



# Strategic Plan for Rural Indiana

The Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs works with Indiana communities to build relevant and economically thriving places where people want to live, work and grow.

## Guiding Principles

Retain, attract and develop talent in our rural communities.

Incite and encourage regional collaboration in rural planning processes.

## Strategic Framework

### 1 Provide opportunities and programs focused on our people and place-based investments

- Enhanced the Stellar Communities Program to include a regional approach
- Expansion of placemaking programs
- Develop regional economic development and talent attraction program
- Partner with applicable stakeholders on water infrastructure issues
- Implement Blight Clearance Program revisions
- Research, build and create a Section 108 program
- Partner with Indiana Bond Bank to provide a gap funding program

### 2 Expand OCRA's role as a Center of Excellence

- Highlight best practices and community successes via communications mediums
- Support programs focused on rural health
- Coordinate regional community development conferences
- Facilitate the Taskforce on Rural Affairs
- Prioritize continuous improvement of agency services

### 3 Build capacity of rural leadership

- Expand community capacity building programs
- Engage youth involvement in leadership activities through curriculum development and programming
- Leverage existing successful leadership resources through mentorship opportunities
- Participate in the Opportunity Investment Consortium of Indiana

### 4 Support economic growth and preservation in downtown and commercial districts

- Grow and cultivate downtown revitalization efforts
- Deliver tactical placemaking training
- Create and launch Downtown Development Week
- Organize Midwest Main Street Conference
- Design second-story housing competition for Main Street communities

### 5 Facilitate strategies to address rural broadband access

- Collaborate with Director of Broadband Opportunities
- Establish grant program to fund planning activities for the installation of broadband
- Host Statewide Broadband Summit