City of

Rushville

Indiana

Comprehensive Plan Update 2014

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RUSHVILLE, INDIANA 46173

Chapter
One
Introduction

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Chapter One **Introduction**

WHY PLAN

Rushville is not a static place; it is continually changing and evolving in response to many unknown circumstances. This change can bring positive and negative results.

A comprehensive plan is a tool for Rushville to help ensure that changes occur in a way which helps make sure that they are positive for the long term good of the community.

While other sections of the plan will focus on how to carry out land use planning, this section focuses on the benefits of planning and how this plan was formed.

This comprehensive plan will serve as a guide for local elected officials as they make decisions related to future growth and development, such as:

- Roadways
- Housing
- Businesses
- Utility service
- Parks
- And other Land Uses

The time frame of this plan is intentionally long term (10-20 years) so it survives the ever changing landscape of the economy, politics, and natural disasters. The real purpose of this plan is to anticipate growth and develop consensus around a plan which will help preserve the quality of life which residents cherish.

What if we Don't Plan?

Nobody really knows what will happen if you don't plan…and that is a big problem! An individual is less likely to achieve their goals and prosper without a plan for the future. A community is no different, and is actually more likely to fail without a plan.

The planning process is not about telling a business owner what color his building must be

or restricting growth. It is about determining the community's priorities and mapping a route toward its goals.

Without a comprehensive plan, community change is dealt with in a piecemeal fashion. Decisions made without a guiding vision are often poorly planned, reactive, and uncoordinated with the community's future needs. The downside of unplanned change is not immediately evident, but in the long run it can result in higher service costs and missed opportunities for the community.

So, what are some of the benefits of a well developed plan? Below are some examples experienced in many other communities the size of Rushville:

- Lowered operating costs for local government
- More efficient local government services
- Directing development to areas with sufficient capacity to support it (i.e., new industries where utilities are available)
- Coordinating development needs with future capital expenditures such as streets, sewage treatment plants, civic buildings, and schools
- Protecting property values
- Preserving community character
- Improving quality of life
- Preventing unwise development, such as subdivisions without proper sewage disposal
- Protecting environmental quality

Public Meeting - July, 2014. *Source: HWC*

A COMMUNITY DRIVEN PLAN...

In Indiana, comprehensive planning is permitted by the 500 Series of Title 36-7-4 of the Indiana Code. This law empowers towns, cities and counties to adopt plans. Plans must be evaluated and updated as the community changes. These changes can be gradual or sudden. Population numbers may steadily increase over 25 years but a sudden loss of a major employer could cause a sharp drop within a three-year span. Or the location of a new housing subdivision or a highway improvement project could quickly increase the population. The creation of this plan was overseen by a steering committee comprised of elected officials and residents. Community outreach efforts included:

Public Survey:

A public survey was conducted to ask residents and city officials their opinion on a broad range of topics. This survey was provided in printed and online format and was intended to provide the framework for developing the comprehensive plan vision. The information collected from the more than 1,000 responses helped guide the Steering Committee and City officials as the goals and objectives of this plan were developed.

Steering Committee Meetings:

The Steering Committee met four times to set priorities and discuss various options for the future of Rushville. This was the core group of people, made up of more than 20 individuals from diverse backgrounds. This group acted as the sounding board for the ideas you see presented in the plan. The Steering Committee was also responsible for review and editing the final document, with individual review teams reviewing and editing every chapter in the final plan.

Key Stakeholder Input:

Another important source of ideas and information came from key stakeholder groups and individuals within the Rushville community. Key community organizations such as the Heart of Rushville, the Rush County Chamber of Commerce, the Rushville Rotary Club, the Rush County ECDC, and Partners for Progress were invited to discuss their vision for the future of Rushville. In addition, representatives from utility companies, officials from county-wide organizations and City staff were interviewed during the process. The result is a plan which presents ideas and information from key community leaders on topics such as economic development, downtown, housing and neighborhoods, recreation and utilities.

Public Meetings:

Public meetings were held to receive additional input and ideas about the local goals found in the plan. Two public meetings were held during the course of the planning process. The first was a workshop style meeting where public survey results were shared and group exercises were conducted to gain additional ideas from residents. The second meeting was a formal public hearing which presented the final draft of the plan and asked for additional comments.

Project Website:

A website - http://cityofrushvillecompplan.org - was used as a portal for communication about the plan's development. All of the minutes from steering committee meetings as well as other important plan documents were posted on the project website. The website also had a forum where people could leave questions or comments about the plan.

USING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The success of this comprehensive plan hinges on the community's ability to implement the ideas contained in these pages. The finished document is just the beginning of a truly successful planning process. The real work begins after adoption of the final plan when the community must rally around its ideas and find ways to implement them. For this to occur the plan must be understandable. The following paragraphs will assist in further understanding of how to use the plan.

Topic Chapters

Topic chapters include land use, economic development, housing, natural resources and recreation, transportation and infrastructure, and utilities. The chapters are mostly self-contained summaries of specific issues shaping the future of Rushville. They include research, goals, and objectives all crafted to present an accurate representation of the community's vision. Besides making the reader well versed in the topic, they outline projects and tasks aimed at tackling problems and taking advantage of the community's best assets. All of the goals contained in the individual chapters are gathered together and summarized in the Implementation Plan at the end of the document.

Downtown along Main Street - *Source: HWC*

Rushville prides displayed in Riverside Park - *Source: HWC*

Tips for Plan Commissioners & City Officials

When properly applied, a comprehensive plan will make the life of the decision-maker easier. Many hours were donated by residents and local leaders to help shape the goals of this plan. These goals represent a unified understanding on the community vision for Rushville. Community leaders can use the plan content as a basis for discussion and to help explain how they reach their decisions. They can also ask themselves how they make decisions without a plan. Certainly their experience in Rushville guides their judgment, but a group of people making decisions based on their individual perceptions may not lead to a shared vision of the City's future. The comprehensive plan provides a defensible, unified vision.

Tips for Developers

To attract the highest quality developers and businesses the City must have a predictable decision making process led by well versed decision makers. Having a well-known local decision making process allows potential investors in the community to clearly understand how to maximize their local investments. This plan spells out the community's preferred future; where it wants to extend infrastructure and where it wants housing, industrial and commercial development. Using this plan as a framework for Rushville's future success will send a clear signal to potential developers and business owners that you are open for business.

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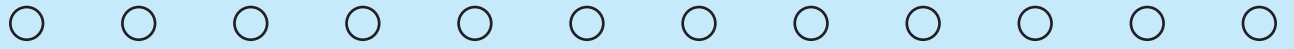
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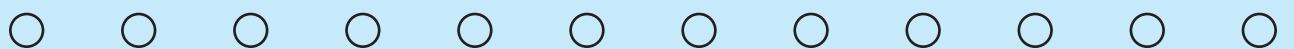
Vision & Plan Summary

Chapter Two **Vision & Plan Summary**

THE VISION

The vision for Rushville's Comprehensive Plan Update is simple: Let's take what we have and find a way to make it better. There was a continuous and constant theme while developing this plan; people think of Rushville as a great place to live, work, and raise a family but things can be done to make it even better. Many stories were shared of Rushville's recent wins and subsequent discussions led to conversations on what can be done for Rushville's future.

With many comprehensive plans the focus of the document is to define areas for future growth. These plans assume that population growth is a given and emphasis is placed on physical development and the land needed for expansion. Unfortunately what many of these plans lack is a clearly defined strategy for making a community more livable for residents and more lucrative for business development. Rushville's plan, contained on the following pages, presents a different approach. The primary theme of this plan is how the city can invest in areas which are currently underdeveloped or underutilized to foster an environment which makes people want to move to Rushville or to start a new business here.

The plan presented on the following pages provides a clear overview of the investments that Rushville's residents said that they wanted. To be clear, there are some areas defined for future development, but the majority of the recommendations in this plan focus on making changes within the city to make it more livable and attractive for residents and businesses alike. They are aimed at preserving the community character that so many people cherish while identifying changes and key investments which will help improve the overall quality of life for everybody. Below is a summary of the overarching themes which helped guide the development of the recommendations and which are resonated throughout the details of the plan:

Reinvest in existing neighborhoods first

Rushville is home to many well established and beautiful neighborhoods in the heart of the city and the quality of the housing options should reflect the quality of the people living in the city. By reinvesting in improvements in existing neighborhoods the city can help ensure high quality housing for all residents while also helping to shore up property values.

Make important quality of life improvements

There was overwhelming support for the city to make improvements which will help make the city more appealing for younger families and more accessible for all residents. This included support for amenities such as trails, parks, and even a community center with aquatic facilities. These improvements can provide opportunities for people to connect to one another and to important community locations.

Reinvigorate core parts of the community

Many stories were shared about what Rushville used to offer and about a business that just couldn't quite make it. By looking inward for development opportunities in downtown the city can identify strategic investments which will have an immediate and lasting impact on existing small businesses. Long term these improvements will also help make Rushville a more attractive place for new small business owners to invest.

Encourage young families to establish roots

There is a great desire for changes which will help make Rushville more attractive as a place for younger generations to want to live. Whether it's encouraging a recent college graduate to move back home and start a business or attracting a young family relocating from afar, there is an overwhelming desire to help make Rushville a more appealing place to live, work, and play. People who live here already agree that Rushville is a great community, we just need to find a way to get other people to realize what the city has to offer.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR THE FUTURE

There is no energy shortage in the City of Rushville. Local leaders have demonstrated vitality in launching many projects: everything from the new industrial park to downtown infrastructure improvements to free concerts.

Rushville has also demonstrated that it has the "people power" – both city staff and volunteers – to get things done. There are ambitious plans for the future, too. This planning document contains details for many years of improvements, all suggested by residents.

Despite the energy level among the city's most engaged citizens, steering committee members said apathy is a lingering problem; many residents don't believe things are changing for the better. It also appears that a relatively small group does most of the heavy lifting when it comes to organizing events, running committees and generally volunteering.

Public Meeting - July, 2014. *Source: HWC*

But there are some encouraging signs about increasing public engagement. A survey conducted for this planning process drew more than 1,000 responses – which in itself is a triumph for a community of Rushville's size. Even more uplifting, the survey was not dominated by irate citizens, who are often more likely than satisfied ones to complete the questionnaire.

In fact, most respondents either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that Rushville is a great place to live.

In short, the city has three of the key ingredients needed for meaningful community development:

- Local leaders (including volunteers) ready to work

- Plans for addressing priority areas such as downtown and core neighborhoods

- Many residents who believe in the community's potential

What's missing? Two more components are needed to ensure steady progress – secure funding and more public involvement and acceptance of the need for revitalization of downtown, key neighborhoods and the overall quality of life. These two factors are deeply entwined.

The Implementation Chapter provides ideas for funding, mostly from governmental grants. The individual chapters of this report, such as Housing and Critical Sub Areas, also suggest ways to raise money for projects by increasing the assessed valuation of local property. It is a very tough time for any city to meet its budget and direct resources for growth, but Rushville's leaders have a strategy in place.

That leaves the need for increased public involvement, but before city leaders can invest public money in downtown and neighborhood projects, they need the publics acceptance of the importance of that revitalization work.

So, the first message to residents should be about the need for public investment. Some areas of Rushville are not being developed right now, but every part is changing. It is inevitable: new roads degrade; houses are built and decay; new businesses begin and old ones close. Over time, sometimes too slowly to attract attention, these changes can alter a community's character.

To preserve that character, public investment – in streets, parks, downtown and neighborhoods – is needed. Public investment also increases the opportunities for private investment.

In summary, to make the changes that local leaders want, there is going to have to be large public investment. To pave the way for that investment, there needs to be community support.

Galvanizing Community Support

First, let us further define the term "community support." It's not enough that people understand an issue or show up at meetings about it; they have to feel something should be done to fix the problem. Here are some tips for building support:

- Enlist well-respected community members as spokespeople.
- Have your biggest advocates get others to support the project.
    - ° Give them access to events to talk about what excites them about the project. Enthusiasm begets enthusiasm.
    - ° Let them take control of parts of the project, such as social media marketing, getting snacks for public meetings, etc. Getting people intimately involved is the best way to keep them engaged.
- Engage people early and often.
    - ° People need opportunities to provide input and feel their opinion is valued.
- Be transparent about progress, setbacks and positive results.

- Tailor your outreach to specific community members.
    - ° Have direct conversations with naysayers to understand and address their concerns; then, recruit them to work on the project in that specific area.
    - ° Give cynics the opportunity to be involved and ask as many questions as they wish.
- Have people test various parts of the project before they are publicly unveiled.
- Frame the issue and the argument for it in clear language that conveys the purpose and elicits broad-based support.
    - ° Emphasize common ground and shared community values.
    - ° Don't make any claims that people find ridiculous or unprovable.
- Ask people to do something for the project rather than just telling them about it.
- Don't try to get everyone on board at the same time – take it one group/person at a time.
- As support grows, illustrate the growth at every event. It increases the sense of inevitability and people want to be part of the majority/winning side.
- Celebrate accomplishments quickly and publicly.
- Maintain contact with supporters and thank them for their support.
    - ° Follow up to see if there have been any changes, questions, or concerns.

Building and maintaining community support is time and energy consuming, but the pay-off can be sustained public involvement and, ultimately, more successful projects. This support will be vital as Rushville builds the capacity to carry out its growth plans.

PLAN SUMMARY

The following chapters lay out what the decision makers in Rushville must do to transform the community's vision into a tangible process. Several of the chapters in this comprehensive plan conclude with a series of goals and an accompanying list of strategies or next steps.   .

Community Character

The Community Character chapter highlights the unique qualities of Rushville. Community resources, cultural resources, and a demographic profile of the community are also included.

Land Use

The Land Use chapter discusses land use policies for the City and where they should be focused. As part of this discussion, a review of the existing zoning policy is discussed as well as existing factors shaping current land use.

Goals include:

- Developing specific land use policies which support the revitalization of key areas within the city and clearly identify high potential infill of redevelopment sites.
- Ensuring the continued protection of the city's charm and character by taking specific measures to help protect and enhance the visual quality of developments within Rushville.
- Continue to evaluate options for having a cooperative role with Rush County over land use decisions which are made in areas directly adjacent to Rushville's corporate boundary

Economic Development

The Economic Development chapter highlights the existing state of the local economy and discusses future growth opportunities. Many of the goals articulated during this process are already being addressed by the Rush County Economic and Community Development

Corporation (ECDC).

These goals Include:

- Promote and recruit businesses for the North Industrial Park until it is filled up.
- Invest in an incentive plan to encourage entrepreneurial development.
- Develop more higher education and workforce development training opportunities for residents.
- Identify and actively recruit employers providing local jobs (residents working in Rushville) and increase in-commuting to Rushville employers.

Housing

The Housing chapter discusses the current housing situation in Rushville, including the type of homes available in Rushville, new home building permits, foreclosures, number of renters, and demographics. The chapter also highlights the current market overview in Rush County.

Goals Include:

- Increase code enforcement
- Support ongoing neighborhood revitalization efforts.
- Develop a neighborhood action plan which focuses on needs and actions for specific neighborhoods.
- Develop and landlord and tenant outreach and education program.
- Develop plans for future housing development along the completed 16th Street corridor; focus on market-rate, multi-family and young professional type housing.
- Develop and/or fund homeowner assistance program to help with small repairs (micro-loans, local bank partnerships, etc.)
- Renewal of blighted property and re-introduction of tax delinquent property to

the market.

Natural Resources and Recreation

This chapter features a discussion of the available natural resources in and around Rushville such as topography, geology/soils, ecology/agriculture, water features, drainage/flooding, air quality, brownfields/underground storage tanks, open space and recreation. Ways in which to protect, expand, and capitalize on these resources are presented.

Goals Include:
- Develop and support additional park programming such as athletic events, camps, and other recreational and fitness activities.
- Develop and/or promote more activities which engage residents and visitors with unique natural features such as wooded areas (trails, etc.)
- Consider potential impacts of future development plans on the quantity and quality of prime farmland and other valuable natural resources such as the Flatrock River.

Transportation

The Transportation chapter highlights the existing transportation resources present in Rushville and how land use policies should guide future transportation development. Key opportunities such as trails, sidewalks, the State Road (SR) 3 connector, and gateways are also discussed.

Goals Include:
- Relieve downtown congestion along the SR 3/Main Street corridor.
- Develop a more comprehensive transportation system which provides realistic transportation alternatives with a focus on improving the overall quality of

life for residents.
- Make plans and complete roadway projects which enhance your long term capacity for additional residential and commercial development.
- Make improvements and provide long-term maintenance at the key transportation gateways into Rushville.

Infrastructure and Utilities

This chapter focuses on the existing conditions of Rushville's infrastructure and utilities and the continued pressures on these facilities such as aging and Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) mandates. Any growth in the community will require growth and updating of infrastructure and utilities. Planning for funding of repairs and expansion is discussed.

Goals Include:
- Continue implementing improvement plans associated with IDEM CSO mandates and overall stormwater and wastewater system needs.
- Develop a stronger portfolio of available high technology communication offerings within the city.
- Strategically plan for the long term utility

needs of the city.

Critical Sub Areas

The Critical Sub Areas chapter highlights 3 areas within the City that warranted further study and will require critical land use decisions within the next several years. The areas discussed in this chapter are the Downtown including the Riverside Park connector, the 16th Street extension, and the SR 3 Connector between I-74 and I-70. Goals for the Downtown have been laid out in the Rushville Downtown Revitalization Plan.

Goals Include:

- Encourage a variety of land uses for a vibrant community through a balance of preservation, rehabilitation, and infill development. Foster development of a strong residential, retail, services, and entertainment core
- Support activities that reinforce Downtown as a destination
- Preserve existing single- and multi-family properties and support new developments
- Restore and preserve historical structures that reflect the city's heritage
- Support sustainable, environmentally responsible development
- Invest in improvements which will make downtown Rushville a key community activity center which welcomes and accommodates new businesses, social functions, community gathering spaces, and creates a unique focal point for the City.
- Enhance downtown Rushville's aesthetic quality and historic façade character
- Develop a strategic communications plan which will positively promote what

downtown Rushville has to offer.
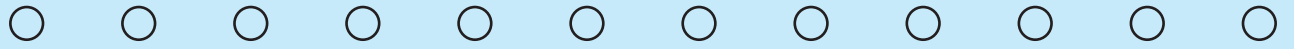
Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan collects all the goals, strategies and next steps listed in all the previous chapters into one table. Besides the goals and next steps, responsible parties are also identified. This plan provides an easy to consult resource upon which progress can be benchmarked.

Additional Ideas from Rushville's Youth

As explained in this chapter, public support for accomplishing the goals outlined in this plan has been growing in urgency, including with Rushville's young adult population. Near the end of the completion of this study another report called Rushville's Youth Planning Objectives was completed and released. This report was an academic exercise led by graduate students in the Ball State University Urban Planning program. The aim of the study was to engage Rushville's young adult population in the civic process and to let them contribute to the planning process. That report echoed all of the goals of this study, including increasing the population downtown, encouraging small business development and connecting multi-use trails. A full copy of the Rushville's Youth Planning Objectives report can be found in the appendices to this comprehensive plan.
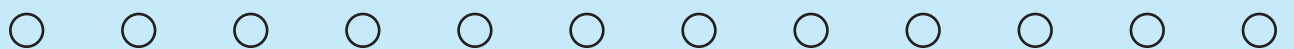
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3 Chapter
Three
Community Character

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Chapter Three **Community Character**

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RUSHVILLE FACTS

- Named in honor of Dr. Benjamin Rush, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

- Tony Stewart, the "Rushville Rocket", started his racing career while living in Rushville.

- Home and campaign headquarters for Wendell L. Willkie, who ran against Franklin D. Roosevelt as the Republican candidate for the President of the United States in 1940.

HISTORY

Rush County was named after Declaration of Independence signer Benjamin Rush, but Rushville's creation is tied to the railroads.

With the development of rail in Southeastern Indiana, the city became a hub for the region. The population grew with the arrival of immigrants from Ireland, Germany, England and elsewhere.

The local hub grew, reaching four major railroads during the 1930s and 1940s. Most train engines using these railroads were coal-fired, supported by four major lumber yards in Rushville.

Rushville also has a long history of close ties to the political pulse not only of Indiana, but the nation. The city served as the political home and campaign headquarters for Wendell L. Willkie, the Republican candidate for president in 1940. Mr. Willkie died in 1944 and was buried in the East Hill Cemetery outside of Rushville.

The Rush County Historical Society in Rushville is in the Gowdy House, the red brick former home of John K. Gowdy, counsel-general to Paris under President William McKinley. It serves as a local history museum which showcases possessions of the Gowdy family, a variety of agricultural implements from the past and a collection of Willkie campaign memorabilia.

HISTORIC DISTRICT MAP

Legend
- Corporate Limits
- River or Stream
- Rushville Parks
- Historic District

Rushville Main Street circa 1914 - Digital Image © 2003 Indiana Historical Society. All Rights Reserved.

Rushville Public Library, constructed in 1930 - *Source: HWC*

City of Rushville, Indiana Comprehensive Plan Update 2014

CHARACTER

Although the heyday of the railroads and growth boom of the 1960s are gone, Rushville retains most of the small town charm of an earlier time.

To preserve the city's character, a historic district was recently designated to protect the integrity of Rushville's remaining historic buildings.

The city is also home to 40 acres of parks, including North Memorial, South Memorial, Laughlin, Community, Riverside and Willkie. The parks include walking trails at Veterans Memorial and Riverside parks in addition to various athletic fields and courts, playground equipment, outdoor water facilities and shelters. Riverside Park also has an amphitheater where residents can attend six free concerts a year in the series "Live by the Levee."

Rush County Youth Baseball Little League runs through the summer and fall and the Rushville Parks and Recreation Department sponsors an adult softball league. The Boys & Girls Club of Rush County also provides recreation and other youth development services to their members in Rushville and greater Rush County.

The Rushville Public Library is a center of community activity with a variety of reading activities and genealogy resources. The library was founded by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1910 and was originally housed in the courthouse. A number of donations from local residents led to the construction of a new, Gothic-inspired library in Rushville where it is housed today.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

To honor their adopted native son, Rushville holds Wendell Willkie Days every September. The festival includes a parade, farmers' market, live music, vendors and crafters, wine tasting and a pedal tractor pull.

The city also recently launched the Mayor's 5K, which highlights Rushville's many parks. The race begins at the Riverside Park Amphitheater and winds through the city's historic district to Veterans' Memorial Park and the Veterans' Memorial Bridge before concluding at the amphitheater.

To celebrate the city and county's steam engine heritage, the annual Pioneer Steam Engine show is held outside of Rushville and includes steam engine displays and parades.

The Farmer's Market compliments many of the events and opportunities downtown. *Source: HWC*

Rushville also recently introduced an annual Rushville Grand Prix karting event which is held in mid-July and attracts visitors from the surrounding area.

Rushville's Main Street organization, Heart of Rushville, holds a weekly Farmers' Market downtown on Third Street Saturdays from May through October. Heart of Rushville also organizes a variety of volunteer clean-up activities and a community yard sale.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Rushville is part of the Rush County Consolidated School Corporation which serves students in preschool through twelfth grade. Two elementary schools, in addition to the middle school and high school, are located in Rushville. Additionally, The Opportunity School, an alternative school for those students requiring services within the corporation is in Rushville. St. Mary's Catholic School serves students in preschool through sixth grade. Though no higher education institutions are located in Rushville, many are just a short drive away from the city.

Rushville currently has more than twenty churches serving a wide range of denominations. A few additional churches are just outside the city limits.

Rushville's healthcare services are anchored by Rush Memorial Hospital.

Because Rushville is the county seat, it is home to many public safety agencies including the Rushville Fire and Police Departments, the Rushville Township Fire department and the Rush County sheriff's office.

A complete listing of Rushville's service providers can be found in the Appendix.

Recent plans include renovation of the old Princess Theater into a community event space.   *Source: HWC*

DEMOGRAPHIC REPORT SUMMARY
RUSHVILLE, INDIANA

RUSHVILLE		INDIANA
46%	Population with a High School Diploma	35%
$35,505	Median Household Income	$48,974
4.9%	Unemployment Rate	9%
$85,129	Median Home Value	$125,208
34%	Poverty Rate	27%

For the full Demographic Report, please see the Appendix of the Rushville Comprehensive Plan.

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Chapter
Four

Land Use

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Chapter Four **Land Use**

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KEY POINTS

- Due to projected population decline, the city's land use policies should focus inward. This includes rezoning and reclassification of existing parts of the City to help facilitate new business growth and to ensure land use compatibility issues don't encourage additional deterioration along the fringes of existing residential and commercial districts.

- Evaluate existing available land within the city to look for in-fill development opportunities. Select places where building use is not at capacity and where parcels of land are underutilized or underdeveloped.

INTRODUCTION

Land use chapters traditionally focus on planning for growth, but how should a community prepare for the future if short-term growth isn't anticipated?

Rushville's population has grown only slightly in recent years, and Rush County is projected to lose residents over the next several decades.

Community leaders are working tirelessly to alter these predictions by attracting new residents, but short-term planning must recognize the projections.

But even if a community isn't growing, that does not mean it isn't changing.

In a city, this constant change can be seen in new businesses opening while local manufacturing plants close down, or how one neighborhood is well-maintained while the homes in another are allowed to deteriorate.

Recognizing that the city is changing (even if it isn't getting much bigger), the key to future land use planning is **creating opportunities;** establishing an environment that uses public investment and planning to set the stage for private investment.

These efforts will require public funding for buildings, roads and other projects. The idea

Rushville can re-envision how it uses underutilized land to help bolster downtown business growth - *Source: HWC*

of investing in the community when growth is uncertain can be seen as risky, but there are consequences and costs to not investing, just as there are costs to not planning.

Rushville can build its capacity for growth in two phases.

Phase 1 - Protect What You've Got:

If few new houses are being built locally, then extra effort is needed to make sure Rushville's existing stock of homes is well maintained.

Revitalizing older neighborhoods is not about nostalgia. Preservation-based community development protects a community's heritage. Revitalization creates affordable housing, generates jobs, supports independent businesses, increases civic participation and bolsters a community's sense of place.

Cities have found that if they reinvest in their traditional neighborhoods first, they will reduce the cost of infrastructure and services, spur private reinvestment in the neighborhoods and reduce crime.

It also makes financial sense. The community is unlikely to attract new, expensive homes if many of the existing ones are not well maintained. The city can build its tax base by helping increase current property tax values through revitalization.

The Housing Chapter and the Implementation Plan outlines a neighborhood revitalization plan.

Phase 2 - Prepare for Future Growth:

If Rushville wants growth, it has to prepare for it. Although the city does not control the housing market, it does have tools and incentives at its disposal to encourage developers. These include control of utilities and roads, as well as the potential for public-private partnerships.

All of these tools may be necessary in promoting growth along 16th Street and Morgan Street.

The city will continue to work with the County leadership regarding the planning for the area adjacent to the Rushville's corporate boundary. While cooperation among the city and Rush County exists, it is possible to imagine future scenarios where mismatches between the city's and county's visions for what happens to land immediately outside Rushville's borders can occur. With any future need for change it may become advantageous for both the city and county to explore how this compromise and dialogue can be accomplished.

FACTORS SHAPING CURRENT LAND USE

Rushville's current land use pattern has largely been guided by the agricultural history of the surrounding region. The city still maintains a compact form and has few locations where traditional suburban style developments have been allowed.

Due to the productive nature of the land surrounding Rushville, and the well-developed agricultural economy in the county, it should be expected that it will be an ongoing challenge to

Traditional Residential Neighborhood around Downtown
Source: HWC

balance city development patterns and county agricultural interests.

Another important factor in how land use has developed in Rushville is the role the APC plays in defining and approving long term land use policy. Planning decisions made in areas immediately around Rushville have short and long term implications for the city including uncontrolled development patterns and potentially costly conflicts in adjacent land use compatibility.

Evidence that more specific planning is needed around Rushville can be seen on the existing zoning map in this chapter. This map shows a total area of more than 1,730 acres of land directly adjacent to the Rushville corporate boundary targeted for future residential development under current Rush County zoning standards.

With an average of 32 new residential building permits issued in Rushville between 2001 and 2012, the total amount of land identified for residential development is enough for more than 54 years of residential development.

The peak number of annual building permits issued during the same time period was 58 in 2003. Even at this rate of new construction the amount of land currently zoned for residential development outside of Rushville's corporate boundary is enough to fulfill more than 29 years of development demand.

With an oversupply of land currently zoned for a specific purpose, in this case residential, the city loses some control over determining healthy, near-term development patterns. This can ultimately lead to unanticipated sprawl, premature infrastructure investment, and development patterns which are counterproductive to redevelopment strategies aimed at improving existing property values.

CURRENT ZONING MAP

Legend

Corporate Limits

Rushville Parks

Zoning Code (County Designation)
- Agricultural District (A-1)
- Agricultural District (A-3)
- Commercial District (C)
- Floodplain (FP, Interim 2004)
- Manufacturing District (M)
- Mobile Home District (MH)
- Undefined (R)

Zoning Code (City Designation)
- Neighborhood Business District (C-1)
- Community Business District (C-2)
- Central Business District (CBD)
- Light Manufacturing District (M-1)
- Heavy Manufacturing District (M-2)
- Single-Family Residential District (R-1)
- Multi-Family Residential District (R-3)
- None

GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE DECISION MAKING

Lower development demands give Rushville the breathing room to plan for the future look of the city by asking questions like, "What neighborhoods do we want to restore?" and "How can we direct commercial growth so that it doesn't compete with downtown?" The Future Land Use Map on the next page outlines the long term recommended land use changes for Rushville.

Current land use needs in Rushville are not centered around containing or directing physical expansion of the city but on the reorganization and redevelopment of existing portions of the city to encourage and enhance the long-term economic and community goals for the region.

Special attention should be paid to the encouragement of specific quality of life measures such as the physical appearance of portions of the city and connecting important community amenities through a multi-use trail system.

A clearly defined land use policy will help encourage the redevelopment and new development opportunities the city needs to achieve some of its long-term goals. Start with a review of current land use policy and zoning ordinances.

Close collaboration with the Rush County can also result in development of a mutual vision for healthy use and stewardship of the land surrounding Rushville. This will yield long term benefits for the city and county alike in the form of controlling fringe development and reducing unneeded sprawl.

The city is establishing a more specific system of pre-determined policies and standards which will support and allow a transparent fulfillment of city development and redevelopment goals.

The development of a more objective review framework, including design standards unique to specific areas, will help ensure that the approval process does not obstruct new development and that development occurs on Rushville's terms, at the appropriate time and place.

Revising land use policy and zoning ordinances to include specific development standards will also improve the attractiveness of Rushville to developers by leveling the playing field and providing predictability for how development proposals are evaluated and approved.

Rushville's Downtown Business District has a lot of potential to attract new business development to the city. *Source: HWC*

Rushville needs to look inward for opportunities to maximize land development potential within its existing boundaries before turning to outward growth. - *Source: HWC*

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

Legend

Corporate Limits

Rushville Parks

Interim Floodplain (2004)
Note: Final Data unavailable

River or Stream

Land Use

- Neighborhood Business
- Community Business
- Central Business
- Light Manufacturing
- Heavy Manufacturing
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Proposed Business
- Proposed Manufacturing
- Proposed Residential

CR200

CR150

CR100

Spencer St

Fort Wayne Rd

CR125

Airport Rd

Flatrock River

3

52

44

44

3

52

REVIEW OF EXISTING ZONING POLICY

Background: Rushville is part of the Rush County Area Plan Commission (APC), but in addition to the proposed new separate comprehensive plan, the city also already has a separate zoning ordinance from the rest of the county jurisdiction. The first Zoning Ordinance enacted for the City of Rushville was Ordinance 927 consisting of 27 pages, on June 20, 1950 in accord with the 1947 Advisory Plan Law. On May 5, 1970 the Rushville City Council adopted a 16 page Subdivision Control Ordinance 1970-7 in accord with the 1947 Advisory Plan Law. APC formation On May 4, 1970, the Rush County Board of Commissioners adopted an Ordinance for the establishment of an Area Planning Department under the provisions of Chapter 138, Acts of 1957; the Ordinance states that the Department shall be in existence from the date on which it is organized at its' first meeting. Area Plan Commission records indicate that August 20, 1970 was the first meeting.   IC 36-7-4-504 required the Area Plan Commission to consolidate the various plans and ordinances in force in the county and in the participating municipality into one comprehensive plan; this was done with Resolution 1971-1 of the Area Plan Commission dated March 23, 1971; on November 12, 1971 Resolution 1971-3 was enacted clarifying the zoning. Then, a Comprehensive Plan was adopted for all of Rush County in 1974; On April 2, 1974, the Rushville City Council enacted Ordinance 1974-2 adopting an updated Zoning Plan for the City of Rushville. Circa 2005, the City of Rushville adopted a Comprehensive Plan for Rushville; per IC 36-7-4-511 this was an Amendment of the Rush County Comprehensive Plan. In 2006 the City of Rushville adopted a Zoning Ordinance; this was a Text Amendment of the County-wide Zoning Ordinance

APC Compliance with State Law: There were major changes to Indiana Planning Law in 2011, regarding appeals, administration, etc. The Area Plan Commission has been briefed by their Attorney and Plan Consultant regarding the 2011 State Law changes; a number of Amendments have been made to the County Zoning Ordinance during the last 6 years that need to be Codified into the Online edition and the print edition. Note that the APC's Zoning Ordinance was not reviewed as part of this project.

Comprehensive Plan and Zoning: Whenever a comprehensive plan is updated, it is important to adjust the zoning ordinance, so it is synchronized with the future vision and goals of the plan. A community's zoning and subdivision ordinances are the primary implementation tools for a comprehensive plan, so if they are not amended to match the plan, it will likely be less successful in the future.

City Zoning: Before Rushville could establish its own planning and zoning, several steps would need to happen, including changes to this zoning ordinance with regards to administration and enforcement. An enforcement section would have to be added and the existing section on administration updated.

General Zoning Ordinance Comments: Rushville's Zoning Ordinance is generally in good shape. Adding illustrations and reformatting the document would help make this zoning ordinance more user-friendly. The corridor overlay and historic district are well developed, with requirements (i.e., lighting and building form) that could easily be expanded to the rest of the city.

One concern is that many of the standards and criteria set forth are very subjective, leaving much room for interpretation. It would be useful to tighten up those standards so there is more predictability in the development process.

COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC SECTIONS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE:

1. Setbacks: Sec 6-101-4, Table __ is "Required Front Yard Setbacks by Zoning District". These appear to be minimum setbacks and should be labeled as such. The city should consider adopting maximum setbacks also.

2. Hospitals: Sec 6-101-4 (B) (2) – Hospitals are not typically compatible with residential uses and should be located in an institutional or commercial zoning district. Note: this comment applies to all other zoning districts.

3. Sanitary Sewer: Sec 6-101-4 (B) (1) – Sanitary sewer should serve all development within the City of Rushville. Most municipalities do not allow septic systems. Note: this comment applies to all other zoning districts.

4. R-1: Sec 6-101-4 (B) (4), Table - the city should establish a minimum lot size for single-family residences Note: this comment applies to all other residential zoning districts.

5. Mobile Home Parks: – Per your definitions, 2 mobile homes constitute a "mobile home park" which could promote scattered 5-Acre pockets of R-4 around the community. The R-4 District is meant for mobile homes, yet they are not listed as a permitted use in R-4 (mobile homes are not the same as manufactured homes, per Indiana Code definitions).

6. Neighborhood Business: Sec 6-101-4 (F) – the maximum 65,000 sq. for retail establishments is not small or neighborhood scale. Many of the uses are not typically considered neighborhood serving (i.e., government buildings, museums, auto sales, etc.). This district should be revised to truly reflect a neighborhood commercial zone. Consider allowing accessory apartments, so that buildings could be mixed use in nature i.e., business downstairs, living quarters upstairs).

7. Community Business: Sec 6-101-4 (G) (1) – industrial uses are not typically allowed in this type of commercial zoning district. Rushville should consider adding a "Heavy Commercial" District to accommodate such uses.

8. CBD: Sec. 6-101-4 (H) (2) – a strong downtown contains post offices, government buildings and other uses that draw people downtown. To ensure they remain downtown, don't allow them in other districts.

9. CBD Form: 6-101-4 (H) (4) – to retain the appearance of the traditional downtown; consider adding a minimum building height and basic architectural standards.

10. Outdoor Storage and Operations: 6-101-4 (I) (2) – Light Manufacturing typically does not allow outdoor storage or operations, which are allowed in a Heavy Manufacturing District. Either prohibit these uses in M-1 or add a Heavy Commercial District that prohibits outdoor storage or operations.

11. Adult Entertainment Businesses: These establishments are typically considered incompatible with most districts and are limited to only one specific district, instead of several, even as a special exception.

12. M-1 Lot Size: 6-101-4 (I) (4) – 23,000 sq. ft. is inadequate for almost any non-residential use, especially industrial uses.

13. Home Occupation in Industrial: 6-101-4 (I) (2) –home occupations should not be allowed in M-2 since residences are not.

14. Corridor Overlay District: 6-101-4 (K) (4) – Establishing more specific standards (i.e., percent masonry construction, etc.) would allow more predictability in the review process.

15. Factors to Be Considered: The "factors to be considered" by the area plan commission are very subjective. For example, when reviewing corridor overlays, they are to consider "attractiveness" of lighting standards or access roads are "encouraged." More predictability and objectivity should be established in Rushville's standards, and could even eliminate the need for APC review.

16. Filing Fees: Filing Fees seem very low in comparison to other communities. Filing fees should be revised to be more competitive with communities of a similar size and character.

17. PUD District: Consider setting more standards for PUDs, such as minimum amount of open space required. Also, the "Factors for Consideration" are very subjective, resulting in less predictability during the review and approval process.

18. Covenants: The covenants required by Plan Commission should be written commitments, which are permanent conditions that are recorded. Written commitments may be used by the Plan Commission and BZA, but must be enabled in the ordinance first.

19. Private Streets: Private streets should not be allowed. Inevitably future property owners ask the city to take over maintenance of these streets which are often constructed using substandard methods.

20. Modifications: Develop written guidelines for what constitutes a minor modification vs. a major modification. For example, adding to the number of lots or decreasing the amount of parking would be considered major modifications.

