

# SR9 Innovation Corridor

Advancing Ag, Health, and Tech Innovation in Hancock County

NINESTAR WORK SESSION · MARCH 25, 2026





# Why here? Why now?

Hancock County's rapid growth, strategic location, and anchor assets create a rare window to launch a visionary innovation corridor.

## Unprecedented Growth

Among Indiana's fastest-growing counties — 3.7% growth in 2023, nearly 1,000 new home permits last year

## Anchor Asset

Elanco campus provides a rare, high-quality foundation; HealthStar Partners secured the site

## Quality of Place

Builds on Hancock County's 2025 quality-of-place plan — rural character, intentional infill, livability



AgriNovus  
INDIANA



# Aligned with Indiana's Statewide Vision

AgriNovus Indiana's **Accelerate 2050** plan charts the path. SR9 is where it takes root.

## Farmer-Focused Innovation

Producers as partners in  
technology development and  
adoption

## Food Is Health

Connecting local production to  
nutrition and healthcare  
outcomes

## Bioinnovation

Bio-based R&D and manufacturing linked to Indiana's \$99B life  
sciences sector



**Accelerate 2050**



**A Vision for Indiana Agbioscience**

# A Next-Generation Rural Innovation Ecosystem



Where agriculture, life sciences, and technology converge — driving economic growth and community well-being.

## Farm to Lab

R&D connected directly to on-the-ground commercialization

## Community Impact

Innovations that improve food security, health outcomes, and regional prosperity

## Indiana's Global Stage

A living embodiment of Accelerate 2050's priorities in ag and life sciences

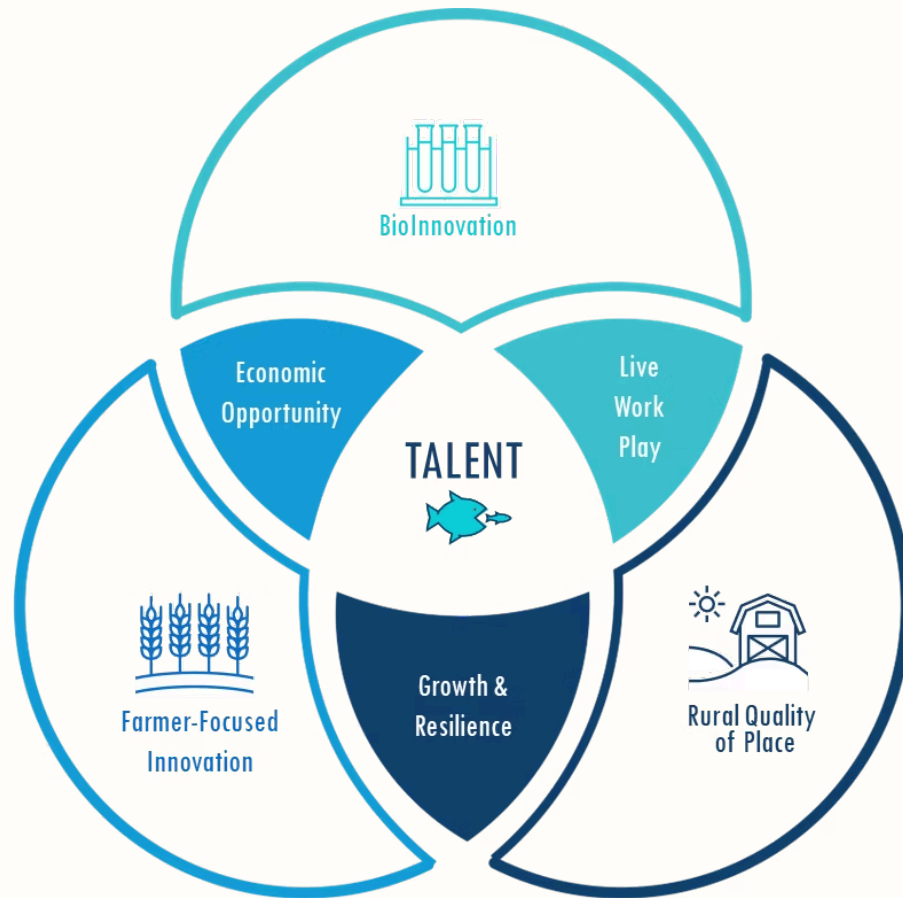
SECTION 02

# Innovation Framework

Three strategic pillars — Farmer-Focused Innovation, Bioinnovation, and Rural Quality of Place — connect research, entrepreneurship, and community development.



