

Indiana Vision 2025

Taking the Next Steps in 2015

Twelve months ago, *BizVoice*[®] chronicled the first three years of efforts toward achieving the 33 goals and overall mission of *Indiana Vision 2025*. You can view that informative timeline at www.bizvoicemagazine.com/novdec14-2025.

Here, we provide an update on 2015 – highlighted by the release of the second *Indiana Vision 2025* Report Card and the accompanying series of six regional forums. The next page outlines the 33 goals and indicates (in red) some of the progress that has taken place on each since the plan’s introduction. On Page 14, three of the forum participants from this year share a few of their insights.

Of the 59 metrics in the Report Card, Indiana improved its state ranking in 28, saw a decline in 19 and there was either no change or no updated data in 12 metrics. In terms of raw score (from the most recent data available in the 2013 Report Card compared to this year’s Report Card), the state improved in 33 of the 59 metrics, declined in 17 and saw no change/no new data in nine.

Indiana Chamber President and CEO Kevin Brinegar offered the following overall assessment of the Report Card results.

“The Outstanding Talent driver, the one most in need of improvement, has seen some movement. But there is a long way to go, particularly in postsecondary attainment.

“Attractive Business Climate has been the state’s strength over the past decade. That remains, for the most part, in this Report Card with further progress coming from the 2015 elimination of the business personal property tax for small businesses. This directly impacts 150,000 companies or more than half of all businesses in the state,” he continues.

“In Dynamic and Creative Culture, more entrepreneurs are needed and they require more money. Unlike the metrics in Outstanding Talent, which generally take many years to achieve progress, change could occur here in a shorter time frame. But only with the proper emphasis and urgency.”

Evaluating the outcomes

What did others have to say about the *Indiana Vision 2025* plan and the Report Card? Here are a few excerpts:

Indianapolis Star: “For the past 10 years, the strongest emphasis has been on building a tax and regulatory climate that encourages economic growth. That approach has worked, but can carry the state only so far. The most

pressing need now is to dramatically strengthen the workforce, and that will require heavy investments.

“The Chamber, by the way, deserves praise for establishing well-researched metrics for tracking progress and for pushing state leaders to meet goals essential for Indiana to prosper.”

Jeff Rea, president and CEO of the St. Joseph County Chamber of Commerce, writing in the *South Bend Tribune*: “So where do we go from here? To improve our grades and move up in the rankings, a concentrated effort is required of all of us. Some parts of the state have experienced great success; some have not. Our region can be an important catalyst to help move those Indiana scores up and improve our rankings. We can do that by making sure our students have the support they need to excel in the classroom. We have to work to improve the business climate and we must ensure the environment is ripe for new businesses to start.”

Fort Wayne Journal Gazette: “Amid a lot of upbeat statistics in its recent *Indiana Vision 2025* report, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce’s metrics include one that ranks Indiana 47th in terms of entrepreneurial activity. We were 30th in 1999. Why isn’t the entrepreneurial spirit thriving in a state that’s so often described as “business friendly”? A big reason appears to be our culture. Conservative by nature, Hoosiers seem more averse to taking risks, and the

penalties for failure seem higher here.”

Greensburg Daily News: “A report comparing Indiana’s potential for economic growth to other states shows worrisome signs amid progress. Reduced taxes and relaxed regulations are boosting the state’s reputation as being business friendly. But Indiana still has a poorly educated workforce that smokes and eats too much.”

Looking ahead

The Chamber plans to reconvene the original *Indiana Vision 2025* task force – a 24-member group that developed the plan over a 15-month period in 2010 and 2011 – to evaluate progress and look at potential adjustments to some of the metrics.

Brinegar says the Chamber and its many partners will continue to use the *Indiana Vision 2025* plan to guide advocacy and other statewide improvement efforts. “The importance of this work only increases as we move closer to the 2025 horizon. I encourage all Hoosiers to ask themselves what they can do to help move the state forward.”

Sponsors of the *Indiana Vision 2025* Report Card and the regional forums that brought the results to business, education and community leaders around the state were: Duke Energy Foundation, Eli Lilly and Company Foundation, Ivy Tech Community College, NIPSCO and St. Vincent Health. More than 60 companies, organizations and individuals are financial supporters of the *Indiana Vision 2025* initiative.



Bringing together business, education and community leaders at regional forums has taken place three times since the introduction of *Indiana Vision 2025*.

