

# LAWRENCE COUNTY INDIANA YOUTH ACTION PLAN

2014-2015



Prepared for & guided by:  
Participating students at Bedford North Lawrence High School  
& Mitchell High School

May 13, 2015

## Executive Summary

Ball State University has prepared a plan in accordance with the expressed objectives and guidance of participating students at Bedford North and Mitchell High Schools. Five initiatives are proposed as contributing to Lawrence County's attraction to young households and adolescents. These initiatives require modest funding and capital improvements, focus on congregative activities of neighbor-to-neighbor and to abet commerce and tourism, and symbolize the spirit of service, evocative of Lawrence County and more broadly Indiana rural life. Each initiative presents viable funding sources and an action plan.

### **Intergenerational Learning**

In Lawrence County there are an estimated 13,948 residents aged 55+ and 5,252 residents aged 15 to 24. Both are neglected, represent an age-gap in communication and shared experiences, and witness a significant opportunity cost. Modeled upon the Creating Caring Communities initiative of the Canadian Province of British Columbia, seniors are paired with adolescents to engage in conversational and experiential exchanges, such as community gardens. The mentoring benefits the younger partner and the renewed sense of usefulness and respect is gratifying to the elder. These are equals while remaining non-peers. This builds community.

### **Renewed Bedford Farmers Market**

The current Bedford Farmers Market is an open air market held on Saturdays from May to October at the Lawrence County Courthouse Square in the heart of Downtown Bedford. It lacks the vitality of the Orleans Farmers Market, voted the 10<sup>th</sup> best in the nation. In 2002 a small group established Orange County Home Grown, a nonprofit volunteer organization. This group had a mission to promote small-town neighborly values in the form of a farmers market, which not only sells food but provides entertainment and promotes congregative activities. Today the market has grown in popularity with over 170 vendors. We ought to organize and follow this lead.

### **Greenway Trail**

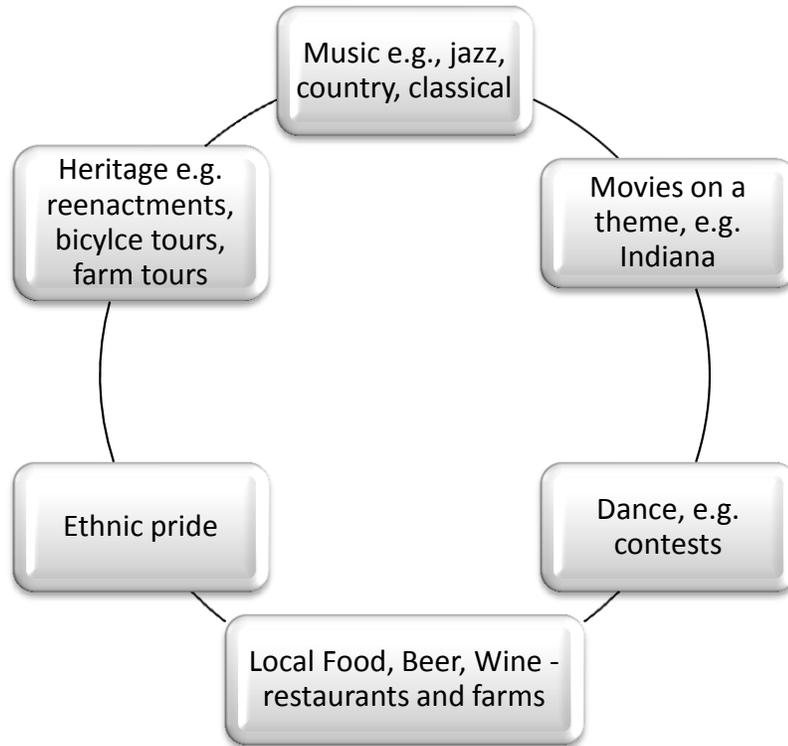
This initiative seeks to provide better connectivity between Mitchell and Bedford in the form of a recreational greenway. The greenway "trail with rail" would parallel the abandoned CSX line that runs north and south, and with access to Mill Spring recreation. The modest strip of trail could be dedicated by CSX, compensated by tax benefits, and improvements made available through volunteer labor and funds identified for materials and equipment.

### **Community Wide Park Day**

Lawrence County has an abundance of parks, many unrecognized and in need of maintenance and improvements. A Community Wide Park day will allow this better recognition, and provide public cost saving initiatives by promoting volunteerism, particularly among adolescents. The City of Austin, Texas has been hosting "It's My Park Day" for the past 13 years, with the aforementioned benefits.

**Development of New Festivals**

Lastly, new festivals and events are planned by our students, with case study success stories and funding sources associated with each. A typology is depicted:



## Excerpts April 2014 Application

Apply the \$500 Award + local match  
for Christmas gift cards for the needy

Volunteerism

4 star  
schools

Connections within the region – IU/ French  
Lick/ Spring Mill [a bike path to go fishing]

“fun” neighborhoods, “cool” houses, fast Internet  
– **Why be limited just because we are rural?!!!**

Make more money  
than our parents

Agricultural  
literacy

Food  
security

Community  
service

## Acknowledgements

The My Community My Vision team would like to thank and acknowledge several contributors that have made this process possible:

### **Bedford North Lawrence High School**

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**Lieutenant Governor Sue Ellspermann and staff**

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Matt Litten, Environmental student mentor

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## Preamble

The recommendations found in this plan are the result of the cooperation between Ball State University, Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), and participating students of My Community My Vision at Bedford North Lawrence High School and Mitchell High School for AY 2014-2015. This plan was delivered on April 13, 2015, at the State Library in Indianapolis before 90 student participants from five communities, their BSU collegiate mentors, high school faculty liaisons, Lieutenant Governor Sue Ellspermann, IHCDA Executive Director Jacob Sipe, and key staff. Those participating from Lawrence County presented the largest contingent of 29 students.

*“If our democracy is to grow in its capacity to solve its weighty environmental, economic, and Social problems, it will be because young people are learning to participate effectively in public life. It is because young people are discovering that involvement in public life is not what we leave to a public official to do for us or to us. It is an exciting, rewarding dimension of the “good life” we all want”.*

– Frances Morre Lappe, Center for Living Democracy

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### Purpose

The plain aims to develop initiatives and strategies that are contributing to “brain drain” within Indiana’s rural communities. Students from Bedford North Lawrence High School and Mitchell High School have established a partnership with their Ball State University Student mentor, Austin Brass to develop a Lawrence County Youth Action Plan. Furthermore, The Lawrence County Youth Action Plan will be presented to public officials and leaders to show that youth have a unified vision for the future of their community. Also, this plan can assist in making community decisions that are important to the quality of life of its current youth.

My Community, My Vision is a contract partnership between the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) and Ball State University, and serving five [5] rural and small town communities throughout the State. This service is through adolescent youth leadership in planning and civic engagement with affiliations at one or more regional high schools and/ or area FFA-Indiana [“Future Farmers of America”]. The program was developed with the belief that the youth of Indiana’s rural and small communities should not have to leave their hometowns in order to live their future. To that end, the My Community, My Vision program has the following goals:

1. Empower the youth to develop a vision for their community;
2. Develop a collaboration among community partners and leaders;
3. Develop, promote and engage leadership in the youth of Indiana’s rural and small communities;
4. Promote youth to return to their hometowns after completing higher education;

5. Promote comprehensive community development with a focus on affordable housing, agriculture and/or community based agriculture, leadership, transportation, community health, entrepreneurship and artistic/cultural components;
6. Promote Indiana’s rural and small communities as areas of destination.

