



Comprehensive Plan

Henry County, Indiana

RESOLUTION ____, 2018-06-13 (01A)

A RESOLUTION APPROVING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the Henry County Planning Commission ("Planning Commission") coordinated and directed the preparation of a new Comprehensive Plan by the consultant, American Structure Point, Inc., in accordance with the provisions of Indiana Code §36-7-4-500, *et seq.*; and,

WHEREAS, on January 18, 2018, the Planning Commission held a public hearing to consider the adoption of a new and amended Comprehensive Plan for the County; and,

WHEREAS, on February 18, 2018, the Henry County Planning Commission certified a new Comprehensive Plan for consideration by the Board of Commissioners; and,

WHEREAS, on March 28, 2018, the Board of Commissioners of Henry County adopted a Resolution Amending the Comprehensive Plan Certified by the Henry County Planning Commission; and,

WHEREAS, on May 17, 2018, the Planning Commission received and reviewed the Board of Commissioner's proposed amendments to the Certified Plan and voted to approve the Board of Commissioner's amendments to the Certified Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners wishes to approve the Comprehensive Plan after receiving the favorable recommendation from the Planning Commission.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the document attached to this resolution as Exhibit "A" is hereby approved and made the Comprehensive Plan for Henry County, Indiana.

All of which is resolved this 13~~th~~ day of June, 2018.

RECEIVED

JUN 13 2018

**BOARD OF HENRY
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HENRY COUNTY, INDIANA

[Signature]

Bruce (Butch) Baker, President

[Signature]

Kim Cronk

[Signature]

Ed Yanos

Attest:

[Signature]

Patricia A. French

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Linda C. Winchester
Henry County Recorder IN
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WELCOME HOME

The Henry County Planning Commission is pleased to present our recommendations for a new Comprehensive Plan for the County. This Comprehensive Plan represents hours of work by this Commission and our consultants as well as substantial input from interested members of the public.

We believe adopting this Comprehensive Plan will provide a forward-thinking road map which will guide policy decisions as well as both public sector and private sector development for years to come. We also believe that the implementation of this Plan could well encourage private sector investment as it provides some sense of certainty as to how, where and what kind of growth is encouraged and endorsed by Henry County.

This Comprehensive Plan represents our proactive planning for the future growth of our County and offers a clarity of vision that protects our County from haphazard development. We owe this guidance to future generations of Henry County residents.

The Planning Commission and I look forward to working with the County Commissioners to see this plan through.

Steve Rust
 President
 Henry County Planning Commission

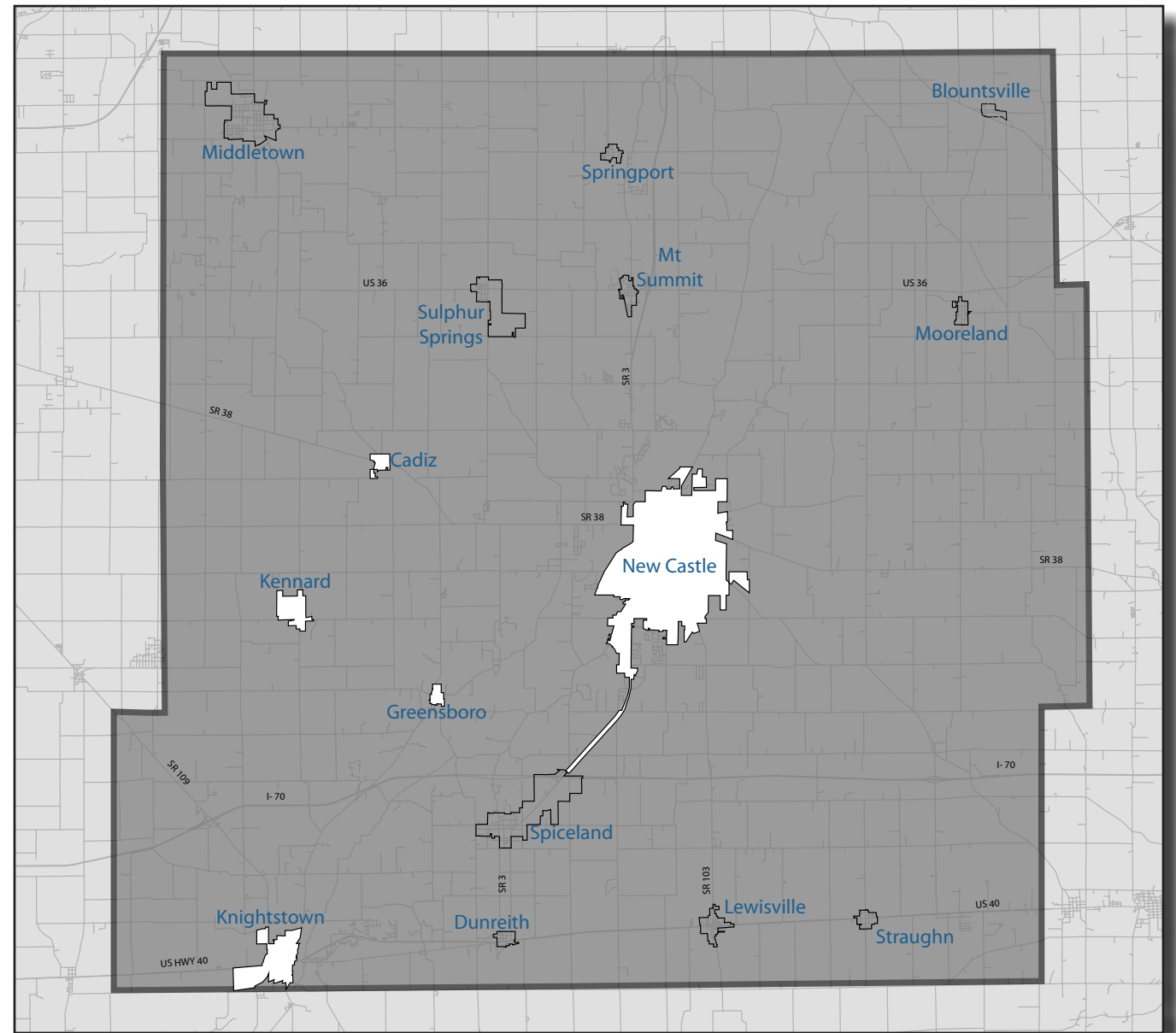


Introduction

context // summary // purpose

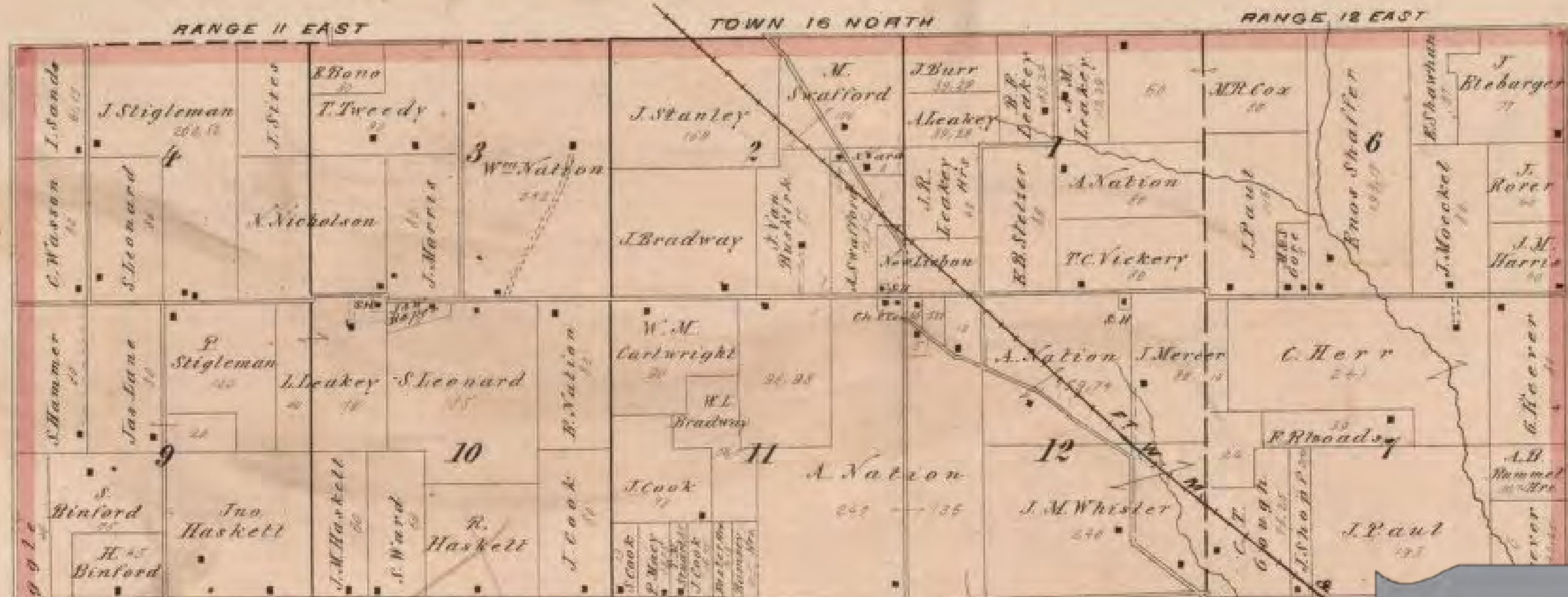
This chapter briefly describes the history and context that brought Henry County to where it is today. The history and context is followed by a brief summary of the final set of recommendations, as well as an explanation of how each of the recommendations came to be, and an acknowledgment of the individuals who contributed to this plan.

Reference this chapter when summarizing the final set of recommendations and noting the key stakeholders in the planning process.



The policy objectives, strategies, and action steps outlined in this plan directly apply to land that falls under the jurisdiction of the Henry County Planning Commission which includes: Middletown, Sulphur Springs, Springport, Mount Summit, Mooreland, Blountsville, Straughn, Lewisville, Spiceland, Dunreith, and the rest of the unincorporated land within the county.





History // Context

Henry County, Indiana is located between the cities of Indianapolis and Richmond in the East Central part of the state. Much of the county is well-served by thoroughfares, including I-70, US 40, US 36, US 38 and SR 3. The county was named after Patrick Henry, a founding father, attorney, and skilled public speaker who served as a leading figure during the American Revolutionary period. Henry was most noted for his opposition of the Stamp Act of 1765 levied by England and remembered by a speech where he famously proclaimed, "Give me liberty, or give me death!" In that patriotic fashion, the nearly 400-square-mile area that became Henry County was officially organized on June 1, 1822. Henry County is the birthplace of such notable people as Wilbur Wright, and home to the basketball court featured in the movie "Hoosiers." The county boasts numerous natural amenities, including Westwood Park Reservoir, Haven Lake, and Summit Lake State Park.

For nearly 200 years, like most communities in Indiana, Henry County was surveyed and divided into townships so that land could be sold, cleared, and built upon. The original gateway of the county appears to have been Dudley Township because of the three heavily traveled routes that led to Henry County from the east. The earliest of neighborhoods included "Leavell," "Heaton," and "Harvey." Residences were established. A free school system emerged. Banks were established. Large tracts of land began to be farmed. A poll tax and licensing fees were established to generate revenue for

the county and the state. Fast forward to the 21st century and Henry County is home to numerous neighborhoods and land uses. The county is now accessible by a number of transportation routes through a number of community gateways. Property and income tax revenues have replaced poll taxes, and the number and amount of permitting and licensing fees has increased. Along the way, local and elected leaders, staff, neighborhood residents, and business owners studied issues and opportunities pertaining to land use and transportation, and – from time to time – established a plan or series of plans by which to guide the decision-making process.

Derived from a community-led process, this plan is a strategic guide for effective decision-making in both private development projects and community



Use this section for a brief overview of the settlement of Henry County.



expenditures for the public good. The following pages contain a series of written recommendations that are intended to move the larger community toward the realization of its collective vision.

The policy objectives, strategies, and action steps outlined in this plan apply most directly to land that falls under the jurisdiction of the Henry County Planning Commission (which includes Middletown, Sulphur Springs, Springport, Mount Summit, Mooreland, Blountsville, Straughn, Lewisville, Spiceland, Dunreith, and the rest of the unincorporated land within the county), we offer that many of the recommendations of this plan are applicable to the incorporated municipalities as well.

To that end, this plan is available to anyone who is interested in the people, places, and progress of the larger Henry County community, now and in the future.



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Summary

The key takeaways from the planning process and resulting plan are:

1. Henry County is seeking a paradigm shift in both the categorization/classification and use/development of agricultural land.
2. Proactively plan for the county's existing and proposed interstate interchanges, while addressing existing public safety concerns at some of the county's existing roadway intersections.
3. Henry County seeks for the future land use and transportation plan to dictate where future water and sewer systems can go, rather than development dictating where centralized water and sewer systems are needed.

Use this section when describing the key takeaways and collective approach to planning for future growth and development across Henry County.

The larger county's collective approach to planning and zoning is to approach issues and opportunities with a growth-based decision making perspective, as opposed to a fear-based decision making perspective. What that means is that local decision making should:

- Be proactive, rather than reactive;
- Be driven by the need to improve upon existing conditions, rather than to succumb to the scarcities that are inherent in any society;
- Be focused on the future, rather than maintaining the status quo;
- More often than not be uncomfortable
- Approach solutions to problems with a both: and mindset, rather than an either: or mindset;
- Seek solutions that bind the rural, unincorporated parts and urban, incorporated parts of the county, rather than pit rural against urban, or vice versa; and
- **Above all else, be decisive.**





Purpose // Intent

What is a comprehensive plan? Communities are shaped by a variety of social, physical, environmental, and economic factors.

A comprehensive plan is the most common approach for addressing nearly all of the interrelated aspects of the built environment. The topics covered herein include: land use planning, housing and neighborhood revitalization, parks and recreation, environmental and natural systems, transportation and utility infrastructure, economic development, education and workforce development, and some community services.

A comprehensive plan is not a set of land use regulations, an ordinance, or a rezoning of someone's property. Nor is it the only contributing factor when local and appointed officials and staff consider development projects or public investments.

How to Use This Plan

This plan is intended to be a strategic guide for effective decision-making in both private development projects and investments in public infrastructure and the delivery of services. It should serve as a reference document for anyone -- property owners, developers, lenders, elected and appointed officials, and county staff -- looking to inform local policy, land use, transportation, and other

This plan is intended to be a strategic guide for effective decision-making in both private development projects and investments in public infrastructure and the delivery of public services.

Use this section to determine if and when the contents of this plan should apply.



infrastructure investments over the next 25 to 30 years. Particular attention should be given to:

- Preserving and enhancing the local character
- Shaping how the community changes over time
- Promoting the orderly development and redevelopment of the county
- Improving the quality of life of residents
- Assisting local governments in making land use decisions, especially as it relates to the effective and efficient delivery of public services, such as roads and utilities
- Coordinating development and future capital expenditures within and between agencies and departments
- Improving local conditions to attract more private investment
- Avoiding costly mitigation of poorly planned developments
- Minimizing the number of instances where it isn't clear what the desired outcomes ought to be – given that there is both a vision and a plan
- Instilling in the general public that there are processes in place to protect the long-term vitality of the community, and that the processes that are used by local decision makers work



Updating the Plan

The following measures should be taken to ensure that the recommended strategies and action steps continue to move the community toward its vision; but also that the plan continues to accurately reflect the community's collective vision and values over time.

1. Prepare an annual report that highlights how the plan was used and the effectiveness of the contents, paying particular attention to the implications of how one part of the plan affects or otherwise relates to another.
2. Establish a five-year review and update process by which to regularly examine and revise the contents of the plan. Of particular importance are: updates to the socio-demographic information, making sure that each of the policy objectives identified are still relevant; making use of any newly defined best practice in land use or transportation planning, or zoning; or simply aligning the content of the plan with any changes to the local regulatory environment.
3. Establish a community engagement process, complete with inter-local cooperation, by which to complete the first two measures.





Acknowledgments

A comprehensive plan comprehensive plan, by its very nature, is a collaborative effort. This plan would not have been possible without the financial contributions of the Henry County Food and Beverage Committee, Henry County Council, Henry County Redevelopment Commission, Henry County Planning Commission and the New Castle-Henry County Economic Development Corporation, or the numerous volunteer hours that were contributed by local community members. The following individuals played an important role in the development of this comprehensive plan.

Disclaimer: *The inclusion of the names on the following pages does not necessarily constitute or imply that one or more of these individuals endorses, recommends, or favors the content of this plan.*

County Commissioners

Bruce (Butch) Baker
Kim Cronk
Ed Yanos

Planning Commission

Larry Brayton
Rachel Clark
Dale Cole
Justin Curley
Robin Reno-Fleming
Daniel Roach
Steve Rust
Olene Veach
Ed Yanos

Project Steering Committee

Marcus Allhands, President // South Henry Regional Waste District
Mike Broyles, Past Chairman // New Castle-Henry County EDC
Bob Clapp, Clerk-Treasurer // Sulphur Springs
Joe Copeland, Highway Engineer // Henry County
Susan Falk-Neal, Broker/Owner // ERA Integrity Real Estate
Dennis Hamilton // Hope Initiative/Healthy Communities
Darrin Jacobs, Zoning Administrator // Planning Commission
Kade Koger, Fourth Generation Farmer // Henry County
Nate LaMar, President // Henry County Council
Jeff Lane, Superintendent // Town of Spiceland
Jon Madison // Blue River School Board, EDC Chair, Redevelopment Commission
John Miller, Financial Planner
Jeremiah Morrell, President // Memorial Park Board
Corey Murphy, President/CEO // New Castle-Henry County EDC
Christy Ragle, Public Relations Consultant
Kellie Riggs // Henry County Soil & Water Conservation District
Shannon Thom, CEO // Henry County REMC
Rachel White, Former Zoning Administrator // Planning Commission



Volunteer Stakeholders

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Nate LaMar
Missy Modesitt
Corey Murphy
Keith Pritchett
Christy Ragle
Aaron Stigall
Shannon Thom
Ed Yanos
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Education and Workforce Development

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Alan McCraine
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Maurie Goodwin
John Greene
Nancy Harmon
Tracy Harrison
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Steve Rust
Shannon Thom

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Guy Cobb
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Kade Koger
Lis McDonnell
Janet Putnam
Brian Riedie
Kellie Riggs
Jim Wenning
Rachel White

Social Media Campaign Partners

Henry County Community Foundation
New Castle-Henry County EDC
New Castle-Henry County Public Library
The Courier Times

Photos

A very special thank you to Tony Roach, an employee of Henry County and local photographer, for his contribution to this plan.

Additional photos provided by Kade Koger, Corey Murphy and Darrin Jacobs of Henry County, and American Structurepoint.

Funding for this plan was made possible by:

Henry County Food and Beverage Committee
Henry County Redevelopment Commission
Henry County Economic Development Corporation
Henry County Council

The facilitation of the planning process and final plan were prepared by:



AMERICAN
STRUCTUREPOINT
INC.



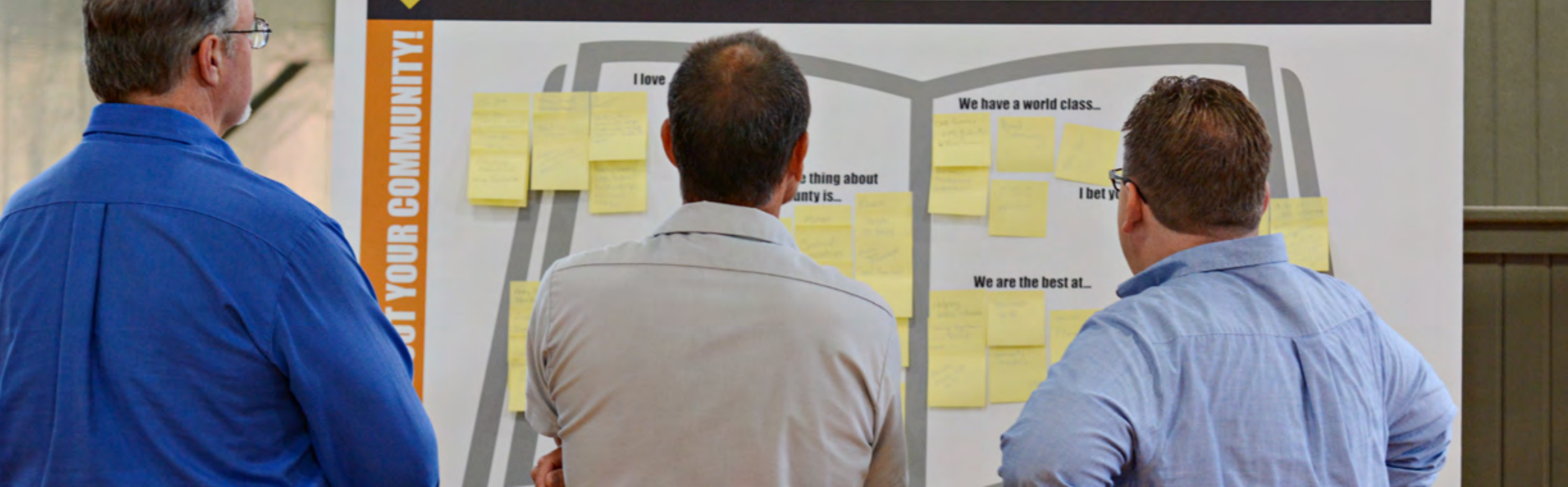
Vision // Values

community

This chapter houses the largely held vision and values of the Henry County community, as determined by the Henry County community. The contents of this chapter are significant in that this is one area where people can seek to find common ground on an issue or opportunity.

