



OUR MISSION

To serve as a vital resource for ambitious organizations, equipping them to make connections, foster relationships and evoke change.

CONTACT

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STATEMENT OF SERVICES

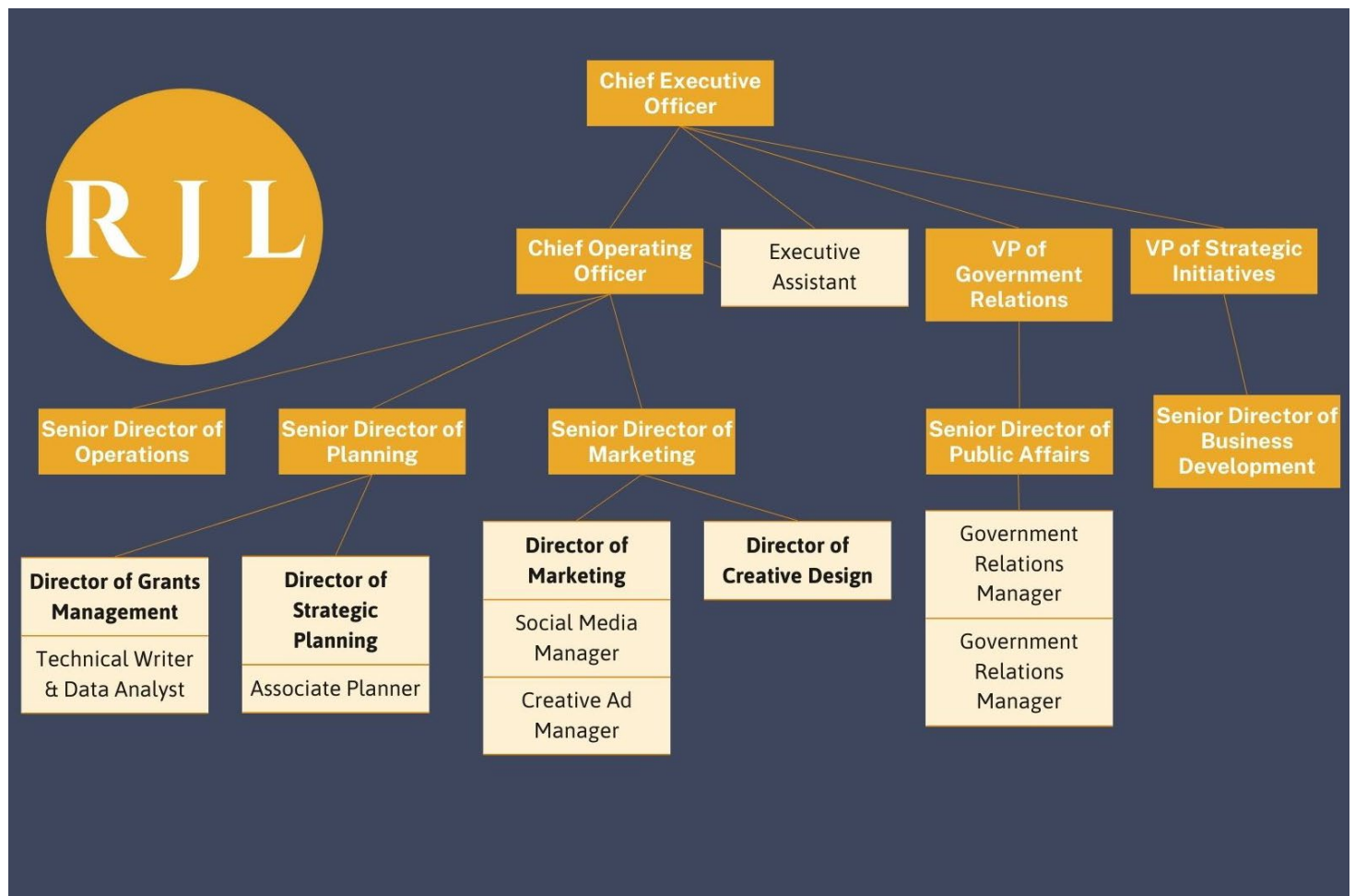
The RJL Solutions team is thrilled at the opportunity to collaborate with Perry County. With extensive experience leading community planning efforts and economic development initiatives across Indiana, we are well-prepared and energized to embark on this partnership. RJL Solutions proposes a targeted scope focused on an economic development strategy. We are confident in our ability to serve as a trusted partner, bringing measurable value and surpassing expectations. Please refer to the final pages of this document for a detailed proposal outlining the scope of work and the associated investment.

