



READI Quality of Place/Capital Project Request for Proposal

Overview

The *Smart Connected Communities 2030 Plan* serves as an outline of the strategies the South Bend – Elkhart region designed to increase talent attraction and retention, improve overall quality of place and quality of life, and amplify the impact of our entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation economy, while supporting our core regional economic development goals of:

- Raising post-secondary attainment among the region’s residents from 34 to 50 percent;
- Transforming net out-migration to a positive in-migration;
- Helping to establish 275 high-growth potential startups;
- Growing jobs in higher pay traded industry clusters by 20 percent; and
- Improving South Bend – Elkhart region’s national MSA percentile rank of minority income disparity from the 15th percentile to the 80th percentile.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is specifically focused on Quality of Place - capital projects that add amenities to our region.

Background

Over the last decade, the State of Indiana has provided support for a range of economic development efforts, especially the Regional Cities Initiative. With a focus on density, connectivity, and amenities, the \$42 million Regional Cities Initiative grant to our region has been invested as seed funding into a set of projects that are enhancing arts and culture, trails and parks, mixed-use housing, and more. The direct investment, including state grant funds, private investment, and local public sector matching funds, is over \$350 million.

In May of 2021 Governor Eric J. Holcomb announced the Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) program, a \$500 million initiative geared toward accelerating Indiana’s population growth by supporting regional economic development strategies focused on making Indiana cities and towns a magnet for talent. To achieve this goal, regions will invest into financial partnerships on quality of life, place, and opportunity projects. In December 2021 a formal recommendation for the distribution of \$500 million in READI funds to regions throughout the state of Indiana was made, with \$50 million allocated to the South Bend – Elkhart region.



A. Quality of Place / Quality of Life

To eliminate blight and create vibrant places that will attract and retain talent, the South Bend – Elkhart Regional Development Authority (RDA) has been supporting brick and mortar quality of place projects since receiving funding from the State of Indiana in 2016. The RDA prioritized investments that enhanced the region’s expansive natural resources, eliminated blight, and expanded arts and cultural amenities.

For READI, we are defining quality of place to include:

- **Affordable/Workforce Housing:** Amenities such as downtown housing and expanded retail entertainment options are needed in the region to retain and attract talent and residents. Housing levels across the region continue to approach all-time lows and the situation is creating inflationary pressure on the current housing stock. Housing continues to be in high demand and serves as a necessary component of vibrant, walkable urban cores. Synergies are co-located with parks, venues, healthcare, shopping, and other amenities to create an environment where all residents can thrive. With employers facing recruitment challenges because of housing costs, there is a particular need to increase the supply of rental units and workforce housing.

Workforce housing is housing that is affordable to workers and close to their jobs. It consists of homeownership, as well as rental housing, that can be reasonably afforded by a moderate to middle income household and located in acceptable proximity to workforce centers. The most common definition of workforce housing comes from the Urban Land Institute, which defines workforce housing as: “housing that is affordable to households earning 60 to 120 percent of the area median income.” It has also been defined as affordable if the housing costs are no more than 30 to 40 percent of income.

Area Median Income (AMI) is a statistic that is calculated annually by the federal agency of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Each household's income is compared to the incomes of all other households in the area. The resulting dollar value represents the most commonly occurring income in the area. While HUD calculates this figure for all household sizes (1 person through 8), the most common figure used as a frame of reference is a four-person household. The most recent (2021) HUD data for each county can be found here https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html#2021_query.

HUD calculates the AMI for a family of four as:



- \$67,500.00 in Elkhart County
 - \$67,800.00 in Marshall County
 - \$73,500.00 in St. Joseph County
- **Arts and Culture:** The built environment and programming within spaces improve access to the arts for everyone in the community. Attracting local makers, artisans, and entrepreneurs will contribute to sector diversification and improved quality of place. Previous investments were made to renovate the REES Theatre in downtown Plymouth and the Goshen Theater. These kinds of projects catalyze activity in city centers, offer jobs, and enhance the cities' creative vitality and reputation as communities that value culture.
 - **Economic Development:** Effective economic development enhances prosperity for the residents in our region and improves our quality of life. Strategic capital investments in economic development projects will make our region more resilient and drive continued innovation. Previous funding supported the renovation of the former Bayer facility into the new ETHOS Innovation Center and seeded the development of the Technology Training and Demonstration Center within the Studebaker Building 113.
 - **Recreation, Trails, Athletics, Health, and Wellness:** Investments are intended to highlight the abundant natural resources as part of creating high-quality communities across the region. A variety of recreational amenities are needed in addition to a low cost-of-living, low energy, and water costs.