21. Vehicle Storage: Sec 6-101-5 (E) (1) – Unlicensed, inoperable, or partially dismantled vehicles to should not be allowed to be stored in any commercial district.

22. Loading: Sec. 6-101-7 (E) (3) – Off-street loading areas should not be allowed in front of a building.

23. Prohibited Signs: 6-101-9 – Consider adding human signs (sandwich boards, etc.) to list of prohibited signs.

● Downtown Pocket Park - *Source: HWC*

● Development along S.R. 3 - *Source: HWC*

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Develop specific land use policies which support the revitalization of key areas within the city and clearly identify high potential infill or redevelopment sites.

Strategies

- ☐ Develop an inventory of underutilized buildings and vacant land within the city. Evaluate and prioritize these sites for redevelopment potential.

- ☐ Identify specific development goals for the highest priority redevelopment sites including higher density and mixed-use future development scenarios.

- ☐ Encourage infill development through a system of promoting and incentivizing new residential and commercial development within existing buildings and on underutilized parcels of land.

Goal 2: Ensure the continued protection of the city's charm and character by taking specific measures to help protect and enhance the visual quality of developments within Rushville.

Strategies

- ☐ Develop design standards appropriate for the city's most important character areas, such as downtown, which reflect the desired visual quality for the area such as building setbacks, signage standards, etc.

- ☐ Revise the city zoning ordinances to allow mixed-use development patterns. Develop standards for physical form, visual character, and permitted uses for new mixed-use developments.

- ☐ Work with the Rush County farmers to help identify the most productive agricultural land surrounding Rushville's corporate limits. Take measures to ensure the land is set aside for agricultural uses and is only developed as the last resort for the city; after all other options have been exhausted.

Goal 3: Continue to evaluate options for having more direct control over land use decisions which are made in areas directly adjacent to the corporate boundary.

Strategies

- ☐ Continue to look for avenues which allow the City of Rushville to have a voice in land use decisions for property adjacent to the Rushville City Limits.

- ☐ Work with the APC to make revisions to the zoning ordinance that updates the document to meet current state law and defines more objective development guidelines.

- ☐ Revise the City of Rushville zoning ordinance to reflect the changes recommended in the zoning ordinance review comments in this chapter of the comprehensive plan.

- ☐ Continue to explore the establishment of city exclusive planning and zoning capabilities.

Goal 3: Continued

Strategies

☐ Develop a trust between the city and county that assures us of land within in close proximity to the city first - avoiding sprawl out into productive farmland.

☐ Educate the larger community on balancing the location of industry and population to the services and quality of life amenities achievable in the city.

☐ Continue conversations with the county to encourage establishment of joint departments to allow provision of services not affordable individually.

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Chapter
Five

Economic Development

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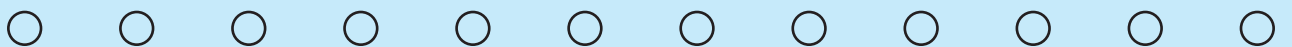
Chapter Five **Economic Development**

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KEY POINTS

- Manufacturing has traditionally played a vital role in the city's wealth. It is still Rushville's largest local employment sector, but its overall role has declined as some of those jobs moved overseas. While industrial jobs are important and well worth local investment, a prosperous future will require a more diversified economy.

- The average Rushville worker in most job sectors (manufacturing, retail trade, education, etc.), gets paid less than the state average.

INTRODUCTION

Rushville's economic health is reflected in the everyday lives of its residents, such as how many people have jobs and what salaries they earn. The city's potential for future growth can also be measured through its citizens, such as the type of work they do and the skills they possess.

Based on these and other indicators, the Rushville economy faces challenges. The city has a successful past, and its historic wealth can still be seen in the ornate buildings downtown and small mansions near Main Street. But as the foundation of the U.S. economy has shifted over the decades, the city has not kept pace.

For example, manufacturing has traditionally played a vital role in the city's wealth. Manufacturing is still Rushville's largest local employment sector, but its overall role has declined as those jobs moved overseas. And while it provides many local jobs, the wages for that work are considerably lower than the Indiana average.

In fact, the typical Rushville worker in most job sectors (retail trade, education, etc.), gets paid less than the state average.

While industrial jobs are still important and well worth local investment, a prosperous future will require a more diversified economy. This could include a workforce trained in growing job sectors such as information technology & telecommunications, arts & visitor industries and business & financial services.

As the city focuses on preparing for a more technologically advanced future, it may face some tension with Rush County's agricultural past and present. Farms take up large tracts of the county and they hire hundreds of people.

Downtown Business Sign and Clock - *Source: SDG*

North Main St. and 2nd Street - *Source: HWC*

City of Rushville, Indiana Comprehensive Plan 2014

Ideas about growth, investment and expansion in Rushville will have to be reconciled with the multi-million dollar (and growing) agricultural sector. Further complicating the issue, Rushville – unlike many communities its size - does not control the planning and zoning of land immediately around its borders.

Although there is considerable work to be done modernizing the city's economic engine, there are many positive indicators of future growth. Decreasing unemployment and increasing total assessed property values show that the recession is receding.

Rushville has also put in place many of the development tools it will need, including tax increment financing districts, multiple development-related organizations and a new industrial park on the north side of the city.

FACTS SHAPING RUSHVILLE'S ECONOMY

The following statistics were gathered using the most current data for Rushville, most of which comes from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS). In cases where new information is not available for the city, Rush County data was used instead.

- Rushville has a labor force of 3,119 people. About 62 percent of the city's 5,071 residents aged 16 and older are in the labor force.

- Rush County's unemployment rate was 4.9 percent in April 2014, according to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. That's lower than the Indiana rate of 5.5 percent. Traditionally, Rushville's unemployment rate is higher than the county's.

- Rushville households have a median income of $36,025, which is markedly smaller than Rush County's ($46,801)

What should a community do with TIF money?

Every community has its own set of problems, and funds collected from Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts should be strategically allocated to address those concerns.

Below are a few case studies in which Indiana communities successfully used TIF funds to improve conditions:

- Converse, Indiana – With a population of roughly 1,200, community leaders invested about $25,000 in legal and financial advice to set up a downtown TIF District.

Today, the district has approximately $600,000 to invest in their downtown. They addressed their drainage issues for their largest company, installed period streetlights and decorated, upgraded sidewalks.

- Portland, Indiana – In 2006, the city was notified that a Wal-Mart supercenter would be built along S.R. 67 on the north side of the city. To capitalize on future potential, Portland created a TIF district to include this area and much of downtown.

With TIF funds, Portland improved Industrial Drive and established a Downtown Façade Funding Program in which approximately $200,000 in investment was put towards improving the central business district.

and Indiana's ($49,083). Furthermore, Rushville, Rush County, and Indiana all have smaller median incomes than the United States average of $53,823.

- About 28 percent of Rushville residents - 767 people - hold manufacturing jobs. That figure is 23 percent for Rush County and 18 percent for the state average.

- Although the city has a high percentage of manufacturing jobs, local workers in those jobs get paid relatively less. Rushville's average manufacturing pay is $32,363, compared to the Indiana average, of $41,000.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

The following table lists the top 10 largest employers in the city. Unfortunately, no information is available on how many of these employees also live in Rushville.

Table 1 : 10 Largest Employers in Rushville		
Employer	**Employees**	**Description**
INTAT Precision, Inc.	250-499	Foundry - Automotive Parts
(Emerson) Copeland	250-499	OEM and Re-Conditioned Compressor Manufacturing
Rush County Schools	250-499	Education
Rush Memorial Hospital	250-499	Healthcare
Trane Commercial Systems	100-249	Air Handling Systems Manufacturing
Herdrich Petroleum	100-249	Fuels, Oils, and Lubricants
Miller's Merry Manor	100-249	Healthcare
Fraley & Schilling	100-249	Trucking - Heavy Hauling
Walmart	100-249	Department Store
City/County Government	100-249	Government

Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development - Hoosiers by the Numbers

PROPERTY VALUE

Rushville can also evaluate its economy by looking at the total assessed value of its residential, commercial and industrial property.

- Rushville's total assessed value is $162.2 million, according to the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF). The value is growing again after slumping during the recession. The total assessed values in both Rushville and Rush County have grown over the last three years.

Figure X: Total Assessed Value of Property
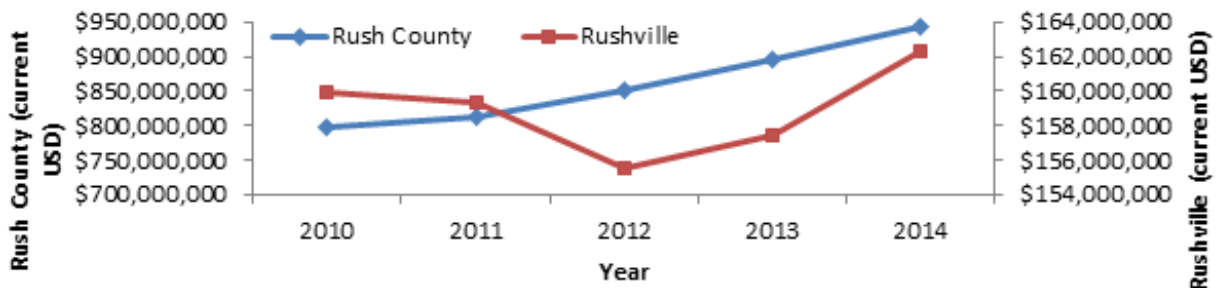
Source: Indiana Department of Local Government Finance

- In the county, the largest share of the property tax assessment was assessed to owners of agricultural land (42.4 percent) in 2012, according to the DLGF.
- About 25 percent was assessed to residential owners, 11 percent to commercial property owners and 5 percent to industrial property owners. The remainder was assessed to personal and utility property.

AGRICULTURE IN THE ECONOMY

Although manufacturing is the region's largest employment sector, agriculture also plays a role in the local economy.

- Rush County has 207,572 acres of farmland, a 7 percent decrease from 2002.
- Rush County has 601 farms run by 931 farm operators, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2012 Census of Agriculture.
- The largest number of farms (152) are 10 to 49 acres. There are 53 farms with more than 1,000 acres. The average farm size is about 345 acres.
- Despite the decrease in farm acreage, the county has experienced significant growth in the value of its agricultural products. The total value was $162.5 million in 2012, an 30 percent increase from 2007. The county's 2007 total was the 22nd highest sales value among Indiana's 92 counties.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The education and skills of the local workforce helps determine what sort of companies move to a community. As the Indiana and national economies become more knowledge-based, and demand adaptable skills from workers, Rushville must ensure its residents are well-educated in order to remain competitive.

- About 17 percent of Rushville's population has an associate's, bachelor's or graduate degree, compared to 31 percent in Indiana.
- The proportion of Rushville's population with a bachelor's degree or higher increased from 7 percent to 10 percent from 2000 to the most recent ACS report.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

Before designing an economic development strategy, Rushville will want to examine what resources and tools it already possesses that could assist in its efforts.

- Rushville and Rush County are home to potential economic development partners; chief among these is the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC). .
- Rushville's leaders also utilize the following economic development organizations:
  - Rush County Chamber of Commerce (http://www.rushcounty.com/)
  - Milroy Economic Development Corporation (http://www.milroyin.org/)
  - Alliance for Strategic Growth (http://www.asgcorp.org/)
  - Energize ECI (http://www.energize-eci. com)

AVAILABLE INDUSTRIAL PROPERTIES

The Rush County ECDC maintains an online database of available sites and buildings for businesses. As of May 16, 2014, in Rushville, there were:

- For lease: Three buildings or spaces within buildings available: two large manufacturing or warehouse buildings and one downtown commercial storefront.
- For sale: Three buildings or spaces within structures: one large manufacturing or warehouse building and two commercial buildings.
- The North Industrial Park: an 80-acre site, which also has land available for purchase. The City of Rushville is willing to lease smaller parts of the land, with a minimum size of two acres.
- Three lots for sale: ranging in size from 40 to 90 acres. The owners of all three lots are also willing to sell smaller portions of their lots, with a minimum size of one to two acres.

Industrial Facility - *Source: SDG*

HOW THE ECDC ADDRESSES RUSHVILLE'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

During the planning process, the steering committee created goals for developing Rushville's economy, several of which are being tackled by the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC). The ways in which the ECDC are addressing the objectives are listed below.

Promote and recruit businesses for the North Industrial Park until it is filled up.

We do this on a daily basis, including website, Facebook and direct contact with site selectors. We also respond to leads from the Indiana Economic Development Corp. We have created marketing material.

Invest in an incentive plan to encourage entrepreneurial development.

We participate in the Young Entrepreneurs Program, and have agreements from a CPA for an hour of consulting at no charge and subsequent reduced rates, attorneys with expertise in business start-ups and local seasoned successful entrepreneurs willing to mentor.

We offer discounted membership to the chamber of commerce and possible office space. We work closely with the East Central Small Business Development Center; offer educational seminars such as Small Business Administration (SBA) Community Day, Launch Your Own Business and quarterly Social Media Roundtables.

ECDC also has a revolving loan fund for small business loans. In conjunction with the city, we have awarded loans to four new small businesses in 2013.

Develop more higher education and workforce development training opportunities.

We partnered with the city and chamber in developing the Manufacturing Matters training course through Ivy Tech. We meet regularly with Ivy Tech to encourage a larger presence in Rushville.

We were instrumental in organizing the K To Success Education Committee, which focuses on creating more career education opportunities for students and encouraging their working in Rushville after high school graduation, or returning to Rushville upon college graduation.

We are the driving force behind the ACT Certified Work Ready Communities program in Rush County. We partner with WorkOne and continually promote their training programs.

Identify and actively recruit employers providing local jobs (residents working in Rushville) and increase in-commuting to Rushville employers.

We meet with employers on a regular basis during our retention and expansion schedule. We visited over 16 companies in 2013; many more planned for 2014.

Develop a marketing plan for economic development and business prospects.

We developed a marketing "packet" of information for prospective businesses.
There was one steering committee goal which the ECDC was not addressing with a specific program

– "Work with Rush County to draft and pass an innkeepers tax." City leaders should consider promoting this cause.

Seventy-three of Indiana's 92 counties have an innkeeper's tax, which adds up to 10 percent to the bills for such things as hotels, motels, bed and breakfast establishments, vacation homes or resorts. A local tourism authority oversees the money, which is used to promote local tourism.

Rushville and Rush County are at a competitive disadvantage because all of the surrounding counties have and use the tax to develop tourism, which brings outside money into a community. In addition to not having an innkeeper's tax, Rush County is also not eligible for gaming grants from casinos as many of its peer counties are, meaning the resources available to Rushville are even more limited.

SETTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR A LAND USE PLAN

Because the ECDC is already addressing the daily goals of promoting development county-wide, the city is free to focus on more specific projects and long-term interests such as improving the overall quality of life in the city.

The steering committee believes the community could do more to take control of the image they want Rushville to project, and move toward fulfilling that image. Residents could start by continually asking themselves:

- How does Rushville look to outsiders?
- Is the city always adding the amenities proven to attract new residents and businesses, such as bike trails, Wi-Fi, greenways and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure?
- Is it adequately portraying and promoting its local economic development initiatives by

cross promoting with a city specific branding campaign?

- Are there public efforts, private efforts and partnerships between the two to ensure adequate funding to address the goals?
- Can it leverage greater potential from its recent North Industrial Park investment by implementing a shell building strategy?

Other specific projects include revitalizing downtown, which is addressed in the Critical Sub Areas Chapter.

● **Light Pole Banners Downtown showing a Rushville theme**
Source: HWC

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Build relationships with regional economic development groups.

Strategies

☐ Rushville has much in common with neighboring cities in Fayette, Henry and other neighboring counties.

☐ Strengthening regional ties is a good idea for any city, but it makes particular sense in Rushville, where the mayor has a deep background in economic development. Developing a presence in organizations such as the I-74 Business Corridor will complement ECDC's efforts.

Goal 2: Work with the ECDC directly on their efforts to build Rushville's economy.

Strategies

☐ In collaboration with the ECDC, review their goals and objectives on the city's behalf and revise to reflect new priorities as they arise. Local leaders are particularly interested in developing these areas:

   ° the North Industrial Park

   ° entrepreneur assistance

   ° workforce training

   ° recruitment of basic employers

   ° marketing for business prospects

Goal 3: Lead a county-wide dialogue on instituting an innkeeper's tax.

Strategies

☐ Start this campaign by talking to officials in neighboring counties who have the tax and use it to promote tourism. Find out the benefits, and if there have been any problems.

Goal 4: Excite a larger base of stakeholders into being active in community development.

Strategies

☐ Aside from taking advantage of social media to recruit people into the cause, the mayor and other city officials should use their public appearances before a wide variety of groups to talk about opportunities for participation in the city's ventures, including downtown revitalization.

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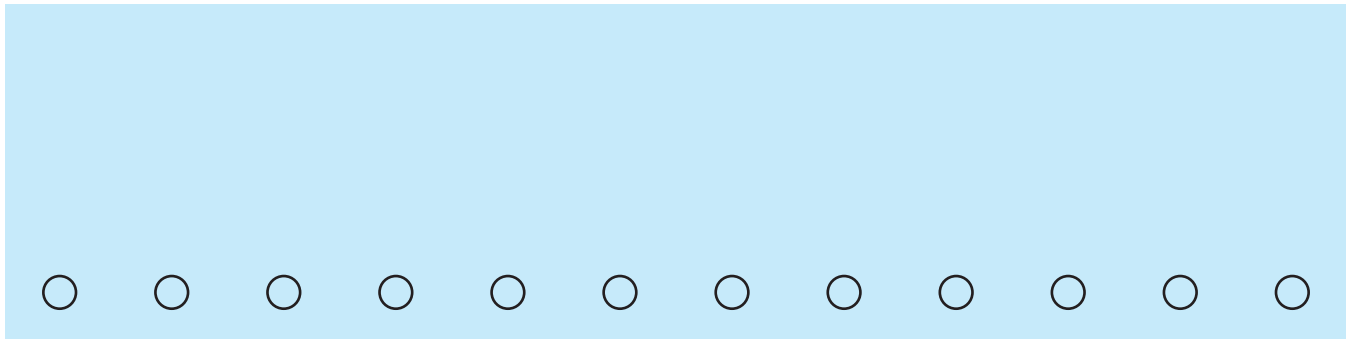
Chapter
Six

Housing

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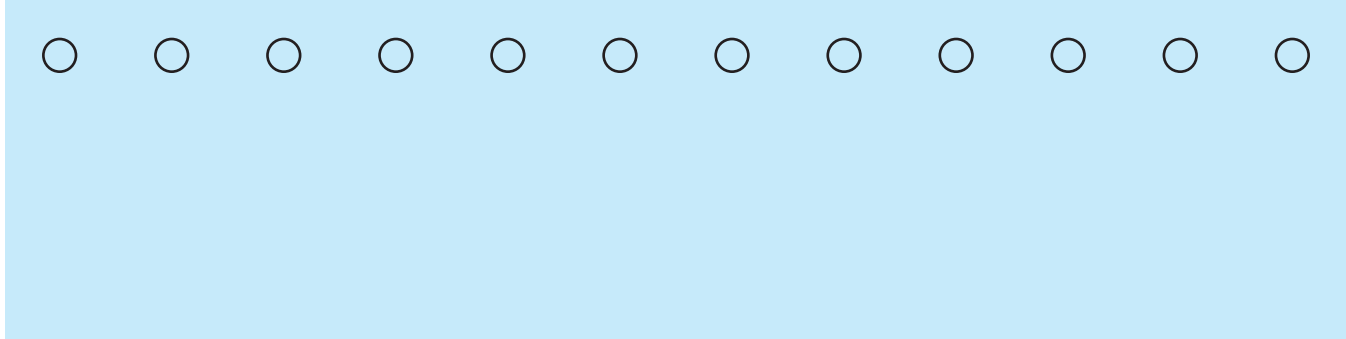
Chapter Six **Housing**

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KEY POINTS

- The city's housing market is recovering from the recession, but at a slower rate than much of Indiana. Local sales are anemic and few people are applying for building permits. There are other troubling signs as well; the city's housing stock is relatively old and there is a shortage of middle- and upper-income homes, which makes it difficult to attract new residents at those income levels.

- On the positive side, the foreclosure rate is dropping and there's a very low vacancy rate for homes and apartments, which can be a signal for new development. Rushville also has a terrific collection of historic, well-maintained homes.

INTRODUCTION

Rushville has about 6,390 people living in 2,880 single-family homes, duplexes, apartments, condominiums, townhouses and mobile homes.

An overview of local housing can be found in Table 1, which compares Rushville and Indiana on key housing indicators. Statistics show some instability in the city's population, which dropped 1.4 percent since 2001.

Characteristic	Rushville 2012	% of total	% change, 2000-2012	Indiana 2012	% of total	% change, 2000-2012
Current Population	6,386	-	-1.4%	6,485,530	-	6.7%
Total Housing Units	2,879	-	10.9%	2,797,237	-	10.5%
Occupied Housing	2,654	92.2%	9.0%	2,478,846	88.6%	6.1%
Owner Occupied	1,510	56.9%	4%	1,749,798	70.6%	4.8%
Renter Occupied	1,144	43.1%	23.3%	729,048	29.4%	9.3%
Vacant Housing Units	225	7.8%	38.3%	318,391	11.4%	62.4%
Median Home Value	$83,900	-	7.6%	$123,400	-	33.4%
Median Year Built	1952	-	-	1971	-	-

Table 1: Rushville and Indiana Housing Data (2012)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey; Indiana Business Research Center

Of particular interest is the 23 percent increase in renter-occupied households from 2000-2012 (highlighted in yellow). This is a very large shift away from homeownership, and was likely triggered by job uncertainty and the difficulty of obtaining financing during the recession. It may take some time for those households to feel secure enough to again attempt homeownership.

The city's housing market is recovering from the recession, but at a slower rate than much of Indiana. Local sales are anemic and few people are applying for building permits. There are other troubling signs as well; the city's housing stock is relatively old and there is a shortage of middle- and upper-income homes, which makes it difficult to attract new residents at those income levels.

Historic Brick Home along Main Street - *Source: SDG*

Historic Shiplap Siding Home in Rushville - *Source: SDG*

On the positive side, the foreclosure rate is dropping and there's a very low vacancy rate for homes and apartments, which can be a signal for new development.

Also, the statistics don't capture some of Rushville's strong assets, such as the amazing collection of historic, well-maintained homes off Main Street, north of downtown. This neighborhood, which would be the envy of much larger Indiana cities, is an indicator of Rushville's rich past, but can also be the foundation for a stronger housing future.

FACTS SHAPING RUSHVILLE'S HOUSING

The most recent data available for Rushville is from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS), which reveals the following trends:

- Between 2000 and 2012, the median value of Rushville homes increased slower (8 percent) than the county (23 percent) or the Indiana average (33 percent). The city's median home value was $83,900.

- More than half (56 percent) of Rushville's owner-occupied housing stock is valued between $50,000-$100,000. Both the county and state have a larger proportion of high-end homes (costing $150k and above).

- Rushville has a higher percentage of homes built before 1939 (at 41 percent) than the county and the state.

- Rushville's homeowner vacancy rate (1.9 percent) is lower than both the county (3.1 percent) and the state (2.5 percent).

- There is a considerably higher percentage of people renting their homes in Rushville (43 percent) than the state average (29 percent). That number has been growing in the city – up 23 percent from 2000 to 2012.

- From 2000 to 2012, there was a decrease in 25-44 year-old and 65-84-year-old

homeowners in the city. This data suggests that more young people are delaying owning a home until the later years.

- Fourteen percent of homeowners and 30 percent of city renters pay more than 35 percent of their income for housing, which meets the federal definition of "unaffordable." That percentage is considered unaffordable because it doesn't allow low-income workers to save enough money for other expenses or emergencies.

Marketing to Families

There are many strategies that a community can implement to attract families. See below for case studies.

- Richmond, Virginia – Offered soft loans to "urban pioneers" that were willing to purchase, refurbish and move into a vacant house in the city's Jackson Ward neighborhood. The pioneers were eligible for up to $35,000 if they invest $70,000 of their own money. After seven years, the entire loan is forgiven and homeowners would not be required to make payments on the loan during that time.

Key Strategies:

- Choose neighborhoods to redevelop, not just houses. Families have an eye for the future and are looking for neighborhoods that have greater future potential. Ideally, cities should target resources aimed at sustained change, rather than a quick band-aid.
- Build on existing assets such as open spaces, schools, and other commercial developments to create anchors for market demand. These renovations should visibly show that value has been added.

- The fair market rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in Rush County is $626. The Indiana FMR is $729. Government agencies do not estimate the rate at the city level.

- At that FMR, someone who earns the minimum hourly wage ($7.25) must work 76 hours a week, 52 weeks per year in order to make the two-bedroom FMR in Rush County affordable, according to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition. Of course, most people do not work that many hours, so they live in unaffordable homes.

Typical Historic Facade - *Source: SDG*

HOUSING CONDITIONS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) collects information on the housing conditions of low-income homeowners and renters.

- 320 renter households pay from 30-50 percent of their income just for housing. These are the city's poorest residents.

- 80 homeowners pay up to 50 percent of their total income on housing, and 110 homes have incomplete plumbing and/or kitchen facilities.

RUSH COUNTY MARKET OVERVIEW – MARCH 2014

The Indiana Association of Realtors provides monthly housing market updates for Indiana counties (but not cities), including comparison of data for June 2013 and June 2014, and the year-to-date change. Their data for Rush County shows:

- There were three new listings of homes for sale in June 2014. The year-to-date total of new listings is 17.

- The median homes sales price so far this year is far below prices in most Indiana counties. The Indiana Association of Realtors said this was due to a combination of an overall slow market and the relatively large number of repossessed homes which sold.

- It takes about 14 months for the average home to sell, according to the association's Months Supply of Inventory data.

CURRENT MARKET SNAPSHOT

To get a better idea of housing in Rushville, the Current Market Snapshot table below shows all homes listed for sale on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) in March 2014. Table 2 shows there were 71 properties for sale, with most being single-family homes.

Table 2: Properties for Sale (March 2014)						
Apartments/ Multiple Family Homes	Single Family Home	Condo/ Townhome/Row Home/Co-Op	Manufactured/ Mobile Home	Lots/Land Residential	Farm/ Ranch	Total
3	65	0	0	3	0	71

Table 3 shows apartments/multiple family homes, single-family homes and lots for sale in March 2014. The majority of units were priced between $25,000-$75,000. There are only two properties whose list price exceeds $200,000 and they are single-family homes.

Table 3: Price Range and Number of Properties for Sale (March 2014)							
	<$25k	$25k-$75k	$75k-$100k	$100-$150k	$150k-$200k	>$200k	Total
Apartments/Multiple Family Homes	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
Single-Family Homes	10	23	13	11	6	2	65
Lots/Land Residential	1	2	0	0	0	0	3

FORECLOSURES

- Local foreclosure rates are dropping. In April, the number of properties that received a foreclosure filing in Rush County was 7 percent lower than the previous month.
- Of the 74 total homes listed for sale in Rushville in May 2014, 19 of them are listed as foreclosures.

SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

Alternative housing is available for low-income, disabled and elderly Rushville residents primarily in the form of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) low-income housing, public housing offered by housing authorities along with nonprofit organizations that help with low-income housing needs.

The following table shows the subsidized low-income housing options available for a Rushville resident, as well as a description of the complex. It shows a total of 180 subsidized units.

Table 4: Rushville Affordable Housing		
Development	**Address**	**Description**
Rushville Commons Apartments	215 Aspen Drive	48 one-bedroom units designed for seniors
East Park Limited / East Park Apartments	1200 N. Benjamin St.	18 one-bedroom units
Oakwood Manor	765 E. 11th St.	20 one-bedroom units and 4 two-bedroom units (24 total)
The Village at Flatrock Apartments	1800 Flatrock Ct.	12 one-bedroom units, 30 two-bedroom units, 12 three-bedroom units, and 6 four-bedroom units (60 total)
Bethel Community	221 Conrad Harcourt Way	30 one-bedroom units designed for seniors

BUILDING PERMITS

Building permits are generally a good indicator of the strength of a housing market and can be a useful benchmark for economic growth.

From 2002-2003 there was a slight increase in building permits. However, from then on the total number of issued building permits decreased steadily, down to 11 total issued in 2012, as shown in Figure 1 below. When comparing total building permits issued, there was a 78 percent decrease from 2001-2012.

Figure 1: Rushville Building Permits
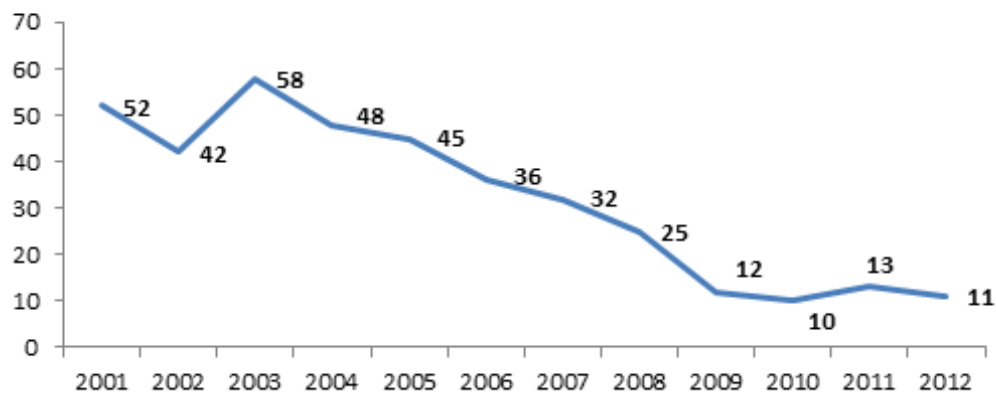
Source: U.S. Census Building Permits Survey

City of Rushville, Indiana Comprehensive Plan Update 2014

LOCAL HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS

Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) assist communities with housing development. Rush County is currently served by the Southern Indiana Housing & Community Development Corporation located in Columbus which serves the greater region including Rush, Bartholomew, Dearborn, Decatur, Jackson, Jennings, Lawrence, Ripley, Scott and Washington Counties.

LOCAL REALTORS' PERSPECTIVES

Local real estate agents were asked their opinions on residential land use issues such as the overall housing market, desirable neighborhoods, low-income housing and current gaps in supply. Their comments are summarized below:

Housing Market

- The city is recovering slowly from the recession – this year was better than 2013. Foreclosures have been a problem, but are slowly decreasing.

- The types of homes that are selling well are two-bedroom, one-bath homes in the $85,000 to $110,000 range.

- A large portion of the housing growth in Rushville and Rush County involved groups of investors purchasing homes at foreclosure auctions either to be used for rental housing or to be rehabilitated and sold.

Desirable Neighborhoods

- The quality of housing is generally mixed throughout Rushville, but the areas that are thought to be desirable are on the north/northwest side of the city. There are also newer homes being built on the southeast corner of town, near Airport Road.

- There is no demand for downtown housing, as Rushville's downtown is on the decline. Additionally, Rushville has a high

Single Family 1-Story Housing - *Source: SDG*

Single Family 2-Story Housing - *Source: HWC*

Housing along Main Street - *Source: HWC*
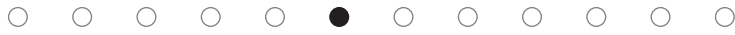
percentage of older homes that require more maintenance and upkeep than your average starter home.

Low-Income Housing

- There is a reasonable amount of demand for low-income housing, and new developments such as the Villages at Flat Rock apartment complex are succeeding in meeting that demand.

A HOUSING STRATEGY

Rushville's number one housing goal is attracting young professionals who have started their families and want middle-to-upper-end homes with a yard on a pleasant street, according to the majority of people who took part in this planning process.

That's a worthwhile goal, and city leaders are working hard to make it a reality. This goal also ties directly to the success of Rush County Consolidated Schools, whose ability to survive and thrive is dependent on increased housing in Rushville. However, Rushville faces stiff competition because almost every other community in the state is also attempting to attract those young, upwardly mobile families.

Right now, there are fewer upper-income families living in Rushville because there are few upper-end homes for them to buy, according to local real estate agents. But the reverse is also true – there are few upper-income homes because there's little demand for them from upper-income families.

Breaking this cycle is vital to the city's prosperous future, but it won't happen all at once. The strategy should be to steadily increase both the supply and demand for nice new homes, as detailed in the 16th Street neighborhood plan in the Critical Sub Areas Chapter.

In the meantime, though, the city must not ignore the existing core neighborhoods that need revitalization. Directing resources to middle-income homes and some of the most distressed

neighborhoods will give an overall boost to the stock of available homes.

At public meetings Rushville residents were asked which neighborhoods should be singled out for the first wave of revitalization. These would be streets where most of the homes are attractive and well kept, but a few deteriorating houses are giving the neighborhood a black eye. In other words, fixing up the few poorly maintained homes would give the biggest bang for the buck because it would restore an otherwise attractive street.

The Neighborhood Revitalization Priority Map shows those the areas with the most potential for revitalization highlighted in green.

Priority Area 2, highlighted in yellow, has more modest homes and a larger number of neglected properties, but restoring this neighborhood would help fix problems before things get even worse.

Priority area 3, highlighted in red, has many older and poorly maintained homes and lies along a well-traveled gateway into the city.

The recommendations following the map detail programs that can be used to launch these revitalization efforts.

Ticketing for Enforcement

An alternative system for code enforcement is available and is currently being used by many communities in Indiana - the ticketing system.

More Hoosier communities have adopted ticketing to address local code violations because it resolves issues much faster and is a more efficient use of staff and financial resources. This approach also allows less severe violations to be handled easily, instead of being considered too minor to take all the way to court.

Greenwood, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis and even rural areas like Jackson County have ticketing in place.

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION MAP

Area 1:
Neighborhood with the MOST Potential for Revitalization.

Area 2:
Neighborhoods with Potential for Revitalization.

Area 3:
Neighborhoods in NEED of Revitalization.

Legend

Corporate Limits

Functional Class (INDOT)
Other Principal Arterial (OPA)
Minor Arterial
Major Collector
Minor Collector
Local

Railroad
Active Line
Abandoned Line

Trails
Open
Rushville Parks

District
Historic District
City Owned Property
Utilities
Rush County Fairgrounds
Education

Orthophotography: ISDP 2012

HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Increase code enforcement

Strategies

- ☐ It will be vital to educate the community about why the city is upgrading its enforcement efforts. It is often unpopular, expensive, and politically risky, but enforcing ordinances against unkempt or dangerously deteriorating properties is key to revitalization. Problems with distressed properties include trash, high grass and security issues; occupied or partially occupied buildings with serious violations such as no heat or broken water pipes and no common area electricity (leading to non-functioning fire alarms).

- ☐ Review existing code to make sure it is up-to-date and enables the city to effectively enforce its regulations.

- ☐ Enforce code in a transparent, consistent way to demonstrate the city's determination to revitalize its core neighborhoods.

- ☐ Switch from the existing enforcement process to a ticketing system, which includes discretion for warnings and flexible timeframes.

Goal 2: Support ongoing neighborhood revitalization efforts

Strategies

- ☐ Encouragement and disincentives (carrots and sticks) are needed for neighborhood revitalization. Just using disincentives – code enforcement – can bring complaints of heavy-handed tactics. But if the city shows its willingness to invest in core neighborhoods, it's in a much stronger position to demand the same in others.

- ☐ The next step is to make the case for why revitalization makes economic sense. Communities have found that if they reinvest in their traditional neighborhoods first, they will reduce the cost of infrastructure and services, spur private reinvestment in the neighborhoods, reduce crime and ultimately increase the tax base in a sustainable manner.

- ☐ Create city staff/resident partnerships through Neighborhood Cleanup Grants. The neighborhood organizes the event and provides all the volunteers; the city provides dumpsters, Hazmat removal, chipper service, tire disposal and safety vests. Consistent and well promoted "clean-up" days can be effective over time in promoting neighborhood activity.

- ☐ Create funding for Small and Simple Grants, which provide neighborhoods with the opportunity to initiate projects that require $1,000 or less. Examples include neighborhood signs, gatherings and brochures. Neighborhood groups would apply.

- ☐ Create funding for Neighborhood Improvement Grants to pay for physical improvement projects that require $2,000 or more. These could include limestone monuments, flower boxes and playground equipment. Neighborhood groups would apply.

- ☐ Encourage definition of historic neighborhoods and other important cultural districts by developing attractive wayfinding systems unique to the character and design of these specific parts of the city.

Goal 3: Develop a neighborhood action plan which focuses on needs and actions for specific neighborhoods

Strategies

☐ Use windshield surveys, walking tours or other instruments to inventory conditions of homes in established neighborhoods. Look for areas where improvements to even a few homes may "tip" the street back toward revitalization.

☐ Provide technical support to help informal neighborhood groups get organized. Start by assigning city staff as the neighborhood contact and to facilitate communication between neighborhoods and city departments.

☐ Create a listing of neighborhoods on the City of Rushville website with contact information.

Goal 4: Develop a landlord and tenant outreach and education program

Strategies

☐ Hold periodic Landlord Summits. These meetings are designed to open up communication between city officials and property owners.

They can include explanation of new city regulations and demonstrations of common maintenance issues such as smoke detector maintenance (work with a local building supply store). Start the process by inviting the top 10 or so biggest landlords to explain upcoming changes to the city codes and the city's legitimate interests in safe and affordable housing.

☐ Moving beyond the discussion phase between landlords and the city often proves difficult. Most landlords agree there are "some bad players" where legal action is needed, but almost all landlords oppose, for instance, a system where all rental owners must register with the city.

Many landlords claim the registries are unnecessary regulation and include fees that hamper the free market, while proponents say the registry allows city officials to more easily track down rental property owners in the event of an emergency or code violation, and ultimately helps preserve the existing housing supply and property values.

There is no easy answer for this problem. Local leaders should start the process by opening communication with landlords, but ultimately decided if other steps are needed.

Goal 5: Develop plans for future housing development along the completed 16th Street corridor; focus on market-rate, multi-family and young professional type housing

Strategies

☐ In a free market, local government has limited ability to specify exactly what type of homes they want built. For example, they can zone where multi-family units can be constructed, but have few tools that would require builders to offer apartments specifically for young professionals or other population segments.