Reference this chapter when describing the collective vision and values of the Henry County community as it relates to the future growth and development, or when sharing the public outreach and involvement efforts used throughout the planning process.





Community Voice

The community outreach and engagement process began in January 2017 and included the formation and contribution of members of a project steering committee, key stakeholder focus groups, and the general public. The project steering committee guided the consulting team both in terms of the process and the final plan. Over 100 local volunteers representing agriculture, economic development, education and workforce, housing and real estate, parks and recreation, and public safety participated in small focus group sessions that were designed to allow participants to dig into a number of important topic areas. Guided by the focus group discussions and with input from the steering committee, the project team conducted a series of public outreach events designed to: further refine the vision and values of the community; obtain feedback on draft components of the plan; and ultimately celebrate the successful completion of the planning process.

Use this section to describe the community engagement process and the reach that the project team was able to have by first implementing a public communications plan.

Much of the public input was obtained through the project website, which was further supported by a larger social media campaign. Between February and October of 2017, there were over 1,300 sessions, 920 (unique) users, and 3,200 page views associated with the project website. There were 79 responses to a handful of quick polls that sought feedback on the types of actions that the County should be taking to improve the quality of life for residents.

On May 17, 2017, the project team held an open house that consisted of both a mid-day and evening session. Participants had the opportunity to provide their thoughts and feedback at 10 different stations. The 50 community members who attended used 363 sticky notes and 610 sticky votes to communicate their thoughts and ideas as to the larger community's values, and what the overall vision of the comprehensive plan should be. More than 200 people contributed their thoughts and ideas about the vision and values of the Henry County community through an online survey that, with few exceptions, contained the same information, questions, and prompts as did the open house materials. The survey opened on May 17 and remained open for 15 days. During this time, there were over 200 survey responds collected. The nearly 90 pages of comments, questions, and recommendations submitted were used to inform and influence the draft policy objectives and strategies. Key takeaways from both the in-person and online engagement can be summarized as follows:



Members of the Steering Committee embarked on an unprecedented, on the ground effort to promote the May 17th open houses. Included below is a list of the various publications, announcements and email blasts that went out during the weeks leading up to the first public event.

The Middletown News paid advertisement
May 4 and 11

The Banner paid advertisement
May 3 and 10

The Courier Times paid advertisement
May 10 and 14

Middletown News Letter to the Editor
May 11

The Banner Letter to the Editor
May 10

The Courier Times Letter to the Editor
May 4

Two sponsored EDC Facebook Posts
1,600 people reached

Open invitation // Memorial Dr billboard
May 2 through 17

Personal invitations to all elected officials

Open invitation in weekly Chamber e-blasts

- A number of residents are vehemently opposed to large commercial wind farms as being unsuitable for Henry County.
- Residents expressed a desire to prioritize redevelopment and infill development over the development of open spaces or prime agricultural land.
- The community would benefit greatly from stricter enforcement of the county's zoning (and by extension building) codes as one way to address everything from blight and illegal dumping to new development or redevelopment of a site.
- Whether addressing an issue, or seeking an opportunity, most of what the county needs relates directly or indirectly to increasing the number, types, and average wage of the jobs in (or near) Henry County.
- More should be done to increase both the housing and transportation options available throughout the county.
- The county currently lacks enough shopping, dining, or entertainment options to amount to an "experience," and the type of broadband connectivity or reliable cell service necessary to improve the local economy, or adequately provide emergency response services.
- In terms of which types of development should go where, there is a growing desire to have more



development at one or more of the interstate interchanges, provided that the new development contributes to enhancing the design aesthetic of the larger community and is consistent with the recommendations of this plan.

- Many participants/respondents shared that the stated vision for the comprehensive plan accurately reflects the values of the larger community, is inspirational, realistic, and attainable, and that it puts Henry County in a position to be competitive, and would result in a greater degree of collaboration among various agencies and organizations.

On Thursday, August 10, 2017, representatives from the project team reached out to residents of and visitors to the 78th annual Mooreland Free Fair to solicit their feedback on a handful of policy objectives/strategies from the draft plan. Numerous residents and visitors contributed their thoughts and ideas about the draft plan contents in person and online, between Friday, August 4 and Friday, August 18.

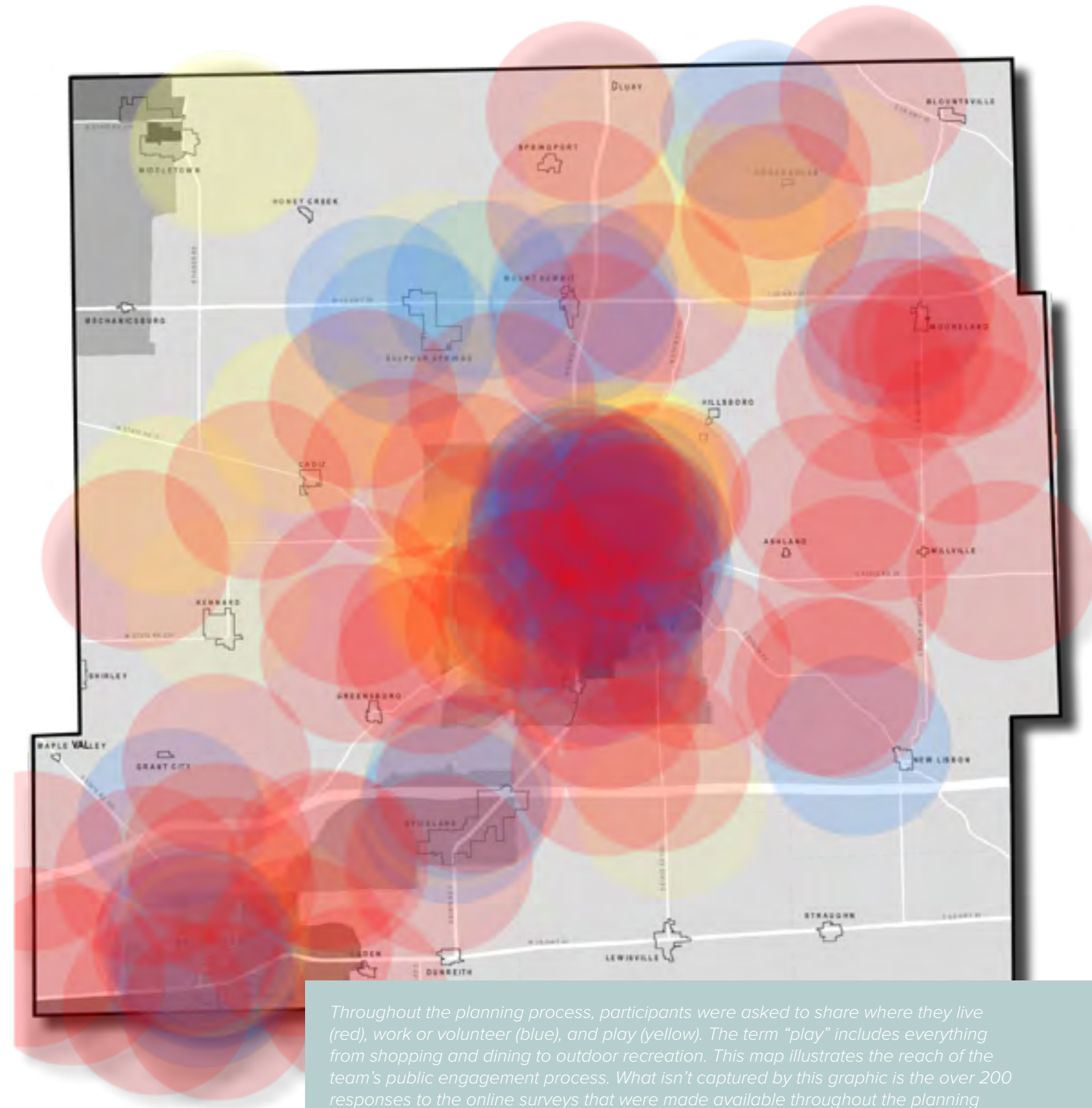
The nearly four pages of comments, questions, and recommendations submitted aided the project team in identifying the actions and resources that are likely to be needed in order for the recommendations of the plan to be implemented by local decision makers. Key takeaways from both the in-person and online engagement can be summarized as follows:

- The draft recommendations that resonated with the greatest number of participants and where none of the respondents were inclined to



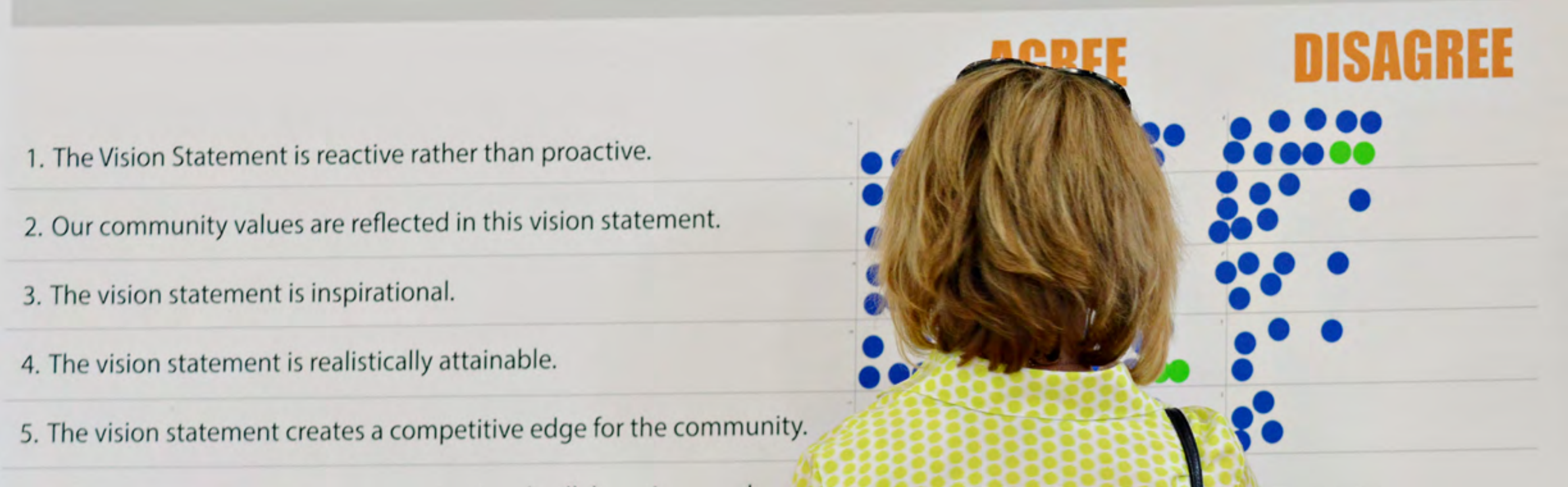
disagree span issues and opportunities related to housing, transportation, natural environments, and public health and safety.

- The majority of respondents agreed with, or were indifferent about, most of the ability of each of the stated recommendations to, once implemented, move the county toward its stated vision.
- Overall, the draft recommendations were well received by those who participated in the survey.



Throughout the planning process, participants were asked to share where they live (red), work or volunteer (blue), and play (yellow). The term "play" includes everything from shopping and dining to outdoor recreation. This map illustrates the reach of the team's public engagement process. What isn't captured by this graphic is the over 200 responses to the online surveys that were made available throughout the planning process as well.





Community Vision

For the purposes of this plan, a vision statement serves as a road map for the future. It is not a declaration about what the community is, but rather what it wants to become. It is an indicator of the types of development and infrastructure investments that it hopes to retain or attract.

Henry County is becoming East Central Indiana's premier community for education, commerce, agriculture, and family opportunities.

Come home to an engaged and invested community where unified leadership encourages innovation to sustain an excellent quality of life.

Use this section when reviewing a proposed development project, or when seeking common ground on a particular issue or opportunity.





Community Values

The following guiding principles, or value propositions serve as a set of promises to the Henry County of the future.

In Henry County you can...

1. Find a home for your life stage and lifestyle.
2. Find quality dependent care.
3. Attend schools that offer a superior education.
4. Access career opportunities with employers that pay self-sustaining wages.
5. Age-in-place.
6. Have adequate, reliable utilities.
7. Have access to or otherwise be among a talented and agile workforce.
8. Easily move about the county.
9. Find a greater variety of shopping, dining and entertainment options.
10. Live in a community that is attractive and well cared for.

Use this section as a "step" between the vision and the detailed policy objectives on the following pages.



Recommendations

policy objectives // strategies // action steps

The following recommendations are comprised of a set of policy objectives that are further supported by a series of strategies and action steps. For the purposes of this plan, a policy objective is a statement about the larger community's position on an issue or opportunity, with enough specificity to suggest how best to measure whether or not a policy objective is, or is not, being met. Strategies are statements phrased as a plan of action. They are designed to achieve one or more policy objectives. By comparison, actions steps are the steps that the various policy and decision-making bodies and agencies have said they are willing to take to achieve the objectives of this plan over time.

Reference this section when describing the larger community's position on one or more issues or opportunities, or the tasks that key stakeholders are willing to undertake to implement this plan, or both.

More often than not, most of the recommendations of this plan will either require, or result in the systems-level thinking and systems-level changes that will be necessary to adequately address the root causes of the issues that the larger Henry County community would like to focus on. The recommendations of this plan requires local decision makers to think of the organized complexities of the larger community, and refrain from reducing the community to parts. It requires embracing the complications inherent in the relationships between human, environmental and fiscal health. Agriculture does this and has done so really well for centuries. Anyone that works in an agriculturally related industry knows that the land is an evolving organism of interrelated parts like soil, hydrology, wildlife, plants, animals, and people. The practice of farming respects the fact that the land limits both the scale and type of farming, and that the land promises to disappoint when its carrying capacity has been exceeded. Farmers are land stewards. And like them, **this plan aims to make better stewards of anyone who seeks to maintain and enhance all that Henry County has to offer.**





Policy Objectives

This section describes the existing conditions as a series of policy objectives that are designed to realize the county-wide vision. It incorporates, where possible, past or present trends in development.

The following policy objectives have been subdivided into three distinct parts: **people**, **places**, and **progress**. Within the people section are the policy objectives that most directly relate to the people that call Henry County “Home.” This first subsection is intended to address issues and opportunities related to the needs of local residents in terms of education, workforce development, community services, and the type(s) of lifestyle(s) that the communities in Henry County afford their residents. The subsection on places lists the policy objectives that most directly relate to the built environment and covers issues and opportunities related to land use, transportation, and utilities. Lastly, the progress subsection addresses issues and opportunities related to long term, growth management, economic development and tourism, and the administration of local policies and procedures.

Use this section as the rationale basis for all local planning and zoning decisions.





People

This section describes the existing conditions as a series of policy objectives that are designed to realize the county-wide vision. It incorporates, where possible, past or present trends in development.





Demographics

Population estimates for 2015 list Henry County's total population at approximately 49,000 people. The most populated municipality is the City of New Castle, the county seat, with a 2015 population of approximately 18,000 people. By comparison, the combined populations for the towns of Middletown (2,270), Knightstown (2,120), and Spiceland (900) make up just over 5 percent of the county's total population. Today, fewer than half of the county's total population lives in an incorporated city or town.

The growth (and decline) of the Henry County's population over time reflects that of the surrounding counties, with the exception of Hancock County. From 1930 to 2015, the Henry County population fluctuated, growing steadily from the 1930s until the early '80s.

Between 1980 and 1990, the county experienced a sharp downturn, losing almost 10 percent of its total population. The sudden decline in population is largely attributable to the loss of automobile manufacturing jobs; a trend that was seen across the entire State of Indiana and which hit places like Henry County particularly hard. Since the 1990s, the county population has increased by approximately 1 percent each year. Henry County has not yet recovered the population that it had when Chrysler, for example, was operating at its peak.

The population loss in Henry County during the 1980s was felt by nearly every municipality. The Town of Middletown experienced the most severe change in population. Between the 1970s and 1980s, the Town of Middletown grew by more than 900 residents. By 1990, the Town of Middletown had lost over 600 residents.

The remaining towns in the county experienced a loss at a less drastic rate, but still averaged more than a 10 percent loss for the same period of time. Similar to the county as a whole, repopulating the city of New Castle and surrounding towns has been very slow.

The top issues attributable to fewer residents includes:

- Less income tax which is the primary source of funds for everything from roads and utilities to police and economic development

- An inability to support or attract many of the retail chains and entertainment options that would contribute to people in all stages of life
- A smaller labor force; fewer people employed or looking for work
- The likelihood that existing employers may continue to struggle to fill vacant positions
- The likelihood that the customer base for existing businesses will grow smaller still and thereby threaten the businesses' existence

The vast majority of Henry County's total population identifies as being Caucasian (95.5 percent), non-Hispanic or Latino (98.8 percent). The rest of the county's population (approximately 4.5 percent of the residents) identifies as being a person of color. Most people of color identify as being two or more races. Less than 2 percent identify as black, and only 1.6 percent of the total population identifies as being of Hispanic or Latino decent. While the county is not exceptionally diverse in terms of race, the populations of Knightstown, Middletown, and Spiceland are even less diverse. Compared to the surrounding counties, Henry County is slightly more diverse than many. Of the counties that are being used for comparison purposes, the populations of Delaware and Madison County have the most diverse populations.

For all but the elderly, the population of Henry County is nearly equally split between male (52 percent) and female (48 percent). The median age of the Henry County population is 42.2, which is similar to the median age of the Randolph and Fayette County populations, but older than that of Delaware (35.5), Wayne (40.9), Rush (41.3), Hancock (39.8), and Madison (39.8) counties. It is quite a bit older than the median age for the State of Indiana (37.3) as a whole. Compared to men, more women are living past the age of 70.

While the majority of Henry County's population is currently of working age, the age distribution suggests that if more people between the ages of 15-59 do not move into the county, Henry County's labor force will continue to shrink while the number of residents who have retired continues to grow.



The top issues attributable to an old and aging population include:

- A shrinking labor force
- A smaller percentage of the population who are of working age and able to face the task of generating enough wealth to provide high levels of support for the aging population, especially elderly women living alone
- A disproportionate amount of the population with growing acute healthcare needs
- An increase in the need for low- or no-maintenance housing units, primarily apartments for rent
- An overall decrease in the standard of living for people on a fixed income/pension if they are not able to age in place, especially with respect to being independently mobile



can be entirely beneficial to many existing and future employers. Grandparents are sometimes able to provide low-cost options for childcare, and older adults will often give freely of their time in any number of civic engagement activities.

The distribution of Henry County's total population tells an entirely different story when it comes to the county's youth. Approximately 20 percent of the county's total population is between the ages of 0 and 17, and another 20 percent of the total population is between the ages of 18 and 35. However, it is the shape of the county's population pyramid that is most concerning. Influenced by births, deaths, and migration, the population pyramid suggests that Henry County "exports" younger adults between the ages of 20 and 35, something that is especially true for the female population.

While it is likely that younger adults will continue to leave Henry County in search of a college education, city life, career opportunities, or any combination thereof, creating and maintaining a community that young professionals and skilled laborers want

to return to when they look to settle down and possibly start a family should be of the utmost importance. The population pyramid further suggests that Henry County is not retaining or attracting families with young children, given the relatively low percentage of people

An old and aging population presents a number of opportunities within the larger community, however. Some businesses, such as those that locate in close proximity to hospitals, are likely to expand with the growth of the elderly population. As a result, all residents of Henry County (and those of nearby communities) are likely to benefit from improved access to a greater number of healthcare services and providers. People of retirement age often look for part-time work or volunteer opportunities, which

Aging in place: the ability to live in a home and community of one's choosing safely, independently, and comfortably regardless of age, income, or ability level." –Adapted from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention definition.



ages 0-14. When combined, these factors indicate that, unless and until births outnumber deaths and/or unless and until Henry County attracts more people at or below childbearing years, the county's population is likely to decrease rather than increase.

The top issues attributable to fewer and fewer young adults and children includes:

- Fewer families
- A shrinking workforce
- A decrease in the amount of wealth that future generations can generate
- A greater dependency between non-economically active residents and residents who generate income taxes
- A decrease in the number of quality childcare options for the few families that remain

The top issues attributable to creating a more inclusive community most likely begins with making Henry County an age-friendly community and addressing some of the underlying factors of the local income inequality. By creating more opportunities for improved health, participation in the community, and security for the county's aging and low income populations, people of all ages and all abilities, and people in the middle- to upper-income ranges stand to benefit as well.