COMPANY BACKGROUND

RJL Solutions was founded in 2017 to be a vital resource for ambitious organizations, equipping them to make connections, foster relationships and evoke change. The unique business platform allows us to be flexible and meet the needs of the client. Our motto is a “No Worry Firm” allowing our clients to be at ease with the work of the collective team. We are often praised for the detail of our work. We believe in taking advantage of every opportunity to offer the best results, sometimes under challenging circumstances. RJL Solutions is a certified woman-owned business.

WHO ARE WE?

RJL Solutions is a group of empowered leaders who embrace challenges and fight for our clients every day. As change agents, we make the competitive market a winning reality. We strive to be the company most admired for its spirit of collaboration, integrity, and dedication to our clients, our communities and our families.



LEADERSHIP TEAM

RACHEL LESLIE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Rachel Joanne Leslie is the face behind the name at RJL Solutions. With a fierce desire to bring good things to Indiana, Rachel's journey has been lined in understanding her community and fighting for what it needs.

Rachel founded RJL Solutions in the summer of 2017 where she recognized the importance and value of advocacy and representation. The firm began as an advocacy firm and has since expanded to the marketing, public relations and community development industries.

As an experienced collaborator and registered lobbyist, Rachel advocates on behalf of her clients, strategically bringing them state and federal relationships and unique resources while also working to educate others on specific issues and promote public/private partnerships. Rachel has over 15 years of experience in government relationships, strategic

communications, event management and intentional collaboration.

Rachel holds a Master of Leadership Development degree from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a B.S. degree in Speech Communication Public Relations and Journalism from Indiana State University. She is a graduate of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce Executive Association Chamber University, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Institute of Organizational Management and the Indiana Leadership Forum. She served the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce in many capacities for seven years, including Executive Vice President, and was the Vice President for External Relations at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College for five years.

Rachel participates on a number of community and professional boards and committees, including the Indiana Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the Governor's Defense Taskforce.

BETSY PEPERAK, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER



Betsy's true strength lies in the perfect balance between left and right brain, using her creative and analytical sides equally to provide solutions and solve problems. As COO, Betsy doesn't just manage finances and operations but contributes to the overall strategic growth of RJL Solutions - using data to make decisions.

As COO, Betsy is responsible for maintaining the financial well-being of RJL Solutions and driving sustainable growth of the company. She provides leadership, management and vision in the areas of budgeting, quality control, information technology, project management, and strategic communications to ensure the proper financial performance and strength of RJL Solutions.

Betsy has a strong background in communications and marketing. She has a bachelor's degree in English Teaching from Indiana State University. After obtaining her master's degree in Professional Writing from Eastern Illinois University, she worked at Tribune-Star as an Advertising Account Executive and at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (SMWC) as Communications Manager. In 2019, she added a second master's degree to her list of accomplishments, a Master of Leadership Development from SMWC. Betsy currently serves on the Terre Haute Children's Museum Board of Directors and the Valparaiso University Women in Leadership Certificate Program Advisory Board. Additionally, she is a founding board member and officer for the Goodwill Workforce Enterprises Board of Directors, serving as secretary of the board. In 2024, Betsy was honored as one of the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce's 12 Under 40.