*Performing Roles*

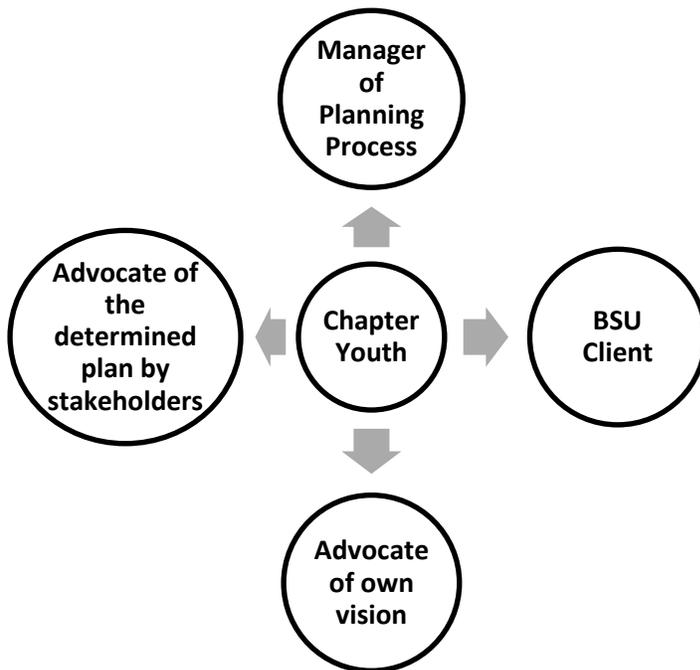
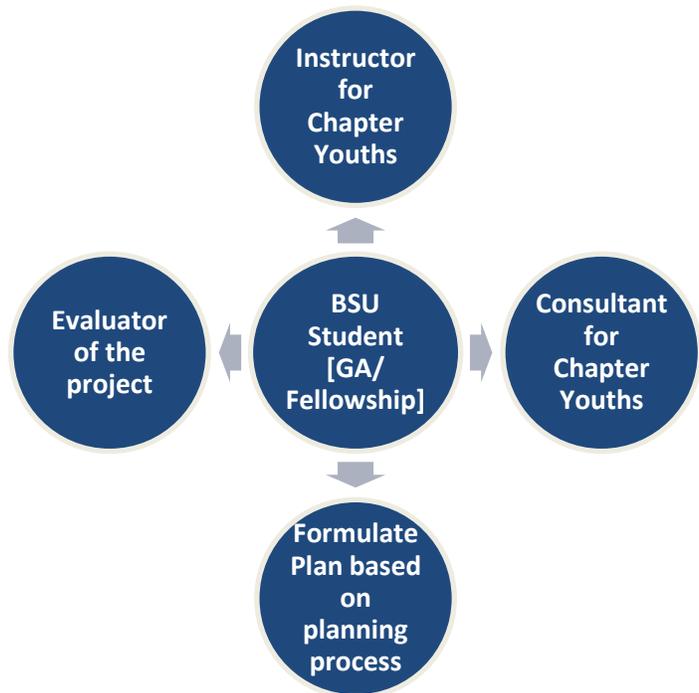
***Instructions to BSU Student-Instructors***

Excerpt from Professor Frankel’s correspondence with IHCD:

I am sensitive to the intimidation factor of doubling up on school. Nevertheless, there remains the unavoidable commitment to learn, to the disciplined process of planning, and to improve the place where you live; these are your primary guides in awarding five [5] chapters.

My view of BSU’s role is to be both consultant and teacher.

First, my seven students are capable of producing a plan [strategic, community/ economic development, ecological/



agricultural, or even comprehensive plan]. This plan will address What? [specific policy recommendations] Why? [based on findings of our analysis] and How? [an actionable element with feasibility addressed].

Second, these are extraordinary students in acumen and enthusiasm, and they will instruct. The learning includes civic responsibilities and actions, the role of planning, including stakeholder engagement and the politics of plan adoption and implementation, and the substance of the various plan elements [e.g., land use, economic development,

and ecological management]. I would rank the second objective primary to the first, although the stated “deliverable” is the plan.

I am viewing the awarded Chapter as the client, and the community’s stakeholders as the constituency [the public to be served]. Ask the rhetorical question: Would a planning client turn down a contract due to inordinate time commitment? [In effect, we extend the schooling by a Saturday a month.] Would these chapters turn down a free plan that will be useful to their communities?

My “lessons” are exercises to open the minds of these high schoolers to a new knowledge base, somewhat outside of their education so far. The exercises are in the nature of thoughtful essays and choices in both prioritizing goals and objectives of the plan and in selecting among alternative strategies to remediate a set of community problems and issues. In large part these choices will be driven [significantly influenced] by stakeholder engagement involving a productive discourse. These essays and choices will be a collective and collaborative response, not individual to each student. We enable them to learn, and in return they direct us.

Further, the “owners” of the plan remain, as always, with the constituents, and the students must learn this important lesson as well...as in “this is not a term paper, even an essay term paper.” In short, respect the planning process, which is democratic. The local governing body has the authority to amend, accept, and/ or reject the plan.



Significantly, this is a learning-centered process, in contrast to teaching-centered. The chapter students must be fully engaged in their own learning and responsibilities as “the client.” The BSU student-instructors must listen and adapt to what works best.

## Introduction

This plan is a representation of My Community My Vision (MCMV), a program conceived by Indiana Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann in an effort to engage small town youth in community planning. Partnering in creating this vision is the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) and Ball State University (BSU). The initiative of this project was to encourage the next generation of youth to take an active leadership role in civic affairs that can influence the future of their hometown.

Across rural America, small towns are facing the influences of widespread “brain drain”, resulting in an out-migration of a community’s brightest youth to large cities with greater economic opportunity and resources. MCMV offered students an opportunity to participate in the creation and development of an action plan for their community. Questions were asked about how the students felt about their community, and what opportunities they could foresee for the future. Local leaders also sent out letters in support for their respective community application. As the first year of the MCMV initiative, IHCDA received eleven applications from communities around the State of Indiana. Five applications were chosen by IHCDA on the basis of the student’s vision, involvement of students, and how well application questions were answered.

These five communities have been awarded the opportunity to work with a BSU graduate student assigned to mentor and develop the creation of a community plan. The Ball State Student mentor works as an educator of planning, and helps guide the students through the planning process leading to final implementation. Several meetings between the Ball State Student and High School Steering Committees have taken place to determine initiatives, goals, and visions for the plan.

The development of this plan serves as an immersive learning opportunity for all students involved along with each Ball State student mentor. For High School students involved this was an opportunity to be exposed in the engaging process of developing a planning document while learning more about the field of urban planning. The development of this plan allows students to have an acknowledged vision for their community, and builds upon civic engagement and leadership skills that are significant for community growth and development.

## Plan Elements

### *Planning Process*

#### **Spring 2014**

Dr. Bruce Frankel, professor of urban planning at Ball State University conducted meetings with the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) about the possibility of having a My Community, My Vision program for the upcoming fall. With continuing discussions, five student mentors, one economic analysis mentor, and one environmental mentor were chosen to participate in the program.

#### **AUGUST 2014**

**ICHDA** sent out flyers for applications of the My Community My Vision program in early August 2014. From the applications received, five winning communities were selected: Lawrence County, Switzerland County, Washington County, Hanover, and Rushville.

#### **SEPTEMBER 2014**

The first chapter meeting was held for winning communities. At these meetings, Ball State Student mentors and participating high school students met to discuss their visions for an upcoming plan.

#### **NOVEMBER 2014**

A second chapter meeting was held at the Columbus, Indiana City Hall. Here the economic analysis and environmental student mentors gave presentations for each community, and how specific initiatives could be applied to each.

#### **December 2014**

A Community leadership meeting was held at the Bedford Chamber Of Commerce to discuss the development and impact of the Lawrence County Youth Action Plan. An open forum discussion was led by the Ball State student mentor along with several community leaders including Chamber President Jamie Medlock, Business and Community Development Director Marla Jones, and Bedford Mayor Shawna Girgis.

#### **February 2015**

The Ball State student mentor met with students at Bedford North Lawrence High School to discuss initiatives for the Youth Action Plan. Student's participating were from all grade levels, including the Freshman Youth Leadership Group whom contributed to the application process. The meeting included the development of a SWOT analysis. This is where students identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that they felt were existing in the Lawrence County community.

**March 2015**

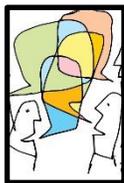
The Ball State student mentor met the art instructor Mrs. Becky Mason of Mitchell High School. Here we discussed initiatives for Mitchell that would be beneficial to the goals of participating Mitchell Students.

**April 2015**

On April 13 a convocation was held at the State Library in Indianapolis, attended by 90 high school student participants, 29 from Lawrence County, and the Lieutenant Governor Sue Ellspermann and her staff, IHCDA Executive Director Jacob Sipe and his staff, and Professor Bruce Frankel, program manager at Ball State and the collegiate mentors. The Lawrence County plan was presented and the entire two-hour event filmed for a documentary.