☐ Whether a city does – or doesn't – have upper-end housing is primarily a decision of the free market. Changing the market will require tinkering with the economics that developers consider when choosing where to build.

☐ Create a city-driven task force to assess the current market for upper-end housing (this report contains some data). The group should include real estate agents, business executives and developers, among others. Task this group with developing a strategy and mindset conducive to identifying mitigated risks which can help create the jump start Rushville needs to develop a new housing market.

Goal 6: Continue and expand city efforts at rebuilding and reinvesting in existing core neighborhoods through targeted revitalization and redevelopment initiatives

Strategies

☐ Continue to expand and fund the homeowner assistance program to help with small repairs (micro-loans, local bank partnerships, etc.). Because of the costs associated with this undertaking for the city ($340,000 in work completed to date), working with grant administrators to secure grants from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority to restore low-income housing can help greatly offset local resources required for this program. After some success with these grants, the city can consider expanding the program, perhaps by working with local social service and not-for-profit agencies.

☐ Complete development and implementation of the city's property reintroduction program. This program is intended to reintroduce city-owned commercial and residential property back onto local tax roles.

☐ Continue to seek funding and program assistance for development of the Campaign Headquarters and Campaign Flats affordable housing projects downtown. These project could inject new investment capital into the lagging downtown residential and commercial property market and provide incentive for additional private investment be current building and business owners.

7

Chapter
Seven

Natural Resources and Recreation

7 Chapter Seven **Natural Resources & Recreation**

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KEY POINTS

- Limited recent development provides Rushville with an opportunity to embrace a forward looking development strategy which continues to limit drainage impacts associated with new development and helps preserve and protect valuable natural features.
- Local support for protecting Rushville's natural resources is strong with a majority of the comprehensive plan survey respondents agreeing that protection of existing natural resources is important.
- Measures must be taken to protect the remaining woodland and wetland habitat in Rushville, predominantly located along the city's most prominent natural feature, the Flatrock River.
- Large amounts of agricultural land surrounding Rushville provides ample opportunity for future development but care must be taken to avoid development on the most productive areas of farmland.

FACTS SHAPING RUSHVILLE'S NATU-RAL RESOURCES

The information contained in this section was primarily sourced from the most recently available Soil Survey of Rush County Indiana (Soil Survey) which was published in 1986 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service. Additional information was sourced from data available on the Indiana Map online geographic information system (GIS) data viewer published by the Indiana Geographic Information Council and available online at http://www.indianamap.org/.

Topography

- Topography in Rushville is largely level with a roughly 50 foot fall as the natural slope works from northwest to southeast towards the Flatrock River.

- The relatively flat grade in Rushville facilitates construction and development without the need for large amounts of earthwork to make the site suitable.

Geology & Soils

- The natural characteristics of the underlying geology and soil conditions of a site impact the ability and costs associated with developing that site.

- According to the Soil Survey, Rush County has approximately 34 different soil types (page1) all with unique characteristics which must be factored into land use and development decisions. According to the Soil Survey, only the Miamian class of soils is listed as suitable for the development of septic tank absorption fields and building site development.

- Development on unsuitable soil types is still possible but it can be expected to come at a cost premium cost over sites with more suitable soil types. Most of the increased costs are associated with overcoming factors such as slope characteristics, erosion

potential, slide hazard, frost action, and permeability.

- The development suitability map on the following page identifies the areas surrounding Rushville where the soil conditions are most suitable for the development of commercial buildings (in green). Development in other areas is still possible but may be met with some of the challenges associated with unsuitable soil types.

Infill Development opportunity - *Source: SDG*

Open recreation space - *Source: HWC*

City of Rushville, Indiana Comprehensive Plan Update 2014

DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY MAP

Legend

- ▢ Corporate Limits
- ∿ River or Stream

Building Suitability - Soils

- Most Suitable

Farmland Suitability

- Most Suitable
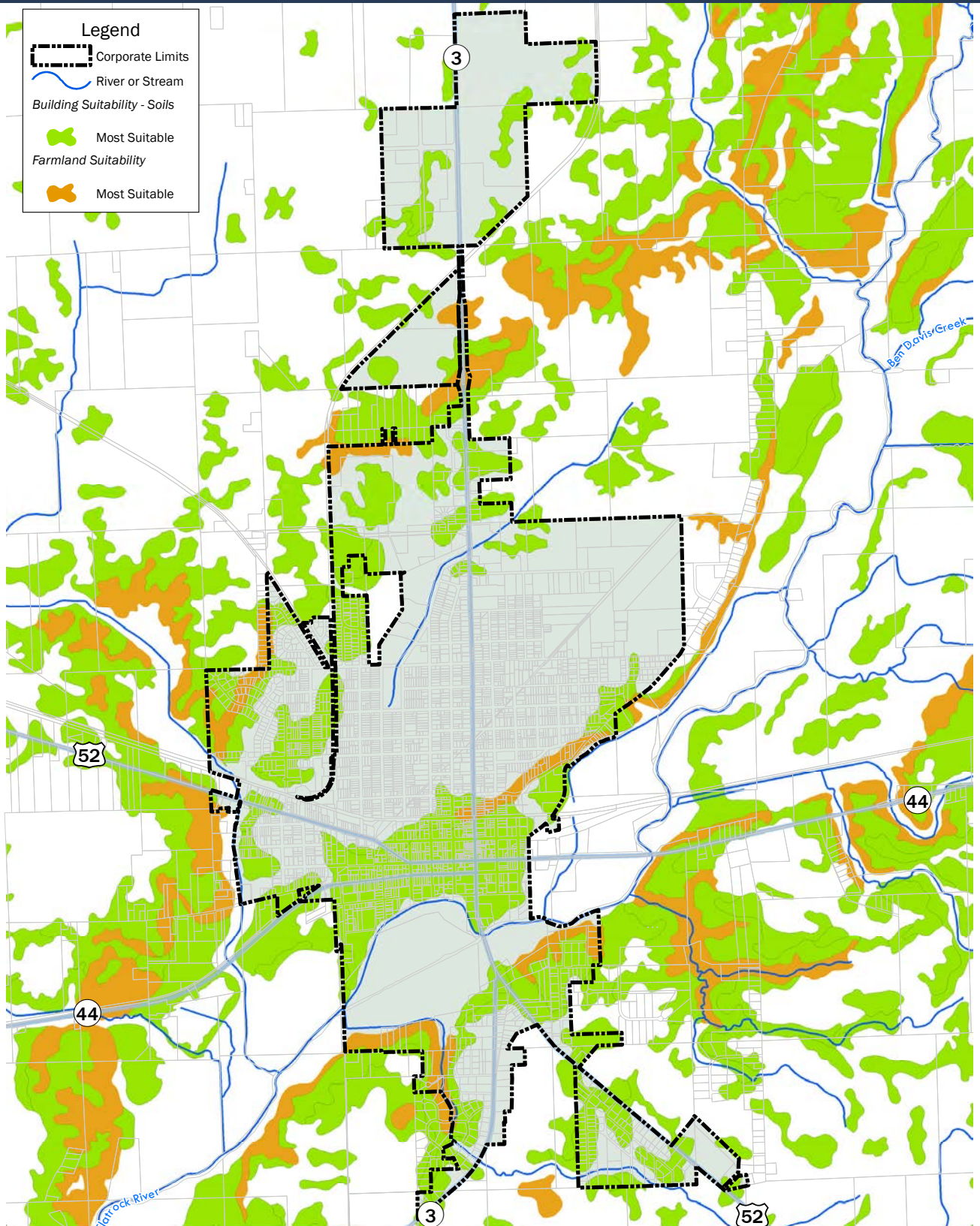
Ecology & Agriculture

- Farmland classification is completed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) with Prime Farmland being the highest classification. According to the USDA, prime farmland exhibits characteristics which make it highly suitable for producing a wide variety of agricultural crops.

- The highest percentage of prime farmland near Rushville is located northeast, east, and southeast of the city, with 81%-100% of the land being classified as such. Other areas surrounding the city have a percentage of prime farmland ranging between 41-60%.

- According to the Soil Survey, 83% of land in Rush County is actively farmed with the primary use being cash grain cultivation (corn, soybean, & wheat) and livestock (Hogs, Beef cattle, Dairy cattle).

- There appears to be widespread support for protecting farmland from development with a majority of survey respondents agreeing that farmland protection is important and that agriculture is still a large contributor to the local economy.

- Additionally, more than 70% of survey respondents identified with Rushville as a rural community. These responses combined indicate a strong connection in Rushville with the agrarian heritage of the surrounding region.

- According to available GIS information there are currently no Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) within Rushville but there are 5 facilities located in Rush County within 2 miles of the Rushville Corporate Limits. CAFO's can present a barrier to urban development due to associated odors and potential long term water quality issues.

- As locations for future development are considered, efforts should be taken to protect and preserve as much prime farmland as possible, helping to ensure that the most productive land remain in production and continue to help contribute to the long-standing agricultural traditions of the region.

- The Development Suitability Map on the previous page indicates the areas most suitable for future development based on its current farmland classification. Areas in orange on the map had the lowest farmland classification and should be considered first as the city weighs its future development potential.

Water Features

- The Flatrock River is the largest water body in the region and it handles most regional drainage as it flows diagonally through the county. The river also runs adjacent to the eastern and southern edges of Rushville, including downtown and Riverfront Park.

- The availability of clean water is essential to the survival of any community and many communities face significant water pollution due to years of poor stormwater management practices and other uncontrolled environmental contaminants.

- Because a large portion of Rushville's water supply comes from groundwater sources, the city has a vested interest in protecting the water supply using methods such as controlling runoff from impervious surfaces associated with urban development.

- Rushville's drinking water system will be discussed in more detail in the utilities chapter of this plan, but the city should acknowledge the importance that natural features such as the river play in the overall success and health of the Rushville community.

- In addition to riparian (river) habitat, wetlands can play an important role in the overall water quality of a region. During recent decades a deeper understanding of the importance of wetlands to the overall ecological health of a region has been recognized.

- The region used to have a large number of wetlands but most have been drained for farming and facilitating development of the land. The Natural and Recreational Features Map on page 71 shows the location of the remaining wetlands in the region, most of which occur south of the city along the Flatrock River and within Riverside Park.

- The location of existing wetlands in Rushville does not appear to limit future development or land use potential. Although there does not appear to be any remaining wetlands directly in the path of potential development the importance of these features should be recognized and steps should be taken to protect them from additional degradation associated with future development.

Drainage & Flooding

- The inherent drainage characteristic of the soil is something which needs consideration as plans for new construction are considered. Additional site development provisions may need to be made in locations with poor drainage characteristics, potentially increasing development costs.

- Overall drainage conditions for Rush county are classified as poor with the soil conditions of the once prevalent marshes and wetlands still exhibiting original tendencies to drain slowly.

- In addition to poorly draining soils, potential flooding is an issue in portions of Rushville. The largest floodplain in Rushville is associated with the Flatrock

River and covers portions of the downtown core. The presence of this feature could limit development potential on the east side of the community (roughly due east of Fort Wayne Road) and the southern portions of the community (roughly between SR 44 and Hunt Road).

- The second area with high flood potential is located in the heart of the community near Rushville High School, Memorial Park North, and Memorial Park South. This location contains a small stream feature which has a relatively wide floodplain along its path. Many comments have been received from residents about local flooding in this area during rain events.

- The Natural and Recreation Features Map at the end of this chapter shows the locations of the floodways and floodplains in and around Rushville. Development in locations with high flooding potential can be challenging at best and in some cases outright prohibited. For example, development in a floodway is restricted by state and federal regulations which protect the integrity of the floodway and mandate that development is limited to a very narrow range of uses.

- Development within the limits of a floodplain will be limited by the insurability of the property, which is often uninsurable or cost prohibitive. These restrictions and limitations are the primary reason many communities choose to designate floodways and floodplains as protected areas reserved for recreational uses and preservation corridors.

- The proximity of the river to Rushville, and its associated flood potential, poses significant challenges future development in portions of the city but it also presents many great opportunities for providing recreational and natural amenities for residents to enjoy.

- Rushville has already taken advantage of some of the more flood-prone portions of the community with the development of Riverside Park and Veterans Memorial Park. This type of development should be considered in the future to help provide additional quality of life benefits for residents while also helping to preserve and protect valuable natural habitat.

Entry sign at Riverside Park - *Source: HWC*

Packed events pavilion at Riverside Park during the 2014 Summer Concert Series - *Source: HWC*

NATURAL AND RECREATIONAL FEATURES MAP

Legend

- Corporate Limits
- Rushville Parks
- Existing Trails
- HUC 14 Wateshed (USGS)
- River or Stream

Interim Floodplain (2004)
- Zone A
- Zone AE
- Zone X
- Floodway
- Note: Final Data unavailable

Wetland Type
- Freshwater Emergent
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Riverine

Flatrock River-Covered Bridges

Ben Davis Creek

Flatrock River-Rushville

Veterans Memorial Park

Community Park

Wilkie Park

Laughlin Park

Riverside Park

Flatrock River

Flatrock River-above US52

East Tributary Flatrock River

Air Quality

- Due to Rushville's location outside of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) reliable air quality data is largely unavailable.

- Although air quality is still a significant contributor to overall community health the May 2012 Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) "Air Quality Trend Analysis Report (1980-2010)" indicates that the East Central Indiana region has seen significant and sustained declines in monitored air quality emission values. In that report IDEM noted that "as new air programs are implemented in the future, the East Central Indiana area will continue to see declines in monitor and emission values, which will help it meet the new thresholds for any new criteria pollutant standards that are implemented".

Brownfields and Underground Storage Tanks

- Identified brownfield sites are only a small percentage of the potential hazardous buildings and properties which could be located within a community. These properties pose significant health risks to local residents due to the presence of harmful chemicals and compounds and create a barrier to redevelopment due to costs associated with remediation.

- Brownfields can also pose a significant threat to ground water and surface water quality due to soil contamination, runoff potential, and leaking underground storage tanks. According to available GIS information there are currently 6 remediation brownfields within Rushville including:

1. Wilson Auto Sales – SR 44
2. B&B Metal Plating – North Washington
3. CVS Pharmacy – 1st Street
4. Rushville High School – Perkins and 6th Street
5. Gas Station – 7th and Main Street
6. Ameritech – East 11th Street

- Again, this is only a partial list of the known environmental hazards which currently exist within Rushville. A recent study, conducted in coordination with an EPA Brownfields Grant application identified significantly more properties with the potential for contamination and environmental health hazards.

- The same GIS data sources used to identify brownfields revealed no current Superfund Sites but did reveal a total of 14 non-leaking underground storage tanks and a total of 16 leaking underground storage tanks within City limits.

- These properties pose a potential physical health risk for Rushville residents but also an economic risk due to the potential costs of remediating the environmental hazards and limited redevelopment potential in their current state. Contaminated properties can increase potential costs for site redevelopment due to State and Federal remediation and monitoring requirements. All of these factors must be weighed carefully as future development potential is evaluated and they can increase potential costs for site redevelopment.

Open Space and Recreation

- Quality open spaces and recreational facilities significantly contribute to an increased quality of life in a community. Results of the comprehensive plan survey indicate that respondents rate Rushville's current parks and recreation facilities as good to excellent and the Riverside

Park Concert series is the most highly recommended local attraction.

- Quality parks and open spaces help provide much needed outlets for residents of all ages to socialize, be physically active, and connect with nature. Policy supporting the preservation and expansion of existing parks and recreation land can help the city with its initiatives to attract new housing development and a younger demographic to settle in Rushville.

- Parks and open space also provide an opportunity for the city to improve the overall environmental health of the community. Strategically planning the acquisition of environmentally sensitive portions of the community can provide additional access for residents to important natural features while preserving these important natural assets in perpetuity.

- Rushville can utilize development of new recreational facilities such as parks and trails to make critical connections between important city features and to foster a positive community building environment. This will provide additional access for residents to important community features and can help bolster other city economic development initiatives.

- The City of Rushville completed its last Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 2010 to comply with Indiana Department of Natural Resources requirements. It provides specific details on the need for the continued development and maintenance of Rushville's parks. This comprehensive plan recognizes the importance of this separate planning process and attempts to define additional long term community goals which can complement and enhance the efforts of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Signage at Riverside Park - *Source: HWC*

Signage at Riverside Park - *Source: HWC*

Signage at Riverside Park - *Source: HWC*

NATURAL RESOURCES AND RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Develop and support additional parks programming such as athletic events, camps, and other recreational and fitness activities

Strategies

☐ Focus on the growth of the Summer Concert Series (attendance and performances). This program draws a large number of visitors to the community and can be a platform for exhibiting all of the best things Rushville has to offer. Drawing on the success of the current program can help the City leverage support for the expansion of Riverside Park. When the completion of the Riverside Park to downtown trail connection is completed (see Transportation Chapter) this concert series can be used as a catalyst for the city's downtown revitalization efforts (see Downtown CSA).

☐ Develop programs and/or facilities that help residents achieve fitness, wellness, and an active lifestyle. These facilities should offer a combination of outdoor and indoor opportunities for residents to engage in planned and unplanned physical activities. A complete recreational program offering can complement existing private and non-profit programs and will provide opportunities for social engagement.

☐ Develop a sports park and/or improved sporting facilities which can become a regional draw for visitors. Work with the Rush County Consolidated Schools athletic programs and other city and county youth sports programs to identify the areas of greatest potential and develop plans for the development of facilities which will capitalize on that potential. Review and tour other regional sports facilities to learn lessons which can be beneficial in the development of the Rushville facility.

☐ Promote and seek funding for the development of a regional rails to trail initiative. Work with local and regional interests groups and governmental agencies to develop a preliminary routing and phasing plan. Look to other successful systems in the state, such as the Cardinal Greenway system in Muncie, to help identify the best strategies for early project development.

Goal 2: Develop and/or promote more activities that engage residents and visitors with unique natural features such as wooded areas (trails, etc.)

Strategies

☐ Connect parks and other natural features to the rest of the city and/or trail system. Allowing residents to easily access and interact with the unique natural qualities in Rushville will help build awareness of the natural beauty inherent in this part of the state. It will also help encourage a more social community spirit and will provide an amenity for the city to market and help attract visitors.

☐ Promote the canoe launch and provide for a defined exit point downstream. Work with local groups and organizations such as the Boy Scouts to develop a strategy to make this existing amenity more usable and attractive for resident and visitor use.

☐ Develop a camping facility within the city. Evaluate locations which exhibit unique or attractive natural qualities. The development of primitive camping facilities could be coupled with promotion of the canoe launch and development of the Riverside Park expansion.

Goal 2: Continued

☐ Develop and support plans for southern Riverside Park expansion. Look for ways to incorporate or highlight the unique natural features and cultural heritage of the site. This plan could be combined with primitive camping sites, the canoe launch, a footbridge connecting both sides of the Flatrock River, and connections to downtown making it an opportunity to create a truly unique park experience for Rushville.

Goal 3: Consider potential impacts of future development plans on the quantity and quality of prime farmland and other valuable natural resources

Strategies

☐ Work with local farmers, landowners, and cooperative extension programs to develop city growth policies which take into consideration the preservation of the most productive pieces of agricultural land.

☐ Work with the Area Plan Commission to develop strategies for encouraging new development in areas where it avoids or minimizes future impacts to the most productive farmland and discourages development on prime farmland.

Goal 4: Consider potential impacts of future development plans on the quantity and quality of valuable natural resources such as the Flatrock River

Strategies

☐ Develop local policies that clearly define the city's position on the value of ecologically sensitive lands.

☐ Build partnerships with local and regional conservation organizations in an effort to increase public awareness for the value of existing woodlands, wetlands, and native habitat.

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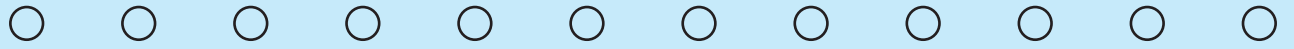
Chapter
Eight

Transportation

8
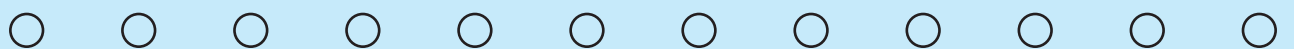
Chapter Eight **Transportation**

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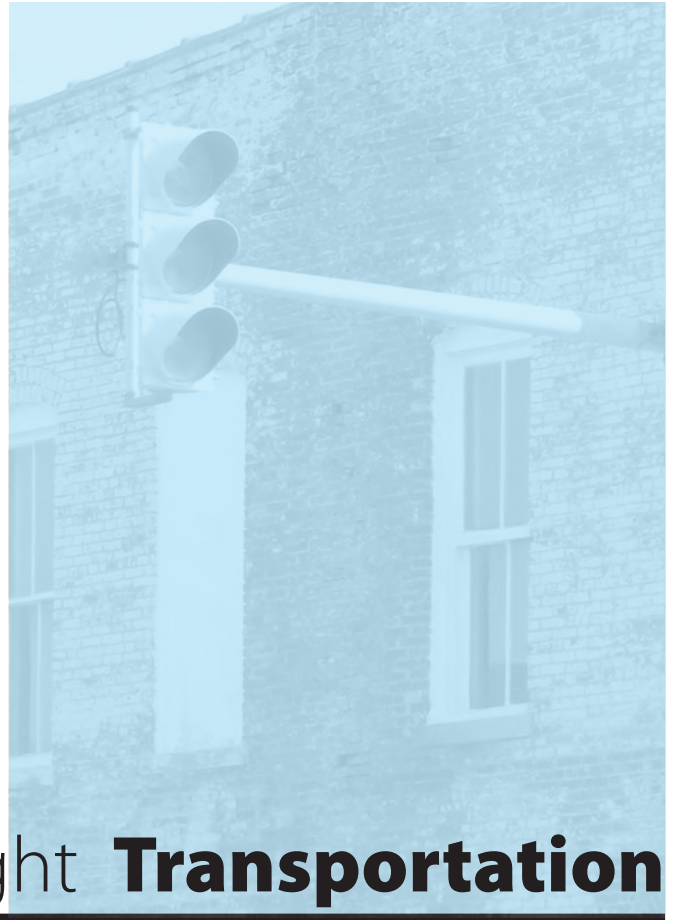
KEY POINTS

- Rushville's location between two interstates and proximity to three state highways exposes the city to a lot of traffic, but congestion is generally not a problem except at a few locations along the SR 3 corridor during peak travel times. However, this congestion could be a long-term barrier to the city's downtown revitalization efforts.

- Trails are an important quality of life indicator for many communities and they can offer Rushville an opportunity to make critical community connections while enhancing travel options for residents. If coupled with other initiatives, trails can contribute to the overall success of long-term development goals.

FACTS SHAPING RUSHVILLE'S TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Functional Classifications:

- The Functional Classification Map on the following page shows Rushville's major roadways. The classifications are created by INDOT and provide a ranking of the roadway based on its intended level of service for the regional transportation system. Roadways with a classification of "collector" or "arterial" are part of the state function classification systems and are eligible for state and federal highway funds for improvements. All other roadways are considered local roads and are maintained by local municipalities.

- Traffic volume information listed in this chapter was sourced from INDOT Average Daily Traffic and Commercial Vehicles Interactive Map available online at the following address: http://dotmaps.indot.in.gov/apps/traffic counts/.

Interstate Access

- Rushville does not have direct interstate access within its planning jurisdiction, however, it is moderately close to two major interstate corridors, Interstate 70 (I-70) and Interstate 74 (I-74). Rushville is approximately 17 miles from both interstates and can access interchanges via three state highway connections.

- Traffic volumes on the interstate corridors near Rushville are heavy due to the proximity of regional destinations and the Indianapolis Metropolitan region.

- Below is a summary table of interstate volumes at the three closest access points to Rushville:

- While the proximity to both interstates makes regional travel more convenient, neither are close enough to provide Rushville with a significant competitive advantage for logistical purposes.

- The Regional Transportation Map on the following page shows the context of the transportation system in the region surrounding Rushville and Rush County. Rushville's location between two major interstate corridors, along with its connection to regional points of interest via state highways, provides an elevated level of traffic volume compared to cities of comparable size in Indiana.

Highway signs coming into the city - *Source: HWC*

Table 1: Rushville Interstate Access				
Interstate	**Exit Number**	**Distance from Rushville**	**Average Daily Traffic (AADT)**	**State Highway Connection**
I-70	123 Spiceland	18.2	40,000	SR 3
I-74	134 Greensburg	17.5	20,000	SR 3
I-74	116 Shelbyville	16.5	30,000	SR 44

FUNCTIONAL CLASS MAP

Legend

	Civil Township Boundary
	Corporate Limits

Functional Class (INDOT)

▬▬	Other Principal Arterial (OPA)
▬▬	Minor Arterial
▬▬	Major Collector
▬▬	Minor Collector
▬▬	Local

Railroad

++++	Active Line
++++	Abandoned Line

Trails

▬▬	Open

JACKSON TWP

RUSHVILLE TWP

Fort Wayne Rd

CR 150

Foster Heights Rd

Spencer St

Sexton St

CR 100

16th St

Main St

15th St

Conrad Harcourt Way

Park Blvd

13th St

Cherry St

Benjamin St

Benjamin Rd

11th St

CR 150

10th St

Oliver St

8th St

Willow St

Maple St

7th St

Jackson St

Harrison St

Morgan St

Perkins St

5th St

52

44

Market St

3rd St

Julian St

Orange Pike

2nd St

Arthur St

S Ave

Old 44

CR 125

Willard Ave

Colorado St

Donald St

Airport Rd

44

Hunt Rd

Royal Rd

Lawton Cir

Cameron Dr

Ruth St

Baker St

Flatrock River Rd

Base Rd

3

52

3

Major Highways

- Two Indiana State roads (SR) and one United States highway (US) traverse Rushville. These roads connect the city to other regional points of interest and provide access to the two major interstates.

- SR 44 travels east-west through the heart of downtown Rushville. The road enters Rushville from the west where it turns into West 1st Street and averages approximately 4,700 vehicles per day (vpd). The west section of SR 44 provides a direct connection to Shelbyville and I-74, approximately 17 miles west of Rushville.

- SR 3 provides Rushville with a critical north-south connection between I-74 and I-70. Volumes on SR 3 average over 5,200 vpd between Greensburg/I-74 to the south and just shy of 4,300 vpd between Rushville and US 40 to the north. There is no direct connection to I-70 from SR 3 as the highway takes a jog east on US 40 for approximately ¾ mile to Dunreith before continuing north to I-70 through Spiceland.

- Traffic volumes on SR 3 within Rushville and just north are much higher and they taper off dramatically between Rushville and US 40, approximately 13.5 miles to the north. Volumes on SR 3 between I-70 and US 40 are also higher, presumably due to the direct interstate connection.

- While the public survey conducted for the comprehensive plan did not identify congestion as a major issue in Rushville there are a few points within the community that experience congestion during the peak travel times. The most prevalent congestion in Rushville is the SR 3 corridor (Main Street) through the heart of the downtown.

- The congestion caused by high volumes in the afternoon, coupled with the occasional train blocking off traffic flow near 4th Street can create backups, which has a direct impact on customer's ability to reach businesses in the downtown area.

- Congestion is also an issue during peak travel times at the intersection of US 52 and SR3 south of the city. There is commercial and business development in this location which adds to the overall congestion.

Local Roads

- The public survey indicated that residents are generally happy with the condition of the local roads. Maintenance of the local roads is solely the responsibility of the city and efforts should be made to anticipate future maintenance and ensure that improvement needs so they do not become too burdensome on city resources.

- Main Street is the main corridor through the heart of Rushville, including the core downtown business district. Main Street, reconstructed in 2010 is part of a Major Moves SR 3 project and has the highest traffic volumes in Rushville. Much of the major commercial and business development occurs directly adjacent to the Main Street corridor, making it an important asset for continued economic activity.

Heavy truck traffic in downtown - *Source: SDG*

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION MAP

Legend

County Boundary

Functional Class (INDOT)

▬▬ Interstate

▬▬ Other Principal Arterial (OPA)

▬▬ Minor Arterial

▬▬ Major Collector

▬▬ Trails

New Castle

Spiceland

Knightstown

HENRY

Dublin

Greenfield

HANCOCK

Carthage

RUSH

FAYETTE

Morristown

Rushville

Connersville

Glenwood

SHELBY

Shelbyville

Laurel

DECATUR

FRANKLIN

Greensburg

Batesville
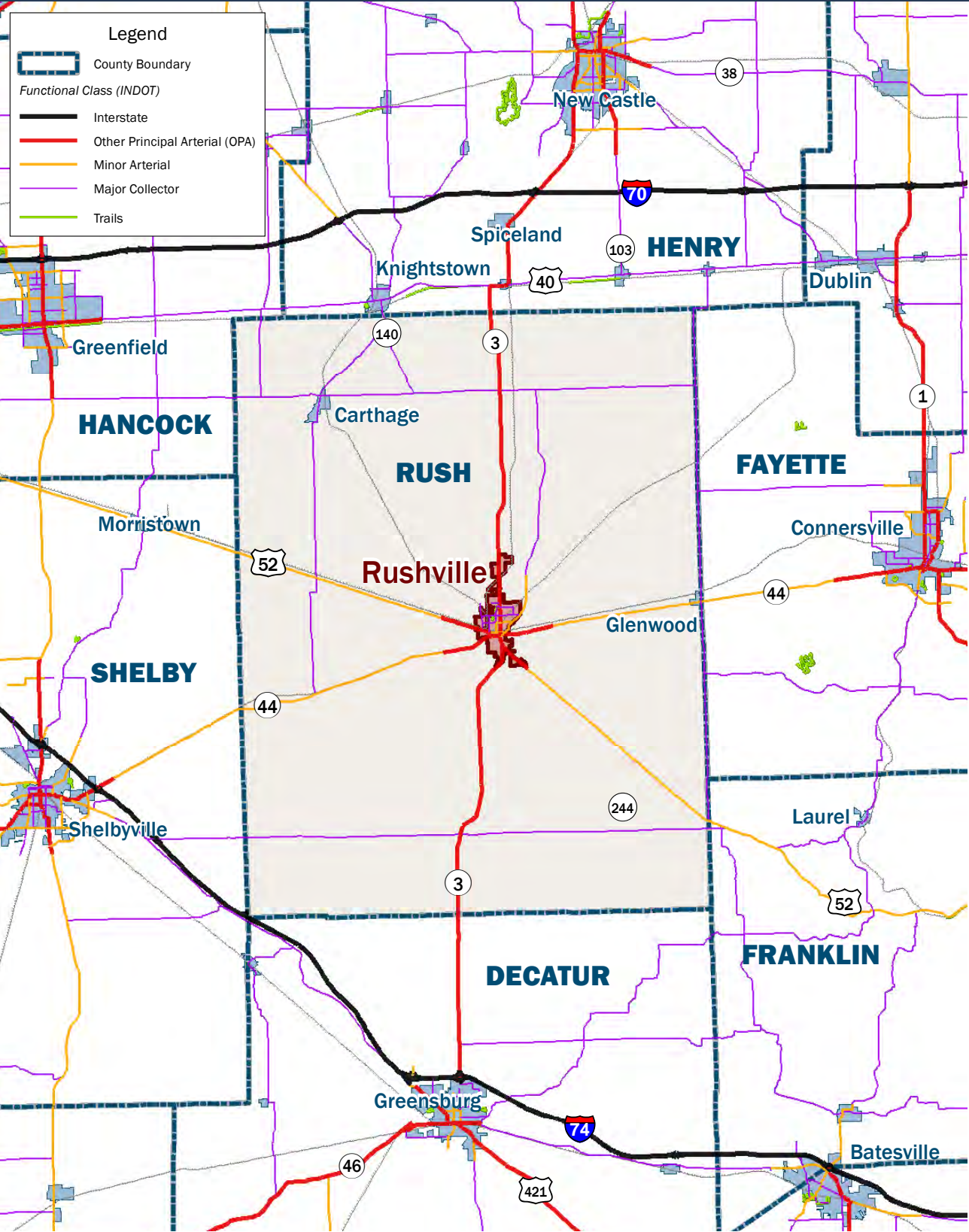
- N. Morgan Street was also mentioned during many of the stakeholder meetings as an important component to Rushville's downtown success. Its lower traffic volumes, connection to multiple community amenities, and wider tree lawns and right of way make this an ideal corridor for future development of a main pedestrian corridor connecting Riverside Park with many of Rushville's cultural attractions including the library, churches, downtown businesses, and farmers market.

- W. 16th Street is being extended to County Road 75 W. When completed this corridor will allow the city to utilize adjacent land to help bolster Rushville's residential growth. The proximity of this corridor to many important community amenities such as Veteran's Park and Rush County Consolidated Schools also create an opportunity to enhance critical pedestrian connections to these important community features.

- The Cherry Street extension from Conrad Harcourt Way to C.R. 200 N. will eventually open up additional land for commercial and industrial development. The routing and design character of this corridor will be critical to ensure an appropriate balance the needs of commercial enterprise with maintaining pedestrian connectivity to nearby neighborhoods.

- Conrad Harcourt Way and N. Benjamin Street are important connectors for one of Rushville's more robust commercial and industrial activity hubs to the larger state highway system. Maintenance and improvements on these local roads should continue to be a priority to help facilitate the commercial activity which occurs in this portion of the city.

- C.R. 200 N. is quickly becoming an important local travel corridor for the city. This road forms the southern boundary of the recently launched North Industrial Park and will eventually become the main connection from the northern end of the Cherry Street extension to the SR 3 corridor. Efforts should be made for the city to eventually take over maintenance and improvements on this road to so it does not become a barrier to future commercial and industrial development potential.

Rail Access

- There is only one major rail corridor running through Rushville. This is the east west Baltimore & Ohio line operated by CSX. This line parallels US 52 from the east and runs along 4th Street through the city. On the west side the line roughly parallels SR 44 until it reaches Connersville.

- One short-line railroad, operated by Honey Creek Railroad, begins near 4th Street and Spencer Street and continues due north until it reaches Sexton, IN, where it appears to be abandoned further north. According to documents obtained online by Railroad Retirement Board, the privately-owned railroad operates approximately six miles of track and its primary purpose is hauling grain from elevators to trucks over the interstate system.

- There are two abandoned rail corridors within Rushville, the former Conrail line begins near the intersection of 11th street and Monroe Street and runs northwest out of the city. Another abandoned corridor parallels the SR 44 corridor from the west and would have traversed through the city diagonally from the southwest to the northeast. Remnants of the old embankment can be seen along US 44 from I-74 and beginning again northeast of the city near the intersection of 11th Street and Gibson Street.

- Former rail corridors are being utilized as

the primary route for regional rails-to-trails project. Federal funds are available through the Federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), which is administered by INDOT. Two well documented examples of these projects are the Cardinal Greenway in Muncie and the Monon Trail in Indianapolis and surrounding suburbs. Evidence suggests that they can become an excellent driver of local economic activity for many communities.

Public Transportation/Transit

- Ride Rush provides limited schedule and on-demand transportation services within Rushville. With an aging population and interest in more senior development, the town should work with local service providers to develop local circulator to key locations within the community.

- Public transportation was also a major quality of life factor cited by one of Rushville's target populations, the millennial generation. While large-scale public transportation is not necessarily feasible in Rushville, small-scaled operations can be combined with a comprehensive approach to providing alternative means of transportation throughout the city.

Airports

- The closest municipal airport to Rushville is the Shelbyville Municipal Airport which also houses the Army Aviation Support Facility. This facility includes approximately 5,000 feet of paved runway and is located approximately 18 miles west of Rushville. The airport's location makes it usable for private planes but not a feasible option for any significant air service to Rushville.

- There are a few limited air facilities within closer proximity to Rushville including McMinn Airport, and the Stevens Farms Airport but each are privately-owned and

have limited length turf runway facilities. In addition to the private airports, the Rush Memorial Hospital heliport provides emergency services to major regional hospitals.

Local highway - *Source: HWC*

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Trails

- Developing trails in key locations, coupled with connectivity improvements to local sidewalks can encourage increased pedestrian activity in a community and help contribute to a higher quality of life, increased economic development potential, and higher property values.

- Rushville has an opportunity to use trail development to make critical connections between important community attractions such as Riverside Park, the Rushville Library, schools, churches, downtown businesses, and the farmers market. In addition, future development of community resources such as athletic fields and a community center can incorporate trail development to help make these community investments more accessible to resident and visitors.

Sidewalks

- Just as multi-use trails are important to a city's complete transportation system, having sidewalks in good condition are equally as important. Traditional sidewalks (width less than 8 feet) provide a critical function in allowing easier local connections to the larger multi-use trails.

- The sidewalk system in Rushville is fairly complete and in good repair. As the city builds additional multi-use trails this system serves a critical role for local connection to the larger system. As trail improvements are made the city should also update its sidewalk inventory. A complete inventory will help the city to identify sidewalk improvement projects that make critical repairs and that fill in any gaps within the existing sidewalk network.

SR 3 Connector

- Because of the regional nature of the SR 3 corridor, a large number of heavy trucks travel this route on a daily basis. The presence of heavy truck traffic creates comfort and safety issues for motorists and pedestrians and creates vibrations which could have a detrimental impact on the existing historic structures present in downtown Rushville.

- The issues described above present significant barriers to the city's long-term downtown redevelopment plans and they need to be addressed. One option is finding an alternative route for the most detrimental impacts caused by regional traffic using this route. The critical sub area analysis addresses these issues in more detail.

Sidewalks in good shape - *Source: HWC*

Sidewalks in need of repair - *Source: HWC*

Gateways

- Throughout the course of this plan it was repeatedly mentioned that the gateways into Rushville do not reflect local values. Terms such as "rundown" and "dilapidated" were used by residents when asked to describe their impression of the main gateways into the city. If this is the reaction of the locals, what will be the reaction of the passerby traveling through for the first time?

- The city owes it to itself to work to improve the appearance of the major gateways into the city. The Transportation Opportunities Map in this chapter shows the most prominent entrances into the community based on the amount of traffic each receives daily.