Project Expectations

All projects will be expected to respond to questions relating to impact (outcomes and outputs) and diversity, equity, and inclusion in the RFP submission form.

The region has consistently communicated its commitment to inclusion in its [regional economic development plan](#). The region's goal is to improve income growth for minorities so that their income more closely matches that of the non-Hispanic White population (income equality). The RFP submission form includes a question asking how your project connects to this goal.



Outcomes and Outputs

Outputs (how much did we do?) represents the amount of service provided or produced by the project. Examples include: # of housing units built, # of miles of trails developed, # of people trained.

Outcomes (or “Is anyone better off?”) represent the ultimate purpose or goal of the project. Outcomes are changes in conditions, circumstances, behaviors, skills, etc. that result from the project. Examples include: # of visitors, # of new permanent jobs, or # of business start-ups that survive one year.

Each project will be asked to describe expected outputs and outcomes, and how they will be measured by the project. If awarded, projects will be expected to report this information to the RDA.

Applicants are encouraged to describe how their outcomes are connected to considerations of equity, diversity, and inclusion, in particular the region’s goal to improve minority incomes.

For example, a housing project might have output of building 50 units, an outcome goal of 50 percent of those units being owned or rented by families at 80 percent AMI, and 30 percent of those units being occupied or owned by minority households.

Applicants must complete the RFP at [XZY link](#). [\[link to submission form question document tbd\]](#)

B. General Process

All READI projects must pass three screens:

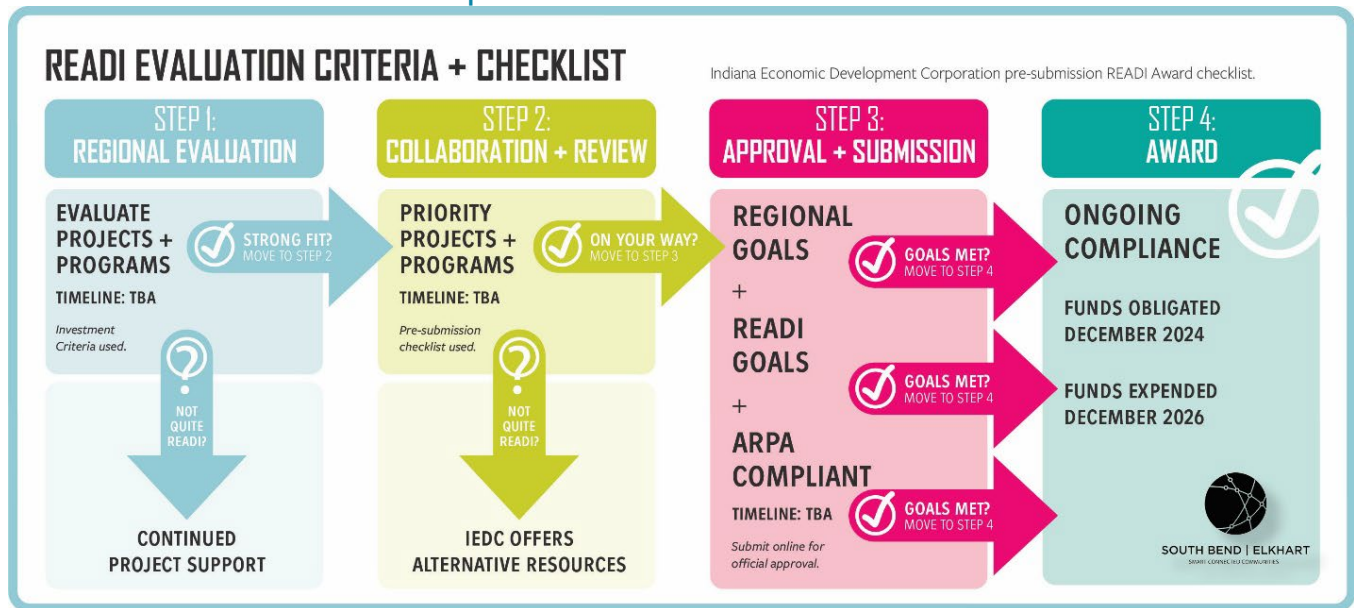
1. Fit within goals of [2030 Smart Connected Communities Plan](#), the South Bend – Elkhart Regional Economic Development Plan
2. Fit within [READI goals](#) of IEDC
3. Contain elements that are [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 \(ARPA\)](#) funding compliant

