

# The Portland Foundation

## *Strategic Plan 2019-2023*



### Contents

Letter from Board President and Executive Director .....	2
Summary .....	3
The Importance of This Strategic Plan .....	4
Elements of The Portland Foundation’s Strategy .....	5
Goal 1: Strengthen our Role as a Community Leader in Jay County .....	5
Goal 2: Increase our Visibility .....	6
Goal 3: Enhance our Fund Development Efforts.....	6
Measuring our Success .....	8
Our Pledge to the Community We Serve.....	8
Appendix A - Community Initiative Criteria.....	9
Appendix B: Identified Items in SWOT Analysis .....	10
Appendix C: Notes from Strategic Planning Session .....	11

## Letter from Board President and Executive Director

The community leaders who came together in 1951 to create The Portland Foundation had a vision that, one day, our community foundation would be able to improve the quality of life for everyone in Jay County. In our history there has never been a more important moment for the Foundation to fulfill that vision and enhance our role as a community leader.

Jay County is blessed in many ways. Far from the traffic and congestion of more crowded urban areas, we can provide a more relaxed lifestyle – and the amenities of Indianapolis and Fort Wayne are less than two hours away. Our school system is top-notch, recreational opportunities exist, and we have built up the arts and cultural amenities which will improve the quality of life for all of us.

We are proud of the role we have played in several successful community projects. Our new home in the John Jay Center for Learning puts us in the middle of this wonderful new community asset. We played a key role in the recent expansion of Arts Place, the new Portland Waterpark, as well as the grandstand project at the Jay County Fairgrounds. And, we are currently actively promoting Freedom Park, which honors Jay County military veterans.

Our Board of Trustees is committed to expanding our community leadership role. You will continue to see us out front in bringing together your friends and neighbors to identify compelling needs and creating programs to address those needs.

As we were nearing the completion of the strategic planning process, the Lilly Endowment announced a major new opportunity for The Portland Foundation to build our unrestricted endowment and access funding for compelling community projects. Known by the acronym GIFT (Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow), this opportunity (Phase VII) continues support that began in 1991. We thank Lilly Endowment for their continued support of Indiana community foundations, and we gladly accept the fundraising and leadership challenges that this opportunity provides.

We invite you to join us as we unite in securing our county's future. We pledge to you our leadership, our resources, and our genuine commitment to a healthy, thriving, and sustainable Jay County.

Rex Journey, President  
Board of Trustees

Douglas L. Inman  
Executive Director

## Summary

The Portland Foundation has been fortunate to have experienced strong leadership, committed volunteers and rising asset levels during the 67 years of our existence. At the same time, Jay County is facing a trend common to many rural communities – declining census numbers, and an aging population. Faced with these challenges, The Portland Foundation has a growing responsibility to serve as a community leader. We do this by achieving our mission of building community endowment, effecting significant impact through grantmaking and providing leadership on key community issues.

On September 5 and October 11, 2018 The Portland Foundation Board of Trustees affirmed broad strategic goals built on the Foundation’s mission and vision for a healthy, thriving, sustainable Jay County.

This strategic plan focuses on the vision and practical steps to help bring this about. We believe we can best serve residents of Jay County by achieving the following goals:

- Goal 1: Enhance our Community Leadership Role
- Goal 2: Increase our Visibility as a Trusted Community Leader
- Goal 3: Continue our Fund Development Success and Grow our Assets

We believe that achieving these goals will help us to realize our vision for our community. Over the coming months and years, our Board of Trustees will monitor progress towards these goals, using appropriate measures of success.

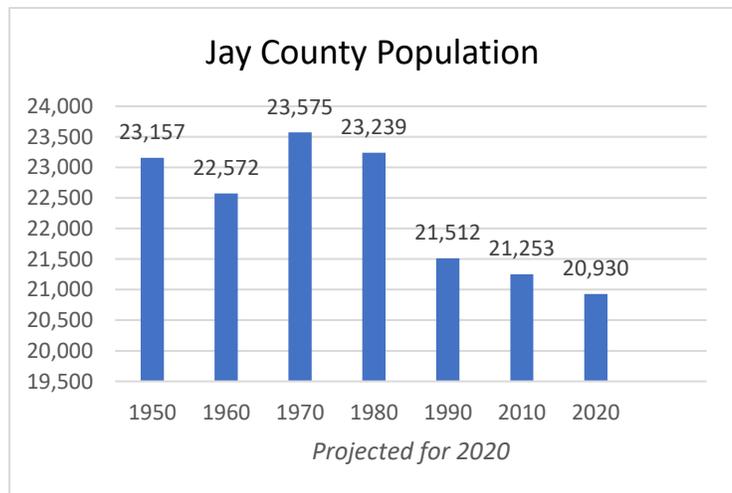
## The Importance of This Strategic Plan

