



**ALL IN ALLEN**  
Moving Forward Together



*Fort Wayne-Allen County Comprehensive Plan*

# ALL IN ALLEN **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

*Effective March 13, 2023*

## Welcome to All In Allen – a Comprehensive Plan that guides the way to reach our community’s vision for equitable growth and prosperity.

Like its predecessor, Plan-it Allen, this is a Land Use and Development Plan for Allen County, the City of Fort Wayne and the adopting communities of Grabill, Hometown, Monroeville and Woodburn. As such, this plan reflects the ideas and priorities of thousands of local residents and includes a broad set of goals that offer the promise to capitalize on new opportunities while preserving the authentic characteristics of our great communities.

The legacy of working together under a single Comprehensive Plan as a development guide is easy to recognize today; more than a decade after producing our first joint plan. The community has seen historically unprecedented growth throughout the County and within the City of Fort Wayne. Make no mistake, this growth has not been a function of pure luck or national good fortune. The past decade brought on plenty of challenges that could have stymied development and growth. By working together, Allen County and Fort Wayne have been poised to capitalize where opportunity met preparation. As a result, our neighborhoods are stronger, downtowns and town centers are thriving, and we are reenergizing connections to rivers and nature. All evidence indicates that working together toward a shared vision is the BEST way to reach our greatest potential as a community. The All In Allen plan represents a new chapter in the growth and development of our community.

The strength of All In Allen is not limited to the shared vision for our future, rather its value also lies in the broad perspectives it provides to decision-makers from multiple jurisdictions in Allen County. The plan offers a framework for considering the planning goals of our neighbors and coordinating development decisions to the mutual benefit of otherwise competing interests. All In Allen illustrates the full-breadth of development goals across the County and provides a foundation for planning together even when decisions are made independently. The plan encourages us to work toward the interests of one another even when we are independent.

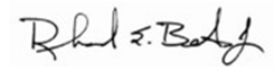
All In Allen began with extensive gathering of data, research on demographic, market and development trends and best practices from other communities along with community input which resulted in the All In Allen Issues and Opportunities Report. Next, during the visioning phase, input was gathered from the community and stakeholders on what the 20-year vision of our community would be for various topic areas. The visioning process led to the creation of goals, strategies, and action steps intended to guide land use decisions, development ambitions, and preservation of deeply valued character and identity. The guidance intended for use by elected and appointed decision-makers addresses both how and where growth should happen into the next decade. Balancing the *how* and *where* in order to meet community needs and market demands is a primary focus of the plan and will require routine review and updates so that the plan can anticipate and respond to changing demographics, market trends and other development dynamics. All In Allen is also a guide that residents and community leaders can use while participating in future dialogue about community services and priorities, public and private investment in development, utility and infrastructure improvements, community amenities and economic incentives intended to encourage growth.

Much like its predecessor, the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan is shaped by and reflects the aspirations of Allen County residents. While the pandemic presented unique challenges for engaging the public, the consulting and staff teams were creative and flexible to be sure that voices were heard so that this plan represents the insights, hopes and dreams of the community. This plan also extends and builds upon the strength of collaboration among staff, plan commission members and political leadership serving Allen County, the City of Fort Wayne and the adopting communities. Planning together is a great way to work together toward mutual interests and common ground.

We are grateful to everyone who has participated throughout this planning process. You showed up to focus groups, stakeholder meetings, technical discussions, and open houses to share your ideas, concerns and hopes for our community. We hope that you see your fingerprints and hear your voices throughout the pages that follow and we encourage you to join us as we pledge to be **ALL IN** for the next decade of equitable growth and prosperity for our community.



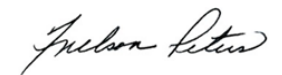
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Initiated in 2020 by Allen County and the City of Fort Wayne, the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan will guide community growth and development for the next 20 years, establishing strategies that will help local leaders make planning decisions. Ensuring All In Allen is representative of the needs and desires of the Community, an extensive planning process was executed to learn the Community's ideas and desires, and build a vision for the future of the Community.

All In Allen will support the vision and goals of Allen County, the City of Fort Wayne, and the adopting communities of Grabill, Hometown, Monroeville, and Woodburn.

***Community Adoption Dates:***

Allen County –December 9, 2022

City of Fort Wayne –December 13, 2022

Town of Hometown –January 3, 2023

Town of Monroeville –January 4, 2023

City of Woodburn –March 6, 2023

Town of Grabill –February 8, 2023

# Acknowledgements

Special thanks for the hard work and dedication of Joint Land Use Governing Board, Allen County Plan Commission, Fort Wayne Plan Commission, Allen County Department of Planning Services, Fort Wayne Division of Community Development Staff, and the citizens of Allen County.

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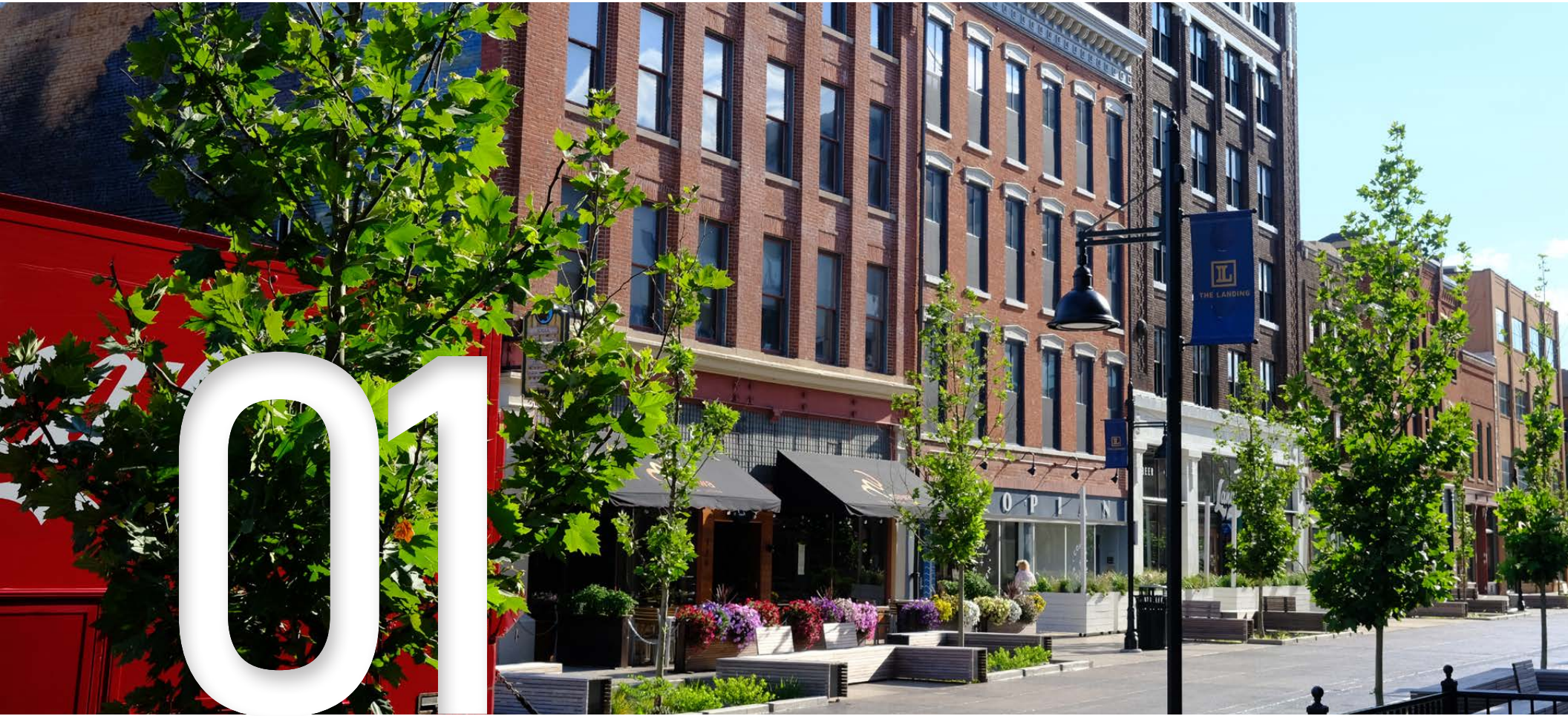


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**Troyer Group** and **Pilcrow Marketing**



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# INTRODUCTION



# Introduction

*All In Allen is the Community’s new Comprehensive Plan that establishes a long-term vision to be implemented over the next 20 years. The Plan is a joint effort by Allen County, the City of Fort Wayne, and the municipalities of Grabill, Hometown, Monroeville, and Woodburn to establish a unified vision for the future of the Community. The Plan acts as a guide, providing clear direction for decision-making regarding planning and development. This includes goals, strategies, and action steps to address a variety of essential topics, critical issues, and opportunities within the County. All In Allen builds upon past planning efforts, existing policies that remain relevant, and Community input from a broad outreach process. It establishes a cohesive vision that is representative of Fort Wayne and Allen County’s residents, businesses, and Community stakeholders, and it will identify the critical steps needed to make that vision come true.*

## What Topics Does All In Allen Address?

*Indiana law requires that county and municipal plan commissions prepare a comprehensive plan to promote public health and improve the safety, morals, convenience, order, or general welfare. Additionally, comprehensive plans should support the efficiency and economy in the process of development. Per IC 36-7-4-502, a comprehensive plan must contain the following elements:*

- *A statement of objectives for the future development of the jurisdiction.*
- *A statement of policy for the land use development of the jurisdiction.*
- *A statement of policy for the development of public ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities.*

## Chapter Organization

Introduction

Project Timeline

Regional Context

Planning Area

The All In Allen Comprehensive Plan outlines existing conditions, describes future goals, strategies, and action steps for development, and includes an action plan on how to achieve these things. The Plan is built around the following core elements:

- **Planning Themes.** The themes identified in the Plan relate to aspects of quality of life. Ultimately the goal of any good plan should be to improve the quality of life within the community. The Plan describes how the various community themes fit with the core elements and are threaded throughout the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan.
- **Land Use and Development.** Future growth and development goals and strategies are described in detail throughout the Land Use chapter. The chapter also includes a Future Growth and Development Map and a Generalized Future Land Use Map.
- **Agriculture and Food systems.** The Plan describes a clear vision for securing a sustainable future for food production and agricultural land in the Community.
- **Housing and Neighborhoods.** A central goal of the Plan is to articulate a vision for high-quality, diverse housing that meets the needs of the Community as it grows.
- **Economic Development.** As the Community evolves, steering its economic future will be key to ensuring it is comprised of a diverse mix of businesses, attractions, and employment options to keep the local economy continue thriving. This chapter explores goals, strategies, and action steps to help the Community fulfill its economic potential.

- **Transportation and Mobility.** The Plan provides specific goals, strategies, and action steps for improving transportation for all modes in the Community.
- **Public Facilities and Infrastructure.** This core element includes capital improvements and infrastructure.
- **Community Services and Education.** This chapter explores goals, strategies, and action steps to help the Community support an educated and successful base of residents.
- **Parks and Environment.** The Community's natural resources, resiliency, parks, and open space are part of its identity and are addressed in this chapter.
- **Implementation.** This chapter summarizes the policies and actions included in the Comprehensive Plan's strategies, outlining the specific steps needed to achieve All in Allen's long-term vision.



# Project Timeline

The All In Allen Comprehensive Plan was completed in the Fall of 2022 after a 30-month, seven-step planning process.

## Outreach During the COVID-19 Pandemic

It is important to note that the first phase of the process, including most of the in-person engagement program, was heavily altered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The project team was able to pivot and effectively engage residents and stakeholders by fully leveraging online and social media platforms in addition to providing virtual meetings, workshops, and tools aimed at allowing people to actively participate

in the planning process from home. Throughout this phase of the project, the public was able to see presentations, ask questions, provide input, and remain actively and effectively engaged. The result for the project is that although the timeline for completion shifted, the high level of quality community input received is valid to the planning process.



# Regional Context

As the second largest city in Indiana, Fort Wayne has anchored Allen County for over 200 years. The growth of the region was fueled by its strategic location at the intersection of three rivers, a stop and the highest elevation along the Wabash and Erie Canal, and key railroads. Manufacturing and industrial development have left a distinct mark on the City's landscape, but today, Allen County features several driving industries: manufacturing, health care, retail trade, and finance/insurance.

Fort Wayne and Allen County are uniquely positioned with extensive access to the surrounding region. Interstate 69 and state highways provide direct connections to numerous major Midwestern cities. The Fort Wayne International Airport also serves as a hub for both domestic and international travel with a selection of direct services.

Fort Wayne and Allen County have growing reputations as exciting places that offer the amenities and attractions of a big city in an affordable and welcoming community. This includes an eclectic mix of destinations and attractions like Downtown Fort Wayne, the recently opened Promenade Park, Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, Parkview Field, and Memorial Coliseum. These are complemented by institutions for higher education like Indiana University Fort Wayne and Purdue University Fort Wayne, as well as an extensive healthcare network of hospitals and facilities, including Parkview Regional Medical Center.



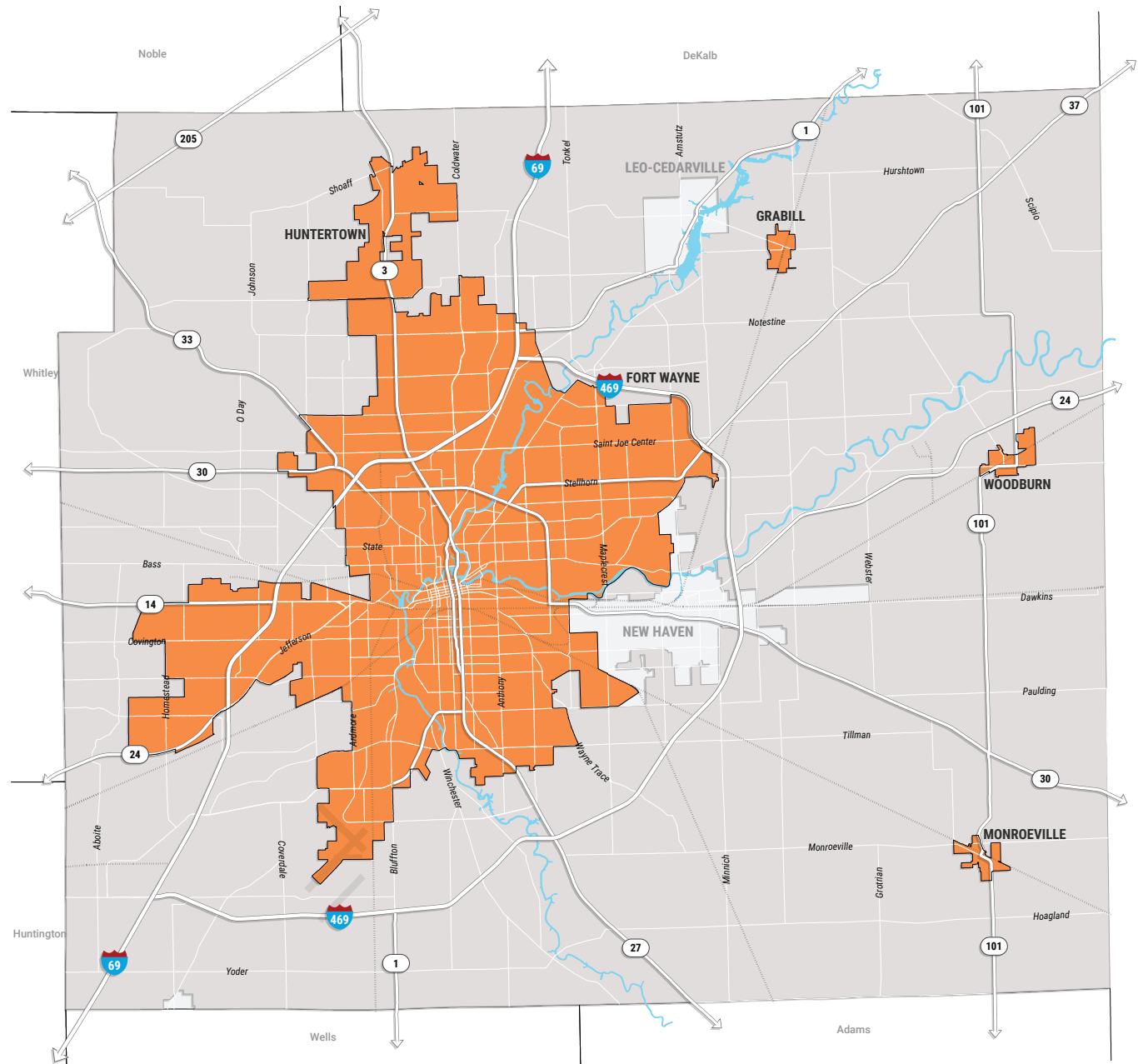
# Planning Area

Indiana State law authorizes County governments to exercise planning and zoning jurisdiction for unincorporated areas. Municipalities are authorized to exercise planning and zoning jurisdiction (IC 36-7-4-205) for areas within their corporate boundary. The All In Allen Comprehensive Plan is a joint planning initiative that addresses the majority of Allen County collectively and should continue to guide coordinated growth within the Community.

The Department of Planning Services provides planning services for the Towns of Grabill, Huntertown, Monroeville, and the City of Woodburn. Fort Wayne and Allen County have had updated and aligned zoning and subdivision control ordinances since 2014. Huntertown adopted a similar ordinance in 2017, followed by Woodburn in 2018, and Grabill and Monroeville in 2021. Zoning is discussed further in [Chapter 4: Land Use and Development](#).

## Adopting Communities

As mentioned above, the Department of Planning currently provides Planning Services to the municipalities of Fort Wayne, Grabill, Huntertown, Monroeville, and Woodburn. The All In Allen Comprehensive Plan will provide guidance to Community decision makers for these adopting communities. The remaining municipalities of Leo-Cedarville and New Haven currently have their own respective Comprehensive Plans.





02

# COMMUNITY PROFILE



## Community Profile

To determine how Allen County, Fort Wayne, and the municipalities of Grabill, Hometown, Monroeville, and Woodburn should grow over the next 20 years, and what issues should be addressed, a clear understanding of where the Community is today first had to be established. This understanding of existing issues and opportunities, paired with community input, established a foundation for the Community's vision for the future. The Community Profile includes three sections summarizing Community Outreach, a Demographic Overview, and a Housing Assessment. These were presented in-depth in the Issues and Opportunities Report, an interim deliverable completed in November 2020 which covered the first phases of the planning process.

## Community Outreach

All In Allen is the product of an extensive public outreach and engagement process that supported a community-led approach to the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The All In Allen outreach process yielded a considerable amount of participation with more than 3,300 points of interaction with the Community. This exceptional level of participation showcased the Community's commitment and active involvement. Public engagement was conducted through a wide range of methods, both online and in-person in facilitated and self-guided formats.

Community feedback and input were vital for developing All In Allen. The engagement process gave community members a chance to be heard and take part in determining the Community's future. The process gathered input from a wide range of community members, including residents, business owners and operators, developers and property owners, and service providers. The solicited input identified key issues, opportunities, and assets of the Community and laid the foundation for the Comprehensive Plan's vision, goals, and strategies.

## Outreach During the Pandemic

The All In Allen outreach program shifted with the COVID-19 pandemic, but participation was still exemplary. Virtual meetings, workshops, and online engagement tools were deployed to allow people to actively participate in the planning process from home. The project team worked closely to ensure the Community was able to view presentations, ask questions, provide input, and remain actively and effectively engaged.

### Chapter Organization

Community Profile

Outreach Program Overview

Self-Guided Outreach

Demographic Overview

Housing Assessment

# Outreach Program Overview

The initial phase of the All In Allen outreach program yielded a significant amount of information regarding the issues and opportunities facing the Community. The outreach program included events, workshops, advisory committee meetings, technical committee meetings, and focus groups, as well as interviews in-person, via telephone, and online. Further, it included a slate of self-guided outreach materials, allowing people to participate at their own pace.

In addition to reaching a broad sample of the Allen County community, the project team had direct contact with over 140 organizations, both public and private, as part of a key person interview or a focus group workshop.



**899**

*In-Person Participants*



**627**

*Short Survey Postcards*



**38**

*Workshops Conducted*



**30**

*Key Person Interviews*



**1,603**

*Online Survey Participants*



**220**

*Kick-off Event Participants*



**55**

*Public Facilities Survey Participants*



**164**

*Online Business Surveys Taken*



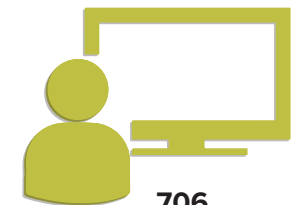
**120**

*Visioning Open House*



**325**

*map.social Features Created*



**706**

*Facilitated Engagement Participants*

The All in Allen outreach process yielded a considerable amount of participation with **more than 3,300** points of interaction with the Community

## Facilitated Engagement

Facilitated outreach events were critical in understanding community issues, identify projects or actions the Community is currently interested in or concerned about. These events also helped to determine what community assets and strengths should be preserved as the Comprehensive Plan addressed change. In total, 38 in-person and virtual workshops and events were conducted, engaging nearly 706 participants in facilitated outreach.

## Community Kick-off Event

The Community Kick-off Event was the first public outreach event of the All In Allen process. The event took place at the Grand Wayne Convention Center on the evening of February 19, 2020. With over 220 community members in attendance, the event introduced the Community to the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan project, offered an opportunity for the audience to interact with a panel discussion via live polling, and outlined opportunities for public engagement in the planning process moving forward.

## All In Allen Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Meetings (CPAC)

The City of Fort Wayne and Allen County conducted a workshop with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) on Tuesday, January 14, 2020. The CPAC was comprised of 22 stakeholders selected for their knowledge and unique perspective within the region, including public officials, business owners, developers, students, and residents. The workshop included a review of the planning process as well as an exercise designed to gather input regarding issues, opportunities, potential projects, and key strengths and assets for Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the adopting communities of Grabill, Hometown, Monroeville, and Woodburn. The CPAC met again on April 23, 2020, and continued to engage throughout the planning process to guide the goals, strategies, and action steps of the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan.





## Key Person Interviews and Focus Groups

Key person interviews and small group discussions allowed the All In Allen team to gain first-hand insight regarding local issues. Interviewees included a wide variety of stakeholders such as property owners, new and lifelong residents, local builders and developers, higher education representatives, local business owners and operators, area not-for-profit organizations and service providers, and representatives from other governmental, institutional, and civic groups.

## All In Allen Facebook Live

On Monday, June 15, 2020, Allen County and the City of Fort Wayne co-hosted a live virtual community workshop about the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan and the Community planning process. Participants were able to view the workshop and interact with the presenters and panelists in real-time via the City's and County's Facebook pages. The panel discussion offered information about why a comprehensive plan is important to a community, what topics the plan will cover, and how area residents could share their ideas for creating a better future for Allen County.

## Business Workshop

On August 11, 2020, Allen County and the City of Fort Wayne virtually co-hosted a Business Workshop via Zoom with Greater Fort Wayne, Inc (GFW) to gather feedback and discuss area businesses' top issues and concerns—topics like business climate and the local labor pool.

## Staff-led Local Workshops

As a central part of the All In Allen team's outreach efforts, staff-led local workshops were conducted both in-person and virtually. The workshops helped achieve broad community participation and input.

## In-person Focus Groups and Small Workshops

In-person and virtual focus groups and small workshops were held throughout the process. These generally convened around a specific topic or with a group that shared a common interest. These meetings included the following:

- Tourism and Culture
- Regional Think Tank
- Local Outreach Team Training
- Cities and Towns Focus Group
- Economic Development
- Elected Officials Roundtable
- Primary Education
- Secondary Education
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Public Safety



## Visioning Focus Groups

To achieve more substantive and quality input, a series of focus groups were organized on the 7 chapters and 3 themes; 10 groups were created with approximately 7-10 people per group. The groups' primary goal was to brainstorm and build consensus on potential goals and strategies for All In Allen. After the initial Vision, Goals and Strategies were refined by staff, the concepts were presented back to the groups, allowing them to refine the content and build a final consensus vision. Each group met two to three times, engaging more than 100 people.

## Open-House Presentation: Chapter Visions and Themes

After the Focus Groups and Community staff reached consensus on the Vision, Goals and Strategies, the draft content was presented to the public at the Grand Wayne Center. To solicit higher quality public feedback, a dynamic new approach to community engagement was deployed: the vision, goals and strategies prepared by each focus group were separately presented at 10 different tables to allow for more nuanced and detailed conversations. The Community showed its dedication to the plan, with 120 people providing input at one large community event.

## Land Use Meetings

Because land use is such a critical element of All In Allen, focus groups and specialized meetings were organized specifically to discuss this important topic.

### *Land Use Focus Group*

Land use focus groups were convened to brainstorm ideas on how land in Allen County should be used in the future and get feedback on the preliminary land use maps and growth strategies prepared by staff. The groups were comprised of Community stakeholders including City and County staff, as well as developers, and members of the business community.

### *Land Use Presentations to City Council and County Commissioners*

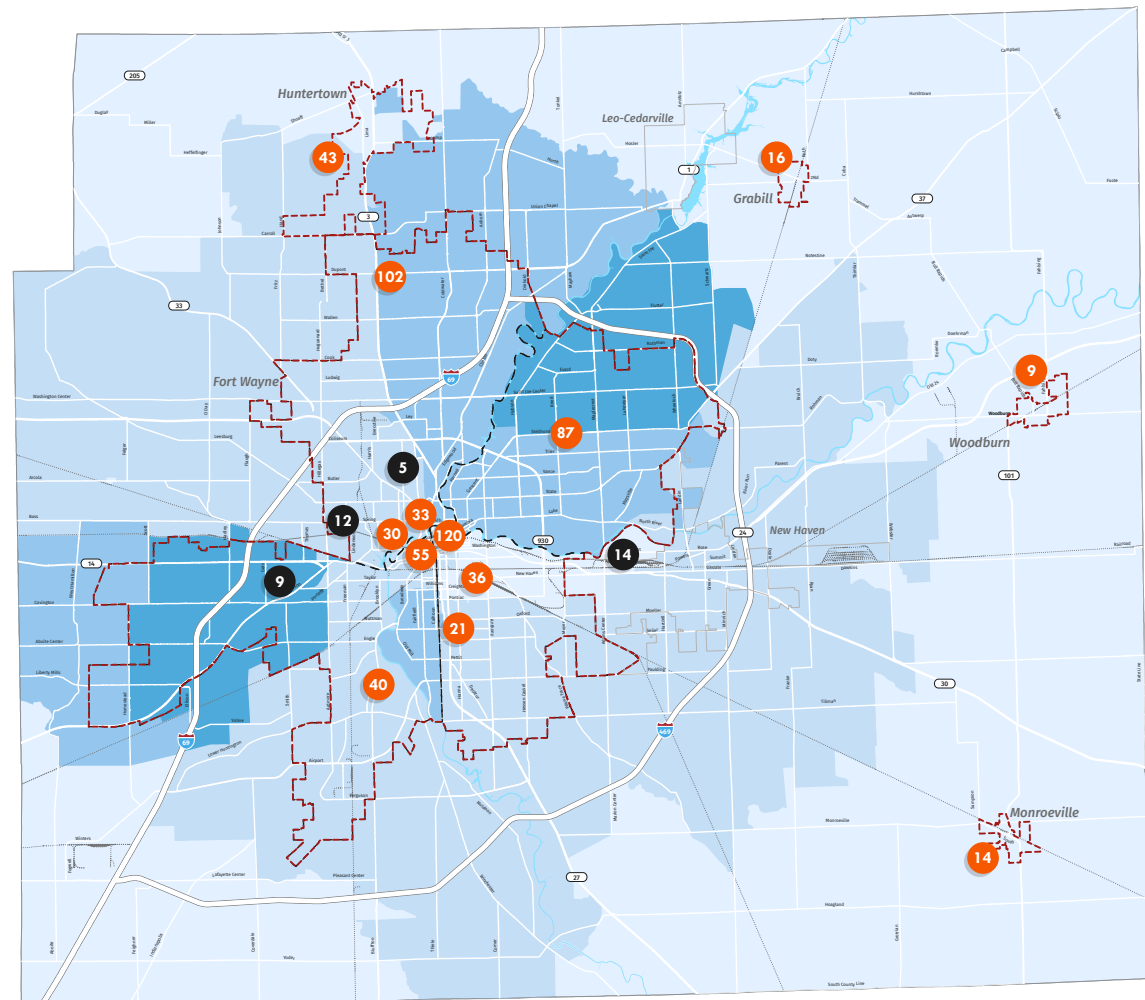
After the focus groups achieved greater consensus on the vision for Allen County, the consultant team provided updates to the Fort Wayne City Council and the County Commissioners. The meetings allowed for a comprehensive conversation on the issue and charted a clear course for the next steps in the process.

## Self-Guided Outreach

Self-guided outreach allowed community stakeholders to participate by filling out a postcard or online survey or by mapping issues, opportunities, and assets using map social, an online mapping tool.

## Community Survey

An online survey was provided on the All In Allen project website that enabled stakeholders throughout the County to participate in the outreach process remotely. The survey was offered in both Spanish and English. Approximately 1600 respondents provided feedback on housing, transportation, land use, and more.



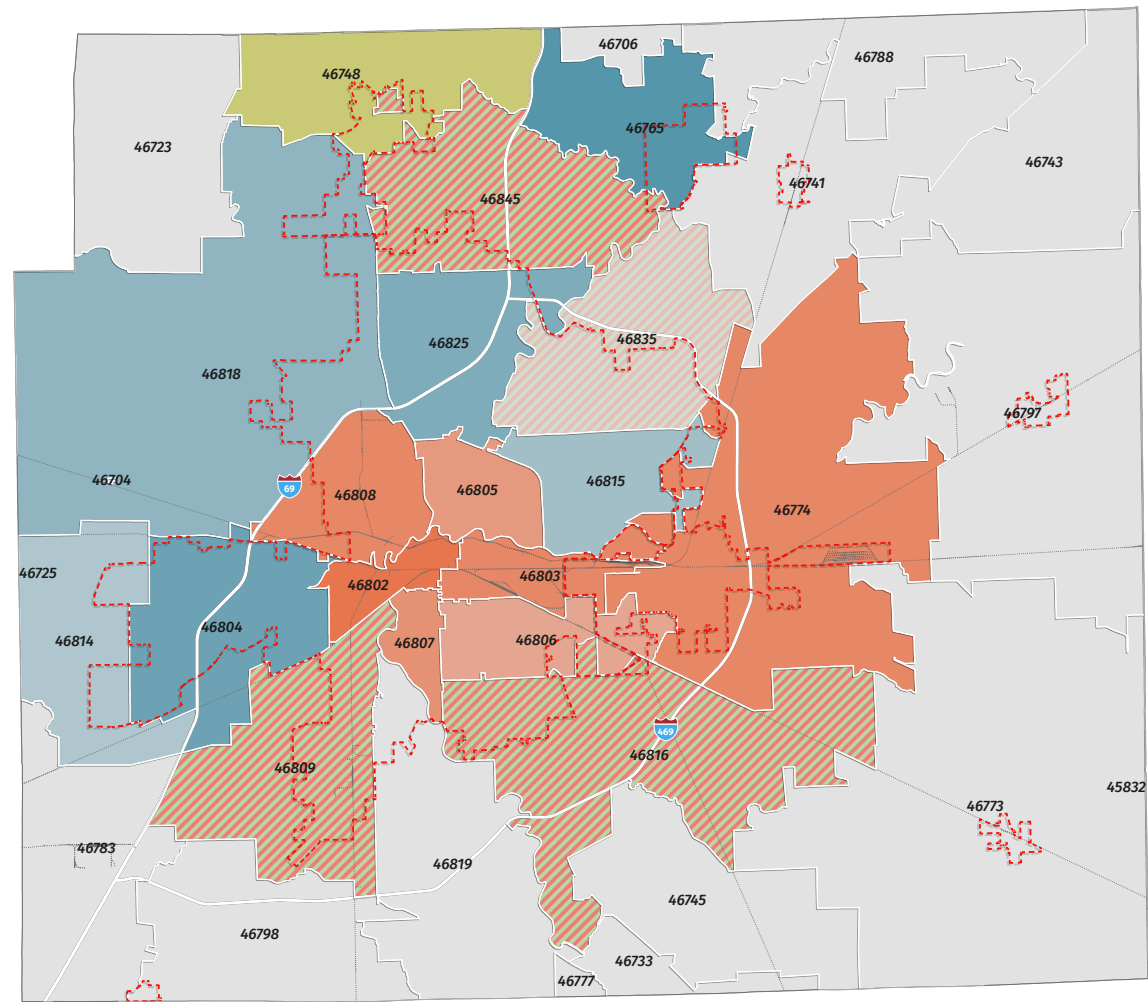
### Community survey participants by Zip Code

- 11 - 20 Respondents
- 21 - 50 Respondents
- 51 - 100 Respondents
- Over 100 Respondents

- Fort Wayne Quadrants
- Number of Short Surveys from Popup Events
- Number of In-Person attendance for Staff-led Local Workshops

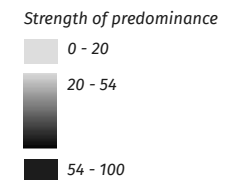
## Short Survey Postcards and Pop-up Events

To cast a wide net of engagement and to inform residents about the planning process, the project team attended “pop-up” events throughout the County and set up a table to talk to residents. A short survey postcard was created to engage community members quickly about key information points. Over 620 participants answered questions about the area’s most important issues, the current quality of life, and community assets.



### Predominant "Most Important Issue" by Zip Codes

- Zip Codes with less than 10 submissions
- Attracting and maintaining a skilled workforce
- Encouraging reinvestment in under-served areas of the community
- Providing all residents access to the same opportunities
- Attracting skilled workforce and providing residents equal access to same opportunities

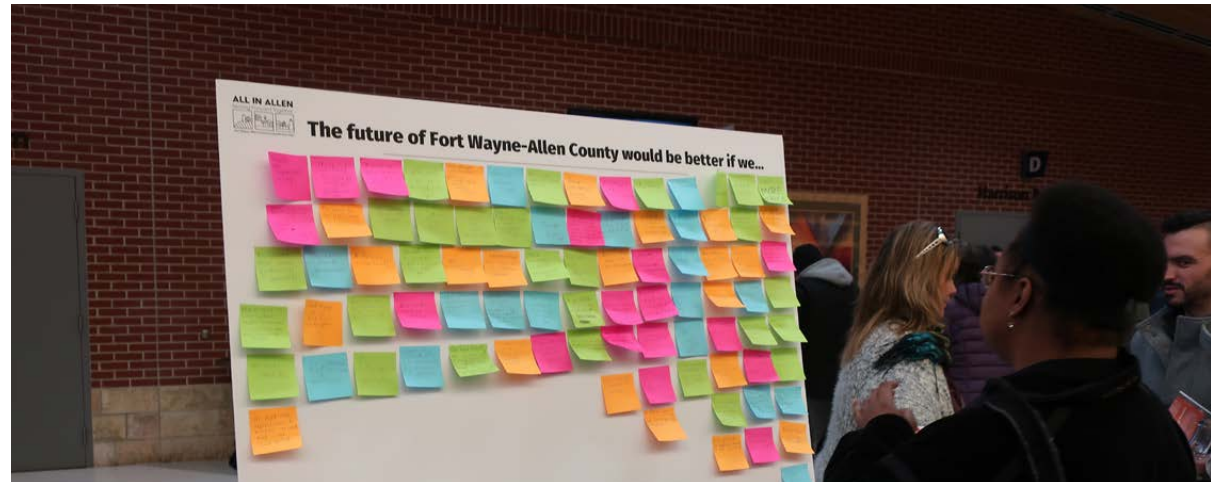


## Community Outreach Themes

Throughout the outreach process, the Community identified their top priorities and concerns. These issues represented areas of focus for the Plan as well as for future initiatives across the County. The themes helped inform the vision, goals, and strategies found throughout sections of the Plan.

Community outreach themes identified include the following:

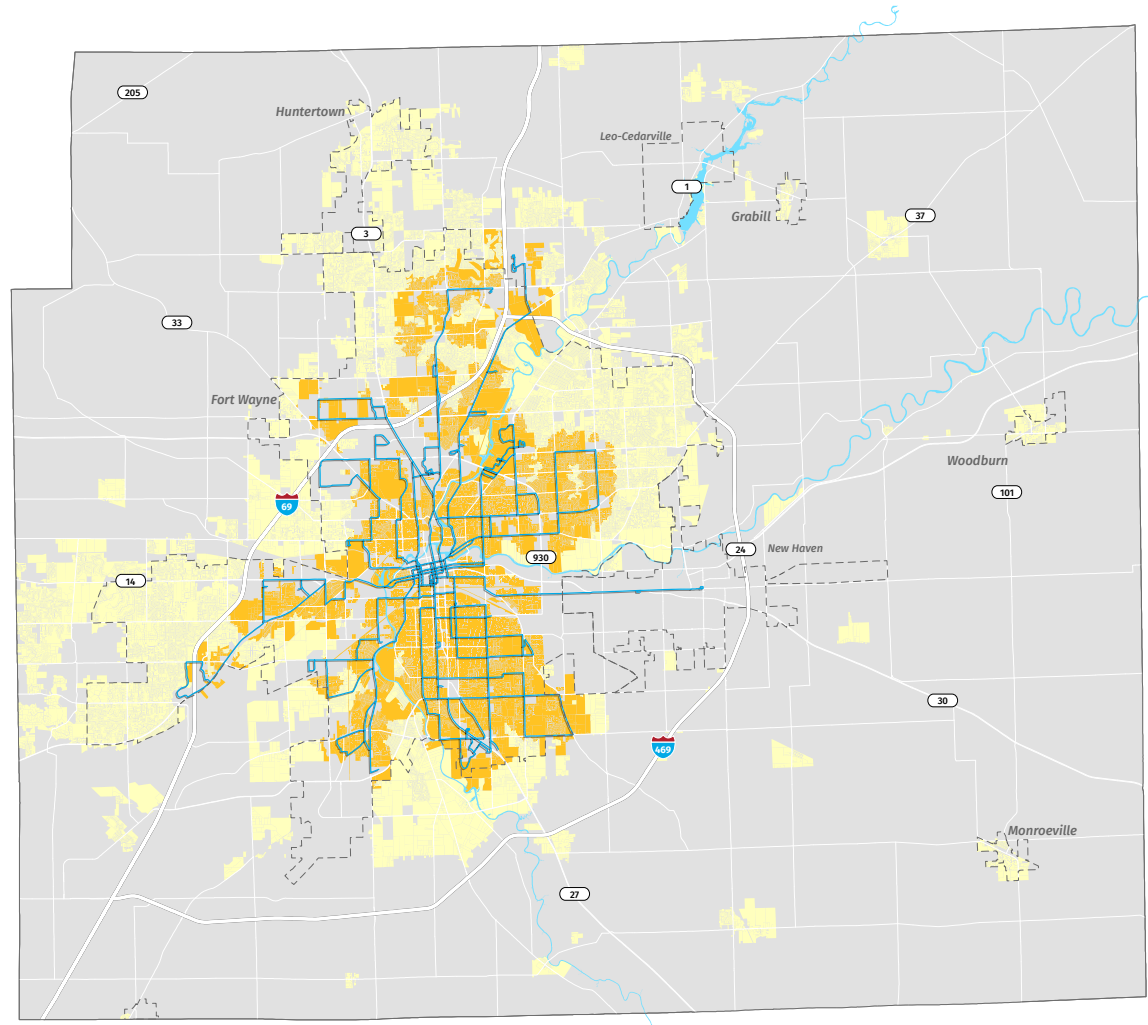
- Access to Public Transportation
- Agriculture Facing Growth Pressure
- Bike and Pedestrian Connectivity
- Capitalize on Location and Existing Amenities
- Downtown Fort Wayne
- Equity and Community Health
- Food Systems and Food Access
- Housing Diversity
- Infrastructure and Service Improvements
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Managing Growth
- Population Diversity
- Preserving/Fostering Community Identity
- Southeast Fort Wayne
- The Three Rivers
- Workforce Attraction and Retention



## Access to Public Transportation

The lack of convenient public transportation options was identified as the most important transportation issue in Allen County. This included both concerns with the limitations to Citilink services in Fort Wayne as well as the complete lack of public transit options in outlying communities and parts of the County.

Participants expressed how the convenience of getting around by car makes public transit options unappealing to most residents. This in turn limits the resources, funding, and support necessary to improve the convenience of these transit services for those individuals as well as other residents for whom driving may not be an option. This is an almost self-perpetuating challenge that reduces the effectiveness of public transportation options in Allen County.



### Residential zoned properties - Access to public transit

- Served by public transit within a 10-minute walk
- Not served by public transit within a 10-minute walk
- Citilink Bus Routes

### ***Agriculture Facing Growth Pressure***

Agricultural preservation was identified as an important element of Allen County that should be carefully considered by the Comprehensive Plan. The outward growth of Fort Wayne and communities like New Haven and Huntertown places pressure on agricultural lands in unincorporated Allen County. Growth pressure is a key challenge for agriculture that participants indicated should be addressed through growth management strategies. In addition to agricultural land, other areas of open space and the environment are experiencing growth pressure.

### ***Bike and Pedestrian Connectivity***

Participants highlighted the importance of bike and pedestrian connectivity in Fort Wayne and Allen County to provide both driving alternatives and increased mobility for residents who do not have regular access to a car. Comments were generally positive and indicated that Fort Wayne is making good progress to add new trails within the community. However, participants discussed that these improvements were largely focused upon the recreational aspects of trails and paths, not on their importance as part of the transportation network. Overall, residents hoped to see a more robust approach to the bike and pedestrian network that provides convenient non-motorized access and mobility.

### ***Capitalize on Location and Existing Amenities***

The regional position of Fort Wayne and Allen County was frequently highlighted as one of the great advantages of living in the area. Stakeholders described Fort Wayne as being at the “Center of the Midwest,” offering easy access to numerous larger cities and destinations. This includes moderate drive times to Indianapolis, Chicago, Grand Rapids, Detroit, Toledo, and Columbus as well as destinations like the Indiana Dunes and the Great Lakes. Participants also indicated that north-eastern Indiana is a great place to be, with ample room to grow and convenient access to the surrounding rural landscape. Many comments indicated a desire to see Fort Wayne and Allen County capitalize on their regional position as an affordable alternative to larger cities that still provides access to major regional destinations.



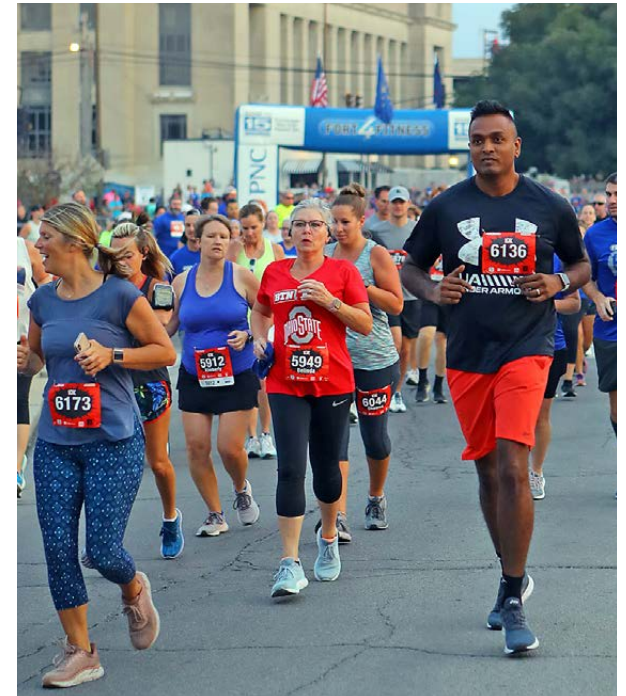
## ***Downtown Fort Wayne***

A key contributor to Allen County's 'Big City' amenities is downtown Fort Wayne, which was consistently identified as an important asset and focal point for the region. Downtown Fort Wayne offers a variety of performance venues, restaurants, stores, live sports, and other amenities that contribute to entertainment, culture, and nightlife in Allen County. Participants discussed downtown as a strength that should be capitalized and further improved upon as Allen County continues to grow.

## ***Equity and Community Health***

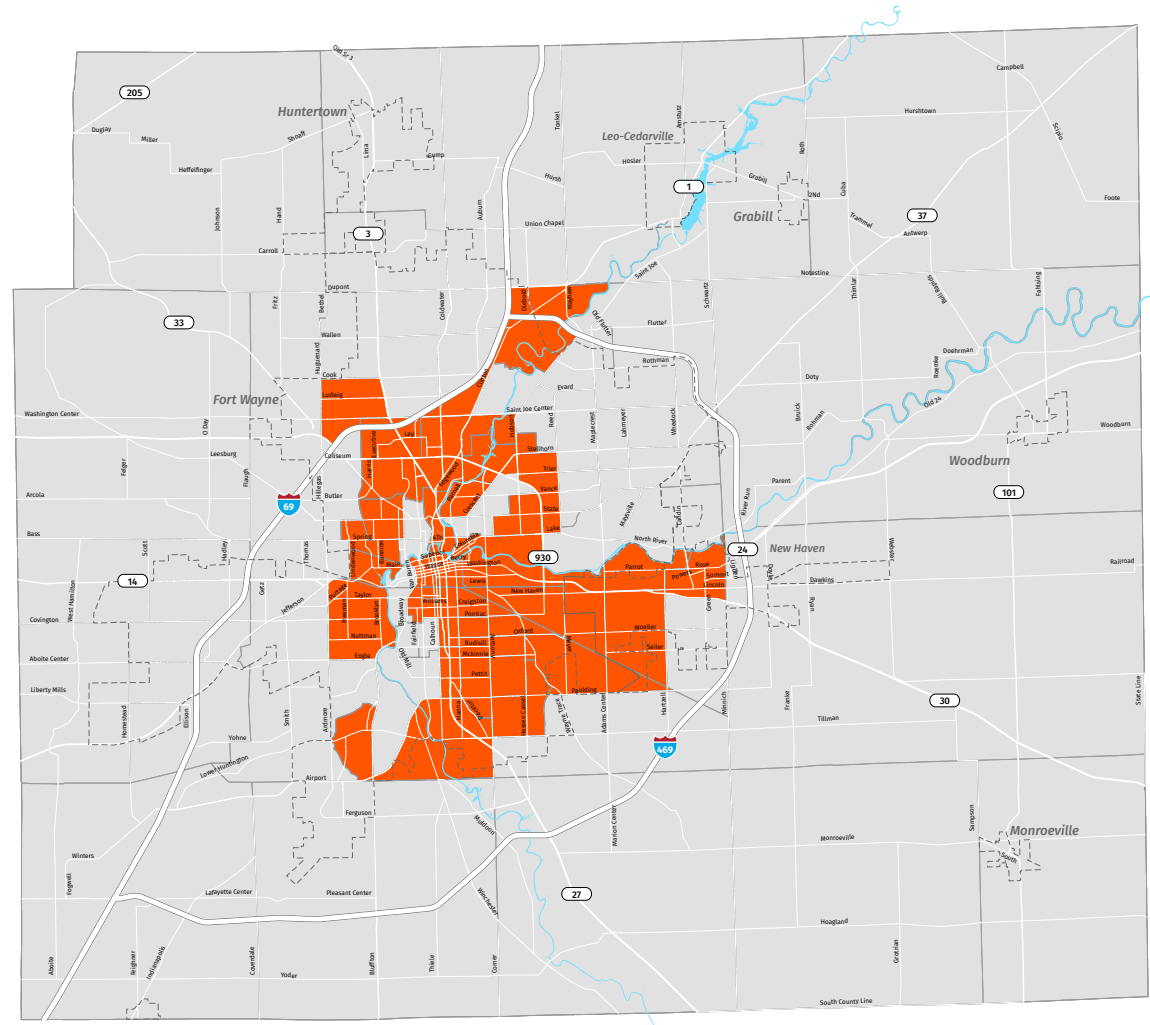
Equity and community health are achieved when each person in a community can attain their full potential without being disadvantaged by social position or external circumstances. The topic of equity was frequently raised in outreach. Participants turned the lens on the least advantaged citizens in Allen County, highlighting the need to address a range of equity issues affecting the Community, including education disparity, broadband access, access to childcare facilities, food access, language barriers, access to after school education, needed upgrades to urban parks, and support for poverty and homelessness.

In several workshops, discussion often linked equity with community health and access to health services. Health outcomes identified as issues in outreach included infant mortality rates, opioid addiction, chronic diseases, and obesity. Poor access to mental health services and insurance coverage and the limitations of the healthcare system were also mentioned in a variety of outreach groups.




## Food Systems and Food Access

The map depicts the low-income, low access tracts. These are the areas of the Community where the data indicates food insecurity is the greatest. Limited access to healthy food options and barriers to food access were identified as important community issues that affect specific areas but have a broader impact on the County. Participants cited lack of income to purchase healthier items at existing stores, limited access to reliable transportation or limited options to get to a grocery store, and a lack of grocery stores within walking distance as contributing factors that limit food access in the Community. The related issue of food insecurity was also raised as a challenge for the area. Participants framed this issue within the context of Allen County's agricultural heritage, noting that in an area that still focuses on food production, limited food access should be a solvable issue.



### Food Access

 Low-Income, Low-Access Census Tracts



### ***Housing Diversity***

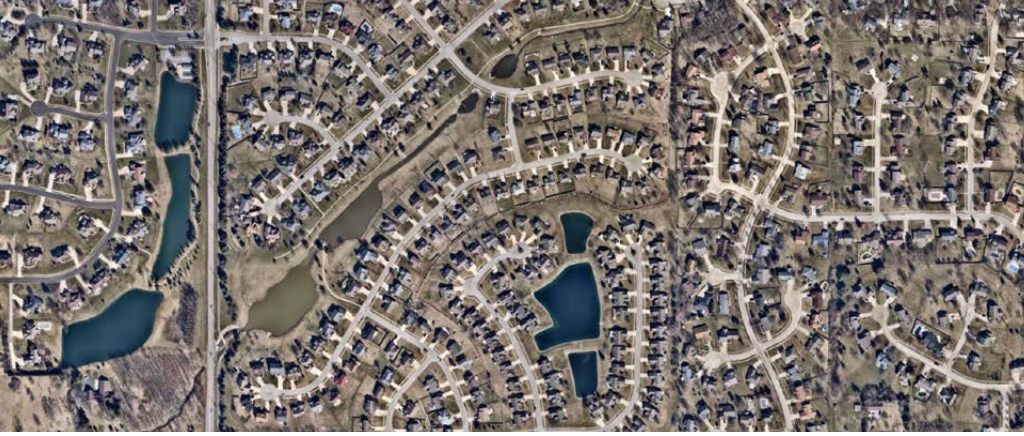
Often closely related to discussions of growth management, participants emphasized the need to ensure housing can meet the demands of Allen County and Fort Wayne as they continue to grow. Emphasis was placed on providing diverse housing options that appeal to existing residents as well as to attract new residents to the County. The need for affordable housing options plus workforce housing was regularly discussed. Some participants further specified that new, high-quality affordable housing should be a priority, noting that the County does have affordable options—rather than existing options are often older and poorly maintained. In general, the age and maintenance of Fort Wayne’s housing stock were identified as concerns. Participants noted that affordable housing is critical, especially in a climate where homes sell within hours of being placed on the market.

### ***Infrastructure and Service Improvements***

Community facilities, infrastructure, and services were widely discussed topics as ones that impact residents throughout the County in different ways. For the City of Fort Wayne, participants discussed aging infrastructure and the need for long-term maintenance. Comments indicated a concern that infrastructure projects to support outward growth would be prioritized over necessary improvements to existing areas of the Community and may impact the quality of service over time. For more rural areas, participants discussed the lack of infrastructure and challenges related to inconsistent services. In particular, the need for better internet services in rural areas of the county was highlighted as a key issue, as well as ensuring the quality of fire protection services.

### ***Intergovernmental Cooperation***

Understanding the role of the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan as a Community document, participants often noted the importance of intergovernmental cooperation. Generally, outreach participants indicated that the municipalities, government groups, and organizations of the County work well together. At the same time, participants emphasized that maintaining cooperation would be essential to implementing the Comprehensive Plan and creating lasting change in the County. Some issues and inconsistencies were discussed where greater cooperation would help eliminate challenges, often related to the relationship between organizations operating inside the City of Fort Wayne and those in the surrounding municipalities and county. Conversely, a need for increased collaboration between Hometown, Fort Wayne, and Allen County was identified as a top issue in the Hometown workshop. One participant noted the importance of a joint effort between the entities in improving roads, bridges, and traffic issues in the area. The need to ensure resources and investment are equitably distributed across Allen County was also discussed.



### ***Managing Growth***

When discussing challenges for Allen County and Fort Wayne, growth and development was regularly listed as a primary concern but qualified as “a good problem to have.” Participants were positive about the potential of ongoing growth but emphasized that the area is experiencing rapid change that could have a lasting impact on the County and its municipalities. Comments stressed the need to carefully manage growth and fully understand how it will impact the County in the future. This included discussion of suburban sprawl, preserving desirable uses and spaces, and protecting the character of Allen County. In general, participants were optimistic that growth management will bring about positive and exciting change for Fort Wayne and Allen County.

### ***Population Diversity***

The diversity of Allen County’s population was regularly cited as both a strength and an important factor to be considered as part of the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan. Participants touched on demographic trends that are both contributing to greater diversity as well as shifting the needs and challenges faced by groups that have been in the Community for decades. Fort Wayne has a growing Burmese population which some have estimated to be the largest such community in the United States. Comments emphasized the importance of embracing diversity to ensure that long-term planning is reflective of the needs and aspirations of Burmese residents and other minority groups. Comments emphasized the value that the Amish community brings to Allen County and the importance of better addressing their needs, as well.

### ***Preserving and Fostering Community Identity***

Building community identity and maintaining a small-town feel were regularly highlighted in outreach. Groups discussed character and identity for Fort Wayne neighborhoods as well as for smaller municipalities and communities in the County, including the adopting communities of Grabill, Hometown, Monroeville, and Woodburn. Many noted that Allen County’s communities have unique identities that exist outside of their relationship to Fort Wayne or the County as a whole. Participants articulated that the Plan would need to consider hyper-local assets and community identity components, way of life characteristics, and personality that make Allen County’s small towns and unique places special.



### ***Southeast Fort Wayne***

In outreach, comments highlighted concern for the lack of development in Southeast Fort Wayne, particularly as other parts of Fort Wayne and the County are seeing growth. Other concerns include poorly maintained infrastructure, increased vacancy in neighborhoods, and the lack of grocery stores and food options creating a food desert. Residents agreed that equity in planning for southeast Fort Wayne needs to be a priority. There was a general sentiment that because past efforts to address issues in south and southeast Fort Wayne had not been successful, things were unlikely to change.

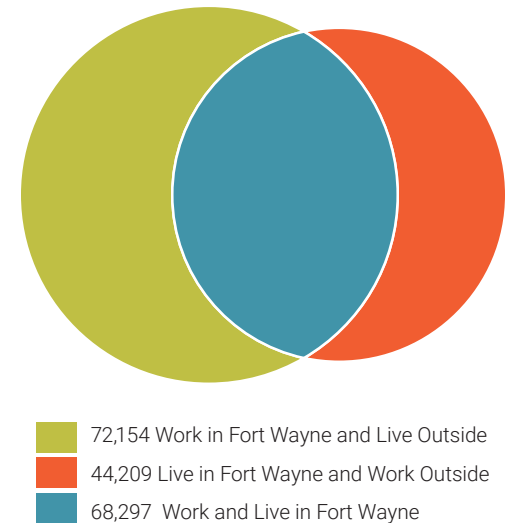
### ***The Three Rivers***

The Three Rivers—St. Marys, St. Joseph, and Maumee—are a defining feature of Allen County and were regularly identified as one of the County’s most important assets. Better riverfront activation was a central focus of the previous 2007 Comprehensive Plan (Plan-It Allen), and residents were proud of the work that has been done already. In addition to improving the activation of the three rivers, participants emphasized the importance of maintaining the health of the rivers as important water sources for Allen County.

### ***Workforce Attraction and Retention***

Participants emphasized the importance of ensuring Fort Wayne’s workforce can meet the needs of existing and future employers and businesses. This included discussion of efforts to attract and retain a highly-skilled workforce and reduce the effects of ‘brain drain’ when students decide to relocate elsewhere after having completed higher education. Participants discussed various programs and ideas to provide workforce education, train individuals for specific industries in the County, partner higher education facilities with employers and businesses, and provide pathways for students to obtain work and remain in the Community after graduation. Some individuals also highlighted the importance of skilled trade jobs in Allen County and the need to educate students about local alternatives to higher education, such as apprenticeships.

**Employment Inflow/Outflow Jobs, 2017**



Source: OnTheMap: Census, Houseal Lavigne Associates



## Demographic Overview

This section also identifies the present demographic conditions in the City of Fort Wayne and Allen County in relation to the statistical composition of the population and economic indicators. It provides valuable insight into the City and County through summaries of technical information related to demographic trends, employment, and housing.

Fort Wayne-Allen County is also a part of Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership. The regional partnership seeks to improve business investment with various support programs and councils for existing and potential businesses within the region. For purposes of analysis, Fort Wayne and Allen County are compared to the Northeast Indiana Region and the State of the Indiana overall.

## A Growing Area

Both Fort Wayne and Allen County have experienced steady growth in population and households over the last three decades. Largely through new residential development, population began to grow significantly in the 1990's and early 2000's. The Northeast region has generally mirrored this growth. Allen County has grown consistently in recent years with annual growth rates of between 0.5% and 1.1% since 2010. The 2019 growth rate of 1.1% was greater than that of the State (0.5%).

In 2018 and 2019, Allen County grew by 3,356 and 4,220 persons, respectively, and much of that growth was due to positive domestic migration (nearly 2,200 new residents in those two years). This positive domestic migration trend demonstrates that Fort Wayne and Allen County are emerging as a destination for new residents and is no longer relying on local growth.

**Allen County Net Domestic Migration, 2012-2019**

Year	Net Domestic Migration Growth/Loss
2012	-1,082
2013	-245
2014	-798
2015	-160
2016	-597
2017	80
2018	685
2019	1,492

**Fort Wayne Population and Land Area, 2000-2018**

	Fort Wayne		Population Density	
	Population	Land Area (sq. mi.)	per sq.mi.	per acre
2000	205,727	79	2,604.14	4.07
2010	253,691	111	2,285.50	3.57
2018	270,402	111	2,436.05	3.81

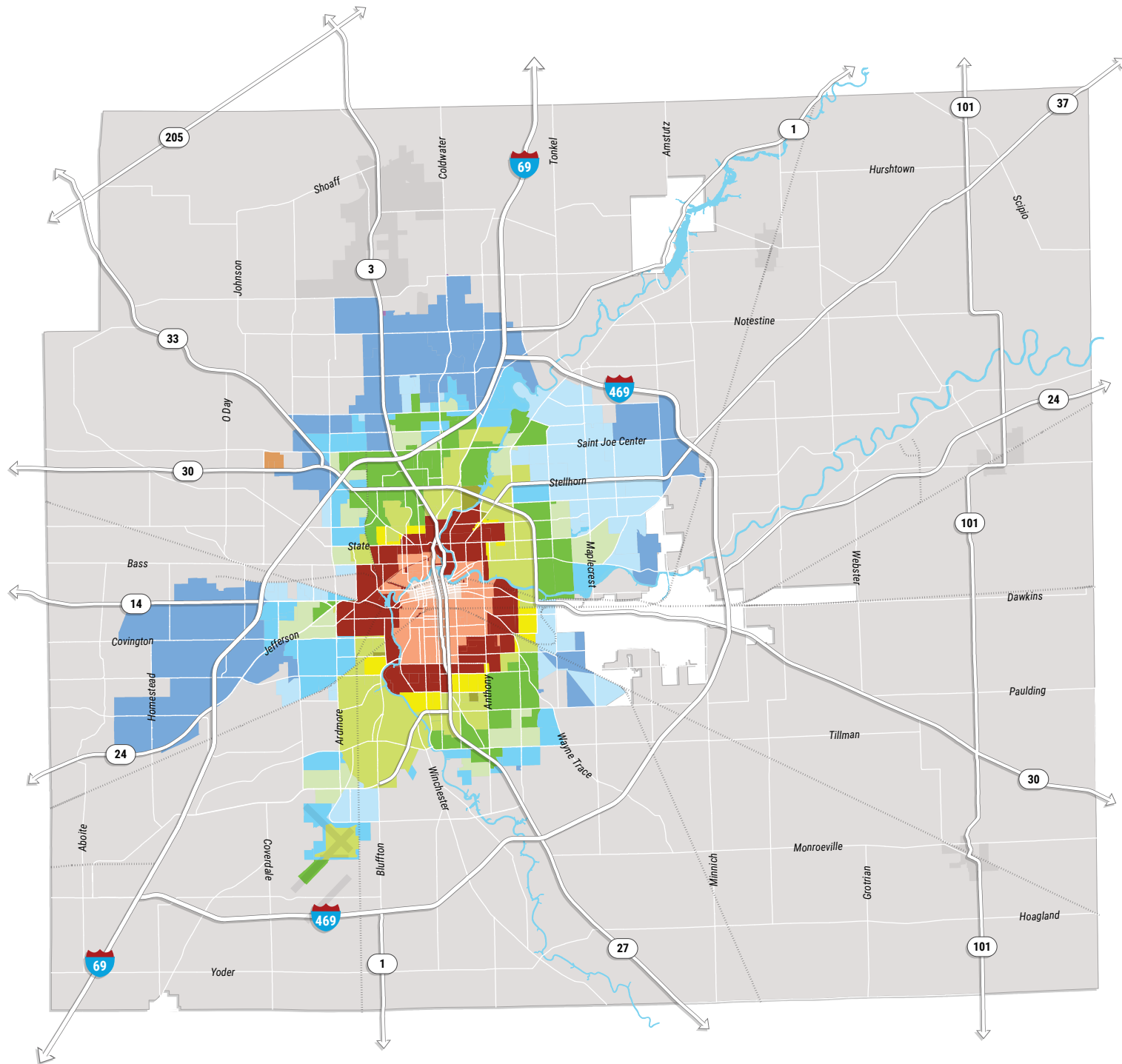
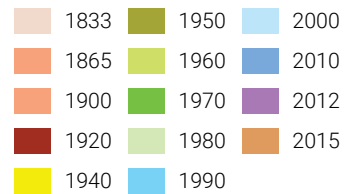
Source: Greater Fort Wayne, Inc.

## Fort Wayne Growth and Annexation

Between 1950 and 2010 the City grew by 90 square miles, 120,000 people, and 47,000 households. The City's most recent growth occurred between 2000 and 2010, when Fort Wayne grew from approximately 79 square miles to 111 square miles (an increase of 32 sq.mi.) while adding nearly 48,000 residents and over 18,000 households.

Despite the increasing difficulty of exercising annexation policy along with potential impacts of tax caps, the City of Fort Wayne has grown at a faster pace than it did in the decade prior to 2010. The City's population grew by nearly 14,000 between 2010 and 2018 without additional annexation. However, with its outward expansion and suburban development, Fort Wayne's population has become more spread out. Growth between 2000 and 2018 resulted in an overall decrease in household density from 1,055 households per acre to 948 households per acre (a decrease of 10.2%). This underscores the attractiveness of Fort Wayne as a regional destination with residents choosing to move to established areas, rather than greenfield areas.

### Decade / Year in Effect



## Populations and Households

Allen County makes up slightly less than half (48%) of the population of the 11-county Northeast Indiana Region; however, this percentage has been steadily increasing. Within the next 20 years it is anticipated Allen County will come to make up over 50% of the region's population. While the City represents a significant percentage of the County's population (71%), this has not always been the case. In 1990, only 58% of County residents resided in Fort Wayne.

## Adopting Communities

The adopting communities of Grabill, Hometown, Monroeville, and Woodburn have maintained relatively stable populations since 2010. Hometown and Grabill experienced the most substantial growth in recent years, having grown by 41.1% and 25.8% between 2010 and 2018, respectively. With the exception of Monroeville, housing vacancies are lower in adopting communities compared to Fort Wayne (9.8%) and Allen County (9.0%).

## Household Income

Allen County's median household income in 2018 was \$53,402 which is higher than that of the City of Fort Wayne (\$48,023) and slightly less than Indiana (\$54,325). Household incomes in the City of Fort Wayne are generally lower than the County, State, and region, but all have increased at approximately the same rate over the past decade. With the long-term economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic still unknown at this time, positive trends in income growth are encouraging for the region over the long term.

## Income Disparities

Minority households in Allen County and Fort Wayne earn less than White households. Within Allen County, the median household income for a home with a Black household (\$29,018) is half that of a White household (\$57,587). The median income for an Asian household (\$51,384) in Allen County is 89% that of White households. Income disparity among Fort Wayne households is very similar. Research is increasingly tying income disparities among households of different race and ethnicity to wider spread impacts on a region's economy.

### Population and Households by Community, 2018

	Population			Households		
	2010	2018	Change	2010	2018	Change
Fort Wayne	253,691	264,052	10,361	101,585	105,174	3,589
Grabill	1,053	1,325	272	403	523	120
Huntertown	4,810	6,787	1,977	1,726	2,312	586
Monroeville	1,235	1,185	(50)	491	495	4
Woodburn	1,520	1,644	124	406	617	211
Allen County	355,329	370,016	14,687	136,208	143,500	7,292

	2018 Median Household Income	2018 Median Age	2018 Vacant Housing Units
Fort Wayne	\$ 48,023	34.8	9.8%
Huntertown	\$ 78,929	35.5	5.1%
Grabill	\$ 55,536	36.1	4.0%
Monroeville	\$ 47,760	45.7	11.4%
Woodburn	\$ 66,359	35.7	7.1%
Allen County	\$ 53,402	35.8	9.0%

Source: Amercian Community Survey (ACS), Houseal Lavigne Associates

## Race and Ethnicity

While the majority of Fort Wayne and Allen County residents identify as white (79.2%, and 73.8%, respectively, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau), the area has become increasingly more diverse over the past 30 years. The same is true for the Northeast Indiana Region and State.

The Hispanic population made up just 8.9% of the City and 7.3% of the County population in 2018, but this population has grown steadily over the past two decades. The Hispanic population has grown by 53.3% (City) and 75.6% (County) since 2000.

The adopting communities are predominantly white with Huntertown being the most diverse at 91.3% White and 4.4% Hispanic. Grabill, Monroeville, and Woodburn are 97% -99% White with up to a 3% Hispanic population.

## Immigration and Burmese Population

Fort Wayne is home to approximately 6,000 Burmese immigrants who began settling in the area in 1991 because of civil unrest in what is now known as Myanmar. It is estimated that the total Burmese population may be closer to 20,000 due to the initial wave of immigrants having children and an influx of Burmese who had initially settled elsewhere in the U.S. This may be the largest Burmese population in the U.S.

## Age

The City's median age of 34.1 has been increasing, which is in line with County (36.1) and State (37.9) trends. This also aligns with broader national trends. In terms of age cohorts, Fort Wayne and Allen County have a similar allocation of population. Trends from the past three decades indicate the greatest increases overall have been in older age cohorts, particularly in the population of residents over the age of 65. This is important as the City and County plan for the future, particularly regarding age-targeted housing and access to emergency/social services.

While most communities in Allen County have a median age similar to that of the County (35.8), Monroeville has a median age of 45.7. Monroeville is also the only adopting community to lose population (-50), and the higher median age reflects a growing senior age cohort with limited growth occurring among younger households. City and County programs as well as housing and infrastructure will need to accommodate this important segment of the population throughout the Community.



### Race and Ethnicity by Community, 2018

	White	Black or African American	Asian	Some other race	Two or more races	Hispanic or Latino
Fort Wayne	73.8%	14.9%	4.6%	2.1%	4.5%	8.9%
Grabill	98.8%	0.0%	0.5%	0.2%	0.5%	2.7%
Huntertown	91.3%	2.7%	1.0%	0.3%	4.7%	4.4%
Monroeville	97.6%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	2.2%	2.8%
Woodburn	96.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	1.9%	3.3%
Allen County	79.2%	11.4%	3.7%	1.8%	3.8%	7.3%

Source: American Community Survey (ACS), Houseal Lavigne Associates

# Housing Assessment

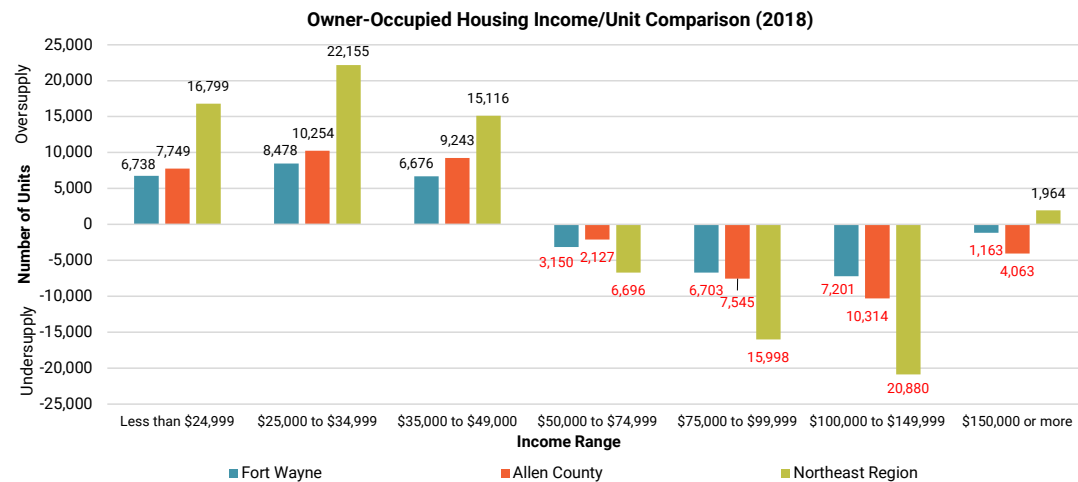
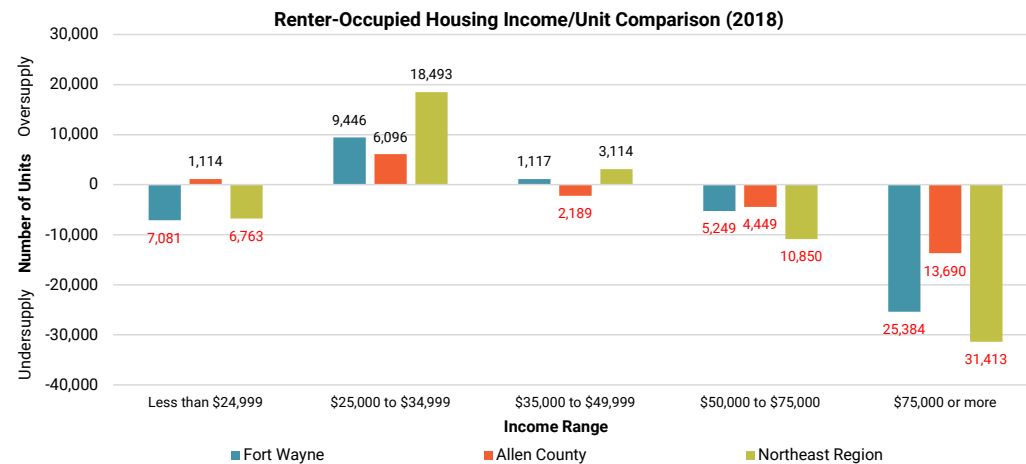
Community input indicated that Allen County's low cost of living is an asset in attracting new residents. However, a review of housing availability by income indicates housing supply has not matched needs. A lack of housing units at higher price points is creating competition for lower cost housing units and exacerbating affordable housing need.

## Household Needs by Income

An analysis of existing housing supply in Fort Wayne, Allen County, and Northeastern Indiana showed the following points:

- There is an undersupply of units in Fort Wayne for households earning less than \$25,000 annually. This income bracket (rental range of less than \$625/month) has an undersupply of 7,081 units causing many low-income households to experience a cost burden.
- In Fort Wayne, there is adequate supply relative to demand for units for those earning between \$25,000-\$49,999 annually without incurring a cost burden. Within Allen County overall, there is an undersupply within this income group, as well as all other higher income groups. Given the lack of supply for lower income households, many of these units are likely occupied by lower income households experiencing a housing cost burden or utilizing a subsidy to offset housing costs.

- Both Allen County and the City of Fort Wayne have an undersupply of mid- to high-value owner occupied homes (\$150,000 or more home value) which could be affordable for households earning an annual income of \$50,000 or more. This supports comments received during community engagement that high-lighted housing availability as a concern and a limiting factor in attracting continued job growth.
- The lack of inventory in upper price points also means that households with increasing incomes seeking to remain in the region may have difficulty finding move-up housing if desired. This further compresses the demand for homes that would otherwise be available to low- and moderate-income households.





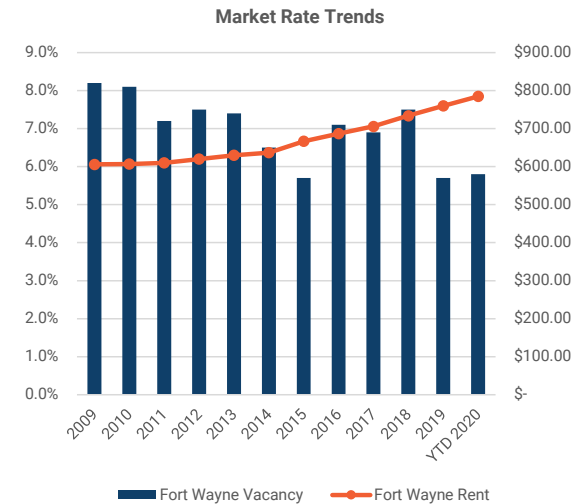
## Market-Rate Demand

Data from CoStar for fourth quarter 2020 have been compared to historic data. The rental housing market (including single-family homes, mobile homes, and apartments) for Fort Wayne is defined by Costar as the combined area of Allen County, Whitley County, and Wells County. In the fourth quarter of 2018, units in Allen County made up 97.4% of the 21,579 units in the market area. The region's continued positive economic growth has combined with positive domestic migration trends to decrease vacancy over the past decade. In 2018, approximately 42.1% of renter households lived in single-family homes or in buildings with two units, which is similar to 2010.