In order to retain and attract young professionals and skilled laborers and families, while simultaneously creating and maintaining a community that supports



older adults and lower income residents, the County must:

- Adequately provide for all of life's stages in everything from housing, transportation, recreation, shopping, and health and human services.
- Improve the county's image and build an appealing reality for young professionals as one way to fuel economic growth and urban revitalization.

- Modify local policies and regulations to accommodate housing developments and individual housing units suitable for an elderly population, and to the extent that they are different, for low-income residents.

Education and Workforce Development

Providing and working to continually improve the county's ability to retain, expand, and attract businesses, especially those that pay higher-than-average wages, is a function of the economic development

opportunities afforded to a community. However, the degree to which a community is seen as an attractive business proposition is often a function of just how educated and agile the local workforce is. Successful workforce development strategies are most often industry led, and rely on schools to partner with employers, industry leaders, and trade/vocational schools to develop and then implement curriculum or training programs that can – over time – close the gaps that exist between what employers want or need their employees to be able to do, and what those same

employees can actually do when they show up to work for both the incumbent and emerging labor forces.

Generally speaking, an educated population should translate to higher earnings and lower unemployment rates. Educational attainment throughout Henry County is relatively high compared to the surrounding communities. Henry County has a relatively higher number of high school graduates, with 43.5 percent of the total population 25 years and older receiving a high school diploma (or equivalency). An additional 43 percent of Henry County's population has earned a post-secondary education. Randolph and Rush County are the only two comparison counties with a greater percentage of their population 25 years and older to earn a high school diploma (or equivalency); however, a smaller percentage of their populations go on to receive a post-secondary education.

The top issues attributable to retaining or otherwise attracting educated young professionals and skilled laborers to live (and when possible live and work) in Henry County include:

- Career opportunities
- Quality childcare opportunities for working parents and caregivers
- Quality housing of all types and price points
- Lifestyle amenities such as multi-purpose trails and greenways

- Lifelong learning opportunities
- Henry County will need to continue to match the job needs of its resident labor force with the jobs available, while meeting the needs of the nearly 23,000 people who work AND live in Henry County.

A community's labor force is made up of people over the age of 16 that are either working or actively seeking a job. In 2015, Henry County had a relatively low unemployment rate of 5.8 percent, the unemployment



rate for the City of New Castle (14.0 percent), and the Towns of Knightstown (13.6 percent), Middletown (15.6 percent) are well above the U.S. (5.2 percent) and Indiana (5.0 percent) unemployment rates at the same point in time. It would seem that the increase in the poverty rate in the City of New Castle and Towns of Knightstown, Middletown, and even Spiceland are due at least in part to the number of residents who are either not looking for a job or are otherwise unable to work. With a 5.3 percent unemployment rate back in 2015, Henry

County is often a little above the average for the region. Fayette County has the highest rate at 6.5 percent, whereas Hancock County is low at 4.2 percent for the same period of time.

At first glance, it looks as if the total number of jobs and establishments in Henry County has fluctuated over the last several years. After 10 years, there are approximately 500 fewer jobs and more than 70 fewer establishments. After adjusting for inflation, the average wage has also decreased.



More important than the number of establishments or jobs is the average wage per job. There are jobs in a number of industries within Henry County, including utilities, construction, manufacturing, retail, transportation, and information; however, the average earnings per job varies considerably, as does the distribution of the total number of jobs across the various industries. For example, the average wage for a utility worker in Henry County is reported to be over \$80,000/year; however, less than 1 percent of the county's jobs are in this industry. Conversely, the average wage for someone working in retail is less than \$25,000/year and over 12 percent of the jobs in Henry County fall into this industry. In Henry County, construction and manufacturing jobs earn at or around the media income of \$41,995, but they make up less than 20 percent of the jobs in Henry County. By comparison, construction and manufacturing jobs in Randolph County earn more than \$45,000/year, and together these jobs make up over 30 percent of the jobs in Randolph County.

The largest employers in Henry County are healthcare and social service providers, and manufacturing. The wages offered by each differs greatly. The average wage per job in the manufacturing industry is over \$45,000/year. Conversely, the average wage for a job in healthcare and social service industry is less than \$24,000/year. The utilities trade far surpasses any industry, providing an average earning more than \$80,000/year. Using Randolph County again for comparison purposes, there are approximately the same number of manufacturing jobs in Randolph County as there are in Henry County; however, the manufacturing jobs in Randolph County pay slightly higher wages. The same is true for the construction industry. There are roughly the same number of jobs in Randolph County as there are in Henry County; however, the construction jobs in Randolph County pay higher wages.

The top issues attributable to relatively lower-wage industries include:

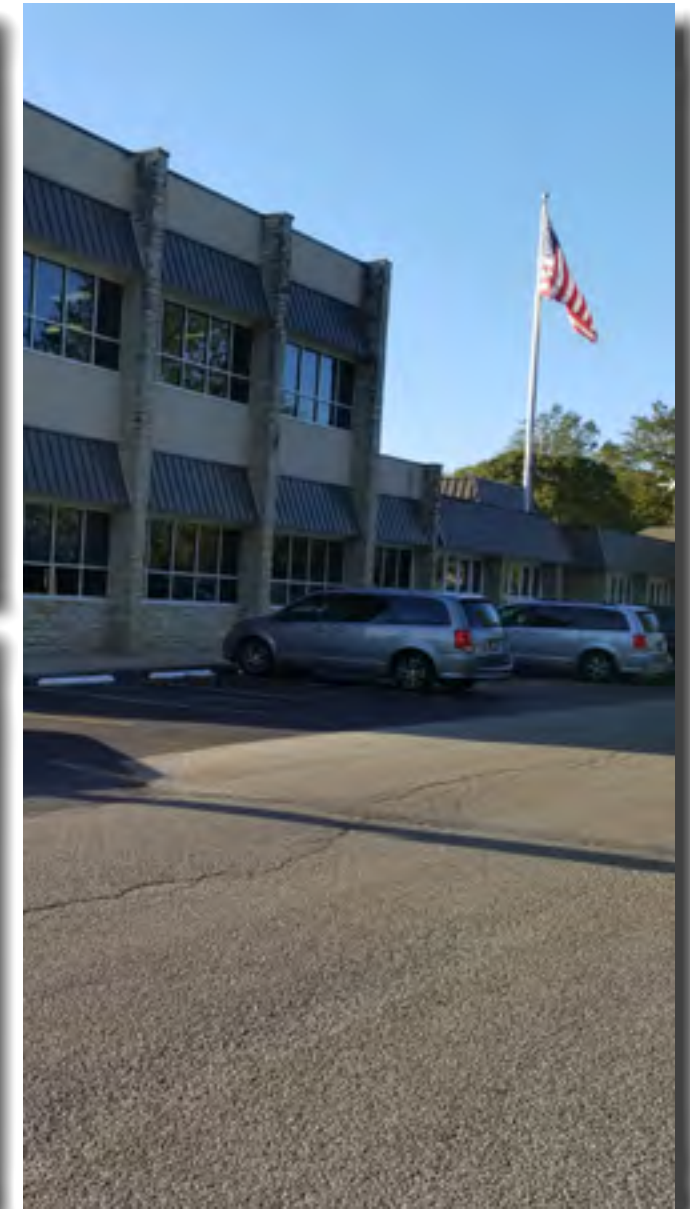
- An increase in poverty
- Fewer families that can afford quality dependent care

- Less stable jobs
- Fewer employer-sponsored healthcare plans

Like the generations that came before them, current and future generations will be faced with challenges that demand creative solutions. Logic would suggest that a well-rounded education will – more often than not – result in a well-rounded employee. A truly great educational system is one of innovation and ingenuity where the desire to explore, experiment, inquire, and invent becomes the cornerstone of all local education and workforce development systems. Integrating art and design in tomorrow's educational systems, reintroduces the human element into the way people are able to think about the built environment, and adds some much-needed authenticity to problem solving.

In order to instill a culture of innovation and spur economic development, the County must:

- Increase the educational attainment levels of the local labor force.
- Invest in those education and workforce development systems – local and regional – that keep workers' skills current.
- Build the next generation of elected and appointed leaders
- Increase the number of project-based learning opportunities throughout the county.
- Allow for the incorporation of the development of life skills in school curriculum and training programs.
- Align workforce development policies, goals, and actions with the county's target industry clusters.
- Integrate art and design into programs aimed at educating students in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM to STEAM Initiative).
- Promote and enhance local career pathways strategy or strategies that can offer continued training to advance a worker's skills, pay, and future employment opportunities over time.



Cost of Living

The cost of owning a home in Henry County has declined in recent years. Between 2009 and 2015, the median monthly cost decreased from \$759 to \$692 per month, or -6.4 percent. By comparison, the monthly rent for renters increased from \$584 to \$626 per month, or approximately 2 percent, during the same period of time. And while housing costs for homeowners ranges from less than \$300 per month to more than \$2,000 per month, rental housing costs indicate that the majority of rental units rent for less than \$800 per month.

A household has historically been considered to be “cost-burdened” if they spend more than 30 percent of their annual household income on housing alone, leaving less income to pay for necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. Between 2009 and 2015, the percentage of homeowners paying more than the recommended 30 percent of their household income on housing has trended downward. The percentage of renters paying more than 30 percent of their household income on housing varies depending on the housing cost. Of the households making between \$20,000 and \$34,999 per year, the percentage of households that paid more than 30 percent of their annual household income decreased by over 16 percent between 2009 and 2015. Conversely, of the households making \$35,000 - \$49,999 per year, more than 15 percent paid more than 30 percent of their annual household income during the same period of time.

The top issues attributable to housing costs includes:

- An increase in the number of renters becoming housing cost-burdened
- A lack of larger, quality rental units for households who have an annual household income of \$50,000 or more
- Concentrations of poverty

In 2015, the bulk of the owner-occupied housing stock in Henry County was between \$35,000 and \$174,999.

Between 2009 and 2015, Henry County experienced a slight decrease in the total number of owner-occupied housing units. During the same period of time, Henry County added homes between \$20,000 and \$30,000, as well as \$300,000 to \$500,000. Homes in the other price ranges remained relatively consistent.

The top issues attributable to home values includes:

- Current homeowners may experience difficulty in leveraging their current home to buy/build another home in Henry County or elsewhere
- Particularly for the middle and lower classes, residents of Henry County could be experiencing a decrease in their net worth, given that residential real estate investment is often the single largest contributor to net worth expansion of any household investment asset class
- People that may not have been able to buy a home six years ago may stand a better chance at doing so today
- Area blight may be detracting from otherwise valuable homes

Nearly everyone who contributed to the development of the recommendations of this plan believes that the relatively low cost of living in Henry County is a strength; something to maintain and promote. As illustrated throughout many sub-sections of this plan, “affordability” is both a virtue and a vice. On one hand, there is land everywhere. On the other, to many people, there is no place to live. Real estate values are low, but for many, the commute to work is long. There are relatively few barriers to becoming a homeowner, but for many, the existing housing stock limits the ability of

Median Household Income is perhaps the most widely used and accepted measure of income. But because it weighs all households the same – persons living alone and families of five – it can sometimes be difficult to know if the incomes of individuals continue to increase. If you sorted all of the household incomes, the median is the value of the one in the middle; eliminating the extreme ends (the poorest and the wealthiest) from the distribution.

some homeowners to create wealth and accumulate assets.

Affordability almost always refers to housing affordability where the traditional measure of affordability recommends that people spend up to 30 percent of their household income on housing. It is estimated that more than half of the neighborhoods in the U.S. are considered “affordable” for the average household. Generally speaking, a household’s second-largest expenditure are its transportation costs. In which case, location matters. When you consider the transportation costs associated with where one lives, the number of affordable neighborhoods in the country falls to around 26 percent.

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), as part of its work to improve urban economies and environments across the U.S., developed and published the Housing and Transportation (H+T®) Affordability Index. The H+T® Affordability Index is intended to provide a comprehensive view of affordability as one that includes the cost of housing and transportation at the neighborhood level. “People who live in location-efficient neighborhoods – compact, mixed-use, and with convenient access to jobs, services, transit, and amenities – tend to have lower transportation costs; while people who live in location-inefficient places – less dense areas that require automobiles for most trips – are more likely to have higher transportation costs.

A truly affordable home (or neighborhood) is one that requires no more than 45 percent of the household’s income be spent on housing and transportation costs. According to the H+T® Affordability Index, residents of the City of New Castle where there aren’t any location effect neighborhoods by CNT standards, the cost of housing AND transportation for the average household is more than 50 percent of household income. This leaves less than 50 percent for everything else from healthcare and education, to dining and entertainment.

Per capita personal income is the average income earned per person in a given area – in this case, Henry County – in a specified year. It is calculated by dividing – in this case – the County’s total income by its total population.

After adjusting for inflation, the median household income for Henry County has decreased since 2000. From 2000 to 2015, the median household income decreased from \$54,679 (in 2015 dollars) to \$41,955; a decrease of over 20 percent. Conversely, the per capita personal income has steadily increased. From 2005 to 2015, the per capita personal income increased from \$32,129 (in 2015 dollars) to \$33,589; a 4.5-percent increase in roughly the same period of time. Between 1985 and 2015 the per capita personal income of Henry County residents increased by 28 percent.

It is no surprise then that with the decrease in the median household income, poverty began to increase. Between 2000 and 2015, the poverty rate in Henry County increased by over 70 percent. For the region, all but Hancock County experienced a similar increase. The poverty rates in Madison, Randolph, and Rush counties increased by over 70 percent as well. Hancock County continues to be the exception. Hancock County has both a significantly lower poverty rate compared to the rest of the counties being used for comparison purposes, and the increase in poverty between 2000 and 2015 was less than 37 percent.

Poverty almost always disproportionately impacts children. Children will never possess their own earning potential and will therefore remain dependent on the earning potential of their parents or guardians. And yet, because the detrimental effects of poverty on the well-being of children, such as severe hunger, homelessness, chronic health conditions, depression, and psychiatric distress, can lead to a prolonged and concentrated degree of poverty in Henry County. Concentrated poverty can dramatically transform neighborhoods and entire communities. And while the causes and consequences of an increase in concentrated poverty are widely debated, there are additional burdens, such as an overall decrease in the housing values or spread of deteriorating structures, placed on the residents of poor neighborhoods beyond what the families’ own individual circumstances would dictate. Children under the age of 18 make up less than 25 percent of the total population in Henry County, but they represent a greater percentage of the poor residents in



Henry County. The poverty rate for children under the age of 18 in Henry County increased by more than 77 percent between 2000 and 2015.

The top issues attributable to an increase in poverty, especially for children under the age of 18 include:

- Rather than relying on one or two primary sources of income, a growing percentage of Henry County's population will be forced to piece together scarce resources spread across multiple sources to not become poorer
- The need for high-quality childcare and high-quality early childhood education to adequately address the impact of poverty on children's health and development will continue to grow
- The likelihood that those who experience poverty in childhood will experience poverty as adults grows
- Many more market-oriented, private institutions and businesses will withdraw from the community as the communities' collective buying power decreases.
- As more and more businesses withdraw, the prices of the goods and services offered by the market (e.g., banking and grocery stores) will increase
- Public institutions, like schools, will continue to suffer from a lack of adequate funding, locally
- Suburban development will most likely be at the expense of older, developed parts of the county

In order to ensure that Henry County continues to be a place that residents and businesses can consider as "affordable," the County must:

- Seek to reduce the time it takes for residents to meet their everyday travel needs.
- Allow for developments that are compact with convenient access to jobs, services, and amenities, while limiting those that are not.
- Seek out the other hidden costs of development, including those that adversely impact

environmentally sensitive areas, or remove prime farm land from production.

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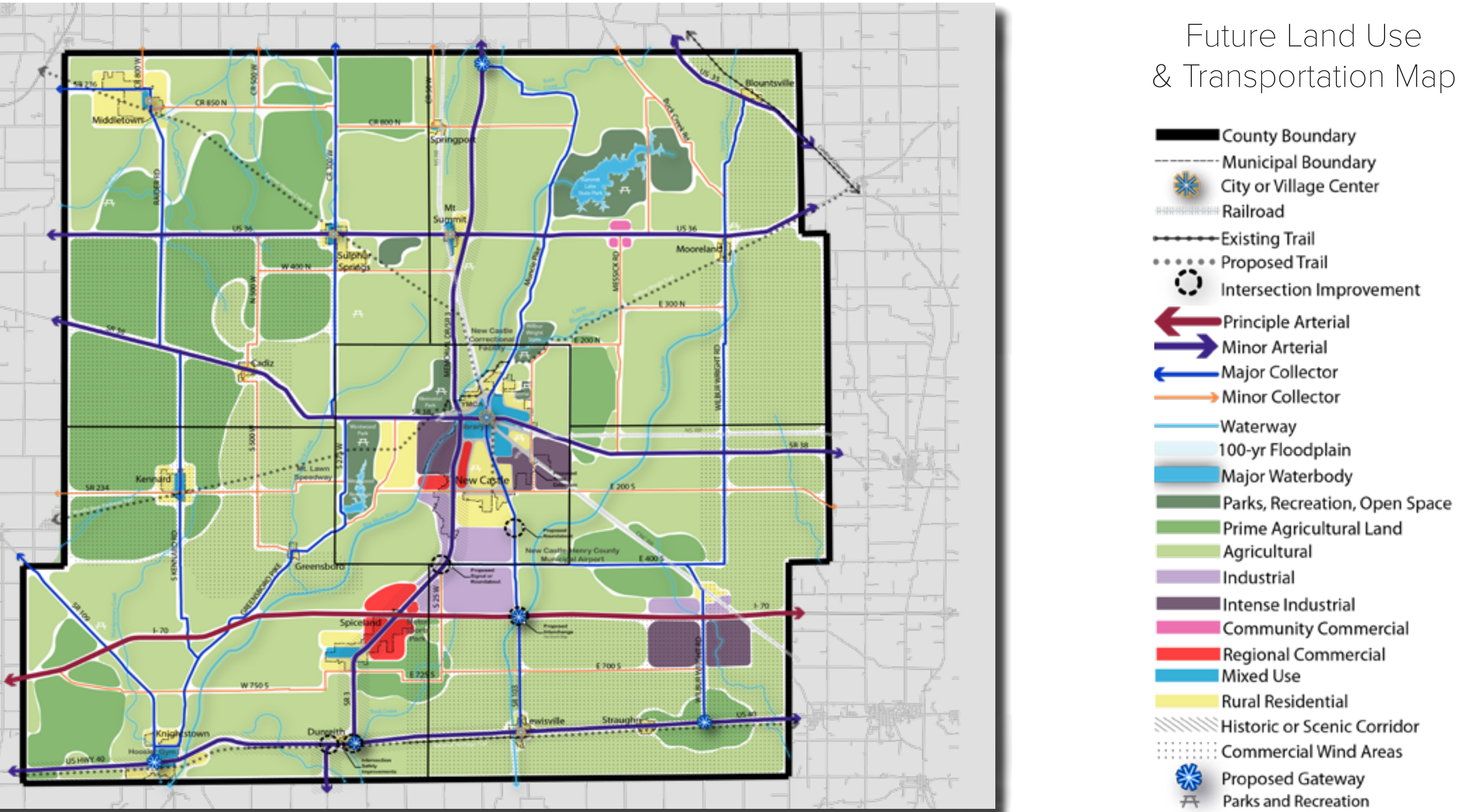
Places

The following recommendations address those issues and opportunities that most directly relate to the planning and zoning decisions that the Henry County Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals, among others, will be asked to make from time to time.

The future land use and transportation map is the community's visual representation of the future land use recommendations that follow, and it includes a graphic interpretation of nearly all of the land use components described throughout this entire planning document.



Future Land Use & Transportation Map



For the purposes of this plan, “prime agricultural land” is any land in Henry County with more than a 1.03 soil productivity, and is a first step in identifying (and then protecting) prime farmland in Henry County. By comparison, prime farmland is defined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service using criteria established by United States Department of Agriculture departmental regulations*

(DR 9500-3, and 7CFR657.5).

Future Land Uses

The future land use plan comprises the following set of policy objectives related to: residential, commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and civic, institutional, and public-serving uses. Due in large part to the importance of agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas to the quality of life offered by Henry County, the future land use plan also includes aspects of these rather distinguishing land uses. Other aspects of each are carried over and reflected in the sub-section on “Progress” on the following pages.

Use the following text and corresponding map to determine how best to balance competing needs and desires with respect to, among other things: responsible growth and development; the preservation of natural features and environmentally sensitive areas; and the underlying need to preserve and strengthen the county’s local tax base.

