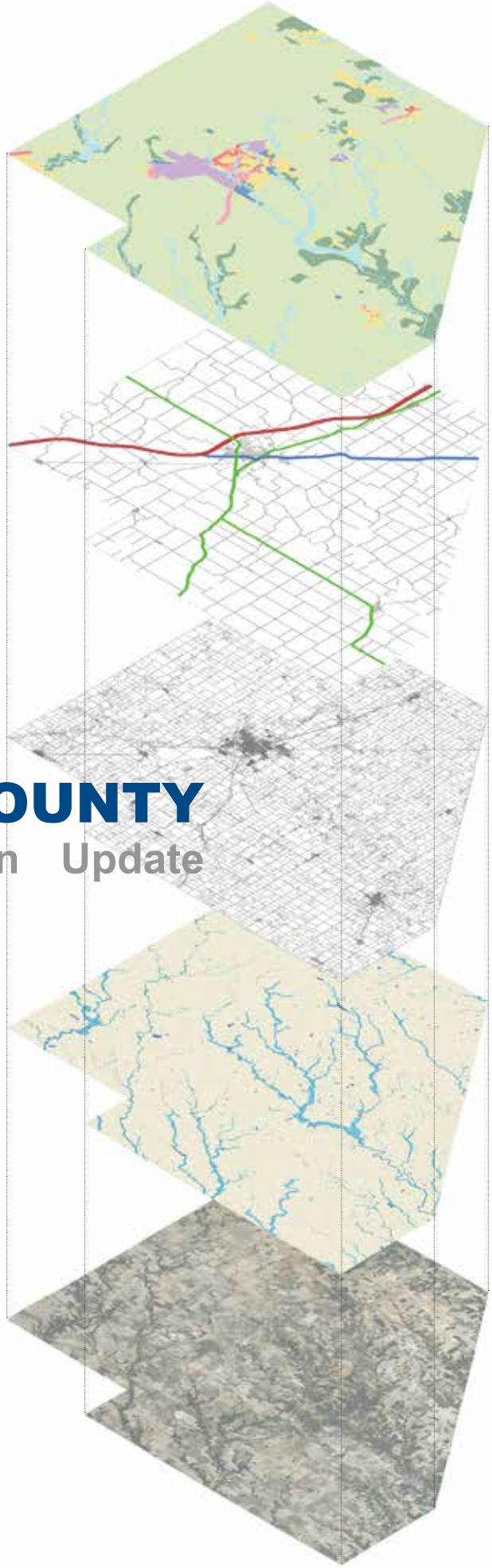

PLAN DECATUR COUNTY

2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Plan Decatur County: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update would not have been possible without the tremendous input, feedback, and expertise of the County leadership and staff. We would also like to give a special thank you to the project steering committee and the countless residents and business owners who generously devoted their time and creativity in the hopes of building a stronger and more vibrant community.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Decatur County's last comprehensive plan was created in August 2007. At that point in time, the County was preparing for the expansion of Honda and the growth that would bring to both Greensburg and other areas in the County. Around 2008 the housing market started to bottom out and the economy went into a recession. The City of Greensburg and Decatur County never realized the growth potential provided in the 2007 plan.

In 2014, the City of Greensburg initiated an update of their comprehensive plan. Decatur County determined this would be an opportune time to update their plan as well, so the City and County could continue to implement compatible visions. The County's plan had provided the necessary guidance with policy recommendations and the future land use plan was used at each Plan Commission meeting to direct future growth. This update provides the County opportunities to revisit policies and ensure they are supportive of the citizens vision for the County's future.

The quality of life in Decatur County is good. The people, economy, and the resources here are intimately interconnected to provide safe, sound environments for raising a family, farming, opportunities for business and industry, and scenic landscapes.

Decatur County is a great place to live for the diversity of environments it offers. The City of Greensburg, at the heart of the County, acts as its urban hub and activity center with a wide range of services, businesses and residential offerings. Small towns such as Westport, Millhousen, St. Paul, and New Point are classic Indiana towns with their traditional Main Streets and small business districts, gridded street layout, and walkable residential neighborhoods. The County's small towns are meeting places for rural residents and gateways to the rural landscape for County visitors; they host occasional restaurants, churches and social clubs. The rural landscape,

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Introduction

covered in various sizes and types of farms as well as woodlands and stream corridors, provides solace for those who prefer to live in a quieter and more natural environment.

Decatur County has many different places to work with Honda, GECOM and Valeo being the largest manufacturers. There are also many farms and confined feeding operations that add to the local economy. Many of these various sectors are supported by a broad network of supporting services. Smaller businesses in Greensburg and the small towns thrive on the closely-knit community that has local loyalty. Furthermore, the transportation system, with I-74 and numerous state routes, and proximate location between Indianapolis and Cincinnati, provides the County the opportunity to employee people from outside of the County, while also supporting a great quality of life for those employees who live here.

Plan Purpose

A comprehensive plan is in essence a road map that guides future development and change in the County. It provides the policy basis and direction for the County's land development and land use policy and zoning regulations. This plan examines the inter-relationships between land use, transportation, utilities, the local economy, recreation, small town development, etc. A comprehensive plan is a document with a long-range view that serves as a guide for making land use decisions, preparing capital improvement programs, and determining the rate, timing, and location of future growth. It is based on establishing long-term vision, goals, and objectives that direct investment and development activity within the County.

The County's comprehensive plan covers the entire county, plus all cities and towns except Greensburg, as it has an Area Plan Commission. The typical plan horizon is 20 to 30 years, however, it should be reviewed annually in order to stay relevant with changing demographics, significant changes in development patterns, changes in the economy and changes in citizen's values.

Indiana Code 36-7-4-502

Sec. 502. A comprehensive plan must contain at least the following elements:

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

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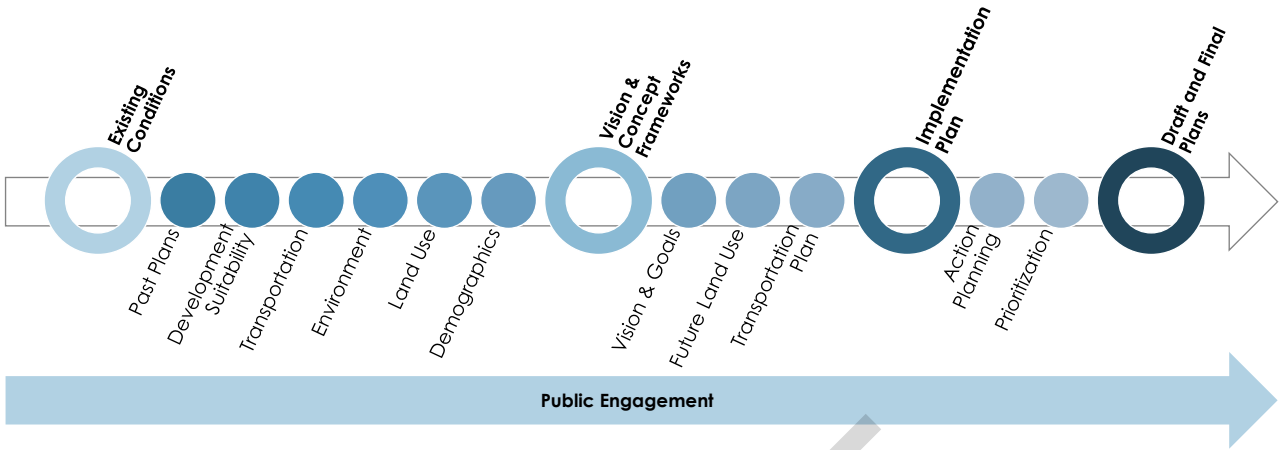

Once adopted, this Comprehensive Plan Update will:

- Update existing land use inventories;
- Address key land use, transportation, urban design, and other development issues;
- Provide guidance for future land use and infrastructure decisions;
- Outline policy to direct future growth, development, and reinvestment.

The Comprehensive Plan will be used by the Decatur County Area Plan Commission and County Commissioners as required under Indiana Law. This plan serves as the basis for policy related to development, redevelopment, infrastructure, and management of land uses. This plan should provide the policy basis to support any changes in the Zoning and Subdivision Control Ordinance as well as provide guidance on the creation of a Capital Improvements Plan.

Process and Outreach

The Decatur County Commissioners contracted with CHA Companies and Rundell Ernstberger Associates to develop the Comprehensive Plan. The Area Plan Commission, with input from the County Commissioners, formed a steering committee to work with the consultants to guide and oversee the planning process. The Steering Committee consisted of members of the County Commissioners, Area Plan Commission, County staff, Economic Development Corporation of Greensburg & Decatur County, business owners, residents, social service providers, agriculture and agriculture related industries. Several members of the public regularly attended the Steering Committee Meetings, which occurred roughly monthly.

The process began with the consultant team digging into the existing conditions of the County to begin to develop a list of issues and opportunities that the plan should address. This included reviewing past plans, mapping the transportation system, utility service areas, a variety of environmental characteristics, land use, and completing a demographic analysis. This allowed the consultant team and steering committee to understand where the County had been and address potential trends and issues within this update.

Next the Steering Committee worked on the vision and concept frameworks. The Steering Committee broke into two groups and worked on framework maps for the land use and transportation components. These maps were discussed and combined into one land use and transportation map that was then revised by the committee. Policy discussions then ensued over several meetings. These discussions set the base for the visions, goals and objectives found in this plan. The final part of the plan to be created was the implementation plan.

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Introduction

There were numerous ways for the public to get involved during the planning process. A project website was setup at www.plandecaturcounty.com and a link posted on the County's home page of their website. The project website allowed people to look at materials presented to the Steering Committee and at the public meetings. There was also a MYSIDEWALK™ page at www.decaturcocomprehensiveplan.com where the consultant team asked questions and visitors to that page could provide responses. A SurveyMonkey™ survey was also sent out and posted at the library and County Courthouse to gain input from citizens regarding how specific policy should be tailored in the County. The consultant team hosted two days of focus group/stakeholder interviews where the interviewees identified key issues and general concerns for the County. Focus Group/stakeholders included:

- County Commissioners
- County Council Members
- Area Plan Commission Members
- Board of Zoning Appeals Members
- County Staff
- Realtors, Developers, Builders
- Farm Operators & Large Property Owners
- Service, Non-Profit and other Community Organizations
- Utilities
- Residents
- Business Leaders/Employers
- Small Towns

Finally, the County hosted two sets of public meetings in four different areas of the County. The first meeting allowed participants to brainstorm ideas and create a vision for Decatur County's future. Participants also noted areas of concern and where future development should occur. This information was incorporated into both the land use and policy document. The second set of meetings discussed the draft plan and allowed participants to provide comments and feedback.

The plan was drafted in sections and the sections were reviewed by the County staff and Steering Committee and made available for public review and input. This drafting and reviewing/revising process occurred between February and May 2016.

Plan Organization

The Plan is outlined in many different sections. This first chapter, the Introduction, provides an overview of the plans purpose, the process and public involvement, how the plan is organized and how to use the plan.

The second chapter focuses on the Vision, Principles and Objectives of the plan. This chapter is the policy basis for the entire plan. It describes what the vision, goals, objectives are.

The third chapter, Physical Recommendations, is the meat of the document where the Plan Commission and County Commissioners will refer to often. It contains the future land use map and a description and photo images of the land use classifications. It also contains the thoroughfare plan map, where improvements should be targeted and other supporting information.

The fourth chapter takes the objectives and focuses them into policy recommendations for the County. There were very specific issues that the Steering Committee wanted to address, and those policies are summarized here. They include future development, agriculture, transportation and infrastructure, and community facilities and services.

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The fifth chapter, Implementation, is one of the most important chapters as it tells readers how to implement the plan. The chapter provides an overview of adoption, how to interpret various elements in the plan, how to rezone property in light of the updated plan, and what to take into account as part of development review. There is also a section on monitoring and updating the plan, as it should be completed periodically instead of waiting every five to ten years to comprehensively re-write it. There are implementation tools and then the top priorities that need to be implemented immediately after the plan is adopted.

The appendix contains the Existing Conditions. It details the baseline trends in the County over many years. This is where the existing land use map as of 2015 is located, an overview of environmental factors are provided, existing transportation network and issues, demographic analysis, and housing characteristics. All this information helped to shape the policy of this plan.

How to Use this Plan

A comprehensive plan is a document with a long-range view that serves as a guide for making land use decisions, preparing capital improvement programs, and determining the rate, timing, and location of future growth. It is based on establishing long-term vision, goals, and objectives that direct investment and development activity within the County. A comprehensive plan typically considers a 20-year planning horizon, although plan updates can occur before the expiration date if the recommendations are implemented, goals are achieved, community conditions change, values and/or priorities shift, or if circumstances dictate that the plan is no longer germane. As such, a comprehensive plan should be reviewed annually to determine progress and relevancy. This Comprehensive Plan Update contains:

- Updates to existing land use inventories;
- Addresses key land use, transportation, agriculture, and other development issues;
- Provides guidance for future land use and infrastructure decisions;
- Outlines policies to direct future development and reinvestment.

From a policy standpoint, the plan will provide guidance specifically for changes in land use through rezonings or future land use amendments. The County Commissioners and Plan Commission should give consideration to the relevant sections of the plan when reviewing applications and desired changes. Specifically this review would determine whether a rezone or land use amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, appropriate recommendations in the Plan and Future Land Use Map. If the application is supported by the various relevant sections of the Plan, then the rezoning/amendment should be approved. If the application is not supported by the various relevant sections of the Plan, then the Commissioners and Commission should either deny the application or approve the application with conditions that would make it consistent with the intent of the Plan. A situation could occur where changes have occurred either socially, physically, culturally or economically in Decatur County that make the Comprehensive Plan inconsistent with the values and goals of the County. At that point, the Plan Commission or County Commissioners should note that and the comprehensive plan needs to be updated to be consistent and responsive to the changing conditions.

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2 VISION AND PRINCIPLES

Introduction

The vision of a comprehensive plan is an overarching view of the physical, economic and social well-being of the County and its residents in 20 years or more. It acts as a guide for decision-making when the Plan Commission and County Commissioners are reviewing new development petitions or petitions that focus on redevelopment. In developing the vision, several questions were asked of key stakeholders, the public, and the steering committee. Such future thinking questions included:

- What does agriculture mean to this County?
- How do citizens want to live?
- What kinds of activities and land uses does the County want?
- What are things that the County doesn't want?
- What does the County want to change about its rural areas?
- What does the County want to keep for future generations?
- Are there sites, landscapes, sensitive areas, and views the County wants to preserve?
- How much new development can the County allow without hurting its agricultural way of life?
- What kinds of new development are appropriate?
- What is the role and importance of farms and confined feeding operations in Decatur County?

What is constant in Decatur County is that it is still an agricultural community and people recognize and support that. However, the County is in transition concerning its future. One point everyone agrees upon is that the agricultural lands need to be preserved, growth and agriculture preservation should be balanced, property owners should be able to develop their property in an appropriate manner, and that any new development needs to be located near already developed areas and existing cities and towns.

The transition point in the County is to minimize conflicts between land uses. These transition points boil down the location of single family housing throughout the County, the location of confined feeding operations and ensuring that the zoning regulations are applied consistent for both agricultural and non-agricultural uses.

Throughout the planning process public opinions were split on confined feeding operations and how to address them in the future. At issue is whether the County should allow operations to

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be located anywhere versus target their location in addition to allow them to continue under state regulation versus adding local regulations. In every venue, whether it was discussions with the steering committee, public meetings or a public survey, the results were split and provided no clear direction. Therefore, the County will need to continue to monitor this issue and adjust the policy and potential vision within this document as the community values continue to change due to political, economic, social and environmental conditions.

The vision statement and supporting principles were developed using input gathered from the planning process including focus group meetings, public meetings, and steering committee discussions. This vision statement incorporates the community values identified by participants involved in the process. The vision should be an inspirational description of future Decatur County. The five principles represent the tenants of the physical, social, environmental, and economic principals of urban planning.

Vision

A vision is a statement that reflects local potential and makes a commitment to future action. A vision generally describes what the community wants to be. It emphasizes the values of Decatur County and what citizens would like to see improved in the future. Topics should include things such as social and economic well-being, basic values of county residents, and the county's physical character. The vision statement should be clear, succinct and purposeful. It should be a statement that everyone generally agrees with and is easily understood. Vision statements help to define the direction in which the remainder of the plan should proceed.

Principles

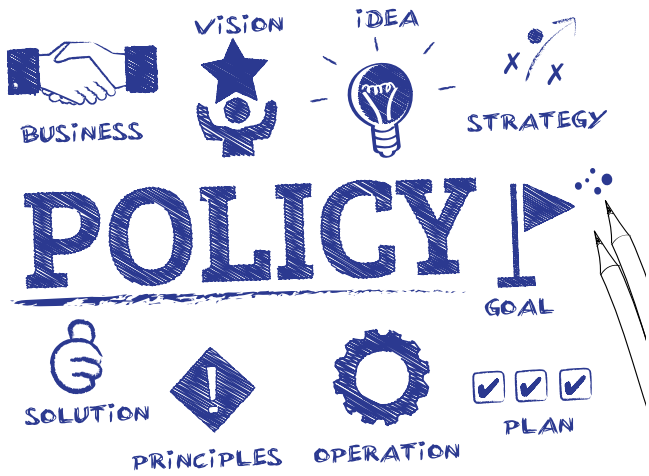
Principles are concise statements that describe in general terms, a desired future condition. Principles are typically positive statements. They further define the vision and one statement should be developed for each principle. From this vision statement and input from steering committee meetings, community meetings, and surveys, five principals have been identified that will frame the physical and policy recommendations. These principles are statements that describe specific elements of the vision. These topical areas include:

- Agriculture
- Future Development
- Government
- Infrastructure/Resources
- Economic Development

Objectives

Objectives are more specific statements that break down the principles in more manageable efforts. Each objective is discussed further in Chapter 4 and has a series of recommendations to implement that objective.

The rest of this chapter highlights the vision, principles and objectives.



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DECATUR COUNTY VISION STATEMENT

Decatur County is a strong agricultural community that provides a rural way of life set between Indianapolis and Cincinnati. Throughout the County, there are valuable natural, agricultural, educational, recreational, social and economic resources. These resources provide residents and businesses with an enhanced quality of life and provide opportunities for all ages. Preserving these resources and strengthening the connections between them is the foundation for maintaining and enhancing quality of life and economic opportunity. Agriculture remains an integral part of the Decatur County economy; manufacturing and the entire chain of services associated with it also play a large role. Small businesses located in Greensburg and in each of the small towns are flourishing and provide a unique market of goods and services for residents and tourists alike. More residents live and work in Decatur County because of the thriving business climate. In 2035, agriculture will still be prevalent because the productive agricultural lands, both large and small, will have been preserved by directing new growth in areas adjacent to already developed clusters or the existing communities of Greensburg, Lake Santee, Millhousen, New Point, St. Paul, and Westport.

AGRICULTURE

Decatur County will continue to preserve and enhance its agricultural lands and activity. The County will continue to work to protect viable farmland, thriving agricultural industry, and enhance the profitability of agriculture through agricultural support services and developing economic development partnerships that increase the demand for locally produced agricultural commodities. Confined feeding operations are part of the agricultural component of the County's economy. The principles for agriculture include:

- Protect the County's agricultural resources.
- Balanced preservation of agricultural land while protecting private property rights
- Focus agricultural related and support businesses along SR 3/46 corridor
- Continue to support CFO development in the county

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Decatur County has had a rural landscape. People desire to live in this rural landscape and it is imperative to maintain the future population and employment base in the County. The County supports future residential, commercial, service and industrial growth and will target it around existing development clusters in the County and around existing cities, towns and burgs. There will be a balance between agricultural preservation and new development, limiting the conflicts between more intensive agriculture development and less intensive business and residential use. Any rural residential development will be mindful of its location within the County and that farming operations are located throughout the entire County.

- Support A Focused Growth and Development Approach
- Increase housing supply and diversity
- Lack of Housing Diversity and Overpriced Housing

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- Focus new non-residential development at the I-74 interchanges

GOVERNMENT

Decatur County is comprised of several governing bodies who work together to enhance and promote the culture and quality of life within the county. Government is financially strong because of its good fiscal management and provides a safe environment for its citizens. Public servants of the various jurisdictions are skilled in their abilities, are receptive to and encourage community involvement, and are accountable and transparent to the public they serve. Various government units possess the capital and human resource capacity and expertise to effectively and efficiently serve the public well. The County government will support existing towns. The public leaders have worked together to maintain the rural lifestyle of Decatur County while encouraging the economic development in targeted areas of the County.

- Increase Available Amenities to Limit Brain Drain of Younger Generations and the Impact of an Increasing Elderly Population
- Increase Government Transparency Regarding Land Use, Zoning and Development Review
- Support Individual, On-Site, Non-Commercial Alternative Energy Sources
- Work with Local, Regional, State and National Agencies to Ensure A Balanced and Desired Future

INFRASTRUCTURE / RESOURCES

Decatur County will continue to maintain the integrity of its small towns while promoting exceptional county-wide infrastructure, developing and managing technological advancement, resource preservation, rural preservation, growth management, and recreational opportunities. Public sewer and water will be provided to appropriate future growth in areas designated on the land use plan. Future roadways will be designed and constructed to safely serve the development that utilizes them as well as provide an underground pathway for technological infrastructure development. Existing roadways will continue to be upgraded as resources are available. The natural landscape of the County, including farmland, lakes, streams, minerals, forests and natural habitats, will be protected through development standards to ensure that they continue to exist into future generations as well as to protect rural character and preserve economically viable agricultural areas.

- Preserve Natural Resources
- Focus Resources on Critical Infrastructure Needs
- Protect Groundwater Quality
- Support The City's Efforts to Expand the Existing Greensburg Municipal Airport

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Decatur County will continue to foster economic prosperity by promoting targeted economic development initiatives, higher wage employment opportunities, and educational opportunities that will ensure a diversified local economy. Targeted industries include agriculture, agriculture support businesses, manufacturing, industrial and small businesses, professional services, retail and restaurants in Greensburg and other small towns. Opportunities are established on the land use map to be located in and around Greensburg and the other towns. The County will continue to support its relationship with schools to provide the necessary skill sets and establish an employee base to attract new businesses. Economic Development initiatives will also focus on attracting independent businesses and services that support existing businesses and residents.

- Increase Employment Opportunities to Provide Higher Wage Jobs
- Continue to Partner with Local Agencies and Not-For-Profits to Provide Additional Skills Training.

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3 PHYSICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Land Use

In order to plan for future growth and development, it is important to have an understanding of existing land use supply. The existing land use pattern shows not only the location of concentrations of certain uses, but also what land may face development pressures and what type of development that may be. Agriculture[1] is the predominant land use, comprising almost 90% of the County's area. The second largest land use in terms of area are woodlands, which make up approximately 6% of the County. Residential uses and home sites account for almost 2.5% of the County's area. This figure does not take into account residential structures that are part of a larger agriculture parcel. Those parcels are included in the agriculture area. More information about the existing land use supply can be found in the existing conditions section of the appendix.

Future land use planning is an important part of the comprehensive plan process because it translates the vision, goals, and objectives into a tangible, physical form. The future land use map was created through examination of existing land use patterns, zoning, stakeholder input, and discussion with County staff. In many instances, the existing land use is the desired future use and expected to continue indefinitely. However, there are some areas where changes in land use are anticipated as farm properties are developed for the first time or vacant and under-utilized properties are redeveloped.

The future land use plan should not be confused with zoning. While land use and zoning are related, they serve separate functions. Land use describes the activity that occurs on the land, single-family residential for example. Zoning then regulates the character, building size, density, and other development standards of that land use activity. There are often multiple different single-family residential zones, ranging from rural or estate in character to denser, traditional neighborhood forms like those around central Greensburg.

The future land use map is intended to be general in nature and not based on specific property lines. For this reason, it is drawn with irregular shapes and symbols. This allows some development flexibility and interpretation on a project by project basis while still establishing the foundation by which to make judgments on the appropriateness of future development petitions.

1 The U.S. Department of Agriculture considers forested land (identified in this plan as woodlands) to be part of agriculture. For the purposes of this plan, it has been separated out to provided specific direction for these areas.

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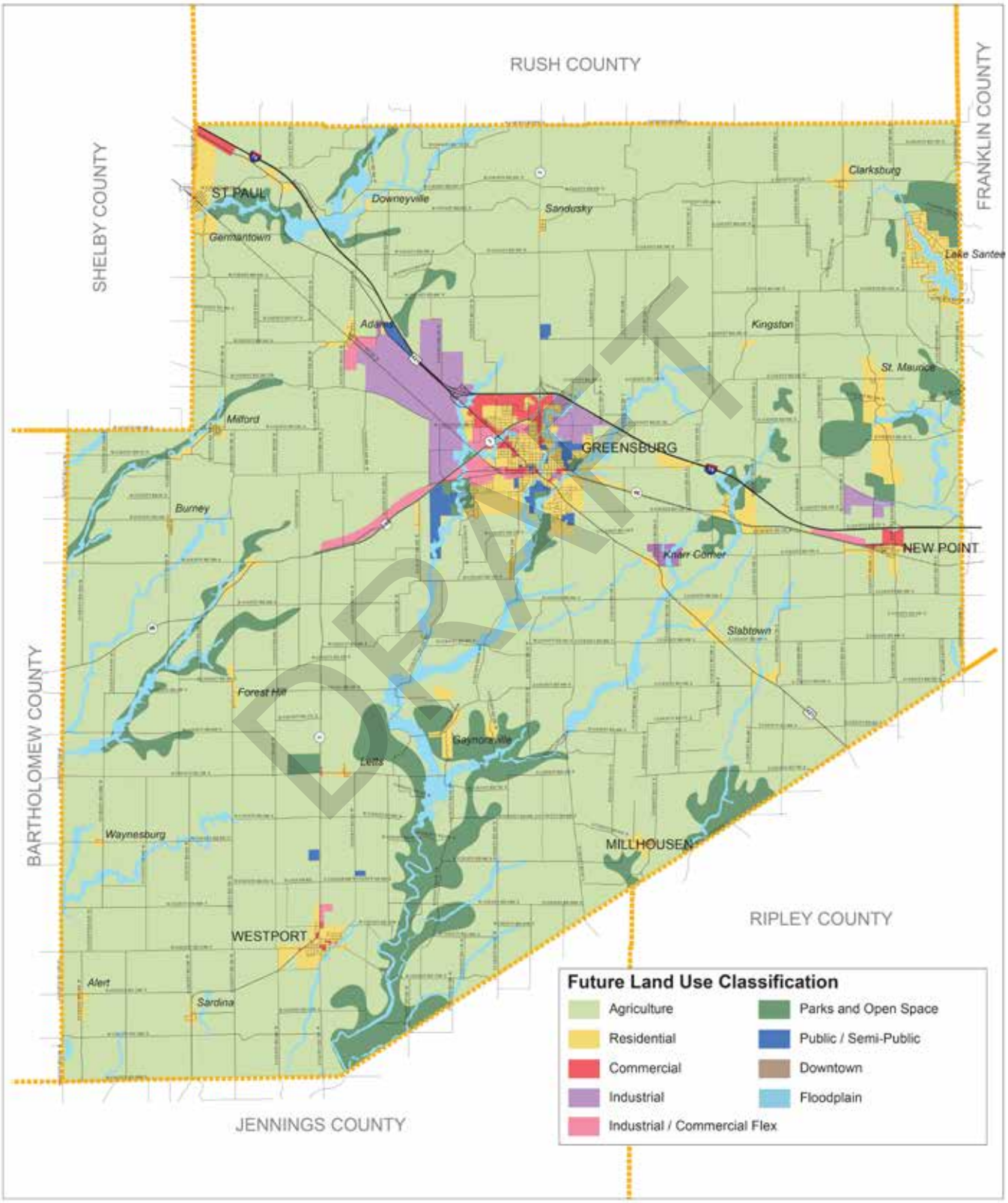
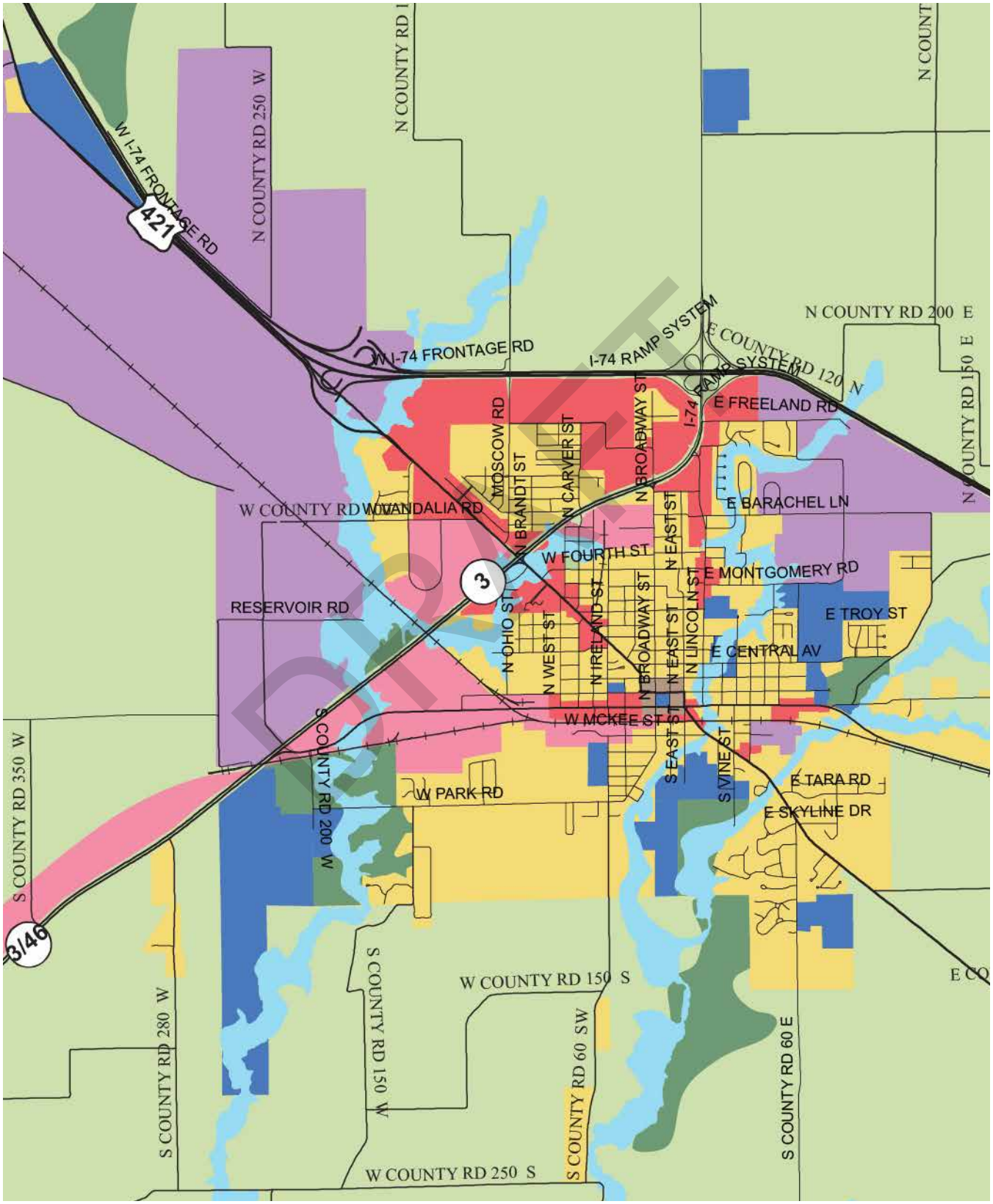
Physical Recommendations

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

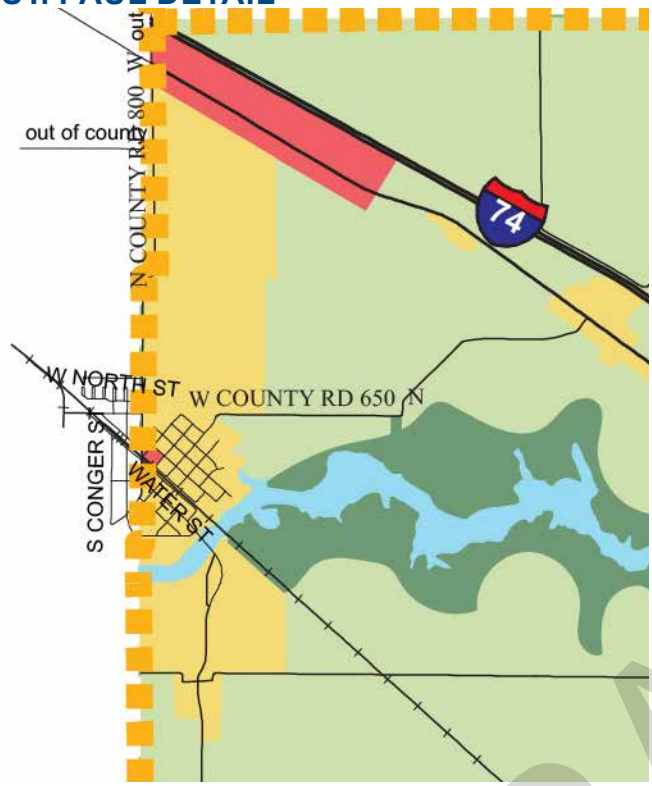


FUTURE LAND USE MAP: GREENSBURG DETAIL

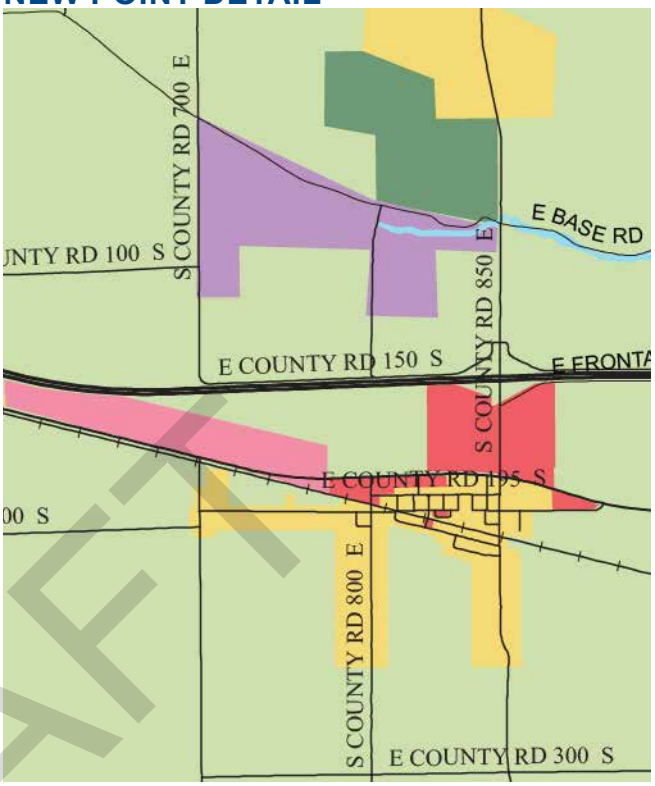


Physical Recommendations

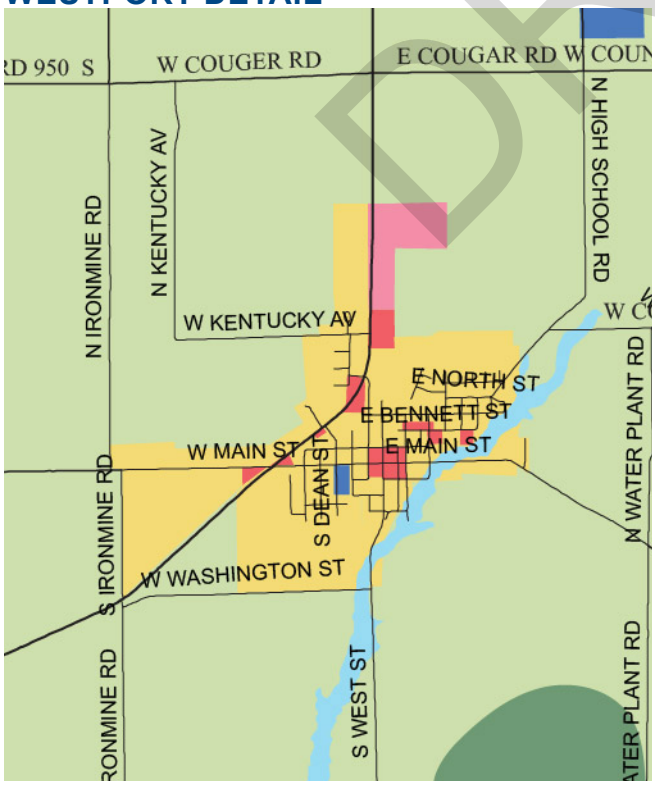
FUTURE LAND USE MAP: ST. PAUL DETAIL



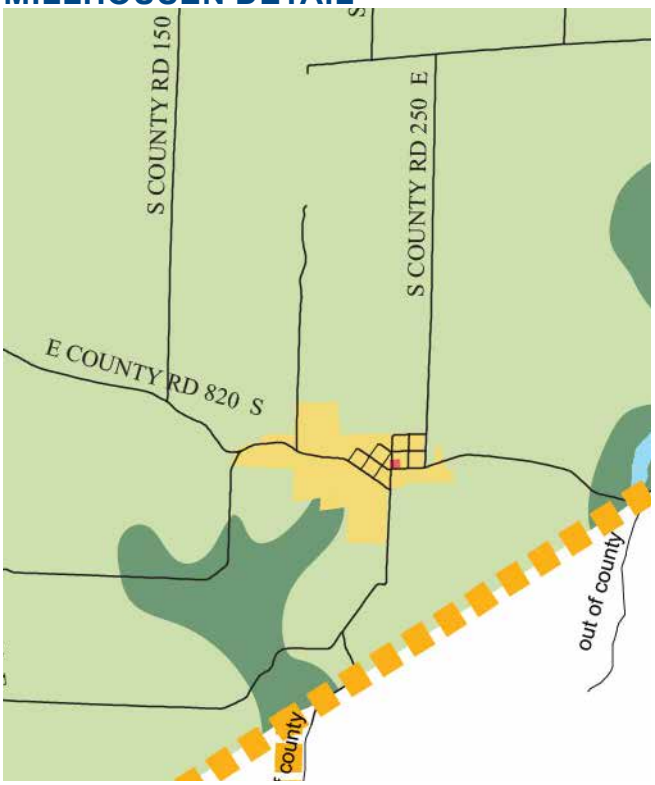
FUTURE LAND USE MAP: NEW POINT DETAIL



FUTURE LAND USE MAP: WESTPORT DETAIL



FUTURE LAND USE MAP: MILLHOUSEN DETAIL



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FUTURE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

Agriculture

The agriculture land use classification is intended to protect the County's rural atmosphere and support the agriculture economy. These areas include lands that are sparsely populated and used primarily for livestock and crop production. Agriculture areas may also include agritourism businesses, wineries, farm stands, and limited commercial uses that support the agriculture industry. Given the potential conflict between residential uses and livestock confined feeding operations, agricultural production and storage centers (such as grain elevators), agriculture research facilities, and other intensive agriculture-related activities, residential subdivisions creating four or more lots are discouraged in these areas. Consideration should be given to appropriately buffer new confined feeding operations and other intensive operations to minimize potential impacts. Additionally, the County should continue to work with the operators of such uses to understand transportation needs and improve local roadway capacity and safety in agricultural areas.