RYAN RITCHIE, VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



Ryan brings robust knowledge, understanding and connections in policy and governmental affairs to the RJL team including his most recent employment opportunities at the Indiana Senate, the United States Congress and The White House. His extensive understanding of federal initiatives and how they directly impact local and state municipalities and organizations allow our team to ensure our clients are taking advantage of every opportunity.

Ryan works directly with RJL's clients by providing analyst level support, coordinating legislative efforts by working with state, local and federal government officials and legislators, and implementing strategic high-level initiatives through policy development, relationship-building and intentional partnerships.

Ryan earned his bachelor's degree from Ball State University and his Master of Public Affairs (MPA) from Indiana University. He is a graduate of the Indiana Leadership Forum. In 2024, Ryan was honored as one of Indiana Business Journal's 20 in their Twenties.

DANIELLE ISBELL, VICE PRESIDENT OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



With over a decade of experience in the non-profit sector and serving the West Central Indiana Community, Danielle's passion for community success and relationship building makes her an integral part of the RJL team.

As Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, Danielle is responsible for leading projects for a variety of community profiles and industries including managing a pipeline of new clients, promoting a culture of client service, facilitating conversations, and networking with professionals.

Danielle earned her bachelor's degree from Indiana State University and her master's in leadership development from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College. She currently serves as secretary on the SMWC Alumni Board of Directors and a board member of Terre Haute Children's Museum.

When not volunteering in the community, Danielle, along with her husband Wes and twin boys Ethan and Owen, can be found traveling the states and exploring National Parks in their fifth-wheel camper.

PROJECT TEAM

JONATHAN BLAKE, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PLANNING



Jonathan Blake is an urban planning professional with more than 20 years experience in local government administration, including complex project management, operations, and executive-level leadership. Throughout his career, he has been responsible for managing programmatic and capital projects, geospatial analysis, public engagement, and public policy development and implementation. He has successfully managed more than \$45.2 million in federally funded transportation projects and \$90 million in public-private partnerships.

As Senior Director of Strategic Planning, Jonathan serves as both a visionary leader and operational manager for the planning and community development services offered at RJI Solutions. Jonathan provides leadership, direction, and general administrative oversight to the Grants & Strategic Planning department, serving as the conduit between the Grants &

Strategic Planning department and the Executive Team, ensuring that the daily tasks of the team contribute to the overall vision of the company.

Jonathan is certified by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), Certified Park & Recreation Professionals (CPRP), and Advance Commercial Advisors (ACA). He has a Bachelor of Science from Purdue University and is currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration at Butler University. Additionally, Jonathan is a member of the American Planning Association (Environmental Division, City Planning Division, and Indiana Chapter), the National Recreation & Park Association, the Indiana Park & Recreation Association, and the Indiana Commercial Board of REALTORS.

STEVEN REINOEHL, DIRECTOR OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT



Steven Reinoehl is an accomplished professional with a strong background in operations, event management, and community engagement. With extensive experience in managing complex projects and leading teams to achieve meaningful outcomes, Steven has established himself as a strategic and results-driven leader.

A graduate of Indiana University's Kelley School of Business, Steven has developed expertise in project management and strategic planning. In his role at RJI Solutions, he oversees a diverse portfolio of grant projects, from research and application development to compliance reporting. Steven plays a crucial role in connecting clients, stakeholders, and funding organizations, ensuring that every grant initiative is executed with precision and delivers maximum impact.

Steven's deep commitment to making a positive difference drives his work at RJI, where his leadership is instrumental in supporting thriving communities across Indiana and beyond. Outside of his professional endeavors, Steven enjoys writing, listening to music, camping, hiking, and engaging with his community.

RHIANNON CRUSE, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING



Rhiannon has extensive experience in business management, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement. Her background includes leading outreach and alumni engagement at Indiana State University Alumni Association, as well as managing public health initiatives with the Vigo County Health Department. She is skilled in strategic program development, cross-functional team leadership, and event coordination.

Rhiannon is set to complete her MBA from Indiana State University, adding to her academic foundation with a Bachelor's degree from Olivet Nazarene University. At RJI Solutions, she oversees strategic planning for clients, driving innovation and fostering long-lasting relationships to ensure clients achieve their goals.