- Increasing rents. The average asking rent for an apartment in fourth quarter 2020 was \$791, a 4.1% increase from 12 months earlier and a 22.8% increase over year-end 2010. Apartment rents in the Fort Wayne market posted an average annual gain of 3.1% over the past three years.
- Steady development activity. From 2010 through 2011, a total of 92 units were delivered in the Fort Wayne market. Between 2012 and 2018, an average of 260 multifamily units were delivered each year including 399 units in 2018.

- Decreasing vacancy. The overall estimated rental vacancy rate is 5.8%, down from 8.1% in 2010. While vacancy rate has varied, it has remained below 6% for the last eight quarters. Between 2010 and fourth quarter 2020, the Fort Wayne market absorbed 2,500 units, outpacing delivery units by 349 (+16.2%).

Overall, the multifamily rental market in Allen County and Fort Wayne has strengthened over the past decade. Positive trends in asking rents, occupancy, and absorption indicate broad demand for multifamily housing. As with observations in the for-sale housing market, data indicate that additional multifamily housing development should be encouraged. This would create more housing choice within the region and decrease the market pressure being felt at lower price points that may be increasing the level of cost burden occurring among low income households.



Source: CoStar; Houseal Lavigne Associates



## Housing Affordability

The proportion of households experiencing a housing cost burden in Allen County and Fort Wayne declined moderately from 2010 to 2018. Cost burdened households are defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development as those households spending 30% or more of annual income on housing and who may have difficulty affording necessities, such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.

In 2010, an estimated 24.5% of households in Allen County and 25.4% in Fort Wayne were cost burdened. In 2018, the percent of cost burdened households in Allen County and Fort Wayne had decreased to 23.5% and 25.4% respectively. Other adopting communities experienced similar declines in the proportion of cost burdened households. This means that in 2018 approximately one in every four households in Allen County and Fort Wayne was cost burdened and spending more on housing and less than other essential needs.

While the share of cost burdened homes has decreased, this highlights a need for the provision of a variety of housing types to provide options at various price points. Owning a home in Allen County is generally affordable, but rental housing can be costly relative to household income. [Housing affordability for owner and renter households are illustrated in Chapter 6 Housing and Development.](#)

**Percent of Households that are Cost Burdened, 2010-2018**

	Owner		Rental		All Units	
	2010	2018	2010	2018	2010	2018
Fort Wayne	18.9%	14.2%	40.1%	43.6%	26.4%	25.4%
Grabill	25.5%	15.4%	25.6%	25.7%	25.5%	16.8%
Huntertown	20.7%	14.7%	54.5%	66.5%	23.0%	19.6%
Monroeville	19.5%	17.3%	46.7%	27.1%	26.0%	19.0%
Woodburn	14.4%	13.5%	26.5%	31.0%	17.4%	15.9%
Allen County	18.4%	14.5%	39.2%	42.8%	24.5%	23.5%

Source: Amercian Community Survey (ACS), Houseal Lavigne Associates

In 2018, cost-burdened households in Allen County decreased to **23.5%** from 24.5% in 2010

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# PLANNING THEMES



# Planning Themes

*The All In Allen Comprehensive Plan establishes the long-term vision for the Community. The Community's vision is supported by a series of goals and related strategies which will work collectively to achieve measurable change. Vision statements are provided for each core element (organized here as chapters) of the Plan. The vision statements are aspirational narratives for each element and set the stage for what the Community should work towards achieving over the next 20 years.*

*The topics of equity, health, and sustainability were consistently brought up as areas of importance throughout the outreach process. This chapter presents the vision and goals for these themes as identified by the visioning focus groups. The themes and associated goals are woven throughout the Plan where applicable and identified using thematic icons. In the end, all components of the Plan are driven by a unifying guiding, thematic principle: to provide a healthy, equitable, and sustainable place to live and work.*

## Chapter Organization

### Planning Themes

#### Equity

- Vision Statement
- Goals

#### Community Health

- Vision Statement
- Goals

#### Sustainability

- Vision Statement
- Goals

## Equity, Health, and Sustainability

The *All In Allen Comprehensive Plan* contains three themes—equity, health, and sustainability—which relate to multiple topics across chapters and weave through each element of the Plan. Goals for each theme were created through a series of focus groups conducted during the community outreach process.

Theme-related action steps that support these goals are incorporated into each chapter where relevant and are highlighted using thematic icons.



**Equity** – The icon symbolizes a level playing field, where all are lifted to the same starting point.



**Community Health** – The classic cross symbolizes health, from healthcare to healthy living.



**Sustainability** – The Three Rivers icon symbolizes sustainability, referencing the agricultural fertility and resiliency provided by the nexus of the Community's waterways.



**AGRICULTURE &  
FOOD SYSTEMS**



**HOUSING &  
NEIGHBORHOODS**



**ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**



**TRANSPORTATION  
& MOBILITY**



**PUBLIC FACILITIES  
& INFRASTRUCTURE**



**COMMUNITY  
SERVICES  
& EDUCATION**



**PARKS &  
ENVIRONMENT**

**EQUITY, COMMUNITY HEALTH, SUSTAINABILITY**



## Equity

### Vision Statement

Promoting equity and inclusivity within Fort Wayne and Allen County will be a priority as the Community continues to grow, ensuring a high quality of life for residents of all backgrounds. The Community's approach to equity will focus on balanced growth and the creation of truly complete neighborhoods with safe and convenient access to neighborhood-focused businesses, a variety of attainable housing options, quality services, schools, and public parks. The redevelopment and reinvestment process will be used to strengthen community identity and, as needed, improve community perceptions.

Attainable, accessible housing options will be promoted through new and infill development strategies to ensure people of all socioeconomic backgrounds, ages, and abilities can call the Community home. This will include educating and empowering residents and local business owners to help lead redevelopment efforts and minimize displacement.

Neighborhood-focused commercial and mixed-use development will be encouraged within walking distance of residential areas, providing access to needed amenities and services such as healthcare, childcare, fresh and nutritious food, and other goods and personal services. Reinvestment and new development will be complemented by equitable investments and infrastructure upgrades across existing neighborhoods and employment areas to ensure all parts of the Community are able to thrive.

Improvements to multimodal connectivity, including transit services, will support neighborhoods, increase access to key community services and employment opportunities, and reduce the need for residents to own a private vehicle. New community facilities and services will be targeted to underserved areas as well as integrated into future growth areas to provide equitable access to essential services and resources. Coordination with education and workforce development partners will also allow residents to prosper and support the life they desire, further contributing to the Community's overall economy.

### Goals

1. Provide for attainable, accessible housing options in established and future neighborhoods and allow for housing choice for all residents.
2. Foster walkable, neighborhood-focused commercial and mixed-use development to expand access to everyday needs and employment opportunities.
3. Promote balanced growth and equitable infrastructure investments in urban and rural areas across the community.
4. Support improvements to expand multimodal connectivity and enhance public transit service across the community.
5. Support equitable access to high quality community services and education for all residents.



# Community Health

## Vision Statement

Health and well-being will be central to quality of life in Fort Wayne, Allen County, and its communities. Collaboration and a coordinated community effort between public agencies and private service providers will improve the ways residents can become informed about health and reduce barriers to care. As a result of these efforts, individual behavioral choices will begin to measurably improve overall health and well-being. Fort Wayne, Allen County, and its communities will work with local healthcare institutions, service organizations, and educational institutions to build on the existing system of care and establish a reputation for a high level of community-wide health.

Residents will enjoy improved access to high-quality healthcare services, regardless of their socioeconomic background or the language they speak. New residential development with walkable streets and improved access to outdoor recreational areas, trails, and bike facilities will encourage a healthier and more active lifestyle among residents. Improvements to transit will enhance access to healthcare services for residents.

Partnerships with local farmers, healthcare organizations and educational institutions will build a local food system that promotes equitable access to fresh and nutritious foods for all residents. Urban and rural areas will have greater access to healthier food options as local communities and agencies work together to address food insecurity.

## Goals

1. Promote built environment and neighborhood design that supports healthier, safer, and more active lifestyles.
2. Support improvements to transit services to increase access to healthcare throughout the County.
3. Improve equitable access to fresh and nutritious food in Allen County's urban and rural communities.
4. Increase access to outdoor recreation opportunities for all ages.
5. Promote equitable healthcare access across language and socioeconomic barriers by building on and improving the community's existing system of care.
6. Encourage collaboration between healthcare providers and service organizations to better inform the public about the importance of healthy lifestyles.



# Sustainability

## Vision Statement

Coordinated efforts between the public and private sectors will lead to Fort Wayne and Allen County being recognized as a leader for sustainability and resiliency, known as a community which adapts in the face of a changing climate and plans for a better future. Local organizations, corporate partners, and individual stakeholders will engage in creating and supporting the community's sustainability initiatives. Throughout the community, thriving neighborhoods, organizations, and businesses will be better prepared to manage changes in climate and environmental hazards.

Throughout the Community, there will be a recognition that sustainable development policies and practices are important for the long-term success of the region. A community-wide focus, built on sustainability outreach and education, will encourage everyone from residents to regional employers to play a collaborative and equitable role in planning for resiliency and sustainability for the natural and built environment. As Fort Wayne and Allen County address growth with best practices, policies will support responsible growth that utilizes the existing built environment and carefully considers new development. Effective intergovernmental collaboration between the County and its municipalities will promote effective use of resources.

## Goals

1. Encourage a higher density of mixed housing types with walkable, well-connected neighborhoods that are close to jobs, services, and recreation, which will preserve farmland, and put less strain on municipal infrastructure.
2. Continue to recognize agricultural uses as valued economic assets and foster responsible growth that minimizes redevelopment of farmland.
3. Promote the use of sustainable energy efficient design practices to reduce the environmental impact of future development and infrastructure.
4. Promote active modes of transportation that reduce vehicle miles traveled, including bicycling, walking, and transit.
5. Promote collaboration among environmental organizations, utility providers, governmental entities, and community stakeholders to conserve wetlands and other natural areas, protect flood-prone areas, manage stormwater, and improve water quality in the community's waterways.



# LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT



# Land Use & Development

*The Land Use and Development chapter is the core component of the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan, representing the primary building block upon which other plan components are structured. The chapter defines land use categories in Fort Wayne and Allen County and provides direction for how the whole community will grow. The Land Use and Development chapter and accompanying Generalized Future Land Use map describe areas that should remain as-is and be supported moving forward in addition to calling out areas where new growth and development can be supported. This approach to land use retains and bolsters established community centers and core neighborhoods, identifies opportunities for growth through infill and careful expansion, and mitigates potential impacts on Allen County's established rural and agricultural character.*

*The Land Use and Development chapter is organized into three sections:*

- **Introduction.** *The planning process blends community input, research, and an understanding of current land use. This section presents the key findings that informed the development of an updated growth framework, generalized future land use categories, and the Generalized Future Land Use map.*
- **Growth and Development Framework.** *Over the next two decades, new development patterns which mitigate sprawl, respond to market demands, support complete neighborhoods, and minimize costly investments in infrastructure and service extension should be encouraged in Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the adopting communities. The Growth and Development Framework section of this chapter identifies where growth should occur.*
- **Future Land Use.** *The Future Land Use section identifies the land use policies and generalized future land uses desired for Fort Wayne, Allen County, and each municipality within the County. The Generalized Future Land Use map depicts where the Community should anticipate new development and land use changes over the next two decades.*

## Chapter Organization

Introduction

Growth and Development Framework

Future Growth and Development Goals and Strategies

Future Land Use



## Introduction

Unchecked growth, or sprawl, stresses existing infrastructure, requires expensive service extensions, increases maintenance costs, encroaches on valuable agricultural areas, and disturbs the rural character that helps define the County. Conversely, compact infill development is typically less costly to service and maintain and generates higher property tax revenues per acre.

In Allen County, the cost of extending utilities is typically the responsibility of developers, so upfront financial impacts are not as steep for local municipalities. However, even if the developer pays for those costs, taxpayers will pay the long-term maintenance costs which are reflected in rate increases. Some low-density development, and most leapfrog development, is built without basic services such as water, sanitary sewer, and sidewalks. Retrofitting existing developments with those services is far more expensive than providing them in the first place for compact, contiguous development.

The following section describes Fort Wayne-Allen County's current approach to land use and development and offers a summary of the Community's input on land use. A review of market demand, existing infrastructure patterns, complete neighborhoods, and assessed value per acre is included to support a focused infill and targeted growth approach to generalized future land use.

## Community Input

Across all forms of outreach, people interacted with the planning process nearly 2,600 times, both online and in person, via facilitated or self-guided methods. Throughout the process, individual residents, business owners, and representatives from local organizations weighed in on the direction of the plan's policies and recommendations. [A summary of the full outreach program can be found in Chapter 2: Community Profile.](#)

The following is a list of the most direct and frequent community input themes regarding land use and development in Fort Wayne-Allen County.

- Develop attainable housing by building a mix of housing types and promoting housing choice.
  - Continue to support Downtown Fort Wayne revitalization to ensure the urban core continues to thrive and attract a talented workforce.
  - Promote reinvestment and placemaking in other areas in addition to Downtown Fort Wayne with an emphasis on the town centers of adopting communities.
  - Preserve rural and agricultural areas, maintain prime active farmland, and protect the County's agricultural heritage.
  - Preserve natural areas, including wetlands, established tree canopy, and open space.
  - Improve public safety coordination by ensuring that growth occurs in tandem with extension of services.
  - Extend infrastructure in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Develop neighborhoods with close and equitable access to amenities, accessible to work, stores, grocery, schools, parks, and transit—also known as “15-minute neighborhoods.”
  - Improve access to public transportation.
  - Invest in existing neighborhoods, with a focus on Southeast Fort Wayne.
  - Repair holes and vacancies in the neighborhood fabric.

## Current Land Use Approach

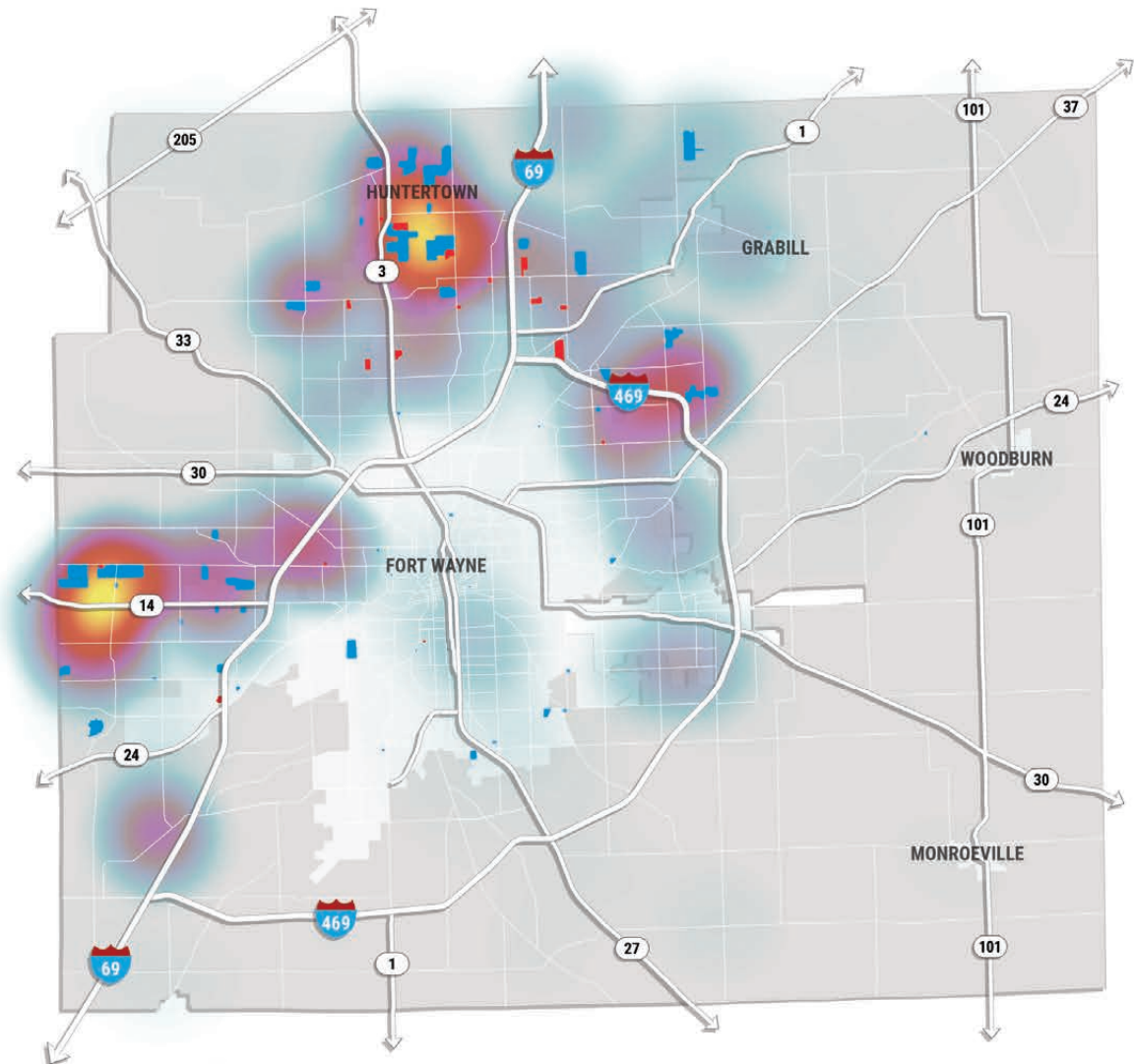
Residential permits and rezoning data between 2016 and 2021 were analyzed to document recent development trends. In general, recent housing projects are located in rural areas and developed at low densities which appear to only partially respond to market trends discussed in the next section. Such development does not reflect the previously discussed community-defined policy direction that emphasizes infill and access to “15-minute neighborhood” community amenities – accessible to work, stores, grocery, schools, parks, and transit.

## Residential Permits

Over the past five years, three out of every four (76.9%) single-family residential building permits have been located outside of municipal boundaries in unincorporated Allen County. Most building activity is concentrated on the northern edges of Fort Wayne, around the Town of Huntertown, and on the western edge of Fort Wayne. Nearly 700 single-family permits were issued within Huntertown. Of the 864 single-family permits issued in Fort Wayne, 130 were for parcels in Southeast Fort Wayne. Most of these permits were concentrated within an area of a few blocks indicating investment momentum may be building in the neighborhood.

## Residential Rezoning

Countywide, almost 2,500 acres were rezoned to low density single family residential districts (AR and R1 zoning districts). While some infill locations within Fort Wayne were rezoned, most of these single-family residential rezonings were in rural areas where farmland was converted to development. 1,907 acres were rezoned in unincorporated Allen County, along with 613 acres in Huntertown, between 2016 and 2021.



### Residential Building Permits and Rezoning

- Low Density Residential (AR, R1, R2, RP)
- Multiple Family Residential (R3)

Building Permits for New Construction after 2016

■ Lower Number of Permits

■ Higher Number of Permits

## Market Demand

Allen County has grown steadily over the last two decades and is expected to continue to grow through the year 2040. The All In Allen Comprehensive Plan seeks to provide an approach to land use and development that accommodates anticipated new growth. In addition to accommodating demand from a growing population for new jobs and new housing, it is important that development and reinvestment also respond to the shifting needs of existing residents already living and working in Allen County.

The following section summarizes the population and employment projections used in formulating All In Allen land use policies. Findings from detailed market analyses conducted outside of the planning process are also summarized as they relate to defining the nature of anticipated growth, the types of households that are likely to move to Fort Wayne and Allen County in the future, and the types of housing they will need.

During the development of the Comprehensive Plan, the Fort Wayne and Allen County community is undergoing a shift in its demographic makeup that is being seen across the United States. Demand for subdivisions of owner-occupied single-family detached homes is waning. As Millennial householders enter the market and Baby Boomers look to downsize, greater value is being placed on neighborhood amenities and greater housing variety within urban, walkable environments.

## Population Projections

STATS Indiana is the statistical data utility for the State of Indiana, maintained at the Indiana Business Research Center at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business. STATS Indiana provides projections for the state's residential population growth. The projections indicate that Allen County (including Fort Wayne and the adopting communities) can expect to grow by 49,267 people, or 19,107 households, over the next two decades.

With over 143,500 households spread across 120 square miles of residential land, Allen County has a residential density of 1.88 units per acre. Applying the gross density based on existing development patterns—including an average of platted and unplatted residentially developed areas—indicates that by 2040 nearly 10,100 acres of additional land could be needed for new homes throughout the Community.

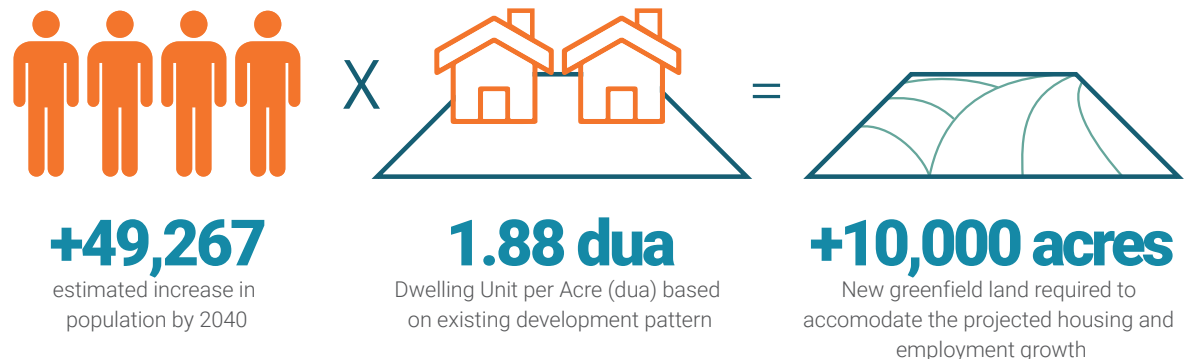
This acreage estimate represents a business-as-usual approach to development and was used as an upper limit for needed land area in developing the Future Growth and Development map and Generalized Future Land Use map.

By following to the recommendations and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, development patterns could move in the direction of increased density and less acreage needed for greenfield development while accommodating the same projected population growth over time.

Allen County can expect to grow by  
**19,107**  
households over the next two decades

### Residential Housing Projection

*Approximately 10,000 acres of land could be needed by 2040 based on existing population trends and development patterns.*



## Employment Projections

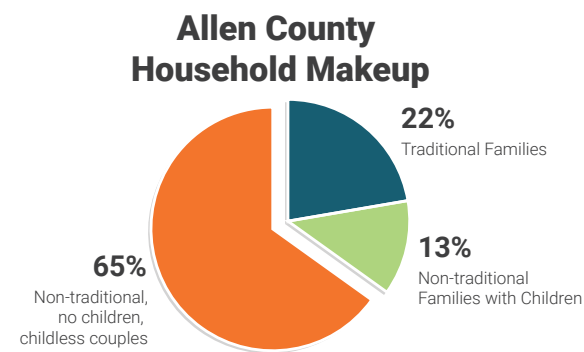
Employment projections from STATS Indiana indicate that 23,340 new jobs will be needed in Allen County, Fort Wayne, and the adopting communities by 2040. Employment acreage calculations based on typical floor area ratios, lot size, and employment share by sector indicate that between 2,000 and 2,500 acres will be needed to accommodate new employment-focused development. This estimate is also in line with a qualitative assessment provided by Greater Fort Wayne, Inc. and presented in the Allen County Together economic development action plan.

By 2040, Allen County, Fort Wayne and the adopting communities will need  
**23,340**  
 new Jobs

## Demographics and Housing Types

A housing market potential study was conducted for the City of Fort Wayne and Allen County by Zimmerman/Volk Associates and was released in November 2021. This study, which was undertaken outside of the All In Allen planning process, documented housing demand based on the demographic makeup of the Allen County region and households within the surrounding market area.

Projections in the market analysis were similar to those of STATS Indiana, indicating that Allen County will grow by approximately 5,000 households between 2021 and 2026. In addition to documenting raw demand, however, the market study also provided valuable insights into the demographic makeup of new and existing households and related impacts to the types of homes that are and will be most desirable based on those demographics.



Source: Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc., 2021

## Housing Composition

The housing market potential analysis found that just 35% of households within the Allen County market area are families with children who are typically looking for a single-family home. The other 65% are non-traditional families with no children or childless couples who are often looking for an apartment, condominium, or duplex. The housing preferences for the market area population do not appear to align with the mix of housing recently approved and currently being constructed in Allen County, the majority of which is single-family detached housing.

### Average Potential Market for New and Existing Housing Units

Housing Type	Number of Households	Percent
Multi-family for rent*	10,123	46.8%
Multi-family for-sale	1,110	5.1%
Single-family attached for-sale	1,828	8.5%
Single-family detached for-sale	8,579	39.6%
Total	21,640	100.0%

\* Includes existing rental single-family detached houses  
 Source: Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc., 2021

## Potential Market Demand by Housing Type

The demographic makeup of households located within the Allen County market area has significant implications for the type of housing that will be desirable in the future. As a result of national trends playing out on the local stage, current and near-term demand for multifamily housing is greater than previously anticipated.

The table, excerpted from the County portion of the Zimmerman/Volk 2021 housing market analysis, summarizes the average annual market potential for new and existing housing units. The demand for housing lies mostly in multifamily products (51.9% include for sale and for rent units). When combined with single-family attached housing (such as duplexes or townhomes), over 60% of market potential is for non-single family detached housing.

While slightly more than a third of households remain in the market for single-family detached housing, that product type makes up the bulk of recent development. Recent development trends appear to leave many market area households with the option of renting or owning a home that does not fit their needs, or choosing to live elsewhere altogether.

## Future Housing Need

To accommodate growth that aligns with these shifts in the market, the policies and recommendations of the Land Use and Development chapter and Generalized Future Land Use map should accommodate non-traditional families with denser development in more walkable areas that have closer proximity to community amenities. If typical development densities by housing type are applied to estimated unit mix demand, it becomes clear that the amount of land needed to accommodate projected growth can be significantly reduced from the more than 10,000 acres needed under the current development pattern.

Multifamily development makes up nearly half of market demand and in Fort Wayne and Allen County, multifamily development is usually built at about 12 units per acre. Single-family attached housing is typically built at seven units per acre and single-family detached housing is typically built at two to four units per acre.

Using this approximate allocation going forward, the County can expect an annual demand of 200 to 300 acres for new residential development, or around 1,500 acres over five years and 6,000 over the next two decades – a significant difference from the 10,139 acres needed if building patterns continue at current densities.

### Annual Market Capture for New Units: Allen County, 2021-2026

Unit Type	New Units Needed			Acreage Needed		Assumed Density d.u./acre
	Low	High	Percent	Low	High	
Multiple-family for Rent	1,012	1,215	46.8%	84.33	101.3	12
Multiple-family for Sale	55	89	5.10%	4.58	7.42	12
Single-family Attached for Sale	92	146	8.50%	13.14	20.86	7
Single-family Detached for Sale	430	685	39.6%	107.5	171.3	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,589</b>	<b>2,135</b>		<b>210</b>	<b>301</b>	

Source: Houseal Lavigne, Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc., 2021

Allen County can expect a demand for

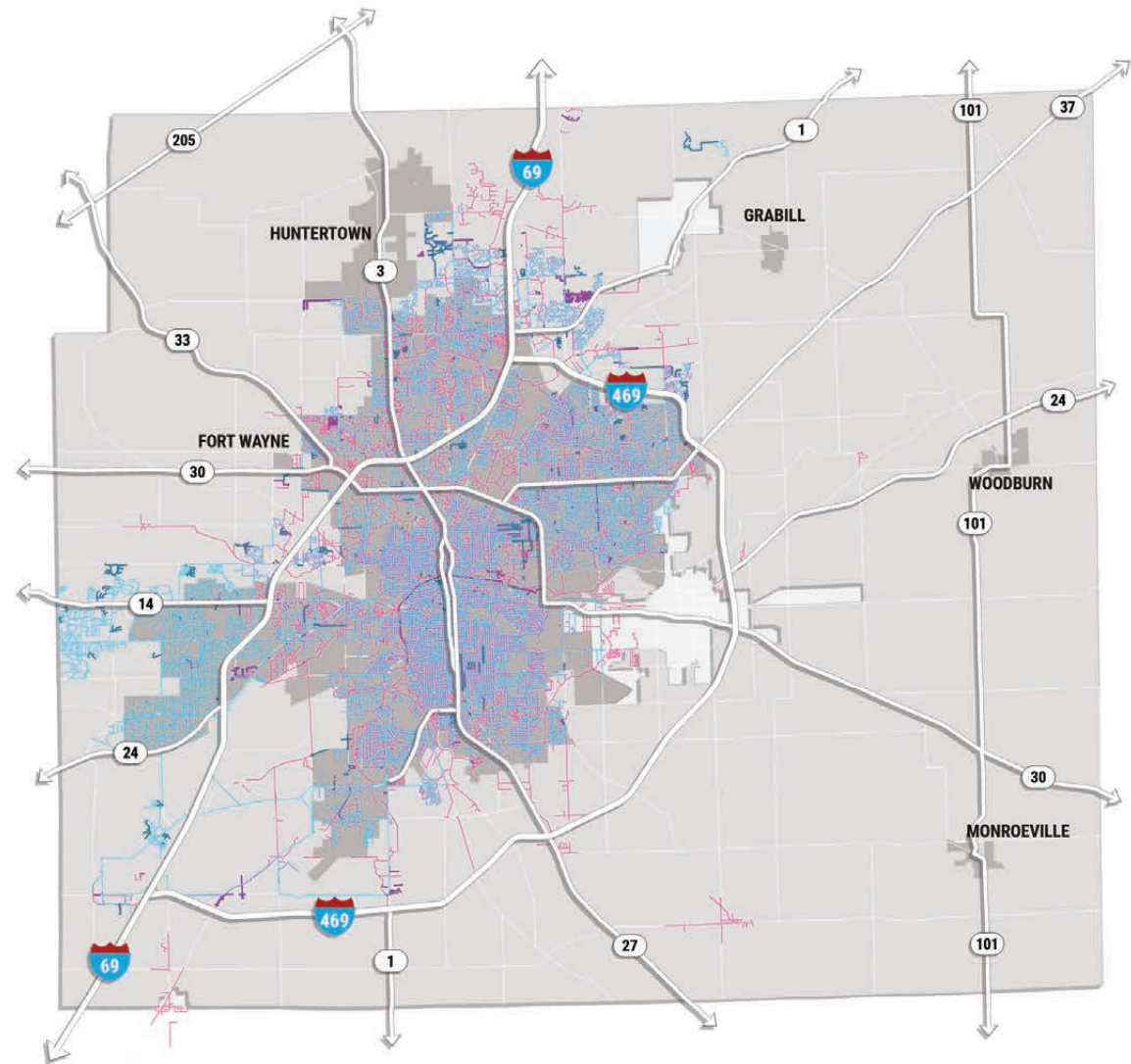
**1,500**

acres of residential development  
over five years

## Recent Fort Wayne City Utilities Infrastructure

While the upfront costs of new roads and utility infrastructure extensions may be addressed by the developer, long-term maintenance costs are managed by the County or municipalities. Countywide, 47 miles of water lines were installed between 2016 and 2021, with 26 miles installed in unincorporated areas. Similarly, 51 miles of sewer and stormwater infrastructure were installed across Allen County during the same period, with 17 miles installed in unincorporated areas.

Much of Allen County's growth has been in unincorporated areas previously unserved by infrastructure, requiring the expansion of water and sewer networks and increasing long-term maintenance liabilities.



### Existing Infrastructure

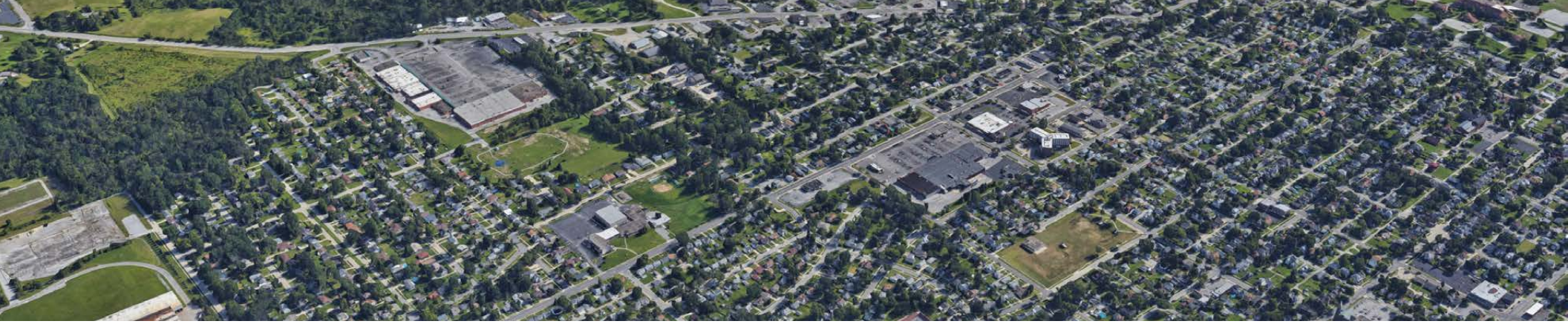
#### Water Infrastructure

- 2016 - 2021
- 2015 or earlier

#### Sewer and Stormwater Infrastructure

- 2016 - 2021
- 2015 or earlier

**47 miles**  
of water lines were installed  
between 2016 and 2021



## Complete Neighborhoods

The infrastructure needed for development is more than the pipes in the ground and pavement. While having housing with quality water, sewer, and roads should be considered a minimum requirement, achieving the quality of place that is increasingly valued by residents requires that housing be located within a broader network of community amenities. The All In Allen Comprehensive Plan supports the development of “15-minute neighborhoods” or “complete neighborhoods” where residents have access to a variety of amenities within a 15 minute walk.

Proximity to various neighborhood amenities was mapped and layered to create an index rating of community amenities and to assess how complete different areas of the region are. The Complete Neighborhoods Index is based on proximity to:

- Citilink Transit Routes
- Cultural Facilities, such as museums, art galleries, the Children’s Zoo, the Botanical Conservatory
- Education Facilities, such as schools and universities
- Medical Facilities, such as hospitals and medical offices
- Park and Recreation Facilities, including parks, community centers, campgrounds, and special facilities such as the Salomon Farm Learning Center
- Places of Employment, such as offices and business campuses
- Public Safety Facilities, such as police and fire stations

As shown in the adjacent map, the darker an area, the more amenity-rich that location is compared to other lighter-colored areas. In general, the core neighborhoods of Fort Wayne and the Downtown have the highest access to amenities, while recent rezonings and residential building permit activity have been predominantly located in areas that lack amenities.

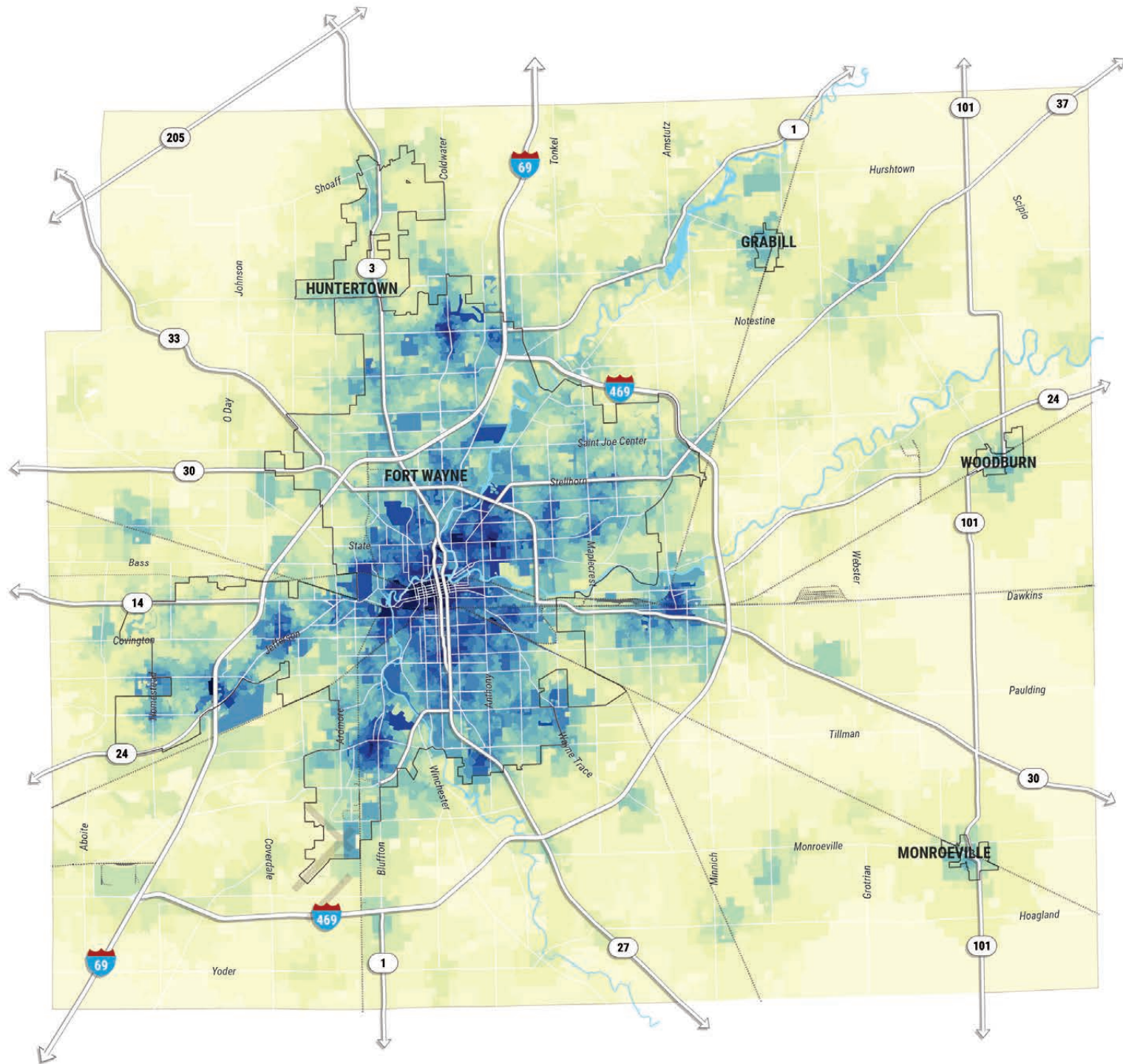
Although community amenities can eventually be built in growth areas to provide better access to things like schools, parks, and local retail and jobs, future development should be encouraged in areas that are already in proximity to such amenities.

# Complete Neighborhood Index

Neighborhoods with a mix of amenities and land uses are "complete". The index was created based on proximity to:

- Transit routes
- Places of Work
- Medical Facilities
- Park and Rec Facilities
- Law and Safety
- Education Facilities
- Cultural Facilities

## Complete Neighborhood Index



## Assessed Value per Acre

In addition to understanding the costs associated with development, the tax revenue generated by development should also be a consideration in ensuring that land use policy supports fiscally responsible growth. To document this, the assessed value of properties throughout Allen County were aggregated at the Census block level and mapped to identify development with high assessed property tax value per acre.

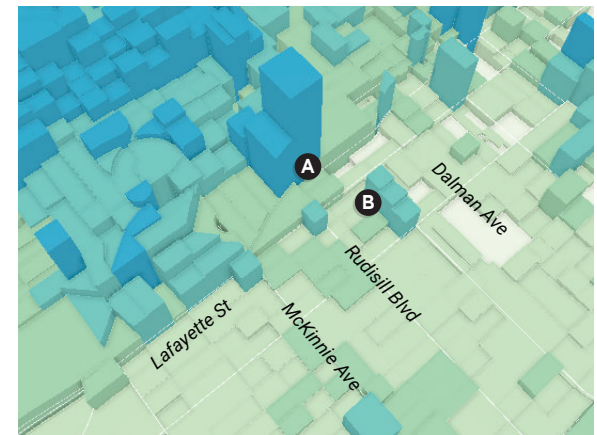
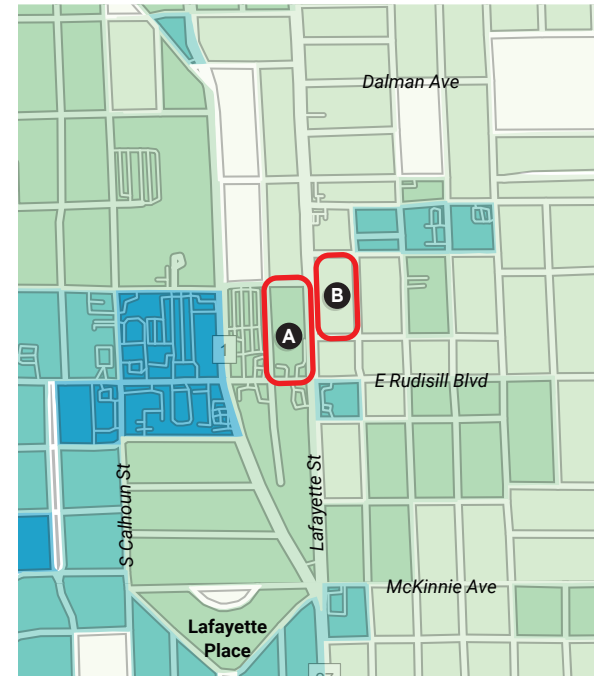
Higher assessed values are generally found in areas that are built at higher densities within municipal boundaries and served by water and sewer infrastructure. Downtown Fort Wayne is clearly the highest value district within the region, making up only .08% of Allen County's land area, but accounting for 2% of all assessed value (a 25:1 ratio despite including tax exempt properties). Meanwhile, Parkview Regional Medical Center and Lutheran Hospital anchor high value areas outside of the downtown on the west and northeast sides of Fort Wayne.

## Value of Traditional Neighborhood Development

It is clear that traditional neighborhoods near Downtown—with their compact block structure, higher density of housing, and mix of uses—are the most consistently high-valued areas across a wider geography. High value areas like Foster Park, Forest Park, and North Anthony neighborhood areas demonstrate the significant potential that traditional neighborhoods possess. This, in turn, shows that areas like Southeast Fort Wayne that have similar neighborhood structure and access to amenities are undervalued and represent an opportunity for investment.

For example, Block A along Lafayette Street has an assessed value of \$223,954 per acre which is two and a half times more than Block B immediately across it to the east (\$87,566 per acre). By implementing the recommendations of the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan, the momentum needed among private property owners and development community can be fostered to more fully realize the potential of this area and others like it, including centrally located neighborhoods in adopting communities.

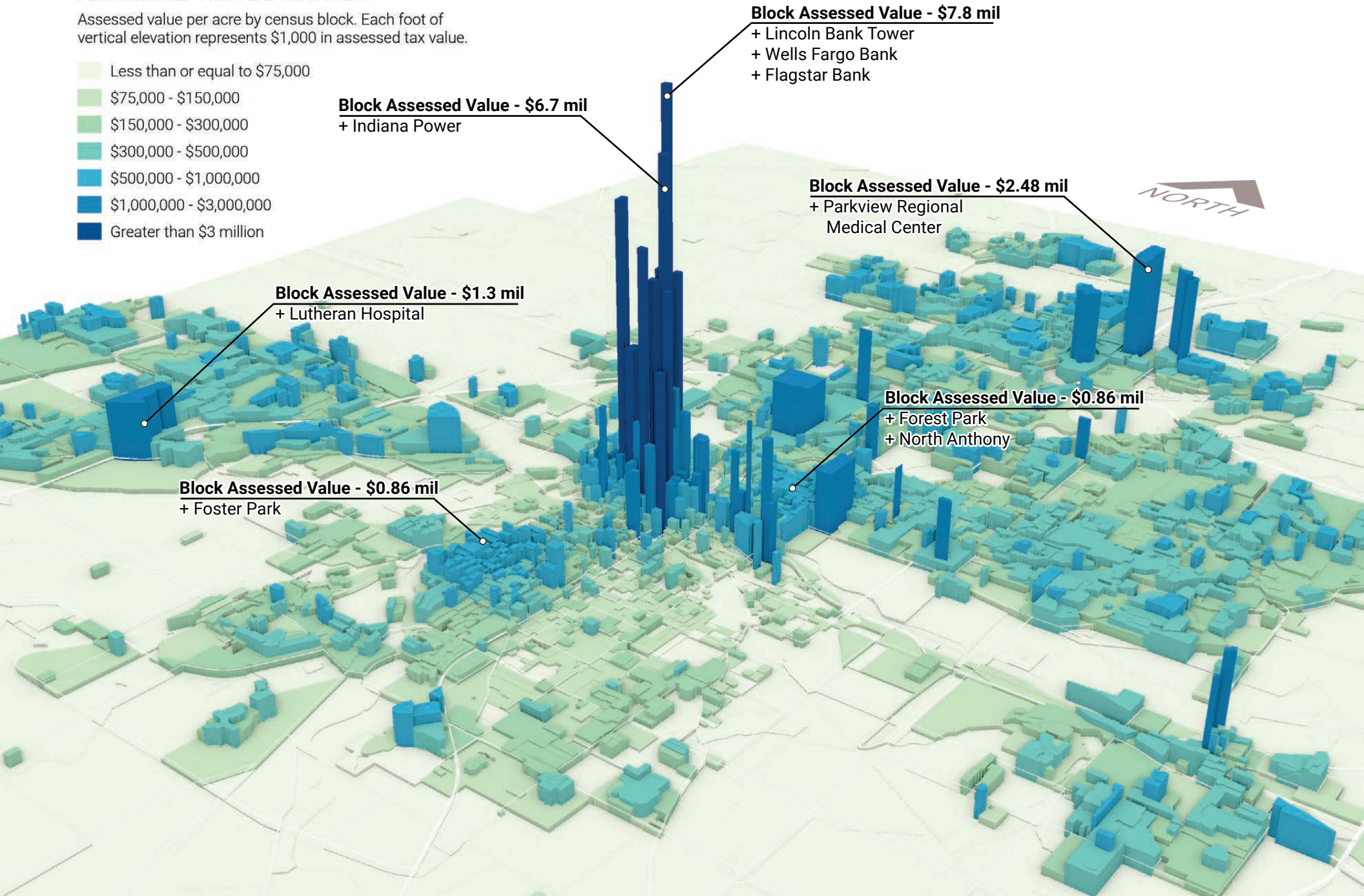
### Assessed Value per Acre



# Assessed Value Per Acre

Assessed value per acre by census block. Each foot of vertical elevation represents \$1,000 in assessed tax value.

- Less than or equal to \$75,000
- \$75,000 - \$150,000
- \$150,000 - \$300,000
- \$300,000 - \$500,000
- \$500,000 - \$1,000,000
- \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000
- Greater than \$3 million



**Block Assessed Value - \$6.7 mil**  
+ Indiana Power

**Block Assessed Value - \$7.8 mil**  
+ Lincoln Bank Tower  
+ Wells Fargo Bank  
+ Flagstar Bank

**Block Assessed Value - \$2.48 mil**  
+ Parkview Regional  
Medical Center

**Block Assessed Value - \$1.3 mil**  
+ Lutheran Hospital

**Block Assessed Value - \$0.86 mil**  
+ Foster Park

**Block Assessed Value - \$0.86 mil**  
+ Forest Park  
+ North Anthony



## Growth and Development Framework

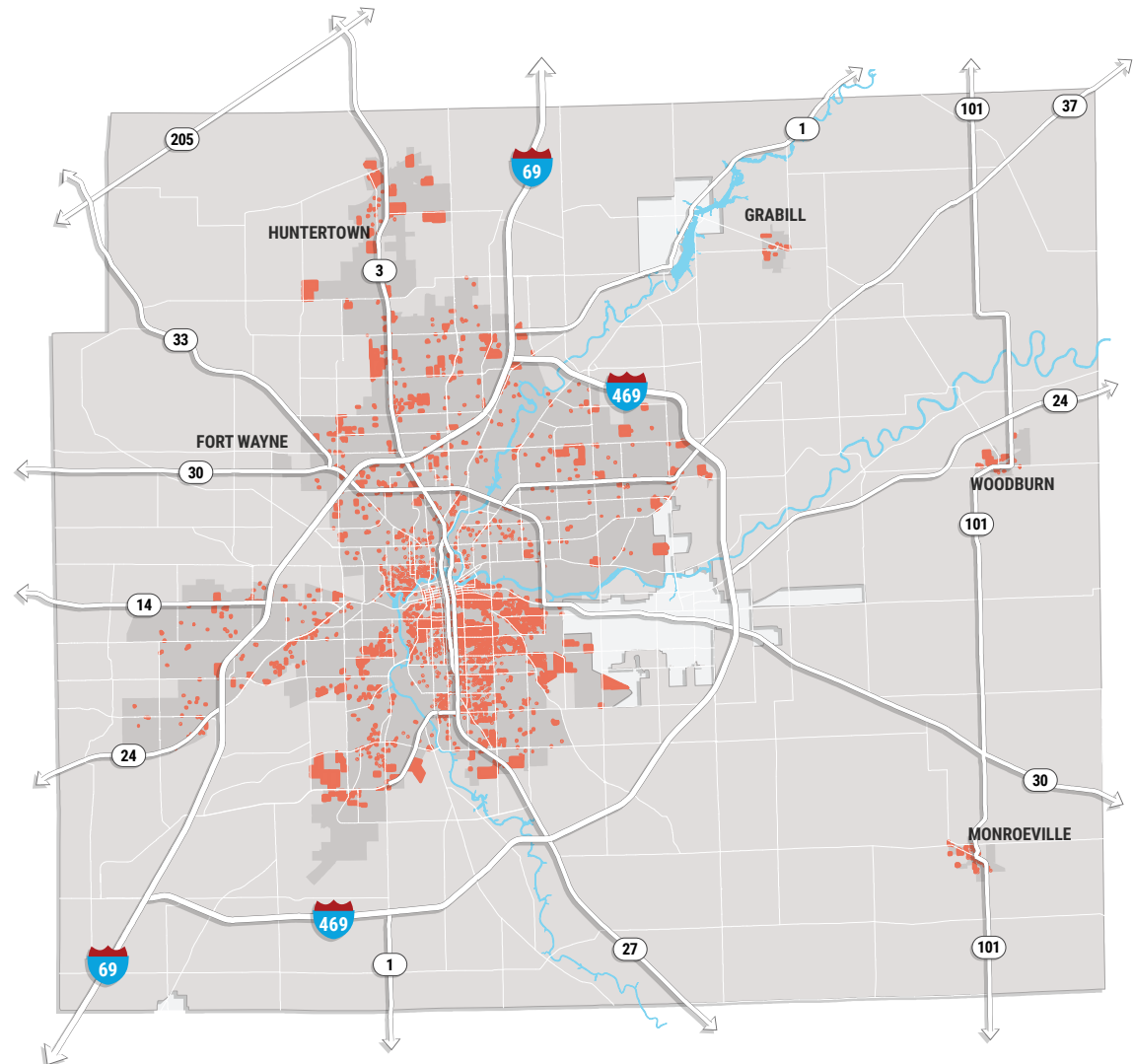
This section defines where growth should occur to encourage new development patterns which mitigate sprawl, respond to market demands, support complete neighborhoods, and minimize costly investments in infrastructure and service extension while still prioritizing future population and employment growth. The following sections outline the analyses undertaken in the development of the recommended Land Use Policies and Generalized Future Land Use map.

## Potential Growth Scenarios

The planning process for All In Allen included a data-driven approach that tied land use recommendations for all 660 square miles of Allen County to projections for population, households, and employment. Available data for influencing factors such as infrastructure availability, environmental constraints, farmland productivity (availability of productive agricultural land with prime characteristics), and development parcel contiguity was used to identify those areas most suitable to physically accommodate future growth and development. Land use policies were developed based on an evaluation of previous policies established in the 2007 Plan-It Allen Comprehensive Plan and input received from the Community, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, and City and County staff. Those policies were subsequently applied to areas suitable for development to establish the Generalized Future Land Use map.

## Infill Growth Scenario

This analysis demonstrates whether residential and employment growth could be accommodated exclusively at infill locations. If all vacant or underutilized parcels within existing municipal boundaries were redeveloped, it is estimated that more than half of the anticipated household growth (10,800 of 19,000 new households) and nearly all anticipated employment growth could be accounted for before any outward growth were to occur. Given that many infill sites are small, scattered across a large area, and are typically more difficult to develop than greenfield sites, it is not reasonable to assume that 100% of these sites would be redeveloped. However, this inventory shows that there is great potential within existing municipal limits to absorb demand for new households and jobs.



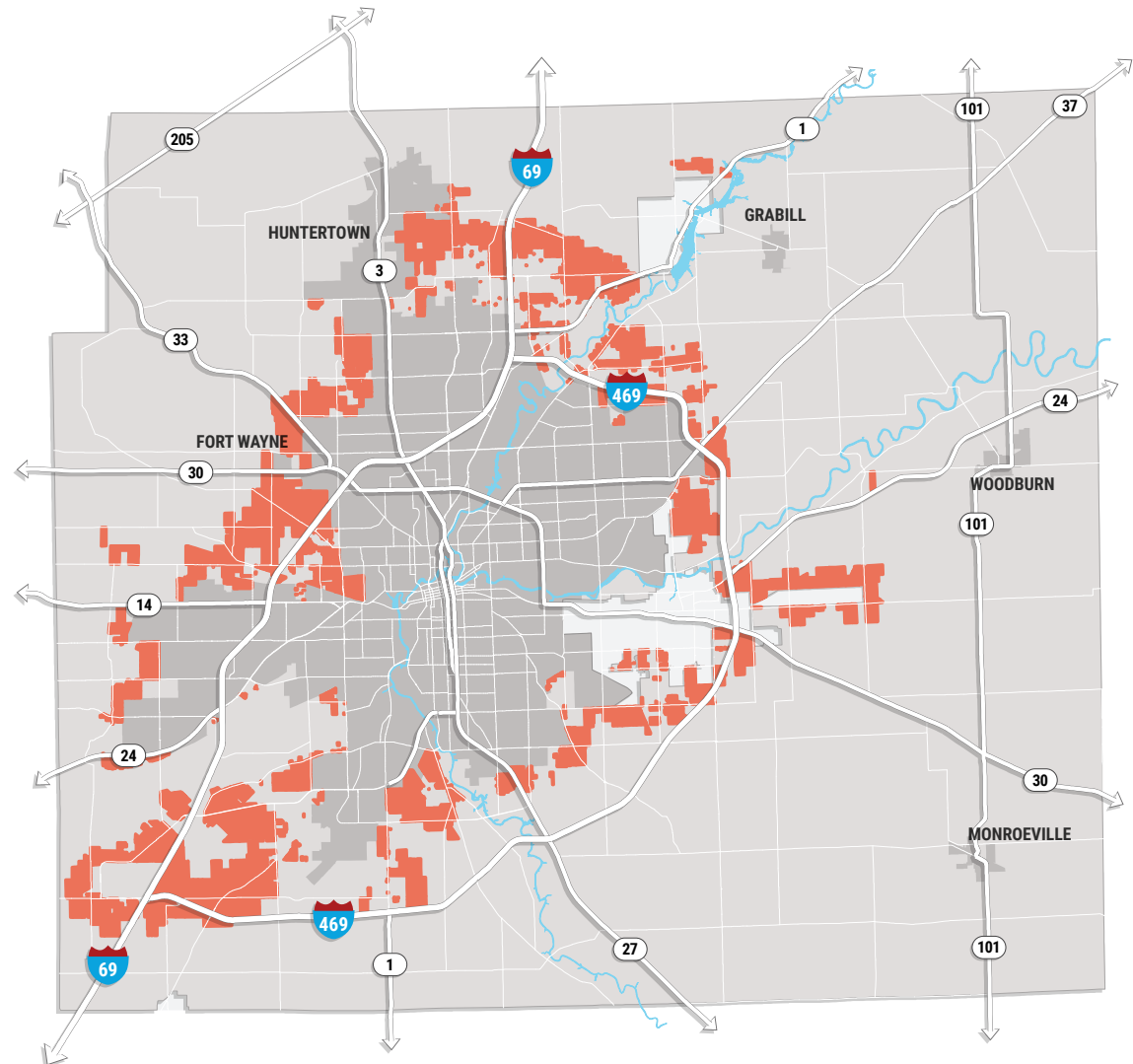
### Potential Growth Scenario

■ Infill Only

If all vacant/underutilized parcels were redeveloped,  
**10,800**  
 households would be accounted for

## Outward Growth Scenario

This analysis illustrates the development potential of all parcels located within the growth area identified in the previous Plan-It Allen Comprehensive Plan. These sites are generally suitable for development based on infrastructure availability, environmental constraints, and parcel contiguity as limiting factors. Greenfield, or undeveloped, locations (excluding sites within municipal limits) could accommodate an additional 98,000 households and 96,000 jobs. The analysis assumes areas would be developed in a pattern consistent with nearby existing development, clearly illustrating that development capacity far exceeds demand. The Community has the physical room to grow for decades to come. The Generalized Future Land Use map is needed to help ensure growth does not go unchecked and that new development makes efficient use of resources, contributes to a high quality of life, and meets shifting housing demands as Allen County's population ages and grows more diverse.



### Potential Growth Scenario

■ Outward Growth Scenario

Greenfield locations could accommodate

**98,000**  
households

## Preferred Growth Approach: Infill and Targeted Outward Growth

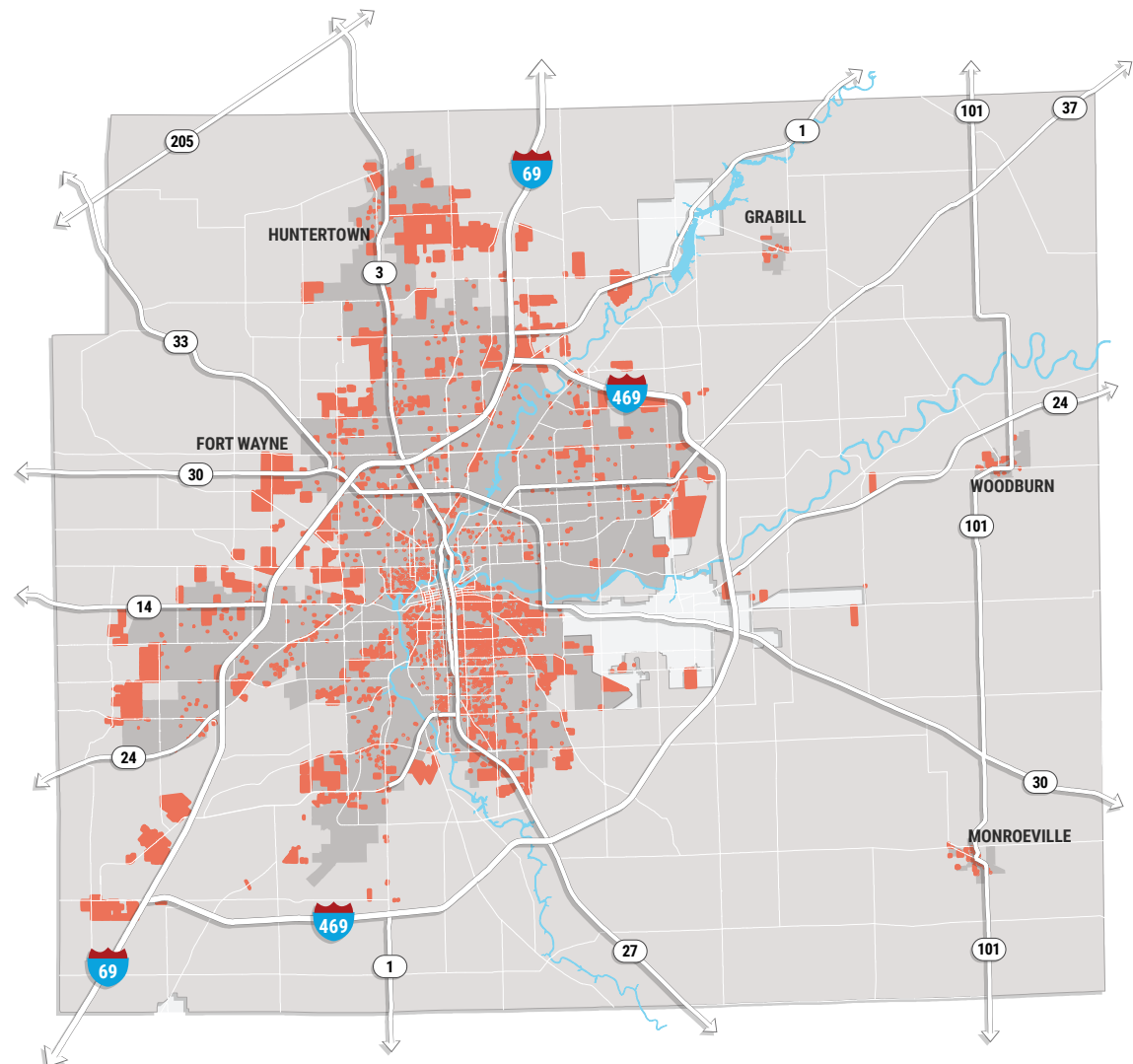
The parcels identified in the preferred growth approach represent areas where new land use designations can be defined as a starting point for the Generalized Future Land Use map. This analysis assesses how and where strategic outward growth could occur in tandem with infill. Many infill sites have environmental or physical constraints that make redevelopment more difficult. Based on typical urban infill patterns, this approach examines buildout potential and assumes only a portion (40%) of development potential at available infill locations will be realized over the next two decades. This analysis restricts development potential based on the following constraints:

- Areas with access or close proximity to existing infrastructure
- Areas with minimal environmental constraints, such as floodplains and floodways
- Areas made up of primarily active, prime agricultural land

The analysis emphasizes the likelihood of development for the following:

- Parcels that are “buildable” – meeting lot size requirements for development
- Areas outside of municipal limits that are likely to develop due to current ownership, zoning, or adjacency

Even under more constrained parameters, it is estimated that developable areas at a mix of infill and greenfield locations can support approximately 35,000 households and over 60,000 jobs which is well over 19,107 households and 23,340 jobs projected. This analysis illustrates that growth can be more tightly controlled while still providing for more housing and job opportunities than are expected to be needed over the next 20 years.



### Potential Growth Scenario

■ Infill and Targeted Outward Growth

A mix of infill and greenfield development could support approximately **35,000** households

## Future Growth and Development

This chapter promotes compact and contiguous development, encouraging new growth and reinvestment in areas within or adjacent to existing development. The Growth and Development Framework identifies how and where the Community should target growth; preserve agriculture, rural character, and natural areas. The Growth Framework map (p. 55) reflects the preferred Potential Growth Scenario map (p. 53). Based on the potential growth scenario, the Growth Framework identifies areas that could accommodate as many as 35,000 households and over 60,000 jobs in the coming decades.

The Growth and Development Framework prioritizes development at infill locations that are within existing municipal limits and served by existing public facilities and services. Infill development leverages existing infrastructure and fills gaps in the urban fabric, bolstering activity in established communities and neighborhoods. Infill development can also be more challenging than greenfield development and may require incentives in some areas. While some large undeveloped or underutilized properties exist within existing municipal limits, many infill opportunities consist of smaller parcels that will require scattered site development that limits economies of scale. In many cases, the economic and service provision advantages of infill will outweigh the upfront challenges presented.

Planned outward development is also needed to accommodate Allen County's long-term population and job growth. The Growth and Development Framework identifies targeted growth areas for new development. By adhering to the framework for development decisions over the next two decades, the Community will be well-positioned to prepare for the anticipated growth while managing land uses, preserving valuable agricultural land, natural areas, and open space, and achieving the vision of responsible growth.

### Priority Investment Area

The first tier of infill includes areas well-served by infrastructure with established traditional neighborhood patterns and opportunities for investment that will lead to more complete neighborhoods with good access to amenities. The priority investment area should be the focus of development initiatives and incentives to address market gaps and build momentum among private sector property owners and developers.

### Urban Infill Area

Municipal infill areas benefit from existing infrastructure and adjacency to other community amenities. These second-tier infill areas are a focus for reinvestment and for filling in gaps within established neighborhoods. Development in urban infill areas should be focused on vacant lots within neighborhoods and commercial or industrial areas already served by infrastructure.

### Unincorporated Development

Within the targeted growth areas, existing development and development patterns for residential, commercial and industrial uses have been identified. The targeted growth areas are intended to continue to concentrate future growth and development utilizing adjacent growth policies and capitalizing on existing infrastructure.

### Rural and Agricultural Areas

The protection of rural areas, natural areas/open spaces, and agricultural preservation areas will help avoid premature development of agricultural areas during the lifetime of the Plan. For the long term, these areas should continue to provide active, productive farmland, rural residential areas, and preserved natural areas and open spaces that define the County. By preserving existing farmland located far from the densest urban core in Downtown Fort Wayne and the town centers in the adopting communities, the whole of Allen County will benefit from planned outward growth near existing infrastructure and development.

### Targeted Growth Area

These areas in unincorporated Allen County have been identified as likely to develop within the next 2 to 5 years. These areas are intended to provide for residential development along with professional office, personal service, neighborhood oriented commercial and employment center uses that are in alignment with the applicable strategies and policies, and the guidance of the Generalized Future Land Use Map.

### Downtown

Downtown Fort Wayne is unique in that it is the highest property tax assessed value area and a destination for the entire region. Its value and continued growth as a major urban center are central to the growth of all urban areas in the County.

### Potential Economic Development Growth Area

These areas are primarily intended to be developed with business, industrial, production and similar uses that will support the Economic Development Chapter and the Allen County Together Economic Development Action Plan. Targeted areas will help to incentivize development while continuing to improve the community's ability to grow jobs, wages, and the economy. As these areas are proposed for development, consideration should be given to the overall economic benefits of the new development, such as: significant levels of investment, average wages, and job creation. The development of high impact economic development projects that can serve as catalysts for additional economic growth should be supported.

### Potential Adjacent Growth Area

As the targeted Growth Areas develop, there will eventually be requests for rezonings outside of the designated Targeted Growth Areas. These additional buffer areas will allow decision makers the flexibility to respond to market demand and changes moving forward.

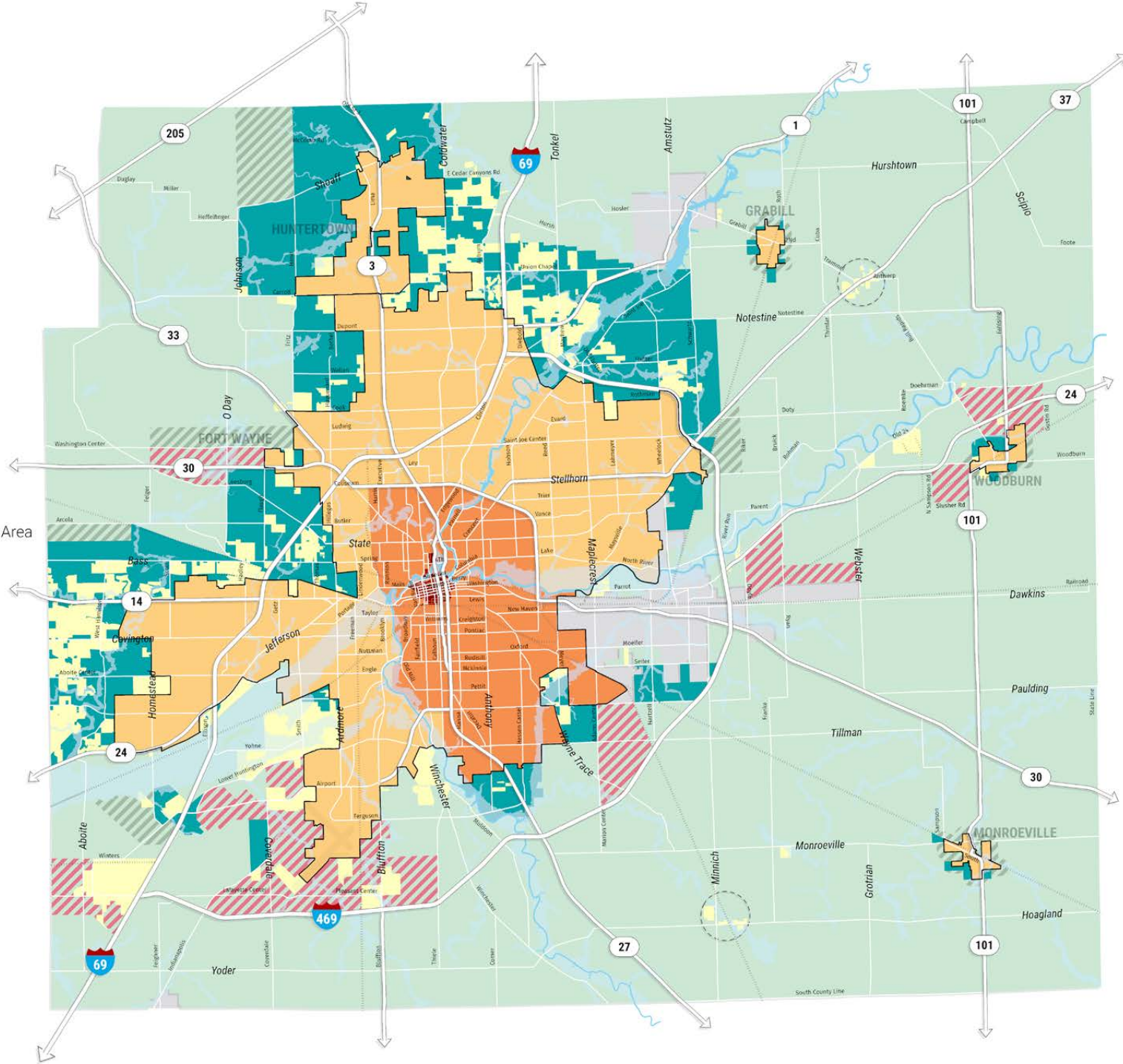
### Floodplain

Floodplain includes any land area susceptible to being inundated by floodwaters from any source. The county and its municipalities have the authority to adopt and enforce floodplain ordinances. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) encourages local governments to adopt higher standards for floodplain development. Development in the floodplain should be carefully considered, and either elevated out of the floodplain or protected to reduce public funds used in relief efforts.

# Future Growth and Development

The Future Growth and Development map illustrates areas where development should be prioritized to accommodate projected growth. Future amendments to this map should be evaluated on a regular basis (at least biannually).