Residential

The residential land use classification is intended to promote and enhance established residential clusters and identify areas for the creation of new housing and neighborhoods. These areas should consist primarily of single-family homes. Duplexes and multi-family apartments may be appropriate within city and town limits. Supporting uses such as schools, parks, open spaces, and religious institutions may also be included in residential areas. Infill and redevelopment of established residential areas should reflect the surrounding density and form. New residential development should allow for a variety of housing types, creating more housing options in targeted areas near existing cities and towns, with development densities being determined by the availability of public utilities and adequate transportation infrastructure.

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Physical Recommendations

Commercial

Commercial areas provide a location for retailers and businesses that serve the needs of residents, employees, and visitors to Decatur County. These areas are primarily comprised of retail, restaurant, office, and service businesses. With the exception of downtown Greensburg and other small retail nodes, these uses are generally automobile-oriented and as such located along thoroughfares in proximity to the neighborhoods and businesses they serve. It is important to ensure roads and bridges can accommodate potential traffic generated by commercial uses. Building form and intensity will vary by use and location; it is important that new development respect the character and context of the area in regard to scale, building materials, signage, lighting, and other development features. For example, infill development along Main Street in Westport should be of a different scale and character when compared to a new project along Interstate-74.

Industrial

The industrial classification is intended to support the existing industrial businesses, while at the same time allowing for growth and new development of manufacturing and processing facilities. The uses found in industrial districts may have a high impact on adjacent lands, require extensive infrastructure improvements, public facilities, and access to major transportation networks. It is important to ensure the adjacent roads and bridges can accommodate potential traffic generated by industrial uses. To help limit the impacts from industrial development, significant landscape buffers and setbacks should be used to separate incompatible uses.

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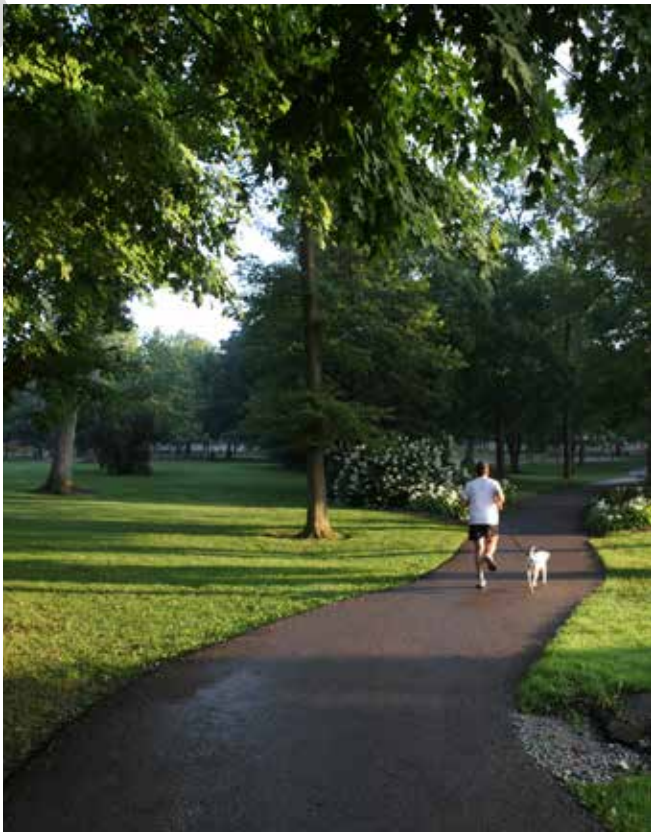
Industrial / Commercial Flex

The industrial / commercial flex classification is established to encourage development for a range of office, research and development, light industrial, retail, and small-scale warehousing uses that will spur economic growth and employment opportunities in the County. Many light industrial uses resemble commercial buildings from the exterior and as such are compatible in flex areas; these areas could include a combination of both high intensity users within multi-story buildings on large parcels and groups of smaller structures in a campus setting. This land use classification has a smaller impact when compared to traditional industrial land uses and should be used to transition between industrial districts and lower impact land uses. These flex areas in and around the City of Greensburg are intended to contain primarily office and light industrial uses. Where restaurant, retail and commercial service uses are included, they should be in a supporting capacity. The flex area along SR 3/46 is intended for continued agriculture-related commercial and industrial businesses with other commercial uses in an ancillary role. The flex areas west of New Point and north of Westport may include a broader range of commercial and industrial uses to accommodate the varying needs of these areas.

Parks and Open Space

The parks and open space classification is established to distinguish and protect recreational areas, public parks, and other open spaces. These lands may be publicly or privately owned and include both active park spaces and undeveloped or preserved natural areas. Uses may include passive open spaces, ball fields, play equipment, golf courses, community gardens, woodlands, conservation areas, and environmentally sensitive lands. Where possible, recreation and park areas should link to each other with bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The preservation of woodlands and other open spaces on private property is encouraged and should be a consideration during the development review process.



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Physical Recommendations

Public / Semi-Public

The public / semi-public facility classification identifies areas where governmental, educational, or general public facilities are located. The scale, character, and intensity of development will be dependent on the use and surrounding area. This land use classification is compatible with most other land uses, and therefore its placement in the community is very flexible to changes in the County's current and future needs.

Downtown

Focused around the County courthouse square, the downtown area incorporates a mixture of uses in a pedestrian friendly environment. Currently this area is primarily comprised of local businesses, but in the future the downtown could become a more diverse cultural hub for the community that consists of residential, commercial, and public open spaces. Promoting mixed-use development is critical to a healthy downtown by promoting housing variety and creating an immediate customer base for local retailers. Infill development should reflect the size and scale of surrounding uses and should promote pedestrian access. Design standards can be used to ensure historical context and promote street life and activity.

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Floodplain

While floodplain areas are not an active land use, they are included on the future land use map to help inform decisions of where development should or should not occur. Floodplain maps are created and maintained at a state and federal level, therefore the County has little control over where these areas occur. The floodplain may be used for passive recreation and open space while most other development should be avoided. Limiting disturbance within the floodplain protects ecologically sensitive land and helps to prevent downstream flooding.

CFO RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to planning the location of future growth, development, and preservation areas, a portion of the plan process addressed mitigating impacts between future intensive agriculture operations and rural residents. A desire for increased separation between confined feeding operations and non-agriculture uses was voiced by many residents during the public engagement process. Maps were developed to help graphically depict potential zoning standards and help to better understand the area impacts of such standards. A CFO working group made up of representatives from the steering committee worked to refine potential development standard regulations.

Standards recommended for consideration and amendment into the zoning ordinance for operations defined as CFOs by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) include:

- CFO structure setback a minimum of 1320 feet from incorporated city and town limits. Millhousen should be excluded from this setback requirement given the large undeveloped areas within Town limits. CFOs should still be prohibited within Town limits.
- CFO structure setback a minimum of 1320 feet from the property line of school.
- CFO structures must be separated from religious institutions, hospitals, nursing homes, and other healthcare structures by a minimum of 1000 feet.
- CFO structures must be separated from residential structures by a minimum of 1000 feet.
- Additionally, standards should be created to protect existing but undeveloped, buildable lots in platted subdivisions and small towns. A 1000 foot setback is recommended from CFO structure to lot line. It may be advantageous to apply this standard only to subdivisions platted after November 1, 1996 so as to exclude large subdivisions that were platted over two decades ago and never developed.

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Physical Recommendations

- Existing front, side, and rear setbacks from property lines and roadways should be maintained.
- All setbacks and separations should be reciprocal, meaning a new non-agriculture use could not locate within 1000 feet of an existing CFO structure.

In addition to these physical, development standards, additional recommendations as they relate to CFOs include:

- Clear definitions as to what qualifies as a school, religious institution, hospital, nursing home, healthcare facility, and residential dwelling will be required as part of the recommended amendments.
- A voluntary waiver of setback/separation may be granted by the affected property owner to reduce the required setback or separation to minimum IDEM or other county regulation.
- Expansion of existing, registered IDEM sites should be exempt from increased setback/ separation requirements but would still need to meet minimum IDEM standards and property line setbacks.
- CFOs should be identified as a conditional use within agriculture districts.
- Additional development standards should be explored that would allow for mitigation practices to be used as a means to reduce required setbacks/separation. Permitted practices should be permanent, easily maintained, and able to be inspected by county personnel.
- Applications for new CFOs should include an emergency plan and contact information for alternative power, ventilation, and water sources in the event of disruption of normal utility service.
- As with all development standards, a variance may be sought for relief from the zoning ordinance.

The map on the following page depicts an approximation of the impacts of these potential CFO development standards. The green area represents locations where a CFO facility could potentially locate based on these standards and does not include additional IDEM regulations dependent on soils, water wells, karst terrain, manure storage systems, etc. The remaining shaded colors indicate areas that would fall within the recommended setbacks and/or separations from existing uses and structures. It is important to note that this map is a planning tool and any changes to existing zoning and subdivision regulations need to go through the legal process as defined by Indiana State Code. Additional information regarding the recommendations of the CFO working group can be found in the appendix.

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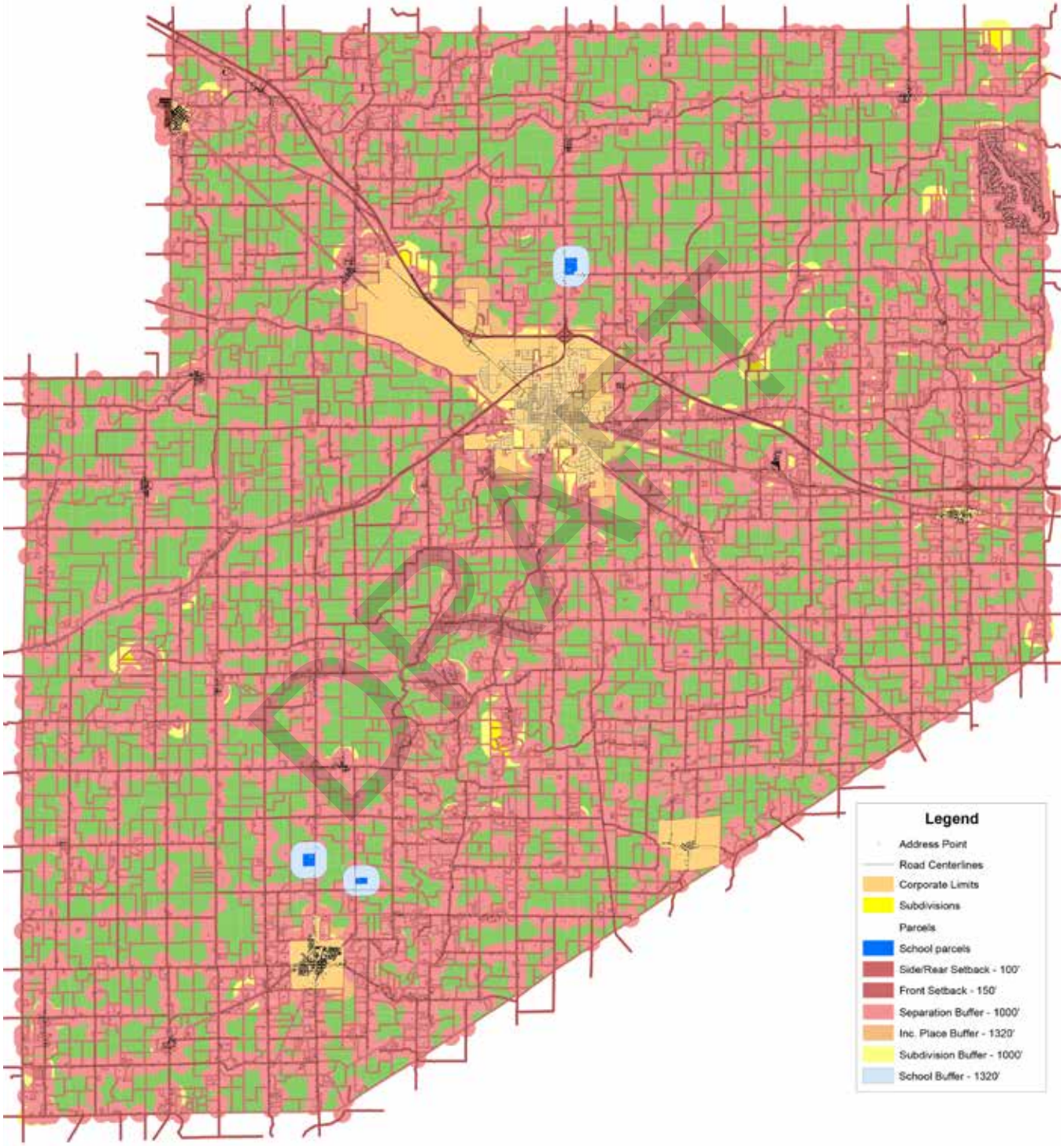
CFO STUDY RECOMMENDATION MAP



Physical Recommendations

Transportation

Decatur County's size and location between Indianapolis and Cincinnati greatly influence transportation options and available travel choices. Interstate 74, US Highway 421, and State Roads 3 and 46 act as the major routes connecting communities throughout the County. These thoroughfares are supported by a system of county and local roads that provide access to properties and connections to the regional system.

Multiple agencies and organizations have influence over roadways in Decatur County. While the County controls the majority of road segments and is responsible for their maintenance, some of the primary routes are controlled by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). This includes Interstate 74, US Highway 421, and State Roads 3 and 46. Additionally, non-INDOT streets within Greensburg, St. Paul, Westport, Millhousen, and New Point are under local jurisdiction. Improvements to INDOT controlled roadways will need to be identified long in advance and included in long-range planning documents in order to gain federal funding. Additional projects seeking federal Transportation Alternative Program funds must also be included in long-range transportation plans. Going forward, coordination between all of these agencies will be necessary to protect and enhance both the local transportation network as well as connections to other regional destinations.

THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The thoroughfare plan map classifies roads and road segments according to the functional purpose they serve within the County's transportation system. The Thoroughfare Plan includes four classifications: primary arterial, secondary arterial, collector, and county / local road.

Primary Arterial

Arterials are designed to carry high traffic volumes at high levels of service for trips to, from, and within the community. Arterials generally need to accommodate a range of vehicle types including cars, trucks, and buses; access to adjacent development is limited along primary arterials. Wide lane widths and the presence of shoulders provide driver comfort and allow for higher speeds. Bicycle and pedestrian travel along arterials requires careful consideration. For example, cyclists and pedestrians are prohibited along interstate routes but may be accommodated along urban arterials.

Secondary Arterial

Secondary arterial roadways carry significant traffic volumes while allowing a greater degree of access to adjacent development. Like primary arterials, secondary arterials should be designed to accommodate a variety of users and vehicle types. Secondary arterials often function to distribute travel from primary arterials to the collector roadway system.

Collector

Collector roadways are designed for slower speed and shorter travel when compared to arterials. Collectors provide land access by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting to arterials. While interstates and arterials are often owned by the Indiana Department of Transportation, collectors are most commonly owned by the County of incorporated cities.

County / Local Road

County and local roads are generally lower traffic roads meant to provide access to adjacent development. In an urban context, local roads are frequently neighborhood streets. In a rural context, local roads are often two lanes and do not include a curb or sidewalk. These are often numbered county roads. Desired speeds are slower because of limited right-of-way design and the residential nature of adjacent land uses. Any public roads not classified as an arterial or collector are considered a county / local road.

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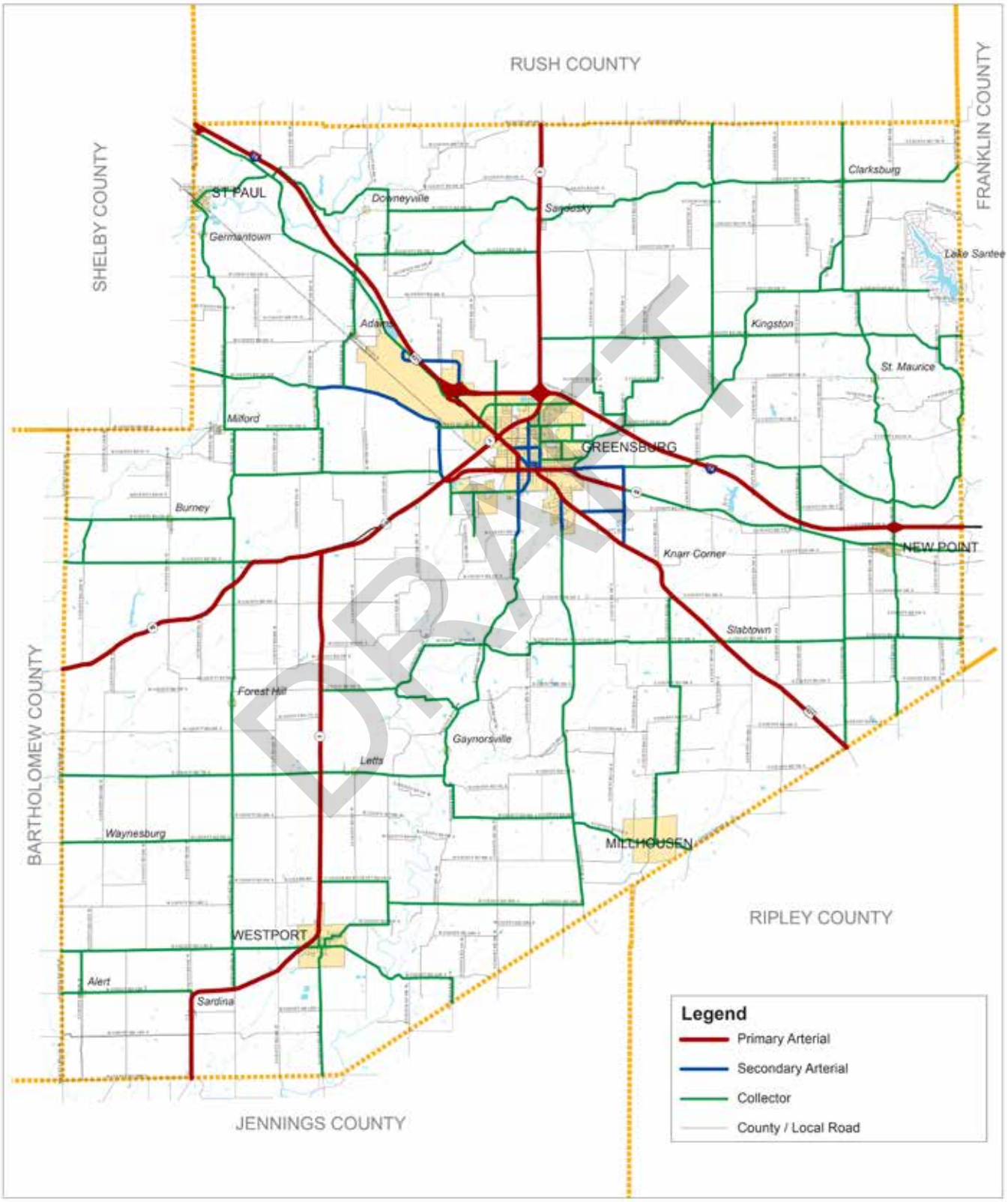
THOROUGHFARE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION MAP



Physical Recommendations

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

In addition to the functional classifications shown on thoroughfare map, a series of additional transportation improvements are included on the map on the following page. This map includes an identification of primary corridors within the county. These roadways all serve as important routes that should be a maintenance priority regardless of the thoroughfare classifications. Additional segments in need of maintenance or improvement as identified during the public engagement process are also identified below.

Areas of Concern

Specific transportation issues identified during the planning process include:

- Have too many narrow roads and bridges.
- Too many gravel roads, which should be paved.
- Roads and bridges are in poor condition and need to be better maintained, including center striping.
- Need east bypass around Greensburg.
- Lack of rail service.
- Unsafe railroad crossings – crossing arms on bypass are too big and slow.
- Traffic control is needed at 421and Vandalia Road (this is within the City of Greensburg).
- Old 421 and bridges can't sustain semis and car carriers.
- Can't get onto 421 during certain periods of day (especially when Honda shifts change).
- St. Paul I-74 interchange needs upgrade.

As agriculture and residential development progress, it is important to make corresponding improvements to transportation networks. Because the transportation network is spread across the County and connects to neighboring jurisdictions and the larger regional network, effective transportation planning will need to go beyond county boundaries to include incorporated city and town departments as well as the Indiana Department of Transportation.

Important considerations for transportation planning include:

- Access for agricultural suppliers, processors, and agricultural service providers to farm operations.
- Efficient transportation of farm products to market.
- Safety for agriculture operators and the general public, including travel of farm machinery to farm fields on public roads and bridges.

It is critical to assess how rural residential developments or new or expanding agricultural operations might affect transportation infrastructure and traffic safety. Numerous "curb-cuts" on county and state highways should be avoided in order to reduce traffic conflicts. In some cases, designating routes for agriculture traffic may be beneficial to highlight the most appropriate roadways and bridges and direct future transportation investments to these roads.

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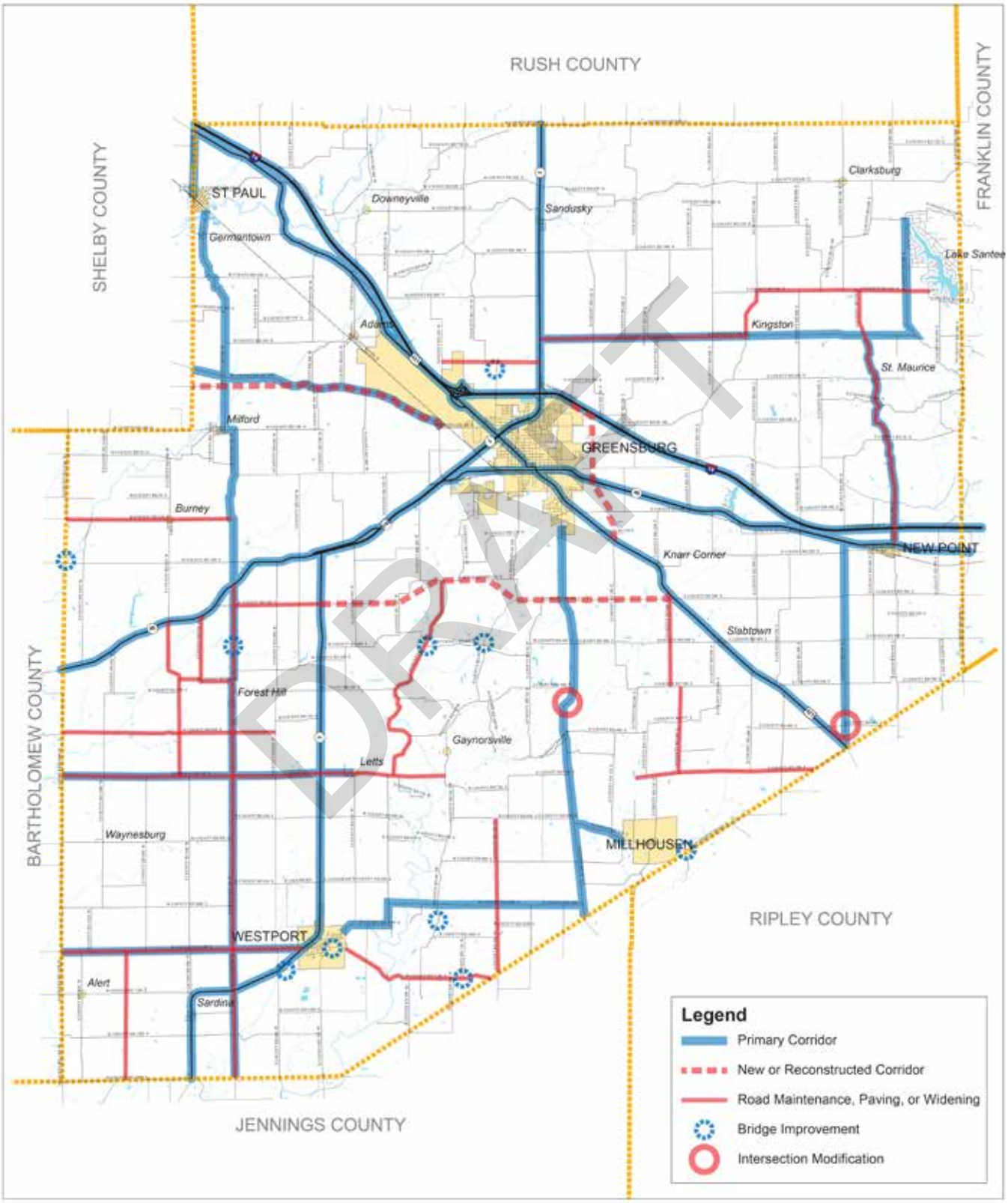
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS MAP



Physical Recommendations

MULTI-USE TRAILS

Planning for a comprehensive, connected bicycle and pedestrian system is an economic development, transportation, and quality of life initiative. The County should strive to develop a multi-modal transportation system that connects existing and future neighborhoods, commercial destinations, parks and schools, as well as other regional trails and paths.

Multi-use trails can take a variety of forms and can be designed in a multitude of ways. The trails and multi-use paths recommended on the following map should generally be constructed as 10 - 12 foot wide, hard surfaces that can be shared by pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users. When planning for these facilities, it is important to consider the context within which the trail or path will be located and the design standards that are offered by organizations such as the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO). For instance, in a rural area with limited vehicular traffic and a lot of open space, a simple asphalt path may be appropriate. In an urban area, where there is a lot of activity, and greater potential for conflict between trail users and vehicles, it may be more appropriate to consider separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

It is recommended that as the proposed bicycle and pedestrian trail system connects various points of interest throughout the County, and specifically within the City of Greensburg, consideration be given to constructing it as a protected cycle track. Protected cycle tracks separate the trail use from the street, and in many cases, separate the trail from the sidewalk. This is an ideal design in urban areas where the trail will be located immediately adjacent to storefronts. By separating the uses, the potential for conflict between the various users groups is minimized.

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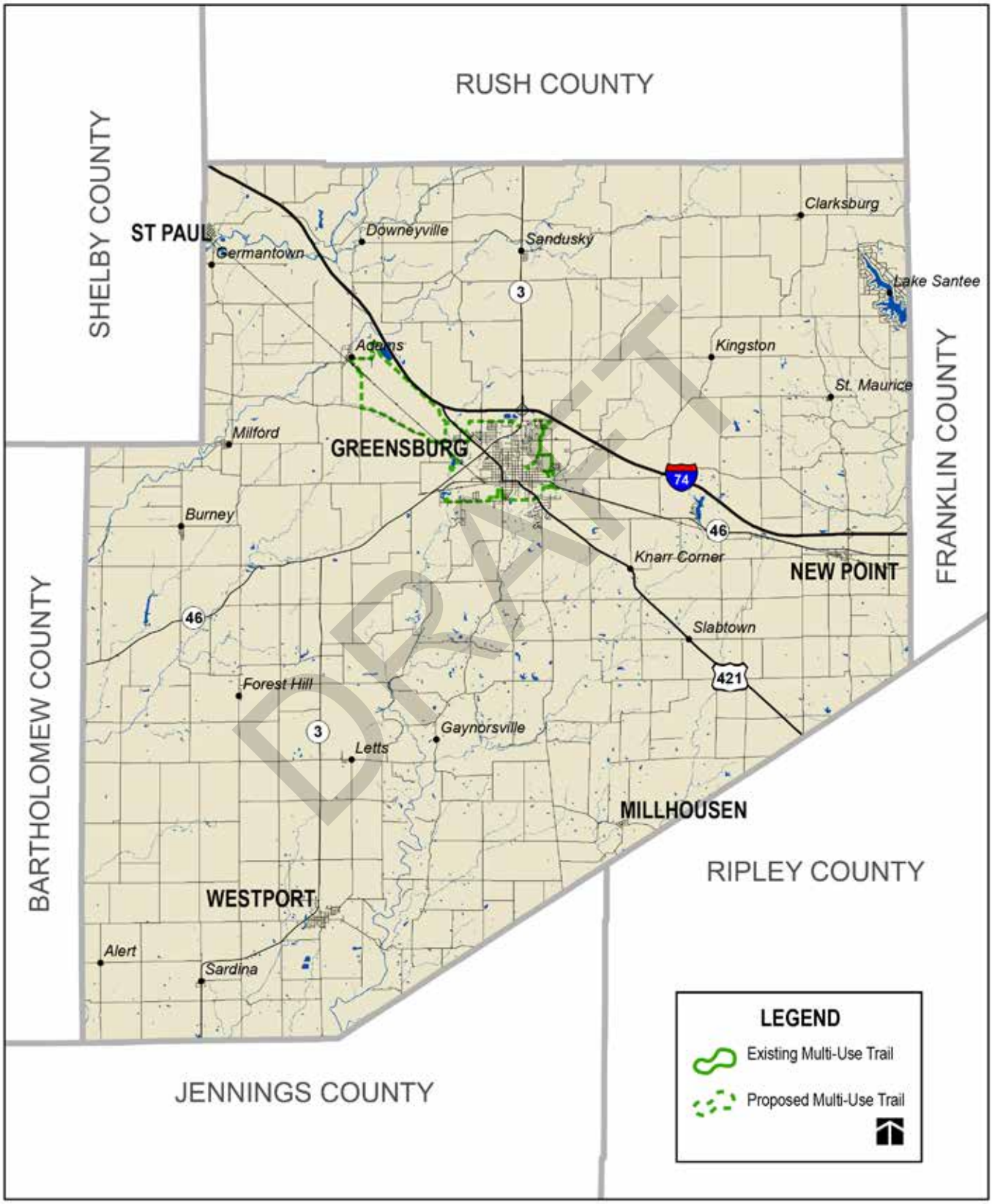
MULTI-USE TRAILS MAP



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4 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Decatur County has long recognized, through its comprehensive plan, the value of maintaining and protecting its agricultural base. As Decatur County continues to balance development of land in the County with its agricultural heritage, some of the issues of the past will change in ways that will require new or modified directions in public policy. It is also true that conversion of agricultural land to other uses is giving rise to new challenges that must also be accounted for when establishing public policy directed toward creating an improved quality of life for residents that is sustainable over time. It is important, therefore that public policy be adaptable and responsive to the needs of Decatur County and the focus remains on balancing all types of agricultural operations with other non-agricultural development.

