ 76,085
82.2% Bass Lake	1,195	\$ 50,000	\$ 22,200	22.2%	\$ 160,694
82.0% Koontz Lake	1,044	\$ 42,750	\$ 23,966	14.9%	\$ 114,766
59.8%					

San Pierre	144	\$ 50,536	\$ 30,721	0.0%	\$ 69,625
100.0%					
Source Data: 1United States Census Bureau and 2City-Data.com					

Previous Planning Efforts*

Provide an inventory and discussion of previous planning efforts and how that work will be incorporated into the RDP.

Planning efforts have been a part of Starke County for many years but now are receiving new life and being updated. These plans include but are not limited to:

- o 5-Year Strategic CEDIT Infrastructure Plan
- o Knox: Comprehensive Plan, 2015; currently being updated
- o City of Knox 5 Year Parks Master Plan, 2018
- o Knox Utility Master Plan
- o Erie Trail Future Vision Plan, 2016
- o Hamlet: Comprehensive Plan, 2019
- o North Judson: Comprehensive Plan, 2019
- o Starke County: Comprehensive Plan, 2019
- o Starke County: Park Plan, 2017
- o Starke County Community Foundation Strategic Plan, 2016
- o San Pierre: Comprehensive Master Plan, 2008
- o Bass Lake Conservancy District Plan
- o Koontz Lake Regional Sewer District Utility Plan
- o Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum Comprehensive Plan, 2019
- o Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan Region 4, February 2017

Some examples of how previous planning efforts have been successfully implemented include:

The Erie Trail Future Vision Plan emphasized the key goal to expand to the southeast and the northwest from the current nine miles of trail. Having successfully completed two sections of the trail prior to the Future Vision Plan, the Prairie Trails Club was awarded state funding for an additional three miles of paved shared use trail, holding to the Future Vision Plan’s goal for connectivity to the regional and national trail systems.

The Starke County Park Board Master Plan called for improved access to the Starke County Forest, which led to the dedication and extension of a Starke County road, a parking area, an informational kiosk, improved wayfinding signage, and a native plant garden.

The City of Knox implemented an extensive plan to further improve the downtown area and parks by installing a covered outdoor amphitheater, upgrading restrooms to ADA compliance, and emphasizing placemaking initiatives, including a small urban park and street graphics.

Many of our past plan implementation successes have centered around our outdoor recreational opportunities and making our communities more attractive. Our RDP builds on this work by focusing on enhanced outdoor recreational activities and spaces, improving trail connectivity, and placemaking and revitalizing our downtowns.

Our RDP builds upon the foundation of these plans. Each plan was reviewed and incorporated. Many of the communities are completing updates to their comprehensive plans, directly complementing the Stellar efforts. The comprehensive plans and corresponding public meetings gauged the community’s needs and informed the goals of our RDP. Older plans, such as the San Pierre Comprehensive Plan, now have renewed momentum.

Section 2: Key Achievements

Desired Achievements*

Describe the key achievements that each community within the region would like to achieve with the designation.

For the Constellation of Starke, the key achievements for each community are complementary and unifying for one another. Our overarching goal—to create a vibrant, engaged, and growing community—will be realized by leveraging our natural resource assets to create a more attractive environment for our citizens while stimulating sustainable economic growth. The region will improve unity and pride through utilization of one another’s resources and creating “third places.” Increasing our educational opportunities, access to addiction prevention and treatment options, and improved housing opportunities will allow our community to grow and thrive.

To reach these goals, each community has defined specific targets and objectives as well as an implementation plan:

Knox

The City of Knox hopes to achieve improved access to high-quality daycare, modernized housing, added vibrance to their downtown, and an increased arts and cultural environment.

Hamlet

The Town of Hamlet desires to enhance their park facilities, increase housing choices, and provide greater access to educational opportunities.

North Judson

The Town of North Judson plans to increase and improve affordable housing and retail opportunities, as well as quality of life through arts and culture and community engagement. North Judson plans to increase access to fresh and locally grown food. Access to quality daycare is another top priority. It is integral to North Judson’s plans to incorporate urban-style housing as part of an enlivened and vibrant downtown.

Starke County

Rural Starke County seeks to improve educational opportunities and increase access to natural amenities while being responsible stewards of the environment. Expanding recreational opportunities, attracting visitors and new residents, improving owner-occupied housing, and enhancing community cohesiveness are primary goals.

Starke County’s lake communities are ripe for revitalization. A key project in our RDP redefines Bass Lake Beach with the all-new Winchetonqua Center as a must-visit, year-round recreational and cultural destination, supported by streetscape improvements throughout the community. Similarly, the Koontz Lake Community Center will further stimulate recreational and cultural opportunities for the entire Constellation of Starke region.

The Trails Connectivity Project is a signature regional goal, which will provide for safe and efficient travel between communities within COS while staying in touch with the outdoors.

Section 3: Designation

Implementation of Goals*

Describe how the Stellar Communities designation will enable the region to further implement their revitalization goals.

Every aspect of the Constellation of Starke (COS) Regional Development Plan is designed to catalyze a rapid transformation of the COS region. Central to the plan is an ambitious reimagining, rebuilding, and rebranding of Bass Lake Beach to energize the region's most outstanding natural asset. Bass Lake is in the heart of the COS region and has long been a recreational destination from Chicago and Northwest Indiana. With its beachfront location and expansive views of Indiana's third largest natural lake, the proposed Winchetonqua Center will provide a beautiful and modern venue for outdoor recreation, family and civic events, and entertainment and the arts, and is certain to appeal to residents and visitors alike. But the substantial investment needed to realize this untapped potential requires the transformative power of a Stellar Communities designation.

That's because with a Stellar designation, this key component of our RDP can be realized in the context of conspicuous reinvestment and revitalization of parks, streetscapes, trails, and transportation services implemented throughout the region. With a Stellar designation, everyone throughout the COS region will see improvements happening near their homes simultaneously with similar improvements throughout Starke County. This momentum encourages people to become more engaged. When residents like what's happening, they stay. When visitors feel the positive energy, they make it their home. When businesses choose to invest in this area, that's the beginning of growth.

Marketing and Attraction*

Describe how the designation will be used to market the communities and the overall region to attract residents and businesses.

That crane on the COS logo—that's not just some random bird. It's a Greater Eastern Sandhill Crane. With 6' wingspans, they fill our skies with their unique chortling calls in the thousands every spring and fall. Our logo is active—a crane on the wing, to be coupled with the message "it's time to return," sometimes directly, other times as a subtle background message. It's an authentic message—come back to a place un-sprawled, uncluttered, with clean air and starry night skies, but not all that far from Chicago, South Bend, or even Indianapolis. Come back, and you'll find we've held onto real country experiences because they're important. But we've also heard the voices that want more, so we've been working hard to make it easier to enjoy our great outdoors, to build the homes that are right for today's young families, to make more good places to work, and to create fun and active things to do. The flying crane will remind people throughout the COS region of the many places, people, things, and events that make the region Stellar.

The Constellation of Starke region is home to talented graphic designers/videographers, Mirth and Whimsy, LLC. This duo has graphic design and marketing experience and have contracted with the COS to design our logo and promotional videos. As creatives who have chosen to call COS their home, they are uniquely qualified to understand our product and to produce content that genuinely and authentically represents our RDP goals. The COS team plans to continue to employ their skills, as well as the skills of other local creatives, in our future marketing efforts upon a Stellar designation.

Our RDP is essentially a marketing document which outlines how we shall make our region more attractive for residents and businesses. Upon designation, we shall publicize and promote the fruits of the plan through the strategies in our existing communications/marketing plan. For the detailed plan, see Section 5 of the RDP.

Section 4: Capacity

Capacity to Administer Funds*

Describe the capacity of the applicant and the partnerships to administer the funds.

Note:

- All participating communities should have no outstanding monitoring/audit findings of any current grants.
- All participating communities must be in good standing with all funding agencies.
- Any community, within a region, who is non-compliant with any of the above, is considered ineligible.

None of the Constellation of Starke municipalities have outstanding monitoring or audit findings, and all are in good standing with all funding agencies. Each of the member municipalities has a proven track record of effectively managing complex projects and successfully complying with federal, state, and locally funded grant initiatives.

Our communities are in good fiscal health with a Standard and Poors bond rating of A+ and has maintained this rating since 2013. Letters from accounting testifying to the fiscal health are included in Appendix B: Commitments.

Fiscal Capacity	Starke County	Hamlet	Knox	North Judson
Taxes				
2019 Property Tax Rate	0.5008	1.6892	1.7652	1.4289
2019 Total Tax Levy	\$4,918,149	\$257,178	\$1,776,343	\$543,530
2019 Certified Net Assessed Value	\$982,058,586	\$15,242,896	\$100,631,288	
\$38,038,289				
Budget and Expenditures				
2019 Total Budget Appropriations	\$11,022,111	\$411,919	\$2,553,780	\$974,329
2018 Total Actual Disbursements	\$42,883,559	\$937,578	\$5,156,219	\$2,096,533
2018 Total Actual Revenue	\$43,566,950	\$869,084	\$5,799,965	\$1,921,148
Indebtedness				
2018 Year End Principal Balance	\$12,245,000	\$1,020,000	\$2,610,000	\$10,343
2018 Principle and Interest Due	\$1,071,000	\$82,030	\$346,365	\$10,343

Recent successful collaborative projects include:

Hamlet teamed with Starke County and the Starke County Economic Development Foundation to manage Economic Development Administration (EDA) for a multi-million dollar industrial infrastructure project.

Klockner Drive and intersection improvements to enhance access to the Knox Industrial Park were a collaboration of the City of Knox, Starke County, and the Starke County Economic Development Foundation. EDA, INDOT, and local funding supported the project.

A regional collaboration, including a grant through the Starke County Community Foundation, the Knox VFW, and Starke County (through their EMS), deployed LUCAS Devices (automated CPR equipment) on county ambulances.

The Starke County Forest is a collaboration of the property's donor (a professional forester), the Starke County Park Board, Territorial Engineering, the Starke County Highway Dept., and the Starke County Community Foundation. The Starke County Forest is both a public greenspace and self-funded working tree farm.

These few examples demonstrate the capacity and willingness of local agencies, municipalities, and private citizens to work together to achieve community goals.

Development Team*

Describe the development team and their ability to implement a multi-project plan. Please cite projects/programs that you have specifically partnered on, providing examples of past successes in your narrative response.

Robert Aloï, owner of Territorial Engineering, LLC, has 30 years' experience in large municipal infrastructure projects, including industrial park developments, the Erie Trail design and construction, residential subdivision design throughout the region, and the Koontz Lakes Regional Sewer District. All of these projects involved the utilization of federal, state, and local grant funds and loans.

Dennis Estok, Mayor of Knox, served as Starke County Surveyor from 2009 to 2016, which included the administration of a small annual budget of approximately \$90,000, which he utilized in the successful implementation of more than 200 projects. He also served as the Sewer Superintendent, managing the large sewer treatment plant and associated infrastructure for the City of Knox. As Mayor, Estok is spearheading an ambitious program to revitalize the City of Knox.

Martin R. Lucas has been the Starke County Attorney since 2009 and attorney for the Starke County Council since 2002. He was a founding member of the Prairie Trails Club and was instrumental in the development of the Erie Trail. He also wrote the trust for the Starke County Forest. Lucas is additionally serving as the attorney for the Starke County Building Corporation, which is the \$14-million bond-holding entity for the Justice Center Project, and he was on the design committee for this project.

After 5 years with the Community Foundation, Jessica Martinović was selected as the Dir. of Development for the SCCF, a \$13-million endowment. Martinović manages more than 120 endowment funds. Just this year under Martinović's leadership, more than \$400,000 in grants and scholarships have been administered, 8 new funds have been established, and net assets have increased by nearly \$1 million. Martinović also has in communications and marketing with a master's degree in English and communications.

Kristina Pitts has served as Clerk-Treasurer for the Town of Hamlet since 2012. She is responsible for implementing an annual budget and overseeing Hamlet projects. Under her leadership, a skate park has been constructed, sidewalks in downtown have been upgraded, and Community Crossing Grants have been utilized for three projects. Pitts has also worked with the Hamlet Park Board to upgrade the Town Park equipment.

Stephen "Rik" Ritzler has served as Superintendent of the Starke County Highway Department since 2013. During this time, Starke County has gone from being one of the worst-ranked counties in Indiana in terms of bridge health to one of the best. Ritzler previously worked for INDOT as a Project Manager for the LaPorte District, where he oversaw more than 300 INDOT projects. He also led the 2010-11 call for projects and managed initial field work and data compilation for the FY2012-FY2016 Capital Program, including all bridge, roadway, safety, and mobility projects within the district.

After working for several years with cities, towns, and economic development organizations throughout Lake, Porter, & La Porte County, Andrew Rowe took over the position of Town of North Judson Clerk-Treasurer in 2017. With numerous, large-scale infrastructure projects in motion, Rowe has worked closely with the Town's Council to build on this momentum. These include the new amphitheater and upcoming splash pad project at Norway Field, as well as downtown beautification efforts and the establishment of a

new dog park, Rowe and fellow leaders have been working hard to make North Judson a more vibrant and engaging community.

While serving as a local reporter, Jacque Ryan has provided news coverage for multiple municipalities within the COS region. By providing detailed articles about these events and forging connections with community representatives, Ryan, along with her colleagues in the WKVI News Department, ensure that local leaders are held accountable and that the public is aware of important local news.

Larry Wickert is Executive Director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation and previously served on the Board of Directors. He is a former Starke County Commissioner and helped initiate the construction of the County Annex 1. He has worked in agribusiness and operated his own agronomic consulting business. He has served on NJWT Library Board, Railroad Township Board, and NJ Kiwanis.

The COS region has demonstrated capacity to administer the programs included through Stellar and additionally plans to select and dedicate a Special Projects Coordinator. This staffer will be specifically assigned to manage and administer Stellar projects as well as complementary projects.

The COS has already collaboratively engaged the services of consultants, engineers, architects, housing developers, graphic designers, and media producers. The team that has been created will continue throughout the Stellar period to ensure projects are delivered on time and as expected.

Leadership Capacity*

Document governmental and/or civic leadership capacities with the region. You should discuss from both an individual and/or regional level.

The COS plans to employ a Special Projects Coordinator. This position will be 100% dedicated to completing Stellar projects as well as complimentary projects simultaneously. The COS will also employ the services of a Program Coordinator on a limited basis to assist. DLZ, an engineering and architectural firm, has been tasked as our Program Coordinator and will provide technical assistance throughout the duration of the region's revitalization. Our COS-EC will serve as the region's voice and will be given the voting authority for final decision making.

In addition to the core team, we have also secured the expertise of Justus Property Management to organize and manage our housing projects. Justus has managed more than 2,000 housing units and has worked with federal, state, and local partners, including HUD, USDA, and IHCD.

Our local governmental agencies are also teeming with experience. County Commissioner Kathryn Norem has over 11 years of experience with county government. Norem served as CEO of Starke Memorial Hospital for seven years. Throughout her tenure, Starke County has received several million dollars in highway funding and has built the Starke County Justice Center as well as many other projects that have improved Starke County. Knox Mayor Dennis Estok has over 22 years of experience with government. Prior to becoming Mayor, Mr. Estok served on the County Council and as the County Surveyor. Mayor Estok has engaged the City of Knox and has completed many programs and projects that have improved the City and region. Under his leadership, Knox has invested in annual sidewalk and ADA improvements, blight elimination, and owner-occupied housing rehabilitation. In 2016, Mayor Estok ignited the community to get involved and breathe new life into Wythogan Park. Through the use of volunteers and local businesses, the park received major improvements including splash, concession stand, restrooms, and performance state. The Town of North Judson, led by Clerk-Treasurer Andrew Rowe, has also experienced significant changes in the last few years. Mr. Rowe has been involved with multiple projects, including the construction of an amphitheater at Norwayne Field that hosts movie and music events throughout the spring and summer seasons. Mr. Rowe, along with Town Councilmembers, have also made it a priority to update the Town's utilities and implement ADA ramps and sidewalks throughout the Town over the last several years.

In addition to these elected officials, COS is fortunate to have an active Economic Development Corporation, led by Larry Wickert, and a generous Community Foundation, with Director of Development Jessica Martinović, on our team. Wickert serves as President of COS and has worked to improve the region for more than eight years in economic development. The Community Foundation is directly involved with improving the quality of life throughout the region and has distributed nearly \$2M in grants and scholarships in the past five years.

COS is grateful to have Robert Aloï from Territorial Engineering on our team. Aloï has more than 30 years of experience and has assisted our region with many projects including all Erie Trail extensions, Knox Industrial Park intersection, and development of a storm water drainage ordinance. Aloï has donated his time and energy to improving the COS in many ways, including the use of his services and expertise.

Our team also includes the vision and expertise of Stephen 'Rik' Ritzler. Ritzler is the Starke County Highway Superintendent and has successfully implemented a bridge improvement program that took Starke County bridges from one of the lowest ranked in the state to nearly the best in less than six years. Ritzler has been instrumental in securing more than \$3M in Community Crossings funding over the past three years and manages the Highway Department budget of \$4 M annually. Ritzler has over 12 years of experience with federal and state highway funding.

While the communities of Koontz Lake and Bass Lake are unincorporated, they have come together and formed homeowners' associations and sewer districts. Both of these communities have a strong sense of ownership in preserving and improving our lakes. The Bass Lake Conservancy is currently undergoing studies for beach restoration. Koontz Lake is also experienced with administration of multiple projects such as the sewer system installation and Lions Club park upgrades.

Resumes of our team are included in Section Appendix D: Additional Stellar Requirements

Grant Administration Capacity*

Document the services of a grant administrator and/or successfully completed projects in the past three years utilizing state and/or federal grant funds.

The Kankakee-Iroquois Regional Planning Commission will serve as the grant administrator for the projects. K-IRPC was founded as a multi-county governmental service agency in 1973, under Indiana Code 36-7-7, for the purpose of assisting local units of government in their efforts to improve and strengthen community and economic conditions and opportunities. K-IRPC presently serves the eight rural counties of Benton, Carroll, Jasper, Newton, Pulaski, Starke, Warren, and White, and the thirty-eight cities and towns within. The K-IRPC agency is governed by a board comprised of appointees from member counties and municipalities within the region. At least two-thirds of the membership consists of locally elected officials. In addition to community and economic development programs, K-IRPC operates the K-IRPC Head Start Program in three counties and the Arrowhead Country Public Transportation System in four counties.

During its more than 45-year history, K-IRPC has provided grant writing and administration to the K-IRPC region for many types of projects using various types of grant programs. With an organizational structure that includes board members from eight counties and many communities, K-IRPC is able to draw from the expertise, experiences, and resources of many local leaders and elected officials.

K-IRPC has three certified grant administrators on its staff. Edwin Buswell is the Executive Director and has been employed by K-IRPC since 1995. During his time at K-IRPC, he has also performed grant administration and will oversee all grant administration activities. Shawn Cain is the primary grant administrator and has been with K-IRPC since 2011. She has administered a variety of state and federal

grants during her tenure. Emily Albaugh is the third grant administrator and has been writing and administering grants with K-IRPC since 2013.

The COS has received OCRA distributed funding for the following projects in the past three years that were administered by K-IRPC:

North Judson

- Water System Improvements Planning
- Water System Improvements Construction
- Comprehensive Plan

Knox

- Park Plan
- Wastewater Treatment Plant

Hamlet

- Comprehensive Plan

Starke County

- Courthouse Elevator
- Comprehensive Plan, and
- Broadband Readiness Plan

In addition to the projects administered by KIRPC, the COS has completed the following state and federal grant funded projects:

- Community Crossings – Starke County, North Judson, Hamlet, Knox
- Next Level Trails – Erie Trail Extension
- INDOT Federal Aid projects
- Knox Industrial Park Access – INDOT LPA
- Porter Starke Services – HRSA
- Knox Owner Occupied Rehabilitation – IHCD
- Knox Blight Elimination - OCRA
- Starke County Implementation Grant – HRSA
- Sandy Acres Park – LWC DNR
- North Judson CSO/WWTP Improvements – USDA
- North Judson Water Improvements – OCRA, SRF

Section 5: Engagement Process

Steering Committee

Upload the completed Steering Committee Matrix.

The form must include:

- The name and contact information for each committee member
- Any specific functions or sub-committees they intend to lead

Steering_Committee_Matrix.xlsx

Community Engagement*

Include the following in your narrative response (*Tip: use "1, 2, 3..." in your response*):

- 1) Outline the community engagement strategy that was used to gather input from citizens within the region (e.g. surveys or meetings). Please include a timeline of events.
- 2) Discuss the overall communications plan throughout the process and include how each community and the region plan to continue this process moving forward.
- 3) Describe the community vision, goals and revitalization strategies to address the identified needs in the targeted area.
- 4) Provide details as to how each community engagement will tie into an overall regional community approach. How has your plan incorporated changes?
- 5) Provide any other information related to the process of developing the plan.

The Constellation of Starke (COS) Team strives to engage the public at every opportunity for not only the Stellar process, but all decisions affecting the people of our community. We understand that it can be difficult to engage citizens and that it is important to bring the opportunities to the people rather than just waiting for people to appear at a public meeting or other designated space. Our strategy is dynamic and flexible to reach many different demographics. Our communication approach includes three cornerstones: Recognition, Opportunity, and Outreach.

Recognition – The COS-EC understood the need to develop a symbol for our region and take control of our brand for the whole community. We developed an all-inclusive logo that highlights connectivity, regionalism, and togetherness. The COS region is ready to take off with our ideas and plans, and to welcome renewed investment.

A Greater Eastern Sandhill Crane taking flight is at the heart of our logo. Each community is connected through a series of stars stretching across the crane's outstretched wings, creating the Constellation of Starke. This logo is featured on all media from the COS team and is used for recognition at festivals, meetings, and even for sponsorships, shirts, and stickers.

Opportunity – We realize that not everyone will answer a survey online or attend a public meeting that might interfere with their work or personal schedules. COS decided to bring the meetings to the people. Our team operated booths at festivals and fairs throughout the region. At these events we provided sign-in sheets as well as methods to provide direct feedback.

Outreach – While we understand that we need to strive to meet community members where they are, we realize we will have to do more to truly give everyone an opportunity to be informed and provide feedback. We offer the opportunity to reach us, anytime, anywhere. By using social media, news outlets, and other avenues, information on the Stellar process is readily available in a variety of ways. Multiple surveys were distributed, which helped to inform our planning process and solidified priorities in our RDP.

Constellation of Starke Stellar Timeline

Before the decision to get involved with the Regional Stellar Communities Program was reached, efforts were being made to inform the public about the importance of quality of place and community development. Holding these various outreach opportunities helped emphasize the role that community members would play in making future plans a reality.

2018

March 21 – Starke County Economic Development Foundation (SCEDF) Hosts Community Retreat

June 14 – SCEDF Hosts Consultation with OCRA NWI Liaison

August 15 – SCEDF Hosts Strategizing Session with OCRA NWI Liaison & Stellar Program Manager

October 9 – Starke County Takes More Stellar Steps with Asset Mapping Workshop

2019

The momentum that was created from engaging with community members, local leaders, and program officials early on was channeled into the new year as the Stellar process really got underway.

February

Stellar Executive Committee officially chooses ‘Constellation of Starke’ as region name

March

Initial survey distributed

1 – Stellar presentation to Leadership Starke County class

April:

4 – Stellar officials publicly share “Constellation of Starke” region name

5 – COS submits Letter of Intent

18 – COS region has been named a finalist

23 – Koontz Lake Association – Stellar presentation

May:

Stellar information shared with boards of numerous services organizations in the COS region

5 – COS pages created on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

6 – COS Logo unveiled

6 – North Judson town council – Stellar presentation

20 – SCEDF Board – Stellar presentation

21 – North Judson Comp Plan public meeting

21 – Meeting with Senator Ed Charbonneau to discuss the COS Region and the Stellar Efforts

22 – Radio Station interview for Stellar and Ball State public meeting promotion

23 – Public Meeting with Ball State and OCRA

June:

1 – Bass Lake Property Owners Association – Stellar presentation

3 – SCEDF Exec Com – Stellar update

3 – North Judson Town Council - Stellar presentation

15 - Koontz Lake Association Annual Meeting – Stellar Presentation

14-16 – North Judson Mint Festival - booth

17 – SCEDF Board – Stellar update

17 – Starke County Commissioners – Stellar update

25 – San Pierre public meeting – Stellar presentation

July:

13 – Bass Lake Property Owners Association – Stellar discussion

15 – Starke County Commissioners – Stellar update

15-19 – Starke County 4-H Fair - booth

26 – Knox Health-Linc Back-to-School Fair - booth

26-28 – Bass Lake Festival - booth

August:

Follow up survey distributed

5 – North Judson town Council – Stellar update

5-19 – individual presentations to county commissioners and councilmen

7 – Starke County Community Foundation Selection Committee – Stellar presentation

13 – Starke Taskforce for Opioid Prevention – collaboration with consortium

- 16-18 – Yellow Stone Trail Fest in Hamlet - booth
- 19 – Starke County Commissioners – Stellar update
- 19 - 20 – Radio interviews as promotion for Community Public Outreach Event
- 21 – Community Outreach Event
- 23 – Starke Hospital Administrator - Stellar Wellness Plan and Detox Center
- 26 – SCEDF Exec Comm – Stellar update
- 28 – North Judson Comp Plan public meeting

September:

- 4 – Starke County Comp Plan public meeting
- 5 – Hamlet Comp Plan public meeting
- 16 – Starke County Commissioners – Stellar update

2) Our communications plan has evolved over the last several months as the COS develops a better understanding of how to effectively engage with citizens throughout the region. We had initial successes with traditional news sources, such as WKVI and the Leader Newspaper. COS then expanded our reach by incorporating social media into our communications plan and collaborating with local creatives at Mirth and Whimsy to develop an explanatory video. We identified the importance of garnering greater exposure by hosting input sessions and having a presence at local festivals where we engaged with the public face-to-face. As we carry out our RDP, these successful communication methods will be utilized, and outreach will continue by incorporating monthly newsletters, regular email blasts, and additional community events.