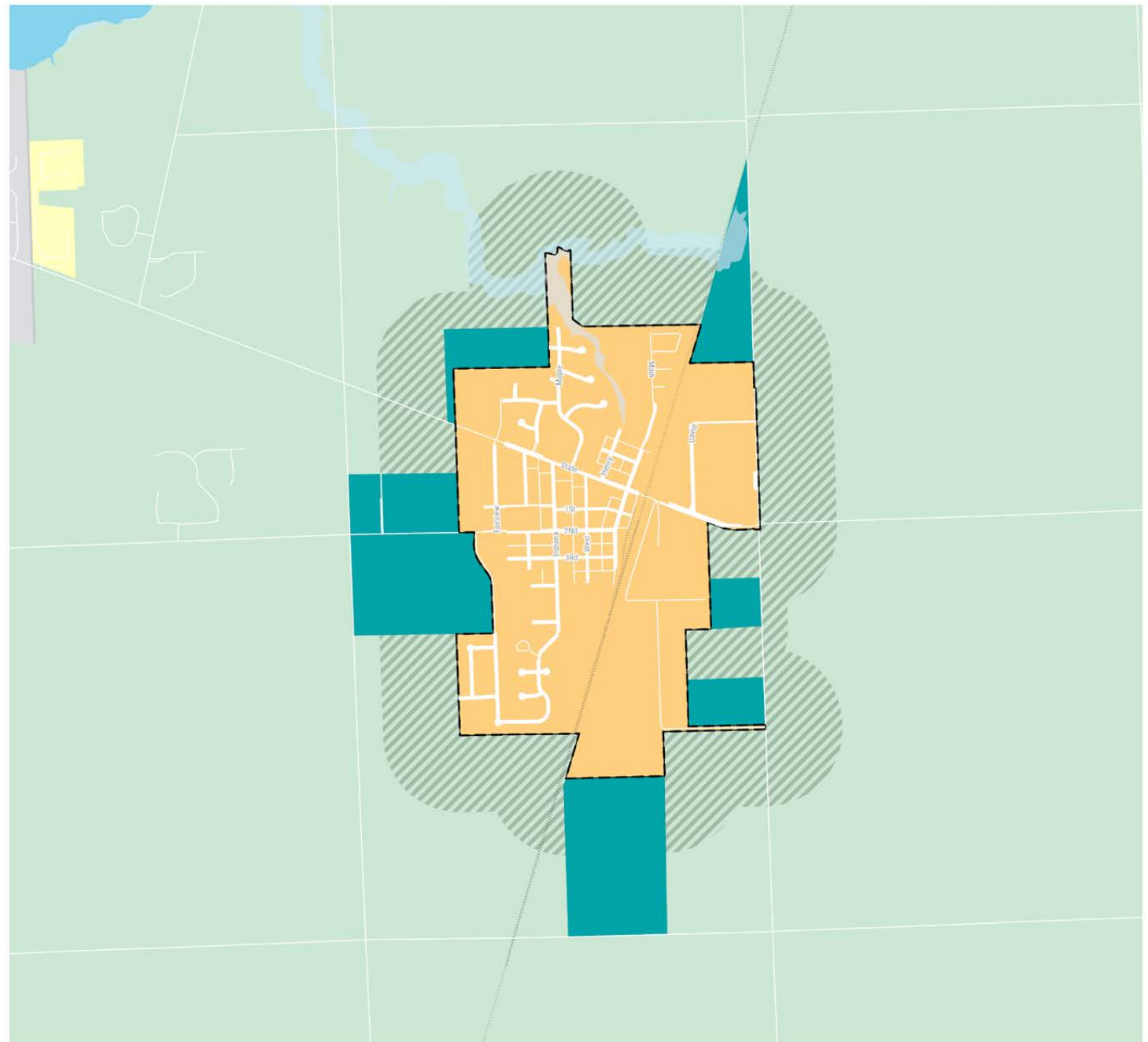
- Priority Investment Area
- Urban Infill Areas
- Downtown
- Unincorporated Development
- Rural and Agricultural Area
- Targeted Growth Area
- Potential Economic Development Growth Area
- Potential Adjacent Growth Area
- Census Designated Places
- Floodplain (FEMA)



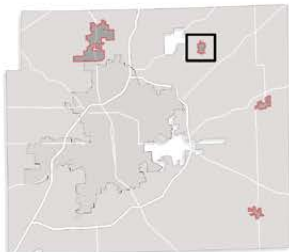
# Future Growth and Development

Grabill

- Urban Infill Areas
- Unincorporated Development
- Rural and Agricultural Area
- Targeted Growth Area
- Potential Adjacent Growth Area
- Floodplain (FEMA)



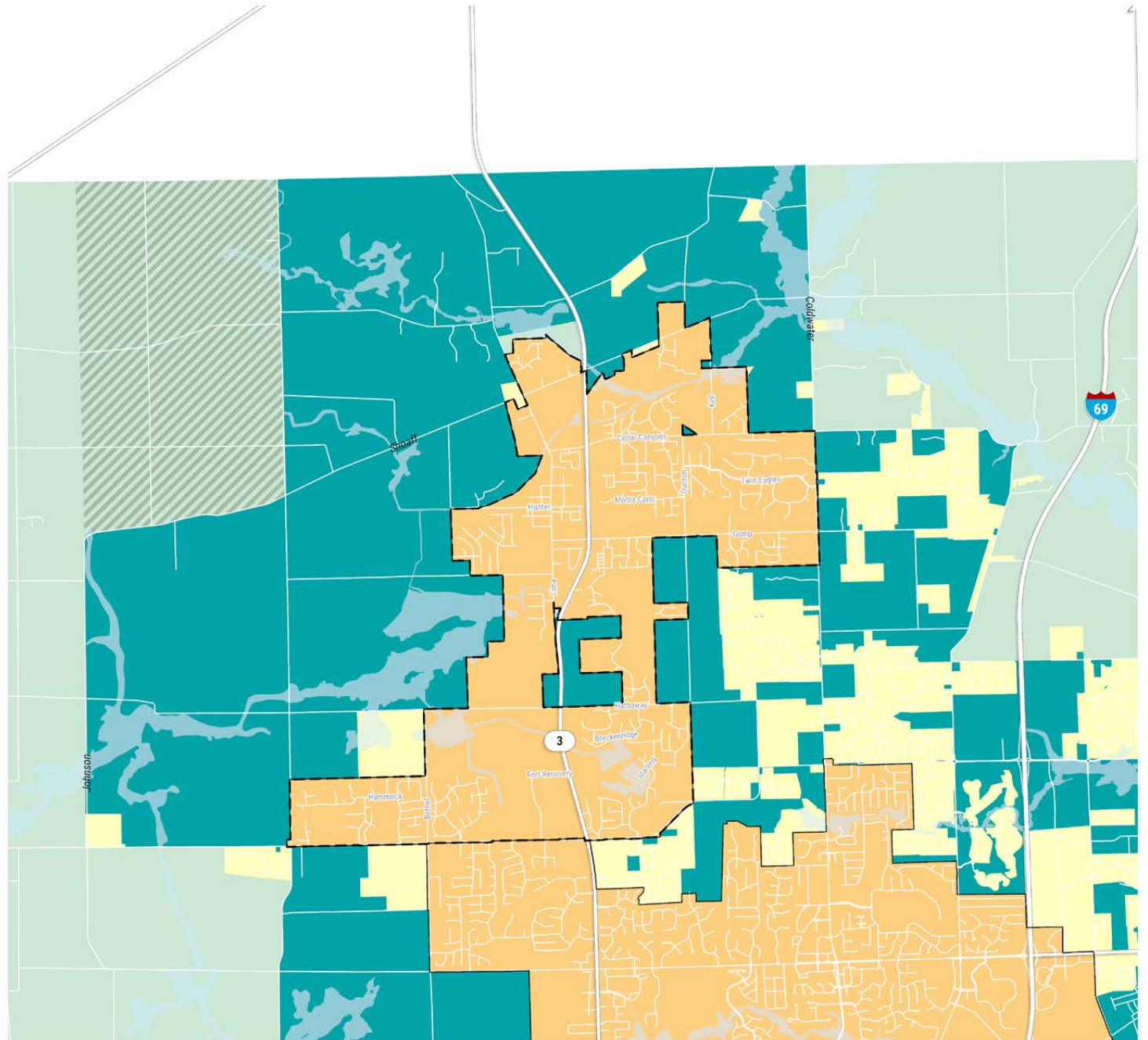
Index Map



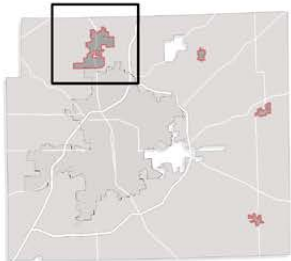
# Future Growth and Development

Huntertown

- Urban Infill Areas
- Unincorporated Development
- Rural and Agricultural Area
- Targeted Growth Area
- Potential Adjacent Growth Area
- Floodplain (FEMA)



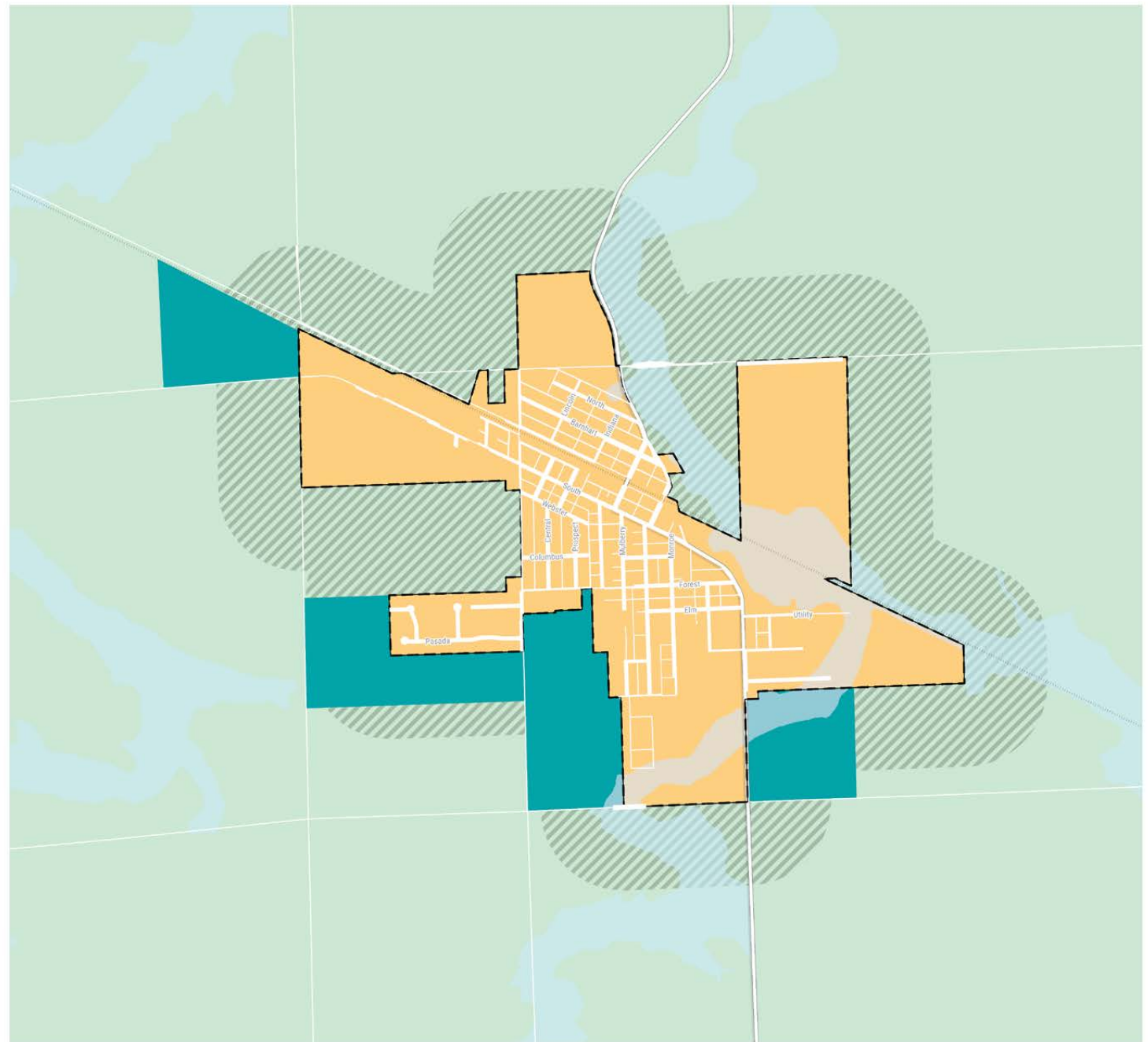
Index Map



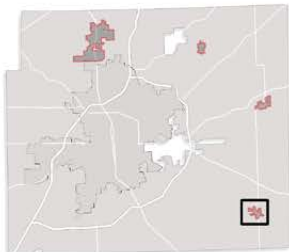
# Future Growth and Development

Monroeville

- Urban Infill Areas
- Rural and Agricultural Area
- Targeted Growth Area
- Potential Adjacent Growth Area
- Floodplain (FEMA)



Index Map

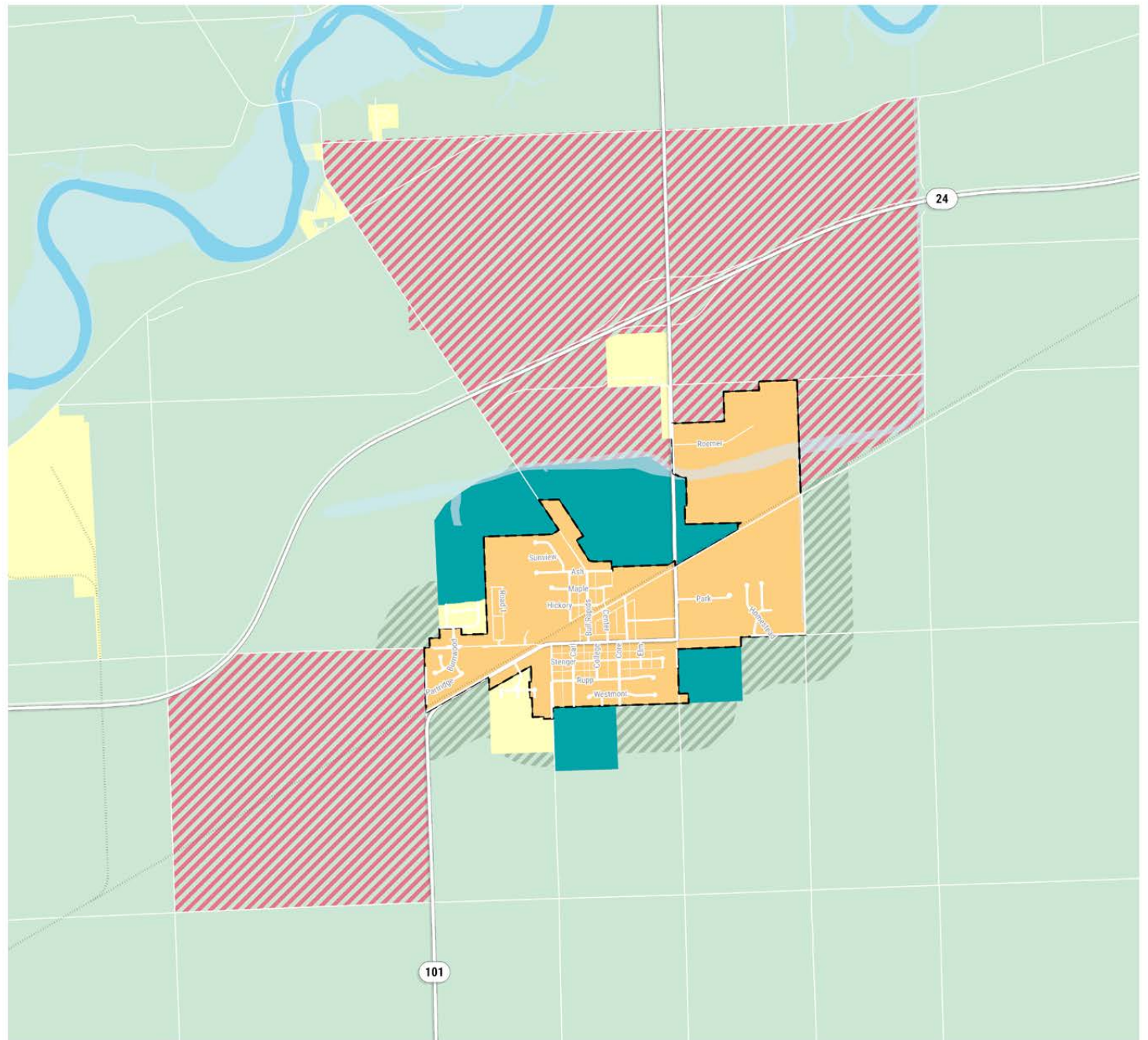
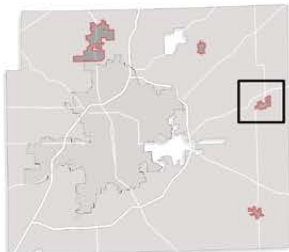


# Future Growth and Development

Woodburn

- Urban Infill Areas
- Unincorporated Development
- Rural and Agricultural Area
- Targeted Growth Area
- Potential Economic Development Growth Area
- Potential Adjacent Growth Area
- Floodplain (FEMA)

Index Map





# Future Growth and Development Goals and Strategies

Allen County's municipalities face few physical constraints to development, allowing for potentially unchecked outward growth and expansion. The following goals and strategies address future growth and development in the Community.

## Goal 1. Encourage compatible infill development and redevelopment in the Urban Infill and Priority Investment Areas.

Infill development occurs when vacant lots, redevelopment sites, or underutilized parcels within areas that are primarily built out are developed. Infill development is desirable because it strengthens established neighborhoods and leverages existing infrastructure; however, it is typically not as easy to accomplish as greenfield development. Constraints such as parcel size and location along with other site conditions can impact the ease of development and building in an active urban environment, creating logistical challenges that are not present in greenfield areas.

Development should be directed toward vacant and underutilized parcels within Fort Wayne and adopting community municipal limits where possible, as identified in the Preferred Growth Approach map ([page. 53](#)). This principle encourages investment in previously developed areas that are already served by utilities, roadways, parks, and open spaces. Infill development should be encouraged through expedited development review, reduced parking requirements, and revising regulations to encourage adaptive reuse.

- 1.1** Explore new zoning classifications, updated development regulations, and other tools to encourage compatible infill development and redevelopment.
- 1.2** Explore modified development review processes to facilitate compatible infill development and redevelopment proposals.
- 1.3** Encourage compatible higher density residential and mixed-use development in infill areas that are near public transit routes, employment centers, institutions, and other amenities.
- 1.4** Focus development and redevelopment initiatives and incentives in the Priority Investment Area to address market gaps and build momentum among private sector property owners and developers.



## Goal 2. Encourage carefully planned, monitored, and compatible outward growth in the Targeted Growth Areas.

Fort Wayne and the adopting municipalities are surrounded by large expanses of agricultural land. Extensive community outreach conducted as part of this planning process indicates a strong desire to preserve these areas—for their ongoing agricultural productivity, for the County's agricultural heritage, and to maintain a clear delineation of where urban areas end and the expansive landscape of agricultural and rural areas begin. While these areas represent opportunities to accommodate new neighborhoods and employment centers, unmanaged growth will lead to the premature development of some of the State's most productive farmland.

Fort Wayne and the adopting municipalities should follow the guidance of the Generalized Future Land Use map, as well as strategies in the subsequent Comprehensive Plan chapters, to promote a balance of contiguous and infill development, limit sprawl, and continue to accommodate denser development patterns. This approach will leverage existing infrastructure and reduce impacts on other public services.

- 2.1** Encourage new development within the Targeted Growth Areas that are contiguous to existing development.
- 2.2** Encourage rezoning petitions for properties that are within the Targeted Growth Areas and are contiguous to existing development.
- 2.3** Encourage development and redevelopment in areas within the Targeted Growth Areas that are served by adequate water, sanitary sewer, and transportation infrastructure.
- 2.4** Discourage development in Targeted Growth Areas that cannot be adequately served by public municipal or private corporate sanitary sewer facilities.



### Goal 3. Encourage carefully planned and monitored growth in the Potential Economic Development Growth Areas.

The Potential Economic Development Growth Areas on the Future Growth and Development map represent targeted areas for high impact and strategic economic development investment in alignment with the Goals of the [Economic Development Chapter](#) and the Allen County Together Economic Development Action Plan. These areas are primarily intended to be developed with business, industrial, production and similar uses.

Targeted development will help to incentivize while continuing to improve the community's ability to grow jobs, wages, and the economy.

- 3.1** Encourage strategically planned economic development investment within the Potential Economic Development Growth Areas that is contiguous to existing development, or that is supported by the Economic Development Chapter and the Allen County Together Economic Development Plan.
- 3.2** Support the development of high impact economic development projects within Potential Economic Development Growth Areas that have the ability to serve as catalyst projects for additional economic growth, with additional consideration given to the overall economic benefits of the new development, such as significant levels of investment, average wages, and job creation.

- 3.3** Encourage development and redevelopment in areas within the Potential Economic Development Growth Areas that are served by adequate water, sanitary sewer, and transportation infrastructure.
- 3.4** Discourage development in Potential Economic Development Growth Areas that cannot be adequately served by public municipal or private corporate sanitary sewer facilities.



## Goal 4. Encourage protection and preservation in the Rural and Agricultural Areas.

While some areas of the County are conducive for development and potential annexation, others should be preserved and protected. Based on the projections for housing growth and the need to better balance outward and infill development, much of unincorporated Allen County should remain as farmland or natural areas throughout the life of the Comprehensive Plan. These areas generally lack physical development other than the presence of agricultural operations and rural residential homes and include natural areas which contain wetlands, ponds and reservoirs, floodplains, wooded areas, and wildlife habitats.

There should be little to no change in the areas identified for agriculture, open space, and natural environments identified in this chapter and on the Generalized Future Land Use map. For agricultural lands, the County has some tools such as its agricultural zoning district to preserve these lands. Additional tools should be identified to preserve these areas in large, contiguous expanses to maintain the critical mass of farms and agricultural land needed to stay economically viable, adapt to modern farming practices, and preserve the agricultural heritage unique to the rural areas of the County.

Natural areas contribute to the County's character while providing green infrastructure by storing and cleaning stormwater, reducing flooding impacts, and creating a natural habitat for native flora and fauna. As a general policy, floodplains, wetlands, and other ecologically important areas should be preserved for their often unseen contribution to resiliency.

The Community should ensure that its natural resources are protected, maintain the complex relationship between natural and man-made surroundings, and improve the quality of the environment. These areas are identified on the Future Growth and Development Map as Rural and Agricultural Areas.

- 4.1** Carefully consider rezoning and use variance requests in Rural and Agricultural Areas, and discourage requests that are not contiguous to existing development and not served by public municipal or private corporate sanitary sewer facilities.
- 4.2** Encourage the development of zoning along with other tools and incentives to encourage the preservation of floodplains, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas.



## Future Land Use

The Community is not homogeneous. It consists of a diverse range of unique places spanning from the urban center of Downtown Fort Wayne to suburban neighborhoods; smaller rural communities of Grabill, Huntertown, Monroeville, and Woodburn along with other incorporated and unincorporated communities; and the open countryside of Allen County. Each of these places has its own history, identity, and character.

Based on extensive community outreach, the Comprehensive Plan promotes sustainable and equitable development coupled with stewardship of the County's natural and agricultural assets and preservation or adaptive reuse in its established neighborhoods.

The Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for preserving and enhancing existing places in the Community while encouraging reinvestment and new development for a sustainable and equitable future. The generalized land use approach will allow the County and local municipalities to partner and plan for desired growth and development. Building on the vision and goals of the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan, land use will take shape through community involvement, neighborhood planning, land use regulation, public investment, private investment, and public-private partnerships.





## Policies

The Land Use Policies connect the Future Growth and Development Framework to the Generalized Future Land Use map. These policies are universally applicable to land use in Allen County, Fort Wayne, and the adopting municipalities.

They apply to all land uses and link the Land Use and Development chapter to the goals and strategies developed for the subsequent chapters of the Plan.

1. Support and promote a diversity of housing types within the applicable land use categories defined in this chapter.
2. Promote complete neighborhoods through sustainable development, preservation, and growth by encouraging and enhancing mixed use neighborhood areas.
3. Encourage updated regulations and other tools to facilitate preservation and adaptive reuse of existing historic assets and improvements to sustain Traditional Neighborhoods and Mixed Residential areas.
4. Nonresidential development which is adjacent to residential neighborhoods should be limited to lower intensity neighborhood commercial uses.
5. Enhance and preserve existing mixed urban commercial corridors through the application of Mixed Urban Corridor or other appropriate zoning classification.
6. Transform key suburban corridors over time into mixed use areas with housing, neighborhood-oriented retail, public spaces, walkable public realms, and transit service.
7. Encourage compatible adaptive reuse of vacant, obsolete, or underutilized nonresidential buildings.

## Future Land Use Categories

A generalized land use category is a collection of land uses that work together to establish the character of an area or multiple parcels of land. This approach is not focused solely on uses for specific parcels but is concerned with the collective mix of uses that establish a place within the Fort Wayne and Allen County community. The generalized land use approach supports the full potential of vacant and undeveloped properties by allowing them to draw on different types of land uses. The creation of places not only depends on land uses, but also on their specific design, functionality, access to infrastructure and services, and overall character.

The All In Allen Plan defines generalized future land use and development using 20 generalized land use categories. The categories, as shown on the Generalized Future Land Use map, include

- Economic Development Transitional Area
- Future Complete Neighborhood Area
- Rural Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Mixed Urban Commercial Corridor
- Mixed Suburban Commercial Corridor
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Downtown
- Town Center
- Business and Office Park
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Production Center
- Airport
- Utility

## Compatibility

Compatibility involves the relationships between the design and characteristics of a development request and the surrounding land uses. As rezoning, development, or other use requests are submitted, the generalized land use categories will be used to help provide guidance with regard to potential compatibility issues.

Requests may be considered compatible (similar or complementary to surrounding uses); potentially compatible (complementary to surrounding uses with additional mitigation or consideration); or potentially incompatible (dissimilar or conflicting with surrounding uses).

Since the Plan promotes a diversity of housing types and encourages complete neighborhood areas with a mix of housing and walkable neighborhood-oriented uses, compatibility will be an important consideration in the review of development requests. While certain proposed adjacent uses could be considered compatible without additional mitigation, higher-intensity non-residential uses may be potentially compatible with additional considerations such as the following:

- Use limitations
- Building design (height, location, mass, setbacks, size)
- Enhanced landscaping and buffer yards
- Improved access (traffic considerations)
- Enhanced connectivity (trails, sidewalks, neighborhood interconnections)

A compatibility matrix ([page 213](#)) has been developed to provide additional guidance on these issues.

## Purpose of the Map

The Generalized Future Land Use map is a tool to guide future development within Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the adopting municipalities. It will be applied through day-to-day decision-making to help implement the Plan for the physical growth of the Community.

## Use of the Generalized Future Land Use Map

The Generalized Future Land Use map should be part of the review and decision-making process for Board of Zoning Appeals requests, Plan Commission rezoning requests, and development proposals. It should be used by City and County staff in project and proposal reviews and recommendations. The map should guide the development and implementation of neighborhood, subarea, and capital improvement plans for investment in systems, such as parks, sewer, transportation, and other infrastructure and services. By using the Generalized Future Land Use map as a guide, elected and appointed officials and staff can help ensure that decisions align with the Community's vision for future growth. The map should also be readily available to the development community and the public for review.

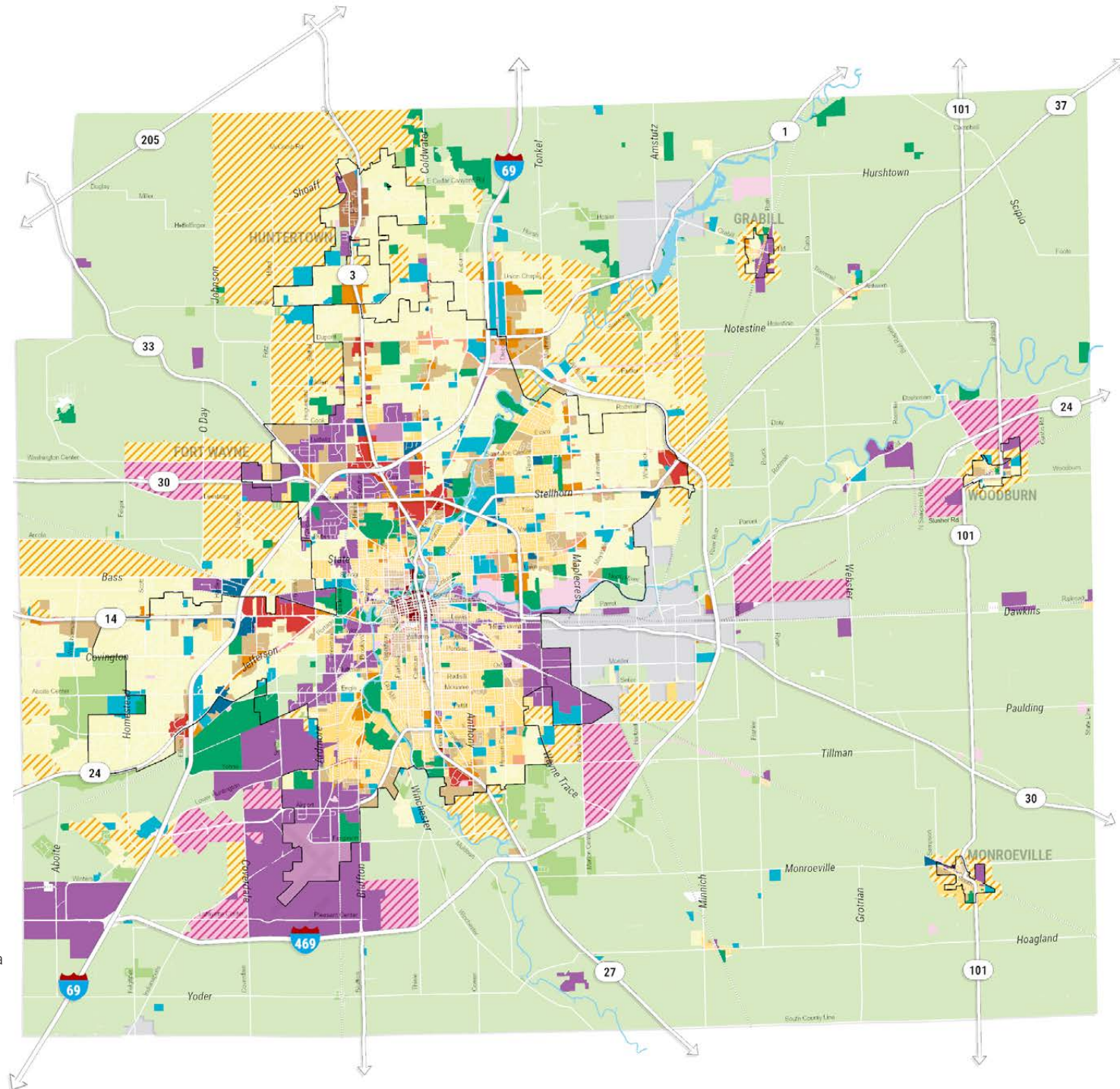
For the Generalized Future Land Use map to continue to be a relevant tool in guiding decision making, development projects and trends should be consistently monitored and a process for regular review and update of this map should be established.

# Generalized Future Land Use

The All In Allen Comprehensive Plan defines future land use and development using 20 generalized land use categories. Future amendments to this map should be evaluated on a regular basis (at least biannually).

## Generalized Future Land Use

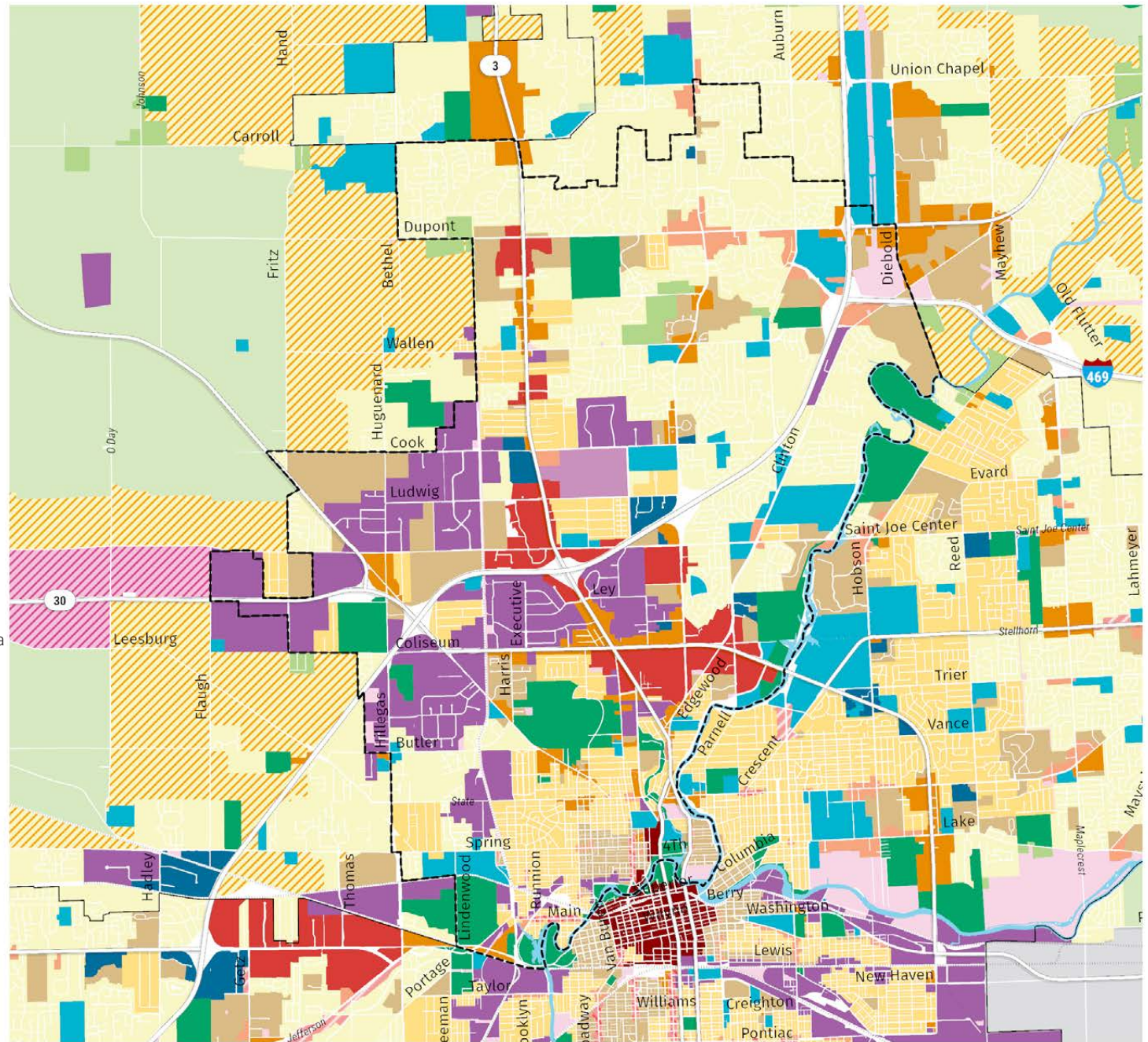
- Rural Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Mixed Urban Commercial Corridor
- Mixed Suburban Commercial Corridor
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Downtown
- Town Center
- Business and Office Park
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Production Center
- Airport
- Utility
- Economic Development Transitional Area
- Future Complete Neighborhood Area



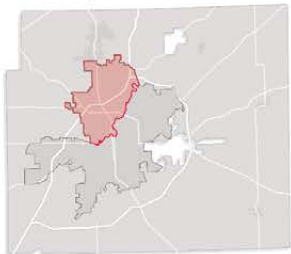
# Generalized Future Land Use

## Fort Wayne NW Quadrant

- Rural Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Mixed Urban Commercial Corridor
- Mixed Suburban Commercial Corridor
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Downtown
- Business and Office Park
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Production Center
- Airport
- Utility
- Economic Development Transitional Area
- Future Complete Neighborhood Area



### Index Map

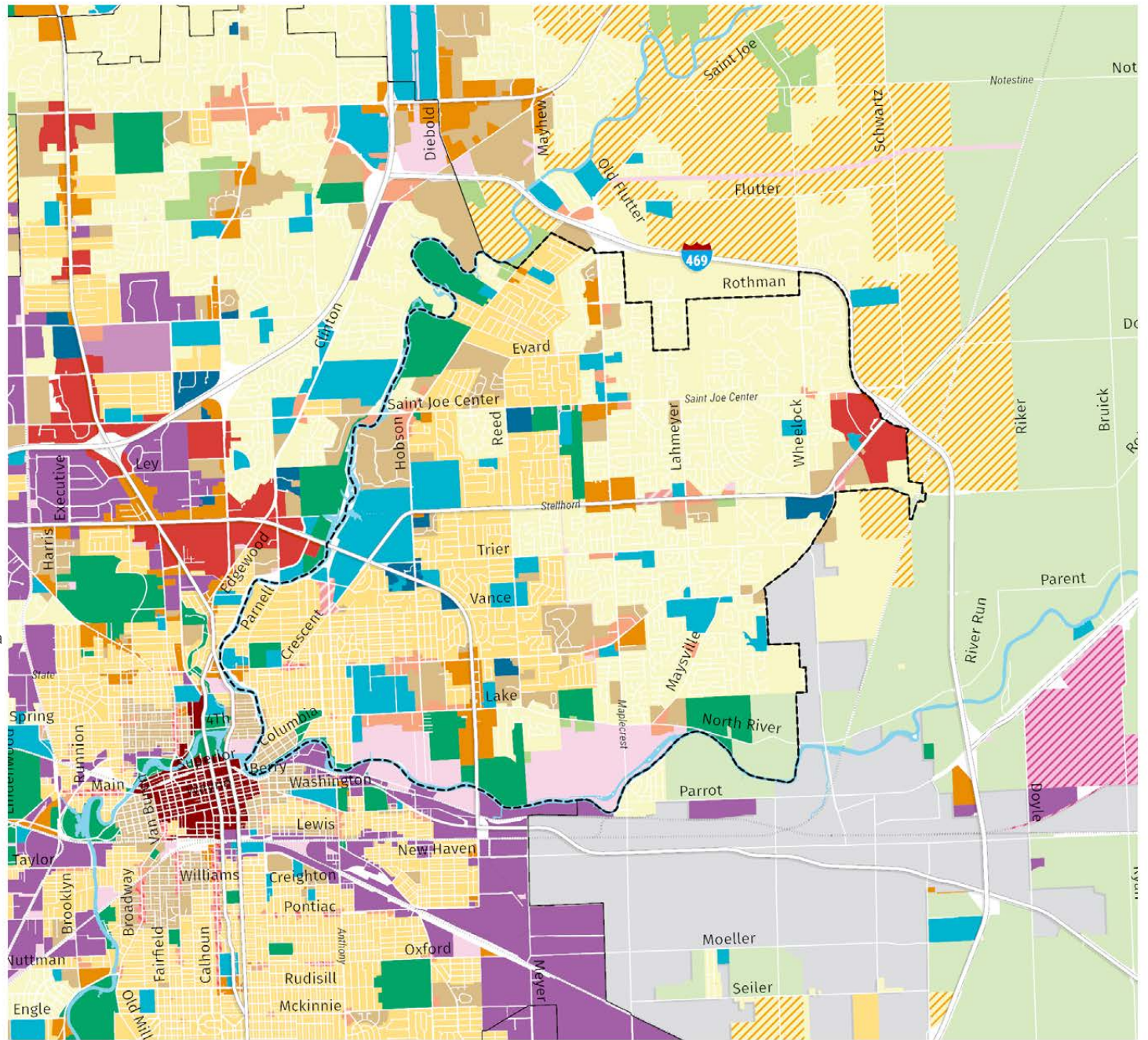


# Generalized Future Land Use

## Fort Wayne NE Quadrant

- Rural Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Mixed Urban Commercial Corridor
- Mixed Suburban Commercial Corridor
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Downtown
- Business and Office Park
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Production Center
- Airport
- Utility
- Economic Development Transitional Area
- Future Complete Neighborhood Area

### Index Map

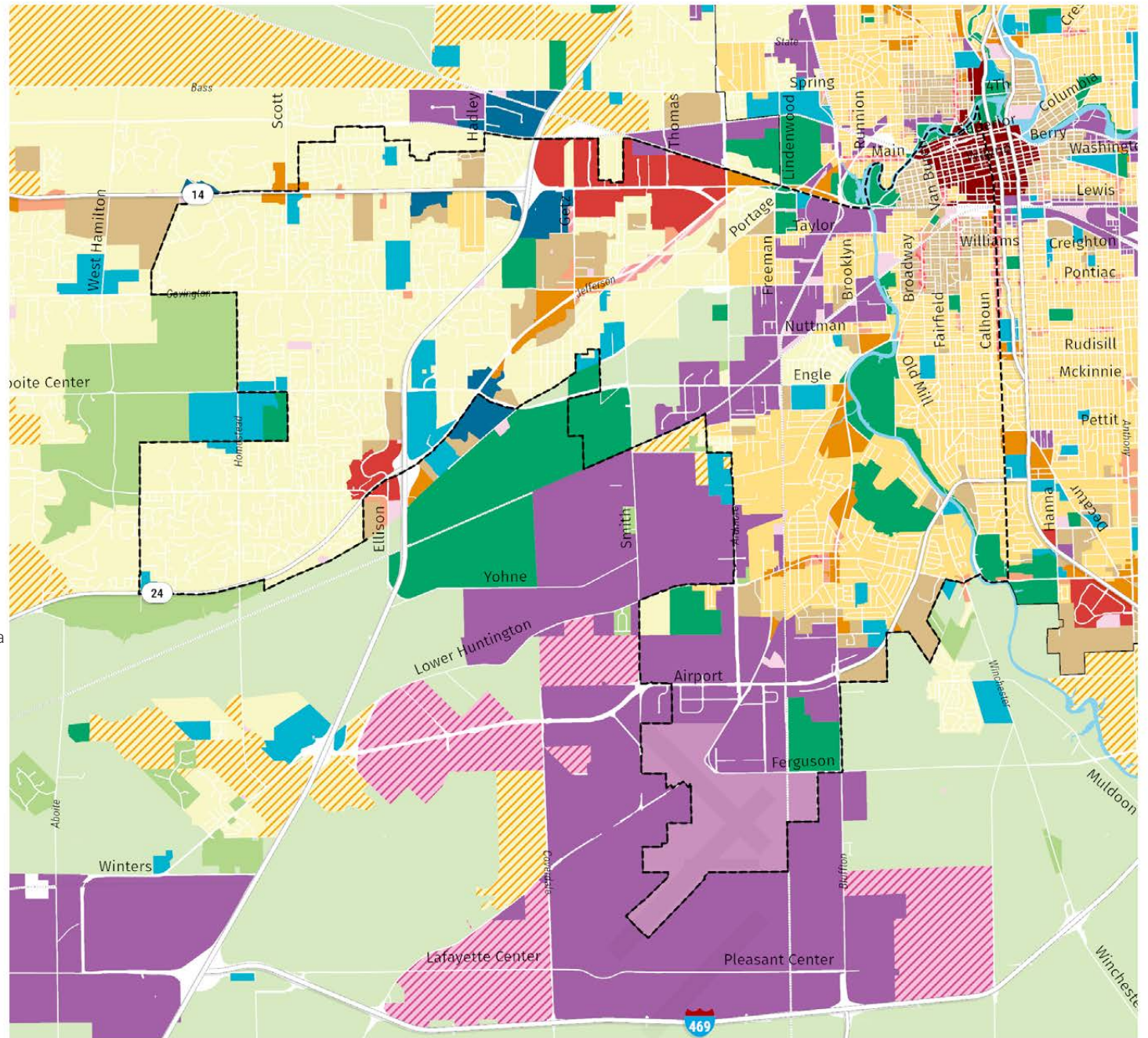
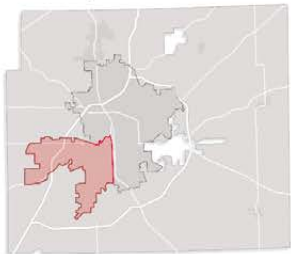


# Generalized Future Land Use

## Fort Wayne SW Quadrant

- Rural Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Mixed Urban Commercial Corridor
- Mixed Suburban Commercial Corridor
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Downtown
- Business and Office Park
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Production Center
- Airport
- Utility
- Economic Development Transitional Area
- Future Complete Neighborhood Area

### Index Map

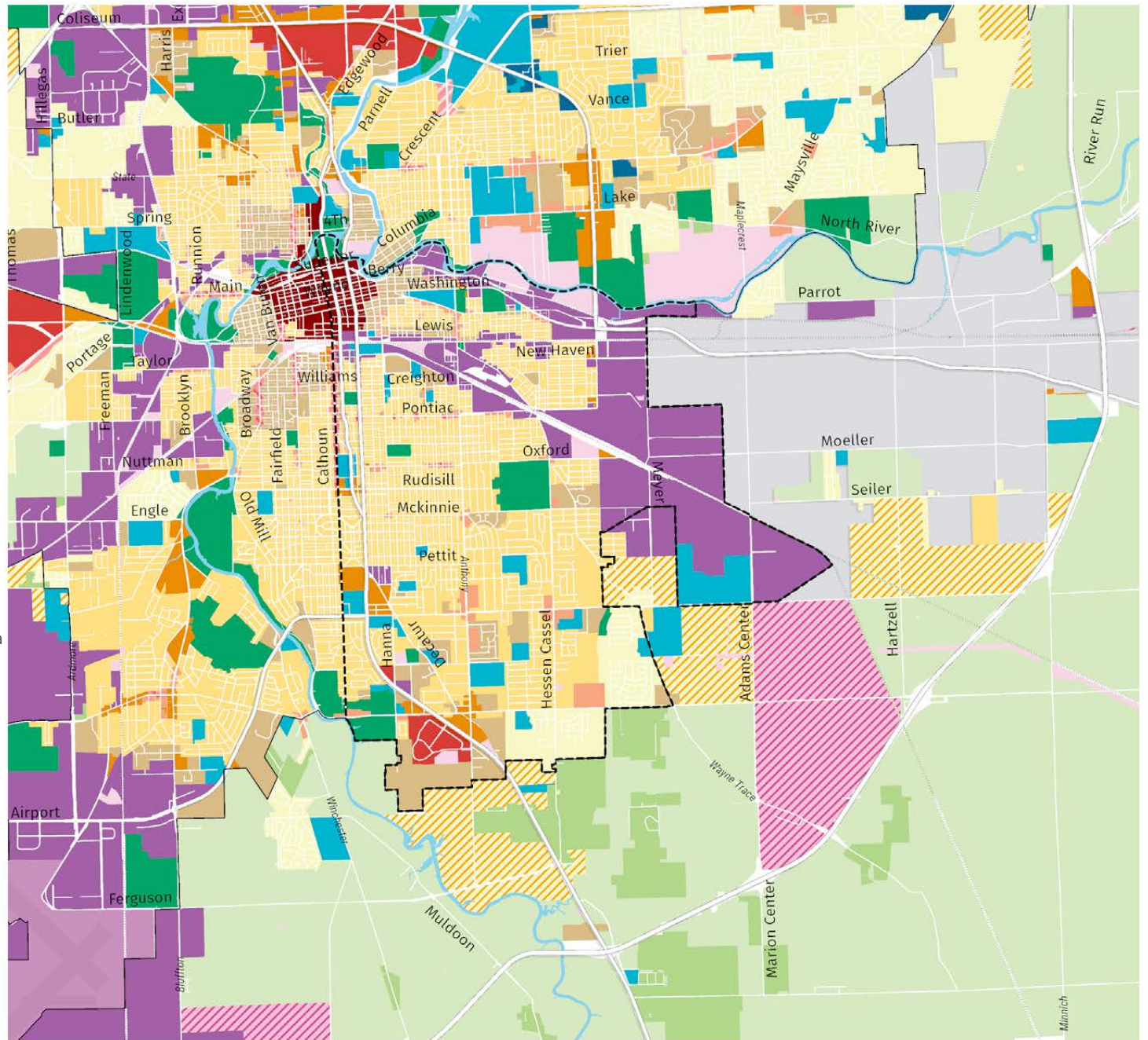


# Generalized Future Land Use

## Fort Wayne SE Quadrant

- Rural Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Mixed Urban Commercial Corridor
- Mixed Suburban Commercial Corridor
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Downtown
- Business and Office Park
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Production Center
- Airport
- Utility
- Economic Development Transitional Area
- Future Complete Neighborhood Area

### Index Map



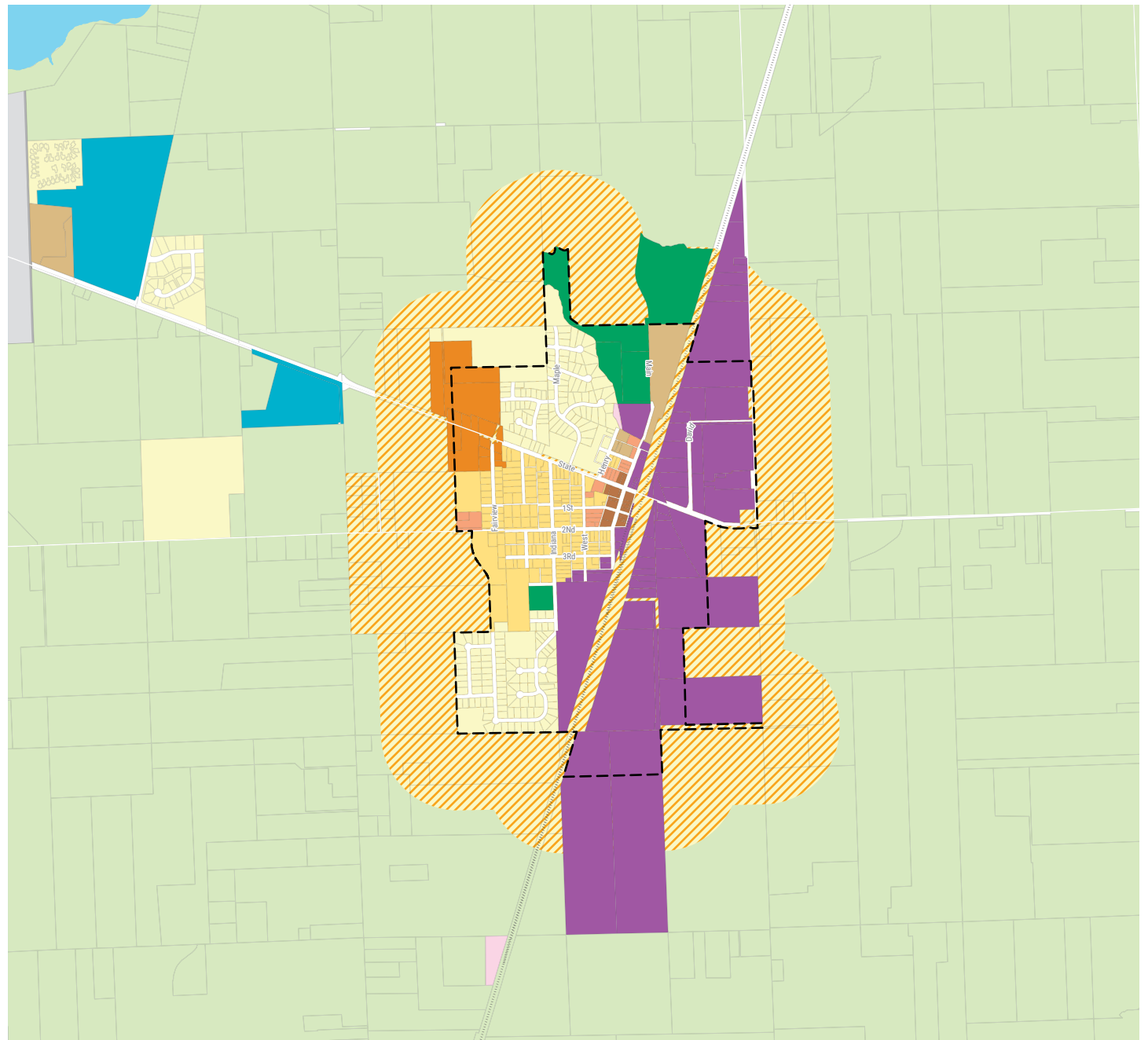
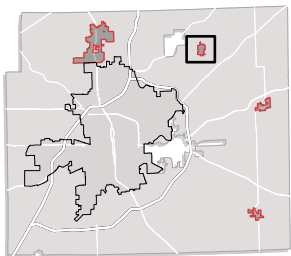
# Generalized Future Land Use

Grabill

## Generalized Future Land Use

- Rural Agricultural
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Town Center
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Production Center
- Utility
- Future Complete Neighborhood Area

## Index Map



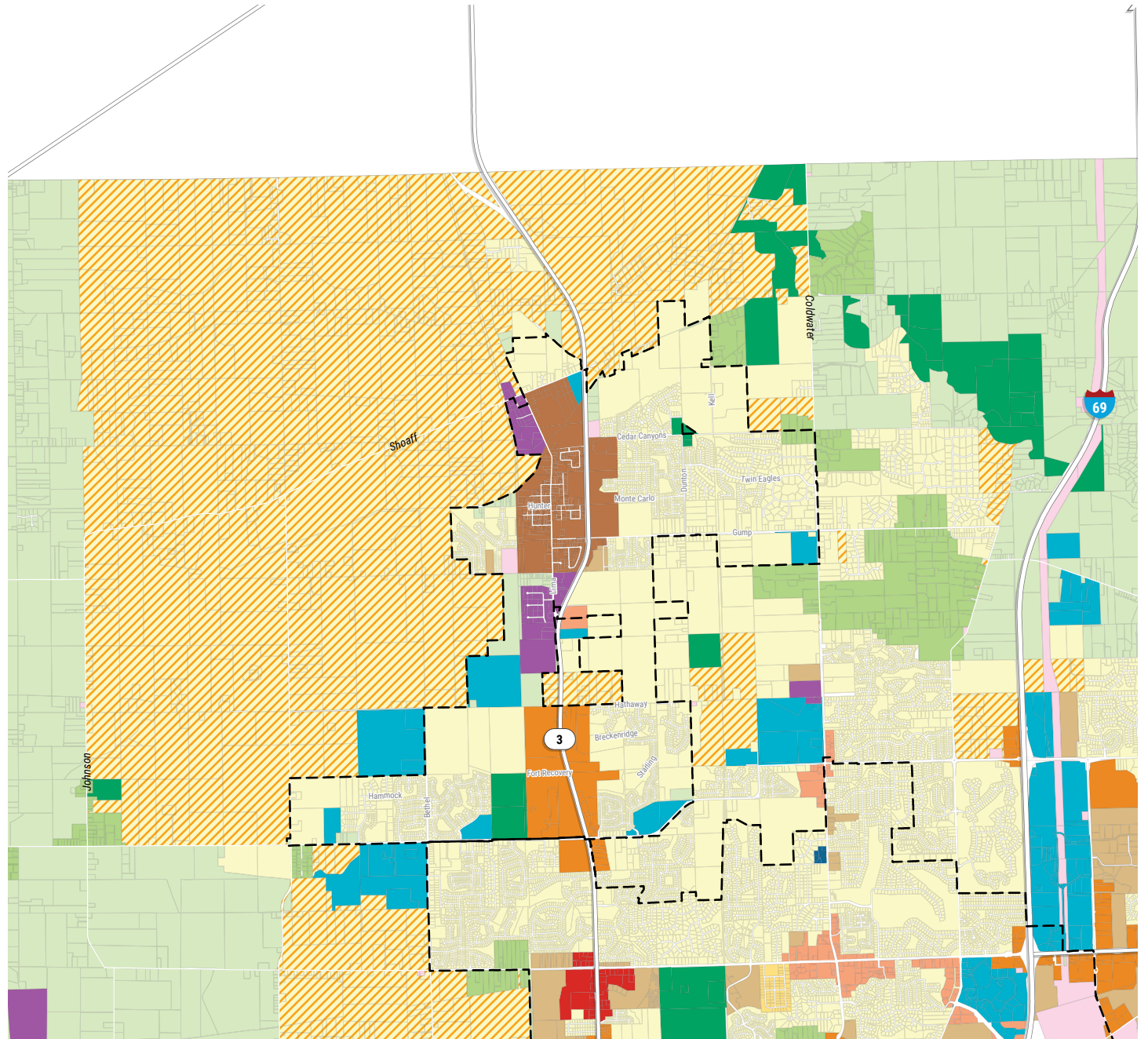
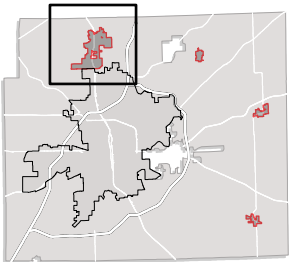
# Generalized Future Land Use

Huntertown

## Generalized Future Land Use

- Rural Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Town Center
- Business and Office Park
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Production Center
- Utility
- Future Complete Neighborhood Area

## Index Map

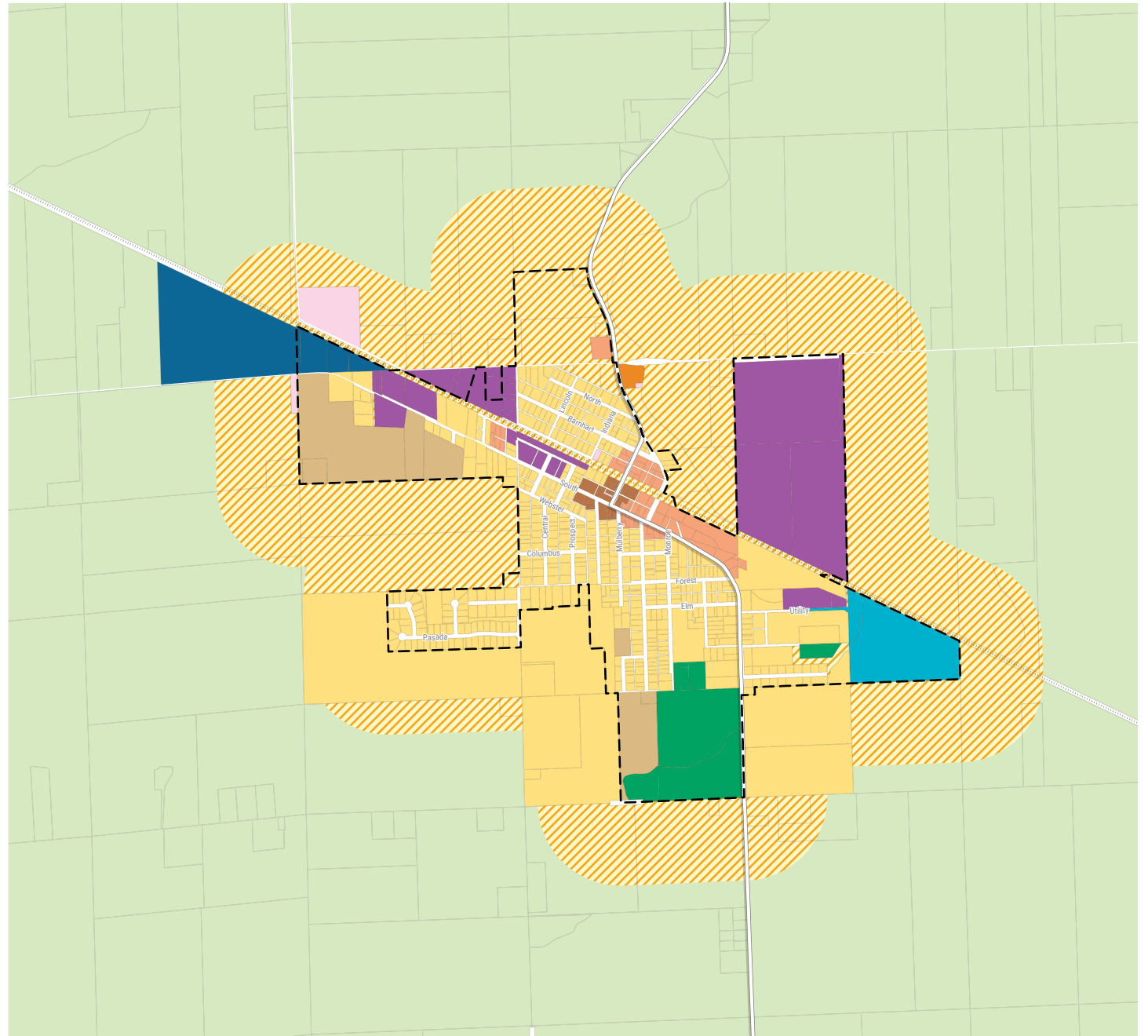


# Generalized Future Land Use

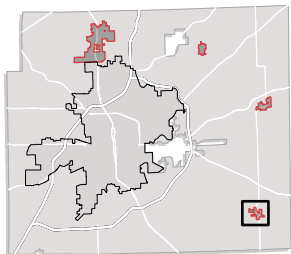
Monroeville

## Generalized Future Land Use

- Rural Agricultural
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Town Center
- Business and Office Park
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Production Center
- Utility
- Future Complete Neighborhood Area



## Index Map



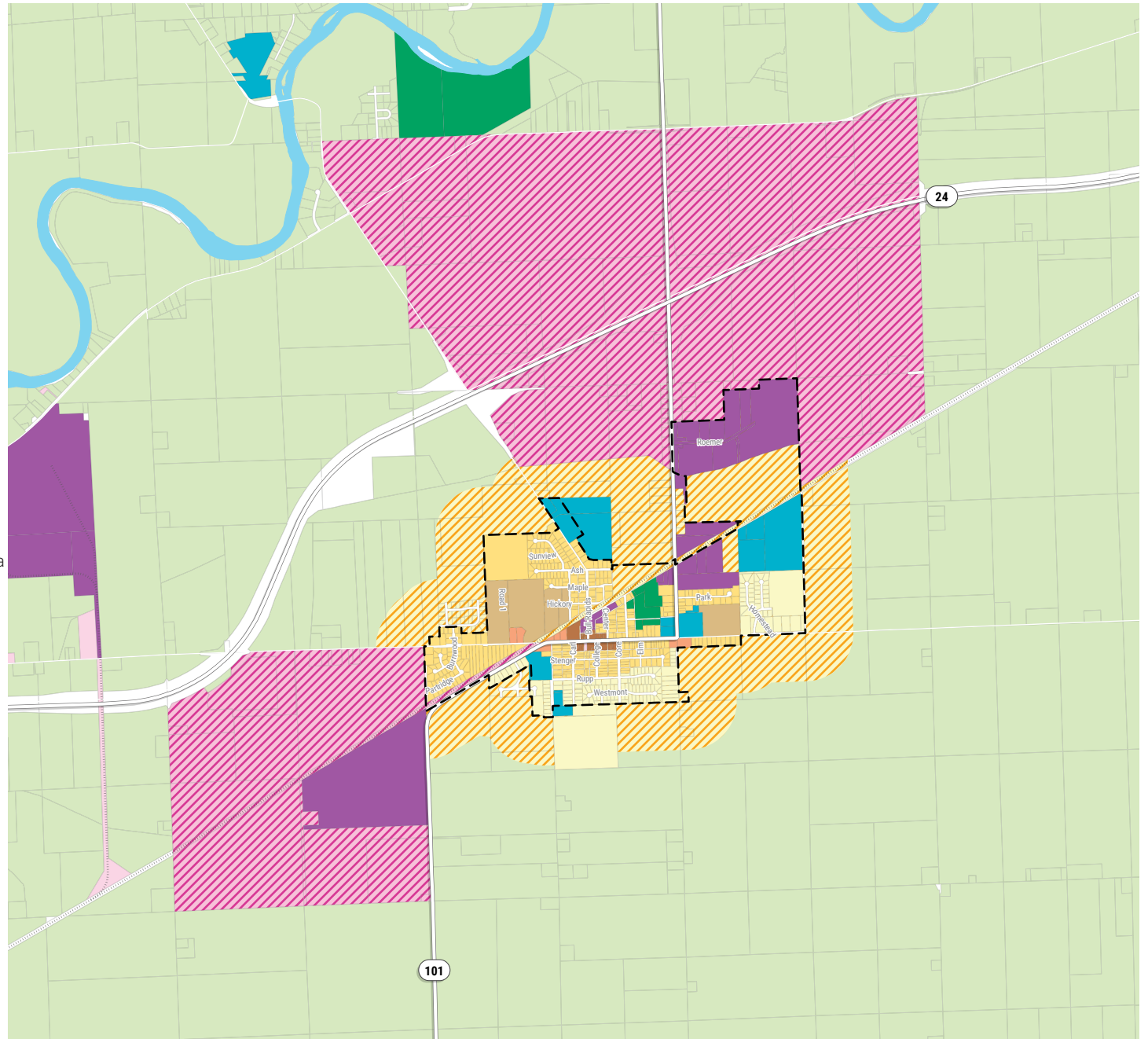
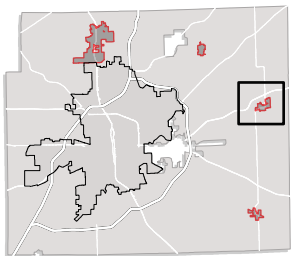
# Generalized Future Land Use

Woodburn

## Generalized Future Land Use

- Rural Agricultural
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Town Center
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Production Center
- Utility
- Economic Development Transitional Area
- Future Complete Neighborhood Area

## Index Map





## Rural Agricultural

The Rural Agricultural Generalized Land Use category supports the County's established agricultural and rural identity and character. Rural agricultural land is actively used for farming; agricultural and dairy operations; cropland for producing food such as soybeans, corn, and wheat; and raising livestock such as chickens, cows, and pigs. Supporting land uses such as feed mills, dairy supplies, rural manufacturing businesses, poultry processing, greenhouses and produce markets, and other businesses including agritourism, parks and open spaces, preserved natural areas, religious institutions, and schools are included in this land use. Rural Agricultural areas make up the largest land use in the County by area despite having the lowest population. Allen County has over 280,000 acres of land in farms and the average farm size in 2017 was 182 acres. There are pockets of rural manufacturing areas within Allen County's Amish communities, such as furniture and cabinetry production, and construction trades. These areas are important to these communities by providing opportunities for additional income to Amish families which is not farm-related.

Due to both past and current trends of increased development, a significant amount of productive agricultural land with prime characteristics in Allen County is at risk of being converted to nonagricultural uses. As growth occurs, the development of agricultural land should align with the Generalized Future Land Use map to preserve the County's valuable agricultural areas and heritage.

### Primary Land Uses

- Agriculture and Farming

### Secondary Land Uses

- Agricultural-Related Industries and Processing
- Farm-Supporting Businesses
- Low Density Single Family Detached Residential
- Rural Manufacturing Businesses





## Rural Residential

The Rural Residential Generalized Land Use category supports the rural character of the County and provides for low intensity residential areas within the broader agricultural landscape. Development patterns consist of clusters of single family homes on larger lots. Rural residential areas typically rely on wells and septic systems and have previously been subdivided as unplanned individual home sites. Significant growth is not anticipated in rural residential areas. This land use should provide a level of development consistent with existing low density and low intensity single family areas allowing additional uses where sanitary sewer infrastructure is available. Supporting land uses could include religious institutions and small-scale recreational facilities.

### *Primary Land Uses*

- Low Density Single Family Detached Residential

### *Secondary Land Uses*

- Agriculture and Farming
- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Parks and Open Space
- Preserved Natural Areas
- Recreational Facilities
- Religious Institutions
- Schools





## Traditional Neighborhood

The Traditional Neighborhood Generalized Land Use category consists of Allen County's older established single-family neighborhoods along with newer neighborhoods with higher densities and connected streets. This land use ranges from existing urban and some suburban neighborhoods to pockets of close-knit homes in rural communities. Many existing traditional neighborhoods were built before 1970.

Traditional Neighborhood land uses should feature homes in a gridded or connected block pattern lined with sidewalks and trees. Land uses should primarily include single family detached homes along with supporting uses, such as religious institutions, schools, civic and cultural facilities, and neighborhood parks.

Traditional neighborhoods may also include single-family attached homes, duplexes, and some smaller multi-family buildings that are consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Smaller clusters of neighborhood-oriented commercial uses along with offices and personal service uses, often at the corners of or along higher traffic streets such as collectors and minor arterials, may be interspersed throughout these neighborhoods.

### *Primary Land Uses*

- Single-Family Detached Residential

### *Secondary Land Uses*

- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Low-Intensity, Neighborhood-Scale Retail
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Parks and Open Space
- Professional Office and Personal Services
- Religious Institutions
- Schools
- Single-Family Attached Residential





## Suburban Neighborhood

The Suburban Neighborhood Generalized Land Use category is characterized by predominantly residential areas with single-family detached housing. Curvilinear streets, cul-de-sacs, and integrated open spaces are typical features of Suburban Neighborhoods. This land use consists primarily of single-family neighborhoods constructed on previously undeveloped or agricultural land. Supporting uses such as religious institutions, civic and cultural facilities, schools, and parks can also be found within and adjacent to Suburban Neighborhood areas. Most existing Suburban Neighborhoods are single-use development areas primarily developed after the mid-1970's in areas that were on the periphery of Fort Wayne, with isolated pockets within and adjacent to other incorporated and unincorporated communities in the County. Newer suburban neighborhood streets typically contain sidewalks and street lighting.

Suburban Neighborhood land uses should consist of primarily single-family homes in planned subdivisions or development areas, located with access to nearby employment areas, neighborhood commercial development, offices and personal services, civic, cultural, and religious institutions, schools, and parks.

New suburban neighborhoods may also include single-family attached homes and duplexes that are consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Streets should be connected where feasible and contain amenities such as sidewalks and street lighting. Supporting uses such as civic, cultural, and religious institutions, schools, and parks should be incorporated near or within neighborhood areas. Future suburban neighborhoods should also be located adjacent to existing developed areas with pedestrian and vehicular connectivity to those adjacent developed areas whenever feasible.

### **Primary Land Uses**

- Single-Family Detached Residential

### **Secondary Land Uses**

- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Parks and Open Space
- Religious Institutions
- Schools
- Single-Family Attached Residential





## Mixed Residential

The Mixed Residential Generalized Land Use category offers an opportunity for Allen County and the adopting municipalities to create desirable, connected, and complete neighborhoods with a mix of housing types and densities. Mixed Residential contributes to housing diversity by providing a wide variety of housing types. The largest concentrations of existing Mixed Residential areas are in the City of Fort Wayne.

Mixed Residential land uses should include a blend of diverse housing types. Land uses include neighborhoods with single-family detached, single-family attached, stand-alone multi-family structures, new planned developments that include duplexes, triplexes and townhomes, nursing homes and assisted living facilities, and manufactured home subdivisions. Supporting land uses may include mixed-use buildings, restaurants, religious institutions, schools, civic and cultural facilities, neighborhood parks, and neighborhood-oriented commercial uses, including office and personal service uses. Mixed Residential land uses are appropriate for increasing density and activity in and near commercial areas and employment centers throughout the County, including the adopting municipalities.

### Primary Land Uses

- Manufactured Home Subdivisions
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Single-Family Attached Residential
- Single-Family Detached Residential

### Secondary Land Uses

- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Low-Intensity, Neighborhood-Scale Retail
- Parks and Open Space
- Professional Office and Personal Services
- Religious Institutions
- Schools





## Commercial Corridors

Commercial Corridors are characterized by a linear pattern of neighborhood-oriented professional office, personal service and retail uses along with a mix of residential uses concentrated along sections of higher traffic transportation corridors surrounded by residential neighborhoods. The mix of uses along with their linear nature differentiates commercial corridors from larger commercial nodes, Downtown Fort Wayne, and the town centers of the adopting municipalities. In some instances, commercial corridors were historically residential but are transitioning due to increased traffic volumes and development trends.

### *Mixed Urban Commercial Corridor*

The Mixed Urban Commercial Corridor Generalized Land Use should include moderate- and high-density developments, incorporating a mix of residential and pedestrian-oriented commercial uses in vertical mixed-use patterns concentrated along established or transitioning urban corridors. Ground floor uses should focus on personal service and neighborhood-oriented commercial uses that serve the daily needs of adjacent neighborhoods. Residential development is encouraged on the upper floors of new or existing buildings but can also exist as a primary use. These corridors should be served by public transit, connected to adjacent Traditional and Mixed-Use Neighborhoods, and prioritize a pedestrian-oriented, bike-friendly environment.

### *Mixed Suburban Commercial Corridor*

The Mixed Suburban Commercial Corridor Generalized Land Use should include low- to moderate-density developments in mixed-use patterns. These corridors should provide access to goods and services in high-traffic areas, with diverse land uses in proximity to each other. Because these areas were historically residential and are transitioning, single-family and multiple-family buildings may intersperse with personal service and neighborhood-oriented commercial uses. This land use serves the daily needs of nearby suburban neighborhoods. These corridors will be accessible primarily by motor vehicles but should also prioritize pedestrian and multimodal access and connectivity to adjacent Suburban Residential and Mixed-Use Neighborhoods.

### *Primary Land Uses*

- Entertainment
- Low- to Moderate-Intensity Business, Service, and Retail
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Professional Office and Personal Services
- Single-Family Attached Residential
- Single-Family Detached Residential
- Two-Family Residential

### *Secondary Land Uses*

- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Religious Institutions
- Schools



## Neighborhood Commercial

The Neighborhood Commercial Generalized Land Use consists of clusters of commercial businesses within or adjacent to residential neighborhoods that provide goods and services to nearby residents. These areas function as neighborhood anchors, creating focal points of activity. Neighborhood Commercial Generalized Land Uses offer the potential for pedestrian-oriented development and connectivity to adjacent neighborhood areas.

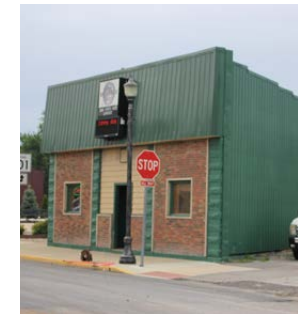
Neighborhood Commercial land uses should include a mix of local professional offices, personal service, and neighborhood-oriented commercial uses. Supporting land uses should include integrated amenities such as religious institutions, small parks, schools, civic and cultural facilities, and multiple-family buildings.

### *Primary Land Uses*

- Low- to Moderate-Intensity Business, Service, and Retail
- Professional Office and Personal Services

### *Secondary Land Uses*

- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Parks and Open Space
- Religious Institutions
- Schools





## Community Commercial

The Community Commercial Generalized Land Use consists of medium to large clusters of commercial businesses providing a mix of day-to-day necessities as well as destination-oriented and specialized goods and services. These areas generally attract consumers from multiple neighborhoods in the immediate area.

Community Commercial land uses should include a mix of local and national business retail and service providers, professional and personal service uses, automobile-related uses, and entertainment uses. Supporting land uses may include religious institutions, schools, civic and cultural facilities, and multiple-family buildings. Community Commercial generalized land uses should be located at the intersection of higher traffic streets which act as primary routes through the surrounding areas, such as arterials.

### *Primary Land Uses*

- High-Intensity Business, Service, and Retail
- Professional Office and Personal Services

### *Secondary Land Uses*

- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Parks and Open Space
- Religious Institutions
- Schools





## Regional Commercial

The Regional Commercial Generalized Land Use consists of large concentrations of commercial businesses offering a diverse range of commercial options for day-to-day necessities, destination and specialized goods and services, and more expensive and niche items that represent significant purchases for consumers, such as cars and appliances. These areas have the greatest market draw of any commercial land use, attracting consumers from throughout Allen County and the North-eastern Indiana region. Due to the size and intensity of Regional Commercial land uses, they should be located at the intersections of major roadways and urban arterials and have access to regional transportation systems such as interstates and freeways. Regional Commercial areas are primarily accessed by car but should contain pedestrian amenities and pedestrian connections to adjacent residential areas.

Regional Commercial land uses should include the full spectrum of commercial businesses—national retailers and big-box stores, professional and personal service uses, automobile-related uses and entertainment uses. These should generally be concentrated in multi-tenant shopping centers with integrated gathering spaces and entertainment uses that function as focal points for activity. Supporting land uses may include religious institutions, schools, civic and cultural facilities, and multiple-family buildings.

### **Primary Land Uses**

- Moderate- to Large-Format Multiple-User Business, Service, and Retail

### **Secondary Land Uses**

- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Religious Institutions
- Schools





## Downtown Fort Wayne

Downtown Fort Wayne is the urban core of Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the region. The Downtown Generalized Land Use is pedestrian-oriented with sidewalk and streetscape enhancements, creating an important shared space for Fort Wayne and Allen County that takes on numerous different roles. Key amongst these is a regional destination for tourism that strongly influences visitors' impressions of Fort Wayne and Allen County. Downtown is defined by a prominent urban character and built form, featuring high-rise buildings located at or near the sidewalk, consistent street walls that provide a sense of enclosure, and mixed-use development.