This plan outlines a vision for Decatur County over the next twenty years, including five principals that describe a desired future condition for the County in Agriculture, Development, Government, Infrastructure / Resources, and Economic Development.

This plan creates opportunities for new development and redevelopment, identifying economic, cultural, social and physical infrastructure improvements needed to enhance Greensburg and other area small towns, by identifying a series of policy recommendations so that the vitality and viability of the County is sustained for the future generations. Therefore, the following Policy Statements will serve as a guide for public policy and program decisions by the Area Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and the County Commissioners in anticipating and responding to issues associated with an agriculturally dominate county. These principles support the vision of the plan set forth in Chapter 2. These principles are reflective of fundamental planning values and were validated by the public.

Many of the important issues that could potentially impact the County relate to land use policy and natural resource management; existing condition information related to these topics can be found in the appendix. This has led to a variety of policy issues related to existing land use patterns, development trends, growth and development in the incorporated towns and small burgs. Besides the physical issues, there are several other issues identified by the County Commissioners, Plan Commission, county staff, steering committee and public that also need to be addressed.

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AGRICULTURE

Decatur county will continue to preserve and enhance its agricultural lands and activity. The county will continue to work to protect viable farmland, thriving agricultural industry, and enhance the profitability of agriculture through agricultural support services and developing economic development partnerships that increase the demand for locally produced agricultural commodities. Confined feeding operations are part of the agricultural component of the county's economy.

POLICY 1:
PROTECT THE COUNTY'S AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Description

Many people move from urban and suburban areas to counties where there is an abundance of open space, less congestion, small town values and a slower pace to life. These individuals will often locate within the County on small (2 acres) to medium (5 to 10 acres) sized lots or within organized subdivisions. This type of development impacts the ability to preserve and protect large expanses of agriculture land, which may be sought after by homeowners because of the relative ease of construction. As a result of growth, Decatur County has lost approximately 9 percent, or 21,200 acres, of farmland between 2007 and 2012. (Source: US Census Bureau, 2012 Census of Agriculture). The majority of this loss was due to construction of the Honda plant. While it has been the policy of the Area Plan Commission to minimize the impact to agriculture land when siting new houses, as more development locates in the rural areas of the County, more agricultural land will be lost.

The issue facing Decatur County is that petitions come in a few at a time over several months. In reviewing petitions, the Plan Commission looks at that single property to determine if the development is appropriate and compatible with the comprehensive plan. The Plan Commission sometimes asks the petitioner to move the structure to a different area of land in order to preserve as much farmland as possible. But oftentimes, if there is minimal impact on farming in the area, the development is approved. As each new parcel is carved off for development, it begins to limit contiguous tracts of land for farming and can pose issues for farm vehicles when trying to cross roads to different fields.

While the County doesn't want to stop development in agricultural areas, they want to manage its location and growth. Therefore, in order to protect the County's agricultural land and especially prime farmland, development should be limited to existing cities, towns and burgs, clusters of other development, or on lots that are designed to preserve as much of the prime farmland as possible. Additionally, the Area Plan Commission will continue to direct housing away from tillable land in order to minimize the impact to prime agricultural soils and maximize contiguity between agricultural parcels.

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Policy Recommendations

Recommendations

- Limit impact to prime farmland by limiting lot size for residential development in unincorporated areas of the county.
- In order to understand the impact to farmland, the County should annually monitor development and keep a log of development projects, noting land use changes and loss of farmland. This should be presented to the County Commissioners and Area Plan Commission annually to determine if changes are needed to the comprehensive plan or zoning/subdivision control ordinances.
- Provide incentives for new development to be located in and around existing towns and cities or within clusters of growth in the unincorporated areas. Incentives may include density bonuses, reduced permitting or utility connection fees, or reductions in other development standards such as setbacks or parking.
- Adjust zoning and subdivision control ordinances to support lower density in rural areas, identify how land splits should occur based on a variety of criteria (tillable ground, acreage, location of nearby residential uses), and focus residential development into clusters and near existing residential communities. Ensure that residential subdivisions creating four or more lots are discouraged in the agricultural zoning classification.
- Adjust the zoning districts to minimize the development of residential uses in areas of prime farmland that are not associated with a farm operation.
- Establish clear guidelines for approval of rezones from agricultural uses to non-agricultural uses that protect prime soils and topography and minimize impediment to productive agricultural uses.
- Support the expansion of farm related businesses, non-traditional agriculture businesses, and direct-market rural businesses such as orchards, vineyards, nurseries, flower or tree farms, and commercial stables that enhance the overall rural and agricultural economy while preserving rural character and an agricultural way of life. This is especially important along the SR3/46 corridor where land has been identified for agricultural support services.
- Continue to implement the “Right to Farm” policy to protect existing farms and farmers from nuisance complaints from neighboring rural residents. The County should ensure that this statement goes on each plat, and educational programs are designed to reduce potential conflicts arising from the proximity of agriculture use to residential development.

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POLICY 2:
BALANCE PRESERVATION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND WHILE PROTECTING PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

Description

The majority of the County is agriculture in use as noted on the existing land use map. The County has a long term policy of protecting agricultural land. An unbalanced approach to land use planning often leaves land owners frustrated and can lead to shifts in land use policy that can often create undesirable development patterns that take decades to change.

County decision makers understand that owners of agricultural property often depend on the value of that property as a retirement savings. The County is balancing new development and preservation of farmland though moderate policies. This plan seeks to ensure that private property rights are not limited and therefore do not lower the value of any property in the County. The County will permit development directly related to the rural economy and way of life such as allowing residences for family members on a working farm, on premise farm stands and markets, and agricultural support businesses. However, it should be noted that any new residence constructed in a farming area will be required to sign a right to farm notice indicating that the residence has been established in an area where agriculture practice exists. Some farm operations may be a bit disruptive, such as farm equipment and row crops close to the edge of pavement, farm equipment traveling along county roads between farm fields, spraying of chemicals and manure application.

Recommendations

- Allow limited lot splits for residential use in agricultural classifications by identifying within the subdivision control ordinance, how land splits should occur based on a variety of criteria (tillable ground, acreage, location of other residential use).
- Encourage residential development into clusters, near existing residential pockets in the County, and adjacent to incorporated communities.
- Ensure that minimum lot size is 1 ½ acres.
- Minimize residential strip development to ease the burden on public services.
- Support the agricultural industry and sustain land in agricultural production through promotion of rural economic uses.
- Ensure effective agricultural zoning, by prohibiting major subdivisions and other development not related to agriculture or agricultural industry.
- Change zoning districts in rural areas of the County if not designated as agriculture.

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Policy Recommendations

- Work with infrastructure entities to limit extension of public water and sewer service only as necessary for health and safety, with design controls to prevent further expansion into rural agricultural areas.
- Use effective natural resource protection (i.e. stream buffer requirements) to maintain the integrity of natural systems and prevent incompatible developments of environmentally sensitive or significant agricultural lands.
- Ensure that the zoning ordinance provides for on-farm uses by right to allow a rural property owner access to additional sources of income to supplement revenue from agricultural products, subject to review criteria. Such uses should include small businesses that are a logical extension of the farm use, including farm product sales and services related to agriculture (i.e., farm co-ops, wayside stands, welding services, farm machinery repair, rental and leasing).

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POLICY 3:
FOCUS AGRICULTURAL RELATED AND SUPPORT BUSINESSES ALONG SR 3/46 CORRIDOR

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Description

The 2007 comprehensive plan created the Agricultural Business Park Complex along State Roads 3 and 46. The purpose of this park is to create an area allowing agricultural related businesses that complete the chain of services for agriculture products. Because of infrastructure needs, these uses may not be appropriate in all agriculture areas, while also not fitting into existing industrial parks because of their agricultural product inputs and relationship with the land. Agricultural related businesses could include processors of grain for food, feed, or seed; ethanol or bio-diesel producers; slaughterhouses and animal rendering facilities, canneries; and other businesses that use agricultural products as inputs for production. Some agricultural support uses have developed along SR 3/46, however there has been no focused economic development effort. Therefore, this plan recommends that the flex area along SR 3/46 continue to be reserved for agriculture-related commercial and industrial businesses with other commercial uses in an ancillary role.

Recommendations

- Focus agricultural related and support businesses along SR 3/46 corridor by promoting this area as targeted industrial/ commercial flex uses that support agricultural operations.
- Facilitate the development of agricultural businesses that are compatible in scale, use, and intensity with the surrounding environment while preserving large areas of land to be used for agriculture. This could be accomplished through the creation of a specific agricultural enterprise zoning classification to promote viable locations for agricultural related and support businesses.
- Ensure that the zoning ordinance includes innovative types of agricultural uses that permit the flexibility in the sale of farm products and related support chain products, and provides opportunities for similar kinds of land uses subject to the capacity of infrastructure.

POLICY 4: CONTINUE TO SUPPORT CFO DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTY

Description

The issues (noise, traffic, odor, etc.) associated with confined feeding operations were identified as a concern by many during the public engagement process. As of 2014, there are approximately 69 CFOs in the County. The known impacts of CFOs are air, odor and water quality impacts. Currently the State of Indiana's Department of Environmental Management regulates CFOs and has specific laws that CFO owners must abide by. To date, Decatur County has not created additional local regulations.

As part of this process, a subgroup of the steering committee was developed to address concerns regarding CFOs. A complete set of recommendations was created and incorporated into the plan. The actual recommendations are included in Chapter 3 Physical Recommendations. The subcommittee also used "A Guide for Local Land Use Planning For Agricultural Operations" developed by the Indiana Land Resources Council (ILRC), under the Indiana State Department of Agriculture. This document should be referenced when updating the zoning standards.

The overall recommendation is not to limit the number of CFOs in the County, but add additional regulations to increase separation between specific uses/structures and ensure that the entire health, safety and welfare of the County is preserved and protected.

Recommendations

- Continue to support CFO development in the county and develop standards to address concerns regarding operations.
- Update zoning ordinance to implement setbacks identified in the subcommittee memorandum.
- Support expansion of existing facilities and allow them to be exempt from new standards for setback/separation.
- Make CFOs a conditional use in the zoning ordinance within the agricultural district.
- Create and incorporate into the zoning ordinance, accepted mitigation practices that would allow a CFO operator to reduce setbacks to IDEM's minimum standard.
- Consider the transportation impacts of new CFOs during the development review process. Items to consider should include number of truck trips, roadway capacity, bridge width, turning radii, and driveway cuts. Information about new development should assist in focusing roadway funding to highly traveled routes that support agriculture development.

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- Require that applicants for new CFOs file their emergency plan prepared for the Indiana Department of Management with the County at time of application for a new CFO.
- Continue to utilize the Agriculture Area Certificate for new residential lots in agriculture zoning districts.

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FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Decatur County has a rural landscape. People desire to live in this rural landscape and it is imperative to maintain the future population and employment base in the County. The County supports future residential, commercial, service and industrial growth and will target it around existing development clusters in the County and around existing cities, towns and burgs. There will be a balance between agricultural preservation and new development, limiting the conflicts between more intensive agriculture development and less intensive business and residential use. Any rural residential development will be mindful of its location within the County and that farming operations are located throughout the entire County.

POLICY 5:
SUPPORT A FOCUSED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

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Description

As stated elsewhere, the County's primary goal is to protect agricultural operations and limit the amount of land taken out of agricultural production. Uncontrolled and unmanaged residential growth will continue a sprawling effect and destroy the agricultural character. Unfocused residential growth will continue to consume prime farmland that is important to the agricultural economy, continue to increase costs to provide county services, could impact the county road capacity, and increase conflicts between farm equipment and motor vehicles. It also impacts groundwater quality by increasing runoff and requiring even more on-site wells and septic systems that can fail.

Therefore, Decatur County promotes a "focused growth" approach where any new significant development (i.e. subdivisions, commercial and industrial uses, and non-agricultural uses) would be developed in and around existing cities and towns. Development in rural areas of the County would be reviewed on a case by case basis, based on suitability of development and limiting consumption of agricultural land.

Recommendations

- Direct new residential development to locations that are consistent with the comprehensive plan. Work on providing incentives to homeowners to locate next to existing residential clusters, burgs and small incorporated towns.
- Work with utility providers to educate them on the development policies of the County and the effects of extending services out in the County.
- Residential developments that contain four lots or more should be located in areas within close proximity (within a mile and one-half) of existing cities and towns.
- New, non-agricultural industrial and commercial use should be located in close proximity to existing or readily expanded utilities adjacent to existing cities and towns.
- New commercial/office uses that are not compatible with the dominant agricultural land use pattern will be allowed to locate only in incorporated places.
- The County may permit non-agricultural related commercial uses by special exception as long as they are compatible in scale and intensity, pose no threat to public health,

safety and welfare, and if the use helps to preserve farmland and continue agricultural operations.

- Ensure appropriate zoning for desired land use is in place in each Town.
- Develop a mixed use district for the small towns to allow a mix of uses within the core of the community.

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POLICY 6:
INCREASE HOUSING SUPPLY AND DIVERSITY

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Description

When Honda first announced its location in Greensburg, speculation occurred regarding future housing development. Housing prices soared and the offering of housing was limited. With the recession, things have not improved. Housing prices for certain segments of the market remain high because of limited stock while some older units have become deteriorated and the supply of new housing is virtually non-existent. There is a way of life where some citizens want to live in a small town while others want to build out in the County. In either situation, local realtors have identified lack of supply to attract new residents. Adding to the situation is the increasing cost of land in the County.

The County needs to promote more housing but ensure that there is a diversity of lot sizes, housing sizes and types, and locations of new residential use in proximity to existing residential development in the County.

Recommendations

- Update zoning ordinance in regard to how new residential structures could be reviewed and permitted in agriculture areas.
- Conduct a housing study for each small town to determine how many residential lots there are to build upon so that these areas can be marketed for infill residential development. Additionally, the condition of houses should be determined and if any house is not inhabitable and unsafe, the County should work with the Town to demolish it.
- Develop a Rural Cluster standard in the zoning ordinance. Rural Clustering would be defined as the grouping of buildings on lots of varying sizes with the largest part of the site remaining in open land, with some protection mechanism in place (conservation easement, etc.). Lots served by on-site water and on-site wastewater within a rural cluster may be a minimum of 1 and ½ acres. Lots served by on-site water and off-site wastewater within a rural cluster may be a minimum of approximately ½ acre. A variety of lot sizes are encouraged within all rural clusters to provide a diversity of housing types. In locating the undeveloped or protected land within a Rural Cluster, the following site features should be considered to ensure that the land kept in open space provides for appropriate rural economy uses:
    - Percent of open space area that is made up of prime agricultural soils;
    - Size of the area that is usable for agricultural production;

- Contiguity of open space area to other designated open space or agricultural land;
- Relationship of development of adjacent properties to the agricultural activity on the open space area;
- Relationship of non-agricultural use of the open space area to adjacent agricultural uses; and
- Unique site features and green infrastructure implementation

- Implement a system of rural villages and hamlets that permit clustered densities and require permanently protected farmland or open space.

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POLICY 7:
FOCUS NEW NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT I-74 INTERCHANGES.

Description

With I-74 traversing the County, there are still a lot of opportunities for interchange development in St. Paul, Greensburg, and New Point. In St. Paul, the interchange has developed with a Love's truck stop and a subway shop. The future land use plan shows ample land around the interchange for commercial development. Greensburg has already seen the I-74 and US 421 interchange develop with the Honda plant, but little else has been constructed there. The intersection directly north of the City (I-74 and SR 3) has developed on the south side with a mix of commercial uses. The northern half of the interchange remains agricultural land. At this point, the land owner desires this land to stay as agriculture, however if that ever changes, the area would likely see commercial and/or industrial development pressure. The interchange at New Point has a truck stop/gas station on its northwestern quadrant but the other three quadrants are undeveloped at this time. All of this leads to the opportunity that Decatur County should manage and control the development pattern at these interchanges in order to promote land uses that create higher paying jobs for the County.

Recommendations

- Work with the Greensburg Decatur County Economic Development Corporation to ensure the areas at the interchanges are shovel ready.
- Work with the corresponding cities/towns to ensure the appropriate zoning is in place to promote the right type of development.
- Limit the development of gas stations to only one quadrant of each interchange, to allow for other economic development opportunities that significantly add to the tax base and provide high-wage jobs.
- At the SR 3 interchange, if the land north of I-74 is open for development, work with the land owner and the City of Greensburg to create a corridor/interchange development plan to manage the type of growth.

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GOVERNMENT

Decatur County is comprised of several governing bodies who work together to enhance and promote the culture and quality of life within the county. Government is financially strong because of its good fiscal management and provides a safe environment for its citizens. Public servants of the various jurisdictions are skilled in their abilities, are receptive to and encourage community involvement, and are accountable and transparent to the public they serve. Various government units possess the capital and human resource capacity and expertise to effectively and efficiently serve the public well. The County government will support existing towns. The public leaders have worked together to maintain the rural lifestyle of Decatur County while encouraging economic development in targeted areas of the County.

POLICY 8: INCREASE AVAILABLE AMENITIES TO LIMIT BRAIN DRAIN OF YOUNGER GENERATIONS AND THE IMPACT OF AN INCREASING ELDERLY POPULATION

Description

Many rural areas face the issue where young people move from, in this case Decatur County, Greensburg or another small town, to Indianapolis or Cincinnati where the lifestyle is different and the promise of better paying jobs are present. This is a concern to residents because as the population in the County continues to age, the social fabric of the community becomes less stable.

Fewer young workers, who generate a greater proportion of the tax base required to support necessary community services required by older individuals, can create the potential of budget deficits and adversely impact the provisions of community services to all individuals.

Decatur County is a bit different than most other rural Indiana counties since its located half-way between Indianapolis and Cincinnati. However, access to different community amenities and quality of life elements still impact where young people locate and Decatur County is impacted by that.

Recommendations

- Support Greensburg and the other small towns in adding more opportunities for younger people. Ensure that necessary technology is available, participate in linking trails, and ensure the transportation system can support connections to major roadways allowing people fast access to I-74.
- The County should focus on attracting young families to the area to off-set the generational shift. The reason being, as people marry, have children and acquire job experience, they may choose to relocate to a smaller town or rural county due to “quality of life” and “small town value” reasons.
- The County and incorporated towns should continue to try and enhance the amenities that increase quality of life (high-speed internet service or broadband, more shopping and entertainment options). This can be completed by reviewing development petitions to ensure that they have allocated and worked with utility providers to plan for future utility easements and enhancements. It’s better to incorporate it when a property is being developed rather than after.
- Support more home based occupations from rural residences. Technology will continue to evolve and more and more people are working from their home. Allowing more home

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occupations will allow residents to also offer needed critical services such as financial, salon, pet grooming, veterinary care, etc. The key is to ensure that these home based services do not create additional nuisances such as traffic, noise, aesthetic and parking issues.

- Encourage more housing options that would attract smaller families and allow them to move within the community as their economic and family status changes.

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POLICY 9:
INCREASE GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY REGARDING LAND USE, ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Description

As communities undergo comprehensive plan updates, more information is sought by the public regarding various planning processes and decisions. Throughout the planning process, community members discussed issues of inconsistent application of rules, lack of vision, little public comment on planning and zoning related issues, and a closed process.

Decatur County doesn't operate in a vacuum – there is an understanding that the policies and actions of one county impact adjacent counties and the larger region. Decatur County is committed to transparency in local government. That means that government officials act openly, with citizens' knowledge of the decisions the officials are making. When information on government policies and actions are readily available, there is a clear sense of organizational direction and accountability. Finally, the County is committed to providing the public with as much information as possible about processes, petitions, and regulations.

Recommendations

- Ensure that planning regulations are applied consistently to every use and that no one use gets special consideration.
- Update the County website so that Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals Agendas, Meeting Minutes and Packets are available.
- Update and continue to add to the Frequently Asked Questions section of the Are Plan Commission web page.
- Implement a technical review committee that is comprised of representatives of county departments (surveyor, health department), fire department, sheriff department, utilities, local town (if within close proximity), and schools to discuss petitions and ensure that there will not be an adverse impact to any department.
- Add on a comment period at the end of the Plan Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals meetings where audience members can address the Commission or Board with questions or concerns.
- Complete an annual report regarding development trends including rezones, special exceptions, variances, conditional uses, etc. Report should also examine where development pressures are occurring and whether or not they match the comprehensive plan.
- Bi-annually review Vision, Goals, Policy and Recommendations to determine if anything needs to be added or changed.

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POLICY 10: SUPPORT INDIVIDUAL, ON-SITE, NON-COMMERCIAL ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES

Description

Indiana has been an area where commercial alternative energy sources have been placed on property. Some of these alternative energy sources have included methane collection, wind farms, and solar farms. Decatur County understands that alternative energy technology is ever-changing. Therefore, the County supports individual, on-site, non-commercial alternative energy sources. However, the County does not support the development of commercial alternative energy supplies that would consume agricultural land.

The County discourages large scale, commercial development of alternative energy sources. While the County supports mining activities, the use of fracking to secure natural gas is not supported.

The County supports any land owner wanting to install equipment related to alternative energy sources to lower energy costs related to their homestead or businesses. However, any property owner installing such equipment should be mindful of consumption of farmland, impact on the view to adjacent neighbors, property values, or general nuisance concerns.

Recommendations

- Update zoning regulations regarding commercial alternative energy sources.
- Ensure that the zoning ordinance allows on-site, individual, non-commercial alternative energy sources.
- Update standards for uses regarding mining, mineral extraction, and other similar uses.

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POLICY 11: WORK WITH LOCAL, REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL AGENCIES TO ENSURE A BALANCED AND DESIRED FUTURE

Description

Throughout the planning process, the County worked with various local, state and federal agencies to help craft its future land use map based more on data than just the prevailing land use pattern. The county needs to continue to work cooperatively with other government agencies and community stakeholders to promote environmental and economic goals necessary to achieve a balanced future.

With changes in the tax law within the State of Indiana, including the changes in inventory tax and property tax caps, many county budgets are limited and resources must be allocated carefully. This plan identifies several projects and programs which will take dedicated funding and planning of that funding. A capital improvements plan can help the County identify when certain projects will be constructed or implemented over a five year period. However, because other sources of funds are needed, the County needs to continue to work with various local, state, regional and federal agencies to secure federal and other types of grants to help fund projects. Some of the key grants will come from the US Department of Transportation, US Economic Development Administration, US Environmental Protection Agency, and US Department of Agriculture. There are also several non-profit groups including the Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Kresge Foundation and others which provide grants for very specific and targeted projects. Therefore, the County needs to ensure that its Comprehensive Plan stays up to date. The County also needs to establish new relationships with people in these departments and foundations as well as with grant administrators to help the County stay abreast of new funding opportunities that may come about. This also means regularly meeting with Decatur County's federal congressional legislators to keep them apprised of changes in Decatur County and the impacts certain federal legislation will have on the County.

Additionally, as agricultural operations change in scale and intensity and new non-agriculture development occurs, the County must remain active at the state, mid-west region and federal level to ensure that the County remains a dynamic and pro-active participant in broader policy decisions. This also means that the County will have to continue to ensure that there are open lines of communication between County government and citizens through various media as technology and society continues to change and evolve. The County will continue to hear citizens and the larger community's concerns and interests and take into consideration when decisions are made that impact residents and businesses of Decatur County.

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Policy Recommendations

Finally, Decatur County and each of the incorporated communities must continue to work together to support the County's agricultural heritage. New development, redevelopment and infill development must be focused in areas that have the necessary support infrastructure in place while also limiting the impact on natural resources (agricultural lands, streams, wooded areas, wetlands, etc.)

Recommendations

- The County should continue involvement in federal initiatives that directly impact the County. This involvement may include data and information sharing as well as discussions on the planning process and the methodology used to create the comprehensive plan.
- Develop an interjurisdictional agreement with Greensburg regarding review of potential development on lands outside of the City's jurisdiction.
- Meet with federal congressional legislators to discuss pending federal legislation and the impact it could have on the County.
- Create an interjurisdictional review committee to review applications within the joint review area.
- Find a grant administrator who can help the county identify grants and match up the recommendations of this plan with those grants.
- Explore expansion of the landfill at its current location.
- Continue to meet with INDOT to discuss interchange development along I-74 as well as other critical roadway improvements that are needing funding from INDOT.
- Develop a partnership with IDEM to continue to monitor changes in the laws for CFOs.

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INFRASTRUCTURE & RESOURCES

Decatur County will continue to maintain the integrity of its small towns while promoting exceptional county-wide infrastructure, developing and managing technological advancement, resource preservation, rural preservation, growth management, and recreational opportunities. Public sewer and water service will be provided to appropriate future growth areas designated on the land use plan. Future roadways will be designed and constructed to safely serve the development that utilizes them as well as provide an underground pathway for technological infrastructure development. Existing roadways will continue to be upgraded as resources are available. The natural landscape of the County, including farmland, lakes, streams, minerals, forests and natural habitats, will be protected through development standards to ensure that they continue to exist into future generations as well as to protect rural character and preserve economically viable agricultural areas.

POLICY 12: PRESERVE NATURAL RESOURCES

Description

Part of the rural character of Decatur County is not only its agricultural heritage but also its natural features and ecosystems which include forested areas, wetlands, streams, floodplains, native plants and species. Maps included in the appendix document the existing parks, recreation and woodlands; lakes, streams, floodplains and wetlands; and prime farmlands. The County should look at an overall strategy to ensure implementation of the environmental policies, which are based on three major themes:

- Conservation – creating a stronger relationship between the natural and built environments.
- Preservation – retaining and protecting existing environmental, agriculture and natural resources.
- Restoration – adding to natural resources wherever possible.

Conservation would apply to the various streams and their corridors, and surface and groundwater resources, all which provide for native vegetation and species. These areas often provide recreational benefits in terms of canoing, fishing and hiking. An opportunity exists for creating a stronger relationship between these natural areas and recreational opportunities. The county has large areas of tree stands and woodlands along Sand Creek and the Flat Rock River as well as north of Lake Santee and large swaths of prime farmlands. Those areas should be preserved. For areas that are noted within floodplains, they should be restored wherever possible and in the future, should not contain development, especially since it would jeopardize the County's flood insurance program. Restoration would include adding to the system including greenways, trails, parks and other recreational opportunities (zip lines, bike trails, etc.), and open space or agricultural easements.

As a general policy, floodplains and wetlands should be protected from development. Reduction in woodlands should be minimized. When development does happen in close proximity to woodlands, it should be interspersed around tree stands in order to protect and preserve the visual character they provide. Woodlands should also be used to provide recreational opportunities such as trails, hiking and hunting.

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Recommendations

- Work with regional land banks who may have the funds to purchase key properties to ensure that they are not developed and kept in a natural state or in agriculture.
- When reviewing development petitions, ensure that natural resources are protected wherever possible.
- Create a preservation or open space zoning district that allows property owners to zone their land for protection from future development.
- Ensure that floodplain areas are appropriately zoned.
- Discourage filling or developing of the floodplain and/or wetlands and areas within 100 feet of them for new development.
- Prohibit billboards along the I-74 corridor to minimize impacts on viewsheds and protect natural areas.
- Create incentives in the zoning and subdivision control ordinance that promote the conservation and preservation of woodlands, prime farmland, etc.

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POLICY 13: FOCUS RESOURCES ON CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

Description

The County, like many communities in Indiana, does not have enough resources to address every issue or need. With Indiana's property tax caps, it's hard for communities to get enough revenue to maintain services, let alone improve them. The County currently has a wide and diverse tax base, however, the implementation of tax caps has cut the County's revenue leading to difficulty in maintaining and replacing existing facilities and services. Therefore, the County must be strategic in updating and maintaining critical infrastructure needs.

For transportation, Decatur County utilizes the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system, developed by the University of Wisconsin – Madison Transportation Information Center, to evaluate its roadway needs. The County evaluates its transportation infrastructure annually, and this is the basis for the asset management strategy for Decatur County's infrastructure. This evaluation helps the county assess and identify the level of maintenance, operations, improvement projects and other plans that are needed. Other factors used to identify projects and where critical funds are needed include accident history, public comments, density of dwellings, average daily traffic values, connectivity to points-of-interest and key destinations, functional classification, adjacent roadway conditions, and funding availability.

Recommendations

- Work with utility providers to improve access to broadband.
- Develop a five year capital improvements plans based on the information gained from the PASER system and information from this plan. Ensure that as each year rolls off, new projects are added to the plan.
- Target funding of new roads, bridges and other key infrastructure improvements towards areas of identified development on the land use map.
- Ensure that infrastructure in targeted economic development areas is maintained and improved in order to keep the state's shovel ready certification.
- Review driveway cuts to ensure they do not create access issues or other traffic issues.
- Where appropriate, encourage property owners to share driveway access.
- Ensure that development regulations require dedication of right-of-way or granting of easements for transportation and utility infrastructure.

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POLICY 14:
PROTECT WATER QUALITY

Description

Throughout Indiana, the quality, supply and demand of water is one that many communities deal with. Water resources are one of those planning issues that is not contained within any jurisdictional boundary, but rather affects the entire region. Everyone, including County government, must do their part in protecting that resource.

There are multiple water supply sources for the County including surface water and groundwater. These are the two major sources for Decatur County residents. Surface water is located on the surface within rivers, streams, creeks, reservoirs, ponds, and lakes. Precipitation (rain, snow, etc.) is what maintains the levels of surface water. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the County is within five watersheds including Whitewater, Middle Ohio-Laughery, Flatrock-Haw, Upper East Fork White and Muscatatuck.

The other major source of water is groundwater. Groundwater is water that is found in the soil or in the pores and crevices of rocks. It is recharged through precipitation (rain, snow, etc.) as well. Groundwater is what recharges aquifers where the water for a well comes from. Over a period of time, groundwater can work its way to a discharge area where it enters a lake, stream or river.

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), there are many potential sources of contamination to the water supply, including:

- Agriculture
- Deposits from the atmosphere due to precipitation
- Construction
- Contaminated soils, sand and other matter
- Combined sewer overflows
- Industrial point sources
- Land disposal of wastewater, sewage, sludge and hazardous waste
- Marinas
- Habitat or waterbody modification
- Municipal point sources
- Natural sources (minerals, nutrients and metals in soils)
- Nonpoint sources (pollutant runoff due to rainfall or snowmelt)
- Resource extraction
- Septic systems
- Forestry activities
- Urban runoff/storm sewers

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Policy Recommendations

Groundwater supplies are a major source of drinking water for many residents in the County. During the public engagement process, concerns were expressed about how runoff and infiltration were negatively impacting water quality. Additionally, some residents indicated that not only is water quality a concern, but there may be quantity issues as well. The quality and quantity of groundwater depends on recharge rates, draw down on the water table, and contamination.

The three biggest areas for the County to focus on in regard to protecting water quality include agricultural operations, which can create contamination due to runoff from farm fields with fertilizer and byproducts from CFOs; construction, including new development due to paving and other surface alterations which creates impervious surface and impacts both the quality and quantity of accessible ground water supplies; new developments which contain septic systems in the county where the outflow from on-site septic systems and drain fields can contaminate ground water and migrate to neighboring properties; and industrial point source pollution which contributes to water contamination by runoff of hazardous materials, discharge from processes into streams and creeks, and land treatment of wastes.

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) regulates many different aspects of agricultural and industrial point source contamination. Currently, the County requires a minimum lot size of 1 ½ acres to ensure there is enough room to install a second septic field in case the first one fails. Contamination risk and lack of water due to increased water consumption from on-site water wells is a concern. The county should also consider standards that would promote green infrastructure to limit impervious surfaces in the County where runoff is critical to recharge the water supply.

Recommendations

- Create a storm water management oversight committee to develop storm water runoff policies that pertain to Decatur County's industries and provide input into petition reviews for new development.
- Insure there is adequate separation between well sites and septic systems.
- Continue to require a backup septic field location that is adequately spaced from water sources.
- Work with the Decatur County Health Department to provide comments on petitions or applications for new development. This will help to ensure septic systems are properly sited, well designed, constructed and maintained, therefore limiting contamination of groundwater with bacteria, nitrates, viruses, and chemicals.
- Ensure coordination between IDEM, the Indiana Department of Health, the County Health Department and the Area Plan Commission office to understand that the development impacts on the watershed have been taken into account when evaluating confined feeding operation waste system siting to ensure that it minimizes contamination of the County water sources and is in compliance with the state and local ordinances.
- Implement a program to sample and test creeks and tributaries to establish a baseline condition in order to monitor and improve water quality within the County.
- Work with Purdue University to complete a watershed analysis of Decatur County as part of their Watershed Connections Series.

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POLICY 15:
SUPPORT THE CITY'S EFFORTS TO EXPAND THE EXISTING GREENSBURG MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Description

Over the past several years, supporters of the Greensburg Municipal Airport have worked with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on the expansion of the existing airport. The Greensburg Municipal Airport is a public use airport located just south of the intersection of State Road 3 and 46 on the southwest side of the City of Greensburg.

It was purchased by the City in 2007 and is managed by the Greensburg Board of Aviation Commissioners. There have been on-going plans to expand the runway from the current 3,400 feet to 5,400 feet with a parallel taxiway. An airport layout plan was approved in 2010 with the environmental review process currently underway. The proposed new runway would allow larger aircraft including regional jets to use the airport.

The County acknowledges that the airport expansion could serve as a strong economic development tool and aid in supporting existing businesses and attracting new ones, especially in the Greensburg area. Decatur County has been supportive from a policy standpoint regarding the expansion of this airport, but cannot support it fiscally.