As a region, we have come to understand that communication and connections throughout our communities will allow us to prosper. We have learned that even without Stellar, the valuable collaboration we have begun must continue. The COS-EC will continue to meet on a monthly basis and will be the driving force behind continuing this process. With the wide range of regional representation, the COS-EC will continue to develop the sub-committees and meet regularly. Our outreach has allowed us to create an extensive database of contacts, which we will continue to involve in our revitalization.

3) Vision Elements: Vibrant, engaged, and growing community

Goal 1: Improve Livability

Strategy:

- Create diverse low-to-moderate income housing choices
- Enhance access to outdoor recreation
- Revitalize downtown areas and support placemaking initiatives
- Generate arts and cultural diversity opportunities

Goal 2: Increase social viability

Strategy:

- Provide locations for gathering (third places)
- Improve existing recreational amenities
- Promote community pride and communication

Goal 3: Create a healthier and better educated community

Strategy:

- Promote education and training opportunities
- Increase skilled and lucrative employment opportunities
- Broaden access to daycare options
- Offer more fresh and local food options
- Improve access to addiction prevention and treatment programs
- Provide recreational opportunities that promote physical activity

4) From very early on in the process, COS-EC determined that it was vitally important to give every person within the community a chance to contribute to the process and to identify as a resident of the Constellation of Starke region. An element of that effort has been having our logo displayed and dispersed in

various ways. We did this by showcasing the logo in Knox City Hall, North Judson Town Hall, the Starke County Community Foundation, the County Commissioners' Meeting Room, the Starke County Economic Development Foundation, and in other community hubs.

Another way this was accomplished was through providing our sponsors with window decals. Businesses across the region now have the COS logo greeting customers and clients as they enter. Stickers with the logo were given out during various community outreach events and shirts were designed to give residents a chance to take the logo home with them.

There were multiple instances during festivals where people would point to the logo and say they were familiar with the design. That level of recognition will only continue to grow as the years go on, and soon all people living in the area will know that they are a valued part of the COS.

5) One project that played an incredibly critical role in the development of our plan and assisted with visibility and recognition was teaming up with Mirth and Whimsy to create a brief but informative video that highlighted Constellation of Starke and our Stellar efforts. There was a noticeable impact when the video was unveiled during our first public meeting in May. It was an instant hit online with nearly 12,000 views within the first week. It also helped familiarize people with the program. Showing it to citizens in Bass Lake, Koontz Lake, San Pierre, and other areas throughout the COS region proved effective in motivating community members there to rally behind the effort and even to contribute monetarily. It has succeeded in fostering community pride while spurring significant interest in investment from outside sources and residents.

Section 6: Project Identification and Description

Project Identification and Description*

Upload a list of the intended projects and demonstrated reasonableness of project scope:

- Identify priority projects in terms of greatest level of impact and need. Document and support the level of need for each project and the significance of each project in the overall revitalization efforts within the region.
 - Projects should be comprehensive in meeting the variety of needs within a region.
 - Projects should be reasonable in the scope of work to be completed. The projects should be able to be completed in the four program years.
- Describe how proposed projects will leverage additional resources.
 - Projects should be practical in relationship to the community's operating budget.

project desc.pdf

Section 7: Implementation

Progress Measurement*

Outline how progress will be measured, including:

- The establishment of the region's baseline relative to itself and its benchmark cities;

- The method and frequency of reporting of progress (who reports the progress, to whom, and how often?); and
- The specific metrics to be used to measure progress.

Of the 92 counties in Indiana, Starke County ranks 66th in population with nearly 23,000 residents. In contrast, Marshall and LaPorte Counties have higher populations of 46,752 and 110,839, respectively. White County is similar to Starke County with a population of 24,279, while Pulaski County has only 12,761 residents. The growth rate in our region is projected to be higher than any other outer region in Indiana for the next 20 years, according to Ball State University Indiana Communities Institute.

Our median income is the lowest of the surrounding counties at \$45,526, and the poverty rate is the highest at 16.7%. The median list price for homes in Starke County is \$93 per square foot, lower than the state-wide average of \$105 per square foot. The median list price per square foot for Marshall County is \$109, for LaPorte County it's \$116, and for Pulaski County it's \$75. [Source: Zillow] Our home ownership is the highest of the surrounding counties at 80.2%.

Through the Stellar program we intend to improve many of these statistics. Below are specific metrics we intend to utilize to measure our progress and show the COS is a vibrant, engaged, and growing community. Results will be compiled and publicly distributed by the COS Executive Committee.

Area Growing
 Metric Increase # of residents who both live and work within region
 Existing Measurement 713 commute into COS 3,688 commute out
 Goal 1-3% reduction 2% reduction per year*
 Reporting Responsibility Economic Development
 Reporting Frequency Annual

Area Growing
 Metric Increase population
 Existing Measurement 22,966
 Goal No loss & 1% increase per year
 Reporting Responsibility Economic Development
 Reporting Frequency Annual

Area Vibrant and Growing
 Metric Increase # of building permits issued
 Existing Measurement NJ - 27
 Goal 2% increase per year
 Reporting Responsibility Economic Development
 Reporting Frequency Annual

Area Vibrant
 Metric Increase assessed valuation of residential properties (trending)
 Existing Measurement 8% increase per year
 Goal Sustain 8% increase per year
 Reporting Responsibility County Assessor
 Reporting Frequency Bi-Annual

Area Engaged
 Metric Increase social media engagements
 Existing Measurement FB post engagements in August '19: 1,500
 Goal Increase engagement by a minimum of 100 through an average of 10 posts per month

Reporting Responsibility Jacque Ryan
Reporting Frequency Monthly

Area Vibrant

Metric Reduce amount of outside assistance at Oregon Township Fire Department

Existing Measurement 45% of calls require outside assistance per month

Goal 15% of calls requiring outside assistance per month

Reporting Responsibility Oregon Township Fire Department

Reporting Frequency Monthly

Area Vibrant and Growing

Metric Improve commercial storefront occupancy rates

Existing Measurement

Goal Attract two per municipality per year

Reporting Responsibility City or Town executive

Reporting Frequency Bi-annual

Area Engaged

Metric Increase COS sponsorships

Existing Measurement 10 in first year

Goal Add 2-3 per month

Reporting Responsibility COS Executive Team

Reporting Frequency Annual

Area Engaged

Metric Increase participants in COS

Existing Measurement 550 number of residents in database in 2019

Goal Increase of 20% annually

Reporting Responsibility COS Executive Team

Reporting Frequency Annual

*We recognize the limitations of this measurement of our target, since those percentages could decrease without any progress. Through our outreach efforts we repeatedly heard discussions around individuals earning higher wages within the county who reside outside of the COS region. In particular, an increase in higher wage earners making this region the place they want to live and work is the ultimate goal.

Future of the RDP

Discuss how the regional development plan will continue to move forward without the state partnership.

The Stellar designation will provide our region with a transformative opportunity that will have a lasting and robust impact, but our intent is to continue building upon established regional connections without the designation. We understand that by working together, we can reach many of our goals, and by connecting our communities and leveraging one another's resources, we will become the vibrant, engaged, and growing community we envision.

We will continue our collaboration through the COS platform by meeting regularly to assist one another and lend available resources. The distribution of an engaging COS newsletter will inform residents of any implementations of the RDP, such as filling vacant storefronts, increasing residential options, or progress in addressing the overdose crisis.

Regardless of this year's Stellar outcome, we see this as an opportunity to continue partnerships built within the COS region and sustain the momentum that's been generated. We will still have the same needs and goals we identified through the Stellar process and plan to pursue these goals with a newfound ambition.

As a small rural community, we have extensive experience finding creative solutions to accomplish large projects with our existing resources and talent.

Our housing need is significant; by continuing to partner with Justus Property Management and Werner Consulting, we seek to pursue IHEDA tax credits during the standard application process. The Bass Lake Beach project has consistently been identified as a centerpiece to our transformation. While the goals listed in the RDP are lofty and would require significant funding, we will continue to take steps to realize that vision, albeit at a slower rate.

Our communities want and need connectivity. The connector trails project will provide that opportunity. The Starke County Highway Department will receive INDOT funds, county-designated money, and other sources to accomplish the project over a longer period of time.

Many of our complementary projects are not directly reliant upon a Stellar designation. Successes and growth have resulted in a need for a SCILL Center expansion space. An Economic Development Administration grant is being sought to address this need. Also, recent funding for Level 3 daycare in North Judson has been obtained, and there are plans to expand that program into Knox.

With renewed momentum, we will continue working as a region to make progress on all aspects identified through the RDP in order to realize our goal of being a vibrant, engaged, and growing community.

Section 8: Feasibility

Feasibility Matrix

Upload the completed Feasibility Matrix.

Feasibility_Matrix Final.xls

Floodplains/Floodways*

Provide documentation of the proposed capital projects in relation to floodplains/floodways.

This should be scanned and uploaded as a single PDF

Section 8 - Feasibility maps.pdf

Section 9: Readiness

Demonstration of Readiness*

Describe the steps taken thus far in each proposed project's process. Include details about key partners and stakeholders.

1. Bass Lake Beach

The Starke County Parks Master Plan identified the Bass Lake Beach property as their top priority for improvements to revitalize this historic area and natural centerpiece of the COS region. The Stellar process brought people from the Bass Lake community and throughout the region together, and a vision for the future coalesced.

In addition to the Starke County Park Board, the Bass Lake Property Owners' Association (BLPOA) have expressed their support for reimagining the entire beach area. Schematic designs for the Beach House have been completed and include an event center, café, office space, and restrooms. Layouts for the water park building that will house ticketing and rentals, as well as lockers and restrooms, is also complete.

The BLPOA is working on a short-term rental for the water park equipment during the summer of 2020. Starke County has committed to rehabilitating the parking area and entrance. The County intends to eliminate the gate charge in favor of water park ticket sales, event center rentals, and café income. The BLPOA, as well as several property owners, have committed additional funding to the project.

2. Connecting Trails

The County Connecting Trails is a key project that truly links the communities within the region. The right-of-way has been researched and no new r/w is required for the project, as each trail and the trail head is within the existing roadway or documented County-owned property. Schematic designs and typical sections have been developed, as well as detailed cost estimates. Environmental impacts are expected to be minimal, as all construction is on previously disturbed soils.

3. Starke County Health and Wellness Plan

COS has developed a partnership with Hope Restored Recovery Home and Celebrate Recovery, which have a variety of existing programs to tackle addiction issues within and around the region. The Health and Wellness Plan will assist with these and other programs.

4. Scale Model of Our Solar System

Schematic designs and scaled layout for our Solar System Model are complete. The Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum, as owners of the corridor, have partnered with COS and Prairie Trails Club to allow the installation of this scientific and cultural placemaking initiative. No environmental documentation will be required.

5. Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation

Starke County will create an application for homeowners to apply for the owner-occupied funding. The County will work directly with a certified administrator to effectively and efficiently manage this program.

6. Hamlet Town Park Improvements

The Hamlet Town Park is municipally owned, and schematic designs for the improvements are complete. The Hardesty Memorial Endowment Fund, through the Starke County Community Foundation, has partnered with the town to provide matching funds.

7. North Judson Housing

North Judson has site control of the lot proposed for the urban housing project. The lot was cleared in 2019, and environmental issues were remediated. Justus Property Management and Werner Consulting will oversee project development.

8. Hamlet Housing

The property for the proposed Hamlet Housing development is in negotiation. Initial discussions with the property owner have been positive, and the Town intends to make a formal offer upon the awarding of funds. Justus Property Management and Werner Consulting will oversee project development.

9. Knox Housing

Site locations for the Knox housing project have been initially researched. The lots are vacant, and no environmental contamination is evident. The City will begin negotiations once funding has been secured. Justus Property Management and Werner Consulting will oversee project development.

10. Knox Streetscape

Schematic designs of the Knox streetscape are complete. Elements from a previous streetscape project will be continued. All property is City owned.

11. Knox Downtown Façade

The City of Knox is currently developing downtown Façade standards through partnerships with existing building owners and City planning. The City will include an owner application and scoring criteria and then proceed with project planning and environmental documentation.

12. Knox Wythogan Park Improvements

Schematic design for the Wythogan Park improvements is complete. The park is City owned. Public input has been utilized to determine the needs and priorities.

13. Knox 8 S. Main Façade

The 8 S. Main building is currently under private ownership. The City intends to purchase this property and will conduct a Phase 1 environmental study upon the awarding of funds to determine the project impacts.

14. Koontz Lake Community Center

Design of the Koontz Lake Community Center is 60% complete by a local Koontz Lake engineering firm. The Koontz Lake Association has had initial contact with the property owner and will negotiate the terms once funding is awarded.

15. Oregon Township Fire Station

The Oregon Township Fire Station has completed design of the expansion. The property is owned by the township. Environmental documentation can begin immediately upon award of funding. There are no anticipated environmental contaminants on the property.

16. North Judson Streetscape/Façade

Schematic design for the North Judson Streetscape is complete. The Town is currently developing Façade standards utilizing the experience of the City of Knox. Included in the standards will be application guidelines and scoring criteria. Upon funding award, the Town will develop complete design plans and environmental documentation. Property for the streetscapes is owned by the Town.

17. North Judson Town Park Improvements

Schematic design of the Town Park Improvements is complete. No environmental issues are anticipated based upon recent updates. The site is owned by North Judson.

18. North Judson Norwayne Field Improvements

Schematic design of the Norwayne Field Improvements is complete. No environmental issues are anticipated based upon recent updates. The site is owned by North Judson.

19. San Pierre School Park

Schematic design for San Pierre School Park is complete. No environmental issues are anticipated. The park property is a public dedication managed by Railroad Township.

Section 10: Impact

Impact*

Describe the local and regional impact.

The Constellation of Starke Regional Plan has been carefully crafted to be a catalyst for a dramatic transformation of the region, with the Stellar projects and services acting to accelerate and precipitate a flow of investment of funds and human capital into what is currently an undercapitalized region.

Our examination of statistical data, coupled with the comments and opinions of citizens, led us to adopt a two-part strategy for stimulating investment in the region by addressing weaknesses that might deter investment and leveraging strengths to introduce more people to the Constellation of Starke and help attract investment.

We identified three areas of weakness that might deter investment:

1. Lower than average educational attainment;
2. Aging and limited housing stock; and,
3. A need for a more vibrant and active sense of place.

We concluded that these three areas of weakness were symptoms of a single phenomenon. From our examination of statistical data, we found that:

- many educated professionals working in the region commute out to homes up to an hour away.
- middle class people have difficulty finding homes with the contemporary amenities they want.
- upscale homes that offered those amenities typically sold shortly after appearing on the market.

We believe the cure requires an aggressive program to update and upgrade regional housing stock and encourage more professionals to make our region their home. This will help bolster the tax base, improve human capital, and help increase median incomes, all of which will help support retail, services, daycare, and schools in the region.

We identified two clear strengths:

1. Our unspoiled countryside of lakes, rivers, farms, and forested land; and,
2. Our friendly and relaxed towns and villages.

Fortunately, the strategies designed to leverage these strengths can be made to dovetail nicely with the needs for improvement listed above.

Many of today's young families are seeking an active lifestyle, space to grow, some land for small personal farms, and modern but affordable homes. The Constellation of Starke region has ample space for both town and rural living, as well as the outdoor amenities of trails, lakes, and rivers for healthy outdoor recreation. Our regional plan primarily focuses on expanding and modernizing these assets and improving the cultural opportunities to enhance both physical and social connectivity. With downtown Chicago only ninety minutes away, few regions can combine such an authentic rural experience with such easy access to a world class urban center.

Better residential choices will attract and hold more people who can choose their home, making the demographic profile of the region more attractive for renewed investment from regional and national retail, commercial, and industrial firms.

We will sustain this momentum by continuing to market the Constellation of Starke brand, with an emphasis on placemaking, including the Our Solar System in Scale project. We're reimagining some of our special places for the 21st century. We're rebuilding the seasonal Bass Lake Beach house into the Winchetonqua Center, a year-round, water-front activities and cultural venue. We're expanding activity schedules and installing upgrades in the parks in Knox, North Judson, Hamlet, San Pierre, and Koontz Lake. Many of these improvements are highly visible from the main roads used by travelers passing through, enhancing the sense of vibrancy. Our own investment in our community demonstrates that we are ready for others to invest and make their home here in Starke County.

Future Investment*

Describe how future investment will be attracted to the region.

The Constellation of Starke Regional Plan is designed to help stimulate continuing investment by working harmoniously with our neighbors. Improvements at Bass Lake will encourage synergy with the nearby Stellar Community of Culver on Lake Maxinkuckee, just a ten-minute drive to the east. Trail improvements will support the long-term goal of making the COS a key—and delightful—link between Chicago and NW Indiana, and Indianapolis. Access improvements on the Yellow and Kankakee Rivers will offer an alternative to the Tippecanoe River, currently getting heavy use in Pulaski County to the south. Improvements at Koontz Lake will help strengthen our links with South Bend to the northeast. All of these linkages will introduce more people from nearby cities to the pleasures of the Constellation of Starke Region, its pastoral landscapes, and friendly people, and thereby create contacts and stimulate investment.

Section 11: Sustainability

Sustainability*

Discuss how the region will continue to sustain the momentum over the course of the Stellar process period. What processes are in place that will allow the region to continue to move projects forward, include new or updated projects as others are completed or adjustments are needed, and engage new individuals in the process?

John Elkington coined the concept of the “triple bottom line” to gauge a company’s social, environmental, and economic impact. Using his accounting-based approach, we think of the three pillars of sustainability: Planet, People, and Profit. Viewed on a regional basis, our triple bottom line means we must sustain:

1. our piece of the planet: our land, its infrastructure, and its natural resources;
2. our people: the people who will drive the Stellar process and the social and governmental institutions that support them, and the people who live in or visit the Stellar region; and
3. our regional economy: through a mix of grassroots self-reliance and productive and balanced networking with state, national, and international organizations, trade, tourism, and investment.

Sustaining our piece of the planet means treasuring and nurturing its natural resources—our abundant fresh water, our good land, our diverse wildlife, and our open spaces. It also means maintaining and improving the built environment, our communities, and the transportation, utility, and communications systems that link us to the world.

Our RDP is designed to bring people closer to our land and water. When people spend time in nature, a virtuous cycle begins. Just being outdoors and active, they reap health benefits, both physical and emotional. In return, they bond with the outdoors, wildlife, and green spaces, and find value there. That relationship is the strongest tool to ensure future sustainability of our green little piece of the planet.

Sustaining our people is the primary mission of the COS. Cultivating a vibrant, engaged, and growing community is perforce likely to sustain the same relationship to the Stellar process. Many prognosticate about the future, but it remains unknowable. That's why it's so important to cultivate young leaders who will be able to adapt, come what may. The COS-EC includes three people under 40 and two under 30. We will continue to cultivate young talent and place them in positions of trust and responsibility to help ensure our core group remains vibrant, engaged, and growing.

Training our people to provide skills and opportunity is another way that we are creating a sustainable population. An example is the Preschool Scholarship Program, a forward-thinking initiative operated by the Starke County Community Foundation (SCCF) and local preschools. This program was inceptioned based on research that emphasized the importance of high-quality early childhood education to break the cycle of poverty and set our children on a track for success. Since 2013, this program has provided \$79,724 in scholarships for 123 children whose families would not otherwise have been able to afford a preschool education.

Another example of developing skills to sustain our people is the Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning (SCILL). This program helps develop skills and opportunities for our workforce by providing training in automotive technology, welding technology, and automation, robotics, and equipment maintenance (AREM).

Sustaining our local economy is both a major goal and a major challenge. National media insists on describing the Midwest in terms that are tired, negative, and insulting: "the Rust Belt" or "Flyover Country." While we need and welcome outside investment, economic development is no longer just chasing smokestacks. Manufacturing can be a desirable component of a vibrant community, but fungible, low-skill jobs run from afar are unlikely to build a Stellar Community. Those kinds of jobs simply migrate to where labor is cheapest; it's a race to the bottom where the winners lose.

Our regional plan positions the COS for greater self-reliance by updated housing choices, improved quality of place experiences, and a new approach to enjoying our natural resources—things that cannot be moved elsewhere.

We're part of a widespread movement toward the reconstruction of America's rural economy. Throughout rural America, there are shared challenges. Communities must recognize their unique qualities, histories, and resources and offer options, rather than destructive competition. We choose to be the lively and unspoiled green place a day trip away from Chicago.

The COS-EC will continue to encourage cooperation and teamwork between the four member municipalities, the Economic Development Foundation, the SCCF, and other public and private partners. Our Interlocal Agreement will outline our process for making adjustments. Our sub-committees will continue to engage community members with projects according to their skills and interests.

Starke County will hire a full-time employee to oversee construction projects and intends to continue the position after the end of the Stellar process. As the new park facilities come online, Starke County will staff them as needed. As the region develops its new attractions, we will upsize our marketing efforts.

Section 12: Long Term Viability

Timeline*

Provide a four year timeline that includes the following:

- 1) Key benchmarks
- 2) Demonstration of how the process will meet the timeline established by OCRA, INDOT, and IHEDA

Appendix C illustrates the timeline, sequencing, and benchmarks for each project. The COS and our partners are eager to move forward as soon as funding is awarded. Several of our projects are moving forward with preliminary planning and property commitments, such as our housing projects and the Bass Lake Beach project. We understand that many of the projects will require the procurement of a consultant and must follow specific guidelines and requirements. Our experienced team is prepared to comply with these requirements. Our timeline also allows for sufficient time for applications, procurement, environmental services, and construction. All projects would have applications and contracts within the first two years to allow construction to be completed prior to 2024, with the exception of the County Connecting Trails. The INDOT construction funding for this project is not available until FY 2024, and construction cannot begin prior to July 2023. We do, however, anticipate design to be completed by third quarter 2022 in the event that funds become available earlier. Below is a summary for project initiation:

Year 1 – 2020

1. Bass Lake Beach
3. Health and Wellness
5. County Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation
9. Knox Housing
10. Knox Downtown Revitalization
12. Knox 8 S. Main Façade
14. Oregon Township Fire Station
7. North Judson Housing/Retail
17. North Judson Norwayne Field Improvements

Year 2 – 2021

2. Connecting Trails
4. Scale Model of our Solar System
6. Hamlet Town Park Improvements
8. Hamlet Housing
11. Knox Wythogan Park Improvements
13. Koontz Lake Community Center
15. North Judson Downtown Revitalization
16. North Judson Town Park Improvements
18. San Pierre School Park

Current Revitalization Strategy*

Provide a current revitalization strategy utilizing any of the following techniques:

- 1) Existing comprehensive plans;
- 2) Existing economic development strategic plans;
- 3) Existing downtown revitalization plans; and/or
- 4) Community surveys.

The COS revitalization strategy is the result of the collaboration among our communities and culmination of public input, surveys, and plans. Hamlet, North Judson, and Starke County have simultaneously been completing comprehensive plans during the COS redevelopment planning process. Knox also recently completed their comprehensive plan update. This has allowed us to understand what each of our community's need today. From the various comprehensive plan meetings, we were able to gather input for

priorities on an individualized scale and then bring them together through COS. Each of the comprehensive plans include collaboration with the region to reach their goals. We were able to pinpoint the community's priorities to come up with a comprehensive revitalization strategy to create a vibrant, engaged, and growing region. We then conducted public outreach to the entire region without placing more importance on one community over the other. We asked participants to prioritize the top three projects from our comprehensive list. Bass Lake Beach was indicated as the overall top project. Other emerging priorities included the County Connecting Trails, Opioid prevention and treatment, and housing. All projects received some number one priority responses, indicating that participants feel all projects are needed priorities in some respect.

In addition to the real-time input from the comprehensive plans, we utilized several other plans to determine our project priorities. Included were the San Pierre Master Plan, Knox Park Plan, North Judson Park Plan, Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum Master Plan, and Prairie Trails Clubs North Judson-Erie Trail Future Vision Plan.

Financial Sustainability

Provide financial documentation supporting the sustainability and maintenance of the proposed projects (pro forma, user rates, available public financing, other appropriate funding mechanisms, etc.

These should be scanned and uploaded as a single PDF.

Accounting Letters Combined.pdf

Section 13: Maps

Region Map

Upload a full color map of the overall project target area for the entire region. Identify regional/partner boundaries on the overall map.

Constellation of Starke-Regional Map_9-19-19.pdf

Individual Community Maps

Upload full color, individual community maps with the following items identified:

- Past projects
- Current projects
- Proposed projects
- Complementary projects

These should be scanned and uploaded as a single PDF.

Starke Maps Combined.pdf

Section 14: SORH - Rural Health Project Proposal

Assessment*

Show how a need has been identified and the target population being served. Your answer may include:

- An analysis of collected data from sources such as a Community Health Needs Assessment to show a rural health need in the community. This information can be utilized through a local hospital or a county public health department;
- Research done through an outside expert such as CDC, NIH, or other reputable sources; and/or
- Information on County Health Rankings or ISDH sponsored initiatives.