In her personal time, Rhiannon enjoys staying active at the gym, traveling with her family, and supporting her daughter, Miah, in softball and basketball.

KRISTA KANE, TECHNICAL WRITER AND DATA ANALYST



Krista Kane serves as RJI Solutions' Technical Writer and Data Analyst, bringing a diverse background in international studies, language, and political science. She holds a bachelor's degree from Indiana University and has gained significant experience through her involvement in global projects and leadership in communications and data analysis initiatives.

With expertise in both technical writing and data analysis, Krista plays a critical role in translating complex data into clear, actionable insights for clients. Her work supports strategic planning and helps drive data-informed decision-making across RJI's projects.

Outside of work, Krista enjoys practicing hot yoga, bird watching, and spending time with family and friends. She is also an avid reader, even if it takes her a while to finish a book!

ETHAN DECATUR, ASSOCIATE PLANNER



Ethan is a spring 2024 honors graduate from Valparaiso University, earning a degree in Criminology and Environmental Science. Following graduation, Ethan joined the RJI team as an Associate Planner, providing support for the strategic planning team with knowledge of GIS software, community engagement, and database management.

Prior to joining RJI, Ethan worked with the City of Valparaiso, Indiana, as a GIS Analyst, assisting the city's public works division with various tasks, such as GIS organization and database updating and administration. Additionally, he has professional experience working with Valparaiso's engineering department as they tackled ADA compliance issues in Valpo through land surveying and sidewalk planning.

Provided with his unique background of experiences, Ethan is excited to join the team to further broaden the reach of RJI's strategic planning division. Outside of the office, Ethan enjoys mountain biking at Griffin Bike Park in Terre Haute, working on his car, and playing pickleball with the Indianapolis Pickleball Club.

POINT OF CONTACT

CONTRACT DEVELOPMENT

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT & SCOPE OF WORK

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EXPERIENCE

WABASH RIVER REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (RDA)

<https://www.rjlsolutions.com/case-studies/readi>

RJL Solutions played a pivotal role in the success of the Wabash River Regional Development Authority (RDA) during Indiana's 2021 Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI), which focused on advancing quality of life projects statewide. RJL Solutions was tasked with managing the application process for the six-county region, emphasizing workforce development, tourism, and talent attraction/retention. The firm facilitated key conversations with the RDA, local leadership, the IEDC, and project stakeholders, leading to a successful plan of 23 projects that secured \$20 million in state funding.



Securing an additional \$10 million through READI 2.0, RJL Solutions continued its involvement by managing the RDA's application process and serving as board administrator.

NEXT LEVEL CONNECTIONS BROADBAND GRANT

<https://www.rjlsolutions.com/case-studies/next-level-connections-broadband-grant>

RJL Solutions has been instrumental in supporting broadband development efforts in Indiana, where rural connectivity is a critical need. Through the state's Next Level Connections (NLC) Broadband Grant Program, RJL Solutions partnered with a broadband provider to develop applications for both Rounds 2 and 3 of the program. This partnership resulted in the submission of 12 applications and secured \$11.5 million in grant funding to expand broadband access in West Central Indiana.

RJL Solutions' success continued in Round 4 of Next Level Connections funding, securing an additional \$4.9 million for further broadband expansion. These efforts have connected more Hoosiers and contributed significantly to closing the digital divide in underserved and unserved areas of the state.

<https://www.rjlsolutions.com/case-studies/kc-46a-community-support-package>

Grissom Air Reserve Base had the opportunity to be one of the bases in the running to receive the KC-46A mission set that had a potential to bring 125 airmen and airwomen and their families to the communities surrounding the base. In response to the DoD, Grissom Air Reserve Base was asked to compile information on the community and how they would accommodate the additional airmen and airwomen into the community from housing, utility infrastructure, education, and more. In partnership with the Miami County Economic Development Authority, RJL Solutions was brought onboard to compile data on the community, facilitate stakeholder conversations, and write and design the final report to be submitted to DoD.

