

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CERTIFIED SITE READY KICKS OFF THIRD ROUND OF
CERTIFICATION PROCESS**
Northeast Indiana poised to add to 12 sites already certified

260 469-3469 < P
300 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 210 < A
FORT WAYNE, IN 46802
NORTHEASTINDIANA.ORG < W

FORT WAYNE, Ind., Feb. 3, 2010 -- Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership (NEIRP) has announced the beginning of its third round of the *Certified Site Ready* site certification process. Just one month ago, NEIRP, along with its support foundation, Northeast Indiana Fund (NIF), announced the doubling of *Certified Site Ready* inventory in Northeast Indiana with a second round of certification. With this additional round of certification, the region is looking forward to the potential of each county having a certified site.

Applications for sites interested in becoming certified have been released to local economic development organizations, and they will be due mid-February. If a private land owner is interested in qualifying for site certification, please contact Mark Becker at mark@northeastindiana.org or by phone at 260.469.3474. *Certified Site Ready* sites will be announced in August of this year.

The *Certified Site Ready* program is designed to meet the needs of site selectors and prospect companies in today's highly competitive global site selection market. The program was established in 2009 to ensure Northeast Indiana sites meet critical criteria for development and to create an expedited process catering to stringent production timelines and a low tolerance for delay. To date, the region has 12 *Certified Site Ready* sites.

The certification process is handled by a third-party consultant, Mark Williams, president of Strategic Development Group, Inc. The privately-owned professional consulting firm certifies the new *Certified Site Ready* sites according to 15 required criteria.

With Certified Site Ready, Northeast Indiana proves that it is committed to making it easier for businesses to find a home and success in Northeast Indiana.

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About the Northeast Indiana Fund: The Northeast Indiana Fund's mission is to support the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership and its ten member counties through the funding and coordination of charitable activities which directly contribute to increasing the region's capacity to support new business investment and the creation of high quality jobs for the region. The Northeast Indiana Fund has received support from the Harold P. Arnold Foundation, the Olive B. Cole Foundation, the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne, the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne/SDI Fund, The Dekko Foundation, the English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, the Foellinger Foundation, the Robert Goldstine Foundation, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Indiana Michigan Power, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Lincoln Financial Foundation, the NiSource Foundation, NIPSCO, the Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana, the Steel Dynamics Foundation and the Verizon Foundation.

About Strategic Development Group: Strategic Development Group located in Columbia, SC, offers expert site location services, and provides a variety of economic development services such as strategic planning, site certification, and targeted marketing services. Recently, Strategic Development Group President, Mark Williams, was named a "Top 10 Site Consultant" by Southern Business & Development magazine. The company's website is www.strategicdev.com

CONTACT:
Mark Becker, Executive Director
Northeast Indiana Fund
260.469.3479
mark@northeastindiana.org