Downtown land uses should be intermixed, including urbanized high-density residential, professional offices, retail stores, restaurants and cafés, museums, entertainment and hospitality venues, and a large concentration of civic, cultural, and institutional facilities. Together, these should continue to comprise Fort Wayne's downtown area and act as a regional destination, employment hub, and focal point for entertainment and activity in Allen County and Northeast Indiana.

### Primary Uses

- Business, Service, and Retail
- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Entertainment and Hospitality
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Professional Office and Personal Services
- Religious Institutions

### Secondary Uses

- Parks and Open Space
- Recreational Facilities
- Schools





## Town Center

Town Centers are intended to be the “downtowns” for the adopting municipalities of Grabill, Huntertown, Monroeville, and Woodburn. Town Centers anchor the Community and provide focal points for activities, acting as areas of focus for ways to strengthen local economies and build on local assets. This land use provides residents in the adopting municipalities vital access to goods, services, and public facilities and serves as the cultural anchor for the Community. Town Centers are pedestrian-oriented with sidewalk and streetscape enhancements, creating an important shared space for area residents.

Town Center land uses are intended to be the densest areas of development and include a pedestrian-oriented mix of residential, local retail and service providers, stores, and offices. Supporting local community amenities such as religious institutions, small parks, schools, and civic and cultural facilities are included.

### Primary Uses

- Business, Service, and Retail
- Entertainment
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Professional Office and Personal Services

### Secondary Uses

- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Parks and Open Space
- Religious Institutions





## Business and Office Park

The Business and Office Park Generalized Land Use includes a mix of professional office and personal service uses; medical, technology, and research facilities; and limited intensity industrial uses. This generalized land use can include planned developments with internal multi-modal connectivity and access to integrated or nearby commercial uses.

Business and office park uses should consist of high-quality development with internal pedestrian connectivity to nearby residential subdivisions and commercial development. Supporting uses may include low- to moderate-intensity service and retail uses. This category may serve as a buffer between residential uses and higher intensity commercial or industrial uses.

### Primary Uses

- Professional Office and Personal Services
- Medical, Technology, and Research
- Limited Intensity Industrial

### Secondary Uses

- Low- to Moderate-Intensity Service and Retail

## Institutional

The Institutional Generalized Land Use includes a mix of institutional and civic-based uses that function as centers for healthcare, culture, and education in Allen County. Institutional land uses include universities and larger public schools, hospitals and medical centers, civic buildings and community facilities, and appropriate supporting uses such as retail, restaurants, multiple family buildings, and parks and open spaces. The Institutional category also includes office buildings affiliated with nearby institutions such as universities and regional hospitals. Institutional land uses should be located throughout Fort Wayne and Allen County with good vehicular and pedestrian access to adjacent streets and residential areas. These areas should include landscaping, public spaces, signage, and other amenities to make them attractive and comfortable.

### Primary Uses

- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Hospitals and Medical Centers
- Professional Office and Personal Services
- Religious Institutions
- Schools

### Secondary Uses

- Business, Service, and Retail
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Parks and Open Space



## Production Center

The Production Center Generalized Land Use consists of areas dedicated to manufacturing, packaging, assembly, warehousing, and distribution of goods and materials. Collectively, businesses located in these areas are some of the largest employers in the County and contribute significantly to job opportunities and community economic development. Production Center land uses are dispersed throughout the County, including a handful of major employers in unincorporated Allen County and near the Fort Wayne International Airport, as well as concentrations of smaller businesses in northern and western Fort Wayne, and in or near the adopting municipalities of Grabill, Hometown, Monroeville, and Woodburn.

Production Center land uses should include a mix of limited, general, and intensive industrial uses, as well as office and high-intensity commercial uses, manufacturing, technology, and warehousing. The built form and character of these areas will continue to be determined by the nature of specific operations, which can include outdoor storage, storage tanks, and high-intensity outdoor activities. As a result, Production Centers can produce noise, smell, pollution, and congestion that may be incompatible with adjacent lower intensity land uses. To mitigate possible off-site impacts, Production Center land uses should be buffered by less intensive industrial or commercial uses, along with adequate screening and buffering.

### Primary Uses

- General Industrial
- Intensive Industrial
- Railroad, Freight, and Transportation-Related Facilities

### Secondary Uses

- High-Intensity Business, Service, and Retail
- Limited-Intensity Industrial
- Medical, Technology, and Research
- Outdoor Storage
- Professional Office and Personal Services
- Utility Facilities

## Airport

The Airport Generalized Land Use is dedicated to airport facilities and operations. The Fort Wayne International Airport (FWA) in southern Fort Wayne accommodates both passenger flights and freight transport. Smith Field Airport (SMD) in northern Fort Wayne accommodates general aviation, such as flight instruction, air tourism, and private flights.

The relationship of the Airport Land Use to adjacent uses is critical to ensuring safe airport operations. The Airport Land Use should continue to be for both public and commercial-service airport operations with regional and national passenger jet capacity. The land use includes ground facilities, such as terminals, hangars, runways, and parking. Supporting uses include airport-related commercial, hospitality, freight, logistics, and industrial uses, along with additional airport-compatible industrial uses.

### Primary Uses

- Aviation Uses, Runways, and Terminals

### Secondary Uses

- Airport-Related Hospitality, Commercial, and Industrial
- Freight and Transportation-Related Facilities



## Open Space

The Open Space Generalized Land Use prioritizes preserving and protecting Allen County's significant natural areas, as well as community parks and outdoor recreational facilities such as athletic fields, golf courses, and trails that draw both residents and regional visitors. Open Space is essential to making Allen County a desirable place to live as these areas allow for active and passive recreation as well as healthy lifestyles. Open Spaces should beautify the Community through greenery and preserve natural habitats and environmentally sensitive areas, such as wetlands and floodplains.

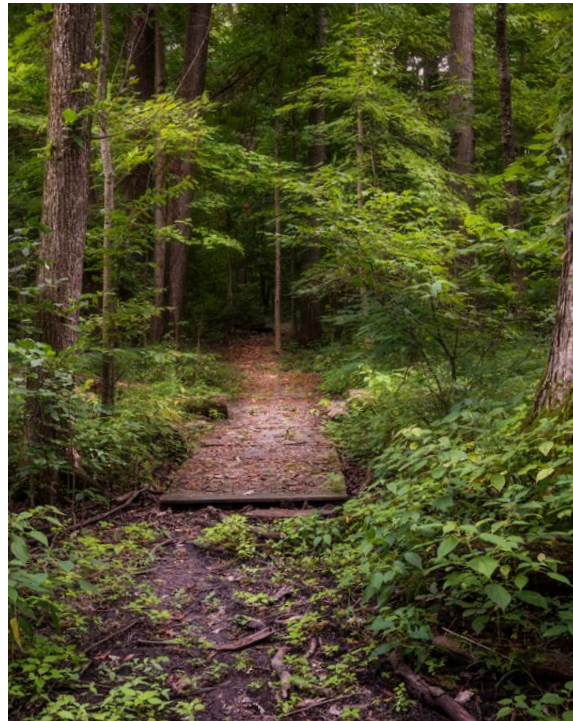
Primary Open Space land uses include parks, preserved open space, and natural areas. Facilities such as recreation centers and nature centers may be included. Where feasible, open spaces should be connected to nearby developed areas. Supporting land uses include cemeteries and related religious institutions.

### Primary Uses

- Parks and Open Space
- Recreational Facilities

### Secondary Uses

- Cemeteries
- Religious Institutions
- Trails and Greenways



## Utility

The Utility Generalized Land Use consists of areas dedicated to Allen County's communication, electric, gas, sewer, and water facilities and infrastructure.

### Uses

- Water Towers
- Utility and Communication Transmission Towers
- Electrical Substations
- Equipment Buildings



## Future Complete Neighborhood Area

The infrastructure needed for development is more than the pipes in the ground and pavement. While having housing with quality water, sewer, and roads should be considered a minimum requirement, achieving the quality of place that is increasingly valued by residents requires that housing be located within a broader network of community amenities. The Plan supports the development of “15-minute neighborhoods” or “complete neighborhoods” where residents have access to a variety of amenities within a 15-minute walk.

This land use category recognizes areas of unincorporated Allen County that have been targeted for future growth and development as identified on the Generalized Future Growth and Development Map ([page 55](#)). These areas are generally suitable for continued adjacent growth due to the availability of sanitary sewer, water, and other utility infrastructure, and existing development patterns.

These areas are intended to encourage a flexible array of options for diverse housing types, higher density development patterns, mixed use buildings along with focused points of professional office and personal service, and local-serving neighborhood commercial uses at the nodes created by intersections of arterial or collector streets. Interconnectivity and shared access points should be considered as new greenfield development proposals, especially commercial uses, are considered. Primary land uses may include a mix of existing rural agricultural and rural residential land uses along with attached and detached single-family residential (including townhomes), duplex, multiple-family and other residential uses including missing middle housing types. Supporting land uses include business, service and retail.

### **Primary Uses**

- Two-Family Residential
- Manufactured Home Subdivisions
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Single-Family Attached Residential
- Single-Family Detached Residential

### **Secondary Uses**

- Civic and Cultural Facilities
- Low-Intensity, Neighborhood-Scale Retail
- Parks and Open Space
- Professional Office and Personal Services
- Religious Institutions
- Schools



## Economic Development Transitional Area

The Economic Development Transitional Area Generalized Land Use category recognizes areas of unincorporated Allen County that due to a variety of site characteristics have the potential to transition from rural agricultural or rural residential into production center, business and office park, or institutional uses. These areas are typically within proximity of existing employment centers or areas targeted by the Allen County Together Action Plan for high impact and strategic economic development investment. They should be served by adequate transportation infrastructure including highways, interstates, rail, and air along with water, sanitary sewer, and other utility infrastructure.

Economic Development Transitional Area land uses may include a mix of existing rural agricultural and rural residential land uses along with production center, business and office park, and institutional uses. Future development should rely on existing or improved infrastructure that can adequately serve the needs of the development without significant impact to existing uses. Development within this area should support related or compatible intensity nearby employment centers or be of a scale that local economic development agencies view as having a regional impact.

### **Primary Uses:**

- Agriculture and Farming
- Low-Density Single-Family Detached Residential
- Medical, Technology, and Research
- Hospitals and Medical Centers
- Limited-Intensity Industrial
- General Industrial
- Intensive Industrial
- Railroad, Freight, And Transportation-Related Facilities

### **Secondary Uses**

- Supporting Professional Office and Personal Services
- Supporting Business, Service, and Retail
- Supporting Utility Facilities
- Parks and Open Space



# 05

## **AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS**



# Vision Statement

*Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the adopting municipalities (the Community) will be leaders in the northeast Indiana region in securing a sustainable future for food production and agricultural land. Creative public engagement will lead urban and rural communities throughout the County to experience a stronger connection and appreciation of agriculture and food systems as a part of the local economy. As a result, agricultural lands will be an integral part of the County's balance of land uses, and stewardship efforts will support and preserve productive agricultural land throughout the Community.*

*New farmers looking for access to hands-on learning in small and urban agriculture opportunities will choose to operate in the Community. The farming community will establish its reputation for agricultural innovation by strengthening production and supporting the local economy. Innovation and technology will lead more community members to invest and work locally in agriculture as farms throughout the County adopt sustainable environmental and economic practices.*

*Providing incentives to farmers and connecting them to improved local distribution networks will help ensure residents across the County have access to fresh, local produce, and food. By improving the local connections, farms will help meet the demand for produce and increase healthy food options for everyone. Residents connect with the farming heritage of the Community as they visit area farms and buy local produce.*

*Agriculture will remain a valuable contributor to the regional economy and the County will maintain its status as a top agricultural producer. Agribusiness, including livestock industries, will continue to grow as an economic sector, exporting goods across the nation while allowing residents and businesses to purchase food grown and processed within the Community.*

## Chapter Organization

### Goals

To achieve the community's vision

### Strategies

To support each community goal

### Action Steps


Actions and Guidance for Consideration  
[See Action Matrix \(page 229\)](#)

### Themes

Applicable strategies and action steps have been identified with the following icons:

 Equity

 Health

 Sustainability



# Agriculture

Agriculture is an important part of Indiana’s economy, and Allen County is a significant contributor. Allen County ranks third in the state in agricultural gross domestic product (GDP). According to analysis prepared by Indiana University’s Business Research Center, the agriculture industry contributed over \$250 million to Allen County’s GDP (approximately \$20.5 billion as of 2020). The residual impact, when considering additional jobs and spending, is estimated at an additional \$160 million, bringing the total to over \$400 million. This section examines agriculture and agribusiness (any business related to farming and farm-related commercial activities) and includes strategies and action steps to help ensure that the County’s agriculture is sustainable and innovative while continuing to be an economic driver over the next few decades.

The agricultural industry contributed over **\$250 million** to the County’s GDP

## Goal 1. Encourage the preservation and stewardship of productive agricultural land

Agriculture is the County’s predominant land use. According to the 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture (conducted every five years), 1,548 farms combined to use more than 281,000 acres of County land (66% of all land) for agriculture. Farmland in Allen County increased by 4% between 2012 and 2017, growing from 271,000 to 281,000 acres.

### 1.1 Establish agricultural preservation tools and incentives

Agriculture should remain a prominent and productive land use in Allen County, and a profitable venture for the County’s farmers. Tools such as land trusts can protect valuable farmland—specifically the for the three types identified on the Productive Agricultural Land Map (p. 89)—from development through tools such as conservation easements, advocating for smart growth, and promoting sustainable farming practices. The following actions should be considered to promote agricultural innovation and to encourage efficient and sustainable use of agricultural land. [Funds and programs are identified and further discussed in Chapter 12: Implementation.](#)

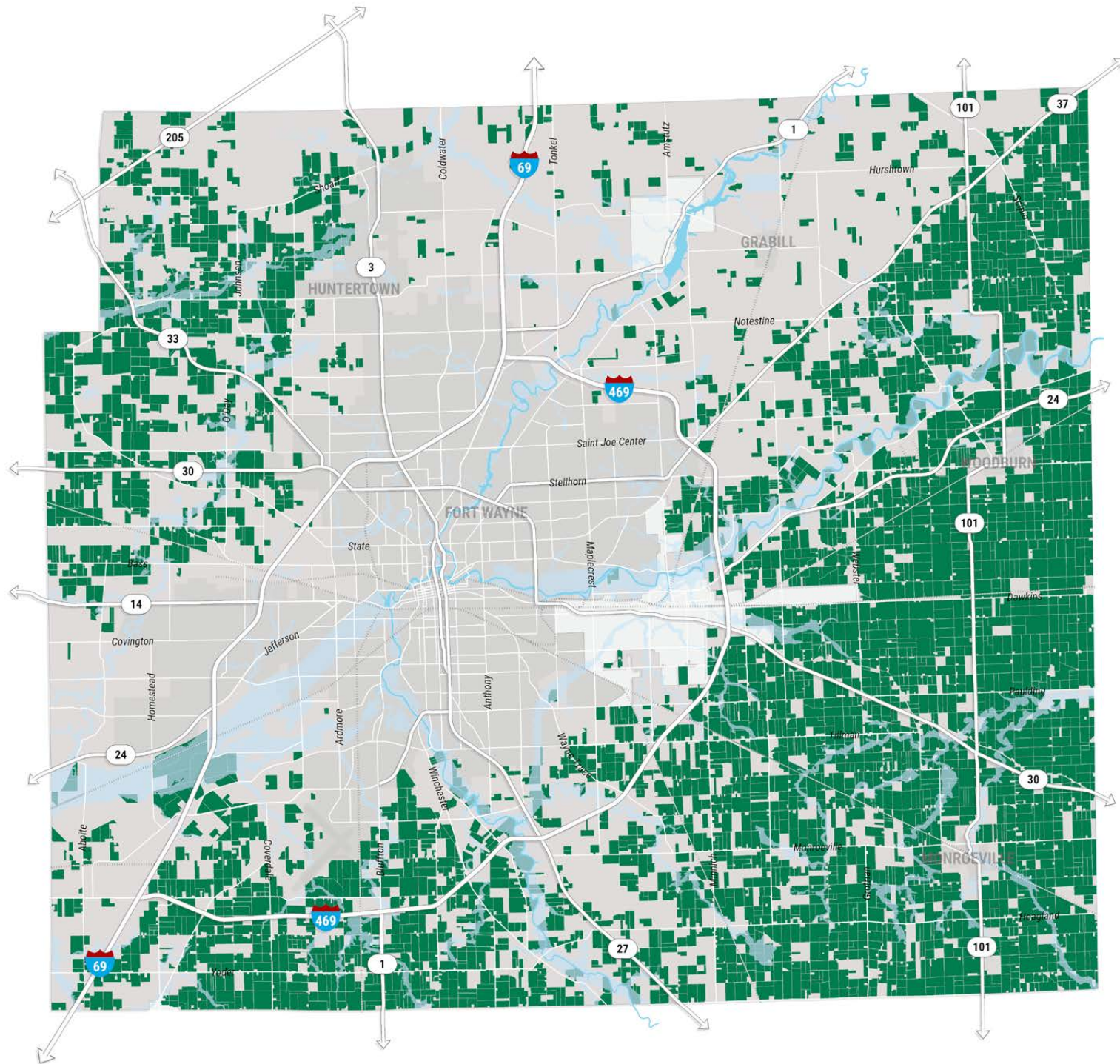
To preserve agricultural lands, promote agribusiness, promote sustainable practices to mitigate impacts to surface water and groundwater quality, and prepare for a changing climate, the Community should:

- 1.1.1.** Consider establishing an agricultural land trust with a broad coalition of farmers, researchers, and community leaders collaborating with individual landowners, with a focus on preserving the most productive farmland as identified on the Productive Agriculture Land map on the [next page](#).
- 1.1.2.** Promote the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) Hoosier Homestead Award Program, which recognizes families with farms that have been owned by the same family for 100 years or more.
- 1.1.3.** Investigate a local agricultural heritage program, which would provide a voluntary, incentive-based process for permanently preserving small farms and agricultural lands as farms are sold.
- 1.1.4.** Promote the adoption of sustainable practices to mitigate impacts to surface water and groundwater quality, prepare for a changing climate including drought and extreme weather, and address pest and disease threats.
- 1.1.5.** Work directly with farmers and private landowners to identify and apply for federal funds in conservation and preservation programs further discussed in [Chapter 12: Implementation](#).

# Productive Agricultural Land

Soybean and corn production accounts for nearly 75% of all the crops harvested in the County. Typically, farmers plant these crops in areas that generates the highest yield over time or on the most productive agricultural land. Based on 2008-2021 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) data, the map identifies the most productive agricultural land in Allen County where corn and soybeans have been planted 50 percent of the time for more than five years.

 Productive Land over 10 acres



## Goal 2. Provide additional support for rural and urban agriculture

As Fort Wayne and other County communities continue to grow in population and size, more people will live in urbanized areas near existing active farmland in Allen County—areas generally identified on the Productive Agricultural Land map on the [previous page](#). A clear regulatory framework is needed to provide specific support for agriculture and food systems and to promote compatibility between agricultural land uses and community residents.

Several sections of this chapter recommend changes to regulations to support agricultural businesses, growing operations, and small- and large-scale farming. The Community should regularly review its land use regulations so that they continue to guide a stable, sustainable, and innovative approach to agriculture.

### 2.1 Encourage regulatory support for rural agricultural uses

The Allen County Zoning Ordinance regulates agricultural land and permits a range of agricultural activities and limited low-density residential development in the A1 Agricultural District. Higher intensity uses, such as Confined Feeding Operations (CFOs) are regulated through special uses. Health Department and Building Department standards and regulations also control and impact agricultural land uses. These community standards and regulations should be reviewed and updated as appropriate to continue to support agricultural operations and help preserve productive agricultural land.

The County should:

- 2.1.1.** Review and update agricultural related regulations and standards to support farms, farm-supporting businesses, and low-intensity agribusinesses.
- 2.1.2.** Explore additional standards and best practices to continue to encourage the conservation and protection of existing agricultural operations.
- 2.1.3.** Continue to limit industrial farming operations, such as CFOs, through Board of Zoning Appeals Special Use approvals to mitigate the environmental impacts of these uses.

### 2.2 Encourage regulatory support for urban agriculture uses

The Fort Wayne, Grabill, Huntertown, Monroeville and Woodburn Zoning Ordinances provide for limited agricultural uses within the AR Low Intensity Residential District. Community gardens are currently permitted in every zoning district throughout Allen County; however, a special use is required to allow structures in community gardens.

The Community has indicated a desire for expanded opportunities for several forms of urban agriculture, including urban farming, community gardens, and other food related uses (such as apiculture, vertical production, warehouse farming, rooftop farms, hydroponic, aeroponic, and aquaponic facilities). The need to improve connections between fresh produce providers and retail, restaurant, institutional, and individual customers has been raised as an issue, as has the idea of expanding on-site sales and similar uses.

## State of Indiana Code Title 15

State regulations strongly support the agriculture industry, reflecting the industry's prominence in the state's economy. Indiana Code Title 15 governs agriculture and animals and establishes the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, providing a statewide framework supporting farms and farmers and preserving the industry for the future. The code also establishes the State Fair Commission, regulates incorporation of state associations and other agricultural societies and horticultural associations, legislates the tax levy for county fairs, and provides the legislative framework for keeping livestock, animal care and health, production of dairy products, and more.

The potential benefits of increased urban agriculture are: meeting the increasing demand for locally grown food, supporting the local economy and promoting a healthier community. Fort Wayne, Grabill, Huntertown, Monroeville and Woodburn should:

- 2.2.1.** Review and update applicable regulations and standards, including permitted use provisions, to better support urban agriculture and other potential food related uses.
- 2.2.2.** Review and update standards for community gardens, including current Fort Wayne City Utility standards for connecting community gardens to municipal water lines.

## Goal 3. Promote sustainable agricultural production and innovation

Promoting sustainable agricultural production and innovation means ensuring that agriculture can play a significant role in satisfying local food needs and enhancing the quality of life for farmers and the whole community. To be sustainable, agricultural practices will need to be environmentally friendly, resilient, and make efficient use of the County's natural resources. To be innovative, local practices for agricultural production will need to move beyond established practices, incorporating modern technology, science-backed farming techniques, and a forward-thinking approach to encourage the long-term viability of the county's farm operations.



### 3.1 Encourage agricultural innovation

Allen County is rich with organizations and resources for encouraging technologically advanced and innovative farming practices. The Community should collaborate with local organizations and institutions to research and promote innovative agricultural practices. Local and regional partners include Purdue Extension, the Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District, Ivy Tech Community College Agriculture Program, the Indiana Farm Bureau, local co-ops, urban agriculture advocacy organizations, large- and small-scale farm operators, and more. Technical assistance provided by these organizations include rotational grazing, soil conservation, pest management, crop diversity, agroforestry, stream and creek protection, and other farming and agribusiness best practices that prepare for a changing climate. To encourage regular dialogue between these stakeholders and organizations, and drive innovation, the Community should:

- 3.1.1.** Consider hosting a regular agricultural innovation roundtable, offering a forum for discussion and collaboration regarding the Community's agricultural research and innovation.
- 3.1.2.** Continue to support regular events such as the Fort Wayne Farm Show, showcasing the County's agricultural technology, resources, and opportunities.
- 3.1.3.** Promote technical assistance in coordination with Purdue Extension, Ivy Tech Community College Agriculture Program, and the Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District for implementing sustainable practices.

### What is Sustainable Agriculture?

As officially defined in US Code Title 7, sustainable agriculture is an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long-term:

- Satisfy human food and fiber needs;
- Enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base;
- Make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources;
- Integrate natural biological cycles and controls;
- Sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and
- Enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.

The USDA identifies several common practices that can improve sustainability for farms of all scales. More information is available at the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture website, [nifa.usda.gov](http://nifa.usda.gov)



### 3.2 Support local and small-scale agriculture

USDA data indicates that family farms remain a majority of U.S. agriculture, making up 98% of all farms and providing 88% of production. Most of these farms are small family farms (typically with annual gross revenue of less than \$350,000), and while they operate almost half of all U.S. farmland, they generate just 21% of production. In Allen County, 58% of farms are less than 49 acres in size while 8% are greater than 500 acres, according to the USDA's 2017 Census of Agriculture.

Similar to the nation, a majority of the agricultural community in Allen County is comprised of smaller, locally-owned farms. To support sustainable, small-scale agriculture, the Community should:

- 3.2.1.** Work with local farmer's market organizers to  encourage additional markets in the Community.
- 3.2.2.** Work with the Greater Fort Wayne Inc. and other  business organizations to encourage restaurants, supermarkets, and co-ops to offer local produce and meat.
- 3.2.3.** Publicize regulatory updates and best practices widely to civic, environmental, and neighborhood organizations to encourage new community gardens and promote growing fresh food throughout the County.

### Purdue Extension

Purdue University maintains public 'extensions' in each of Indiana's counties. The extensions provide resources and assistance to residents and communities. The Allen County Purdue Extension focuses on agriculture, community and economic development, environmental stewardship, health and wellness, food access, and youth services.

The Extension offers a research-based, unbiased source of information for the County's crops, agricultural business, livestock, natural resource, horticulture, small farms, urban agriculture, pesticide use, and land conservation.



More than **50%** of farms  
in Allen County are less than  
**49 acres**  
according to USDA



## Goal 4. Expand and promote agritourism

Agritourism can support Allen County's economy and provide an economic benefit to farms by generating supplemental income. Community outreach for All In Allen drew support for using agritourism to connect people to farms throughout Fort Wayne and Allen County.

Successful agritourism operations can benefit local restaurants, hotels and lodging, shops, markets, and other destinations. It will be important to consider possible impacts such as increased traffic, parking issues, noise, and issues associated with activities such as on-site sales. At the municipal and county level, agritourism adds to the Community's marketable amenities and helps to define community character.

### 4.1 Engage farmers and community partners to expand agritourism opportunities

There are multiple factors for a farm operator to consider before expanding into agritourism, such as making the property safe for visitors, investing in facilities such as parking areas, restrooms and concessions, marketing the farm to the wider community, and setting up programming and activities. To promote the establishment of new opportunities and provide resources for local farmers and business owners to establish an agritourism operation, the Community should:

- 4.1.1.** Expand community outreach and collaboration by facilitating partnerships with non-traditional audiences and organizations.
- 4.1.2.** Investigate community grants to assist farmers with agritourism-related property improvements.
- 4.1.3.** Create a toolkit for bringing tourism to a farm, with recommendations and best practices for necessary facilities, programming and activities, and assistance with marketing.

### 4.2 Establish regulatory support for agritourism

Agritourism has been identified as an area where current community regulations and standards need to be reviewed and updated. In order to clarify how local farms can take advantage of agritourism opportunities, the Community should:

- 4.2.1.** Review and update community agricultural related regulations for urban and rural agritourism.



## Goal 5. **Attract new agribusiness that supports local agricultural production**

Fort Wayne and Allen County are home to both family-owned agribusinesses and regional and national agribusiness companies. Community outreach for All In Allen indicated support for new agricultural development and business attraction.

### 5.1 **Support agribusiness operations**

The locational needs of agribusinesses vary, with some located in rural areas of the County and others adjacent to communities and neighborhoods. Small agribusinesses such as local meat processing, small butcher shops, have different site and support needs than larger agribusinesses such as feed growers and livestock industries.

To support existing and attract new agribusiness, the Community should:

- 5.1.1.** Review and update regulations regarding small and large agriculture-related businesses.
- 5.1.2.** Explore possible incentives for new agribusinesses.
- 5.1.3.** Work with higher education programs such as the Ivy Tech Community College Agriculture Program and the Purdue Extension to establish and promote a skilled local agricultural-related workforce.

## **Agribusiness**

Agribusiness is the broader business sector that encompasses farming and farming related commercial activities. Typically, this refers to large-scale farming operations but can also include smaller businesses. In addition to harvesting, agribusinesses are concerned with streamlining production and producing food as quickly and cheaply as possible. Agribusiness also includes industries adjacent to farming such as machinery manufacturing and farm real estate acquisition. Any company that participates in the production, marketing, safety, and distribution of food is involved in agribusiness.

One example of an agribusiness in southern Allen County is the Walmart milk processing plant. The plant generates the equivalent of 7,000 acres of food products annually and has over 100 employees.



## Food Systems

The County's food system is closely related to its agriculture. Food systems include food production, processing, distribution, and consumption. These activities are rooted local system that can address food insecurity and support the local economy. Sustainable food systems help connect local farmers directly to consumers, boosting income and providing employment opportunities. Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the County's communities will not be able to address food insecurity and establish a system to solve healthy food access in a vacuum. Improving and expanding a healthy system with access to affordable fruits, vegetables and other foods that make up a full and healthy diet will require local partnerships, transportation improvements, and programmatic support.

**51,830**



Allen County residents  
are food insecure

### Goal 6. Expand access to local, fresh, healthy, and nutritious produce and food by improving the local production and distribution systems

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) defines food deserts as areas where residents lack access to affordable fruits, vegetables, and other foods that make up a full and healthy diet. Food access and insecurity are pressing issues for the Allen County and Fort Wayne communities. According to a 2018 Vulnerable Populations Study commissioned by Purdue Fort Wayne and released by the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, there are 37 census tracts in Allen County that have been designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as low-income/low-access food deserts. In these areas, at least 33% of the population lives more than a half-mile from a grocery store in urban areas or more than 10 miles away from rural areas. The study also notes that 51,830 Allen County residents are food insecure, facing a concern that food would run out before they had the money to buy more. There are several ways to improve access to healthy foods, from identifying the ideal locations to promoting local partnerships and programs.

#### 6.1 Work with partner organizations

The Community has identified food access as a weakness of the existing food distribution system, including for low-income and rural residents ([as shown on the Food Access Map on page 103](#)). To improve this aspect of the distribution system the Community should:

- 6.1.1.** Work with Purdue Extension to create a list of  desirable locations for fresh food markets in food desert areas.
- 6.1.2.** Partner with local food co-ops, grocers, and existing  markets to document and explore ways to mitigate potential barriers.

## 6.2 Establish programmatic partnerships

Nationally, the Food and Nutrition Service of the USDA administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) which provides food assistance to low and no-income people and families. The distribution of benefits occurs at the state level. In Indiana, the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) ensures SNAP is implemented and consistently applied in each county. The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program is another federally funded program implemented locally by the Indiana Department of Health that provides pregnant, breastfeeding, postpartum women, children, and infants with nutrition assistance.

The County and City of Fort Wayne should work with the FSSA, the Department of Health, and nonprofit partners to ensure the SNAP and WIC programs are actively used throughout the Community.

Hospitals and healthcare organizations have a growing interest in identifying and addressing local conditions that contribute to patient health. Local schools are also invested in ensuring students have the best learning environment possible. Food insecurity and lack of access to fresh, healthy foods contribute to patient health and the student learning environment.

To continue supporting programmatic partnerships for food access, the Community should:

- 6.2.1.** Publicize the Double Up Indiana program, a local initiative of the national nonprofit Fair Food Network that matches SNAP or food stamps dollars spent on fresh fruits and vegetables. 
- 6.2.2.** Continue to support and expand the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) summer markets, which accept SNAP Electronic Benefits Transfer and WIC. 
- 6.2.3.** Partner with hospitals and health care organizations to support incentives and investments that improve food access and healthier lifestyles. 
- 6.2.4.** Leverage partnerships with hospitals, schools, and local food banks to connect with local farmers and increase the supply of fresh, healthy, local food for families in need. 
- 6.2.5.** Support connections between local food producers and the local school systems to promote fresh food in schools. 

## 3 Rivers Co-op

The 3 Rivers Co-op was founded in 1976 as a consumer co-op. The store is part of National Co-op Grocers, a larger cooperative of 143 food co-ops in 38 states that brings together consumers as member-owners. The current 3 Rivers Co-op location offers 6,300 square feet of retail space for natural and organic products with an emphasis on local producers. The store is a “full-line” natural grocer and offers bulk foods, a wellness department, a cafe, fresh organic produce, frozen and refrigerated goods, and a full selection of natural grocery products.



## Parkview Health Community Greenhouse and Learning Kitchen

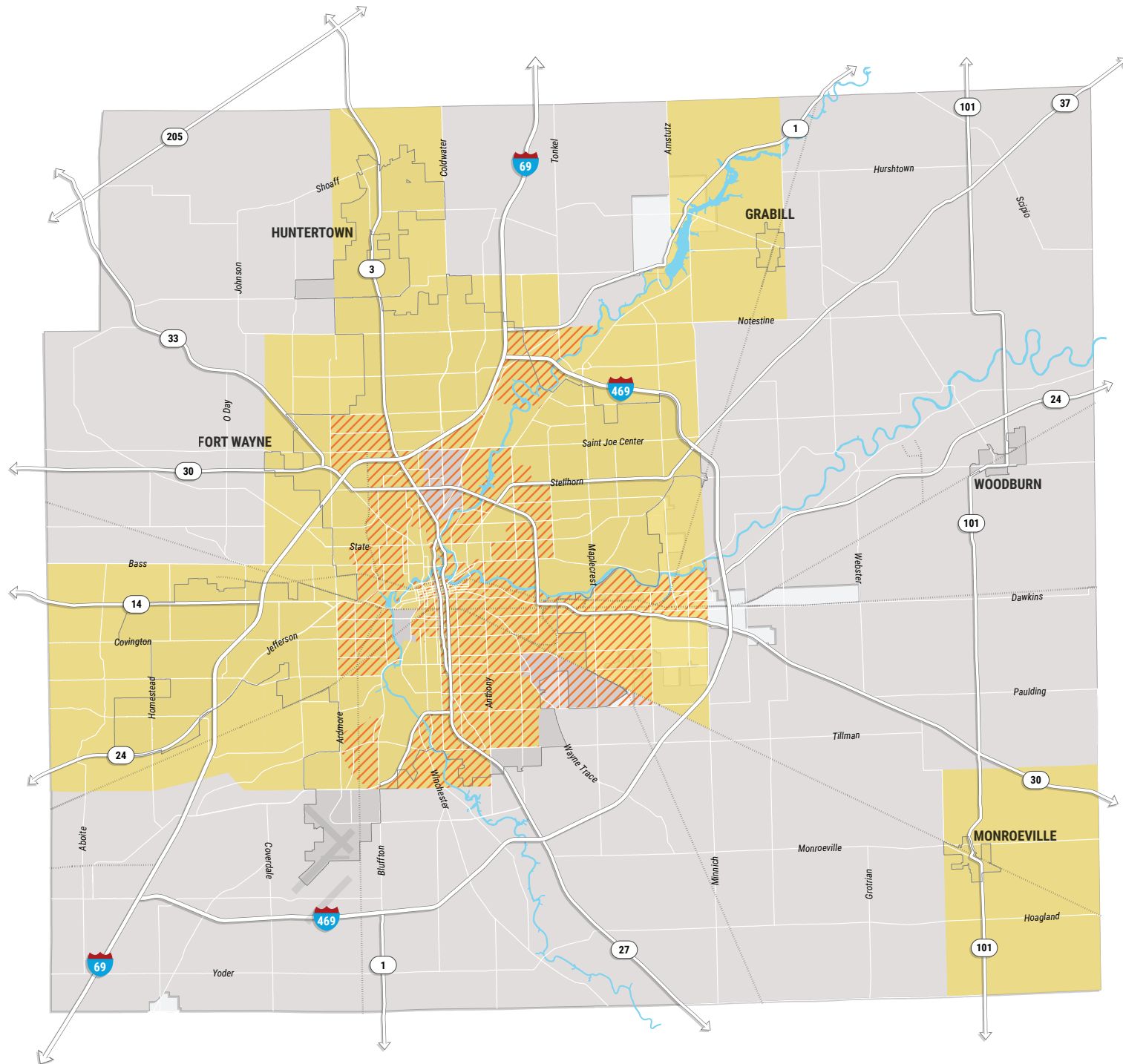
The 3,000 square-foot Parkview Health, Community Greenhouse and Learning Kitchen provides the Community with greater access to fresh, affordable produce and engages the Community with opportunities to learn new skills at home, in the kitchen, and in the garden. The Randallia Campus was specifically chosen because 46805 is one of five Fort Wayne zip codes considered to be a food desert.

The facility is designed to give residents in the area access to fresh produce and the information and skills they need to improve nutrition and overall health. Classes and events include cooking demonstrations and hands-on activities designed to build the skills needed to select, grow, and cook fresh food.

# Food Access

The United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service prepared the Food Access Research Atlas in 2019. The Atlas presents an overview of food access indicators for low-income and other census tracts using measures of supermarket accessibility. While a third of Allen County (encompassing most of Fort Wayne, Huntertown, Grabill and Monroeville) has limited access to grocery stores, the County should look to improve options for healthy and affordable food especially in low-income neighborhoods in the County.

- Areas that have low access to healthy and affordable food options
- Areas that have populations designated as low-income





### 6.3 Support local cooperatives and community-supported agriculture

Food co-ops and Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) are important components of the food system that allow people to purchase local food from local farmers, increasing the opportunity for residents to access and enjoy healthy and sustainable food. The USDA advocates and promotes both co-ops and CSAs. Though similar in many ways, the USDA notes that a food co-op and a CSA are slightly different:

- CSAs consist of a community of individuals who pledge support to a farm operation so that the farmland becomes, either legally or spiritually, the community's farm, with the growers and consumers providing mutual support and sharing the risks and benefits of food production.
- Co-ops are producer- and user-owned businesses that are controlled by and operated for the benefit of their members, rather than outside investors. The co-op business model is highly flexible and can address a wide variety of needs. Farmer-owned co-ops help producer-members market and process their crops and livestock, and secure needed production supplies and services.

A variety of organizations in the community can offer expertise that fosters advancement for the entire agricultural community. This expertise could allow for training focused on business planning, direct marketing, transitioning to wholesale markets, food safety certification, and other skills. To support growth and collaboration among local agricultural businesses across all scales and encourage local farmers to network with one another and organizations to strengthen the local food economy, the Community should:

- 6.3.1.** Collaborate with partner organizations like the Northeast Indiana Local Food Network to provide local farmers with training to assist in starting a CSA farm business or participating in a co-op.
- 6.3.2.** Promote participation in the online Northeast Indiana Local Food Guide, and Indiana Grown and Indiana Grown for Schools Resource Guides.
- 6.3.3.** Investigate partnerships to sponsor CSA and co-op membership reimbursement for low-income/low-access residents.





### 6.4 Improve transportation for food access

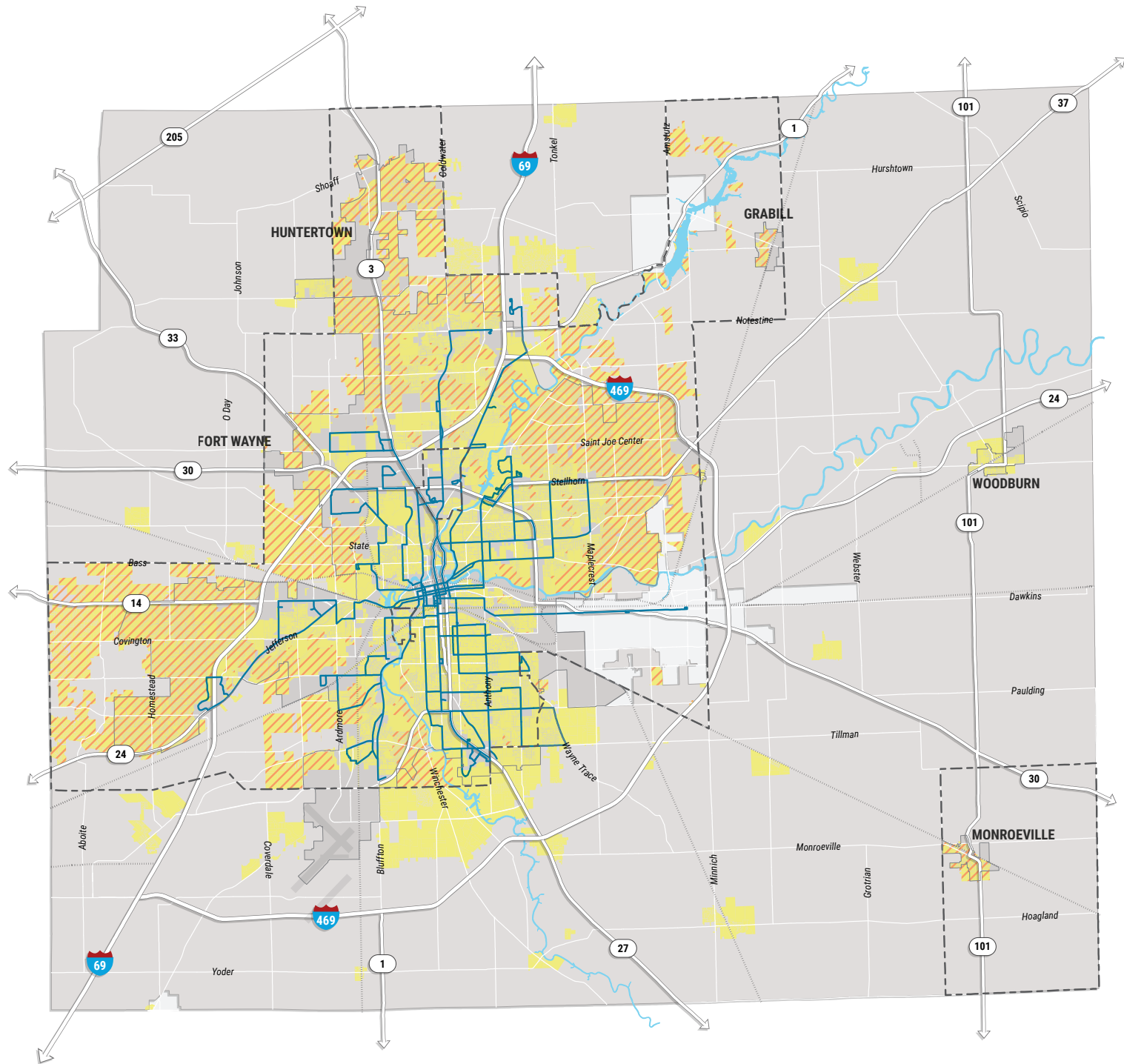
The transportation network will play an important role in improving food access throughout the Community. Without a car, it is difficult to access food in Allen County – 87% of residential areas that are not within a 10-minute walk of public transit are also within a low food access census tract. Lack of transportation options limits access to healthy food for those who do not own a car or who have limited access to public transportation, and for people who are elderly or mobility-restricted. Improving transportation options to and from supermarkets and farmers' markets will increase access to healthy foods. To do this, the Community should:

- 6.4.1.** Work with Fort Wayne Citilink and other transportation agencies to improve public transportation services in urban and rural food desert areas.
- 6.4.2.** Work with local supermarkets, co-ops, and farmers' markets to incentivize and provide shuttle service and low-cost fresh food delivery in low-access areas.

# Food Access and Public Transportation

The USDA defines a lack of grocery stores or other sources of healthy and affordable food within one mile in urban areas and 10 miles in rural areas as low-access areas. The map highlights residential areas designated as low-access areas. People living in these areas must walk more than 10-minutes to get to a bus stop for groceries. The public transportation network will play an important role in improving access to healthy food.

-  Citilink Bus Routes
-  Areas that have low food access
-  Areas outside a 10-minute walk to a bus stop
-  Residential Areas



**87%**  
of residential areas with  
poor access to public transit  
also have low food access



# HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS



## Vision Statement

*Fort Wayne, Allen County, and its communities will be composed of safe, active, and thriving neighborhoods that contain a diverse mix of housing welcoming to all residents. Responsible growth and development will be encouraged throughout the region, from Fort Wayne's Downtown and its urban neighborhoods to suburban communities and smaller cities and towns. With a shared growth vision, the community will guide development, maximize the use of existing infrastructure, and preserve vital agricultural land. A better balance of new residential development and neighborhood reinvestment will prioritize providing a more diverse range of owner and non-owner housing options that enable long-term residents to age in place and new households to take root in the community.*

*Improvements, such as new infill development, upgrades to existing housing stock, and placemaking efforts will strengthen and beautify previously disinvested neighborhoods. A collaborative community approach to neighborhood revitalization will encourage creative design and development solutions, the use of renewable energy and resources, and historic preservation while increasing owner and non-owner housing choices. Established residential neighborhoods will continue to be supported through investments in neighborhood commercial areas, parks, community gathering spaces, and adaptive reuse projects that sustain community assets and build on local identity. Complementing new housing and neighborhood revitalization, an integrated network of sidewalks, trails, and bike routes will provide increasingly safe people-powered access to community amenities.*

## Chapter Organization

### Goals

To achieve the community's vision

### Strategies

To support each community goal

### Action Steps


Actions and Guidance for Consideration  
[See Implementation Matrix \(page 231\)](#)

### Themes

Applicable strategies and action steps have been identified with the following icons:

 Equity

 Health

 Sustainability

# Housing & Neighborhoods

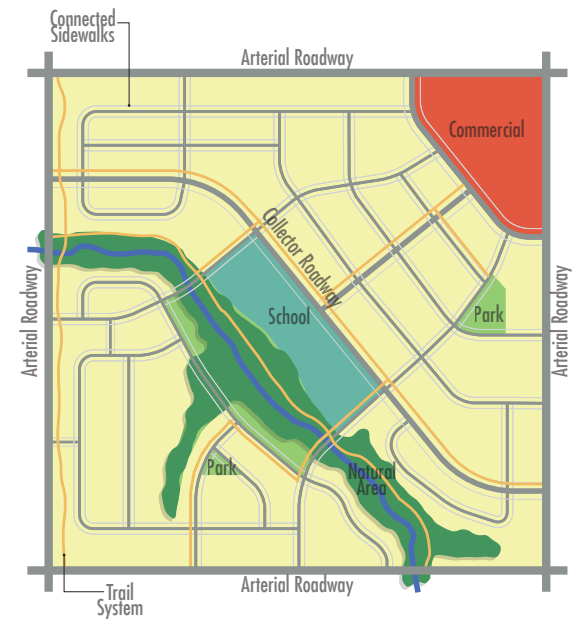
Allen County, Fort Wayne, and the County's communities are home to a variety of neighborhoods with a diverse mix of housing types, institutions and amenities. From the urban lifestyle offered to residents of Downtown Fort Wayne and areas like the historic West Central, Williams Woodland, or Northside neighborhoods, to the suburban lifestyle offered to residents in areas like Huntertown and the State Route 14 corridor, to small-town living in places like Woodburn and rural residential areas located amongst farms in the County, there are options for all.

The Housing and Neighborhoods chapter strives to support existing neighborhoods through residential reinvestment and infill while providing new housing options to ensure the Community grows and thrives over the next two decades. To position each of Allen County's communities for a bright future, the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan emphasizes 1) investment in "complete" neighborhoods that offer a full range of amenities to residents; and 2) creative design and development solutions that support a mix of affordable, accessible and sustainable housing options that meet the needs of all residents. These goals, as well as strategies and action steps to reach them, are described in detail on the following pages.

## Goal 1. Support and Strengthen Complete Neighborhoods

A "Complete Neighborhood" is a community with convenient access to the necessities of daily life. Complete neighborhoods should have a diverse mix of housing types, accessible grocery and shopping options, quality public schools, shared open spaces and recreational facilities, and convenient transportation options. To meet the needs of people of all ages and abilities, complete neighborhoods should be walkable, bikeable, and connected to surrounding neighborhoods through street, sidewalk, and trail networks.

The Community can ensure its neighborhoods are "complete" by fostering public/private partnerships to aid new development, promoting compact development, enhancing the sense of place in each community, and increasing housing options. Additionally, the Community can work to revitalize declining neighborhoods while activating others that lack the features to make them "complete." The Community should prioritize enhancing existing and new neighborhoods with neighborhood amenities to improve their desirability and livability.

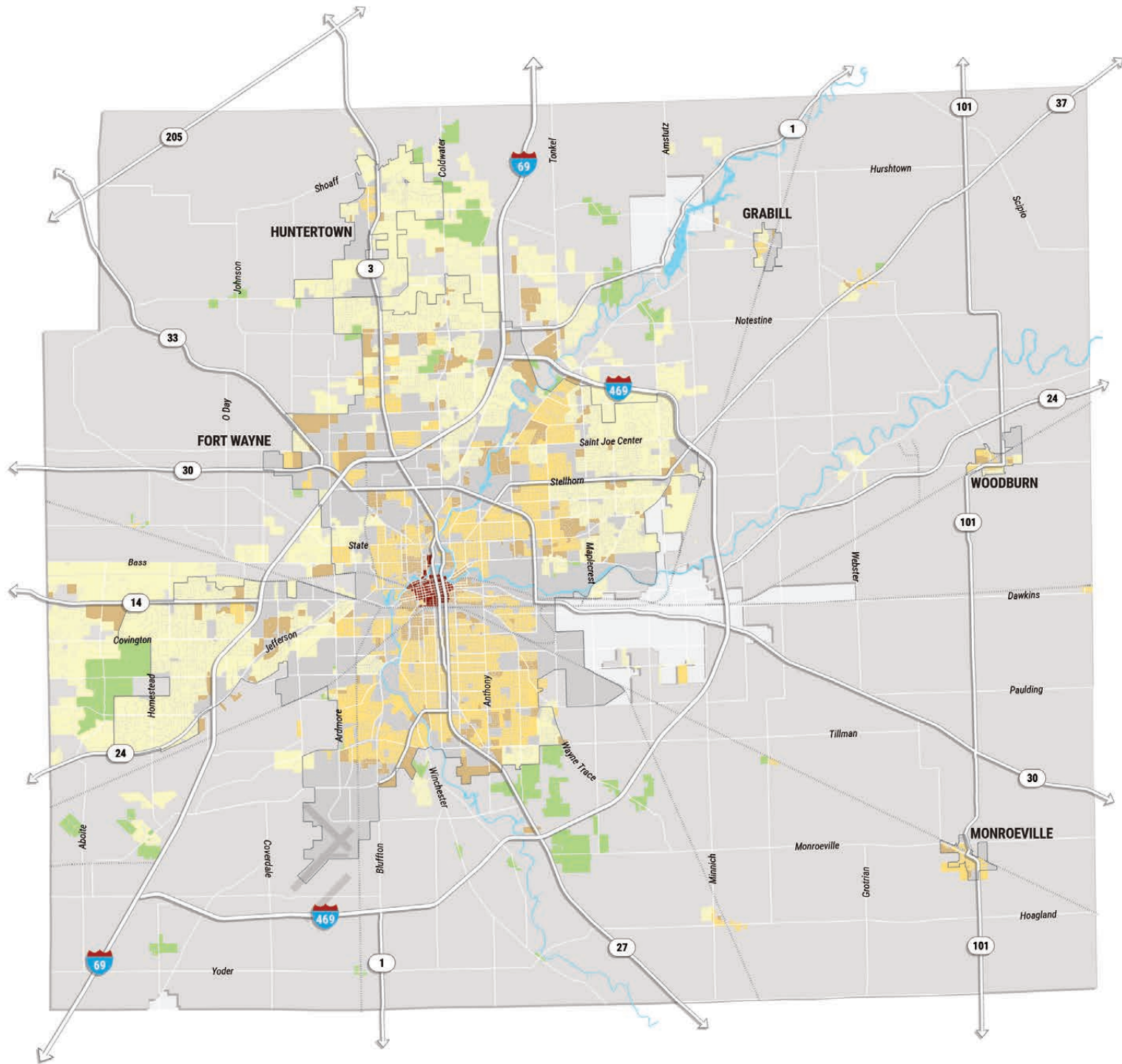


*The idea of a "Complete Neighborhood" stems from Clarence Perry's Neighborhood Unit Concept, dating back to the 1920s.*

# Housing & Neighborhoods

Allen County, Fort Wayne, and the county's municipalities and unincorporated places are home to a variety of neighborhoods. Through investment, new development, redevelopment public/private partnerships, ensuring neighborhood amenities in such neighborhoods would improve desirability and livability and make each more 'complete'. This map should be viewed alongside the goals and strategies of the Housing and Neighborhoods chapter.

- Rural Residential
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Downtown





## 1.1 Promote the creation of complete neighborhood areas through compact development, increased density, and infill

A complete neighborhood is also known as a “15-minute neighborhood”, or a neighborhood where one has access to the social infrastructure and amenities that support a high quality of life within a 15-minute walk. Social infrastructure includes school, work, healthcare, healthy grocery options, shopping, and open space. A complete neighborhood is made possible through a compact development pattern—smaller, walkable blocks that encourage foot traffic and foster interaction—and a mix of uses such as shops, restaurants, and services along key routes and at key intersections that complement housing. Higher density housing is also needed to encourage a population with the critical mass necessary to support all of the amenities in a complete or 15-minute neighborhood.



## Smart Growth and Housing

“Smart Growth” is a planning and development philosophy that has been growing in popularity since the 1990s. The movement is a response to some of the inefficient externalities created by sprawling suburban development patterns that defined American housing in the preceding decades.

According to the US EPA, “Smart growth covers a range of development and conservation strategies that help protect our health and natural environment and make our communities more attractive, economically stronger, and more socially diverse.” This means that new communities should have a mix of uses, take advantage of compact urban design, be well connected, environmentally sustainable, and center the community in decision making.

From a housing perspective, Smart Growth emphasizes housing choice and development that maximizes open space for resident use. Building quality housing for families of all life stages and income levels is an integral part of a smart growth approach. Housing options available in a community will influence families’ economic opportunities, costs of living, and how much time they spend commuting each day. Diversifying housing options within existing neighborhoods can give everyone more choices about where to live.



Infill and redevelopment should be prioritized over outward growth to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and leverage proximity to destinations and amenities for residents. This promotes a smart growth approach that focuses on increasing the mix of housing choices within neighborhoods, while prioritizing compact, walkable environments and avoiding sprawl. Infill development will also help strengthen existing neighborhoods and improve the local sense of place for current residents by adding new, quality housing stock within established neighborhoods.

To reach complete neighborhood goals, the Community should prioritize investment in local amenities that drive the regional economy and elevate the quality of life for all residents. The Community should:

- 1.1.1.** Identify and facilitate mixed use redevelopment opportunities on vacant or underutilized properties within Priority Investment and Urban Infill Opportunity Areas on the Future Growth and Development map.
- 1.1.2.** Encourage smart growth development practices to support efficient use of land and resources.
- 1.1.3.** Encourage the development of an integrated network of sidewalks, trails, and bike routes within existing and new neighborhoods that will provide safe access to community amenities.

**1.1.4.** Promote residential development with compact block structure, a mix of uses and housing types, and active transportation access to nearby jobs, recreation, fresh and nutritious food, and schools as well as connections to nearby neighborhoods.

**1.1.5.** Identify sites and prioritize strategic areas, such as commercial corridors with underutilized retail, college campuses, and areas with high public transportation access, for mixed-use and higher density housing, single-family attached homes, duplexes, and multifamily housing.

**1.1.6.** Collaborate with stakeholders to coordinate the future locations of public facilities and social infrastructure such as schools, libraries, and services such as public transportation to strengthen complete neighborhood areas.

## 1.2 Support historic preservation efforts

Historic Preservation is the practice of protecting and preserving buildings, sites, and structures, or districts that reflect our history. It safeguards and celebrates a community's unique identity, making it available for future generations. Preservation stabilizes and enhances property values and strengthens the local community. The National Park Service (NPS) administers the National Register of Historic Places, which includes 74 individual and multiple property districts as well as two National Landmarks; the Allen County Courthouse and the Chief Jean Baptiste de Richardville House in Allen County. Additionally, Fort Wayne has more than 90 individual and multiple property Local Historic Districts.

Federal historic preservation law applies to individual work projects where federal grants or rehabilitation tax credits are involved. In contrast, local historic preservation ordinances give cities and counties the ability to address unsuitable exterior modifications, remodeling, and demolition within an entire historic district. In residential areas, historic preservation efforts can help a community retain its vibrancy and increase property values and desirability within historic and traditional neighborhoods.

To improve the Community and ensure future generations can enjoy its neighborhoods, Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the adopting municipalities should continue to go beyond the National Register and establish the regulatory guidance needed to preserve historic sites, neighborhoods and homes. The Community should investigate establishing a joint county-wide preservation ordinance and historic preservation commission, modeled on the City of Fort Wayne ordinance and commission. The ordinance and commission would support each municipality seeking to preserve its historic buildings, sites, and neighborhoods. The Community can further support historic preservation efforts and increase public awareness by distributing easy-to-understand educational materials to the public about the requirements and process for historic designation. This could include mailing letters annually to property owners of potentially historically significant homes with an invitation to an informational meeting. To further support historic preservation efforts, the Community should:

- 1.2.1. Encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic homes and structures.
- 1.2.2. Support the establishment of National Register and local historic districts.
- 1.2.3. Prioritize regular review and updates to preservation guidelines and building codes.
- 1.2.4. Investigate, develop, implement, and promote federal, state, and local financial incentives to encourage property owners to maintain, preserve, and rehabilitate historic properties.
- 1.2.5. Explore establishing a county-wide historic preservation ordinance.

## Fort Wayne Historic Preservation Commission

The Fort Wayne Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is a seven-member mayoral appointed body. Commission members are residents of the City who are interested in the preservation and development of historic areas and include professionals with experience related to history, architecture, construction, and other disciplines related to historic preservation. Qualified Historic Preservation Planners in the City's Community Development Division serve as staff to the HPC. The HPC is empowered to preserve and protect historically or architecturally worthy buildings, structures, sites and districts which serve as visible reminders of the historic heritage of the city. The HPC enforces the provisions found in the Fort Wayne Historic Preservation and Protection Ordinance ([Chapter 151 of Fort Wayne City Code](#)).

The City of Fort Wayne is also recognized as a Certified Local Government by the National Park Service. The goal of the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program is to facilitate State and local government cooperation with Federal partners to promote nationwide preservation initiatives. Through the certification process, local communities make a commitment to national historic preservation standards. This commitment is key to America's ability to preserve, protect, and increase awareness of our unique cultural heritage found across the country.

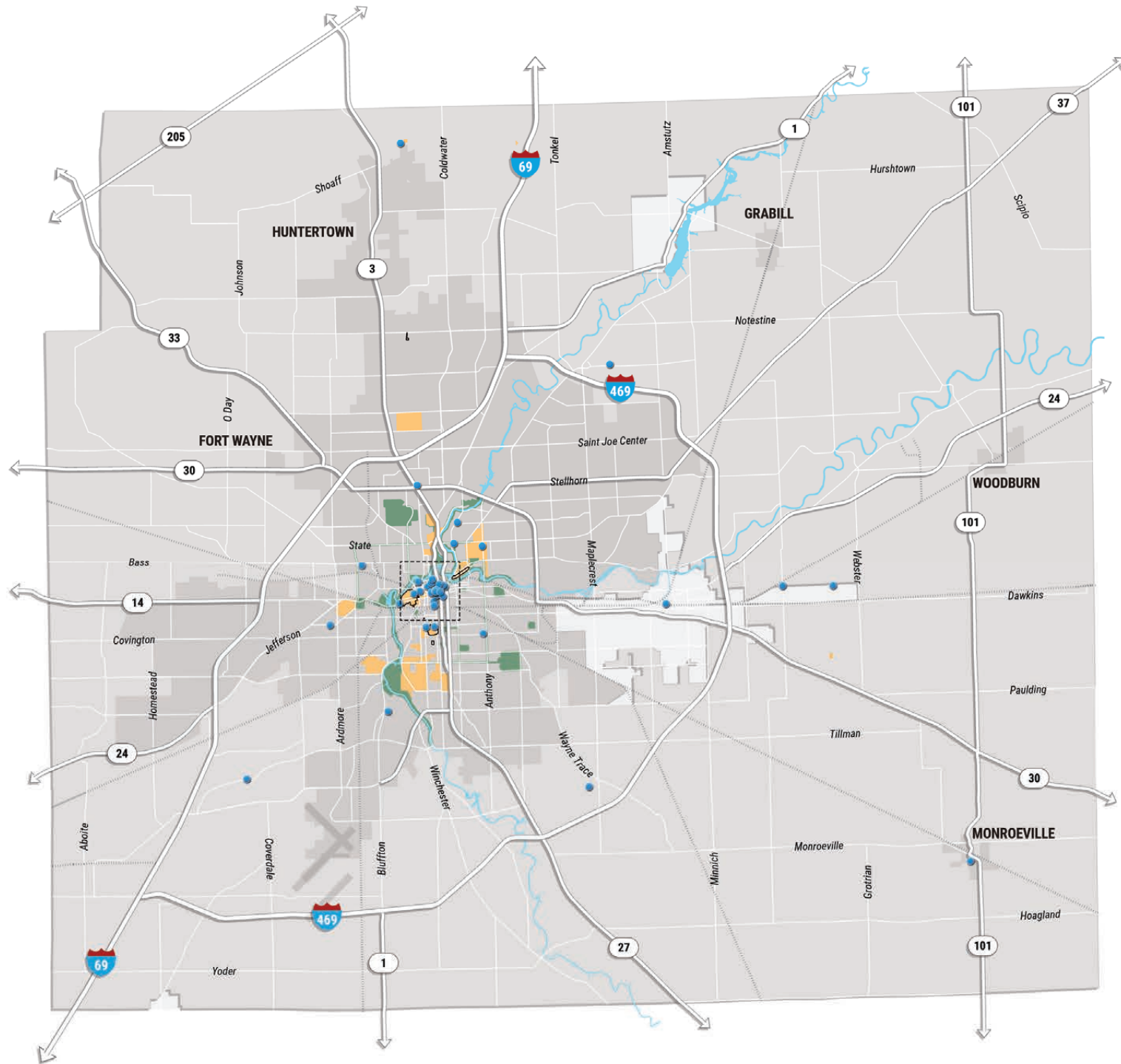
# National and Local Historic Districts

The National Park Service (NPS) administers the National Register of Historic Places, which includes landmarks, individual structures, and multiple property districts. A majority of the historic landmarks, buildings, and districts in the Community are concentrated within central Fort Wayne. Further support for historic preservation and public awareness will ensure historic assets, and traditional neighborhoods throughout the County can be enjoyed by future generations.

- Historic Structures
- National Historic Districts
- Local Historic Districts
- Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System Historic District



Downtown Fort Wayne





### 1.3 Encourage adaptive reuse

Adaptive reuse is the method of repurposing or “recycling” an existing structure for a new use other than for what it was initially intended. It can be used to bring life to existing structures within neighborhoods, such as older and underutilized industrial buildings that exist dispersed within residential areas. Adaptive reuse can also help preserve the Community’s historic architecture and heritage, such as in Downtown where historic buildings could be repurposed into unique housing options. Many intact historic buildings built in the 19th and early 20th centuries are well-suited for new residential uses, often boasting unique architecture and plentiful space for new tenants. Adaptive reuse of these buildings retains local history, maintains unique elements of a community, and brings welcome variation to the urban environment. Adaptive reuse projects are typically a “win-win” in that they remove a vacant or poorly used building by transforming it into an asset.

To encourage adaptive reuse, local regulations should be flexible enough to allow builders and developers to pursue these projects. For example, parking minimums may be reduced where space limitations prohibit conversions from meeting the requirements of their desired development programs.

One source for supporting adaptive reuse is the National Register of Historic Places. Administered by the National Park Service and IRS, their tax credit program has leveraged more than \$116 billion dollars in private investment since 1976. The program offers a 20% income tax credit available to historic, income producing buildings.

Education about other existing and new development incentives, environmental approaches to building conversion, and other initiatives should also be pursued to support investment in all areas of the region. To encourage adaptive reuse, the Community should:

- 1.3.1.** Review and update zoning regulations to encourage appropriate adaptive reuse of historic, institutional, and other non-residential buildings within neighborhoods.
- 1.3.2.** Promote education on and incentives for adaptive reuse, preservation, and green retrofitting of existing buildings.



## 1.4 Strengthen existing neighborhoods and revitalize declining and middle- and low-income neighborhoods

The Community is home to neighborhoods with a range of demographic, socioeconomic, and income levels.

As the region grows economically and in population, all neighborhoods should be lifted with it. For residents living in middle- and low-income neighborhoods, a lack of resources can make it difficult to succeed. To support struggling neighborhoods, policies should be pursued that offer multiple forms of assistance and investment to both tenants and homeowners. This includes supporting reinvestment and renovation, property improvement incentives, affordable and workforce housing, and proactive code enforcement, as well as public investments for improved neighborhood amenities.

Along with incentives for reinvestment and renovation, the Community should consider developing landlord education programs to better educate landlords and property managers on how to provide safe living conditions and facilitate better rental business success for landlords. Additionally, the County and Fort Wayne should consider the use of an “equity index” that tracks community health, environmental conditions, economic factors, and other quality of life indicators to help determine the areas most in need of investment.

To strengthen and revitalize neighborhoods, the Community should:

- 1.4.1. Review and update incentives and provide coordinated planning assistance to revitalize declining and middle neighborhoods and address vacancies, such as home repair, rental rehabilitation, and home buyer programs.
- 1.4.2. Pursue opportunities for residential lot and land consolidation to improve buildability and support higher density housing including missing middle housing types ([see page 118 for definition](#)).
- 1.4.3. Improve property maintenance by prioritizing code enforcement, updating maintenance standards, and developing landlord education programs.
- 1.4.4. Consider the development and use of a neighborhood-focused equity index in the development of neighborhood plans, reviewing proposed development, considering requests for incentives, and prioritizing infrastructure investment.



## Case Study of Neighborhood Equity Index

A Neighborhood Equity Index is a tool to assess and compare factors impacting wellbeing at a neighborhood level. A Neighborhood Equity Index can measure how neighborhoods are doing based on sets of indicators specific to the community. By identifying areas with a lack of resources to thrive, the index can support local planning and action to improve neighborhoods.

### Pittsburgh Equity Indicators

The City of Pittsburgh created the Equity Indicators project in 2017 to assess annual progress toward equitable opportunities and outcomes for Pittsburghers of all races, genders, and incomes, and to inform the City’s investment decisions moving forward. The Indicators report was created by examining a series of inequality indicators individually and bringing everything together in a composite report that scores areas on a scale of 1 (higher *inequality*) to 100 (higher *equality*). Indicators examined included health, food access, safety, transportation, education, environment, and others. The report’s goal is to illustrate the level of equity and opportunity in the City so that residents and leaders have a data-driven understanding of community needs.

(Source: [pittsburghpa.gov](http://pittsburghpa.gov))



## 1.5 Enhance a neighborhoods sense of place

“Sense of Place” is a term meant to encompass all the factors that make a place feel unique to residents and visitors. Many communities experience “cookie-cutter development” and large-scale subdivision development that results in places that feel physically indistinguishable from other areas. Conversely, some existing neighborhoods may suffer from deteriorating infrastructure, such as poor sidewalk conditions or lighting, that detract from sense of place. Investments in gateway and wayfinding signage, decorative vegetation, attractive street lighting, and other aesthetic infrastructure can help differentiate each neighborhood from the next.

A sense of place can also be intangible, created by the people who live in a community. To create a more tightly-knit social fabric in the Community, a range of events should be supported ranging from block parties to summer concerts, to volunteer cleanup events. To support these events, investments should be made in new and improved community gathering spaces. Additionally, Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the adopting municipalities should ensure the processes and permits required for gathering in public areas and on public rights-of-way are clear and accessible.

To enhance a sense of place in neighborhoods, the Community should:

- 1.5.1. Beautify neighborhoods and enhance a sense of place with investments such as gateway signs, street trees, pedestrian-scaled street lighting, and other public infrastructure improvements.
- 1.5.2. Support established residential neighborhoods by facilitating investments in neighborhood commercial areas, parks, and community gathering spaces that sustain and build on local identity.





## 1.6 Encourage neighborhood activation and planning

An active and involved base of residents is a key component of a thriving neighborhood. Local neighborhood advocacy organizations are where a neighborhood comes to life. These organizations allow residents to voice their interests, build consensus, and initiate grass-roots change. To support neighborhood organizations, the Community should consider seeking funding for more “block-level” neighborhood organizations that hold routine meetings, community betterment initiatives (like street cleanups or tree planting events), and other efforts. Neighborhood organizations are not only critical to grass-roots neighborhood growth but also to local community action to ensure community change is not top-down.

The Community should support organized neighborhoods who are empowered to map assets and address their concerns and to be a positive force in the quality of life for their residents. Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the adopting municipalities should provide neighborhood organizations with support and resources to equip them to make informed decisions about where and how to find resources. This should include assistance with the development of neighborhood and sub-area plans to implement the Community-wide policies of the Comprehensive Plan at the local level.

To encourage neighborhood activation and planning, the Community should:

- 1.6.1.** Foster neighborhood organization and partnerships with residents and associations to promote activation and inclusive and shared decision making.
- 1.6.2.** Support and foster the development of action-oriented and asset-based plans for declining and middle neighborhoods.
- 1.6.3.** Support and foster the creation of sub-area plans that promote and sustain complete neighborhood areas.

## 1.7 Increase Downtown housing

Downtown Fort Wayne is a burgeoning area rich with amenities such as the Arts Campus, Parkview Field, Promenade Park, numerous entertainment venues, and several riverfront parks. As the Downtown population grows, the area will become increasingly vibrant with new shops, restaurants, and shared amenities. To ensure housing needs are met and Downtown fulfills its immense potential, a variety of incentives should be implemented. Such incentives could include tax abatements for new residential development and adaptive reuse of historic buildings or height bonuses for developers willing to build affordable housing—particularly on Downtown’s vacant lots and existing parking lots.

These efforts will ensure the viability of Downtown while also improving affordability. As housing options are diversified, maintaining that affordability will be key to the Community’s success. To increase downtown housing, Fort Wayne should:

- 1.7.1.** Consider financial and other incentives to support a mix of housing types in Downtown Fort Wayne, building off the recommendations of the Zimmerman and Volk 2021 Analysis of Residential Market Potential.

## Goal 2. Enable sustainable, diverse, and accessible housing choices along with creative design and development solutions throughout Allen County to meet the needs of all residents

The residential landscape in Fort Wayne is continually evolving. New subdivisions are being developed, existing neighborhoods are maturing, and some of the Community's oldest neighborhoods are changing to meet the demands of a new generation of residents.

As the Community diversifies, the demand for distinct types of neighborhoods and housing will increase. New housing options must better accommodate those with disabilities, aging in place, attract new families and young people, and be affordable for residents of all socioeconomic levels. It will be crucial that new housing options are high quality, affordable, and accessible for people of all backgrounds, abilities and in all stages of life.

### 2.1 Promote diverse and creative housing solutions

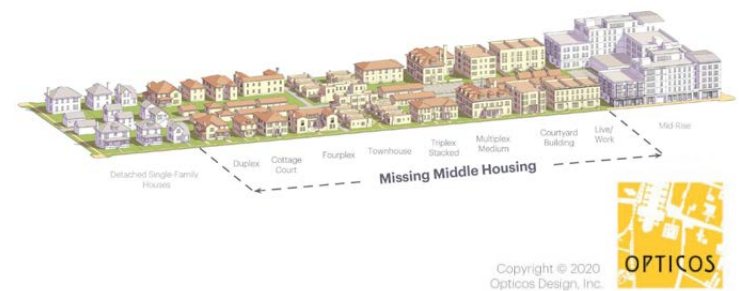
Housing affordability and choice is a growing concern in Allen County as property values and rents have increased, and vacancy and available housing units have decreased. There are several ways the Community can use regulatory tools, as well as incentives, to support increased affordability and housing choice through market-rate development.

By utilizing zoning tools, the Community can take steps to diversify the housing stock. One such tool is the creation of form-based overlays in key areas of the community. A form-based overlay is a zoning district that is "overlayed" like a blanket on top of existing districts to add standards that emphasize architectural form and character. Although a form-based overlay places additional design requirements on development, it typically relaxes use requirements or increases permitted density, making development more straightforward for builders. These overlays can be strategically applied in areas with high numbers of vacant lots to encourage infill that is sensitive to the surrounding architectural context.

### Missing Middle Housing

Missing middle housing types provide opportunities for the Community to increase the diversity of its housing stock through moderate increases in density, while maintaining the local neighborhood character. Missing middle housing types range from low density duplexes to mid density multiplexes and triplexes, which can be integrated into the a community's housing mix by using single-family lots to accommodate two to three units in a context-sensitive manner. Missing middle housing types to consider include:

- Duplex (Side-by-side)
- Duplex (Stacked)
- Triplex
- Quadplex
- Courtyard Building
- Bungalow Courts
- Townhome
- Mixed-Use



## Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are a creative and subtle way of providing greater housing variety in existing single-family neighborhoods without negatively impacting community character. ADUs, sometimes called “granny flats,” are typically less than 800 square feet and allow for context sensitive infill on smaller lots, such as by placing an accessory structure behind the primary residence or through a home expansion. ADUs also provide opportunities for multi-generational housing where multiple generations of one family can live on the same property.

### ADU Design Guidelines

Design guidelines can be established to regulate bulk, height, massing, and architecture to ensure the character of established neighborhoods are not compromised by ADUs. Appropriate lot coverage should be defined based on the size of the lot and not the primary structure. Such conditions should ensure ADUs have little to no impact on the appearance of the primary residence and character of development as seen from the street.

In combination with financial incentives offered by the Community, strategically designed development regulations can make a major impact on the residential development goals of Allen County. The result can be new “missing middle” housing and accessory dwelling units that address housing shortages and availability issues within neighborhoods, contributing to affordability and increasing the ability for residents to age in place.

To promote diverse and creative housing solutions, the Community should:

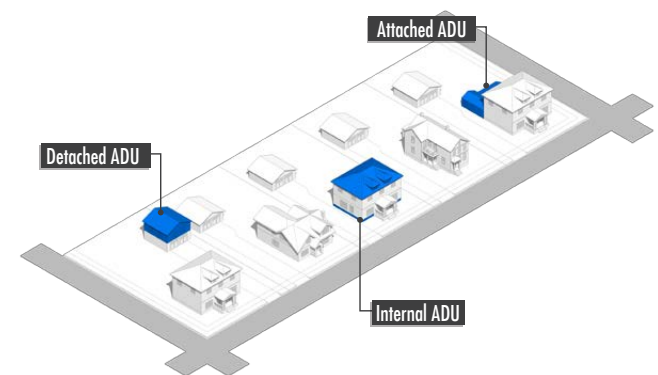
- 2.1.1.** Identify zoning and subdivision regulation updates, zoning tools such as form based overlay districts, and policies, including form-based overlays, to support and promote a greater range of housing types and sizes (single-family detached, single-family attached such as duplexes and multi-family housing) for rent and sale within individual neighborhoods.
- 2.1.2.** Review and update land use regulations to allow opportunities for creative, innovative, context-sensitive housing solutions such as accessory dwelling units (multi-generational housing), lofts, live-work spaces, and manufactured/modular housing to increase housing diversity and affordability.