RJL Solutions spent two days in Miami County, Indiana meeting with several stakeholder groups with the North Central Indiana region including education, municipalities, relators, legislators, local businesses, community groups and foundations, and base personnel, to compile information and additional data on the community and how the community would accommodate the addition of airmen and women and their families. RJL then compiled the data into a written report and created a community packet that highlighted the assets that existed in and around the region including recreation, educational opportunities (k-12 and higher education), entertainment, transportation, and more.

PERRY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The purpose of this project is to identify key opportunities and challenges faced by industry leaders within Perry County, determine feasible priority initiatives for economic growth, and develop an actionable implementation strategy. The scope includes background research, stakeholder engagement, prioritization of initiatives, and brand awareness and utilization strategies.

SCOPE OF WORK

STEP 1: RESEARCH AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Objective: Gather qualitative and quantitative data regarding the needs and opportunities for industry retention and growth. Understand regional challenges and potential for collaboration with other organizations.

Critical Link: Establish relationships with local industries within Perry County.

1. Background Research.

- Conduct background research to identify key industries, businesses, and economic drivers within the County.
- Conduct market analysis to evaluate Perry County's potential for residential development, business growth, or a combination of both.
 - Analyze workforce availability, housing trends, and industry needs.
 - Identify growth sectors and business clusters with the highest potential.

2. Industry Leader Interviews and Surveys.

- Conduct interviews and surveys with local industry leaders (businesses, economic development groups, chambers of commerce, etc.) to assess their current needs, challenges, and growth opportunities.
- Explore industry-specific factors such as workforce development, infrastructure, regulatory climate, tax incentives, and innovation needs.

3. Regional and Sector Analysis.

- Collect and analyze data on regional trends, demographic shifts, workforce availability, and emerging sectors.
- Identify sectoral clusters or emerging industries with the potential to drive economic growth with the specific assets in the County.

4. Competitor Benchmarking.

- Research and analyze economic strategies employed by neighboring counties and regions, identifying best practices and competitive differentiators.

5. Stakeholder Meetings.

- Hold meetings with key stakeholders, including local government officials, economic development organizations, and community leaders to understand broader regional goals and perspectives. Note: This step focuses on information sharing rather than research.

Deliverables:

- Existing Conditions Report summarizing:
 - Stakeholder feedback and industry insights.
 - Data-driven analysis of the County's opportunities and challenges.
 - Recommendations for fostering stronger relationships with local industries.
 - List of priority sectors or industries for potential focus.

STEP 2: IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Objective: Use data collected from Step 1 to develop a list of feasible and impactful priorities and projects that will drive growth and improve industry retention and expansion.

Critical Link: Review development opportunities provided by the State.

1. Analysis of Feasibility and Impact:

- Analyze the feasibility, potential ROI, and long-term impact of proposed initiatives based on the data gathered.
- Prioritize initiatives based on industry needs, community support, economic potential, and available resources.

2. Development of Strategic Projects:

- Define specific projects that will support identified priority initiatives, including workforce development programs, infrastructure investments, policy changes, or incentives to support targeted industries.

3. Collaboration with State and Regional Partners:

- Conduct an in-depth review of state level economic development programs, incentives, and funding opportunities.
- Assess Perry County's readiness to capitalize on state opportunities, identifying key barriers or weaknesses that need to be addressed.
- Engage other regional organizations, educational institutions, and private sector partners to align resources and support the implementation of initiatives.

Deliverables:

- List of priority initiatives and strategic projects.
- A detailed evaluation of the feasibility of each initiative.
- List of relevant organizations and stakeholders for collaboration.

STEP 3: IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

Objective: Develop a clear, actionable plan to implement the selected initiatives, including timelines, resource allocation, and roles and responsibilities.