*Priorities*

The development of the Lawrence County Youth Action plan lies within the implementation of its initiatives and recognition of issues that have been identified by students. The plan should be a valuable for future community improvement actions. If successful, this plan will address the following requests from student at Bedford North Lawrence High School, and Mitchell High School:



Intergenerational Learning Initiative



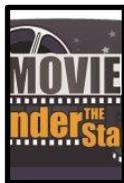
Renewed Farmers Market in Bedford



Greenway Trail Connecting Bedford, Spring Mill & Mitchell



Community Wide Park Day



Development of New Festivals & Community Events

## *County Profile*

This section provides an overview of the county's history, geography, and demographics.

### History

The history of Lawrence County, along with the communities of Bedford and Mitchell. Also, remarks of some of the most notable citizens from Lawrence County such as Astronauts Virgil "Gus" Grissom, Kenneth Bowersox, Charles Walker, and BNL and IU basketball player Damon Bailey.

#### **Notable Citizens from Lawrence County**

##### **Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom**

Born on April 3, 1926 in Mitchell, Grissom was an original NASA astronaut and test pilots. Grissom came from humble beginnings, and graduated from Mitchell High School. In 1946 he enrolled at Purdue University, and became an air-force pilot after graduation. In 1959 Grissom was selected to be one of seven astronauts to be part of the Project Mercury astronauts. On January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1967 Grissom passed away during a test launch of Apollo 1 at Cape Canaveral, Florida, he was only 40 years old. Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom remains a true hometown hero to Mitchell and Lawrence County today. Each year Mitchell celebrates "Gus Grissom Days", and a respected memorial was established in 1971 at Spring Mill State Park in his honor.

##### **Kenneth Dwaine "Sox" Bowersox**

Born on November 14, 1956, Bowersox is one of three astronauts from Lawrence County. He graduated from Bedford High School in 1975, and went onto the United State Naval Academy to study aerospace engineering. Bowersox was selected by NASA in 1987 to be an astronaut candidate, and took his first flight to space in 1992. In 2010 he was inducted to the Astronaut Hall of Fame.

##### **Charles D. Walker**

Born on August 29, 1948 in Bedford, Walker flew three spaces shuttle missions in 1984 and 1985 as specialist for the McDonnell Douglas Corporation. He is a 1966 graduate of Bedford High School, and continued his education at Purdue University. Walker was the first non-government individual to fly in space.

##### **Damian Bailey**

Born on October 21<sup>st</sup> 1971 in Lawrence County, Bailey is a prominent basketball player who played for Indiana University. In 1986, *Sports Illustrated* named him the countries best 9<sup>th</sup> grade hoopster. He also told the magazine that, "BNL had a lot in common with Hickory. Not because we're a small school. We're one of the biggest in the state. But we had nobody over 6-3, and no one thought we could win it". As a senior Bailey lead BNL to the 1990 Indiana state championship. In Bailey's first three seasons at Indiana University he had 87 victories, and later was on the cover of *Sports Illustrated*. After his career

with Indiana, he was recruited by the NBA team Indiana Pacers. Today Bailey is retired from his legendary career of professional basketball.

### Political Profile

#### **Lawrence County**

County Seat: Bedford

Founded: 1818

Area: 449 square miles

Population: 46,134

Lawrence County has a topography dominated by rolling hills, rivers, and creeks. Limestone and spring water are found in abundance. The county has many caverns as a result of its geologic nature of limestone. The primary crops grown are corn and soybeans, and cattle, hogs, and horses are also raised in the rural areas of the county.

Lawrence County was established in 1818 and named after naval Capt. James Lawrence of the *Chesapeake*, a war time hero wounded in action during the war of 1812. The County Seat of Bedford was authorized in 1825 after the county's initial seat of Palestine proved to be a malaria-infested death trap.

#### **Bedford**

Founded: 1825

Area: 12.16 square miles

Population: 13,413

Bedford was named by pioneer Joseph Rawlins after Bedford County, Tennessee. A major growth factor for Bedford was its development around the limestone industry, resulting in Bedford becoming the "Limestone Capital of the World". Bedford and Lawrence County is known for being the exporter of limestone used to construct many iconic structures such as the Empire State Building, Biltmore Mansion, and the National Cathedral. Today Bedford is home to many historic structures constructed with native limestone, Lawrence County Historical Museum, and the recently established Milwaukee recreation trail.

#### **Mitchell**

Founded: 1853

Area: 3.29 square miles

Population: 4,350

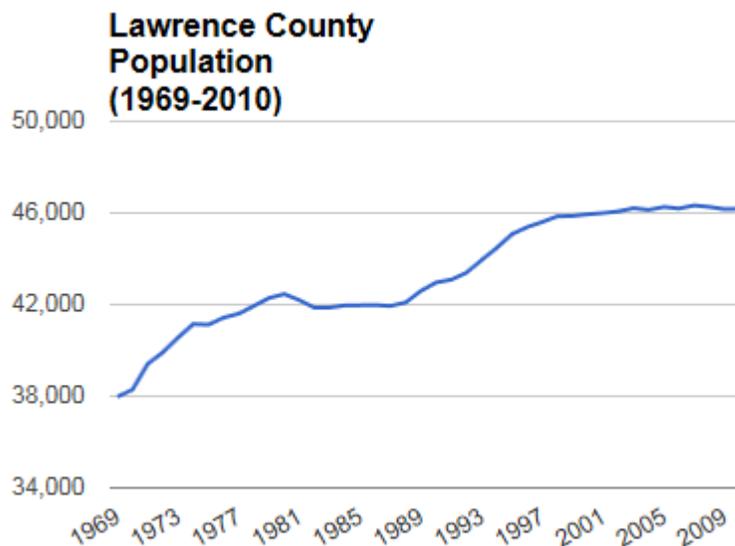
Mitchell was laid out in 1853 as a result of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad. The city was named after Ormsby McKnight Mitchell, a chief engineer and land surveyor. Mitchell is best known as being the hometown of original astronaut Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom. Today Mitchell is home to the widely celebrated Persimmon Festival, Spring Mill State Park, and the Mitchell Opera House built in 1902.

### Demographics

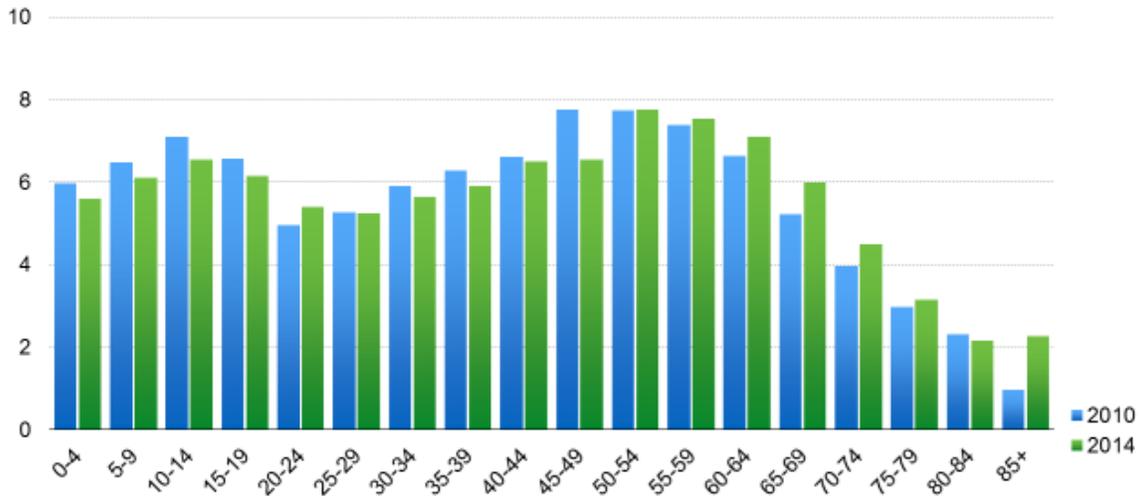
The Demographics section is characterized of population, age, gender, race, occupation, housing, and educational attainment.

#### Population

Lawrence County has seen population increase since 1969. According to the Center for Business and Economic Research at Ball State University, population increases with times of heavy agricultural and industrial employment.