Recommendations

- Support the City decision to annex the airport into the City's jurisdiction.
- Ensure that the airport is appropriately zoned.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Decatur County will continue to foster economic prosperity by promoting targeted economic development initiatives, higher wage employment opportunities, and educational opportunities that will ensure a diversified local economy. Targeted industries include agriculture, agriculture support businesses, manufacturing, industry, small businesses, professional services, and retail and restaurants in Greensburg and other small towns. Opportunities are established on the land use map to be located in and around Greensburg and the other towns. The County will continue to support its relationship with schools to provide the necessary skill sets and establish an employee base to attract new businesses. Economic Development initiatives will also focus on attracting independent businesses and services that support existing businesses and residents.

POLICY 16:
INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE HIGHER WAGE JOBS

Description

Employment is generally the key factor that dictates where younger workers will make their home. Lower paying jobs force family bread winners to hold multiple jobs to sustain their families, which can deprive the family of parent time. Additionally, if people do not want to drive to Indianapolis or Cincinnati for work, then higher wage jobs are needed for people to locate in the County.

Concerns were raised during the process that the County is solely focused on auto manufacturing. Residents expressed concern about the last economic recession that impacted the auto industry and therefore limited Honda's expansion plans.

Recommendations

The Greensburg Decatur County Economic Development Corporation has targeted four major industries to bring to Greensburg/Decatur County. These include auto manufacturing, logistics, food & agriculture and call centers.

- Continue to partner with community colleges and vocational schools to ensure the workforce has the desired skills for new employers.
- Develop a comprehensive economic development strategy plan. Funding for this could come from the US Economic Development Administration. This plan can be used to acquire additional grants at the state and federal levels.
- Ensure that as new business parks are developed, that the necessary road and rail infrastructure is in place to promote regional access and connectivity.
- Rezone areas that are targeted for economic development to zoning districts that allow the desired uses.
- Continue to develop the agricultural business park along SR 3/46.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate local incentives (tax abatement, TIF district, ERA, etc.) to ensure that they meet the County's

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economic needs and offer competitive incentives to attract well-paying jobs.

- Support land use decisions that support manufacturing, logistics, food & agriculture and call center businesses.
- Support land use decisions that focus on investment and redevelopment of the downtowns in the small communities.

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POLICY 17: CONTINUE TO PARTNER WITH LOCAL AGENCIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SKILLS TRAINING.

Description

Human capital is the backbone of economic development for any county. Without skilled employees, the County will continue to struggle to bring in businesses that offer high paying jobs. Throughout this planning process, employers in Decatur County have discussed a need for certain skill sets. Employers are finding it hard to find employees with those skills sets in Decatur County. With the changes in the economy to a more technology and knowledge based society, furthering educational opportunities are needed to increase the skill sets of people in Decatur County in order to bring in new employment opportunities and increase the economic base.

The employers, educators and County leaders are seeing the gap between today's educational levels and the more demanding knowledge and skill requirements of the family-wage jobs of the future. It is imperative for the County to remain competitive against other counties to close the gap between the young people who will enter the workforce and the adults who are already working.

While the County cannot improve skill sets by itself, a partnership encouraged and supported by Decatur County and the Greensburg Decatur County Economic Development Corporation with various employers, high schools, technical colleges and universities and other not-for profits can elevate employee's skills sets to make the area more attractive to businesses. To be successful, creating a highly skilled workforce requires sustained public investment.

Recommendations

- Establish a workforce partnership to include active participation by leaders from labor, business, education and government.
- Develop a targeted workforce development plan for all partners to develop goals, benchmarks, and commitments and follow-up. This can also be used to acquire grants at the state and federal levels.
- Develop a school to work transition program that will improve movement of students to post-secondary training and employment in the careers of their choosing.
- Work to increase public awareness about the importance of workforce training and education issues and initiatives.
- Greensburg Decatur County Economic Development Corporation and workforce training programs should work together to establish and implement policies that target firms applying high performance work practices.

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5 IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

Preparing the comprehensive plan is relatively uncomplicated when compared to the real challenge of translating a plan's vision, goals, and recommendations into the day-to-day operations and actions of County government.

When implementing the comprehensive plan's recommendations, it is important to continuously consider the integrity of the planning process, the community's values, and why those ideas are so important. A plan is a community's future. It is the collective will and dreams of its citizens, and a County's duty is to find ways to give it life that keep it true to the vision and maintain its integrity.

Tremendous discussion was undertaken to develop the comprehensive plan and ensure that it reflected the desired land use pattern and improvements needed for directed development within the County for the next 20 years. This 20-year period allows adequate time to implement new development ordinances, adjust existing land use patterns, and improve the multi-modal transportation network. It also allows the County adequate time to formulate capital improvement funding strategies and sources to implement the recommendations and achieve ultimate success of this planning effort.

Everything in a living community is interconnected with both the built and natural environment, therefore the plan must be implemented in a way that treats its components as part of a whole. Therefore, chapters 1 through 4, were developed with this focus, and on what to do and where to do "it." The plan also adds the understanding of why "it" needs to be done. It takes great care to make every decision within the context of that basic reality.

The overall intent of this plan has been to follow a planning process that would result in implementation of the vision, goals, policy and physical recommendations discussed in chapters 2, 3 and 4. This plan has also identified specific recommendations and techniques related to the stated goals and objectives. The proper implementation of this plan will require that the County prioritize the numerous recommendations. With these thoughts in mind, this chapter is meant to help the County adopt, implement and update a comprehensive plan and make it available to the public.

This chapter is organized into eleven sections:

- Adoption
- Administration

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Implementation

- How to Use this Plan
- Interpretation
- Decisions Regarding Rezoning
- Work Plan
- Monitoring and Updates
- Annexation
- Fiscal Considerations
- Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Update
- Interjurisdictional Agreement

Top 10 Priority List

From these sections, there is a top ten priority list that the County should strive to undertake in the first year and then develop a work plan, prioritizing recommendations for the following years.

1. Ensure that both the Area Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals have the correct members according to IC-36-7-4-200 series.
2. Adopt the Comprehensive Plan by both the County Commissioners and Town Councils.
3. Update Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances into a Unified Development Code.
4. Develop an interjurisdictional agreement with the City of Greensburg regarding development surrounding the City.
5. Update the County's website to include planning related information including agendas, meeting minutes, applications and meeting packets in an easy to use format.
6. Implement a formal technical review committee to provide recommendations to the Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals.
7. Complete annual planning report for 2016.
8. Meet with various county departments and agencies, including utility providers to inform them of the updated policies within the comprehensive plan.
9. Develop a five year capital improvement plan
10. Work with Purdue University to complete a watershed analysis for Decatur County as part of their Watershed Connections Series.

Adoption

The first action the County must take is to adopt its comprehensive plan. The County must prepare a resolution to adopt its comprehensive plan to ensure that it promotes the public health, safety, morals and convenience, order or the general welfare for the sake of efficiency and economy in the process of development.

The process starts with the Area Plan Commission. They will hold a public hearing to review the comprehensive plan and forward a recommendation to both the County Commissioners and all Town Councils that are a part of the Area Plan Commission. These include Westport, New Point, St. Paul and Millhousen.

In order for the plan to be effective for every jurisdiction, it must be approved by the legislative body. So, once the recommendation has been made, it will then go on to the County Commissioners and the Town Councils of each of included Towns. Typically the County Commissioners and Town Councils have a process for adopting resolutions that generally involves a public hearing allowing public comment. If residents are actively involved throughout the planning process, the public hearing at all levels should go smoothly. Using a resolution, the County Commissioners and each of the Town Councils formally adopt the plan – by a simple majority vote. The procedures for adopting a plan are described in Indiana Code, 36-7-4-500 Series.

When the plan has been adopted by all jurisdictions, a copy of the plan with all the approval resolutions shall be recorded with the County Recorder.

Even with a well-designed planning process, a community may lack consensus on certain issues or, in the worst case, may not have enough support to adopt a plan. In that case, the County may want to:

- Setup a committee to work through the remaining issues. The committee should have balanced representation from all sides of the issues in dispute and a definite timeline for reporting back its recommendations.

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- Recommend further study of the issues with a clear timeline. Through additional study, participants may discover new information that will help them develop a consensus.
- If the community is extremely divided on an issue, it may be necessary to bring in a professional facilitator or a mediator to help it find a solution. Sometimes a community must make tough choices and move on.

Interpretation

The Decatur County Comprehensive Plan should serve as the guide for land use and development policies for development and redevelopment in the study area. The long range vision, principles, and recommendations, along with the supporting maps, are intended to guide development decisions towards the County's collective vision of the future. Members of the County staff, Plan Commission, County Commissioners and Town Councils should interpret the goals and objectives as a long-term and deliberately broad vision. The Commission, Councils and Commissioners should keep in mind that this plan reflects the community's values. County officials cannot expect to control all circumstances. However, the spirit of this plan should be adhered to in order to ensure that the values and policy document in this plan are maintained.

Members of the County Commissioners and Town Council should interpret the policy and recommendations by saying, "given our long-term goals and changing community conditions, these are the projects and programs that we want to complete in the short-term and long-term, and this is how we plan to accomplish them." Interpreting the plan in this way will enable the members of both the commission, county and towns to justify their approval, or denial, of any proposed development or redevelopment in Decatur County or our Town.

When a new annexation, rezone, planned unit development (PUD), subdivision, or site plan review request is filed with the Planning Department, the County planning staff as well as other County departments should review and evaluate the application against the Comprehensive Plan and the zoning and subdivision ordinances and provide a staff report with a formal recommendation to the Plan Commission regarding its findings. The staff report should include an evaluation of the development and the degree to which the proposed project conforms to the plan's vision, principles and recommendations, future land use, and transportation maps.

The Comprehensive Plan does not contain the actual decisions that should be made; however, it does serve as a reminder and provide guidance of the community's collective vision for the future development of this area and should be interpreted as such.

Decisions Regarding Rezonings

Zoning protects the rights of individual property owners while promoting the general welfare of the County and Towns. The purpose of zoning is to locate specific land uses where they are most appropriate. In determining the most appropriate zoning designation, the County must consider such things as public utility availability, road access, and the established development pattern of the area in which development is proposed.

In general, the Area Plan Commission, County Commissioners and Town Councils should consider that a rezone is only justifiable under the following circumstances:

- When the requested rezoning is consistent with comprehensive plan's land use map adopted by the appropriate governing body;
- When there was an error or oversight in the original zoning of the property;
- When changes have occurred to conditions in the vicinity of the property which prevent the reasonable use of the property as currently zoned;
- When the requested rezoning benefits the community at large;
- Changes in the zoning district negatively impact how the land can be developed;

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- Rezones should not be granted because of a single hardship expressed by a property owner or group of property owners. Rezones should only be granted when they reflect the community's collective vision for the future.

Should the Area Plan Commission recommend approval to the County Commissioners or Town Councils for numerous rezones that are substantially inconsistent with the future land use map associated with the Comprehensive Plan, the plan should be updated. This is an indication that the area's conditions, issues and/or priorities have changed.

Work Plan

The Comprehensive Plan covers a broad variety of issues and subject matters. In order to implement the plan, the County Commissioners and Area Plan Commission should, on an annual basis, prioritize the recommendations outlined in the plan for that fiscal year and develop a strategy for moving these items forward. This information should be shared and approved by the County Council, since they control the budget for the County. It will be important that this is completed prior to County budgeting time in order to ensure adequate funding is in place if funds are anticipated from the County budget.

Monitoring & Updates

Planning does not have a defined beginning and end. It is an on-going process that responds to new information and circumstances and incorporates changing conditions into decisions. Circumstances that may change include physical conditions of buildings and/or infrastructure, economic climate, the natural environment, and social and community goals.

Once the plan is adopted it will need to be revised from time to time to ensure that it stays consistent and relevant to current conditions. It is best that the County continue in the same partnership manner it has to undertake the creation of this plan. An implementation committee should be used to monitor and update this plan. A plan update should occur at intervals of approximately every five years. The purpose of the plan update is to re-evaluate the goals, policies, and strategies contained within this Plan (noting those to change and those to remove), and to develop new policies if necessary to make sure that this Plan is being effective. The plan update process is further described below.

Plan Update Process

This plan should be updated at least every five (5) years, unless otherwise directed by the Area Plan Commission or County Commissioners. This is important, especially since the County will see the effectiveness of the policies in this plan and determine if an adjustment is needed. The County's prime consideration in making a determination of when an update should be initiated, should include what changes have occurred since the Plan was last updated. These changes may be in such areas as the economy, the environment/agriculture, changes in administration, jurisdictional priorities, or something else significant. The plan update should include a thorough review and evaluation of the vision and development policies contained within Chapter 4 of the plan. Within that review, each development policy should be reviewed for achievement, in process, or lack of relevancy. Policies that have been achieved or are not relevant should be changed or removed from the plan. New policies should be developed, if necessary, to accommodate any changes in conditions and ensure the plan is still effective. A plan update should also include a thorough review of the validity of all the information contained within the plan and should include opportunities for involvement by the public, boards and commissions, elected and appointed officials, staff and other affected interests.

The amendment would be in accordance to IC 36-7-500 series and occur as follows:

- The Area Plan Commission would give notice for a public hearing for an amendment to the jurisdiction's Comprehensive Plan in accordance with IC 5-3-1;
- Hold a public meeting(s) and approve the amendment by certifying the Comprehensive

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Plan amendment to the appropriate jurisdiction's legislative body(County Commissioners & Town Councils);

- A resolution shall be adopted by the appropriate jurisdictional legislative bodies (County Commissioners & Town Councils).

A disciplined schedule for plan review is helpful in plan implementation. Noting areas of the plan's success helps to build support for future planning activities. The identification of less successful components of the plan may suggest a need for refinement and/or amendment. The planning staff should create an annual "report card" which reviews and documents the activities of the Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and County Commissioners/Town Councils.

Also, prior to preparing the annual County operating budget, an assessment should be completed that documents the impacts of the plan implementation activities. This assessment should consist of the following:

- Necessary adjustments to zoning and subdivision control ordinances brought on by changes in state law, county policy, etc.;
- Deviations by the Area Plan Commission from the plan, and why those deviations were made;
- Requests for amendments to the plan, in order to determine if there is a pattern of requested changes emerging;
- Changes in the local/regional political structure that may affect the implementation of the plan;
- Identifying the recommendations that were completed that were identified in the plan; and
- Identify new recommendations, if any, that could be implemented.

A separate process exists for amendments to the Plan. The County should perform amendments on a yearly or periodic basis as needed. This plan amendment should be at the recommendation of the implementation committee. Plan amendments may include revisions to one or more sections of this plan as a result of changes within the market, infrastructure, a specific issue/policy change or change in state law. Plan amendments may include changes to the land use plan map or may be as small as correcting text.

Annexation

The County has a great working relationship with the City of Greensburg and other incorporated Towns. Some areas of the County exist that are wholly surrounded by the City of Greensburg, but have not been annexed into the City. Additionally, there will be from time to time, additional annexations by the City of Greensburg and potentially other communities. During this process, the County worked with the City of Greensburg and the incorporated communities to identify land uses outside their jurisdictions in case annexations might occur. Overall, the County supports annexations into a City or Town and will work with that community regarding future development. See the Interjurisdictional Agreement section later in this chapter for more details.

Fiscal Considerations

The implementation of the comprehensive plan will require the County's financial commitment and support to carry out the recommendations in order to achieve the vision set forth herein. These financial commitments should include existing programs and policies the County currently has in place. Although it is the County's intent to administer this plan with the current financial resources available, monies may need to be set aside in future budgets to carry out some of the recommended actions. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan does not authorize expenditures for its implementation. The County Council, in accordance with state statutes and the County's policies, may authorize the financial resources to implement the plan.

Funding may be available from outside sources. When opportunities become available and make sense financially, the County should seek these funds through federal, state or local grants, loans and other financial resources.

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Zoning & Subdivision Control Ordinance Updates

The Decatur County Comprehensive Plan is a statement of policy and it is not a regulatory document. The most common regulatory means for implementing the plan include zoning and subdivision ordinances. Zoning is the most direct method for regulating land use. In addition to restricting uses, zoning ordinances also dictate the bulk of development (typically through height requirements, floor-area ratios, etc.) and its site placement (typically through the use of building setbacks). The subdivision ordinance relies on the right of municipalities to regulate the subdivision of land, and places the burden of implementing public infrastructure directly on the developer.

Currently the County's zoning is administered through the Area Plan Commission and its executive director. Throughout this process several revisions to the zoning ordinance have been identified. Overall, the format of the Ordinance is out of date and is not user-friendly for planning staff, developers or applicants. There have been several chapters included, such as floodplain standards, transportation management regulations, uniformed numbering system, etc.) that almost makes this Ordinance a Unified Development Code. The only item missing is the Subdivision Control Ordinance.

Several improvements can be made to streamline chapters and processes to create a more efficient system. There are several provisions within the Ordinance that are unnecessary, or make day to day operations more difficult because they are located within the Ordinance instead of some other department documentation. Graphics and easy to read charts are needed to clearly communicate standards. All of this leads to a list of items to be addressed including:

- Create a Unified Development Code to link all codes in one place. Ensure that definitions are consistent across ordinances and allow for linkages between zoning and subdivision control ordinances to achieve the vision of this plan.
- Ensure that the ordinances are user-friendly and easy to use electronically, include bookmarks, page links in PDF to make searching easier.
- Re-organize the Ordinance so the districts and standards are up front and the use conditions are located in one section to increase usability.
- Use graphics and charts to convey information succinctly and quickly. Create use and standards tables which are more easily understood.
- Take basic duties of Plan Commission, Planning Director, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Floodplain Administrator, out of Ordinance and put into Rules of Procedure so they can be updated easier than with an Ordinance amendment.
- Remove all application requirements from the Zoning Ordinance and maintain an applications section within the rules of procedure so they can be amended more easily when needed.
- Move all administration related items into one chapter.
- Update standards for non-conformities.
- Update permit requirements and types of permits.
- Develop easier to implement enforcement provisions in the form of a ticketing process for zoning and subdivision violations.
- Take any fees out of the Ordinance and put into a separate Fee Ordinance.
- All definitions should be in one location in the Ordinance.
- Update standards in all districts based on the recommendations of the plan.
- Update permitted, special exception, and conditional uses.
- Create standards for CFOs in the A-1 district based on the recommendations of the plan.
- Develop incentives within the Ordinance to help facilitate implementation of the recommendations of the plan.

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- Update subdivision lot split standards based on the recommendations of the plan.
- Develop a mixed use zoning classification to be used in incorporated towns and other burgs in the County.
- Develop cluster residential standards.
- Update home occupation standards to keep with the technology evolution.
- Implement a technical review committee to review development petitions and provide recommendations to the Plan Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals. This should be located in the administrative section of the Ordinance.
- Update standards for individual, on-site alternative energy sources.
- Update wireless communications provisions to be in compliance with state law.
- Put all use standards together into one chapter (use standards, parking and loading, etc.) and into a more user friendly format. Update use standards and add additional use standards widely accepted by the planning profession.
- Update parking standards to industry accepted standards.
- Utilize a hearing officer to expedite applications for contingent uses or conditional uses as outlined in IC36-7-4-923 and IC36-7-4-924.
- Take out all rules of procedures and put them in a separate document that can be updated by the Plan Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals as they see as necessary.
- Establish clear guidelines for rezoning and special exception approvals.
- Update sign regulations to be consistent with the Reed v. Town of Gilbert Supreme Court decision.
- Amend development regulations to require dedication of right-of-way or granting of easements for transportation and utility infrastructure as part of the review and approval process.

Interjurisdictional Agreement

Joint planning agreements are a form of intergovernmental cooperation that help local governments address cross-jurisdictional impacts on infrastructure, land use, capital improvements, and development timing. Although these agreements can be between any two or more local governments, most joint planning agreements involve at least one municipality and one county.

The basic purpose of a Greensburg-Decatur County joint planning agreement is to create a mechanism for planning and reviewing future growth in a specified area. For joint planning agreements between a City and County, the agreement usually relates to specifically designated county land that may be annexed by the city in the future. Looking ahead to such potential annexations, the City's interest is in ensuring that development within these county areas is compatible with existing City standards and development patterns.

IC 36-1-7 et seq. is the guiding law on intergovernmental agreements and covers the topics of:

- Purpose
- Duration
- Manner of financing, staffing and supplying the joint understating and establishing and maintaining budget
- Termination
- Administration
- Disposal of real and personal property

A couple of joint meetings were held between Decatur County Comprehensive Plan and Greensburg Comprehensive Plan Steering Committees to begin to set the framework for and interjurisdictional meeting. The map on the following page highlights the areas that should be under joint review by the City and the County. The joint steering committees worked out the appropriate land uses for this area. They determined any applications for rezones,

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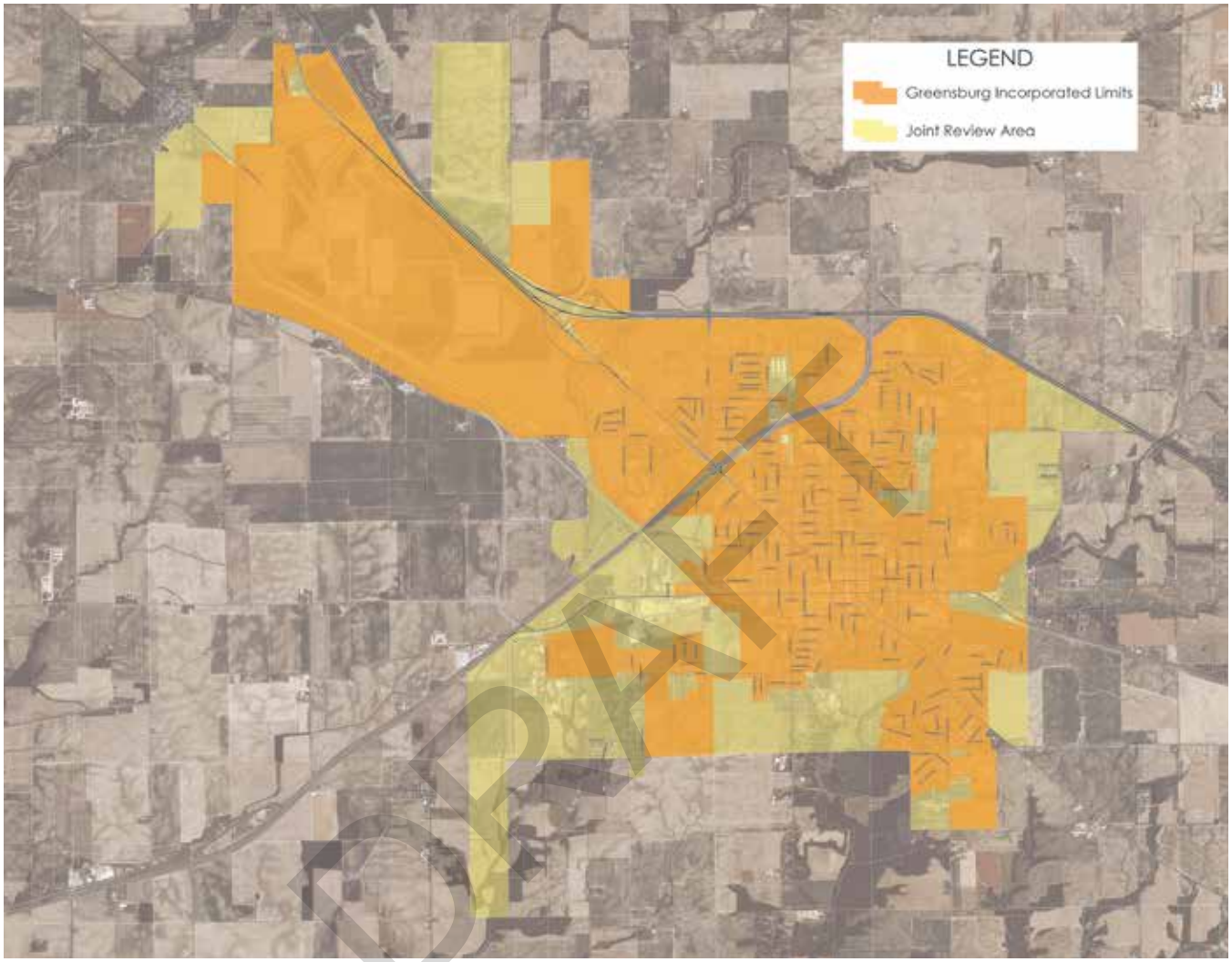
POTENTIAL JOINT REVIEW AREA MAP



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planned unit developments, major subdivisions and commercial and industrial site plans that are outside the City's jurisdiction but within certain limits should be jointly reviewed.

The committee couldn't agree on a specific distance in which parcels would be required for joint review. Instead, they developed a series of criteria to determine if the subject property should be jointly reviewed. Specifics will still need to be worked out, but the general framework that the committee agreed upon includes:

- Parcels immediately adjacent to City limits.
- Parcels in identified future land use planning areas.
- Industrial and commercial development within a 2 mile buffer of City limits.
- Residential subdivisions greater than X number of units or X acres of land area that are within X mile buffer of City limits.

The committee also discussed how a review process should occur. It was generally agreed upon that there should be a standing joint review committee established with representatives of both the City and the County. This review community should meet monthly to review pending

petitions. If there are no pending petitions, it is not necessary that the committee meet. The Area Plan Commission office should still receive all applications as any subject property would still be under County jurisdiction. The joint committee would then send a recommendation to the Area Plan Commission, who would then either make the final decision or provide a recommendation to the County Commissioners.

Potential members of this joint committee could include:

- City department heads (Street, Fire, Police, Water, Wastewater, Engineer, Plan Commission President)
- Utility Representatives
- County Technical Review Committee (Area Plan Commission Executive Director, Highway, Surveyor, Rural Water)
- County Area Plan Commission Representatives
- Potentially other City Plan Commission members in addition to President

Typically, all interjurisdictional agreements have a timeframe for which the agreement is valid. The joint committee recommended that a termination clause was needed so that either party could terminate the agreement. Additionally, the agreement should be reviewed whenever either party is updating their comprehensive plan or not to exceed ten years, if the comprehensive plan is not being updated.

Other general recommendations were identified including suggestions on which standards would prevail, timing of review periods and forwarding of applications. The full recommendations can be found in the appendix of this plan.

The next steps for implementation of an interjurisdictional agreement would include representatives of the City and County meet to work out a draft agreement based on recommendations contained here and in the appendix. A draft agreement would be drawn up and presented to both parties for review. Then the County Commissioners and the City Council would adopt the formal agreement and set an effective time period for the date on which joint review would begin.

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A-1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

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Introduction

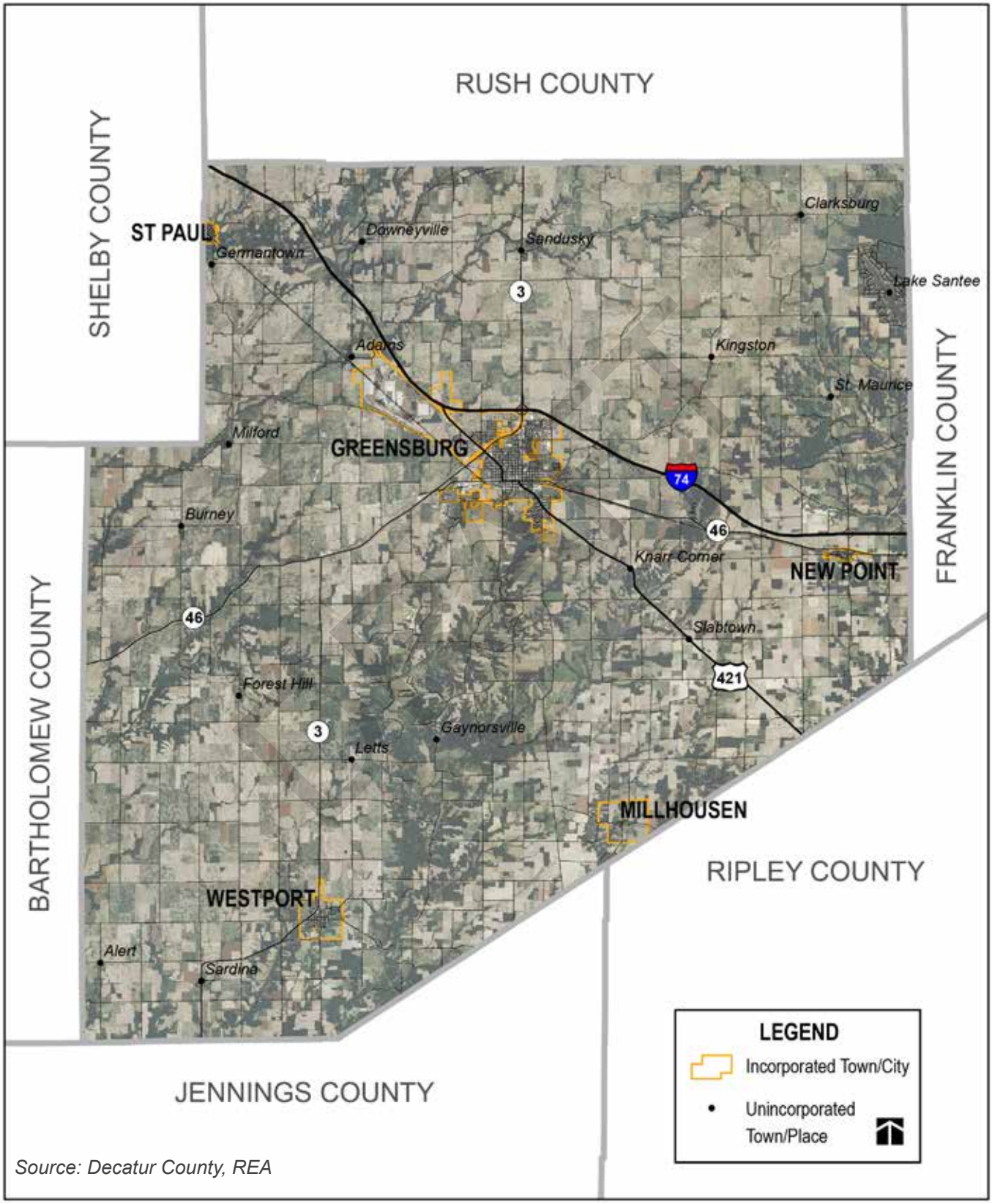
Decatur County is located approximately halfway between Indianapolis, Indiana and Cincinnati, Ohio. The County was founded in 1822, and is named after Commodore Stephen Decatur of the US Navy. Decatur County is divided into nine townships: Adams, Clay, Clinton, Fugit, Jackson, Marion, Salt Creek, Sand Creek and Washington. There are five incorporated communities in the County: Millhousen, New Point, St. Paul, Westport, and Greensburg, the County seat. The County has a land area of approximately 373 square miles. Agriculture and manufacturing, specifically automobile related industries, are the primary economic drivers. A more detailed snapshot of the existing conditions of the County at the time of the planning process is presented on the following pages.

COUNTY CONTEXT MAP

Source: ESRI, REA

A-1 Existing Conditions

INCORPORATED CITIES AND TOWNS



Source: Decatur County, REA

Land Use

Decatur County is most commonly characterized by its rural atmosphere and agriculture industry so it should come as no surprise that agriculture is the predominant land use, comprising almost 90% of the County's area. The second largest land use in terms of area are woodlands, which make up approximately 6% of the County. Residential uses and home sites account for almost 2.5% of the County's area. This figure does not take into account residential structures that are part of a larger agriculture parcel. Those parcels are included in the agriculture area. Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, and Recreation uses are the other categories represented in the chart below and on the Existing Land Use Map.

Residential uses are primarily located in and around the City of Greensburg with additional concentrations in Westport, New Point, Millhousen, St. Paul, and Lake Santee. Small groups of homes are present in the many unincorporated places throughout the County, while strip residential development along County Roads is limited.

Commercial and industrial uses are generally located within the City of Greensburg. Additional industrial uses are present at the landfill east of US Hwy 421 and the quarry between Interstate 74 and Base Road. Limited commercial use can be found near St. Paul along Interstate 74, in Westport and New Point.

Woodlands are dispersed throughout the landscape with many adjacent to water courses such as the Flatrock River and Sand Creek. Woodlands are also prevalent along N CR 850 E and north of Lake Santee along the Franklin County border.