Recent statistics released in November of 2018 by the Indiana State Department of Health clearly indicate the extent of the opioid crisis in Starke County and the need to prevent overdoses in our rural community. Of the 53 overdose cases resulting in death in the county from 2011 to 2017, 45 of them were caused by single or multiple pharmaceutical opioids. The report further shows that Starke County has one of the highest rates of drug overdoses in the state at 38.2 per 100,000 persons. The rate at which opioids are dispensed to Starke County residents is nearly 1.5 times the overall state of Indiana rate. This impactful statistical data is enough to rally a call to our community to fight back against this crisis.

Project Development Plan*

Describe how other areas have approached the particular rural health issue identified in the Assessment section. You may:

- Look locally. Ask the health experts in the region for ideas of projects and programs that they would like to do but haven't been able to or what's been done before that worked but wasn't sustained.
- Look nationally. There are a number of resources available such as:
 - Rural Health Information Hub
 - NACCHO Model Practices Database
- Be innovative. Develop a project that is unique to the region represented by thinking outside the box and taking modern approaches.

Provide and continue to support prevention, treatment, wellness, recovery, and educational efforts and, more specifically, develop strategies for preventing opioid and other drug overdoses. Some of the programs we will immediately support are included in the implementation plan below.

The Health and Wellness Plan goal is to further support already existing efforts of prevention and revitalization of our community when it comes to overcoming the opioid and overdose crisis. The Plan will go beyond to support and partner with existing educational and support centers such as the Joseph Dream Center, Imagination Library, Chaucie's Place, and others. It will also support mental health initiatives, healthy eating and nutrition seminars, and programs by partnering with Purdue Extension programs and also supporting Cornerstone Café, a meeting place which allows citizens to collaborate, mentor, and grow.

Wendy Medbourn, of the Joseph Dream Center, shared the following information regarding programs that are being implemented and new ones for the future:

Joseph Dream Center

The Joseph Dream Center is the non-profit umbrella for many programs. Our goal is to have a center that is centrally located that will be the office and community building for life skill classes, cooking classes, a retail

store, small café and resource center. The retail store will be very nice with items donated and sold for profit to fund the center and the programs and projects in the community.

Building Eden- A community project where we taught families to build, plant, and sustain raised garden beds and gave them educational classes.

The Purdue Peace Corps Prep students came and helped put this project together. This gave them the experience they needed to start a program from the ground up. I also had them volunteer at the local Hope Restored building many times. The Starke County Purdue Extension also came and did the educational classes for this project. Both the PCPrep and Purdue Extension are very eager in collaborating with the Joseph Dream Center to fulfill the mission we have for Starke County.

Celebrate Recovery (CR) is a Christ-centered 12-step recovery program. Clients attend every week if they like. A meal, worship, testimony or speaking, small groups with anonymity, many resources and sponsorship are available to them. They get tokens for their progress. Sometimes that small plastic token is what stops them from making the decision to start their addiction again by just seeing all the progress they have made. They have the opportunity to join a 12-step program to deepen their recovery separate from the weekly small group meetings. CR is where major transformation takes place.

Based on the 8 Beatitudes, we have small groups where we talk about life struggles and issues, with anonymity giving us a safe place to express ourselves helping us mentally and emotionally to deal with everyday life. We have childcare available and hope to have transportation available for those who need it. There is also the opening for jail ministry through CR. 30,000 churches have this program leading to 85 % of clients staying with a church. It is for everyone. We all have hurts, habits, and hang-ups. Addiction is a huge part of recovery for CR. I am amazed at how many people still go to CR years after recovery. What I have found is having those CR relationships is where they turn to instead of the ones they had, where their addictions started. CR gives them hope, accountability, structure, friendship, a sponsor if wanted and the resources to freedom in recovery, leading to a relationship with Christ. It helps them to be responsible for their own actions, know they have purpose, serve and train to be leaders in their own community. We will start putting together a Celebrate Recovery Jr. Program after about a year of successful consistency with the adult program. This will help students that have addictions, hurts, habits or hang-ups to make wise choices, and for others to have a safe place to share and process thoughts before getting into peer pressure and the addictive environments that surround them.

Art therapy is needed for mental health in our county. I am envisioning a place where art can be created, sold and admired by the community like a small gallery. There will also be a serenity garden to relax and create art there and for mindfulness.

Chaucie's Place is a child abuse and sexual abuse prevention program given in the school system. When they go into the classroom, they talk about these things to all ages and this results in kids feeling safe to share what is happening to them at home and other places.

All these programs and more are helping in the opioid prevention. Having all these outlets leads to more confidence, and one can create goals for their life and have optimistic attitudes towards themselves, others and the community. Thus, making them contributors to society helping others with their needs. We need each other.

Implementation Plan*

Discuss how the regions will work together to ensure that the project is fulfilled. You must include:

1) An outline of action steps;

- 2) A list of person(s) responsible; and
- 3) An approximate timeline.

We discussed with groups working on these new programs about support we could provide to enhance their effectiveness. We will continue to discuss those needs with them and aid where it will be most effective.

The persons responsible and the timeline are as follows:

Hope Restored: Steve Perth and Megan Johnston; fall and winter 2019 for rehabbing building and acquiring furnishings and equipment. Programming, transportation, and supplies will be ongoing.

Celebrate Recovery: Missy Allen; fall 2019 for office, kitchen, and classroom equipment and supplies, van, startup paperwork and attorney's fees, ongoing for office space, snacks and food, gas cards for transportation, office and kitchen supplies, programming for classes, training for volunteers, fundraising materials, administrative assistant, and childcare fees.

Detox Center: Starke Hospital and South Bend Detox Center; fall to winter 2019 and ongoing assistance with lease for detox space.

Yoga training for cancer patients: Julia Ford; fall to winter 2019.

Mammogram screening awareness program and post diagnostic assistance: Julia Ford; ongoing beginning in 2020.

Healthy Eating Partnership with Purdue Extension: Deb Mix; ongoing beginning in 2020.

Joseph Dream Center Programs: Wendy Medbourn; fall 2019 and ongoing.

Cornerstone Café: Jay Weinberg, fall 2019 and ongoing.

Outcome Measures*

Provide information on how the project's impact will be measured. How does the region know if the project was successful or not? You may include:

- Personal stories of those served;
- Statistical improvements;
- Knowledge increases;
- Lessons learned; and/or
- Rate changes.

Our impact will be measured based on the following:

- Decline in EMS overdose calls
- Reduction in opioid prescription rates from local pharmacies to no more than the state average
- Reduction of Children in Need of Services (CHINS) cases due to parents with serious substance abuse problems
 - Successful reintegration into the workforce by former substance abusers
 - Having outlets available, which leads to more self-esteem, and one can begin to create goals for their life and have optimistic attitudes toward themselves, others, and the community
 - Stories built on personal success (see Wendy Medbourn's information above)

Budget*

Explain how the region will use the funding awarded and provide a timeline of when funding will be used. There is no required format, but ample justification must be provided.

A recent grant from the Department of Health and Human Services is already beginning to work for our community to "...help prevent overdoses on opioids and other substances, expand available treatments and ultimately give individuals struggling with addiction a second chance at full and healthy lives." The Constellation of Starke, through our RDP, believes this existing leverage is an opportunity to expand our Health and Wellness Plan beyond our region and develop a model resource for other Indiana communities to follow and succeed against this national crisis.

In order to finance this plan, we will prioritize and support the programs listed above in collaboration with STOP and the other supporting groups and agencies. Some of these programs are in the development stage and will use existing funding in the next few months. We understand that a more detailed budget is necessary, but at this stage, determining fund allocations would be premature. Starke County is a party in the pending multi-state opioid litigation and intends to use any proceeds to help with CHINS matters and other costs associated with managing the opioid epidemic. For all these programs, we would ask Starke County (a local match provider) to release funds as soon as we receive the Stellar Communities designation. For most of these programs, we would seek funds ongoing throughout the four-year Stellar period.

Section 15: Link to Regional Development Plan

Link your Regional Development Plan Below*

Be sure to test that it works prior to submitting your application.

<https://www.nicf.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Constellation-of-Starke.pdf>

Additional Required Documentation

Budget and Leverage Matrix

Upload the completed Budget and Leverage Matrix.

Budget_and_Leverage_Matrix FINAL.xlsx

Stellar Research Investment Spreadsheet

Upload the completed Stellar Research Investment Spreadsheet.

Stellar_Research_Investment_Spreadsheet FINAL.xlsx

Resumes of Key Project Staff

These should be scanned and uploaded as a single PDF.

Resumes.pdf

Sign and Submit

Important Notes:

- Be sure to review your application for accuracy before submitting. Corrections may not be made after the submission deadline.
- After submitting the application, an automatic email will be sent to the primary contact. To confirm the application was submitted and/or download a copy of the submitted application, go to the "Applicant Dashboard".

Authorizing Official*

Jessica L. Martinovic

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- Steering_Committee_Matrix.xlsx
- project desc.pdf
- Feasibility_Matrix Final.xls
- Section 8 - Feasability maps.pdf
- Accounting Letters Combined.pdf
- Constellation of Starke-Regional Map_9-19-19.pdf
- Starke Maps Combined.pdf
- Budget_and_Leverage_Matrix FINAL.xlsx
- Stellar_Research_Investment_Spreadsheet FINAL.xlsx
- Resumes.pdf

Steering Comm

Name	Title	Community/Organization
Stephen 'Rik' Ritzler	Highway Superintendent	Bass Lake
Robert Aloï	Engineer	Koontz Lake
Larry Wickert	Economic Development Director	San Pierre
Kristina Pitts	Clerk/Treasurer	Hamlet
Andrew Rowe	Clerk/Treasurer	North Judson
Dennis Estok	Mayor	Knox
Martin Lucas	County Attorney	Starke County
Jessica Martinović	Community Foundation Director	Community Foundation
Larry Wickert	Economic Development Director	Economic Development Foundation
Jacque Ryan	Radio Reporter	Young Professionals/Communications
Jodi Coblenz	Engineer	Program Coordinator

* The RDP was a culmination of many others not included on the Executive Committee

nittee

Email Address	Phone Number	Function
rik_ritzler@yahoo.com	(574) 806-2955	Bass Lake, plan development, connecting trails
bob@te-llc.com	(574) 910-0458	Plan development, Koontz Lake
execdir@scedf.biz	(574) 595-5329	President, Treasurer, Plan Deveopment
hamlettownhall@yahoo.com	(574) 867-3541	Plan Development, Hamlet
arowe@townofnorthjudson.com	(574) 896-3340	Plan Development, N. Judson
mayor@cityofknox.net	(574) 772-4553	Plan Development, Knox
martinlucas@gmail.com	(574) 896-5800	Plan Development
starke@nicf.org	(574) 772-3665	Plan Development, Creative Director
execdir@scedf.biz	(574) 595-5329	President, Treasurer, Plan Deveopment
jacque.ryan42@gmail.com	(574) 806-3917	Secretary, Plan Development, Engagement
jacoblentz@dlz.com	(574) 485-9957	Program Coordinator

Subcommittees

Outdoor recreation, Communities
Communities, Housing
Communities, Transportation,
Housing, Health
Communities
Communities
Communities

Communities/Arts and Culture

Arts and Culture
Communities, Transportation,
Housing, Health

Secretary, Communications

Community	Project	
Bass Lake	Bass Lake Beach	Stephen 'Rik' Ritzler
County	Connecting Trails	Stephen 'Rik' Ritzler
Countywide	Health and Wellness	Larry Wickert
Countywide	Scale Model of our Solar System	Martin Lucas
Countywide	County Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation	Larry Wickert
Hamlet	Hamlet Town Park Improvements	Jessica Martinović
North Judson	N. Judson Housing/Retail	Andrew Rowe
Hamlet	Hamlet Housing	Larry Wickert
Knox	Knox Housing	Dennis Estok
Knox	Knox Downton Revitalization	Dennis Estok
Knox	Knox Wythogan Park Improvements	Dennis Estok
Knox	Knox 8 S. Main Façade	Dennis Estok
Koontz Lake	Koontz Lake Community Center	Robert Aloï
Koontz Lake	Oregon Township Fire Station	Robert Aloï
North Judson	N. Judson Downtown Revitalization	Andrew Rowe
North Judson	N. Judson Town Park Improvements	Andrew Rowe
North Judson	N. Judson Norwayne Field Improvements	Andrew Rowe
San Pierre	San Pierre School Park	Larry Wickert

Highway Superintendent

Highway Superintendent

Economic Development Director

County Attorney

Economic Development Director

Community Foundation Director

Clerk/Treasurer

Economic Development Director

Mayor

Mayor

Mayor

Mayor

Engineer

Engineer

Clerk/Treasurer

Clerk/Treasurer

Clerk/Treasurer

Economic Development Director

The image features a central white horizontal band containing text. Above and below this band are abstract, textured backgrounds in shades of blue, teal, and purple, with visible brushstrokes and splatters.

SECTION SIX
PROJECT IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION

1. Bass Lake Beach

Description: The Bass Lake Beach property will be reimagined, rebuilt, and rebranded. As the centerpiece for the Constellation of Starke’s revitalization efforts, the project includes the demolition of the dilapidated facility and the construction of a multi-use facility that includes an event center, open air café, restrooms with beachside and interior access and a shared use commercial kitchen. Also included in the project is a water park building which will serve as a ticket station and rental area with locker rooms, restrooms, and outdoor showers. Conceptual layouts for these buildings as well as project details are included in the “Constellation of Starke Stellar Improvement Projects” in Appendix A. Also included as part of the project is a full paved parking area with designated handicapped spaces and landscape elements that include replacement of the existing fencing with row hedges or other barriers. The

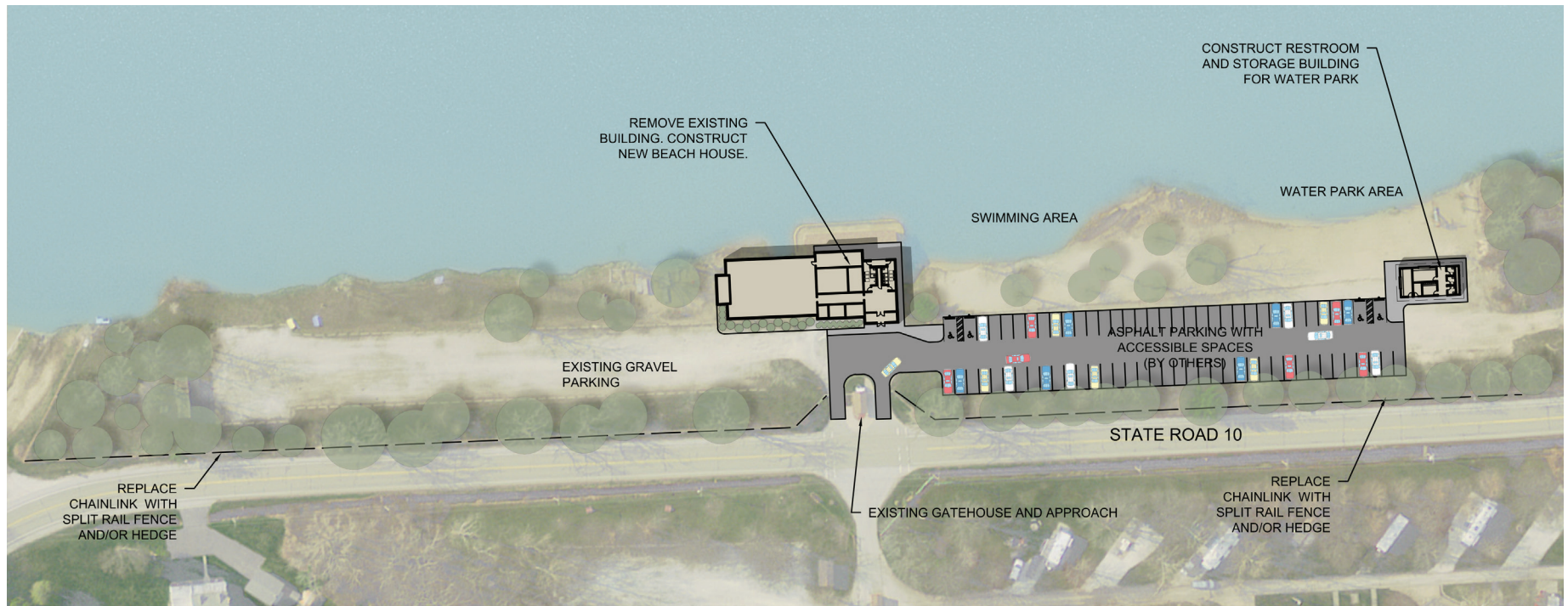
intent is to eliminate the gate charge for entry to the beach facility and allow the public to enjoy this natural amenity. The facility will be supported through ticket sales, event center rentals, and café income. Complementary to the Stellar funded portion of this project will be a “floating water park.” The floating waterpark will include inflatable and floating obstacles for varying skill levels and age groups.

Impact: Bass Lake is the centerpiece of the revitalization efforts of the Constellation of Starke region. As the third largest natural lake in Indiana, Bass Lake is an underutilized asset that can directly impact our need for a vibrant, engaged, and growing community. No other nearby facility has an upscale venue for weddings and events, and the panoramic views will entice users. The waterpark facility will provide revenue and encourage outdoor recreation. Visitors can dock their boats, and park automobiles, bicycles, and golf carts to visit the café.

By showcasing the lake through event rentals and recreational opportunities, we will attract outside visitors and provide opportunities for new residents to live here.

Significance: The Bass Lake Beach project consistently scored as the public’s number one priority for the region. Surveys and public responses have shown that revitalization of this asset will help generate the momentum and vibrancy needed for the region to reach our goals.

Resources: The Bass Lake Property Owners Association has committed \$40,000 towards the revitalization efforts. In addition, private local individuals have committed \$25,000. The beach property is owned by Starke County and will provide roadway upgrades around the area to further complement the project and leverage funding.

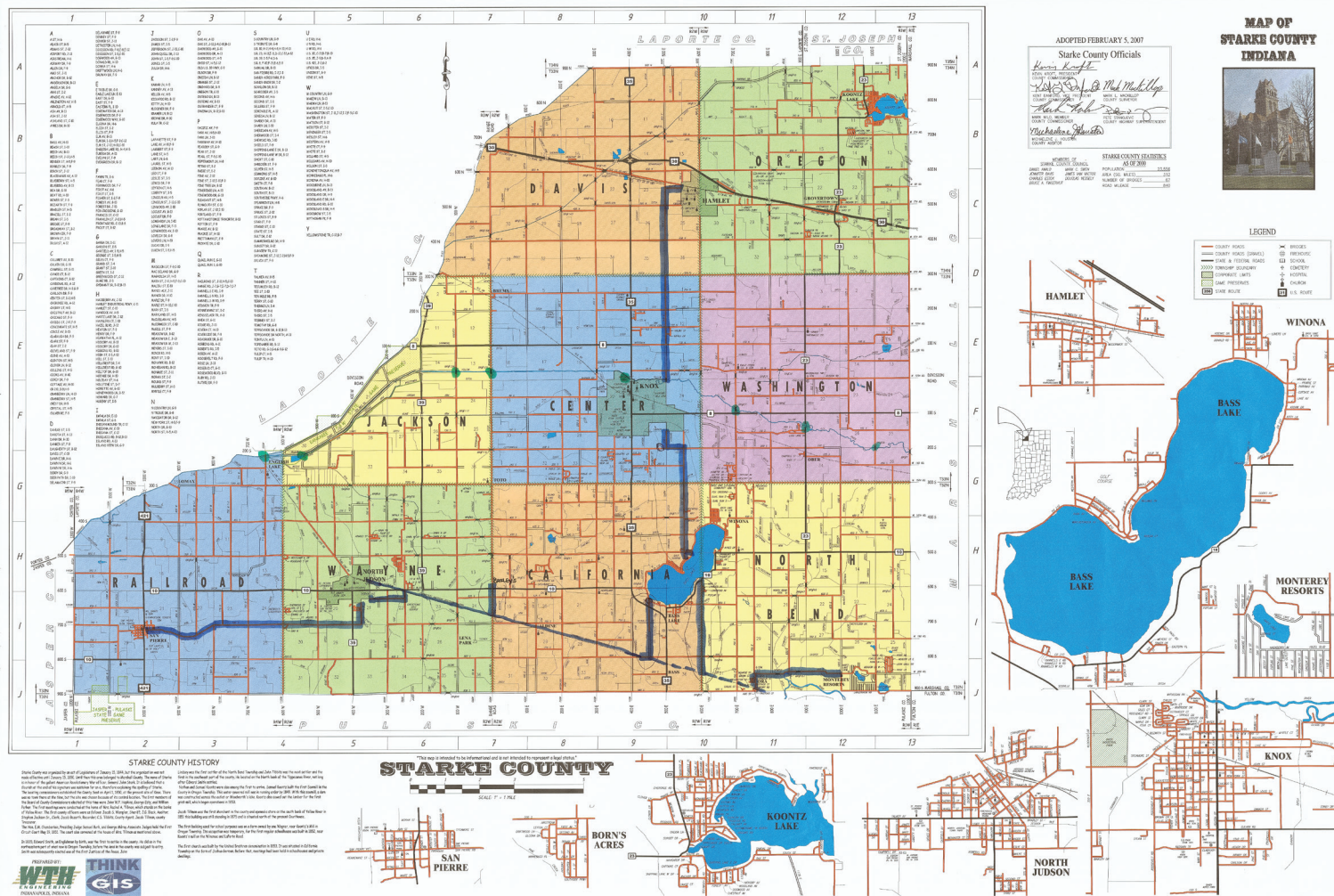


2. Connecting Trails

Description: Starke County will construct a series of connecting shared use routes throughout the county to provide safe travel for bicyclists and golf carts. Sections include connections from:

- ★ Erie Trail to Bailey's Discount Center
- ★ Bass Lake to Erie Trail via CR 450 E. to CR 800 S.
- ★ Bass Lake to Erie Trail via CR 600 E.
- ★ Knox to Bass Lake via CR 550 E., CR 200 S. to CR 500 E.
- ★ Hamlet to Knox via CR 500 E. to CR 550 N.
- ★ San Pierre to North Judson via CR 700 S. to CR 375 W.
- ★ North Judson to the Erie Trail via CR 625 S. to CR 375 W.

The routes will utilize existing roadways with additional signage to convert the roadways to share the road facilities. In addition to signage, the project includes paving existing gravel portions and the correction of site distance issues at several intersections. The project also includes lighting at several locations and a trail head with bathroom, rest area, bicycle rack and parking area at CR 450 E. and CR 210. A detailed description of each route's segment scope of work on the table following.



Priority	Shared-Use Route Description	Scope
1	Erie Trail to Bailey's	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add signage for golf carts and bicycles, 2. Add lighting at the intersection of State Road 10 and Range Road to increase visibility for safer crossing, 3. Post speed limit at 35 mph.
1	Bass Lake to Erie Trail - Route 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add signage for golf carts and bicycles, 2. Add lighting at the intersections of County Road 450 E with US 35, CR 210, and CR 800 S to increase visibility for safer crossing, 3. Post speed limit at 35 mph, 4. Pave one section of CR 450 E that is gravel, and mill and overlay the remaining roadway with full depth patching where required, 5. Add a trail head in the triangle formed at the intersection of CR 450 E and CR 210, which will include a bathroom, rest area, bicycle rack and parking area for golf carts, and if possible, provide at least two truck and boat trailer parking spaces. CR 450 E will also be realigned to form a near 90-degree intersection with CR 210.
1	Bass Lake to Erie Trail - Route 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add signage for bicycles only, 2. Add lighting at the intersection of CR 600 E with State Road 10 and CR 800 S to increase visibility for safer crossing, 3. Post speed limit at 35 mph.
1	Knox to Bass Lake	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add signage for golf carts and bicycles, 2. Add lighting at the intersections of CR 500 E with County Road 200 S, CR 300 S, and CR 210 S, and at the intersection of Maple Street and County Road 550 E to increase visibility for safer crossing, 3. Post speed limit at 35 mph, 4. Correct an existing sight distance issue along CR 200 S just west of CR 500 E by cutting the crest of the hill and repaving the roadway.
2	Hamlet to Knox	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add signage for golf carts and bicycles only, 2. Add lighting at the intersections of CR 500 E with CR 500 N, CR 400 N, CR 250 N, CR 150 N, CR 100 N, and CR 25 N to increase visibility for safer crossing, 3. Post speed at limit 35 mph, 4. Pave two sections of CR 500 E that are gravel, and mill and overlay the remaining roadway with full depth patching where required.
3	San Pierre to North Judson	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add signage for golf carts and bicycles only, 2. Add lighting at the intersection of CR 700 S and State Road 39 to increase visibility for safer crossing, 3. Post speed limit at 35 mph.
3	North Judson to American Discovery Trail	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add signage for golf carts and bicycles only, 2. Add lighting at the intersection of CR 625 S and CR 250 W to increase visibility for safer crossing, 3. Post speed limit at 35 mph.

Impact: Golf carts and bicycles have become a popular mode of transportation throughout the region particularly around the lake communities. Starke County has adopted an ordinance that allows golf carts and bicycles to utilize county roadways if certain conditions are met. A safe and reliable route for these users is needed to increase the connectivity between communities for shopping, dining, and access to recreational activities.