Internal ADU



External ADU



## 2.2 Promote the use of renewable energy resources and green infrastructure

The Community should prioritize sustainably-built housing to help ensure its long-term environmental future. There are several approaches to sustainable residential construction that can be utilized to build homes that are comfortable and healthy yet consume little energy. Insulation, airtight construction, optimized windows, balanced ventilation, and minimal use of mechanical systems that consume energy are features that can be incorporated into new homes or retrofits. Homes built with these features work as efficiently as possible by minimizing energy consumption and making use of renewable energy, such as solar panels, where possible. Municipalities can make energy-efficient building practices more appealing to homebuilders by clearing code requirements that make implementation difficult and offering tax abatements to homeowners.

In a housing context, green infrastructure refers to techniques that efficiently manage water, such as rain gardens, runoff capture, utilization of native plantings to improve drainage, permeable pavement, and green roofs. Passive building design is an effective approach to implementing green infrastructure in housing.

Municipal regulations can sometimes prevent homeowners from investing in this type of infrastructure, and the Community should ensure these construction techniques are possible and welcome. To promote the use of renewable energy and resources and green infrastructure, the Community should:

- 2.2.1.** Promote policies and update regulations that encourage environmentally responsible construction techniques and renewable energy in new and rehabilitated housing development.
- 2.2.2.** Encourage the inclusion of green infrastructure and the use of low-impact design to reduce environmental impacts.
- 2.2.3.** Review code requirements to determine if there are barriers that make implementation of sustainable design difficult.

### Passive Building

Passive building is a set of design principles for attaining energy efficiency while also creating comfortable indoor living spaces. These principles can be applied to all buildings, including single-family homes, townhomes, duplexes, and multifamily apartment buildings.

#### Case Study: Chicago Passive House Retrofit

Chicago's first certified single-family Passive House is located in the Ravenswood neighborhood. The original home was built in the 1890s, and architects attempted to create a replicable model for retrofitting an existing home following Passive House Institute (PHIUS) building guidelines. The house demonstrates that sustainable retrofitting can be both environmentally and aesthetically rewarding.

The five-bedroom house uses "superinsulation" for an extremely airtight envelope minimizing energy demands. The exterior features fiber-cement cladding and insulated windows, while the roof includes a solar system meeting 25% of the house's annual energy demand. The house is heated and cooled by an Energy Recovery Ventilator (ERV), replacing stale air with clean, fresh air, while harvesting heat energy to heat the incoming air.

Completed in 2020, the house has achieved PHIUS 2018+ certification – the first single-family house in Chicago to do so. The house also achieved energy efficiency accolades from the Department of Energy and the US Environmental Protection Agency.

(Source: [archinect.com](https://www.archinect.com))



## 2.3 Promote accessible, attainable, and stable housing

Housing in the Community should be accessible to people of all ages and abilities, attainable by people of all economic backgrounds, and consistently available to vulnerable populations recovering from substance abuse or other personal complications.

**Accessible Housing.** Housing has historically been designed for only the most able-bodied individuals, at the expense of people with different physical needs. To change this, regulations should be examined to make sure housing is available to wheelchair users and the elderly who may struggle with stairs. Further, “universal design” is an approach to home building that is inclusive of all people. The Community should encourage private developers to apply universal design practices which increase housing accessibility for people of all ages and abilities. This could include level access from the street, zero-entry thresholds, fixtures and fittings located at varying heights and widths, and other design elements that allow for lifetime homes.

**Attainable Housing.** Individuals in revitalizing neighborhoods should expect affordable housing to ensure they are not priced out of their homes as the property values in the neighborhood grows. This means building enough housing to meet demand and considering anti-displacement initiatives when new investments are made in communities. Housing is typically considered “unaffordable” when housing-related costs, including rent and utilities, are over 30% of the household’s income. Such households are unlikely to meet other basic needs and are therefore considered cost burdened.

**Stable Housing.** Stable housing should be guaranteed to accommodate individuals who are working toward economic advancement, but struggling with destabilizing risk factors. The “road to recovery” for people who have struggled with substance abuse (and other personal complications) is often made more complicated by inconsistent housing options. To combat this, housing providers should work closely with related agencies and the Community to ensure high-risk individuals are taken care of.

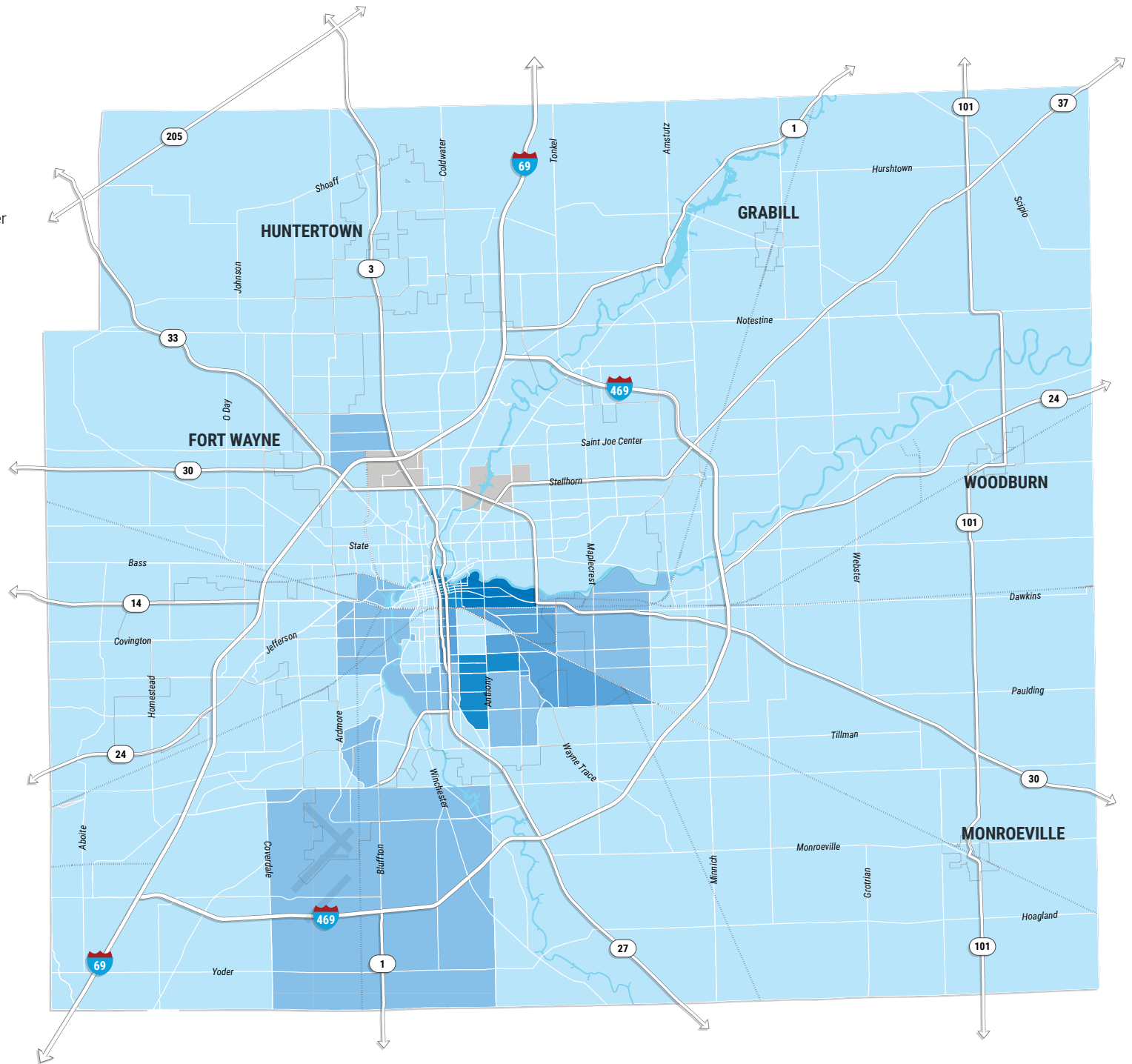
To promote accessible, attainable, and stable housing, the Community should:

- 2.3.1.** Identify barriers and examine updates to development regulations to incorporate universal design principles.
- 2.3.2.** Identify incentives for the development of visitable housing for people with disabilities and those considering aging in place.
- 2.3.3.** Revise development regulations as needed to  permit and encourage home renovations and expansions that increase accessibility.
- 2.3.4.** Evaluate the creation of land trusts and cooperative  housing, including identification of regulatory or financial barriers, to restore existing housing stock, increase homeownership, and preserve affordability as redevelopment occurs.
- 2.3.5.** Work with community organizations, non-profits,  and municipalities to ensure affordable housing for individuals recovering from substance abuse and aid entry into the workforce.

# Owner Housing Affordability

The map shows the percentage of owners per census tract that spend over 30% of their household income on housing.

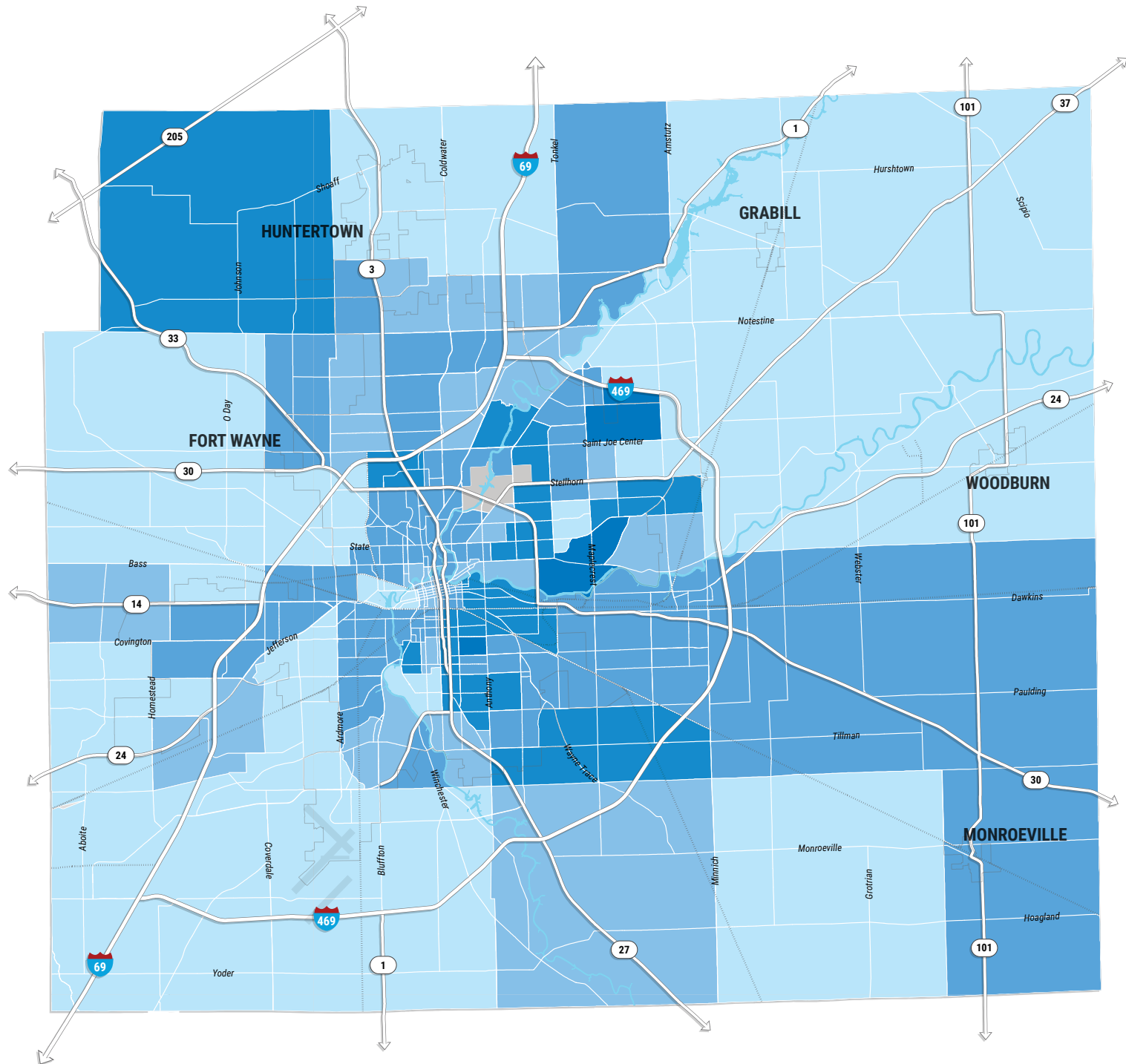
- Less than or equal to 25%
- 25% - 35%
- 35% - 50%
- 50% - 65%
- More than 65%
- Data Unavailable



# Renter Housing Affordability

The map shows the percentage of renters per census tract that spend over 30% of their household income on housing.

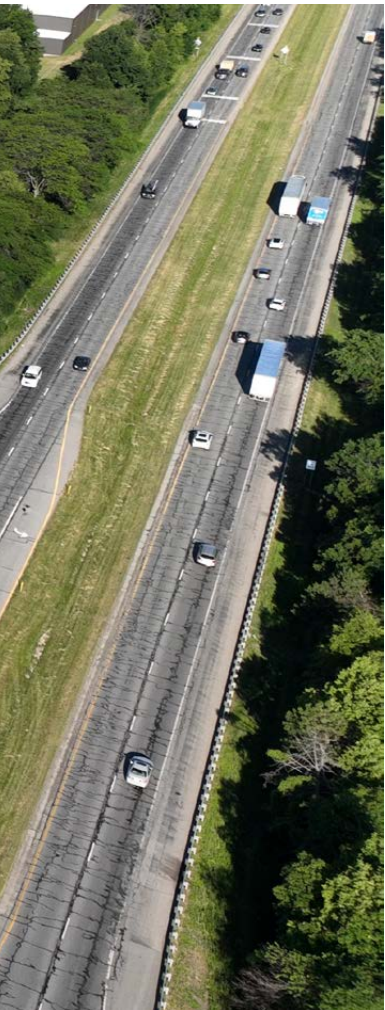
- Less than or equal to 25%
- 25% - 35%
- 35% - 50%
- 50% - 65%
- More than 65%
- Data Unavailable





07

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# Vision Statement

*A diverse mix of businesses, attractions, and employment options will help the local economy continue thriving. Strong collaboration among educational institutions and employers will aid the development of a skilled home-grown talent pool and help attract additional employers to the Community. In addition to attracting companies from outside the region, quality education and improved business support systems will cultivate local businesses and enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The Community's strengths and established employment sectors will grow and attract businesses, capitalizing on the broader national shifts in work and collaboration.*

*Successful collaboration with Greater Fort Wayne Inc., other economic development agencies, large employers, and local business groups will also help direct balanced public-private investment and economic growth across all communities. Community-wide economic development efforts will accompany balanced and inclusive community reinvestment that maximizes infill development opportunities, expands housing choice, reinforces established neighborhood identities, and fosters local business development. By strategically investing in infrastructure, focusing on renewable resources, conducting short and long-range planning, and updating development regulations, Fort Wayne and Allen County will accommodate commercial and industrial expansion on new sites in key growth areas with high accessibility to transportation assets and services.*

*The Community will view the local quality of place as an economic development tool and recognizes its interconnectedness with talent attraction and business development. Prioritizing continued investments in Downtown Fort Wayne will further strengthen the area's good reputation as a place to live and work. Emphasis will continue to be placed on public realm infrastructure and growing the amenity-rich employment districts and healthy neighborhoods needed to provide a high quality of life for existing residents and attract talent from across the country. Public and private investments in local arts, culture, entertainment, and sports will build the Community's reputation, attracting visitors and new residents from neighboring communities and states and driving tourism. Cultural institutions, including art galleries, museums, historic sites, performance venues, and sports venues will continue to offer world-class experiences and a quality work-life balance in the Community.*

## Chapter Organization

### Goals

To achieve the community's vision

### Strategies

To support each community goal

### Action Steps

Actions and Guidance for Consideration  
[See Implementation Matrix \(page 233\)](#)

### Themes

Applicable strategies and action steps have been identified with the following icons:



Equity



Health



Sustainability



## Economic Development

Fort Wayne and Allen County constitute the second-fastest-growing metro area in the Great Lakes region, with more than \$1 billion in private investment in downtown Fort Wayne since 2009. In 2021, Allen County set a record for single-year job growth with more than 2,600 new jobs and witnessed approximately \$400 million in new capital investment and more than \$2 billion in community permits. The Community is well-positioned for success because of the growing healthcare and retail sectors, a stable manufacturing sector, and low unemployment. Further, a variety of partners such as Greater Fort Wayne Inc. and the New Allen Alliance contribute to a positive economic environment. This section examines economic development in Fort Wayne and Allen County, including employment, investment in the community to support placemaking and the arts, infrastructure, and transportation improvements as they relate to development efforts, and initiatives to support a welcoming business community and an entrepreneurial spirit.

In 2021, Allen County  
added more than

**2,600 Jobs**



# Commercial and Employment Areas

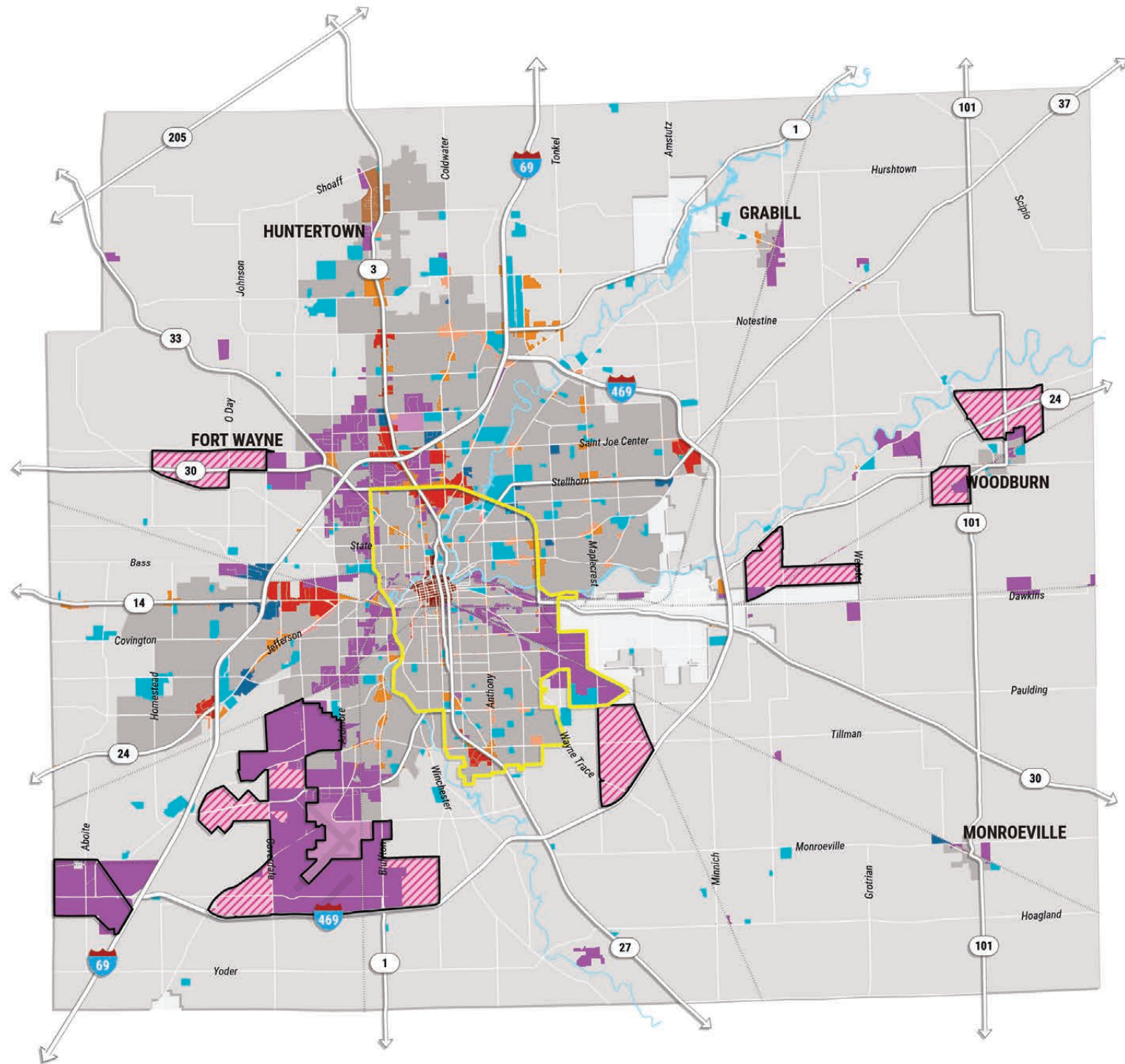
There are several areas throughout Allen County that are primed for economic development and investment.

## Future Growth and Development Area

-  Priority Investment Area
-  Potential Economic Development Growth Area

## Generalized Future Land Use

-  Mixed Urban Commercial Corridor
-  Mixed Suburban Commercial Corridor
-  Neighborhood Commercial
-  Community Commercial
-  Regional Commercial
-  Downtown
-  Town Center
-  Business and Office Park
-  Institutional
-  Production Center
-  Airport
-  Economic Development Transitional Areas





## Potential Economic Development Growth Areas

There are several areas throughout Allen County that are primed for economic development and investment. Sites such as the I-469 corridor on the southeast side of Fort Wayne in the county, Airport Expressway, and the US Route 30 corridor on the west side of Fort Wayne will lead to significant job creation for Allen County residents. Equitable economic growth will be particularly key in Southeast Fort Wayne, an area that needs investment to help bring new employers to the area and improve the economic outlook of residents. Fostering growth in these key areas will ensure a bright economic future for Allen County residents and ensure there are jobs to offer future residents.

### Goal 1. Ensure all areas of Fort Wayne and other Allen County communities can prosper and meet the projected employment demand

The Community's diverse employment base is prospering, anchored by a strong manufacturing sector that includes BF Goodrich and General Motors, and the rapidly expanding healthcare industry centered on Parkview Health Systems and Lutheran Health Network. To continue to meet employment demand in the coming years, every area of Allen County including Fort Wayne and each of the County's municipalities will need to build on established employment sectors while laying the groundwork for new investment. Development-ready employment sites, equitable economic investment, and business development can help the Community reach this goal.

#### 1.1 Prioritize the creation of development-ready employment sites

To clear a path for new business employment centers in the community, appropriate sites must be identified and positioned for investment. Sites should be prioritized for development or redevelopment based on the Land Use Plan to ensure development is compatible with adjacent compatible uses. The City and County should appropriately rezone areas where new investment is desired, ensure the proper infrastructure is in place to make sites attractive to potential businesses, and purchase key parcels for development where necessary.

To prioritize the creation of development-ready employment sites, the Community should:

- 1.1.1.** Strategically identify and prepare land and redevelopment areas for development-ready employment sites in alignment with the Future Growth and Development map, the Generalized Future Land Use map, and the Allen County Together Economic Development Action Plan.
- 1.1.2.** Identify and support catalyst projects for high-impact economic development opportunities within Potential Economic Development Growth Areas on the Future Growth and Development map that support the priorities of the Allen County Together Economic Development Action Plan.



## 1.2 Support equitably-balanced economic investment and reinvestment

Equitably-balanced investment benefits the entire Community by strengthening its competitive advantages. It elevates areas such as Southeast Fort Wayne, which has stagnated with a high proportion of cost-burdened households and a vacancy rate of 17%, twice that of the rest of the City.

Throughout the Community, investment and reinvestment should be context-sensitive. The Land Use Plan should guide investment decisions and ensure development is appropriate for a given area or place. The updated Southeast Fort Wayne Development Strategy lays out a clear example of how to approach proactive land use planning, beautification efforts, and context-sensitive development and redevelopment. In the development Strategy, the intersection of McKinnie Avenue and Anthony Boulevard was targeted for new investment with public art, bike lanes, bulb-outs, and a pedestrian plaza with space for food trucks, farmers' markets, and other community gatherings.

In addition to identifying appropriate locations for investment, the Community should consider the barriers to equitable advancement and aim to maximize prosperity for its businesses and their employees. One innovative approach to this is the creation of an "equity index"—a tool designed to help communities identify priority areas for advancing racial equity, track progress over time, and set specific goals for closing racial gaps.

Using several indicators such as median wage, poverty, unemployment, pollution, and others, an equity index provides a snapshot of overall equity outcomes for cities, counties, regions, and states. Communities that have utilized an equity index include San Antonio, Seattle, and Los Angeles. If implemented, Allen County would be an equitable development leader in the Midwest, positioning the region for new investment and growth. To create the most economically viable atmosphere for the County and the unique areas within it, the Community should:

- 1.2.1.** Identify and address barriers to development and redevelopment opportunities, such as regulatory barriers, functional obsolescence, and development finance gaps.
- 1.2.2.** Continue to foster public/private partnerships to offer development assistance and other incentives, giving priority to opportunities within the priority investment area on the Future Growth and Development map.
- 1.2.3.** Identify gateways and corridors to target for proactive land use planning, beautification efforts, and appropriate context-sensitive development and redevelopment. 
- 1.2.4.** Consider the use of an equity index in reviewing proposed development and redevelopment, considering requests for incentives, and prioritizing infrastructure investment. 
- 1.2.5.** Facilitate and incentivize the remediation and redevelopment of brownfields into tax-generating uses that increase local employment opportunities.

## Brownfield Redevelopment

To minimize sprawling development patterns and take advantage of existing infrastructure, redevelopment on vacated brownfield sites should be prioritized. Brownfields are sites of former industrial or commercial uses with known or suspected contamination due to hazardous waste and pollution. According to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), there are about 76 brownfields recorded in Allen County with 69 of them within the City of Fort Wayne.

Before accommodating new uses, a brownfield must be cleaned and revitalized through a remediation process. The US EPA's Brownfields and Land Revitalization program offers a guide to the remediation process as well as grant money to support revitalization efforts by funding environmental assessment, cleanup, and job training activities. Effective Brownfield remediation increases local tax bases, facilitates job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure, takes development pressures off of undeveloped, open land, and both improves and protects the environment.

### 1.3 Support business development and expansion, and new business attraction

To build upon its diverse employment base, the Community should work to support and expand growing sectors and attract new businesses in pursuit of a strong, diversified economy. The New Allen Alliance provides a template for local governmental collaboration. The alliance represents a coalition of the seven East Allen County communities. United around the core values of collaboration, economic diversity, empowerment, individualism, and leadership, the alliance aims to work collaboratively to enhance the livability of the County's rural areas and attract and retain a talented workforce that benefits all of Allen County and Northeast Indiana.

Economic development partners and organizations such as the New Allen Alliance, Greater Fort Wayne Inc., and the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership are working to advance the local economy. In tandem with these organizations, Allen County's governing bodies should work together to offer assistance programs, provide economic incentives, and market existing resources.

To better address the evolving needs and increasing scale of Amish businesses in Northeast Allen County, the Community should assess the requirements and implications of this growing sector, ensuring the regulatory framework adequately guides rural business development.

### Business Development in Rural Areas

Business development in rural areas will impact the Community's economic future. The County's sizable Amish population in eastern Allen County will benefit from rural business development. A historic part of the Community's social fabric, the Amish have long been integral to the local economy, producing high-quality lumber goods and undertaking several other enterprises.

While the economic activity rural industries provide is generally desirable, additional mechanisms are needed to ensure these operations do not negatively impact quality of life in the community. The freight traffic generated by these businesses is often at odds with the design capacity of rural roadways and bridges and greater oversight is needed to ensure rural businesses are not negatively impacting the environment including nearby wetlands and waterways.

**Roadways** – As of 2016, approximately 40% of county roads across Indiana were in poor condition and 33.5% of local bridges were structurally deficient (based on a 2016 report by Purdue Technology Center). The Allen County Highway Department is responsible for the maintenance of more than 1,354 miles of public roadways including 392 bridges. Rural industry exacerbates poor local road conditions, impacting quality of life for local residents and shortening the lifespan of roads that must be repaired or replaced more frequently.

**Waterways** – According to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, the majority of waterway segments in Allen County (for which there is assessment data) are impaired. These include waterways like Cedar Creek and Black Creek in the northeastern portion of the County where numerous rural businesses are present. Many rural businesses are located in close proximity to or adjacent wetlands and creek corridors. It is not known what impact these businesses are having on water resources. While industrial uses in incorporated areas are closely regulated and monitored, the County does not have the capacity to monitor such uses in rural areas.

#### Recommendation

In 2019, the County amended its Zoning Ordinance to permit and establish guidelines for Home Industry as a special use within the A1 zoning district. As defined in the ordinance, home industries are intended to permit the highest level of home-based business use intensity, including uses which produce or repair a product, and shall be permitted in conjunction with a single-family dwelling unit with a maximum gross floor area of 25,000 square feet.

In addition to standards already in place, the County should consider requiring a traffic impact study as part of the review and approval process for home industry special use applicants. Additional funding mechanisms should be evaluated to address impacts to roadways.

The Community is well-positioned to promote and develop a rich ecosystem of diverse businesses, from Downtown Fort Wayne to East Allen County. To continue improving conditions for innovation and attract new businesses, the Community should:

- 1.3.1.** Facilitate collaboration among local governments and economic development partners to leverage existing resources, assistance programs, and incentives.
- 1.3.2.** Identify barriers to the development and expansion of businesses and explore the creation of new incentives and programs to address identified barriers.



- 1.3.3.** Support the establishment and expansion of rural businesses in areas with sufficient infrastructure capacity and enforce performance standards to mitigate potential negative impacts on the rural environment.
- 1.3.4.** Increase accessibility to support services for local-serving businesses including financial institutions and non-traditional loan providers, such as CDFIs (Community Development Financial Institutions) and SEED (Summit City Entrepreneur and Enterprise District).

## CDFIs and SEED

CDFIs (Community Development Financial Institutions) are treasury-designated non-profit organizations that primarily promote economic development by providing financial products and services to people and communities underserved by traditional financial institutions, particularly in low-income communities. CDFIs include community development banks and credit unions, and non-regulated institutions such as non-profit loan funds or venture capital funds.

CDFIs in Fort Wayne include Brightpoint Development Fund and Union Baptist Church FCU. Founded in 2010, Brightpoint Development Fund offers Small Business Loans, Financial Empowerment Workshops, and housing development services. Union Baptist Church FCU (UBCFU) makes competitive financial services and products available while increasing financial literacy and personal financial stability for the underserved populations of Fort Wayne. UBCFCU offers affordable financial products and services that meet the unique needs of economically underserved communities.

Further, Summit City Entrepreneur and Enterprise District (SEED) is an initiative of the City of Fort Wayne's Community Development Division. Offering solutions for residents who aspire to entrepreneurship, the program aspires to revitalize and spur economic development in its seven square miles of critical neighborhood corridors.

## Goal 2. Continue to invest in Fort Wayne and outlying communities to improve the quality of place

Economic development should increase prosperity in the community for reasons other than just productivity and output. Economic development is intrinsically linked to culture, art, and a sense of place. For example, cultural centers can drive economic activity as residents use their income to patronize cultural offerings. Amenity-rich neighborhoods and commercial districts are also increasingly valued by potential employers, and the growing remote worker population, as desirable environments needed to attract a talented workforce. This relationship is a key pillar of a prosperous economy.

The Community has established itself as a destination for arts and culture through services offered by organizations such as Fort Wayne Ballet, Fort Wayne Philharmonic, Fort Wayne Museum of Art, Auer Center for Arts and Culture, the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre, and numerous galleries, exhibits, and concert venues.

The growing diversity in the Community contributes to cultural events such as the Cherry Blossom Festival, Germanfest, and Burmese dance and art among others, drawing people from across the region.

Besides the arts and cultural experience within the City and County, the arts community has also cemented itself by supporting a wide range of creative occupations and industries. The creative economy includes occupations and industries with a focus on cultural goods and services. The Creative Economy Report published in 2016 by the Indiana Arts Commission identified 18,834 creative economy jobs in the region.

Cultural offerings support a strong “sense of place” in Allen County. “Sense of place” is a term that describes the intangible feeling a place creates because of physical design and local culture. Public art, well-designed sports arenas, unique shops and restaurants, local architecture, parks and interaction with natural features and water bodies are all factors that contribute to the sense of place in a community. Efforts that help to create a better sense of place make an area more appealing to residents and businesses alike. Strategic urban design and identity investments in Downtown Fort Wayne and other activity centers will improve the local sense of place and bolster the appeal of the Community as a whole.

### Arts United

Founded in 1955, Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne is a private, nonprofit organization that supports the creative sector of Northeast Indiana. Arts United is the third oldest united arts fund in the nation and the region's only local arts agency and regional arts council. Arts United acts through advocacy and promotion, fundraising and grant making, business support, community and economic development, and coordination with Arts Campus Fort Wayne. The organization's Mission, Vision, and Values are as follows:

**Mission** – Arts United advances the creative sector by mobilizing resources to elevate our community's quality of life.

**Vision** – Arts United adopts the community vision that Northeast Indiana will claim its place as a national destination by driving forward its creative sector with a regionally collaborative, dynamic, inclusive, and innovative spirit.

#### Values

- Create a margin of excellence for the creative sector
- Encourage innovation and creativity
- Exemplify good stewardship of the community's resources
- Operate collaboratively and inclusively





## 2.1 Support vibrant activity centers

Activity centers in the Community contribute to the quality of place through their cultural offerings and community-oriented urban design. Activity centers are centrally located, providing residents, employees, and visitors the opportunity to live, work, and socialize near amenities. Vibrant activity centers, building form, housing types, streets, and open spaces contribute to a walkable place. Downtown Fort Wayne is the primary activity center for the region, offering historic architecture, unique restaurants, attractive parks, and cultural attractions.

The Community should build on the concept of activity centers to make Fort Wayne, the Town Centers in the surrounding municipalities, and other commercial nodes within neighborhoods more attractive to prospective residents and businesses alike.

In pursuit of more thriving and appealing activity centers, the Community should:

- 2.1.1.** Enhance Downtown Fort Wayne, Town Centers, and other community commercial nodes as vibrant activity centers by identifying areas for placemaking strategies and targeted improvements to the public realm.
- 2.1.2.** Identify areas for public-private partnerships which provide public spaces for gathering and socializing.
- 2.1.3.** Develop a cohesive branding and marketing strategy to promote Downtown Fort Wayne and Town Centers in Allen County communities.
- 2.1.4.** Encourage additional investment in mixed-use and urban residential development in and around downtown Fort Wayne, along urban corridors leading to and from downtown, and in Town Centers.

## Downtown Improvement District

The Downtown Improvement District (DID) is an Economic Improvement District established under the State of Indiana statute that provides special events to promote the downtown, beautify the district, and partner with the City to augment municipal services. PFW Community Research Institute prepared a report for the DID in 2017 to provide a profile of downtown employees and residents compared to Fort Wayne's population.

Some of the key takeaways include:

- Between 2000 and 2017, the population within the DID grew by 14% compared to just over 5% within the City of Fort Wayne (when excluding the effect of annexation).
- The employee-to-resident ratio within the DID is more than 100 times greater than that of Fort Wayne. There are 763 jobs in the DID for every 100 residents compared to 68 jobs for every 100 residents in the City of Fort Wayne.
- Approximately 24% of jobs in the DID are with finance and insurance establishments compared to just 6% within Fort Wayne's total workforce. The second-largest DID employee cluster is public administration at 21%.

**DOWNTOWN**  
*Fort Wayne*



## 2.2 Identify and enhance key community, sports, and tourism assets

Fort Wayne is a four-time winner of the All-America City Award and is home to multiple high-quality institutions that make it one of the most appealing places in the Midwest. Institutions that contribute to the desirability and sense of community, attracting both visitors and new residents, include the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, Parkview Field (ranked the #1 Minor League Stadium in the United States by Stadium Journey magazine), the Grand Wayne Convention Center, the Conservatory Embassy Theatre, and many others.

To bolster these institutions and further cement them as regional economic drivers, the Community should investigate several initiatives to support them, including:

**2.2.1.** Enhance key community and regional assets such as the Arts United Campus, Embassy Theater, the County Fairgrounds, the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, and Fort Wayne Children's Zoo that define local community identity and support arts, culture, and entertainment to complement private investment and encourage tourism.

**2.2.2.** Explore the use of a countywide Fort Wayne-Allen County sports commission to identify and address barriers to enhancing local youth sports, attracting new events, and promoting Fort Wayne and Allen County's regional sports brand.

**2.2.3.** Evaluate the potential for developing new multi-purpose spaces for high-profile sporting events, concerts, and other events/festivals.

## 2.3 Enhance the use of the three rivers, especially in the Fort Wayne urban core

Fort Wayne is located at the nexus of three rivers: the Maumee, St. Joseph, and St. Marys. These waterways are a historic part of the Community's physical and cultural fabric, with the St. Joseph providing water for 250,000 people in Fort Wayne. The rivers represent a major opportunity to spur more economic activity. Fort Wayne is seeing more residents downtown, and an increased interest in boating, kayaking, biking, commerce, community events, and natural scenery along the rivers.

Efforts to improve the riverfronts and better utilize the three rivers as valuable amenities have been a recent focus for the City of Fort Wayne. Most notably, Promenade Park is a key part of this effort, envisioned through a large-scale community engagement process. The first phase of Promenade Park was completed and dedicated in August 2019. In the coming years, the Community should support the continued development of Riverfront projects into their next phases, which include new public-private developments with space for new businesses and residents. To position the Community's waterfronts for success in the future and maximize the rivers as both an economic and quality-of-life asset, the Community should:

**2.3.1.** Support continued implementation of the Riverfront Conceptual Plan and the Riverfront Development Implementation Framework Plan.

**2.3.2.** Encourage additional appropriate river-related development in the downtown Fort Wayne area.

Parkview Field  
**Ranked #1**  
 Minor League Stadium by  
 Stadium Journey Magazine

## 2.4 Enhance the appearance and unique identity of the Community's towns and cities

The Community is a collection of unique places, spanning from the urban core of downtown Fort Wayne to growing towns like Hometown, and smaller rural communities like Grabill, Monroeville, and Woodburn. Allen County's towns and cities each offer a unique sense of character that complements and contrasts with Fort Wayne. Investments made in these municipalities will need to differ in strategy and scale to be effective and meet the goals of their residents.

Most communities throughout Allen County are home to a central business district, or Town Center, which caters to the needs of its residents. While there may be variations in the goals of each town, downtown revitalization and investment are critical for these places. The New Allen Alliance Regional Development Plan provides an approach for how revitalization can occur in the County's communities through Town Center investments like streetscaping, investment in parks, sidewalk and trail connections, investment in industrial sites, and workforce and entrepreneurial development. To enhance the appearance and unique identity of the towns and cities, the Community should:

- 2.4.1. Support the implementation of the New Allen Alliance Regional Development Plan.
- 2.4.2. Explore updated development regulations and other tools to encourage "main street" commercial development and redevelopment in and around Town Centers, and additional investment within Allen County's incorporated areas and unincorporated communities.

## New Allen Alliance Regional Development Plan

In 2015, the New Allen Alliance released a Strategic Investment Plan that outlined the needs of the community and how they are planning for future viability and growth. Desired outcomes and impacts of the Plan:

- **Quality-of-Place Investment** – focuses on the collective investment by East Allen's communities in quality-of-place projects (downtowns, parks, sidewalks, and trails) concentrated in target areas of revitalization within each community.
- **Industrial Site Investment** – manufacturing businesses should be retained and attracted. Well-located near major job centers like Chicago and Indianapolis, the Community is well suited to capitalize on new opportunities.
- **21st Century Workforce Investment** – Advanced educational attainment will provide a local workforce with the appropriate skills to meet the needs of local employers and the local economy.
- **Regional Development** – Through the collaboration of government and business leaders, clear and purposeful leadership has enabled trust, unity, and a shared understanding of the region's trajectory. Cross-sector collaboration is critical to future decision-making.
- **Enhancing Livability** – East Allen County residents will have a high quality of life. Access to parks, goods, and services will increase, pedestrian accessibility to central community assets and neighborhoods will be improved, and health and wellness will improve through increased opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating education. – New Allen Alliance



Seven UNIQUE COMMUNITIES  
One BOLD VISION

### Goal 3. Coordinate key infrastructure and transportation improvements with local economic development efforts

Transportation is pivotal to the Community's economy and quality of life. A competitive economy, and the economic and social well-being of residents, require a multi-modal transportation system that provides choice and reliability.

Infrastructure and transportation improvements should be made with anticipated development and future land uses in mind. Infrastructure and transportation improvements steer and support economic development and urban growth. The Community's transportation infrastructure provides building blocks for its economy—connecting businesses, connecting workers with employment, and connecting households to vital needs like healthcare and education.

To be successful in the long term, the Community will need to ensure its infrastructure and transportation connects workers to jobs and provides easy access between bustling urban neighborhoods, growing small communities, and rural areas. Detailed discussion regarding infrastructure and transportation access can be found in the [Transportation and Mobility chapter](#).

#### 3.1 Ensure sufficient infrastructure and transportation capacity

Different areas of the Community face unique challenges and opportunities related to infrastructure and transportation. To position all areas of the Community for effective economic development, high-quality multimodal transportation infrastructure must be available so residents can easily get to and from their places of work, as discussed in the [Transportation and Mobility chapter](#). The Community must also ensure a sufficient network and quality of roadways needed for businesses to deliver products to economic markets and consumers, as identified in the Transportation and Mobility chapter. To support economic development and employment growth through investment in infrastructure and transportation, the Community should:

- 3.1.1.** Maintain and expand infrastructure (including electric, natural gas, water, sanitary sewer and telecommunications/broadband) and transportation capacity to facilitate economic development.
- 3.1.2.** Invest in transportation corridors and infrastructure that increase mobility and transportation choices (including bike, pedestrian, and public transit) while providing greater access to existing and planned centers of employment.

#### 3.2 Maintain and expand key transportation assets

One approach to maximizing public and private investment is focusing on transportation hubs and corridors, including existing hubs such as the intersection of U.S. 24 and Lima Road, as well as potential growth areas like U.S. 30 (west of U.S. 24) and the new Parkview Hospital Innovation Hub. The Community should emphasize and invest in existing assets while planning for growth and expansion. In Allen County, the U.S. 30 Corridor is a key route to Chicago and thus an attractive place to locate a business with logistical needs. U.S. 24 is another key corridor with economic development potential, connecting Allen County to the Indiana-Ohio state line. The Community should continue improving access to the broader Midwest and beyond, supporting transportation improvements such as passenger rail service. Additionally, the Community should support investment at the Fort Wayne International Airport (FWA) and Smith Field Airport (SMD), diversifying options for commercial air travel and shipping for businesses. The Community should:

- 3.2.1.** Continue to work on plans for the expansion of the U.S. 30 corridor to promote and enhance travel between Allen County and the Chicago area.
- 3.2.2.** Facilitate community collaboration to identify opportunity sites along the eastern portion of the U.S. 24 corridor to leverage the "Fort to Port" project.
- 3.2.3.** Support the restoration of passenger rail service to better connect Allen County to cities throughout the Midwest and support regional economic development and tourism.
- 3.2.4.** Continue to improve and protect the FWA and SMD as economic assets.



## Goal 4. Support efforts to continue to create a welcoming, business-friendly, and inclusive community that fosters entrepreneurship, innovation, and business growth

Cultivating a diverse and multi-talented economy that is friendly to new and existing businesses is critical to ensuring the economic future of the Community. With a diversified economy that is anchored by the health care and manufacturing industries, there are several areas where the business community can attract new businesses, and improve access to jobs, wages, and the economy. Promoting “innovation hubs” can allow new businesses to grow and support each other. The Community can also support partnerships between businesses and schools or higher education institutions, build the local workforce, and train entrepreneurs to start businesses. To support the employment base, the Community can identify opportunities for housing designed for middle-income workers and students. An innovative and entrepreneurial community requires active involvement from decision-makers, economic development partners, and stakeholders from businesses large and small.

### 4.1 Support targeted business attraction

While Fort Wayne and Allen County can support businesses with workforce training, infrastructure investment, fast-tracked processes, and access to development sites, partnership organizations will be key to attracting new businesses from outside the region. The Community can ensure cohesive local efforts are focused on generating interest in the County and its municipalities. To leverage the Community’s strengths and jointly market County and municipal benefits to potential businesses, the Community should:

- 4.1.1.** Work with economic development partners and entities, including universities, Greater Fort Wayne Inc., Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership, and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) to market to target industries for recruitment and attraction.
- 4.1.2.** Support Greater Fort Wayne Inc. and other economic development partners in business attraction efforts as part of the implementation of the Allen County Together Economic Development Plan.
- 4.1.3.** Support preparation for and cultivation of a competitive environment for innovations in technology adoption in targeted industries.

### Greater Fort Wayne (GFW) Inc.

Greater Fort Wayne (GFW) Inc. serves as the chamber of commerce and economic development organization for Fort Wayne and Allen County. Since 2014, GFW Inc. has helped 153 businesses expand in Fort Wayne-Allen County resulting in 9,019 new jobs, \$393 million in annual payroll, and \$2.6 billion in investment including local expansions, business attraction efforts, and foreign direct investment. Building upon these efforts will allow the area to grow into the future.



**GREATER  
FORT WAYNE INC.**  
METRO CHAMBER ALLIANCE



Source: Electric Works

## 4.2 Develop and support innovation hubs where anchor institutions and companies are concentrated and support new business start-ups, business incubators, and accelerators

To foster economic growth and catalyze new development, “innovation hubs” should be developed. An innovation hub, such as the Northeast Indiana Innovation Center, resembles a micro-economy where businesses can share infrastructure such as transportation access and amenities for employees. By clustering businesses in targeted areas, all parties stand to benefit from the sharing of ideas and the competitive marketplace. Innovation hubs can be anchored by local institutions, and offer startup incubators, coworking spaces, and tech offices positioned within a walkable environment near amenities. There are multiple areas in the Community well-suited for an innovation hub such as the Electric Works campus.

To support the development of innovation hubs that offer inspiring spaces to work and start businesses, the Community should:

- 4.2.1.** Continue to position Electric Works as an entrepreneurial hub for business innovation alongside established companies in partnership with local entrepreneurial support organizations.
- 4.2.2.** Attract and grow high-wage jobs in research and development, advanced manufacturing, skilled trades, and engineering-focused and technology-driven growth industries.
- 4.2.3.** Explore additional opportunities to attract and expand research institutions and campuses.

## Electric Works

The redevelopment and adaptive re-use of the former General Electric campus in downtown Fort Wayne. The mixed-use district is proposed to include 39 acres, 18 historic buildings, and more than 1.2 million square feet of space for office, education, retail, residential, hotel, and entertainment uses. An Innovation Center will be central to the development, bringing a coworking space with programming to both activate the area and foster a new generation of entrepreneurs. Also, a new Food Hall will bring the community together and accent this already vibrant area. In Phase 2 of the project, a range of affordable and inventive living spaces will come to the area. This unique, wellness-oriented development is poised to capitalize on the already exciting new downtown projects to make this burgeoning area more vibrant.



### 4.3 Collaborate on workforce support and development

Between 2010 and 2017, Fort Wayne added a total of 8,074 jobs, an increase of 6.1%. Over the same period, Allen County grew by 14,319 jobs (+8.8%). This is good momentum and a sign that the Community is headed in a positive direction.

To bring employment opportunities to more people and increase access to and awareness of the Community's job pipeline, new relationships should be fostered between educational institutions and employers. The Allen County Together (ACT) Plan notes that talent shortages limit the growth of existing employers and business attraction potential, but there is an opportunity for local higher education institutions to expand and provide graduates with in-demand skills, and more top-tier research and development.

The Community's students anticipate employment shortly after graduation, and adults who have struggled with employment in the past should be able to find new opportunities. To support local collaboration on workforce development, the County should:

- 4.3.1.** Foster partnerships between area schools, colleges and universities, and employers to increase access to and awareness of internships, vocational training, and education in skilled trades in alignment with economic opportunities.
- 4.3.2.** Facilitate expanded access to daycare and early childhood education.

### 4.4 Support and facilitate the development of workforce and student housing

Housing is not only an issue for individuals and families, but it matters to businesses as well. A range of housing options helps to attract and retain workers to the Community. Students or previously unemployed adults often struggle to attain acceptable quality housing that is in reasonable proximity to their jobs. There is a high rate of cost burden in parts of the Community, such as an undersupply of units in Fort Wayne for households earning less than \$25,000 annually. This income bracket (rental range of less than \$625/month) has an undersupply of 7,081 units causing many low-income households to experience a cost burden. Many of the people in this income bracket are students or adults seeking housing as they work to gain middle-income employment. This housing need increases the difficulty of people becoming more economically stable overall.

One student-focused initiative comes from the Allen County Together Plan, which calls for the construction of 2,500 on- and off-campus student housing units—and other amenities associated with local higher-education institutions—by the end of 2031 to help Fort Wayne become a widely recognized “college town.” The Community should investigate incentives for new housing and work with institutions to develop housing solutions for individuals working towards employment in the region. To do this, the Community should:

- 4.4.1.** Identify appropriate areas and incentives for the development of housing that is affordable to middle-income workers and students within walking distance of major employment centers or with high-quality transit access.
- 4.4.2.** Collaborate with higher education institutions in the creation of strategic plans to identify sites, financial incentives, and public-private partnerships to facilitate the development of on and off-campus student housing.





#### 4.5 Support inclusivity and diversity

As a result of historic inequalities, minority households in the Community earn less than White households. Within Allen County, the median household income for a home with a Black household (\$29,018) is just over half that of a White household (\$57,587). The median income for an Asian household (\$51,384) in Allen County is 89% of White households. Income disparity percentages among Fort Wayne households are similar.

Research is increasingly tying income disparities among households of different races and ethnicities to impacts on a region's economy due to the decreased economic output of minority groups. In the Community, Southeast Fort Wayne has the largest minority population and should be a focus of inclusivity initiatives. Community-wide, a focus should be on welcoming immigrants, international students, and refugees, and celebrating diversity as a source of strength and innovation.

The Community should promote immigrant-friendly policies, communicate welcoming principles and the benefits of inclusion among residents, and work with its partners to unite individuals and businesses from varied backgrounds. To do this, the Community should:

- 4.5.1.** Promote equitable access to economic opportunities by targeting investments and incentives in employment centers, significant mixed-use development, commercial corridors and nodes, and small business support, with a focus on diverse communities and historically underrepresented groups.
- 4.5.2.**  Work with community partners (nonprofits, philanthropic organizations, etc.) to identify and support business formation among women, Burmese, Black, Hispanic, and other underrepresented groups.
- 4.5.3.**  Encourage diversity in business leadership that is reflective of the Community.

#### 4.6 Strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem

Entrepreneurs are the backbone of an economy, creating the ideas and employment centers of the future. The County and its municipalities can work to create the physical environment for new businesses to locate and thrive, but the Community will also need to make a concerted effort to support its local entrepreneurs. The Community should work towards an "ecosystem" of entrepreneurship and innovation where educational programs are made available to prospective businesspeople, innovative ideas are formulated and shared, and people have the tools they need to succeed. Resources provided by local institutions and job training centers should have a greater emphasis in the Community to bring employment to more people. The Community will be able to measure success as locally-grown businesses thrive within Allen County, complementing those that are established through relocation or business attraction. To drive innovation, promote entrepreneurial activity, and support new business development, the Community should:

- 4.6.1.** Support the implementation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem strategy.
- 4.6.2.** Expand access to entrepreneurial training and mentorship programs such as the SEED Build Institute, the Northeast Indiana Innovation Center (NIIC) Breakthrough Program and the Greater Fort Wayne Bridge Program.

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# TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY



## Vision Statement

*Over the next decade, Allen County and its municipalities will fully emerge as a state leader in transportation modes and systems. These entities will boast a regional transportation system that is safe, accessible, affordable, and connected for all users. Fort Wayne and Allen County will lead Indiana by example as the Community grows as a regional and national multimodal transportation hub. The County and its communities will highlight best practices in air travel, transit improvements, bicycle and pedestrian systems, passenger rail service, and vehicular and freight circulation. The system will integrate each of these modes effectively, strengthening the capacity of affordable, convenient, and healthy transportation options. Combined with other focus areas and themes, these systems will support efforts to improve countywide recreational, natural, and cultural assets and serve as tools to bolster economic development.*

*Informed users and policymakers will support the interconnected transportation system. Investments across all modes of transportation will continue to enhance the region's identity and economy, improving system efficacy while better showcasing community gateways, standardizing roadway design, classification, and improvements, and beautifying public rights-of-way. Exploring new and evolving modes of public transit, transportation, and innovative technology will improve both individual and group connectivity opportunities for the region, augmenting economic productivity and expanding tourism for the Community.*

## Chapter Organization

### Goals

To achieve the community's vision

### Strategies

To support each community goal

### Action Steps

Actions and Guidance for Consideration  
[See Implementation Matrix \(page 236\)](#)

### Themes

Applicable strategies and action steps have been identified with the following icons:



Equity



Health



Sustainability



## Transportation

The Community is well-positioned to take advantage of its location, with connections to the Interstate Highway System and Fort Wayne International Airport. These connections contribute to the Community's continued population growth and its economic development efforts. The Community has seen a growth rate of over 10% since 2010 with a parallel increase in business parks, new housing in the southwest and northern Allen County, and medical center expansions. The Community's transportation systems will need continued investment and regional collaboration to support its ongoing economic rise and meet its long-range goals.

Because land use is linked with transportation, the two must be coordinated to effectively meet the Community's economic, social, and sustainability goals. With an increase in economic development and growth in population, the Community must explore and implement transportation systems and networks that are complementary to its already existing Interstate 469 bypass and arterial routes. To ensure the system is viable long-term, the Community will need to reduce traffic within the urban core, lower total vehicle miles travel, improve mobility for passenger and transit vehicles, and reduce arterial system congestion. These efforts will help lower emissions, improve air quality, reduce energy consumption, and importantly – reduce neighborhood and local traffic to maintain and improve safe, livable spaces.

The transportation planning process within Allen County and Fort Wayne is an ongoing effort that involves the Northwest Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC), which serves as the oversight authority and the region's Regional Planning Organization (RPO). This chapter stresses the need to continue to work with NIRCC and other agencies to best coordinate efforts in managing, maintaining, and improving every aspect of the regional transportation system. It also represents a cooperative effort by the state, local governments, public transportation, various advocacy groups and stakeholders, as well as area residents.

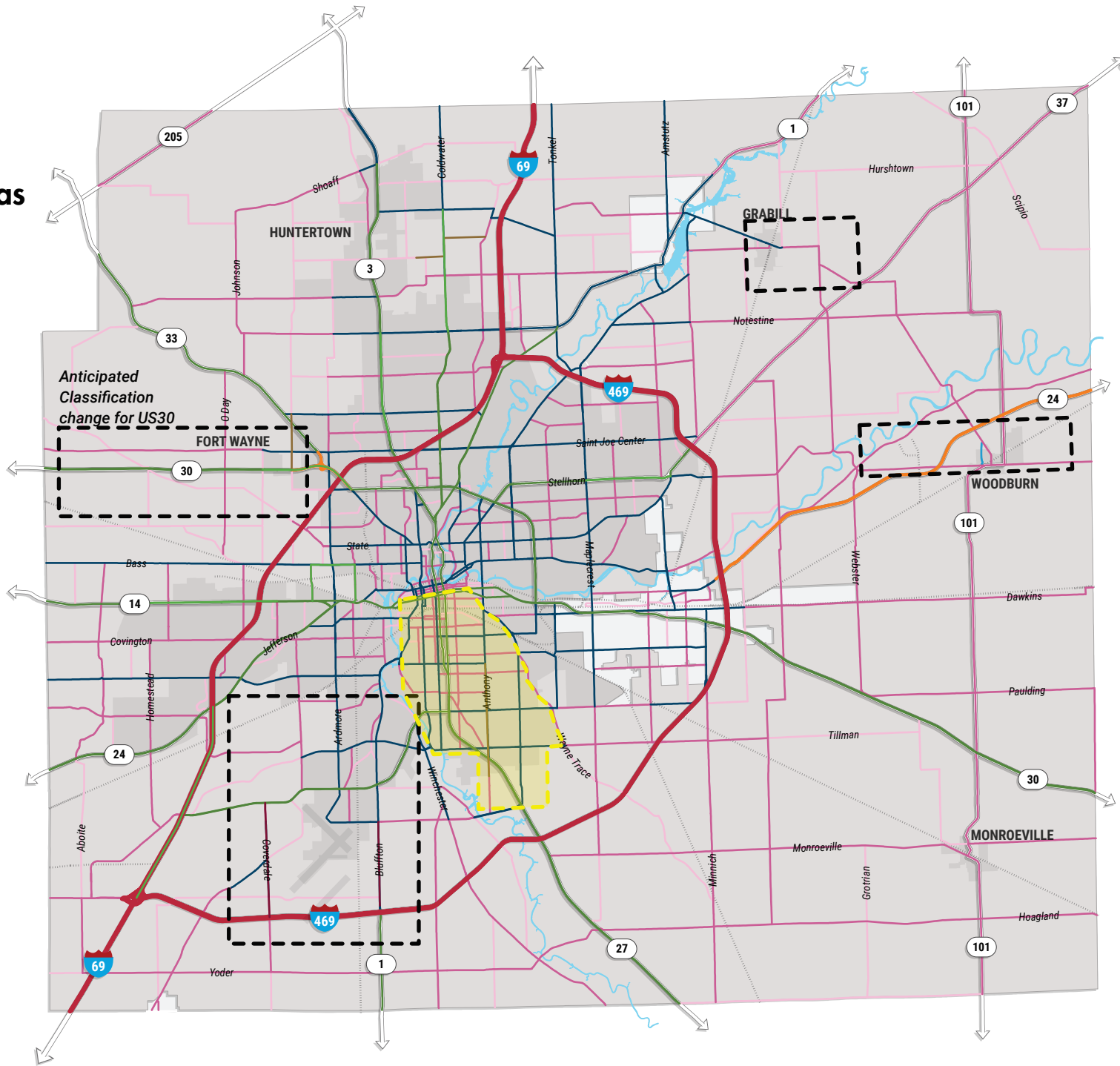
This chapter builds on the collaborative context and regional strategy by addressing planned future growth patterns, emerging transportation concepts and best practices, and policy changes. This chapter also emphasizes multimodal transportation to increase system capacity while supporting equity, sustainability, and health opportunities throughout the Community.

Allen County Metro Area  
has had a growth rate of over  
**10%**  
since 2010

# Roadway Capacity and Classification Focus Areas

Allen County's vehicular infrastructure, at its current capacity, is well-suited to support the planned growth outlined in the Land Use and Development chapter. Vehicular improvements should focus on multimodal road capacity configuration changes and complete street initiatives within infill areas, and roadway improvements coordinated with land use changes adjacent to the proposed "production center" areas. These are likely to experience additional truck traffic and require higher capacity classifications.

- Interstate
- Freeway / Expressway
- Major Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Proposed Rural Major Collector
- Classification Evaluation Focus Areas
- Multi-modal Enhancement Focus Area



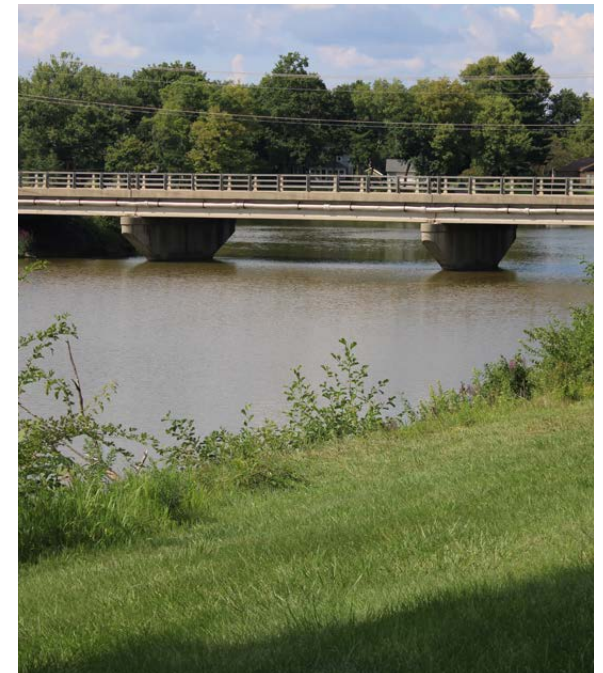


## Goal 1. Support high-quality infrastructure and systems for all transportation modes that align with community needs and facilitate economic development

According to the NIRCC 2040 Transportation Plan, the Community is within a day's drive of half of the nation's population and sits at the center of six major economic city centers, including Chicago, Cincinnati, Columbus, Detroit, and Indianapolis. The Allen County Together plan especially details the importance of the connection to the Chicago market. With a robust vehicular transportation system already in place—particularly at the interstate, freeway, and major arterial classification levels—the Community is well-positioned for continued connectivity to each of these centers.

The Land Use Plan locates production centers in areas already supported by existing major roadways. Some core focus areas for roadway capacity expansion include the Southeast Fort Wayne which is targeted for economic development within a short drive of established neighborhoods, particularly along the Adams Center Road corridor. Desired growth near Woodburn will also require future improvements as industry and employment-generating development expand in that area. From an infill standpoint, several traditional and suburban neighborhoods will see future growth, particularly in the Hometown and south to southwest Fort Wayne areas.

Roadway expansion that dovetails with the NIRCC 2040 Transportation Plan, along with key safety improvements and ongoing road lane reconfiguration will reinforce capacity building from a multimodal standpoint. To support growth in specific residential areas and employment centers, public transit will need to extend service primarily to the northern and western parts of the Community (potentially along bus routes 2, 4, and 9). Similarly, the existing bike network already covers broad swaths of the Community, but there are areas of focus that could benefit from bike mobility improvements. Portions of Hometown and south and east Fort Wayne are areas where there are opportunities to better connect residential areas.



The first half of 2021 saw an increase of  
**18.4%**  
in motor vehicle crashes as compared to  
the same time in 2020



### 1.1 Improve connectivity and capacity

While the priority investment area, within Fort Wayne and south of U.S. 30, has strong neighborhood patterns and infrastructure, the urban infill and targeted growth areas may need additional transportation infrastructure investment to better support them. Similarly, community growth, particularly in all types of residential areas, will need subsequent recreational, natural, and cultural assets to drive quality of life within those areas, like trail extensions or bike lanes.

Establishing maximum lengths for block perimeters and requiring all new development to connect to adjacent streets is a tool to bolster new developments. As noted above, block length is a key component in determining walkability but has corresponding impacts on the total street area, available frontage, and taxable area. A complementary analysis of Intersection Density, shown on [page 149](#), highlights areas on the periphery of downtown as more sparse and therefore less walkable. Future support should focus on areas that overlap with the Highest and Medium Need locations shown on the Map 4 Pedestrian Connectivity in the Walk Fort Wayne plan. To improve connectivity and capacity, the Community should:

- 1.1.1.** Prioritize the development and implementation of transportation plans that reflect best practice models to address transportation capacity needs across all transportation modes.
- 1.1.2.** Explore updated development regulations to require interconnected street networks to increase public and private street, sidewalk, bike, and trail connections between and within developed areas.
- 1.1.3.** Coordinate planning efforts with local land use and zoning, working with housing agencies to offer adequate access across all neighborhoods.

### 1.2 Plan for and coordinate transportation improvements with economic development priorities

Public transportation and transportation expansion projects offer many benefits to the residents and workers of Fort Wayne and Allen County. These include economic stimulation, job growth, energy conservation, traffic congestion, defining public spaces, contribution to a sense of community, and increasing mobility for youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income populations. Countywide, public transportation education and awareness will encourage greater use of available options and promote the growth of the multimodal transit system.

While the expansion of U.S. 30 is advised in the Allen County Together goals, that plan also highlights the importance of context sensitive improvements that ensure local businesses will not be adversely impacted. U.S. 30 is a key growth corridor for economic development and the potential for interstate designation should be tempered with continued involvement from adjacent businesses and the City of Fort Wayne to ensure alignment with desired growth.

Freight movement, particularly around areas identified as production centers and the airport, would be better accommodated by intensification of roadway classifications along strategic segments. Some roadways, such as S.R. 1 (Bluffton Rd.) would extend the classification farther into Fort Wayne's municipal boundary. To coordinate transportation with economic development, the Community should:

- 1.2.1.** Support advocacy, planning, and implementation efforts for the expansion of the U.S. 30 corridor into an interstate highway.
- 1.2.2.** Support the investment and improvement opportunities along the I-469 corridor with specific emphasis on the Adams Center Road Interchange.
- 1.2.3.** Engage in planning and implementation efforts to enhance the image and appeal of highway interchanges, major gateways, and key corridors into downtown Fort Wayne and town center areas.
- 1.2.4.** Consider changes in functional class to higher capacity classifications to improve freight movement along roadways serving production centers and the airport.



### 1.3 Support Fort Wayne International and Smith Field Airports

Fort Wayne International Airport's 20-year Master Plan incorporates several capital improvements projects to accommodate anticipated increases in passenger and cargo services. Transportation development projects should continue to support the Fort Wayne International Airport Master Plan and utilize it as a tool for guiding land use development. New development around the airports should incorporate uses that are compatible with the airport to bolster its long-term viability. To support its airports, the Community should:

- 1.3.1.** Continue to support the Fort Wayne International Airport Master Plan and the Smith Field Airport Layout Development Plans as tools for guiding development in and around the airports.
- 1.3.2.** Continue to use the Airport Overlay District as a tool for guiding development in and around the airports.

### 1.4 Support efforts to restore passenger rail service to enhance regional multimodal connectivity

The 1990s ended the era of passenger rail in the Community as Amtrak, the last remaining railway provider, departed Fort Wayne. In 2009, the Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA) was created by community stakeholders to revive passenger rail service in northern Indiana. The overall goal is to eventually link nine states with a passenger rail network providing substantial economic benefits for Fort Wayne and Northern Indiana. It is estimated that some 4,500 full-time permanent jobs could be generated in Indiana with the completion of this nine state passenger rail network. The organization has been working to raise funds to complete the economic and environmental studies necessary to establish a passenger rail route from Chicago to Columbus, connecting the unserved Midwest Region. In support of the efforts to return passenger rail service to the area, the Community should:

- 1.4.1.** Continue to support the efforts of the Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA) to work with area stakeholders, northern Indiana communities, and surrounding states on a comprehensive Midwest passenger rail initiative.

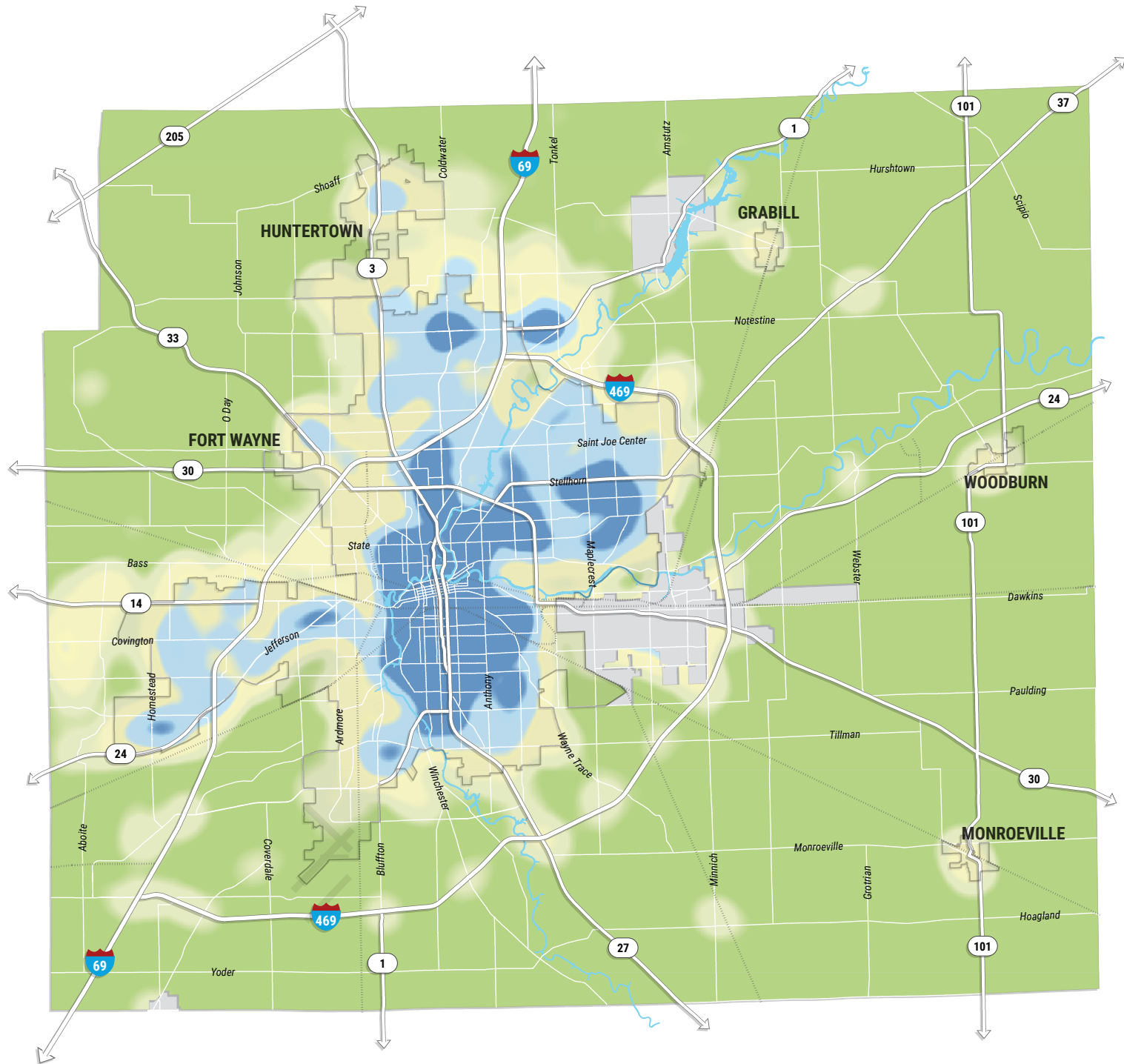
### 1.5 Increase public transparency and collaboration

Collaboration between municipalities, transportation agencies, and public and private organizations will help facilitate the evolution of transportation systems. Collaboration should occur between transportation planning agencies and transit providers to analyze the locations of existing public transportation routes and stops, ensuring they meet the needs of population centers, employment areas, and commercial centers. Route scheduling should optimize the convenience of public transportation. Other tools to foster transportation awareness and usage in the community should also be considered; examples include transit kiosks that provide real-time updates on travel information, text messaging directly to riders for key communication updates, and use of available mobile data to better track and provide updates on transportation usage. To increase public transparency and collaboration, the Community should:

- 1.5.1.** Facilitate collaboration between municipalities, transportation agencies, and organizations to facilitate the expansion of existing transportation systems and make information available to all.
- 1.5.2.** Utilize a variety of tools to foster better education and awareness of transportation usage and improvement projects.

## Intersection Density

Intersection density impacts walking rates as a greater number of intersections within an area allows pedestrians to access more destinations and take more direct routes. Where intersections are further apart, pedestrians tend to cross in the middle of the block at unmarked and often unsafe crossing locations to reach their destination. As shown in the map, intersection density is highest around Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods as well as along Dupont Rd in the North. Intersection density is sparse towards the west of Fort Wayne as well as in the adopting municipalities, and unincorporated areas of the County.



## Goal 2. Plan for and integrate new transportation technology and emerging best practices into the transportation network

New transportation technology will profoundly impact infrastructure, land use, and related regulations. Current and emerging technologies, such as autonomous vehicles and micro-mobility trends like dockless bike/scooter-share, are making significant gains and causing regulatory disruptions within Indiana municipalities. The resulting best practice impacts on the built environment could include decreased street widths, increased right-of-way dedicated to bike-sharing stations/parking, and the prevalence of wireless tech within street furniture like lighting. Smart transportation and autonomous vehicles are expected to help reduce road accidents, reduce traffic congestion and travel times, reduce fuel consumption, and reduce emissions. Similarly, mobile data collection is improving our understanding of travel demand at an increasingly granular level, allowing for better forecasting and documentation of the impacts of different modes and origin/destination patterns.

The Greater Fort Wayne Inc. Allen County Together plan highlights the “bold project” of becoming a premier automotive tech community with a focus on collaboration between industry, government, and higher education. This strongly dovetails with continued capacity within emerging automotive trends like vehicle connectedness—technology that enables cars, trucks, buses, and other vehicles to “talk” to each other to improve traffic patterns and prevent accidents.

The strategic initiatives for this innovative guiding principle within that plan also include increased technology adoption, further emphasizing the importance of this goal.

### 2.1 Improve and establish regulations, design standards, and policies

Fort Wayne and Allen County have collectively worked with NIRCC (Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council) to develop plans that focus on the maintenance and upgrades to their transportation systems. From a technology standpoint, increases in available and on-demand transportation data will optimize decisions. Location-based services data sources will help evolve the geographic understanding of these systems.

As part of the planning process and development of the 2040 Transportation Plan, Allen County and Fort Wayne used the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) planning regulations and performance measures. The plan ensures a cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive framework for making appropriate transportation investment decisions.