- Improvements at these locations do not have to be showy or extravagant. Simply pulling the weeds and posting visible gateway signs surrounded by appealing landscape can say welcome. Rushville should view these important locations as the 'welcome mat' to the community as they are the first (and possibly last) impression people may have of the city. The city should take measures to ensure these community gateways leave a positive impression which will encourage people to make a return trip.
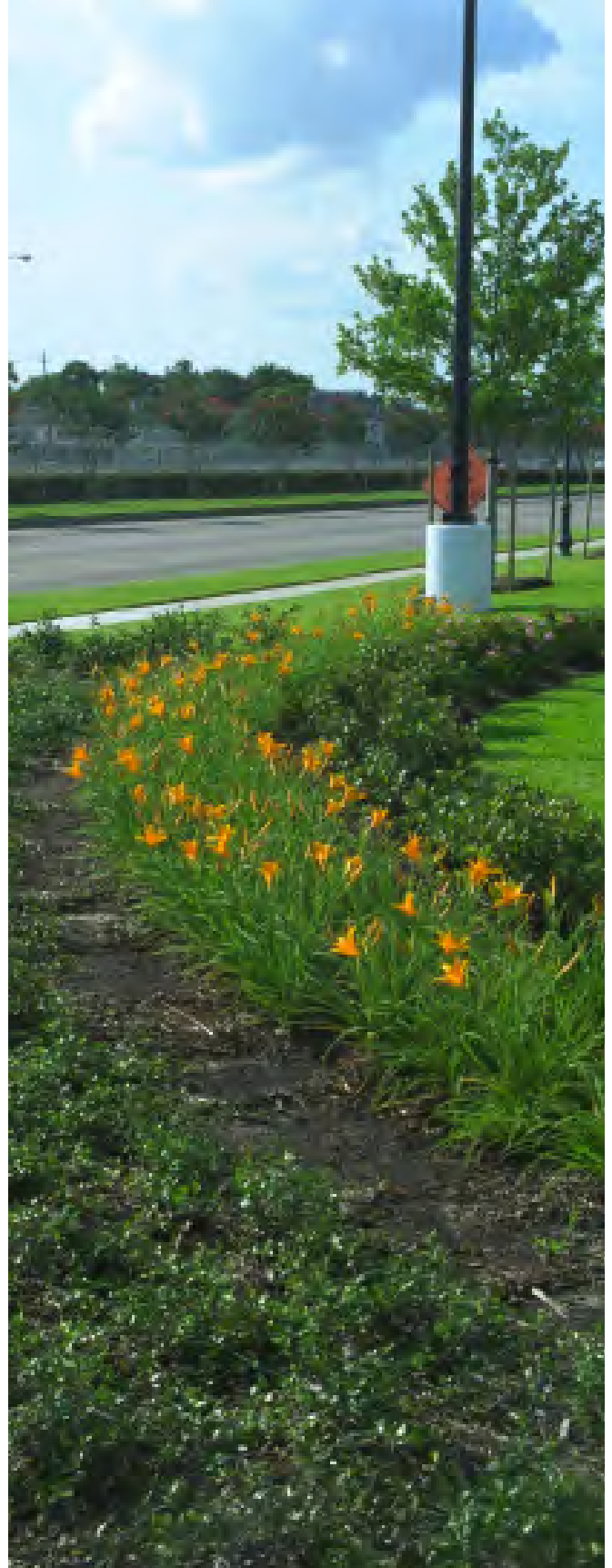
Potential Gateway Example - *Source: HWC*

Legend

Civil Township Boundary
Corporate Limits

Functional Class (INDOT)
Other Principal Arterial (OPA)
Minor Arterial
Major Collector
Minor Collector
Local

Railroad
Active Line
Abandoned Line

Trails
Open

Opportunities
New Trails
Pedestrian Sidewalk Upgrades
Upgraded Roadway
New Roadway
Future Roadway Extension
Gateway Enhancements

JACKSON TWP
RUSHVILLE TWP

Rushville Rd
Fort Wayne Rd
CR 150
Foster Heights Rd
Spencer St
Sexton St
16th St
15th St
Main St
Conrad Harcourt Way
13th St
Cherry St
Benjamin Rd
Benjamin St
11th St
Park Blvd
10th St
Willow St
Maple St
CR 150
Olive St
8th St
7th St
Jackson St
Harrison St
Morgan St
Perkins St
5th St
Arthur St
3rd St
Julian St
Market St
2nd St
Old 44
CR 125
Willard Ave
Donald St
Colorado St
Airport Rd
Hunt Rd
Royal Rd
Lawton Cir
Cameron Dr
Ruth St
Baker St
Base Rd
Flatrock River Rd

3
52
44
3
52

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Relieve downtown congestion along the SR 3/Main Street corridor

Strategies

☐ Work with the CSX Railroad to see if anything can be done to prevent or minimize train disruption at the 4th Street crossing during peak afternoon travel times (between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.).

☐ Work with INDOT to conduct a signal timing analysis and re-time the traffic signals along this corridor to provide for more efficient traffic flow between E. Willard Avenue and 3rd Street.

☐ Work with INDOT on feasibility of a SR 3 connector which will serve as a truck bypass around downtown Rushville. See the SR 3 Critical Sub Area for more detailed discussion of this concept.

Goal 2: Develop a more comprehensive transportation system that provides realistic transportation alternatives with a focus on improving the overall quality of life for residents

Strategies

☐ Complete an inventory and prioritization of local road and sidewalk improvements, focusing first on closing gaps in the network and making critical repairs which impair a person's ability to safely walk or bicycle around Rushville.

☐ Develop a shared-use trail network throughout the community with an emphasis on efficient routing to the most important community attractions. Include a plan to improve or enhance primary local connections between shared use trails and surrounding neighborhoods.

    i.   Initial priority routes should be determined by the city but it is recommended that at the very least initial plans define a central north south corridor connecting Riverside Park to Veterans Memorial Park through the downtown core.

    ii. Another recommended primary route for initial consideration is a well-defined 'pedestrian circulator' trail which encircles the downtown core roughly along Water Street, Morgan Street, 3rd Street, and Perkins Street.

    iii. See the Transportation Opportunities Map in this chapter for an illustration of the recommended initial trail routes.

☐ Work with local businesses and other agencies to investigate the feasibility of a local public transit circulator which provides door-to-door or limited stop service between key residential and commercial locations.

☐ Maintain availability of the CSX rail corridor for future passenger service to Indianapolis. Presently Connersville is the closest access point to this service and the city needs to lobby for Rushville to be included in future plans.

Goal 3: Make plans and complete roadway projects that enhance your long term capacity for additional residential and commercial development

Strategies

- ☐ Complete the N. Cherry Street extension project between Conrad Harcourt Way and E CR 200 N within the originally proposed timeframe of 2018-2019.

- ☐ Plan for and construct future pedestrian and trail improvements along the soon to be completed 16th Street extension corridor including potential shared-use path connections to eventual residential development in the area.

Goal 4: Make improvements and provide long-term maintenance at the key transportation gateways into Rushville

Strategies

- ☐ Work with key community organizations such as Heart of Rushville, Partners for Progress, Rush County Chamber, and Rush County Economic and Development Corp. to build support and funding capacity for key gateway improvements and maintenance.

- ☐ Work with the Area Plan Commission (APC) and other regulatory agencies to make sure all local property maintenance codes and ordinances are strictly enforced at gateway locations. If the codes and ordinances do not provide enough guidance to ensure proper appearance at these locations, work with the APC to modify them.

9

Infrastructure & Utilities

9

Chapter Nine **Infrastructure & Utilities**

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KEY POINTS

- Completion of IDEM mandates to address the city's Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) will continue to be a major focus. The city needs to continue to plan and fund additional improvements associated with the overall stormwater and wastewater system.

- The primary need for utility system expansion will come in the form of industrial and commercial growth and to support planned infrastructure expansion around the 16th Street and Cherry Street expansion projects.

- Aging infrastructure is a growing concern for most Hoosier communities. Much of the city's original utility system is well beyond its functional lifespan and infrastructure improvements need to become a priority investment for near-term and long-term time horizons.

- This plan should include a prioritization of anticipated improvement needs and a strategic funding plan that outlines a time frame for being able to complete priority projects.

FACTS SHAPING RUSHVILLE'S UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

City utilities consist of three departments; Water, Wastewater, and Customer Service. There is one Facility Manager who is responsible for overseeing all day-to-day activities at the Water and Wastewater Treatment facilities, and the utilities are governed by a five-member utility service board which meets regularly. Below is a brief description of the responsibilities for each department.

Water Department

- The City of Rushville Water Department operates the water treatment plant and ensures all processes are operating soundly. This department is also responsible for maintenance and repairs of the water system including the elevated tanks and supply wells, responding to customer requests, and taking meter readings. Water Department staff includes 3 operators and/ or service personnel.

Wastewater Department

- The city's Wastewater Department ensures the wastewater treatment plant and treatment processes are operating efficiently. This includes routine sampling and testing of wastewater samples to ensure all water quality requirements are being met. Responsibilities also include repair and maintenance of the wastewater treatment plant, lift stations and collection including responding to customer requests for service. The department includes the following personnel.
  - ° 2 operators/service personnel
  - ° 1 Laboratory Technician

Customer Service Department

- Responsible for all financial and record keeping aspects of the City utilities including maintaining meter reading records and handling all utility bills and

Stormwater Pipe - *Source: HWC*

Water utility downtown - *Source: HWC*

payments. Another primary function is working with the utility's customers to ensure that all service request and other needs are being met. The Customer Service Department includes three personnel:

° 1 Office Manager

° 1 Bookkeeper

° 1 Customer Service Representative

AVAILABLE UTILITIES

Water Utility

- Rushville currently produces an average of 750,000 gallons of water per day (2009). It currently has a storage capacity of 800,000 gallons of water provided by two elevated tanks, which falls within the typical state standard of having at least one day's supply of water production available in elevated tanks. Recent improvements have made the system more efficient and have increased the utility's storage capacity.

- The water source for the city consists of two well fields, one on the north side of the city near Veteran's Memorial Park and one on the south side of the city near the Flatrock River. The water supply sources are protected by a wellhead protection program.

- It is anticipated that the largest capital need for the water treatment facilities will be continued maintenance and modernization of the plant's treatment capabilities to meet current needs and potential new regulations. With limited growth predicted over the next decade, the capacity of the city's water treatment facilities should be adequate for the anticipated need into the near future. However, advanced planning must occur to be able to anticipate and fund future needs for system repairs and modernization. Without a concerted effort to predict and plan for the future needs of current water treatment facilities the cost

associated with rapidly aging facilities could quickly overcome available city resources.

Wastewater Utility

- Rushville operates a combined sewer system which currently has a 2.0 MGD conventional activated sludge wastewater treatment plant. The largest single need for the wastewater system is modernization. Because of the sewer system's age, its design is antiquated and leaves the city exposed to increased risk of unexpected capital costs due to a failure.

- The design of the system also means that the city has combined sewer overflows (CSOs). CSOs were once a common method of constructing a sewer system. In a CSO design, all of a community's wastewater and stormwater is combined into a single sewer which is directed to the wastewater treatment plant. The combined nature of the system means that raw sewage, stormwater, and all other drains are conveyed using a single pipe.

- As the community has grown, impervious surfaces have increased and therefore so has the amount of stormwater directed to the treatment facilities. This increase in flow means that existing facilities, which were designed to hold certain capacity, reach their limits much quicker. When capacity limits are reached the combined sewer system overflows and dumps the wastewater, sometimes including raw sewage, directly into the receiving body of water, which in Rushville's case is the Flatrock River.

- Rushville currently has one CSO within its system and, as a result, is currently under an Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) mandate to remediate the impacts of its CSOs. In response to the IDEM mandate the city developed a Long Term Control

Plan (LTCP) in 2003 and revised it in 2007 and 2014. The LTCP evaluates and makes recommendations for improvements which bring the city into compliance with current water quality standards and the IDEM CSO mandates.

- An Agreed Order signed by the city in 2008 established a completion date for complete elimination of CSO occurrences by 2022. A Blue Ribbon committee was appointed in March of 2013 to weigh the City's options for addressing this issue, which included costly measures that would further increase the utility rates of customers.

- As a result of the Blue Ribbon Committee findings, rate increases (water and sewer) were recommended and approved in late 2013 to help fund the necessary improvements. The revenue captured as a result of the rate increase will be used to implement the recommended improvements and eliminate CSOs from the Rushville wastewater system as outlined in the adopted Capital Improvement Plan.

- As the city weighs its options for increased industrial development, the city's wastewater capacity must be carefully monitored. Careful planning of future industrial site locations, through well-defined future land uses, will help ensure that the investment associated with utility infrastructure expansion for future industrial development can be anticipated and made available well in advance of any potential demand.

Stormwater

- As noted above, the city currently has a combined system for handing most of its runoff, meaning most stormwater ends up at the wastewater treatment plant. Newer areas for the city have separate storm sewers which discharge directly to nearby receiving streams. As system improvements

are made to meet the required CSO mandates nearly all of the city's stormwater runoff will eventually be processed through the treatment facilities prior to entering receiving streams.

- There has been some local debate about establishing a separate stormwater utility to help pay for future repairs. A complete separation of the stormwater and wastewater system was evaluated during recent engineering studies and determined to be too costly of an option. Many Hoosier communities are increasingly picking this option since they have little funding otherwise for necessary stormwater improvements.

- Due to the age of the current system there will be an increased need for additional capital expenditures to keep pace with a deteriorating stormwater utility. As future development is considered the impacts of additional stormwater runoff must be evaluated to ensure that the city does not exceed the capacity limits of its current system.

- Localized flooding associated with typical stormwater events does not appear to be an issue within most of Rushville. However, one area of concern was identified in the northwest part of the city near Veteran's Memorial Park and the high school. The city has made plans for improvements to address flooding issues in this part of the community.

Natural Gas

- Natural gas service in Rushville is provided by Vectren Energy Delivery. There is currently natural gas available in most portions of the city. The city should continue to work with Vectren to ensure that natural gas service is extended to all portions of the city planned for future industrial and commercial growth. It

should also work with Vectren to expand available natural gas supply at North Industrial Park, making sure that limited energy supply does not negatively impact local industrial recruitment potential.

Electric

- Electric service in Rushville is provided by Duke Energy. Based on maps available online at the Duke Energy website (http://www.locationindianaprospector.com) most of Rushville currently has electric service provided by Duke. The only visible exception to available service is in the northern portion of the city in the area surrounding the North Industrial Park and the 16th Street extension, which would be serviced by Rush Shelby Energy.

Telecommunications

- According to the Comcast website some cable, telephone, and high speed internet service is available in Rushville through their Xfinity branded services.

- Frontier Communications also provides broadband service to Rushville. Service offerings include phone and high speed internet (DSL) to the available service area. Service area extents could not be confirmed through available online sources.

- Fiber optic communications have been installed by the city and services reach a good portion of the community, including all city buildings and the North Industrial Park. The fiber optic network is operated through an agreement with NineStar Connect. Completing the fiber optic network to include coverage for the entire city is an important step Rushville can take in keeping pace with technological developments and remain competitive with regional peers. Cellular service in Rushville is limited to only one carrier, Verizon Wireless. With cellular service rapidly becoming the primary means of communication for businesses and residents it is important that the city work to expand service availability and service providers within Rushville. Likewise, limited options for high speed internet and other high technology communications services could put the city at a competitive disadvantage in attracting new residents and businesses to Rushville.

Utility pole - *Source: HWC*

Above ground utilities visible on downtown skyline
Source: HWC

UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Continue implementing improvement plans associated with CSO mandates and overall stormwater and wastewater system needs

Strategies

☐ Continue to support and implement recommended combined sewer overflow improvements.

☐ Ensure plans for water and wastewater treatment facility improvements adequately account for increased capacity needs associated with planned commercial and industrial growth.

☐ Support efforts at improving overall community stormwater quantity and quality issues. Develop plans to identify and resolve specific 'hot spots'.

☐ Make improvements to bring the current treatment facilities to state of the art standards and install larger blower units to help provide future capacity.

Goal 2: Develop a stronger portfolio of available high technology communications offerings within the city

Strategies

☐ Work with service providers to identify future telecommunications trends and develop a plan to expand service availability and network capacity which will help the city keep pace with the technology needs of businesses and residents.

☐ Make high speed internet more accessible and more affordable throughout the community. Ensure that high speed communications are included in plans for any future development within the city.

☐ Develop a recruitment plan to attract more than one cellular service provider to Rushville.

Goal 3: Strategically plan for the long term utility needs of the city

Strategies

☐ Inventory existing city facilities and develop a transition plan for existing 'institutional knowledge' from long-time employees to be formally documented. The recently updated water treatment standard operating procedures provides a good precedent example for other departments to model.

☐ Encourage a spirit of cooperation among all city departments. Coordinate periodic planning sessions for all city departments to discuss long range infrastructure improvements and seek ways to more efficiently use city resources through a collaborative approach to designing and constructing improvements.

☐ Develop a long term plan to fund replacement of aging 'invisible infrastructure' (water lines, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, etc.). The plan should include a prioritized list of anticipated infrastructure needs based on known age and condition of existing utility resources and should project anticipated costs for at least 5 years into the future.

☐ Continue to discuss options for establishing a separate stormwater utility to help plan and fund a phased plan for modernizing the city's aging stormwater facilities.

10

Chapter
Ten

Critical Sub Areas

10
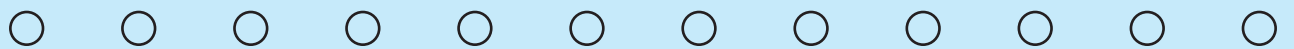
Chapter Ten **Critical Sub Areas**

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KEY POINTS

- Downtown Revitalization

- 16th Street Extension

- S.R. 3 Connector

INTRODUCTION

As the Rushville Comprehensive Plan was developed, it became apparent that there were several key areas of the city which warranted further study. In general, the comprehensive plan is designed to unfold over 20 years, but it was clear that land use decisions were needed in these key areas over the next few years because they are critical to Rushville's future success.

The following three areas were the identified as the most important to warranting additional short-term study as the city's Critical Sub Areas (CSA's):

- Downtown, including the Riverside Park connector
- The 16th Street extension
- S.R. 3 connector between I-74 and I-70

These areas represent significant opportunities for Rushville's success well into the future. They are a representative cross section of new infrastructure investment, making plans for leveraging current investment, and reinvestment in existing community assets.

Plan Commissioners, Rushville City Council members, economic and community development experts, community leaders, and city staff should use these plans to build a foundation for strategic land use and investment decisions. The general public can also use these recommendations as a clear indication of the desired direction for the community's future.

Each following section explains the justification for the areas to receive special attention, identifies issues and opportunities specific to each area, and identifies possible next steps for leveraging the most from future community investment.

Infill opportunities downtown - *Source: HWC*

Downtown facades - *Source: HWC*

CSA: DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Intent

Rushville residents are hungry for a livelier, more complete central business district. Because downtown is the most visible expression of the community, it should be the city's cultural and economic hub. However, the free market has not delivered everything residents want downtown, so more public investment and community effort is needed to spur private growth.

Public investment almost always precedes private investment, and the city has shown its interest in downtown revitalization by working to improve streets and utilities. The city has also stepped in and worked to remove downtown buildings which posed a public safety hazard and detriment to viable historic structures.

These investments include a wide spectrum of other possible actions from city leaders. For example, forging public-private partnerships to help groups acquire, rehab and market buildings for downtown businesses.

Public investments can also include guidance for future development such as new design guidelines which details what sort of new buildings would be appropriate in the historic downtown district.

And finally, local leaders can show their support of downtown by considering the effects of their decisions on the central business district. Granting exemptions so that small businesses can start out of their homes in residential neighborhoods and allowing concentration of commercial development in other parts of town can negatively impact revitalization efforts.
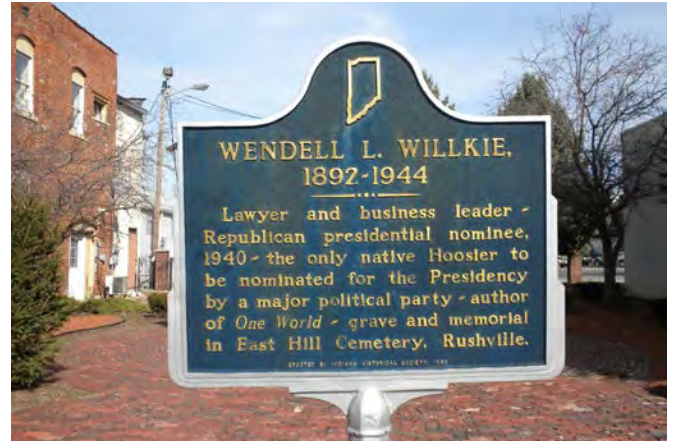
Wendell Wilkie pocket park in downtown - *Source: HWC*

Downtown facades - *Source: HWC*

Example of a Proactive step towards a renewed downtown Rushville - *Source: HWC*

Issues & Opportunities

The historic character of downtown Rushville remains largely intact along Main Street and efforts should be made to restore building aesthetics to their original appearance. Design standards should also be considered which help define the desired character of the central business district, including preferred building styles, materials, and streetscape options.
Rushville residences have a need for more retail and dining options throughout downtown. Local leaders should work with building owners to identify improvements which would make occupancy by these key business types easier. Downtown truck traffic along the Main Street/ S.R. 3 corridor presents a host of problems for successful There is ample on-street parking available within a few block radius of Main Street and also a number of surface lots within easy walking distance to most portions of the Central Business District.

There is an abundance of underutilized and/or low density land within a few blocks of the downtown core. These areas should be inventoried and a plan developed identifying future development goals for these parcels. Redevelopment of these sites is not typically as cost effective as new 'greenfield' development, but with encouragement and incentives the city could create an atmosphere which would spawn greater reinvestment in downtown.

Princess Theater in its current state - *Source: HWC*

Princess Theater

- The Princess Theater, located at 330 N. Main Street, was constructed in 1918 as a live performance venue. This large two story building has sat vacant for nearly three decades. Recently, this building has been given new hope to become a shining example of how strategic municipal investment can help reinvigorate and revitalize a once thriving downtown.

- The theater is now being envisioned as a repurposed north anchor to downtown Rushville. The building was recently purchased by the city and plans are being considered to rehabilitate the grand building into a community and civic center featuring movies, live performances, and a high performance learning center. The project will also bring the activity associated with City Hall directly into the heart of the downtown district.

DOWNTOWN CSA MAP

CONNECTION TO
VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK

PRINCESS THEATER
RUSHVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
RUSH COUNTY COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

DOWNTOWN
DISTRICT MARKER

MORGAN STREET
ART CORRIDOR

KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS
BUILDING

DOWNTOWN LOOP TRAIL
"Rushville Art & Cultural Trail"

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT MARKER

DOWNTOWN GATEWAY DISTRICT

ENHANCED ENTRANCE TO PARK

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT MARKER

CONNECTION BETWEEN
DOWNTOWN & RIVERSIDE PARK

RIVERSIDE PARK CONNECTION

Legend

Corporate Limits
Functional Class (INDOT)
Other Principal Arterial (OPA)
Minor Arterial
Major Collector
Minor Collector
Local
Railroad
Active Line
Abandoned Line
Trails
Open
Rushville Parks
District
Historic District
City Owned Property
Utilities
Rush County Fairgrounds
Education

Next Steps

The community is fortunate to have groups such as Heart of Rushville and Partners in Progress working on downtown revitalization. Earlier this year, members of these groups and other residents prepared The Rushville Downtown Revitalization Plan. Goals and action steps laid out in that community-driven plan are a strong foundation for what should happen next downtown. The report recommends:

Redevelopment Activities Goal:

Encourage a variety of land-uses for a vibrant community through a balance of preservation, rehabilitation, and infill development. Foster development of a strong residential, retail, services, and entertainment core using the results of the recently completed 'Dream Walk' as a starting point.

Next Steps

- Promote Heart of Rushville's Smile Fund grants for facade improvements.
- Seek Federal or State grant funds for facade improvements.
- Support redevelopment or adaptive reuse of vacant or abandoned buildings.
- Encourage infill development.
- Improve, demolish, and/or secure any unsafe or blighted buildings.
- Support the re-use of underutilized properties.
- Encourage a mixed land use pattern that allows the integration of compatible land uses such as single- and multi-family homes, churches, schools, and commercial businesses.

Downtown Destination Goal:

Support activities that reinforce Downtown as a destination

Next Steps

- Develop plans and complete renovations to make the Princess Theater building a focal point of community and civic activities.
- Support Heart of Rushville (Main Street Organization) activities.
- Support Partners in Progress activities, including the Rushville Farmer's Market.
- Promote events to be held in the Riverside Park Amphitheater.
- Encourage new festivals and activities that bring people Downtown.

Housing Goal:

Preserve existing single- and multi-family properties and support new developments

Next Steps

- Promote repair and maintenance of existing single-family and multi-family residences.
- Increase the availability of affordable and quality rental housing.
- Support housing for both senior citizens and families.

Historic Preservation Goal:

Restore and preserve historical structures that reflect the city's heritage

Next Steps
- Promote preservation of the Durbin Hotel, national headquarters of the Wendell Willkie presidential campaign.
- Promote preservation of the Knights of Pythias Lodge (aka Boys Club).
- Promote preservation of the Princess Theatre / Masonic Lodge.
- Promote preservation and expansion of the Rushville Public Library.
- Promote preservation of other endangered historic resources.

Environment Goal:

Support sustainable, environmentally responsible development

Next Steps
- Support environmentally sensitive development.
- Promote sustainability through Energy Star and LEED certified developments

In addition to the goals outlined in The Rushville Downtown Revitalization Plan there were some additional objectives for downtown identified throughout the course of the comprehensive planning process. Below are the additional steps which came directly from recommendations gathered from the public survey, steering committee meetings, and during public workshops:

Activity Center Goal:

Invest in improvements which will make downtown Rushville a key community activity center which welcomes and accommodates new businesses, social functions, community gathering spaces, and creates a unique focal point for the City.

Next Steps:
- Promote a vibrant social atmosphere in downtown Rushville by making investments in the appropriate infrastructure and facilities to encourage daytime, evening, and weekend activity for residents and visitors of all ages.
- Actively encourage the use of downtown as the primary site for public events, such as parades, art festivals, farmer's markets, and community gatherings.
- Create a functional and attractive pedestrian oriented link between downtown and Riverside Park.
- Actively recruit downtown property owners, business owners, and community organizations into active leadership roles in downtown revitalization planning efforts.

Physical Appearance Goal:

Enhance downtown Rushville's aesthetic quality and historic façade character

Next Steps:

- Support private investment in the downtown whenever possible by coordinating public infrastructure improvements with the investment. Improvements such as streetscapes, enhanced pedestrian amenities, benches, ornamental roadway lighting, murals, public art, and unique wayfinding elements will improve downtown;s visual character and be a visible display of the city's investment in downtown success.

- Support the efforts of property owners to obtain variances on buildings from Indiana Building Codes which are necessary to facilitate the continued use of historically significant structures and the preservation of historically appropriate design features. Keep in mind that the granting of such variances should maintain safety standards for all the buildings.

- Explore the options for developing a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district downtown to help support ongoing investment into critical downtown improvements. Timing of this initiative should occur prior to undertaking any significant redevelopment efforts in order to capture the greatest increment value from reinvestment activities.

- The city should consider further study of the downtown district to develop a feasible plan to aid its revival. Studies should include a detailed downtown redevelopment plan, including an area specific economic development analysis and further development of a strategic action plan for downtown renewal.

Marketing and Promotion Goal:

Develop a strategic communications plan which will positively promote what downtown Rushville has to offer.

Next Steps:

- Explore options for a specific channel on Comcast that will broadcast city news and events.

- Use Facebook and Twitter to communicate downtown news and events.

- Develop a unique web presence for downtown Rushville

In summary, besides transforming this area into a hub of activity for festivals, concerts and other community events, a more general touch-up is needed. This could include sidewalk and accessibility improvements, investment in downtown buildings/façade, better signage and lighting improvements. This infrastructure work should be accompanied by recruitment efforts for new businesses, specifically small, local businesses.

16TH STREET EXTENSION MAP
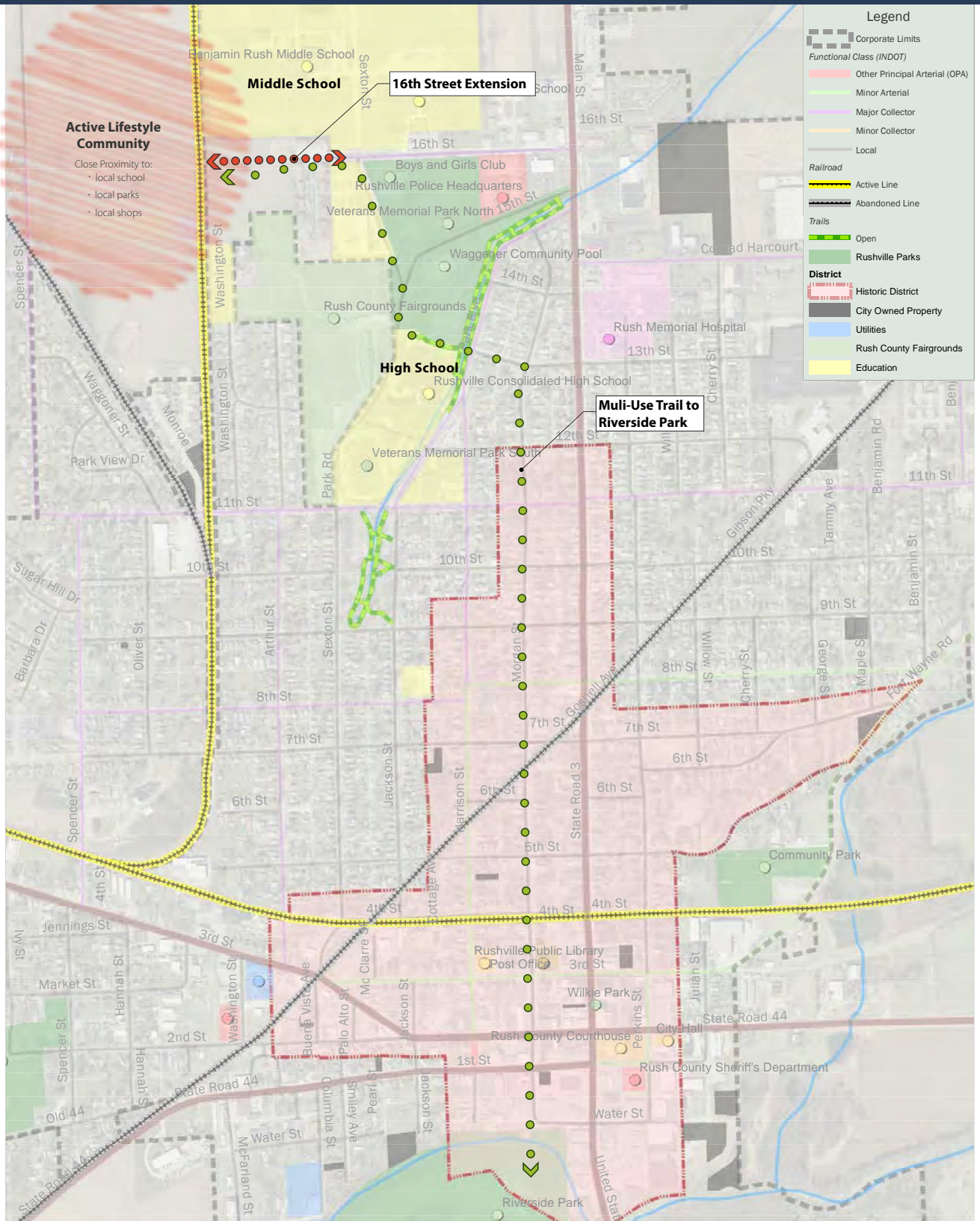
CSA: 16TH STREET EXTENSION

Intent

Rushville should direct its energies to creating a neighborhood, not just a new subdivision. The city's ongoing infrastructure investment on the west end of 16th Street creates the potential for one of the biggest residential developments in many years.

Those same investments, in roads, water and sewer systems, makes the city a partner in the development, with an active voice on what happens there.

Admittedly, demand has been low and private housing developers have not staked claims to the area. However, city investments in 16th Street along with other quality of life projects underway in Rushville should eventually attract builders. When that happens, local leaders should have their vision of the new neighborhood ready (along with incentive packages and guiding regulations).

Issues & Opportunities

The location of the 16th Street connector provides a great opportunity for the development of an active living style community which incorporates a broad range of housing styles and price points.

With schools, parks, and shops nearby, new development around 16th Street should appeal to all generations of people. To enhance this appeal the city can invest in connecting this area to other parts of the city with a network of off-street multi-use trails.

New development in this area also allows the city an opportunity to decide what style of housing development it would like to see in this location. Decisions to make up front include development density, housing mix, housing product, and amenities which would help attract the desired families to live in Rushville.

Since the city has not yet annexed the land surrounding the 16th Street extension it is imperative that it do so within the immediate future. Without having more direct control over the land uses in this area there is a risk that new development could be allowed which does not compliment Rushville's long-range housing goals.

Land availability is going to be an ongoing issue when discussing new development in Rushville. Much of the land surrounding the 16th Street project is currently farmed. With grain prices at historic highs there is little incentive for current landowners to sell property. Those that can be convinced to sell may demand a price per acre high enough to make residential development uneconomical.

Rushville has not historically seen much interest from outside developers. In order to develop a modern style residential development the city must find ways to encourage developer interest. A good start would be to identify one or two developers with a style and quality the city would like to see in Rushville and meet with them to discuss ways to encourage that type of development in the city.

Next Steps

A natural first step is for local leaders to familiarize themselves with subdivision trends that focus on building a neighborhood, one that gives residents a sense of belonging, pride and connection.

The new homes do not have to be mansions. For example, some developers are designing "village style" subdivisions; cottage-style houses, ranging in size from 1,800 to 2,700 square feet, with a meeting room, pool and pocket parks.

Conservation subdivisions, which preserve undivided, buildable tracts of land as communal open space for residents, are also gaining in popularity.

Creating a vision can start with a few basic questions about the project area:

- What mix of homes is ideal (sizes, prices, etc.)?

- How much park and green space is needed?

- Should there be something communal -- church, town hall, association?

- Can it contain businesses and workplaces?

- How can the city help initiate home associations to develop morale and confidence in the permanence of the neighborhood.

- What sort of changes are needed to our regulations to promote these ideals?

Websites like Building Living Neighborhoods offer more ideas (www.livingneighborhoods.org/ht-0/bln-exp.htm).

As the local committee comes up with imaginative ideas for the area, expect resistance, as this quote from the Project for Public Spaces explains:

"Creating good public spaces is inevitably about encountering obstacles, because no one in either the public or private sectors has the job or responsibility to 'create places.' For example, professionals such as traffic engineers, transit operators, urban planners and architects all have narrow definitions of their job – facilitating traffic or making trains run on time or creating long-term schemes for building cities or designing buildings. Their job, evident in most cities, is not to create "places." Starting with small scale community-nurturing improvements can demonstrate the importance of "places" and help to overcome obstacles."

Once the vision has been established and the incentives in place, the city is in a stronger position to market the land to potential developers. Be sure to include information about other improvements underway in Rushville. Marketing is likely to be time consuming, but the job may be made easier as the recession continues to fade and developers once again look for growth areas.

CSA: S.R. 3 CONNECTOR

Intent

Rushville is inconveniently located between two major interstates. The city is approximately 15 miles from both I-74 and I-70, yet it does not experience the same benefits that other similarly situated communities do, largely because no road conveniently connects the two interstates.

The proposed S.R. 3 connector between I-70 and I-74 would widen the roadway to a minimum of 4 travel lanes and provide a parkway around Rushville and Spiceland. The results would be a more efficient and direct travel route between the two interstates – perhaps too direct.

Improved mobility and connectivity along the S.R. 3 corridor will help enhance connections between major manufacturing and distribution centers located in New Castle and Greensburg. It would also open up new opportunities for Rushville to recruit and retain industries related to the Greensburg Honda plant.

The S.R. 3 connector would provide a more direct critical supply chain link between New Castle/Henry County and Greensburg. Providing more efficient travel times and increased traffic volumes along the corridor could bolster local economic development and community development initiatives.

On the other hand - as the name 'bypass' suggests - the connector could also give travelers less of a reason to stop in Rushville. The city will need to use signage, marketing and other techniques to ensure that they take advantage of the connector's benefits without suffering from unintended consequences.

Issues & Opportunities

One of the largest hurdles to implementing a project of this scale is the amount of time it takes to envision, plan, and fund. Time frames for a project like this vary widely but it is likely to take 15-20 years or more to successfully take a project of this magnitude from concept to reality.

Another major issue is the cost. The recently released report from the Blue Ribbon Panel on Transportation Infrastructure (Blue Panel Report) placed an approximate project cost of $318 million (2013 dollars) on the SR 3 connector.

As roadway infrastructure continues to age and available funding for roadway projects continues to shrink, there will be extremely competitive conditions for funding major roadway projects. This competition means that large projects will receive additional scrutiny, will be politically charged, and will have a higher chance of never being completed.

Another important issue is the reemergence of discussions about the Indiana Commerce Connector (Indianapolis outer loop bypass). If plans for this bypass materialize it would essentially provide the same type of connectivity between the same two interstate in nearby Shelby County, effectively making the Rush County connector unnecessary.

The SR 3 connector has received attention at the regional and state level. The project was recently discussed in the Blue Panel Report. While the project was considered it was eventually eliminated because it did not have the same statewide significance as other projects under consideration.

If the SR 3 connector is built it would bypass Rushville (likely on the west side of the community) which would help alleviate many of the issues currently experienced in Downtown from the heavy truck traffic passing through.

However, a parkway around Rushville could also create new demands for the community (currently Rush County) to develop near the new corridor.

While new development is welcome it can put extreme pressure on existing businesses currently located along the SR 3 corridor in Rushville to relocate, causing a business exodus from the heart of the community.

Next Steps

Rushville should continue to have conversations with INDOT about the viability of the project. Work with INDOT to help identify the most likely route for the parkway and what steps can be taken to move the project into a more detailed study phase.

Work with local and state representatives to continue to lobby for support of the project at the state level. Building a strong case for the positive impacts this project can bring to your community can go a long way towards receiving some form of support.

Partner with other organizations and communities which support the plan such as East Central Indiana Economic Development, New Castle/Henry County, Greensburg, and Decatur County to continue to build support through regionally focused initiatives.