Agricultural Use

This plan recognizes and further emphasizes that agriculture remains as the dominant land use in Henry County. At the time of this study, agricultural land accounted for nearly 88 percent (or 223,148 acres) of Henry County’s 395 square miles of land area. For the purposes of this plan, agricultural land uses range from: intensive to moderate-intensity.

and land use conflicts become harder to mitigate over time.

At 121,842 acres, prime agricultural land, accounted for 54 percent of all agricultural land, or 48 percent of all land within Henry County at the time of this study. If prime agricultural land isn’t protected, marginal demand from rural residential development and commercial retail development will crowd out agricultural uses to the detriment of the larger Henry County community.

Because farming is such a significant factor in the local, regional, state, and national economy, and in order to ensure that the county’s agricultural lands remain free from encroachment and preserve the rural character of the community, the County must:

- Conserve and, where necessary, preserve viable working farmland.
- Represent large, commercial farming operations as working land, rather than open space.
- Offer residents moving into an agricultural area greater predictability of the types of agricultural uses that do, or could occur near their homes.
- Ensure that agritourism, while desirable, does not deplete the viability of the primary agricultural land use.

At the time of this study, agricultural land accounted for 88% (or 223,148 acres) of land within Henry County.

In more populated communities, agricultural land is often viewed as a “placeholder;” even in instances where the land is being farmed. In more rural settings like that of Henry County, working lands are often romanticized. The public’s appetite for the farm aesthetic can impede real conversations about the future of agriculture in a community. Nearby residents often view the land as an extension of their backyard,

- Discourage the extension of city and town services, such as sewers, into prime agricultural areas, as illustrated on the current future land use and transportation plan map.
- Encourage all new residential subdivisions to be constructed contiguous to existing development.



- Require all new residential subdivisions locating in an area where agriculture is the primary use of land to be low impact, or cluster, development to minimize the loss of productive agricultural land.

Refer also to the "Residential Use," "Industrial Use," and "Growth Management" subsections on the following pages.



CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- > Large lots
- > Single ingress // egress point
- > Long, dead end cul-de-sacs
- > Considerable grading and clearing
- > Wide, curvilinear streets

LOW IMPACT // CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

- > Smaller lots, placed closer together
- > More common open space
- > Optimal stormwater management
- > Narrower streets
- > Greater retention of existing vegetation
- > Narrower streets

Residential Use

For the purposes of this plan, residential housing includes:

- Detached single-family homes, detached and attached single-family housing, and multi-family apartment buildings that are typically found in residential neighborhoods throughout an incorporated city or town
- Detached single-family homes in predominately residential subdivisions or multi-family housing developments on the edge of, or just outside of, a municipal boundary

- Rural residences where no farming is known to take place
- Hobby farms
- For "agricultural homesteads" see "Industrial Uses" on the following pages

At the time of this study, residential housing, accounted for approximately 5.6% (or 14,055 acres) of Henry County's 395 square miles of land area; the majority of which being single-family detached homes.



In 2015, it was estimated that there were over 18,000 households in Henry County, with the majority of the households being family households. Traditionally, families have accounted for a large majority of households. The family household types vary between married with children, married without children, single parents, and other family-based households. In Henry County, a greater percentage (35.2 percent) of family households are married individuals without children. Only 15.4 percent of the households are married with children. Single-parent households make up 9.5 percent of total households, and other family units make up the remaining 6.8 percent. Of the 33.1 percent non-family households in the county, 28.5% of them are individuals who are living alone; most of them elderly women according to the structure of the population. While the towns within the county follow a similar breakdown between family and non-family households, the types of family households vary. The city of New Castle and the towns of Knightstown and Middletown trend with the county as a whole. Spiceland is somewhat unique. It has a greater percentage of family households (78 percent), greatest percentage of households of families with children (23 percent), and fewer persons living alone (21 percent).

In 2015, the (estimated) average household size in Henry County was 2.5 people per household. This is consistent with the State of Indiana as a whole, and only slightly larger than that of Delaware, Randolph, Rush and Madison counties.

The top issues attributable to household composition and size include:

- An increase in the likelihood that a number of households will be individuals living alone, given the relative age of Henry County's population
- The increasing need for housing policies that can accommodate both larger households, as well as smaller households

There are over 20,000 housing units in Henry County, with approximately 35 percent in the city of New Castle. Most of Henry County's housing stock consists of single-family attached or, more likely single-family detached homes. Less than 20 percent of the units

in the city of New Castle and towns of Knightstown, Middletown, and Spiceland are 2-9 units in size, and there are even fewer 10-19 unit buildings or buildings with 20 or more units. In fact, the Town of Spiceland lacks buildings with more than 2 housing units.

The top issues attributable to too few single-family attached and multi-family housing options includes:

- The inability for older adults to downsize from their family home to a smaller unit that requires less upkeep
- Growing inability to keep up with the demand for walkable communities
- Fewer non-subsidized, affordable housing options

With respect to the age of the local housing stock, the homes in Knightstown and Spiceland are much older. Over 50 percent of the housing stock in each town was built prior to 1940 compared to less than 30 percent in the city of New Castle and the town of Middletown. Over 78 percent of Spiceland's housing stock was built over 75 years ago, making it one of the "pockets" of the entire country where a disproportionate share of the housing stock is approaching 100 years old. An old and aging housing stock can pose a unique set of challenges for local governments. Neighborhoods in transition, properties that sit vacant for years on end, and a decline in the number of homes occupied by homeowners, as opposed to renters (often owned by out-of-town investors), become real challenges with consequences that reach well beyond the age of local housing stock.

The top issues attributable to an old and aging housing stock in parts of the county include:

- More homes will fall into disrepair as older homes require more upkeep
- More homeowners will have to undertake remodeling and renovation projects before selling unless the home is sold as-is, in which case the buyer will be responsible for updating their new residence



- Building inspection and code enforcement become too crucial to ignore
- Elderly residents who often lack the financial means or the physical ability to repair older homes becomes of particular concern for local officials and their families
- Older homes are often surrounded by old and aging water and sewer infrastructure which can cause problems within the homes themselves
- Older homes can pose very specific public safety hazards, such as added challenges for firefighters, simply because modern building codes didn't go into effect until around 1970

In order to continue to retain and attract families to Henry County, adequately house Henry County's aging population, and improve the fiscal health of local agencies, the County must:

- Allow for a range of housing types and sizes.
- Provide a wide variety of high-quality housing options, including accessory dwelling units, to accommodate a wide range of ages and incomes.
- Encourage all new, multi-unit residential developments to locate in or near a town or village center to strengthen the existing community centers and further ensure that public and public serving programs and services can be delivered efficiently.



- Encourage all new residential construction to locate in areas that are already served by public water and sewer.
- Use transects, a range of different development types, to determine which parts of the county are best suited for which housing types.
- Allow for neighborhood commercial and mixed-use development, by right.

Commercial Use

At the time of this study, commercial properties accounted for less than 1 percent (or 1,858 acres) of land in Henry County.

For the purposes of this plan, commercial retail establishments range from small (neighborhood-level) to large (regional-level) and can include: corner stores, grocers, eating and drinking establishments, truck and automotive service establishments, and regional shopping centers or malls. By comparison, professional offices are often limited to such uses as: doctors' offices and clinics, personal services, some research

and development facilities, and single- or multi-tenant professional office buildings. For the purposes of this plan, industrial offices are considered to be an accessory use to the manufacturing operation that it is most directly associated with. (See also "Industrial Use" on the following pages)

Commercial uses range in size. In fact, second only to the use itself, the size of a commercial development is often a primary concern of the community. For the purposes of this plan, commercial uses are further defined as follows:

- Convenience – convenience retail establishments are stand-alone businesses, meaning they aren't co-located with an anchor retail establishment. They may or may not be located in a stand-alone building, and are almost always part of the makeup of a mixed-use area or district. They are almost always pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and cater almost exclusively to the day-to-day needs of residents within a 1-mile radius.
- Neighborhood – neighborhood commercial

Zoning entitlements are descriptions of what can be built by right on a particular property under the current rules and regulations of the zoning code, the comprehensive plan and any other regulatory restrictions. Zoning codes typically divide uses of land into two categories, permitted uses and discretionary uses, which in Henry County are referred to as commission-approved uses. To allow something by right means to require no further review or approvals beyond the strict compliance with the applicable zoning requirements.

areas will often consist of more than one tenant, including an anchor tenant, such as a grocery store. Neighborhood commercial areas can accommodate retail, professional offices, or personal services, or a combination thereof, but are "limited" in that they primarily cater to the needs of residents, and other businesses, within 1- to 3-mile radius. As a result, neighborhood commercial areas should also be easily accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists. These too can be found in most mixed use areas or districts.

- Community – community commercial areas are similar to neighborhood commercial areas in that they can accommodate retail, professional offices, or personal services; however, the range of goods and services offered is much wider. Community commercial areas may have as many as two anchor tenants. Their trade area can be anywhere from 3 to 6 miles in any direction, which has a tendency to make them less hospitable to pedestrians and bicyclists since most people will

need a private automobile to get to and from the development.

- Regional – regional commercial areas are almost always located directly adjacent to a major (or minor) arterial thoroughfare because their trade area radius can be 15-miles or more. They cater to the masses and, as a result, have very large building (and parking lot) footprints.

Compared to office space, retail spaces are almost always more expensive. The ability to maximize the total number of parking spaces, site the building in a location that has direct access to a major thoroughfare, and site lines that increase the visibility of the property are the three key drivers of this type of commercial development. Traditional office space is generally owned or leased for a longer period of time. Like retail, offices need to be visible to the public; just less so. Business parks are often convenient enough for employers, employees, and clients, but not so convenient as to cause the company to have to compete with retail businesses for land. The key drivers of office space are:

the attractiveness of the property, building exterior, and public-facing interior spaces; where the business' customers/clients are; and the implications of relocating in the future.

In order to effectively plan, facilitate, or manage the location, siting and design of commercial businesses, the County must:

- New regional commercial developments should be limited to the SR 3 corridor between Broad Street/ SR 38 (north) and CR 300 S (south) corridors, and at designated interstate interchanges (see also "Interchange Development" on the following pages).
- New neighborhood or community commercial developments should be limited to the city and village centers.
- More residential areas should allow for convenience commercial.
- Plan for and then allow sewer and water extensions to dictate where future development can go, versus approving a development in an



area that is not already adequately served by public or private water and sewer.

See also “Mixed-Use” and “Land use conversions” on the following pages.

Industrial Use

At the time of this study, industrial land accounted for less than 1 percent (or 1,247 acres) of the total land area for the county. For the purposes of this plan, industrial uses range in intensity and include: warehousing, distribution centers, flex-industrial/office complexes, and large-scale commercial farm operations (including their “agricultural homesteads”), among others. Heavy manufacturing is often characterized by its need for/use of outdoor storage, truck parking, truck docks, noise pollution, light pollution, and/or unpleasant smells. Most other manufacturing uses are much less objectionable.

Historically speaking, industrial land uses have almost always been viewed as being incompatible with residential uses; sometimes commercial uses as well; even though entire neighborhoods were constructed to take advantage of the close proximity to manufacturing jobs. It was this type of incompatibility that led to zoning in the first place. With very few exceptions, every community needs industrial uses.

Demand for industrial land comes from several sources, but nearly all factors affecting the demand for industrial land are due in large part to industrial restructuring. Land characteristics that seem to be



prevalent across multiple industries includes (in no particular order):

- Entitlements (i.e., zoning)
- Access to customers, suppliers, workers, and transportation networks
- The ability of the local transportation system(s) to serve the site/area
- Stable and relatively affordable leases

- Nearby industries within the same industry cluster
- Large areas of land, or districts, that are free from encroachment by non-industrial (or related) uses
- The skills and average wages of the local workforce for issues related to displacement
- Sites that are conducive to the storage, handling, and usage of the industrial operation
- When present, buildings that are new enough and configured in such a way as to increase the properties’ productivity (and later marketability)

- The presence or absence of environmental contamination left by previous industrial users
- The potential for expansion(s) in the future

Industrial land, its location, its impact on labor markets, its effect on residents, and the shape of communities has been studied thousands of times over. Communities are only now starting to overcome the legacy of industrial pollution. At the same time, manufacturing has changed and continues to change to the point where more and more industrial uses

Drastic or fundamental changes internal to the manufacturing industry (and some service industries) that has permanently altered the relationships between different components or elements of the manufacturing industry, and where the consequences span:

- *Observable changes in the cultural, social and economic characteristics of local populations*
- *A long-term decline in employment in manufacturing industries (i.e. deindustrialization)*
- *Spatial shifts in the investment, production and circulation of capital*
- *An increase in the importance of new technologies*

would benefit from “interactions” with non-industrial uses in order to produce a healthy local economy. This is especially true when one considers that transportation costs drive many of the decisions that industrial companies have to consider. The role that industrial land plays in communities remains vital; even in the wake of structural manufacturing job losses.

Nearly every rural community has contemplated the loss of prime agricultural land. Few communities – rural, suburban, or urban --stop to contemplate the loss of prime industrial land. Nearly every community seeks to prevent industrial land from encroaching on non-industrial land. Few communities consider that non-industrial land can encroach on industrial land. Marginal demand for residential and mixed-use development (not unlike some of the policies, strategies, and action steps included herein) can crowd out industrial uses to the detriment of the larger Henry County community. And yet, both prime industrial land and prime agricultural land are important to the character and prevailing “country” lifestyle in Henry County.



In order to effectively plan, facilitate, or manage the location, siting, design, and in some instances, preserve or protect industrial uses, and ultimately provide more jobs and career opportunities within Henry County while increasing the local tax base, the County must:

- Clearly define where the industrial areas – existing or proposed – are.
- Describe industrial land uses as either production, distribution, or repair to convey the importance of the integral role that industrial land plays in the local economy.
 - Align local land use regulations with efforts to attract higher-skilled, higher-wage jobs.
 - Reserve land within existing or planned industrial parks should be reserved for higher-wage jobs producing manufacturing uses or their ancillary uses.
 - Concentrate new, large-scale industrial development within the county’s existing industrial parks and at designated interstate interchanges (see “Interchange Development” on the following pages).
- Facilitate the extension of public water and sewer to planned industrial areas.
- Protect prime industrial land from the encroachment of non-industrial uses.
- Improve the county’s collective ability to deliver “shovel-ready” sites for (re)development.



See also "Mixed-Use" below and "Land use conversions" on the following pages.

Mixed-Use

For the purposes of this plan, mixed-use is defined as some combination of residential and non-residential development. Mixed-use developments are often a more compact type of development, and can take the form of a single building, a city block, or an entire neighborhood or community. Mixed-use land use categories vary from other single-use land use categories in that they:

- Allow for residential and non-residential uses to locate within the same building (vertical mixed-use) or in adjacent buildings (horizontal mixed-use).
- Allow for greater residential densities (people/acre) and greater commercial intensities (businesses/squire mile).
- Reduce the physical distance between residential units, retail businesses, and public serving agencies, among others to effectively reduce travel costs (for the resident) and transportation costs (for the applicable government agencies).
- Activate the streetscape and create a stronger sense of "place." (See also, "Placemaking" on the following pages)
- Improve the mobility of people who cannot or choose not to own and operate a personal automobile.



- Accommodate residential uses within an existing (or proposed) industrial building where there are still industrial operations present.

At the time of this study, mixed-use development was unclassified. Considering that New Castle city proper and many of the smaller towns were developed as mixed-use districts before conventional zoning required land uses to be separated. The municipalities of New Castle, Knightstown, Shirley, Greensboro, Kennard, Cadiz, Spiceland, Lewisville, Sulphur Springs, Mount Summit, and Springport

were used as proxies for existing (and future) mixed-use areas within the county. At the time of this study, the mixed-use substitutes accounted for approximately 3 percent (or 7,586 acres) of land in Henry County.

In order to effectively plan, facilitate, or manage the location, siting, and design of mixed-use developments, the County must:

- Formally establish the county's existing mixed-use areas.
- Seek out areas for new mixed-use developments in downtown urban centers, and along primary or secondary thoroughfares.
- Allow for ancillary uses, such as outdoor retail sales of beverages, flowers, and food from carts on sidewalks and in public areas, within all mixed-use districts by right.
- Develop, adopt, and properly administer site development and building design standards to facilitate successful mixed-use environments; ensuring that all development within a mixed-use

"Shovel-ready" means that the site is at the stage where workers can be employed and construction can begin. This often requires the following steps to have been completed by either the previous or current property owner, or a governmental or quasi-governmental agency – all of which are intended to reduce or mitigate the risks of the developer:

The site is truly for sale (at a realistic price) and has well-established terms and conditions.

The site is fully served by all utilities, including water, sewer, electric, natural gas, broadband, etc., and all systems have the distribution and storage capacity to adequately serve the development (or a detailed plan developed with the service provider(s) demonstrating the same).

The site is developable in that all of the necessary due diligences (e.g., environmental assessments, wetland delineations, zoning approvals, etc.) have been completed, and demonstrable proof that the site is free of any restrictive easements (or that the owner of the easement is willing to move them).



district is scaled to the pedestrian, rather than motorists.

- Plan for and require accommodation of and connections between vehicular and non-vehicular transportation.
- Give due consideration to the need to provide common open spaces, features, and amenities within a mixed-use district.

Parks, Recreation & Open Space Uses

A great system of parks can often be the catalyst to improving the overall quality of life for residents and memorable experiences for both residents and visitors. Some of the strongest communities are anchored around social places like parks, greenways, and small neighborhood nodes that reflect the area in which they are located. There are many positive elements of the various municipal, county, and state park and recreation areas. For this to continue, the parks, recreation areas, and trails across the county need to be seen as an economic development tool; and then funded accordingly.

Similar to commercial uses, parks are classified by size and represent a cross-section of service areas.

- Regional park – approximately 10 acres per 1,000 people served with a minimum size of 1,000 acres, where it might take someone up to an hour to drive there (50 mile radius)



- District park – approximately 5 acres per 1,000 people served and between 200 to 400 acres in size and a 5-mile service radius
- Community park – at least 3 acres per 1,000 people served and typically around 40 acres in size with a 2-mile service radius
- Neighborhood – at least 3 acres per 1,000 people served and between 5 to 15 acres with a ½-mile service radius so as to be walkable
- Greenway (a linear park) – no minimum requirements in terms of acreage or service area; however, to be considered as an asset similar to those listed above, the greenway needs to connect a number of community destinations, such as other recreational facilities, schools, residential neighborhoods, or shopping areas.

At the time of this study, park and open space land accounted for approximately 2.5 percent (or 6,212 acres) of all of the land in Henry County.

For the purposes of this plan, parks, recreation and open spaces are limited to: trails, municipal, and

county park facilities (as opposed to programs), and recreational areas.

PARKS

Henry County is home to a number of publicly owned park facilities. Henry County Memorial Park is a 362-acre park with a number of facilities and amenities. From shelters, to athletic fields, and wooded areas, this park offers both active and passive recreational opportunities. Other parks that offer both active and passive recreational opportunities include:

- Allen Park (Sulphur Springs)
- Art Center & Arts Park of Henry County (New Castle)
- Baker Park (New Castle)
- Dietrich Park (Middletown)
- Greensboro Town Park (Greensboro)
- Hospital Heights Park (New Castle)
- Lewisville Park (Lewisville)
- Lowe Park (New Castle)
- Maxwell Park (New Castle)
- Mooreland Park (Mooreland)
- Murphey Park (New Castle)
- Osborne Park (New Castle)
- Shirley Town Park (Shirley)
- Spiceland Town Park (Spiceland)
- Straughn Park (Straughn)
- Sunset Park (Knightstown)
- Westwood Park (New Castle)
- Your Park (New Castle)

RECREATION AREAS

The Wildlife Sanctuary at the corner of Lynndale Drive and Trojan Lane in New Castle is a 40-acre property that serves as an “outdoor observation laboratory” for area schools.

The Wilbur Wright Fish & Wildlife area near New Castle, just east of SR 3, consists of more than 1,000 acres of land that accommodates such activities as fishing, trapping, hunting, and gathering, in addition to nature watching and target practice. Its mix of fallow cropland, prairie grasses, uplands, marshes, woodlands, wetlands, and floodplains provide habitats for over 200 species of wildlife.

Summit Lake State Park consists of more than 2,680 acres, and includes a large lake, nature preserve (Zeigler Woods), and nearly 5 miles of hiking trails. Picnicking, boating, camping, swimming. These are some of the activities that visitors can do while they are at the park.

TRAILS

The Henry County greenways network includes the Wilbur Wright Trail, National Road Heritage Trail, Woolly Bear Parkway Trail, and the Cardinal Greenway.

Opened in the fall in 2013, the Wilbur Wright Trail begins at the Henry County YMCA and generally follows the (former) Pennsylvania railroad corridor for 2 miles until it terminates in a trailhead at the intersection of SR 103 and CR 150 N in the Wilbur Wright Fish and Wildlife Area. Future extensions, planned as five phases, would connect the trail with the Cardinal Greenway in the Town of Losantville in the neighboring Randolph County, Indiana.