# Change in Population Distribution



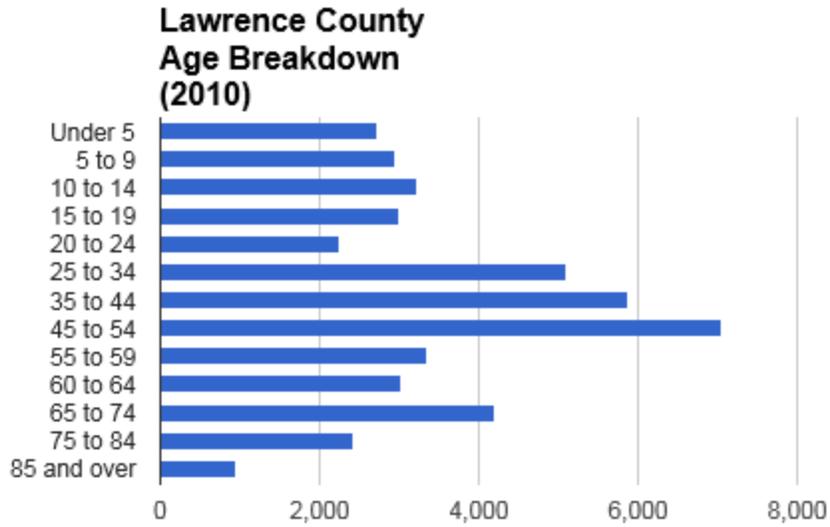
	Lawrence County	Indiana
2014 Total Population	46,185	6,581,982
2000-2014 Annual Growth Rate	0.04%	0.57%
2014 Median Age	42.6	37.6
2014 Unemployment Rate	6.7%	6.3%



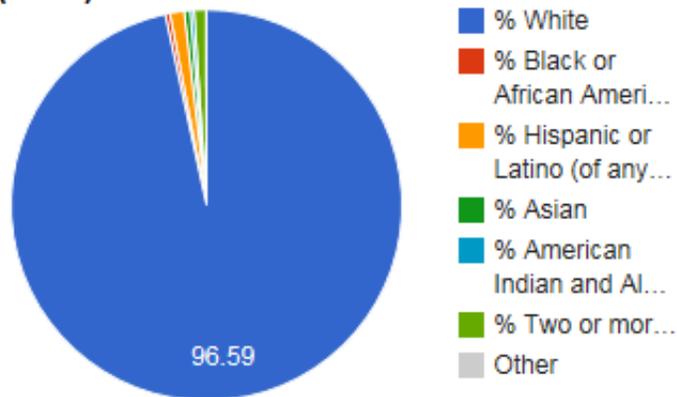
MY COMMUNITY. MY VISION

## Age Breakdown

According to 2010 data by the Center for Business and Economic Research at Ball State University, a large segment of the older population exists, but there is a smaller segment of younger population within the county.

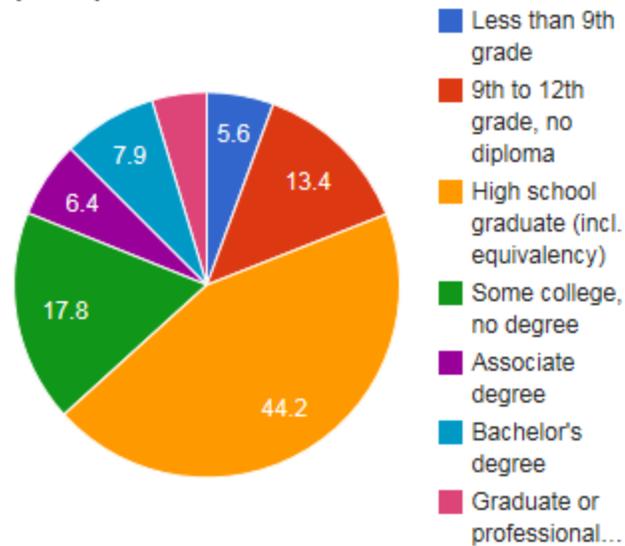


### Lawrence County Ethnic Makeup (2010)



Lawrence County has a racial makeup that is similar to other counties with rural characteristics in Indiana.

**Lawrence County  
Educational Attainment, Percent of  
Population 25+ Years Old  
(2010)**



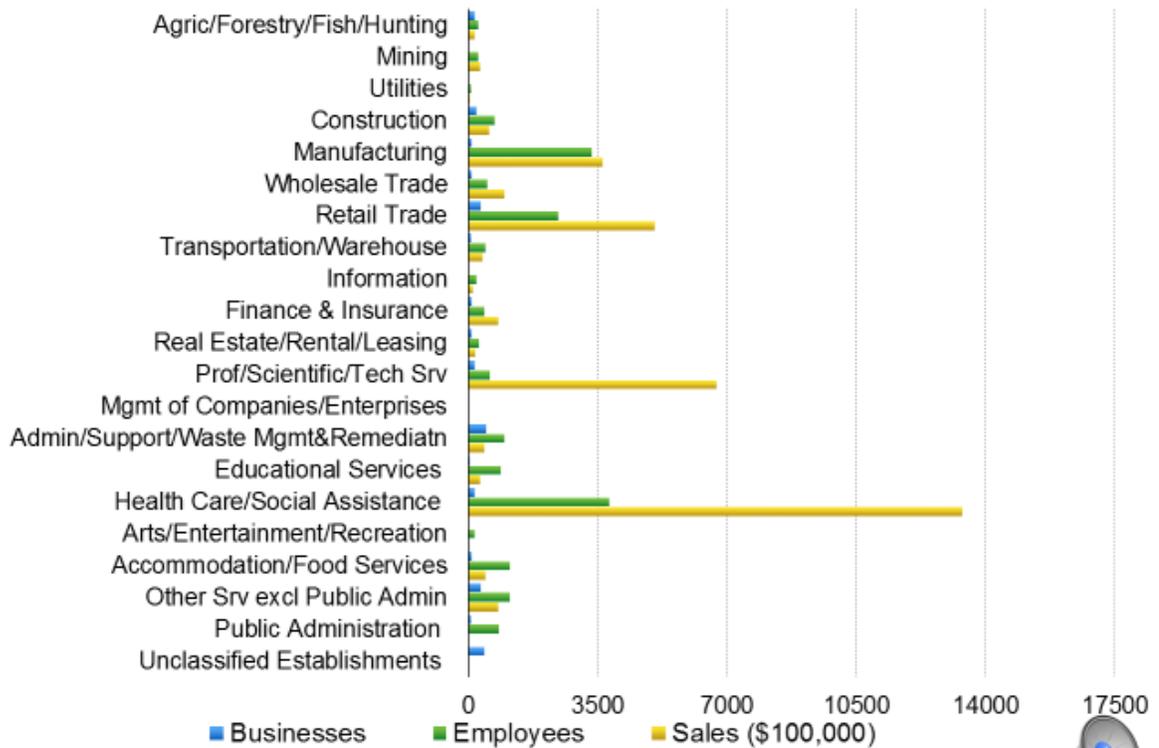
Data obtained from the U.S. Census show the number of adults in Lawrence County in correlation with education they have obtained. According to the Center for Business and Economic Research at Ball State University, the relative age of the county population has an influence on education statistics as older adults are less likely to have completed high school or obtained a college degree.

### Economy & Retail Capacity

The ensuing two graphs depict the County's economy. The first traces business establishments, employees and dollar sales volume by industry. Health care and social assistance represents the fewest firms, but one of the largest work forces and by far the largest sales volume. Profession, scientific and technical services employ few but achieve the second largest sales. Retail trade and manufacturer are third and fourth, respectively, in level of economic activity.

Retail capacity demonstrates excess demand for 70,195 s.f. of clothing stores, 51,389 s.f. for health and personal care retail, and 28,309 s.f. for electronics and appliances. This represents that the purchasing power within Lawrence County must drive to other places to make purchases, and that would be better satisfied locally. Alternately, Lawrence County retailers attract outside demand in the left hand side of the chart.