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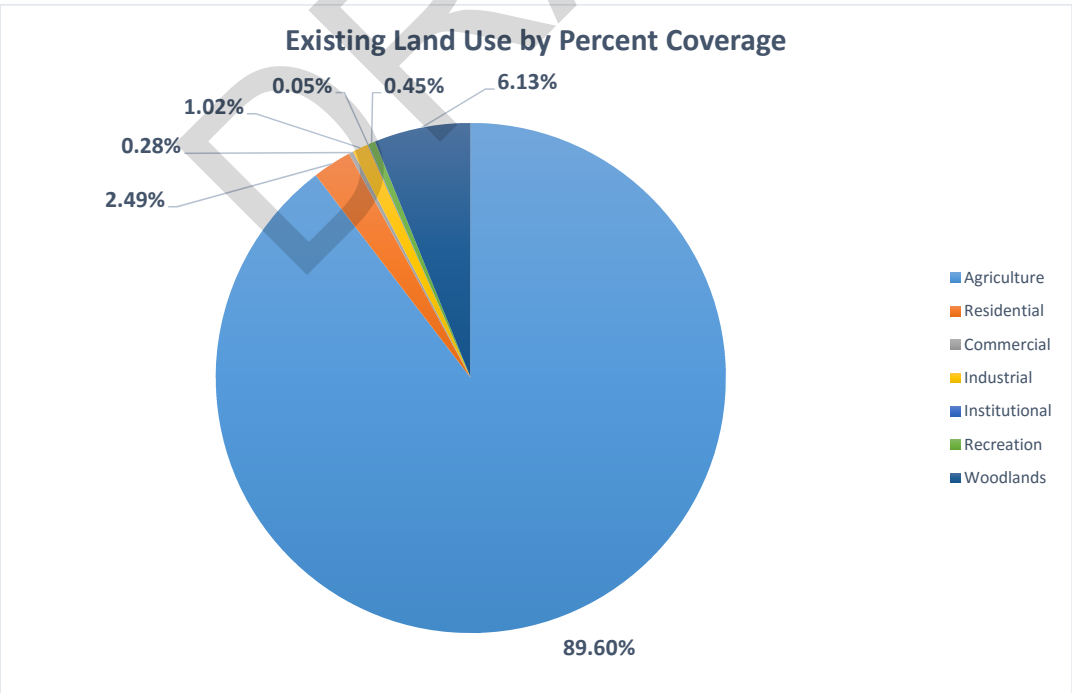
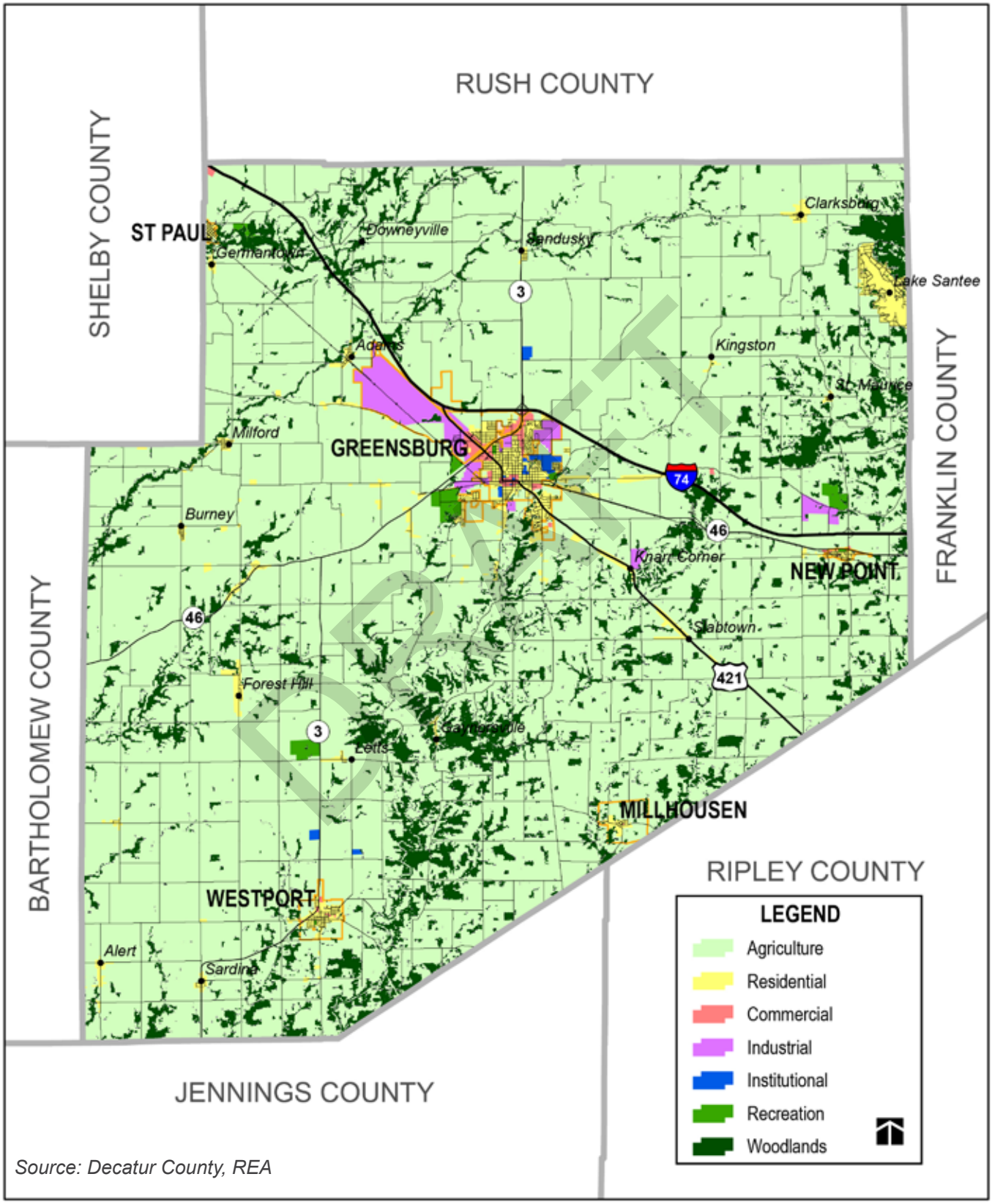


Source: Decatur County, REA

A-1 Existing Conditions

EXISTING LAND USE



Source: Decatur County, REA

Agriculture

PRIME FARMLAND

Prime farmland is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is also available for these uses. Prime farmlands typically have an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable climate and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, and few rocks. Some soils are classified as prime farmland outright while others may be prime farmland if drained or protected from flooding. Soils that are classified as "all areas prime farmland" are mapped on the following page.

In reality, most of Decatur County is quality farm ground that produces quality crop yields and contributes to the agriculture economy of the County.

FARM SIZE

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, there were 610 farms in Decatur County. The majority of farms fell between 10 and 500 acres. There were 46 farms under 10 acres and 43 farms over 1000 acres in size. The chart below summarizes the number of farms by class size in Decatur County as of 2012.

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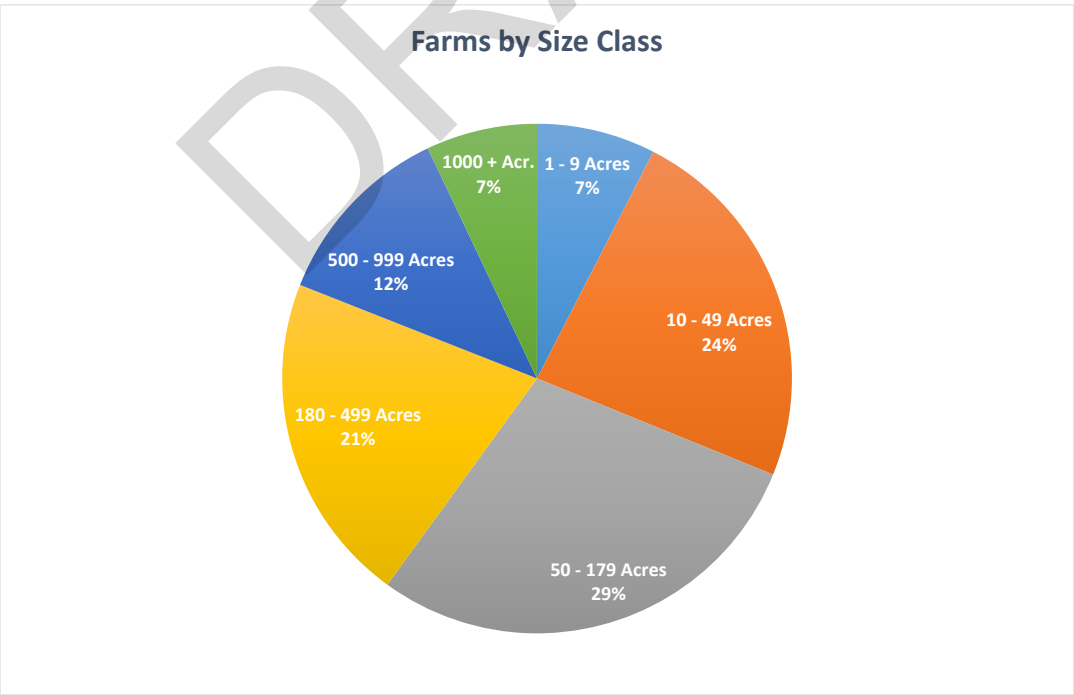
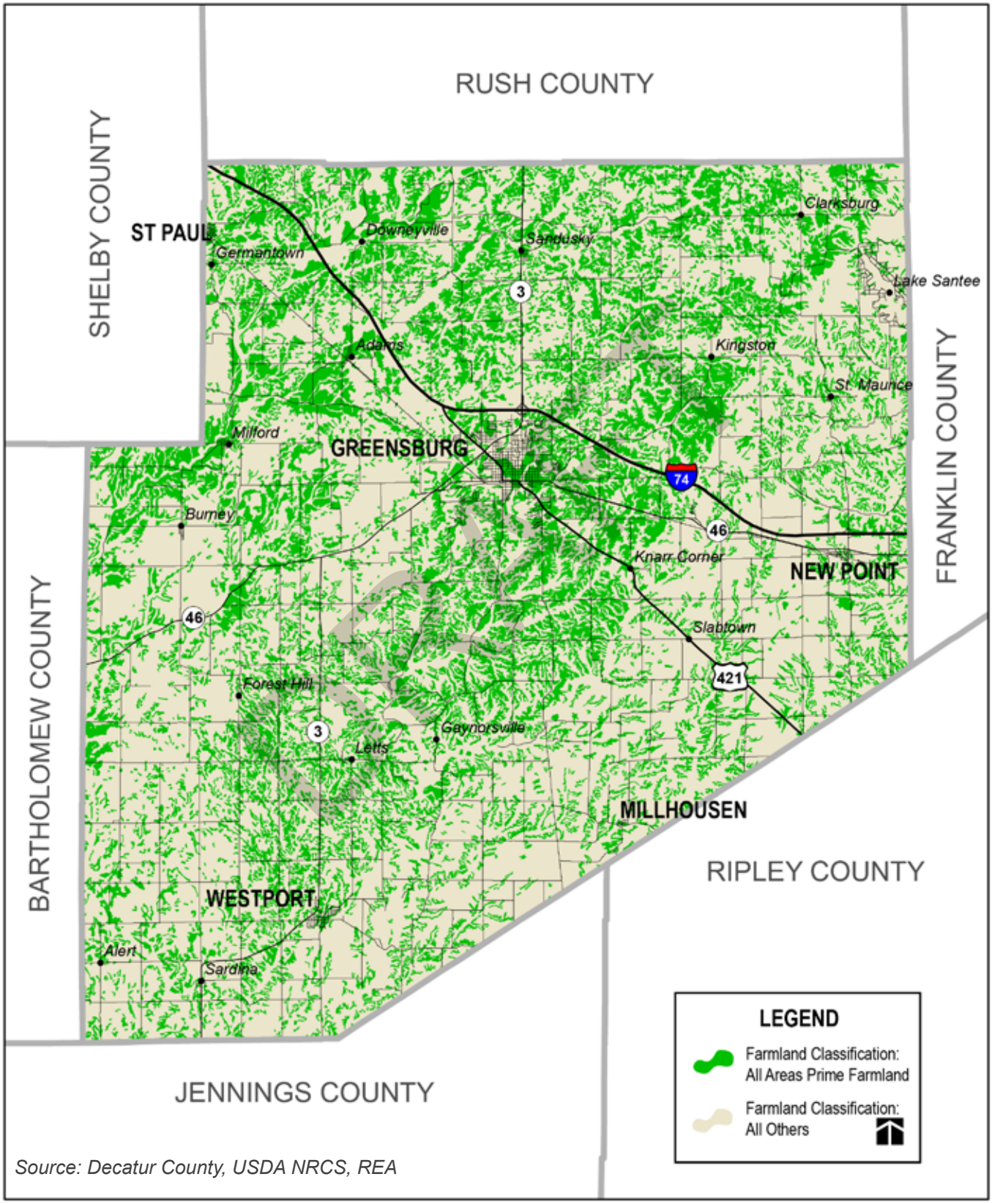


Source: USDA, 2012

A-1 Existing Conditions

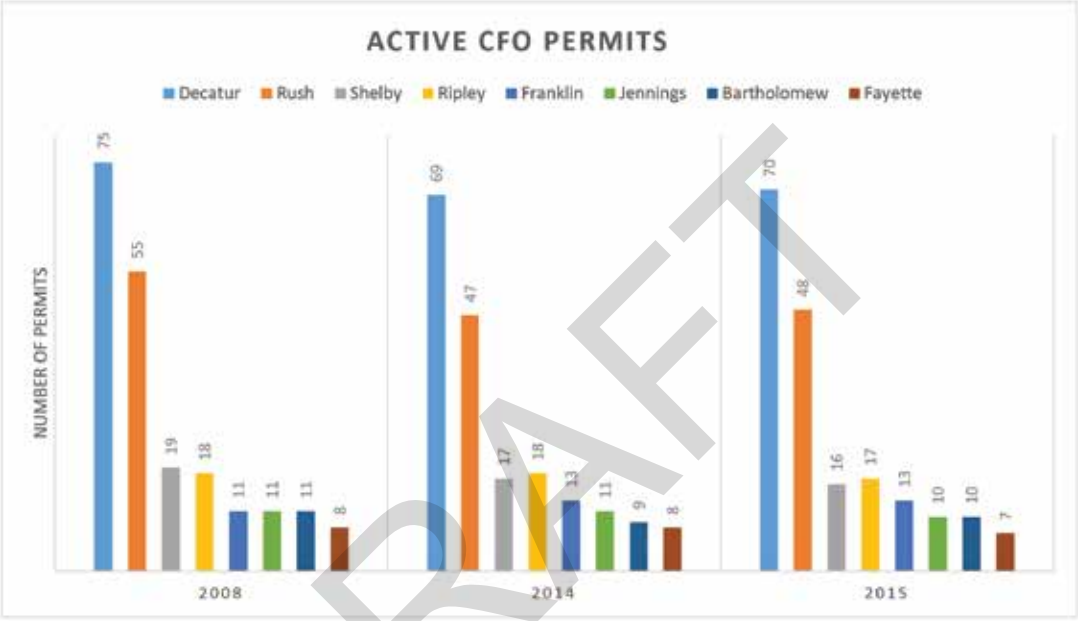
PRIME FARMLAND



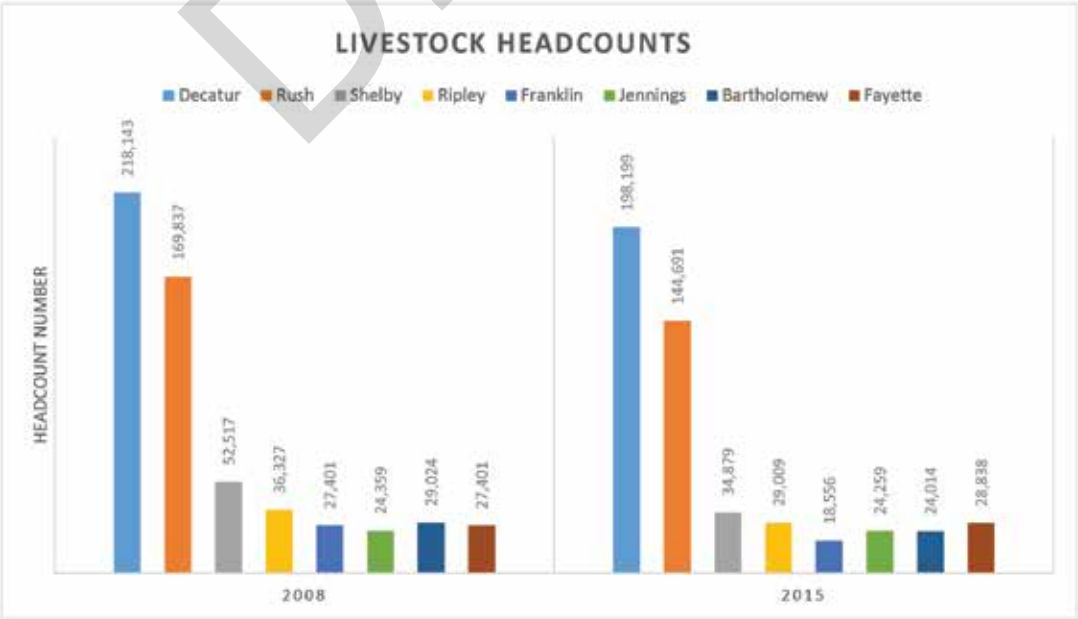
Source: Decatur County, USDA NRCS, REA

CONFINED FEEDING OPERATIONS

Information on active confined feeding operations (CFOs) was obtained from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). The number of active permits decreased from 75 in 2008 to 69 in 2014. One new permit was issued in 2015 to bring the active total to 70 CFOs. Between 2008 and 2015, the livestock head count, excluding chickens, decreased from 218,143 to 198,199. CFO and livestock head count numbers for Decatur County and surrounding counties are summarized in Figures A.10 and A.11. The chicken headcount was excluded to normalize data; one CFO in Jennings County houses over 2 million chickens. Chicken operations were however included in overall CFO permit numbers.



Source: Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management



Source: Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management

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A-1 Existing Conditions

Environment

Floodplain and wetland areas are depicted in the map on the following page. The flood areas shown on the map include the floodway and 100-year floodplain. The floodway includes the stream channel and adjacent lands that are reasonably required to discharge flood waters downstream. The 100-year floodplain is any area that is susceptible to being inundated by water during a 100-year flood event. A 100-year flood is not one that will occur every 100 years but is instead a flood that has a one percent chance of happening in any given year. There are approximately 10,272 acres of flood area in Decatur County; this represents 4.3% of the total County by area. There are 357 acres of identified wetlands in Decatur County. This is only 0.15% of the County area and many of the identified wetlands fall within the floodway/ floodplain.

In addition to rolling agriculture fields, the Decatur County landscape includes many tree stands and woodlands. Woodlands are most prevalent along Sand Creek and the Flatrock River. The northeast quadrant of the County also includes many forested areas in the more hilly areas and north of Lake Santee. Additionally, many agriculture parcels contain a forested patch or wooded fence row. These areas contribute visual interest to the landscape and provide habitat for wildlife.

In addition to passive recreation areas, the County has several key recreation destinations. The map on page 88 shows these active recreation areas as well as areas of significant tree cover. School sites have been included on this map as recreation amenities because of the important role they play in the community in terms of locations for sport and play areas. Other recreation destinations include:

- Flat Rock YMCA Camp
- North Branch Golf Course
- Decatur County Park and Sports Complex
- Allen Memorial Pool
- Decatur County Fairgrounds
- Greensburg County Club
- Oddfellows-Rebekah Park
- Sand Creek Township Park
- Wyaloosing Creek Golf Course
- Westport Community Park

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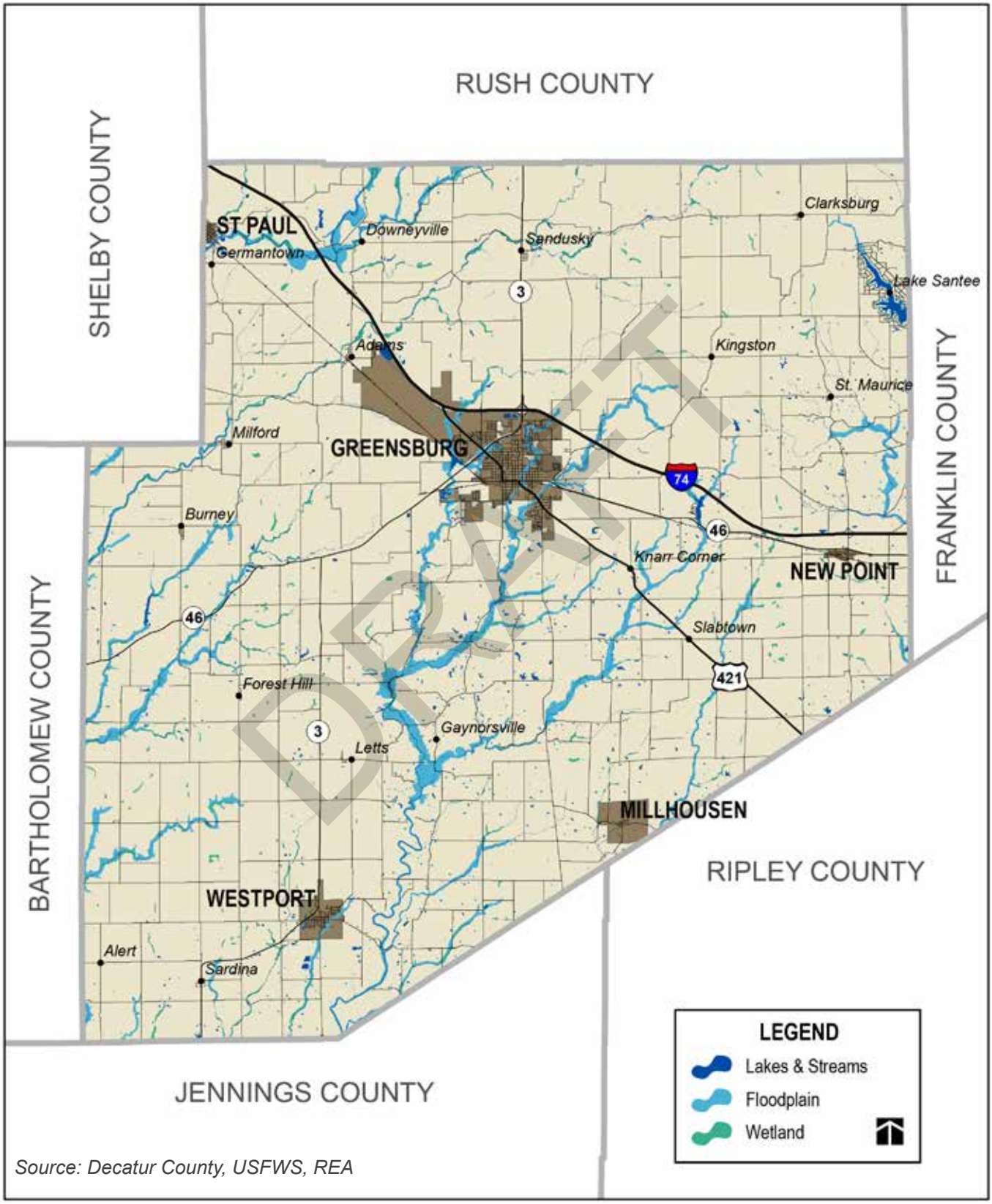
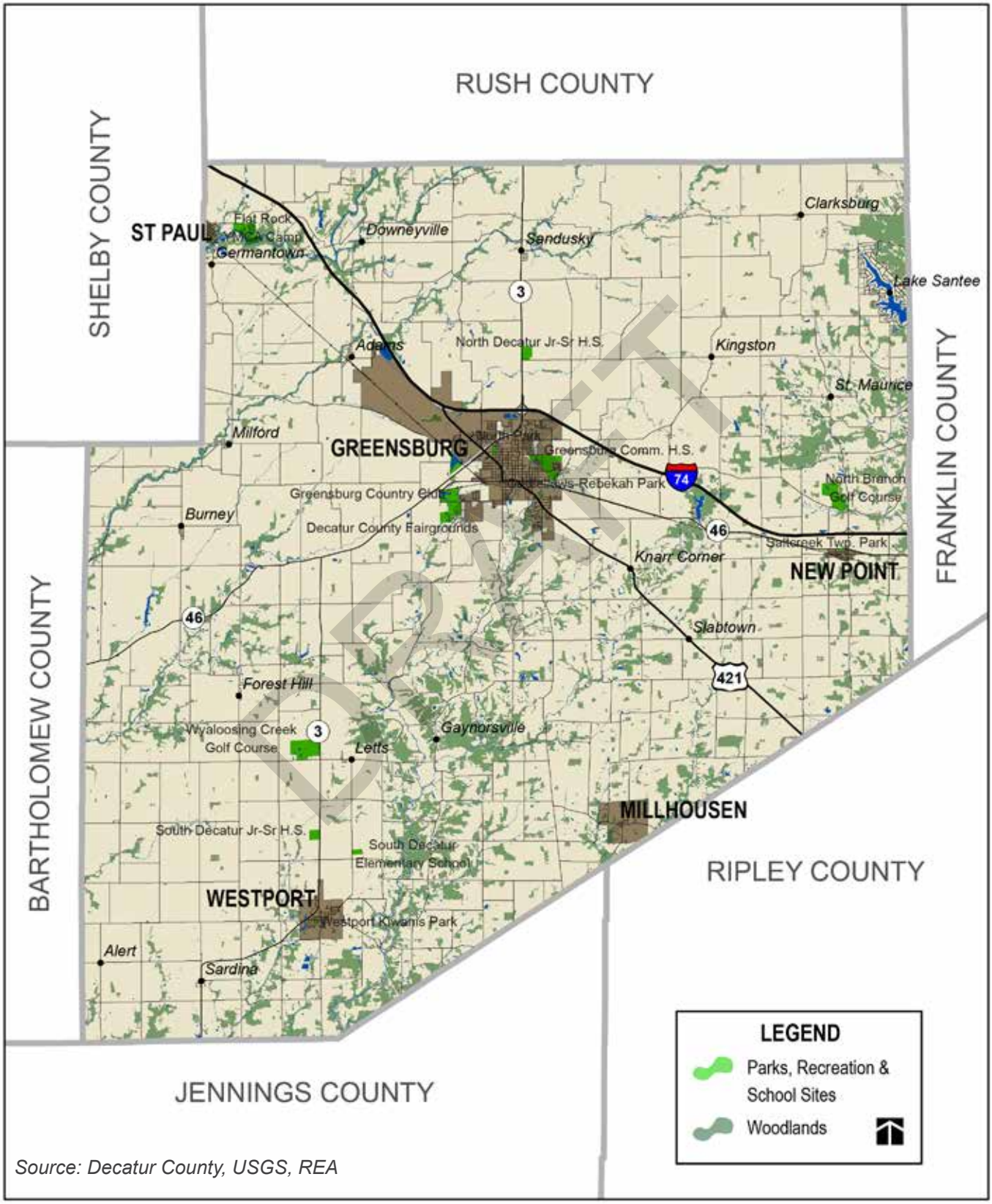
WATERCOURSES, FLOODPLAIN, AND WETLANDS



Source: Decatur County, USFWS, REA

A-1 Existing Conditions

PARKS, RECREATION, AND WOODLANDS



Source: Decatur County, USGS, REA

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Transportation

The road network in Decatur County is maintained by the County highway Department and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). Additionally, roads within Greensburg city limits are maintained by the Greensburg Street Department. The hierarchy of the area roadways is illustrated in Figure A.14 and summarized below.

Freeway: Interstate 74

Highway: U.S. Highway 421

State Routes: State Road 3, State Road 46

All other roads are classified as local or county roads.

The highest volume thoroughfare in the County is Interstate 74 which carries approximately 23,500 vehicles daily (INDOT, 2015 Annual Average Daily Traffic, AADT). The second busiest roadway is State Road 3, just north of Greensburg. AADTs here are over 10,000; where State Road 3 and State Road 46 run together, southwest of Greensburg, traffic counts range between 9,000 and 10,000 AADTs (INDOT, 2015). In areas outside of the City of Greensburg, where U.S. Highway 421 is separate from I-74, it carries between 3,000 and 4,000 AADT (INDOT, 2015).

Where there is a lack of roadway capacity or where capacity is projected to be needed, the County Highway Department may determine that a road improvement project is necessary. However if the road is controlled by the State, then INDOT must study and perform any of the improvements.

The following is a summary of public comments related to transportation heard during the public engagement process:

- Have too many narrow roads and bridges
- Too many gravel roads, which should be paved
- Roads and bridges are in poor condition and need to be better maintained, including center striping
- Need east bypass around Greensburg
- Lack of rail service
- Unsafe railroad crossings – crossing arms on bypass are too big and slow
- Traffic control is needed at 421and Vandalia Road (this is within the City of Greensburg)
- Old 421 and bridges can't sustain semis and car carriers
- Can't get onto 421 during certain periods of day (especially when Honda shifts change)
- St. Paul I-74 interchange needs upgrade

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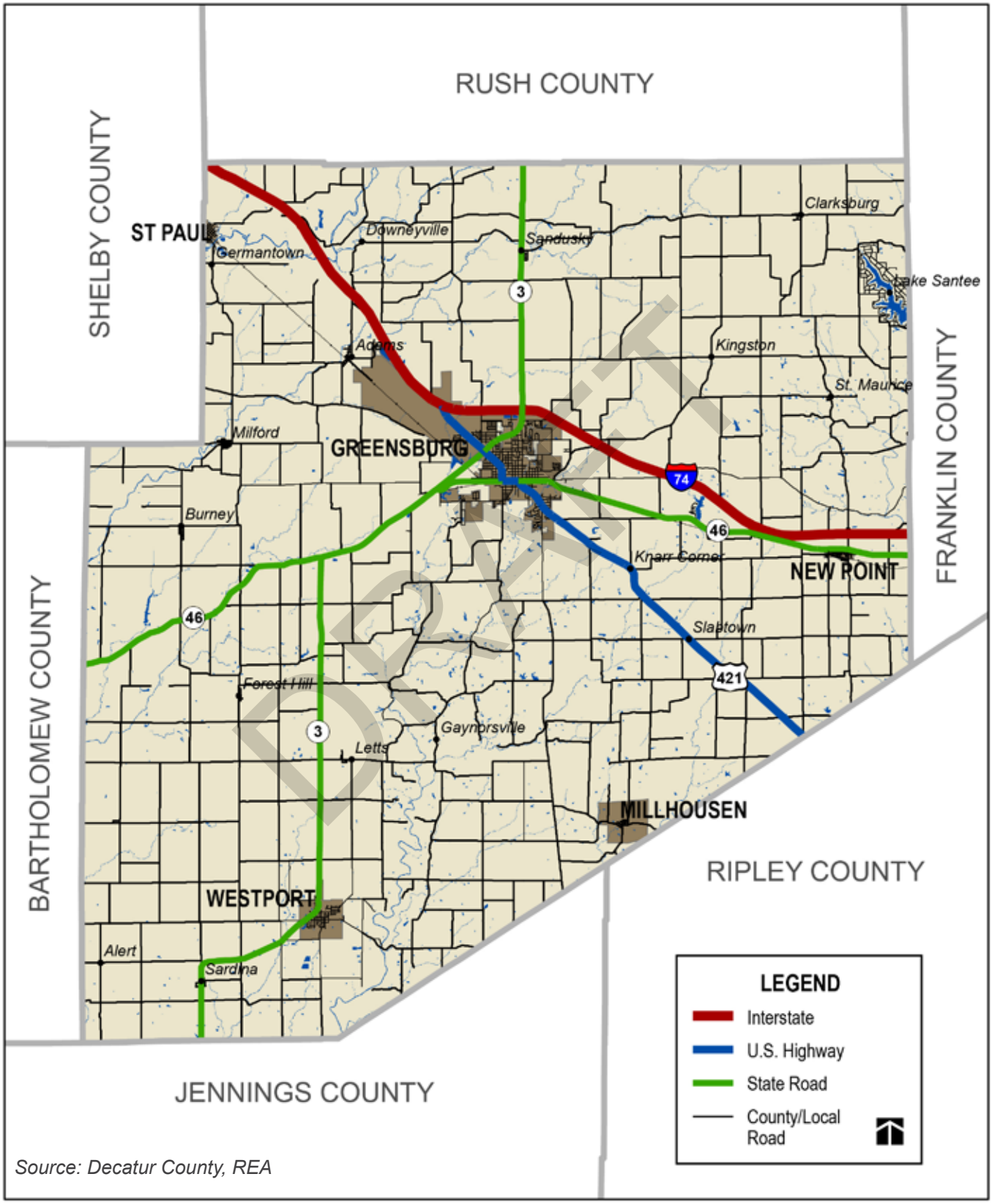
A-1 Existing Conditions

EXISTING ROADWAY NETWORK



Source: Decatur County, REA

Demographics

POPULATION

The figure below shows the long-term population change patterns for both Decatur County and the City of Greensburg. Over the time period from 1900 to 2010, the population of Decatur County has increased, from approximately 19,500 residents in 1900 to approximately 25,700 residents in 2010. The City of Greensburg's population has steadily increased from approximately 5,000 residents at the beginning of the 20th Century to approximately 11,500 residents in 2010. These values indicate that, since 1900, the City of Greensburg is the primary source of population growth in Decatur County. Outside the City of Greensburg, Decatur County's population has actually decreased slightly over time.

Decatur County's total population increased by 4.8% between 2000 and 2010, while Greensburg's population increased by 12.0%, over this time period. The population of Decatur County outside the City of Greensburg decreased by approximately 50 residents between 2000 and 2010. It is likely that, during this time period, most change occurred from 2005 forward, after the Honda facility was introduced to the community.

The chart on the following page shows recent population estimates for the incorporated cities and towns in Decatur County, based on data from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) for 2010-2014. Greensburg's population has increased slightly over this time while the towns of Millhousen, New Point, St. Paul, and Westport have generally remained unchanged.