# The Innovation Framework



## Bioinnovation

Destination for bio-based R&D and manufacturing — tied to Indiana's life sciences sector

## Farmer-Focused Innovation

Farmers as partners: on-farm testing, ag incubators, grower-tech feedback loops

## Rural Quality of Place

Walkable centers, trails, and gathering spaces — where innovators choose to live

# Land Use + Economic Development

Two interdependent strategies — one shaping the physical environment, one driving innovation — create the places and programs that attract talent and investment.

## Land Use Strategy

- Mixed-use innovation hubs in Maxwell, Eden, and I-70/SR9 interchange
- Trail networks, hospitality nodes, and town centers for livability
- Rural character preserved through zoning and design standards
- Infrastructure phasing aligned with growth nodes

## Economic Development Strategy

- Three-pillar framework: Ag Innovation, Bioinnovation, Rural Quality of Place
- Sector recruitment and startup incubation
- Pilot projects at Elanco campus activate R&D and entrepreneurship
- Partnerships with HealthStar, AgriNovus, State of Indiana, universities, and local farmers

INNOVATION FRAMEWORK

# Future Land Use Plan



# Land Use and Growth Plan

Balancing development with preservation — a mixed-use innovation district that grows in harmony with the rural landscape.



# SR9 Corridor Growth Without Losing Rural Character

## Mixed-Use Innovation Hubs

Maxwell and Eden evolve into rural mixed-use districts. I-70/SR9 interchange anchored by Elanco — vibrancy without sprawl.

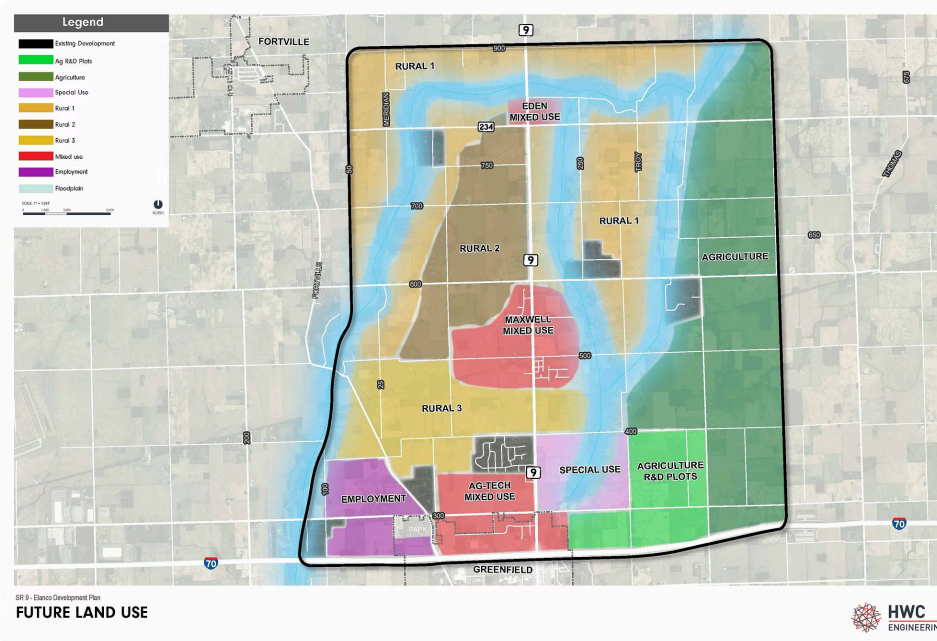
## Preserving Rural Character

Farmland protected east of SR9 through conservation zoning. "Modern rural" aesthetic — contemporary forms, natural materials, open space.

## Managed Growth

Employer sites directed to CR 300 N, keeping truck traffic off SR9 and protecting quality of life in nearby communities.

# Future Land Use Map



01

**Growth is inevitable** — the question is where and how it happens, so expansion can be directed rather than scattered.

02

**Farming and ag-related businesses are the backbone** of the local economy, not barriers to development, and should be treated as assets to strengthen.