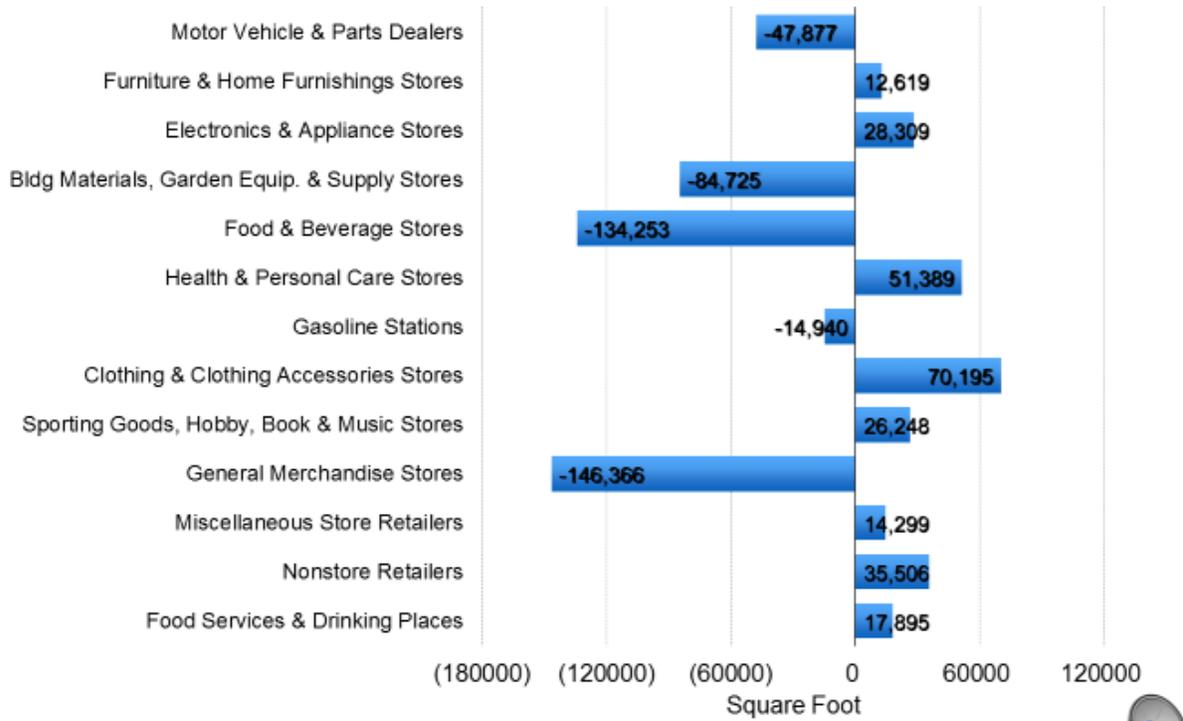
# Businesses cf. Employees cf. Sales

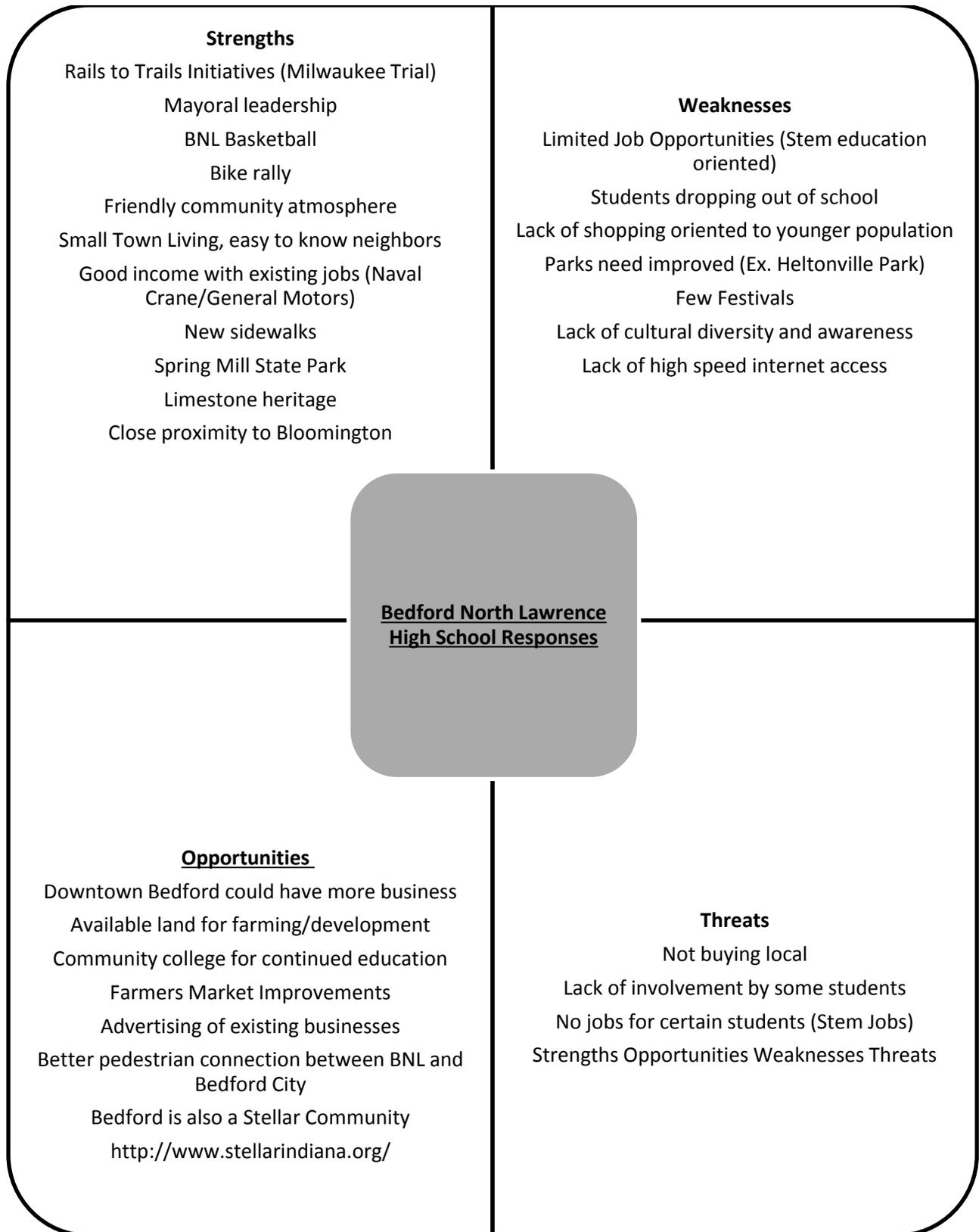


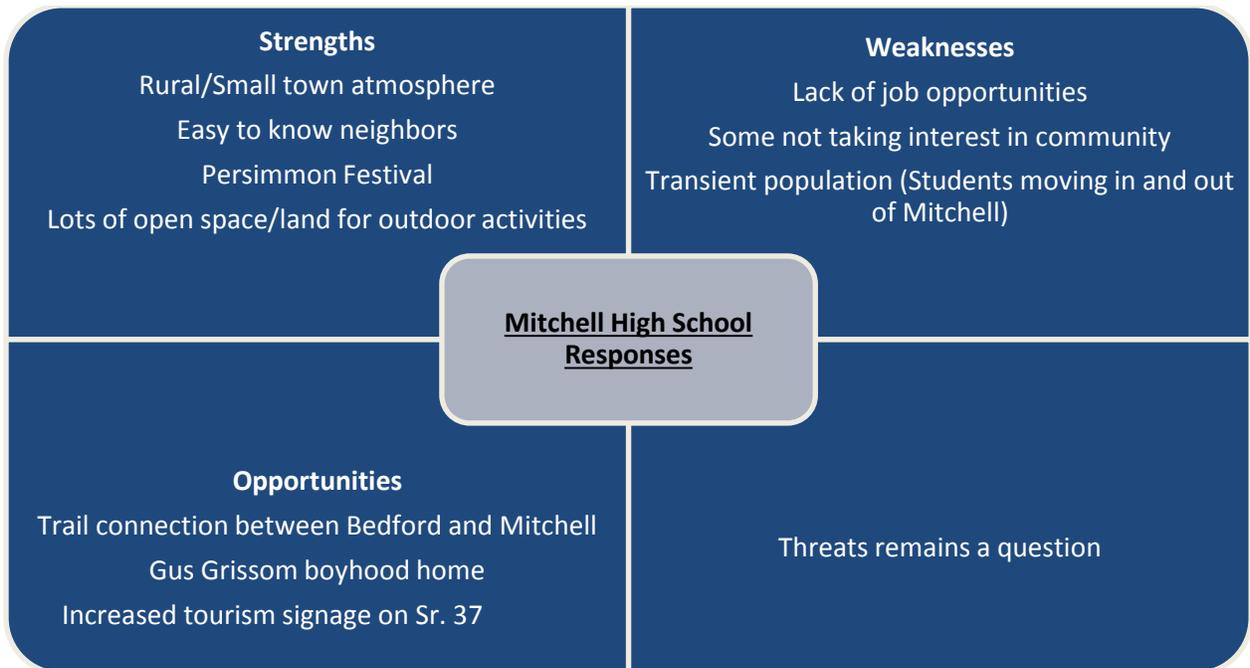
MY COMMUNITY. MY VISION



# Retail Supply/Demand







*INITIATIVES & IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS*

This section describes five community initiative and actions that students want to see implemented or improved in Lawrence County.