The Henry County segment of the National Road Heritage Trail consists of two segments along the former Pennsylvania Railroad corridor between N. West Street in Raysville east to CR 425 W in Ogden (total segment length of 2 miles), and between CR 125 east to William Street in Lewisville (total segment length of 3 miles). Once completed, the National Road Heritage Trail will span more than 150 miles connecting Terre Haute and Richmond, Indiana.

The Woolly Bear Parkway Trail is a multi-use trail along the former section of the New York Central Railroad corridor that connects the City of New Castle and Town of Shirley, passing through the Towns of Westwood and Kennard along the way. A 1-mile segment beginning at Kennard and stretching west is all that existed at the time this study was completed.

The Cardinal Greenway traverses 60 miles of an abandoned CSX railroad corridor between Richmond and Marion, passing through Henry County as part of the Losantville-Mt. Pleasant segment that lies east of US 35. The trail is the longest rails-to-trails project in the state and was designated as a National



Recreation Trail to become part of the National Trail System in 2003. The Cardinal Greenway provides further access to the Northern Route of the American Discovery Trail (intracoastal route), White River Greenway (Muncie, Indiana), and Whitewater Gorge Trail and Gennett Walk of Fame (Whitewater Gorge Park, Richmond, Indiana)

Westwood Park in New Castle includes a 6.5-mile equestrian trail, as well as other park features and amenities. The stables, coupled with the County's rural setting and the outdoor activities offered in Henry County, Westwood Park extends the benefits of equestrian trails and uses to the broader community.

In order to effectively plan, facilitate, or manage the location, siting, and design of future parks, recreation, or open spaces to enhance the experience of residents and visitors, the County must:

- Allow for the expansion of the county's trail networks.
- Seek to complete the county's greenway network, beginning with the segments that are near the county's more populated areas.
- Consider equestrian trail extensions, connections, and destinations as a part of local park and recreation master planning efforts.
- Consider greenways and equestrian trails as amenities that provide a greater benefit to the community when allocating resources, or providing government incentives to private developments that could reasonably be expected to benefit from or impact trail use.



- Ensure that existing and future segments of the county's trail system(s) connect to and provide access between the following types of destinations: schools, community centers, commercial shopping areas, government facilities, healthcare campuses, and parks, as well as residential subdivisions that have a trail network.

Civic, Institutional and Public-Serving Uses

For the purposes of this plan, civic, institutional, and public-serving uses include: law enforcement facilities, fire and EMS facilities, schools, hospitals, cemeteries, libraries, jails, landfills, community centers, as well as a number of health and human service facilities. (See also "Parks, Recreation and Open Space Uses," "Greenways & Trails," and "Tourism" herein)

Many community facilities are supported by local property taxes and some are not. However, nearly every public or quasi-public agency finds itself in the position of having to weigh the costs and benefits of siting, acquiring, co-locating, programming, designing, or constructing a new facility, or adding

additional services based on the projects ability to deliver a greater benefit to the community that they serve.

Like other communities throughout the Midwest, the larger Henry County community could benefit from system-wide improvements, especially those that can specifically address issues and opportunities related to mental illness and substance abuse - neither of which is a mutually exclusive condition. This is especially true when a community, like Henry County, is in need of a new jail facility.

In order to better support the county's various civic, institutional, and public-servicing agencies of Henry County, the County must:

- Adequately fund each taxing agency so that they have the resources they need to, at a minimum, maintain and operate existing facilities and programs.
- Reduce or remove (local) barriers to siting, permitting, licensing, or constructing early childhood learning establishments.
- Seek or otherwise support opportunities for increasing the number of the number of dependent care providers to ensure that both the county's children elderly populations are adequately served.
- Maintain and strengthen north-south and east-west roadway networks to ensure that emergency responders can move about the county with relative ease.
- With the exception of primary and secondary schools, collocate community facilities and services to improve access, reduce travel times/ costs for the public, reduce transportation costs for the agencies, and create conditions for economic development.
- Seek systems-level solutions that address the root causes of problems anytime the criminal justice, mental health, and social service systems are expected to interface and provide opportunities for intervention by area service providers and interrupt the cycles that only serve to reinforce the current system.
- Appropriately site, design, and construct all new public facilities, such as a new jail facility, within or very near the county seat where other critical facilities are located; even if it means that both the land and the development costs are more expensive in the short term.
- Seek to enhance the aesthetics, economic development, and community development prospects of the neighborhoods in which new public or quasi-public facilities are located.

- Encourage all attached single-family residential developments and all multi-family housing developments to locate within a village center or other mixed-use area to strengthen the existing city and town centers, and to further ensure that these types of developments can be properly served by public and public serving programs and services.
- Similarly, ensure that the districting of all fire and EMS services is well suited to the future growth of the county.



Transportation

Communities often seek to develop safe, reliable, and affordable transportation infrastructure, although their reasons for doing so can sometimes vary. And while it can be especially important for the disabled, the young, and the elderly who are often less mobile, a community that has more transportation options is a community that offers a higher quality of life for its residents. Even private automobile owners experience unusual or unexpected conditions or events, such as when their automobile breaks down, if they become physically disabled (if only temporarily), or their income decreases.

Out of the more than 19,000 people over the age of 16 in Henry County, 86.3 percent of the local labor force commutes to work in a single-occupancy vehicle. This trend is true for the entire East Central Indiana region, as well as Indiana as a whole. In Henry County, only 8.1 percent of the residents carpool to work, 3 percent of the population works from home, (and therefore does not experience a commute), and only 2 percent of the community walks or takes public transportation.

The annual commuting trends for Henry County are similar to those of Randolph, Fayette, and Madison counties. Approximately 10 percent of the implied workforce (the approximately 25,000 people who work in Henry County) live in another county or state. The implied labor force, the number of people who live in Henry County and work, is just under 30,000 people. Nearly 75 percent, or 22,300 people live AND work in Henry County. Nearly 25 percent (or more than 7,500 people) commute to a job outside of Henry County. By contrast, fewer than 2,600 people commute into Henry County to work. A greater percentage of Delaware and Wayne counties' labor force lives AND works in their respective counties. A lesser percentage of Hancock and Rush counties' labor force lives and works in their respective counties.

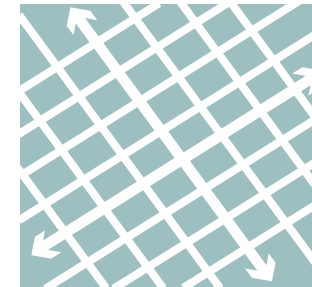
The top issues attributable to the types of commuting trends and patterns experienced in Henry County include:

- The degree to which residents purchase goods and services locally may decline, if residents who live in Henry County but work elsewhere purchase goods and services near their places of employment

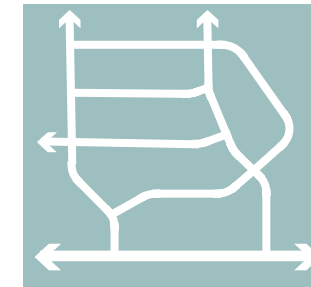
The top counties sending workers INTO and receiving workers FROM Henry County include: Delaware, Hancock, Madison, Rush and Wayne counties

- The ease of mobility (interstate access and relatively short commute time) is likely to continue to make it relatively easy to live in Henry County and travel outside of the county for employment and shopping, resulting in a reduction in the flow of money through the local economy
- Fewer consumers can sometimes lead to even fewer retail establishments, smaller selections of goods and services, and relatively higher prices for the goods and services that remain

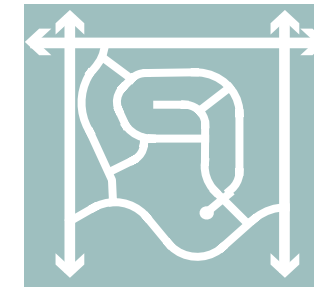
Nowhere is it more important to take a smarter and more strategic approach to transportation and provide for a smarter way of providing access to and from jobs, shops, services, education, and healthcare than in rural and small town communities. Henry County is more than likely some combination of an “exurban community” and a “production community,” according to Transportation for America. A2010 study published by the organization examines the different economic and transportation approaches for improving transportation options in rural and small-town communities. An “exurban community” is one that has close proximity to urban areas for their access to jobs and retail, service, health, and educational needs. They are often characterized as having some of the highest employment levels and median household incomes. By contrast, a “production community” is often focused on a single industry, such as agriculture, manufacturing, and mining, and where the community is pretty well isolated. “Production communities” can be characterized as (recently or currently) experiencing rapid job loss, a decline in young and highly educated



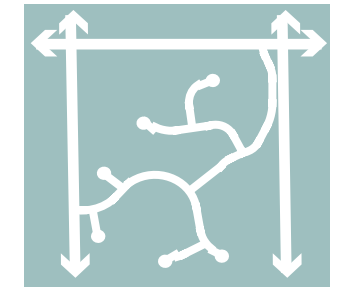
Grid



Modified Grid



Curvilinear



Conventional Cul-de-Sac

segments of the population, and a relatively large and growing aging population.

Use the following text and corresponding future land use and transportation map to weigh the pros and cons of all public investments in transportation infrastructure.

Roadways and Intersections

The county's roads are intended to accommodate vehicular and truck traffic, as well as farm equipment. Thoroughfare classifications for the roadways that traverse the county include:

- Principle arterial – I-70
- Minor arterials – US 40, US 36, US 35, SR 3, and SR 38, 5
- Major collectors – SR 109, SR 103/Muncie Pike, SR 236, S Kennard Road, Raider Road, CR 300 W, Greensboro Pike/S 275 W, Wilbur Wright Road, E 400 S
- Minor collectors – a number of the remaining county roads (refer to the future land use and transportation map)
- Municipal and County roads and streets – all other roads and streets

A roadways performance, or “level of service,” is largely influenced by the design, or layout, of the community's road network. The traditional grid design was the dominate road layout of the early 1900s. Between 1930 and 1950, curvilinear loops and cul-de-sacs began to influence suburban residential

development. From the 1960s through today, the conventional cul-de-sac design continues to dictate neighborhood design.

By most accounts, the grid system remains as the most efficient way to layout a community. The advantages of a grid, or modified grid street pattern, includes:

- Easily recognizable blocks
- Regularly shaped, buildable parcels that are relatively easy to redevelop
- Predictable lot shapes and sizes
- A logical and predictable hierarchical thoroughfare system
- Few, if any, impacts resulting from extending or vacating a road on the overall transportation system
- Improved access and connectivity throughout the community
- More route choices for motorists, as well as pedestrians and cyclists
- A greater number of corner lots, which are highly desirable parcels for commercial retail development
- Ease of navigation and addressing

Potential drawbacks of a grid, or modified grid street pattern, can include: monotonous streetscapes,



more lane miles, more impervious surfaces, more intersections (or “potential conflict points” in engineering terms), and the increased likelihood of a residential street being used as a through street.

Conventional residential subdivisions are discernible from older (pre-WWII) residential developments because they have long, wide curvilinear streets that terminate in cul-de-sacs. While there is almost universal acceptance that this type of street layout offers a reprieve from the unsafe traffic conditions of older, urbanized areas, this type of street system has the tendency to:

- Hinder fire and EMS response times
- Increase the amount of traffic past some residences
- Force people to drive longer distances
- Drastically (and unnecessarily) increase the distance between properties that are otherwise in close proximity to one another
- Needlessly increase in traffic on adjacent primary and secondary roadways
- Introduce pedestrian routes that are too cumbersome to serve as a viable alternative to automobile travel
- Result in more severe traffic safety incidences
- Isolate residents in their own community

In addition to facilitating movement within a community, the road network allows for the movement of goods, services and people in and out of the county. Consider that, on any given day, some commutes consists of more than just two destinations (home and work). Commuters will often make additional, non-work-related stops between work and home. Capturing the total number of miles or minutes associated with work travel in order to better understand and establish effective transportation policies becomes difficult when commuters add one

or more non-work-related trips to their commute to or from work.

“Trip chaining” is considered to be one of the primary reasons that both the total number of miles and minutes for weekday commutes has increased in recent years. Studies have found that the farther the commute are more likely to string multiple (quick) stops (e.g., the “Starbucks effect”), or (short-term) activities as part of their trip; often for family and personal business (which are considered “fixed destinations,” and sometimes for shopping which is considered a “discretionary destination.” Longer stops and activities are considered “trip tours.” Local transportation policies and programs have the potential to become complicated by the behaviors of workers who trip chain given that approximately

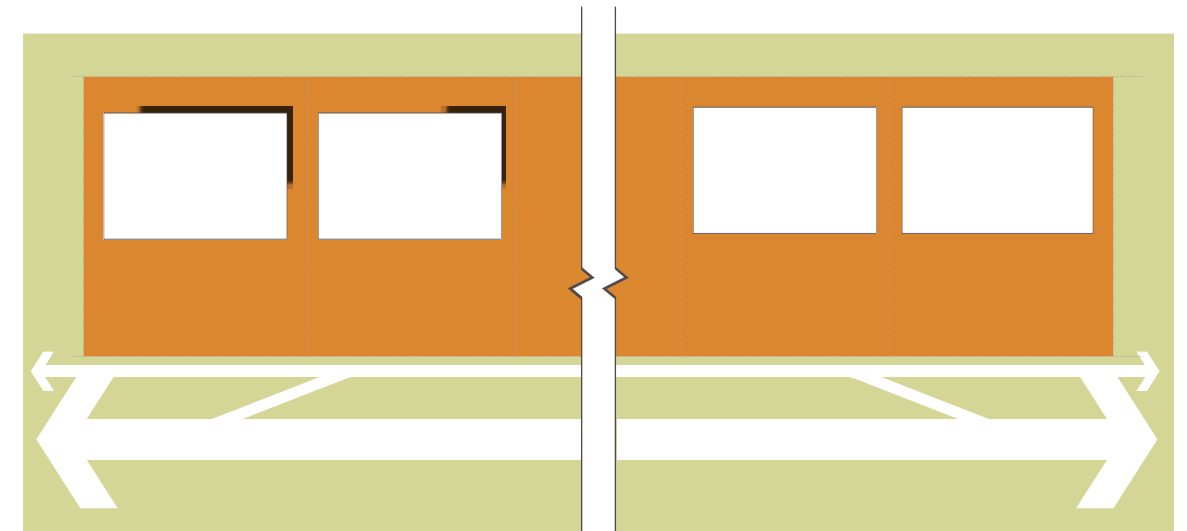
For the purposes of this plan, the county’s trails are a system of linear parks, rather than transportation corridors capable of facilitating travel to (and from) work. Refer to “Parks, Recreation, and Open Space” on the previous pages.

25 percent of people who live in Henry County (and work) outside of Henry County. Timing, location, time of departure, sequencing of travel, time at work, and the distribution of all of these trips across the county’s transportation network will continue to impact not only travel, but also local land uses.

Another consideration of particular importance is the need to plan for and accommodate the movement of farm equipment between fields, as well as the increased operation and maintenance costs associated with the relatively heavy use of the county’s roads to move freight trucks to and from the large-scale commercial farm operations.

In order to effectively plan for and implement roadway infrastructure and interchange improvements that are necessary to support the various land use objectives stated herein, the County must:

- Propose improvements for the intersections identified on the future land use and transportation map.



Frontage Road Illustration

- Require that all transportation projects consider motorized, and non-motorized modes of transportation, as well as the use of county roads for the movement of farm implements and freight trucks, as designated truck routes are ineffective in a farming community.
- Focus on transportation solutions that don’t rely solely on having to alter motorist or pedestrian behaviors but that instead focus on transportation investments that focus on improving local and regional connectivity, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and transit service to community destinations that are facilitating community (re) development, and economic development.
- Right size the county’s transportation network to improve the county’s position in terms of its long-term obligation to operate and maintain the community’s local roadway network.
- Alleviate any extreme application of suburban cul-de-sacs in existing neighborhood developments through the strategic placement of sidewalks and paths.
- Require that new residential and non-residential developments incorporate stub streets rather than cul-de-sacs to provide access to any future development of the adjacent property/development and further enhance the county’s transportation network.
- Require that sidewalks be designed in such a way as to provide access between development (residential and non-residential) and across natural features whether a road is present or not.
- Review, update and circulate the current set of roadway cross-sections to reflect the strong desire to maintain the rural character of the county, paying particular attention to building setbacks, driveway spacing, turning maneuvers, traffic control devices, and any accommodation of the county’s greenways or trails system in addition to the roadways’ capacity to handle farm equipment, truck traffic, and vehicular traffic.
- Require that all new developments adjacent to an established gridded-street system extend and make use of the application of a grid, or modified grid, street layout pattern.
- Maintain, and in most instances, increase the frequency and distribution of intersections in the County’s urban areas and village centers to create a walkable environment and more resilient vehicular transportation system.
- Plan for the use of frontage roads along the County’s minor arterial and major collector



roadways to allow for (relatively) uninterrupted travel on the county’s minor arterial and major collector roadways while still allowing for access to (and thus the future development or redevelopment of) adjacent properties, while maintaining the visibility of the adjacent properties.

- Limit the number of curb cuts or access points along the county’s remaining thoroughfares
- Require multiple access points onto one or more collector roads for all new development and redevelopment of large parcels
- Accurately account for siting of new industrial developments or parks, as well as the increasing wear and tear on county roads given that truck traffic is expected to increase as more and more local freight movement shifts away from rail.

Refer to the proposed roadways and intersection improvements illustrated on the future land use and transportation map. See also “Growth Management” on the following pages.

Transit

While it can be easy to associate public transportation as something that only large urban areas can implement and sustain, local bus (including New Castle Community Transit) intercity bus service, shuttles, paratransit (e.g., LifeStream), medical transport, and other services offer mobility options for residents of rural communities. Public transportation can be vital in rural communities where residents who lack the ability or means to drive, can become isolated. Increasing access to, and use of, public transportation in rural communities often has the added benefit of helping to grow and diversify the local economy.

In order to ensure that public transportation remains a vital part of the local transportation network, the County must:

- Make land use decisions in such a way as to concentrate, or co-locate

important services like jobs, retail, schools, and healthcare in one location.

- Enable travel within and between communities within the county, as well as the adjacent communities of Muncie, Anderson, Richmond, Greenfield, and Greater Indianapolis Area.

Air

The New Castle-Henry County Municipal Airport is a general aviation, public-use airport southeast of New Castle off of E County Road 400 South. It covers an area of 32 acres and is 1,088 feet above (mean) sea level. The airport has one runway with an asphalt surface that measures 4,000 feet by 65 feet. The airport averages around 15 planes per day; most of which are for general aviation purposes. There are over 20 aircraft based at the airport.

Air travel is another avenue for commerce and often requires a higher level of intergovernmental coordination because of the jurisdictional complexities that accompany the various aviation and non-aviation facilities and activities that occur at an airport. Two of the most common concerns for any airport includes: 1) the ability to protect the airspace; and 2) the ability to expand the runway to accommodate a greater number of flights, a greater number of aircrafts, or both.

In order to continue to effectively serve the Henry County community with air transport and avoid the need to construct an entirely new airport in some other location to do the same, the County must:

- Continue to pursue funding to extend the runway to 5,000 feet.
- Update the airport master plan to illustrate where new hangers might be located in the future.

Paratransit: special, demand-responsive transport services that provide door-to-door service from any point of origin to any destination within a defined service area.

General aviation: all civil aviation operations other than scheduled air services and non-scheduled air transport operation for hire.

- Position the non-aviation land at the airport for economic development purposes.
- Consider that aviation land can serve a dual purpose when it comes to the installation of solar farms.
- Keep land around the airport free from development that is inconsistent with the future growth and development of the airport.

Rail

New Castle-Henry County is served by three rail providers. The Connersville New Castle Railroad (C&NC) offers access to both the Norfolk Southern RR and the CSX RR. The C&NC Railroad is a (Class III) short-line railroad that connects the towns of Beesons and New Castle. The total length of the C&NC railroad is just over 27 miles.

Unlike other modes of transportation, rail does not have a dedicated federal funding source. Freight rail infrastructure and operations across the county are funded almost entirely by the private sector. The maintenance, replacement, and expansion of tracks, structures, and equipment by Class I railroads is almost exclusively funded by income generated from the operation of the rail lines by private companies. Smaller, short line and regional railroads tend to be the primary recipients of state and local funding. The State of Indiana allocates less than ½ of 1 percent of revenues from the state’s gross retail and use taxes to the Indiana Industrial Rail Service Fund. States are also able to use federal funds to develop revolving loan programs for the funding of state railroad projects.

In order to grow the number and types of jobs offered in Henry County or otherwise advance one or more economic development initiatives, the County must:

- Continue to leverage the presence of the county’s active railroads.

- Proactively retain and enhancing reliable, cost-competitive rail service to area businesses who are dependent on rail.
- Make use of the remaining rail spurs by reserving the accessible land for industrial uses.
- Increase multi-modal mobility and access.