A good strategic plan is like a road map that shows you where you are and guides you to where you want to be. It provides a sense of direction, outlines measurable goals and gives an organization the tools to measure progress. With a community foundation, the strategic plan is doubly important because successfully achieving goals is good for both the community foundation and the entire community, as well. It is with this spirit that a team of board members, volunteers and staff gathered to develop a strong strategic plan to help the Portland Foundation achieve its vision.

### *Jay County, Indiana*

As of the 2010 United States Census, there were 21,253 people in Jay County. This number, however, is down from the peak of 23,575 achieved in 1970. Our population is projected to decline further through 2020.

In Jay County, about 10.0% of families and 13.5% of the population were below the poverty line, including 22.7% of those under age 18 and 7.8% of those age 65 or over.



### *The Role of The Portland Foundation*

The Portland Foundation can play a key role in addressing issues faced by our community and leading the efforts to address those issues. During our strategic planning session, we heard of several problems which cry out for leadership: The opioid epidemic, control of flooding, retaining our best and brightest young people, and building a system of attractive bicycle paths, to name just a few. The Portland Foundation is committed to leading the efforts to address these opportunities.

## Elements of The Portland Foundation's Strategy

The Portland Foundation can best achieve its vision through community leadership, proactive grantmaking and continued growth. Our strategic plan is designed to achieve success in those three areas.

### Goal 1: Strengthen our Role as a Community Leader in Jay County

The Portland Foundation has a strong history in serving as a trusted community leader. We have come together with our friends and neighbors to discuss community issues, develop strategies to address those issues, and then play a key role in raising the resources to implement those solutions. It is our intention to strengthen and build upon our leadership role.

Like many rural communities across the country, Jay County faces significant challenges in the areas of educational attainment, family income and population decline. We are prepared to help address those issues by leading a process to **identify effective initiatives for revitalizing rural communities, using research-based methods to identify best practices.**

The Portland Foundation intends to use the many tools available to a community foundation to help build a better quality of life for everyone in Jay County. We will foster leadership and problem solving in which our board, volunteers, donors and staff are active participants, encouraging everyone in Jay County to find common ground and new solutions.

The strategic intent of The Portland Foundation over the next five years is to address the root causes of Jay County's most critical issues, to continue to build philanthropy as an agent of change, and to respond to our highest priority community needs.

The **newly-announced GIFT VII initiative from Lilly Endowment** will help our efforts tremendously. The Endowment has made available funding for planning and implementing effective projects. It is our intention to work with thought leaders to spearhead those efforts.

Jay County is filled with successful projects that we led. The John Jay Center for Learning is critical to giving both young persons and adults the skill they need to compete in a fast-changing world. Arts Place provides cultural activities crucial to a high quality of life. The Jay County Fairgrounds provides a gathering place for many community events throughout the year. And the community foundation led the fundraising efforts for the Portland Waterpark.

The Portland Foundation hosted the Implementation Committee of the Jay County 20/20 Vision project - a comprehensive strategic plan for the community. The plan was originally published in April 2010 and was updated in May 2017. The recommendations from this plan will be taken into consideration when selecting future community projects to support

We also realize that we can't do this alone. We intend to **leverage the dollars we have available** to take advantage of other sources of funding. Our resources could be used for either planning or implementation – but we can be more effective if we can use our grants to attract the support of others.

Of course, there are many compelling community needs that could be addressed using the resources of The Portland Foundation. The criteria for selection of those projects, and the nature of the involvement of the Foundation, are described in more detail in Appendix A.