Improving relations  
with older and  
younger  
generations

Improved Bedford  
Farmers Market

Development of a  
Memorial Walk

Community Wide  
Park Day

Development of  
New Festivals &  
Community Events

### **Funding Sources**

Funding opportunities at federal, state, and local levels are listed to ensure that initiatives of the Lawrence County Youth Action Plan can be funded.

### **Funding Methods**

Funding opportunities at federal, state, and local levels are listed to help ensure the success of the LCYAP (Lawrence County Youth Action Plan). While it is not a guarantee that funds will be available for a certain initiative, the list of resources can be considered when evaluating the options of funding for a particular project and initiative.

## 1. IMPROVED RELATIONS BETWEEN OLDER AND YOUNGER GENERATIONS

- A) Build connections between youth and senior population
- B) Increase social capital and mentorship within Lawrence County

**Lawrence County  
Age Breakdown  
(2010)**

Age Range	People	Percent
<b>Under 5 years</b>	2,723	5.9%
<b>5 to 9 years</b>	2,955	6.41%
<b>10 to 14 years</b>	3,231	7%
<b>15 to 19 years</b>	2,995	6.49%
<b>20 to 24 years</b>	2,257	4.89%
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	5,094	11.04%
<b>35 to 44 years</b>	5,875	12.73%
<b>45 to 54 years</b>	7,056	15.29%
<b>55 to 59 years</b>	3,361	7.29%
<b>60 to 64 years</b>	3,025	6.56%
<b>65 to 74 years</b>	4,188	9.08%
<b>75 to 84 years</b>	2,413	5.23%
<b>85 years and over</b>	961	2.08%

According to the 2010 U.S. Census of Lawrence County, there are an estimated 13,948 residents aged 55+ and 5,252 residents aged 15 to 24. The largest segment of population in the county is ranged 45 to 54 years, making up 15.29% of the population (2010 stats). In a county where there is a greater population of residents aged 55 to 64, than from 15 to 24, it is important to have opportunities that allow the youth population to remain in Lawrence County. Also, it is of equal importance to create an environment that accommodates the older population of the community.

In many communities where there is a significant age gap, older and younger generations will express lack of understanding and concern for the other generation. Connections between youth and seniors

have become less common in recent history. This social divide can create generational isolation and missed learning opportunities. However, when young and old come together it is common to see astounding things happen. Young and old may have differences, yet can find perspectives that together can have crucial impacts on public policy decisions.

### Why is this Important?

# cultivating healthy places

In discussing initiatives for the Lawrence County Youth Action Plan, most every student participated highlighted the generational difference from older Lawrence County residents with its current youth. It is important to foster the development of intergenerational relationships. Not only does this bridge generations closer again, but creates a better sense of social responsibility while

building mutual respect. This sort of contribution is crucial for community development to support initiatives outlined in the Lawrence County Youth Action Plan.

### RECOMMENDATION:

Seek out a group of senior citizens in Lawrence County to volunteer in an Intergeneration Connection Program. These senior citizens would pair with participating students from Bedford North Lawrence and Mitchell High Schools. For example, seniors that have retired from certain career fields can meet with students to have engaging meetings. This intergenerational social connection can create a lasting relationship.

### Case Study: Creating Intergenerational Connections in British Columbia

The Canadian Province of British Columbia has established a Creating Caring Communities initiative to bring older and younger people together. They have recognized that the basic human need to connect with others has more than just a mutual connection.

### FARM FRIEND GROUPS

The Land Food Community Garden at the University of British Columbia has introduced



school children, youth, and retired adults an intergenerational approach to growing food.

## 2. A RENEWED FARMERS MARKET FOR BEDFORD

A viable Farmers Market benefits Bedford and the Lawrence County Community. A successful farmers market is important because it allows local farmers to sell their produce, benefits the local economy, brings people into Downtown Bedford, and strengthens a community's social fabric. Also, the farmers market allows consumers to purchase fresh and local products while making healthy choices.

### **Why is this Important?**

Participating students of the Lawrence County Youth Action Plan have all recognized the Farmers Market as a reason one might visit Downtown Bedford. However, the current farmers market was stated as being small, not exciting, and most of all not like the one in nearby Orleans. Many students travel with their families on weekends to shop at the Orleans farmers market. In a given My Community My Vision survey, most participating Bedford North Lawrence High School students identified Orleans, Indiana as their favorite other small town.

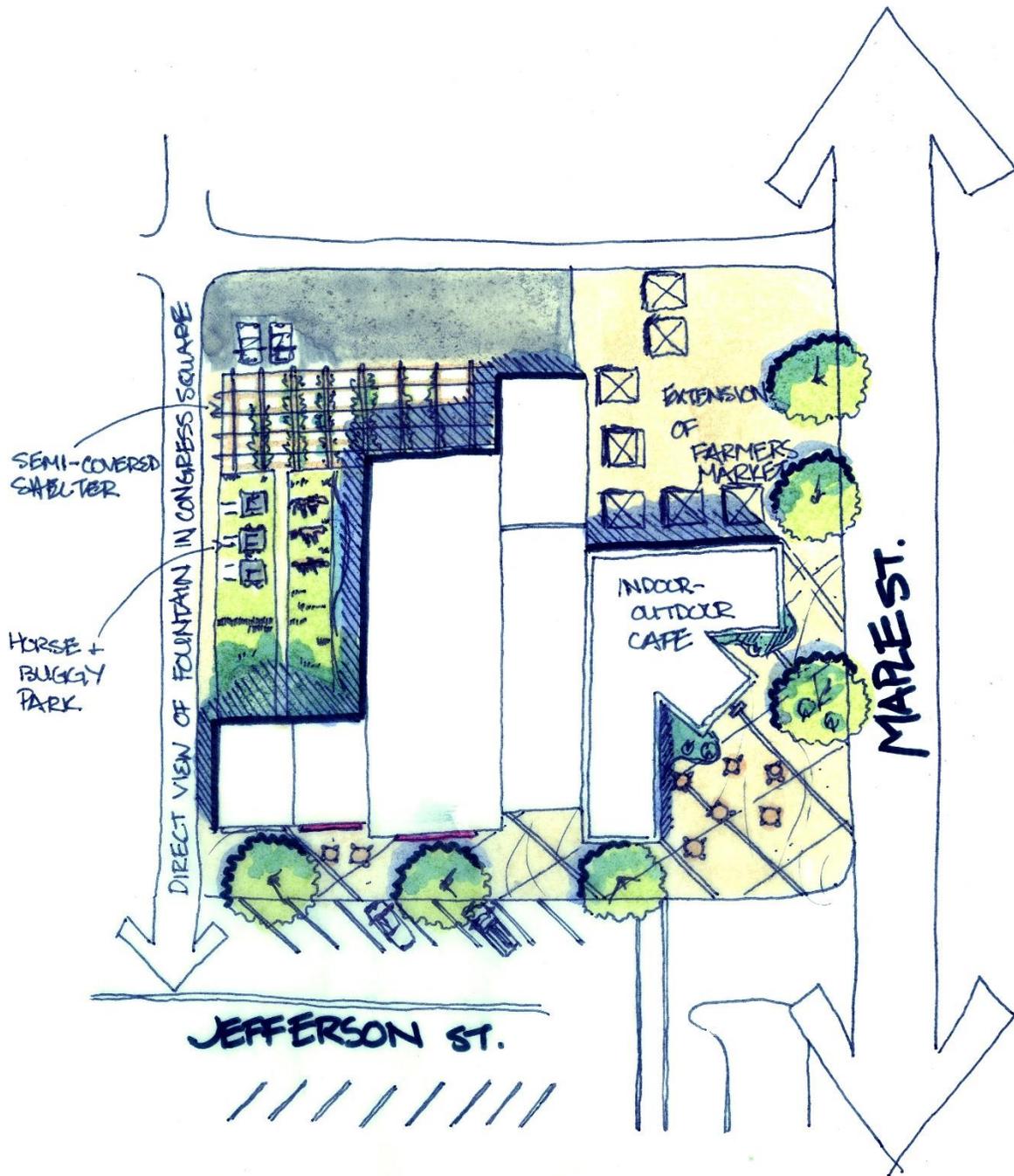


### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The current Bedford Farmers Market is an open air market held on Saturdays from May to October at the Lawrence County Courthouse Square in the heart of Downtown Bedford. Improving community knowledge and better advertisement of the Farmers Market can better promoted according to students. Also, a greater diversity of goods and services can be offered. For example, the Orleans Farmers Market has musical entertainment, crafts, and unique vendors. It is recommended that Bedford students seek out a grassroots group to create a more active and viable Farmers Market on the Bedford Square.