The 22-year plan is the most recent official document specifically focused on transportation for the Community. It outlines ten goals that support the performance-based planning efforts. Moving forward, it will be important to continue to support pedestrian-oriented transportation and infrastructure standards with accessibility, sustainability, and safety following the 2040 Transportation Plan. The Community should:

- 2.1.1.** Regularly update transportation policies, design guides, and standards to reflect current technology.
- 2.1.2.** Establish context-sensitive design standards and policies for all transportation improvement projects.
- 2.1.3.** Identify and prioritize active transportation gaps and encourage improved connectivity in new developments in addition to expanding transit service areas



## 2.2 Prioritize the inclusion of renewable energy technologies and low environmental impact transportation modes in infrastructure planning

Public-private partnerships help to push low environmental impact initiatives, such as fleet vehicle fuel transition, to fruition. The upfront cost of fueling stations and similar infrastructure can be costly and serve as a barrier to transit agencies and private industry. Partnering with public entity fleets, like municipal solid waste collection or police, can help bridge the cost gap to realize the fuel savings return on investment at a faster rate. This happens primarily through sharing the cost of refueling stations. Natural gas fleet transitions that typically rely on shared use of fueling stations are helpful ways to support this. These partnerships could involve public transit, public safety, and other large fleets within the region. Similarly, renewable energy placement such as solar panels at locations like bus stops can help offset streetlights energy usage or adjacent EV charging stations.

A “Green City” performance standard can help guide these processes. This standard would focus on sustainable actions and emphasize climate protection. To set the standard, the Community can promote energy efficiency in all its activities, encourage sustainable solutions, apply land compactness standards, and anchor its local development in the practices of green growth and equity.

Low environmental impact transportation modes will be easier to implement as a result. To prioritize renewable energy technologies and low environmental impact transportation modes in infrastructure planning, the Community should::

- 2.2.1.** Investigate installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at high-traffic public and community nodes into transportation infrastructure planning.
- 2.2.2.** Investigate the purchase of EV and alternative fuel vehicles for public transportation and other municipal vehicle needs.
- 2.2.3.** Work with transportation agencies to encourage multimodal infrastructure expansion that reduces environmental impacts.
- 2.2.4.** Investigate the incorporation of renewable energy generation and connections into transportation projects.





### Goal 3. Increase safe, attractive, multimodal transportation opportunities across the entire Allen County area.

Multimodal transportation remains a core mobility focus area for the Community. While funding for alternative modes, like public transit remains a barrier to increased intervals or new amenities, integrating active and alternative options into other transportation infrastructure improvements will help. Transportation infrastructure and expanding transportation assets appeared as “key findings” in the Allen County Together plan. While these aspects are primarily related to vehicular infrastructure, increasing multimodal options is critical to meeting the inclusive themes (Equity, Health, and Sustainability) that the Community aspires to.

To be effective, users must feel that these systems are meeting their needs to facilitate their travel in a safe, efficient, and effective manner. Where multimodal systems intersect, the region should continue to examine overall safety and improve safety perception. This may include increasing elements such as physical buffers between modes, designing infrastructure to reinforce speed limits as opposed to infrastructure designed to accommodate much higher speed limits, or simply better signals, signage, and lighting.



### U.S. Department of Transportation – Multimodal Access to Public Transportation

Multimodal access to public transportation considers and accommodates the many ways public transportation users get to and from a public transportation stop or center to access a public transportation service. Methods include walking, bicycling, riding feeder public transportation systems (e.g., taking the bus to connect to commuter rail at a station), and driving. The idea is that providing the infrastructure and support services for multiple modes of public transportation will increase the use of the public transportation system and result in health benefits. When effectively integrated, bicycling and walking to public transportation help advance various environmental, health, and congestion-mitigating benefits for communities. Successful integration between modes will increase the catchment area and subsequent use of public transportation, its efficiency, and the overall demand for bicycling.



### 3.1 Prioritize the development of safe, attractive “Complete Streets”

Smart Growth America defines complete streets as a process and approach to enabling safe access for users of all ages and abilities including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders. A complete streets approach focuses on areas of continued underinvestment where needs are not met, but it also assesses all transportation projects in a community against complete streets principles.

In 2016 the City of Fort Wayne adopted the Complete Streets Resolution that sets guidelines for engineers and planners to improve street design through the philosophy of complete streets. A complete streets approach avoids the traditional transportation planning and implementation that failed to consider the needs of all people and utilized outdated measures of what a street should look like. Working with the National Complete Streets Coalition to track and improve scores for the greater Allen County areas set forth by the coalition can drive continued progress while keeping the region at the forefront. Over 1,600 complete streets policies have been passed in the U.S., making performance metrics readily accessible for communities to use as precedents.

Safety perceptions partially impact the usage of active and alternative transportation modes. This includes both accidents and crime-related safety.

Density, diversity (of adjacent amenities), design (such as lighting and accessibility improvements), and distance (to both transportation options and opportunities) all contribute to increased walkability, bikeability, and transit usage. Hazards include the impacts related to increased distances to transit stops or trails, decreased urban density, and design that prioritizes vehicular efficiency and Level-of-Service (LOS). To prioritize complete streets, the Community should:

- 3.1.1.** Encourage the development of complete street policies for each Allen County community to encourage safe pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle connectivity.
- 3.1.2.**  Prioritize the integration of landscaping, green stormwater features, street trees, and streetscape elements into transportation improvement projects to enhance the attractiveness of infrastructure and surrounding areas.
- 3.1.3.** Review Vision Zero principles for potential incorporation into complete streets and other transportation policies.
- 3.1.4.** Continually monitor and address safety perceptions and hazards, especially where multimodal systems are adjacent to or intersect with one another.
- 3.1.5.** Identify and prioritize multimodal transportation gaps and require connectivity in new developments.
- 3.1.6.**  Consider the use of an Equity Index to identify and prioritize streets in low-income areas for complete street improvements that provide for and encourage safe active transportation.

### Vision Zero

Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.

Strategies for these indexes include building and sustaining leadership, collaboration, and accountability among a diverse group of stakeholders including transportation professionals, policymakers, public health officials, police, and community members; collecting, analyzing, and using data to understand trends and potential disproportionate impacts of traffic deaths on certain populations; prioritizing equity and community engagement; managing speed to safe levels; and setting a timeline to achieve zero traffic deaths and serious injuries.



### 3.2 Prioritize public transportation

Demand for public transportation is growing in Allen County due to increased population growth, job growth, new developments, and the location of employment and health care centers outside existing public transportation service areas. Other factors increasing demand are a greater awareness of environmental impacts due to individual transportation and the prohibitive cost of transportation, which consumes 26% of family incomes in Allen County, according to the H+T index from the Center for Neighborhood Technology.

Funding for public transportation is the primary challenge limiting the expansion of service. Citilink is funded by local tax revenues, state and federal funding, and revenue from operations. While federal funding for public transportation has increased, particularly for low- and zero-emission buses, state and local funding has not grown significantly in more than a decade. Establishing a strategy for growth in state and local funding will need to be prioritized along with building partnerships and incentives to support public transportation.

Strategies for increasing transit availability include evaluating existing fixed-route service for improvements, providing innovative alternatives such as flexible on-demand service ([see map on the following page](#)), vanpools, carpools, ride sharing, and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) for high-transit-demand corridors such as that operated by IndyGo in Indianapolis.

BRT provides a dedicated lane for buses, with prepay bus stops and minimal traffic stops, allowing a bus to operate similarly to rail mass transit. While BRT may require significant infrastructure improvements and dedication of traffic lanes to transit, other transit strategies may be implemented for much lower investments.

Other strategies for increasing transit availability include improvements made for new, large-scale development or redevelopment projects. Improvements could include adding accommodations for alternative forms of transportation at a variety of commercial, residential, and employment centers, especially adjacent to existing transit lines. Anticipated growth as shown on the Future Growth and Development map will create future service gaps within the North, Northwest, West, and Southwest quadrants of the Community. The South and Southeast quadrants, including the growth areas, are well covered for transit ridership. Growth opportunities to the west may require route expansions to meet future demand.

Parking can impact transit. In the Community's densest core (Downtown Fort Wayne), parking should be strategically priced, with available park-and-ride facilities, bike racks, bus shelters, and benches at connection points to help facilitate a comfortable transition between different modes of transportation, including transit connectivity between Downtown and the Fort Wayne International Airport.

### Transportation Equity

An independent study published by Urban Institute, "Access to Opportunity through Equitable Transportation: Lessons from Four Metropolitan Regions," defines transportation equity as transportation decisions that are made with deep and meaningful community input that lead to transportation networks and land use structures that support health and well-being, environmental sustainability, and equitable access to resources and opportunities.

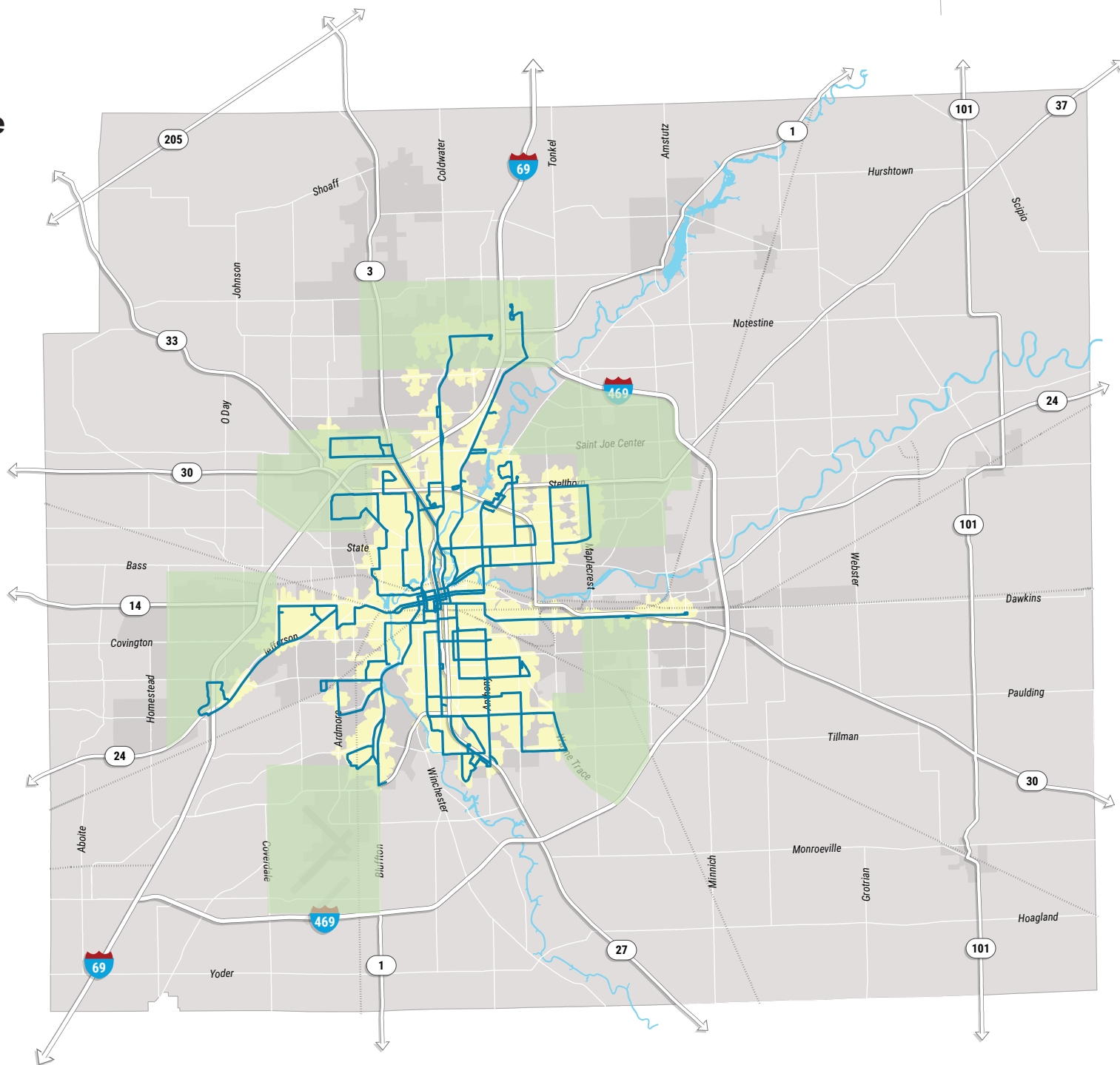
### Equity Index

A Equity Index is a data tool designed to help communities identify priority areas for advancing racial equity, track progress over time, and set specific goals for closing racial gaps. It provides a snapshot of overall equity outcomes for cities, counties, regions, and states. [See Chapter 6: Housing and Neighborhoods Strategy 1.4](#) for more information on the City of Pittsburgh's Equity Indicators project.




# Future Citilink Flex Zone Service Option

Citilink has identified potential priority areas or flex zones where one vehicle would operate in demand-response service. The flex service option is targeted in areas where fixed route service is not economically viable and will help passengers connect to the fixed route system.

- Current Citilink Fixed Transit Routes
- Within 10 minutes to a bus stop
- Potential Future FlexZone Service Areas and Destinations (from Citilink 2030 Transit Development Plan)



To prioritize public transportation, the Community should:

- 3.2.1.** Work with community stakeholders to increase public transportation use by identifying private and public incentives, partnerships, and sustainable funding sources. 
- 3.2.2.** Address sidewalk gaps, enhance ADA accessibility, and provide bus stop amenities to foster increased transit use.
- 3.2.3.** Include public transportation access and passenger amenities in the planning and development of transportation projects along public transit routes.
- 3.2.4.** Encourage the review and update of regulations to require the incorporation of public transit facilities and pedestrian connectivity within and between development projects. 
- 3.2.5.** Conduct neighborhood walk audits for walk-to-bus times, assess bus stop quality, and location frequency, and increase route frequency to hospitals, healthcare campuses, mental health and wellness centers, and medical offices.
- 3.2.6.** Enhance transit connections to employment centers and service hubs by reevaluating route locations, service times, and frequencies. 
- 3.2.7.** Connect transit and healthcare providers to encourage collaboration in facilities planning, and prioritize transit at hospitals, clinics, and medical campuses.
- 3.2.8.** Plan for and promote the use of innovative technologies and evolving modes of public transportation to improve connectivity opportunities.

### 3.3 Develop consistent and sustainable funding sources for an integrated multimodal transportation system.

The Public Mass Transportation Fund of Indiana (PMTF) provides state operating assistance for Indiana public transportation agencies including Citilink. In 2015, the statewide PMTF allocation was \$42.2 million, and the City of Fort Wayne received about \$2 million. State legislators were looking to increase PMTF to a total of \$60 million per year to support growth in demand statewide, however, legislation was not passed. In 2021, funding dipped to a mere \$38.25 million with economic hardships and lower ridership totals experienced across the state due to the COVID-19 pandemic. PMTF levels were restored in 2022. Because state funding is not growing, the Community will need to join other stakeholders in advocating for increased state funding for public transportation as well as asking legislators to give more local control over funding to cities.

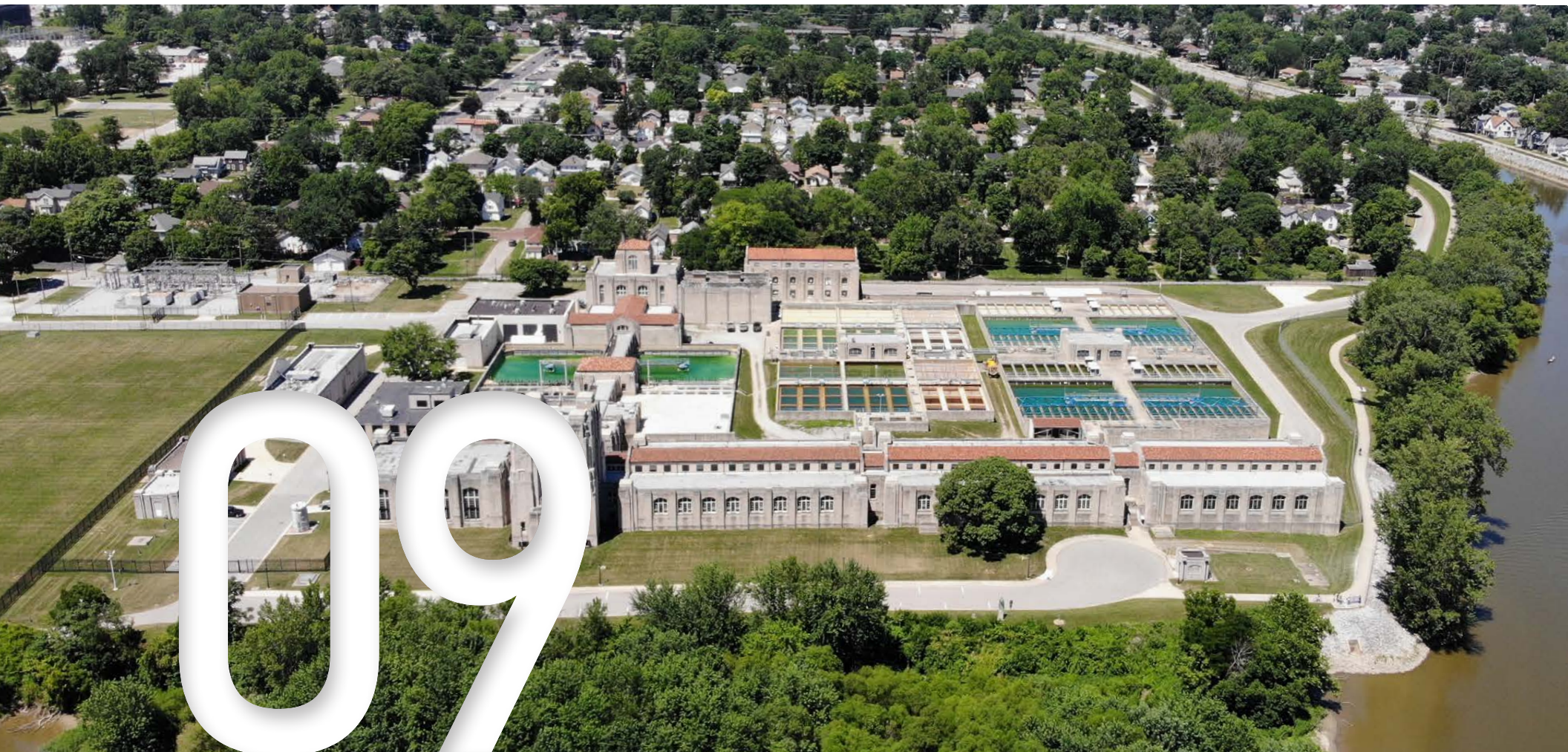
To foster more sustainable funding to sustain and grow public transportation, the Community should:

- 3.3.1.** Coordinate with local public and nonprofit transportation agencies to promote the establishment of a broad advocacy coalition that includes key businesses and stakeholders.
- 3.3.2.** Improve communication with area employers on needs for multimodal transportation options.

- 3.3.3.** Support broader collaboration opportunities for identifying projects and addressing funding constraints and securing sustainable funding.
- 3.3.4.** Prioritize the provision of adequate staff support to implement multimodal transportation plans and projects.



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# PUBLIC FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE



## Vision Statement

*Allen County and its communities will feature advanced utility, communication, and public safety infrastructure and services. As these services evolve to meet the demands of burgeoning communities, they will accommodate all future needs and embrace emerging opportunities, while balancing fiscal responsibility.*

*Utility networks and public safety services will continue to play a critical role in providing a high quality of life to existing residents while accommodating new development and redevelopment. Improvements to the existing public facilities and infrastructure network will collectively support sustainable, balanced growth while bolstering community and environmental resiliency. Collaborative decision-making, implementing best practices, and adopting updated and aligned standards will work to achieve the common goals of improving utility quality, enhancing accessibility of public facilities, and supporting growth. By implementing the next generation of sustainable solutions and proactive strategies across all utilities, Allen County and its communities will provide satisfactory capacity, increase reliability and resilience, and improve quality over the long term.*

*Investment in broadband expansion and public safety coordination will also further enhance local quality of life. The coordinated pursuit of broadband expansion in rural areas and smaller communities will increase engagement, improve access to education and information, and strengthen disaster response and systems management. An increased commitment to collaboration among public safety entities along with public outreach and education on safety issues will lead to improved community outcomes.*

## Chapter Organization

### Goals

To achieve the community's vision

### Strategies

To support each community goal

### Action Steps

Actions and Guidance for Consideration  
[See Implementation Matrix \(page 239\)](#)

### Themes

Applicable strategies and action steps have been identified with the following icons:



Equity



Health



Sustainability



## Public Facilities & Infrastructure

While the term public facilities and infrastructure implies broad applicability, this chapter focuses on public utility infrastructure including water, wastewater sewers, and storm sewers, rather than privately controlled public utilities such as natural gas and electricity. This chapter also focuses on the need to expand broadband services. The availability of adequate broadband and utility infrastructure and public safety services will underpin economic development and growth within the Community. While much of the cost of this growth is borne by private developers and future users (commonly referred to as the ratepayers), All In Allen's goals reflect a desire to encourage these utilities to growth and maintain existing infrastructure in a more sustainable, equitable, and collaborative direction. Lastly, this chapter concentrates on public safety services, specifically police, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS). These services are essential to the long-term viability of the Community.

### Goal 1. Prioritize coordinated public and private utility systems planning

Several sewer and drinking water systems exist across the Community and beyond Allen County boundaries, including the supply and distribution network. Of the sewer and public water systems in the Community, Fort Wayne City Utilities (FWCU) serves the largest customer base, with a population of approximately 257,000 people in the Fort Wayne city limits and approximately 43,000 outside the city limits, according to the 2017 FWCU Strategic Plan. Acquisitions over the last few years—either through regulatory pressures or through public demand for services (quality, service levels, or cost)—have brought in about 25,000 additional customers, totaling 85% of the County population. Combined with FWCU, Aqua Indiana and the City of New Haven serve upwards of 97% of the population of the Community. The Allen County Regional Water and Sewer District serves some of the unincorporated areas of the County. In addition, the Town of Hometown manages its exclusive sewer and water services for over 9,000 residents.

Collaboration with utilities as the region continues its anticipated population increases helps ensure the growth and development of the entire Community. Because adequate utility services are essential to development, coordination between utilities and community stakeholders will ensure a balance between outward growth in the Targeted Growth Areas and Infill Development within municipalities as shown on the [Growth and Development Map in the Land Use and Development Chapter](#).

Fort Wayne City Utilities serves about  
**300,000**  
City and County residents



## 1.1 Improve collaboration between public and private utility providers and stakeholders to better plan for strategic growth and development

FWCU is working towards being nationally recognized as a regional utility of choice. Through continuing partnerships and shared oversight, FWCU brings a broad understanding of best practices that can be leveraged through additional system planning.

In addition to FWCU guidance, best practices shared within the local public utility systems create more efficient operations, resulting in better services offered to the communities of Allen County. Collaborative participation in advisory meetings and oversight boards encourages the development of joint regulations and standards. This approach assists with federal guideline compliance and also guides decision-making for each community.

The Septic Elimination Program in Fort Wayne is one effort to connect utility providers with stakeholders by enabling homeowners the opportunity to upgrade their sanitary infrastructure. Centralization within the large public utilities noted above is the dominant trend for the Community. Septic systems are not inherently deficient, but they require users to effectively manage and maintain their systems. This involves properly disposing of waste (not grease, oil, or household chemicals), efficiently using water, and frequently inspecting and pumping the system.

These efforts are difficult to monitor, and leaks, ruptures, or flooded drain fields result having potential public health implications. The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) has put more restrictive measures in place that will inhibit the growth of septic systems and ensure proper long-term functioning. To further improve collaboration between public and private utility providers and stakeholders, the Community should:

- 1.1.1. Work with public and private utility providers to organize regular meetings focused on proactive community-wide systems planning.
- 1.1.2. Continue to hold and expand participation in City Utilities Local Advisory Group meetings.
- 1.1.3. Encourage the regular review and alignment of regulations and standards for utility infrastructure design incorporating new technologies and sustainable solutions.
- 1.1.4. Improve education about available utility systems in the development of the Community.
- 1.1.5. Collaborate with public and private utility providers in the regular review and update of the infill and targeted growth areas as shown on the [Future Growth and Development map in the Land Use and Development Chapter](#).
- 1.1.6. Discourage on-site wastewater treatment systems.





## Goal 2. Encourage community sustainability and infill development opportunities through continued maintenance and improvement of existing water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater systems

There is a connection between improving utility infrastructure systems and creating a better balance between outward growth and infill development. By prioritizing this balance between infill and new development, the Community can better conserve resources related to these systems, reducing the carbon footprint and waste, while also demonstrating more fiscal responsibility.

Municipal Long Term Control Plans were undertaken to improve water quality in the Community and throughout Indiana. While stormwater and sanitary sewer capacity were the impetus of those plans, municipalities began incorporating green infrastructure projects to keep stormwater out of sanitary systems. With both infill and growth on the horizon, the Community has an opportunity to optimize the implementation of sustainable infrastructure with capacity-driven models to ensure future development is resilient – able to withstand and recover from natural hazards and climate change. These upgrades reflect the start of improved water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater systems that will assist in overall community sustainability.

### 2.1 Coordinate existing utility infrastructure maintenance and improvement plans with infill development goals and strategies

The majority of areas within the Future Growth and Development map fall under the authority of the FWCU, particularly in the Priority Investment Area. As the FWCU Strategic Plan runs through 2022, the Community has a critical opportunity to collaborate on future utility improvement plans. According to the FWCU's Neighborhood Drainage Problem Areas, 11 areas were identified as problematic within the Priority Investment Area, and 32 across the entire urban area. While the City has spent more than \$40M toward drainage improvements in these areas, continuing to address drainage issues will help with reinvestment in Urban Infill and Priority Investment Areas.

Financial incentives, such as the Septic Elimination Program or residential sewer lateral replacement initiatives, where the utilities cover a per property cost toward the desired improvements may help with barriers to small-scale infill development. Income-based assistance can supplement these costs as well. To further coordinate existing utility infrastructure maintenance and improvement plans with infill development, the Community should:

- 2.1.1. Increase infrastructure maintenance and investment in areas that have experienced economic disinvestment.
- 2.1.2. Create utility-based financial incentives to encourage infill.

### Fort Wayne City Utilities (FWCU) 2017-2022 Strategic Plan

FWCU identified six strategic initiatives with accompanying goals, actions, and measures of success. Each measure of success is tied directly to the principles outlined in the "Ten Attributes of Effectively Managed Water Sector Utilities" developed by the EPA in concert with national water and wastewater associations. Within each of the ten attributes laid out for an effectively managed utility, several measures of success or performance indicators are provided, ranging from customer satisfaction to infrastructure stability. FWCU successfully utilizes most of these measures in its day-to-day operations and continuing to utilize and expand the use of the metrics included in the EPA report is an ongoing focus of FWCU staff.

#### Strategic Initiatives


- Human Capital Investment
- Community & Employee Engagement
- Customer Service
- Technology
- Affordability & Cost Management
- Environmental Stewardship & Conservation



## 2.2 Promote equitable infrastructure development

According to the Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Initiative, equitable development meets the needs of underserved communities, reducing disparities while fostering places that are healthy and vibrant. Environmental Justice is often looked at in the context of the law, public health, waste management, and public involvement. Other contributing factors include enforcing proper zoning and incompatibility of land uses. The outcomes from development will need to be responsive to underserved and vulnerable populations in addition to using better design tactics and policies. To do this, the Community should:

**2.2.1.** Increase infrastructure maintenance and investment in areas that have experienced economic disinvestment.

**2.2.2.** Consider the use of an equity index in reviewing and  prioritizing infrastructure investment ([see the Case Study – page 154](#)).

## 2.3 Promote wellhead protection and stewardship

Water supplied by FWCU comes from the St. Joseph River. Residents not served by FWCU and some utility providers rely on groundwater resources to meet their drinking water needs. Strategies for safeguarding and enhancing drinking water in the Community must address both groundwater and surface water supply systems. The protection of drinking water systems is also enhanced by discouraging development on conventional septic systems and discouraging on-site wastewater package treatment facilities.

Local groups like the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative work to educate the public about groundwater and river protection to maintain quality drinking water. The Community also evaluates land use development guidelines on an ongoing basis to help reduce river contamination.

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requires states to develop and obtain EPA approval for wellhead protection programs (WHPP) to minimize contamination of groundwater. Defined by the EPA, a wellhead protection area is the surface and subsurface area surrounding a water well or wellfield. If a wellhead protection area is contaminated, contaminants are likely to move forward and reach a public water system. To promote wellhead protection and stewardship, the Community should:

**2.3.1.** Encourage and support efforts to reduce river contamination and identify and protect wellhead areas and enhance wellhead-based drinking water systems.

Fort Wayne has spent  
**\$40M**  
towards drainage improvements  
in problematic areas

## 2.4 Encourage watershed management

If preserved correctly, watersheds provide three functions to improve water quality. They capture water filtering into the soil, store water within the soil to replenish vegetation, and provide the beneficial release of water into streams, rivers, and lakes. All three processes play a vital role in the quality health of the surrounding environment.

A way to encourage watershed management during land development is to implement standards for the treatment and mitigation of stormwater. The Community's jurisdictions should collaborate on updating and aligning land development stormwater standards.

Another watershed management technique involves collaborating with local farmers create a database for current fertilizer application times and types. This will help the Community keep track of the potential quantity of pollutants, and with the acquired information can suggest viable alternative fertilizers and pesticides. To care for the three watersheds, the Community should:

- 2.4.1.** Address stormwater improvement needs through effective watershed management and drainage system standards updates.

## 2.5 Explore additional funding options for utility improvements

Ratepayers, an industry term for individuals who pay for public utilities, have often borne the responsibility of municipal utility improvement projects through increased rates. Similarly, developers are frequently required to share costs on at least a portion of utility extensions for their projects. Unfortunately, for many municipalities, this leaves a gap in needed improvement projects and the available funding to complete them. While municipalities must meet the obligations made to their communities, there is limited available funding for larger improvements. One additional funding source is the State Water Infrastructure Fund (SWIF) Grants offered by Indiana Finance Authority (IFA). This program finances projects that protect and improve Indiana's water resources and provide substantial rate relief to Indiana utility customers most in need. The Community should continue to participate in this program and also consider the following:

- 2.5.1.** Develop funding strategies to address funding gaps and ratepayer commitments.



### Goal 3. Expand and improve broadband access across underserved areas of the Community

Reliance on internet access has never been higher, with the recent pandemic exposing the need for greater access and broadband expansion. Higher speeds may be available across the Community, but many areas remain underserved due to cost. Improving broadband access requires a combination of availability, ensuring high-speed internet options are offered in a particular location, affordability, helping people and organizations pay for connectivity and device costs, and adoption, which involves overcoming digital literacy or other educational barriers. As shown on the following map, while the majority of the Community has 25 mbps download speeds available, affordability and adoption remain low, especially in more rural areas.

#### 3.1 Improve existing broadband systems

Overwhelmingly, homes without internet access are closely correlated to income leveling and fall along racial divisions. Newer developments are starting to utilize strategies that support “over-building” with multiple service providers to give consumers more choice. Simply having more service providers helps bring broadband affordability to more manageable levels. Joint trenching is a strategy for over-building that requires entities that have received approval to excavate in public rights-of-way to plan and schedule construction with other service providers that are interested in installing or maintaining equipment in public rights-of-way. For existing underserved areas, communities will have to work with services providers to overcome gaps in funding for low density or prohibitive cost barriers to be overcome. To address these gaps and improve countywide broadband access, the Community should:

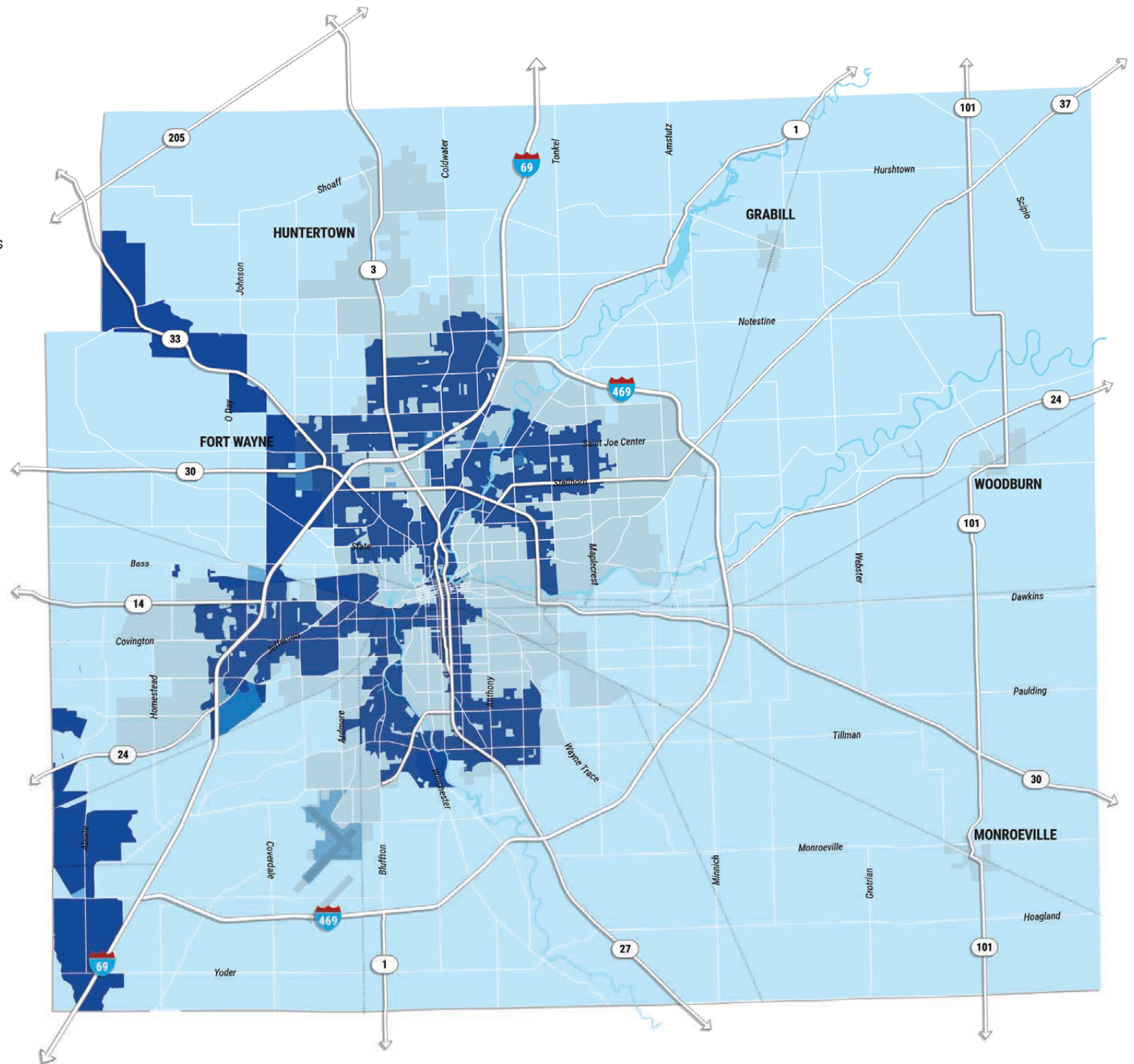
- 3.1.1. Collaborate with broadband providers and review regulatory processes to expand service while balancing potential aesthetic impacts.
- 3.1.2. Improve broadband access across underserved areas of the Community by addressing barriers to implementation and affordability and promoting efficient infrastructure investment.
- 3.1.3. Encourage the inclusion of additional capacity as part of future system development and improvements.



# Broadband

Most of Fort Wayne and Allen County have broadband coverage, as a combination of both wired and wireless access. Generally, FCC defines broadband internet as having a minimum of 25 mbps download and 3 mbps upload speeds.

- Less than or equal to 25 mbps
- 25 - 100 mbps
- 100 - 500 mbps
- 500 - 1000 mbps



Source: Digital Divide, Purdue University, 2018

### 3.2 Improve disaster resilient broadband infrastructure

As Allen County examines its existing broadband and internet infrastructure, its communities must focus on expansion to enable all citizens to connect, while also employing strategies to ensure that these systems remain operational during disaster conditions. Cellular and broadband connections are used to get essential information like weather updates, evacuation updates, shelter in place orders, or other governmental alerts. Providers may have the best insights into how their networks will perform under stress, but municipalities may understand the other ways their communities can respond. Outdated networks should be replaced before disaster situations arise.

“E-Resilience” is the ability of information, communication, and technology systems to withstand, recover from, and adapt in the face of disturbance – both human and natural. It involves infrastructure understanding and planning, policy and regulation, digital data adoption, hazard identification, and exposure. To become more resilient regarding broadband infrastructure, the Community should:

- 3.2.1.** Explore climate impacts on broadband equipment and infrastructure.
- 3.2.2.** Continue efforts to strengthen, harden and increase redundancy of wired and wireless infrastructure needed to deliver reliable broadband services during severe weather and other emergencies.
- 3.2.3.** Identify broadband services to receive emergency notifications.
- 3.2.4.** Incorporate E-Resilience and Readiness concepts into broadband initiatives focusing on connection, quality, stability, and resilience.

### Goal 4. Encourage collaboration between stakeholders, organizations, and governmental entities to strengthen environmental resiliency and reduce the impact of future infrastructure

Leveraging existing relationships and developing new public-private partnerships to better address environmental challenges ensures a broader impact of the work. From expanding the implementation of green infrastructure and sustainable construction practices to creating more partnerships and collaboration opportunities, what is most evident is that environmental resiliency touches all aspects of the plan and will involve everyone in the Community.



### 4.1 Encourage green infrastructure and low impact design

Green infrastructure filters and absorbs water where it falls without carrying it to another location. For municipalities, this may include in-street rain gardens, bioswales, or using parkland as stormwater storage. Other examples of this can range from home scale (rain barrels) to neighborhood scale (rain gardens) to watershed scale (large open riparian areas, grasslands, permeable roadways).

Low impact design (LID) works to reduce the amount of negative impact on the surrounding environment by reducing site development disturbance and applying green infrastructure strategies for stormwater management. LID uses practices and alternative systems that mimic the natural systems of nature and their processes to improve water quality. For example, including trees as a component of the design offers substantial benefits, including cleaner air and water, quieter streets, cheaper energy bills, cooler temperatures, and wildlife habitat.

To encourage green infrastructure and low impact design, the Community should:

- 4.1.1.** Encourage the inclusion of green infrastructure low impact design in new developments to reduce environmental impacts, through efforts like advocating for developments to work towards LEED or SITES certifications.





## 4.2 Facilitate environmental stewardship collaboration

Effective environmental stewardship requires partnerships at all levels of government as well as buy-in from the residential and business communities. Working with local environmental groups such as Fox Island Alliance, ACRES Land Trust, St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative, the Maumee River Basin Commission, and the Cedar Creek Wildlife Project provide a good foundation to build on. The Community should:

- 4.2.1.** Collaborate with community partners and stakeholders on environmental stewardship strategies to protect environmental assets and preserve environmentally sensitive lands, open spaces, forested lands, and wildlife habitats.

## 4.3 Encourage environmentally responsible and sustainable infrastructure construction

Certification programs like SITES and LEED give developers and designers guidelines for environmentally responsible developments. Projects that utilize these rating systems must be executed through sustainable construction practices to achieve designation. Sequencing infrastructure construction to coincide with other improvements or using environmentally friendly techniques such as trenchless sewer construction or using more recycled concrete content in improvements are a few ways in which “sustainable” projects will have positive outcomes for the communities. To prioritize its responsibility to the local environment, reduce harmful impacts or development, and boost the local economy, the Community should:

- 4.3.1.** Develop and promote policies and regulatory incentives that encourage environmentally responsible infrastructure construction techniques and sustainable development.

### LEED Certification

LEED provides a framework for healthy, efficient, carbon- and cost-saving green buildings. LEED certification is a globally recognized symbol of sustainability achievement and leadership.

### SITES Certification

SITES offers a comprehensive rating system designed to distinguish sustainable landscapes, measure their performance, and elevate their value. Landscape architects, designers, engineers, planners, ecologists, architects, developers, and policymakers use SITES to align land development and management with innovative sustainable design. SITES certification is for development projects located on sites with or without buildings—ranging from national parks to corporate campuses, streetscapes to homes, and more.



#### 4.4 Support environmental resiliency outreach and education

Environmental resiliency is the capacity at which an ecosystem responds to any type of disturbance by resisting damage and recovering quickly without jeopardizing the current functions of the system. The Land Trust Alliance, a nature conservation organization, states that “resilience can be seen as a factor influencing adaptive capacity, which in turn is an element of the vulnerability of a system. More resilient systems can absorb larger shocks without changing in fundamental ways, while less resilient systems are less capable of adapting to change and more vulnerable to harmful impacts.”

To support environmental resiliency outreach and education, the Community should:

- 4.4.1. Collaborate with community partners and stakeholders to educate the public on the importance of environmental resiliency.
- 4.4.2. Support recommendations from Fort Wayne Climate Action Plan.





## Goal 5. Ensure adequate public safety services through increased collaboration as part of planning for new growth and development

Maintaining safe and secure communities is of the utmost importance to residents, businesses, and local governments. The rise in households over the next twenty years means Allen County and Fort Wayne's public safety services must expand to meet the growing demands. Increased demand will require continued community input and emerging strategies to maintain adequate levels of service and safety coverage.

### 5.1 Encourage expanded public safety input in development

The role of public safety input in development is often relegated to permit review. To support a safer environment, development should look at safety as an integrated piece of project planning. This involves developing relationships before project implementation as well as seeking design input during the initial project stages. Proactive engagement with public safety departments can help avoid problems before they emerge. To encourage public safety input, the Community should:

- 5.1.1. Explore the inclusion of additional Public Safety groups in new project planning and review.

### 5.2 Promote property maintenance and crime prevention techniques to improve perceptions and reduce crime risks

Proactive maintenance is known to positively lower crime rates. Community-led efforts that keep people engaged supplement existing public safety initiatives, but will need fiscal, operational, or other guidance to be sustainable. Additionally, natural surveillance such as passing traffic, other pedestrians, homes, or businesses with frontage can help discourage crime. To be effective, this must be supported through controlled access and well-defined public-private boundaries. To improve perceptions and reduce crime risks, the Community should:

- 5.2.1. Endorse and support community-led property maintenance efforts to improve perceptions of safety in both residential and non-residential areas.
- 5.2.2. Identify and promote crime prevention development design techniques, such as CPTED standards for new development.

### Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

CPTED focuses on the design and effective use of the built environment applied to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Key issues to consider include:

- Ensuring spaces are well-connected
- Creating clear and legible circulation that is instinctive
- Diversifying route options for users
- Ensuring sidewalks and paths are wide enough to accommodate double pushchairs/strollers so that caregivers and families feel welcome
- Making nodal spaces that are defensible
- Providing a good mix of functions and considering including 24-hour services
- Increasing visibility by keeping planting clear of major sightlines and not creating hidden spaces with low-level planting
- Providing clear signage so that users always know where they are and how to get out
- Budgeting for good maintenance so that spaces feel well cared for and that acts of vandalism are quickly addressed

# Emergency Services

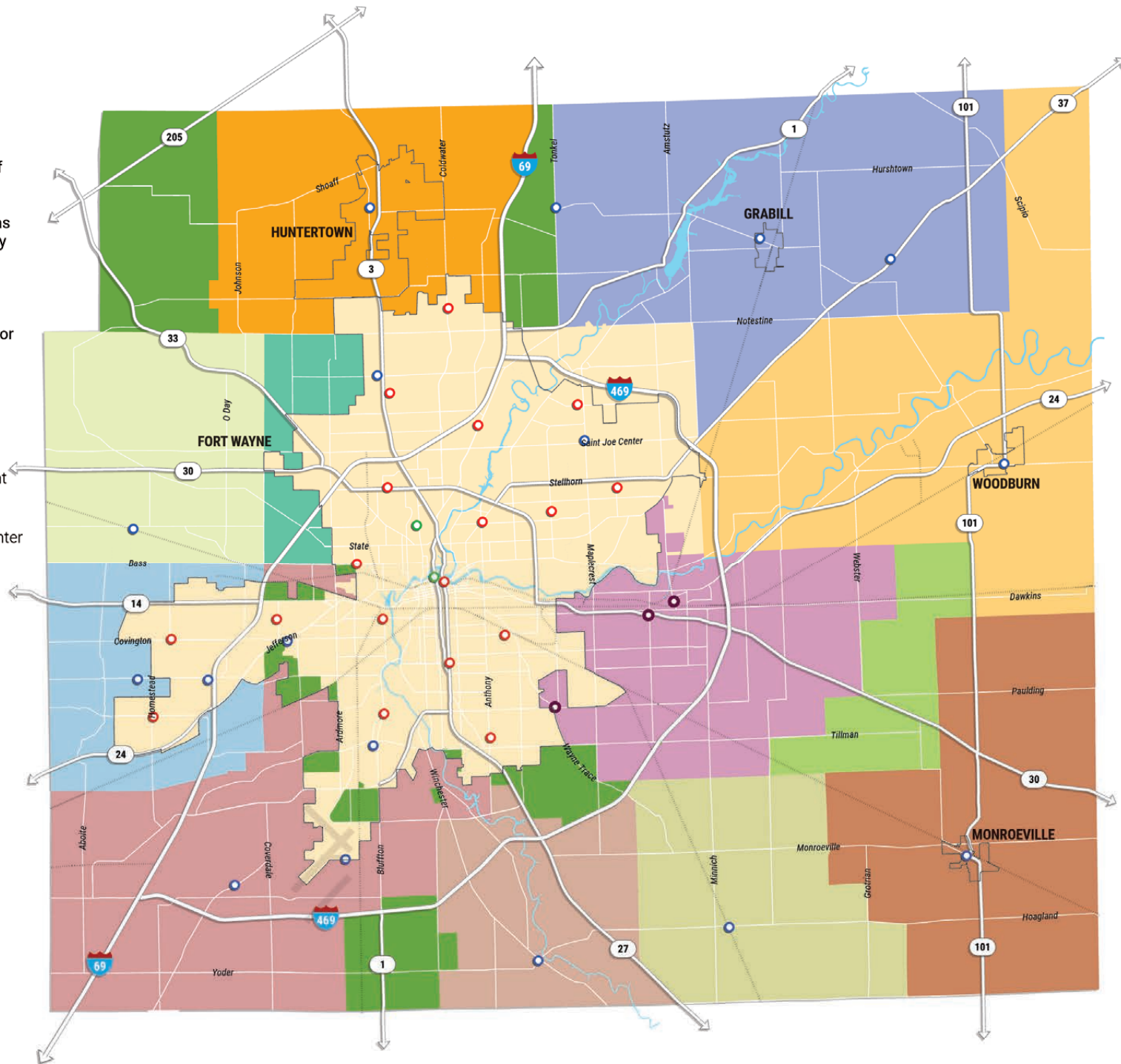
Public safety is an important variable and contributor to the Community's overall quality of life. Public safety is also facing increasing challenges to provide services as population grows, development increases, and service areas expand. Public safety services in the Community include fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical services. Continued coordination and a strategic network of nodes between service providers will continue to be crucial to maintain adequate levels of service and response times for residents of the Community.

## Name of Facility

- Fort Wayne Fire Station
- New Haven - Adams Twp. Fire Department
- Other Fire Departments
- Allen County Juvenile Jail and Justice Center

## Fire Districts

- Aboite
- ACFD Unverified Zone
- Arcola
- Dual EMS Response
- Dual Response
- Fort Wayne
- Hoagland
- Huntertown
- Monroeville
- New Haven Adams Township
- Northeast
- Poe
- Southwest
- Washington
- Woodburn



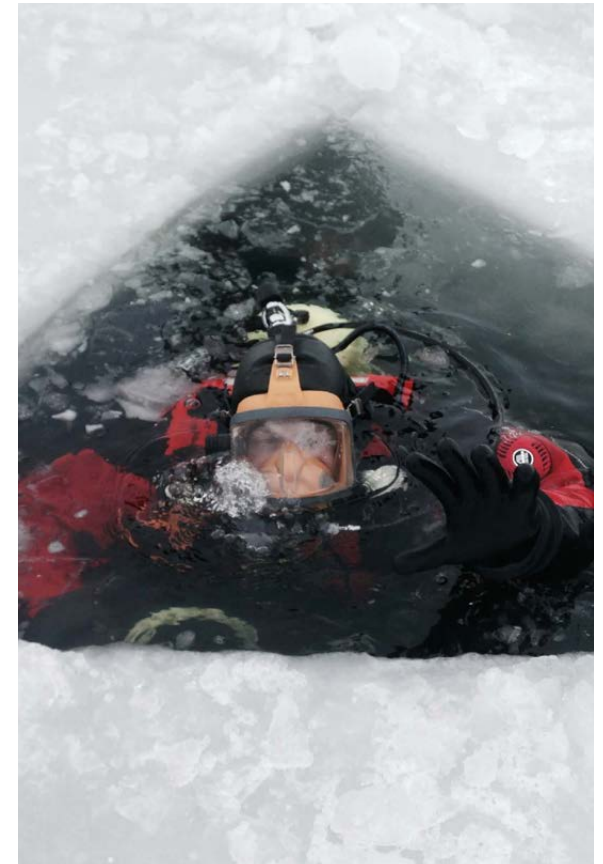


### 5.3 Promote prepared and resilient communities

The Fort Wayne-Allen County Office of Homeland Security's All Hazard Mitigation Plan, as well as FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Planning policies, both define natural or human-caused hazards that impact the region, including extreme weather events, flooding, active shooter scenarios, power outage, and more. They also identify actions and activities to reduce any losses of property or life from those hazards, while establishing a coordinated process to implement the plan. Efforts at all levels of impact, including individual, organizational, municipal, and regional, are encouraged to manage disaster scenarios.

To promote preparedness and resiliency, the Community should:

- 5.3.1.** Support community-wide preparedness planning efforts.
- 5.3.2.** Encourage resiliency efforts for private residences.
- 5.3.3.** Support Hazard Mitigation Plan updates, including adding mitigation strategies to upcoming plans.
- 5.3.4.** Conduct an audit of public safety facilities including location review.





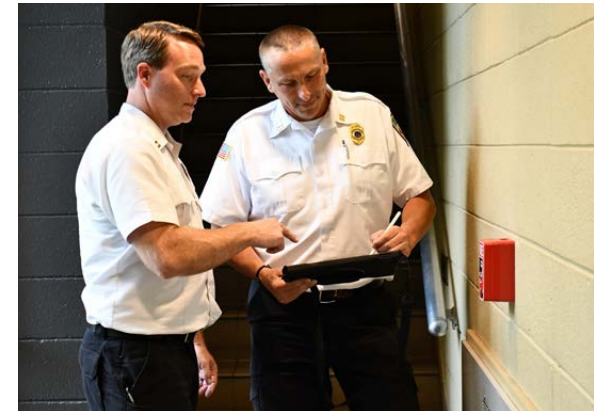
## Goal 6. Improve public safety outcomes

Through outreach, collaboration, and trust-building initiatives the Community can strengthen what they are already doing well, while also improving public safety outcomes. From an appreciative inquiry perspective (versus a deficit mindset), improving strengths will help the various public safety departments have deeper impacts. At the same time, regular public safety self-audits that involve community input to analyze their approach to current judicial practices will continue to build community trust. Perceptions of non-biased, or neutral decision-making give the Community confidence in law enforcement. Improving the perception of fairness has been increasingly identified as both evidence-based and cost-effective in its approach to reducing crime.

### 6.1 Support public safety community outreach

Public safety services rely on feedback from the Community to better serve the population and their needs. These relationships and partnerships are beneficial to both parties as they work towards unified goals and strategies within their respective communities across Allen County. Through cross-departmental and inter-jurisdictional collaboration, public safety entities can bolster their presence, increase their collective participation, and build the relationships necessary to foster community trust. To support outreach for public safety, the Community should:

- 6.1.1.** Work with the Community and public safety agencies to strengthen existing programs and create new opportunities for public outreach and relationship-building initiatives.





## 6.2 Strengthen public safety collaboration

Public safety entities often work together across jurisdictions and operational focus areas – not only between cities, counties, towns, and townships, but between police, fire departments, and EMS. From training and co-hosting continuing education to emergency response support, partnerships among these groups are critical to support public safety. Reinforcing cooperation between agencies like publicizing, marketing, and celebrating collaboration events, leverages resources and increases operational efficiencies. The additional capacity also increases the agencies' ability to manage more serious events. With strong commitments to ongoing reform, each public safety entity is continually challenged to adapt to new challenges. Involving key stakeholders as well as neighborhood organizations will ensure that efforts to improve perceptions of safety remain at the forefront.

As a program of the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE), Community Risk Reduction helps public safety entities, like Fire Departments, identify, prioritize, and develop assessments related to target hazards and critical facilities.

Critical facilities may include hospitals, schools, public utilities (water/sewer), assisting living centers, airports, and communication systems, as well as important cultural and historic sites. FEMA defines these as: "facilities in either the public or private sector that provide essential products and services to the general public, are otherwise necessary to preserve the welfare and quality of life in the Community, or fulfill important public safety, emergency response, and/or disaster recovery functions." To strengthen public safety collaboration, the Community should:

- 6.2.1.** Encourage intra-jurisdictional cooperation between public safety departments and agencies.
- 6.2.2.** Support Community Risk Reduction, by identifying hazards and impacts on critical infrastructure, and developing actions to mitigate the hazard to build a better-prepared, more-resilient community.

## Public Safety Program – Ivy Tech

The Homeland Security Public Safety Program allows students the opportunity to explore a career with many facets, all of which are under the umbrella of Homeland Security Public Safety. This profession serves the spectrum of local community employment to both state and federal agencies. Students in this program will study and learn about the various components of Homeland Security and Public Safety. It includes courses that detail the objectives of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Public Safety, Environment Health and Safety, Fire Science, and Public Administration.





### 6.3 Support procedural justice

To continue to build trust within the Community, especially with disenfranchised groups and law enforcement entities, procedural justice reinforces the concept of fair processes and how the perception of fairness is correlated to the quality of people's experiences (not just the result). According to Yale Law school, the four "pillars" of procedural justice include neutrality, voice, respect, and trustworthiness. Decisions made must be perceived to be unbiased and transparent, with all parties treated with respect and dignity, allowing all involved the opportunity to present their sides.

The emphasis on citizen-led interactions with law enforcement and the pillars themselves helps convey that decision-makers have the well-being of those involved in mind. This leads to trust in the decisions. To support procedural justice, the Community should:

- 6.3.1. Promote neutral decision-making best practices to resolve disputes and allocate resources.

### Procedural Justice – via the US Department of Justice, Community Oriented Policing Services Office (COPS)

Procedural justice refers to the idea of fairness in the processes that resolve disputes and allocate resources. It is a concept that, when embraced, promotes positive organizational change and bolsters better relationships.





10

# COMMUNITY SERVICES & EDUCATION



# Vision Statement

*Fort Wayne, Allen County, and its communities will be known for quality educational institutions and social and community service organizations that work to enrich the lives of residents and prepare youth for a successful future. The community's early childhood, secondary, and higher education institutions each will play a significant role in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce. Strong collaboration between educational institutions and employers will create opportunities for residents throughout the community. Accessible, modern educational facilities will offer opportunities to students of all ages and in all communities to grow the skills needed for modern employment.*

*The community's focus on equity and inclusion will cast a wide net that encourages collaboration between community and social service organizations. Throughout the County, community and social service organizations will work together, supporting municipal and County efforts to collectively improve education, employment, and other quality of life opportunities for community residents. The community culture of inclusive lifelong learning will ensure that all have a place in a diversified and evolving economy, including individuals with disabilities, people who speak different languages, and those who come to the community from different ethnic backgrounds. The community will foster an environment where services and resources are widely available and accessible in multiple languages.*

*Fort Wayne, Allen County, and its communities will work with local healthcare institutions, service organizations, and educational institutions to build on the existing system of care and establish a reputation for a high level of community-wide health. Residents will enjoy improved access to high-quality, comprehensive healthcare services including mental health facilities and services, regardless of their socioeconomic background or the language they speak.*

## Chapter Organization

### Goals

To achieve the community's vision

### Strategies

To support each community goal

### Action Steps

Actions and Guidance for Consideration  
[See Implementation Matrix \(page 242\)](#)

### Themes

Applicable strategies and action steps have been identified with the following icons:



Equity



Health



Sustainability



## Community Services & Education

Home to 72 public schools, 53 private schools, 10 higher education institutions, and 1,479 nonprofit organizations, the Community is rich in service and education providers. Services provided by the City of Fort Wayne, Allen County, and other municipalities as well as a diverse range of other public and semi-public entities help ensure the long-term health and quality of life of the Community. This section examines approaches to supporting educational institutions, potential partnerships between local organizations and employers, initiatives to increase participation in community decision making, and methods for improving quality of life outcomes.

Fort Wayne and Allen County are home to

**1,500+**

community service and educational institutions


### Goal 1. Support school districts and higher education institutions to ensure access to high quality, responsive education for all within the Community

Public education in Allen County is well regarded. Northwest and Southwest Allen County Schools both received an “A” grade for school accountability from the Indiana Department of Education for the 2018-2019 school year (the latest data available at the time of plan adoption). East Allen County Schools received a “B” and Fort Wayne Community Schools received a “C.” Although these are solid ratings, performance gaps must be bridged. Socio-economic factors can significantly impact a student’s success and policy recommendations must be mindful of this barrier to achievement.

High quality and responsive education will improve student outcomes across a range of indicators from math and reading scores to attendance, to postsecondary enrollment. Overall, the educational opportunities in the Community should foster an environment most conducive to learning for students from all backgrounds and cultures. To position students for academic success, school districts and higher education institutions should collaborate with service providers to foster early learning and promote connectivity to facilities, both in-person and digital.

#### 1.1 Encourage collaboration with schools and service providers to promote sufficient early childhood development and education programs

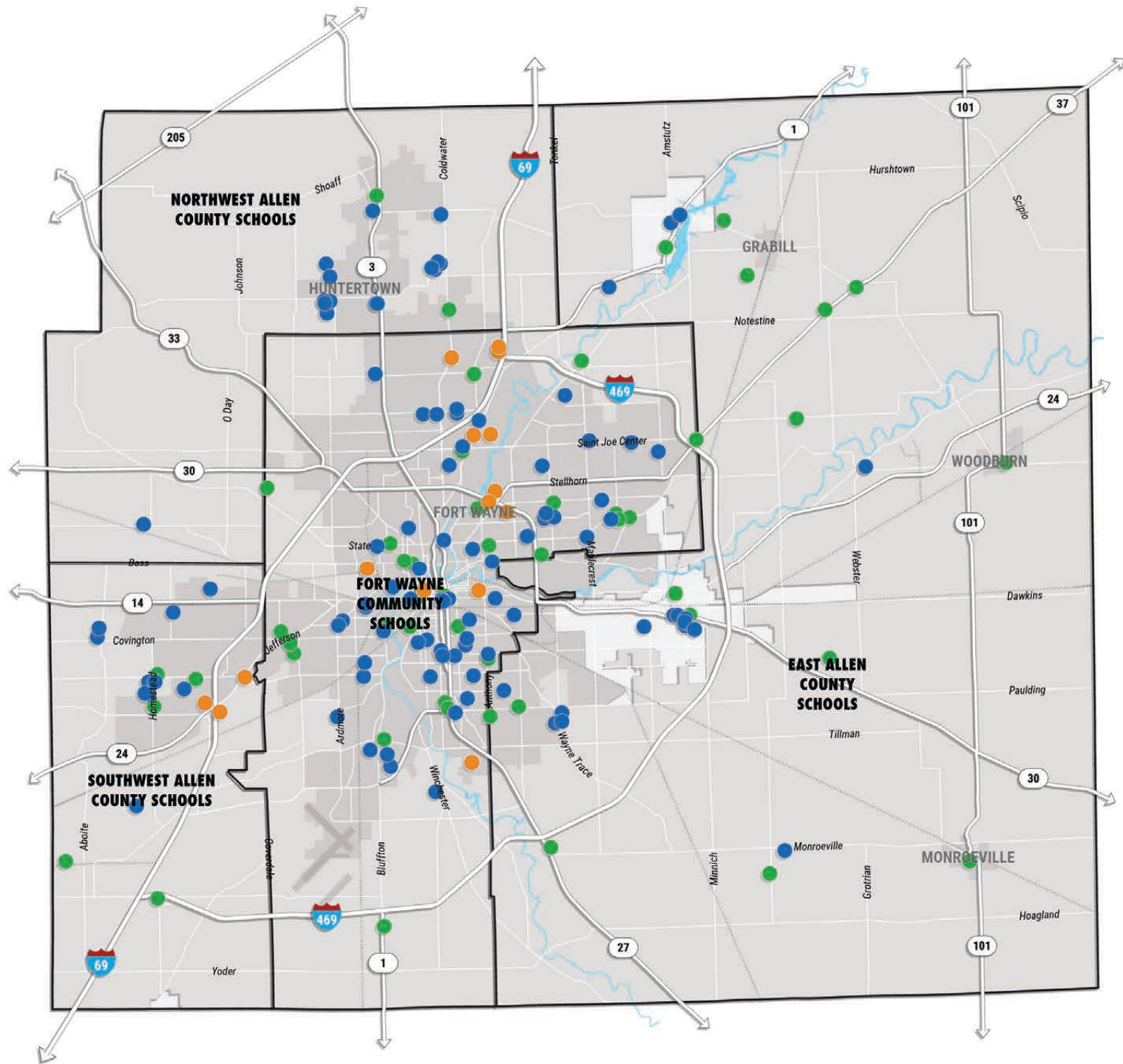
Early learning programs help bridge the learning gap among young children and position older students for success. When a young person struggles to thrive in a public school environment, private and nonprofit educational environments can be a suitable alternative. To create a stronger educational pipeline for low- and moderate-income students, stronger relationships between the public school system and nearby service providers must be cultivated. Early childcare programs are also essential for working parents, serving as a tool to address economic development and equity issues. To encourage collaboration with schools and service providers to promote sufficient early childhood development and education programs, the Community should:

- 1.1.1.** Fund expanded training for new and established  early childcare workers.
- 1.1.2.** Evaluate creative solutions, such as combined education and job training initiatives, to minimize barriers to parents utilizing early childcare programs.
- 1.1.3.** Support efforts to work with primary and secondary schools to raise awareness of available high-demand career paths including skilled trades.

# Schools and Education Facilities

The community is home to nearly 170 public, 53 private, and higher education facilities.

- Higher Education
- Public Schools
- Private and Non-profit Schools
- School Districts



## 1.2 Improve transportation and digital access to education services and facilities

Connectivity to schools both physically and digitally is integral to the success of all students and these connections should be supported and reinforced.

One way to improve access to schools is to ensure that children have safe alternative transportation options besides cars and buses. As traffic volumes have risen in recent decades, fewer parents have felt comfortable letting their children walk to school—the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that 85% of children’s trips to school are made by car or school bus and only 13% of school trips are made by walking or bicycling. These motor vehicle trips add to traffic problems on roads surrounding schools, long lines of traffic in school drop-off zones, and inconsistent attendance when children must universally rely on their parents for drop-offs. Walking and biking to school help children feel more connected to their community, increase their confidence that schools are safe places for learning, and help establish a healthy, active lifestyle from an early age.

Furthermore, cities and towns with established Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs report a stronger sense of community identity and increased social skills among the children. SRTS programs are both programmatic and project-based. In many cases, SRTS programs are defined by volunteer crossing guards and “safety town” programs for children.

The program can be facilitated through federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding. This investment can result in the construction of on- and off-street trails for walking and cycling, safer crossings at key intersections, landscaping to support safer and more welcoming trips, and other improvements to make walking to school safer.

Digital access, or access to broadband internet, has become increasingly critical to academic success. As the educational environment evolves further into the 21st century, the necessity of occasional “learning from home” has been made clear. To ensure this is possible, the Community should explore new ways to bring broadband to all residents, and specifically to students. State and federal grants that bring broadband to residents will be key. Technology accessibility programs that provide all students with computers are also critical and should be pursued. Additional discussion of broadband access is included under [Goal 3 in Chapter 9: Public Facilities and Infrastructure](#). To improve traditional and alternative transportation as well as digital access to education services and facilities, the Community should:

- 1.2.1.** Continue to work with the Indiana Safe Routes to School Program to identify ways to increase safety to promote biking and walking to school.
- 1.2.2.** Continue working with Citilink and other community transportation providers to identify ways to expand access to transit services from schools.
- 1.2.3.** Support access to online educational resources by working with service providers to expand broadband coverage in underserved areas.
- 1.2.4.** Support continued modernization of existing facilities to promote accessibility and meet education needs.

### Case study: Marin County, California Safe Routes to Schools

In 2000, the Marin County Bicycle Coalition (MCBC) created a pilot Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) program in Marin County as one of two national pilot programs, through a combination of grants from the Marin Community Foundation, The California Department of Health, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. 14 Schools participated in the first year of the pilot program. Within 5 years, the number of students traveling to school by walking and biking increased from 21% to 38%.

Today, more than 50 schools now participate in the program within Marin County, including preschools, almost every elementary school, middle schools, and even high schools. The program has expanded to include a diverse offering of classes and opportunities to encourage more walking, biking, carpooling, and transit use in the journey to and from school. ([Source: saferoutestoschools.org](http://saferoutestoschools.org))





## Goal 2. Foster education and employer partnerships to build a skilled workforce

Allen County has a strong mix of workforce training agencies and educational institutions to fortify an already strong workforce. Workforce training empowers people from every background to attain good-paying jobs and high quality of life. The practice also infuses an economy with new life; supporting a new generation of workers and entrepreneurs. Organizations in Allen County include JobWorks Inc, a Fort Wayne-based nonprofit that provides workforce training and career counseling to thousands of people and has connected new workers to more than 200 organizations in a variety of sectors. WorkOne Northeast is another organization that is part of a statewide network of career centers administered by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, with a mission of helping people find new or better jobs, choose careers, access training and educational workshops or get the information needed to succeed in today's job market. Together, these agencies position adults for real success in life.

### 2.1 Expand access to workforce training

The first step in advancing the Community's workforce is ensuring Allen County residents are positioned to enter their program of choice. To be well-positioned for a workforce training program, a person needs to have the appropriate educational background – typically a community college degree, high school diploma, or GED– and they must have dependable, consistent, and safe transportation to their training site.

To ensure residents have the appropriate educational background for their job training programs, agencies should collaborate with educational institutions, including community colleges, high schools, and other providers to design curricula that align with workforce training programs in the Community. This may come in the form of preliminary technical training or shadowing opportunities with local employers.

Often, the population most in need of workforce training is a population that has been traditionally deprived of resources. This creates a feedback loop in which people cannot attain education because they do not have transportation, and they cannot attain transportation (a car) because they do not have the education to get a job.

To break this cycle, workforce training agencies should partner with public transportation providers to ensure the populations most in need of training are appropriately served with reliable service. To encourage and expand access to workforce training, the Community should:

- 2.1.1.** Collaborate with educational institutions to ensure workforce preparation and continuing education/training opportunities.
- 2.1.2.** Partner with public transportation providers to capitalize on Indiana Department of Workforce Development funding for transportation to workforce training opportunities. The Allen County Together Plan targets health services, advanced manufacturing, trades, e-commerce and information technology, data analytics and teaching as focus areas for development of career pipelines.

## 2.2 Encourage school-employer collaboration to expand employment opportunities

The diverse employer base in the Community offers young people a variety of potential pathways to success. With a variety of sectors represented in the Community, ranging from healthcare to manufacturing, there are numerous opportunities for advancement. To facilitate new connections, schools take a variety of approaches including offering high school classes for college credit and holding career fairs to connect students and employers or simply raise awareness about potential opportunities. To encourage school-employer collaboration to expand employment opportunities, the Community should:

- 2.2.1. Support collaboration efforts between primary and secondary schools and employers to raise awareness of available high-demand career paths including skilled trades.

### Allen County Together Plan Career Pipelines and the MadeByMe Campaign

The 2021 Allen County Together Economic Development Action Plan created a strong groundwork for career pipelines in the Community. The Plan called for the Community to work with K–12 schools to raise awareness around available high-demand career paths and skilled trades. To do this the plan specifically calls for:

- Continuing and expanding the MadeByMe program to build awareness among middle school and high school students about career opportunities in advanced manufacturing, construction, and skilled trades.
- Expanding the MadeByMe model to provide local students with opportunities to gain experience about other in-demand career opportunities in growing fields, such as healthcare, financial technology, software, architecture, and engineering.
- Continue working with each K–12 school district in Allen County to support the development of career pipelines in health services, advanced manufacturing, trades, e-commerce, information technology (IT)/data analytics, and teaching.

The MadeByMe Campaign is an initiative specifically aimed at building awareness among middle and high school students about career opportunities in advanced manufacturing and construction. The program is administered by Greater Fort Wayne Inc. and backed by the national MadeByMe Coalition. The campaign connects students of all ages to rewarding career paths by working with important business stakeholders throughout the region. Among others, key stakeholders include:

- Building Contractors Association of Allen County
- East Allen Career Center
- FWCS Career Academy
- Ivy Tech Community College Northeast
- Northeast Indiana Building and Construction Trades Council
- Plumbers Steamfitters Local Union 166



### Goal 3. Encourage collaboration with education and community or social service providers to increase communication and participation in community decision making

In addition to fostering prosperity among low- and moderate-income families, a good education and access to social service programs offer the means to participate in community dialogue and affect positive change. Traditionally, a key barrier to upward mobility for families (and underprivileged neighborhoods at large) is the lack of social capital to create positive change that benefits struggling populations. Unlike struggling families that need to spend their time worrying about necessities, higher-income families can more easily advocate for policies and improvements that benefit their families and neighborhoods.

Collaboration between education and community or social service providers is key to fostering prosperity among the aforementioned low- and moderate-income families. While one provider may offer a specific set of services to underprivileged individuals, those services alone likely do not provide a holistic foundation. A more coordinated effort that increases communication and participation in community decision-making will help individuals build long-term social capital.

#### 3.1 Encourage regular communication among education and community or social service providers

Partnerships between education and social service providers empower residents to affect change in their community through the creation of innovative new programs that provide people with the resources needed to speak up. Acting separately, providers may have programs designed to empower residents, but they may not be appropriately comprehensive or offer the necessary connections to succeed. New, joint programs would create a more comprehensive approach to empowerment that maximizes the potential for effective community participation.

Business and education/service leaders can utilize connections in their respective communities to identify potential new partnerships and craft new methods for joint advancement. To encourage regular communication among education and community or social service providers, the Community should:

- 3.1.1.** Create an informal task force among business leaders, educators, and community or social service providers that meet regularly to facilitate partnerships.

#### 3.2 Encourage increased outreach and participation in decision-making processes by education and community or social service providers

In addition to working together, education and service providers should collaborate with the broader community to increase resident communication and participation in local decision-making. Leaders from service providers, educational institutions, and other resident advocacy groups should be included in all appropriate community discussions through positions on local decision-making bodies, regular input on local legislation, and input on Community planning processes. To encourage increased outreach and participation in decision-making processes by education and community or social service providers, the Community should:

- 3.2.1.** Explore opportunities to add representation from education and community or social service providers to city and county decision-making bodies.
- 3.2.2.** Encourage targeted outreach to education and community or social service providers as part of ongoing planning projects.

## Goal 4. Ensure collaboration with community and social service providers to support vulnerable populations and improve quality of life outcomes

Human services make up a large portion of the Fort Wayne-Allen County economy, but they are also the organizations that contribute to community health and equity. To support the landscape of local human services and increase equity throughout the community, All In Allen's goals and strategies will need to support collaboration with nonprofit organizations throughout the county.

### 4.1 Capitalize on existing services

Where there are gaps in services, the Community should work with service providers to develop strategies to fill in gaps. To begin the process of "filling in gaps," the Community should identify key service providers in Allen County and work with them to determine gaps in the availability of services. This could come in the form of a deficiency of banking services in a neighborhood or a lack of healthy food in another. Working together, local governments, social service providers, educational institutions, private businesses, and nonprofits should build upon existing services to fill in service gaps and ensure all residents have the services necessary to succeed personally and professionally. To capitalize on existing services, the Community should:

- 4.1.1. Promote expanded use and access to existing community and social service organizations.

### 4.2 Support public/private collaboration across jurisdictions to support vulnerable populations throughout the Community

To better serve residents in need, the various governmental bodies and nonprofits of Allen County should collaborate to ensure services are accessible, streamlined, and of high quality. Often, there are duplicative services between communities. This redundancy can be a poor use of resources and represents a missed opportunity for collaboration. By working together, municipalities and nonprofits with overlapping services can collaborate to offer a stronger portfolio of services that includes workforce training, financial counseling, and childcare. To encourage public/private collaboration across jurisdictions and support vulnerable populations throughout Allen County, the Community should:




- 4.2.1. Facilitate partnerships between municipal departments, county departments, and local nonprofits to determine service and program needs.

### 4.3 Better connect vulnerable populations to community or social services

Proximity to services for vulnerable populations is often as important as the quality of the services themselves. If people are not aware and able to easily find a facility in or near their neighborhood, they are unlikely to find the services. To combat this, social service providers, as well as community facilities such as schools and libraries, should locate new facilities in neighborhood locations where possible (as opposed to standalone campuses outside residential areas).

When full-service facilities are not feasible, smaller locations may be appropriate depending on the type of provider (in some cases even a kiosk can make a major impact).

Further, banks and credit unions are critical community facilities and key indicators of the financial well-being of a neighborhood. Location is particularly important in the case of these institutions because they often offer financial well-being services such as monetary counseling and tax preparation services, as well as traditional checking and savings accounts that are key to building wealth. To better connect vulnerable populations to community or social services the Community should:

- 4.3.1. Continue to locate community facilities such as  libraries, medical centers, and schools near residents to serve as neighborhood centers to enhance accessibility to vulnerable populations.
- 4.3.2. Identify strategies to expand financial services in  underbanked areas, including financial counseling and tax preparation services.
- 4.3.3. Seek funding through partnerships and grants to  provide care services and shelter accommodations that meet the objectives stated in the Fort Wayne Consolidated Plan.