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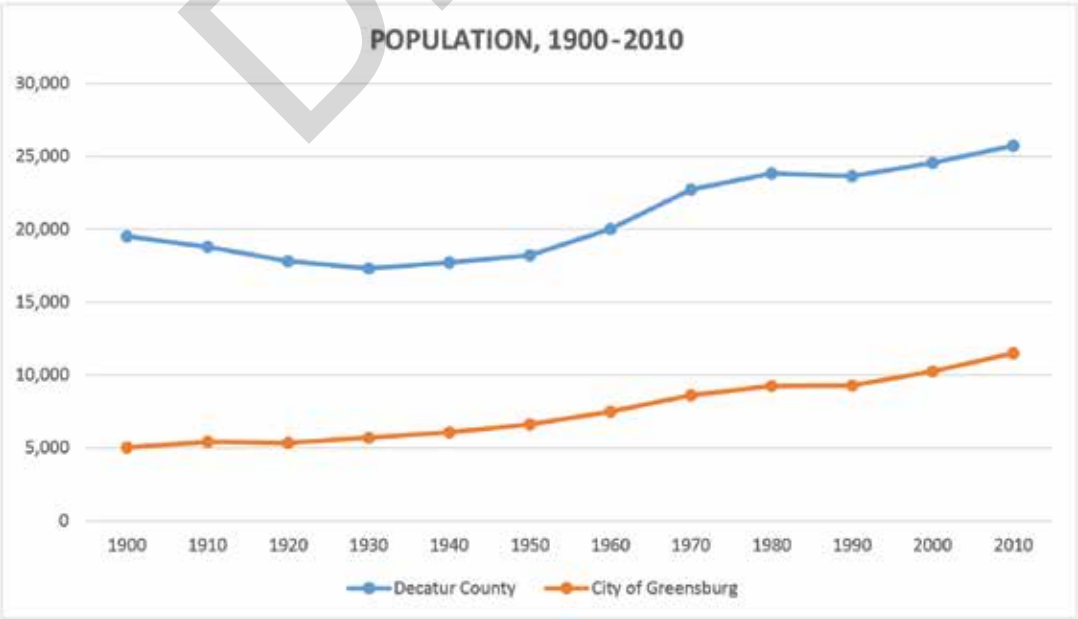
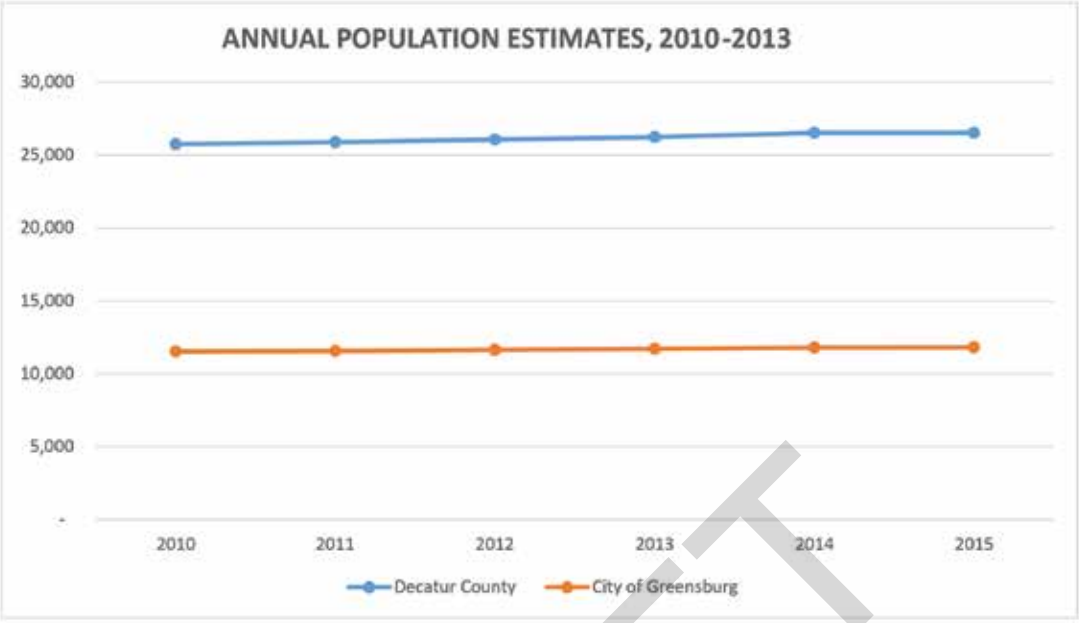


Source: Indiana Business Research Center



Source: American Community Survey

AGE

Working age adults (age 25-64) represent approximately half of the Decatur County population, which is similar to the age distribution at a statewide level. The County's population is aging slightly: the median age of Decatur County residents increased from 35.8 years to 38.7 years between 2000 and 2010. The County will experience an increasing proportion of aging residents in the near to medium term, as residents currently in the 50-69 year age range continue to grow older.

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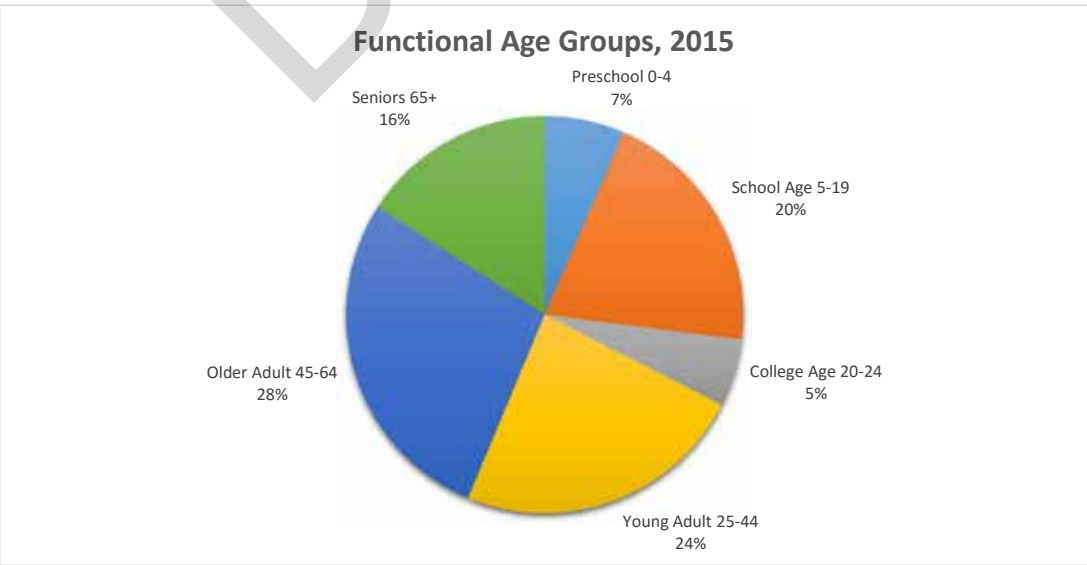
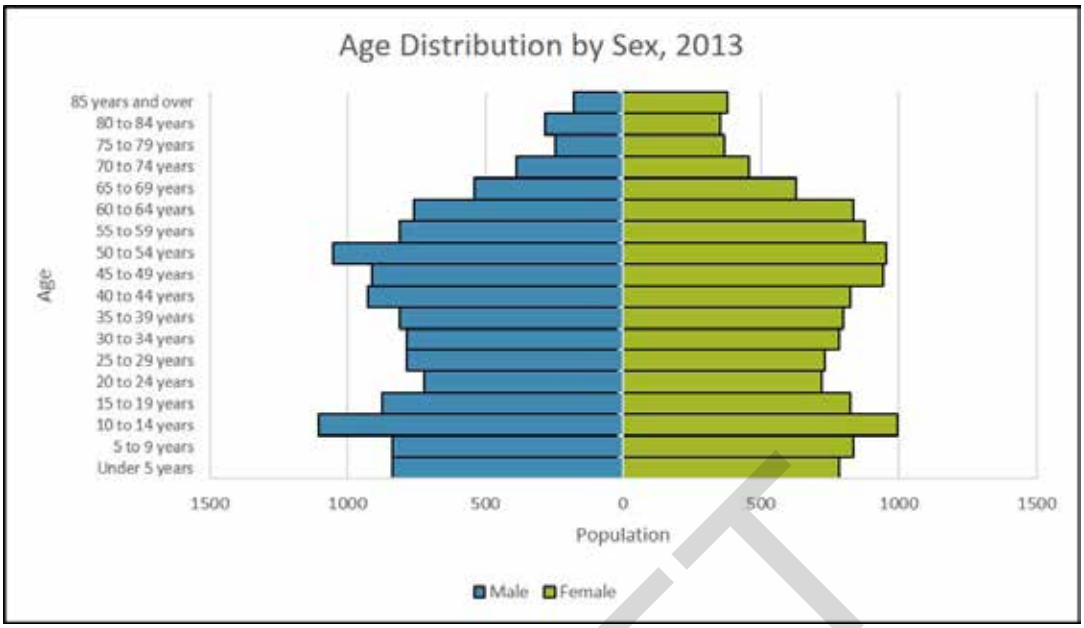


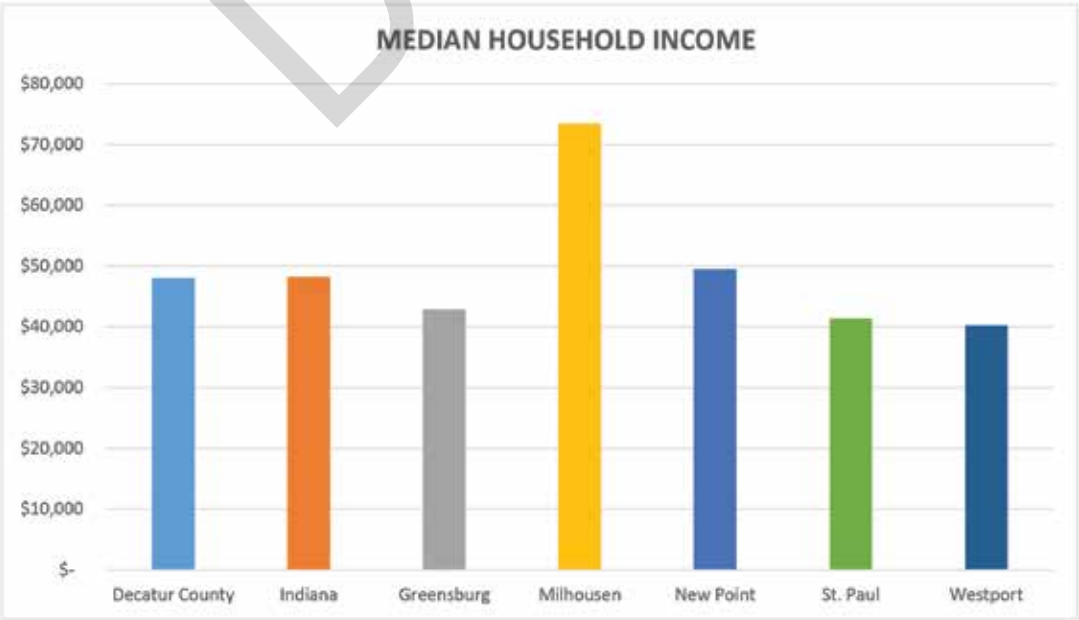
Source: Indiana Business Research Center



Source: American Community Survey

INCOME

The median household income in Decatur County in 2013 (American Community Survey) was $48,047, very comparable to the Indiana statewide median household income of $48,248. Median household income in Greensburg was $42,842, more than $5,000 less than the state median, meaning Greensburg residents have less spending power than the residents of other parts of the region and state. Between 2000 (US Census SF3) and 2013, the median household income in Decatur County increased by 16 percent, as compared to 19 percent for the state.



Source: American Community Survey

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A-1 Existing Conditions

EDUCATION

The following table summarizes the educational attainment of adults aged 25 or more, for Decatur County, the City of Greensburg, and the State of Indiana overall. Compared against statewide levels, a higher proportion of Decatur County and Greensburg City residents hold a high school diploma without attaining additional education degrees. A greater proportion of residents at the state level hold a bachelor's or advanced graduate/professional degree when compared to both Decatur County and the City of Greensburg. Statewide, 23.2 percent of adult residents hold a bachelor's or graduate/professional degree. In comparison, 13.7 percent of Decatur County residents and 14.6 percent of Greensburg residents hold a bachelor's or graduate/professional degree.

	DECATUR COUNTY	CITY OF GREENSBURG	INDIANA
Less than 9th grade	4.0%	4.1%	4.2%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	8.8%	8.8%	8.6%
High school graduate	47.8%	46.1%	35.2%
Some college, no degree	18.0%	19.2%	20.9%
Associate's degree	7.6%	7.3%	7.9%
Bachelor's degree	8.5%	9.6%	14.8%
Graduate or professional degree	5.2%	5.0%	8.4%

Source: American Community Survey

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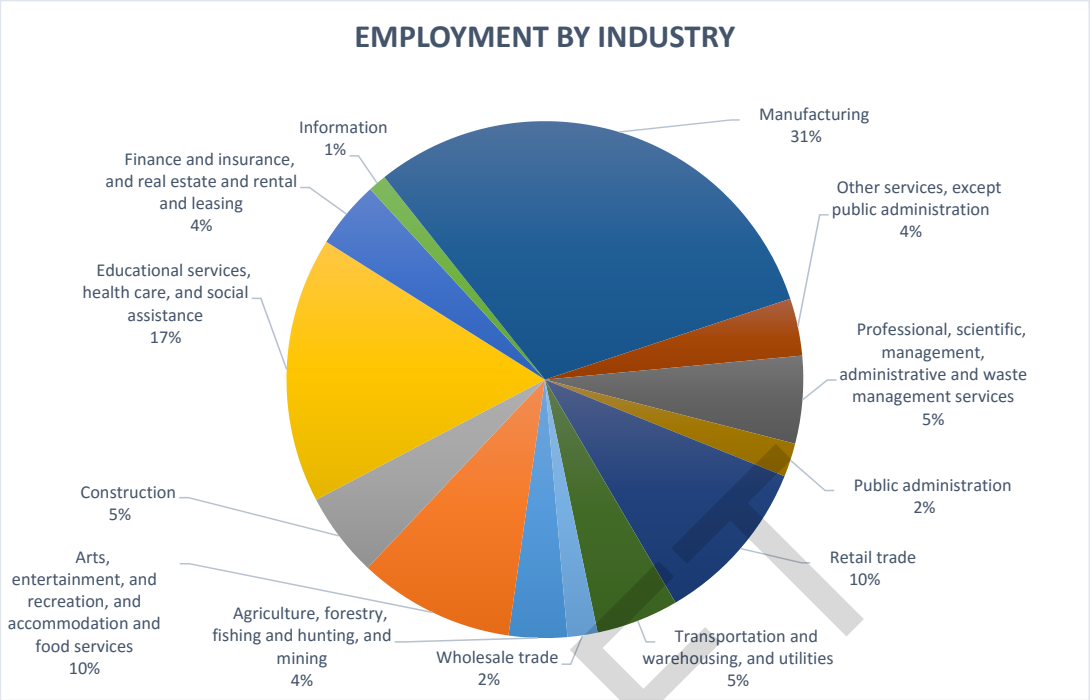
EMPLOYMENT

Manufacturing is the largest job sector in Decatur County representing 31% of overall employment. The second largest industry is educational services, healthcare, and social assistance representing 17% of the employment share with the third largest industry being retail trade jobs representing 10% of overall employment. There are 840 jobs in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining industry, making up 4% of County employment. This figure may be slightly misleading in that sales jobs involving farm equipment and materials would be classified under retail trades. Similarly, transportation and warehousing jobs that deal with agriculture products are classified under transportation and warehousing, not agriculture. In reality, agriculture makes up a larger portion of the Decatur County economy than suggested by the 840 reported agriculture jobs.

The unemployment rate in Decatur County is currently at a 14-year low. The 2015 unemployment rate was approximately 4%, well below both the state and national average. There has been a major turn-around in the County economy considering the 2009 unemployment rate was over 13%.



Source: American Community Survey

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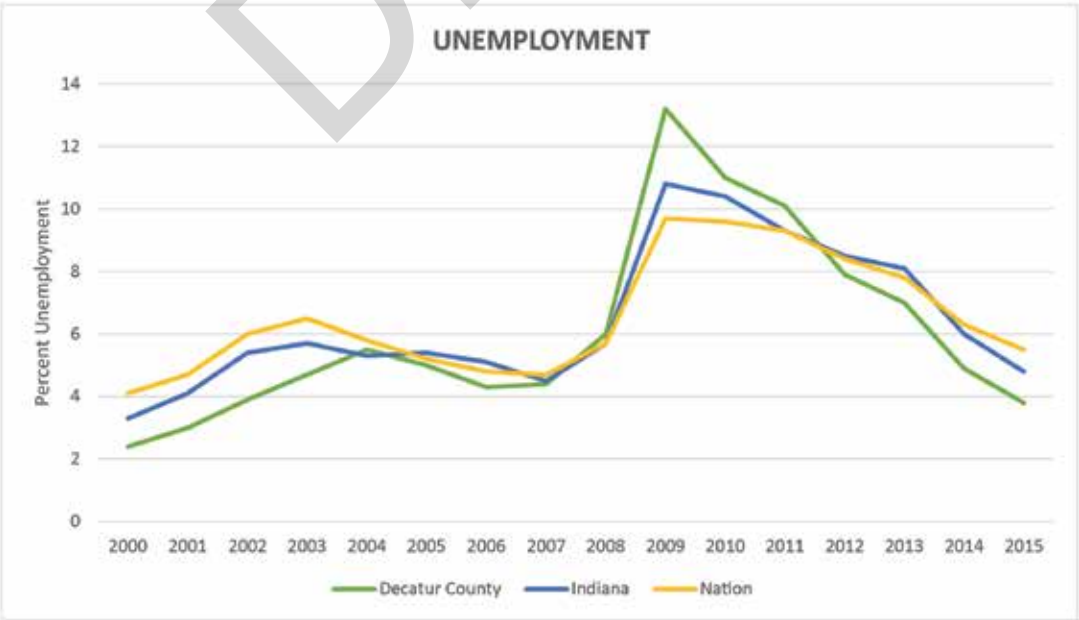

Source: Indiana Business Research Center

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

In 2010, the American Community Survey (ACS) indicates that 11,209 housing units were located in Decatur County. This marks an increase of nearly 12 percent between 2000 and 2010. This growth is significant, and is likely a result of expanded job opportunities in the community. However, the number of vacant housing units increased by over 100% during this time, from 603 vacant units in 2000 to 1,232 vacant units in 2010.

Age of Housing

More than one-quarter of the homes in Decatur County were built prior to 1940, and nearly two-thirds of the homes in the County were constructed prior to 1980. While older housing can be attractive for the quality of architecture and character, its downside includes the need for upgrades and maintenance, as well as a lack of modern energy efficiency. Generally housing needs to be renovated or replaced after a 30 year period – a strong majority of the County's housing stock is more than 30 years old. Considering that the number of housing units has increased significantly in recent years, it appears that new construction is preferred to the renovation of existing housing in the community. Housing by age groups is summarized below for Decatur County, Greensburg, and the State of Indiana.

Home Value

The median home value in Decatur County in 2013 was $112,000, marking a decrease of $6,500 (5.8%) from the median value of $118,500 in 2010. The 2013 median home value in Decatur County is higher than that of Greensburg ($103,300) but lower than the statewide median value of $122,800. The higher home values outside city and town limits in Decatur County indicate that home buyers may place a greater value on larger suburban or rural properties within the local real estate market. Median home values for the County, state, and incorporated places are presented on the following page.

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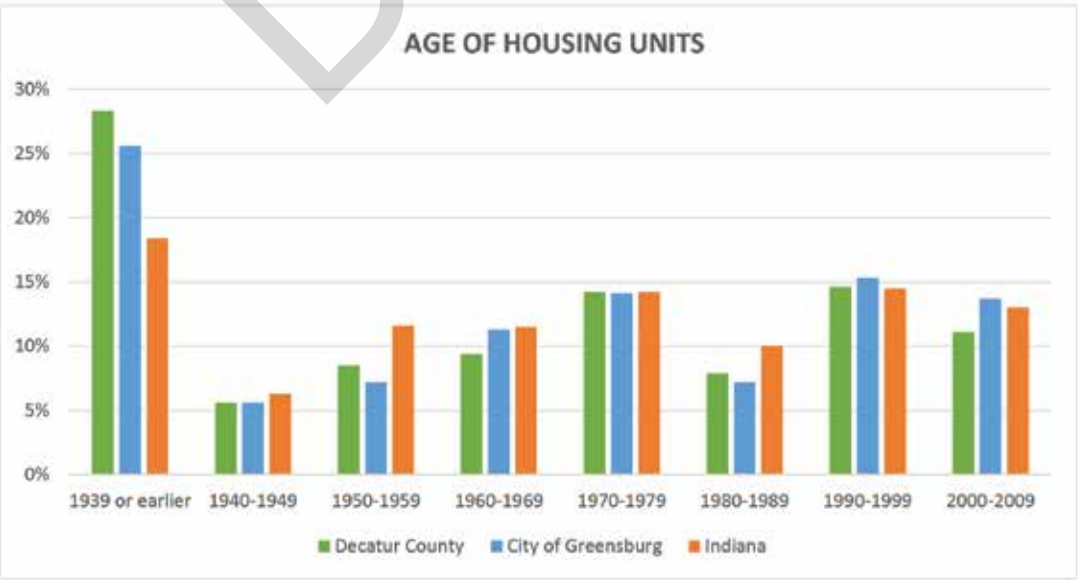
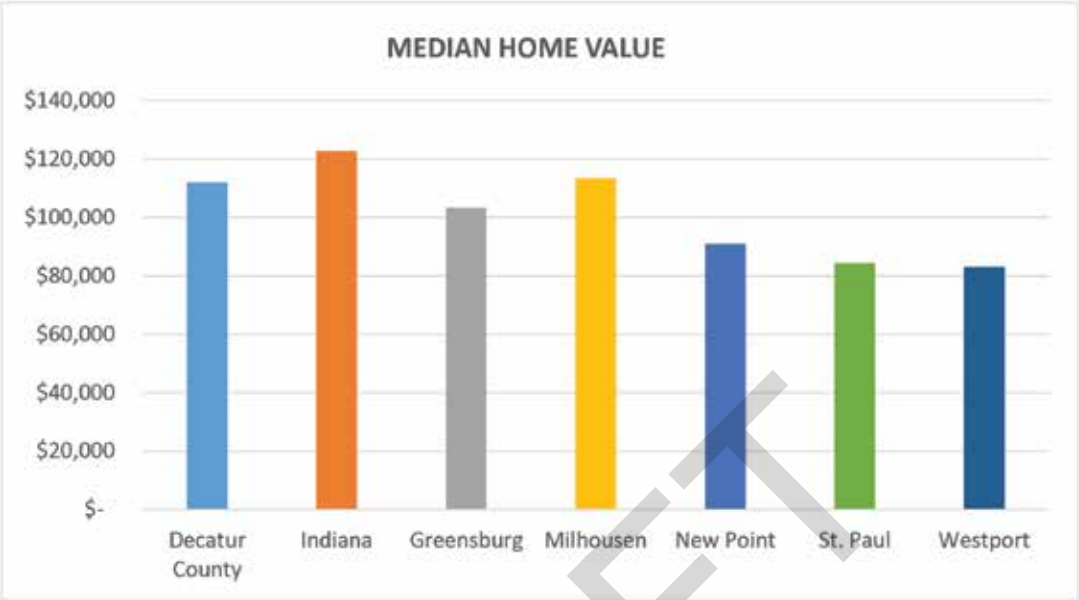


Source: American Community Survey



Source: American Community Survey

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A-2 INTERJURISDICTIONAL AGREEMENT

COMPONENTS OF AGREEMENT

This information was determined by a joint Greensburg/Decatur County Steering Committee on October 26, 2015. The purpose of the meeting was to work out some preliminary elements that should be included in the interjurisdictional agreement between Greensburg and Decatur County. The agreement would describe how joint review would occur for certain parcels that would impact Greensburg's future growth.

DISTANCE

- What is the review area and how will it be applied?
  - Parcels immediately adjacent to City limits
  - Parcels in identified future land use planning areas (this will require a map exhibit)
  - Industrial and commercial development within a 2 mile buffer of City limits
  - Residential subdivisions greater than X number of units or X acres of land area that are within X mile buffer of City limits

REVIEW PROCESS

- How will applications be reviewed?
  - Joint Technical Review Committee
    - » City department heads (Street, Fire, Police, Water, Wastewater, Engineer, Plan Commission President)
    - » Utility Representatives
    - » County Technical Review Committee (Area Plan Commission Executive Director, Highway, Surveyor, Rural Water)
    - » County Area Plan Commission Representatives
    - » Potentially other City Plan Commission members in addition to President
  - The committee will meet monthly pending petitions. If no applications have been submitted that would require joint review, the committee will not meet.
  - The County Area Plan Commission office will receive applications. They will then be forwarded to the City Engineering, Planning & Zoning office.
  - Applications to be reviewed include:
    - » Rezones

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    - » Planned Unit Developments
    - » Major Subdivisions
    - » Site Plan Review (commercial and industrial only)
  - The Joint Committee will send a recommendation to the Area Plan Commission, who ultimately will make the decision (or then provide recommendation to legislative body)

TIMEFRAMES

- Overall Agreement
  - A termination clause should be included in the agreement to set the terms by which one party may terminate the agreement
  - The agreement should be reviewed whenever one or both parties are updating their comprehensive plan or not to exceed 10 years if comprehensive plans are not being updated
- Application forwarding should occur as soon as possible after the determination has been made that a petition qualifies for joint review
- A two week review period should be provided prior to the Joint Committee meeting
- Applications that meet the existing 30 day filing requirement should not be held up or penalized because of joint review if the application is complete

PREVAILING STANDARDS

- Generally the City standards should be applied in annexation or potential annexation situations. Provisions for waiving of some standards as allowed by statute should be included. Standards include:
  - Setbacks
  - Transportation infrastructure
  - Stormwater/Drainage infrastructure
  - Fire protection

NEXT STEPS

- Meeting between Mayor and Commissioners to develop agreement
- Agreements go before Commissioners and City Council to adopt as formal agreement
- Implement agreement

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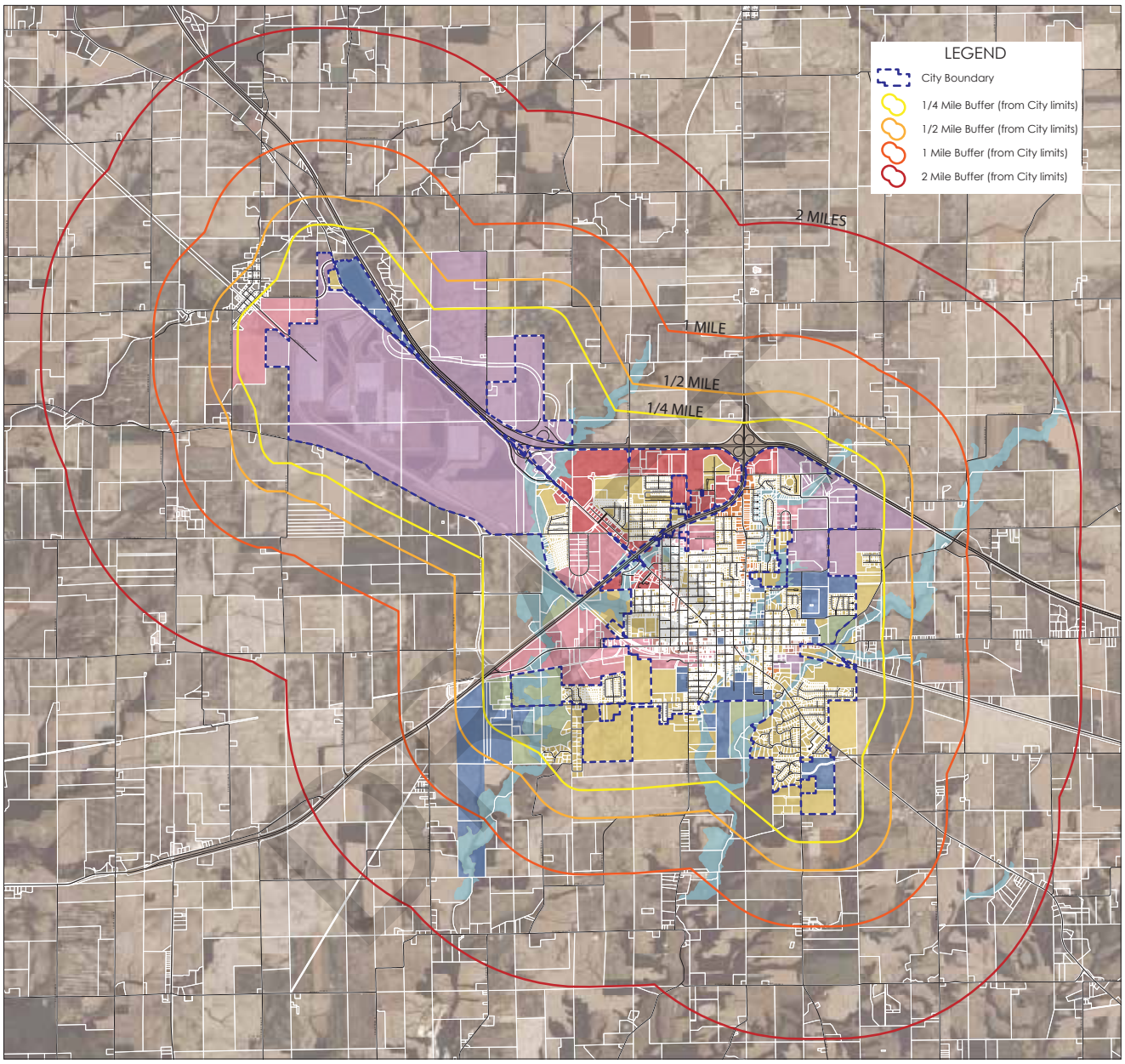
DISCUSSION MAP



CITY & COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES

Joint Steering Committees Meeting 10.26.2015

1 inch = 1,500 feet

A-2 Interjurisdictional Agreement

EXAMPLE INTERJURISDICTIONAL AGREEMENT FROM INDIANA COMMUNITY

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Model Inter-local Agreement Concerning an Area of Common Interest

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MODEL INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE RONALD REAGAN CORRIDOR

Hendricks County, the Towns of Avon, Brownsburg, and Plainfield, and the Indianapolis Airport Authority

This agreement between Hendricks County, Indiana, herein referred to as "County," and the Towns of Avon, Brownsburg, and Plainfield, Indiana, herein referred to as "Towns" and the Indianapolis Airport Authority, herein referred to as "Airport".

WHEREAS, the County, Towns, and Airport have collaborated over the past year in developing a long-term vision for the critical north-south roadway between Interstate 70 and Interstate 74, known as the Ronald Reagan Corridor; and

WHEREAS, the collaborative vision of this corridor recommends that this area be a premier economic development corridor with high-quality development standards; and

WHEREAS, more stringent planning controls are recommended to ensure the preservation of the corridor's accessibility and development quality; and

WHEREAS, the County, Towns, and Airport have an interest in the same geographic area referred to as the Ronald Reagan Corridor as illustrated in Exhibit 1; and

WHEREAS, portions of the Ronald Reagan Corridor are within the jurisdictions of the Hendricks County Plan Commission, the Avon Plan Commission, the Brownsburg Plan Commission, the Plainfield Plan Commission; and the Indianapolis Airport Authority;

WHEREAS, development along the Ronald Reagan Corridor impacts future development within the County;

WHEREAS, the County, Towns, and Airport want to make the development process as efficient as possible without compromising quality; and

WHEREAS, Indiana Code does not provide a mechanism that allows both the County and the Towns to review developments within an AREA OF COMMON INTEREST (ACI), herein referred to ACI, but does allow Counties and Towns to enter into inter-governmental agreements.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual agreements and covenants set forth herein, the County, Towns, and Airport agree as follows:

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1. THAT, the AREA OF COMMON INTEREST (ACI) shall be defined as the Ronald Reagan Corridor as shown in Exhibit 1.

2. THAT, all parties agree to adopt the Ronald Reagan Corridor Master Plan as the long range vision for this area.

3. THAT, all parties agree to participate in an annual steering committee meeting to review the progress of the Ronald Reagan Corridor Master Plan. All parties agree to appoint at least one representative to the Ronald Reagan Parkway Steering Committee.

4. THAT, all parties will agree to utilize the model overlay ordinance contained in the Master Plan as a base document which they will then review and modify for local conditions and adopt as an amendment to their zoning ordinance.

5. THAT, the individual Plan Commissions, in order to maximize coordination, will route for comment any petition or development in the ACI that requires a hearing (rezoning, variance, special exception, conditional use, subdivision of land, development plan review, etc…) to the other Plan Commissions in the ACI and the Indianapolis Airport Authority as soon as possible.

6. THAT, the local governments will use the standards identified in the Master Plan for construction of the various improvements within the right-of-way of the Ronald Reagan Corridor. This includes the suggested standards for the road cross section, landscaping, trails/sidewalks, median treatment signage and other enhancements.

NOW THEREFORE, such Intergovernmental Agreement is approved by _____

On _____.

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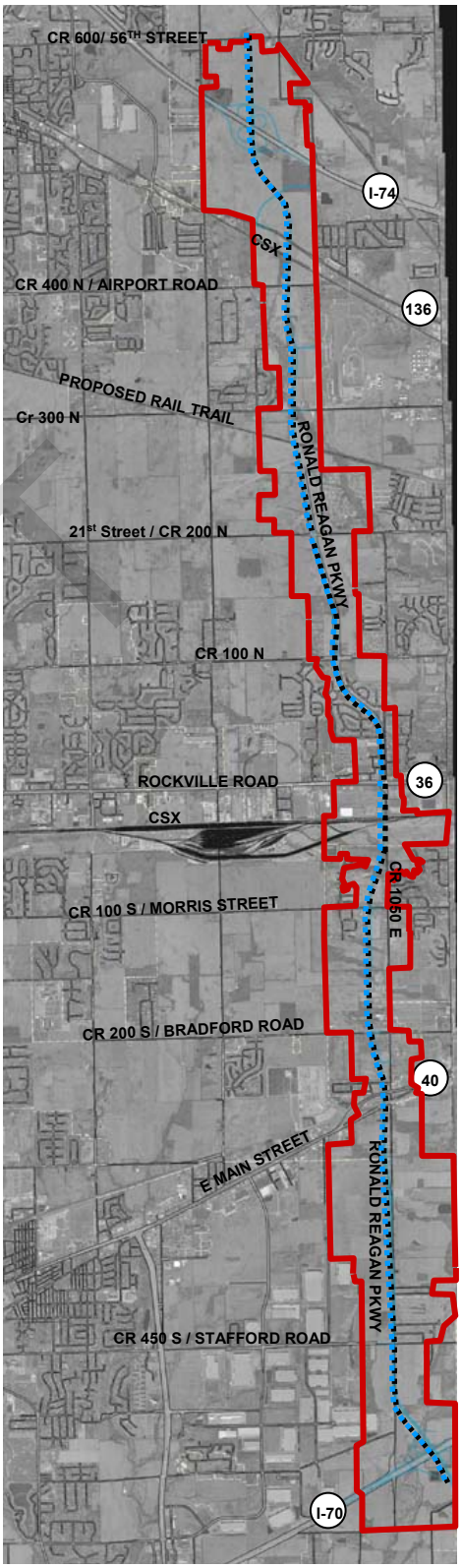
EXHIBIT 1: Area of Common Interest



RONALD REAGAN CORRIDOR STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

RONALD REAGAN PARKWAY

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A-3 RECOMMENDATIONS OF CFO WORKING SUBGROUP

INTRODUCTION

A special working subgroup of the steering committee was put together to develop recommendations for Confined Feeding Operations (CFOs) for the comprehensive plan. The group meeting on 6/29/2016, 7/7/2016 and 7/22/2016. The information was then presented to the steering committee on 7/25/2016.