### **CASE STUDY: Orleans, Indiana Farmers Market**

How did the small town of Orleans, Indiana (2,142) get voted the 10<sup>th</sup> most popular farmer market in the U.S.? In 2002 a small group established Orange County Home Grown, a nonprofit volunteer organization. This group had a mission to promote small-town neighborly values in the form of a farmers market. The first farmers market the organization started was in an unshaded parking lot in Downtown Paoli with 9 vendors. The next year the market moved north to Orleans where it is currently located in a shaded park near downtown. Today the market has grown in popularity with over 170 vendors. The Orleans farmers market is regarded as place to not just buy crafts and produce, but for socializing and entertainment. The economic impact of the farmers market has transformed Orleans, and draws visitors and vendors from surrounding Counties like Lawrence. Downtown businesses have also improved sales by the increased foot traffic from the farmers market.



Depiction block of a farmers market in Orleans, IN:

*FUNDING SOURCES:*

Farm Aid

[http://www.farmaid.org/site/c.q15IhNVJsE/b.2723745/k.9953/Grant\\_Guidelines.htm](http://www.farmaid.org/site/c.q15IhNVJsE/b.2723745/k.9953/Grant_Guidelines.htm)

Blooming Prairie Foundation

<http://www.bloomingprairiefoundation.org/>

Clif Bar Family

<http://clifbarfamilyfoundation.org>

Social Venture Partners

<http://www.socialventurepartners.org/get-involved/apply-for-a-grant/>

Local Business support

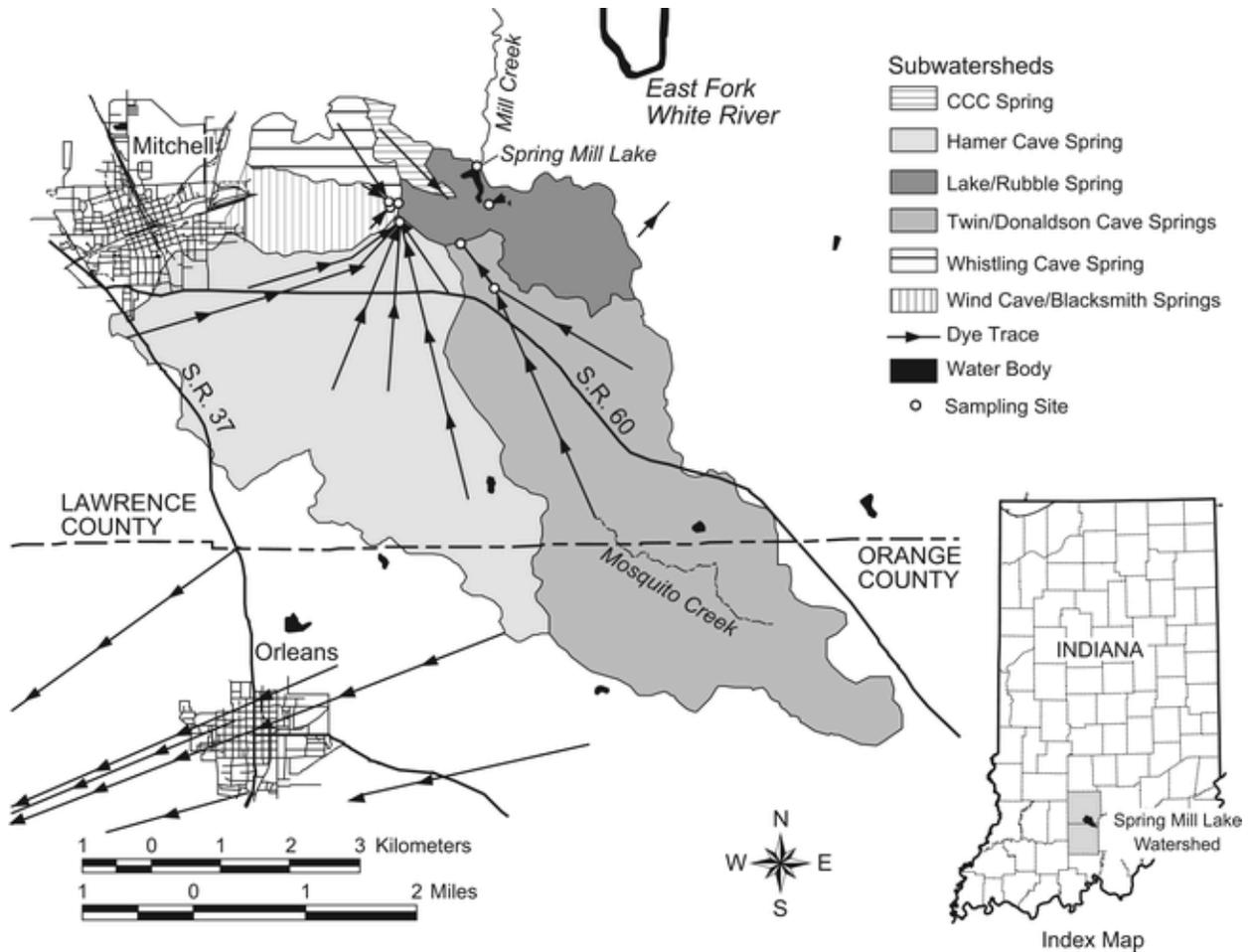
**3. DEVELOPMENT OF A GREENWAY TRAIL TO CONNECT BEDFORD, SPRING MILL & MITCHELL**

*“We envision riding bikes from Spring Mill to Bedford, and walking on a trail system to BNL to Mitchell High School”- Lawrence County Freshman Leadership Academy*

This initiative seeks to provide better connectivity between Mitchell and Bedford in the form of a recreational greenway. The greenway trail would parallel the existing CSX owned rail line that runs north and south between Mitchell and Bedford.

Map depicting Spring Mill and watersheds:





**RECOMMENDATION**

The current rail line is considered abandoned, and there is not foreseeable action for CSX to give up its rail line for alternative purposes. Furthermore, the existing rail line can serve as a future economic asset for Lawrence County. An alternative solution would be to create a “rails with trails” initiative. The recreation trail would run parallel to the railroad track on adjoining land. The land along the rail line can be purchased or leased from the Railroad Company or landowners.



Rails-with-trails provide safe transportation networks for pedestrians and bicycles. According to key findings by the national rails-to-trails conservancy, there are 161 rails-with-trails in the United States in 41 states. Studies show that a well-designed pathway can provide a safe transportation alternative and reduces the amount of trespassers whom use rail tracks as shortcuts. The growing trend of rail-with-trail developments alongside railroads has increased 260 percent since 2000.

## Case Study: The Mountain Division Trial



The Maine Mountain Division Trial (MDT) is a 6 mile, rail-with-trail built along an abandoned rail line. The trail is beneficial in connecting the towns of Gorham, Windham, and Standish, Maine. The trail takes its name for the railroad that adjoins it and is expected to one day span 52 miles between Fryberg and Portland. The connections between other towns and the heritage of an existing railroad help bring vitality to this newly established trail.

*FUNDING SOURCES*

National Trails Training Partnership:

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/fedfund/>

Indiana Recreational Trails Program:

<http://www.in.gov/dnr/outdoor/4101.htm>

Transportation Investment Generating  
Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants:

<http://www.dot.gov/tiger>

#### Sponsorships

Portions of the trail can be sponsored by businesses, banks, or local groups.

#### In-kind donations

Local businesses can donate resources that can be used in trail projects.



#### 4. COMMUNITY WIDE PARK DAY

“To me, part of the magic of its My Park day is the tremendous impact that we have when we all work together as a community”—Ladue Anne Wofford, Austin, Texas Parks Foundation Director.



This initiative seeks to provide a volunteer opportunity for students to serve their community. A Community Wide Park day will allow Public Parks in Bedford and Lawrence County to be better recognized. Providing cost saving initiatives by promoting volunteerism are beneficial to the community.

Community volunteers planning a park cleanup day, focused on revamping some of Bedford and Lawrence Counties parks would promote volunteerism, and be an opportunity for students to work together within the community. In meeting with city leaders, it was mentioned that Bedford has more parks per capita than needed for a city of its size. However, many of the city’s parks often go unrecognized and there are limited resources in place to help maintain all of them.