03

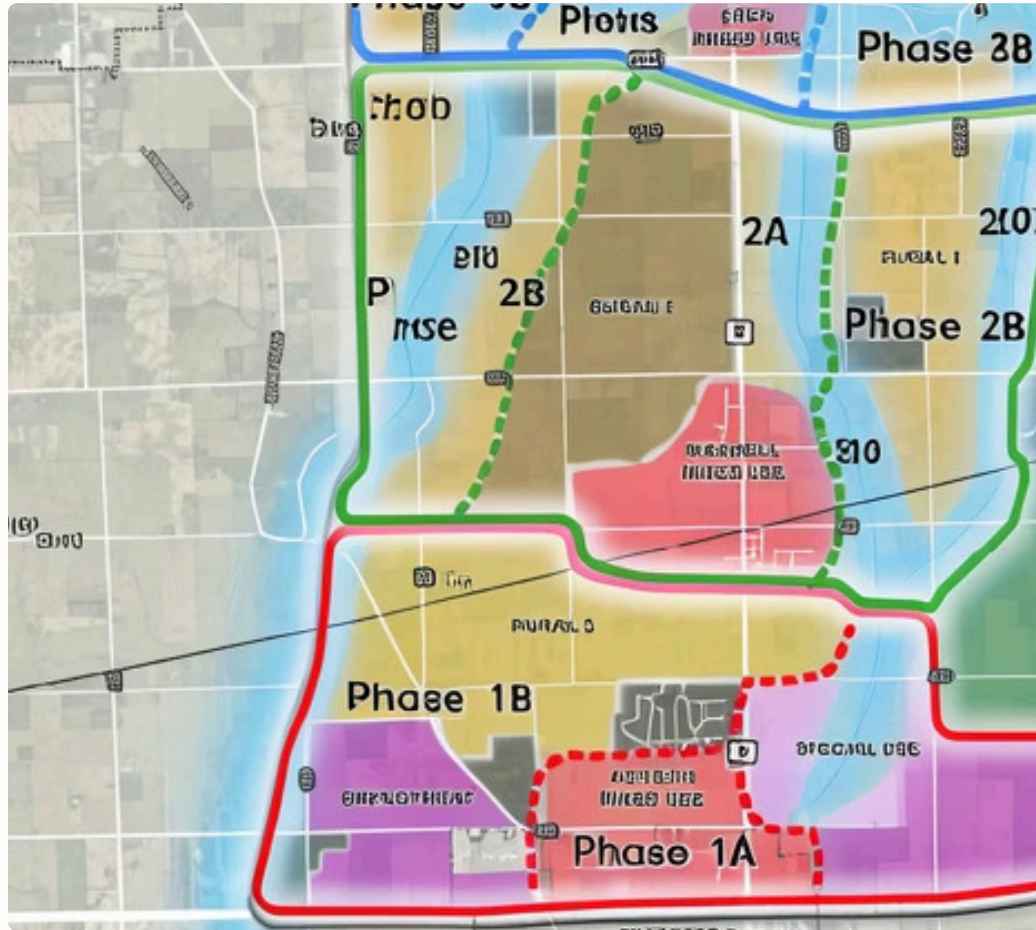
**A binding master plan keeps development aligned** with community values by setting clear expectations for land use, scale, and character.

04

**Clustered commercial nodes create vibrancy without sprawl**, serving residents, attracting businesses, and supporting a stronger long-term tax base.

The long-term land use plan reflects a vision that focuses growth in the right places, protects farmland and small-town character, and creates an environment attractive to both businesses and residents.