The intersection of CR 800 S and CR 450 E, where the new trail head will be constructed, is currently a haphazard parking area and is unmaintained. By creating the trail head and providing ADA accessibility to restroom facilities, the Erie Trail will have another location where users can begin their Starke County adventure.

Significance: The County Connecting Trails embraces the idea of connecting our communities and leveraging each other's strengths. Similar to our logo with a connecting constellation of stars, the Connecting Trails will provide the ability for users to better access our resources. This project meets the primary objective for building a vibrant, engaged and growing community and has been rated as one of the highest priorities for the region.

Resources: This project will be funded through the annual CEDIT allocation for the County Highway Department and INDOT. The project generally utilizes existing right-of-way wherever possible to lower the cost for project development. The trail head is entirely on county owned right-of-way and will be maintained by funds from the Bass Lake Home Owners Association and Starke County.



3. Starke County Health and Wellness Plan

Description: Provide and continue to support prevention, treatment, wellness, recovery and educational efforts and, more specifically, develop strategies for preventing opioid and other drug overdoses. Existing overdose prevention and mental health centers will be supported including STOP – Starke Taskforce for Overdose Prevention and Porter-Starke Services, a community mental health center.

Impact: Recent statistics released in November of 2018 by the Indiana State Department of Health clearly indicate the crisis in Starke County and the need to prevent opioid overdose in our rural community. Of the 53 overdose cases in the county from 2011 to 2017, 45 of them were caused by single or multiple pharmaceutical opioids. The report further shows that Starke County has one of the highest rates of drug overdoses in the state at 38.2 per 100,000 persons. The rate at which opioids are dispensed to Starke County Residents is nearly 1.5 times the overall state of Indiana rate. This impactful statistical data is enough to rally a call to our community to fight back action against this crisis.

The COS needs to support a Health and Wellness Plan that has as many prevention, treatment, and recovery programs as possible to reverse this catastrophic trend to reach our goal of an engaged, vibrant, and growing community.

Significance: The Health and Wellness Plan goal is to further support already existing efforts of prevention and revitalization of our community when it comes to overcoming this opioid and overdose crisis. The Plan will go beyond, to support and partner with existing educational and support centers such as Joseph Dream Center, Imagination Library, and Chaucie's Place. It will also support mental health initiatives, healthy eating and nutrition seminars and programs by partnering with Purdue Extension programs and also supporting Cornerstone Café, a meeting place which allows citizens to collaborate, mentor, and grow.

The spaces and knowledge created by these efforts not only add to the revitalization of our region but the mind, body, and soul of our citizens. All these programs are helping overdose prevention because a healthier, happier, and more educated community will make better choices and provide more self-support. Having all these outlets available leads to more confidence, and one can then begin to create goals for their life and have optimistic attitudes towards themselves, others, and the community.

Resources: A recent grant from the Department of Health and Human Services is already beginning to work for our community to "...help prevent overdoses on opioids and other substances, expand available treatments and ultimately give individuals struggling with addiction a second chance at full and healthy lives." The Constellation of Starke, through our RDP, believes this existing leverage is an opportunity to expand our Health and Wellness Plan beyond our region and develop a model resource for other Indiana communities to follow and succeed against this national crisis.



4. Scale Model of our Solar System

Description: Typical depictions of our solar system are familiar, even commonplace. Most often it's depicted poster size to fit a classroom wall or perhaps as a small three-dimensional model with spheroid marbles on metallic rings. These models show the relative positions of the sun and major planets but rarely depict their relative scale to each other.

Our Proposed Scale Model of the Solar System will utilize the entire 9-mile section of the Erie Trail from North Judson easterly to U.S. Highway 35 just south of Bass Lake. The project combines science, art, cultural awareness, and of course, fitness. It's place making par excellence - the entire installation would be a noteworthy place or destination, but each monument/sign would also be something of a place or destination as well. "Meet me at Saturn," for example.

Because the sun is so large, only a portion of its relative diameter would be depicted as an arc over the trail, but the arc would be to relative scale. The sun and each planet would be depicted by a trailside steel sign, with each of the following elements.

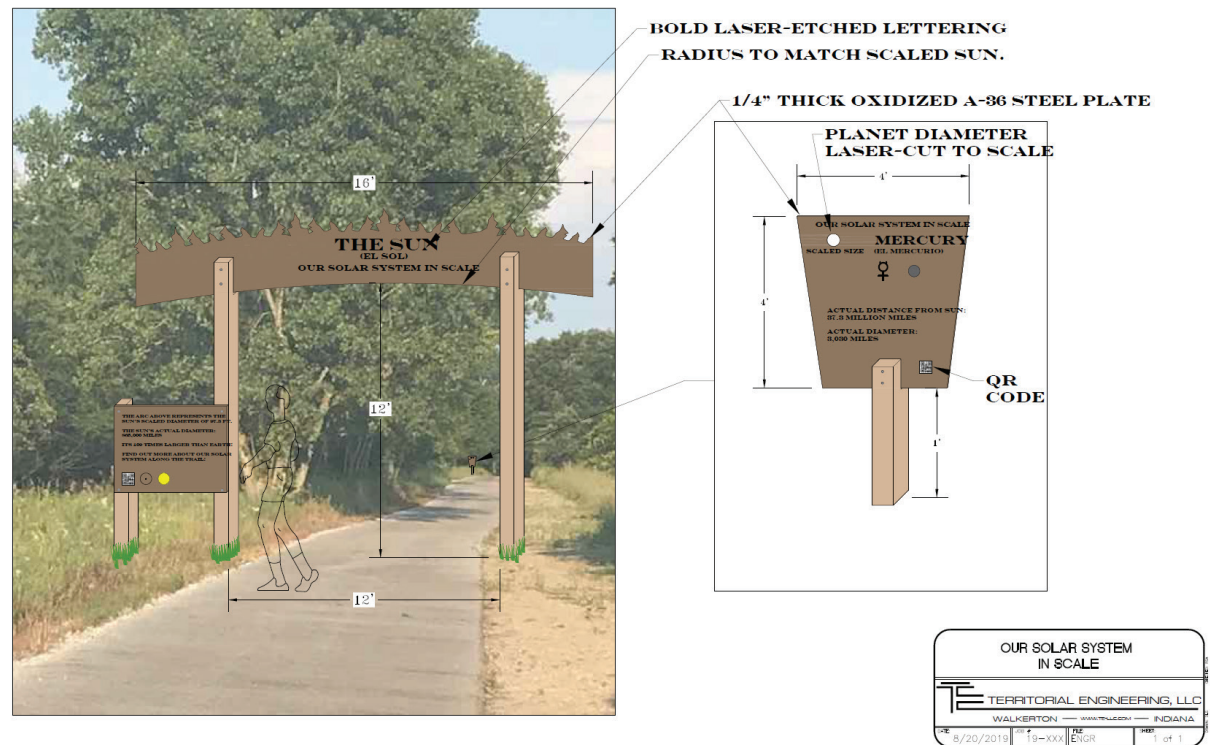
1. The name of the planet in English, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese, and the 16th Century based symbol. (Central Algonquin would be included for the Sun and the Earth.)
2. A depiction of the planet in scale – this will vary, of course, according to the relative size of the planets. If feasible, each will be illuminated by a solar powered LED of appropriate color (Red for Mars, for example), ideally one that correctly represents the appearance of the planet. In any event, the relative sizes of the planets to one another will be accurately depicted so one can sense the enormity of our solar system.
3. A QR code box allowing access to on-line information, including spoken word descriptions of the planet, eventually in multiple languages, will be included.

Impact: The location of the project, in a sparsely populated rural area with little nearby auto traffic and limited road crossings will accentuate its impact. It will be a highlight for long distance travelers. The most notable monument, The Sun, would be depicted at a featured site just east of the Hoosier Valley Railroad museum providing synergy between these two attractions, and placing Neptune along U.S. Highway 35 will have a visible impact drawing attention to the attraction.

Significance: By providing an attraction such as this scaled solar system, we continue to create our vibrant, engaged, and growing community and

beyond. The Solar System becomes a destination for not only visitors to the trail and community, but also easily accessible for school field trips and families looking to do something different and interesting in an outdoor environment.

Resources: By adding another element to an already successful cultural feature of the region, we gain interest from a whole additional demographic of people who are utilizing the trail for other social and educational purposes but are still reaping the cursory benefits of an outdoor wellness activity the trail already provides.



5. Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Project

Description: Through the IHCD's CDBG Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Grant program the COS Region of rural Starke County would fund up to \$25,000 per qualified home to establish safe and healthy residences by providing needed property improvements.

Impact: Many existing rural homes throughout the Region show visible signs of deterioration and need repair to make them safer and improve their overall integrity so that they can be maintained for a long period of time.

Significance: By engaging residents to improve the quality of their homes, they also make their overall community vibrant and will continue to remain and grow their families in this rural landscape they chose to call home.

Resources: By rejuvenating and improving the landscape of these existing rural residential areas, we retain the country character of our region, which invites not only those citizens to remain and grow in their existing homes, but it continues to draw others to live and invest in our rural community atmosphere.



6. Hamlet Town Park

Description: The Hamlet Town Park restroom and site improvements include accommodations for accessible walking routes and surfaces to meet ADA standards as well as ADA compliant restrooms. The project consists of parking upgrades to include handicap accessible spaces and a commemorative sidewalk connecting the parking to all areas of activity on the site. The design also includes the addition of a central accessible play area that provides a variety of play experiences and a new play surface, meeting current accessibility and fall protection/safety guidelines. The existing bicycle/skate park surface will be replaced to provide a longer life span. Landscape plantings will separate the skate park from the adjacent playground. The

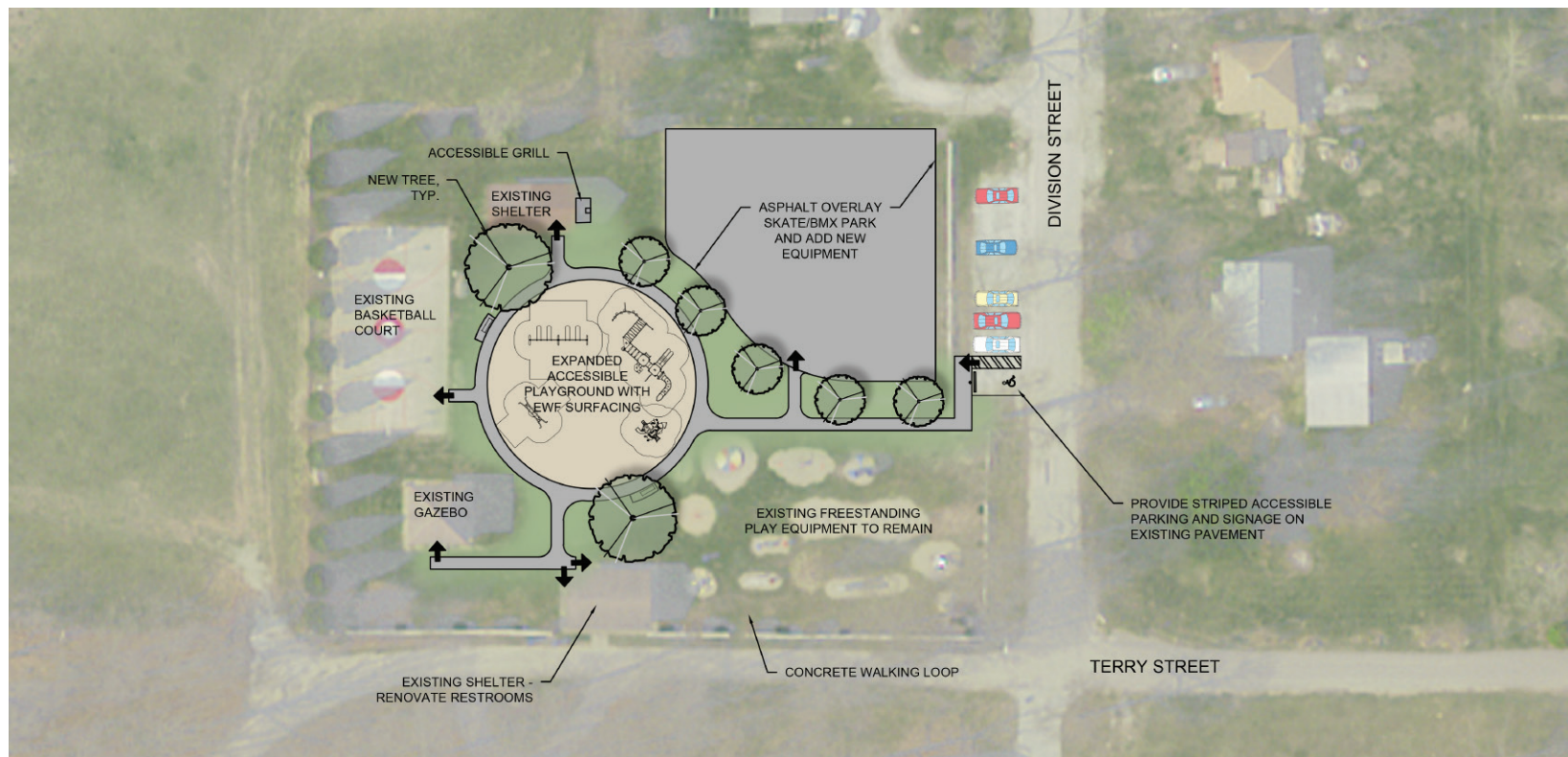
existing restrooms will be reconfigured, including relocation of walls and installation of ADA compliant fixtures.

Impact: The key objective for the Town of Hamlet in the Comprehensive Plan is to increase quality of life elements in the town by expanding placemaking efforts. The Town Park does not meet ADA standards, which restricts the use for those with disabilities. By upgrading the only playground park within the town, the project will directly impact residents and increase the vibrancy for the community thereby attracting new residents.

Significance: The number one parks and recreation goal in the Hamlet Comprehensive Plan is to expand recreational amenities. Each community within

the COS needs to have outstanding and accessible recreational amenities for the use of residents and visitors and to help stimulate investment. As the Town's only park with a playground, upgrading the facility to meet current ADA standards provides access for all residents and visitors. A significant feature of the park will be the walkway honoring Robert Tauteris, Jr., Specialist, Army National Guard, the only Hamlet resident killed in action.

Resources: The Hardesty Memorial Endowment is providing the project match through the Starke County Community Foundation. The American Legion Post #356 is funding the commemorative walkway. These park improvements are a continuation of previous efforts to keep the park's amenities in line with current usage.



7. Affordable Housing in North Judson

Description: North Judson is approaching this development opportunity differently to provide more multi-family units in their downtown area by creating a three-story apartment building with an urban living lifestyle with walking distance to downtown amenities. The development will include space on the first floor for a Developer Office and public media and community rooms.

The town has site control of three contiguous downtown properties they want to convert into this complex consisting of 14-20 units of 1-3 bedroom family apartments.

North Judson intends to apply in the 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit round in 2020. The North Judson community can keep costs lower while creating a significant impact in each area.

All of the apartment units and spaces will meet the minimum thresholds for construction and design laid out in the Qualified Allocation Plan by incorporating numerous amenities and features accenting convenience, safety, and accessibility.

Impact: Currently there are limited quality and affordable housing options for low to moderate income families within the Town of North Judson. The housing need is significant within the town limits and will continue to be needed with anticipated growth. By partnering with Justus Property Management and Werner Consulting, developers and financial consultants familiar with applying the 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit, together with land optioned by the Town, we are able to structure a project that satisfies North Judson's needs while keeping with the desired urban landscape theme.

Significance: Safer, accessible, convenient, and desirable residential choices will attract and hold more citizens who can both work here and choose to make their home here, which in turn makes the demographic profile of the region more attractive for renewed investment from developers and help attract business interest to existing vacant storefronts downtown.

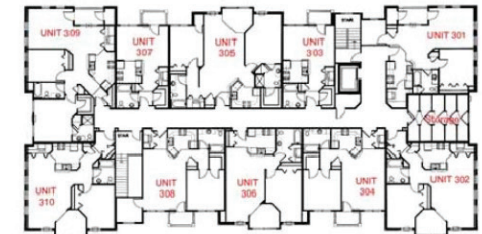
Resources: Using the existing low-cost land opportunities and available infrastructure will concentrate new development within the downtown area. By reducing the need to provide expensive utility infrastructure and repurposing and infilling the downtown spaces, North Judson will be revitalizing its downtown area as well as preserving utility infrastructure.



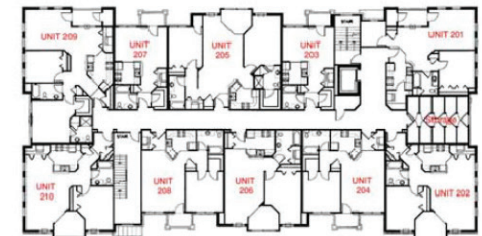
STREET VIEW



SITE PLAN



3RD FLOOR



2ND FLOOR

FIRST FLOOR CONTAINS (4) 3 BEDROOM UNITS WITH DEVELOPER OFFICE SPACE, MEDIA ROOM, AND COMMUNITY ROOM.

SITE INFORMATION

SITE SIZE = 166.0' x 165.0'
 UNITS = (4) 1 BEDROOM
 (8) 2 BEDROOM
 (4) 3 BEDROOM

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION
 FOR GENERAL REFERENCE USE ONLY

**NORTH JUDSON HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
 PROJECT 2**

**TERRITORIAL
 ENGINEERING**
Engineers — Surveyors
 7908 NORTH STATE HWY. 23 WALKERTON, INDIANA 46574
 PHONE: (574) 836-3443 EMAIL: TEENR@TE-LLC.COM WWW.TE-LLC.COM

8. & 9. Affordable Housing Project in Knox and Hamlet

Description: The City of Knox plans to develop a unique mix of 20 housing units consisting of both duplexes and single-family homes. The 13-acre site selected by the town leaves an option to add another 10 units of new construction as part of a future Phase II development. The land has easy access to utilities and land area for proper infrastructure and road access.

Similar to Knox, the Town of Hamlet is proposing to construct their housing development in phases as well. Consisting of both single-family homes and duplexes targeting families in the area, Hamlet's first phase will provide 10 units of housing and add another 20 as part of future development. The 18 acres has easy access to utilities and land area for proper infrastructure and road access.

These communities will team up to apply in the 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit round in 2020. By working together, these smaller communities can keep costs lower while creating a significant impact in each area.

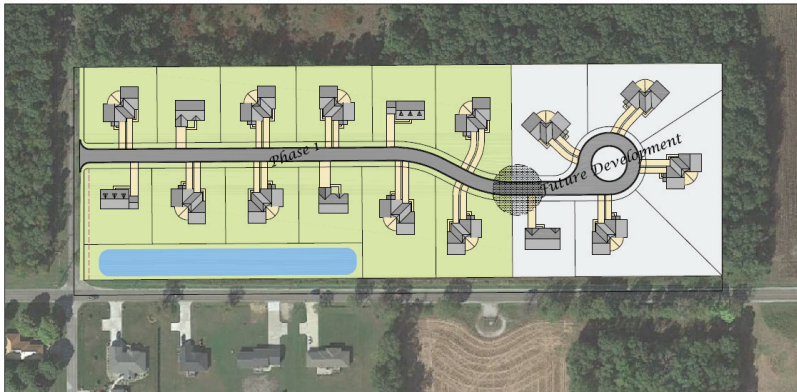
All of the development units will meet the minimum thresholds for construction and design laid out in the Qualified Allocation Plan by incorporating numerous amenities and features accenting convenience, safety, and accessibility.

Impact: Currently there are limited, quality, and affordable, housing options for low to moderate income families within the City of Knox and Town of Hamlet jurisdictions. Our housing need is significant in these communities and will continue to be needed with anticipated growth. By partnering with Justus Property Management and Werner Consulting, developers and financial consultants

familiar with applying the 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit, along with cooperation from local landowners and the municipalities, we are able to structure a project that satisfies our area's needs while keeping with our rural landscape theme.

Significance: Safer, accessible, convenient, and attractive residential choices will attract and hold more citizens who can both work here and choose to make their home here, which in turn makes the demographic profile of the region more attractive for renewed investment from developers.

Resources: Utilizing existing low-cost land opportunities and available infrastructure concentrates new development within the municipalities. By reducing the need to provide expensive utility infrastructure and subdividing the rural regional landscape, the COS region will be preserving both natural and financial resources.



MULTI - FAMILY DWELLING
(DUPLEX UNIT)



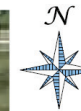
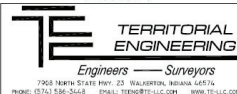
SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION
FOR GENERAL REFERENCE USE ONLY

SITE INFORMATION

SITE SIZE = 13 ACRES ±
NET RESIDUAL
MULTI FAMILY (DUPLEX) (SF/AC) = 12
SINGLE FAMILY (SF/AC) = 1
MINIMUM LOT SIZE = 0.5 ACRES ±
MINIMUM LOT SIZE = 1.0 ACRES ±

KNOX HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT I

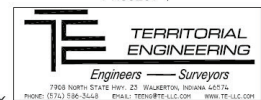


MULTI - FAMILY DWELLING
(DUPLEX UNIT)



SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING

HAMLET HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT I



NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION
FOR GENERAL REFERENCE USE ONLY

10. Knox Downtown Revitalization

Description: Through the IHCD's CDBG Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Grant program the COS Region of rural Starke County would fund up to \$25,000 per qualified home to establish safe and healthy residences by providing needed property improvements.

Impact: The City of Knox has already taken steps to beautify the downtown area by completing certain projects identified within the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. So far the improvements have mainly been concentrated to a centrally located intersection at Lake and Main Streets which is near Serenity Gardens, a small gathering space adjacent to the Nancy J. Dembowski Community Center.

The addition of a City of Knox logo street print and designed crosswalks as well as a mural of a child playing in the Wythogan Park Splash Pad has made a noticeable difference and received positive feedback from visitors and residents alike.

Significance: This project would allow other sections of the City to benefit from the efforts that have already proven effective. Not only would this project be advantageous to locally owned businesses that already speckle the downtown area, like Poppin' Off Popcorn, Vorpall Gaming, and the Studio, but it would serve as a motivator for new businesses to establish a base in the Constellation of Starke region.

Resources: Existing resources such as the roadways paved through the City's Annual Road Improvement Program and the Community Crossings Matching Grant, lighting upgrades on Lake Street, and the improvements surrounding Serenity Garden will be leveraged through the continued revitalization of Main Street and the Downtown area within the City of Knox. Cohesively linking the two roads together where the City's parks are located will also help leverage past park projects as well as ones planned for the future.



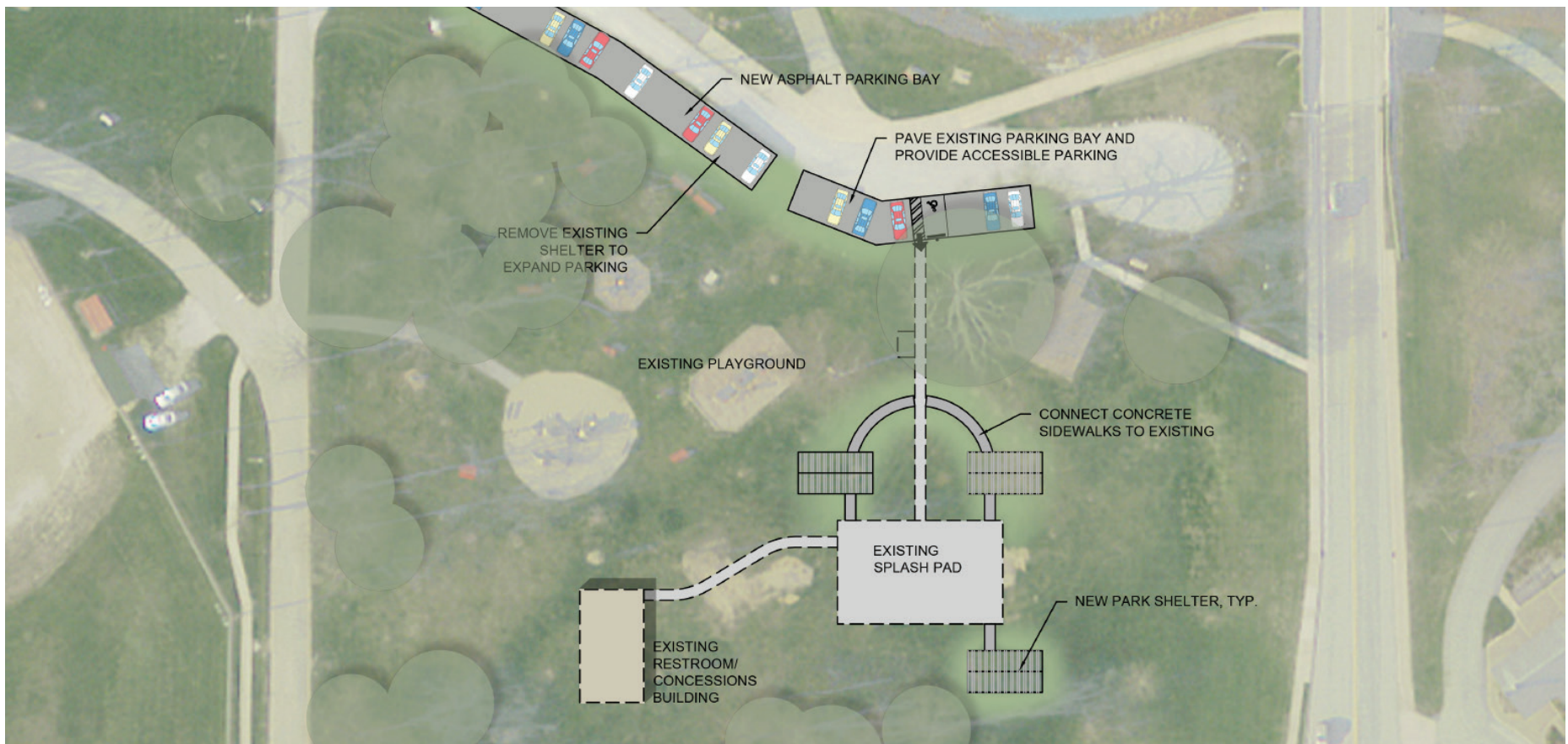
11. Knox Wythogan Park Improvements

Description: Improvements to Wythogan Park will include earthwork, sidewalk connections, and installation of up to three new pavilions. Also included is a new ADA compliant restroom with storage attached to the maintenance building. Each pavilion will be constructed above the floodplain and will include lighting and a power receptacle. Parking will be expanded along the existing drive near the old pavilion and pavilion 1 will be removed. The existing gravel parking area will also be paved to provide ADA accessible parking. A dog park with security/access control, a shaded canopy, and site furnishings will also be included.