RESOURCE: Full Report Card and additional *Indiana Vision 2025* information at www.indianachamber.com/2025

Indiana Vision 2025 – OUTLINE OF KEY DRIVERS AND GOALS**DRIVER 1: OUTSTANDING TALENT**

- Increase the proficiency of Indiana students in math, science and reading to "Top 5" status internationally. **Strong improvements in NAEP reading and math scores**
- Increase to 90% the proportion of Indiana students who graduate from high school ready for college and/or career training. **Keeping assessments aligned to new standards; Chamber partners in Postsecondary Pathways events to connect education-business communities**
- Eliminate the educational achievement gaps at all levels, from pre-school through college, for disadvantaged populations. **Continued funding for first publicly-funded preschool program for low-income children; establishment of more balanced school funding formula**
- Increase to 60% the proportion of Indiana residents with high quality postsecondary credentials.
- Increase the proportion of Indiana residents with bachelor's degrees or higher to "Top 10" status internationally.
- Increase the proportion of Indiana residents with postsecondary credentials in STEM-related fields to "Top 5" status internationally.
- Develop, implement and fully fund a comprehensive plan for addressing the skills shortages of adult and incumbent workers who lack minimum basic skills. **Continued efforts of Indiana Career Council and Indiana Works Councils; significant funding increase for career and technical training**

DRIVER 2: ATTRACTIVE BUSINESS CLIMATE

- Adopt a right-to-work statute. **Passed February 2012**
- Enact comprehensive government reform at the state and local levels to increase efficiency and effectiveness in delivery of services. **Repeal of common construction wage law**
- Reform public pension systems to achieve fairness and cost containment. **Moderate cost containment passed in 2014**
- Preserve and enhance a "Top 5" ranking among all states for Indiana's legal environment. **Legal climate generally regarded as very fair and effective**
- Attain a "Top 5" ranking among all states for Indiana's business regulatory environment. **Top ranking in 2013 and 2015 Report Cards**
- Eliminate the business personal property tax. **2015 legislation eliminates tax for more than 150,000 small businesses**
- Eliminate the state inheritance tax. **Phase out passed in 2012/tax eliminated in 2013**
- Promote the enactment of a federal solution to the Internet sales/use tax dilemma. **Marketplace Fairness Act reintroduced in Congress**
- Streamline and make consistent the administration of the state's tax code. **Several moderate procedural improvements passed in 2015**
- Establish government funding mechanisms to more closely approximate "user fee" model.
- Contain health care costs through patient-directed access and outcomes-based incentives.
- Reduce smoking levels to less than 15% of the population. **First statewide smoking ban passed in 2012; nearly 4% drop in adult smoking rate in 2015 Report Card**
- Return obesity levels to less than 20% of the population. **Wellness Council of Indiana working directly with employers**

DRIVER 3: SUPERIOR INFRASTRUCTURE

- Create and implement a plan to position Indiana as a net exporter of energy.
- Diversify Indiana's energy mix with an emphasis on clean coal, nuclear power and renewables.
- Identify and implement workable energy conservation strategies. **2015 legislation requires utilities to submit efficiency plans**
- Develop and implement a strategic water resource plan that ensures adequate fresh water for citizens and business. **Indiana Chamber Foundation water resource study (August 2014); 2015 legislation directs collection of additional resource data**
- Develop and implement new fiscal systems to support the array of infrastructure projects critical to economic growth. **2014 Blue Ribbon Commission identified transportation priorities; study of funding alternatives offers financing models**
- Aggressively build out the state's advanced telecommunications networks. **2015 Broadband Ready Communities legislation streamlines regulatory hurdles to network expansion/upgrades**

DRIVER 4: DYNAMIC & CREATIVE CULTURE

- Develop entrepreneurship and aggressively promote business start-ups through education, networking, investment and financial support. **2015 developments: Launch Indiana program authorized and funded; 21st Century Fund reauthorized and funded; new leadership at Elevate Ventures**
- Increase the amount of technology transfer from higher education institutions and attain "Top 5" ranking per capita among all states. **Indiana Biosciences Research Institute created (2013); leadership in place, fund-raising ongoing (2015)**
- Achieve "Top 12" ranking among all states in number of utility patents per worker.
- Achieve "Top 12" ranking among all states in venture capital invested per capita. **Crowdfunding legislation passed in 2014**
- Strategically recruit foreign direct investment (FDI) and achieve "Top 12" ranking among all states in FDI as a percent of gross state product. **State maintains 12th-place ranking**
- Increase Indiana exports to achieve "Top 5" ranking per capita among all states. **Top 10 ranking maintained**
- Promote a culture that further values diversity and civility, attracting and retaining talented individuals. **Regional Cities Initiative bill promoting quality of place passed; legislative protections for LGBT community passed into law for first time**