# Phasing Plan



## Phase 1A — Elanco Activation

Leverage existing infrastructure for immediate R&D, pilots, and early tenants

## Phase 1B — Adjacent Expansion

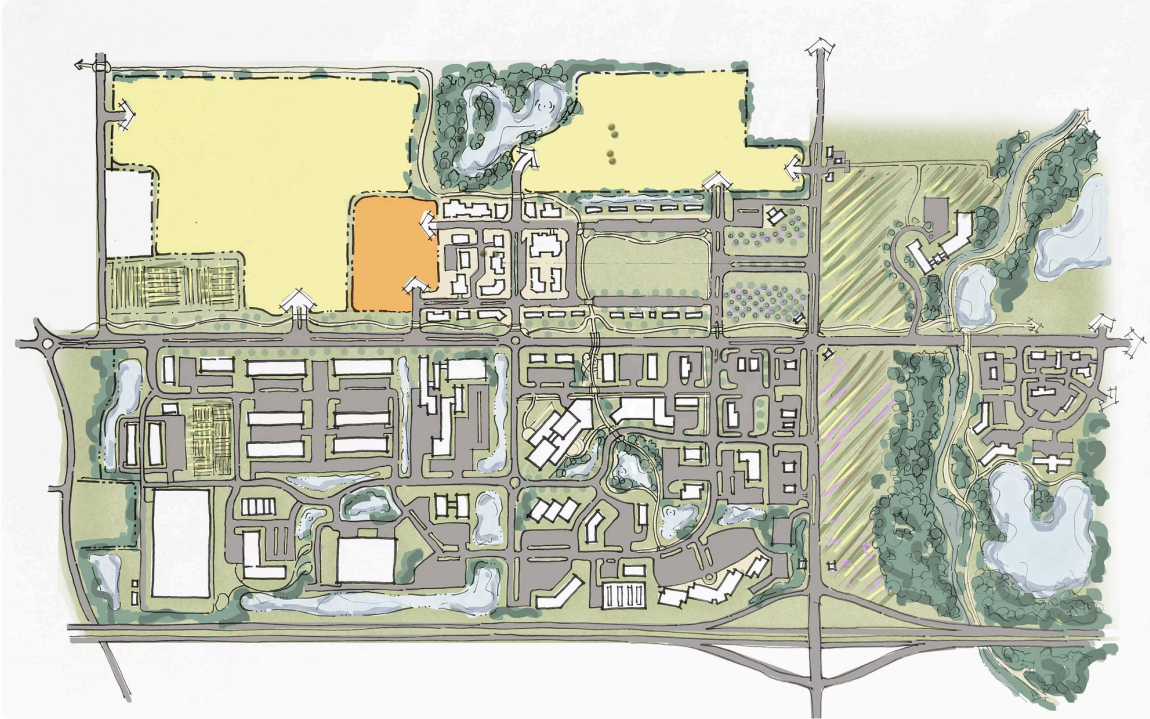
Extend utilities east and west; activate mixed-use nodes and ag tech sites

## Phase 2A — SR9 Infrastructure

NineStar sewer buildout unlocks development capacity along SR9 and Maxwell

## Phases 2B–3B — Rural Expansion

Utility extension into surrounding zones; managed rural innovation hubs preserve ag character



# Conceptual Development Plan

A vision for district growth — from ag tech and innovation districts to hospitality nodes, town centers, and start-up employment.

Ag Tech + Innovation District

Town Center + Open Space

Start-Up Employment District

Hospitality + Commercial Node

INNOVATION FRAMEWORK

# Economic Development Strategy





# Elanco Site as Catalyst

The corridor's anchor — physically and strategically. A rare, turn-key platform ready to launch innovation activity.

## 20+ Acre Anchor Campus

Five buildings, purpose-built for Fortune 500 life sciences — labs, offices, conference areas

## ~70,000 Daily Vehicles

I-70 and SR9 intersection, ~200 acres total developable land, excellent logistics access

## Ready for Redevelopment

Facility soon to be vacant. Now is the time for thoughtful transition under local ownership via HealthStar Partners

# Elanco Campus: Launchpad for Pilots



Purpose-built for life science companies — **224,000 sq ft** of labs, offices, and collaboration space with infrastructure in place for rapid activation.



## R&D Lab + Field

Animal or plant-based research and prototyping



## Food is Health

Production innovation with select local farmers



## Entrepreneur Support

Labs, prototyping, early-stage financing, business support



## Satellite Operations

Elanco, Corteva, Purdue, Velocity, BioCrossroads

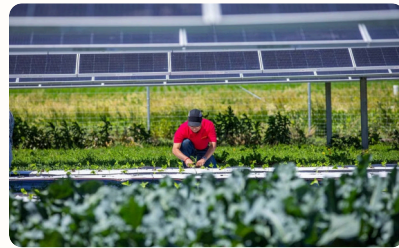
# A Place to Test, Grow, and Scale

From state-of-the-art labs to open farmland — a rare **lab-to-field-to-market** setup in one location.