Following a review of each submission utilizing the Regional Evaluation Framework, a proposal will be deemed either eligible and prioritized, and will be selected to be recommended for an incentive from the READI award or deemed ineligible and/or misaligned with one or more of the three screens listed above. The RDA will present eligible and prioritized projects to the IEDC to



confirm the appropriate process to fund the project and comply with ARPA requirements. The IEDC could require more information at that time and will decide whether to allow the RDA to move forward with the recommended award. A development agreement will be negotiated and executed as the instrument to define the roles and responsibilities of the selected developer and the RDA. All awarded projects will need to go through a procurement process through the Federal grant administration online tool.

C. Evaluation Criteria in Step 1 of Overall READI Process



Investment Criteria

To review and vet READI project submissions, a prioritization tool will be used considering the following investment criteria:

- Project budget (including match requirements)
- Completion within the stipulated time frame
- Regional collaboration and partnership
- Quality of place impact
- Level of broad long-term impact
- Overall perception of the project

Additionally, there are subjective requirements including:



- Region-wide impact
- Ability to attract talent to the region
- Likelihood of bringing national recognition to the region
- Positive return on investment
- Firmness of match fund commitments from the public and private sectors
- Amount of READI funds as a percentage of the total project cost
- Clear project champion
- How likely the project is to achieve its goals

Lastly, the RDA will consider the following guiding factors: extent of public benefit, revitalization of existing vacant, blighted, or underutilized assets within the region, and embodiment of the goals of the READI program, such as regionalism and inclusivity of all communities.

D. Terms and Conditions

1. The RDA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or to make no award. The RDA further reserves the right to excuse technical defects in a proposal when, in its sole discretion, it is beneficial to the overall goal of the READI plan.
2. The RDA may require the proposer to retain a minimum 3-year ownership of the property.
3. Failure to execute the proposed project within the timeframe stated in the development agreement may result in revocation of the incentive.
4. Recipients are responsible for ensuring that any procurement using SLFRF funds, or payments under procurement contracts using such funds, are consistent with the procurement standards set forth in the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200.317 through 2 CFR 200.327, as applicable. The Uniform Guidance establishes in 2 CFR 200.319 that all procurement transactions for property or services must be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition, consistent with standards outlined in 2 CFR 200.320, which allows for non-competitive procurements only in circumstances where at least one of the conditions below is true: the item is below the micro purchase threshold; the item is only available from a single source; the public exigency or emergency will not permit a delay from publicizing a competitive solicitation; or after solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate. Recipients must have and use documented procurement procedures that are consistent with the standards outlined in 2 CFR 200.317 through 2 CFR 200.320. The Uniform Guidance requires an infrastructure for competitive bidding and contractor oversight, including maintaining written standards of



conduct and prohibitions on dealing with suspended or debarred parties. Your organization must ensure adherence to all applicable local, State, and federal procurement laws and regulations. For additional information on Uniform Guidance Requirements not applicable to these funds, please see [Sam.gov - Assistance Listings Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds](#).

5. Awardees are required to provide additional reporting that includes output, outcomes and additional metrics associated with the READI program.
6. Further terms will be negotiated and defined in the development stage of this process.

Quality of Place RFP

Submission Form (Question Preview)

Final 6.3.2022



SOUTH BEND | ELKHART
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Project or Name *

Short Text Box

Project Location

Project Location Address*

Street Address

City State / Province Postal / Zip Code

County *

Select One Option

- Elkhart
- Marshall
- St. Joseph

About the Lead Organization

Organization Name *

Short Text Box

Organization Mailing Address: *

Address fields

Organization Website: *

URL

Primary Contact Person's Name *

First Name Last Name

Contact Person's Title *

Short Text Box

Work Phone Number *

Please enter a valid phone number.

Mobile Phone Number *

Please enter a valid phone number.