## Goal 5. Promote equitable healthcare access across socioeconomic barriers by building on and improving the community's existing system of care

Access to healthcare services helps the community maintain and promote a good quality of life. The provision of and access to better healthcare services is essential for the local economy as businesses weigh such variables when deciding where they want to locate. Parkview Health Systems, Lutheran Health Network, and Indiana University Health (IU Health) are the primary healthcare providers in Fort Wayne-Allen County. Despite good access to physicians and hospital care, in 2019, Allen County's Department of Health reported the county's rank in terms of quality of life had dropped to 52nd among the 92 counties in Indiana. Health factors such as the physical environment saw a significant drop from 10th to 68th between 2014-2019. The county ranks near the middle of the state in terms of health behaviors, clinical care, and social and economic factors. To bridge this gap in quality, underserved populations need to be provided with equitable access to both physical and mental healthcare services, and outreach for prevention must be supported.

In Allen County,

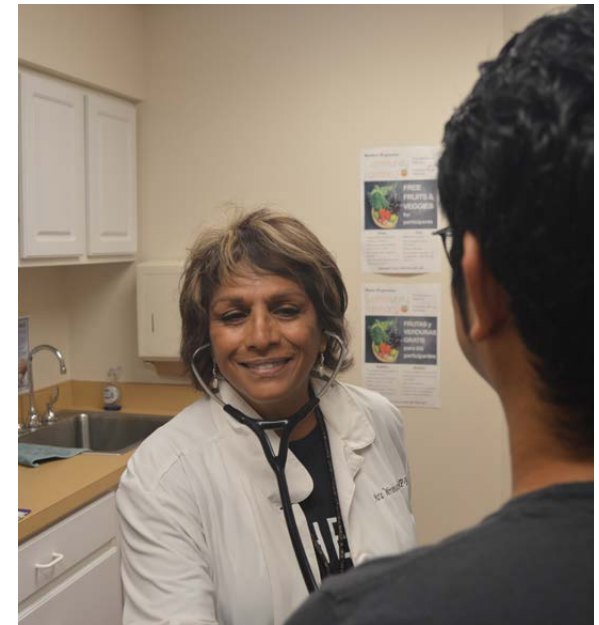
# 11.2%

of the population speak a language other than English in the home

### 5.1 Improve healthcare access for non-English-speaking populations

A key indicator of health in a community is the population's comfort and familiarity with the healthcare system. In Allen County, 11.2% of the population speak a language other than English in the home, and Census estimates indicate that 2.2% of the population are isolated by language (speaking no English). The Community must ensure residents can attain care for their families regardless of a language barrier. The first step in this process is to conduct an audit of healthcare providers to determine their specific level of comfort with the healthcare system. Once an accurate number is determined, the Community must work to implement a strategic mix of approaches that support professional translation and interpretation where possible and translation technology where necessary. To improve healthcare access for non-English-speaking populations the Community should:



- 5.1.1. Conduct an audit with healthcare providers and service organizations in the County's non-English speaking populations to determine the level of comfort with the healthcare system.
- 5.1.2. Work with community organizations and service providers to provide interpretation and translation services in all healthcare facilities.



## 5.2 Expand equitable access to physical and mental health services


In 2019, Parkview Health, a major healthcare provider in Allen County, partnered with the Polis Center and the Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health to conduct a community health needs assessment. The study was conducted to better understand the health, behaviors, and needs of the populations they serve. The report identified the areas of central and downtown Fort Wayne as medically underserved areas with medically underserved populations that lack access to primary care services. Community-based healthcare solutions should be undertaken to improve outcomes for struggling residents in these areas and across the community. One approach is to invest in new community-based health and mental health centers.

Ideally, these centers will offer free or subsidized basic healthcare to at-risk populations. Also, to bring healthcare directly to residents, health screenings should be offered at little or no cost to residents wherever possible. For example, at community meetings and baseball games. To expand equitable access to physical and mental health services, the Community should:

- 5.2.1.** Support community-based mental health centers to  provide a variety of free or subsidized services.
- 5.2.2.** Work with health providers to host physical health  and mental health screenings at community events.

## 5.3 Support outreach for substance abuse prevention

The most effective approach to supporting individuals struggling with substance abuse is often to help them before their problems arise. Educational programs to prevent substance abuse can inform children and adults of the potential dangers of substance abuse and prepare them for a healthier and happier lifestyle. Potential partners in educational outreach could include the Allen County Health Department, Tobacco Free Indiana, and others. To support outreach efforts for substance abuse prevention, the Community should:

- 5.3.1.** Develop and implement educational programs to  prevent substance abuse and equip individuals to make healthier lifestyle choices.

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# PARKS & ENVIRONMENT



## Vision Statement

*Recreation and nature will be a part of everyday life and a core component of the identity of Fort Wayne, Allen County, and its communities. Fort Wayne and Allen County's world-class parks, trail systems, and linkages along the rivers will continue to connect and engage residents and visitors throughout the Community. These systems will provide equitable access and support active recreation, healthy lifestyles, community interaction, and regional tourism.*

*Inclusive community engagement and strong collaboration among key stakeholders, local parks departments, and conservation groups will help instill a sense of appreciation and stewardship for the County's natural and environmentally sensitive areas. This collaborative effort will also assist in meeting the increased demand for parkland and open space throughout the County. As a result, parks and park facilities throughout Fort Wayne and Allen County will be accessible for all residents to enjoy outdoor active and passive recreation opportunities.*

*Building on successful outreach campaigns and local marketing, the Community will encourage natural environmental stewardship and conservation efforts for flood-prone areas and other environmentally sensitive land, understanding the value they play in storing stormwater across the region. Ongoing public education and continued activation of Fort Wayne's downtown riverfront will help raise awareness of the importance of a healthy environment along the Community's waterways. Throughout the County, policies for conservation design and thoughtful growth will support initiatives to protect and increase local wetlands and habitats and preserve and expand the County's tree canopy. With environmental preservation goals and strategies reflected in regulations and the development process, businesses, developers, and residents alike will find it easy to incorporate best practices that preserve the Community's rich natural amenities.*

## Chapter Organization

### Goals

To achieve the community's vision

### Strategies

To support each community goal

### Action Steps

Actions and Guidance for Consideration  
[See Implementation Matrix \(page 244\)](#)

### Themes

Applicable strategies and action steps have been identified with the following icons:



Equity



Health



Sustainability



## Parks & Environment

There are many opportunities for recreation across the Community. Green space is considered a key community asset by residents as it provides a place for passive and active recreation, offers opportunities to enjoy nature, and helps beautify the entire Community. Parks and open spaces in Allen County are maintained by several departments and organizations, accounting for over 7,400 acres of land. This includes 3,800 acres of parkland maintained by the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department and Allen County Parks Department, with the remaining acreage maintained by the smaller municipalities and other agencies like the Acres Land Trust and Little River Wetlands Project.

Outdoor recreational areas range from small neighborhood parks to larger nature preserves, including sports facilities, outdoor performance centers, botanical conservatories, campgrounds, and a diverse network of trails. Together, these provide for the recreational needs of residents throughout the County and its municipalities and ensure each community has access to outdoor spaces.

### Goal 1. Ensure all residents have equitable access to parks, natural areas, and trails to meet increasing current and future demand

The Community is fortunate to have a healthy ratio of park space per resident - 20 acres per 1,000 residents (the national standard is 10 acres per 1,000 residents). However, the parkland is not evenly distributed throughout the Community.

On one hand, the urban core of Fort Wayne benefits from its historic roots in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Residents of the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to Downtown enjoy the park and boulevard system with legacy parks including Memorial, McCulloch, Lawton, Nuckols, Lakeside, and Swinney Parks, as well as revitalized riverfront parks and greenways. On the other hand, as the City grew beyond its historic core over the latter half of the 20th Century, less park and recreation space was created. Outside Fort Wayne's urban core, parks tend to be larger but more sporadic with a handful of areas enjoying high-quality access.

Walkable access to parks is an equity issue and part of the "15-minute neighborhood," or complete neighborhood approach established in the [Land Use and Development chapter](#). In a 15 minute neighborhood, those who can

safely leave home and access parks have increased opportunities to gather with friends and family, exercise, and maintain their mental health - something that was increasingly important during the pandemic. Those without a park close to home must travel for outdoor space or use substandard spaces such as vacant lots. An analysis of the walkability of parkland in Allen County indicated that only 42% of homes are located within a 10-minute walk of a park. With 58% of the Community lacking pedestrian access to parks, the need for a car to access parkland becomes necessary for most, leaving non-drivers (such as children and the elderly) deprived of easy access to open space and outdoor amenities.

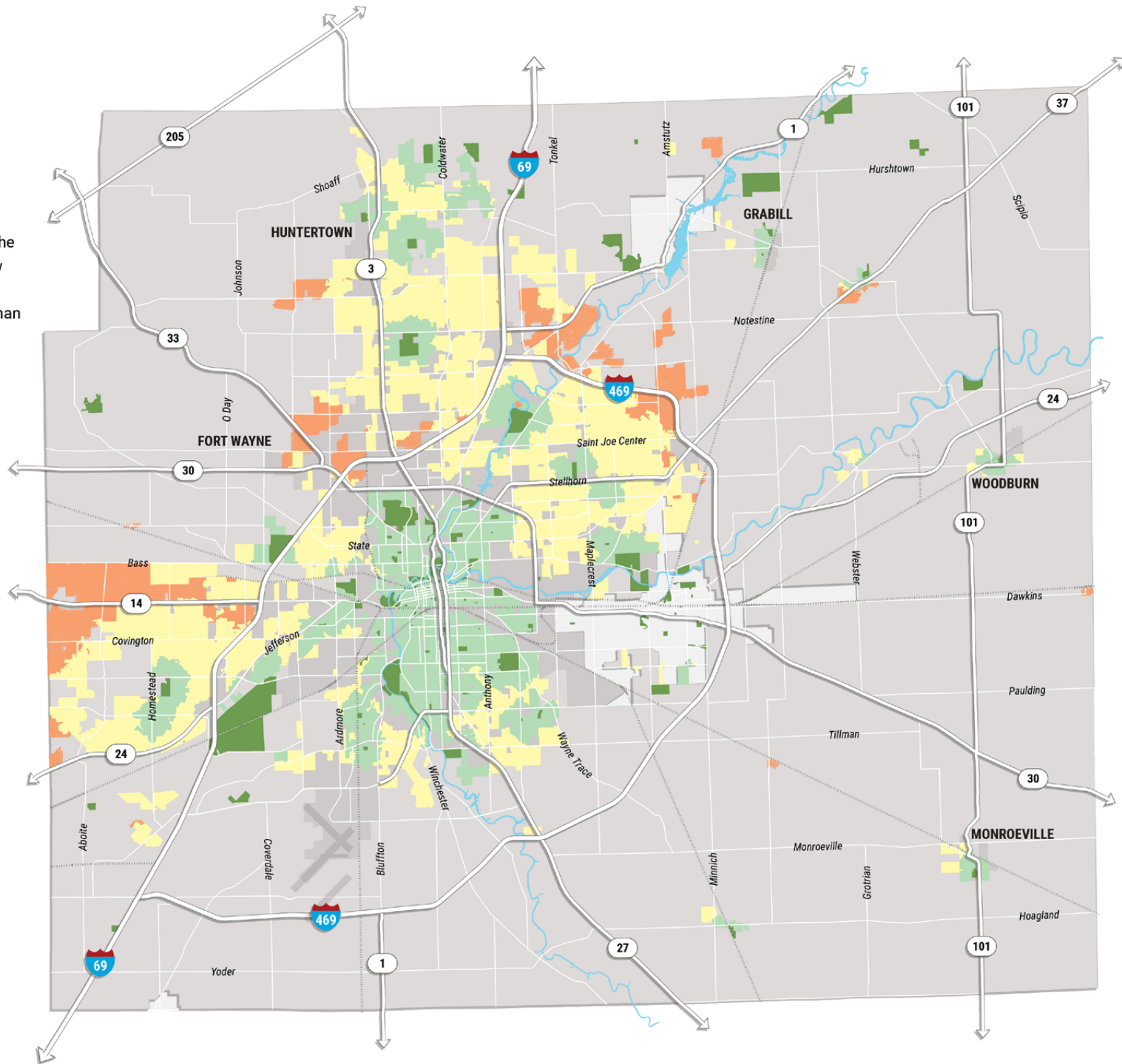
Lack of walkable access not only detracts from the neighborhood's quality of life but poor access to open space is also often associated with decreased health outcomes. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, poor access to open space is linked to:

- **Decreased physical activity.** Walkable access to appropriate sites motivates people to participate in physical activity and to do so more frequently.
- **Worsened mental health.** Parks can serve as a venue for stress reduction.
- **Increased chance of injury.** Parks and trails can provide safe spaces for people to play and exercise, away from busy streets and commercial areas.

# Parks Service Area

While most of the residential areas within Allen County are well-served by public parks, accessibility to parks needs to be improved in the unincorporated areas to serve existing and new residents in the County. Residents in such underserved areas would need to travel more than 3 miles (15-minutes on a bike) to get to a park.

- Parks
- Residential Area Within 10-minute Walking Distance
- Residential Area Within 15-minute Biking Distance
- Underserved Residential Areas





## 1.1 Support an increase in parkland

Parks should meet the needs of all Community residents. Park and open space access makes communities more active, enjoyable, and connected. A neighborhood park is typically a center for gathering—offering space for cultural events, farmers’ markets, ball games, and picnics. In addition to offering these benefits and many others, lack of park access correlates with lower property values, decreased rates of exercise, and poor health outcomes.

The Community should take steps to bring park access to all residents of Allen County. To begin this process, the Community should identify underserved neighborhoods and prioritize investment accordingly. Available vacant lots throughout the County should be strategically targeted for activation and programming. Community pop-up events such as farmers’ markets and ballgames could also be organized in underutilized lots to bring residents together and raise awareness about the potential for new spaces.

Stakeholders throughout the County – including parks departments, private landowners, and developers - should be engaged in community conversation and strategic planning to improve access to parkland throughout the Community.

To support an increase in parkland, the Community should:

- 1.1.1.** Identify and prioritize underserved areas that need new parks.
- 1.1.2.** Collaborate with private landowners and organizations to strategically acquire new parkland.
- 1.1.3.** Explore options for the provision of parkland as part of new residential development proposals.
- 1.1.4.**  Facilitate collaboration among property owners, developers, and land conservancies for more connected access to natural areas and trails.

## 1.2 Prioritize the maintenance and improvement of existing parks

The Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department maintains 87 parks covering 2,840 acres of parkland. Continued maintenance and expansion of this park system is guided by the 2018-2022 Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which identifies goals and objectives for the department. The Allen County Parks Department currently operates five parks covering an area of 1,005 acres. These departments are responsible for managing a widespread system that includes aquatic centers, golf courses, a botanical conservatory, an outdoor theater, a zoo, a greenhouse, pavilions, sports facilities, and miles of trails. Although new park investment should be a priority, it must not come at the expense of the Community’s existing parks which are critical to the quality of life throughout Allen County.

Maintenance and improvement of the City of Fort Wayne park system are primarily funded by the municipal government; however, partnerships with various organizations are a crucial part of this effort. Grants and donations are managed by the Fort Wayne Parks Foundation, which provides financial support to projects



and programs requiring additional funding. In recent years, the Foundation has provided support for capital improvements to Salomon Farm Park, Foellinger Theatre, Foellinger Freimann Botanical Conservatory, Lakeside Rose Garden, and Freimann Square. Besides capital improvements, the foundation supports other facilities and programs like the Lifetime Sports Academy, a seven-week academy in McMillen Park offering free golf, tennis, and swimming lessons to youth for the past 20 years. Notably, the development of Promenade Park saw significant funding from the Foundation as well as other agencies such as the Community Foundation, and Allen County-Fort Wayne Capital Improvement Board to acquire properties and improve public infrastructure. Other funding opportunities should be explored to ensure other existing and new parks are well-funded in the future. To prioritize the maintenance and improvement of existing parks, the Community should:

- 1.2.1.** Continue to regularly assess park facilities for necessary upgrades.
- 1.2.2.** Ensure community and neighborhood engagement as part of planning for park improvements.

### **1.3 Continue to promote and strategically activate existing parks and riverfront areas with active and passive recreation opportunities**

Framed by quality open space as well as the St. Marys, St. Joseph, and Maumee rivers, the Community's natural areas and waterways are critical to its history and quality of life. Better activation of these assets for recreation has been a recent focus for the County and Fort Wayne in particular. This is highlighted by the recent opening of Promenade Park along the St. Marys River north of Downtown Fort Wayne. The Community should build upon these successes to make existing parks and riverfront areas more attractive and useful to residents from across Allen County.

Another approach to activating parks and riverfront areas involves implementing equity-focused programming. Such programming engages all communities, focuses on public space in low-wealth areas, identifies programs or improvements that operate in a previously underutilized or completely unused space, and creates initiatives or improvements that connect people to local waterways.

Building upon recent successes, the Community should continue to activate existing parks and riverfront areas, the Community should:

- 1.3.1.** Support and promote the continued activation of parks in the community through active and passive recreation programming.
- 1.3.2.** Identify areas and strategically plan for the development of river-oriented active and passive recreation spaces and tourism opportunities.
- 1.3.3.** Promote community outreach and education regarding recreation opportunities along with the importance of conservation and stewardship.



## Riverfront Fort Wayne (2015)

The 2015 plan conceptualizes designs to develop the river edges along the St. Marys River, as a public space and strengthen investment and private development in Downtown Fort Wayne. A series of surveys, polls, and community engagements helped define the community's priorities. Many were focused on re-establishing the river's connection to the city and programming the river edge to activate such spaces. The conceptual plan focuses on balancing the ecology and the built environment, and the introduction of varied programs such as commerce, mixed-use developments, open space, and civic uses. An integral strategy adopted in the plan is to improve the connectivity throughout the study area and with the surrounding neighborhoods with a promenade along the north and south of the river being a priority connection. Completion of Promenade Park was the first phase of the Riverfront Fort Wayne project, successfully connecting the community to Fort Wayne's rivers. Implementation of the Riverfront Fort Wayne should continue to be a priority to continue building on the success of the City's public waterfront.

### 1.4 Identify resources needed for park, trail, and natural area maintenance, activation, improvement and expansion.

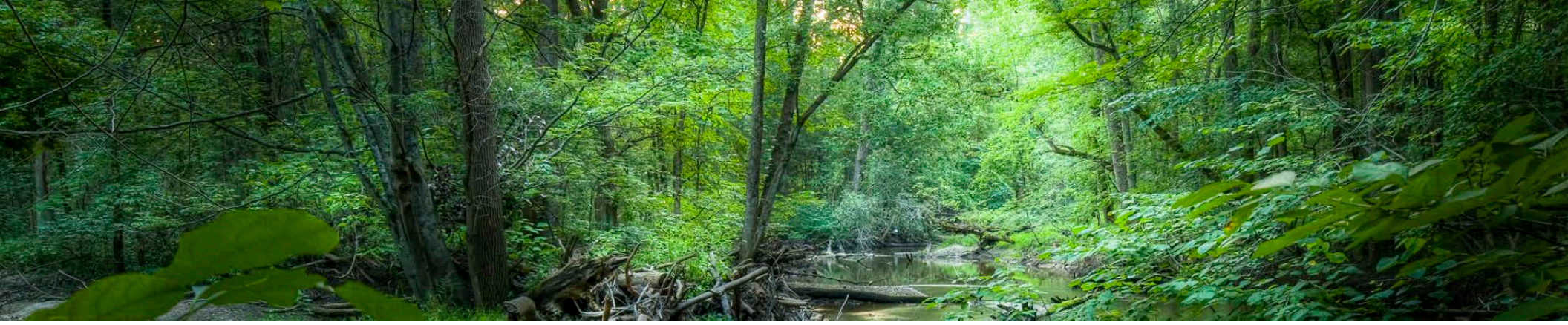
Currently, maintenance and improvements to the park system are primarily funded by the City of Fort Wayne; however, partnerships with various organizations are a crucial part of this effort. Grants and donations are managed by the Fort Wayne Parks Foundation, which provides financial support to projects and programs requiring additional funding. In recent years, the Foundation has provided support for capital improvements to Salomon Farm Park, Foellinger Theatre, Foellinger Freimann Botanical Conservatory, Lakeside Rose Garden, and Freimann Square. Besides capital improvements, the foundation supports other facilities and programs like the Lifetime Sports Academy.

The Parks Service Area map (p. 187) highlights areas where existing and future residential development will be located in relationship to the existing parks network. Several areas in the Community could benefit from improved access to parks and open space, particularly in unincorporated areas. Funding will need to be secured to expand the parks network and support open space amenities for current and future residents. To achieve

this and other open space recommendations, new funding and staffing resources must be identified and pursued. Efforts to meet funding needs will be built upon the efforts of both Community municipalities and the above-mentioned local organizations. To begin the process of securing this funding, potential resources at the federal, state and local levels are outlined in the [implementation chapter](#).

To pursue resources needed for park, trail, and natural area maintenance, activation, improvement and expansion, the Community should:

- 1.4.1.** Investigate and actively pursue opportunities for grants and other creative funding options.
- 1.4.2.** Study potential staffing increases needed to adequately maintain and expand park, trail and natural areas



## Goal 2. Provide accessible and connected trails that offer high-quality local and regional opportunities for recreation and multimodal transportation

Trails connect parks, provide access to open space and complement the natural environment. They serve a dual purpose, providing an opportunity for recreation as well as for active transportation. There are approximately 124 miles of multi-use trails, of which 109 miles are interconnected. These are owned and maintained by a variety of entities and municipalities, primarily the City of Fort Wayne and the New Haven-Adams Township Parks and Recreation Department.

### 2.1 Collaborate with area communities and trail organizations to expand and enhance the trail and greenway systems to create a well-connected and comprehensive local and regional system

In 2011, the Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System was added to the National Register of Historic Places. The system encompasses a portion of Fort Wayne's total parks network, including 1,880 acres of parks and open space, comprising 11 public parks, four parkways with 10 associated parks, and 10 boulevards. This includes historic parks like Memorial, McCulloch, Lawton, Nuckols, Lakeside, and Swinney Parks as well as key sites along the Three Rivers that have enabled the revitalization of the river greenway Trail system. Maintaining this historic amenity should be a priority and the system should be expanded where possible to create a responsive and constantly improving system that benefits existing residents and welcomes new ones. These assets should be built upon in the Community.

Further, to build upon the Community's strong trail network, new trails should be created and expanded to make walking, hiking, and biking trails easily accessible to all residents. Fort Wayne Trails, Inc. is a non-profit organization that advocates for the long-term maintenance and expansion of the trail network in Allen County and will be

a key partner. The organization does not own or maintain trail facilities but coordinates with the City of Fort Wayne, Allen County, and other local governments to address trail management and expansion. In addition, they fundraise for trail projects and help prioritize trails within the County. With partnerships with organizations like Fort Wayne Trails, Inc., the Community can make great strides to increase the trail network throughout Allen County.

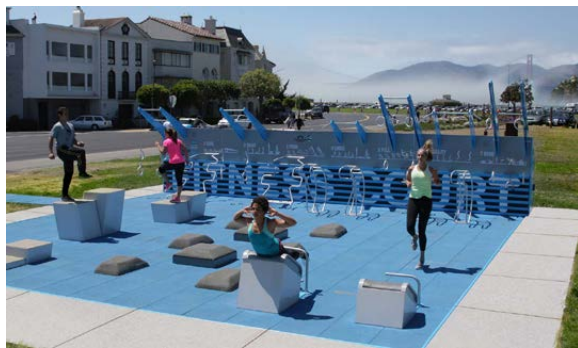
In addition to expanding the trail network, lighting improvements should also be pursued to ensure that existing trails are safe and well-used. Trail lighting will promote increased active transportation. Primary routes, such as more heavily used commuter trails or multiuse paths, should be prioritized for lighting improvements either through proactive planning efforts or in response to neighborhood requests. The Community should:

- 2.1.1.** Support local and regional growth of existing trail systems.
- 2.1.2.** Prioritize improvements to existing trails and greenways in key recreation/activity areas, such as along the riverfronts.
- 2.1.3.** Create partnerships to connect private trails to the  larger public trail and greenway network.
- 2.1.4.** Explore the creation of standards to integrate trail design into existing infrastructure projects.





## Fitness Courts

The National Fitness Campaign has a goal of bringing a free-to-use Fitness Court – a modular fitness station – within a 10-minute bike ride of every American. A Fitness Court features seven training zones, bodyweight exercises, and digital programming for adults of all ages and abilities. The modular courts can quickly be installed in desired locations near trailheads, in parks, or anywhere space can accommodate. The National Fitness Campaign has installed Fitness Courts in states across the country, including the Midwestern states around Indiana. Grant funding is available to schools and cities.



## 2.2 Improve trail and trailhead safety and amenities

Large and small trailhead spaces offer walkers, hikers, and bicyclists a chance to plan their route, rest, and congregate. Modern trailheads typically offer a combination of restrooms, fitness stations, maps, signposts, and distribution centers for informational brochures about the trail and its features, as well as parking areas for vehicles and/or trailers. With the help of the Fort Wayne and Allen County Parks departments, existing trailheads should be identified for modernization and expansion. When planning new trails, opportunities for high-quality trailheads—potentially at trail crossroads—should be considered and prioritized. To improve trailhead and trail recreation amenities, the Community should:

- 2.2.1.** Assess and improve lighting and enhance trail connections between parks, neighborhoods, and key destinations. 
- 2.2.2.** Identify opportunities to enhance trailhead amenities.
- 2.2.3.** Add loop trails or trail extensions to existing parks and add fitness stations and outdoor exercise equipment where suitable. 

## 2.3 Support community education on the benefits of trails

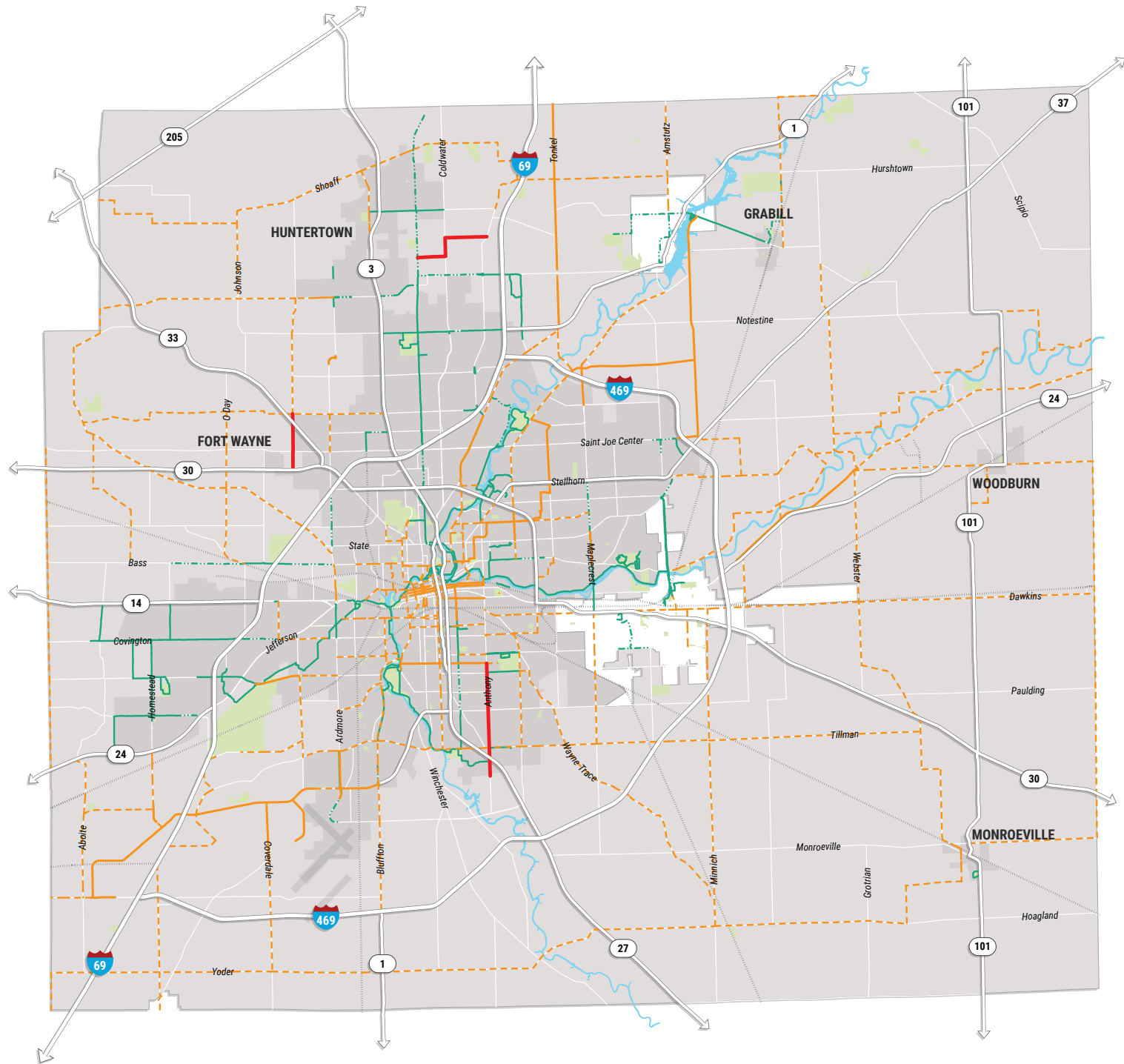
In addition to upgrading and expanding trail facilities in the Community, education and community outreach programs should be created to raise awareness of trail amenities in Allen County. A trail is only useful if people are aware of it in their community, so an awareness campaign should be implemented with the help of local organizations such as Fort Wayne Trails, Friends of the River, Tri-State Watershed Alliance, and others. The Community should:

- 2.3.1.** Work with parks departments, trail organizations, and stewardship groups to engage and educate the Community regarding the benefits of trails.

# Bike Routes and Trails

Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure proposed expansion areas largely cover all planned residential growth across the County. Additional focus areas should include the south and southwest portions of Fort Wayne along with bike lane expansions in the priority infill target area.

- Potential Trail Extensions
- On-Street Bike Lane
- Proposed On Street Bike Lane
- Existing Trails
- Planned Trails





### Goal 3. Encourage community stewardship of natural and environmentally sensitive areas

Open space includes natural and environmentally sensitive areas that have been or should be specifically preserved from development. Examples include floodplains, wetlands, waterways and riparian corridors, and wooded areas. These support passive recreation, protect environmental assets, and contribute to the character of Fort Wayne-Allen County. Most open space in the Community is concentrated in dedicated nature preserves, found in both urban and rural areas. Allen County has 18 dedicated nature preserves totaling an estimated 2,478 acres of land. Additional open space includes parcels that serve as landscaping and storm-water management areas within residential neighborhoods as well as boulevards and parkways within the City of Fort Wayne.

#### 3.1 Facilitate community stewardship partnerships

To preserve natural and environmental assets, a new generation of advocates must be cultivated. Collaborating with local organizations, and programs that foster a love of nature and a sense of responsibility among residents will help ensure the future of the Community's green space. Organizations such as ACRES Land Trust, Friends of the River, Tri-State Watershed Alliance, Maumee Watershed Alliance, St. Joe Watershed Initiative, and Little Rivers Wetland Project already take responsibility for natural amenities in the Community. These organizations provide the capacity to strategically increase parkland, build coalitions and partnerships to elevate conservation as a priority in the Community, and increase public awareness of the importance of natural amenities. Their collective efforts should continue to be supported by the Community, allowing them to reduce parkland deficits where they exist, increase public access where needed, and build on the existing system of parks and accessible open spaces. This will continue to grow the system that is one of the best in the northeast Indiana region and helps draw in people from the neighboring regions. The Community should:

- 3.1.1. Collaborate with organizations, educational institutions, and municipalities county-wide to conserve natural areas and environmentally sensitive land.

#### Little Rivers Wetland Project

Founded in 1990, Little River Wetlands Project is a nonprofit land trust. The stated goal of the trust is to restore and preserve wetlands in the watershed of the Little River, a headwater tributary of the Wabash River. The preserve dutifully protects more than 1,300 acres of wetlands in the Little River watershed. In addition to Eagle Marsh, Arrowhead Marsh, Arrowhead Prairie, and Buttonbush Bottoms, LRWP also co-owns Little River Landing with ACRES Land Trust.


Preserves in the system include Eagle Marsh (831 acres), Arrowhead Prairie (158 acres), Arrowhead Marsh (97 acres), Little River Landing (53 acres), and Buttonbush Bottoms (25 acres). LRWP maintains trails throughout the vast protected wetlands, and they are available to public at no charge.

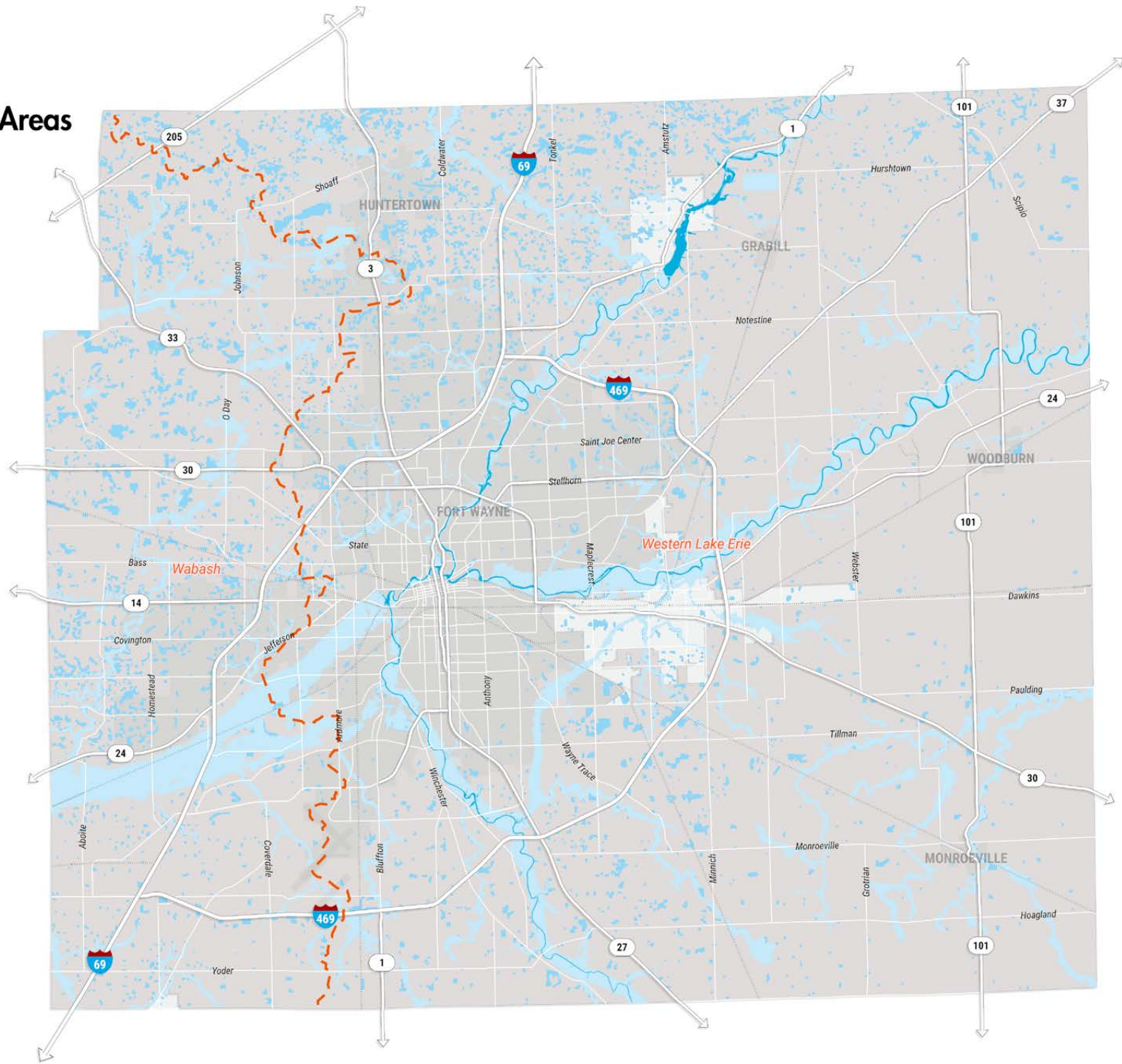


**LITTLE RIVER**  
WETLANDS PROJECT

# Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Watershed Basins

Environmentally sensitive areas and watershed basins are assets - they absorb water in rain events, support passive recreation, and contribute to the character of Fort Wayne-Allen County.

-  Watershed Basin
-  Floodplain (FEMA)
-  Wetland or Pond



### 3.2 Support wetland, natural area, and riparian restoration and protection

Inland wetlands and riparian areas in the Community store flood overflow, support a diverse ecosystem and improve water quality. Wetlands include rivers, streams, lakes and ponds, and marshes. Riparian areas are lands that occur along watercourses and water bodies, including flood plains and streambanks. They are different from surrounding lands because of the unique soil and vegetation characteristics that are strongly influenced by the presence of water. Among other goals, the 2018-22 Parks and Recreation Master Plan emphasized the importance of natural wetlands, riparian corridors, and man-made aquatic resources. This emphasis should be continued going forward. Anchored by Three Rivers—the St. Marys, St. Joseph, and Maumee—Allen County lies within two watersheds basins: the Wabash River Basin and the Western Lake Erie Basin, to the west and east respectively as shown on the map on the [previous page](#).

Wetlands have been historically polluted in the United States and should be preserved and revitalized in Allen County where necessary. To support wetlands, and river and riverbank restoration and protection, the Community should:

- 3.2.1.** Identify areas for strategic property acquisition and preservation efforts for wetland and riparian areas.
- 3.2.2.** Promote wetland restoration initiatives and investigate local wetland protection regulations.
- 3.2.3.** Collaborate with municipal, education, businesses, and nonprofit organizations to devise strategic actions to protect and restore natural areas



### 3.3 Encourage tree canopy expansion and protection

The Community's tree canopy is critical to the local ecosystem, supporting water filtration and drainage efforts, neighborhood cooling, and street beautification. A tree canopy provides numerous advantages, including improving community character, cleaning the air, and cooling heat islands. A complete and robust tree canopy may also increase property values due to its direct positive effect on improving neighborhood character and desirability. To promote tree preservation, the Community should maintain existing trees in natural environments and support new plantings wherever possible in urban areas, as rights-of-way projects occur, and as new subdivisions develop. Street tree plantings should be encouraged along primary corridors, especially in Downtown and Town Center streetscapes from an approved species list. Along with beautifying streets and enhancing the user experience, which could provide economic benefits, using species native to northeast Indiana will provide opportunities for education and foster regional pride.

To further protect the existing canopy, the Community's zoning ordinances and landscape standards should be updated to protect existing trees from damage or loss during or after project construction. A tree protection zone is an area surrounding the base of a tree within which neither construction activity nor physical development is permitted. These zones protect the branches and trunks of trees as well as the underground root system. The tree root zone is the area of a tree in which most of its roots lie. Often, 95% of roots are found in the upper 12 to 18 inches of soil.

A tree protection ordinance helps to ensure that the soil above tree roots does not become impacted. Care should be taken to balance preservation with flexibility in any tree preservation ordinance so as not to make it too restrictive for development. Preservation of trees of a certain size or significance should be prioritized over retaining trees that could be moved to another site or replaced through a fee-in-lieu arrangement. To encourage tree canopy expansion and protection, the Community should:

- 3.3.1.** Investigate ways to preserve and maintain existing stands of trees.
- 3.3.2.** Review and update policies for subdivision street trees.
- 3.3.3.** Determine and implement best practice strategies for managing invasive species and enhancing tree cover.



### Indiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The Indiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) analyzes the state's outdoor recreation resources, aiming to support local, regional, and state-level decision making in addition to fostering successful partnerships and cooperation. The plan emphasizes the benefits of outdoor recreational areas to the economy and explains how they help cities attract more people. It also discusses the health benefits of encouraging outdoor recreation. SCORP establishes the following five goals for communities in the state of Indiana:

- Develop more trails and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.
- Encourage and promote outdoor recreation participation.
- Continue emphasizing Indiana's aquatic resources both natural and man-made.
- Protect and enhance Indiana's natural and outdoor recreation resources.
- Provide funding for outdoor recreation development at the local and state levels.

The goals and resources identified within SCORP have been adopted by both Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department and Allen County Parks Department. These goals should continue to play a role in understanding and planning for parks and recreational needs in the County moving forward.

## Goal 4. Reduce or mitigate impacts of new development on environmentally sensitive areas

Allen County is home to numerous environmentally sensitive areas. These areas differ from general undeveloped open spaces in that they are critical to maintaining the long-term environmental health of the Community. They offer biodiversity, wildlife corridors, or other vital natural resources; and they may provide stormwater management, filtration, and flooding benefits. Many environmentally sensitive areas in the Community are already protected by dedicated nature preserves, however many remain unprotected. New development poses a threat to these areas. Before new development in the County is approved, environmentally sensitive areas and the long-term environmental health of the Community must be given special consideration.

### 4.1 Promote sustainable development practices

There are several approaches to sustainable development that the Community should consider to ensure the long-term environmental health of the region. One such approach to residential development is conservation design, also known as cluster development, which preserves contiguous areas of open space and natural areas by clustering smaller residential parcels on select areas of a site.

The overall housing density within the development remains the same, but the site design allows for larger areas of open space to remain intact and used to preserve wetlands, floodplains, or other natural features, and shared as neighborhood or community parkland. Residential areas within the Targeted Growth Area and proximate to the floodplains, wetlands, or large wooded areas should be considered for conservation design.

Low Impact Development (LID) is another approach to sustainable development. This approach to development (or re-development) works with nature to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible. It employs principles such as preserving and recreating natural landscape features and minimizing impervious surfaces to create functional and appealing site drainage that treats stormwater as a resource rather than a waste product. By requiring, or promoting, LID principles and practices, stormwater can be managed in a way that reduces the impact of built areas and promotes the natural movement of water within an eco-system or watershed.

To promote these practices, the Community should:

- 4.1.1. Develop and promote information on green and low-impact development practices.
- 4.1.2. Encourage conservation design and green and low-impact development practices to protect environmentally sensitive areas.



#### Typical Subdivision

- 24 Lots
- Minimum Lot Size: 1 to 2 acres
- No Undivided Open Space



#### Conservation Design

- 24 Lots
- Lot Size Range: less than one acre
- 50% Undivided Open Space

## Goal 5. Improve awareness of outdoor passive and active recreation and local and regional tourism opportunities within our parks, trails, riparian and natural areas

Recreational opportunities, ranging from bike paths along the riverfronts to athletic fields nestled within the County's neighborhoods, enliven the Community, and improve the quality of life for all. The rich mix of parks and open space in the Community is accented by a variety of passive and active recreation opportunities that give all residents a reason to visit a park in Allen County.

Local park and recreation agencies not only help raise the standard of living in communities but also spark economic activity that has lasting effects well beyond any initial expenditure in creating jobs and prosperity. The Bureau of Economic Analysis estimates that the outdoor recreation economy represents \$374.3 billion of gross domestic product (GDP)—or 1.8% of the U.S. economy. These benefits stem from the direct expenditures required to improve and maintain parks, employee salaries contributing to the economy, benefits from the promotion of health and wellness among residents, and the increased attractiveness for businesses and employees considering moving to the region. Building upon existing assets, the Community can improve outdoor passive and active recreation opportunities that serve all residents.

### 5.1 Encourage additional outreach and engagement to support local and regional recreation and tourism opportunities

To support tourism and bring greater awareness to the Community's abundance of parkland, trails, riverfront amenities, and natural areas, additional outreach and engagement should be conducted. To facilitate this outreach, the community should strongly consider a promotional campaign. Such a campaign should be organized with the help of both the Fort Wayne and Allen County Parks Departments to promote the variety of open spaces in and around the Community. Several organizations such as Friends of the Parks should be involved to organize park events, advertise in schools, and promote the parks at large community gatherings. A promotion campaign would support local and regional tourism, raise park attendance, and help cultivate a new generation of nature lovers that may not have otherwise visited one of the rich green spaces of Allen County. The Community should:

- 5.1.1.** Increase efforts to promote existing parks, trails, riverfront amenities, and natural areas in the Community as an active and passive outdoor recreation destination for residents and visitors.



# IMPLEMENTATION



## Overview

*All In Allen provides direction for growth and development within Fort Wayne and Allen County and serves as a land use decision making guide for the County and Fort Wayne Plan Commissions; the County and Fort Wayne Boards of Zoning Appeals; the County Commissioners and Fort Wayne Common Council; and the adopting municipality legislative bodies of Grabill, Huntertown, Monroeville, and Woodburn.*

*The Implementation chapter summarizes the strategies and actions included in the Comprehensive Plan, outlining the specific steps needed to work towards achieving All In Allen's goals. It identifies a variety of potential funding sources to support these efforts.*

*This section briefly highlights the next steps that should be undertaken to begin the process of implementation. These include:*

- *Regularly using the Plan throughout the community;*
- *Providing effective guidance for Land Use decision making;*
- *Updating the Plan at regular intervals;*
- *Developing and maintaining partnerships throughout the implementation of the Plan;*
- *Continuing public communication and education regarding the importance and value of long-range planning;*
- *Exploring funding sources and implementation techniques; and*
- *Reviewing the Action Matrix.*

## Chapter Organization

The Implementation chapter articulates a clear approach to enacting All In Allen's bold vision. The chapter breaks down as follows:

Regular Use of the Plan

Implementation Roles

Development  
Decision-Making

Update the Plan Regularly

Maintain Public  
Communication

Explore Funding Sources and  
Implementation Techniques

Action Matrix



## Regular Use of the Plan

To ensure routine use of the **All In Allen Comprehensive Plan**, the Community should:

- Make a digital version of the Plan and associated maps available online.
- Aid the public by explaining the Plan and its relationship to public and private development projects and other proposals, as appropriate.
- Meet with department directors and officials to explain the purpose, importance, and intended benefits of the Plan.
- Provide a Plan “orientation” for new staff, officials, and board members that highlights key takeaways and goals of the Comprehensive Plan that are essential to local policy and initiatives.
- Maintain a list of recommended amendments, issues, or needs that may be the subject of changes, additions, or deletions from the Plan.
- Create implementation groups organized around the implementation roles discussed in this section and establish a regular meeting schedule.

## Implementation Roles

The Comprehensive Plan addresses a wide variety of topics and issue areas and County and City departments are equipped to address many of those topics. While County and City staff include numerous knowledge experts who can directly assist with plan implementation, successful implementation will require a coordinated effort between City and County officials, partner organizations, stakeholders, and residents.

Community officials and staff will need to form implementation groups, tapping partner organizations and local knowledge experts, to champion the Comprehensive Plan, prioritize action steps, and structure the Community's response.

Implementation roles are further delineated in the adjacent diagram, and organized into the following groups.

- **Champions** – Community officials establish the importance of the implementation of the Plan, identify other Fort Wayne, County, and adopting municipality entities to participate in implementation, and approve implementation resources as appropriate.
- **Implementation Advisors** – Topic groups consisting of existing boards and commissions and other established decision-making bodies assist with the prioritization of action steps and provide guidance to the Plan Implementation teams.
- **Plan Implementation** – Topic implementation teams identify ways to incorporate the Plan into ongoing work activities, and do the work of Action Step implementation for the 13 Plan Topic areas (Agriculture, Community Services, Economic Development, Education, Environmental Resources, Food Systems, Housing and Neighborhoods, Infrastructure, Land Use, Mobility, Parks, Public Facilities, and Transportation).
- **Oversight** – Community Development and Department of Planning Services staff, along with possible additional County and Fort Wayne representatives oversee implementation progress.

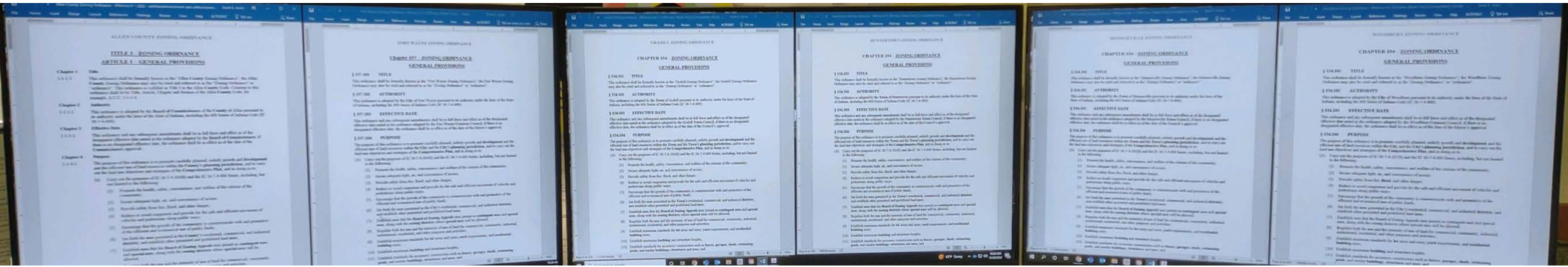
# Comprehensive Plan Implementation Project Roles

CHAMPIONS		
<b>County Commissioners</b> <b>Fort Wayne Mayor</b> <b>Fort Wayne Council</b>	<b>Woodburn Mayor</b> <b>Woodburn City Council</b> <b>County Council</b>	<b>Grabill Town Board</b> <b>Huntertown Town Board</b> <b>Monroeville Town Board</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set forth importance of Plan Implementation</li> <li>• Encourage joint cooperation and communication</li> <li>• Identify department/division head Plan implementation participation</li> <li>• Provide recommendations for Topic Group Partners</li> <li>• Approve implementation resources as needed</li> </ul>		

IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORS
<b>Topic Groups</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide recommendations for Topic Implementation Team Members</li> <li>• Assist with the prioritization of action steps</li> <li>• Provide guidance to applicable Topic Implementation Teams</li> <li>• Oversee the creation of prioritized action matrices for Topic Areas</li> <li>• Use existing groups if possible (Governing Board, Board of Public Works, NIRCC) or convene new groups</li> </ul>

COORDINATION
<b>Community Development   Department of Planning Services</b> <b>Additional County and Fort Wayne Representatives (TBD)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with teams</li> <li>• Develop and provide action matrices templates</li> <li>• Compile the action matrices</li> <li>• Provide updates</li> </ul>

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION			
TOPIC IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS			
<b>Land Use</b> <b>Agriculture</b> <b>Food Systems</b> <b>Parks</b>	<b>Environmental Resources</b> <b>Housing and Neighborhoods</b> <b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Transportation</b> <b>Mobility</b> <b>Public Facilities</b>	<b>Infrastructure</b> <b>Community Services</b> <b>Education</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ways to incorporate the Plan into ongoing division/department/group activities</li> <li>• Action step implementation for Topic Areas</li> <li>• Provide updates and reports to Topic Groups</li> <li>• Create working groups based on technical working group staff plus external topic experts</li> </ul>			



## Implementation Partners

The City and County should collaborate with the adopting municipalities in leading Plan implementation, coordinating administrative actions, reviewing and approving land development applications, and public improvement projects as identified within the Comprehensive Plan. The success of implementation will be reliant on developing and maintaining partnerships with the numerous stakeholders throughout the Community, including public agencies, community groups, municipalities, the local business community, foundations, and the private sector. Given the breadth and scope of the Plan, these organizations will be essential to assist the Community in reaching the established goals and vision for the future of Fort Wayne-Alten County.

Per the strategies of the Plan, the Community should identify specific organizations and agencies to assist with implementation and explore opportunities for potential partnerships and collaborations. Discussions should continue to occur following the adoption of the Plan regarding how the implementation of the goals and strategies can be jointly accomplished with partner agencies. Further, the Community should ensure that property owners and developers plan for and construct improvements that are consistent with the directives of the Plan.

Potential partners in the Plan's implementation are grouped by Community Role, Stakeholder Groups, and Plan Topic areas in the following section.

### County & Municipal

- Fort Wayne City Council
- Allen County Board of Commissioners
- Fort Wayne Plan Commission
- Allen County Plan Commission
- Communities (Grabill, Huntertown, Leo Cedarville, Monroeville, New Haven, Woodburn)

### Regional Partners

- Northeast IN Regional Coordinating Council
- Northeast IN Regional Partnership

### Agriculture

- ACRES Land Trust
- Allen County Purdue Extension
- Farm Bureau
- Soil and Water Conservation Service

### Housing and Neighborhoods

- Allen County Neighborhoods Association
- FW Housing Authority
- Northeast Area Partnership
- Northwest Area Partnership
- Southeast Area Partnership
- Southwest Area Partnership
- Homebuilders
- Apartment Association-focus-business
- UPSTAR (Upstate Alliance of Realtors)
- Developers
- Oakmont Development
- RCI Development LLC
- North Eastern Group

### Economic Development

- Building Contractors Association
- Downtown Improvement District
- Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Fort Wayne
- Greater Fort Wayne Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- New Allen Alliance



- Top Employers
- GM
- BF Goodrich
- Lutheran Health Network
- Sweetwater
- Frontier Communications
- Lincoln Life

### ***Tourism and Culture***

- ARCH
- Arts United
- Fort Wayne Public Art Commission
- Visit Fort Wayne
- Fort Wayne Children's Zoo

### **Transportation and Transit**

- Fort Wayne Trails
- Indiana Air National Guard
- Public Transportation
- Airport Authority
- Citilink
- Active Transportation Coalition
- Indiana Department of Transportation

## **Public Facilities**

### ***Education***

- East Allen County School District
- Fort Wayne Community School District
- Northwest Allen County School District
- Southwest Allen County School District
- Universities (Concordia Theological Seminary, Crossroads Bible College, Indiana Wesleyan University, Ivy Tech, Indiana Tech, Indiana University Fort Wayne, Purdue Fort Wayne, St. Francis)
- AC Regional Water and Sewer District
- Fort Wayne Utilities
- NIPSCO
- Indiana and Michigan Power

### ***Public Health and Safety***

- Allen County Board of Health
- Community Harvest Food Bank
- Crossroads Child and Family Services
- Public health entities (IU Health, Lutheran, Parkview)
- Fort Wayne-Allen County Public Safety
- Fort Wayne Fire Department
- Three Rivers Ambulance Authority

- Allen County Sheriff's Department
- Fire Chief's Association
- Brightpoint
- Easter Seals ARC

### ***Inclusivity***

- African American Leadership Council
- Age Friendly Community Advisory Council
- Fort Wayne Rescue Mission
- Fort Wayne Urban League
- Junior Achievement
- NAACP
- Turnstone

### **Parks & Environment**

- Allen County Parks
- Fort Wayne Parks
- Little River Wetlands Project
- Maumee River Basin Commission
- Saint Joe River Water Initiative
- Jonnie Mae Farm
- Wyss Farms
- Friends of the Park
- Tri-State Watershed

# Development Decision-Making

City and County officials should encourage carefully planned growth by utilizing the Future Growth and Development map, the Generalized Future Land Use map, and associated policies as part of the Community's land use decision-making process. This should include requests to Boards of Zoning Appeals and Plan Commissions.

As part of Comprehensive Plan implementation, Community Development and Department of Planning Services staff should establish a process for regular review and update of the Future Growth and Development and Generalized Future Land Use maps.

## Implementation Through Regulation

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy guide that outlines the necessary actions for the Community to achieve its vision. It is designed to serve as a foundation for decision-making for staff, elected and appointed officials, developers, residents, and other stakeholders. Despite the comprehensive scope of the Plan's vision, it is not regulatory. The Plan itself is advisory and does not have the "regulatory teeth" needed to require new development and redevelopment to align with the Community's vision, or with the goals and strategies conveyed in the Plan.

Land development regulations are the rules that new development and redevelopment must follow, making them an essential tool in Plan implementation. Often, communities will adopt a plan with a clear vision, only to "pull the reins back" on the land development regulations needed to achieve their objectives. The common rationale for this is that stakeholders often feel that such regulations will drive development elsewhere. However, properly drafted land development regulations that align with the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan can remove unnecessary barriers to investment by providing flexibility for potential developments and offsetting the requirements related to design. In this way, land development regulations offer an opportunity to implement the Plan by making preferred development easier.

## Overview of Land Development Regulations

Land development regulations dictate how land can be divided, assembled, built upon, and used and include subdivision, zoning, and sign ordinances.

### Subdivision Ordinances

Subdivision ordinances manage how land is split up or assembled and regulate how public improvements and infrastructure are designed and constructed. They accomplish this by establishing standards for a variety of topics including the minimum length of blocks; how roads need to be connected; where sidewalks are required; where street trees need to be planted; how stormwater is managed; and the amount of land required to be dedicated or activated for parks, schools, and other community facilities.

## Zoning Ordinances

Zoning ordinances are how local governments regulate land use. Indiana Code § 36-7-4 (Chapter 4), Local Planning and Zoning, lists the following purposes for local zoning ordinances:

- Securing adequate light, air, the convenience of access, and safety from fire, flood, and other danger;
- Lessening or avoiding congestion in public ways;
- Promoting the public health, safety, comfort, morals, convenience, and general welfare;
- Otherwise accomplishing the purposes of Chapter 4 of the Indiana Code.

There are several ways to apply zoning and development regulations to a community, including but not limited to those detailed below.

- **Euclidean Zoning.** Euclidean zoning is the traditional approach to zoning that divides a community into zoning districts based on the types of uses that are desirable in different areas and establishes rules for how land in each district can be developed and used. Euclidean zoning districts keep high-intensity uses that may impact surrounding properties, like manufacturing, away from less intense uses, like homes and schools. Each district establishes different rules that limit development activity, including which use types are allowed and how they are permitted as well as building size, where on a lot a building can be located, how much open space must be left over, and how much parking has to be provided.

The City of Fort Wayne and Allen County Zoning Ordinances are primarily Euclidean. Traditional land use controls are still some of the most powerful tools available to municipalities and will be key to implementing several key elements of All In Allen.

For example, compatible infill development and redevelopment can be encouraged through specialized districts with rules for landscaping and buffering as well as restrictions on the mix of uses in defined areas.

- **Form-Based Zoning.** Form-based zoning also divides a community into zoning districts, however, unlike Euclidean zoning, form-based zoning districts are based on the types of urban form and development patterns that are desirable in different areas. The foundation of form-based zoning districts in many communities is the “rural to urban transect,” which defines a series of areas that transition from rural areas utilized for agriculture to dense downtowns and urban cores. Form-based zoning primarily regulates what development looks like and secondarily how development is utilized. This is accomplished by establishing standards for different building types and how building façades relate to the public realm. Form-based zoning has not been heavily used in the Community but could be an affective tool if strategically deployed in target areas like town centers or mixed-use corridors where placemaking is emphasized.
- **Incentive-Based Zoning.** Incentive-based zoning is a type of Euclidean zoning that offers flexibility in standards and requirements in exchange for items that help a community reach its goals such as the provision of affordable housing, preservation of open space, and environmental features. Increased density, height, or lot coverage are some of the most common types of incentives offered along with relief from requirements for parking and other development standards as detailed below.

The Allen County and Fort Wayne Zoning Ordinances currently employ incentive based standards for parking. Other potential approaches could include incentives for affordable housing in new developments or improvements to nearby Right-of-ways in exchange for extra floor area allowances.

- **Overlay Zoning.** Overlay zoning is used in concert with Euclidean and form-based zoning to establish unique standards for specific areas that are otherwise governed by multiple zoning districts such as Downtowns, commercial corridors, areas surrounding transit stops, and historic neighborhoods. In some circumstances, the overlay zoning district applies additional standards on top of the standards of the base zoning district, while in other circumstances the overlay zoning district standards supersede or replace the standards of the base zoning district. The standards established in overlay zoning districts often control building architecture and design, allowed density and development patterns, and other topics that make the area governed by the overlay district unique. The City of Fort Wayne and Allen County Zoning Ordinances have overlay zones surrounding the Fort Wayne International and Smith Field Airports. Floodplain zones and Local Historic District are also an example of Overlay Zones within the City and County. Overlay zoning could be a powerful tool to implement the open space goals of the Plan.

- **Development Standards.** Development standards, often called standards of general applicability, are an integral component of Euclidean zoning. They include regulations that are relevant for all uses throughout zoning districts, such as off-street parking and loading, landscaping, fences, and buffer yards. The Community currently utilizes use specific provisions and they will be important to implementing multiple plan goals, such as efforts beautification, placemaking and universal design.
- **Use Specific Provisions.** Use-specific standards are another integral component of Euclidean zoning. They include detailed regulations applicable to specific uses such as accessory dwellings, home occupations, food trucks, drive-throughs, or outdoor storage, regardless of the district in which they are located. The Community currently utilizes use specific provisions and they will be important to implementing plan goals, including initiatives related to housing, neighborhoods and commercial districts.
- **Planned Unit Development.** Planned unit development (PUD) is a development review and approval procedure that uses site development allowances for greater flexibility from underlying regulations in siting and design. Through the planned unit development process, a developer can request deviations from standards such as lot area, building height, a mix of uses, and any other requirement of a base or overlay zoning district in exchange for tangible benefits to the development and community such as the preservation of open space, activation of public gathering spaces, higher quality architecture and design, and enhanced landscape. The City and County do not currently have provisions for Planned Unit Development in their ordinances. If implemented, PUD could be an effective tool in guiding future greenfield development in the community.

### ***Unified Development Ordinances***

Unified development ordinances (UDOs) bring together all land development regulations into one section of a municipal code including subdivision, zoning, and sign ordinances. A UDO streamlines regulations and review and approval processes, making them easier to use, administer, and enforce. The zoning ordinances for Fort Wayne and Allen County are functionally UDOs but do not title the ordinances as a “UDO.”

### ***Sign Ordinances***

Sign ordinances manage the type, size, and location of permanent and temporary signs in a community. Where a sign ordinance is located within a municipal code varies community by community, but can often be found in the zoning ordinance, building ordinance, business ordinance, or as a standalone title. In 2016, the Supreme Court of the United States decided in the *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* case that impacted the majority of sign ordinances throughout the country, Fort Wayne and Allen County included. This decision clarified that sign copy is protected speech under the first amendment and held that signs cannot be treated differently based on their communicative content. If a sign regulation can only be enforced by reading what the sign says, then that regulation is a violation of the first amendment. For example, signs that communities traditionally have established specific regulations for, such as real estate signs or political campaign signs, are no longer valid.

### **Ensuring Usability of the Land Development Regulations**

Every Fort Wayne and Allen County resident, business owner, or developer should be able to navigate and understand the zoning codes without the assistance of an attorney or member of staff. To encourage development, the Community’s zoning codes should be easy to use and understand. Additionally, they should align with the Generalized Future Land Use map and be easy to navigate during the development approval process.

### **Alignment with the Generalized Future Land Use and Future Growth and Development Maps**

The Plan’s Generalized Future Land Use and Future Growth and Development maps identify the preferred generalized land uses and illustrate how the Community envisions development and growth transitioning in the coming decades. Although the Generalized Future Land Use and Future Growth and Development maps are not regulatory, they should be used to guide the Community when considering development proposals or rezoning requests. To ensure that new development and redevelopment are consistent with the Generalized Future Land Use and Future Growth and Development maps and with the vision and goals of this Plan, the Community should consider conducting a zoning alignment and proactively rezoning key areas to ensure that the type of development that is envisioned for those areas is accommodated.

### ***Approval Processes***

The development approval process is as much a factor in attracting local investment as actual development regulations. The Allen County Department of Planning Services has recently worked to review current procedures and identify barriers that create time delay or unpredictability in the process. The Community should continue to explore ways to remove barriers through process and technology improvements. The Community should also revisit the administrative review and approval processes for straightforward approvals such as minor adjustments to bulk and dimensional standards.

## Land Use Compatibility Matrix

The Land Use Compatibility Matrix offers recommended zoning updates related to strategies outlined in the Fort Wayne and Allen County Comprehensive Plan. This table provides a tool to identify and guide amendments to the Fort Wayne and Allen County Zoning Ordinances that will enable the Community to begin implementing the Plan.

•	Compatible in or adjacent to this Generalized Future Land Use category
I	Potentially compatible in or adjacent to this Generalized Future Land Use Category with additional mitigation/consideration (i.e. written commitments, building design, enhanced landscaping, enhanced access and connectivity such as trails/sidewalks, shared access points/roads, street interconnections, Board of Zoning Appeals conditions of approval)
D	The uses in the proposed zoning district should generally be discouraged in or adjacent to this land use category
E	Encourage high impact economic development projects with significant levels of investment or substantial job creation with above average wages.

Proposed Zoning District Board of Zoning Appeals Request	Rural Agricultural	Rural Residential	Suburban Neighborhood	Traditional Neighborhood	Future Complete Neighborhood	Mixed Residential	Suburban Corridor	Urban Corridor	Neighborhood Commercial	Community Commercial	Regional Commercial	Downtown	Town Center	Business and Office Park	Institutional	Production Center	Economic Development Transitional Areas	Open Space	Airport	Utility		
	<b>A1/Agricultural</b>	•	•																•	•	•	<b>A1</b>
<b>A3/Estates</b>	•	•	•	•														•		•	<b>A3</b>	
<b>AR/Low Intensity Residential</b>	•	•																•	•	•	<b>AR</b>	
<b>R1/Single Family Residential</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	D		•		•	<b>R1</b>	
<b>R2/Two Family Residential</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	D		•		•	<b>R2</b>	
<b>R3/Multiple Family Residential</b>				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•		•	<b>R3</b>	
<b>MHS/Manufactured Home Subdivision</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	D		•		•	<b>MHS</b>	
<b>MHP/Manufactured Home Park</b>						•								•	•			•		•	<b>MHP</b>	
<b>RP/Planned Residential</b>				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•		•	<b>RP</b>	
<b>C1/Professional Office and Personal Services</b>			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	<b>C1</b>	
<b>C2/Limited Commercial</b>				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•					•	<b>C2</b>	
<b>NC/Neighborhood Center</b>						•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•					•	<b>NC</b>	
<b>SC/Shopping Center</b>									•	•	•	•	•	•	•					•	<b>SC</b>	
<b>C3/General Commercial</b>	D	D								•	•			•	•					•	<b>C3</b>	
<b>C4/Intensive Commercial</b>	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	•	•	D	D		D					•	<b>C4</b>	
<b>UC/Urban Corridor</b>	D	D		•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•		•	<b>UC</b>	
<b>BTI/Business, Technology, and Industrial Park</b>		E		E						•	•			•	•	•		E			•	<b>BTI</b>
<b>I1/Limited Industrial</b>		E		E						•	•			•	•	•		E			•	<b>I1</b>
<b>I2/General Industrial</b>		E		E												•		E			•	<b>I2</b>
<b>I3/Intensive Industrial</b>		E		E	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D			•		E			•	<b>I3</b>

## Update the Plan Regularly

Noting the Community's dedication to thoughtful planning, the Comprehensive Plan should not exist as a static document, rather it should be the center of a continuous planning process. Following the adoption of the Plan, the community will continue to move forward, change, and evolve. As such, the Plan should be reviewed and updated regularly to respond to these changes, addressing shifts in community aspirations, increasing growth pressures, changing market and demographic conditions, as well as new and unexpected issues as they arise. It is important to emphasize that the Comprehensive Plan is not a static document. If community attitudes change or new issues arise which are beyond the scope of the current Plan, the Plan should be revised and updated accordingly.

The Comprehensive Plan should be considered in the preparation of the annual budget and capital improvement program. In this manner, strategies or changes relating to capital improvements or other programs can be considered as part of the upcoming commitments for the fiscal year. In turn, development regulations may need to be amended to reflect the intent of any modifications most accurately to the Comprehensive Plan. Routine examination of the Plan will help ensure that the planning program remains relevant to community needs and aspirations.

## Maintain Public Communication

The Comprehensive Plan was supported by an outreach process intended to gather public input and foster a sense of stewardship and excitement for the Plan. Through outreach events, public workshops, the project website, online surveys, interactive mapping tools, and other media, residents, and stakeholders were able to get involved and stay informed of the Plan's development. This public participation throughout the process helped communicate the importance of long-range planning and provide individuals with a better understanding of ongoing efforts to improve their community and the overall quality of life in Fort Wayne-Allen County.

The outreach process should serve as a foundation for continued communication with members of the public throughout the implementation process. The Community should ensure that strategies and the overall vision for the City of Fort Wayne, Allen County, and the adopting municipalities, as defined within the Plan, are conveyed to the entire community. The Community should maintain avenues by which residents and stakeholders can communicate with staff and receive information about planning and development efforts. This includes methods for residents to voice questions and concerns that are then reviewed and addressed promptly.



# Explore Funding Sources and Implementation Techniques

Many of the projects and improvements called for in the Comprehensive Plan can be implemented through administrative and policy decisions or traditionally funded state or local programs. However, other projects may require special technical and/or financial assistance.

The Community should continue to explore and consider the wide range of local, state, and federal resources and programs that may be available to assist in the implementation of planning strategies. For example, initiatives related to economic development, neighborhood stabilization and housing, or sustainability and environment can receive assistance from grant programs established for specific categories of actions or projects.

A description of potential funding sources is summarized below. The list illustrates the variety of tools at the disposal of County and municipal staff to implement plan recommendations. Staff are very knowledgeable in grant sources and funding mechanisms. The Community should continue to research and monitor grants, funding agencies, and programs to identify new opportunities as they become available, or to update this list as sources change.

## Economic Development Tools

The Community can use a variety of incentive programs to help the community achieve its goals. These incentives can be used to help attract new development to the area, to help improve existing development, and to encourage business owners to stay in the community and continue to help the local economy thrive. While this list of incentive programs is not exhaustive, it is representative of the range of options that are available to help the Community achieve its goals.

### Federal Tools

#### *New Market Tax Credits*

The New Market Tax Credit Program is an initiative of the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, a department of the U.S. Treasury, in support of its mission to expand the capacity of financial institutions to provide capital, credit, and financial services in underserved markets. Taxpayers will receive a Federal Tax Credit for making qualified equity investments. The program means access to loans lower than the market rate, subordinated debt, and enhanced equity arrangements. Fort Wayne supports the program and eligible applicants are based location in a low-income community, which is any population census tract in which at least 20% of its population is at poverty level, or median family income is at or below 80% of the area median family income.

## State Tools

### *Tax Increment Financing*

Tax Increment Finance (TIF) utilizes future property tax revenues generated within a designated area or district to pay for improvements and incentivize further reinvestment. As the Assessed Value (AV) of properties within a TIF District increases, the incremental growth in property tax over the base year that the TIF was established is invested in the area. Local officials may then issue bonds or undertake other financial obligations based on the growth in new tax revenue within the district.

Per the Indiana Gateway for Government Units, the Community and its partners have used TIF to stimulate investment and 71 TIFs have been created as of April 2022. This equates to 2,551 parcels designated as TIF districts, which grossed an assessed value of \$1.9 billion. The TIF districts have generated \$20 million in revenue. Some examples of developments that have been made possible through TIF districts include the Fort Wayne Riverfront, Electric Works in Fort Wayne, General Motors and the Parkview Regional Medical Center in Allen County.

The maximum life of a TIF district in the State of Indiana is 25 years. Over the life of a TIF district, the taxing bodies present within the district receive the same amount of tax revenue that was generated in the base year in which the TIF was established. Some provisions allow for schools to receive additional revenue. In Indiana, TIF Districts can be designated as either redevelopment areas or economic development areas, depending on factors related to alleviating blight or creating jobs and new investment.



As an economic development tool, TIF is well-suited to fund efforts to enhance Downtown Fort Wayne to suburban neighborhoods; smaller rural communities of Grabill, Huntertown, Monroeville, and Woodburn along with other incorporated and unincorporated communities; and the open countryside of Allen County. TIF funds can be used for infrastructure, public improvements, land assemblage, and to offset the cost of development—including, but not limited to, engineering, stormwater management, and other site-related issues. Several of the Comprehensive Plan’s strategies could be funded through TIF. For example, the community could utilize TIF district funds to:

- Facilitate site assembly of catalyst sites;
- Implement further streetscape enhancements in the downtown;
- Construct new trails and recreational amenities; or
- Fund a site improvement grant to encourage landscaping and screening improvements.

### ***Business Improvement District***

A municipality may designate, after public hearings, an area of the municipality as a Business Improvement District (BID). While Fort Wayne and Allen County currently do not have any BIDs in place, the Southeast Fort Wayne Plan calls for BIDs to be used in the area. The Plan recommends the City of Fort Wayne consider implementing an effective BID for managing commercial corridors or shopping centers and the BID should seek to improve common area maintenance, hire shared security services, and raise funds for street improvements including street lighting, way-finding, site furnishings, and other shared amenities.

While business district designation does not provide a funding source outside of BID fees, it empowers a municipality to conduct a business district development or redevelopment plan through the following actions:

- Approve all development and redevelopment proposals;
- Acquire, manage, convey, or otherwise dispose of real and personal property acquired under the provisions of a development or redevelopment plan;
- Apply for and accept capital grants and loans for business district development and redevelopment;
- Borrow funds as it may be deemed necessary for business district development and redevelopment;
- Sell, lease, trade, or improve property that may be acquired in connection with business district development and redevelopment plans;
- Expend public funds as necessary for the planning, execution, and implementation of the business district plans;
- Establish by ordinance or resolution procedures for the planning, execution, and implementation of business district plans; and
- Create a Business District Development and Redevelopment Commission to function as an agent for the municipality for business district development and redevelopment.



### ***Economic Improvement District***

An Economic Improvement District (EID) is a program enabled by Indiana Code 36-7-22 that is designed to allow property owners in a given area to collect a fee, pool that money, and then use it to fund programs that might otherwise not happen through local government action. Because the fees in an EID are assessed equally and in a formal process, the possibility that some businesses will carry more financial burden for improvements than others are eliminated. While Fort Wayne and Allen County have not implemented EIDs, the Community should consider establishing a Downtown Fort Wayne EID to facilitate various improvements to the district such as:

- Capital improvements for streetscaping and other physical improvements like lighting, street furniture, and landscape installation and maintenance;
- A Downtown marketing and branding campaign;
- Economic development activities that assist new and existing local businesses in a manner that is beneficial to the larger downtown district;
- Joint maintenance services such as street and sidewalk maintenance, snow removal, trash collection, and other services;
- Parking management and wayfinding program; or
- On-site security where necessary.