## Flexible R&D Facilities

224k sq ft former Elanco HQ — corporate-grade labs, full utilities, plug-and-play activation



## Living Laboratories

Adjacent farmland + 60-acre fiber-wired smart farm for lab-to-field prototyping



## Room to Grow

Pilot production, greenhouses, flex space, and a walkable town center with dining and coworking



# Built to Attract and Retain Talent

An innovation district must appeal to people — the scientists, entrepreneurs, and skilled workers who drive it forward.

## Connected, Vibrant Places

Mixed-use town center with restaurants, shops, and gathering spaces — not just a business park but a livable community

## Walkable + Bikeable

Bike paths and pedestrian links connect workspaces to amenities and Hancock County's quality of life

## Live Where You Work

A destination where top talent chooses to stay — building careers and community simultaneously using the latest in broadband services

# Not Starting from Scratch

A network of existing assets — each an on-ramp to activation, ready to build momentum from day one.

## Elanco Facilities

20+ acres, five purpose-built life science buildings — labs, offices, and specialized amenities ready for reactivation

## Maxwell School Site

Village-scale node with school-owned farmland suited for a plant science lab — seed and crop trials, student engagement

## NineStar North Campus

Existing coworking and robust utilities at 600 N and SR9 — an ag-tech hub linking growers, startups, and entrepreneurs



## SECTION 03

# Implementation

From vision to action — governance, early funding, and pilot programs to activate Phase 1 and build long-term momentum.

# Implementation Strategy

A successful corridor demands structure, resources, and a clear path forward.



## Organizational Structure

Governance model and key partnerships — HealthStar, AgriNovus, universities, ag businesses



## Defined Opportunities

Priority sectors, pilot programs, and innovation themes — Food is Health, agtech incubation