Students at Bedford North Lawrence High School also stated that they were not aware of all the parks within Bedford, and would like to see a community wide park day be established within the community.

##### Case Study: Austin, Texas “It’s My Park Day”

The City of Austin, Texas has been hosting “It’s My Park Day” for the past 13 years. Sponsored by the Austin Parks Foundation, the city-wide volunteer clean up event focuses on spring maintenance, repairing trails, planting, and cleanup project. This is the largest single volunteer event held in the city of Austin. Each year community volunteers build upon the successful efforts of the previous year. Also, It’s My Park Day has proven to be a great way to meet neighbors, and has also been beneficial in keeping city costs down. Fewer city tax dollars have to be utilized on park repair and cleanup by this community effort.



## 5. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FESTIVALS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

The economic development strategy deployed embraces heritage tourism. In Muncie, Indiana, the downtown merchants association support “Muncie Gras” in March, and “Arts Walk” the third Thursday of the month. The festival may adopt one or more of the following ubiquitous themes:



*HERITAGE TOURISM*

A **niche tourism market** where tourists travel to destinations to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that are a true representation of the past. Heritage tourism can include historic, cultural, and natural resources



Creating historic districts and integrating heritage tourism in rural towns **stimulate investments, revitalizes and unites communities, create jobs, and improves the residential quality of life.** Studies have shown heritage tourists spend more money than any other tourist.

Heritage tourism is a way to market the qualities that make communities special to tourists.

According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, there are 4 steps to integrate heritage tourism:

**Step 1:** Assess the potential. Where are historic areas? Are there farms or wineries? Have historic events happened in your community?

**Step 2:** Plan and organize. If improvements need to be made, where will they have the most impact? Who needs to be involved in the plan development?

**Step 3:** Prepare product and manage. If you are creating a bed and breakfast district, rehabilitate buildings and decide who will manage the businesses.

**Step 4:** Market for success. How will this be marketed? Think of strategic ways to reach the target market. Marketing can happen on-line, through advertisements in magazines, billboards on highways, etc.

## Case Study: Behold! New Lebanon



**About:** Located in New Lebanon, New York Behold! New Lebanon is a self described living museum of contemporary rural american life.

**What:** Behold! New Lebanon offers tourists a glimpse of present day country culture over the course of four weeks in the summer/fall months. Visitors board buses and are shuttled around the town to take part in cooking, farming, art, and other activities that represent the town culture.

*FUNDING METHODS*

Funding sources for community initiatives can be made in several formats. Each use of funding sources is described below.

1. Business Improvement District, with fee or special assessment tax support
2. TIF [Tax Increment Financing]
3. Grants
4. Private Corporate/Business sponsorship
5. Individual sponsorship
6. In-kind sponsorship
7. Crowdfunding on the Web
8. Tax Incentives
9. Loans

**BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS**

## Case Study: Fort Wayne, Indiana



*"91 blocks to  
live, 91 blocks to  
work, 91 blocks  
to enjoy"*

-Fort Wayne  
Downtown  
Improvement  
District

**About:** A 91-block area located in downtown Fort Wayne.

**Financing:** A total annual revenue of \$587,679 was generated from assessment fees, city/county support, sponsorships/contributions, and program fees

**Outcome:** The BID made it possible to host events/festivals of up to 8,000 visitors, created jobs, marketed the downtown area, improved appearance/cleanliness, increased business activity and downtown usage, and led beautification efforts. Since the BID, visits to the Fort Wayne website have grown over 43%

## **GRANTS**

Grants are monies that can be applied for by organizations that have beneficial purposes. These grants are usually held by community foundations and do not have to be repaid. However, they require public acknowledgment and financial reporting. Lawrence County is fortunate to have many community foundations that actively support both Bedford and Mitchell Schools.

Types of Funds Held at Community Foundations:

1. Unrestricted Fund, a charitable gift to improve the life of a community. It allows a community group to assess charitable needs and be flexible in grant making.
2. Field-of-Interest Fund, an interest for a certain group such as youth, but does restrict the grants to be made over the years to any specific organization.
3. Designated Fund, a designation to a specific charity that is to receive the grant.
4. Donor-Advised Fund, a fund that is suggested by the donor to what organization to support.
5. Scholarship Fund, a gift to benefit education to deserving recipients.

## **PRIVATE CORPORATE OR BUSINESS SPONSORSHIP**

Corporations and private business sometimes take interest in working with their local community to support projects. It is beneficial if the project has a connection that can impact the mission of the business or corporation. These types of sponsorships do not need to be paid back, but may have deadlines in requesting funding. It could be advantageous to advertise the business as a supporter of community endeavors involving youth initiatives and community improvement.

## **INDIVIDUAL SPONSORSHIP**

Individual sponsorship is funded by an individual or family for an event or project. This type of sponsorship is usually solicited, and does not require a formal application. For example, a donation towards a brick for a memorial walk in the memory of a loved one may support a specific cause such as downtown improvements or scholarships.

## **IN-KIND SPONSORSHIP**

This type of sponsorship occurs when a business or entity provides a good or service free of charge, but not in the form of money. For example, supplies could be donated by local business for a community clean-up, or donation of a product that would be beneficial to the goal of a project.

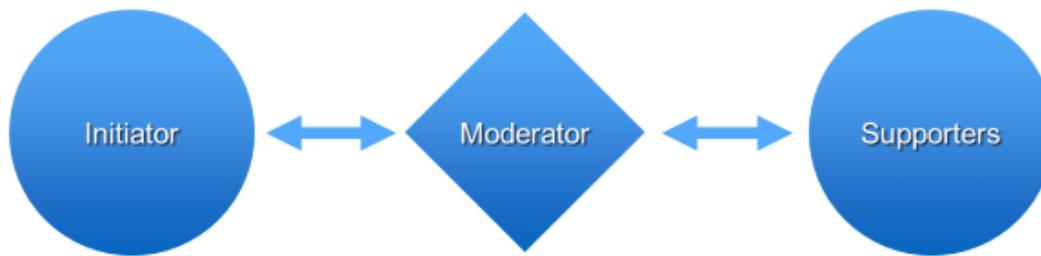
## **CROWD-FUNDING**

This emerging field of fundraising is a request of funds from a large group for a specific project. This is done through social media campaigns such as in Facebook. In a crowd-funding model there are 3 participants: the project initiator that proposes the project, individuals/groups that support and fund the project, and a moderator that brings the groups together.



There are 3 participants in the crowdfunding model: the project **initiator** who proposes the project, individuals/groups who **support** and fund the project; and a **moderator** to bring the groups together.

The project initiator creates a business plan and marketing strategy for their idea. After deciding on an appropriate crowdfunding platform, they connect with a moderator. The moderator assists them in finding local supporters appropriate for the project.



## Case Study: Ouya



*"a new kind of video game  
counsel"*

-Julie Uhrman, CEO

**About:** Pledged a goal of \$950,000

**Financing:** Raised a total of \$8,596,474 from 63,416 backers. This reward-based model of crowd funding provided investors a reward based on the amount invested ranged from being rewarded with a reserved username for a \$10 pledge to a unique console, private dinner with the developers, and attendance to the launch party for \$10,000.

## REVOLVING LOANS

Revolving loan funds are a source of money that can be used to fill in gaps for funding.

A revolving loan fund (RLF) is a capital fund that provides low interest **loans to community members**. When the loans are repaid, the loan amount is returned to the fund and becomes available to other borrowers.

To provide a source of capital within the community that can be used to fill gaps in financing. A RLF can provide funding for projects that may be more risky at **lower interest rates** than other lenders. By creating program criteria, a RLF can stimulate development in target industries.

RLFs are typically **administered by planning and development commissions or economic development organizations**. The initial funding can come from federal grant programs and other sources.

The group administering the RLF can determine requirements, minimum and maximum amounts.

## Case Study: Muncie Industrial Revolving Loan Fund



**About:** Launched in 1977 with a \$5 million federal grant, this program offers up to 33% of a project cost up to \$450,000 for projects that create or retain jobs.

**Requirements:** The funds can be used for the purchase of fixed assets (equipment, land, buildings) or working capital. For consideration, applicants are required to provide a detailed business plan.

**Who:** The program is administered by the Muncie Redevelopment Commission and funds can be used by business in the City of Muncie and contiguous areas.

*Next Steps*

The follow suggest a sequence of events and organizational measures. IHCD and Ball State have agreed to assist in this for 2015-16 academic year, should the plan implementation program be funded.