Impact: Several elements within Wythogan park are not ADA compliant, including restrooms, parking, and connecting pathways, which restricts the use for those with disabilities. Current pavilions are generally rented well in advance on a regular basis and generate more than \$3,500 annually, illustrating the need for additional opportunities. The need for a dog park was initiated through public input and quickly became a high priority. By upgrading the City's premier park, the project will directly impact residents and increase the vibrancy for the community thereby attracting new residents and growing the region.

Significance: It is imperative that each community within the COS have outstanding and accessible recreational amenities to attract investment. As the City's premier park with a new amphitheater and splash pad, upgrading the facility to meet current ADA standards will provide access for all residents and visitors and illustrate that the region is growing.

Resources: The City of Knox has steadily been investing in Wythogan park with gateway improvements, a splash pad, a performance stage, and park concession improvements. Many of these projects utilized in-kind services and donations from local residents and businesses.



12. Knox 8 S. Main Street

Description: 8 S. Main Street façade will be rehabilitated to reflect its historic nature. The project will include demolition of the building, excepting the stone front. The empty lot will then be transformed into a courtyard to allow community events and a shared “third” space. The demolition and courtyard renovations will be completed with other funding sources

Impact: The 8 S. Main building is a dilapidated structure in need of demolition. However, the City of Knox does not want to lose the historic face on Main Street. If the building front is not restored, there will be an empty key space along Main Street and could cause issues with the attached structures on either side. Restoration of the frontage structure is a key component to downtown revitalization of Knox. Providing a court yard that will allow for connections within the community to perhaps play a game of chess, Bocce ball or have a cup of coffee will directly impact residents and visitors to the region.

Significance: It is imperative that each community within the COS have accessible amenities and that the buildings of our City and Towns reflect care and investment. If this building is completely demolished, not only will we lose a historic opportunity, but Main Street will lose continuity and the vibrancy we are attempting to create through our revitalization program.

Resources: The interior of the building will be demolished through other funding sources as well as the construction of the courtyard. By utilizing the historic funding program for the building front, the City will capitalize on the investment for the remainder of the project.



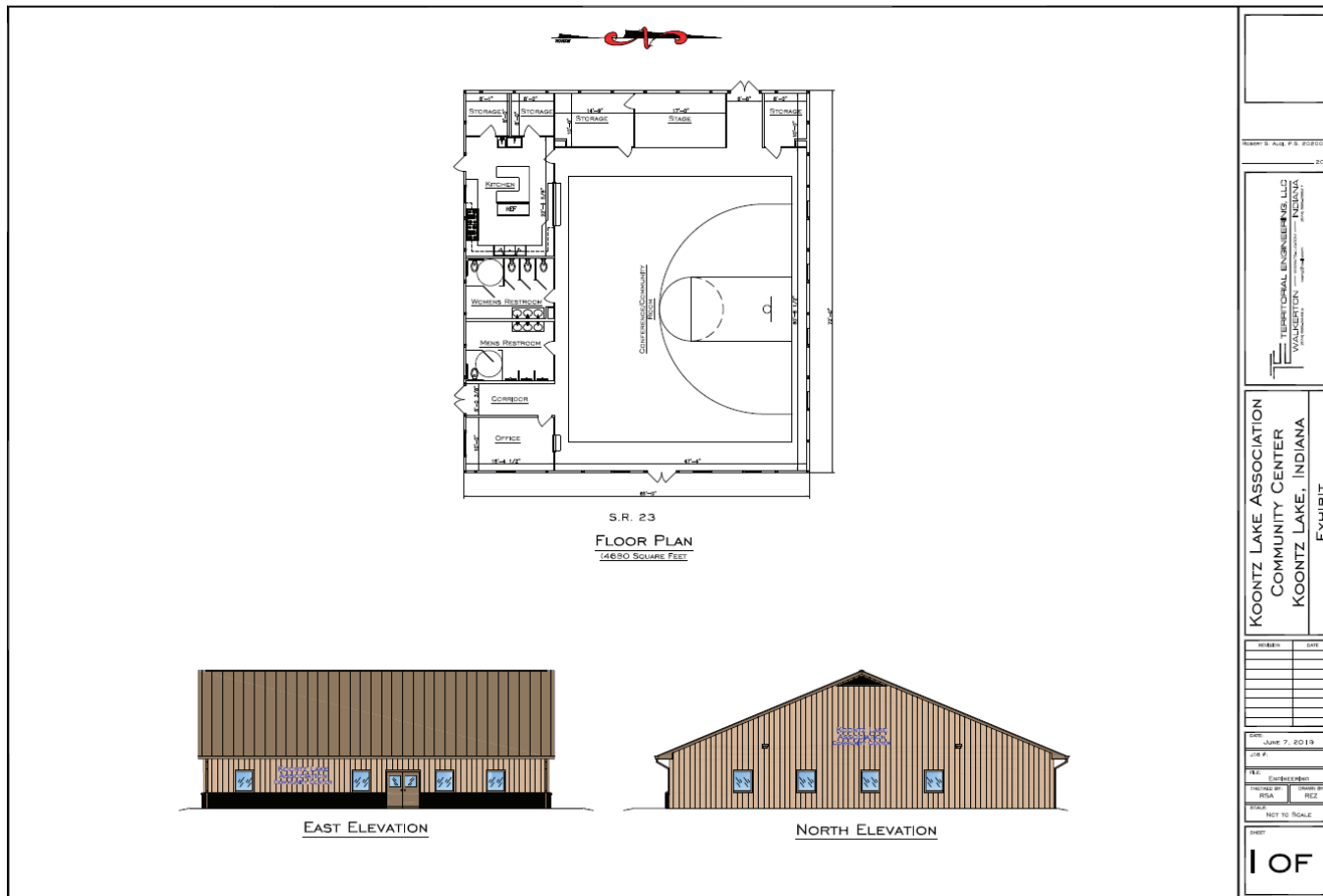
13. Koontz Lake Community Center

Description: The proposed Koontz Lake Community Center is a 4680 Sq. Ft. ADA Accessible facility accommodating a large kitchen, bathrooms, storage rooms, a stage, office space and a large conference/community room/half-basketball court. Expanded parking spaces are also included.

Impact: The community has long been in need of a more ADA accessible, energy efficient facility which has an increase in quality of space in order to accommodate and grow with the increasing social activities and needs of the community.

Significance: By accommodating the increase in social activities and needs of the Koontz Lake community, including but not limited to space for community events, concerts, dedicated meeting space, and an adequate kitchen for large gatherings and food fundraisers, the project will contribute to the overall vision of creating an engaged, vibrant and growing community by establishing a facility that is utilized not only by The Koontz Lake area but the entire region of the Constellation of Starke.

Resources: Establishing a resource such as a Community Building extends beyond the immediate Koontz Lake region. Even though the Koontz Lake Association members will continue to maintain and support the facility, additional entities within the entire Constellation of Starke region will utilize and support the amenities of this facility as well and contribute resources to that end.



14. Oregon Township Fire Station

Description: Fire Department 2-Bay Apparatus Building consisting of a 1-story, 1,700 sq-ft wood truss pole barn on existing adjacent property owned by Oregon Township.


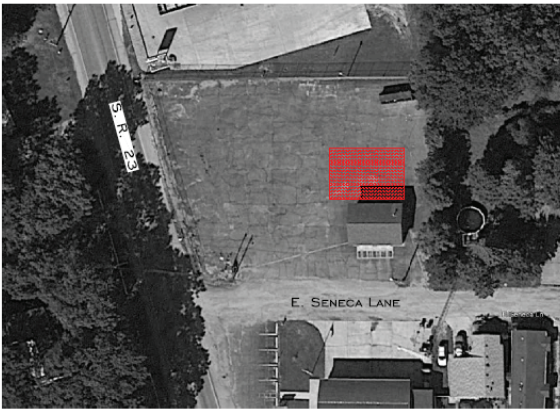
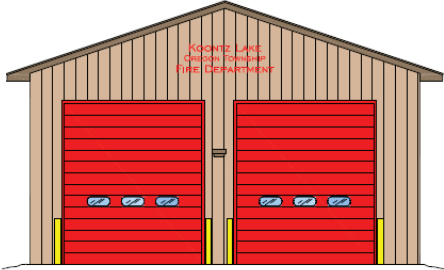
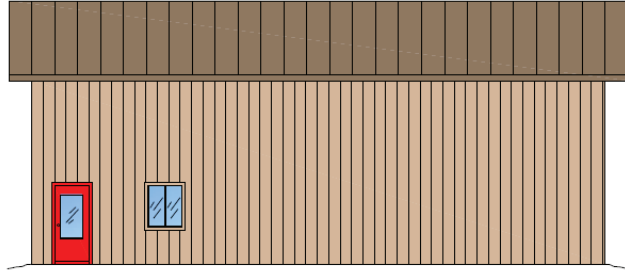
Impact: The new facility will allow the firemen the flexibility to purchase either new or used fire-fighting and emergency response vehicles without custom ordering new equipment due to the current apparatus building having undersized equipment bays.

Significance: By having the needed equipment for the department at their disposal, safety, efficiency, and response times are improved, since the Fire department does not have to always rely on other local fire departments for borrowed equipment. As the Constellation of Starke Region grows and improves, it is necessary and significant that the emergency response services grow and become more efficient as well.

Resources: By having a larger two-bay structure that is sized for much larger equipment, the options for selecting new and used equipment become more affordable and attainable by the Fire Department, which in turn frees up resources for more equipment and/or more training.

The architectural drawings include:

- Floor Plan:** A large rectangular apparatus room measuring 34' x 50' (1,700 S.F.) with two bays at the bottom labeled 'STATIONS (TYP)'. The overall dimensions are 50'-0" by 34'-0".
- Aerial Site Location:** An aerial photograph showing the proposed site at the intersection of Seneca Lane and E. Seneca Lane, with a red rectangle indicating the building footprint.
- Exterior Elevations:** Two views of the building's exterior. The left view shows two large red double doors with the text 'KOONTZ LAKE Custom Construction FIRE DEPARTMENT'. The right view shows a side elevation with a red door and a window.
- Logo:** The Koontz Lake Fire Department logo, featuring a Maltese cross with 'KOONTZ LAKE OREGON TWP.' at the top, 'FIRE' on the left, 'RESCUE' on the right, and 'VFD' at the bottom.

	
	
	
	
<p>PROPOSED KOONTZ LAKE FIRE STATION KOONTZ LAKE, INDIANA</p> <p style="text-align: right;">EXHIBIT</p>	
<p>DATE: JULY 31, 2019</p> <p>JOB #</p> <p>BY: Construction</p> <p>DESIGNED BY: RMA CHECKED BY: REZ</p> <p>SCALE: NOT TO SCALE</p>	<p>SHEET</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">1 OF 1</p>

15. North Judson Downtown Revitalization

Description: The North Judson Downtown Revitalization Project will include beautification efforts as well as a Façade Grant Program. It will, first, succeed in beautifying our downtown public spaces and infrastructure in a way that thematically matches ongoing improvements to our nearby Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum. With the museum now in the midst of a Master Plan, the Town will be working to emphasize our rich railroad history in developing signage, crosswalks and “stations” that give a nod to this heritage. These stations will include elaborate benches that feature an awning overhead resembling the train platforms that once were prominent areas in Town signaling our connectedness to the rest of America.

Along with these improvements, greening up our downtown will be another important part of our beautification planning. From planters at intersections and hanging floral arrangements on light poles to the planting of trees on currently bare sidewalks, adding color and vibrancy throughout our Lane Street and Main Street areas will be an important aspect of creating an atmosphere in which people want to gather.

As an additional element to help facilitate the occupancy and revitalization of our downtown, this project will include a Downtown Façade Program. While there are currently several vacant storefronts in the downtown area, a major aspect of this project will be to rehabilitate and bring some life to the facades of businesses along Lane & Main Streets, some of which are still operating as a 2nd or 3rd generation enterprise. An application process will be implemented to ensure that all design, thematic and aesthetic requirements are met.

Impact: While the Town of North Judson has taken steps recently towards beautification and revitalization, the downtown area remains a blank canvas on which we’re planning to write the Town’s future. Some improvements have been undertaken by the Town and some property owners, including the addition of colorful banners along Lane Street from spring to fall, the purchase of lighted decorations designed for the entire winter season, and implementing ADA ramps and sidewalks, but we’ve seen recently how impactful it can be when these owners work to improve their space.

For every property owner downtown who’s made an effort to update their space, there are a dozen who may not have the resources or the mindset to follow suit. Building up and beautifying the Town’s public spaces and helping to facilitate the revitalization of our store fronts and buildings downtown will result in a kind of domino effect wherein otherwise apathetic storefront and building owners will be motivated to improve their space to the heightened standards surrounding them. This project will serve as the direct catalyst towards meeting the needs and raising the standards and attractiveness of our downtown.

Significance: With recent and potential developments around the downtown area, this project’s importance towards the overall growth and vibrancy of the COS region could not be overstated. Having two nation-spanning trails, parks, a splash pad and eateries all within a block of our downtown, this project directly leverages the infrastructure improvements and quality of life initiatives which we’ve been undertaking over the last few years. Not only would this project be advantageous to locally owned businesses that already speckle the downtown area but it would serve as a distinct motivator for new businesses to establish a base in the Constellation of Starke region.

Resources: Existing resources such as the roadways paved through budgeted funds and the Community Crossings Matching Grant, lighting upgrades on Lane Street, and the improvements surrounding our nearby parks will be leveraged through the continued revitalization of the downtown area within the Town of North Judson. With such an array of public and private assets conveniently located around our downtown and in the COS region overall, this projects impact and ability to enhance these assets could not be overstated.



Photo by: Martin Lucas

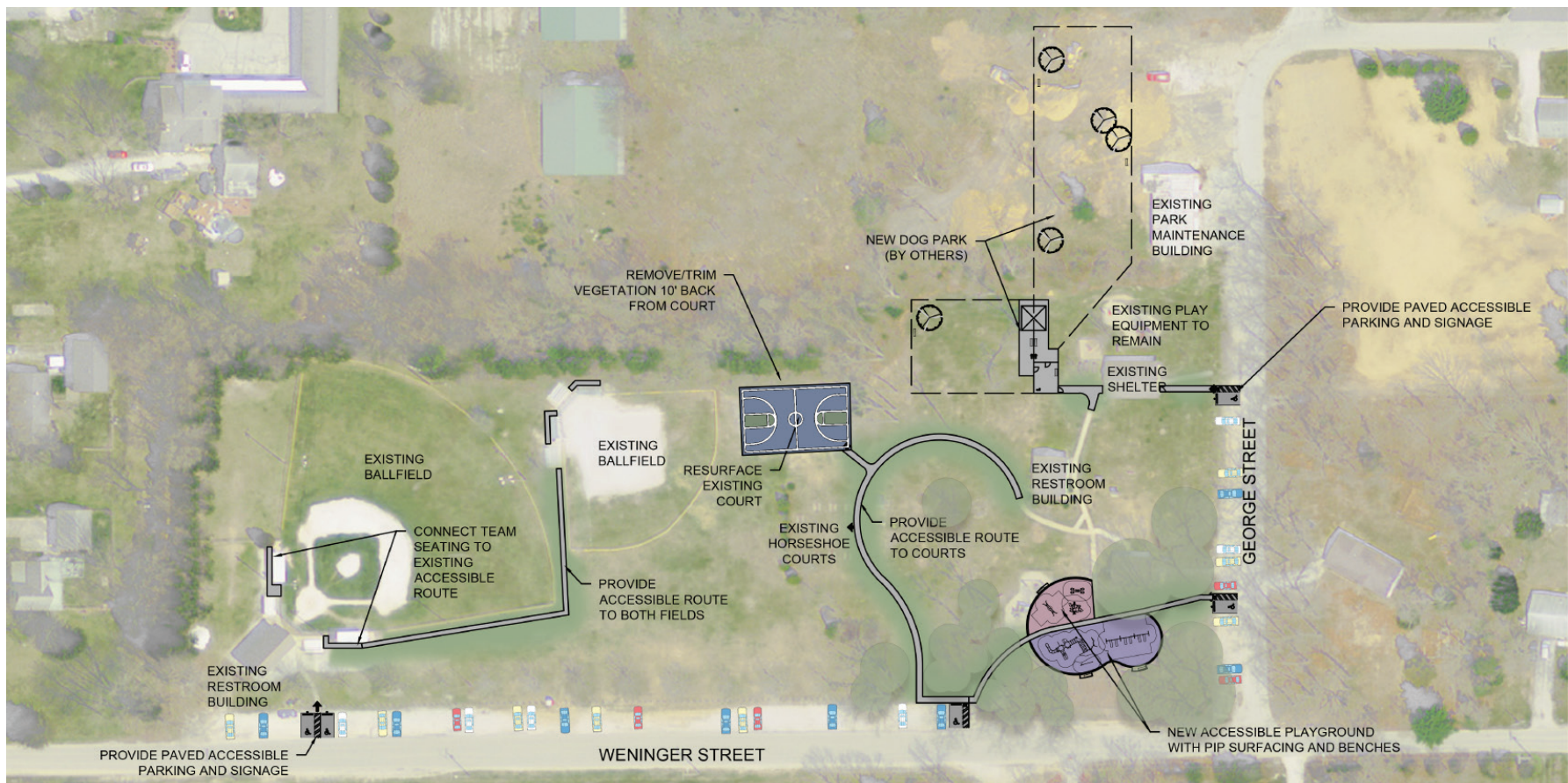
16. North Judson Town Park Improvements

Description: North Judson Town Park improvements include an accessible route to connect parking with all areas of activity including the ball fields, basketball, shelters, dog park, and playground. The existing basketball court will be repaired and overlain. Existing playground equipment will be replaced with components that incorporate physical benefits for movement, balance, and body position; serves a range of age groups to encourage activity choices and integrated user groups; and allows for different types of social interactions. An ADA compliant play surface meeting fall protection/safety guidelines will be built. An accessible connection from player seating areas and bleachers at the ball fields will be constructed.

Impact: Key quality of life priorities identified in North Judson's Comprehensive Plan included improvement and expansion of local park and recreation amenities. North Judson Town Park does not currently have accessibility to parking or amenities. Upgrading North Judson Town Park will provide opportunities for all levels of abilities and ages.

Significance: Outstanding and accessible recreational amenities are needed in each COS community to improve quality of life and to attract investment. Providing ADA compliant access, as well as equipment and surface upgrades, demonstrate that North Judson and the region are ready for new investment and community growth.

Resources: North Judson has a consistent track record of investment and maintenance of their parks. This project will use federal funding to revitalize the park and help the town control maintenance costs while providing better access and opportunities.



17. North Judson Norwayne Field Improvements

Description: This project includes new restrooms to serve the park's other amenities, including the nearby splash pad that is currently under construction and the historic amphitheater. Site improvements will provide accessible parking, curb ramps, and an accessible route to serve the restroom and splash pad. The restrooms will include men's and women's restrooms with at least two toilet spaces as well as a fully ADA-compliant family restroom that can function as a changing room. A mechanical space to serve the restroom and splash pad controls with an extended roof to provide a covered picnic area is also planned.

Impact: Norwayne Field is undergoing major reimagining with the recent installation of a permanent roof over the band stage and a new splash pad. There are currently no restrooms available and temporary accommodations are made for events. The park has limited accessibility, and these improvements will directly impact residents and increase the vibrancy for the community. These upgraded amenities will produce a space more conducive to public events and able to accommodate larger crowds.

Significance: This historic, scenic, and well-preserved amenity greets every person traveling through North Judson. What is needed at Norwayne Field is more usage by the public for more frequent and larger events. By continuing to enhance this existing amenity, the already-

beautiful public space can be appreciated and fully utilized as a prime downtown destination and entertainment venue. Upgrades will also bring attention to the veteran monument gazebo featuring Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Frank Ono.

Resources: North Judson has invested significant time and town funds into Norwayne Field maintenance and improvements for more than eighty years. This project will expand and complement those investments by providing necessary amenities for this local icon to reach its full potential of significantly increased usage and providing permanent restroom facilities and accessibility.



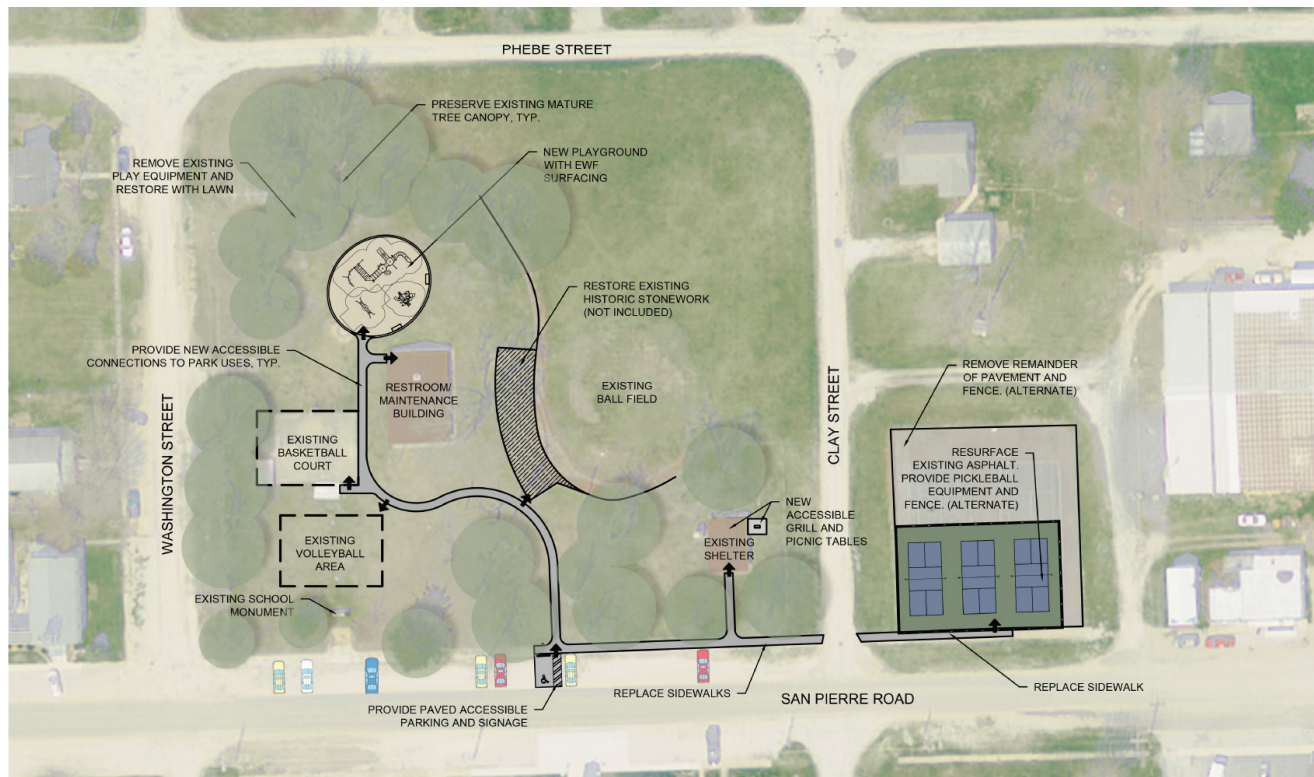
18. San Pierre School Park

Description: The project includes new playground equipment, sidewalk connections to park amenities, repair to steps near the flag, accessible parking and pickleball court. Accessible routes will connect all areas of activity on the site, including the park shelter, ballfield, basketball court, volleyball court, restroom building, and playground area. Existing play equipment will be removed and new elements that provide compliant transfer opportunities will be installed. Play surfaces will meet current accessibility and fall protection/safety guidelines. The existing tennis court will be partially removed and resurfaced for pickleball. The existing fence will be removed and replaced, including a new gate of sufficient width to meet ADA requirements. Benches and other site furnishings will be replaced with ADA compliant elements and accessible routes and clearances will be included.