Once we have identified the most effective, research-based strategies to address our community needs, those priorities will be used to guide all of our grantmaking. Our unrestricted endowments make up nearly 40% of our assets, and we can redirect some of those grants to high-priority efforts. And, of course, when we successfully complete the challenge presented in Lilly Endowment's GIFT Phase VII, our unrestricted endowment will grow even larger.

## Goal 2: Increase our Visibility as a Trusted Community Leader

Despite our long history of service, The Portland Foundation is not as well known as we would like it to be. We will develop effective strategies to reach community members and educate them in how they can use – and help strengthen – The Portland Foundation.

The vision for our foundation coincides with the strengths of those we serve. Jay County is a good community, attractive to both elderly residents and younger people looking for a place to raise their family. We want to solidify our image as a trusted community leader who strives to help Jay County become even better.

We know that behind our grants and leadership activities are compelling stories of those we have helped. **We want to find those stories and share them with our constituents.**

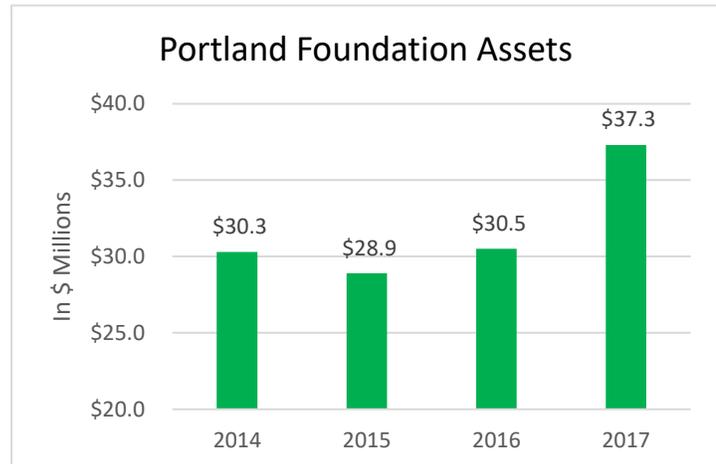
As part of this goal, we will make an extra effort to reach out to two categories. First, we will be more intentional in our work with the rural areas of Jay County, particularly those in the agricultural community. Second, if our County is to thrive we will need to retain, and attract, those in the upcoming generations who not only seek the type of lifestyle we can provide, but also can develop into the next generation of leaders for The Portland Foundation.

## Goal 3: Enhance our Fund Development Efforts

The Portland Foundation has witnessed with significant growth in the last decade. Since 2009, assets have risen from \$16.3 million to \$37.3 million at the end of 2017. We've grown by more than 25% just in the last two years.

We want to continue this fundraising success in the future. With a larger asset base, we can generate more financial support for important community projects.

It's important that donors who partner with The Portland Foundation feel good about their work with us and the charitable activities they support. That's why we will **continue to meet regularly with our donors and listen** to their hopes, their suggestions, and their concerns. We want to make sure we are providing good customer service, and this is one way we can make sure we are living up to their expectations.



The support of high-quality professional advisors serving our community is critical to our future success. Professional advisors play a key role in helping their clients reach their charitable goals. The Portland Foundation can be a conduit for their philanthropy. We will **increase the awareness and support among professional advisors** and emphasize not only how we help them and their clients but how they can help us.

We also want to be a source of useful and relevant information to our key stakeholders. The last few years have witnessed significant changes in tax laws regarding philanthropy – and more changes may come in the future. We intend to offer **seminars on charitable giving** to our donors and professional advisors, as well as our board members and volunteers. The opportunity to provide factual, unbiased information will also further enhance our goal to be Jay County's philanthropic leader.

## Measuring our Success

It will be the role of the Board of Trustees to help achieve the goals of this plan, and to periodically measure the actual performance of The Portland Foundation against the goals of this plan.

The Board will allocate a portion of time at each meeting to review progress relative to this plan, including the following:

***Community Leadership*** – What is the status of the projects that have been identified for community leadership support? Are there new projects that should be considered for participation? Are there any currently supported projects where The Portland Foundation should discontinue its participation?

***Visibility*** – What is the current marketing and communications plan for The Portland Foundation? How has the Foundation performed relative to that plan? Are there any upcoming opportunities to increase the visibility of The Portland Foundation?

***Fund Development*** – What gifts have been received since the last meeting of the Board? What gifts are expected soon? What is the status of donors who have indicated an intent to leave a gift to the Foundation in their estate plan?