Generally

- The proposed changes to the comprehensive plan listed below apply to CFOs as defined by IDEM. As the term "CAFO" is no longer used by IDEM, it has been avoided in this document. Livestock operations small enough to fall below the threshold for them to be classified as CFOs by IDEM are to be exempt from the changes proposed.
- The definition of churches, schools, nursing homes, and hospitals should follow the definitions of how they could apply to be exempt from county taxes. The concept of using this tax exempt status in combination with Indiana Land Resource Council documents to define these entities for purposes of our Comp Plan was discussed and generally accepted. All or part of a building is exempt from property taxation if it is owned, occupied, and use by a person for educational, literary, scientific, religious, or charitable purposes.
- All setbacks are reciprocal
- A setback from unincorporated towns was discussed and generally favored. Discussion centered on protecting undeveloped but buildable lots platted in existing small towns in the county. The concept of a 1000 feet setback from CFO structure to lot (as opposed to parcel) boundary in a subdivision is recommended. Concern over undeveloped subdivisions outside of existing small towns creating unnecessary "blackout" areas for CFOs was noted. The committee recognizes that platted subdivisions containing multiple approved building lots exist within the county, with some existing for many decades, and have had no development other than the "survey and platting of the subdivision", and do not adjoin any other developed subdivision. In cases such as these and particularly any platted subdivision that meets the previously described conditions and were establish before the year of 1997, the committee strongly recommends the variance process be utilized, thus each being reviewed on a case by case basis, as to the feasibility of any

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setback other than the applicable property line setback.

- The committee that drafted these recommendations and wishes to be involved with the updating and / or the creation of any ordinances that address or involves CFOs. The purpose of this request is to strive to maintain as much unity and original intent as possible with regards to the comprehensive plan and any new regulations going forward.

All Incorporated Towns

A setback of 1320 feet from jurisdictional boundary to CFO structure, with the exception of Millhousen. Because Millhousen has a very large jurisdictional area that does not have development out to its boundary, an additional setback from the bound to CFO would not be required. Instead, no CFO would be constructed within the town limits of Millhousen.

Schools

A setback of 1320 feet from property line to CFO structure. It is intended that this apply to the city and county school corporation, teaching facilities, as well as private schools (i.e. religious organizations). A strict definition of the term "school" is to apply. School: A county, tax exempt institution for the teaching of children or adults including primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, professional schools, technical schools, business schools, and trade schools.

Religious Institution

A setback of 1000 feet from structure to structure is to apply between churches and CFOs. A strict definition of "church" is to be applied to prevent the loose interpretation of the term to be used to prevent CFO placement.

Residential

A setback of 1000 feet from structure to structure will be applied between residences including approved residential building sites and CFOs. Input from consultants requested to define "residence". Residential Dwelling: Any building arranged, designed, used, or intended to be used for residential occupancy by one or more families and that includes but is not limited to the following types: (a) single-family detached dwellings; (b) two-family dwellings; (c) townhouse dwellings; and (d) multiple-family dwellings.

Setbacks, Generally

Existing county front, rear, and side setbacks from roads and property lines will be used when not superseded by other setbacks.

Setback Waiver

A voluntary waiver of setback can be granted by affected property owners to lower setbacks as low as allowed by IDEM or other county minimums. Signed document required.

Expansion

Expansion on existing sites registered with IDEM is exempt from increased setback distances. Expansions must meet minimum existing county property line and road setbacks as well as IDEM requirements. Existing site defined as an IDEM permit application submitted prior to date of adoption of new ordinances.

Permitted/Conditional Use

There was discussion on CFOs as a Permitted Use vs Conditional Use. The intent is for them to be approved administratively by APC staff if all requirements are met. A public hearing is not necessary for a CFO project that meets all requirements. Input from consultants is requested on this issue. ***Recommendation***: Conditional Use

Setback Mitigation

The concept of setback reduction via mitigation was discussed and generally accepted. Using mitigation practices to lower setbacks from residences to CFOs down to a number as low

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as the IDEM minimum of 660 feet was generally favored, with some notable concerns. Concerns included permanence of mitigation practice, verification, and effectiveness of practice. Earthen berms were generally favored. It was hoped that a definition of mitigation practices could be draw from other sources (NRCS, Midwest Plan Service, etc.). It was left for some later group to develop the type and amount of practices required to earn a reduced setback. This group prefers practices that are permanent, effective, and require a minimum of inspection and verification from county personnel.

Emergency Plan

Any new applications shall include an emergency plan that at a minimum shall include the following: contact names, contact information, and plans to address alternative power / ventilation and water sources in the event that normal service is disrupted.

Variance

It was intended that CFOs that do not meet minimum requirements will have the opportunity to seek a variance. Advice from consultants requested on legal and procedural questions.

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A-4 SUMMARY OF MEETINGS

There were several meetings held during the entire process. This appendix contains summary meeting notes from the following meetings:

- Steering Committee Meeting 1 6-23-2015
- Steering Committee Meeting 2 7-27-2015
- Steering Committee Meeting 3 8-17-2015
- Steering Committee Meeting 4 11-09-2015
- Steering Committee Meeting 5 11-23-2015
- Steering Committee Meeting 6 12-07-2015
- Steering Committee Meeting 7 1-25-2016
- Steering Committee Meeting 8 5-31-2016
- Steering Committee Meeting 9 6-27-2016
- Steering Committee Meeting 10 7-25-2016
- Joint Steering Committee Meeting 1 7-07-2015
- Joint Steering Committee Meeting 2 10-26-2015
- Area Plan Commission Meeting 4-1-2015
- Focus Group Meetings 9-14 through 9-16-2015
- Public Meeting 1 9-14 through 9-17-2015
- Public Meeting 2 10-3, 10-4, 10-12, and 10-13-2016

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Steering Committee Meeting 1

Meeting Notes

What should this plan accomplish?

- Buy in
- Community understanding
- Flexibility
- Things to attract young families
- Surrounding property notification
- Airport – upgrade
- Wide community support
    - To be able to use the plan as a marketing brochure for the County
- Provide appropriate evidence for decision making
- Fair administration
- Agriculture / Resident balance (protection of rights of both)
- Maintain economic balance and also opportunities
- Clear process and expectations
- Recreation opportunities
- Open space
- Affordable housing
- Support small towns
- Remove barriers to / facilitate desired development

Strengths

- Preserving agriculture (grain and livestock)
- People always willing to help each other
- Location – between Indianapolis and Cincinnati, and along interstate
- Learning Center
- Labor force
- Maintained small town feel and politeness
- High graduation rate

Weaknesses

- Rail line
- Scale of County schools
- High percentage of students on reduced fee lunch is an indicator of poor community financial health
- Drop-out rate
- Too many gravel roads
- Roads insufficient for full size semi – which is increasing in use for agriculture
- Lack of restaurants
- Bridges

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- County spends more money on roads comparatively because have to go far for gravel and other construction materials
- Maybe too conservative with agriculture protection
- Limited water resources

Opportunities

- Walking trails and other recreation
    - Archery
    - Hunting
    - Kids activities
- Senior housing
- Child care
- Strategy for attracting better (higher paying) jobs
- Passenger rail
- Courthouse square (Alma Taylor Foundation has contributed significantly)
- Coordination with City comprehensive plan update process and fringe of municipal boundary
- Support volunteer fire and ems services

Threats

- Prevalence of drugs – health implications
- Housing – lack of choice / affordability
- Need to secure long-term source of quality water (Napoleon serving part of water need)
- Interchanges
    - Could develop as asset or eyesore
    - Have rail access close by

Things to research

- Job mix
- Commuting profiles
- Greensburg / Rural Water agreement
- Number / density of CFOs as compared to other counties
- EDC future industrial park plan

Follow up items

- Project team will email steering committee requesting input on participants for focus group discussions
- Project team will send "Doodle" request for joint City/County steering committees meeting to be held July 7th, 8th, or 9th
- Will keep with the 4th Monday of the month from 3 to 5 pm for future steering committee meetings

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Decatur County Steering Committee Meeting #2

Demographics

- Large growth in the 60's , 70;s, and 80's are due from new industries
    - Delta
    - Valeo
    - Bon Aluminum
- How does the county compare to the state in growth rate
- Long term water quality problems
- High School graduation rates vs. high school dropout rate
    - These numbers seem wrong

Interjurisdictional Agreements

- Not in favor of a 2 mile blanket approach
- A stepped buffer way be a better option
    - Certain land uses could have different buffers and/or triggers that will require a joint city/county review process
    - What will those triggers be?
    - Who will have the final say / authority?
    - What are the steps in this plan approval process?
    - Where does the process begin and end

Past Plan Goals and Objectives Discussion

- Cluster Housing
    - This might be more acceptable near existing communities
- Preserve Ag Land
- County needs to develop walking trails
- Trails and road upgrades need to occur simultaneously
- % of green space requirements
- Churches will likely begin providing small homes for aging population
- Balance of appropriate housing
- Development Review
    - Soil Type
    - Slope
    - Current Housing Density
    - APC uses a scoring sheet for plan review
- Future development of Decatur County
    - Winery
        - Other Agro-tourism businesses

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    - Race Track
    - College
    - Athletics
    - Arts Community
- Shovel-ready sites
    - Express permitting process
- Ag Industry is larger than demographics show
    - 840 doesn't include all direct and indirect ag jobs
    - Many jobs in ag related retail
- Catch-a-ride program
    - 3 buses
- SR 421 has truck height and width limits
    - This needs bypassed around city to protect the downtown's "small town" character
    - East of Town
- Widen bridges as we replace them
    - 24' or 20'
    - 2' Shoulder
- ROW is a major issue
    - Sight distance (Corn Fields, Trees)
    - Try to educate public
    - Acquire ROW
        - For future utility lines; power, water, internet
    - Drainage issues
        - Farmers plant to edge of pavement
    - 6' – 8' off edge of pavement
- Access along roadways

Possible Public Meeting Locations

- West Port
    - Fire Station
- Lake Santee
    - Community Room
    - Fire Station
- Greensburg
- Millhousen
    - Fire Department

Cell phone alerts to inform public of meetings

Radio

Newspaper

Facebook/Email

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Steering Committee Meeting 3

Meeting Notes

Existing comprehensive plan

- "Promote agriculture, protect farmland, and protect the rural economy"
- Improvements to accommodate farm equipment where possible
- Proposed a "Right-to-farm" statement when purchasing land in the county
- Agriculture business park along SR 3/46
- CFOs Are Only Mentioned Once…"Fair Regulation On Both Sides, Currently Seems To Be Under Control"

CFO and CAFO building setbacks

- 150 feet from road
- 660 feet from residence
- 1320 feet from school or church

Two agriculture districts: A-1 and A-2

- Crops, pastures, dairy, and CFOs allowed in both districts
- Parks, cemeteries, churches, and schools permitted in A-2 but not A-1

Review of IDEM regulations for CFOs and CAFOs

- Threshold to be classified as CFO is 300 cattle or 600 swine
- Threshold from CFO to CAFO is 700 dairy cows, 1,000 other cattle, 2,500 swine above 55 pounds, or 10,000 swine less than 55 pounds

Active CFO permits in Decatur County went from 75 in 2008 to 69 in 2014 and 70 in 2015

Livestock head counts (excluding chickens) decreased from 218,143 in 2008 to 198,199 in 2015.

Decatur County has more CFOs and more livestock by headcount (excluding chickens) than all other surrounding counties

Comment: don't feel these other counties should be used for comparison because don't have a similar ag industry

Review of some other county CFO regulations – see powerpoint

CFO study will be coming out for Bartholomew County

When we are planning for agriculture and ag protection it requires just as much thought as planning for development

Try to accommodate ag activities at varying levels of intensity while also protecting property rights

National trends in ag planning/development

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- Aging landowners
- Farm size is growing and number of farms decreasing…results of industrialization
- Residential development pressures in rural areas
- Increase in renewable energy on farms
- Direct to consumer sales – farmers markets, farm stands – increasing

Conflicts between agriculture producers and rural residents typically center around:

- Odor
- Water pollution
- Heavy machinery and trucks on narrow roads
- Overspray of herbicides onto adjacent property
- Noise – most frequently at night during harvest
- Agritourism can have parking impacts or require signage that may be viewed unfavorably

Case studies from Tipton County, Rush County, St. Joseph County, White County, and Porter County presented – see powerpoint

Discussion:

Are two ag districts adequate:

- Yes, like current system, use A-2 district to require rezone for new residential lots…have site evaluation score sheet that APC uses

Are additional standards/criteria needed for CFOs:

- Mixed feelings
- Some say no, IDEM regulations are adequate and keep playing field the same across state
- Others believe there is a need for increased setbacks and that setbacks should be based on property lines, not where building is located

New residences should have to meet same or similar buffer requirements to CFOs so that someone can't build a house and then complain about CFO that was there first

Miscellaneous items:

Website and mySidewalk page are up and available for viewing/comment

Public workshop series #1 will be September 14-17, steering committee is encourages to attend and show support for process

Need to get focus group attendees finalized and invited. Focus group discussions will be either Sept 15 and 16 or Sept 16 and 17

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Will coordinate with Krista Duvall in regard to contact information for County staff and officials

Next Steering Committee meeting will be October 26

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Steering Committee Meeting 4

November 9, 2015

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Decatur County EMS Headquarters

Meeting Notes

1. Review of common themes and consensus items from public workshops, focus group discussions, and previous steering committee meetings:
   - Balance growth versus agriculture preservation
   - Protect personal property ownership, regulations should be fair to both CFOs and residential owners (consensus at high level but may be disagreements in practice / application – see below)
   - Protect agriculture viability
   - Preserve prime farmland
   - Too many narrow roads and bridges, need improvement or replacement
   - Too many gravel roads, need to be paved
   - Need to prioritize transportation improvements
   - Need east bypass around Greensburg
   - Too many unsafe rail crossings
   - Need to attract higher paying, permanent jobs (that offer benefits)
   - Need to diversify industrial job base
   - Ensure housing availability corresponds with new jobs so that people can live and work in Decatur County
   - Continue to develop the agriculture economy with agribusiness, research & technology, and agritourism
   - Expand affordable housing / senior housing options into the County
   - Expand recreation and entertainment options for young adults to keep them/bring them back to the community
   - Have good community pride and service back to the community
   - Address abandoned and underutilized buildings / increase code enforcement
   - Preserve the environment for future generations
   - High land costs (possibly result of continued Honda effect) are a major impediment to growth and development
   - Long term water quality and quantity concerns
   - Need good City-County coordination and communication
   - Expand arts and culture activities both in school and for community at large
   - Need to ensure a fiscally responsible and transparent government
   - Need more dining and shopping options – would contribute to quality of life and make community more desirable

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2. Review of items needing additional discussion or resolution:
   - Airport expansion at current location
     - County won't stand in the way of City efforts and would support potential annexation if expansion occurs.
     - Show general "potential expansion area" on future land use map
   - CFOs
     - Plan needs to include definitions for agriculture categories/activities
     - Establish a minimum threshold for agriculture activity so that we're not regulating a couple of chickens or a 4H activity
     - Policy statement along the line of "the county supports a balanced approach to preserving agriculture and allowing for residential development while preserving as much agriculture land as possible"
     - The county supports new CFOs in appropriate locations
     - New CFOs should not be within X buffer around cities, towns, schools and other places (to be defined)
     - Setbacks should be based on property line, not building line so as to protect use of neighboring properties
     - Include provisions for waivers to this rule
     - A reciprocal setback should be established for new home construction near an existing CFO
     - Again, include provisions for waivers
     - CFOs should be encouraged to co-locate
   - Does the community want to permit/encourage/explore alternative energy sources?
     - On-site (non-commercial) alternative energy sources should be permitted
     - Given ever changing technology they shouldn't be ruled out all-together but should be focused to appropriate areas
     - Ensure it is not a nuisance
     - Could potentially lower energy costs
     - Do not want to see commercial wind farm – too much consumption or disturbance of farm ground
     - Natural gas wells – should not allow fracking
   - Inconsistent rules and regulations
     - Farm ponds – permit required to ensure proper location away from the right-of-way
     - More of an education issue, need to inform public of reasoning
     - Not unfair application because manure lagoons are very rarely used and require an engineer's stamp
   - Protection of property rights
     - Discussion of "focused growth" and could that be used to prevent residential construction in un-incorporated places – major subdivisions, commercial uses, and non-agriculture industry should be focused around existing cities and towns.

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    - Should continue the policy of requiring a subdivision in order to construct another home, even if for family member
- Southern bypass around Greensburg
    - Include in plan as long term
    - 250 S / 300 S corridor to make SR 3 to SR 46 connection
- Expansion of landfill
    - Should plan for expansion at current location
    - Have approximately 15 years of remaining capacity but approval for expansion with take years
    - Should plan for another use and to make it more attractive when closed
- Cell towers
    - Should reduce setbacks to allow towers closer to road, thereby reducing land disturbance
- Stone Quarry
    - Plan should be supportive of additional stone quarry in appropriate location

3. Discussion of land suitability analysis – work in progress
    a. Will create separate analysis for residential development, industrial development, CFOs
    b. Focus residential growth around developed areas
    c. Do not include proximity to schools or parks as factors
    d. Run a CFO scenario analyzing how locations in the county could meet the proposed 660' setbacks if based on property line
4. Next meetings
    a. Monday, November 23, 2015
    b. Monday, December 7, 2015

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Steering Committee Meeting 5

November 23, 2015

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Decatur County EMA Headquarters

Meeting Notes

1. Review of Policy Statements
    a. POLICY 1: Decatur County supports the City's efforts to expand the existing Greensburg Municipal Airport.
        i. Statement okay as written
    b. POLICY 2: Decatur County supports a balanced approach to preserving agricultural activities and agricultural land while protecting private property rights that allow for individual rural residential development.
        i. Bullet #4: Discussion of extending public water and sewer
            1. Mixed opinions in the group – could be used to limit development but what about extensions to existing homes that do not currently have public water and are experiencing supply issues. Some think water should not be limited but sewer could be limited to control development
            2. At a high level, do we want to limit the number of houses out in the County? Mixed opinions – some believe any new houses have a negative impact on agriculture, others believe minor subdivisions should be permitted but major subdivisions should be directed towards developed areas
            3. Discussion of taxes paid versus services consumed by residential development in the County. Residential development is net loss in that the taxes paid do not cover the full cost of services provided
            4. If not comfortable saying "limit" service extension, should the bullet point be deleted
        ii. Bullet #5: Discussion of natural resource protection and definition of environmental sensitive or significant agricultural lands
            1. Some feel written too broadly, opens up opportunities for subjective judgement
            2. If a farmer wants to harvest timber they should be able to, it is an ag-related product
            3. Others feel this is a plan, it is okay to be high level and not specifically define or map all sensitive land types
    c. POLICY 3: Decatur County understands that alternative energy sources are ever-changing. Therefore, the County supports individual, on-site, non-commercial alternative energy sources. However, the County does

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not support the development of commercial alternative energy supplies that would consume agricultural land.

i. The word "discourage" in the first paragraph is too strong.
ii. Add "that takes agriculture land out of production" to the end of that sentence.
iii. Clarify that hydraulic fracturing is not supported as there are other types of fracking.

d. POLICY 4: Decatur County promotes a "focused growth" approach where any new significant development (i.e. subdivisions, commercial and industrial uses, and non-agricultural uses) would be focused in and around existing cities and towns. Development in rural areas of the County would be reviewed on a case by case basis based on suitability of development and limiting consumption of agricultural land.

i. Second paragraph – change four lots to three lots to reflect current minor subdivision definition
ii. Ensure that the document is consistent – shouldn't be regulating with density in one area of the plan but number of units in another.

2. Review of Suitability Maps
   a. CFO Setback Accommodation Map: needs to be amended to reflect size of building, which can be substantial. Change from parcels at least 1320'x1320' to parcels at least 1800'x1800'
   b. CFO Suitability: Flip Prime Farmland factor to favor CFO siting in prime areas because of proximity for manure application
   c. Residential Suitability: Need to re-examine proximity to developed areas, does not appear to be calculating properly…areas around Greensburg should be more suitable
3. Next meeting
   a. Monday, December 7, 2015, 3:00 to 5:00 pm, Decatur County EMA Headquarters

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Decatur County Comprehensive Plan Update

Decatur County Comprehensive Plan Update

Steering Committee Meeting 7

Meeting Notes

Presentation of survey results

- 209 responses, of which 160 were complete
- For detailed results, see powerpoint
- Still need to compile responses for questions 16, 17, and 18 that relate to road and bridge maintenance, safety, and potential new roads that should be created.

Future land use map

- Identified land for residential growth around Greensburg, St. Paul, Westport, New Point, and along N CR 850 E. This area has rolling terrain; new large lot residential and hobby farms would be appropriate and not consume prime, tillable ground
- Smaller residential concentrations and existing home sites not related are also shown as residential (yellow) on the map
- New or expanded commercial areas are located along 421 near the St. Paul interchange, north of New Point and south of I-74 along CR 850 E, and within Greensburg.
- Existing commercial areas in Westport are shown to continue.
- New or expanded industrial areas are shown for:
    - The Enterprise business park which is located north of I-74, across from Honda
    - The Adams and Decatur Co. Rail parks as being marketed by the EDC
    - North of Westport along SR 3
    - West of New Point along SR 46
    - Landfill has also been identified as an industrial use with room for expansion
- Do not want to support commercial uses jumping I-74 to the north at the SR 3 interchange – have preserved this area for agriculture
- Heavily wooded areas and floodplains have been included to help make good planning decisions about the environment and protecting natural resources
- The portions of SR 3 and SR 46 that run together west of Greensburg is identified as the agriculture corridor
- N CR 250 W between SR 3 and W CR 100 N is identified as an industrial corridor

Comment: need to show land use areas along these corridors, simply highlighting the corridor may be to general and not provide direction for future decisions.

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Next Steps:

- Need to complete survey results and send those out
- Finalize transportation improvements map and send that to steering committee
- Will be working on draft chapters and sending those to steering committee as completed
- Once all draft documents are out with sufficient time for review, will schedule next steering committee meeting for discussion

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Steering Committee Meeting 8

May 31, 2016

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Meeting Notes

Tim opened the meeting with a discussion of prime agriculture. Preservation/protection of prime farmland was brought up during the public meetings and online survey. If we are going to protect production agriculture (state term) or prime agriculture or whatever we want to call it, we need to have a definition for it.

USDA definition is limited and doesn't adequately address our needs for this plan. Looked at additional characteristics that could be used:

- Yields by soil type – data from Soil and Water Conservation District
- Productivity index used in land assessment

This led to using soil types that meet the 3 out of 4 criteria (USDA classification, corn yield, soybean yield, productivity index).

Then learned about the Gulf Hypoxia initiative and it was surprising how well their map for high implementation focus areas matched the areas outside the production agriculture area.

Cynthia presented the layers that went in to developing the draft future land use map:

- Existing agriculture use as the base
- Differentiated the production agriculture areas by soil type that met at least 3 out of the 4 criteria
    - Productivity factor of 1.11 or greater
    - Corn yield of 155 or greater
    - Soybean yield of 49 or greater
    - Farmland classification of "All areas are prime farmland"
- Added flood areas
- Added Parks, recreation, and woodlands
- Examined existing non-agriculture land uses
- Updated the map with existing uses planned to continue and future land use changes based on the Greensburg comprehensive plan and recommendations for other communities
- Buffered non-agriculture areas from production agriculture areas
    - ½ mile buffer for incorporated cities/towns and schools
    - ¼ buffer for existing non-agriculture concentrations in unincorporated Decatur County
- Simplified outlines for production agriculture and woodland areas to reflect general nature of future land use plan
- TIF and EDA areas were added to the map for information purposes, not to reflect a recommended future use

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Reviewed draft General Agriculture and Production Agriculture definitions

Discussion:

- The general agriculture definition as proposed is a big shift from current zoning – where is this definition supported
    - Reflects split opinions on confined feeding operations and the ability to subdivide lots. The idea was to use production agriculture area as the separator and direct new CFOs to these areas while limiting new residential development in them. The general agriculture areas can then accommodate limited new residential lots without potential CFO conflicts
- Did not get the feeling from comments and discussion that agriculture would be split into two classes – feels this limits potential lot splits for kids in the production area and in the general area you can split lots without regard to soils/farm ground
- Questions of if the current process is really that broken – mixed opinions
- County plans and ordinances have included statements about protecting prime farmland for some time, but in reality development is almost always approved, ie Honda plant, 2.99 acres for additional family home, etc.
- When regulations allow for plan commission or other body to dictate where house can go on a lot, it can add a lot to the cost of construction in land clearing, building on a slope, or a longer driveway
- Farm Bureau did a survey of voting members and 84% answered in favor on maintaining current setback limits for livestock buildings and 84% in favor of protecting tillable ground
    - A question was raised whether or not this is a representative sample of the county
- Statement was made that agriculture is the largest tax base in Decatur County and that Fayette County has restrictive agriculture policies and they don't have any money
- County should be protecting all tillable ground, not just prime farmland
- Productivity index differences within the county are not that great so don't think there is a need for two agriculture categories
- Question was asked how greater than 155 for corn yield and 49 for soybean yield was determined
    - These represent soil groups with the top 20% yield
- There are inherent property rights and people should be able to do what they want with their land but they shouldn't be able to prevent use of neighboring properties. We must also think about stewardship of the land and that while we may own it now, someone else will own and use the land after us.
- We do need to keep neighbors in mind when using our properties; can't have spillover effects like drainage or odor across property lines
- Many communities in Ohio use agriculture preservation practices that only allow growth in incorporated places

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- Soil data doesn't match reality, there are examples of very tillable properties with zero trees that are not being classified as production agriculture on draft map

Questions:

- Proceed with one agriculture classification or two?
    - Vote – One classification (almost unanimous)
- How to define agriculture?
    - Winery, produce, anything that is a legal crop
    - Not commercial wind or solar farms – need to differentiate between small-scale wind or solar for use on site versus commercial operation with the primary purpose of feeding back into grid – recommendation to use 1 megawatt or some other standard of measure as a threshold
    - Farm stands
- What uses in the agriculture district should require additional review/permitting at the County level?
    - CFOs – conditional approval given clear standards – vote yes
    - Single or two-family dwelling – vote yes to some level of review – vote split on special exception versus rezone
    - Mining – requires rezone to industrial when products are offered for commercial sale but need to clarify that extraction for use on-site (such as well for water or geothermal) is permitted
    - Planning consultant to develop a more comprehensive set of uses and recommendations to include:
        - Utilities / Cell towers
        - Commercial businesses
        - Clubs
        - Campgrounds
        - Churches
    - Crops, timber, and pasture (under IDEM thresholds) is permitted without any additional review

Next Steps:

- Next meeting is scheduled for June 27, 2016 from 3:00 – 5:00 pm at the EMA large meeting room
- Planning consultant will develop maps for discussion of various setback impacts

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Steering Committee Meeting 9

June 27, 2016

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Meeting Notes

1. Land Use Map Update

   The revised future land use map was presented. This map was revised based on comments from Steering Committee Meeting 8. The primary change was removal of the Production Agriculture area; lands under this classification were changed to General Agriculture. The General Agriculture description was amended to allow new livestock confined feeding operations and other intensive agriculture activities given appropriate buffers and separation from existing non-agriculture uses.

   A question was raised regarding the extent of the Expanded Economic Development Area. It was decided to remove the TIF and EDA areas from the future land use map.

   There was a discussion of the ability to construct single family homes in the parks and open space area. Currently, single family homes are directed to wooded areas as a means to preserve tillable ground. The description should be amended to allow single family homes on non-tillable areas.

   Discussion of setbacks/separation for new CFOs to non-agriculture uses:

   - Setbacks should be based on zoning of adjacent property, for example, within the A1 district, setbacks would be building to building but when adjacent to a residential district, it would be building to property line
   - It was agreed that the CFO small working group would meet to develop a draft recommendation for presentation at the next steering committee.
   - The consultant will work to develop maps that will assist the working group.

2. Transportation Map Discussion

   There was a question of whether CR 700 W was a primary route because it runs parallel to SR 3.

   General agreement that the map matches well with existing County road priorities.

3. Other Changes to Chapters

   a. Introduction

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There is a sentence in the introduction that references the increasing number of CFOs in the County. This is not accurate and needs to be corrected.

b. Vision

No comment

c. Existing Conditions

No comment

4. Next Steps

Consultant needs to re-send Introduction, Vision, and Existing Conditions sections to steering committee.

Next meeting will be July 25th

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Steering Committee Meeting 10

July 25, 2016

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Meeting Notes

Cynthia opened the meeting discussing the Confined Feeding Operation (CFO) working group's charge and presented their recommendations. The Steering Committee discussed those recommendations.

Discussion and Voting:

- Everyone agreed to the following:
    - Use the term CFO's since that was what IDEM is moving towards.
    - CFO structure shall be setback 1,320 feet from the jurisdictional boundary line of any incorporated town except for Millhousen. Millhousen will not have any CFO's inside their jurisdictional limits.
    - CFO structure shall be setback from the property line of a school by 1,320 feet.
    - A CFO structure shall be separated from a church structure by 1,000 feet.
    - A CFO structure shall be separated from a residential dwelling, nursing home and hospital structure by 1,000 feet.
    - For other setback not mentioned, existing county front, rear and side yard setback will prevail.
    - A setback/separation waiver can be granted by the County to a CFO at the limits allowed by IDEM so long as affected property owners agree in writing.
    - All setbacks and separation distances are reciprocal between the CFO and any other structure.
    - Any existing CFO registered with IDEM is grandfathered into old regulations. So if they wanted to expand, they would be able to per approval of IDEM.
    - CFO would become a conditional use unless all conditions were not met. Then it would go before the Plan Commission for review and approval.
    - New applicants will file their emergency plan that they prepare for IDEM with the County during their application.
- Discussion occurred that we need to define schools, churches and nursing homes/hospitals and that they need to be tax exempt from County/State taxes.
- If a church is abandoned, and it can be proved, then the setbacks/separation distances would not apply.
- Residential dwelling should be defined as well.
- Clarified that the setback waiver had to be agreed to by the Plan Commission however both property owners had to agree in writing.

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- The application date to get a CFO will dictate what standards will be used based on the existing surrounding development at the time the application was filed.
- The group recommended that a setback reduction to IDEM's standard would be supported as long as acceptable mitigation practice were identified and incorporated into the zoning ordinance.
- There was discussion about a potential situation where a subdivision would have been platted in the 1800's creating buildable lots creating an area that wouldn't be allowed to have a CFO even though it might never come to fruition. Therefore the committee discussed that the variance process was crucial to seeking relief from the recommended standards.
- The subcommittee asked to be reconvened with the County updated their zoning ordinance so they could ensure that the recommendations were implemented appropriately.

Next Steps:

- Planning consultant will finish up draft of comprehensive plan and provide to Steering Committee on August 22, 2016.
- Next meeting is scheduled for September 6th to review the draft plan.

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Joint Steering Committee Meeting

Greensburg / Decatur County

Future Land Use Discussion

70 Acre and 113 Acre Sites – North West of Honda

- Industrial and Commercial Mix
- Owner is willing to sell land, lives out of state
- Railroad and Interstate access is a huge industrial asset
- The proximity to Adams community will require some buffering and appropriate set backs
- "What is the appropriate amount of industrial area to plan for in a community like Greensburg/Decatur County
    - ½ or ¼ Mile around Honda
    - Adjacent to existing industrial

SR3 and I74 Intersection

- Commercial
- Plan for access management at this major intersection
- Leave as is with design principles for possible future growth
- Property owner on the North West corner will not see for at least one more generation

65 Acre – East of Valeo and other Existing Industrial Park

- Industrial
- Be aware of the residential neighborhood to the east of this site
    - Avoid developing land directly south of this area
- This area currently has multiple conflicting land uses; Industrial, Commercial, and Residential
- Area should be extended to include land north of residential area extending to I74 and CR N 80 NE intersection
- This area is not a high priority on the community's budget
- Existing industries can use for expansion purposes

326 Acre – South East of Greensburg City Limits

- Residential
- This seems to be more than the city will be able to absorb
    - Half of this might be more appropriate
    - From city limits straight south to 421
- This area should permit a mix of uses and greenspaces
- Allow for lower densities, as low as 1du/acre
- This is Prime Farmland, Flat
- "Are the landowners willing to sell?"
- "Why not north of 46 instead of south of 46?"

121 Acre – South of Greensburg City Limits

- Residential

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- Park Rd can't handle this amount of growth in its current conditions

303 Acre – Directly West of Current Airport

- Airport expansion

395 Acre – Between SR3 and Greensburg City Limits

- Mix of uses based off of adjacent uses
- Prime area for annexation
    - Roads need to be upgrades to city standards

55 Acre – Former Greensburg Reservoir

- Recreational use

Future Coordination and Review

- Joint Technical Review Committee
    - ½ - 1 Mile Around City Limits
    - Include these areas of projected growth
- See other cities for examples of ordinances
- Development in the county that will eventually be in the city need to be built to the city's standards
    - City has the viewpoint of not forcing annexation if property owners are opposing

Three Decision Principles

1. Look at corridors where infrastructure exists or is planned for Economic Development
2. Match the surrounding land use character
3. Similar land uses in contiguous parcels

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Joint Steering Committee Meeting 2
October 26, 2015
3 pm – 5 pm
Decatur County EMS

Meeting Notes

The purpose of interjurisdictional agreements was introduced (see handout).