Impact: San Pierre School park is in a dilapidated condition and is in need of major upgrades. Due to the park's deterioration, residents are not utilizing and maintaining this amenity available for the rural southwest Starke County. San Pierre is an unincorporated census designated area with a population of less than 600. The School Park is one of the few dedicated recreational amenities in southwest Starke County and serves much more than San Pierre. Since the announcement of COS as a Stellar finalist, residents have formed a group to repair and update the park as much as possible. The County recognizes that this park needs a significant infusion to bring it into the outstanding recreational amenity it once was. Providing an accessible opportunity for residents in this low-income area will invigorate the community and propagate pride encouraging other investments and showing that San Pierre is a vibrant community.

Significance: It is imperative that each community within the COS have outstanding and accessible recreational amenities to attract investment. Providing ADA compliant access as well as new equipment and modern recreational opportunities such as pickleball and disk golf illustrates that Starke County and the region are investing and are ready for new businesses and residents to grow.

Resources: The San Pierre project will rely on the complete Stellar investment for the entire region to build a foundation for the community. With the investment into School Park, the County intends to work with area residents and business to continue improvements at both School Park and Tierney Park.



27. SCILL Center Expansion

Description: The Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning (SCILL) project is to locate and renovate an existing space large enough to accommodate the growth of its programs since its inception in 1996.

At the present time, SCILL sponsors three separate programs for students in the North Central Area Vocational Cooperative (which includes 10 school corporations in 4 counties and two time zones). These programs include Automotive Technology, Welding Technology, and Automation, Robotics and Equipment Maintenance (AREM). The programs in welding and AREM also have an adult component to them. Through the years, each of these programs has continued to grow and with two of them using space in the Knox Middle School that is slated for remodeling, it has become imperative that a new, larger location for these programs be found within the next two years.

Impact: Welding in particular is in a space that is very small and does not allow any fabricating of any kind which unduly restricts the program and the training that can be provided. The adult component has trained over 150 people coming from 13 different counties in Northern Indiana, the vast majority of whom come through a WorkOne office and after the training they receive, approximately 80% of the graduates of the program can be placed in a welding job either in the County or adjacent to the county. Both the vocational and the adult side are severely limited in growth as both are at the very top of what can be handled safely.

The AREM program is training students on how to maintain the automation equipment that more companies are resorting to in order to overcome the lack of people to fill their open jobs. The program includes learning about electricity, pneumatics, hydraulics, and mechanics and will greatly improve the ability of local and area companies to find qualified applicants for this kind of work. SCILL is also able to train existing workers so that companies can promote from within and then hire new entry-level employees. Again, space has become an issue as has trying to run this program on the hours of a middle school. Having their own building would allow additional training equipment and classes to be offered which almost guarantees a job to a successful graduate of the program.

Significance: Starke County decided in 1996 that if it was going to be successful in attracting and retaining manufacturing employers that a trained workforce needed to be created. Since its inception, through the efforts of the Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning (SCILL), many citizens in the County have received some form of workforce training.

Thus, the need for an expansion of SCILL is to continue to create a trained workforce that is so vital to the economic prosperity of the COS region and the significance lies in being able to create and teach programs that can lead our citizens to enter the workforce more easily than they otherwise could on their own.

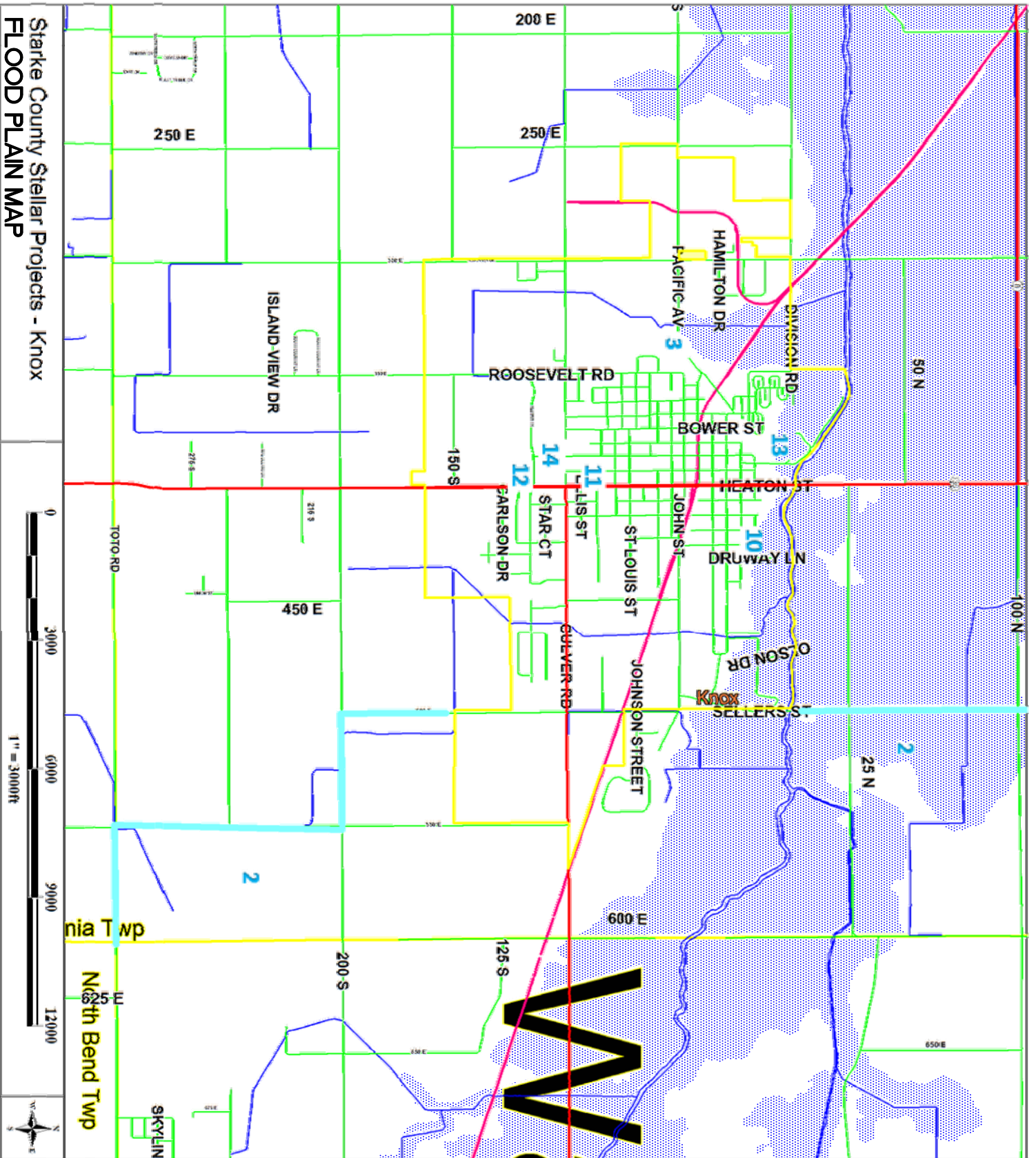
The continued growth and support of this already successful regional endeavor is the very essence of our revitalization efforts of an engaged, vibrant and growing community.

Resources: An example of how this expansion project will leverage additional resources and continue to grow as a practical resource for this community and beyond lies in the SCILL Center's most recent pilot program.

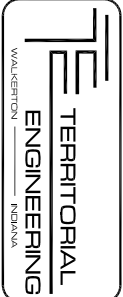
The demand for welders nationally continues to be strong, and with a larger and more modern facility, those programs could expand more quickly. A pilot SCILL program launched in April of this year trained 5 jail inmates, three of whom received a job upon release from jail with another waiting for an opening in a welding position before his release. This program had to be held in a local manufacturing facility because it would have been impossible to bring jail inmates into a middle school environment. Having a designated space for this program would allow SCILL to expand and continue to develop this successful program.



Project Name	Financing		Site Control			Environmental Review			Schematic Design			Architectural/ Preliminary Engineering Documents		
	Identified	Unknown	Complete	Ongoing	Not Started	Complete	In Process	Not Started	Complete	In Process	Not Started	Complete	In Process	Not Started
1 Bass Lake Beach	Identified		C				N		C					N
2 Connecting Trails	Identified			O				N	C					N
3 Health and Wellness	Identified				N/A			N/A			N/A			N/A
4 Scale Model of our Solar System	Identified		C				N/A		I				I	
5 County Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation	Identified				N/A			N			N/A			N/A
6 Hamlet Town Park Improvements	Identified		C					N	C					N
7 N. Judson Housing/Retail	Identified		C					I	C				I	
8 Hamlet Housing	Identified			O				N	C				I	
9 Knox Housing	Identified			O				N	C				I	
10 Knox Downton Revitalization	Identified			O				N			I		I	
11 Knox Wythogan Park Improvements	Identified		C					N	C					N
12 Knox 8 S. Main Façade		U		O				N			N			N
13 Koontz Lake Community Center	Identified			O				N	C				I	
14 Oregon Township Fire Station	Identified		C					N	C				I	
15 N. Judson Downtown Revitalization	Identified		C					N	C					N
16 N. Judson Town Park Improvements	Identified		C					N	C					N
17 N. Judson Norwayne Field Improvements	Identified		C					N	C					N
18 San Pierre School Park	Identified		C					N	C					N



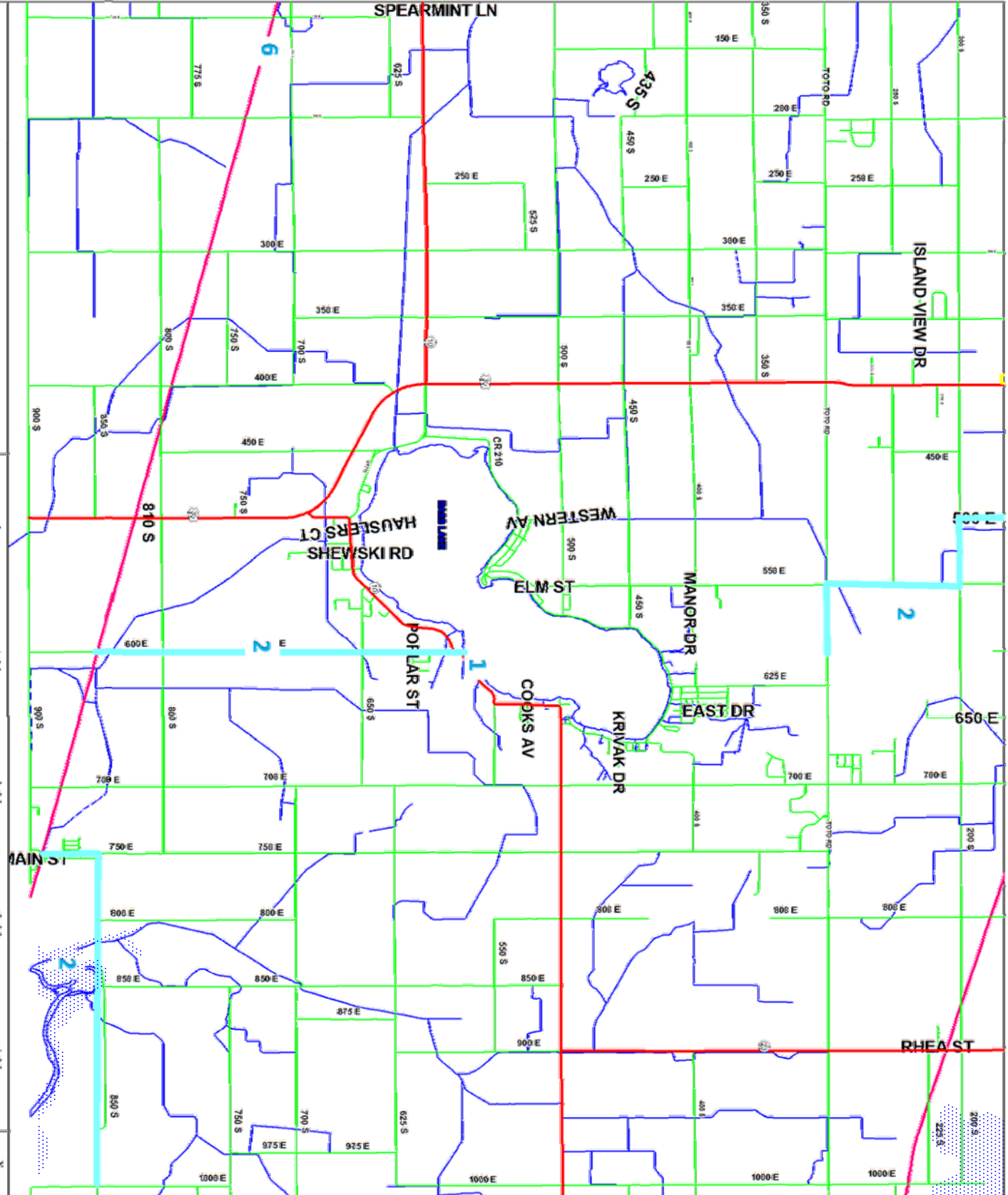
Stärke County Stellar Projects - Knox
FLOOD PLAIN MAP



- FLOOD PLAIN
- Regional Counties
- County Boundary
- Townships
- Water
- Roads
- Corporate Boundaries
- Connecting Trails
- Transportation System
- Knox Housing
- Knox Streetscape
- Knox Downtown Facade
- Wynthogan Park Improvements
- S. Main
- Regional Roads
- Townships
- Water
- Railroads
- Roads
- Highways
- Corporate Boundaries
- Connecting Trails

NOTE:
 FLOOD PLAIN BOUNDARY
 SCALED FROM 2014 FEMA
 FLOOD MAPS, FOR
 GENERAL REFERENCE
 PURPOSES ONLY.

Starkie County Stellar Projects- Bass Lake
FLOOD PLAN MAP



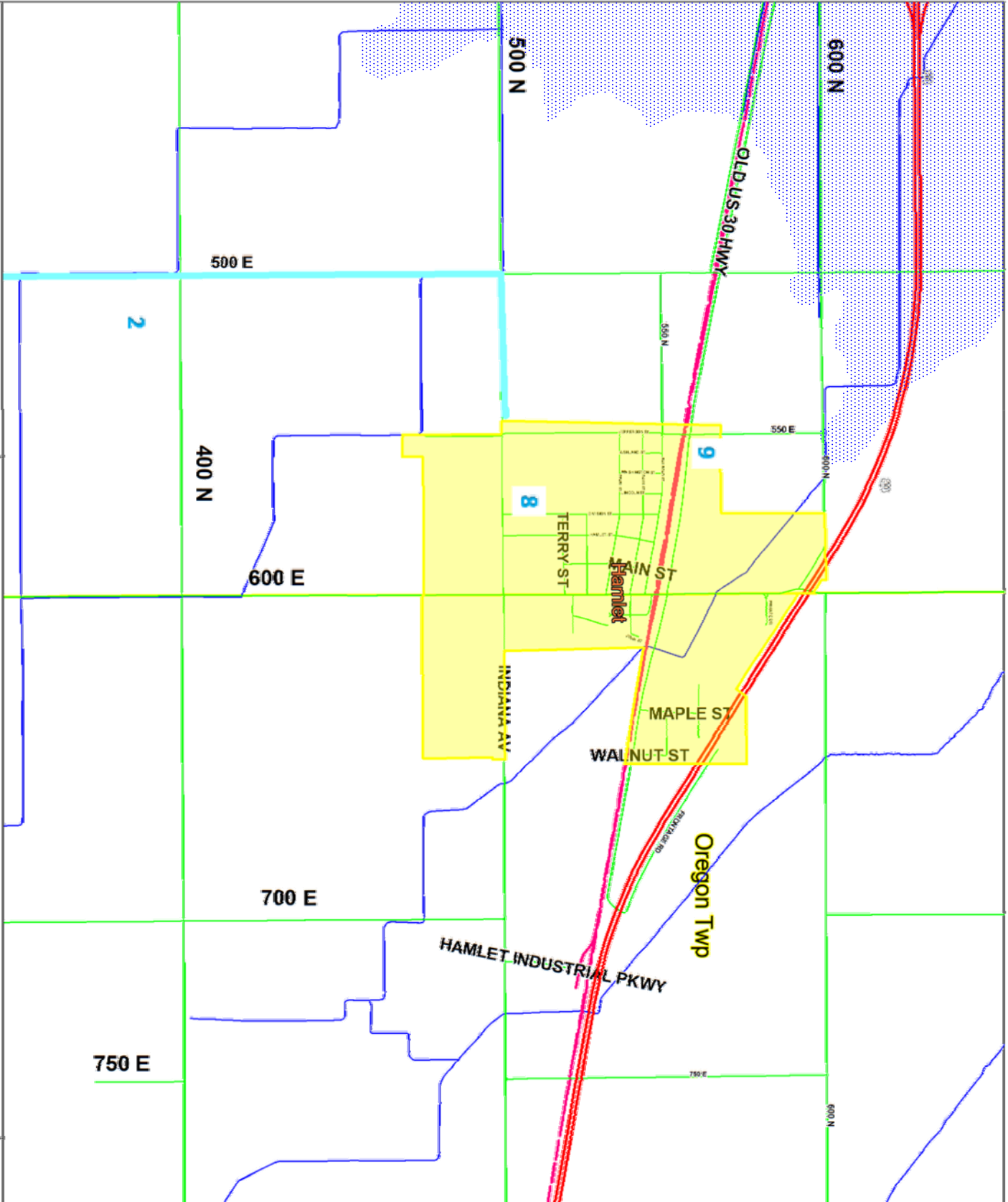
- Water
- Roads
- Corporate Boundaries
- Beach House & Waterpark Fac
- Connecting Trails
- Solar System Sculpture

- 1 Beach House & Waterpark Fac
- 2 Connecting Trails
- 6 Solar System Sculpture
- Water
- Railroads
- Roads
- Highways
- Corporate Boundaries
- Connecting Trails

NOTE:
 FLOOD PLAN BOUNDARY
 SCALED FROM 2014 FEMA
 FLOOD MAPS, FOR GENERAL
 REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY.



Stark County Stellar Projects - Hamlet
FLOOD PLAIN MAP



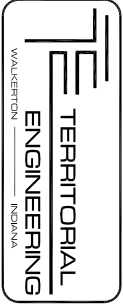
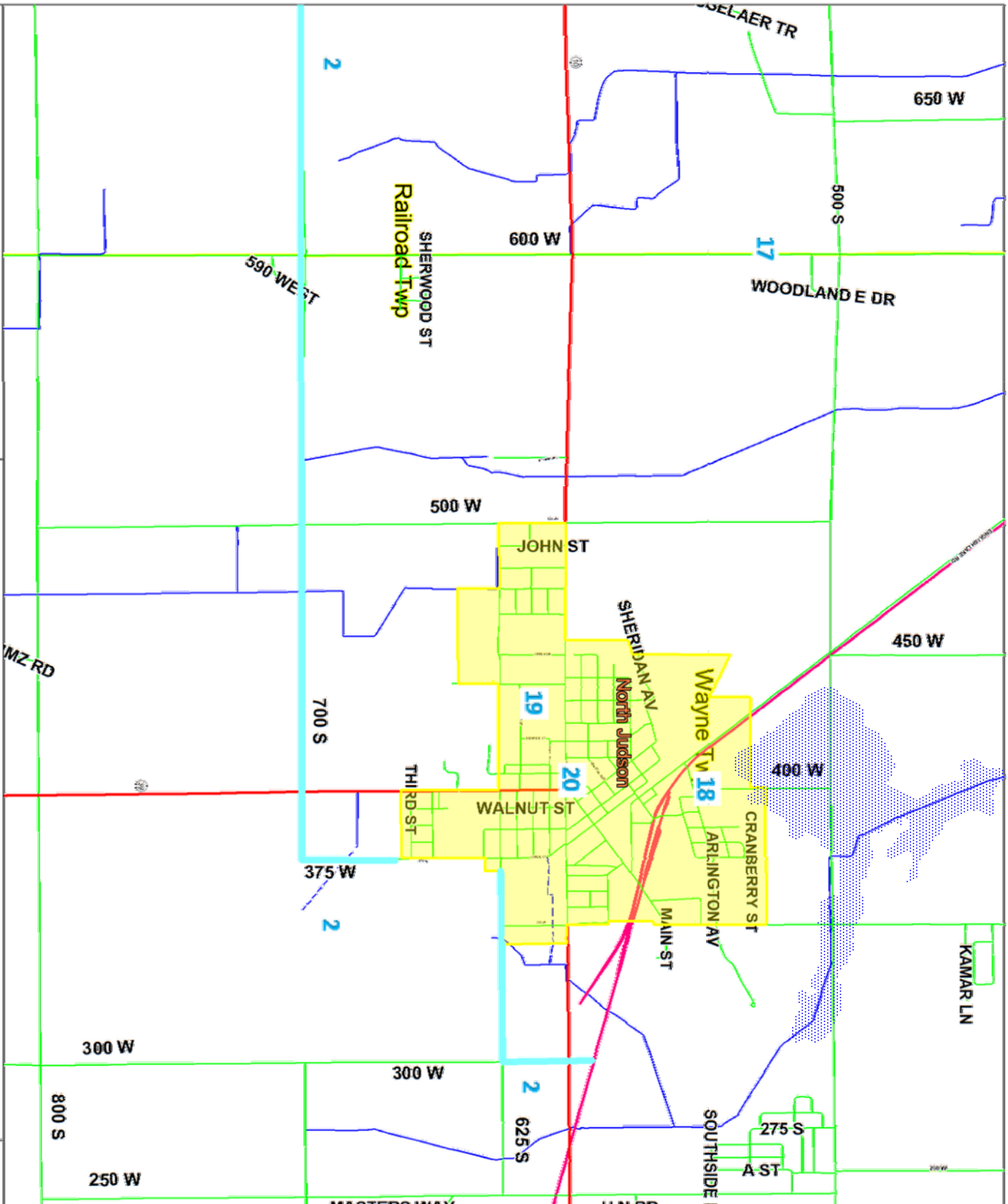
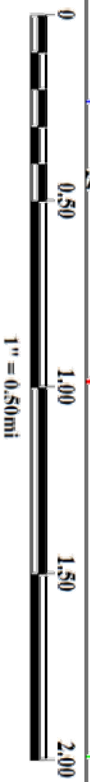
- Regional Counties
- County Boundary
- Townships
- Water
- Corporate Boundaries
- Connecting Trails
- Hamlet Town Park Improvements
- Hamlet Housing
- Regional Roads
- Townships
- Water
- Railroads
- Roads
- Highways
- Corporate Boundaries
- Connecting Trails
- FLOOD PLAIN

NOTE:
 FLOOD PLAIN BOUNDARY SCALED
 FROM 2014 FEMA FLOOD MAPS,
 FOR GENERAL REFERENCE
 PURPOSES ONLY.

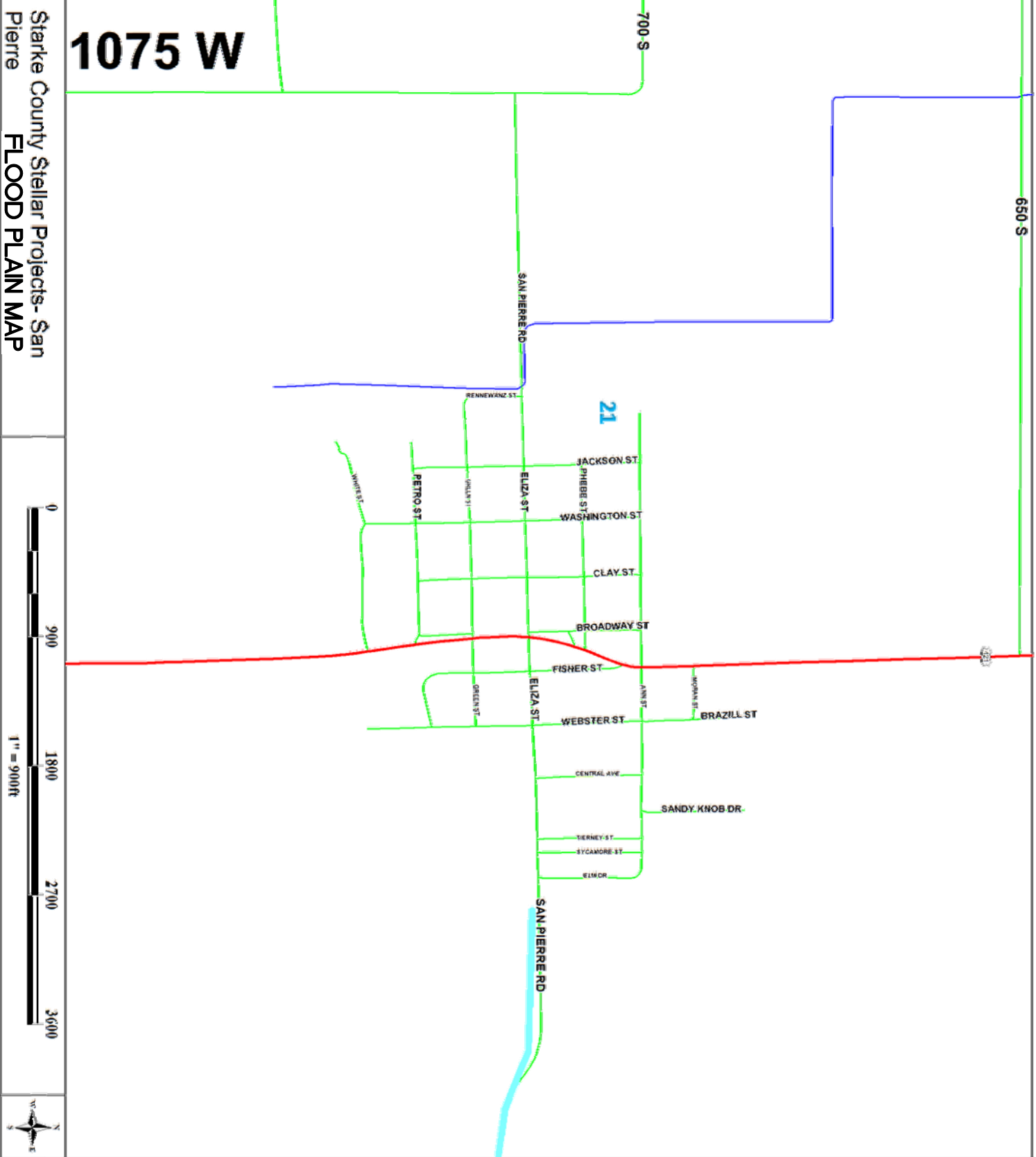
TE TERRITORIAL
 ENGINEERING
 WALKERTON INDIANA



Stark County Stellar Projects - North Judson
FLOOD PLAIN MAP

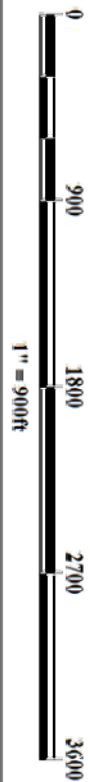


- NOTE:**
 FLOOD PLAIN BOUNDARY
 SCALED FROM 2014 FEMA
 FLOOD MAPS FOR GENERAL
 REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY.
- FLOOD PLAIN
 - Regional Counties
 - County Boundary
 - Townships
 - Water
 - Roads
 - Corporate Boundaries
 - Connecting Trails
 - Housing/Retail
 - Streetscape/Facades
 - N. Judson Town Park Improvements
 - Norwayne Field Improvements
 - Regional Roads
 - Townships
 - Water
 - Railroads
 - Roads
 - Highways
 - Corporate Boundaries
 - Connecting Trails



1075 W

Stark County Stellar Projects - San Pierre
FLOOD PLAIN MAP



- Regional Counties
- County Boundary
- Water
- Corporate Boundaries
- School Park
- Regional Roads
- Water
- Railroads
- Roads
- Highways
- Corporate Boundaries
- Connecting Trails

FLOOD PLAIN

NOTE:
 FLOOD PLAIN BOUNDARY
 SCALED FROM 2014 FEMA
 FLOOD MAPS, FOR GENERAL
 REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY.