## Our Pledge to the Community We Serve

The Portland Foundation – with many community foundations across the nation – embraces the leadership responsibility to move beyond building assets to building communities. This plan is our expression of that commitment.

As The Portland Foundation develops further over the next five years, the plan will stand as a consistent reminder of our goals. We believe we can provide the avenues to positive change for our children, our families, our workers, our students, and our communities. Positive change does not come about by accident. It takes focus, hard work, careful thinking, frequent compromise, and strategic investment.

We, the board and staff of The Portland Foundation, pledge to you our time, our energy and our resources to achieve these goals.

## Appendix A - Community Initiative Criteria

One of the strategic goals of The Portland Foundation is to strengthen our role as a community leader in Jay County. To help fulfill that role, we will actively seek compelling community initiatives to support with our time and resources. This document will help define those types of initiatives and guide our board of trustees in their decision-making.

**Criteria for Selection** - When evaluating community initiatives, the first step is for the Board of Trustees to affirm that the initiative aligns with the organization's mission, vision, and values. If alignment exists, then the board will also review the following criteria:

1. Is the subject area a Community Foundation priority?
2. Is the project charitable and is there a clear role for philanthropic involvement?
3. Is there a contribution that we are *uniquely* positioned to make or is there another organization that is better positioned to lead or convene this initiative?
4. Is the project financially sustainable?
5. What is the outcome of the project, and is that outcome attainable?
6. What are the potential costs to the Community Foundation?
7. When will the Community Foundation's participation end?
8. Is there a reason we wouldn't get involved – any obvious impediments or downside?

**Types of Involvement** - When a project is selected for Community Foundation involvement, it will be important for everyone involved to understand the type of aid that the Foundation will provide. The following are potential elements of support, and the role that the Community Foundation will play should be clearly understood before embarking on a community project.

- **Community Convener** – Bring key groups together to discuss opportunities, raise awareness around issues or partner to increase efficiency
- **Philanthropic Advisor** – Educate and inspire donors and other funders about key issues worthy of investment in the community
- **Information Hub** – Collect and disseminate data to fill information gaps around key subjects or issues
- **Capacity Builder** – Aid nonprofits in increasing their efficiency and effectiveness by providing training or other capacity-building opportunities, hosting a speaker on philanthropy or specific topics, or connecting key organizations that will benefit from building relationships/sharing resources
- **Proactive/Strategic Grantmaking** – Allocate a portion of unrestricted grantmaking to a particular area or need
- **Fiscal Sponsor** – Collect donations on behalf of a community initiative, provide financial reports to interested parties, and disburse those funds to relevant charities

## Appendix B: Identified Items in SWOT Analysis

<b>Strengths</b> <i>Build on These Items</i>
Community Leadership
Credibility and Integrity
Expertise in Grantmaking
High-Quality Staff
Financial Strength

<b>Opportunities</b> <i>Invest in These Items</i>
Community Leadership
Proactive Grantmaking
Rural Engagement
Nonprofit Training
Ties with Millennials
Charitable Giving Seminar

<b>Weaknesses</b> <i>Address These Items</i>
Low Visibility
More Proactive Grantmaking
Services for Seniors
Services for Rural Areas
Utilize Past Board Members
Provide Operational Grants

<b>Threats</b> <i>Monitor These Items</i>
Economic Decline
Rise in Competition
Challenging Demographics
Departure of Millennials
Understanding by Professional Advisors

## Appendix C: Notes from Strategic Planning Session

### Preference Voting

#### Highest Priority

	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>1<sup>st</sup> Place Votes</u>	<u>2<sup>nd</sup> Place Votes</u>
Leadership	10	\$ 17.25	8	1
Visibility	9	\$ 9.25	2	3
Proactive (Twice)	9	\$ 8.00	1	
Total	28	\$ 34.50		
% of All	51%	63%	100%	36%

#### Next Highest Priority

	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>1<sup>st</sup> Place Votes</u>	<u>2<sup>nd</sup> Place Votes</u>
Professional Advisors	9	\$5.50		
Rural/Agricultural	7	\$4.00		1
Millennials (Twice)	4	\$2.50		1
Total	20	\$12.00		
% of All	36%	22%	0%	18%