Develop a local economic development strategy around targeted industries for both interstate corridors – begin working to attract businesses which will benefit from the project. For example, the I-74 Target Industry Analysis (2012) noted the following target industries for this corridor:

- Manufacturing & Advanced Materials
- Burial casket Manufacturing
- Wind Energy Production
- Transportation & Logistics
- Business & Financial Services

Plan ahead for the future – work on identifying specific land uses and zoning policy for the potential bypass route. Include specific triggers for allowing development in this location and clearly define the intended character of this potentially important community gateway.

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11

Chapter
Eleven

Implementation Plan

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Chapter Eleven **Implementation Plan**

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IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

The residents of Rushville, especially its elected and appointed officials, hold the success of the comprehensive plan in their hands. While the residents of Rushville have their own responsibility in determining the future of the community, it is elected and appointed officials who make the daily decisions that will determine the future of the community.

A lot of time and community resources went into the completion of this plan and will take even more resources for it to succeed. This section lays out the goals and strategies needed to make the plan work, but local government officials, especially including the Area Plan Commission, will need to take ownership of implementing the plan. This plan is their guidebook and manual upon which decisions will be based. Understanding the plan's goals and reasoning by the community at large helps these leaders make informed decisions.

Training for Public Officials

It is critical that elected and appointed officials get the training that they need in order to undertake planning and zoning matters in the most informed manner possible.

Laws and ordinances from the Federal level, State level and local level are often complicated. Though Indiana does not currently require commission members to receive training, it is always a good idea.

The following suggestions can assist the city in obtaining some training for public officials.

- Membership in the American Planning Association (APA). The APA hosts an annual national conference including sessions for citizen planners as well as publishes a magazine, newsletters, books

and reports. For more information, visit www.planning.org.

- Utilize the Indiana Citizen Planner's Guide from the Indiana Chapter of the American Planning Association. The guide is free and available on-line at www.indianaplanning.org. The guide contains several chapters that can be useful for elected officials, plan commission members, board of zoning appeals members, neighborhood organizations, and citizen committees and contains information specific to Indiana.

Helping People Understand the Plan

To obtain the most out of planning, some effort is needed in educating stakeholders about the basic goals and tools available. Following are some suggestions for communicating how planning can help direct and guide the future of the community.

EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ABOUT PLANNING AND ZONING.

Most residents do not understand planning and zoning because it is not something that they deal with on a day-to-day basis.

After final adoption, the City should make the plan available online and in local libraries. The City should also consider providing information sessions for anyone interested in how to read and use the plan.

Plan commission and board of zoning appeal hearings can also be educational opportunities. Many people who attend these meetings have never attended before and don't know what to expect. Letters and notifications should be written so they are easy to understand. A brief summary of what will happen at the meeting prior to the start can assist those in attendance follow and know what is going on.

The commission and board can also remove much of the mystery that surrounds their decisions by including what laws and ordinance criteria they must consider in their decision. The background information can be included on the back of the agenda, at the entrance of the meeting, or posted online.

Funding Sources

A list of potential funding sources for the implementation items is included in the Appendix.

Next Steps

This plan contains years worth of ideas and suggestions for projects. It can be overwhelming to think about addressing all of the recommendations.

However, it is possible to look ahead to the near future and take the steps needed to implement the comprehensive plan. The following chart summarizes the goals identified in each of the chapters. Each goal is grouped under a chapter name and provides strategies and responsible parties for carrying out the goal. It is intended that the plan commission and staff use this chart on an annual basis to benchmark their progress for implementing this plan.

City of Rushville Implementation Plan

LAND USE

Goal: Develop specific land use policies which support the revitalization of key areas within the city and clearly identify high potential infill or redevelopment sites.	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Develop an inventory of underutilized buildings and vacant land within the city. Evaluate and prioritize these sites for redevelopment potential.	
• Identify specific development goals for the highest priority redevelopment sites including higher density and mixed-use future development scenarios.	
• Encourage infill development through a system of promoting and incentivizing new residential and commercial development within existing buildings and on underutilized parcels of land.	
Goal: Ensure the continued protection of the city's charm and character by taking specific measures to help protect and enhance the visual quality of developments within Rushville.	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Develop design standards appropriate for the city's most important character areas which reflects the desired visual quality for the area such as building setbacks, signage standards, etc.	
• Revise the city zoning ordinances to allow mixed-use development patterns. Develop standards for physical form, visual character, and permitted uses for new mixed-use developments.	
• Work with the Rush County farmers to help Identify the most productive agricultural land surrounding Rushville's corporate limits. Take measures to ensure the land is set aside for agricultural uses and is only developed as the last resort for the city; after all other options have been exhausted.	
Goal: Continue to evaluate options for having more direct control over land use decisions which are made in areas directly adjacent to the corporate boundary.	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Continue to look for avenues which allow the City of Rushville to have a voice in land use decisions for property adjacent to the Rushville City Limits.	
• Work with the APC to make revisions to the zoning ordinance which updates the document to meet current state law and which also defines more objective development guidelines.	
• Continue to explore the establishment of city exclusive planning and zoning capabilities.	
• Revise the City of Rushville zoning ordinance to reflect the changes recommended in the zoning ordinance review comments in this chapter of the comprehensive plan.	
• Develop a trust between the city and county that assures use of land within in close proximity to the city first - avoiding sprawl out into productive farmland.	
• Educate the larger community on balancing the location of industry and population to the services and quality of life amenities achievable in the city.	
• Continue conversations with the county to encourage establishment of joint departments to allow provision of services not affordable individually.	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	

Goal: Build relationships with regional economic development groups.	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Rushville has much in common with neighboring cities in Fayette, Henry and other neighboring counties.	
• Strengthening regional ties is a good idea for any city, but it makes particular sense in Rushville, where the mayor has a deep background in economic development. Developing a presence in organizations such as the I-74 Business Corridor will complement ECDC's efforts.	
Goal: Work with the ECDC directly on their efforts to build Rushville's economy.	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**

• In collaboration with the ECDC, review their goals and objectives on the city's behalf and revise to reflect new priorities as they arise. Local leaders are particularly interested in developing these areas:
  ° the North Industrial Park
  ° entrepreneur assistance
  ° workforce training
  ° recruitment of basic employers
  ° marketing for business prospects	

Goal: Lead a county-wide dialogue on instituting an innkeeper's tax.	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Start this campaign by talking to officials in neighboring counties who have the tax and use it to promote tourism. Find out the benefits, and if there have been any problems.	
Goal: Lead a county-wide dialogue on instituting an innkeeper's tax.	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Aside from taking advantage of social media to recruit people into the cause, the mayor and other city officials should use their public appearances before a wide variety of groups to talk about opportunities for participation in the city's ventures, including downtown revitalization.	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan

HOUSING

Goal: Increase Code Enforcement	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• It will be vital to educate the community about why the city is upgrading its enforcement efforts. It is often unpopular, expensive, and politically risky, but enforcing ordinances against unkempt or dangerously deteriorating properties is key to revitalization. Problems with distressed properties include trash, high grass and security issues; occupied or partially occupied buildings with serious violations such as no heat or broken water pipes and no common area electricity (leading to non-functioning fire alarms).	
• Review existing code to make sure it is up-to-date and enables the city to effectively enforce its regulations.	
• Enforce code in a transparent, consistent way to demonstrate the city's determination to revitalize its core neighborhoods.	
• Switch from the existing enforcement process to a ticketing system, which includes discretion for warnings and flexible timeframes.	
Goal: Support ongoing neighborhood revitalization efforts	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Encouragement and disincentives (carrots and sticks) are needed for neighborhood revitalization. Just using disincentives – code enforcement – can bring complaints of heavy-handed tactics. But if the city shows its willingness to invest in core neighborhoods, it's in a much stronger position to demand the same in others	
• The next step is to make the case for why revitalization makes economic sense. Communities have found that if they reinvest in their traditional neighborhoods first, they will reduce the cost of infrastructure and services, spur private reinvestment in the neighborhoods, reduce crime and ultimately increase the tax base in a sustainable manner.	
• Create city staff/resident partnerships through Neighborhood Cleanup Grants. The neighborhood organizes the event and provides all the volunteers; the city provides dumpsters, Hazmat removal, chipper service, tire disposal and safety vests. Consistent and well promoted "clean-up" days can be effective over time in promoting neighborhood activity.	
• Create funding for Small and Simple Grants, which provide neighborhoods with the opportunity to initiate projects that require $1,000 or less. Examples include neighborhood signs, gatherings and brochures. Neighborhood groups would apply.	
• Create funding for Neighborhood Improvement Grants to pay for physical improvement projects that require $2,000 or more. These could include limestone monuments, flower boxes and playground equipment. Neighborhood groups would apply.	
• Encourage definition of historic neighborhoods and other important cultural districts by developing attractive wayfinding systems unique to the character and design of these specific parts of the city.	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan	
HOUSING *(continued)*	
Goal: Develop a neighborhood action plan which focuses on needs and actions for specific neighborhoods	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Use windshield surveys, walking tours or other instruments to inventory conditions of homes in established neighborhoods. Look for areas where improvements to even a few homes may "tip" the street back toward revitalization.	
• Provide technical support to help informal neighborhood groups get organized. Start by assigning city staff as the neighborhood contact and to facilitate communication between neighborhoods and city departments.	
• Create a listing of neighborhoods on the City of Rushville website with contact information.	
Goal: Develop a landlord and tenant outreach and education program	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Hold periodic Landlord Summits. These meetings are designed to open up communication between city officials and property owners. They can include explanation of new city regulations and demonstrations of common maintenance issues such as smoke detector maintenance (work with a local building supply store). Start the process by inviting the top 10 or so biggest landlords to explain upcoming changes to the city codes and the city's legitimate interests in safe and affordable housing.	
• Moving beyond the discussion phase between landlords and the city often proves difficult. Most landlords agree there are "some bad players" where legal action is needed, but almost all landlords oppose, for instance, a system where all rental owners must register with the city. Many landlords claim the registries are unnecessary regulation and include fees that hamper the free market, while proponents say the registry allows city officials to more easily track down rental property owners in the event of an emergency or code violation, and ultimately helps preserve the existing housing supply and property values. There is no easy answer for this problem. Local leaders should start the process by opening communication with landlords, but ultimately decided if other steps are needed.	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan

HOUSING *(continued)*

Goal: Develop plans for future housing development along the completed 16th Street corridor; focus on market-rate, multi-family and young professional type housing	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• In a free market, local government has limited ability to specify exactly what type of homes they want built. For example, they can zone where multi-family units can be constructed, but have few tools that would require builders to offer apartments specifically for young professionals or other population segments.	
• Whether a city does – or doesn't – have upper-end housing is primarily a decision of the free market. Changing the market will require tinkering with the economics that developers consider when choosing where to build.	
• Create a city-driven task force to assess the current market for upper-end housing (this report contains some data). The group should include real estate agents, business executives and developers, among others. Task this group with developing a strategy and mindset conducive to identifying mitigated risks which can help create the jump start Rushville needs to develop a new housing market.	
Goal: Continue and expand city efforts at rebuilding and reinvesting in existing core neighborhoods through targeted revitalization and redevelopment initiatives	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Continue to expand and fund the homeowner assistance program to help with small repairs (micro-loans, local bank partnerships, etc.). Because of the costs associated with this undertaking for the city ($340,000 in work completed to date), working with grant administrators to secure grants from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority to restore low-income housing can help greatly offset local resources required for this program. After some success with these grants, the city can consider expanding the program, perhaps by working with local social service and not-for-profit agencies.	
• Complete development and implementation of the city's property reintroduction program. This program is intended to reintroduce city-owned commercial and residential property back onto local tax roles.	
• Continue to seek funding and program assistance for development of the Campaign Headquarters and Campaign Flats affordable housing projects downtown. These project could inject new investment capital into the lagging downtown residential and commercial property market and provide incentive for additional private investment be current building and business owners.	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan	
NATURAL RESOURCES AND RECREATION	

Goal: Develop and support additional parks programming such as athletic events, camps, and other recreational and fitness activities	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Focus on the growth of the Summer Concert Series (attendance and performances). This program draws a large number of visitors to the community and can be a platform for exhibiting all of the best things Rushville has to offer. Drawing on the success of the current program can help the City leverage support for the expansion of Riverside Park. When the completion of the Riverside Park to downtown trail connection is completed (see Transportation Chapter) this concert series can be used as a catalyst for the city's downtown revitalization efforts (see Downtown CSA).	
• Develop programs and/or facilities that help residents achieve fitness, wellness, and an active lifestyle. These facilities should offer a combination of outdoor and indoor opportunities for residents to engage in planned and unplanned physical activities. A complete recreational program offering can complement existing private and non-profit programs and will provide opportunities for social engagement.	
• Develop a sports park and/or improved sporting facilities which can become a regional draw for visitors. Work with the Rush County Consolidated Schools athletic programs and other city and county youth sports programs to identify the areas of greatest potential and develop plans for the development of facilities which will capitalize on that potential. Review and tour other regional sports facilities to learn lessons which can be beneficial in the development of the Rushville facility.	
• Promote and seek funding for the development of a regional rails to trail initiative. Work with local and regional interests groups and governmental agencies to develop a preliminary routing and phasing plan. Look to other successful systems in the state, such as the Cardinal Greenway system in Muncie, to help identify the best strategies for early project development.	
Goal: Develop and/or promote more activities that engage residents and visitors with unique natural features such as wooded areas (trails, etc.)	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Connect parks and other natural features to the rest of the city and/or trail system. Allowing residents to easily access and interact with the unique natural qualities in Rushville will help build awareness of the natural beauty inherent in this part of the state. It will also help encourage a more social community spirit and will provide an amenity for the city to market and help attract visitors.	
• Promote the canoe launch and provide for a defined exit point downstream. Work with local groups and organizations such as the Boy Scouts to develop a strategy to make this existing amenity more usable and attractive for resident and visitor use.	
• Develop a camping facility within the city. Evaluate locations which exhibit unique or attractive natural qualities. The development of primitive camping facilities could be coupled with promotion of the canoe launch and development of the Riverside Park expansion.	
• Develop and support plans for southern Riverside Park expansion. Look for ways to incorporate or highlight the unique natural features and cultural heritage of the site. This plan could be combined with primitive camping sites, the canoe launch, a footbridge connecting both sides of the Flatrock River, and connections to downtown making it an opportunity to create a truly unique park experience for Rushville.	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan	
NATURAL RESOURCES AND RECREATION *(continued)*	

Goal: Consider potential impacts of future development plans on the quantity and quality of prime farmland and other valuable natural resources	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Work with local farmers, landowners, and cooperative extension programs to develop city growth policies which take into consideration the preservation of the most productive pieces of agricultural land.	
• Work with the Area Plan Commission to develop strategies for encouraging new development in areas where it avoids or minimizes future impacts to the most productive farmland and discourages development on prime farmland.	
Goal: Consider potential impacts of future development plans on the quantity and quality of valuable natural resources such as the Flatrock River	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Develop local policies that clearly define the city's position on the value of ecologically sensitive lands.	
• Build partnerships with local and regional conservation organizations in an effort to increase public awareness for the value of existing woodlands, wetlands, and native habitat.	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan	
TRANSPORTATION	

Goal: Relieve downtown congestion along the SR 3/Main Street corridor	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Work with the CSX Railroad to see if anything can be done to prevent or minimize train disruption at the 4th Street crossing during peak afternoon travel times (between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.).	
• Work with INDOT to conduct a signal timing analysis and re-time the traffic signals along this corridor to provide for more efficient traffic flow between E. Willard Avenue and 3rd Street.	
• Work with INDOT on feasibility of a SR 3 connector which will serve as a truck bypass around downtown Rushville. See the SR 3 Critical Sub Area for more detailed discussion of this concept.	
Goal: Develop a more comprehensive transportation system that provides realistic transportation alternatives with a focus on improving the overall quality of life for residents	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Complete an inventory and prioritization of local road and sidewalk improvements, focusing first on closing gaps in the network and making critical repairs which impair a person's ability to safely walk or bicycle around Rushville.	

• Develop a shared-use trail network throughout the community with an emphasis on efficient routing to the most important community attractions. Include a plan to improve or enhance primary local connections between shared use trails and surrounding neighborhoods.
 	
   i.   Initial priority routes should be determined by the city but it is recommended that at the very least initial plans define a central north south corridor connecting Riverside Park to Veterans Memorial Park through the downtown core.
 	
   ii. Another recommended primary route for initial consideration is a well-defined 'pedestrian circulator' trail which encircles the downtown core roughly along Water Street, Morgan Street, 3rd Street, and Perkins Street.
 	
   iii. See the Transportation Opportunities Map in this chapter for an illustration of the recommended initial trail routes.	

• Work with local businesses and other agencies to investigate the feasibility of a local public transit circulator which provides door-to-door or limited stop service between key residential and commercial locations.	
• Maintain availability of the CSX rail corridor for future passenger service to Indianapolis. Presently Connersville is the closest access point to this service and the city needs to lobby for Rushville to be included in future plans.	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan

TRANSPORTATION *(continued)*

Goal: Make plans and complete roadway projects that enhance your long term capacity for additional residential and commercial development

Next Steps	Who's Responsible?
• Complete the N. Cherry Street extension project between Conrad Harcourt Way and E CR 200 N within the originally proposed timeframe of 2018-2019.	
• Plan for and construct future pedestrian and trail improvements along the soon to be completed 16th Street extension corridor including potential shared-use path connections to eventual residential development in the area.	

Goal: Make improvements and provide long-term maintenance at the key transportation gateways into Rushville

Next Steps	Who's Responsible?
• Work with key community organizations such as Heart of Rushville, Partners for Progress, Rush County Chamber, and Rush County Economic and Development Corp. to build support and funding capacity for key gateway improvements and maintenance.	
• Work with the Area Plan Commission (APC) and other regulatory agencies to make sure all local property maintenance codes and ordinances are strictly enforced at gateway locations. If the codes and ordinances do not provide enough guidance to ensure proper appearance at these locations, work with the APC to modify them.	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan	
UTILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE	
Goal: Continue implementing improvement plans associated with CSO mandates and overall stormwater and wastewater system needs	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Continue to support and implement recommended combined sewer overflow improvements.	
• Ensure plans for water and wastewater treatment facility improvements adequately account for increased capacity needs associated with planned commercial and industrial growth.	
• Support efforts at improving overall community stormwater quantity and quality issues. Develop plans to identify and resolve specific 'hot spots'.	
• Make improvements to bring the current treatment facilities to state of the art standards and install larger blower units to help provide future capacity.	
Goal: Develop a stronger portfolio of available high technology communications offerings within the city	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Work with service providers to identify future telecommunications trends and develop a plan to expand service availability and network capacity which will help the city keep pace with the technology needs of businesses and residents.	
• Make high speed internet more accessible and more affordable throughout the community. Ensure that high speed communications are included in plans for any future development within the city.	
• Develop a recruitment plan to attract more than one cellular service provider to Rushville.	
Goal: Strategically plan for the long term utility needs of the city	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Inventory existing city facilities and develop a transition plan for existing 'institutional knowledge' from long-time employees to be formally documented. The recently updated water treatment standard operating procedures provides a good precedent example for other departments to model.	
• Encourage a spirit of cooperation among all city departments. Coordinate periodic planning sessions for all city departments to discuss long range infrastructure improvements and seek ways to more efficiently use city resources through a collaborative approach to designing and constructing improvements.	
• Develop a long term plan to fund replacement of aging 'invisible infrastructure' (water lines, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, etc.). The plan should include a prioritized list of anticipated infrastructure needs based on known age and condition of existing utility resources and should project anticipated costs for at least 5 years into the future.	
• Continue to discuss options for establishing a separate stormwater utility to help plan and fund a phased plan for modernizing the city's aging stormwater facilities.	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan

CRITICAL SUB AREAS

Redevelopment Activities Goal: Encourage a variety of land-uses for a vibrant community through a balance of preservation, rehabilitation, and infill development. Foster development of a strong residential, retail, services, and entertainment core using the results of the recently completed 'Dream Walk' as a starting point.	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Promote Heart of Rushville's Smile Fund grants for facade improvements.	
• Seek Federal or State grant funds for facade improvements.	
• Support redevelopment or adaptive reuse of vacant or abandoned buildings.	
• Encourage infill development.	
• Improve, demolish, and/or secure any unsafe or blighted buildings.	
• Support the re-use of underutilized properties.	
• Encourage a mixed land use pattern that allows the integration of compatible land uses such as single- and multi-family homes, churches, schools, and commercial businesses	
Downtown Destination Goal: Support activities that reinforce Downtown as a destination	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Develop plans and complete renovations to make the Princess Theater building a focal point of community and civic activities.	
• Support Heart of Rushville (Main Street Organization) activities.	
• Support Partners in Progress activities, including the Rushville Farmer's Market.	
• Promote events to be held in the Riverside Park Amphitheater.	
• Encourage new festivals and activities that bring people Downtown.	
Housing Goal: Preserve existing single- and multi-family properties and support new developments	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Promote repair and maintenance of existing single-family and multi-family residences.	
• Increase the availability of affordable and quality rental housing.	
• Support housing for both senior citizens and families.	
Historic Preservation Goal: Restore and preserve historical structures that reflect the city's heritage	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Promote preservation of the Durbin Hotel, national headquarters of the Wendell Willkie presidential campaign.	
• Promote preservation of the Knights of Pythias Lodge (aka Boys Club).	
• Promote preservation of the Princess Theatre / Masonic Lodge.	
• Promote preservation and expansion of the Rushville Public Library.	
• Promote preservation of other endangered historic resources.	
Environment Goal: Support sustainable, environmentally responsible development	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Support environmentally sensitive development.	
• Promote sustainability through Energy Star and LEED certified developments	

City of Rushville Implementation Plan	
CRITICAL SUB AREAS *(continued)*	
Activity Center Goal: Invest in improvements which will make downtown Rushville a key community activity center which welcomes and accommodates new businesses, social functions, community gathering spaces, and creates a unique focal point for the City.	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Promote a vibrant social atmosphere in downtown Rushville by making investments in the appropriate infrastructure and facilities to encourage daytime, evening, and weekend activity for residents and visitors of all ages.	
• Actively encourage the use of downtown as the primary site for public events, such as parades, art festivals, farmer's markets, and community gatherings.	
• Create a functional and attractive pedestrian oriented link between downtown and Riverside Park.	
• Actively recruit downtown property owners, business owners, and community organizations into active leadership roles in downtown revitalization planning efforts.	
Physical Appearance Goal: Enhance downtown Rushville's aesthetic quality and historic façade character	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Support private investment in the downtown whenever possible by coordinating public infrastructure improvements with the investment. Improvements such as streetscapes, enhanced pedestrian amenities, benches, ornamental roadway lighting, murals, public art, and unique wayfinding elements will improve downtown;s visual character and be a visible display of the city's investment in downtown success.	
• Support the efforts of property owners to obtain variances on buildings from Indiana Building Codes which are necessary to facilitate the continued use of historically significant structures and the preservation of historically appropriate design features. Keep in mind that the granting of such variances should maintain safety standards for all the buildings.	
• Explore the options for developing a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district downtown to help support ongoing investment into critical downtown improvements. Timing of this initiative should occur prior to undertaking any significant redevelopment efforts in order to capture the greatest increment value from reinvestment activities.	
• The city should consider further study of the downtown district to develop a feasible plan to aid its revival. Studies should include a detailed downtown redevelopment plan, including an area specific economic development analysis and further development of a strategic action plan for downtown renewal.	
Marketing and Promotion Goal: Develop a strategic communications plan which will positively promote what downtown Rushville has to offer.	
Next Steps	**Who's Responsible?**
• Explore options for a specific channel on Comcast that will broadcast city news and events.	
• Use Facebook and Twitter to communicate downtown news and events.	
• Develop a unique web presence for downtown Rushville	

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Appendix

Appendix

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

City of Rushville Demographic Profile

Demographic profiles are useful for making informed decisions and crafting policies for a community. These reports provide limited, but important, information about communities' populations, housing, and finances. As Rushville determines what course of action to take, its elected officials, community leaders, and citizens may find the included information on population, housing, poverty, and education helpful.

The majority of the demographic information for Rushville comes from the US Census Bureau. The Census Bureau conducts the Census of Population and Housing every ten years, and requests information from every US resident on household population, age, sex, race, and housing. The Census Bureau also gathers information on income, employment, home values, and education, among other categories, using the annual American Community Survey, which is sent to about 3 million households per year. Information from the American Community Survey is released in in one-, three-, and five-year estimates as compilations from multiple surveys.

Additionally, this profile includes data from the Indiana Business Research Center's *STATS Indiana* website and the Indiana Department of Education. *STATS Indiana* provides information on population estimates and projections, while the Department of Education compiles statistics on student characteristics and graduation rates.

Whenever possible, information was collected on Rushville itself. In some cases, information was collected on Rush County due to a lack of available data on Rushville.

Population

Between 1900 and 2010, the population of Rushville varied between 4,541 people (in 1900) and 7,264 people (in 1960). After decreasing by almost 600 people between 1980 and 1990, the population of Rushville has grown over the last two decades. According to the most recent American Community Survey data, the current population of Rushville is 6,386 people. This represents a slight increase from the city's population of 6,341 people in the 2010 Census.

Fig. 1. Rushville Population, 1900 - 2010

Year	Population
1900	4,541
1910	4,925
1920	5,498
1930	5,709
1940	5,960
1950	6,761
1960	7,264
1970	6,686
1980	6,113
1990	5,533
2000	5,995
2010	6,341
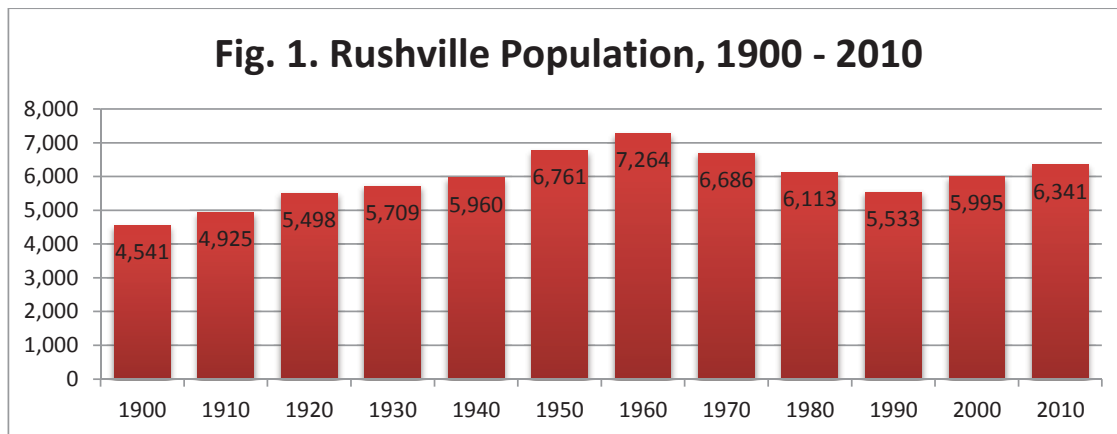
Source: STATS Indiana

Unlike the city of Rushville, the surrounding areas of Rushville Township and Rush County both experienced a decline in population between 2010 and 2012, as shown below.

Fig. 2. Rushville Township Pop., 2010 - 2012

Source: STATS Indiana

## Fig. 3. Rush County Population, 2010 - 2012
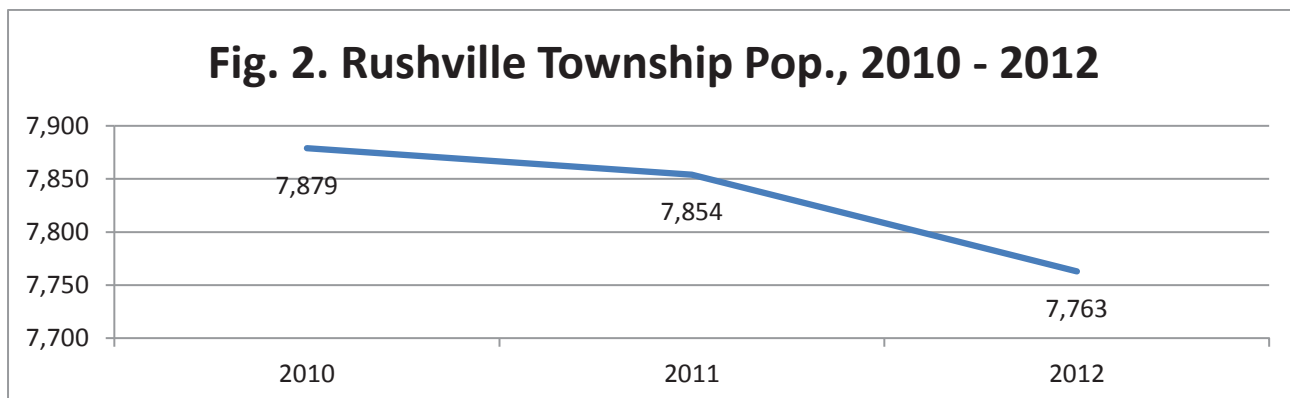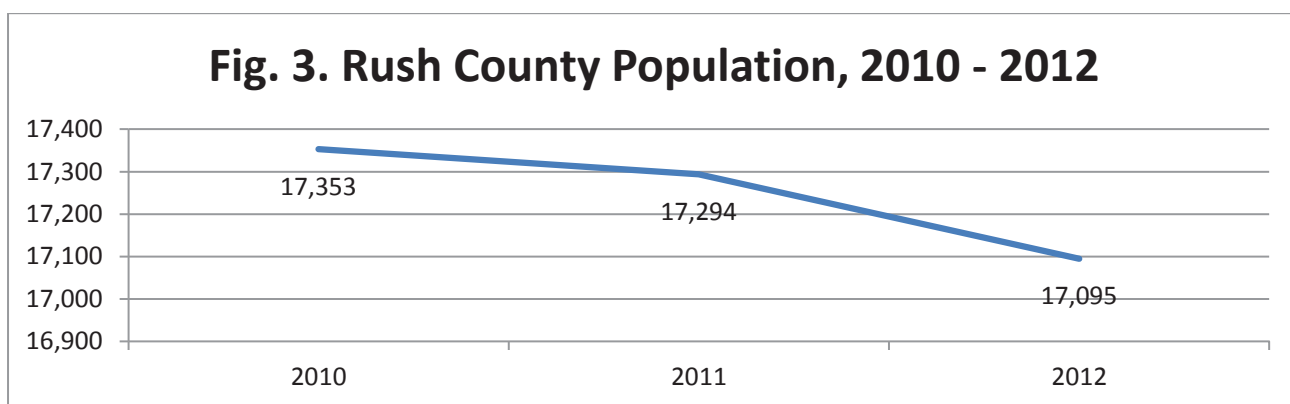
Source: STATS Indiana

While information on Rushville's future population growth is not available, the Indiana Business Research Center predicts that Rush County's population will continue to decline by about 24% over the next four decades. By contrast, Indiana's population is expected to grow over the same time period by approximately 15%.

Fig. 4. Rush County Pop. Projections, 2010 - 2050
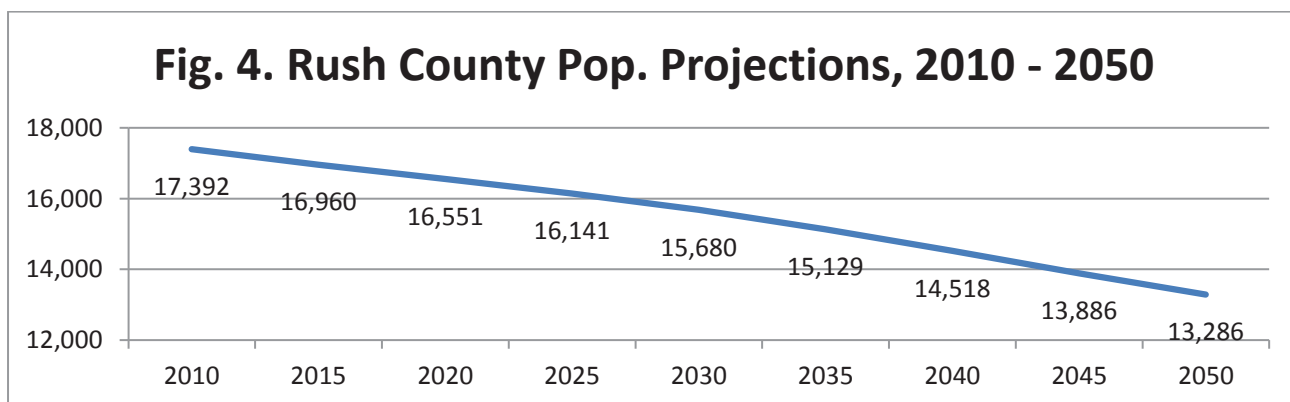
Source: STATS Indiana

Age

The age distribution in a geographic area has important effects on both the local economy and the community structure. According to the most recent American Community Survey data, Rushville's population is distributed similarly to that of Indiana as a whole. Rushville has a higher proportion of older residents (aged 65 and above) than Indiana, 17.0% versus the state's 13.0%. However, Rushville has a proportion of residents aged 55 to 64 that is close to the state's. In addition, the city has a lower concentration of individuals between the "working" ages of 15 to 65, 64.2%, compared to Indiana, 66.5%. Rushville's median age, 39.3 years, is higher than Indiana's, 37.0 years, but lower than Rush County's, 40.6 years. All three areas' median ages have grown over the last twenty years.

Fig. 5. Percentage of Population in Age Group
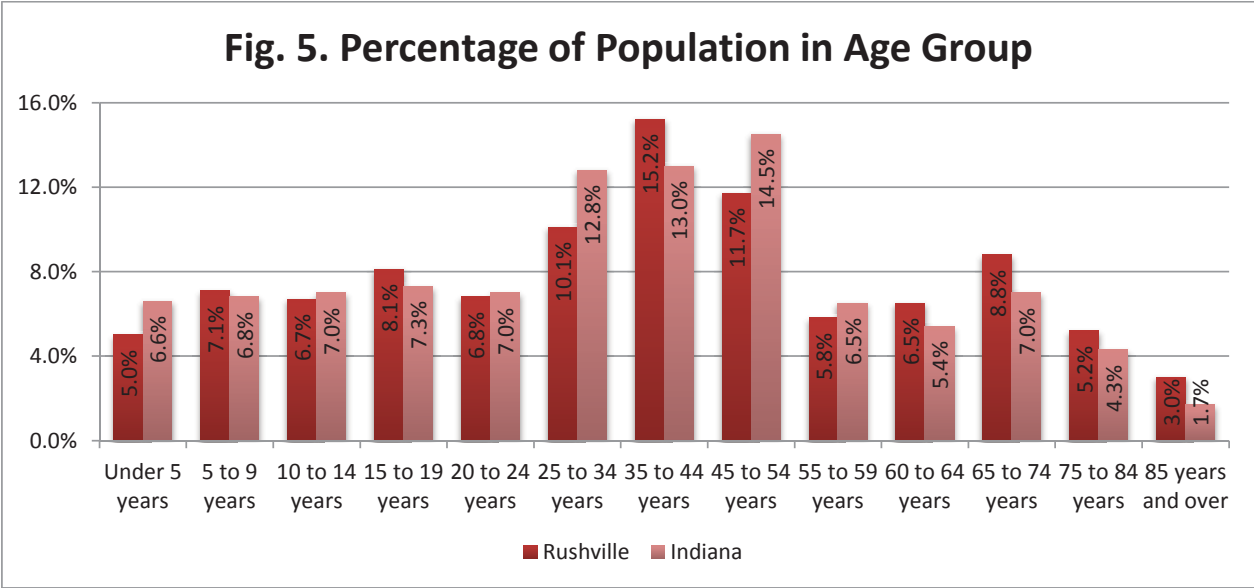
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Fig. 2. Median Age (Years)			
Year	**Rushville**	**Rush County**	**Indiana**
1990	34.9	33.6	32.8
2000	36.7	36.9	35.2
2010	39.3	40.6	37.0

Source: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing

Educational Attainment

The graph below shows the graduation rates for four year cohorts in Rushville's public school district, Rush County Schools, between the 2006-2007 and 2011-2012 academic years. The district's graduation rate has fluctuated in this time period between 89.4% in 2008-2009 and 96.8% in 2011-2012. In all six of these school years, the school district's graduation rate outpaced the state's overall graduation rate

(counting both public and private schools) by between 6.1% (in 2008-2009) and 11.4% (in 2006-2007). Also, since the 2008-2009 academic year, Rush County Schools' graduation rate has grown every year.