TE TERRITORIAL
 ENGINEERING
 WALKERTON INDIANA

STARKE COUNTY
 HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Starke County
BOARD OF COUNTY COUNCIL
53 East Mound Street
KNOX, INDIANA 46534

Council Members:

Dave Pearman, President
Brad Hazelton, Vice-President
Freddie Baker
Kay Gudeman
Howard Bailey
Robert Sims
Don White

Marty Lucas, Starke County Attorney
Rachel Oesterreich, Starke County Auditor
& Secretary to the County Council

Constellation of Starke
PO Box 14
300 Keller Ave
North Judson, IN 46366

To whom it May Concern,

This letter is in response to whether or not the unit of Starke County can afford the local match for several proposed projects. I understand to secure the grants the County is pursuing they will need to provide a local match of approximately \$1.75 million dollars. The intended source of funding for the grant match is the County's CEDIT funds, but Rainy Day Funds could also be used, if needed.

The unit of Starke County receives a monthly distribution of CEDIT funds. The annual average distribution of fund are a total of \$1.4 million dollars. The Starke County Board of Commissioners have also passed a resolution for the Allocation of Funds Contingent upon the Constellation of Starke being selected as a Stellar Community Resolution 2019-14. Based on the facts provided regarding the proposed projects, the required match, and my experience and knowledge of the unit of Starke County's finances, the County will be able to fund the local match for the proposed projects.

Best Regards,



Rachel Oesterreich
Auditor of Starke County & Secretary to the County Council



MUNICIPAL ADVISORS

now joined with
Springsted and Umbaugh

Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC
112 IronWorks Ave, Ste C
Mishawaka, IN 46544
United States of America

T: +1 (574) 935 5178
F: +1 (574) 935 5928
bakertilly.com

August 27, 2019

Honorable Dennis Estok
Mayor, City of Knox
101 West Washington Street
Knox, IN 46534-1100

Re: City of Knox (Indiana) Financial Capabilities for Capital Projects

Dear Mayor Estok:

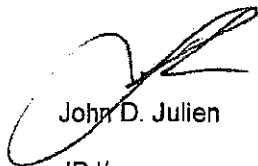
This letter is in response to your question as to whether the City can afford the local match for several proposed projects. We understand to secure the grants you are pursuing you need to provide a local match of approximately \$400,000. Your intended source for funding the grant match is the City's Economic Development Income Tax distribution, but TIF revenues could also be used, if needed.

The City of Knox receives an economic development income tax distribution each year. For the last three years, the annual distribution has averaged \$382,000, and is projected by the DLGF to be \$438,000 in 2020. \$80,000 of your distribution is pledged annually for other projects, but as Mayor of the City, you have control over determining how those funds are spent and by statute those funds can be used for any legal purpose. Based on the facts you have provided me and with my experience and knowledge of the City's finances, the City will be able to fund the local match for the proposed projects.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the above, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

BAKER TILLY MUNICIPAL ADVISORS, LLC



John D. Julien
JDJ/mac



now joined with
Springsted and Umbaugh

September 6, 2019

Andrew Rowe, Clerk-Treasurer
Town of North Judson
310 Lane Street
North Judson, IN 46366

Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC
112 IronWorks Ave, Ste C
Mishawaka, IN 46544
United States of America

T: +1 (574) 935 5178
F: +1 (574) 935 5928
bakertilly.com

Re: Town of North Judson (Indiana) Financial Capabilities for Capital Projects

Dear Andrew:

This letter is in response to your question as to whether the Town can afford the local match for several proposed projects. We understand to secure the grants you are pursuing you need to provide a local match of approximately \$361,600. Your intended source for funding the grant match is the cash on hand in the Railroad Capital Fund and the Town's Economic Development Income Tax distribution.

The Railroad Capital Improvement Fund currently has a balance of approximately \$153,000 in discretionary funds that the Town plans to use on large capital projects such as the Stellar Communities projects. The Town expects to pay all of these funds toward the Stellar Communities projects if necessary.

The Town of North Judson receives an economic development income tax distribution each year. For the last two years (2018-2019), the annual distribution has averaged \$122,000, and is projected by the DLGF to be \$134,000 in 2020. \$111,000 of your distribution in 2020 is pledged for other capital projects, but as the Clerk-Treasurer, you and the Town Council have control over determining how those funds are spent and by statute those funds can be used for any legal purpose. The Town also currently has a balance of approximately \$45,000 in its CEDIT fund. Based on the facts you have provided me and with my experience and knowledge of the City's finances, the City will be able to fund the local match for the proposed projects.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the above, please don't hesitate to contact me.

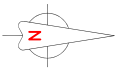
Very truly yours,

BAKER TILLY MUNICIPAL ADVISORS, LLC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric J. Walsh", written in a cursive style.

Eric J. Walsh, Partner

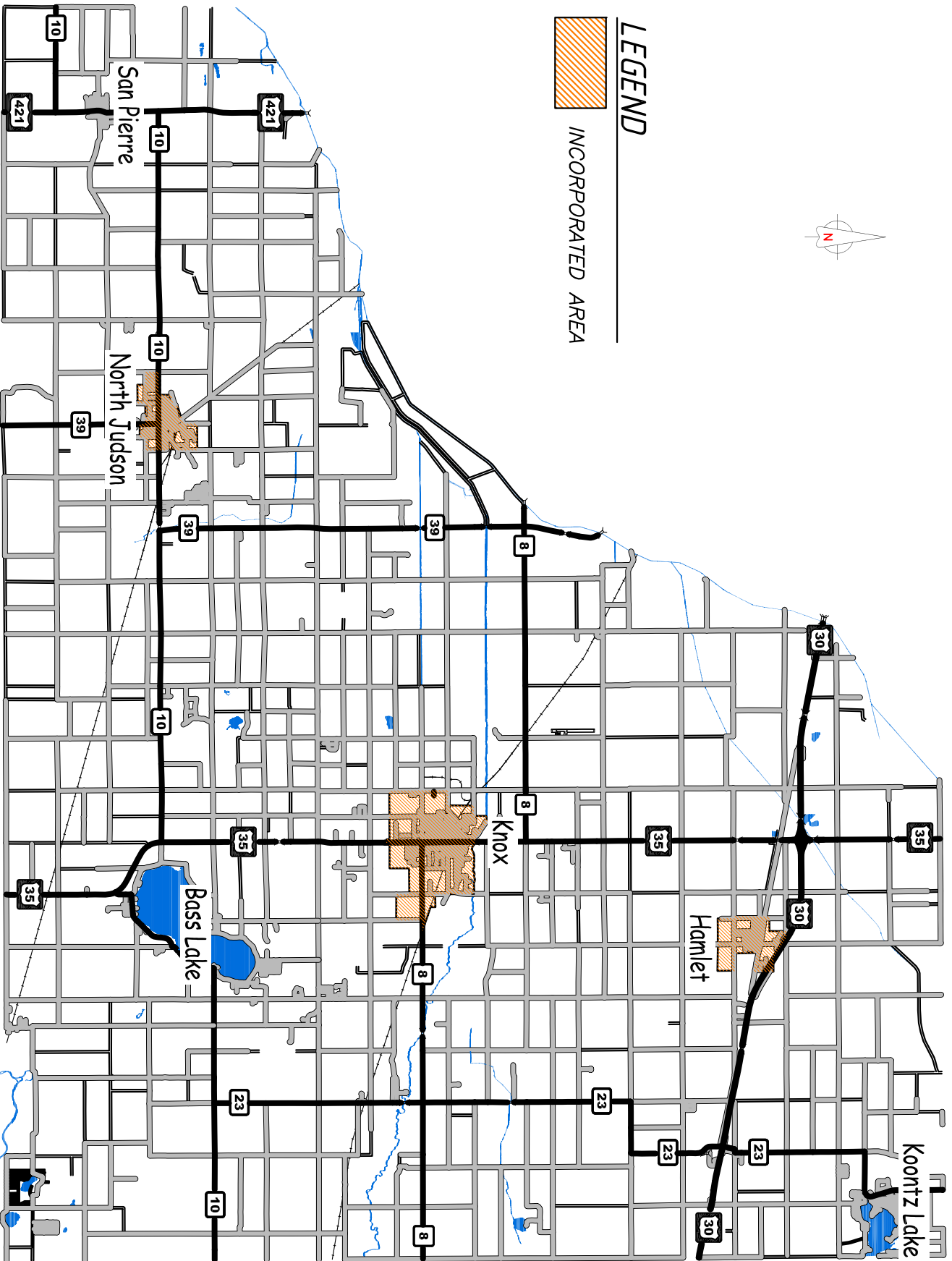
EJW/jlw



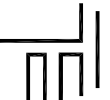
LEGEND



INCORPORATED AREA



CONSTELLATION OF STARKE - REGIONAL MAP



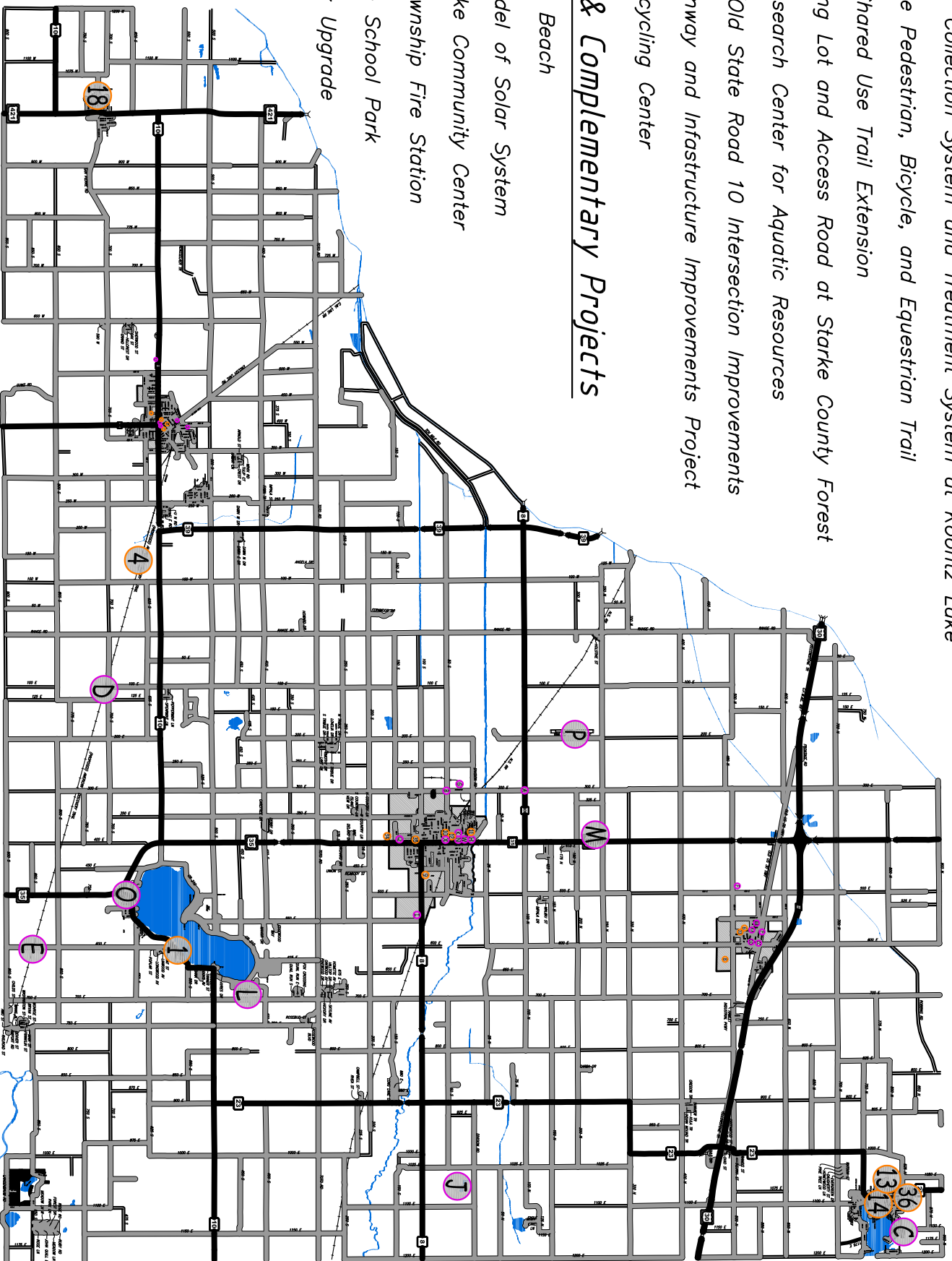
TERRITORIAL ENGINEERING, LLC
WALKERTON — WWW.TE-LLC.COM — INDIANA

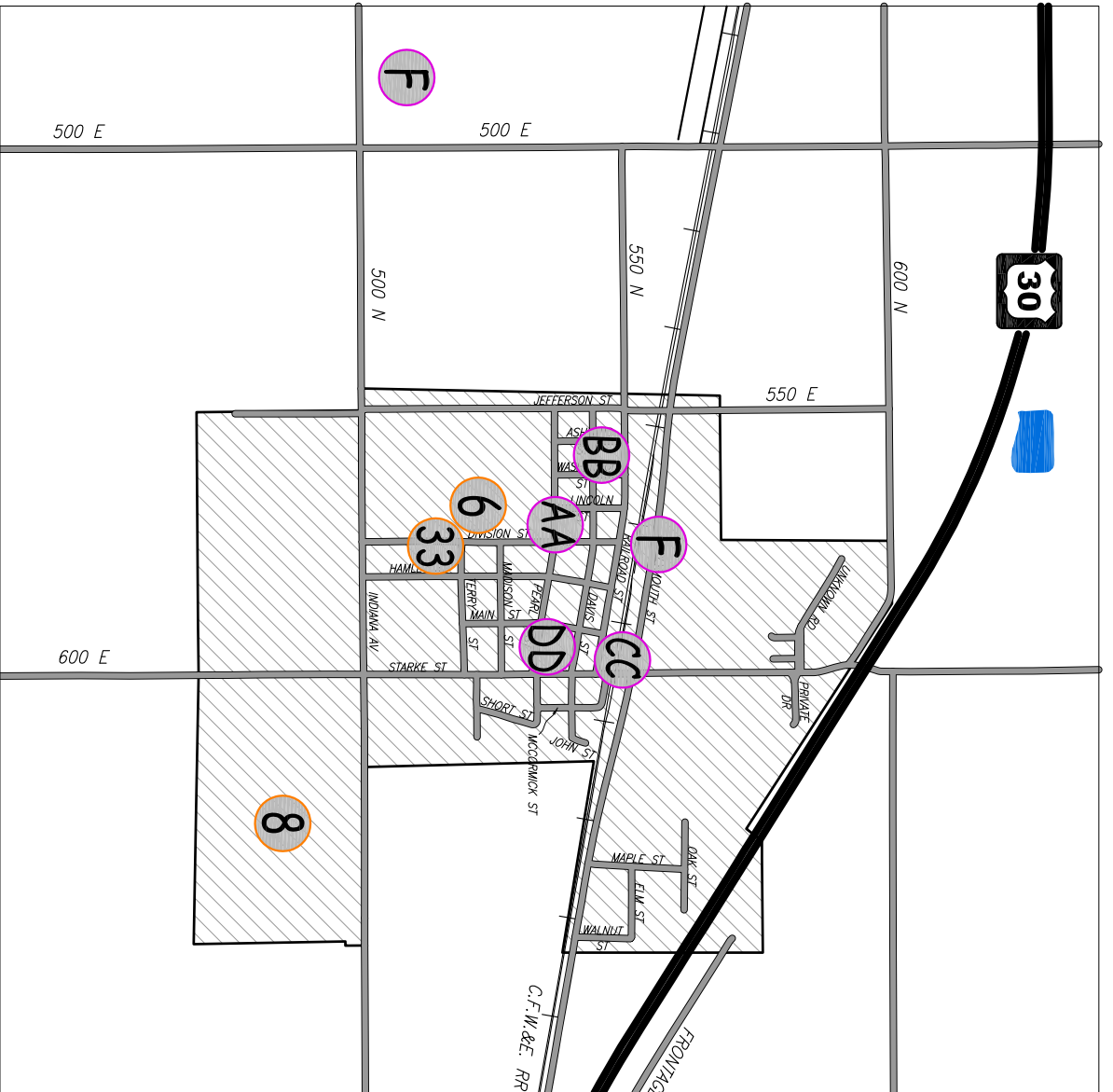
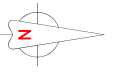
Past & Current Projects

- C** Wastewater Collection System and Treatment System at Koontz Lake
- D** Shared Use Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Equestrian Trail
- E** 2.1 Mile Shared Use Trail Extension
- J** New Parking Lot and Access Road at Starke County Forest
- L** Palmer Research Center for Aquatic Resources
- O** C.R. 210/Old State Road 10 Intersection Improvements
- P** Airport Runway and Infrastructure Improvements Project
- M** SCEMD Recycling Center

Proposed & Complementary Projects

- 1** Bass Lake Beach
- 4** Scaled Model of Solar System
- 13** Koontz Lake Community Center
- 14** Oregon Township Fire Station
- 18** San Pierre School Park
- 36** Lions Park Upgrade





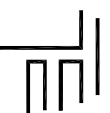
Past & Current Projects

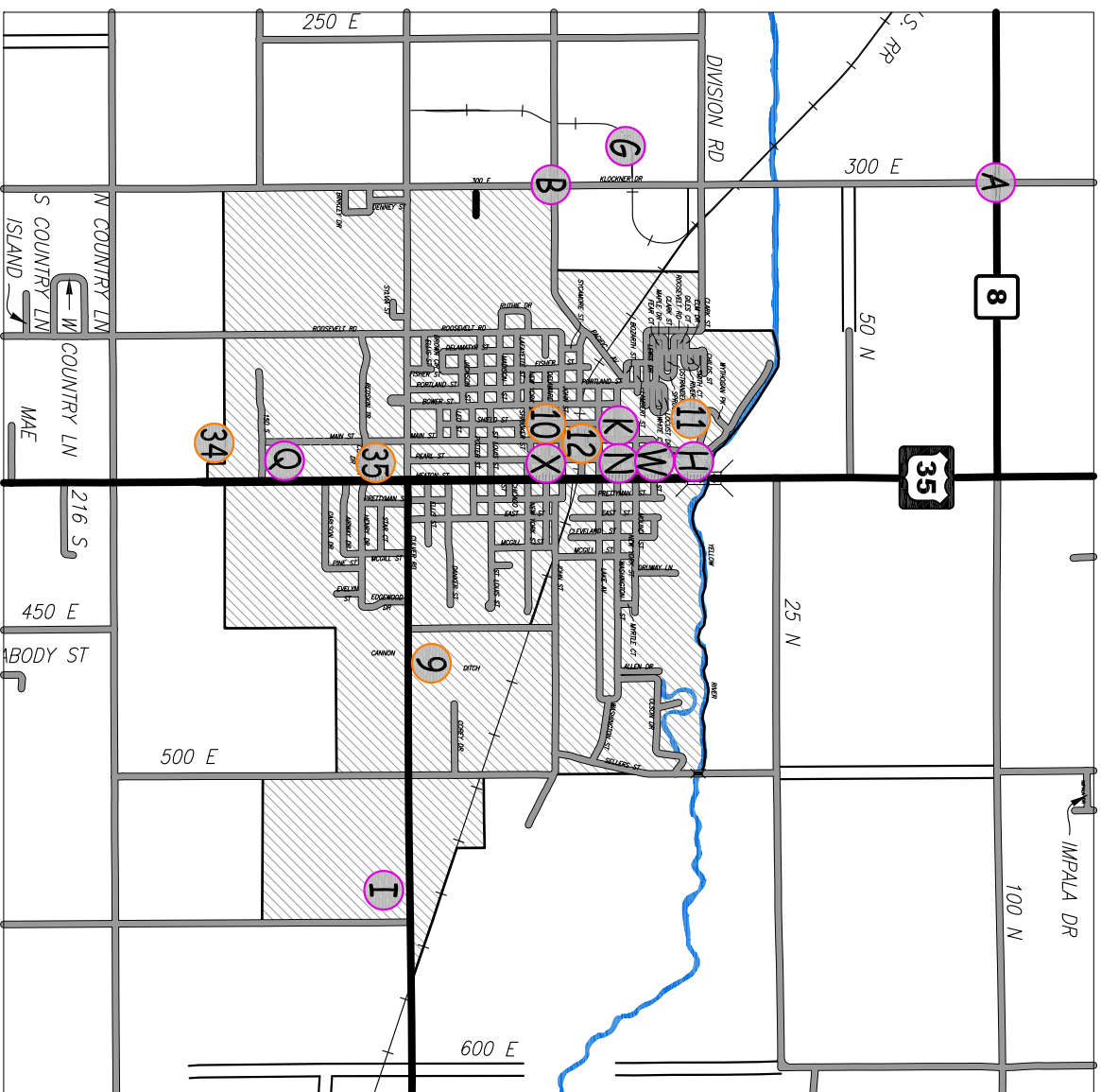
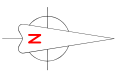
- F** Water and Sewer System Expansion for New Industrial Service Area & Water Tower Upgrade
- AA** Skate Park and Town Park Equipment Upgrade
- BB** Reconstruction of Railroad Street (2019)
- CC** Reconstruction of Intersection, Starke and Plymouth Street
- DD** Sidewalk Upgrades Downtown

Proposed & Complementary Projects

- 6** Town Park Improvements
- 8** Hamlet Housing
- 33** Walking Trail to Fairgrounds