There are several abandoned railroads in Henry County, including Honey Creek RR, the New Castle Branch, and Conrail RR. The Honey Creek RR applied to abandon all 5.9 miles of its line between Sulphur Springs and the City of New Castle in 2004; however, the conditions of the tracks suggest that it has been quite some time since a train made the trip between the two municipalities. The New Castle Branch started out as the New Castle and Franklin Railroad in the early 1870s. It was acquired by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1918 who abandoned part of it. The rest of the line was abandoned under the Penn Central Railroad. See also “Trails” which are categorized as linear parks, under “Parks, Recreation & Open Space” on the previous pages.



Utilities

Many rural and small utility systems throughout the country face significant management and operational issues, such as aging or inadequate infrastructure, recruiting and retaining qualified staff, growing or establishing financial reserves, or adopting utility rates that allow the service provider to cover their operational costs and long-term capital needs.

The following subsections describe the utility services that existed at the time of this study. Use this section when growth and development opportunities are described in terms of the availability of public utilities.

Water

Residents and businesses in (and in some instances near) the City of New Castle and incorporated towns of Knightstown, Lewisville, Spiceland, Shirley, Mount Summit, and Middletown are served by public water.

The only community that faces water capacity issues is the Town of Knightstown, which will hinder any new growth in the southwest corner of the county for the foreseeable future.

Wastewater

Residents and businesses in (and in some instances near) the City of New Castle and incorporated towns of Knightstown, Lewisville, Spiceland, Shirley, Kennard, Mooreland, Sulphur Springs, Springport, Mount Summit, and Middletown are served by public wastewater. Properties in Dunreith, Straughn, and Lewisville are served by the South Henry Regional Waste District, as is the Fair Oaks subdivision.

Some communities, like Cadiz, that rely exclusively on individual septic systems are already or will soon be forced to address the fact that many septic systems will fail over time.

Stormwater

Stormwater runoff occurs when precipitation in the form of rain or snowmelt flows over the surface of the earth. The addition of roads, driveways, parking lots, rooftops, and other surfaces that prevent water from soaking into the ground increases both the amount and rate of stormwater runoff. Stormwater

management often stops at the incorporated limits of a city or town.

While the unincorporated parts of Henry County are not able to have a separate and distinct stormwater utility, efforts can and should be made to improve both the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff in both the incorporated and unincorporated parts of the county. From best management practices in agricultural production and understanding the various changes that take place from one season to the next or within a single season, to modeling the county's roads, ditches, and culverts, accounting for changes in slopes and terrains, and tracking key pollutants (e.g., sediment, phosphorus, and nitrogen), more can be done to improve both the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff across the county's rural landscape. Some incorporated areas, like the City of New Castle and Town of Middletown, continue to make progress on separating their combined sewer overflow systems (CSOs).

Electric

Duke Energy provides services to properties in New Castle and Cadiz. Electricity is also available through the Indiana Municipal Power Association (IMPA) along US 40, and Henry County REMC in the more rural parts of the county. Of the three service providers, Henry County REMC has the largest service area.

Telecommunications

At the time of this study, there were numerous broadband providers for both residential and business. However, broadband access, speed and reliability continues to be an issue for the most rural parts of the Henry County community.

The minimum broadband service, as determined from time to time by the Federal Communications Commission, continues to go up. As the rate at which a user is able to download or upload data to the Internet increases, rural communities across the county will struggle to become or remain compliant. Even as the technology improves, it will always be more efficient for a telecommunications company to install or upgrade communications infrastructure in areas where there are 2,000 people per square mile, compared to areas where there are 10 people per



square mile. For these reasons, Henry County should ensure that local policies are updated to coincide with the National Broadband Plan, and that local standards align with the incentives that maximize the federal governments priorities as it relates to this national infrastructure challenge.

Alternative Energy

Alternative energy, is any energy source other than fossil fuel. Both the nature and use has changed over time.

WIND

Prior to the advent of rural electrification programs, wind turbines were often commonplace on farms and ranches across the Midwest. They have historically offered rural homesteads most of the conveniences of urban life. Today, wind turbines can serve an additional power resource. With on-going technological advances, wind turbines may become even more reliable, quieter, and safer over time.

With the adoption of a Wind Energy Conversion System (WECS) ordinance regulating the siting of both commercial and non-commercial wind energy conversion systems in 2009, wind turbines were deemed to be acceptable for (presumably) parts of Henry County. Since that time, both commercial and non-commercial wind projects have been approved by the Henry County Planning Commission.

In Henry County, whether or not commercial wind energy conversion systems are appropriate land uses is something that will be determined on a case-by-case, or project-by-project basis, as local decision makers continue to weigh the pros and cons of this type of development. Some of the concerns expressed by opponents of commercial wind energy conversion systems include:

- Impacts on the local quality of life, generally;
- Potential degradation of the scenic/aesthetic value of the rural landscape;
- Potential impact on local home/property values;

- Nuisance-related concerns that affect the ability of residents to feel comfortable in and around their own homes; and
- The distribution of the economic benefits of wind energy, wherein non-participating neighbors experience negative externalities and little to no direct economic benefit.

Proponents of commercial wind energy conversion systems recognize that there are a number of benefits associated with alternative energy production, including:

- Lease payments for landowners hosting wind turbines;
- An increase in the local tax base;
- A new source for local jobs and business activity; and
- The availability of wind energy power, among others.

For its part in helping to provide a stronger foundation for renewable energy, both commercial wind farms and non-commercial wind turbines are considered to be appropriate uses in parts of Henry County, provided that commercial wind projects – in whole or in part – are limited to the least densely populated areas of the county where agriculture is anticipated to remain as the predominate land use type.

SOLAR

Cities and counties are uniquely positioned to support economic growth, strengthen the country’s energy dependence, and reduce pollution by using solar energy. For these, and other reasons, it is the policy of Henry County to support the inclusion of solar technologies and design in development projects, and to allow for solar energy farms, or “brightfields,” throughout much of Henry County, provided that solar energy farms do not cause a net reduction in the county’s total number of acres of prime agricultural land.

In order to adequately provide residences and businesses throughout the various Henry County



communities with the infrastructure that is needed for each community to grow and thrive, the County must:

- Prioritize infill housing and the redevelopment of non-residential areas – increasing both residential densities and the intensity of non-residential developments over time—to increase the feasibility of installing or upgrading utility infrastructure and maintaining operations over time.
- Allow for and accommodate the siting of wind and solar energy projects, by ensuring that applicable regulations offer both clarity and stability, as well as a degree of flexibility so that regulators can continue to incorporate new information and properly mitigate impacts.
- Ensure that all applicable land use and subdivision control regulations are an accurate

reflection of the need to effectively deliver sustainable utility infrastructure.

- Mitigate the effects of deferred maintenance on all public utilities by right-sizing local utility rates to cover the true costs of operating and maintaining a public utility, and allowing for the establishment of a reserve fund for each.
- Reduce the amount of paved and hard surfaces in the more developed parts of the Henry County community.
- Remove local barriers to the installation, expansion or upgrading of broadband throughout the county.

See also, “Environmentally Sensitive Areas” on the following pages.





Progress

For the purposes of this plan, progress is defined as addressing issues and opportunities in a holistic, outcomes-oriented manner. Progress is measured in terms of population and jobs growth (quantitative), and the overall enhancement to the local quality of life (qualitative).

The following recommendations address the issues and opportunities related to the community's growth and development.



Growth Management

While much of Henry County has changed since 1999 when the previous comprehensive plan was adopted, some things remain the same. The 1999 comprehensive plan sought to focus new development around established towns for the purposes of protecting farm land and environmentally sensitive areas. This plan seeks to do the same. In addition to steering clear of environmentally sensitive areas, this overarching growth management policy is important in terms of the county's fiscal stability. It also assists with the implementation of policy related to redevelopment and placemaking, among others. In addition to ensuring that the rate of future growth and development is proportionate to the government's ability to maintain adequate service levels, long-term operations, and maintenance obligations, the following should also be considered.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

For the purposes of this plan, environmentally sensitive areas include: the 100-year floodplain, wellfields, wooded areas, wetlands, and wildlife corridors.

Environmentally sensitive areas often require special protections because of the benefits to the landscape, wildlife, or cultural/historic value. In order to properly preserve, and protect the county's environmentally sensitive areas, the County must:

- Establish and maintain natural areas that help to reduce the amount of nonpoint source pollution generated from agricultural operations and urban run-off, especially along the Flat Rock River, Big Blue River, Buck Creek, Duck Creek, Little Blue River, and Montgomery Creek.
- Limit the types of land uses or developments that are likely to need to obtain a discharge permit, especially along the Flat Rock River, Big Blue River, Buck Creek, Duck Creek, Little Blue River, and Montgomery Creek.
- Reduce the risk of flood damage now and in the future by: restricting (re)development in the 100-year floodplain; expressly prohibiting (re) development in the 100-year floodway; protecting and enhancing riparian corridors; and by adopting

best practices in stormwater quantity and quality management for all new public and private infrastructure investments.

- Reduce the risk of flooding in Henry County and downstream by maintaining and possibly even increasing the flood storage capacity within Henry County.
- Prevent contaminants from reaching levels that present a risk to people's health and maintain a safe and adequate drinking water supply.
- Allow for both active and passive recreational opportunities within the 100-year floodplain where desirable, but refrain from allowing for the construction of temporary or permanent structures to house anything related to the recreational activities above grade.
- Plant trees, shrubs, and native species and increase natural cover across the entire county.
- Encourage the use of cover crops, no-till, or minimum-till conservation tillage, and maintain crop residue in the more rural parts of the county.
- Maintain tree lines that serves as windbreaks along roadsides or fields, prevent erosion, and connect woodlots.
- Plant and maintain streamside buffers to slow down and hold overland flow of water, prevent erosion, and provide plant and wildlife habitats.

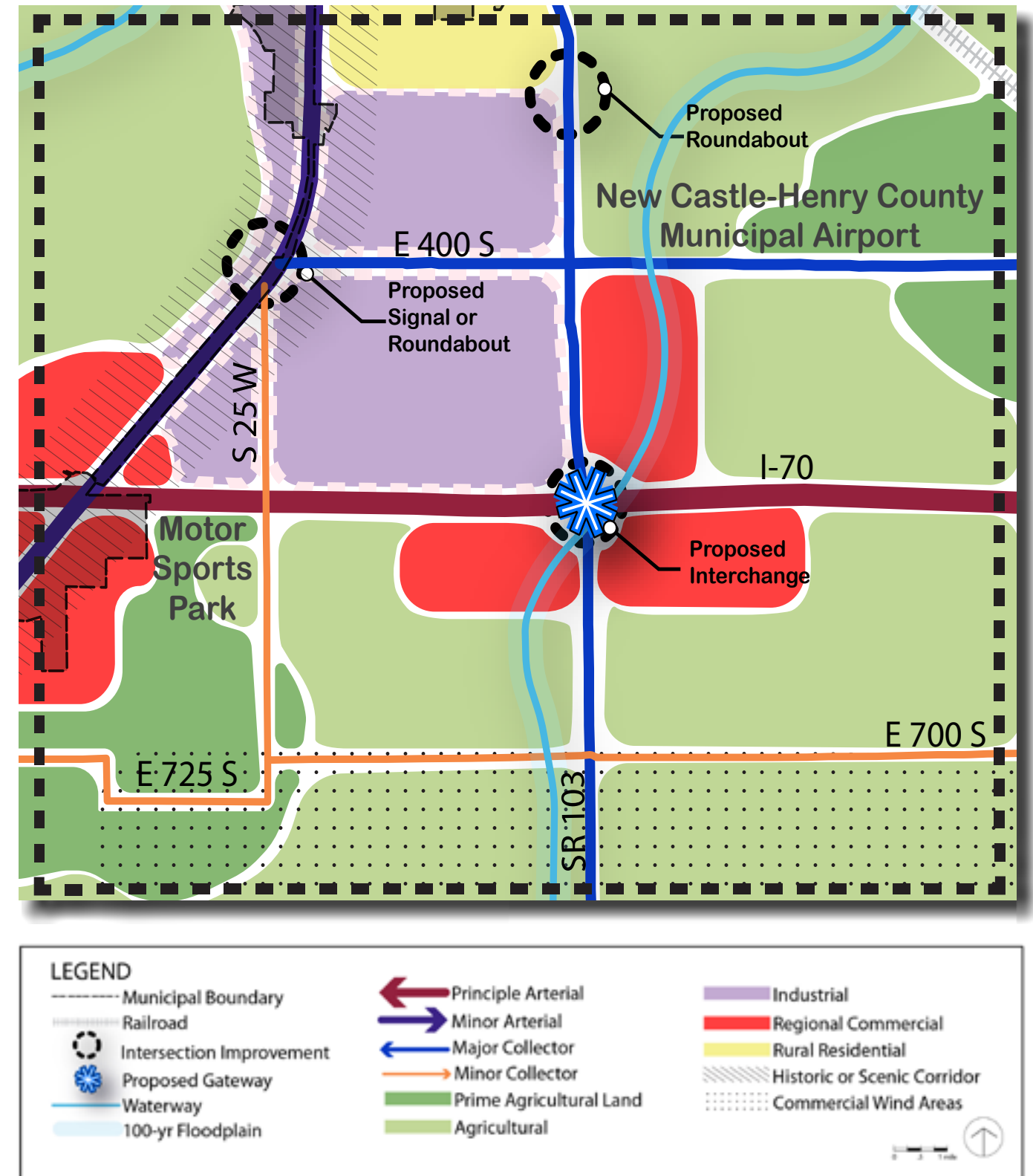
Interchange Development

There are three existing interstate interchanges within Henry County, including:

- I-70/SR 109 (Knightstown)
- I-70/SR 3 (New Castle/Spiceland)
- I-70/Wilbur Wright Road (New Lisbon)

Future development in and around the Knightstown exit should not only maintain, but enhance, the county's rural image. Appropriate uses for this area include estate housing and/or equestrian farms. Future development in and around the New Castle/

Future Land Use and Transportation Map Inset: An Alternative Scenario



Spiceland exit should help to make this area a shopping and employment destination for the entire Henry County community. Appropriate uses for this area include regional commercial uses and low- to moderate-intensity industrial uses. Land in and around the New Lisbon exit should be reserved for future industrial development (i.e., jobs). Appropriate uses for this area include really large, intensive industrial uses.

A fourth interstate interchange at I-70/SR 103 (New Castle/Lewisville) would offer additional opportunities for the future growth and development of Henry County. Land at this proposed interchange should be reserved for the type of development(s) that have the ability to “welcome” residents and visitors to Henry County.

In order to ensure that each of the county’s interstate interchanges – existing and future - reflect the county’s overarching vision, the County must:

- Plan and then put in place protective measures to ensure that future development at each of the county’s existing interchanges is the highest and best use for the land.
- Consider the needs of area commuters and find ways to shape or adapt the county’s land uses and transportation infrastructure to facilitate commuting and “extreme commuting” for those that continue to find Henry County as a desirable place to live but whose work requires them to leave Henry County during most business days.
- Begin to lay the groundwork for the construction and future development of the land around a future interchange at the intersection of I-70 and SR 103.

Corridors & Gateways

Henry County is home to two types of corridors: scenic and historic. Memorial Drive/SR 3 corridor that stretches north from the City of New Castle is considered by many to be Henry County’s most scenic route. By contrast, the entire US 40 corridor offers a more historic scene. It was developed

over time to include a mixture of residential and commercial uses and serves as the “main street” for many of the county’s southern communities. Both corridors have the potential to greatly enhance the overall appeal of Henry County.

Gateway: an entry to a place, which in this case is an entry to the Henry County community

Both corridors act as primary gateways into the county. Recognizing the importance of enhancing these gateway corridors as a means of promoting Henry County to visitors and investors will require the development of short-term and long-range actions aimed at improving both the function and aesthetics of the county’s proposed gateways.

In order to facilitate improved mobility and improve the attractiveness of Henry County as a place to live and work, the County must:

- Prioritize public investments along the county’s designated corridors at key gateway locations over other stretches of roadway.
- Employ the use of best practices in the maintenance and branding of each gateway,

Extreme commuting: a daily journey to work that takes more than 90 minutes each way

and give careful consideration to the need for wayfinding.

- Stabilize and enhance the properties that abut each roadway.
- Support the improvement, enhancement, and expansion of SR 3 between I-70 and I-74.

Vacant and Abandoned Properties

Vacant properties include: abandoned, boarded-up buildings; unused lots that attract trash and debris; vacant or under-performing commercial properties (such as under-leased shopping malls and strip commercial properties); neglected industrial properties (some of them with environmental contaminations); and deteriorating single-family homes, apartments with significant code violations, and housing that remains vacant for long periods of time. Properly attending to vacant and abandoned properties can quickly overwhelm government resources and actually cost homeowners money. Compared to the surrounding counties and the State of Indiana as a whole, Henry County has a relatively high vacant housing rate of 15 percent. This could be due in (small) part to the presence of some housing units that are only intended for seasonal or recreational use. While less than 1 percent of Henry County’s housing units are considered vacant for seasonal or recreational use, this is true for all comparison counties and the State of Indiana as a whole.



But because few data sources include the number of vacant properties that are inadequately maintained, the vacant housing rate and total number of vacant properties in Henry County is likely to be much higher.

The top issues attributable to vacant properties includes:

- Increase in crime , arson, and accidental fires
- Proliferation of illegal dumping and rodent infestations

- Lost tax revenue
- Lower property values for surrounding properties
- Higher insurance premiums for homeowners

In order to better facilitate (re)development of lasting value, the County must:

- Encourage and support the adaptive reuse of vacant structures.
- In and near city and village centers, reduce the large parcels or blocks and extend the county’s motorized and non-motorized transportation network within a redevelopment area.

Balance the need to redevelop areas with a number of vacant, abandoned, or underutilized properties with the desire to expand the developed area.

- Take into consideration the life cycle cost of construction for all new built projects.

Land Use Conversions

Residential conversions occur when: 1) a single-family, detached residence is converted into a

commercial use, or 2) a non-residential use (often a former industrial operation or institution) is converted into a single- or multi-family residential use (e.g., a condominium), or lodging.

The conversion of one, single-family detached residence to an office or retail establishment is often viewed as just a logical extension of a nearby commercial district or area. However, over time these one-off conversions can erode the residential character of the neighborhood and weaken both the vibrancy and viability of the adjacent commercial area. The two biggest factors are the off-street parking



spaces that are often needed (and granted) to the new business, and the signage that must accompany the use.

By contrast, there are a number of advantages associated with converting a former industrial operation, institution, or commercial buildings into housing units. For example, large structures – and especially large older structures – can be difficult to repurpose. In the time that it takes to find another user, the large, older structure can become an eyesore or cause the neighborhood to destabilize. Residential conversions of this nature can also help in terms of the community's ability to offer different types of housing units, including subsidized and affordable housing.

The conditions under which it may be better to allow industrial land to convert to another, non-industrial use include, but are not limited to:

- Areas not well served by or connected to arterial roadways
- Long-term vacancy
- Building is obsolete in terms of ceiling height, pillars
- Changing community conditions, such as the redevelopment of the properties adjacent to the former industrial use

In order to realize some of the benefits of converting non-residential buildings into residential units, but



limit the negative effects that are often associated with the conversion of a single-family residence into a non-residential establishment, the County must:

- Use the existence of residential neighborhoods to corral commercial development.
- Allow former non-residential structures to be converted to residential units or lodging.
- Consider the life-cycle costs of new buildings in conjunction with their ability to be repurposed in the future.

Placemaking

So much of the built environment is designed to attract one's attention, especially with respect to commercial advertisements and signs. The landscape can often become cluttered with too much information and cause one to become disoriented. The principles of placemaking, one way in which planners, landscape architects, and urban designers aid communities in re-imagining and reinventing the public spaces within a neighborhood or

city, are often used to maximize the shared value of those spaces and convey that the space is a place of importance, a place with meaning.

Through the observations of a well-known urban planner, sociologist, and author named Kevin Lynch, there is a rather instinctual way to describe how, we as people, perceive and experience the built environment. Referred to as elements, there are a number of visual cues that shape the "mental map" that we, as people, create in our head so that we can better orient ourselves to places. It is one way

of "reading" a community that continues to stand the test of time, and a relatively straightforward way to later explain your experiences (e.g., how you got around and found what you were looking for) in other communities to someone who has never been there. The five elements, where one element can function as another, are:

1. Paths – often dominant, but always identifiable routes along which people move throughout the community with some continuity, such as streets, sidewalks, trails and rivers.
2. Edges – physical or perceived boundaries and breaks that separate one district from another, such as walls, buildings, and fence rows.
3. Districts – relatively large areas of the community that share common characteristics, such as a warehouse district or arts district.
4. Nodes – strategic focus points for orientation, such as town squares or highway interchanges, or stops that can be made along one or more paths, such as a shopping center or park.
5. Landmarks – external points of orientation, usually an easily identifiable physical object with a sense of predominance compared to the area around it, such as a church or monument.