Critical Link: Determine Perry County's Economic Niche

1. Implementation Roadmap:

- Create a timeline and phased implementation plan, including short-, mid-, and long-term strategies, outlining key milestones, deliverables, and responsible parties.

2. Resource Allocation and Funding Plan:

- Identify funding sources and partnerships to support each initiative (public funds, private investment, grants, etc.).
- Define budget requirements and a resource allocation plan.

3. Roles and Responsibilities:

- Assign roles and responsibilities to County Commissioners, relevant departments, and key stakeholders, ensuring strong collaboration throughout the implementation process.

4. Performance Metrics and Monitoring:

- Establish metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) to track the success of each initiative.
- Develop a system for monitoring progress and adjusting the strategy as needed.

Deliverables:

- Detailed implementation strategy and action plan.
- Resource allocation and funding plan.
- Performance metrics and monitoring framework.

STEP 4: BRAND AWARENESS AND UTILIZATION

Objective: Develop a compelling branding strategy, utilizing ‘Pick Perry,’ that positions the County as a competitive and attractive destination for businesses, investment, and quality of life - utilizing the current community brand.

1. Brand Positioning Strategy.

- Utilize a brand positioning statement (Pick Perry) that communicates the County’s unique value propositions for business, talent, and investment.
- Create a messaging framework that highlights the County’s competitive advantages, such as infrastructure, quality of life, tax incentives, etc. - on the IN/KY border.
- Develop materials that help tell the Pick Perry story for competitive purposes related to the priority initiatives.

STEP 5: ONGOING SUPPORT AND EXECUTION

Objective: Execute Perry County's economic development strategy by implementing prioritized initiatives, fostering stakeholder collaboration, monitoring progress through measurable metrics, and utilizing targeted branding to attract business investment, enhance competitiveness, and drive sustainable economic growth

1. Program Management.

- Provide project management and implementation support to ensure the successful execution of the Action Plan.
- Coordinate with County Commissioners, stakeholders, and local organizations to advance identified initiatives.
- Adjust strategies as necessary based on progress and changing conditions to ensure desired outcomes are achieved.

2. Reporting.

- Monitor progress, track performance metrics, and provide regular updates to County leadership.

3. Marketing.

- Actively promote Perry County through targeted branding, outreach, and marketing campaigns to attract businesses, investors, and residents.

Deliverables:

- Progress reports with updates on implementation activities and outcomes.
- Marketing and outreach materials to promote Perry County.
- Annual performance review and recommendations for ongoing improvements.

TIMELINE

- **Phase 1** (Research and Stakeholder Engagement): 3-4 months
- **Phase 2** (Identification of Priority Initiatives): 2-3 months
- **Phase 3** (Implementation Action Plan): 2-3 months
- **Phase 4** (Brand Awareness and Utilization): 2-3 months
- **Phase 5** (Ongoing Support and Execution): 12 months

Initial Contract Term: 12-month annual contract (Phases 1 thru 4), with reconsideration to continue implementation strategy (Phase 5) for an additional 12 months, based on performance.*

Collaboration & Stakeholder Involvement

- **County Commissioners:** Serve as project leads, providing strategic oversight and decision-making.
 - **Economic Development Organizations/Tourism:** Collaborate to ensure alignment with regional goals and to provide expertise in planning and implementation.
 - **Local Businesses and Industry Leaders:** Actively participate in providing feedback, shaping priorities, and supporting the execution of initiatives.
 - **Educational Institutions:** Assist in workforce development initiatives and provide research support.
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Success Metrics

- **Economic Growth:** Number of new businesses attracted, jobs created, and industries expanded.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Positive feedback from local industry leaders, government officials, and community members.
- **Project Implementation:** Completion of strategic projects within established timelines and budget.

INVESTMENT

\$96,000 Annual Contract (payable in monthly installment of \$8,000/month)

*Note: Phase 5 is not included in the above investment amount.

THANK YOU

Thank you for allowing RJI Solutions to submit a proposal for this important scope of work. We don't take this opportunity lightly and will exceed expectations in all areas.