## Clear Benchmarks

Timeline for activation, pilot launches, and capacity-building milestones



## Support Infrastructure

Utilities, broadband, lab space, funding mechanisms, and talent pipelines

## State Road 9 Innovation Corridor Initiative

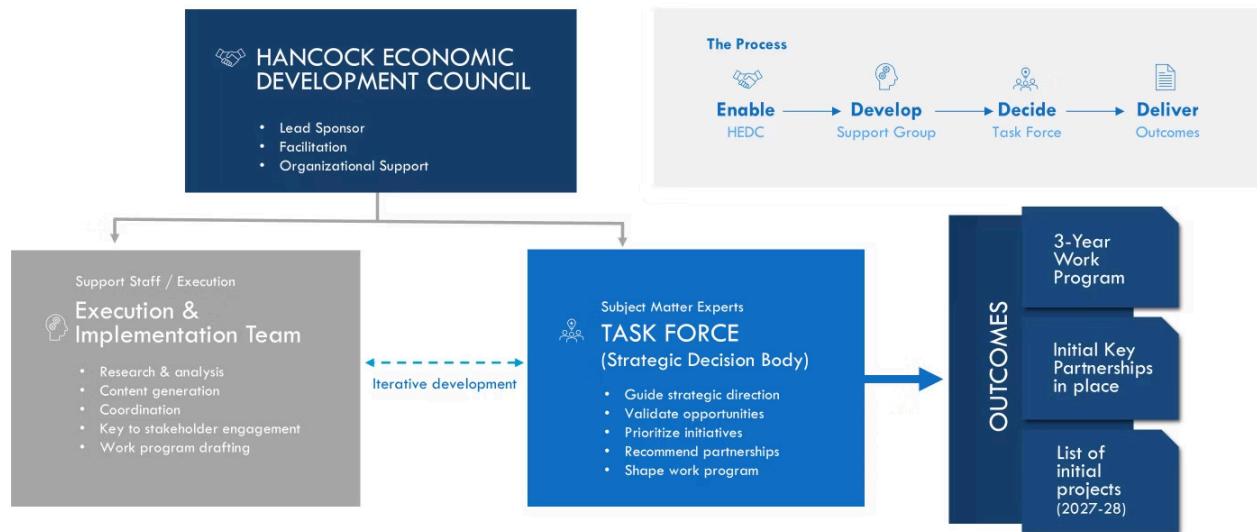
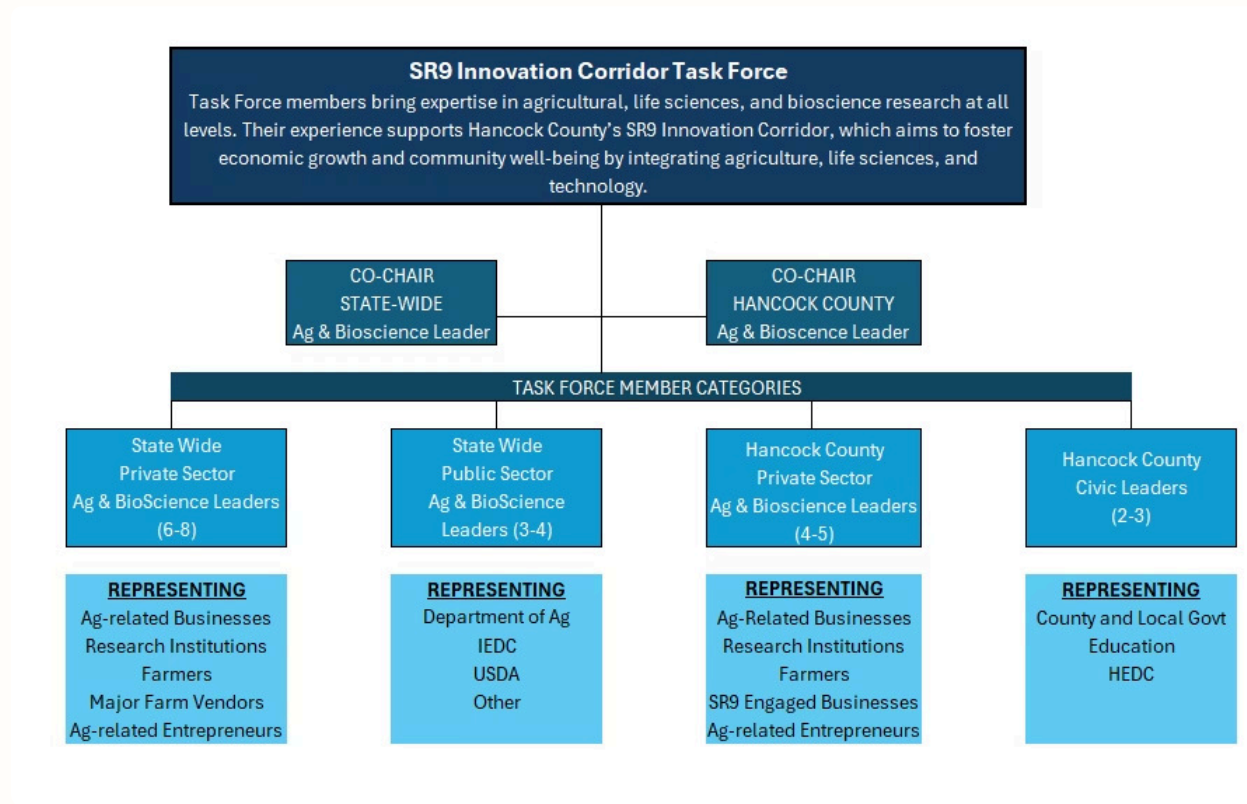


Illustration I

## Organize for Success

- Build a dedicated support team to manage process, logistics, and deliverables
- Convene a sector-focused Task Force of state and local thought leaders
- Drive targeted stakeholder engagement to shape a viable, high-impact work program