In order to improve upon the order in which the county's developed areas are laid out, the County must:

- Define the edges and districts throughout the community.

- Use wayfinding signage to help residents and visitors locate nodes.
- Seek design/development solutions that contribute to residents' and visitors' ability to acquire a clear mental map of the various communities found throughout Henry County.
- Seek design/development solutions that make it relatively easy for people to navigate the county and various communities throughout Henry County.



- Seek design/development solutions that provide structure and make it relatively easy for people to function within the built environment.

- Seek design/development solutions that are likely to result in some meaning – nostalgic or new -- for the observer, and contribute in a meaningful way to the rest of the built environment (i.e., context-sensitive solutions).



Economic Development

The things that we use, wear, and consume start as raw materials that then move through any number of steps (and businesses along the way) to become a finished consumer good. There are a number of economic factors, such as the need to minimize transportation costs or gain access to a labor force, which has a very specific set of skills that make it advantageous for businesses to locate in close proximity to one another. When businesses locate together, they form industry clusters. A cluster analysis and/or target industry study are often used to improve the number of matches between purchasers and suppliers within a given supply chain.

According to past studies, target industries for Henry County include:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Transportation, distribution, and logistics
- Automotive manufacturing
- Appliances manufacturing
- Metal fabrication (manufacturing)
- Energy production, including solar and biofuels such as ethanol and soy diesel
- Agribusiness, including human and animal food processing and production, energy production, and nutrition and health research
- Technology-based knowledge occupations related to medical science, mathematics, statistics, data and accounting, natural science, and environmental management

The following subsections explain in specific term, the types of actions or activities that the collective community should take to increase the County's tax base over time.

Business Retention & Expansion

A strong business retention and expansion policy can give a community "the right" to ask other businesses to locate in the community. Why? Because

existing businesses often account for more than 90 percent of new job creation. By improving business relations, establishing and maintaining strong lines of communication, and reducing or mitigating the challenges that existing businesses face from time to

Advanced manufacturing: the insertion of new technology, improved processes, and management methods to improve the manufacturing of products

time, the County can further accelerate job growth.

In order to foster a stronger BR&E program, the County must:

- Employ an economic development official that is focused almost exclusively on the needs and wants of existing businesses.
- Invest in a product(s) or service(s) that would aid in the creation of a single survey instrument to interview all primary and secondary sector business executives.
- Offer a structured visitation program that consists primarily of face-to-face meetings.
- Conduct a routine survey that can be used to identify: any immediate concerns, training curriculum, opportunities to provide technical assistance, what potential there might be for the business to expand or relocate, and a place for respondents to indicate that they would like to schedule a follow-up meeting, among other things.
- Develop a way in which to conduct regular meetings with regulatory agencies to better understand the regulatory (and enforcement) environment in which these businesses are required to operate, offering recommendations as to how to improve the local regulations when necessary.
- Maintain enough authority and resources (monetarily and otherwise) to remove barriers or

otherwise address issues that may be experienced by one or more local businesses at any given time.

- Tie the existing BR&E program directly to efforts pertaining to workforce development.

Small Business and Startup Businesses

Small businesses, those with five or fewer employees, and start-up businesses that can become operational with \$35,000 or less, make up the county's micro-enterprise. These types of businesses often do not qualify for traditional financing and loan programs, especially if they are looking to locate in a distressed area. Starting or maintaining any business is a complicated endeavor. Compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, maintaining cash flow and financials, and human resources can quickly overwhelm a small business owner. The New Castle-Henry County Economic Development Corporation has partnered with the Indiana Small Business Development Center to make the center's technical resources available to small businesses at no additional cost to the business owner. In addition to promote the center's services across Henry County, the New Castle-Henry County Economic Development Corporation maintains a revolving-loan fund, a gap-financing measure primarily used for the development or expansion of small businesses. The fund is a self-replenishing pool of money that uses interest and principal payments on established loans to issue new ones.

In order to continue to improve the local business climate for small business owners and start-up businesses, the County must continue to offer one location for a business owner to:

- Make referrals to the appropriate person(s) at the appropriate agency(ies) regarding planning, zoning, or development matters, including permitting and licensing.
- Ascertain local economic indicators or labor market statistics.
- Review local development opportunities.
- Find out if and where there is land or spaces available for sale or lease.

- Connect with local financing providers.

Beyond that, the County must also:

- Evaluate the use of eligible shares of the newly combined Local Option Income Tax (LOIT) for economic development purposes, as well as how Local Option Income taxes are allocated locally.
- Reserve public support for value-added manufacturing, or to support an existing business in adding distribution as a secondary part of their operations, and refrain from incentivizing stand-alone logistics facilities.
- Continue to support the New Castle Area Career Center by strengthening the relationships between Ivy Tech and local school corporations.
- Actively market internship opportunities to potential interns, and potential interns to area businesses.
- Weigh the pros and cons, but consider all development proposals.
- Maximize the county's collective decision-making capabilities by tying the recommendations of this plan to local public policies and budget decision making.

The Collaborative Economy

Due in large part to advancements in technology, the collaborative economy continues to grow, and both consumers and businesses are able to take advantage of the excess capacities that exist within nearly every facet of the economy, temporarily and long-term. Carpooling, for example, has long been a way of sharing both the cost of commuting and the cost of owning, operating, and maintaining a private automobile. The collaborative, or shared, economy of today is allowing for greater cost savings and conveniences than ever before.

In order to fully leverage the excess capacities within the Henry County community, the County must:



- Increase the access and speed of broadband throughout the community to unlock the employment potential of the less densely populated or developed areas of the county.
- Seek out and make use of the excess capacity of the governmental or quasi-governmental assets.
- Allow residents and businesses to do the same by accommodating residents and businesses that seek to make use of the excess capacity in their houses, apartments, offices, and vehicles, among others, especially in the county's city and village centers.

Tourism

Much of Henry County's tourism sector is rooted in the presence and promotion of the natural, cultural/historical resources and assets throughout the county. In addition to the numerous parks, recreation, and open space opportunities present, Henry County offers a number of area attractions for both residents and visitors. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Henry County Saddle Club, which attracts approximately 70,000 visitors to the county each year and, according to all accounts, punches above its weight class as far county tourism
- New Castle Motorsports Park / New Castle Raceway, a one-mile road course and home of Kart Racers of America
- Mt. Lawn Speedway, a 1/3-mile paved oval course located west of New Castle
- Big Blue River and Little Blue River
- Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame
- Henry County Historical Society Museum
- Wright Brother's museum
- Henry County Convention and Visitor's Center
- Arts Park

More than a set of destinations, a strong tourism sector can foster shared responsibility among what

are otherwise separate and distinct municipalities, and serve as a community builder. A strong tourism sector requires a strong community identity to preserve the uniqueness and character of the Henry County community.

In order to improve upon Henry County's tourism sector, the County must:

- Ensure that tourism and tourism related activities enhance the county's character, which is primarily defined by natural and cultural/historical resources.
- Protect the county's cultural/historical resources while promoting tourism and educational opportunities at each site.
- Protect and support the Henry County Saddle Club's on-going operation and maintenance of current and future facilities and programs at Memorial Park.
- Create a county wide brand and identity to promote a positive and appealing community image for residents, businesses and visitors.
- Seek appropriate outlets for promoting the natural and cultural/historical based tourism and visitation opportunities.
- Promote year-round tourism and further establish winter tourism destinations.
- Make it easier for people to identify and access Henry County's many tourism destinations, and for the agencies and entities responsible for the county's tourism destinations to reach residents, businesses and visitors.

See also "Parks, Recreation and Open Space Use," "Vacant and Abandoned Properties," "Corridors and Gateways" and "The Collaborative Economy."



Administrative Policies and Procedures

Zoning and subdivision control regulations are the primary tools for implementing this comprehensive plan. To fully realize the stated vision and respond to changing conditions, local governments will need to continue to improve the ways in which local land use laws and regulations are administered and enforced.

Code Enforcement

Residents and business owners want to protect their investments and their property values. Governmental agencies seek to protect and enhance the local tax base.

These goals are mutually beneficial. They are also highly interdependent and one reason why code enforcement is as much an economic development issue as it is a property rights issue. In order for local land use and buildings regulations to be effective in their application, they have to be properly enforced. In order for them to be properly enforced, the each community with jurisdiction over planning and zoning needs to provide

dedicated resources – in the form of both personnel and budget – to properly assist property owners in maintaining or coming into compliance with all applicable land use and building regulations.

In order to effectively govern land uses and buildings, each of the county’s jurisdictions must:

- Adequately staff and fund code enforcement activities.



- Improve communications and foster collaboration across departments, including county surveyor, county engineer, auditor, assessor, building department and health department.
- Remove barriers to disseminating information to the public.
- Modernize the land use regulations and subdivision control regulations.

- Properly allow for all of the various land uses that are permitted by way of the county’s existing ordinances, including those land uses that are or have the ability to become controversial, and seek opportunities to remove any barriers to their development or continued existence.

Tax Increment Financing

From time to time, there will be properties or large areas of the community where the government needs to step in to make something happen. Tax-increment financing is one of few –if not the only -- remaining tool afforded to

governmental entities who are in a position to help finance the costs associated with public infrastructure improvements, land acquisition, demolition of existing buildings, utility expansions, landscaping, parking improvements, and environmental cleanup of a site, among others, for the purposes of spurring private development in the area.

As of 2016, there were a total of eight tax-increment finance (TIF) districts, in Henry County. The County’s TIF Districts include: I-70 & SR 109, the I-70 Quad, the Industrial Park, and the Spiceland (Draper-Smith)

TIF Districts. The City of New Castle had three TIF Districts, including one on Indiana Avenue, one in NW New Castle, and another in SE New Castle. The remaining TIF District was situated in the Town of Middletown. Altogether, the TIF districts in the county include approximately 270 parcels that have a reported gross assessed value of over \$83 million and a net assessed value of nearly \$70 million. The reported base assessed value is just over \$20 million and the amount of increment that is captured totals more than \$45 million. The cost of bonds associated with all of the TIF districts in the county is reported as being just over \$7 million.

In order to effectively overcome barriers to the redevelopment of vacant, abandoned, and wholly underutilized areas, the County must increase its collective capacity to:

- Acquire property for redevelopment or economic development purposes.
- Dispose of property acquired for redevelopment or economic development purposes.
- Hold and use property for redevelopment and economic development purposes.
- Clear property for redevelopment or economic development purposes.
- Remediate properties of any environmental contaminants for redevelopment or economic development purposes.
- Repair, remodel, maintain, or otherwise improve property that was acquired for redevelopment or economic development purposes.

See also “Vacant and Abandoned Properties” on the previous pages.





Strategies // Actions

Developing and adopting a comprehensive plan is one thing. Implementing the plan's recommendations is another. This plan will be implemented in part by the degree to which local decision makers consider the stated vision and policy objectives when they:

- Develop or amend regulations that control the location, form, and character of public and private projects.
- Advocate for capital projects that are financed, designed, built, or maintained by local government.
- Assume responsibilities for programs that involve active government participation, or that otherwise require the government's endorsement.

The implementation of this plan also hinges on the county's collective ability to affect change in one or more areas by completing a number of tasks. Unlike the policy objectives on the previous pages, which are intended to frame the conversations surrounding all land use and transportation decision-making policies and procedures, the strategies and action steps that follow are the measurable tasks that elected and appointed officials and staff, and key stakeholders can take to advance many of the policy objectives listed on the previous pages.

Reference this section when identifying or describing the various tasks that key stakeholders are taking to implement this comprehensive plan.



Strategy

Reduce both the number and severity of land use conflicts in both the developed and undeveloped parts of the county.



Action Steps

1. Develop and adopt a new agricultural zoning district and exclusively zone so as to preserve much of the county's prime agricultural land.
2. Use agricultural land, parks, and opens spaces, and natural features to buffer prime agricultural land from non-agricultural land.
3. Amend all applicable development standard regulations to require a minimum distance and treatment (e.g., landscaped buffer) between the farm and non-farm uses, residential and non-residential uses, and environmentally sensitive areas and all other land uses.
4. Revisit both the definitions, zoning district classifications, and the zoning district standards for their ability to distinguish and govern the following manufacturing uses, or their performance: heavy, medium, light, hazardous, and food production (animal and human) manufacturing.
5. Establish an environmentally sensitive areas overlay district and standards for the county's riparian corridors, and initiate commission-sponsored rezonings for the county's critical natural environments and resources.
6. Develop and maintain an inventory of key community assets to be considered as a part of the (re) development process.
7. Periodically review the WECS ordinance to make sure that it reflects the best available data in regards to the siting and regulating of wind energy conversion systems in Henry County.
8. Develop and adopt an ordinance for the siting and regulation of solar energy conversion systems in Henry County.



Strategy

Expand housing and transportation options, and social networks, to meet the changing needs of older residents.



Action Steps

1. Ensure that local land use regulations and building codes will allow for a variety of house types suitable for an older or aging population, including accessory dwelling units such as "granny flats," which are a part of a house made into self-contained accommodations suitable for an elderly member of the family that resides in the main house.
2. Identify the most desirable housing types for seniors in Henry County, evaluate the current supply of desirable housing types, and identify areas for the potential development of the types of housing that older residents want.
3. Allow for the clustering of senior living facilities, especially near healthcare intuitions.
4. Allow for mixed-use developments near housing developments geared toward the older population and vice versa.
5. Write visitability design standards for all new single-family, detached housing units to include accessibility features that make it possible for most people to visit another home.
6. Design and construct all future public facilities (and infrastructure) using universal design standards so that the composition can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability.



Visitability design standards: at least one zero-step entrance on an accessible route leading from a driveway or public sidewalk; interior doorways that are at least 32 inches wide to allow a wheelchair to pass through; and at least a half-bathroom on the main floor

See also "Residential Use" and "Mixed-Use"



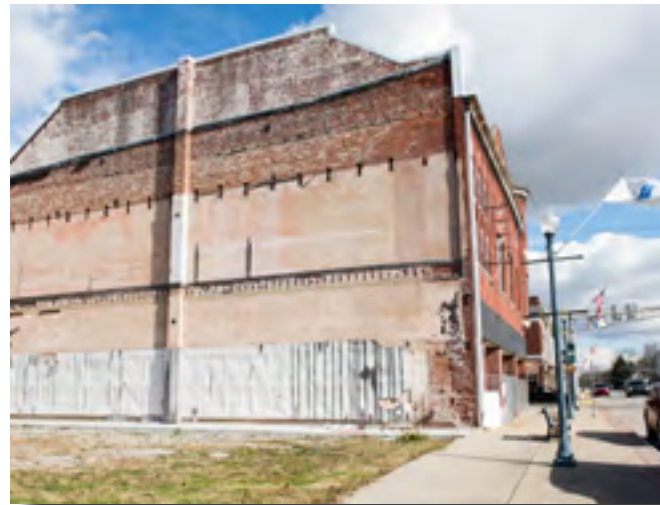
Strategy

Increase the County’s capacity to properly administer and enforce local zoning and building regulations



Action Steps

1. Employ at least one professional staff member dedicated solely to enforcing Henry County’s land use regulations and building code.
2. Ensure that zoning district standards are updated to accurately reflect and allow for the various land use categories described throughout this plan.
3. Revise the enforcement and administration sections of the county’s existing zoning and subdivision control ordinance(s) to include the following: docketing of an enforcement case on the Plan Commission agenda; notice to adjacent property owners; and legal notices.
4. Create and distribute a flier that explains the County’s new policies and procedures as it relates to zoning code enforcement, and if necessary, building code enforcement.
5. Clearly define the local procedures for various actions, including: building a house, rezoning, building in a floodplain, making improvements in a wellhead protection area, among others. Make these available for the general public both in hard copy and electronically (i.e., flowcharts and checklists).
6. Institutionalize a county-wide system of checks and balances for all applicable development review procedures and processes.



Strategy

Make use of the excess capacity present in existing infrastructure, assets, or services, and foster opportunities for a thriving shared economy throughout the county



Action Steps

1. Ensure that the local land use regulations allow for urban gardens and neighborhood produce sales.
2. Expressly permit uses such as shared offices and salon suites in all commercial and mixed-use zoning districts.
3. Adopt policies, procedures, and regulations that expressly permit uses intended for, or that would otherwise accommodate, the “sharing economy,” including such businesses as Airbnb, Uber, Lyft, makerspaces, and shared working places.
4. Ensure that the local land use regulations allow for the establishment and operation of one or more commercial kitchens.
5. Consider updating local land use regulations to permit accessory dwelling units, by right, in one or more residential districts, and any mixed-use district.
6. Within the area around the I-70/SR 109 interchange (and in the event that it moves forward, the I-70/SR 103 interchange), plan for and allow for a phasing in of a commuter parking lot(s) and related infrastructure to accommodate commuters and further assist in maintaining the level of service currently afforded by the I-70 corridor through Henry County.
7. Study the feasibility of an intermodal yard in one of the areas designated for intensive industrial use.



Strategy

Improve and enhance the county’s natural environments, while preserving and protecting Henry County’s surface water features, groundwater resources, and wildlife habitats.



Action Steps

1. Require the preservation of existing riparian corridors around tributaries and streams, while encouraging the establishment of riparian corridors where missing.
2. Establish and protect a series of wildlife corridors capable of boosting the biodiversity of the county’s plant and animal species.
3. Improve the floodplain mapping and regulations, response and warning processes, dissemination of public information, and other efforts to reduce flood damage to increase the community’s standing in the Community Rating System.
4. Increase flood protections by revising the applicable flood protection ordinances to: raise the freeboard factor, and require compensatory storage at a rate of 1:1, or greater, to offset any loss of flood-storage capacity and ensure that the 100-year floodplain’s capacity to store flood waters is not diminished over time.
5. Develop, adopt, and publish alternative stormwater standards.
6. Review the capacity of the county drainage systems for its ability to handle future development; and in areas where it cannot, upgrade and enhance the county system, local systems, or both.
7. Study the feasibility of a septic system elimination program focused on areas where system failure rates are high, housing density is likely to increase, or where the development is in close proximity to a surface or groundwater resource.
8. Adopt and enforce a county-wide wellhead protection overlay district and standards that address the one-, five- and ten-year time of travel, revising the list of permitted uses in each overlay district accordingly.
9. Create public awareness and general knowledge about the importance of wellhead protection for maintaining an adequate and safe water supply in Henry County.



Strategy

Re-establish and then grow the local workforce in conjunction with local education, dependent care, and economic development efforts.



Action Steps

1. Explore “last dollar” scholarship programs for all county high school graduates
2. Study the current local option income tax (LIT) rate and allotment to better provide for economic development purposes, such as infrastructure, access to early childhood education and childcare, enhancing the Revolving Loan Fund and/or Deal Closing Fund.
3. Use the strong and emerging industry clusters to form a series of industry-specific roundtables and foster both formal and information communications throughout each year.
4. Partner with all school corporations to increase opportunities to expose middle-schoolers and high-schoolers to: local government and elected offices; Junior Chamber of Commerce , youth sub-committee for the Henry County Plan Commission and/or Henry County Council.
5. Continue the support of the ACT Work Ready Program

A “last dollar” scholarship program is a need-based award that serves to fill any gap that exists when the sum of what a family could be expected to pay for attendance at a college or university and their financial aid package are less than the cost of attendance

The New Castle-Henry County Chamber of Commerce Academy for Community Leadership is designed to develop an informed public who will influence Henry County’s future. The Academy’s goal is to identify people who are emerging leaders within New Castle and Henry County. Through contact with a wide variety of experts, participants are able to expand their leadership skills, knowledge and influence in the community.



Strategy

Reinvest in the county’s existing residential neighborhoods.



Action Steps

1. Adapt elements of form-based zoning regulations to create a residential infill toolkit/guidelines that specify the appropriate building types and site design principles to be applied.
2. Amend the county’s zoning ordinance to include the “missing middle” housing types, including: attached single-family residential, duplexes, triplexes, quads, apartment buildings, live-work units, and accessory dwelling units; and then revise the district standards to allow more of these housing types to occur in more districts, by right.
3. Amend all applicable zoning and subdivision control ordinances to allow convenience commercial in more districts, by right; adopting specific use standards as necessary to mitigate any potential impacts to surrounding residents.
4. Establish a set of context-sensitive solutions for infill development, such as how best to replicate street frontage characteristics, continue the established rhythm of development along the street, minimize contrasts in scale, and integrate off-street parking.
5. Conduct a housing conditions analysis.
6. Conduct a sidewalk conditions analysis in each incorporated municipality.
7. Continue working with the Indiana Brownfields Program to identify and secure technical and financial assistance opportunities for brownfield remediation.
8. Monitor the availability of county tax sale properties and purchase strategic parcels for economic development and redevelopment opportunities.
9. Work with the New Castle Housing Authority to increase their capacity to offer subsidized housing.
10. Explore opportunities to attract more market-rate apartments .
11. Continue to offer grants to homeowners who need to make improvements to their primary residence, and extend it beyond the City of New Castle.