Meeting discussion followed handout outline:

1. Components of Agreement
    a. Distance
        i. Question of City water and sewer service extensions into the County
            1. Water service areas between Greensburg and Rural Water have already been determined
            2. The industrial area west of the City along SR 46 is served by City utilities, the City wants to be a good neighbor and has not forced annexation, businesses do pay for fire service

*One of the main reasons to consider the interjurisdictional agreement are the different construction standards between the City and County. If a development will be annexed, it should be built to City standards in the first place.

        ii. Map was created to display ¼, ½, 1 and 2 mile buffers from existing City limits
        iii. Initial thought is to apply a tiered approach with distances based on use (ie ½ mile for residential or commercial uses but a 2 mile buffer for industrial uses)
        iv. There are some concerns that a straight ½ mile (or other distance) buffer would include too much land, specifically areas around Honda that while technically adjacent to the City limits are actually quite far from the City core
        v. Also a fear that straight buffers may later be used for different intent
        vi. Instead of tiers, use criteria that if one is met, joint review is required. Criteria include:
            1. Parcels immediately adjacent to City limits
            2. Parcels in identified future land use planning areas (this will require a map exhibit)
            3. Industrial and commercial development within a 2 mile buffer of City limits
            4. Residential subdivisions greater than X number of units or X acres of land area that are within X mile buffer of City limits
    b. Review Process

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i. A joint committee should be established with representatives from both the City and County
ii. The joint committee should include:
    1. City department heads (Street, Fire, Police, Water, Wastewater, Engineer, Plan Commission President)
    2. Utility Representatives
    3. County Technical Review Committee (Area Plan Commission Executive Director, Highway, Surveyor, Rural Water)
    4. County Area Plan Commission Representatives
    5. Potentially other City Plan Commission members in addition to President
iii. The committee will meet monthly pending petitions. If no applications have been submitted that would require joint review, the committee will not meet.
iv. The County Area Plan Commission office will receive applications. They will then be forwarded to the City Engineering, Planning & Zoning office.
v. Applications to be reviewed include:
    1. Rezones
    2. Planned Unit Developments
    3. Major Subdivisions
    4. Site Plan Review (commercial and industrial only)

c. The Joint Committee will send a recommendation to the Area Plan Commission, who ultimately will make the decision (or then provide recommendation to legislative body)
d. Timeframes
    i. Overall agreement
        1. A termination clause should be included in the agreement to set the terms by which one party may terminate the agreement
        2. The agreement should be reviewed whenever one or both parties are updating their comprehensive plan or not to exceed 10 years if comprehensive plans are not being updated
    ii. Application forwarding should occur as soon as possible after the determination has been made that a petition qualifies for joint review
    iii. A two week review period should be provided prior to the Joint Committee meeting
    iv. Applications that meet the existing 30 day filing requirement should not be held up or penalized because of joint review if the application is complete

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e. Prevailing Standards – generally the City standards should be applied in annexation or potential annexation situations. Provisions for waiving of some standards as allowed by statute should be included. Standards include:
   i. Setbacks
   ii. Transportation infrastructure
   iii. Stormwater/Drainage infrastructure
   iv. Fire protection

2. Next Steps
   a. Meeting between Mayor and Commissioners to develop agreement
   b. Agreements go before Commissioners and City Council to adopt as formal agreement
   c. Implement agreement

*The next County Steering Committee meeting will take place Monday, November 9th, from 3 to 5 pm at the Decatur County EMS building.

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Area Plan Commission Meeting

April 1, 2015

7:00 pm

SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)

Strengths:

- Agriculture preservation
- Rural setting
- Agriculture, industrial, commercial balance
- Recreational environment
- Residential
- Transportation – routing vehicle in correct (or appropriate) place
- City / County collaboration
- Small businesses
- Ability to have voices heard

Weaknesses:

- Appropriate location for housing
- Appropriate location for cell towers
- Need to update maps to give guidance
- Appropriate location of CAFOs
- Water quality and quantity
- Road system
    - Lots of gravel roads
    - Farm equipment and semis
- Vacant structures

Opportunities:

- Infrastructure assessment
- Recreation facilities
- More than ball courts and fields
- Brown County as example
- Trails
- Wooded areas – hunting
- Industrial growth north of Interstate 74
- Residential growth

Threats:

- Growing too fast
- Sticking with plan to keep growth adjacent to existing development

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- Too much growth focus on Greensburg
- Infrastructure in small towns
- Production agriculture – threats to small farms
- City people in agriculture areas
- Agriculture infringement on small towns
- Education on both sides of ag / urban conflicts
- Education / small college (threat because of a lack of)

Current Plan:

- Gives pretty good guidance
- Score sheet (separate from plan - ? who created this)
- Good base to start with
- Integrated, flows and compliments well
- Could benefit from larger, more detailed maps
- Give more voice to community

Steering Committee Meetings:

- Evenings preferred
- Thursdays are good
- No 1st Monday
- No 3rd Tuesday

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County Commissioners

- Need to improve quality of roads and bridges
  - Have bridges that are under-weight and/or structurally deficient
  - Most roads are 16 feet wide
  - Need to prioritize improvements
- Zoning regulations – it is easier to build a CFO in the County than a new house
- Number of CFOs per capita is much higher in Decatur County than surrounding counties
  - Need to regulate nitrates in the air
  - CFOs over aquifers have potential to contaminate ground water sources
- Communication is an issue – residents don't know where to go with issues
- A one-stop shop would be helpful
  - For example – if the APC office had a building inspector that could also inspect the septic system, or have a Health Dept. representative there
- Ability to grant approvals administratively would be beneficial
- Transportation routes to improve
  - 1100 S – Westport to Columbus connection
  - Vandalia Road
  - NE 80
  - 1100 S to the east – National Guard uses this route to Muscatatuck
  - 60 E – Greensburg to Millhousen
- Need a southern bypass around Greensburg – protect as a transportation thoroughfare – don't allow development all along it
- APC decided to regulate farm ponds – it makes sense for them to regulate subdivision ponds but not farm ponds
- Regulation of accessory structures – a $150 shed requires a $700 permit

CFO Operators

- IDEM permitting does a good job
- The County should not have regulations more restrictive than the State
- IDEM regulations are based on science, not emotion
  - However, there is a double standard in regard to setbacks…a new CFO must be X feet away from existing residential but new residential can go closer to existing CFO
- Manure is now regarded as a big asset, not a waste product

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- The County has had strong leadership in protecting the agriculture industry, with good producers there should be few issues
- Thoughts on Rush County site scoring system
    - Have seen what should be considered good locations score low
    - There is no one size fits all solution, all sites are different
- Currently a 4 to 6 month process to get a new CFO approved
- Most neighbor complaints are about odor or transportation
- Transportation example
    - One truck with 2000 head 2.2 times per year
    - 4 to 5 months later, those 2000 head come out on 25 loads
    - In the interim, about one semi load of feed per 3 days
- Drag lining – manure application – reduces truck trips, helps to have culverts under roads
- There are ways for the public to express concern about CFOs at state level
- Operators are generally pleased with how the County worked in the past to establish the system
- The system isn't broken, so don't try to fix it

Area Plan Commission

- People over Pigs group has some legitimate concerns but some requests have been extreme or too emotional
- Bartholomew County is currently doing a case study regarding CFOs
- When new houses are proposed in Ag district, always try to avoid tillable land
- Will need to address landfill in comprehensive plan update – tried to rezone land across the street (same owner) but was denied (unsure?)
- There was a time when the APC didn't have a clear direction but that was more related to zoning than the comprehensive plan
- County areas within the City – City should likely have some say
- Application forms and the site checklist result in good information provided to the APC
- Monthly progress reports to be presented at APC meetings would be helpful

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County Staff

- Residential growth – need places available for people to move to
- Have a need for attractive, affordable housing
- Missing $150,000 to $300,000 housing
- It is hard to find land to build a house
- In agriculture areas, few land owners want to sell and if they do, another farmer will buy it
- Wireless towers are consuming farm ground
- Need new recreation attractions but can't maintain/replace existing facilities
    - Funding is decreasing but the cost of materials is increasing
- The City and County don't work well together in terms of park improvements
- Budgets are getting cut across all County departments
- The business base is good but tax caps have significantly cut revenues
- Tax abatements are a double-edged sword
    - Example – Woodmizer just moved from Newpoint to Batesville
- Honda effect – housing is still overpriced
- Need to grow but want to stay small town
- Focus growth around developed Towns/centers
- People go to Columbus for dinner because they can get gas for $0.30 cheaper while they are there
- Young professionals can't buy homes in rural areas because no supply but some don't want to live in town
- It's hard to get new faces to run for office or participate in leadership
- Drug and alcohol rehab – need services co-located for easier service to those in need

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Realtors, Developers, Builders

- There will be a shortage of buildable residential lots in Greensburg in the near future
- Land prices are high, money is made on the house, not the lot
- 20% higher land cost in Greensburg when compared to Shelbyville
- $10,000 to $12,000 per acre for Agriculture land to develop as residential
- It's cheaper to buy infill lots with infrastructure available than to build-out
- Can build 1,600 s.f. with basement for $160,000 but there aren't many products to build between $160,000 and $200,000

- There are few impediments to development besides high land and infrastructure costs
- Tax abatements don't work because everyone will give them
- Must continue to grow, otherwise will turn into Rushville
- Need a Target
- Need to get people excited about growth – expose them to new things
- Young kids are not involved, college age come home 1 or 2 weekends a year but that is it
- Need a big box to commit to Veterans to get things going
- Need a path from downtown to the park

Residents

- Need common sense rules to apply to CFOs
- IDEM setbacks are insufficient
    - Setbacks should be based on property line, not building line
- Issue of unincorporated places that have a cluster of housing with CFOs all around them
- How is the County going to continue to pay for/provide services without new residents – can't attract new residents because there are CFOs everywhere
- There is a contradiction in protecting tillable land but allowing a CFO building in the middle of a field
- CFOs generate substantial truck traffic on insufficient infrastructure
    - Bigger tankers and wagons
    - If you pull over to let them pass you may be trespassing because there is no right of way
- Family is why people are here or why they moved here
- Vision for future:
    - Residential and industrial growth is balanced
    - CFOs are isolated like industrial development
- Utilize trees and embankments to break wind or require air filtration at CFOs
- The Area Plan Commission is inconsistent – you need to get a permit to build a farm pond but you don't need a permit for a hog lagoon
- County leadership/officials want local regulation for so many things but will defer to IDEM for CFOs
- IDEM says they inspect facilities every 5 years but they have too limited resources
- IDEM doesn't turn anyone down

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- The property line setback issue is a big deal for residents – it's not fair that their property is used by the CFO operator to meet the required setback
- Airport expansion – some of the effected property owners are against it, potential for having to use imminent domain
- People don't feel like their vote/voice counts
- Need proactive assistance for Westport, Newpoint, etc. because they don't have the resources
- What happens if McDonalds, Chipotle, public opinion changes about antibiotics and growth hormones?

Farm Operators & Large Property Owners

- CFO hog operations – implications for water quality (nitrates)
- Need larger setbacks - recommend ½ mile from residential property line
- Knife law and regulation of how much manure you can apply
- Commercial fertilizer is cheaper but it isn't as good
- CFOs should be required to post bond in case they screw up and need to repair damages
- CFO impacts to county roads – it's not a family farm with that many hogs, most of which are owned by big company, at that point it is a commercial enterprise
- Don't' have long term water source
- Some operators are having to haul water from Bartholomew County
- Who polices CFOs
    - If there was a manure spill, what would the Health Dept. do?
    - Game wardens have been the best avenue for enforcement
- Putting houses on un-tillable land is a good practice to protect farm ground
- Inconsistent treatment in front of the Area Plan Commission – some people can speak but some can't

Agribusiness

- $600 permit to replace part of a building that was damaged
    - Not getting anything for the money
    - Not getting the protection for what services/permits are designed for
- It is an agriculture community, if you don't like it, move
- There is a public perception of an inconsistent application of rules

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- 120' setback is required but will grant the variance to reduce it
    - Why have the standards if you will grant any variance

Service, Non-profit, and other Community Organizations

- Sign ordinance – a permit in the County cost $600, in the City it would be $25
    - Ended up decreasing size of sign so permit was $325 – cost of sign construction was only $700
- No maintenance required for poor looking existing signs, no code enforcement, but are very picky with new signage
- Zoning in regard to mineral rights – special exception (?)
    - Language similar to right-to-farm would benefit quarries
- Need term limits for APC, BZA, Council
- No vision to future on boards and commissions
- Inability to split 2 acre parcel off for son
- Can't get permit to put a farm pond on tillable ground
- Need objective decisions, right now it is too subjective
    - Growing distrust because not following the existing plan
- 2.99 acres minimum required for septic, well, and backup septic site
- Water availability (Rural Water versus well water) is a big issue for additional residential development in the County
- Health department should publish results of inspections – newspaper example from Columbus
- Feel like the government transparency is there but people don't take advantage of it
- When say large farm, mean about 1000 acres
- When say corporate farm, mean out of town ownership
- People creating CFOs are already in the community, on one is coming in from outside to start farming – costs too high
- Local regulations shouldn't be more restrictive than IDEM
- There is no real community vision – need to develop wide buy-in
- Clear vision of who we need to be attracting
- Envision Decatur County visioning plan was done in 2005 (with vision to 2015) as part of a Chamber initiative
- Does the agribusiness park at SR 3 and SR 46 still fit the vision?

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Public Workshop Series 1

A series of public workshops was conducted the week of September 14, 2015 in order to inform the general public about the Comprehensive Plan update and gather input regarding current opportunities and issues in the community as well as begin to develop the vision for the future. Each meeting began with a presentation reviewing the plan purpose and process, demographic and existing conditions information gathered to date, and the desired plan outcomes. All four meetings included the same presentation and exercises to ensure consistent input across the community. The meeting dates and locations were:

- September 14th: Decatur County Schools Administration Building, 2020 N. Montgomery Road, Greensburg
- September 15th: Clarksburg Fire Station, 6644 N CR 700 E., Clarksburg
- September 16th: Westport Community Building, 205 West Main Street, Westport
- September 17th: St. Paul Civic Center, 102 East Washington Street, St. Paul

The following is a summary of comments heard during the meetings:

Issues

Growth & Development

- Need to balance growth versus agriculture preservation
- Individual homes in the county have a negative effect on agriculture viability
- Protect personal property ownership, regulations should be fair for both CFOs and residential owners
- Need to determine a plan for the landfill, both now and in the future
- Requiring homes on untillable areas makes building more expensive

Transportation

- Have too many narrow roads and bridges
- Too many gravel roads, need to be paved
- Roads and bridges are in poor condition and need to be better maintained, including striping
- Transportation to/from Westport and Greensburg for seniors
- Need east bypass around Greensburg
- Lack of rail service
- Unsafe railroad crossings – crossing arms on bypass are too big and slow – get hit, railroad won't help with crossing improvements
- Airport – poor location, expansion not best use of resources
- Traffic control – 421and Vandalia Road – large groups of motorcycles blocking traffic
- Old 41 and bridges can't sustain semis and car carriers
- Can't get onto 421 during certain periods of day (especially when Honda gets out)
- St. Paul I-74 interchange needs upgrade

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Agriculture

- Protect agriculture viability including CFOs and livestock production
- We are an agriculture community but import the vast majority of our food source
- IDEM rules are enough (in regard to CFO regulation)
- Concerns about wind farms consuming farm ground – utilize existing right-of-way for locations
- CFOs need to be cleaned up when they close
- CAFOs – too many, need bigger setbacks, size of operations is too big, consume too much tillable ground

Environment

- Water quality and quantity concerns
- Air quality as a result of CAFOs, dust from agriculture activity, and industry
- Burney flooding, drainage, septic issues

Economic Development

- Where are tax dollars going? – pressure from industry
- Business left New Point to go to Batesville (Woodmizer)
- No eminent domain except for hospital/schools
- Limit speculative economic development
- Need higher paying jobs and jobs that offer benefits
- Lack of motivated workforce, feel like jobs are available
- Honda workforce coming from out of county, not driving local economy as originally thought
- More agricultural related business – start-ups, agritourism
- Attract tourism

Services

- Greensburg has done a good job with affordable housing, need to expand services and amenities out into county
- Education – continue to create opportunity
- EMS needs to respond to potential growth
- Need better cell phone and internet service
- High school education – small bang for buck
- Need increased education options – vocational, workforce development
- Recreation for young adults – keep them here and bring them back after college – helps to attract higher quality jobs
- Consolidation of services – clearinghouse in Madison, IN is a good example
- Lack of fiber optic
- Code enforcement
- Wastewater system in St. Paul in question – infiltration issue

Miscellaneous

- Do we want windfarms? Also solar, methane, pipelines – need to study
- Trying to keep community clean, especially along road ways
- Resistance to change
- Westport specific

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    - Need new sidewalks
    - Move mailboxes back from edge of road
    - Flooding issue
    - Abandoned building rehab
    - Impression of a drug problem – need quicker enforcement
- Address abandoned and under-utilized buildings

Opportunities

Growth & Development

- Parks and greenspace
- Regional coordination and sharing resources
- Don't have residential dispersed throughout county
- Residential growth to north of St. Paul

Quality of Life

- Family friendly atmosphere
- Home town feel, safe
- Community steps up – very helpful with each other
- Spiritual diversity – active community
- You can see the stars – no light pollution

Transportation

- Good location between Indianapolis and Cincinnati
- I-74 interchange on east side of Greensburg (NE 80) would be beneficial
- Access to I-65

Agriculture

- Agricultural innovation
- Crop diversification
- Teaching/learning farm
- Bio-tech

Economic Development

- Potential shipping from airport

Miscellaneous

- Westport specific
    - Have commercial building stock
    - Recent sewer upgrades
    - Attract a family restaurant
    - Well used recreation facilities
    - Create revitalization plan / historic district
    - Have sewer and water capacity
    - Canoe launch at covered bridge to be created in 2016
- St. Paul has water capacity

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Vision

Growth& Development

- Assisted/senior living distributed so people can age in place
- Respect all property owner's rights
- Self-sustaining
- Full service restaurants
- City-County coordination
- More shopping choices
- Repurpose, re-use, revitalize buildings
- Development around Love's area in St. Paul (retail, commercial)
- Less government control "get more undone than done"
- Same land use pattern
- Focus growth around towns

Quality of Life

- Keep it the way it is
- What can I do for the community, not what can the community do for me
- Get the best and brightest back to the County
- Arts and culture activities
- "A place to be"
- Active small towns
- Rural/scenic drives
- Safe, friendly environment
- "Place I am proud to live"
- Family friendly – take care of each other
- Quiet
- Advanced but preserved comfort, small town feel
- Respect and pride

Transportation

- Fast passenger trains
- Public transportation
- Sidewalks
- Gateway from SR 3 into Westport

Agriculture

- Protect agriculture viability
- Diverse agriculture community, progressive farmers
- Ensure property rights – production farming and livestock

Environment

- Preserving the environment

Economic Development

- Higher paying job opportunities

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- Destination location
- Jobs outside of the auto industry
- College educated children moved back because there are opportunities here for them and their children
- Re-thinking on TIF to support schools

Services

- Modern technology and services
- Single school system
- Distributed healthcare
- Maintain excellent school corporations and extra-curricular activities, especially in the arts
- Recreation for children
- Health clinic
- Growing hospital
- Strong, active fire service
- More activities for kids – skate park in St. Paul, splashpad
- Upgrades to infrastructure (water, sewer)
- Higher education
- After school care
- Affordable housing
- Higher graduation rate

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Vision Word Circle Exercise

Attendees to the open houses were asked to complete a visioning exercise to identify top words and phrases that should embody the community as well as words and phrases that they do not want to represent the community. The top twenty words and phrases identified as most important, with the number of responses in parentheses, are:

- Preservation of Farmland (20)
- Responsible Government (18)
- Agricultural Community (16)
- Healthy Community (15)
- Skilled Labor Force (15)
- Strong Quality of Life (15)
- Family Friendly (14)
- Friendly Community (14)
- Environmental Protection (13)
- Small Family Farms (13)
- Family Atmosphere (12)
- Financial Stability (12)
- Growth Around Existing Communities (11)
- Increased Mom & Pop Businesses (10)
- Parks (10)

- Agriculture Industry (9)
- Bikeways/Trails (7)
- Paved Roads (7)
- Rural Feel (7)
- Public Transportation (6)
- Wide Streets (6)

The top words and phrases that should not represent Decatur County are:

- Gravel Roads (15)
- More Fast Food Restaurants (14)
- Confined Feeding (11)
- Corporate Farms (10)
- Manufactured Housing (9)
- Narrow Streets (9)
- Strip Shopping Centers (8)
- Suburban Feel (5)
- Large Big Box Retailers (4)
- Apartment Communities (3)
- Increased Distribution/Warehouses (3)
- Public Transportation (3)
- Regional Retail Destination (3)
- Agriculture Industry (2)
- Front Porches (2)
- Public Square/Gathering Place (2)
- Subdivisions (2)
- Growth Around Existing Communities (1)
- Employment Center (1)
- Environmental Protection (1)
- More Senior Housing (1)
- Rural Growth (1)

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This map is a summary of comments received at the first public meeting series. Information presented may not be based on data.

RUSH COUNTY
FRANKLIN COUNTY
SHELBY COUNTY
BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY
JENNINGS COUNTY
RIPLEY COUNTY

TRAFFIC ISSUE
AT GRADE RR X-INGS
ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL POTENTIAL
ST PAUL
Germantown
Downeyville
Sandusky
Clarksburg
Lake Santee
CREATE INTERCHANGE
PRIME FARMLAND
Kingston
Adams
SHOVEL READY SITES
St. Maurice
IMPROVE ROUTE TO I-65
MAINTAIN AG
Milford
PEDESTRIAN ACCESS
RESTAURANTS & SHOPPING
GREENSBURG
RR X-ING
Burney
AIRPORT AS ECONOMIC DRIVER / DON'T EXPAND
REDEVELOP LAKE McCOY
GRAVITY TOWARDS BATESVILLE / CINCINNATI
NEW POINT
Knarr Corner
HILLENBRAND REGIONAL AIRPORT
Slabtown
GRAVEL
Forest Hill
Gaynorsville
Letts
IMPROVE
PRIME FARMLAND
SAND CREEK IS PRIME RECREATION OPPORTUNITY
MILLHOUSEN
WATER FROM BARTHOLOMEW CO.
NEW ROAD
WESTPORT
IMPROVE, WIDEN, FIX BRIDGES
COVERED BRIDGE PARK
NEED AFFORDABLE HOUSING
NEED CONNECTION
Alert
WIND DIRECTION
Sardina

Legend

- County Boundaries
- Incorporated Land
- Unincorporated Towns

Transportation

- Roads
- Railroads

Decatur County Comprehensive Plan Update

CHA design/construction solutions

1 in = 0.75 miles

0 1 2 3 4 Miles

PUBLIC MEETING SERIES 2 & ONLINE SURVEY COMMENTS

VERBAL COMMENTS AT MEETINGS	There is currently a lawsuit in Iowa to make drainage districts and ultimately farmers responsible for nitrate loads in drinking water sources…How does the plan address water quality concerns?
	The County loses potential tax revenue if the SR 3/46 agriculture business park and other flex areas are annexed into the City. Concerned about allowing annexation and impacts on county tax base.
	Page 40 – Incentives to focus growth around developed centers – what were the thoughts behind this?
	Page 58 – "Support expansion of the landfill"…this statement needs some qualifiers or additional explanation, it can't just be a blanket statement without a better understanding of expansion areas and impacts.
	Page 64 – On-going two-year inspection program for septic systems…this would be a huge and expensive undertaking.
	Does the plan have to be done in 2016? Seems like there is an urgency that may not be needed.
	1000 foot separation between house and CFO is not enough.
	There should be a minimum separation between CFOs and water sources.
	There should be a recommendation on limits to CFO expansion – the dairy was given as the example.
	The setback for a CFO from a residence should be 1200-1500 feet.
	The last time increased setbacks were discussed, the builders/developers pushed back about the increase.
	There are inconsistencies in the protection of prime farm ground, sometimes won't allow homes to be built on it but Honda took 1500 acres of some of the best ground in the County.
	Are we limiting ourselves by not allowing for commercial solar or wind energy production?
	The transportation map looks good.
	The southern bypass around Greensburg would help to remove truck traffic from downtown.
	Does the plan address the fairgrounds? City stellar community process is asking questions about adding facilities here.
	Airport expansion – seem to be cramming too much into this area…ie improvements to fairgrounds, ball diamonds, airport expansion. Have to use eminent domain. Why can't the Columbus airport be used? County shouldn't pay for any expansion costs.
	Need to acquire road right-of-way. Too many narrow roads, have to drive in the ditch to allow semi trucks to pass.
	Agriculture is the predominant feature of the plan but these meetings are happening when farmers are in the field, timing is a problem.
	Question the inclusion of the Gulf Hypoxia Initiative text, seems contradictory to enhancing agriculture.
	Plan seems negative to CFOs; doesn't recognize the positive impacts of CFOs – specifically tax revenue.
	Information and data from Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative (related to Gulf Hypoxia Initiative) is concerning.

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VERBAL COMMENTS AT MEETINGS	There should be an additional policy after policy 4 in the agriculture section related to the responsibilities of rural home owners in Decatur County. Issues to address include: • Planting large growth trees next to the property line (see photo) • Creating drainage issues when filling in/blocking culverts and ditches (see photo) • Planting "farmer traps" ie planting sensitive plants next to property line that may get sprayed • Planting water loving trees without regard to tile lines • Siting mailboxes or other structures too close to the road – prevents big equipment from getting by • Protecting the flow of subsurface drainage
	Concept of agriculture priority routes for transportation…shouldn't limit agriculture traffic. We do need wider roads but where do we get the money?
COMMENT CARDS	Still think there should be a setback of at least 1/3 mile from CAFOs.
	Provide a documented process to change the comprehensive plan, in addition to just recommending that the plan be reviewed every couple of years.
	CFOs should be setback 1,000 feet from property line.
	Airport expansion is not needed.
	Policy: Do not support more CFO development in the County.
	We have Washington Street south of Westport, with a concrete slab over the creek. Our buses, carrying our school children travel over this water twice a day! Please address this all over the county! No slab bridges for school buses!
	Make our covered bridge a destination for our county.
ONLINE SURVEY	The CAFO/CFO structures should use the property lines for setbacks, not structures. If you use structures for measurement you are infringing on your neighbors and using their property to fulfill the criteria of the setback. These operations should be stripped of any agricultural title and be labeled according to their purpose, factories.
	CAFO/CFOs need more regulation than currently exists in the county's plan and any policy that restricts the amount of potential pollution (water, air, and traffic (diesel emissions) and amount of negative impact on rural residents, particularly in residential districts and in homes that were there before the livestock operation, is needed.
	When you list as a part of your vision to stuff more CFO's into an already permeated county (not even mentioning the spillover into neighboring counties) you might as well forget any other possible vision you have for your county. You have sealed their fate as the CFO capital. Nobody will want to live there.
	Fairly thorough but setbacks to CAFO are still too close, expand CAFO regulations.
	I may have missed it, but I don't recall seeing anything about county right-of-way along the roads. It makes me nervous to think that when I get off the road to make way for a piece of big/oversized farm equipment that I'm actually trespassing on somebody's personal property and could be cited, fined or whatever for trespassing when all I'm trying to do it share the road with my farm neighbors. Also, I didn't see anything about recommending that the county actively pursue ways to deal with the blighted smaller towns like Burney and Letts and Clarksburg...ways to help rebuild those small residential communities again instead of taking more farm ground to build houses.

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ONLINE SURVEY	Good job to the committee and consultants. This is a very thorough document. I would like to add that I'd rather see an expansion of the landfill than any more of those CFOs in the county. While they may pollute some of the area, I don't think it would be as widespread as the concentrated animal feeding operations are. Speaking of which, size does matter and there should have been something in the comprehensive plan about the difference between IDEM recognized CFOs (smaller number of animals) and IDEM/EPA recognized CAFOs (larger number of animals). It makes a difference in the smell (air pollution from methane and other gases), as well as the potential risk to the area watersheds from increased gallons of manure and wastewater, and the increased potential for accidents with or without pollution from the larger amount of equipment, including large tanker trucks, silage wagons, tractors, drag line spoolers, etc. I wholeheartedly DISAGREE with the policy that Decatur County should support or in any way encourage expansion of CAFO/CFO operations in the county. We don't need those sorts of businesses. They aren't farms; they work on an industrial model, focused on making a product (meat or dairy) using as little resource/expense as possible, often doing away with jobs (manual labor), which is replaced by machinery. This is not the type of economic development we need in Decatur County. We need good paying jobs with safe working environments. We need more farmers running the farms in Decatur County, instead of the businessmen who currently run these sorts of operations; by this I mean people who truly love the land and that want to take care of it as well as make a good product for others to consume and be able to do this and have enough money to take care of their families and live a nice live...not just get rich and run the poor next door neighbor farmer out of business because he can't compete with the industrial model and economies of scale. If given the choice between encouraging large confined and concentrated livestock operations or filling the county with residential districts...I'd much rather see the residential districts...at least we'd have more county revenue and could maybe get better roads and infrastructure and services. This is a big issue in the county and I think this plan is a good start in addressing the issue; I just don't think it went far enough. However, I do realize that you've got to start somewhere.
	Plan seems to into great detail about farmland, but does not give the same time & thought to much of anything else. I wonder how this will affect future requests, potential, & quality of life.
	I would be opposed to the east bypass unless there are thorough research of how it could impact various segments of the community such as downtown, Lincoln, residential areas, etc. Traffic studies, in person visits & conversations with other communities that have recently done them, appropriate restrictions on development of adjacent properties, traffic studies, etc. Studies on varying types of roads that would be an option (truck routes, by-pass, etc). All of this should be clear & transparent to the public, probably better notification/stronger attempts to engage than the comp plans have been. I would be willing to help.
	Of any of it I think the policy recommendations might be attempted the most, and by attempted I don't necessarily think they will be attempted in the way the community would actually like. Reading through the plan it seemed to totally contradict itself in numerous locations, makes us look stupid. Please try much harder next time to actually have good representation on the committee, solicit ideas, provide info to the public, etc.

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ONLINE SURVEY	While I appreciate everyone on the steering committee that helped create this plan, I think there should have been more participation by our county's leaders (whose names were on the list, but never bothered to attend any significant number of meetings) and there should have been more opportunity for the average resident to sit on the steering committee. I think the consultants did a good job of staying neutral and leading the plan, as did Tim Ortman. It is good that the APC staff and commission members were not in charge of this process, as I believe they have a vested interest in not making changes, despite the fact that some are (in my opinion) needed. It's sort of like an industry policing itself...just doesn't work that well.
	Concerning transportation our airport should be moved and planned as a regional facility. We have an overabundance of large hog confinement operations and do not need anymore. I want to make it clear I am not talking about the average hog or livestock farm but the huge operations. I have great concern for the viability and availability of water with this and the "accidental" run offs that take place. We have an extremely high cancer rate as compared to the national average and all of this needs to be considered when planning the future of this community.
EMAIL COMMENTS	Please take all reference to Gulf Hypoxia Initiative completely out of the Decatur Co. Comprehensive Plan. This creates another layer of reporting and accounting on the county level - that is ALREADY covered by state [through the State Chemist] and federal agencies. Investigation into those involved with the Gulf Hypoxia Initiative have supporters who have a stated agenda that would prove to be unfavorable to Decatur County agriculture. Since agriculture is SO important to the economic health of Decatur County - this is a concern. Furthermore - any probability of getting funding into our county involving this initiative would not be coming without 'strings attached'. Sometimes it's best to look past the money into the real consequences of receiving it.
	One of the seven Landscape Conservation Cooperatives aligned with the Mississippi River Basin / Gulf Hypoxia Initiative, such as "Eastern Tallgrass Prairie & Big Rivers LLC have a vision and vision statement and comments regarding agriculture that do not align with common agricultural practices and market value. One such comment regarding agricultural chemicals "MAY damage wildlife and habitat" Another comment regarding biomass/biofuels, "diverse prairie plantings for cellulosic biofuels COULD have market value". There is not widespread cellulosic fuel production, thusly no market for cellulosic feed stock. Following is a link to the ETPBR website for your further investigation: https://tallgrassprairielcc.org/
ADDITIONAL ITEMS	Policy 14 changed to "Protect Water Quality" and re-written
	Page 74, rephrase second sentence of first bullet on page
	Page 76, rephrase fifth bullet in second column regarding plan commission applications and rules of procedure
	Page 77, add two bullets to first column: • Update sign regulations to be consistent with recent court rulings, specifically Reed v. Town of Gilbert • Update right-of-way standards and dedication requirements
	Add title and note to public meeting summary map on last page to clarify that the information on the map represents public comments and not necessarily factual or quantifiable – for example prime farmland areas

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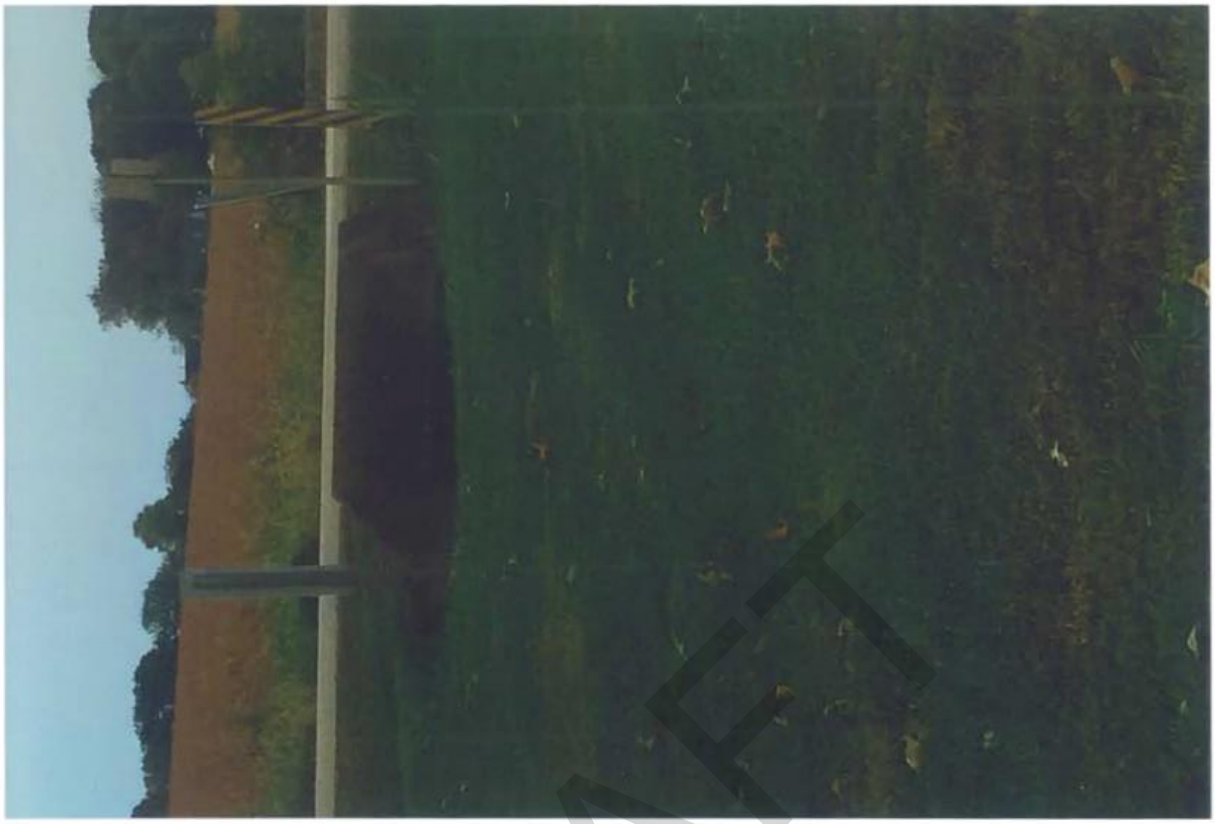

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