Preferred Phone Number *

Picklist: Work/Mobile

Contact Person's Email *

example@example.com

Project Category

What, specifically, is your project category?*

Multi Select Option

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- Recreation, Trails, Athletics, Wellness
- Arts and Culture
- Housing
- Economic development

Project Details

Abstract (50 words-300 CHARACTER LIMIT). A description of the project or program anticipated outcomes and how it will help the region achieve its goals and vision. *

Text Box

Project Estimated Start Date *

Month Day Year

Estimated Milestones *

Long text Box (1000 characters)

Project End Date *

Month Day Year

Project Partners *

Please provide name(s) of partner organization(s) and their role.

*Partner Organization 1:**

*Partner Organization 1 Website: **

*Partner Organization 1 Role:**

*Partner Organization 2:**

*Partner Organization 2 Website: **

*Partner Organization 2 Role:**

*Partner Organization 3:**

*Partner Organization 3 Website: **

*Partner Organization 3 Role:**

Additional Partner comments: Long Text Box (Rich Text, 1000 characters)

Describe how success will be measured. *

Long Text Box (Rich Text, 2000 characters)

Describe alignment to [SCC 2030 Plan](#)

Please select which goal(s) best fits your project. [Maximum 3]*

Drop down menu (Multi-select with max of 3)

- *Educating a world-class workforce*
- *Recruiting and retaining great talent*

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REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

- *Industry Growth*
- *Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*
- *Helping Entrepreneurs*

Describe alignment. *

Long text box (2000 character limit)

Key Performance Outputs*

(Outputs are services or good produced, like # of units built or # of miles created)

Long Text Box (character limit 2000)

Key Performance Outcomes*

(Outcomes represent change, like % increase in # of visitors, increased sales revenue, changes in incomes or wages or assets for specific population(s)).

Long Text Box (character limit 2000)

What barriers does the project or program face? *

Long Text Box (character limit 2000)

Describe how the project will be financially sustainable. *

Long Text Box (character limit 2000)

Describe the impact the project will have as it relates to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. * Be as specific as you can on how your project supports the region's goal of improved incomes for minorities.

Long Text Box (character limit 2000)

ARPA Compliance

ARPA Expenditure Category*

Single Select Drop Down

- *Support public health*
- *Address negative economic impacts*
- *Serve disproportionately impacted communities*
- *Water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure*
- *Administrative expenses*

ARPA Category Reasoning*

Long Text Box (character limit 2000)

Budgetary Items

READI Grant Funds Requested* \$ value

Local Public Sector Funding (If none secured or promised, enter "0")* \$ value

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Is the funding already secured? Y/N

Private, Philanthropic or Non-Profit Sector Funds (If none secured or promised, enter "0")* \$ value

- **Is the funding already secured? Y/N**

Other (If none secured or promised, enter "0")* \$ value

Total Financial Commitments* \$ value

Please provide a description of funding coming from private and local public sources.*

Long Text Box (2000 characters)

Total Projected Costs* \$ value

Upload Budget Spreadsheet here.*

Required Submission Attachment: Project letter*

- Project Letter should outline several aspects of the project including:
 - o Development Team – describe composition of the development team, each member’s relevant experience, and the key personnel involved. Clearly identify role(s) as principal, general partner, project manager, or other.
 - o Proposed Use - detail the size and end-use of the new structure(s) and consider including relevant market analysis or general feasibility and sustainability of the new development. Linkage to the READI Regional Development Plan should be referenced.

Supplemental Attachments

Please upload any relevant documents, per the suggested areas below.

All documents relevant to the attachment section should be uploaded as one file. Meaning, if you have multiple letters of support, upload them as one PDF as opposed to an individual PDF for each letter.

- Ordinances/resolutions
- Cost estimates from qualified sources
- Architecture/engineering drawings
- Developer/Program Manager Qualifications
- Letters of Support
- Other relevant project documentation

UPLOAD HERE

IEDC/ARPA Acknowledgement

Please type your name below to acknowledge that you have reviewed the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) – READI Project Pre-Submission Checklist, and are willing to comply with the requirements therein, with the guidance of the South Bend – Elkhart Regional Partnership

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and the IEDC, for a component of the proposed project, if successfully awarded READI funding. The “Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) – READI Project Pre-Submission Checklist” can be found [at this link](#).

TYPE NAME HERE: *