### ***Community Revitalization Enhancement District***

The Community Revitalization Enhancement District (CRED) tax credit is a state enabled legislative program that entitles a taxpayer to a 25% credit against the taxpayer's state and local tax liability for a taxable year if the taxpayer makes a qualified investment in that year. The purpose of CRED is to allow applicants to make investments in the redevelopment or rehabilitation of properties where there are financial hardships, whether that be through architectural and engineering fees, construction management and demolition costs, or environmental remediation costs. Fort Wayne has both the Downtown CRED and the Southtown CRED, which have helped construct, reconstruct, and repair properties in these areas.

### ***Summit City Entrepreneur and Enterprise District***

Effective January 1, 2018, the Fort Wayne Urban Enterprise Zone footprint has been expanded by 75% to almost seven square miles. The expansion includes many of the City's corridors. With the new boundaries, this state enabled legislative program was renamed the Summit City Entrepreneur and Enterprise District (SEED). Aside from the City of Fort Wayne's changes to enlarge the district, the State of Indiana expanded the available manufacturing incentives to include investments in innovation, technology, and logistics. SEED businesses may be eligible for Real Estate and Personal Property tax deductions in addition to supporting new startup efforts and emerging entrepreneurs.

### ***Economic Development for a Growing Economy***

The Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) Tax Credit is a program enabled by the Indiana Legislature (IC 6-3.1-13) and provides an incentive to businesses to support job creation and capital investment and to improve the standard of living for Indiana residents. The Community can leverage EDGE as new and existing businesses introduce new jobs and provide opportunities for incoming and existing Fort Wayne-Allen County residents. EDGE will not only benefit residents by providing new options for employment but also strengthen the Community's local economy.

### ***Industrial Development Grant Fund***

The Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) provides financial support for infrastructure improvements for projects creating jobs and generating capital investment in Indiana through the Industrial Development Grant Fund (IDGF). This grant provides money to local governments for infrastructure projects associated with an expansion of an existing Indiana company or the location of a new facility in Indiana. State funding through the IDGF program must be matched by a combination of local government and company financial support. Approval is based on the number and quality of jobs being created, the community's economic need, a local match of funding, and capital investment being made by the company. Typically, this grant does not exceed 50% of project costs. This may include construction of airports, airport facilities, and tourist attractions; construction, extension or completion of sanitary sewer lines, storm sewers and other related drainage facilities; waterlines, roads and streets, sidewalks, rail spurs and sidings; fiber-optic and other IT infrastructure; leasing, purchase, construction, or repair of real and personal property; and the preparation of surveys, plans and specifications for the construction of publicly owned and operated facilities, utilities, and services.

### ***Brownfield Programs***

A brownfield is a property where redevelopment is complicated due to actual or potential environmental contamination. The Indiana Brownfield Program encourages and assists investors in the redevelopment of brownfield properties by helping communities through educational, financial, technical, and legal assistance to identify and mitigate environmental barriers that impede local economic growth. The Indiana Brownfield Program works in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other Indiana agencies to assist communities in making productive use of their brownfield properties. The redevelopment of brownfields benefits communities by rejuvenating neighborhoods, increasing the tax base, and mitigating threats to human health and the environment.

Additionally, Fort Wayne offers the CEDIT Brownfield Grant, which includes both assessments (environmental testing) and remediation, or the clean-up of contamination. Grants for assessments reimburse 80% of all costs for any environmental Remediation grants reimburse 100% of all costs for remediation work, not to exceed \$30,000. One example of a brownfield site that has been redeveloped using the CEDIT Brownfield Grant includes the vacant McMahan Tire site on Jefferson Boulevard, which has been converted into a Starbucks.

### ***Indiana Grown***

Less than 10% of the food consumed by Indiana residents is locally-sourced. Increasing demand for local products prompted the Indiana State Department of Agriculture to create Indiana Grown, a statewide branding initiative. The initiative aims to form a clearer designation of which products truly come from Indiana and help consumers easily identify and buy these products. Members are permitted to use the Indiana Grown logo to promote their products. The three components of the initiative include:

- Helping Indiana farmers and producers have a greater market for their products.
- Supporting Indiana processors in their effort to process more Indiana Grown products.
- Educating consumers on the importance of buying Indiana Grown products.

### ***Site Certified Program***

The Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) Site Certified Program is structured to reduce the potential costs of site development for businesses and enhance the marketability of designated sites.

The Site Certified Program certifies sites that are ready for economic development. Communities of any size can apply for designation of Silver, Gold, or Prime tiers of readiness, based on specific site criteria such as acreage, location, and utility capacity. The Site Certified Program has three main goals:

- To mitigate risks;
- To provide a marketing tool for sites; and
- To illustrate the community's commitment to economic development.

The Community should utilize the Site Certified Program in marketing sites available for industrial development and other employment-related uses such as corporate campuses and research and development parks.

### ***OCRA Planning Grant***

The State of Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) division provides planning grants to aid communities to shape their vision for economic development and encourage planning for long-term community development. Planning Grants are funded with federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

### ***Indiana Economic Development Corporation Programs***

Several Indiana Economic Development Corporation programs can be used to incentivize the development or relocation of business and industry within the Community. A taxpayer is typically not eligible for more than one tax credit for the same project.

Among these programs are:

- Certified Technology Parks
- Broadband Ready Communities
- Industrial Recovery Tax Credit (DINO)
- Hoosier Business Investment Tax Credit (HBI)
- Enterprise Zone Investment Cost Credit
- Redevelopment Tax Credit (RTC);
- Skills Enhancement Fund (SEF)
- Venture Capital Investment Tax Credit (VCI).

### **Local Tools**

#### ***Commercial Façade Grant***

Fort Wayne's Commercial Façade Grant (CFG) program is intended to help businesses transform their buildings' facades and revitalize the City's corridors. The purpose is to improve the appearance of their building and the surrounding sites. By visually enhancing the exterior of buildings, businesses increase their property values, maintain their marketability, and strengthen Fort Wayne's commercial activity. The City's CFG program provides a 50% matching grant for eligible businesses and businesses who have participated in the program including the Colony Shops of Waynedale, Curly's Village Inn, and ARCH's Merchant Huxford House. The City's program compliments similar programs offered by Hometown and the New Allen Alliance.



### ***Impact Fees***

Impact fees are imposed on new development to offset the capital costs of maintenance, construction, or expansion of infrastructure such as roads, parks, sewers, etc. needed to serve development. Impact fees provide additional funds for capital improvements rather than imposing new taxes in an area. This is especially beneficial in growing communities. According to Indiana State Law, municipalities can enforce an impact fee on developers during the development approval process by adopting an Impact Fee Ordinance. An impact fee ordinance must include a schedule stipulating the fees that may be imposed for each type of infrastructure and a formula stating how these fees are derived.

The Community currently has an impact fee ordinance established to fund the acquisition and improvement of parkland throughout the community. The impact fee is beneficial because future residents pay for the increased demand for park services, and current residents do not end up bearing the burden of expansion due to population growth. The Community should continue to evaluate the impact fee ordinance, alter it where appropriate, and extend the ordinance before its expiration. During this process, the Community should consider other improvements that could be funded through the impact fee ordinance.

### ***Tax Abatement***

Tax abatement is a tool used by local governments to attract private investment and job creation by exempting taxes on all or a portion of the increased assessed value resulting from new investment. Tax abatement is based on an applicant's ability to achieve development goals such as jobs and new investments. Tax abatement is one of the most commonly used local financial incentives in Indiana.

The Fort Wayne and County administered Tax Abatement Program offered incentives to over 360 companies and allows the investment in the construction of new structures and/or additions or repairs to existing structures (source: Allen County Auditor, 2021-2022 Abatements). The tax deductions phase in the company's property taxes over time, which helps to ease the costs associated with start-up business expansions and investments in property. In Allen County, the phase-in period ranges from three to ten years.

### ***Incubator Programs***

Business incubators provide low-cost space and specialized support services to small companies. Such services might include administrative consulting, access to office equipment and training, and assistance in accessing credit. Incubators are typically owned by public entities such as municipalities or economic development agencies who then subsidize rents and services with grants. In addition to job creation and generating activity, the goal is to have startup businesses grow and relocate to larger spaces within the Community.

Fort Wayne's 40,400 square foot business incubator, the Northeast Indiana Innovation Center (NIIC) collaborates and networks with emerging companies, startup professionals, educational partners, and experienced mentors. It is one of the top-ranked business incubators in the country and offers a variety of resources for professionals in various fields. The NIIC should be used as a model for future business incubators in the Community and residents and local companies should be encouraged to seek professional opportunities and resources in the NIIC.



### ***Land Banking***

Allen County began its land banking program in 2009 with the infusion of \$2.5 million in County funds into the Allen County Redevelopment Commission's capital fund for purchasing property and making it shovel-ready. Guidelines were created that established criteria for the purchase of and sale of property as well as the expenditure of capital funds to prepare land for development.

### ***Foundation and Specialized Grants***

The successful implementation of the Plan requires the realization of projects that range in scale and scope. One type of funding source that becomes increasingly significant when issue-specific projects or programs (tourism, performing arts, historic preservation, small business assistance, etc.) are considered is foundation grants. The Community should continue to dedicate resources to monitoring and exploring the foundation grant as a funding tool.

### ***Economic Development Partner Organizations***

- **Greater Fort Wayne Inc.** (GFW) is the chamber of commerce and economic development organization for the Community. GFW focuses on supporting local businesses, attracting new business, and improving the Community's quality of place to grow jobs, wages, and the economy.
- The **New Allen Alliance** is an all-volunteer organization that works toward improving growth and economic stability, and to help give community organizations a stronger voice in Allen County. The NewAllen Alliance collaborates with community organizations and stakeholders including Allen County Commissioners, Allen County Board of Commissioners, East Allen County Schools, Greater Fort Wayne, Inc., Northeast Indiana Regional Chamber, and Ivy Tech Community College. With these organizations and stakeholders, the NewAllen Alliance helps to support and create a unified voice for the rural areas of Allen County. Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership
- The **Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership** builds, markets, and sells economic opportunities in the 11 counties of Northeast Indiana to increase business investment. The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership supports businesses by providing confidential project management, planning customized site tours, creating demographics and market reports, and identifying all available resources for businesses. Additionally, the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership developed programs to benefit businesses such as identifying certified sites and locating prime locations for specific industries.

## Indiana Economic Development Corporation Programs

Many communities use Tax Increment Financing (as appropriate) to fund the startup and/or operation of a Community Development Corporation (CDC) that oversees a range of redevelopment activities for a specific geographic area, particularly commercial areas, and central business districts. CDCs are often funded through public-private partnerships with financial commitments from local financial institutions or businesses and a public funding source such as TIF to provide for both operating expenses and programs. There are several existing CDCs in the Community, including The Community Development Corporation of Northeast Indiana, the Woodburn Community Association, the West Central Neighborhood Association, the Leo-Cedarville Foundation, and others. These CDCs have funded a variety of programs, such as the SBA 504 Loan program, which helps provide local businesses with the permanent financing needed to acquire, renovate or expand an owner occupied commercial facility or purchase fixed assets with a useful life of at least 10 years. The results of this effort, among others, have resulted in tangible improvements for the Community that should be built upon.

## CDC Loan Program

An example of a distinctive CDC activity is the facilitation or administration of a revolving loan fund, or a community lending pool supported by commitments from local financial institutions to provide low-interest/low-cost loans. Such funds typically target both new and expanding businesses for such redevelopment activities as interior improvements, façade, and exterior enhancements, building additions, site improvements, etc. Some state and federal small business assistance programs are also structured to work in combination with CDC-administered loan programs. Fort Wayne and Allen County sponsor the Community Development Corporation of Northeast Indiana (CDC), which is a 501c(3) nonprofit business development organization. The primary object of this organization is to promote the growth and development of small commercial and industrial for-profit businesses in Indiana using the revolving loan fund model.



## Public Facilities and Infrastructure

### The Septic Elimination Program

The Septic Elimination Program was formed by the Fort Wayne City Utilities department in 2009 to eliminate failing septic systems in Fort Wayne by making connections to public sanitary sewer systems available for these properties. Hundreds of Fort Wayne homes are served by private septic systems. Septic systems have a limited life and eventually fail if not maintained properly. While City Utilities converts many neighborhoods on septic systems to public sanitary sewer service, neighborhoods with higher septic system failure rates are given priority.

### Federal Infrastructure Funding

According to the Congressional Budget Office, 60% of state and local investment in infrastructure is financed using tools that impose costs on the federal government: tax-exempt bonds, tax credit bonds, state banks, and direct federal credit programs. In addition to these, Federal-aid funding programs are set up to help with major projects, gap funding situations, as well as emergency conditions.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provides funding for a variety of infrastructure projects including transportation (vehicular, transit, freight/rail, airports), broadband, water infrastructure, water infrastructure, as well as legacy pollution clean-up. Environmental resiliency and green infrastructure also have funding through this public law.

### Broadband

The IIJA includes approximately \$65 billion dollars to help ensure Americans have access to reliable and affordable broadband. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) will implement six separate programs aimed to address the broadband needs of the nation. The first three programs include:

- Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program;
- Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program;
- State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program.

### State Revolving Funds

Congress has directed that most Infrastructure Act funding for water projects will be channeled through state revolving loan fund (SRF) programs:

- Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF): The DWSRF is a financial assistance program to help water systems and states to achieve the health protection objectives of the Safe Drinking Water Act. DWSRFs fund a wide range of drinking water infrastructure projects. Six categories of projects are eligible to receive DWSRF assistance. These categories include treatment, transmission and distribution, Source, Storage, and Consolidation. The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program: CWSRF is a federal-state partnership that provides communities low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects.

### Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program

This program provides funding for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage to households and businesses in eligible rural areas. Funds may be used to finance the acquisition, construction or improvement of drinking water sourcing, treatment, storage and distribution; sewer collection, transmission, treatment and disposal; municipal solid waste collection, disposal and closure; as well as storm water collection, transmission and disposal. Eligibility includes public entities and nonprofit corporations in rural areas may be eligible. They also include cities, towns or unincorporated areas with a population of less than 10,000 people. Serves populations of 10,000 or less except for the Loan Guarantee Program, which has an eligible population up to 50,000 people.

### Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants (ECWAG)

Provides 100% grant funds for project costs to rural communities at two levels: A maximum grant of \$1,000,000 to communities with a significant decline in quantity or quality of drinking water due to an emergency and a maximum grant of \$150,000 to make emergency repairs and replacement of facilities on existing systems. These grants cover projects to obtain or maintain adequate quantities of water that meet the standards set by the Safe Drinking Water Act. Qualifying entities include cities, towns or unincorporated areas with a population of less than 10,000 people. These cities must also have a median household income of no more than 100% of a state's non-metropolitan median household income.



## Transportation Funding Sources

This section outlines potential eligibility for pedestrian and bicycle projects under the U.S. Department of Transportation surface transportation funding programs as well as state-level programs in Indiana. Project sponsors should fully integrate nonmotorized accommodation into surface transportation projects.

### Thriving Communities Program:

In a partnership with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), this program provides technical assistance and capacity building resources to improve communities through transportation projects. The partnership aims to improve the coordination between housing and transportation to advance access to opportunity, specifically aimed at disadvantaged communities.

### RAISE

Formerly BUILD and TIGER, Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity discretionary grants (RAISE) aims to build and repair critical pieces of freight and passenger transportation networks. While the program is subject to annual appropriations, Congress has dedicated \$9.9B for thirteen rounds of National Infrastructure investments.

### TIFIA

Program helps only in the form of secured loans, loan guarantees, or standby lines of credit, but can be combined with other grant sources, subject to total Federal assistance limitations.

### HSIP Projects

These projects must be consistent with a State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan and either (1) correct or improve a hazardous road location or feature, or (2) address a highway safety problem.

### NHPP Projects

These projects must benefit National Highway System (NHS) corridors.

### Next Level Trails Program

As part of an effort to expand the State's Visionary Trail System, this program remains a popular alternative to other State trail grant opportunities. While it is subject to appropriation from the Indiana Legislature, there are still close to \$70M in funds available after the first three rounds.

### Bicycle Indiana

An organization that Promotes, Educates, and Advocates for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure around Indiana. This group works specifically with the State Department Health and the Health By Design organization to bring together resources aimed at making Indiana a bicycle-friendly state as well as making safe roadways for everyone.

### Indiana Trails Program

Formerly the Recreation Trails Program Grant (RTP): Administered through the Department of Natural Resources Division of Outdoor Recreation, this program provides funds to municipalities and not-for-profit agencies focused on providing public outdoor recreation opportunities to communities. Eligible projects include Construction of trails, acquisition of easement or property for trails, development of trailheads and other support facilities (parking, water fountains, benches, signage, etc.), and construction of bridges, boardwalks, and crossings. Facilities must be universally designed to accommodate all people. The ITP will provide a maximum of 80% reimbursement for eligible projects. At the time of application, the applicant must have at least 20% of the total project cost available. Applicants may request a minimum of \$100,000 and maximum of \$400,000 in grant assistance.

## Indiana Trails Fund

The Indiana Trails Fund (ITF) is an Indiana corporation, incorporated in 1994, for the purpose of providing a means of acquiring land and holding funds for trail development.

## Greenways Foundation

The Greenways Foundation is a charitable trust working to promote the growth, enhancement, and use of Indiana greenways. To accomplish that, they solicit donations and make grants in support of greenway development, enhancement, and operation. The Board of Directors meets monthly and has a total of nine Directors around the state. Partnerships include the National Park Service, the Indiana Department of National Resources, Health By Design, and the Indiana Tourism Association.

## Transportation Alternatives Program

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), enacted in 2015, combines Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and the Recreational Trails Program (previously eligible under the expired Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)) under a new program entitled Transportation Alternatives

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), enacted in 2012, included provisions to address challenges facing the U.S. transportation system, including improving safety, maintaining infrastructure conditions, reducing traffic congestion, improving the efficiency of the system and freight movement, protecting the environment, and reducing delays in project delivery. The FAST Act builds on changes made by MAP-21.

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding primarily serves to fund non-motorized transportation modes. Project examples include:

- Sidewalks
- On-street or off-street bicycle infrastructure
- Pedestrian and bicycle signals
- Maintenance or construction of recreational trail or trailhead facilities
- Traffic calming techniques
- Lighting and other infrastructure that improves bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Safe Routes to School programming (Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Evaluation).

## Public Mass Transportation Fund

The Indiana State Legislature established the Public Mass Transportation Fund to promote and develop transportation in Indiana. The funds are allocated to public transit systems on a performance-based formula. Eligible recipients are defined as any transit system that receives federal funds under the Federal Transit Act and provides public transportation in Indiana. Activities that are eligible to receive funding include operating project grants, capital project grants, and calendar year funding.

## Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) program focuses on projects that provide solutions to regional congestion and air quality problems. Eligible project types include transit improvements, bus purchases, traffic flow improvements like roundabouts, commuter parking lots, trails, bicycle/pedestrian projects, and projects that result in emissions reductions. The Federal share for most CMAQ projects has been 80% of project costs.

## Surface Transportation Block Grant

Formerly known as the Surface Transportation Program, the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds can be used by states and localities for any type of transportation project to preserve and improve the conditions and performance of any federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel projects on any public road, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects.

## Highway Safety Improvement Program

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds can only be used for projects and plans that improve the safety of the transportation network, including roundabouts, signage projects, and safety studies.



## Parks and Open Space Funding Sources

### Reconnecting Communities Program

Created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), funds for the FY 2022 Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP) are to be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that reconnect communities by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including to mobility, access, or economic development. The variety of transformative solutions to knit communities back together can include: high-quality public transportation, infrastructure removal, pedestrian walkways and overpasses, capping over highways, linear parks and trail connectors, roadway redesigns and complete streets conversions, and main street revitalization.

Up to \$195 million is available to for competitive grants through the RCP Program in FY 2022 (\$50 million is dedicated to planning grants and \$145 million is dedicated to capital construction grants). Eligible applicants for RCP planning grants are states, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Federally recognized Tribal Governments, units of local government, and nonprofit organizations. Eligible applicants for RCP capital construction grants are owners of the transportation facility. Facility owners may submit joint applications with those entities eligible for planning grants.

The RCP Program welcomes applications from diverse local, Tribal, and regional communities regardless of size, location, and experience administering Federal funding awards. Preference is given to applications serving economically disadvantaged communities, especially those that address equity and environmental justice, have strong community engagement and stewardship, and a commitment to shared prosperity and local workforce development.

### Land and Water Conservation Fund

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants are available through IDNR to park and recreation boards with a current 5-year plan for parks on file. Projects require a 50% match. All funded projects are taken under perpetuity by the National Park Service and must only be used for outdoor recreational purposes. Examples of types of projects include:

- Acquiring park space or a natural area
- Picnic areas
- Sports and playfields, such as playgrounds, ballfields, court facilities, and golf courses
- Water-oriented facilities for boating, swimming, and access to lakes, rivers, and streams
- Natural areas and interpretive facilities
- Campgrounds
- Fishing and hunting areas

- Winter sports facilities
- Amphitheatres and bandstands
- Trails
- Outdoor natural habitat zoo facilities
- Roads, restrooms, utilities, park maintenance buildings
- Nature centers

### Funds for Stream Bank Restoration Initiatives

Several funding sources are available for stream bank restoration initiatives specifically on park properties, including:

- **The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)** provides federal funding for any states bordering the Great Lakes.
- **The Lake and River Enhancement fund (LARE)** is provided through the Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- **The Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Program (GLSNRP)** is a state and federal partnership managed by the Great Lakes Commission in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), and the eight Great Lakes states.

# Action Matrix

The Action Matrix presents a complete list of all goals, strategies and action steps included within the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan. The Action Matrix should be used as a resource by City and County staff, as well as partner organizations, to monitor implementation progress and facilitate coordination.

## Implementation Category

To assist with implementation, the Action Matrix is organized by plan chapter. The recommendations are categorized into the following 5 categories.

### *Capital Improvement & Funding (CIF)*

Recommendations that could impact future capital improvement programs or budgetary processes.

### *Policy Guidance (PG)*

Recommendations that are intended to guide decision making by boards, commissions, legislative bodies, city and county staff, and other stakeholders.

### *Planning Initiative (PI)*

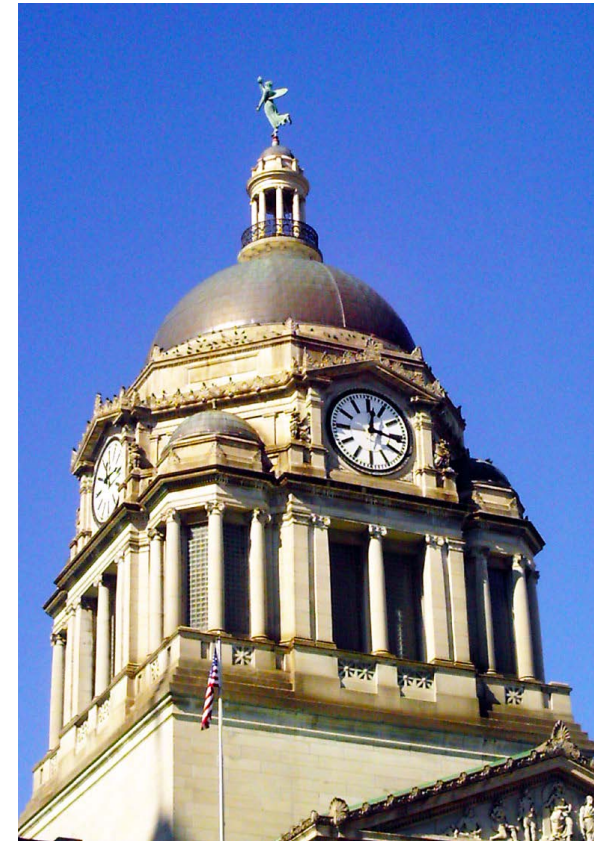
Recommendations that require further investigation or planning efforts to determine next steps.

### *Partnership Opportunities (PO)*

Recommendations that encourage collaboration with other community organizations and/or governmental entities.

### *Regulatory Updates (RU)*

Recommendations that encourage review and updates to community ordinances, standards, and other requirements.



# Land Use & Development

Goal	Strategy	Implementation Category				
		CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 1. Encourage compatible infill development and redevelopment in the Urban Infill and Priority Investment Areas</b>	1.1. Explore new zoning classifications, updated development regulations, and other tools to encourage compatible infill development and redevelopment.					RU
	1.2. Explore modified development review processes to facilitate compatible infill development and redevelopment proposals.			PI		RU
	1.3. Encourage compatible higher density residential and mixed-use development in infill areas that are near public transit routes, employment centers, institutions, and other amenities.		PG			
	1.4. Focus development and redevelopment initiatives and incentives in the Priority Investment Area to address market gaps and build momentum among private sector property owners and developers.	CIF	PG			
<b>Goal 2. Encourage carefully planned, monitored, and compatible outward growth in the Targeted Growth Areas.</b>	2.1. Encourage new development within the Targeted Growth Areas that are contiguous to existing development.		PG			
	2.2. Encourage rezoning petitions for properties that are within the Targeted Growth Areas and are contiguous to existing development.		PG			
	2.3. Encourage development and redevelopment in areas within the Targeted Growth Areas that are served by adequate water, sanitary sewer, and transportation infrastructure.		PG			
	2.4. Discourage development in Targeted Growth Areas that cannot be adequately served by public municipal or private corporate sanitary sewer facilities.		PG			
<b>Goal 3. Encourage carefully planned and monitored growth in the Potential Economic Development Growth Areas</b>	3.1. Encourage strategically planned economic development investment within the Potential Economic Development Growth Areas that is contiguous to existing development, or that is supported by the Economic Development Chapter and the Allen County Together Economic Development Plan.	CIF	PG			
	3.2. Support the development of high impact economic development projects within Potential Economic Development Growth Areas that have the ability to serve as catalyst projects for additional economic growth, with additional consideration given to the overall economic benefits of the new development, such as significant levels of investment, average wages, and job creation.		PG			
	3.3. Encourage development and redevelopment in areas within the Potential Economic Development Growth Areas that are served by adequate water, sanitary sewer, and transportation infrastructure.		PG			
	3.4. Discourage development in Potential Economic Development Growth Areas that cannot be adequately served by public municipal or private corporate sanitary sewer facilities.		PG			
<b>Goal 4. Encourage protection and preservation in the Rural and Agricultural Areas</b>	4.1. Carefully consider rezoning and use variance requests in Rural and Agricultural Areas, and discourage requests that are not contiguous to existing development and not served by public municipal or private corporate sanitary sewer facilities.		PG			
	4.2. Encourage the development of zoning along with other tools and incentives to encourage the preservation of floodplains, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas.	CIF			PO	RU

# Agriculture & Food Systems

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 1.</b> Encourage the preservation and stewardship of productive agricultural land	<b>1.1. Establish Agricultural Preservation Tools and Incentives</b>	Consider establishing an agricultural land trust with a broad coalition of farmers, researchers, and community leaders collaborating with individual landowners, with a focus on preserving the most productive farmland as identified on the adjacent Productive Agriculture Land map.			PI	PO	
		Promote the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) Hoosier Homestead Award Program, which recognizes families with farms that have been owned by the same family for 100 years or more.				PO	
		Investigate a local agricultural heritage program, which would provide a voluntary, incentive-based process for permanently preserving small farms and agricultural lands as farms are sold.			PI	PO	
		Promote the adoption of sustainable practices to mitigate impacts to surface water and groundwater quality, prepare for a changing climate including drought and extreme weather, and address pest and disease threats.					RU
		Work directly with farmers and private landowners to identify and apply for federal funds in conservation and preservation programs.			PI	PO	
<b>Goal 2.</b> Provide additional support for rural and urban agriculture	<b>2.1. Encourage regulatory support for rural agricultural uses</b>	Review and update agricultural related regulations and standards to support farms, farm-supporting businesses, and low-intensity agribusinesses.					RU
		Explore additional standards and best practices to continue to encourage the conservation and protection of existing agricultural operations.			PI		RU
		Continue to limit industrial farming operations, such as CFOs, through Board of Zoning Appeals Special Use approvals to mitigate the environmental impacts of these uses.		PG			
	<b>2.2. Encourage regulatory support for urban agriculture uses</b>	Review and update applicable regulations and standards, including permitted use provisions, to better support urban agriculture and other potential food related uses.					RU
		Review and update standards for community gardens, including current Fort Wayne City Utility standards for connecting community gardens to municipal water lines.					RU
<b>Goal 3.</b> Promote sustainable agricultural production and innovation	<b>3.1. Encourage agricultural innovation</b>	Consider hosting a regular agricultural innovation roundtable, offering a forum for discussion and collaboration regarding the Community's agricultural research and innovation.				PO	
		Continue to support regular events such as the Fort Wayne Farm Show, showcasing the County's agricultural technology, resources, and opportunities.				PO	
		Promote technical assistance in coordination with Purdue Extension, Ivy Tech Community College Agriculture Program, and the Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District for implementing sustainable practices.				PO	
	<b>3.2. Support local and small-scale agriculture</b>	Work with local farmer's market organizers to encourage additional markets in the Community.				PO	
		Work with the Greater Fort Wayne Inc. and other business organizations to encourage restaurants, supermarkets, and co-ops to offer local produce and meat.				PO	
	Publicize regulatory updates and best practices widely to civic, environmental, and neighborhood organizations to encourage new community gardens and promote growing fresh food throughout the County.			PI			

# Agriculture & Food Systems

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 4.</b> <b>Expand and promote agritourism</b>	<b>4.1. Engage farmers and community partners to expand agritourism opportunities</b>	Expand community outreach and collaboration by facilitating partnerships with non-traditional audiences and organizations.				PO	
		Investigate community grants to assist farmers with agritourism-related property improvements.	CIF		PI	PO	
		Create a toolkit for bringing tourism to a farm, with recommendations and best practices for necessary facilities, programming and activities, and assistance with marketing.			PI	PO	
	<b>4.2. Establish regulatory support for agritourism</b>	Review and update community agricultural related regulations for urban and rural agritourism.					RU
<b>Goal 5.</b> <b>Attract new agribusiness that supports local agricultural production</b>	<b>5.1. Support agribusiness operations</b>	Review and update regulations regarding small and large agriculture-related businesses.					RU
		Explore possible incentives for new agribusinesses.	CIF		PI		
		Work with higher education programs such as the Ivy Tech Community College Agriculture Program and the Purdue Extension to establish and promote a skilled local agricultural-related workforce.				PO	
<b>Goal 6.</b> <b>Expand access to local, fresh, healthy, and nutritious produce and food by improving the local production and distribution systems</b>	<b>6.1. Work with partner organizations</b>	Work with Purdue Extension to create a list of desirable locations for fresh food markets in food desert areas.				PO	
		Partner with local food co-ops, grocers, and existing markets to document and explore ways to mitigate potential barriers.				PO	
	<b>6.2 Establish programmatic Food Access partnerships</b>	Publicize the Double Up Indiana program, a local initiative of the national nonprofit Fair Food Network that matches SNAP or food stamps dollars spent on fresh fruits and vegetables.				PO	
		Continue to support and expand the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) summer markets, which accept SNAP Electronic Benefits Transfer and WIC.				PO	
		Partner with hospitals and health care organizations to support incentives and investments that improve food access and healthier lifestyles.				PO	
		Leverage partnerships with hospitals, schools, and local food banks to connect with local farmers and increase the supply of fresh, healthy, local food for families in need.				PO	
		Support connections between local food producers and the local school systems to promote fresh food in schools.				PO	
	<b>6.3 Support local cooperatives and community-supported agriculture</b>	Collaborate with partner organizations like the Northeast Indiana Local Food Network to provide local farmers with training to assist in starting a CSA farm business or participating in a co-op.				PO	
		Promote participation in the online Northeast Indiana Local Food Guide, and Indiana Grown and Indiana Grown for Schools Resource Guides.				PO	
		Investigate partnerships to sponsor CSA and co-op membership reimbursement for low-income/low-access residents.	CIF			PO	
<b>6.4 Improve transportation for food access</b>	Work with Fort Wayne Citilink and other transportation agencies to improve public transportation services in urban and rural food desert areas.				PO		
	Work with local supermarkets, co-ops, and farmers' markets to incentivize and provide shuttle service and low-cost fresh food delivery in low-access areas.	CIF			PO		

# Housing & Neighborhoods

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 1. Support and Strengthen Complete Neighborhoods</b>	<b>1.1. Promote the creation of complete neighborhood areas through compact development, increased density, and infill</b>	Identify and facilitate mixed use redevelopment opportunities on vacant or underutilized properties within Priority Investment and Urban Infill Opportunity Areas on the Future Growth and Development map.	CIF		PI		
		Encourage smart growth development practices to support efficient use of land and resources.			PI		RU
		Encourage the development of an integrated network of sidewalks, trails, and bike routes within existing and new neighborhoods that will provide safe access to community amenities.			PI		RU
		Promote residential development with compact block structure, a mix of uses and housing types, and active transportation access to nearby jobs, recreation, fresh and nutritious food, and schools as well as connections to nearby neighborhoods.			PI		RU
		Identify sites and prioritize strategic areas, such as commercial corridors with underutilized retail, college campuses, and areas with high public transportation access, for mixed-use and higher density housing, single-family attached homes, duplexes, and multifamily housing.			PI		
		Collaborate with stakeholders to coordinate the future locations of public facilities and social infrastructure such as schools, libraries, and services such as public transportation to strengthen complete neighborhood areas.			PI	PO	
	<b>1.2. Support historic preservation efforts</b>	Encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic homes and structures.				PI	
		Support the establishment of National Register and local historic districts.		PG	PI		
		Prioritize regular review and updates to preservation guidelines and building codes.		PG			RU
		Investigate, develop, implement, and promote federal, state, and local financial incentives to encourage property owners to maintain, preserve, and rehabilitate historic properties.	CIF		PI		
	<b>1.3. Encourage adaptive reuse</b>	Explore establishing a county-wide historic preservation ordinance.			PI		RU
		Review and update zoning regulations to encourage appropriate adaptive reuse of historic, institutional, and other non-residential buildings within neighborhoods.					RU
		Promote education on and incentives for adaptive reuse, preservation, and green retrofitting of existing buildings.	CIF		PI	PO	
	<b>1.4. Strengthen existing neighborhoods and revitalize declining and middle- and low-income neighborhoods</b>	Review and update incentives and provide coordinated planning assistance to revitalize declining and middle neighborhoods and address vacancies, such as home repair, rental rehabilitation, and homebuyer programs.	CIF		PI		
		Pursue opportunities for residential lot and land consolidation to improve buildability and support higher density housing including missing middle housing types.			PI		
		Improve property maintenance by prioritizing code enforcement, updating maintenance standards, and developing landlord education programs.			PI		RU
		Consider the development and use of a neighborhood-focused equity index in the development of neighborhood plans, reviewing proposed development, considering requests for incentives, and prioritizing infrastructure investment.		PG	PI		

# Housing & Neighborhoods

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 1. Support and Strengthen Complete Neighborhoods</b>	<b>1.5. Enhance a neighborhoods sense of place</b>	Beautify neighborhoods and enhance a sense of place with investments such as gateway signs, street trees, pedestrian-scaled street lighting, and other public infrastructure improvements.	CIF		PI		
		Support established residential neighborhoods by facilitating investments in neighborhood commercial areas, parks, and community gathering spaces that sustain and build on local identity.	CIF		PI		
	<b>1.6. Encourage neighborhood activation and planning</b>	Foster neighborhood organization and partnerships with residents and associations to promote activation and inclusive and shared decision making.			PI	PO	
		Support and foster the development of action-oriented and asset-based plans for declining and middle neighborhoods.			PI	PO	
		Support and foster the creation of sub-area plans that promote and sustain complete neighborhood areas.			PI	PO	
	<b>1.7. Increase Downtown housing</b>	Consider financial and other incentives to support a mix of housing types in Downtown Fort Wayne, building off the recommendations of the Zimmerman and Volk 2021 Analysis of Residential Market Potential.	CIF		PI		
	<b>Goal 2. Enable sustainable, diverse, and accessible housing choices along with creative design and development solutions throughout Allen County to meet the needs of all residents</b>	<b>2.1. Promote diverse and creative housing solutions</b>	Identify zoning and subdivision regulation updates, zoning tools such as form based overlay districts, and policies, including form-based overlays, to support and promote a greater range of housing types and sizes (single-family detached, single family attached such as duplexes and multi-family housing) for rent and sale within individual neighborhoods.			PI	
Review and update land use regulations to allow opportunities for creative, innovative, context-sensitive housing solutions such as accessory dwelling units (multi-generational housing), lofts, live-work spaces, and manufactured/modular housing to increase housing diversity and affordability.					PI		RU
<b>2.2. Promote the use of renewable energy resources and green infrastructure</b>		Promote policies and update regulations that encourage environmentally responsible construction techniques and renewable energy in new and rehabilitated housing development.			PI		RU
		Encourage the inclusion of green infrastructure and the use of low-impact design to reduce environmental impacts.			PI		RU
		Review code requirements to determine if there are barriers that make implementation of sustainable design difficult.			PI		RU
<b>2.3. Promote accessible, attainable, and stable housing</b>		Identify barriers and examine updates to development regulations to incorporate universal design principles.			PI		RU
		Identify incentives for the development of visitable housing for people with disabilities and those considering aging in place.	CIF		PI		
		Revise development regulations as needed to permit and encourage home renovations and expansions that increase accessibility.			PI		RU
		Evaluate the creation of land trusts and cooperative housing, including identification of regulatory or financial barriers, to restore existing housing stock, increase homeownership, and preserve affordability as redevelopment occurs.			PI	PO	RU
		Work with community organizations, non-profits, and municipalities to ensure affordable housing for individuals recovering from substance abuse and aid entry into the workforce.				PO	RU

# Economic Development

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category					
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU	
<b>Goal 1. Ensure all areas of Fort Wayne and other Allen County communities can prosper and meet the projected employment demand</b>	<b>1.1. Prioritize the creation of development-ready employment sites</b>	Strategically identify and prepare land and redevelopment areas for development-ready employment sites in alignment with the Future Growth and Development map, the Generalized Future Land Use map, and the Allen County Together Economic Development Action Plan.			PI	PO		
		Identify and support catalyst projects for high-impact economic development opportunities within Potential Economic Development Growth Areas on the Future Growth and Development map that support the priorities of the Allen County Together Economic Development Action Plan.		PG	PI			
	<b>1.2. Support equitably-balanced economic investment and reinvestment</b>	Identify and address barriers to development and redevelopment opportunities, such as regulatory barriers, functional obsolescence, and development finance gaps.	CIF		PI		RU	
		Continue to foster public/private partnerships to offer development assistance and other incentives, giving priority to opportunities within the priority investment area on the Future Growth and Development map.	CIF			PO		
		Identify gateways and corridors to target for proactive land use planning, beautification efforts, and appropriate context-sensitive development and redevelopment.			PI			
		Consider the use of an equity index in reviewing proposed development and redevelopment, considering requests for incentives, and prioritizing infrastructure investment.			PI			
		Facilitate and incentivize the remediation and redevelopment of brownfields into tax-generating uses that increase local employment opportunities.	CIF		PI			
	<b>1.3. Support business development and expansion, and new business attraction</b>	Facilitate collaboration among local governments and economic development partners to leverage existing resources, assistance programs, and incentives.				PO		
		Identify barriers to the development and expansion of businesses and explore the creation of new incentives and programs to address identified barriers.	CIF		PI		RU	
		Support the establishment and expansion of rural businesses in areas with sufficient infrastructure capacity and enforce performance standards to mitigate potential negative impacts on the rural environment.		PG				
		Increase accessibility to support services for local-serving businesses including financial institutions and non-traditional loan providers, such as CDFIs (Community Development Financial Institutions) and SEED (Summit City Entrepreneur and Enterprise District).	CIF			PO		
	<b>Goal 2. Continue to invest in Fort Wayne and outlying communities to improve the quality of place</b>	<b>2.1. Support vibrant activity centers</b>	Enhance Downtown Fort Wayne, Town Centers, and other community commercial nodes as vibrant activity centers by identifying areas for placemaking strategies and targeted improvements to the public realm.	CIF		PI		
			Identify areas for public-private partnerships which provide public spaces for gathering and socializing.	CIF		PI	PO	
Develop a cohesive branding and marketing strategy to promote Downtown Fort Wayne and Town Centers in Allen County communities.					PI			
Encourage additional investment in mixed-use and urban residential development in and around downtown Fort Wayne, along urban corridors leading to and from downtown, and in Town Centers.				PG	PI			

# Economic Development

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 2. Continue to invest in Fort Wayne and outlying communities to improve the quality of place</b>	<b>2.2. Identify and enhance key community, sports, and tourism assets</b>	Enhance key community and regional assets such as the Arts United Campus, Embassy Theater, the County Fairgrounds, the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, and Fort Wayne Children's Zoo that define local community identity and support arts, culture, and entertainment to complement private investment and encourage tourism.	CIF		PI	PO	
		Explore the use of a countywide Fort Wayne-Allen County sports commission to identify and address barriers to enhancing local youth sports, attracting new events, and promoting Fort Wayne and Allen County's regional sports brand.			PI	PO	
		Evaluate the potential for developing new multipurpose spaces for high-profile sporting events, concerts, and other events/festivals.			PI		
	<b>2.3. Enhance the use of the three rivers, especially in the Fort Wayne urban core</b>	Support continued implementation of the Riverfront Conceptual Plan and the Riverfront Development Implementation Framework Plan.	CIF	PG			
		Encourage additional appropriate river-related development in the downtown Fort Wayne area.	CIF	PG			
	<b>2.4. Enhance the appearance and unique identity of the Community's towns and cities</b>	Support the implementation of the New Allen Alliance Regional Development Plan.	CIF	PG			
		Explore updated development regulations and other tools to encourage "main street" commercial development and redevelopment in and around Town Centers, and additional investment within Allen County's incorporated areas and unincorporated communities.			PI		RU
	<b>Goal 3. Coordinate key infrastructure and transportation improvements with local economic development efforts</b>	<b>3.1. Ensure sufficient infrastructure and transportation capacity</b>	Maintain and expand infrastructure (including electric, natural gas, water, sanitary sewer and telecommunications/broadband) and transportation capacity to facilitate economic development.	CIF		PI	
Invest in transportation corridors and infrastructure that increase mobility and transportation choices (including bike, pedestrian, and public transit) while providing greater access to existing and planned centers of employment.			CIF		PI		
<b>3.2. Maintain and expand key transportation assets</b>		Continue to work on plans for the expansion of the U.S. 30 corridor to promote and enhance travel between Allen County and the Chicago area.			PI		
		Facilitate community collaboration to identify opportunity sites along the eastern portion of the U.S. 24 corridor to leverage the "Fort to Port" project.			PI	PO	
		Support the restoration of passenger rail service to better connect Allen County to cities throughout the Midwest and support regional economic development and tourism.		PG			
	Continue to improve and protect the FWA and SMD as economic assets.	CIF	PG				

# Economic Development

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 4. Support efforts to continue to create a welcoming, business-friendly, and inclusive community that fosters entrepreneurship, innovation, and business growth</b>	<b>4.1. Support targeted business attraction</b>	Work with economic development partners and entities, including universities, Greater Fort Wayne Inc., Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership, and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) to market to target industries for recruitment and attraction.				PO	
		Support Greater Fort Wayne Inc. and other economic development partners in business attraction efforts as part of the implementation of the Allen County Together Economic Development Plan.		PG		PO	
		Support preparation for and cultivation of a competitive environment for innovations in technology adoption in targeted industries.			PI	PO	
	<b>4.2. Develop and support innovation hubs where anchor institutions and companies are concentrated and support new business start-ups, business incubators, and accelerators</b>	Continue to position Electric Works as an entrepreneurial hub for business innovation alongside established companies in partnership with local entrepreneurial support organizations.			PI	PO	
		Attract and grow high-wage jobs in research and development, advanced manufacturing, skilled trades, and engineering-focused and technology-driven growth industries.		PG		PO	
		Explore additional opportunities to attract and expand research institutions and campuses.			PI	PO	
	<b>4.3. Collaborate on workforce support and development</b>	Foster partnerships between area schools, colleges and universities, and employers to increase access to and awareness of internships, vocational training, and education in skilled trades in alignment with economic opportunities.				PO	
		Facilitate expanded access to daycare and early childhood education.			PI	PO	
	<b>4.4. Support and facilitate the development of workforce and student housing</b>	Identify appropriate areas and incentives for the development of housing that is affordable to middle-income workers and students within walking distance of major employment centers or with high-quality transit access.	CIF		PI		
		Collaborate with higher education institutions in the creation of strategic plans to identify sites, financial incentives, and public-private partnerships to facilitate the development of on and off-campus student housing.	CIF		PI	PO	
	<b>4.5. Support inclusivity and diversity</b>	Promote equitable access to economic opportunities by targeting investments and incentives in employment centers, significant mixed-use development, commercial corridors and nodes, and small business support, with a focus on diverse communities and historically underrepresented groups.	CIF		PI	PO	
		Work with community partners (nonprofits, philanthropic organizations, etc.) to identify and support business formation among women, Burmese, Black, Hispanic, and other underrepresented groups.			PI	PO	
		Encourage diversity in business leadership that is reflective of the Community.				PO	
	<b>4.6. Strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem</b>	Support the implementation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem strategy.	CIF			PO	
Expand access to entrepreneurial training and mentorship programs such as the SEED Build Institute, the Northeast Indiana Innovation Center (NIIC) Breakthrough Program and the Greater Fort Wayne Bridge Program.		CIF			PO		

# Transportation & Mobility

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 1. Support high-quality infrastructure and systems for all transportation modes that align with community needs and facilitate economic development</b>	<b>1.1. Improve connectivity and capacity</b>	Prioritize the development and implementation of transportation plans that reflect best practice models to address transportation capacity needs across all transportation modes.			PI		
		Explore updated development regulations to require interconnected street networks to increase public and private street, sidewalk, bike, and trail connections between and within developed areas.					RU
		Coordinate planning efforts with local land use and zoning, working with housing agencies to offer adequate access across all neighborhoods.		PG	PI	PO	
	<b>1.2. Plan for and coordinate transportation improvements with economic development priorities</b>	Support advocacy, planning, and implementation efforts for the expansion of the U.S. 30 corridor into an interstate highway.	CIF	PG	PI		
		Support the investment and improvement opportunities along the I-469 corridor with specific emphasis on the Adams Center Road Interchange.	CIF	PG			
		Engage in planning and implementation efforts to enhance the image and appeal of highway interchanges, major gateways, and key corridors into downtown Fort Wayne and town center areas.			PI		
		Consider changes in functional class to higher capacity classifications to improve freight movement along roadways serving production centers and the airport.			PI		
	<b>1.3. Support Fort Wayne International and Smith Field Airports</b>	Continue to support the Fort Wayne International Airport Master Plan and the Smith Field Airport Layout Development Plans as tools for guiding development in and around the airports.		PG			
		Continue to use the Airport Overlay District as a tool for guiding development in and around the airports.		PG			
	<b>1.4. Support efforts to restore passenger rail service to enhance regional multimodal connectivity</b>	Continue to support the efforts of the Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA) to work with area stakeholders, northern Indiana communities, and surrounding states on a comprehensive Midwest passenger rail initiative.			PI	PO	
	<b>1.5. Increase public transparency and collaboration</b>	Facilitate collaboration between municipalities, transportation agencies, and organizations to facilitate the expansion of existing transportation systems and make information available to all.			PI	PO	
		Utilize a variety of tools to foster better education and awareness of transportation usage and improvement projects.	CIF			PO	

# Transportation & Mobility

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category					
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU	
<b>Goal 2. Plan for and integrate new transportation technology and emerging best practices into the transportation network</b>	<b>2.1. Improve and establish regulations, design standards, and policies</b>	Regularly update transportation policies, design guides, and standards to reflect current technology.		PG			RU	
		Establish context-sensitive design standards and policies for all transportation improvement projects.		PG			RU	
		Identify and prioritize active transportation gaps and encourage improved connectivity in new developments in addition to expanding transit service areas.	CIF		PI			
	<b>2.2. Prioritize the inclusion of renewable energy technologies and low environmental impact transportation modes in infrastructure planning</b>	Investigate installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at high-traffic public and community nodes into transportation infrastructure planning.	CIF		PI			
		Investigate the purchase of EV and alternative fuel vehicles for public transportation and other municipal vehicle needs.	CIF		PI			
		Work with transportation agencies to encourage multimodal infrastructure expansion that reduces environmental impacts.		PG	PI	PO		
		Investigate the incorporation of renewable energy generation and connections into transportation projects.			PI			
	<b>Goal 3. Increase safe, attractive, multimodal transportation opportunities across the entire Allen County area</b>	<b>3.1. Prioritize the development of safe, attractive “Complete Streets”</b>	Encourage the development of complete street policies for each Allen County community to encourage safe pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle connectivity	CIF	PG	PI		
			Prioritize the integration of landscaping, green stormwater features, street trees, and street-scape elements into transportation improvement projects to enhance the attractiveness of infrastructure and surrounding areas.	CIF	PG			
Review Vision Zero principles for potential incorporation into complete streets and other transportation policies.				PG	PI			
Continually monitor and address safety perceptions and hazards, especially where multimodal systems are adjacent to or intersect with one another.					PI			
Identify and prioritize multimodal transportation gaps and require connectivity in new developments.					PI		RU	
Consider the use of an Equity Index to identify and prioritize streets in low-income areas for complete street improvements that provide for and encourage safe active transportation.			CIF		PI			

# Transportation & Mobility

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 3. Increase safe, attractive, multimodal transportation opportunities across the entire Allen County area</b>	<b>3.2. Prioritize public transportation</b>	Work with community stakeholders to increase public transportation use by identifying private and public incentives, partnerships, and sustainable funding sources.	CIF		PI	PO	
		Address sidewalk gaps, enhance ADA accessibility, and provide bus amenities to foster increased transit use.	CIF		PI		
		Include public transportation access and passenger amenities in the planning and development of transportation projects along public transit routes.	CIF		PI		RU
		Encourage the review and update of regulations to require the incorporation of public transit facilities and pedestrian connectivity within and between development projects.					RU
		Conduct neighborhood walk audits for walk-to-bus times, assess bus stop quality, and location frequency, and increase route frequency to hospitals, healthcare campuses, mental health and wellness centers, and medical offices.			PI	PO	
		Enhance transit connections to employment centers and service hubs by reevaluating route locations, service times, and frequencies.	CIF		PI		
		Connect transit and healthcare providers to encourage collaboration in facilities planning, and prioritize transit at hospitals, clinics, and medical campuses.			PI	PO	
		Plan for and promote the use of innovative technologies and evolving modes of public transportation to improve connectivity opportunities.			PI		
	<b>3.3. Develop consistent and sustainable funding sources for an integrated multimodal transportation system</b>	Coordinate with local public and nonprofit transportation agencies to promote the establishment of a broad advocacy coalition that includes key businesses and stakeholders.			PI	PO	
		Improve communication with area employers on needs for multimodal transportation options.				PO	
		Support broader collaboration opportunities for identifying projects and addressing funding constraints and securing sustainable funding.	CIF			PO	
		Prioritize the provision of adequate staff support to implement multimodal transportation plans and projects.	CIF				

# Public Facilities & Infrastructure

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 1. Prioritize coordinated public and private utility systems planning</b>	<b>1.1. Improve collaboration between public and private utility providers and stakeholders to better plan for strategic growth and development</b>	Work with public and private utility providers to organize regular meetings focused on proactive community-wide systems planning.			PI	PO	
		Continue to hold and expand participation in City Utilities Local Advisory Group meetings.			PI	PO	
		Encourage the regular review and alignment of regulations and standards for utility infrastructure design incorporating new technologies and sustainable solutions.			PI		RU
		Improve education about available utility systems in the development of the Community.			PI	PO	
		Collaborate with public and private utility providers in the regular review and update of the infill and targeted growth areas as shown on the Future Growth and Development map in the Land Use and Development chapter.		PG	PI	PO	
		Discourage on-site wastewater treatment systems.		PG			RU
<b>Goal 2. Encourage community sustainability and infill development opportunities through continued maintenance and improvement of existing water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater systems</b>	<b>2.1. Coordinate existing utility infrastructure maintenance and improvement plans with infill development goals and strategies</b>	Increase infrastructure maintenance and investment in areas that have experienced economic disinvestment.	CIF		PI		
		Create utility-based financial incentives to encourage infill.	CIF		PI		
	<b>2.2. Promote equitable infrastructure development</b>	Increase infrastructure maintenance and investment in areas that have experienced economic disinvestment.	CIF		PI		
		Consider the use of an equity index in reviewing and prioritizing infrastructure investment.	CIF		PI		
	<b>2.3. Promote wellhead protection and stewardship</b>	Encourage and support efforts to identify and protect wellhead areas and enhance wellhead-based drinking water systems.			PI		RU
	<b>2.4. Encourage watershed management</b>	Address stormwater improvement needs through effective watershed management and drainage system standards updates.			PI		RU
	<b>2.5. Explore additional funding options for utility improvements</b>	Develop funding strategies to address funding gaps and ratepayer commitments.	CIF		PI		

# Public Facilities & Infrastructure

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 3. Expand and improve broadband access across underserved areas of the Community</b>	<b>3.1. Improve existing broadband systems</b>	Collaborate with broadband providers and review regulatory processes to expand service while balancing potential aesthetic impacts.				PO	RU
		Improve broadband access across underserved areas of the Community by addressing barriers to implementation and affordability and promoting efficient infrastructure investment.	CIF				
		Encourage the inclusion of additional capacity as part of future system development and improvements.	CIF		PI	PO	
	<b>3.2. Improve disaster resilient broadband infrastructure</b>	Explore climate impacts on broadband equipment and infrastructure.				PI	
		Continue efforts to strengthen, harden and increase redundancy of wired and wireless infrastructure needed to deliver reliable broadband services during severe weather and other emergencies.	CIF		PI		
		Identify broadband services to receive emergency notifications.			PI	PO	
Incorporate E-Resilience and Readiness concepts into broadband initiatives focusing on connection, quality, stability, and resilience.				PI			
<b>Goal 4. Encourage collaboration between stakeholders, organizations, and governmental entities to strengthen environmental resiliency and reduce the impact of future infrastructure</b>	<b>4.1. Encourage green infrastructure and low impact design</b>	Encourage the inclusion of green infrastructure low impact design in new developments to reduce environmental impacts, through efforts like advocating for developments to work towards LEED or SITES certifications.		PG	PI		
	<b>4.2. Facilitate environmental stewardship collaboration</b>	Collaborate with community partners and stakeholders on environmental stewardship strategies to protect environmental assets and preserve environmentally sensitive lands, open spaces, forested lands, and wildlife habitats.			PI	PO	
	<b>4.3. Encourage environmentally responsible and sustainable infrastructure construction</b>	Develop and promote policies and regulatory incentives that encourage environmentally responsible infrastructure construction techniques and sustainable development.		PG			RU
	<b>4.4. Support environmental resiliency outreach and education</b>	Collaborate with community partners and stakeholders to educate the public on the importance of environmental resiliency.				PO	
		Support recommendations from Fort Wayne Climate Action Plan.		PG			

# Public Facilities & Infrastructure

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 5. Ensure adequate public safety services through increased collaboration as part of planning for new growth and development</b>	<b>5.1. Encourage expanded public safety input in development</b>	Explore the inclusion of additional Public Safety groups in new project planning and review.			PI	PO	
	<b>5.2. Promote property maintenance and crime prevention techniques to improve perceptions and reduce crime risks</b>	Endorse and support community-led property maintenance efforts to improve perceptions of safety in both residential and non-residential areas.	CIF			PO	
		Identify and promote crime prevention development design techniques, such as CPTED standards for new development.			PI		
	<b>5.3. Promote prepared and resilient communities</b>	Support community-wide preparedness planning efforts.				PO	
		Encourage resiliency efforts for private residences.			PI		
		Support Hazard Mitigation Plan updates, including adding mitigation strategies to upcoming plans.			PI		
		Conduct an audit of public safety facilities including location review.			PI		
<b>Goal 6. Improve public safety outcomes</b>	<b>6.1. Support public safety community outreach</b>	Work with the Community and public safety agencies to strengthen existing programs and create new opportunities for public outreach and relationship-building initiatives.			PI	PO	
	<b>6.2. Strengthen public safety collaboration</b>	Encourage intra-jurisdictional cooperation between public safety departments and agencies.				PO	
		Support Community Risk Reduction, by identifying hazards and impacts on critical infrastructure, and developing actions to mitigate the hazard to build a better-prepared, more-resilient community.			PI		
	<b>6.3. Support procedural justice</b>	Promote neutral decision-making best practices to resolve disputes and allocate resources.		PG		PO	

# Community Services & Education

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 1. Support school districts and higher education institutions to ensure access to high quality, responsive education for all within the Community</b>	<b>1.1. Encourage collaboration with schools and service providers to promote sufficient early childhood development and education programs</b>	Fund expanded training for new and established early childcare workers.	CIF			PO	
		Evaluate creative solutions, such as combined education and job training initiatives, to minimize barriers to parents utilizing early childcare programs.			PI	PO	
		Support efforts to work with primary and secondary schools to raise awareness of available high-demand career paths including skilled trades.				PO	
	<b>1.2. Improve transportation and digital access to education services and facilities</b>	Continue to work with the Indiana Safe Routes to School Program to identify ways to increase safety to promote biking and walking to school.			PI	PO	
		Continue working with Citilink and other community transportation providers to identify ways to expand access to transit services from schools.			PI	PO	
		Support access to online educational resources by working with service providers to expand broadband coverage in underserved areas.			PI	PO	
		Support continued modernization of existing facilities to promote accessibility and meet education needs.		PG		PO	
	<b>Goal 2. Foster education and employer partnerships to build a skilled workforce</b>	<b>2.1. Expand access to workforce training</b>	Collaborate with educational institutions to ensure workforce preparation and continuing education/training opportunities.				PO
Partner with public transportation providers to capitalize on Indiana Department of Workforce Development funding for transportation to workforce training opportunities.						PO	
<b>2.2. Encourage school-employer collaboration to expand employment opportunities</b>		Support collaboration efforts between primary and secondary schools and employers to raise awareness of available high-demand career paths including skilled trades.				PO	
<b>Goal 3. Encourage collaboration with education and community or social service providers to increase communication and participation in community decision making</b>	<b>3.1. Encourage regular communication among education and community or social service providers</b>	Create an informal task force among business leaders, educators, and community or social service providers that meet regularly to facilitate partnerships.			PI	PO	

# Community Services & Education

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 3. Encourage collaboration with education and community or social service providers to increase communication and participation in community decision making</b>	<b>3.2. Encourage increased outreach and participation in decision-making processes by education and community or social service providers</b>	Explore opportunities to add representation from education and community or social service providers to city and county decision-making bodies.		PG		PO	
		Encourage targeted outreach to education and community or social service providers as part of ongoing planning projects.			PI	PO	
<b>Goal 4. Ensure collaboration with community and social service providers to support vulnerable populations and improve quality of life outcomes</b>	<b>4.1. Capitalize on existing services</b>	Promote expanded use and access to existing community and social service organizations.				PO	
	<b>4.2. Support public/private collaboration across jurisdictions to support vulnerable populations throughout the Community</b>	Facilitate partnerships between municipal departments, county departments, and local nonprofits to determine service and program needs.				PO	
	<b>4.3. Better connect vulnerable populations to community or social services</b>	Continue to locate community facilities such as libraries, medical centers, and schools near residents to serve as neighborhood centers to enhance accessibility to vulnerable populations.		PG		PO	
		Identify strategies to expand financial services in underbanked areas, including financial counseling and tax preparation services.			PI	PO	
		Seek funding through partnerships and grants to provide care services and shelter accommodations that meet the objectives stated in the Fort Wayne Consolidated Plan.	CIF			PO	
<b>Goal 5. Promote equitable healthcare access across socioeconomic barriers by building on and improving the community's existing system of care</b>	<b>5.1. Improve healthcare access for non-English-speaking populations</b>	Conduct an audit with healthcare providers and service organizations in the County's non-English speaking populations to determine the level of comfort with the healthcare system.			PI	PO	
		Work with community organizations and service providers to provide interpretation and translation services in all healthcare facilities.				PO	
	<b>5.2. Expand equitable access to physical and mental health services</b>	Support community-based mental health centers to provide a variety of free or subsidized services.	CIF			PO	
		Work with health providers to host physical health and mental health screenings at community events.				PO	
	<b>5.3. Support outreach for substance abuse prevention</b>	Develop and implement educational programs to prevent substance abuse and equip individuals to make healthier lifestyle choices.				PO	

# Parks & Environment

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 1. Ensure all residents have equitable access to parks, open spaces, and trails to meet increasing current and future demand</b>	<b>1.1. Support an increase in parkland</b>	Identify and prioritize underserved areas that need new parks.			PI		
		Collaborate with private landowners and organizations to strategically acquire new parkland.	CIF			PO	
		Explore options for the provision of parkland as part of new residential development proposals.			PI		
		Facilitate collaboration among property owners, developers, and land conservancies for more connected access to natural areas and trails.			PI	PO	
	<b>1.2. Prioritize the maintenance and improvement of existing parks</b>	Continue to regularly assess park facilities for necessary upgrades.			PI		
		Ensure community and neighborhood engagement as part of planning for park improvements.			PI	PO	
	<b>1.3 Continue to promote and strategically activate existing parks and riverfront areas with active and passive recreation opportunities</b>	Support and promote the continued activation of parks in the community through active and passive recreation programming.	CIF		PI		
		Identify areas and strategically plan for the development of river-oriented active and passive recreation spaces and tourism opportunities			PI		
		Promote community outreach and education regarding recreation opportunities along with the importance of conservation and stewardship.			PI	PO	
	<b>1.4 Identify resources needed for park, trail, and natural area maintenance, activation, improvement and expansion.</b>	Investigate and actively pursue opportunities for grants and other creative funding options.	CIF		PI		
		Study potential staffing increases needed to adequately maintain and expand park, trail and natural areas	CIF		PI		

# Parks & Environment

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category					
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU	
<b>Goal 2. Provide accessible and connected trails that offer high-quality local and regional opportunities for recreation and multimodal transportation</b>	<b>2.1. Collaborate with area communities and trail organizations to expand and enhance the trail and greenway systems to create a well-connected and comprehensive local and regional system</b>	Support local and regional growth of existing trail systems.	CIF	PG		PO		
		Prioritize improvements to existing trails and greenways in key recreation/activity areas, such as along the riverfronts.	CIF					
		Create partnerships to connect private trails to the larger public trail and greenway network.			PI	PO		
		Explore the creation of standards to integrate trail design into existing infrastructure projects.			PI		RU	
	<b>2.2. Improve trailhead and trail recreation amenities</b>	Assess and improve lighting and enhance trail connections between parks, neighborhoods, and key destinations.	CIF		PI			
		Identify opportunities to enhance trailhead amenities.	CIF		PI			
		Add loop trails or trail extensions to existing parks and add fitness stations and outdoor exercise equipment where suitable.	CIF		PI			
	<b>2.3. Support community education on the benefits of trails</b>	Work with parks department, trail organizations, and stewardship groups to engage and educate the Community regarding the benefits of trails.				PO		
	<b>Goal 3. Encourage community stewardship of natural and environmentally sensitive areas</b>	<b>3.1. Facilitate community stewardship partnerships</b>	Collaborate with organizations, educational institutions, and municipalities countywide to conserve natural areas and environmentally sensitive land.				PO	
		<b>3.2. Support wetlands, and river and riverbank restoration and protection</b>	Identify areas for strategic property acquisition and preservation efforts for wetlands, creeks, rivers, and riverbank areas.	CIF		PI		
Promote wetland restoration initiatives and investigate local wetland protection regulations.					PI		RU	
Collaborate with municipal, education, businesses, and nonprofit organizations to devise strategic actions to protect and restore natural areas.					PI	PO		
<b>3.3. Encourage tree canopy expansion and protection</b>		Investigate ways to preserve and maintain existing stands of trees.			PI			
		Review and update policies for subdivision street trees.			PI		RU	
		Determine and Implement best practice strategies for managing invasive species and enhancing tree cover.			PI		RU	

# Parks & Environment

Goal	Strategy	Action Step	Implementation Category				
			CIF	PG	PI	PO	RU
<b>Goal 4. Reduce or mitigate impacts of new development on environmentally sensitive areas</b>	<b>4.1. Promote sustainable development practices</b>	Develop and promote information on green and low-impact development practices.			PI	PO	
		Encourage conservation design and green and low-impact development practices to protect environmentally sensitive areas.		PG		PO	
<b>Goal 5. Improve awareness of outdoor passive and active recreation and local and regional tourism opportunities within our parks, trails, riparian and natural areas</b>	<b>5.1. Encourage additional outreach and engagement to support local and regional recreational and tourism opportunities</b>	Increase efforts to promote existing parks, trails, riverfront amenities, and natural areas in the Community as an active and passive outdoor recreation destination for residents and visitors.			PI	PO	



# APPENDIX

## Overview

*The Appendix chapter includes supporting information and documents that are relevant to the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan. This section includes:*

- *Previously Adopted Plans and Studies*
- *The Allen County Adoption Resolution*
- *The City of Fort Wayne Adoption Resolution*

# PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED PLANS & STUDIES

The following plans, which were previously adopted as amendments to the Plan-it Allen Comprehensive Plan, are included and incorporated as a part of the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan.

- Downtown Fort Wayne Action Plan: Blueprint for the Future (2003)
- City of Fort Wayne Housing Strategy (2003)
- West Central Plan (2004)
- Bloomingdale/Spy Run Neighborhood Plan (2005)
- East Park Planning Alliance: A Neighborhood Plan for the East Central Neighborhood (2005)
- Packard Area Planning Alliance (PAPA) Plan (2005)
- Southeast Area Development Strategy (2007)
- Northside Neighborhood Plan: A Plan for the Future of our Neighborhood (2007)
- Memorial Park Neighborhood: Neighborhood Plan for Community Improvements (2008)
- Bike Fort Wayne: A Plan to Enhance Transportation Options (2010)
- Nebraska Neighborhood Plan (2010)
- Walk Fort Wayne: A Plan to Enhance Pedestrian Accessibility (2011)
- Front Door Fort Wayne: A Plan to Enhance Our City's Gateways (2012)
- Bus Fort Wayne: A Plan to Enhance Public Transit (2013)
- Bluffton/Lower Huntington Corridor Improvement Plan (2017)
- Southeast Strategy Update (2021)
- Riverfront Development Implementation Framework (2021)

# Allen County Adoption Resolution

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF ALLEN

### RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE ADOPTION OF THE ALL IN ALLEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR ALLEN COUNTY INDIANA

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the County of Allen, State of Indiana, pursuant to Indiana Code §36-7 et. seq., as amended, has authority to plan for and regulate the use and zoning of real property located within its planning jurisdiction of the unincorporated areas of Allen County; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Indiana has enacted I.C. 36-7-4-500 to establish standards for developing comprehensive plans for the promotion of public health, safety, morals, convenience, order or the general welfare and for the sake of efficiency and economy in the process of development; and

WHEREAS, the Allen County Plan Commission serves as the Plan Commission for the County; and

WHEREAS, the Fort Wayne City Plan Commission and the Allen County Plan Commission ("County Plan Commission") jointly prepared the All In Allen Comprehensive Plan for the City of Fort Wayne and Allen County (the "Comprehensive Plan") which promotes and provides direction for a twenty (20) year community-wide development plan for the greater Fort Wayne and Allen County community in accordance with applicable Indiana statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan contains goals, strategies, action steps, maps, figures and tables as part of the following chapters: Introduction, Community Profile, Planning Themes, Land Use and Development, Agriculture and Food Systems, Housing and Neighborhoods, Economic Development, Transportation and Mobility, Public Facilities and Infrastructure, Community Services and Education, Parks and Environment, and Implementation; and

WHEREAS, a statistically significant portion of the community participated in the planning process which resulted in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Allen County Department of Planning Services serves as the Land Use staff for the County; and,

WHEREAS, the Allen County Department of Planning Services staff provided for publication of the required notice of public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan in *The Journal Gazette*, in accordance with I.C. 5-3-1; and

WHEREAS, on October 26, 2022, the County Plan Commission conducted a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, on November 17, 2022, the County Plan Commission held a public business meeting, during which the Plan Commission recommended approval of the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ind. Code § 36-7-4-508, the County Plan Commission certified its recommendation to the Board of Commissioners of the County of Allen to approve the Comprehensive Plan;

1

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the County of Allen, that the Comprehensive Plan, also known as the "All In Allen Comprehensive Plan", be adopted for the unincorporated areas of Allen County to replace the previously adopted "Plan-it Allen" Comprehensive Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Comprehensive Plan shall be in full force and effect on and after March 13, 2023. A copy of the approved Comprehensive Plan shall be placed and remain on file in the office of the Allen County Recorder.

Passed this 9 day of December, 2022.


## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF ALLEN COUNTY, INDIANA

  
F. Nelson Peters, President

**Absent**  
Richard E. Beck, Jr.

  
Therese M. Brown

Attest:

  
Chris Cloud  
Allen County Deputy Auditor

1

# City of Fort Wayne Adoption Resolution

1 BILL NO. R-22-11-27

2 RESOLUTION NO. R-10-22

3  
4 A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE ADOPTION  
5 OF THE ALL IN ALLEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
6 FOR THE CITY OF FORT WAYNE, INDIANA.

7 WHEREAS, the State of Indiana has enacted I.C. 36-7-4-500 to establish  
8 standards for developing comprehensive plans for the promotion of public health, safety,  
9 morals, convenience, order or the general welfare and for the sake of efficiency and  
10 economy in the process of development; and

11 WHEREAS, the Fort Wayne City Plan Commission ("City Plan Commission")  
12 and the Allen County Plan Commission have jointly prepared the All In Allen  
13 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Fort Wayne and Allen County (the "Comprehensive  
14 Plan") which promotes and provides direction for a twenty (20) year community-wide  
15 development plan for the greater Fort Wayne and Allen County community in  
16 accordance with applicable Indiana statutes; and

17 WHEREAS, a statistically significant portion of this community participated in the  
18 planning process which resulted in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan; and

19 WHEREAS, the required notice of public hearing for the Comprehensive Plan by  
20 the City Plan Commission was published in accordance with I.C. 5-3-1; and

21 WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission held such public hearing on October 26,  
22 2022 following which the City Plan Commission recommended approval of the  
23 Comprehensive Plan on November 14, 2022; and

24 WHEREAS, the Common Council of the City of Fort Wayne and all other  
25 government bodies within the territorial jurisdiction of the City Plan Commission shall be  
26 guided by and consider the general policy and pattern of development as set forth in the  
27 Comprehensive Plan as required by Indiana statutes; and

1 WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission has submitted its certified  
2 recommendation to the Common Council for Council's approval and adoption of the  
3 Comprehensive Plan.

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE  
5 CITY OF FORT, WAYNE, INDIANA, THAT:

6 SECTION 1. The Common Council finds that the procedures required pursuant to  
7 Indiana statutes providing for notice, public hearing, and other statutorily required acts by  
8 the City Plan Commission have been properly performed.

9 SECTION 2. The Common Council hereby APPROVES the Comprehensive Plan  
10 for the City of Fort Wayne and Allen County, also known as the "All In Allen  
11 Comprehensive Plan", which contains goals, strategies, action steps, maps, figures and  
12 tables as part of the following chapters: Introduction, Community Profile, Planning  
13 Themes, Land Use and Development, Agriculture and Food Systems, Housing and  
14 Neighborhoods, Economic Development, Transportation and Mobility, Public Facilities  
15 and Infrastructure, Community Services and Education, Parks and Environment, and  
16 Implementation as the new Comprehensive Plan for the City of Fort Wayne and Allen  
17 County which shall replace the previously adopted "Plan-it Allen" Comprehensive Plan.

18 SECTION 3. The Comprehensive Plan shall be in full force and effect on and  
19 after March 13, 2023. A copy of the approved Comprehensive Plan, which includes and  
20 incorporates previously adopted plans as shown in Appendix I in the Comprehensive  
21 Plan, shall be placed and remain filed in the Office of the Clerk of the City of Fort  
22 Wayne, Indiana.

23   
24 Council Member

25 APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

26   
27 Malak B. Heiny, City Attorney  
28  
29  
30

Public Hearing Date: N/A  
 Read the first time in full and on motion by Councilperson Ensley.  
 Read the second time by title and referred to the Regulations Committee.  
 Read the third time in full and on motion by Councilperson Ensley, placed on passage by the following vote:

<u>TOTAL VOTES</u>	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAINED</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
ARP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CHAMBERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DIDIER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ENSLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FREISTROFFER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HINES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JEHL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PADDOCK	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TUCKER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

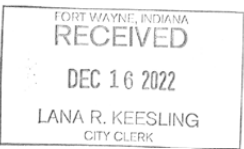
DATED: December 13, 2022 Stacy A. Reed  
 STACY A. REED, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Passed and adopted by the Common Council of the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana, as  
 Resolution No. R-22-11-27 on the 13th day of December, 2022

ATTEST:  
Stacy A. Reed STACY A. REED, DEPUTY CITY CLERK  
Tom C. Henry PRESIDING OFFICER

Presented by me to the Mayor of the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana, on the 14th  
 of December 2022, at the hour of 9:30 o'clock A.M. E.S.T.  
Stacy A. Reed  
 STACY A. REED, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved and signed by me this 15<sup>th</sup> day of December 2022, at the  
 hour of 11:00 o'clock Am, E.S.T.



Thomas C. Henry  
 THOMAS C. HENRY, MAYOR