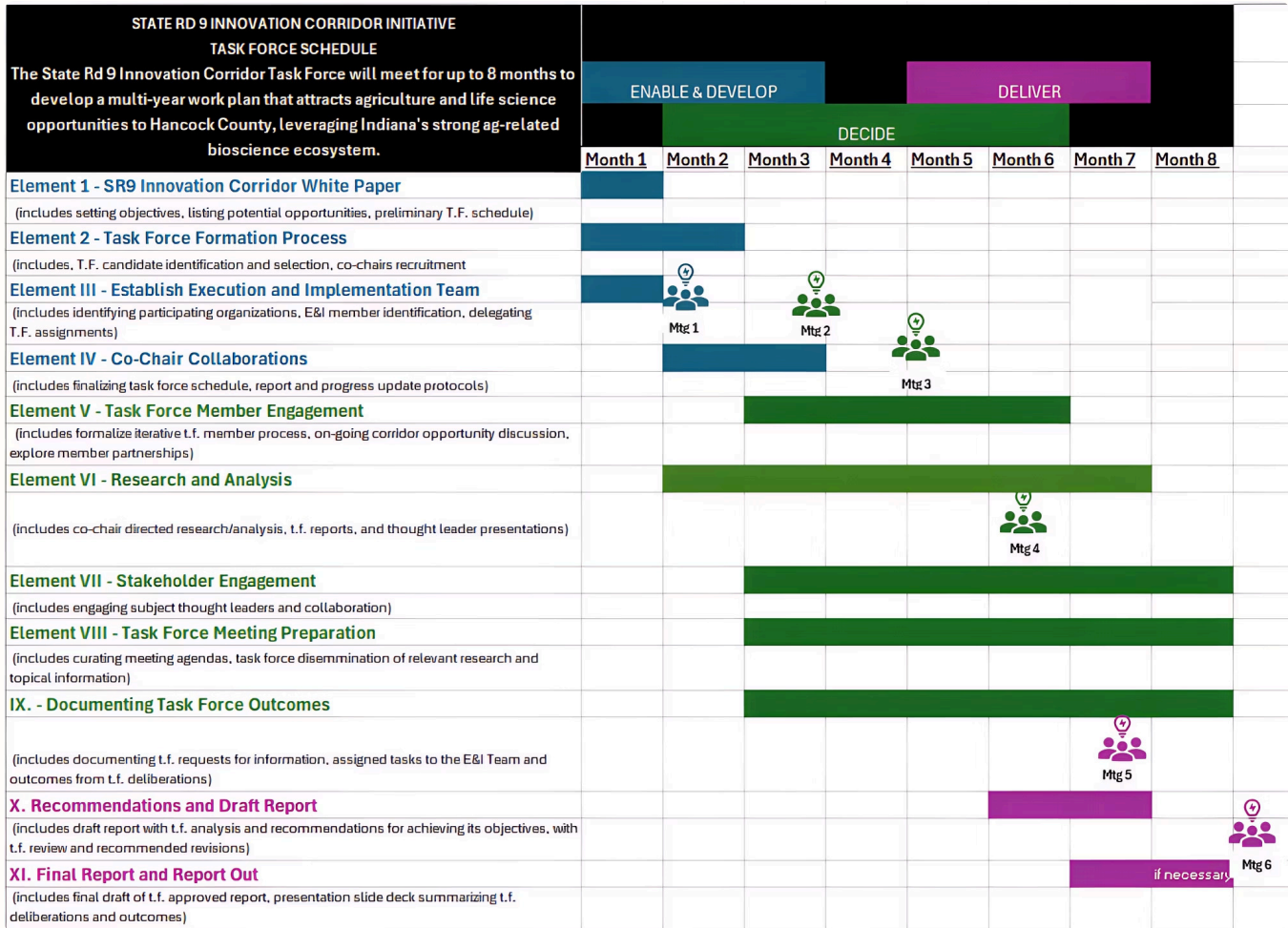
# Governance Structure



*“Begin with the end in mind.”* — Jim Collins

- Engage Indiana's ag bioinnovation and life sciences ecosystem
- Align ecosystem members around Hancock County's unique assets and regional resources
- Establish a focused work program and lay groundwork for critical partnerships
- Identify and celebrate early wins to build momentum

A three-tier structure ensures strategic alignment from lead sponsor to execution — with the Task Force as the central decision body guiding the 3-year work program.



# Structuring for Effectiveness

- ➔ Respect members' time – design a lean, high-impact meeting cadence
- ➔ Set a clear schedule with defined milestones and accountability checkpoints
- ➔ Establish measurable benchmarks to track progress and maintain momentum
- ➔ Equip each session with expert thought leaders who bring targeted, decision-ready input

# Potential Next Steps

01

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## Organize for Success (Feb–Mar 2026)

Define HEDC role, establish benchmarks, secure stakeholder buy-in, recruit Blue Ribbon Task Force and establish Execution and Implementation Team

02

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## Activate Task Force (Apr–Nov 2026)

4–6 meetings — white paper, strategic objectives, stakeholder engagement, draft 3-year work program and critical partnerships

03

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## Implement Work Program (Jan 2027–Dec 2029)

Execute the 3-year work program, activate pilot projects, build critical partnerships, and measure progress against benchmarks

# More Than a Vision — A Shared Opportunity

With aligned leadership, ready assets, and a clear strategy, Hancock County is poised to activate the SR9 Innovation Corridor. Now is the time to move from planning to action — together.

HANCOCK COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