Strategy

Assist law enforcement and emergency responders by ensuring that the built environment contributes to, rather than detracts from, efforts to their efforts to protect and serve the Henry County community.



Action Steps

1. Revise the local building code to include barns in the unsafe building regulations.
2. Work with the county health department to revise the unsafe structures ordinance to include language and requirements for barns and homes where methamphetamines have been shown to have been produced; impaired structures.
3. Adapt the principles and strategies of the state’s Safe Routes to Schools program and identify both infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements that can be made in all five school districts: Blue River Valley Schools, Charles A. Beard Memorial School Corporation, New Castle Community Schools, Shenandoah School Corporation, and South Henry School Corporation.
4. Adapt the principles and strategies of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), a multidisciplinary approach to alter the physical design of a community for the purposes of deterring crime, in updates to local zoning and subdivision control regulations, specifically in areas where there are opportunities to:
 - features, activities, and people in such a way as to maximize the visibility of the space and its users.
5. Maintain and enhance the natural surveillance of the community by allowing for the placement of physical
 - 6. Create or extend “territorial reinforcement” through the use of buildings, fences, pavements, signs, lighting, landscaping, or some combination thereof, to convey that a particular space belongs to someone who cares for it.
 - 7. Control access and clearly differentiate between public and private property through careful placement of entrances and exits, eliminating design features that provide access to roofs or upper levels, and use visual cues to communicate how users might move through the space.
 - 8. Ask that the criminal justice reform task force study issues and opportunities related to drugs and addiction, mental illness, mass incarceration, repeat offenders, the arresting process, re-entry, among others, prior to siting, designing, or constructing a new jail facility.
 - 9. Explore the establishment of fire service territories to further improve the County’s collective ability to protect and serve area residences and businesses.

Did you know? Comprehensive planning is deeply rooted in the need to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the entire community; these are the very principles upon which land use planning stand and the rational basis for all zoning ordinance regulations.



Strategy

Ensure that all administrative processes, procedures, and regulations continue to reflect the vision and values of the larger Henry County community.



Action Steps

1. Modernize all applicable zoning ordinances to replace hierarchical or pyramid-type land use districts with districts that accommodate their intended land uses to the exclusion of others, including the establishment of one or more industrial districts that restrict the use of industrial land for non-industrial uses.
2. Amend the plan commission rules of procedure, docketing, etc., to include code enforcement actions.
3. Using this comprehensive plan as a guide, review all development projects for their ability to, among other things, improve mobility, increase the mix of housing types and price points, and construct or otherwise incorporate components or features that benefit the larger community.
4. Make training for elected and appointed officials a part of their duties.
5. Mitigate the economic impacts of wind turbines by considering the creation of community wind projects, good-neighbor payments, independent community funds, or some combination thereof, to more evenly distribute the direct economic benefits of wind energy production across the community.
6. Mitigate any real or perceived impact to local property values through the use of strategically placed landscaping or trees.
7. Mitigate the aesthetic impacts of wind turbines by requiring that they utilize similar turbine types to create consistency and uniformity within a project area, select turbines of higher generating capacity so that fewer turbine installations are necessary to achieve a given energy output, and place as much of the electrical infrastructure below ground.
8. Mitigate the common stress symptoms that can result from wind turbines by using predictive noise propagation models to better understand the levels of noise that potential neighbors are likely to experience, place upper bounds on the change from ambient noise resulting from wind energy facilities, and require the use of wind farm modeling software tools that have features that facilitate communication and mitigation of shadow flicker.
9. Develop and publish a list of community benefits, unique to Henry County, that are a direct or indirect result of the presence of alternative sources of energy.
10. Determine which local laws, policies, standards and incentives need to be updated to maximize the benefits of broadband in governmental sectors, such as public education, health care and government operations

Strategy

Reaffirm the county's commitment to good governance.



Action Steps

1. Develop and adopted zoning ordinance amendments that reflect the difference between populated, urban areas, and suburban areas.
2. Employ a full-time County attorney who can address all legal matters for the county.
3. Help facilitate the completion of a county-wide, cross district utility rate study for the purposes of, among other things: accounting for increasing operating costs; establishing stormwater as a separate and distinct public utility; accurately assessing the needs of even those residences and businesses that are currently on well or septic, or both; and establishing a process by which to periodically evaluate the same.
4. Officially establish the existing site development plan review committee with representation from the planning commission, building commission, sheriff's department, fire department, water and sewer utilities, engineering department, surveyor's office, and the health department to review and, on a stamp provided by the planning and zoning department, sign off on all development proposals.
5. Because it is a competitive advantage of Henry County, continue the strategic investment and use of Food & Beverage tax revenues by: a) requiring that applicants demonstrate how their funding request(s) advances one or more strategies of this Comprehensive Plan as a part of the application and evaluation process; and b) pursue legislation that would renew the county's ability to issue bonds payable from the Food & Beverage tax.
6. Improve communication about the various decision-making processes so as to become highly transparent in all matters related to land use planning and zoning.
7. Restructure the operation and maintenance of the county's government website to better facilitate the dissemination of the information that it is intended to contain, without imposing a separate cost-burden to anyone agency or department.
8. Establish a non-reverting fund to allow the building inspector to send out violation letters and, when necessary, remove unsafe structures.
9. Reallocate funds as necessary to ensure that zoning and permitting fees are able to be used for the interpretation, administration, and enforcement of local regulations.



Strategy

Advance local efforts to innovate and create, beginning with the retention and expansion of existing businesses and direct outreach to past graduates.



Action Steps

- Using a series of ideal industrial land characteristics as evaluation criteria, identify and then protect the county's prime industrial land, which is – as the previous pages explain – inclusive of the county's prime agricultural land.
- Modernize the county's definitions for manufacturing uses and better distinguish between what is happening or present on-site at any given time (performance), rather than the nature of what are otherwise accessory uses to the manufacturing operations (e.g., outside storage), and allow for more land uses categories related to manufacturing, including: artisan, light, medium, heavy, hazardous, and the processing and packaging of food and beverages for human or animal consumption.
- Establish an "expatriate program" designed to directly communicate with 24 – to 40-year-old former residents of the Henry County community to share with them all that Henry County has to offer: the new shopping destinations, jobs, and housing options.
- Prepare a site development plan for the I-70/SR 3 New Castle/Spiceland interchange (Exit 123) as a top priority, followed by the I-70/SR 109 Knightstown interchange (Exit 115) and I-70/Wilbur Wright Road interchange (Exit 131).
- Complete a cluster analysis with a supply chain focus to identify target industry sectors; match existing local businesses to a cluster and market to fill the gaps, and map out the various location of the production cycles.
- Grow the county's industry roundtable for business-to-business networking and problem-solving.
- Enhance the county's BR&E initiatives to improve upon or include: an annual survey, business appreciation program, awards program.
- Update and maintain the county-wide clearing house for financing information for businesses, including local sources for micro-enterprise loans, angel financing, small-business investment corporations and venture capital funds and then seed the fund(s).
- Increase funding for the Revolving Loan Fund
- Work with local businesses to increase the visibility of the opportunities to buy local.
- Create a gateway master plan.
- Purchase additional land for light and heavy industrial use.
- Continue to seek funding to extend the New Castle-Henry County airport runway to 5,000 feet.
- Rebuild rail spur along CNC railroad in New Castle.
- Explore the establishment of a transload facility on CNC RR at former Firestone Plant.
- With the exception of the Knightstown exit, allow for the incorporation of commuter infrastructure in future developments at one or more of the county's interchanges.

Strategy

Enhance the local quality of life offered by the various communities throughout the county.



Action Steps

- Create and maintain a five-year parks master plan to guide capital planning and funding of all parks (municipal or county) within the county and become eligible for grant programs administered by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Outdoor Recreation, and others.
- Using universal design standards, develop and adopt a plan to make every playground in the county accessible over time, and determine if a similar goal is attainable for all government facilities to create a built environment that goes beyond what is required of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and improves the experience for people of all ages and abilities.
- Perform an asset inventory designed to identify existing community assets – those structures, places, and services that contribute to the current quality of life experienced by residents – to facilitate asset-based planning and community development decisions and contribute to the promotion of Henry County as a tourist destination.
- Revise the local zoning ordinance to allow dependent care facilities in non-residential and residential districts; and in all but a few instances, allow them by right.
- Develop a management plan for the Big Blue River, and address the issues and opportunities associated with canoe/kayak access, parking, picnic shelters or pavilions, interpretive signage and exhibits, trails, and the establishment of user fees.
- Conduct an economic impact study of Henry County's tourism destinations and events to quantify their economic impact to the local community.
- Create a media relations and marketing plan for Henry County.
- Develop a set of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to address tourism related conflicts that cannot be resolved by consensus-based processes between interested parties.
- Establish a community calendar and clearing house for all tourism destinations and events.
- Study the feasibility of including overnight cabins at Memorial park, Summit Lake State Park and Westwood Park Reservoir.



Strategy

Improve the County’s position in terms of its collective ability to operate and maintain the County’s public assets and liabilities.



Action Steps

1. Because it is a competitive advantage of Henry County, continue the strategic investment and use of Food & Beverage tax revenues by: a) requiring that applicants demonstrate how their funding request(s) advances one or more strategies of this Comprehensive Plan as a part of the application and evaluation process; and b) pursue legislation that would renew the county’s ability to issue bonds payable from the Food & Beverage tax.
2. Revisit all local transportation or utility-related plans and then undergo both a long-range, multi-modal transportation plan and a capital improvement plan planning process to determine if there are benefits to reducing the total number of paved lane miles in some areas, and ways in which the county can strategically add new lane miles in areas targeted for economic development, or where transportation improvements are warranted.
3. Update the county’s subdivision control ordinance to limit development in unincorporated areas, especially the development of civic, institutional, or public-serving uses (i.e., schools, jails, hospitals, etc.), or rural residences in areas where the primary land use is (or should be) agricultural uses.
4. Develop, adopt, and maintain a five-year parks and recreation master plan for all of Henry County.
5. Establish and adopt a set of evaluation criteria for extending public or private water and sewer giving consideration to: existing and planned development, environmentally sensitive areas, economic development needs and opportunities, the opportunity costs associated with not extending water and sewer utilities, and the long-term fiscal impacts of extending water and sewer utilities.
6. Using the Safe Route to Schools program as a guide, develop and adopt a set of school citing criteria for new or consolidating schools.
7. Establish open space protections in all future planning efforts to adequately buffer the airport from noise compatibility or encroachment issues that are often introduced by neighboring development.
8. Consider whether or not regulations need to be put in place to prohibit certain types of development (e.g., residential) from locating within close proximity to the airport.
9. Explore the potential of creating or gaining access to a program that would allow staff to quickly do a cost-benefit analysis of a proposed development and using the information to make data-driven decisions pertaining to individual development proposals.
10. Map or otherwise determine where the county’s “location-efficient” development areas (i.e. mixed-use areas) are, and update the future land use and transportation map accordingly.

Location-efficient development are residential and commercial development located and designed to maximize accessibility and overall affordability. These areas are often well served by the local transportation network and close to public services. They are often more opportunities for infill development, or redevelopment compared to new development. Both residents and employees in such areas tend to drive less, rely more on walking, and afforded more transportation options than those who live or work in the more remote parts of the community.

Strategy

Plan for the continuation, expansion, and growth of agricultural uses and agriculture-related businesses.



Action Steps

1. Revise local regulations to require the granting of a commission-approved use for residential development in agricultural areas, as illustrated on the future land use and transportation map.
2. Work to define and map prime farmland, updating the future land use and transportation map accordingly.
3. Modify existing zoning district classifications and regulations to reflect a multi-tiered approach to regulating agricultural land to better differentiate between the various types of modern, agricultural land uses that can be accommodated throughout Henry County, and then study the need to initiate commission-sponsored rezonings in response to the new zoning districts that are created.
4. Revise local zoning and subdivision regulations to require all rural residential development to be low-impact development (e.g. cluster development, and limit all future rural residential developments to the rural residential areas illustrated on the future land use and transportation map.
5. Review, and if necessary strengthen, the minimum density regulations for residential dwellings in all agricultural zoning districts, and the corresponding minimum lot size for all agriculturally zoned land in the subdivision control ordinance to protect farms from residential encroachment.
6. Develop specific use regulations or buffering requirements aimed at minimizing the encroachment of non-farm uses in areas designated as agricultural.
7. Raise awareness of common agricultural practices and other realities of rural living.
8. Educate the public about CAFOs and Right-to-Farm laws through the creation and dissemination of an informative brochure that is made available in hard copy and electronically.
9. Allow smaller, hobby farms or value-added agricultural enterprises as permitted uses in agricultural zoning districts and rural residential zoning districts by right, provided the parcel is relatively large (e.g. greater than 5 acres).
10. Allow for the establishment of agritourism businesses, by right, in some zoning districts , provided that the agritourism is consistent with the primary purposes of the respective agricultural district.



Strategy

Improve traffic conditions and enhance mobility within and around the county



Action Steps

1. Develop, adopt and implement a county-wide, long-range multi-modal transportation plan that considers the roadway and interchange improvements illustrated on the future land use and transportation map.
2. Amend all applicable development standard regulations within the county to prohibit curb cuts within so many feet (e.g. 1,000 feet) of an intersection, requiring where necessary frontage roads (for non-residential developments) and stub streets (for residential subdivisions).
3. Limit the number of instances that cul-de-sacs can be used by revising the subdivision control ordinance to include a maximum length (e.g. 500 feet) for all new cul-de-sacs.
4. Review, and if necessary revise, the county's roadway cross-sections to ensure that they accommodate, where appropriate, the following modes: vehicles, tractor trailers, farm equipment, multi-purpose trails, sidewalks in developed areas, and public transit.
5. Develop, adopt, and implement a mobility management plan to identify the family of transportation services that include a wide range of travel options, services, and modes that are matched to the demographics and needs of the residents of Henry County.
6. Create a bicycle and pedestrian connectivity plan in conjunction with (or as a part of the county's long-range transportation plan), with an emphasis on destinations, and complete with a timeline, schedule, and potential funding options by phase.
7. Require new residential development to connect to and expand upon the existing (conventional or modified) grid-street pattern of adjacent development to ensure a more efficient transportation network.
8. Establish a decision-making matrix for all future capital improvement projects that prioritizes needs over wants, infill development over greenfield development, and those things that local government can control over those things that it cannot.
9. Develop, adopt, and implement a ratio for the desired number of intersections per square mile for both non-motorized (e.g., greenways, trails, and sidewalks; on and off-street) and motorized infrastructure in the county's city and village centers.
10. Revise regulations within the local zoning and subdivision control ordinances to require larger front-yard setbacks along the county's minor arterials and major collectors to accommodate frontage roads now or in the future.
11. Develop, adopt, and adhere to a set of minimum connectivity standards, or index, to be applied uniformly across all city and village centers, using the following minimum standards as a starting point:
12. Municipal Streets – characterized by lower speed limits and low carrying capacity. They are often limited in their ability to move traffic longer distances. Local roads are distinguishable from others roads in that their primary purpose is to provide direct access to private properties.
13. County Roads – characterized by faster speeds and their ability to carry vehicular traffic and heavy



agricultural loads longer distances, where the average distance between intersections is one-mile.

14. Collector Roads – characterized by a low to moderate carrying capacity and moderate speeds, as well as their ability to bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance to an arterial roadway. They are distinguishable from other roads in their ability to effectively distribute traffic for shorter distances. Collector roads are particularly important in terms of their ability to move traffic between local streets and arterial roadways. They often provide the best access to county seats, to larger cities and towns not directly served by an arterial roadway, and to other traffic generators such as consolidated schools, shipping points, county parks, etc.

15. Arterial Roads – characterized by their relatively equally spaced intervals so that all land within the community is within a reasonable distance of an arterial roadway, their relatively higher design speeds, and few interferences so as to assist with moving people greater distances. They form the rural road network and are distinguished from other road types in that their primary purpose is to connect cities and larger towns and other major traffic generators such as a large recreational area.

Collector Road Considerations

1. Maximum distance of 1,000 feet between intersections
2. Incorporation of bicycle/pedestrian crossing(s) every 350 feet, using design features, such as curb extensions or pedestrian refuge islands, to reduce the crossing to a maximum distance of 36 feet

Municipal Street Considerations

1. Minimum distance of 300-400 feet between all local streets
2. Maximum distance of 500 feet between intersections
3. Maximum block size of 5-12 acres
4. Maximum cul-de-sac length between 400 and 500 feet



Strategy

Improve the design aesthetic of developed areas and increase efforts to ensure that the condition of privately owned property contributes to the attractiveness of the community.



Action Steps

1. Develop, adopt, and enforce minimum, on-site landscaping standards for residential development.
2. Revise all applicable policies and procedures to tighten regulations pertaining to illegal dumping, abandoned or inoperable vehicles, and outside storage.
3. Designate a series of corridors to be enhanced within the county-wide, Long-Range Transportation Plan.
4. Amend all applicable zoning ordinances to include, among others a “scenic parkway” corridor overlay district and “historic” corridor overlay district, and further regulate development along the county’s primary transportation corridors, paying special attention to enhancing site design (e.g., building orientation and layout), landscaping, signage, parking, and lighting, loading and unloading areas, and the citing and screening of outside storage and refuse areas, among other things.
5. Amend all applicable zoning ordinances to require unified development signs for unified developments.
6. Amend all applicable zoning ordinances to address performance and nuisance standards.
7. Develop and adopt regulations that enhance the site, signage, architectural, and landscape design elements to protect and enhance the character of the county’s city and town centers, and remove any regulations that are known to perpetuate bad design (e.g., large windowless facades).
8. Explore the possibility of creating downtown façade programs for all village centers to help current business owners restore their building facades in accordance with the new design standards.
9. Revise all applicable regulations to expressly permit public art in the form of such things as wall murals, sculptures, and interactive water features throughout the entire county.
10. Incorporate public art in all public improvement projects.



Strategy

Reinvest in existing cities and towns by moderately increasing residential densities and the intensity of non-residential development.



Action Steps

1. Ensure that every city and town allows for a mixture of residential and non-residential uses, multi-modal transportation options, as well as civic and public gathering spaces all at a walkable scale, but especially the City of New Castle, and areas designated as village centers on the future land use and transportation map.
2. Remove minimum off-street parking requirements for all village centers.
3. Conduct a retail market assessment of what is missing in each of the village centers.
4. Identify specific target areas for blight elimination and redevelopment to create and then maintain an inventory of areas with a number of vacant or abandoned properties.
5. Revise most application and permit fee schedules to allow for lower fees that can be applied to projects within areas that include a number of vacant or abandoned properties, or city and town centers.
6. Revise all applicable ordinances to allow for more uses to occur within long-standing vacant buildings, by right.
7. Publish a set of criteria for land use conversions, in sufficient detail to allow property owners or developers to: 1) determine if the criteria favor preservation over conversion, or vice versa; and 2) perform quick and relatively inexpensive self-assessments to determine whether or not a specific property could meet the criteria.
8. Seek funding opportunities for brownfield and blight elimination, and then develop one or

9. more programs in conformance with the funding requirements.
9. Revise all applicable ordinances and building codes to allow for the conversion of former industrial buildings or institutions into single- or multi-family housing, or lodging in more urbanized areas, and commercial uses in less populated areas.
10. Identify non-residential buildings with adaptive re-use potential .
11. Revise all applicable ordinances and buildings codes to expressly permit the siting and construction of the missing middle housing types within city and village centers.
12. Conduct a parking study for all village centers.

A community benefit master plan, or program, is one way of granting development rights to developers in exchange for providing or otherwise funding public benefits. It often requires workforce, environmental, health, transportation, social justice and housing organizations to come together to create the plan. The result is a system that offers a conditional acceptance of growth by affirming that all growth add inherent value to the larger community

13. Create and maintain a strategic plan for areas with a number of vacant or abandoned properties.
14. Explore the feasibility of creating and maintaining dedicated staff for the Redevelopment Commission.
15. Establish density bonuses as an incentive to infill development in mixed-use areas.
16. Prepare and adopt a “community benefit master plan” to be used in conjunction with projects requiring or otherwise requesting public financial incentives or tax abatements.
17. Continue to maintain a publicly available inventory of potential development sites for a wide variety of uses.
18. Perform a fine-grained analysis of industrial land supply.
19. Establish development standards (preferred), or guidelines for all mixed-use areas, beginning with the following:
 20. Limits on how far back buildings can be from the roadway
 21. Requirements for wider (e.g., 6'- 10') sidewalks
 22. Require street trees and take the steps necessary to ensure their survival
 23. Require that everything be scaled to the pedestrian, including but not limited to: buildings, signs, travel lanes, and lighting
 24. Prohibit parking in all front and side yards
 25. Require that all developments incorporate common open spaces into the list of features and amenities that they propose.



WELCOME HOME