Fig. 4. Four Year Cohort Graduation Rates

Year	All Indiana Schools	Rush County Schools
2011-12	88.6%	96.8%
2010-11	87.1%	95.9%
2009-10	85.9%	92.8%
2008-09	83.3%	89.4%
2007-08	79.7%	90.3%
2006-07	78.4%	89.8%

■ All Indiana Schools ■ Rush County Schools
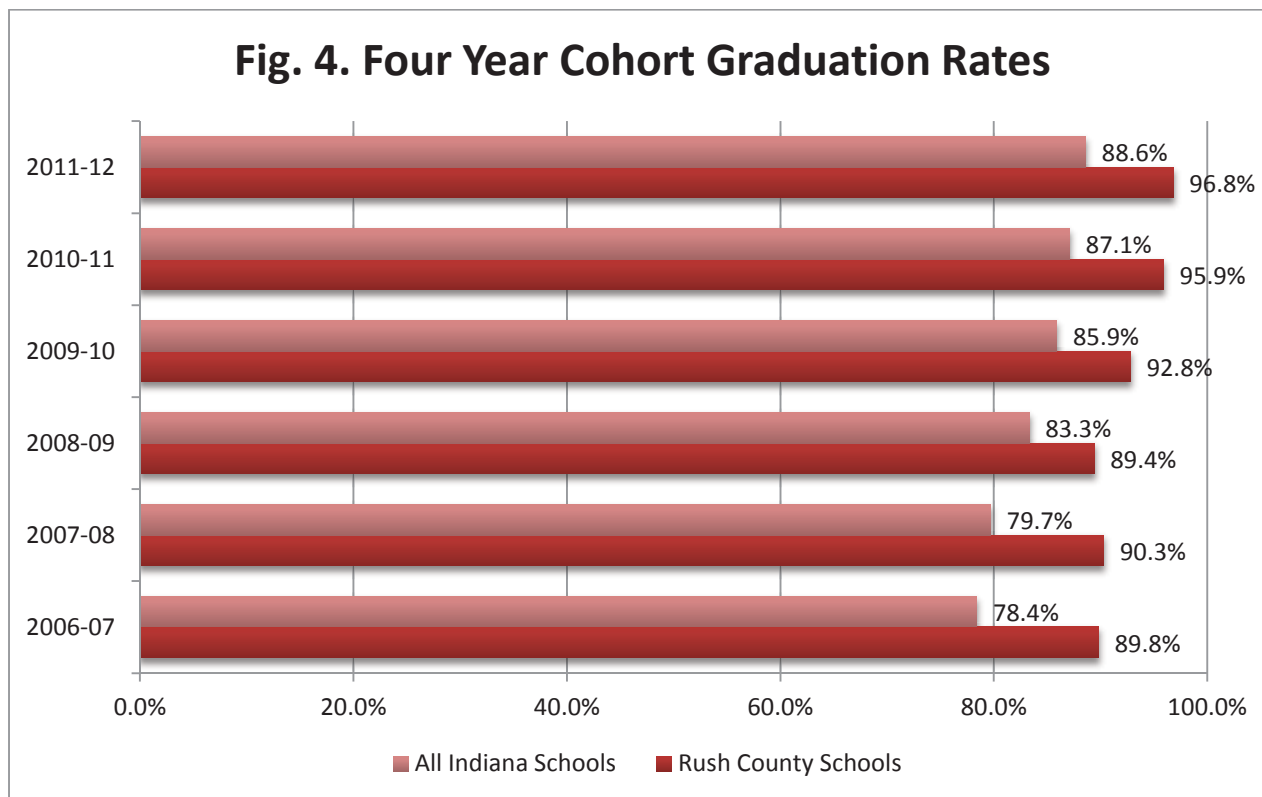
Source: Indiana Department of Education, Compass: School and Corporation Data

Additionally, the Census Bureau provides comparisons of the educational attainment of Rushville, Rush County, and Indiana residents age 25 and older. As shown in the chart below, 83.7% of Rushville residents have at least a high school diploma (including equivalency), a proportion slightly smaller than those of Rush County (87.2%) and Indiana as a whole (86.9%). Rushville also has a similar proportion of its population who did not complete the 9th grade (4.6%) as the county (4.0%) and state (4.2%). However, Rushville and Rush County have a significantly lower percentage of residents with an Associate's degree or higher (16.8% and 19.0%, respectively) compared to Indiana (30.6%).

Fig. 8. Educational Attainment Comparisons

■ Rushville   ■ Rush County   ■ Indiana
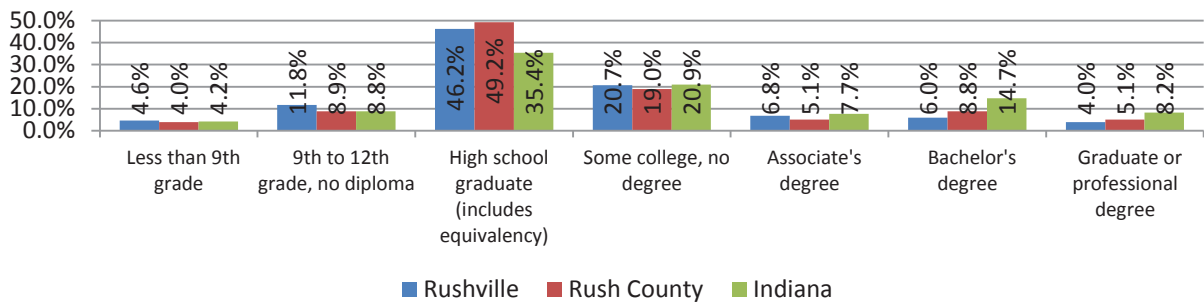
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Poverty

To determine the percentage of people living in poverty in the United States (the poverty rate), the Census Bureau calculates a series of poverty thresholds (or poverty lines) each year. A poverty threshold is defined as the minimum income a family would have to earn to meet its basic needs. The Census Bureau calculates 48 different poverty thresholds based on families' size and the ages of their members. All individuals in these families are counted as being in poverty. It is important to note that the poverty thresholds are applied to the entire country and do not vary geographically. They do not reflect differences in the cost of living or the price of goods and services. As such, poverty figures may overestimate or underestimate the number of people in a given area who cannot afford basic needs.

The graph below shows the percentage of individuals in various age groups who live below the poverty line in Rushville, Rush County, and Indiana. In all five categories, Rushville has a higher poverty rate than the county and state. For instance, 24.6% of Rushville residents under 18 years of age are impoverished, compared to 20.6% of Rush County and 20.9% of Indiana minor residents. Rushville's greatest difference from the county and state poverty rates is in the 18 to 64 year old category. Rushville's poverty rate for those individuals, 20.4%, is 6.0% higher than the county's rate and 6.6% higher than the state's rate.

Fig. 5. Percentage of Age Group in Poverty

Unrelated individuals 15 years and over
- Indiana: 26.8%
- Rush County: 25.0%
- Rushville: 34.2%

65 years and over
- Indiana: 7.4%
- Rush County: 7.1%
- Rushville: 10.8%

18 to 64 years
- Indiana: 13.8%
- Rush County: 14.4%
- Rushville: 20.4%

18 years and over
- Indiana: 12.7%
- Rush County: 12.9%
- Rushville: 18.4%

Under 18 years
- Indiana: 20.9%
- Rush County: 20.6%
- Rushville: 24.6%

■ Indiana ■ Rush County ■ Rushville
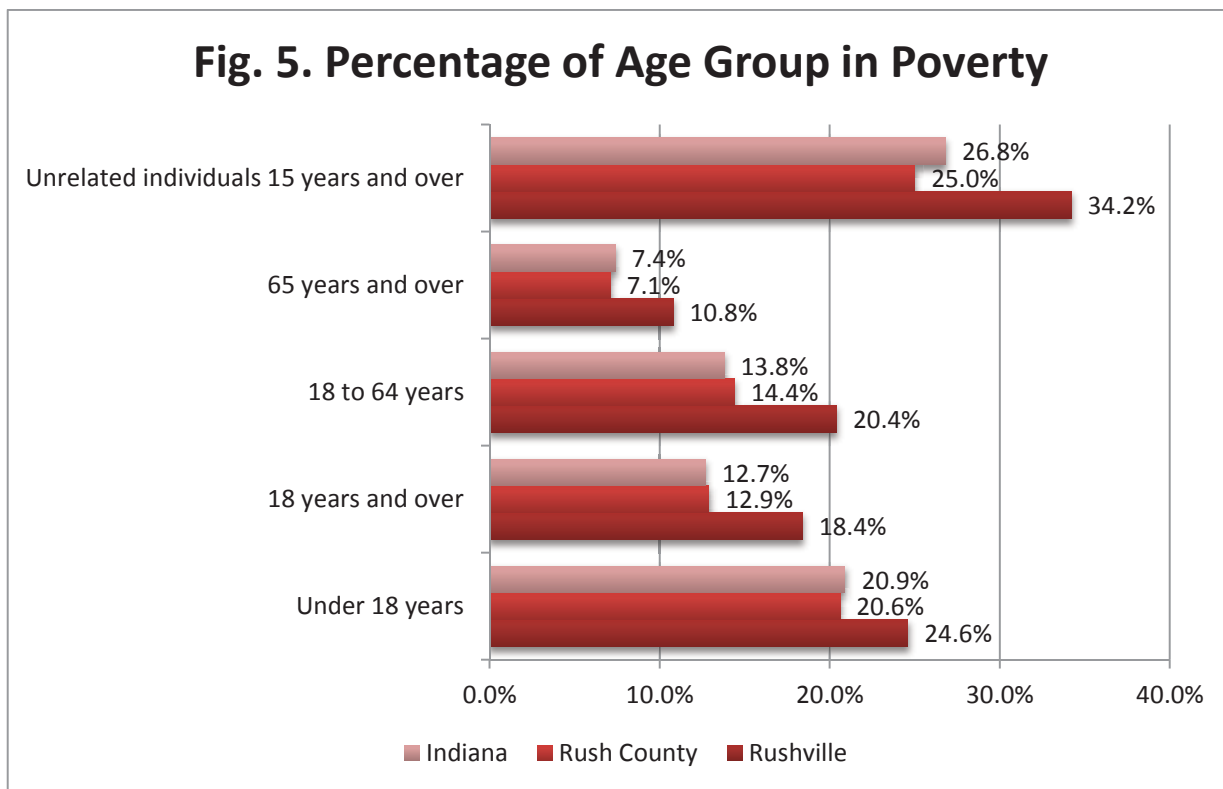
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The Indiana Department of Education provides another way of thinking about a city's poverty: the percentage of students who, due to low family incomes, receive free or reduced-price lunches in the local school district. The graph below shows the percentage of students in Rush County Schools and in all Indiana schools (public and private) who have participated in the free and reduced-price lunch program since the 2005-2006 academic year. For the first three years of this period, and in 2010-2011, Rush County Schools had a slightly lower participation rate than the state as a whole. However, in the other four school years, Rush County Schools had a slightly higher proportion of its students receive free or reduced-price lunches as compared to Indiana overall. Both the school district and the state have seen free and reduced-price lunch enrollment rise since 2011-2012.

Fig. 6. Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Enrollment
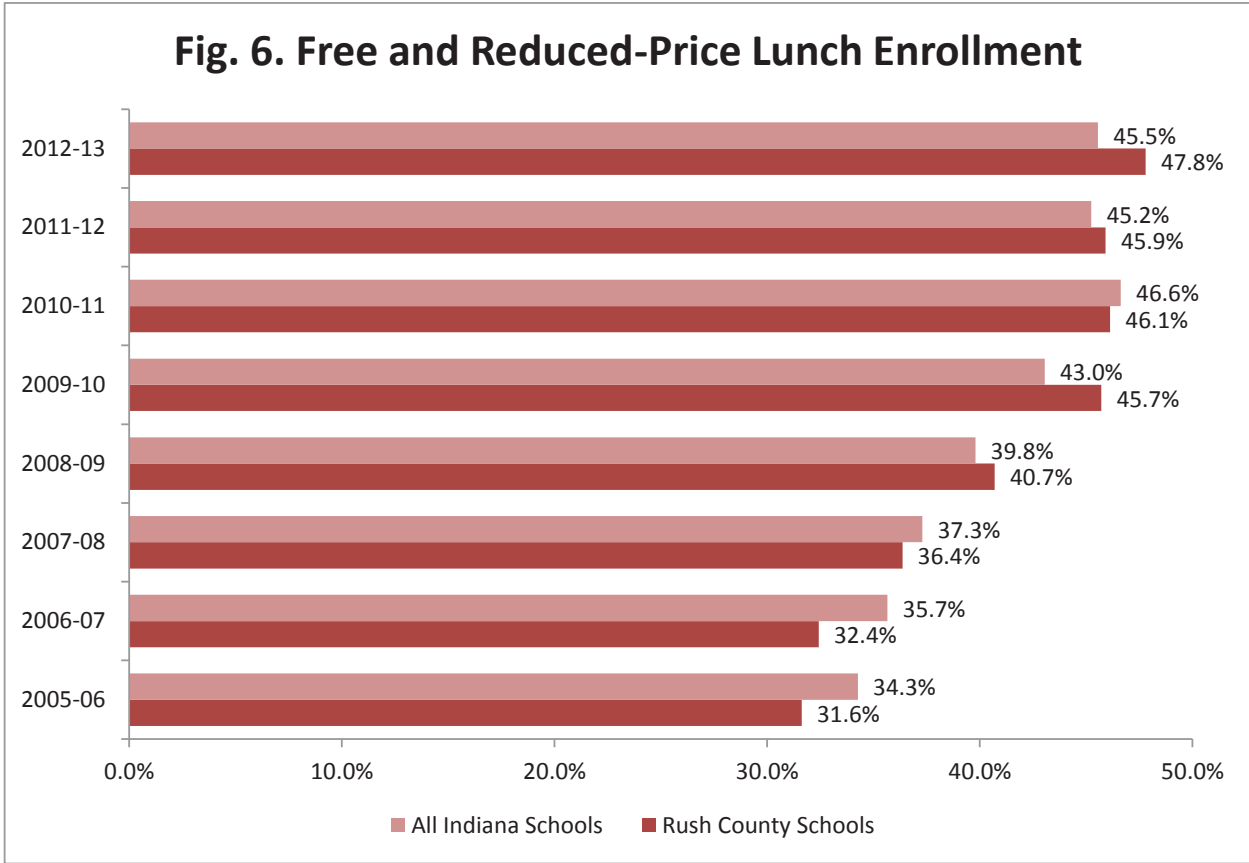
Source: Indiana Department of Education, Compass: School and Corporation Data

Income

The chart below shows the income distribution of households (defined by the Census Bureau as groups of individuals sharing a dwelling, whether or not they are related) in Rushville, Rush County, and Indiana as a whole. The Census Bureau includes all types of income in its calculations, including payments to individuals. As shown below, Rushville's income distribution is more concentrated in lower income brackets than the county's or state's. The majority of Rushville residents (67.0%) make less than $50,000 annually. This is greater than the percentage of Rush County residents and Indiana residents making under $50,000 per year (54.1% and 51.5%, respectively). 96.4% of Rushville residents make under $100,000 per year, compared to 86.8% for Rush County and 83.6% for Indiana. The plurality of Rushville residents (20.7%) earn between $50,000 and $74,999 each year, followed closely by the 19.3% of Rushville residents who make between $25,000 and $34,999 annually.

Fig. 11. Household Income Distribution (2012 US Dollars)

Horizontal bar chart showing household income distribution by category for Indiana (green), Rush County (red), and Rushville (blue). Income categories from top to bottom: $200,000 or more; $150,000 to $199,999; $100,000 to $149,999; $75,000 to $99,999; $50,000 to $74,999; $35,000 to $49,999; $25,000 to $34,999; $15,000 to $24,999; $10,000 to $14,999; Less than $10,000. X-axis ranges from 0.0% to 24.0%.
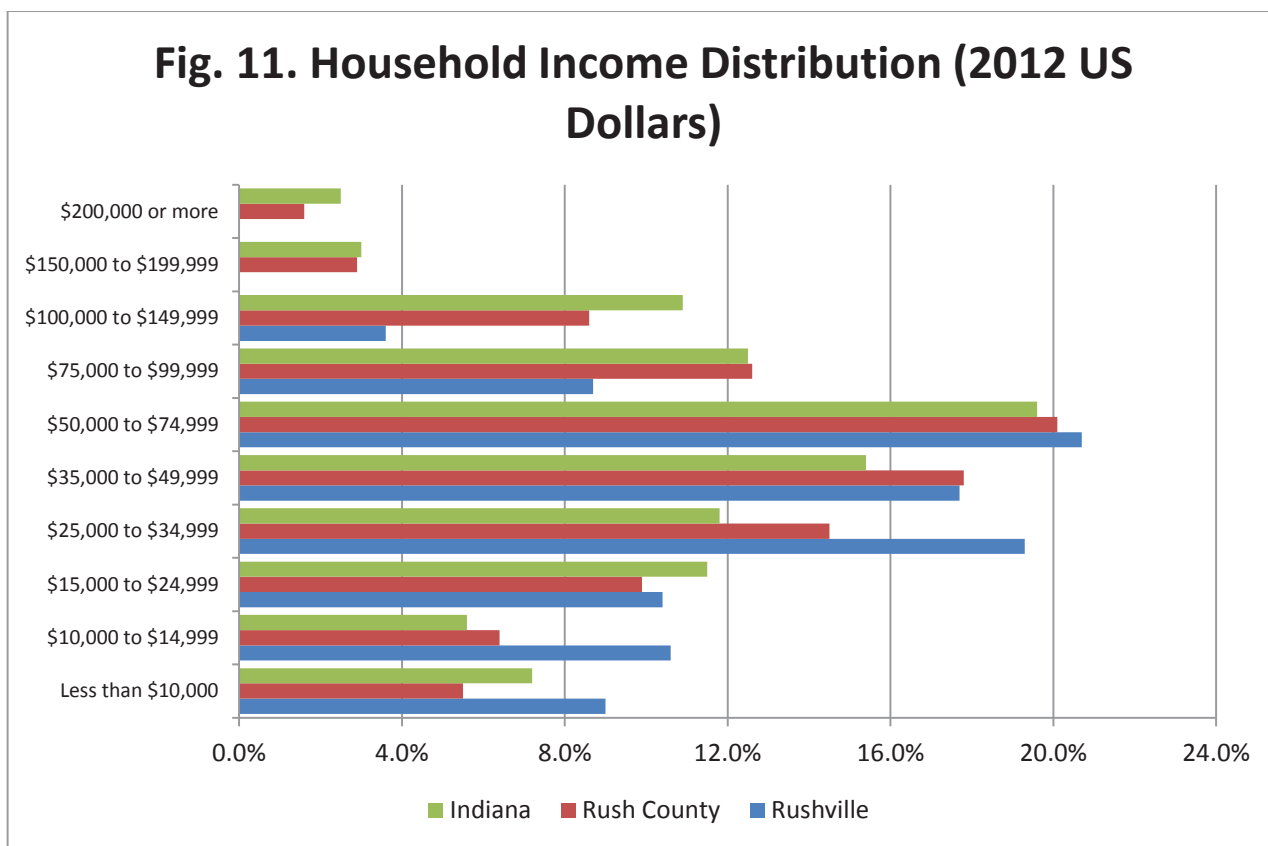
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Over the last twenty years, Rushville has consistently had a median household income lower than Rush County's and Indiana's median household incomes, accounting for inflation. Between 1990 and 2000, Rushville's median household income grew by 2.1% increase. This change was much smaller than the growth that Rush County (13.1%) and Indiana (7.4%) saw to their median incomes. Between 2000 and 2012, Rushville's median household income went down by 14.8%. Rush County experienced a smaller loss, in percentage terms (12.3%), while Indiana performed worse than Rushville (a loss of 15.5%).

Fig. 7. Median Household Income
(2013 US Dollars)

A grouped bar chart showing median household income for Rushville, Rush County, and Indiana across 1990, 2000, and 2012.

1990:
- Rushville: $41,423
- Rush County: $47,176
- Indiana: $54,101

2000:
- Rushville: $42,275
- Rush County: $53,348
- Indiana: $58,123

2012:
- Rushville: $36,025
- Rush County: $46,801
- Indiana: $49,083

Legend: Rushville, Rush County, Indiana
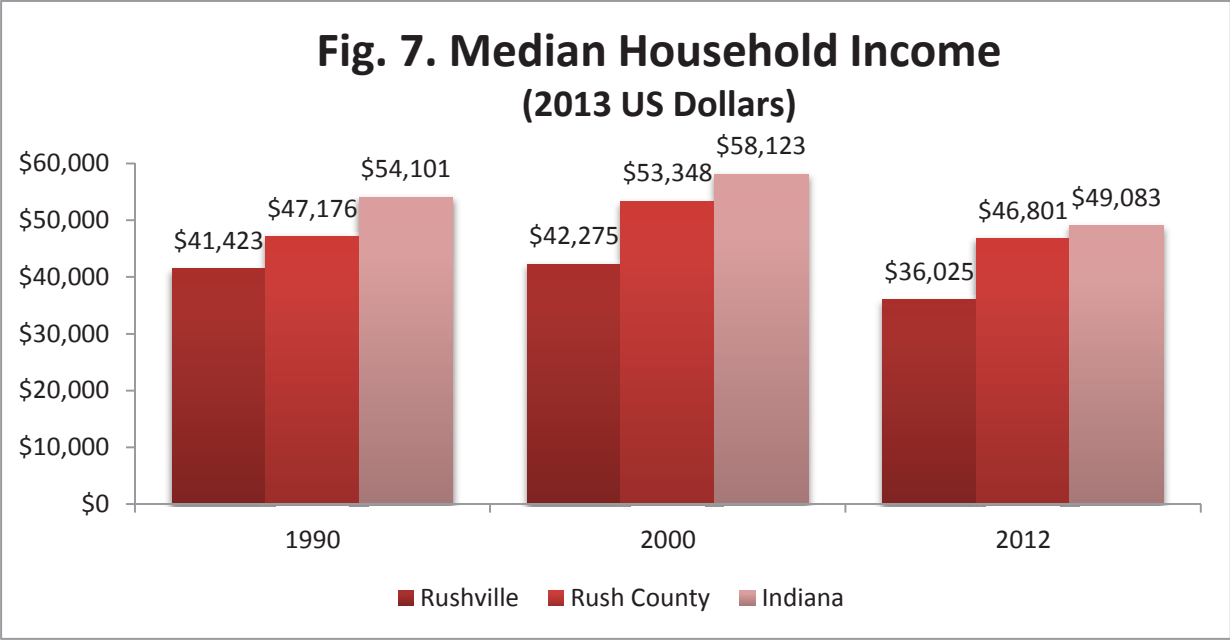
Source: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing; 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Data adjusted for inflation using Bureau of Labor Statistics' CPI Inflation Calculator

Employment

Rushville's employment status and distribution are important determinants for the city's potential economic development and expansion. As shown in the chart below, of Rushville's population age 16 and older, 54% are employed, 7% are unemployed (but seeking work), and 39% are not in the labor force (meaning they are currently neither employed nor seeking work).

Fig. 8. Rushville Employment Distribution

Not in labor force
39%

Employed
54%

Armed Forces
0%
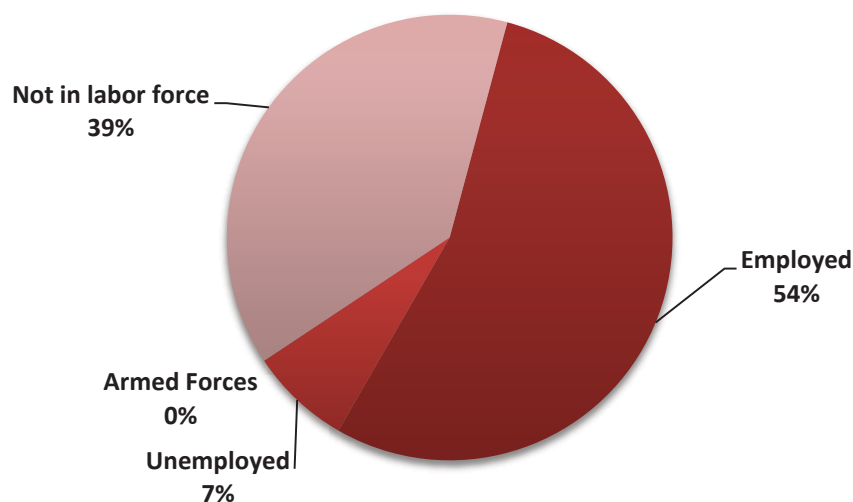
Unemployed
7%

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

As seen below, Rushville's employment distribution is most concentrated in manufacturing, where 27.9% of employed city residents work, followed by retail trade (18.1%) and education and health care (15.7%). Rushville has a higher proportion of its civilian workers employed in the first two industries than the state of Indiana, as well as a higher percentage employed in arts, recreation and accommodation (11.0% versus the state's 8.9%).
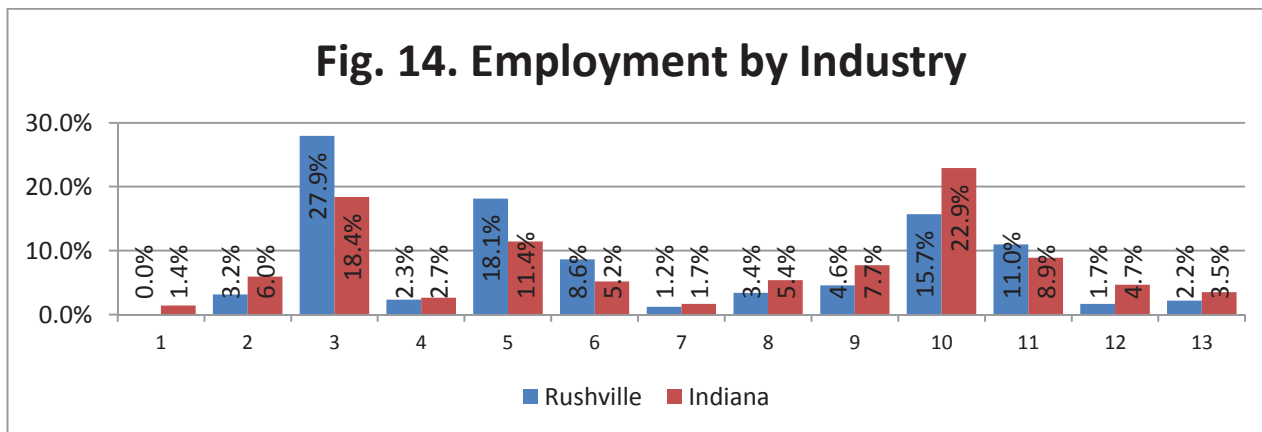
Fig. 14. Employment by Industry

Industry	Rushville	Indiana
1	0.0%	1.4%
2	3.2%	6.0%
3	27.9%	18.4%
4	2.3%	2.7%
5	18.1%	11.4%
6	8.6%	5.2%
7	1.2%	1.7%
8	3.4%	5.4%
9	4.6%	7.7%
10	15.7%	22.9%
11	11.0%	8.9%
12	1.7%	4.7%
13	2.2%	3.5%

Industry Key:

1. *Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining*
2. *Construction*
3. *Manufacturing*
4. *Wholesale trade*
5. *Retail trade*
6. *Transportation and warehousing, and utilities*
7. *Information*
8. *Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing*
9. *Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services*
10. *Educational services, and health care and social assistance*
11. *Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services*
12. *Other services, except public administration*
13. *Public administration*

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Rushville's employment can also be viewed in terms of median annual earnings by industry. The five highest-paid industries in Rushville are, in order, information (a wide-ranging category that could include libraries, publishers, movie theaters, and Internet service providers); transportation and warehousing, and utilities; wholesale trade; manufacturing; and construction. However, except for information, where the city has an advantage of over $30,000, and other services, where Rushville slightly outpaces Indiana, Rushville workers earn less than the state average for each industry.
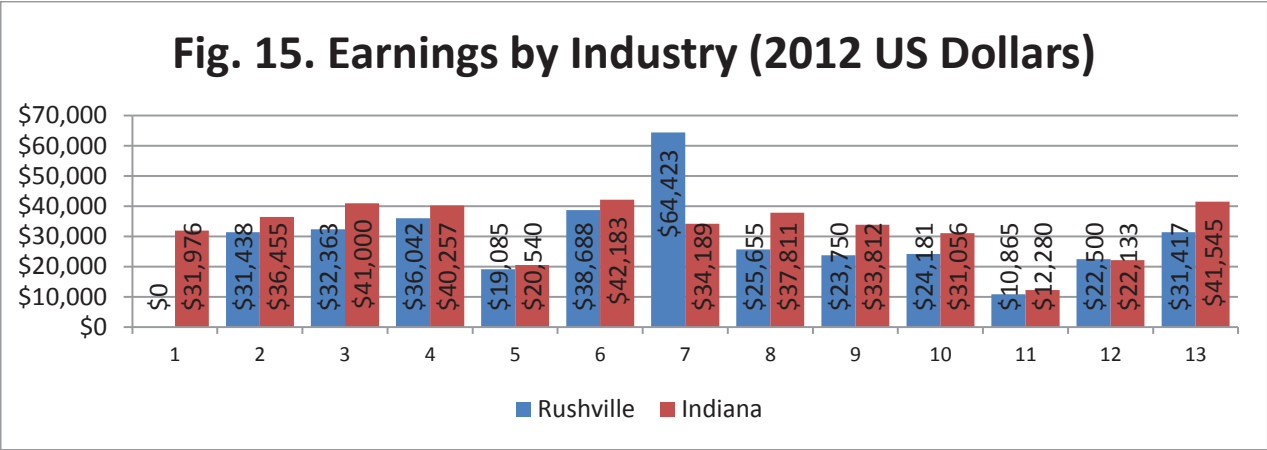
Fig. 15. Earnings by Industry (2012 US Dollars)

Bar chart comparing Rushville (blue) and Indiana (red) earnings by industry, numbered 1–13.

Industry	Rushville	Indiana
1	$0	$31,976
2	$31,438	$36,455
3	$32,363	$41,000
4	$36,042	$40,257
5	$19,085	$20,540
6	$38,688	$42,183
7	$64,423	$34,189
8	$25,655	$37,811
9	$23,750	$33,812
10	$24,181	$31,056
11	$10,865	$12,280
12	$22,500	$22,133
13	$31,417	$41,545

■ Rushville ■ Indiana

Industry Key:
1. *Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining*
2. *Construction*
3. *Manufacturing*
4. *Wholesale trade*
5. *Retail trade*
6. *Transportation and warehousing, and utilities*
7. *Information*
8. *Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing*
9. *Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services*
10. *Educational services, and health care and social assistance*
11. *Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services*
12. *Other services, except public administration*
13. *Public administration*

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Rushville's commuting information can also be important in judging its economic health. 53.2% of Rushville workers are employed in Rush County, while the remaining 46.8% work outside the county. On average, employed Rushville residents travel 22.9 minutes (one way) to get to work.

Fig. 9. Rushville Commuting Patterns	
Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)	22.9
Percent of Population Working in Rush County	53.2%
Percent of Population Working outside Rush County	46.8%
Percent of Population Working outside Indiana	0.0%

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing

As noted earlier, Rushville has had a lower median household income than both Rush County and Indiana since at least 1990. As shown in the graph below, Rushville has also had a lower median owner-occupied home value over this time period. Between 1990 and 2000, Rushville's median housing value grew by 59.6%, outpacing Rush County's (48.7%) and Indiana's (31.7%). However, between 2000 and 2012, Rushville's owner-occupied housing decreased in value by 23.0%, a greater drop than the declines in value for the county (5.5%) and the state (5.0%).

Fig. 14. Median Housing Value
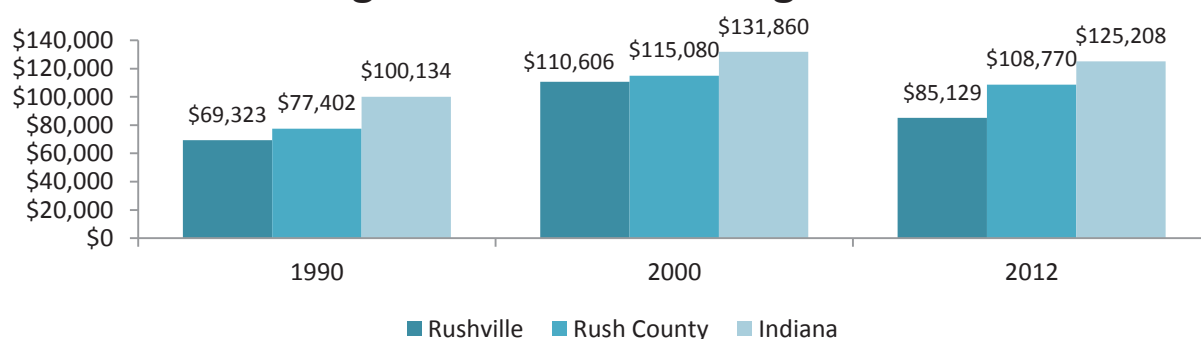
Source: US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Data adjusted for inflation using Bureau of Labor Statistics' CPI Inflation Calculator

The chart below shows the percentage of housing units that are vacant, owner-occupied, and renter-occupied in Rushville, Rush County, and Indiana as a whole. In all three areas, the majority of housing units are owner occupied; however, Rushville has a significantly higher proportion of its housing occupied by renters, 39.7% versus the county's 25.1% and the state's 26.1%. Rushville also has a slightly lower percentage of vacant housing compared to Rush County and Indiana.

Fig. 18. Housing Distribution

	Vacant	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
Rushville	7.8%	52.4%	39.7%
Rush County	9.4%	65.4%	25.1%
Indiana	11.4%	62.6%	26.1%
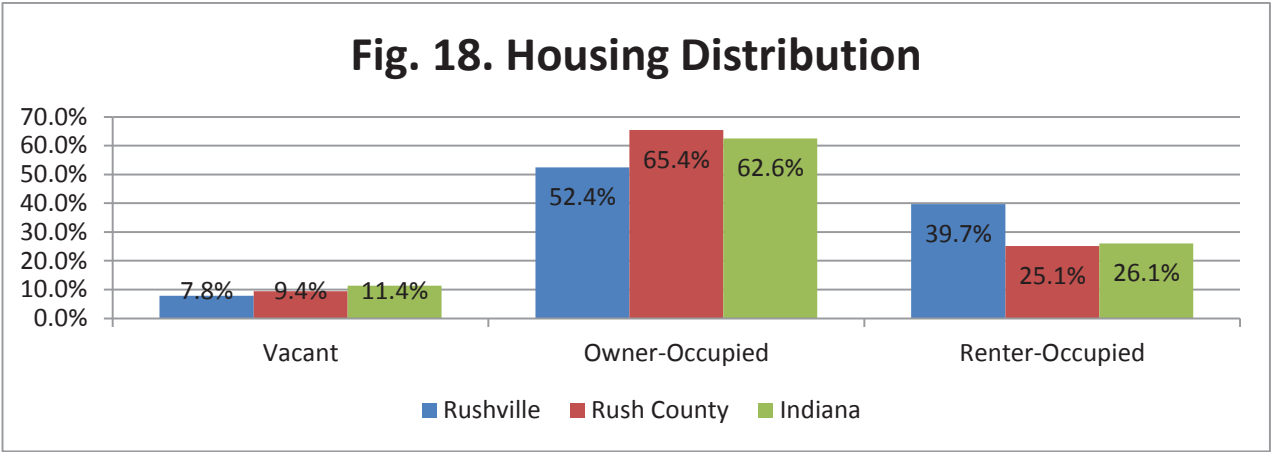
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

SERVICE PROVIDER DIRECTORY

Churches
Faith Baptist Church
602 N. Arthur St.
Rushville, IN 46173

First Presbyterian Church
226 N. Morgan St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Main Street Christian Church
615 N. Main St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Rushville Church of Christ
627 W. 11th St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Rushville Wesleyan Church
802 W. 9th St.
Rushville, IN 46173

St. Paul's United Methodist Church
426 N. Morgan St.
Rushville, IN 46173

St. Mary's Catholic Church
512 N. Perkins St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Education
Benjamin Rush Middle School
1601 N. Sexton St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Rushville Consolidated High School
1201 Lions Path
Rushville, IN 46173

Rushville Elementary East
390 W. 16th St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Rushville Elementary West
410 W. 16th St.
Rushville, IN 46173

St. Mary's Catholic School
226 E. 5th St.
Rushville, IN 46173

The Opportunity School
330 W. 8th St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Healthcare
Rush Memorial Hospital
1300 N. Main St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Public Safety Services
Posey Township Fire Department
131 E. 1st St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Rush County Sheriff
131 E. 1st St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Rushville Fire Department
120 N. Perkins St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Rushville Police Department
270 W. 15th St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Rushville Township Fire House
215 Washington St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Economic Development
Rush County Economic & Community
Development Corporation
210 E. US 52 Suite C
Rushville, IN 46173

Civic and Public Institutions
Rush County Chamber of Commerce
315 N. Main St.
Rushville, IN 46173

Rush County Historical Society
619 N. Perkins St.
PO Box 302
Rushville, IN 46173

Rushville Public Library
130 W. 3rd St.
Rushville, IN 46173

RUSHVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
Project Organization Meeting Minutes
Meeting Date: January 16, 2014

LIST OF ATTENDEES:
Mike Pavey	Mayor, City of Rushville Mayor
John McCane	Executive Director, Rush County ECDC
Carolyn Bunzendahl	Client Services Manager, Rush County ECDC
Sandy Fussner	Executive Director, Rush County Chamber of Commerce
Rex Dillinger	HWC Engineering
Cory Daly	HWC Engineering

This meeting was the project organizational meeting and served as an internal kick-off meeting for the Rushville Comprehensive Plan project. The purpose of the meeting was to review the project process, discuss the proposed project schedule, and the steering committee makeup and meeting dates.

General Summary of the Meeting Discussion
- After general introductions, HWC reviewed the general points of contact for the project. Cory Daly will serve as the Project Manager and will handle most general day to day correspondence.
    - Mayor Pavey will be the main project point of contact for the City.
- The group walked through a general discussion of the project process and an anticipated schedule.
    - The group agreed that an October target for completing the draft plan and beginning the approval process was feasible.
- The meeting proceeded to a discussion of available background documents the HWC team could use to begin the research process. A summary of the available documents the City would like the HWC team to research is listed below:
    - Zoning and ordinance control documents; these should be available from Kevin Tolloty, the Rush County Planning Director.
    - Utility plans and information; the City utility superintendent would be a good resource for this information.
    - The current library plan;
    - Recent work on the EPA brownfields grant; a copy of the draft report was provided by Dan McCane.
    - Rushville's current economic development plan; available from Thayr Ritchie with SDG
    - County GIS information; contact Kathy Pratt for this information
    - Current ADA transition; provided by the City
    - Current Comp Plan; provided by the City
    - Workforce studies; provided by the Rush County ECDC
    - Housing study; contact Eric Frye
    - Facades study
- The role and composition of the Steering Committee was discussed. HWC explained that the Steering Committee would play an integral role, along with the City, in shaping the content of the plan.