CONSTELLATION OF STARKE - HAMLET PROJECTS MAP



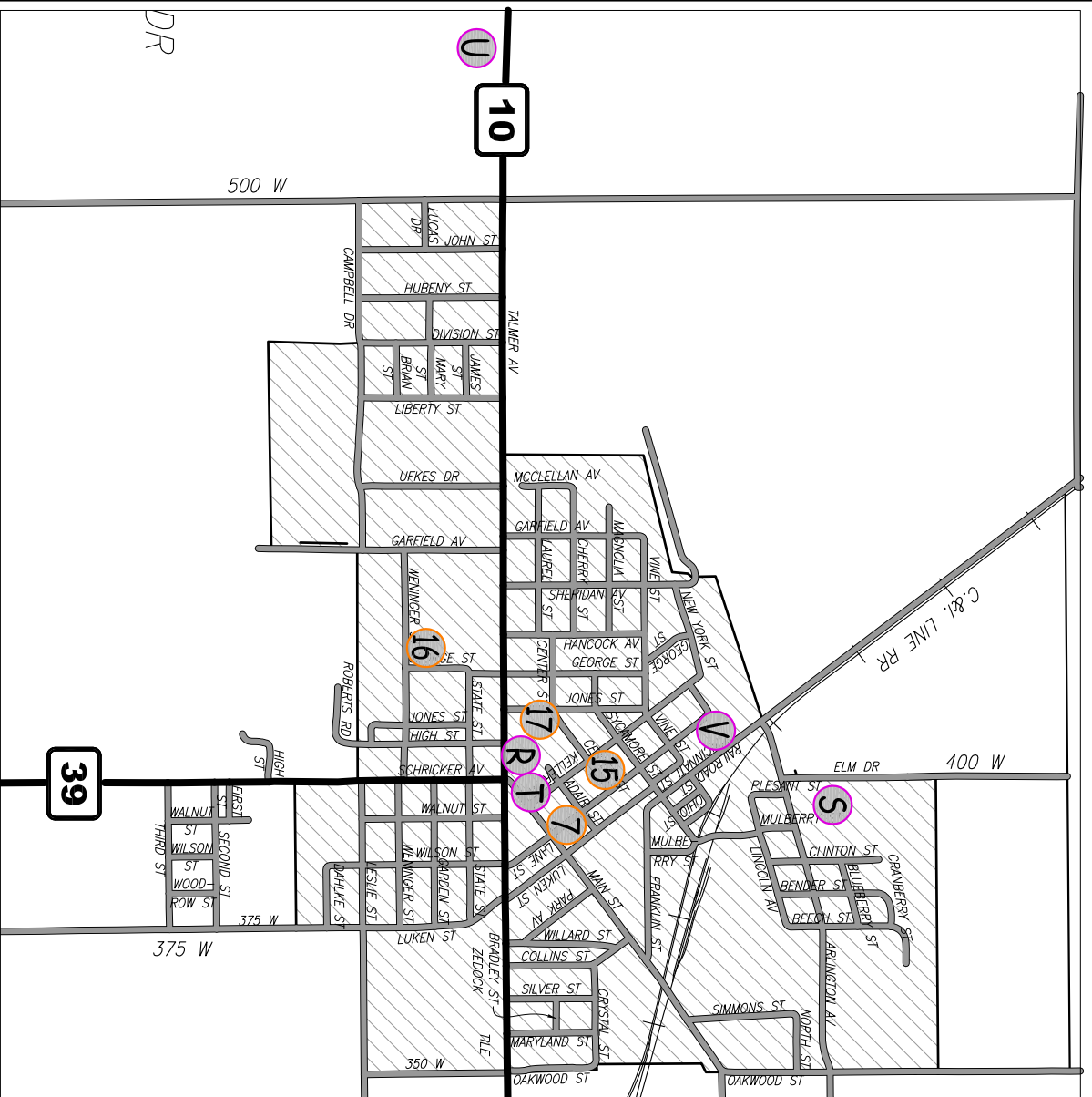


Past & Current Projects

- A** State Road 8 & C.R.300E. Industrial Park Intersection Improvements
- B** C.R.300E./Kloekner Drive Industrial Park Access Improvements
- G** Industrial Park Team Track and Dock Facility Knox and County of Starke, IN.
- H** Wythogan Park Improvements
- I** Justice Center
- K** Court House Renovations
- N** Starke County Annex 2
- Q** Sandy Acres Park Improvements
- W** Message Board
- X** Pop-Up-Store Revitalization Project

Proposed & Complementary Projects

- 9** Knox Housing
- 10** Knox Downtown Revitalization
- 11** Knox Wythogan Park Improvements
- 12** Knox 8 S. Main Facade
- 34** Main Street Extension
- 35** Fire Station



Past & Current Projects

- R** Norwayne Field Amphitheater and Splash Pad
- S** Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements
- T** Water Tower Rehabilitation, New Supply Well, and Emergency Generator
- U** Water Tower Rehabilitation
- V** New Street Department Garage

Proposed & Complementary Projects

- 7** Housing
- 15** Downtown Revitalization
- 16** Town Park Improvements
- 17** Norwayne Field Improvements



	Stellar Project Name	Total Project Cost	Private Investment	Local Leverage	Other Sources (foundations, etc.)	Gap	% of Local Leverage
1	Bass Lake Beach	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 740,000		\$ 3,200,000	20%
2	Connecting Trails	\$ 5,000,000		\$ 1,000,000		\$ 4,000,000	20%
3	Health and Wellness	\$ 150,000		\$ 25,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 75,000	50%
4	Scale Model of our Solar System	\$ 37,500	\$ 7,500			\$ 30,000	20%
5	County Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 600,000	0%
6	Hamlet Town Park Improvements	\$ 500,000			\$ 100,000	\$ 400,000	20%
7	N. Judson Housing/Retail	\$ 9,153,373		\$ 190,695		\$ 8,962,678	2%
8	Hamlet Housing						
9	Knox Housing						
10	Knox Downton Revitalization	\$ 125,000		\$ 25,000		\$ 100,000	20%
11	Knox Wythogan Park Improvements	\$ 885,385		\$ 177,077		\$ 708,308	20%
12	Knox 8 S. Main Façade	\$ 93,750		\$ 18,750		\$ 75,000	20%
13	Koontz Lake Community Center	\$ 1,000,000		\$ 200,000		\$ 800,000	20%
14	Oregon Township Fire Station	\$ 130,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 11,000		\$ 104,000	20%
15	N. Judson Downtown Revitalization	\$ 625,000		\$ 125,000		\$ 500,000	20%
16	N. Judson Town Park Improvements	\$ 783,000		\$ 156,600		\$ 626,400	20%
17	N. Judson Norwayne Field Improvements	\$ 400,000		\$ 80,000		\$ 320,000	20%
18	San Pierre School Park	\$ 350,000		\$ 70,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 260,000	26%
	Project Management				\$ 30,000		

Leverage Resource	Proposed (P) or Committed (C)	Amount	Designated Project
Starke County	C	\$1,750,000	Unrestricted
Starke County Community Foundation	C	\$100,000	Unrestricted
Hardesty Memorial Endowment Fund	C	\$100,000	Hamlet Town Park Improvments
Oregon Township	C	\$15,000	Oregon Township Fire Station
Bass Lake Association	C	\$40,000	Bass Lake Beach
Luminous Fund	C	\$20,000	Bass Lake Beach
Koontz Lake Assocation	C	\$10,000	Koontz Lake Community Center
Community Fundraising	P	\$6,000	Scale Model of our Solar System
SKILL Center	C	\$1,200,000	Skill Center expansion
Knox	C	\$400,000	Knox
North Judson	C	\$361,100	North Judson
Stephen and Kathleen Lucas	C	\$1,000	Unrestricted

City Capital Investments - Stellar Area	Description: Please provide a description of the investment. Example: " 8 lights on Main Street and Harrison Road"	Type based upon 4 Categories of: Building Renovation, Building Construction, Housing/Residential, Infrastructure)	Year	Investment Amount
N. Judson Water System Improvements Project				
Planning	Planning for Water System Improvements	infrastructure	2018	\$30,000
N. Judson Water System Improvements Project				
	Division B: Storage Tank Rehabilitation	infrastructure	2018	\$1,042,200
	Division A: New Supply well, emergency generator and west tank altitude valve	infrastructure	2018	\$506,800
N. Judson Water System Improvements Project				
N. Judson Asset Management	Utility Asset Management Program	infrastructure	2018	\$25,000
	Grant Obtained for Water Project (Construction)	infrastructure	2018	\$550,000
N. Judson Water Improv. Project CDBG Grant				
N. Judson CSO/WWTP Improvements Project	Division A: Collection System Improvements		2019	\$1,130,000
N. Judson CSO/WWTP Improvements Project	Division B: Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements		2019	\$1,460,000
N. Judson Street Garage				
	New Maintenance Building	Building Construction	2014	\$240,000
N. Judson Norwayne Field Improvements				
	Amphitheater built on existing stage	Building Construction	2018	\$17,500
Starke County				
Starke County Airport	Airport Extension	infrastructure	2019 \$	1,300,000
Starke County EMD	Recycling Center	Building	2019 \$	41,970
Starke County Justice Center	New Jail/Justice Center	Building	2017 \$	12,000,000
Starke County Courthouse	Courthouse Renovations	Building Renovation	2017 \$	1,000,000
Annex II	Former Jail Renovation	Building Renovation	2017 \$	1,000,000
Starke County Courthouse	Exterior rehabilitation	Building Renovation	2018 \$	50,000
Starke County Courthouse	Courthouse Renovations	Building Renovation	2019 \$	300,000
Starke County Courthouse	Elevator Renovation	Building Renovation	2019 \$	375,275
Starke County	CR 210 and CR600 S.	infrastructure	2019 \$	987,787
Starke County - road	SR 8 and CR 300 E	infrastructure	2015 \$	713,196
Starke County - Wastewater	Koontz Lake wastewater and treatment	infrastructure	2013 \$	14,300,000
Starke Co - Industrial Park	Track and dock facility rail	infrastructure		
CR 300 E. and Kloeckner Drive	Industrial Park Park Access	infrastructure	2013 \$	3,056,679
Erie Trail	Ped, Bike, Equestrian Trail	infrastructure	2013 \$	1,300,000
City of Knox				
Knox Wastewater Treatment Plant	Plant upgrade	infrastructure	2019 \$	1,972,000
Knox ADA and sidewalk Program	Sidewalk, curb, and ADA access	infrastructure	2014 \$	10,000
Knox ADA and sidewalk Program	Sidewalk, curb, and ADA access	infrastructure	2015 \$	10,000
Knox ADA and sidewalk Program	Sidewalk, curb, and ADA access	infrastructure	2016 \$	10,000
Knox ADA and sidewalk Program	Sidewalk, curb, and ADA access	infrastructure	2017 \$	10,000
Knox ADA and sidewalk Program	Sidewalk, curb, and ADA access	infrastructure	2018 \$	10,000
Knox Klochner Drive	Drive and Truck access improvements	infrastructure	2014 \$	63,300
Knox Blight Elimination	Various housing demolition	housing	2015 \$	268,400
Knox Industrial Park	Shell Building	Building Construction	2015 \$	200,000
Serenity Gardens	Building demolition, park, gazebo, mural	Building Construction	2015 \$	87,500
Traffic Control Specialists	Wastewater/Stormwater Improvements	infrastructure	2015 \$	57,000
Park Improvements	Splash Pad	infrastructure	2016 \$	140,000
Knox Community Center	Repairs and improvements	Building Renovation	2017 \$	318,000
Park Improvements	Performance Stage	Building Construction	2016 \$	115,000
Park Improvements	Wythogan Park concession stand	Building Construction	2016 \$	225,000
Brown Circle	Water line replacement project	infrastructure	2016 \$	180,000
Clabaugh Drive	Lift Station	infrastructure	2014 \$	88,000
Water hydrant	Replacements	infrastructure	2017 \$	34,500
Knox Streetscape	Downtown street improvements	infrastructure	2019 \$	50,000
Sewer Relining	relining project	infrastructure	2017 \$	58,000
Sewer Relining	relining project	infrastructure	2018 \$	81,500
Sewer	Line Replacement	infrastructure	2018 \$	33,500
Gateway project	Acquisition of Depot and gateway property	infrastructure	2019 \$	590,000
Owner Occupied Rehabilitation	Housing repairs for homeowners	housing	2019 \$	214,500
JW Hicks	Sewer extension	infrastructure	2018 \$	46,000
Retail space	Pop-up Shops space	Building Renovation	2019 \$	30,000
Water Tower	Cleaning and well repair	infrastructure	2019 \$	60,000
Sandy Acres Park	Park upgrades	infrastructure	2017 \$	215,000
Knox Message Board	Message sign at City Entrance	infrastructure	2018 \$	58,000
Hamlet				
Hamlet - water and sewer	Industrial Service expansion	infrastructure		

City Capital Investments - NonStellar Area (i.e., streetscape, facades, etc)

Example: City Park

Description: Please provide a description of the investment.

Example: " 8 lights on Main Street and Harrison Road"

New Accessible playground

Type based upon 4 Categories of:
Building Renovation, Building
Construction, Housing/Residential,
Infrastructure)

	Year	Investment Amount
infrastructure	2013	\$100,000

Private Capital Investments - Stellar Area	Description: Please provide a description of the investment. Example: " 8 lights on Main Street and Harrison Road"	Type based upon 4 Categories of: Building Renovation, Building Construction, Housing/Residential, Infrastructure)	Year	Investment Amount
JW Hicks Manufacturing	Addition and new building	Building Construction	2018	\$ 3,000,000
O'Riley Auto Parts	Building Renovation	Building Renovation	2018	\$ 2,400,000
Traffic Control Specialists	New Building	Building Construction	2015	\$ 1,500,000
Tractor Supply	Building remodel	Building Renovation	2017	\$ 1,500,000
Kemen	Building Additon and Equipment	Building Renovation	2017	\$ 2,134,000
Nortons	Building Additon and Equipment	Building Renovation	2019	\$ 5,400,000
Dollar General	New Building	Building Construction	2018	\$ 850,000
Starke County Fair Board Sidewalks	New sidewalks	infrastructure	2019	\$ 5,000
Starke County Historical Society	New Building	Building Construction	2019	\$ 22,000
Davis Township	Community center/Fire House	Building Construction	2019	\$ 25,000
Hope Restored Recovery Home	Home	Housing	2019	\$ 2,000
Northern Indiana Community Foundation	Office Renovation	Building Renovation	2019	\$ 20,975
Prairie Trails Club	Erie Trail Extension match	infrastructure	2019	\$ 5,000
Starke County Humane Society	New Building campaign	Building Construction	2019	\$ 20,000
Starke County Park Board	Yellow River Boat Launch	infrastructure	2019	\$ 5,000
Palmer Research Center	Hatchery Pond	Building	2017	\$ 250,000
The Anglers Arsenal, LLC	Family Bait Shop	Building Renovation	2018	\$ 10,000
B&R Boat Lift Services	Building	Building Renovation	2018	\$ 47,000

Private Capital Investments - NonStellar Area

Example: ABC Manufacturing

Description: Please provide a description of the investment.

Example: " 8 lights on Main Street and Harrison Road"

new manufacturing plant

Type based upon 4 Categories of:
Building Renovation, Building
Construction, Housing/Residential,
Infrastructure)

	Year	Investment Amount
Building Construction	2013	\$2,500,000

Private Non - Capital Investments *Ex: new events(i.e., Festivals) , programs, marketing campaigns, merchant trainings)				
Description	Stellar Area (Y/N)	Year	Investment Amount	
Blue Grass Jams		Ongoing-Started in 2014		\$8,000.00
Car and Bike Show		Ongoing-Started in 2016		\$4,000.00
Concerts in the park	Y	Ongoing-Started in 2016		\$16,000.00
4th of July Fireworks, Parade and Fun Day in the Park		Ongoing-Started in 2016		\$44,400.00
Peppermint Parade and Hometown Christmas Celebration	Y	Ongoing-Started in 2016		\$2,000.00
Movies in the Park		Ongoing-Started in 2016		\$2,700.00
Movies in the Park - North Judson	Y			
North Judson Elementary Assembly	Y	Annual	\$	400
North Judson Jr/Sr High School	Y	2019	\$	1,100
North Judson Fire Department	Y	Annual	\$4000-\$6000	
North Judson Mint Festival	Y	Annual	\$	1,000
SCILL Center Training	Y	2019	\$	5,000
Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum	Y	2019	\$	3,250
Oregon Township Fire Department	Y	2019	\$	5,000
Starke County A.B.A.T.E.	Y	2019	\$	2,000
Hive Giving Circle	Y	Annual	\$	\$2,000-\$5,000
Community Services of Starke County	Y	2019	\$	10,100
Yellowstone Trail Festival	Y	Annual	\$	\$1,000-\$3,000
Starke County WIC	Y	2019	\$	600
Constellation of Starke	Y	2019	\$	2,500
Starke County Park Board	Y	2018	\$	5,000
North Judson Park Beautification Committee	Y	2018	\$	7,940
Psi Iota XI	Y	2018	\$	2,000
Habitat for Humanity	Y	2018	\$	2,000
Knox Winamac Community Health Center	Y	2018	\$	1,000
Starke County Public Library	Y	2018	\$	800
Starke County EMS	Y	2018	\$	14,350
Knox Middle School	Y	2018	\$	1,400
Educational Grants and Scholarships	Y	2019	\$	95,000
Ancilla College	Y	2019	\$	40,000
Celebrate Recovery	Y	2019	\$	1,500
Family Foundation	Y	2019	\$	1,700
Coalition against domestic Abuse	Y	2019	\$	2,200
Community Services of Starke County	Y	2019	\$	4,000
Food Bank of Northern Indiana	Y	2019	\$	2,500
Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum	Y	2019	\$	6,781
Junior Achievement	Y	2019	\$	6,905
Ken Craig Community Garden	Y	2019	\$	1,000
Knox Community School Corporation	Y	2019	\$	19,450
Koontz Lake Oregon Township	Y	2019	\$	1,500
NISP Community Schools	Y	2019	\$	8,100
North Judson Volunteer Fire Department	Y	2019	\$	12,000
Oregon Davis Elementary School	Y	2019	\$	1,400
Oregon Davis Elementary School	Y	2019	\$	4,500
SKILL Center	Y	2019	\$	5,700
Starke County EMA	Y	2019	\$	16,200
Humane Society	Y	2019	\$	10,000
Starke County Youth Club	Y	2019	\$	9,000
Hamlet Fireworks	Y	since 2018	\$	150
Hamlet - Yellowstone Trail Fest	Y	2017	\$	650
Hamlet - Yellowstone Trail Fest	Y	2018, 2019	\$	1,000

City Non - Capital Investments *Ex: new events(i.e., Festivals) , programs, marketing campaigns, merchant trainings)				
Description	Stellar Area (Y/N)	Year	Investment Amount	
Example: Write Your Business Plan	Y	2014	\$	200
Fire Truck	Y	2019	\$	800,000
North Judson Christmas Lights	Y	2019	\$	22,000
Starke County	Y	Annual	\$	40,000

Real Estate Transactions - Stellar Area	Number	Year	Total Value of Transactions
Arms Length			
Ag Improved	42	2018	\$ 7,291,531
Ag Land	62	2018	\$ 26,868,636
Commercial Improved	37	2018	\$ 10,324,116
Commercial Unimproved	3	2018	\$ 420,500
Industrial Approved	3	2018	\$ 423,600
Industrial Unimproved	2	2018	\$ 185
Exempt Property	14	2018	\$ 1,406,985
Residential Improved	589	2018	\$ 52,830,296
Residential Unimproved	103	2018	\$ 1,884,774
Total	855	2018	\$ 101,450,623

Economic Development

	Number	Year (Since Designation)	Description
New businesses	0		
New jobs created	60		20 at J W Hicks, 40 at Traffic Control Specialists
Estimated amounts of new investments	\$5,581,000		\$3,000,000 for J W Hicks, \$2,000,000 for Knox Fertilizer, \$581,00 for Traffic Contol Specialist
Total			

Resumes of Key Project Staff

Stephen “Rik” Ritzler

Rik_Ritzler@yahoo.com | (574) 806-2955

SUPERINTENDENT

Starke County Highway Department

- Implementation of a bridge inspection and replacement program has seen the county go from having some of the most structurally deficient bridges in the state to being among the safest. By September 2020, Starke County will not have any structurally deficient bridges. The county continues to emphasize the importance of preventive bridge maintenance and inspections to ensure early detection of any potential problems.
- Establishment of a 10-year plan of strategic road improvements with a goal of creating a county-wide truck route to boost industry and commerce.
- Development of a 10-year plan of strategic road improvements aimed at ensuring critical transportation infrastructure access and implemented the PASER road rating system to
- Addition of a local construction inspector position to the Starke County Highway Department has resulted in annual savings of more than \$240,000.
- Adoption of Asset Management has resulted in more efficient operations and greater control of all facets of the highway department's scope of work.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in
History/Political
Science, Fairleigh
Dickinson University

CERTIFICATIONS

Asset Management
Training, INDOT 2009
Project Management,
INDOT 2008

Jessica L. Martinović

jessi.Martinović@valpo.edu | (574) 249-0808

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Starke County Community Foundation

- Hold responsibility for the development of the Starke County Community Foundation (SCCF), a \$13 million dollar community endowment.
- Meet regularly with donors and prospects.
- Plan and execute quarterly board meetings and annual events, such as a scholarship reception, Giving Tuesday open house, and women's giving circle event.
- Serve as spokesperson for the SCCF and communicate its mission.
- Serve in a community leadership position through various committees, such as the Constellation of Starke Executive Committee and the Broadband Planning Grant Committee.
- Manage the local SCCF office and its operations.

EDUCATION

Master of Arts,
English Studies and
Communication,
Valparaiso University,
Valparaiso, IN

EXPERTISE

Professional Writing
Creative Writing
Editing
Marketing
Event Planning
Administration

Martin R. Lucas

martinlucas@gmail.com | (574) 896-5800

ATTORNEY

Starke County Board of Commissioners Attorney

Store-front lawyer specializing in Indiana municipal law - key current clients include:

- County Attorney for Starke County beginning in 2009
- Attorney for the Starke County Council beginning in 2002.

More than thirty appeals - Indiana Court of Appeals, Indiana Supreme Court and Tax Court, including:

- Applicability of the public trust doctrine to Indiana's public freshwater lakes; riparian rights of lakeside landowners: Lake of the Woods Property Owners Assoc. v. Ralston (2006).
- Police Disciplinary actions: Gray v. Starke Co., (2017); Howard v. Town of North Judson (1996).
- Drainage assessments and protections accorded to dedicated nature preserves: Joint Noble-LaGrange Co. Drainage Bd. v. ACRES, et al. (2001) (the Elkhart River case mentioned above)
- The constitutional right of a criminal defendant to a trial by jurors drawn from the community where the crime is alleged to have been committed (the vicinage): Mareska v. State (1989).

EDUCATION

JD, 1980 IU School of Law, Bloomington

Selected Indiana's 2006 Environmental Litigator of the Year by the Hoosier Environmental Council in recognition of representation of ACRES Land Trust et al in a lawsuit that halted dredging of the Elkhart River, northern Indiana's wildest major river.

Robert S. Aloj, P.S.

bob@te-llc.com | (574) 910-0458

OWNER/ENGINEER

Territorial Engineering, LLC

Presently Managing Partner engaged as Project Engineer and Professional Land Surveyor for Territorial Engineering, LLC, and involved in all aspects of site development and other civil engineering projects. Engineering responsibilities include design of on-site wastewater disposal systems, complete site plans, Roadway, Trail and Railway design projects; design, construction observation, site layout, and administration of municipal water lines, sewer lines, lift stations and storm water systems projects.

Responsible for project approvals and permitting. Have a working knowledge of Local and State Health Department requirements in addition to IDEM rules and regulations For Sanitary Sewer and Water projects. Having Extensive familiarity with "Rule 5" storm water management and erosion control requirements.

Other project responsibilities include roadway designs conforming to INDOT Specifications and Complete residential and industrial subdivision projects conforming to all local ordinance requirements. Mr. Aloj is familiar with Federal and State Funded Grant Projects including OCRA, EDA, USDA and others. Also serving as Survey Manager proficient in all aspects of land surveying, including legal boundary, ALTA/NSPS, topographic surveys, legal descriptions, and construction layout.

EDUCATION

B.S. – Civil
Engineering | Tri-
State University,
Angola, IN

PROFESSIONALS

Registered
Professional Land
Surveyor, State of
Indiana | Certificate
No. 20200024

Dennis Estok

mayor@cityofknox.net | (574) 722-4553

Mayor City of Knox

Mr. Estok is a life-long resident of Knox, Indiana, and have spent his life serving the community through county and city government. His goal is to continue working for and with the citizens of the community to create a better quality of life, more opportunity, a safer place to call home, and a more vibrant place to live.

Experience

- Serving as Mayor of the City of Knox since 2016 to present and elected to begin second 4-year term January 2020.
- Served as Starke County Surveyor for 8 years
- Served as Mayor of Knox from 2004-2007
- 22 Years as an employee with the City of Knox
- Certified WWTP Operator and served as Superintendent for 18 years.
- Owner of numerous local businesses and housing developments.
- Starke County Economic Development Board Member for 15 years.
- 2005 Recipient of the "Sagamore of the Wabash" by Governor Joseph E. Kernan.

ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Mayor, City of Knox
- Member, Stellar Community Executive Team
- Member, Stellar Community Housing Committee
- Member, Starke County Economic Development Foundation

Jacque Ryan

jryan@wkvi.com | (574) 806-3917

KANKAKEE VALLEY BROADCASTING Broadcast Journalist

- Researching stories
- Forging connections with community representatives
- Attending meetings
- Conducting interviews in person and over the phone
- Recording and editing audio for on-air broadcasts
- Writing and formatting stories for websites

EDUCATION

Journalism & Sociology, Ball State University

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Member of Starke County Young Professionals
- Community Organizations Active in Disaster Representative
- Local Emergency Planning Committee Secretary

Larry Wickert

execdir@scedf.biz | (574) 772-5627

Executive Director
Starke County economic Development Foundation

EDUCATION
Purdue University – Agricultural Economics

Community Involvement

- North Judson Kiwanis
- Prairie Trails Club
- Erie Trail Extension Team
- North Judson United Methodist Church Council
President

Constellation of Starke Executive Team

- President and Treasurer
- Health Committee Chairman
- Housing Team
- Project Development Team
- Transportation Committee
- Education Committee

Stellar Responsibilities

- Administrator for executive Team
- Conduct Constellation of Starke presentations throughout the county
- Coordinate Health Committee Wellness Program selection
- Participate in housing plan decisions
- Prepare Constellation of Starke financial reports
- Assist in the development of the Transportation plan
- Organize Education committee and assist in development of education plan