- ▪ Ideally Steering Committee members would be willing and able to commit to four scheduled meetings and additional time to review draft versions of the comp plan document.
- ▪ HWC proposed tentative Steering Committee dates in the schedule.
- ▪ The City noted that it would be ideal to have the meetings on a Tuesday on which the Common Council does not meet, likely the second Tuesday of the month.
- ▪ Meetings can be held in the Council Chambers.
- ▪ Mayor Pavey will consult with possible Steering Committee members to determine the best possible time for everybody to meet.
- • The conversation then turned to local issues and opportunities that the project team should be aware of as they begin project research and planning. Below is a summary of the items discussed:
  - ▪ The Rush County Chamber of commerce is 'brand new' it has been active for the past 1.5 years after a long hiatus due to funding.
  - ▪ The North Industrial Park is well underway and represents a big opportunity for the City and region.
  - ▪ 16th Street is/will be a new growth area for the City due to new infrastructure construction taking place. The City is in the process of beginning three other construction projects including:
    - o Hwy 52 improvements from Rushville to Hwy 3
    - o Water treatment plant expansion
  - ▪ Hubler Auto and Farm Credit Services are both expanding their operations and facilities.
  - ▪ Solidifying the relationship with Ivy Tech would be a great opportunity for the region.
  - ▪ The City is working to provide EMS services through the Fire Department.
    - o This places a potential strain on the existing City/hospital relationship (County Hospital)
  - ▪ A new K to Success Education Committee has been formed.
    - o This is a cooperative effort between the Chamber, ECDC, and School Corporation.
  - ▪ There is a definite 'brain drain' in Rushville. Students graduate, go to college, and leave the community.
  - ▪ The new transfer station is a current hot button issue.
  - ▪ There has been a resurgence of the Chamber and ECDC relationship.
  - ▪ There is a general overall 'positive spirit' taking place in the community right now due to recent efforts and developments.
    - o The group discussed that it would be ideal to capture this momentum and find ways to incorporate it into implementation of the comp plan initiatives.
  - ▪ The Grand Prix Road Race last year was a huge success.
  - ▪ The City is in the process of implementing a micro loan program using USDA funds.
    - o So far this program has been helpful in the startup of three new small businesses.
  - ▪ The St. Patrick's Day party has turned into one of the most successful in the state, bringing between 700-1,000 people together.
  - ▪ The City is in early development of a marketing/branding initiative
    - o It would be ideal to develop the comp plan document and website around this developing campaign.
  - ▪ A CFF grant is being used to revitalize the booker T. Washington School Community Center.
  - ▪ One area of concern the project team needs to be aware is the recent water rate
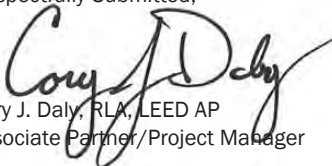
increase – these are helping to fund CSO improvements.

Action Steps
1. HWC to follow up on the background information leads and collect information for the research portion of the project.
2. The City is going to develop a list of potential Steering Committee Members.
3. The City is going to finalize the preferred day and time for Steering Committee meetings, HWC will finalize the proposed project schedule based on those days.
4. HWC will provide the City with a letter of invitation for the Steering Committee.
5. HWC will make contact with the group developing the branding campaign to get examples of graphic styles to use for the website and the plan document.

The next progress meeting was not scheduled but it is anticipated that ongoing coordination would commence immediately. If there are any corrections or additions to these minutes, please notify the preparer in writing within 5 business days.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cory J. Daly, RLA, LEED AP
Associate Partner/Project Manager

cc: Project File, Attendees, Scott Burgins, Claire Linnemeier

City of Rushville Comprehensive Plan Update

Steering Committee Meeting #1 Minutes
Meeting Date: February 25, 2014 – Rushville Council Chambers

The first Steering Committee meeting for the Rushville Comprehensive Plan project was held on the evening of February 25, 2014. The purpose of the meeting was to kick off the Rushville Comprehensive Plan project and to provide a general overview of the planning purpose, process, and timeline. This meeting also included facilitated conversations and exercises aimed at establishing a baseline understanding of the constraints and opportunities which need to be considered during the plan. Below is a summary of the proceedings.

1. **General Introductions and Roles**
   - Consultant Team Members
     - Cory Daly – HWC Engineering, 317-379-2634, cdaly@hwcengineering.com
     - Dan Syrus – HWC Engineering, 317-347-3663 x 219, dsyrus@hwcengineering.com
     - Rex Dillinger – HWC Engineering, 317-796-4615, rexdillinger@sbcglobal.net
     - Scott Burgins – SDG, 800-939-2449, sburgins@sdg.us
     - Lauren Haney – SDG, 800 -939 -2449, lmhaney@umail.iu.edu

   - Steering Committee Members
     Each Steering Committee member was asked to introduce him or herself and to provide a brief summary of who they are. Below is a summary of those in attendance:
     - David Bane - north side resident
     - Josh Dwenger - property owner
     - Larry Copley - retired police officer
     - John Williams - Superintendent, Rush County Schools
     - Mike Pavey – Mayor, City of Rushville
     - Sandy Fussner – Executive Director, Rush County Chamber of Commerce
     - Paul Barada – Board Chairman, Barada Associates; Board of School Trustee
     - Bill Herdrich – Herdrich Oil Company, APC Member
     - Jessica Miller – Rushville City Council Student Liaison; President, Student Council
     - Jim Huston – Retired from manufacturing, Rushville Historic Board
     - David Pane - Business owner

2. Icebreaker

After introductions the design team launched the steering committee into an icebreaker exercise to help gain an understanding of the committee's expectations for the comprehensive plan project. The exercise was a facilitated conversation aimed at answering the question 'What do you want from this plan?' A brief summary of the results of this conversation follow:

- Realistic vision—feasible, workable
- Problem identification broken down into goals, this plan needs to be bite size pieces that can be accomplished in a reasonable timeframe.
- Roadmap to where we are headed/want to be
- Need a foundation, nothing will happen if there isn't a strong economy
    - Focus on foundation of economy)
- Stop population decline through:
    - **Jobs** – that will uplift the economy (i.e., high tech, medical manufacturing, jobs that require post high-school training)
    - **Housing** - 120-220 thousand range, people with more than a high-school diploma, quality housing)
    - **Increase live-ability**/ desire to reside in Rushville
- Needs to be favorable for youth.

Additionally, the committee was also asked if they had any fears about the plan or the process, here is what was said:

- It will sit on the shelf, not be used.
- It won't take into consideration what the youth want or make people want to be in Rushville
- General concerns about what happened with previous comp plan (outdated)

3. Demographic Profile

At the conclusion of the icebreaker exercise, the consultant team presented the results of the demographic profile prepared for the plan. The committee agreed that the findings of the profile accurately represented the Current conditions in Rushville. A copy of the demographic profile will be made available on the project website at www.cityofrushvillecompplan.org. Following is a brief summary of the conversation which occurred at the conclusion of the presentation of the demographic profile:

- A majority of people see this as a farming community even though manufacturing is the largest employer—we have to change the mindset. The farming community feels that it pulls a lot of weight because of this mindset.
- We need to build a tax and employment base, need to build a foundation and that foundation comes from industry.

- Convince people that future success isn't just from farming; it's manufacturing. We need to help community come to terms that Rushville is more than a farm community.
- Concerns about employment by industry—manufacturing data is a threatening number because it threatens many people's self-image.
- The plan will also need to focus on service industries. The City could fill up the central business area (downtown) with service areas if it wanted to.
- Technical services are important.
- Attract jobs that require skills
  - Emerson as an example, most of employees live out of town
  - **Land use plan discourages residential development**
- Need to save Downtown by encouraging more service businesses.

4. **Visioning Exercise**

   After discussion of the demographics the steering committee was asked to participate in a visioning exercise to help identify the constraints and opportunities within the community. For this exercise the committee was asked locate three specific areas within their community, namely, the area the think is the most unattractive, the area which they think is the most attractive, and the area which has the most future opportunity. After they had completed the exercise the results were shared with the group. Following is a summary of the exercise results:

Attractive Areas
- Park Boulevard
- North Main St.
- 14th down to 10th
- Nature Center (across from junior high)
- School campus
- North Memorial Park, Riverside Park (x2)
- Subdivisions: Lawton's Fields Edition, River crest, Colorado drive (newest), Wilson estates, Sugar Hill
- Emerson's campus
- Victorian buildings - Some need to be occupied and/or restored
- Lebanon, Ohio was mentioned as an example of an attractive downtown.
- North side of 2nd street
- Rush County Courthouse

Unattractive Areas

- Approach to city limits between SR 44 and SR52 (west side) — nothing there, dilapidated housing, vacant lots, first impression is "what a dump"
  - Mentioned multiple times
  - This is a potential GATEWAY to the city.
- Main St. between 5th and Water St.—horrible bottleneck for shipping traffic, really unattractive
  - Additional area on this comment – Ft. Wayne Rd. on NE side
- It was mentioned that "outsiders think the city is nicer than residents think"
- Durbin hotel - 2nd and Morgan
- West side dilapidated trailer park
- East side pig/cattle farm. In addition, vacant lot.
- South side SR 3/52 area
- All entrances to Rushville
- Downtown abandoned buildings—201, Main Source Bank, and Courthouse are only attractive buildings
- Area by senior citizen center—rail spur,
- North of 3rd on west side
- City limits on SR 52 to senior citizen center—building on Arthur, semi parking lot, dilapidated homes
- Around animal shelter and sewer plant

Future Opportunity Areas

- Shovel ready industrial area, North Side Industrial Park
- Self-image, we are better than we think we are, need to change the local mindset
- 16th St for housing, north end of city to west side of city
  - In process of building road, 70 acres south and 80 north
- Cherry St. extension (truck traffic, commercial development)
  - Attaches two industrial area
- North of 16th St. extension for Ivy Tech or IU post-secondary campus?
  - Only have distance learning opportunities right now
- Need to do something with buildings downtown, need to put something new in place now so that in the future our only option isn't to tear them down
- Airport Rd., near Colorado between SR 44/52 for residential development
- Amphitheater (area floods) Riverside Park
  - 6 concert series in summer, draws 1000-2000 people
  - Excitement about events and possibility of expanding
- Want more people to come to Rushville

Appendix

Rushville Comprehensive Plan   Page **5** of **5**
Steering Committee Meeting #1 – Minutes
Meeting Date: February 25, 2014

General Concerns Discussed During Visioning Exercise

- People resent high school consolidation from 1968 – that was a long time ago but we will hear about it.
- There are (unofficial) opinion leaders who live outside of city limits and influence the way people think.
  - Larger farmers, Rushville National Bank
- Didn't annex nicer subdivisions because of county opposition, septic's failed and there are real infrastructure needs.
- In past the City gave incentives away to get people to do something, but didn't put any leverage behind it.
- The Steering Committee wants to see comments on website to help provide guidance because they don't know what everyone wants, educational for committee

5. Final Notes and Discussion

- The Steering Committee wants to see comments on website to help provide guidance because they don't know what everyone wants, educational for committee.
  - Posted comments need to be filtered before they hit the website for the public to view
- Most recent senior class is 186, average at 140-150
- Old gambling and horseracing town as well as furniture making (where many of the detailed homes came from)
- March 11 @ 5pm Downtown Revitalization Town Hall meeting
- The next Steering Committee meeting was tentatively scheduled for March 25.
  - That date falls during Spring Break and will need to be rescheduled.

City of Rushville Comprehensive Plan Update

Steering Committee Meeting #2 – Meeting Minutes
Meeting Date: March 31, 2014 – Rushville Council Chambers

The second Steering Committee meeting for the Rushville Comprehensive Plan project was held on the evening of March 31, 2014. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss more detailed ideas for individual plan elements and establish a set of goals that the steering committee would like to see included in the plan. Most of the meeting time was devoted to completing an exercise aimed at establishing a set of specific project goals relating to individual topical portions of the plan. Below is a summary of the proceedings.

1. **General Introductions and Roles**
   1. Consultant Team Members
      o Cory Daly – HWC Engineering, 317-379-2634, cdaly@hwcengineering.com
      o Dan Syrus – HWC Engineering, 317-347-3663 x 219, dsyrus@hwcengineering.com
      o Scott Burgins – SDG, 800-939-2449, sburgins@sdg.us

2. **Interim Survey Results Discussion**
      o The consultant team presented interim public survey results and explained that the survey results are used to help identify trends in public opinion and to help inform and validate decisions which are made by the Steering Committee.
      o The results presented at this meeting represented a small sampling of the final results which will be made available to the Steering Committee upon completion of the survey period on April 18, 2014.
      o Overall, the trends seem to be positive with many of the respondents showing support for new development within the community.
      o There is also an overall spirit of loyalty to Rushville and an overall view of this being a good community.
      o There is also a trend of people recognizing that the City needs to offer more housing, commercial, and entertainment options for people.
      o Complete survey results, with accompanying comments, will be distributed to the Steering Committee at the end of the survey period.
      o A condensed overview of the results will be made available to the general public following Steering Committee review.

3. Goal Setting Exercise

1. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to working through a goal setting exercise. The purpose of the exercise was to establish a list of priority items, asking the question of **"what you want done"** to the Steering Committee, for six key comprehensive plan topical areas. The areas discussed during the exercise included:
   1. Transportation Infrastructure
   2. Economic Development
   3. Parks and Natural Resources
   4. Neighborhoods and Housing
   5. Utility Infrastructure
   6. Downtown

Below is a summary of the responses given by the Steering Committee for each category.

1. **Transportation Infrastructure** (Roads, Bridges, Sidewalks, Trails, etc.)
   a. Complete the West Side Connector project (bypass).
   b. Complete the S.R. 3 Connector (between I-70 & I-74).
   c. Develop a shared-use trail network throughout the community, including connector sidewalk.
   d. Complete the Cherry Street connector project.
   e. Complete an inventory and prioritization of local road and sidewalk improvements.
   f. Develop expanded options for public transit within the city.

2. **Economic Development** (Businesses, Jobs, Services, Incentives, etc.)
   a. Conduct a review and revision of the zoning and building code.
   b. Develop a marketing plan for economic development and business prospects.
   c. Work with Rush County to draft and pass an innkeepers tax.
   d. Develop a new/better internet presence and city branding image.
   e. Identify and actively recruit employers providing local jobs (residents working in Rushville) and increase in-commuting to Rushville employers.
   f. Develop a local investment/incentive plan to encourage and promote entrepreneurial development.
   g. Identify and actively recruit/develop entertainment businesses and/or facilities.

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Steering Committee Meeting #2 – Meeting Minutes
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    h. Coordinate promotional plans for big events (such as the Concert Series) with more local shops and restaurants.

    i. Focus on actively recruiting and/or promoting the North Industrial Park – fill it up.

    j. Develop and/or recruit more higher education and workforce development training opportunities for residents.

    k. Actively recruit and develop commercial business opportunities for business providing goods and services to meet resident's daily needs (so they don't have to leave town to shop).

    l. Support and facilitate the Rush County Library expansion downtown.

3. **Parks and Natural Resources** (Parks, Rivers, Woodlands, Wetlands, etc.)

    a. Develop and/or promote more activities which engage residents and visitors with unique natural features such as wooded areas (trails, etc.)

    b. Construct a bark park (possibly in park on Ft. Wayne Road).

    c. Develop and support plans for southern Riverside Park expansion

    d. Connect parks and other natural features to the rest of the city and/or trail system.

    e. Develop a camping facility within the city.

    f. Develop a sports park and/or improved sporting facilities (regional draw for visitors).

    g. Develop programs and/or facilities which help residents achieve fitness, wellness, and an active lifestyle.

    h. Promote the canoe launch and provide for a defined exit point downstream.

    i. Improve trail safety and access for hours extending beyond dusk (improved lighting, etc.).

    j. Develop and support additional parks programming such as athletic events, camps, and other recreational and fitness programs.

    k. Focus on the growth of the Summer Concert Series (attendance and performances).

4. **Neighborhoods and Housing**

    a. Focus on code enforcement

    b. Develop and/or fund homeowner assistance program to help with small repairs (micro-loans, local bank partnerships, etc.)

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    c.   Organize and promote consistent and regular community clean-up days.

    d.   Develop a landlord and tenant outreach and education program.

    e.   Focus on improvements to the city gateways.

    f.   Develop plans for future housing development along the completed 16th Street corridor, focus on market-rate multi-family and young professional type housing options.

    g.   Support ongoing neighborhood revitalization efforts such as the new vacant building tear down program.

    h.   Develop a neighborhood action plan which focuses on needs and actions for specific neighborhoods (look to Muncie plan as an example).

5. **Utility Infrastructure** (Water, Sewer, Cable, Telephone, Internet, Mobile)

    a.   Make high speed internet more accessible and more affordable throughout the community.

    b.   Support continued efforts at improving overall community stormwater quantity and quality issues. Develop plans to identify and resolve specific 'hot spots'

    c.   Continue to support combined sewer overflow improvements.

    d.   Develop plan to attract more than one cellular service provider to Rushville.

    e.   Develop an inventory and long term plan to fund replacement of aging 'invisible infrastructure' (water lines, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, etc.).

    f.   Develop and inventory of city facilities and a transition plan for existing 'institutional knowledge' from long-time employees to be formally documented.

6. **Downtown** (Storefronts, Businesses, Buildings, Streetscape, etc.)

    a.   Focus on utilization of existing building upper stories.

    b.   Make improvements to the streetscape (curbs, sidewalks, furnishings, plantings, etc.)

    c.   Develop and promote a downtown event space (for entertainment, banquets, etc.).

    d.   Develop and/or promote a strategy to encourage more service oriented businesses to locate downtown.

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    e. Develop a building rehabilitation and business development program.

    f. Provide additional centralized parking spaces.

    g. Make downtown a 'point of interest' or a destination (look at Dream Walk results).

    h. Support plans for the redevelopment of the Princess theater into a multi-use entertainment/community event venue.

    i. Support/promote more arts and cultural activities downtown – expand the Artisan Market concept.

    j. Inventory the occupancy, use, and condition of existing commercial buildings.

    k. Support/promote the Durbin Development project.

City of Rushville Comprehensive Plan Update

Steering Committee Meeting #3 Minutes
Meeting Date: May 27, 2014 – Rushville Council Chambers

The third Steering Committee meeting for the Rushville Comprehensive Plan was held on the evening of May 27, 2014. The purpose of the meeting was to formally present a summary of the survey results, provide the opportunity for additional input from the Steering Committee on the goal exercise, discuss additional recommendations for City Economic Development goals, discuss the recommended critical sub areas, and to discuss existing and future land use for the City of Rushville. Below is a summary of the proceedings.

LIST OF ATTENDEES:
- Consultant Team Members
  - Cory Daly – HWC Engineering, 317-379-2634, cdaly@hwcengineering.com
  - Dan Syrus – HWC Engineering, 317-347-3663 x 219, dsyrus@hwcengineering.com
  - Rex Dillinger – HWC Engineering, 317-796-4615, rexdillinger@sbcglobal.net
  - Scott Burgins – SDG, 800-939-2449, sburgins@sdg.us

- Steering Committee Members
  - Mike Pavey – Mayor, City of Rushville
  - Bill Herdrich – Herdrich Oil Company, APC Member
  - David Bane - north side resident
  - Carolyn Bunzendahl – Rush Co. E.C.D.C
  - Gary Cameron – Property Owner
  - Sandy Fussner – Executive Director, Rush County Chamber of Commerce
  - Jessica Miller – Rushville City Council Student Liaison; President, Student Council
  - Bryant Miehoff – Ball State Student
  - Jim Huston – Retired from manufacturing, Rushville Historic Board
  - Paul Barada – Board Chairman, Barada Associates; Board of School Trustee
  - Michele King – Property Owner
  - Josh Dwenger - Property Owner
  - Larry Copley - retired police officer

GENERAL MINUTES FROM THE DISCUSSION:
The meeting started out with a brief summary of the survey results. It was the consensus of the group that the results were the best anyone has seen in quite a while and that Rushville should be congratulated on everyone's participation. The overall vibe of the survey was that most people who live in Rushville love their city, but they also think it is time to make some major improvements in the city to make a better place to live and work. There is an overall positive tone toward the city, but most people think

downtown is the most important piece to the success of the city's revitalization. Having more entertainment and dining options within the city would also help create a better sense of place for Rushville. There were several good points made during the meeting, but one major point that was mentioned by a steering committee member was the fact that the community has to grow, and that the trend in neighborhood development needs to increase. If the housing issue can be addressed and development begins to increase, the second area of focus would be more middle class income jobs that will improve employment prospects at all levels. One major questions that came from tonight's discussion was – What opportunities does Rushville have to capture more people to live and work in the city? The steering committee would like this question answered as part of this comprehensive plan.

Following the survey result discussion, SDG gave a brief summary of the city's economic development goals. As part of this discussion, the steering committee wanted to know if the county had a focus on economic development and does it overlap with the city's current vision. A recommendation that came out of tonight's discussion was to take control of a 2 mile fringe around the existing city limits. In 2004, a one mile buffer was looked at as part of the comprehensive plan, but everyone agreed at tonight's meeting that a one mile fringe would be more appropriate for the city at this time. Another topic that emerged from tonight's discussion was the need for a future land use map as part of this comprehensive plan.

Immediately following the economic development discussion, the steering committee participated in a land use exercise. For the most part, the steering committee agreed that the existing land use map fell in line with what the city is doing, but also agreed that this map needed to be updated. There is a need for community to growth, but it is not always as easy to determine the location of that growth. It was mentioned by the steering committee that the main reason planning happens in Rushville is due to were farmers are willing to sell their land for development opportunities. The city would like to focus on the Cherry Street corridor for future development opportunities. They also need to look at their existing infrastructure to make sure it is currently adequate and capable to support future county residential opportunities. On another note, the residential zone in the upper northwest portion of the city might be better suited as a PUD. The steering committee also mentioned that the APC was discussing the option to run city water out to Pioneer. The steering committee also brought up the topic on type of housing within the fringe, and they mentioned that they would like to see homes in the $150's to $250's come to the new development area.

This concludes the meeting minutes.

HWC
ENGINEERING

SDg
planning & research solutions

City of Rushville Comprehensive Plan Update

Rush County ECDC Focus Group Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: April 14, 2014 – Rushville ECDC Offices, 210 E. US 52, Suite C

The focus group meeting was held to help develop additional ideas and a deeper understanding of economic development opportunities in Rushville. The results of this meeting will be used by the consultant team as initial drafts of plan recommendations are prepared. Below is a brief summary of the meeting.

1. **Attendees**
   - John McCane – Executive Director, Rush County ECDC
   - Carolyn Bunzendahl – Client Services Manager, Rush County ECDC
   - Cory Daly – HWC Engineering, 317-379-2634, cdaly@hwcengineering.com
   - Scott Burgins – SDG, 800-939-2449, sburgins@sdg.us

2. **General Summary of Meeting Conversation**
   - 2013 was a great growth year for Rushville with many significant investments coming from new and expanded business enterprises.
   - Unemployment in Rushville has been best in Region 6 for the last 6+ months. It is the best it has been since May of 2005.
   - One major focus of the comp plan should be building community – how do we get people to want to come back to Rushville?
       - A few ideas are being circulated, including:
           - Develop internship opportunities for students to come back home. This has been a recent focus of the K to Success Committee
   - Another fundamental question the City needs to answer is how to get private investment to take a risk.
   - If Rushville develops the amenities it will go a long way towards improving quality of life and attracting/retaining residents in the community.
   - Downtown redevelopment is critical in Rushville and two recently proposed projects (Durbin Development and Princess Theater) will be a great first step towards this goal.
       - Developing new ideas and ways to get people downtown is a good thing.
       - Developing a plan for viable second story uses in downtown buildings is important.
       - A new micro-brewery/micro-distillery establishment in downtown would be a great traffic generator.
   - There is City owned land near the Pioneer facility which can/should be sold and reinvested in additional land near the North Industrial Park.
       - An investment in a P3 project to develop a spec building would also be positive.

- The City needs to explore a TIF District in downtown now, prior to realizing significant new building/business development.
- A new Highway 3 connector between I-70 & I-74 would benefit the entire community and specifically downtown.
    - Truck traffic downtown is a problem
- Developing more recreational amenities is needed, especially south of the river.
    - Library expansion, Durbin Building, and amphitheater expansion are all good potential projects.
    - These projects could become a catalyst for a renewed Morgan Street Corridor – part of overall downtown revitalization plan.
- Rushville needs to become a vibrant community with amenities that appeal to individuals and families.
    - How can we draw positive attention to Rushville?
- New roadway and infrastructure project will also have great long term benefits
    - Cherry Street connector can improve connectivity to the North Industrial Park
    - 16th Street Extension will open up residential development opportunities within close proximity of the school, Boys & Girls Club, Parks, and other infrastructure.
- From a land use perspective, the City needs to focus on in-fill and filling what is currently available.

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City of Rushville Comprehensive Plan Update

Rushville Rotary Focus Group Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: April 14, 2014 – Rushville St. Paul's UMC, 426 N. Morgan Street

The focus group meeting was held to help develop additional ideas and a deeper understanding of opportunities in Rushville. The results of this meeting will be used by the consultant team as initial drafts of plan recommendations are prepared. Below is a brief summary of the meeting.

1. **Attendees**
   o Kevin Snyder – American Family Insurance
   o Gerald Mohr – Rush County Council
   o Paul Barada – Rush County Chamber of Commerce
   o Nancy A. Rice – Main Source Bank
   o Shelly (Michele) King – Shelle Design, Inc.
   o Gracie Marlatt – Purdue Extension
   o Janice Dimick – UMC Pastor, Rotary President
   o Jason Clemmons – Rush Shelby Energy
   o Cory Daly – HWC Engineering, 317-379-2634, cdaly@hwcengineering.com
   o Scott Burgins – SDG, 800-939-2449, sburgins@sdg.us

2. **General Summary of Meeting Conversation**
   • Rushville, in general, appears to be struggling to move forward.
     o The city is trying to move ahead but there is unclear/inconsistent branding – no unified message.
   • NTAT and Pioneer continue to grow and Rushville is fortunate to have great industries and growth potential.
   • There is a continual struggle to get people to move to Rushville
     o Housing options are limited - the city needs housing opportunities in the $110 - $130 thousand dollar price range.
     o Housing quantity & quality are both very limited.
   • The city has great infrastructure but need to find its appeal to people.
     o Need to determine what the wall/hang-up is preventing people from coming to the community.
   • There should be a renewed focus on turning around the gradual decline in population.
   • People tend to go west (to neighboring communities) to work.
     o Residents work elsewhere and local jobs are filled by people who don't live here.
   • The group was asked to list some of the best neighborhoods in Rushville, here is a partial list of the answers:
     o Lautton Addition
     o Sugar Hill

- o River Crest
- o Wilson Estates
- o Foster Heights
- The 16th Street extension is a good opportunity for housing.
  - o It is within walking distance to most community attractions
  - o The city needs around 100 new homes and this project will provide access to the land for new housing.
- One area that needs revitalization is the Perkins Neighborhood Area (south of 11th Street).
  - o The southwest area of Rushville could use investment.
- The City should stop focusing on low-income people, Rushville needs to find ways to attract middle income families to the community.
- Community attitude has a lot to do with current conditions.
  - o The local attitude makes it difficult to move plans ahead.
  - o Rushville is a giving and caring community and it's the people that make the community.
- Code enforcement and developing neighborhood standards would be helpful
- There is a need for condos and executive housing
- There are a lot of homebuilders in the community but not many land developers
  - o The Area Plan Commission is a hurdle for developers.
  - o They have a tendency to be a regulatory hurdle
  - o It is perceived that they are only interested in helping/supporting the 'old boy network'.
- The south side of 16th Street would be a good place for new residential development.
- The City/community needs to go after what they want (businesses, developers, etc.)
- Start with the concept of how to bring 100 new families to Rushville and build from there
  - o Start with a small vision and watch it grow.
- The Community Center idea is a good one but it has been talked about for 27 years.
  - o There are too many naysayers for this type of project to successfully get through referendum.

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City of Rushville Comprehensive Plan Update

Rush County Chamber of Commerce Focus Group Meeting Minutes
Meeting Date: April 14, 2014 – Rush County Chamber Office, 315 N. Main Street

The focus group meeting was held to help develop additional ideas and a deeper understanding of opportunities in Rushville. The results of this meeting will be used by the consultant team as initial drafts of plan recommendations are prepared. Below is a brief summary of the meeting.

1. **Attendees**
   o Ken Masters – Rush County Commissioner
   o Sandy Fussner – Rush County chamber of Commerce
   o Cindy Harcourt – Harcourt Counseling
   o Tracy Armstrong – Wells Fargo Bank
   o Ramona Wilkinson – Rush County Chamber Board Member
   o Darrell Wilkinson - Retiree
   o Bill Griffis – Capital Planning Associates
   o Cory Daly – HWC Engineering, 317-379-2634, cdaly@hwcengineering.com
   o Scott Burgins – SDG, 800-939-2449, sburgins@sdg.us

2. **General Summary of Meeting Conversation**
   - Rushville is 10 years behind the times.
   - Lots of people live outside of town and there is a lack of (quality) housing within town.
     o There is a need for senior active lifestyle type communities.
   - There is a great need for a wellness center and a competitive pool facility.
     o A place where the community can exercise, rehab, occupational therapy, etc.
     o It needs to be affordable and have programming/classes for all ages.
   - Rushville, in general, is a poor community – residents/community could benefit from financial education.
   - The local schools are good.
   - The Lions (statues around town) is an idea that got people interested in the community and it gets noticed by outsiders.
   - Rushville needs a movie theater
   - Small business and downtown revitalization should be focused on
     o The community could also use a good steakhouse (and other high quality local restaurants).
   - The group would like to see more being done to preserve and reuse existing buildings in the downtown instead of tearing them down.

- The community need sot find a way to keep kids in Rushville – there is nothing for them to do outside of school.
  - o Movies, shopping, entertainment, etc. are all in other places & not in Rushville.
- There is a new coffee shop and bookstore (locally owned) which will be opening downtown.
  - o The City/community could have more success stories like this if they would find a way to build more small business support.
- The Chamber tries to develop initiatives which provide community events and can help support local businesses.
- The Downtown Dream Walk, conducted by Partners for Progress, was a huge success but it is our only downtown plan to date.
  - o Bringing Ivy Tech back to the City would be important.
    - ▪ They left because of the rent.
- There needs to be an inventory of downtown businesses and buildings.
- Heart of Rushville is the local Main Street group and they are focusing on events to bring people downtown
  - o The Farmers Market has been a recent success organized by this group.
- The 24/7 community calendar will be a great tool for the community and it can be used to help support/advertise upcoming events and generate interest.
- There needs to be more/better shopping options in Rushville.
  - o Currently no jewelry, shoes, etc. available outside of Wal-Mart.
- The farm-to-table concept is one that could work in Rushville.
  - o Find ways to develop restaurant industry based on locally grown agricultural products.
- The area surrounding Rushville is very rural – the County has a lot of people but farms are bigger and family homes are smaller.
  - o The result is that small family farms are no longer sustaining downtown businesses like they were in the past.
- Wells Fargo Bank on North Main Street has business from all over – there is an opportunity to direct visitors to downtown as they wait on appointments, etc.
- There are some good restaurants in the community – maybe we could develop a restaurant map for visitors to downtown.
  - o This could be used as a small fundraiser, etc.
- The City needs to find a way to get truck traffic out of downtown
  - o The runaround (West side bypass) and SR 3 connector could help.
- A community center would be a great place for social gathering, swimming, flex use space, etc.
  - o Give it a recreational focus with programming, etc.
- Need to find a way to improve self-esteem and community pride

- 50% of the community is low-moderate income – we need to shift this balance.
    - o   Providing good financial education would be a start
- The GED program is too big – there is a waiting list and people get turned down.
    - o   Need more space for this program and other educational opportunities.
- There is currently a disconnect – we need to find a way to get more people involved.
    - o   Maybe develop an opportunity school or a leadership school to develop community leaders.

CITY OF RUSHVILLE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2014

Public Meeting #1
July 9, 2014

2 | Introductions

▸ A.39
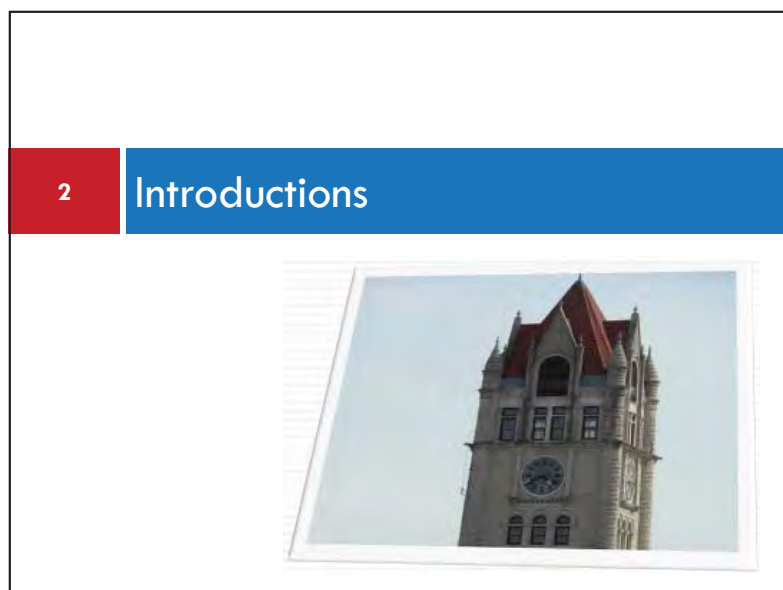
Consulting Team:

3

□ Cory Daly

□ Scott Burgins

□ Dan Syrus

Steering Committee Members:

4

□ Bill Herdrich
□ Brad Berkemeier
□ Brian Sheehan
□ Bryant Niehoff
□ Carolyn Bunzendahl
□ Dave Zellner
□ David Bane
□ David Payne
□ Gary Cameron
□ Jessica Miller

□ Jim Huston
□ Joe Rathz
□ John McCane
□ John Williams
□ Josh Dwenger
□ Larry Copley
□ Paul Barada
□ Sandy Fussner
□ Shelly King

2

5 Overview

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

6

- ☐ It is the City of Rushville's guide to the future
  - ◻ Considers short range and long range goals
  - ◻ Typically developed for a 10 – 20 year timeframe

- ☐ It answers two fundamental questions
  - ◻ What do we want to change?
  - ◻ What do we want to protect?

- ☐ It is a guiding document for decision-makers
  - ◻ Not a legally binding document like zoning code.

Why Plan?

7

□ Planning allows Rushville to develop and work towards common community goals including:

- ◻ Economic Development
- ◻ Growth Opportunities and Challenges
- ◻ Increased Governmental Efficiency
- ◻ Direct Development to Areas with Highest Future Potential
- ◻ Ensure Land Use Compatibility
- ◻ Stabilize Property Values
- ◻ Coordinate Future Capital Expenditures
- ◻ Realize the Dreams of the Community

Planning Process in Rushville

8

□ This is a community driven planning process designed to get resident feedback as much as possible.

□ Transparency is key and all information has been posted in real-time as it is developed.

□ The plan is being developed using a variety of information gathering and visioning approaches.

4

Participation & Feedback

9

☐ The planning process has been developed to collect information from a broad cross section of residents through the following activities:

- Steering Committee Workshops
- Focus Group Workshops
- Individual Stakeholder Interviews
- Public Survey
- Public Meetings
- Community Website and Press Releases

10 Current Plan Details

Plan Elements:

11

- ☐ Community Character
- ☐ Land Use
- ☐ Economic Development
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Natural Resources
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Infrastructure & Utilities
- ☐ Critical Sub Areas
- ☐ Implementation Plan

Critical Sub Areas…What are they?

12

- ☐ Critical Sub Areas are more detailed planning studies focusing on important community 'Hot-Spots'.

- ☐ CSA's also allow a community to focus additional attention on areas of greatest need.

6

Critical Sub Areas…What are they?

☐ The following areas have been identified as the Critical Sub Areas for the Comprehensive Plan:

◻ 16th Street Extension (housing/land use)

◻ Downtown Revitalization

◻ SR 3 Connector

14 Public Survey Results

Public Survey

15

The survey was developed to help inform the Steering Committee and to allow citizens the opportunity to actively participate in helping shape the future of Rushville.
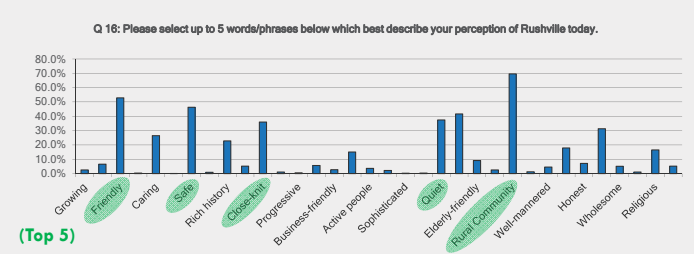
- Conducted between **March 14**, 2014 & **April 18**, 2014
- Total of 1,033 responses received
- Responses represent 16% of current city population
- Total of 18 questions

- **Responses will guide the development of plan recommendations**

Highlights of the Survey

16

Q 16: Please select up to 5 words/phrases below which best describe your perception of Rushville today.

(Top 5)

"Rushville is a friendly, safe, close-knit quiet rural community"

Highlights of the Survey

17

Q 17: Please select up to 3 local attractions you would tell people to visit to get them interested in Rushville and Rush County.
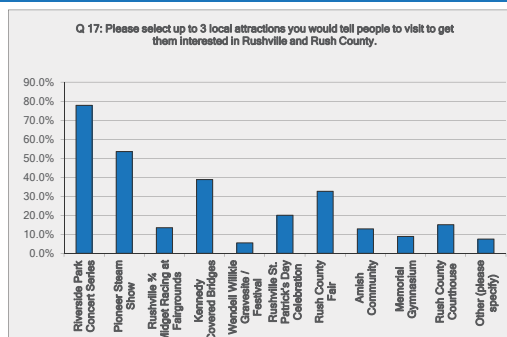
Top 3 activities in Rushville "Riverside Park Concert Series, Pioneer Steam Show, and Kennedy Covered Bridges"

Highlights of the Survey

18

☐ Statements which received a high level of agreement:

- Agriculture is still a large contributor to the local economy.
- Community growth is essential for the future of Rush County.
- Rushville has many neighborhoods which need to be improved.
- Sidewalks and trails are important to the quality of life in Rushville.
- We need a better selection of restaurants.
- We need more retail development in Rushville.

9

▶ A.47

Highlights of the Survey

19

☐ Statements which received a high level of disagreement:

- I do not think Rushville needs any more development.
- There are plenty of things to do on the weekends in Rushville.
- Traffic congestion is a problem I Rushville.
- Downtown Rushville is a nice place to shop.
- The housing quality in Rushville is very high.

Highlights of the Survey

20

☐ Long story short…

- The biggest lesson learned from the survey is Rushville is a safe community filled with great people who care about each other

- BUT…there are many things that NEED to be addressed to create better opportunities for everybody in the community.

City of Rushville, Indiana Comprehensive Plan Update 2014

21 | Current Recommendations

Areas of Recommendation:

22

- ☐ Transportation Infrastructure
- ☐ Utility Infrastructure
- ☐ Economic Development
- ☐ Land Use
- ☐ Parks and Natural Resources
- ☐ Neighborhoods and Housing
- ☐ Downtown

▶ A.49

Transportation Infrastructure:

23

- ☐ **Complete the S.R. 3 Connector (between I-70 & I-74)**
- ☐ Complete the Cherry Street connector project.
- ☐ Complete an inventory and prioritization of local road and sidewalk improvements.
- ☐ **Develop a shared-use trail network throughout the community, including connector sidewalk.**
- ☐ Complete the West Side Connector project (bypass).
- ☐ Develop expanded options for public transit within the city.
- ☐ Complete work to improve the appearance of Rushville's major transportation gateways.

Utility Infrastructure:

24

- ☐ **Make high speed internet more accessible and more affordable throughout the community.**
- ☐ Support continued efforts at improving overall community stormwater quantity and quality issues. Develop plans to identify and resolve specific 'hot spots'
- ☐ Continue to support combined sewer overflow improvements.
- ☐ **Develop an inventory and long term plan to fund replacement of aging 'invisible infrastructure' (water lines, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, etc.).**
- ☐ Develop an inventory of city facilities and a transition plan for existing 'institutional knowledge' from long-time employees to be formally documented.
- ☐ Develop a plan to attract more than one cellular service provider to Rushville.

Economic Development:

25

- Focus on actively recruiting and/or promoting the North Industrial Park – fill it up.
- **Develop and/or recruit more higher education and workforce development training opportunities for residents.**
- Encourage and promote entrepreneurial development. Identify and actively recruit employers providing local jobs (residents working in Rushville) and increase in-commuting to Rushville employers.
- Work with Rush County to draft and pass an innkeepers tax.
- Supplement RCECDC's projects with specific, City-led programs, including incentives for new downtown businesses and a façade improvement grant.
- **Focus on quality of life improvements that will make Rushville more attractive to new and existing businesses.** This includes bike trails, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, etc.

Land Use:

26

- **Conduct a review and revision of the zoning and building code.**
- Begin annexation planning for potential growth areas where public investment is being made, such as the area surrounding the 16th Street expansion.
- **Looking ahead five to 10 years, select other areas where new public investment would promote growth.**
- Consider using incentives and disincentives to phase in future residential growth; that is, encourage it close to existing water, sewers, etc., and discourage it in more remote areas.
- Work with county officials on differences in opinion about the importance of promoting residential and business growth, especially close to the city hub.

13

▶ A.51

Parks and Natural Resources:

27

- Connect parks and other natural features to the rest of the city and/or trail system.
- Develop and support parks programming such as athletic events, camps, and other recreational and fitness programs.
- Develop and support plans for southern Riverside Park expansion.
- Develop programs and/or facilities which help residents achieve fitness, wellness, and an active lifestyle.
- Develop a sports park and/or improved sporting facilities (regional draw for visitors).
- Develop and/or promote more activities which engage residents and visitors with unique natural features such as wooded areas (trails, etc.)
- Promote the canoe launch and provide for a defined exit point downstream.
- Focus on the growth of the Summer Concert Series (attendance and performances)

Neighborhoods and Housing:

28

- Increase code enforcement
- Develop plans for future housing development along the completed 16th Street corridor, focus on market-rate multi-family and young professional type housing options.
- Develop a landlord and tenant outreach and education program.
- Support ongoing neighborhood revitalization efforts such as the new vacant building tear down program.
- Develop and fund homeowner assistance program to help with small repairs (micro-loans, local bank partnerships, etc.)
- Organize and promote consistent and regular community clean-up days.

- Develop a neighborhood action plan which focuses on needs and actions for specific neighborhoods (look to Muncie plan as an example).

14

Downtown:

29

- Inventory the occupancy, use, and condition of existing commercial buildings.
- ***Make downtown a 'point of interest' or a destination (look at Dream Walk results).***
- Develop a new/better internet presence and city branding image.
- Develop a building rehabilitation and business development program.
- Make improvements to the streetscape (curbs, sidewalks, furnishings, plantings, etc.)

- ***Develop and promote a downtown event space (for entertainment, banquets, etc.).***
- Support/promote the Durbin Development project.
- Support plans for the redevelopment of the Princess theater into a multi-use entertainment/community event venue.

Downtown: (continued)

30

- Focus on utilization of existing building upper stories.
- Actively recruit and develop commercial business opportunities for business providing goods and services to meet residents' daily needs (so they don't have to leave town to shop).
- Provide additional centralized parking spaces.
- Support/promote more arts and cultural activities downtown – expand the Artisan Market concept.
- Coordinate promotional plans for big events (such as the Concert Series) with more local shops and restaurants.
- Support and facilitate the Rush County Library expansion downtown.
- Identify and actively recruit/develop entertainment businesses and/or facilities.

31 **What Happens Next?**

Draft Plan

32

- ☐ Over the next few months all chapters of the plan will be drafted & reviewed by the Steering Committee.

- ☐ A full draft of the plan will be made available for public comment and review.

- ☐ The Steering Committee will meet one final time to discuss the draft plan and provide comments.
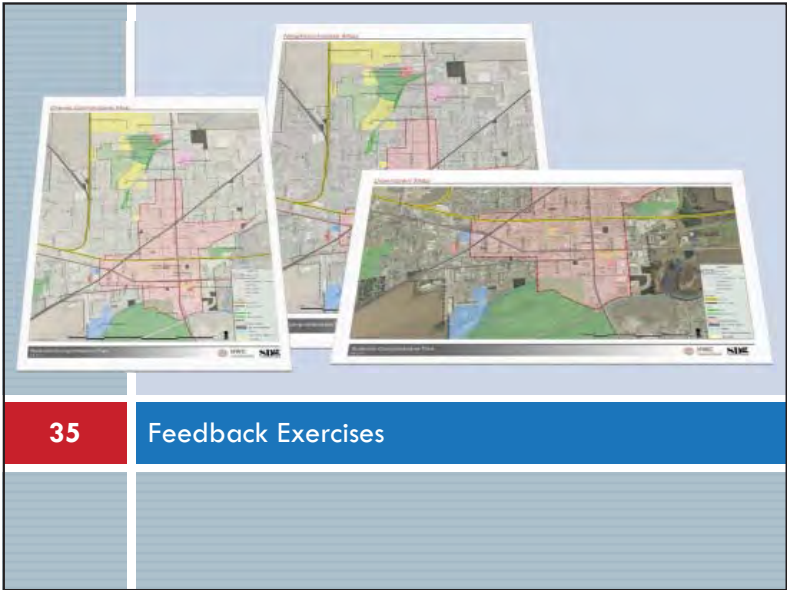
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Adoption Process

33

☐ After the draft plan has been reviewed and all comments have been addressed the plan will go through the approval and adoption process which includes the following steps:

◻ Final Public Hearing for comments.

◻ APC reviews and recommends for approval.

◻ City Council considers and approves.

34 Questions or Comments?

35 Feedback Exercises

Feedback Exercise

36

- Break into three **(3) groups**
- Each group will spend **10 minutes** at each station

Purpose:

- Provide additional input on the following topics:
  1. **Overall Connections**
  2. **Neighborhoods**
  3. **Downtown**

Contact Us

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CITY OF RUSHVILLE
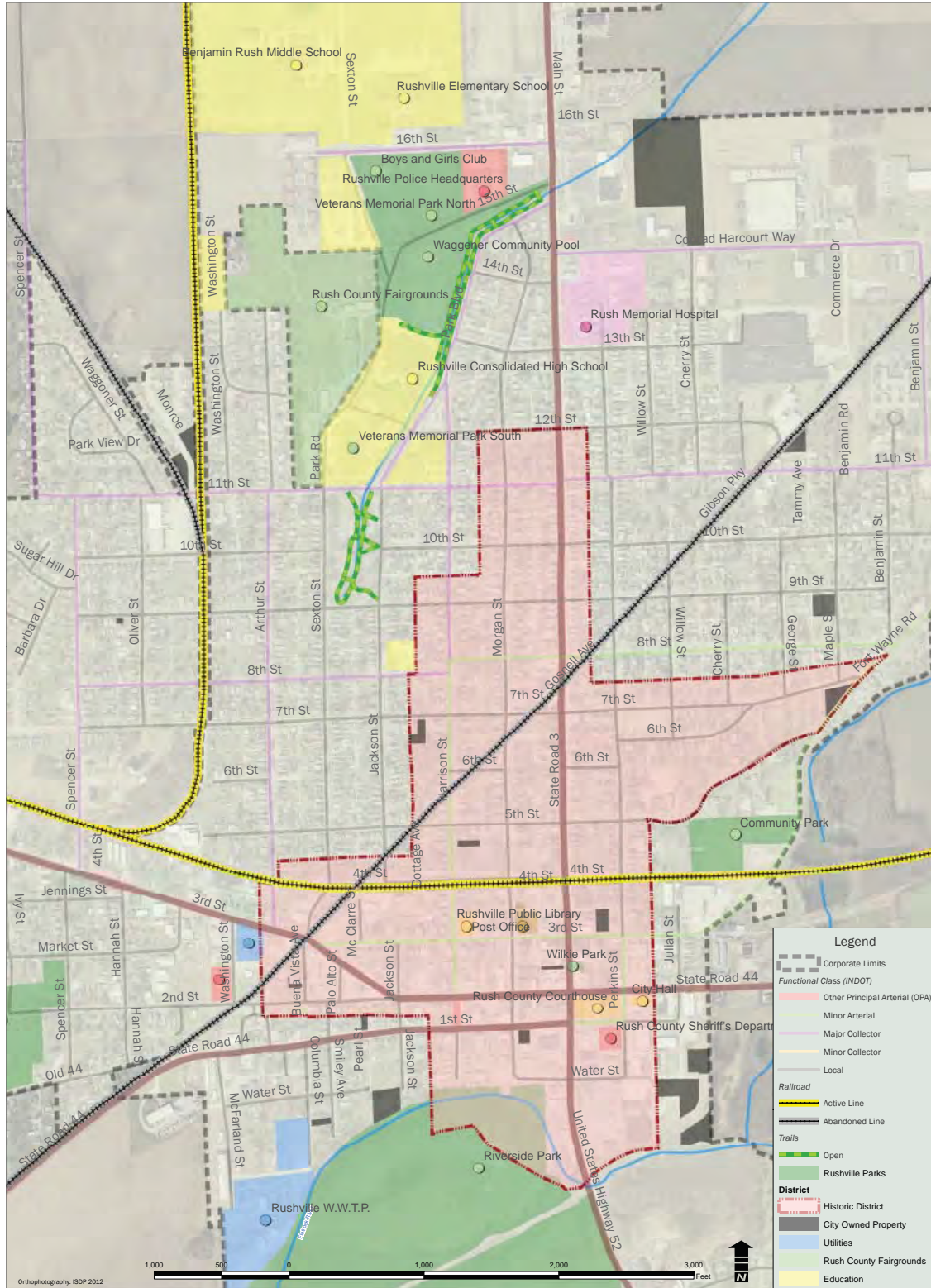## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2014
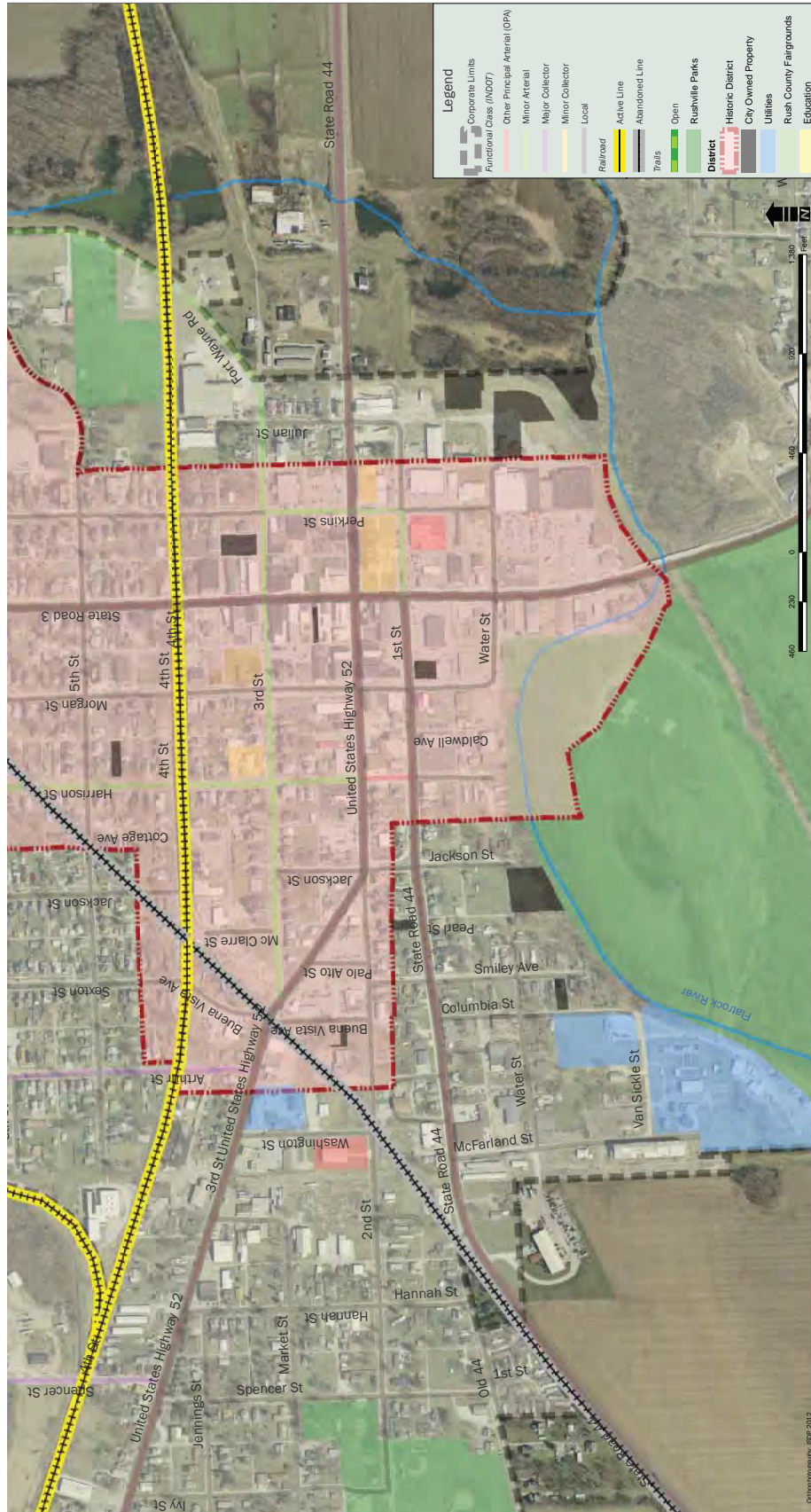
Public Meeting #1
July 9, 2014

Rushville Comprehensive Plan
July 2014

Neighborhoods Map

Overall Connections Map

Legend

Corporate Limits

Functional Class (INDOT)
- Other Principal Arterial (OPA)
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local

Railroad
- Active Line
- Abandoned Line

Trails
- Open
- Rushville Parks

District
- Historic District
- City Owned Property
- Utilities
- Rush County Fairgrounds
- Education

Orthophotography: ISDP 2012

Rushville Comprehensive Plan
July 2014

HWC ENGINEERING SDg

Goal Prioritization

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE: (Roads, Bridges, Sidewalks, Trails, etc.)

Preliminary Goals
Complete the S.R. 3 Connector (between I-70 & I-74)
Complete the Cherry Street connector project.
Complete an inventory and prioritization of local road and sidewalk improvements.
Develop a shared-use trail network throughout the community, including connector sidewalk.
Complete the West Side Connector project (bypass).
Develop expanded options for public transit within the city.
Complete work to improve the appearance of Rushville's major transportation gateways.

UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE: (Water, Sewer, Cable, Telephone, Internet, Mobile)

Preliminary Goals
Make high speed internet more accessible and more affordable throughout the community.
Support continued efforts at improving overall community stormwater quantity and quality issues. Develop plans to identify and resolve specific 'hot spots'
Continue to support combined sewer overflow improvements.
Develop an inventory and long term plan to fund replacement of aging 'invisible infrastructure' (water lines, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, etc.).
Develop an inventory of city facilities and a transition plan for existing 'institutional knowledge' from long-time employees to be formally documented.
Develop a plan to attract more than one cellular service provider to Rushville.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: (Businesses, Jobs, Services, Incentives, etc.)

Preliminary Goals
Focus on actively recruiting and/or promoting the North Industrial Park – fill it up.
Develop and/or recruit more higher education and workforce development training opportunities for residents.
Develop a local investment/incentive plan to encourage and promote entrepreneurial development. Identify and actively recruit employers providing local jobs (residents working in Rushville) and increase in-commuting to Rushville employers.
Work with Rush County to draft and pass an innkeepers tax.
Supplement RCECDC's projects with specific, City-led programs, including incentives for new downtown businesses and a façade improvement grant.
Because so many of Rushville's broad economic development goals (such as business recruitment) are being addressed by the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corp. (RCECDC), the city should focus on quality of life improvements that will make Rushville more attractive to new and existing businesses. More specifically, local leaders should take control of image they want the city to project and move toward fulfilling that image. This includes bike trails, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, etc.

LAND USE:

Preliminary Goals
Conduct a review and revision of the zoning and building code.
Begin annexation planning for potential growth areas where public investment is being made, such as the area surrounding the 16th Street expansion.
Looking ahead five to 10 years, select other areas where new public investment would promote growth.
Consider using incentives and disincentives to phase in future residential growth; that is, encourage it close to existing water, sewers, etc., and discourage it in more remote areas.
Work with county officials on differences in opinion about the importance of promoting residential and business growth, especially close to the city hub.

City of Rushville Comprehensive Plan Update

Public Survey Results Summary

May 2, 2014

Below is a summary of the public survey which was conducted between March 14, 2014 and April 18, 2014. The survey was developed to help inform the comprehensive planning process and to allow citizens the opportunity to actively participate in helping to shape the future of their community. There were a total of 1,033 responses received for the survey which represents a nearly 16% response rate based on current city population estimates. There were a total of 18 questions contained in the survey. A summary of the results for each question is contained below. In addition, there were multiple opportunities for survey respondents to provide solicited and unsolicited comments. An overview of those comments is contained further on in this summary.

The results of the survey will be used as a guide for the development of plan recommendations. The results will be shared with City Officials and discussed in detail with Steering Committee Members. The ideas and opinions expressed in the survey responses will be a leading contributor to the overall content and recommendations resulting from the comprehensive planning process and a summary of the results will be made available for public review and also discussed at the Public Workshop materials which are currently being prepared.

1. **Summary of Individual Survey Question Responses:**

Q 1: What is your gender?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Female	64.1%	653
Male	35.9%	365
answered question		1018
skipped question		15

Q 2: Which category below includes your age?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
17 or younger	1.8%	18
18-20	4.4%	45
21-29	14.9%	152
30-39	18.9%	192
40-49	25.3%	257
50-59	21.5%	219
60 or older	13.2%	134
answered question		1017
skipped question		16

Q 3: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Did not attend school	0.0%	0
1st grade	0.0%	0
2nd grade	0.0%	0
3rd grade	0.0%	0
4th grade	0.0%	0
5th grade	0.0%	0
6th grade	0.0%	0
7th grade	0.0%	0
8th grade	0.2%	2
9th grade	0.3%	3
10th grade	0.9%	9
11th grade	2.7%	28
Graduated from high school	25.7%	262
1 year of college	9.7%	99
2 years of college	10.4%	106
3 years of college	5.9%	60
Graduated from college	26.9%	274
Some graduate school	4.5%	46
Completed graduate school	12.8%	130
answered question		1019
skipped question		14

Q 4: What is your approximate average household income?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
$0-$24,999	9.8%	98
$25,000-$49,999	26.1%	260
$50,000-$74,999	23.8%	238
$75,000-$99,999	19.1%	191
$100,000-$124,999	9.7%	97
$125,000-$149,999	4.8%	48
$150,000-$174,999	3.1%	31
$175,000-$199,999	1.6%	16
$200,000 and up	1.9%	19
answered question		998
skipped question		35

Q 5: Which statement below best describes your relationship to Rushville?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Full-time resident of Rushville.	42.4%	435
Full-time resident of Rush County, outside the City of Rushville.	30.8%	316
Former resident of Rushville or Rush County.	16.5%	169
Employed in Rushville or Rush County, but live elsewhere.	5.7%	59
Regular visitor to Rushville or Rush County.	2.6%	27
Tourist.	0.0%	0
I have never been to Rushville or Rush County.	0.1%	1
Other (please specify)	1.9%	20
	answered question	1027
	skipped question	6

Q 6: Which of the following apply to you? (Please select all that apply.)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Own a home	76.4%	730
Lease a home/apartment (long term lease)	5.2%	50
Rent a home/apartment (monthly basis)	17.8%	170
Own rental property	6.8%	65
Own land other than my home	13.6%	130
Own a commercial building	3.1%	30
Own a business	9.5%	91
Lease business space	0.8%	8
	answered question	956
	skipped question	77

Q 7: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

Answer Options	Rating Average *	Response Count
Rushville is a great place to live.	3.78	961
Agriculture is still a large contributor to the local economy.	4.27	960
There are plenty of things to do on the weekends in Rushville.	2.18	962
Rushville needs more service oriented jobs.	3.67	947
A property owner's rights are more important than maintaining an attractive City.	2.76	957
I would like to see future development on the south side of Rushville.	3.94	958
Rushville is a great place to raise a family.	4.00	958
Rushville should invest in new utility infrastructure and services to encourage new development.	3.92	954
Higher paying jobs should be emphasized over more ordinary factory jobs.	3.57	957
I would like to see future development on the north side of Rushville.	4.00	959
Rushville has a need for more upscale housing.	3.35	952
The existing parks facilities meet the community's current needs.	3.34	951
I would like to see future development on the east side of Rushville.	3.65	947
Rushville needs more educational opportunities after high school.	4.09	956
Rushville needs more advanced manufacturing jobs.	3.98	951
The housing quality in Rushville is very high.	2.52	952
I would like to see future development on the west side of Rushville.	3.76	941
Rushville should emphasize attracting new business to the city even if the changes are not popular.	4.00	956
Traffic congestion is a problem I Rushville.	2.58	958
It is important to protect Rushville's natural resources and environment from development impacts.	3.75	954
answered question		967
skipped question		66

* Rating Scale: 5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree

Q 8: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements		
Answer Options	Rating Average *	Response Count
Is it important to protect the farmland surrounding Rushville from development?	3.43	903
I do not think Rushville needs any more development.	1.82	901
Rushville's roads are in good condition and easy to navigate.	2.87	902
Rushville need more high tech industry jobs.	3.87	898
Rushville has many neighborhoods which need to be improved.	4.07	900
We need more commercial development in Rushville.	4.01	897
Sidewalks and trails are important to the quality of life in Rushville.	4.11	904
The housing quality in Rushville is very low.	3.35	899
I would be willing to participate in an organized neighborhood clean-up day.	3.62	895
Community growth is essential for the future of Rush County.	4.35	902
Rushville has a positive small business environment.	3.29	899
Rushville should focus on expanding future growth opportunities adjacent to current city limits.	3.82	895
Downtown Rushville is a nice place to shop.	2.41	901
Neighborhood sidewalks are in good condition.	2.71	896
We need a better selection of restaurants.	4.20	899
Downtown is currently an attractive part of our community.	2.68	897
The main gateways into Rushville look run down to visitors.	3.76	900
Local cable, telephone, and internet service options are good.	3.01	894
Locally owned businesses should be encouraged over large corporate businesses.	3.45	899
The city and county should build an access road to connect SR 3, US 52, and SR 44 just west of the city.	3.32	895
I would encourage my children or other family members to move to Rushville.	3.20	905
We need more retail development in Rushville.	4.18	901
answered question		911
skipped question		122

* Rating Scale: 5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree

Q 9: If you could change a current perception about Rushville what would it be?

There were 497 individual responses given for Question 9. Individual responses have been reviewed and condensed into the answers contained in the Overview of General Survey Comments section of the summary.

Q 10: What do you like best about Rushville?

There were 646 individual responses given for Question 10. Individual responses have been reviewed and condensed into the answers contained in the Overview of General Survey Comments section of the summary.

Q 11: What do you like least about Rushville?

There were 643 individual responses given for Question 11. Individual responses have been reviewed and condensed into the answers contained in the Overview of General Survey Comments section of the summary.

Q 12: In a few words or sentences please describe what makes Rushville/Rush County BETTER and/or DIFFERENT from other places?

There were 463 individual responses given for Question 12. Individual responses have been reviewed and condensed into the answers contained in the Overview of General Survey Comments section of the summary.

Q 13: If Rushville/Rush County created a Twitter hashtag, what would it be?

There were 346 individual responses given for Question 13. Individual responses have been reviewed and condensed into the answers contained in the Overview of General Survey Comments section of the summary.

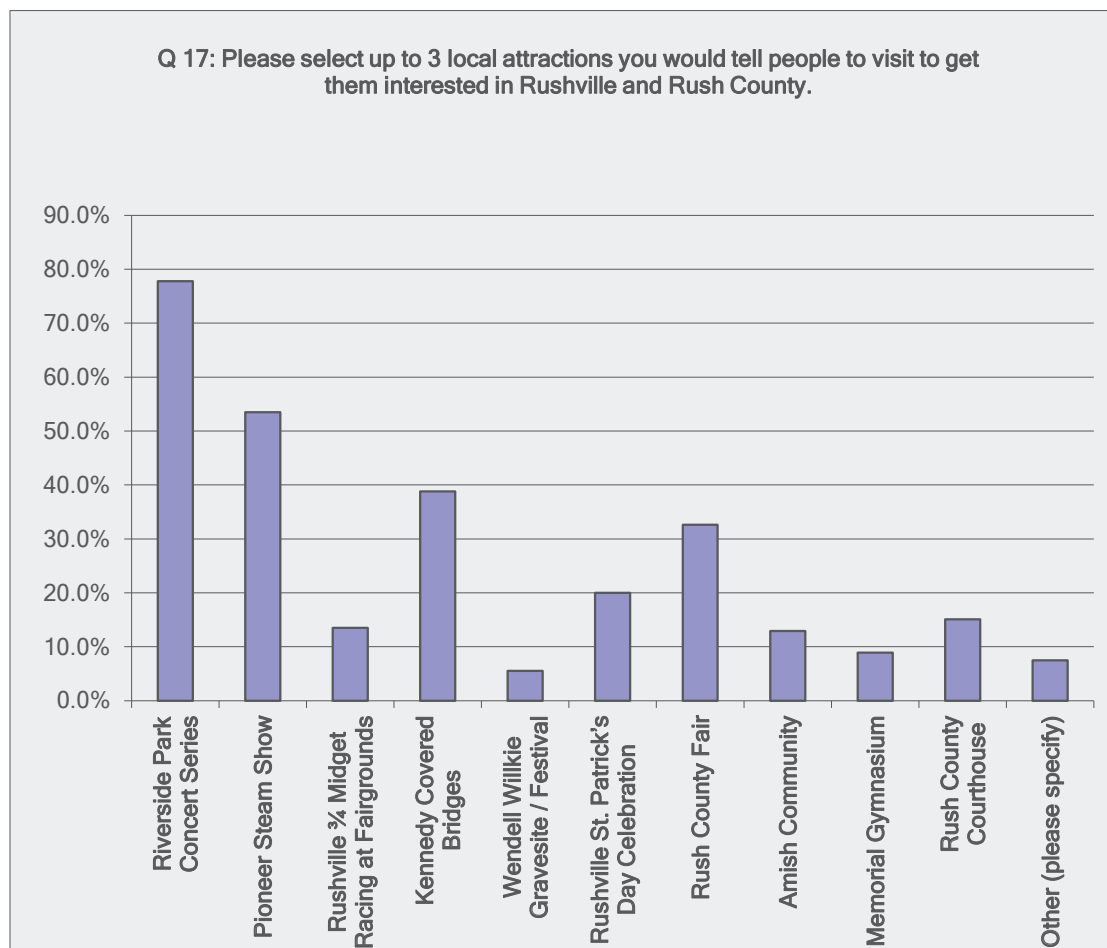| Q 14: Please rate the following features of Rushville and Rush County		
Answer Options	Rating Average *	Response Count
Job Market	2.15	781
Job Options	2.06	775
Housing Options	2.69	775
Quality of Housing	2.70	774
Access to Childcare	2.90	748
Business Climate	2.62	770
Investment Opportunities	2.40	764
Communication / Media	2.54	767
Community Pride	3.77	777
Public Education	3.64	773
Workforce Development & Skills Training	2.69	760
Crime Prevention	3.40	769
Community Safety	3.69	770
City Services	3.46	758
answered question		783
skipped question		250

* Rating Scale: 5 = Excellent; 4 = Good; 3 = Average; 2 = Poor; 1 = Very Poor

Q 15: Please rate the following features of Rushville and Rush County

Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
Community Health	3.01	721
Healthcare Options	2.94	720
Arts and Culture	2.33	717
Innovation and Creativity	2.38	715
Dining Options	2.18	722
Shopping Options	1.78	718
Parks & Recreation Facilities	3.27	720
Entertainment Options	2.07	719
Natural Surroundings	3.34	718
Senior Living	2.99	705
Volunteerism	3.21	715
Transportation Options	2.46	715
Road Conditions	2.91	719
Quality of Life	3.39	721
	answered question	726
	skipped question	307

 * Rating Scale: 5 = Excellent; 4 = Good; 3 = Average; 2 = Poor; 1 = Very Poor

Q 16: Please select up to 5 words/phrases below which best describe your perception of Rushville today.

Q 17: Please select up to 3 local attractions you would tell people to visit to get them interested in Rushville and Rush County.
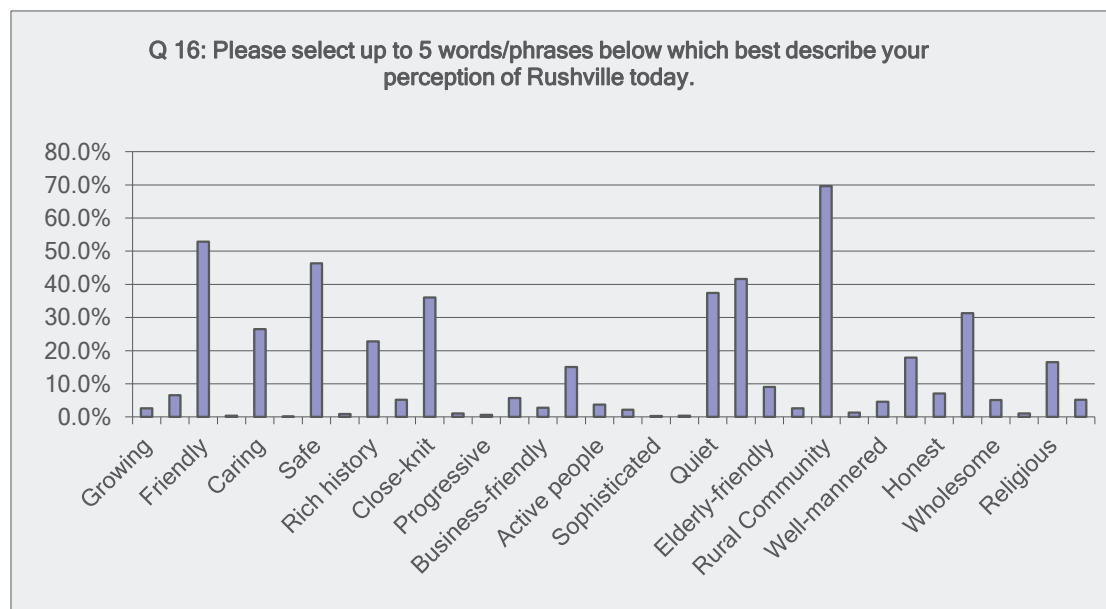
Q 18: Please share any other thoughts or comments you have about Rushville:

There were 203 individual responses given for Question 13. Individual responses have been reviewed and condensed into the answers contained in the Overview of General Survey Comments section of the summary.

▶ A.69

2. **Overview of General Survey Comment Responses**

   In all there were more than 2,900 individual comments received among the survey questions. While all of these comments have validity in providing guidance and feedback for the Comprehensive Plan listing each individual comment would be too cumbersome to be of any value to the Steering Committee. That being the case, the consultant team, with the help of Steering Committee members, reviewed each individual comment looking for overall themes. After reviewing each comment specific comments were selected which best represent the overall consensus of all comments received. Below are the selected comments:

   - "This is the way it has always been" attitude

   - That Rushville is not just for people on welfare or for people who want to carry out their drug habits

   - I would like for us to present ourselves as a UNIFIED community, not merely as Democrats and Republicans

   - There is nothing to do for fun. Community projects are always taking place, but those that show are generally the same faces over and over.

   - That Rushville depends upon the farming community to support it therefore farming needs to be placed at a higher priority than the citizens of the city.

   - That nobody cares. Change the attitude of residents and you change Rushville. More people need to care about how their property looks. I am saddened by the rundown conditions and lack of pride when I pass through my old hometown. Clean up the weeds, slap some paint on the houses, restore pride to your main thoroughfare, Main Street.

   - The summer concerts. I think it is a great opportunity to bring people to Rushville and show off how fun Rushville can be.

   - I love the way the community rallies around people or causes in times of need. I feel like this community is a part of my extended family, and we need to preserve that atmosphere even as we develop and grow.

   - I like the small town sense of community. For example, all the kids go to the same high school, and the whole community comes to cheer on the Lions. I currently live in a suburb of a big city, and we don't have the same sense of community.

   - There is an underlying attitude this community does not deserve better, and should not try for the best. Start striving for the best, instead of average.

   - I dislike the lack of opportunities here in Rushville. As a teenager, there is nothing to do on the weekends. All we have is the bowling alley. And then the pool in the summer time. Rushville is not a desirable place to be as a teenager.

- I have a college degree and there is absolutely no possibility of a career in Rush county. I would like to come back but there is nothing for me. I hate the negative attitudes too and the resistance to change although it is obvious that it has to happen for the community to survive.

- In Rushville I believe that a citizen only gets "perks" or advantages if they have a name in Rushville. If your family is not a farm family, you might as well just leave now, because you will get nothing from the town of Rushville. A few families get EVERYTHING in Rushville I think that the unchanging political party is a major drawback. The same small group of people continue to run this town. I wish there was a presence of additional politicians that would be able to make an impact and not be overpowered by the select few who have formed the one party.

- Denial that we are a river town and public access to the river...though there seems to be some improvement in the works. It is an asset that is not being maximized.

- Few things to do and very little options of places to eat and grocery shop. Always needed to go out of town for a Movie or to a nice grocery store. Walmart is also small and often doesn't have what I needed.

- Our downtown is falling apart physically and economically. Coming into town from Shelbyville, all the old houses makes a bad first impression.

- I hate how messy so many neighborhoods and homes are. Take pride in your surroundings! Clean it up!

- Tearing down the downtown stores instead of getting grant money to fix the up to attract new small business--town feels defeated instead of looking for solutions to rebuild downtown-thinking that a runaround would be a cure all for the towns economic woes

- Rushville should focus on professional business e. g. Shelle Design & Barada Assoc. and other cottage type companies that have a low environmental footprint, don't rely on the local economy to survive and provide professional opportunities. This compliments manufacturing jobs.

- The pace and temperature both drop immediately upon arrival in Rush. It's a palpable change you can actually feel. I've worked out of town for decades and love coming home to Rushville.

- Rushville is working to improve the situation at the present time- but without sharing the thoughts with the community. If you're not part of the inner circle you're clueless.

- The Riverside Amphitheater is a valuable and unique amenity during the warm months. The Lion statues around town are a great eye-catching unique feature that

provide a sense of community. If Rushville can capitalize on its scenic views (e.g., seeing the courthouse coming off SR 44 W into town), it would be an improvement.

- The leadership in the past 2 or 3 years has been positive, forward thinking, willing to hold on to our heritage - but not afraid to make changes at the same time. Trying to strike a balance between past & future

- Rushville has events that remind me of the Groundhog Day final scene. Everyone comes together and has city wide celebrations. That is the best thing Rushville has going for it.

- There is a golden opportunity in Rushville that I spent several years trying to advance before ultimately giving up and leaving. Downtown is a beautiful, attractive place for well-run, classy businesses. There is a built-in advantage of old-school charm and history that could be a very attractive weekend getaway for baby boomers, with bridges, natural beauty, and small town charm. No one seems to want to start from the ground up. Ideas are either "leave it as it is" or "become the next booming metropolis". It is small, measured, sustained growth that will be successful.

- The people of Rush county are much like a giant family. This community is ALWAYS willing to come together and show our support in any time of need. From comforting one another over loss of loved ones to helping provide for our new members, someone is sure to be lending a helping hand. Truly feel blessed to have a home like this.

- The acceptance of all educated classes of people. Yes I want more higher educated jobs to come to Rushville but the attitude needs to stay with the acceptance of all races, sexuality, and education levels.

- Rushville has recently started to get into the real enjoyment of things. Festivals. Block parties. That's has helped change my opinion of Rushville   Thru have changed for the better. Instead of being so against change it wore on atmosphere of Rushville.

- The people if Rushville and Rush county are the greatest. They know everyone and help when needed. Imagine how much better things would be if opportunities to make more money closer to home, raise a family with better facilities. The covered bridges in the area are great, but not being used as the opportunity that it should be. Maximize them as a tourist opportunity.

- The canvas of opportunity.

- Rushville is BETTER than most communities of a similar size because the citizens generally care more about their neighbors. It is DIFFERENT because there is a true

sense of community, not only within the city boundaries, but also with the county as a whole.

- Rush county and Rushville have so much potential. Politics and personal agendas over the years have played a huge roll in where our community stands now. You have your work cut out for you trying to recover from years of neglect and closed mindedness.

- Nice to have an attitude of change finally

- I think sprucing up downtown is a better idea than building new businesses on the outskirts of town.

- I believe the community has a lot of potential but has floundered in the past when it comes to big decisions. Too often the goal is to keep the town exactly the same and people are unwilling to invest in the town. The downtown could be a much more vibrant area of town with proper community investment. Outside investors won't come to Rushville and Rush County's aid if the residents aren't willing to do the same. Housing developments aren't the answer. Major renovation of houses and businesses throughout the town and development of areas within city limits should take priority over spoiling the agricultural setting that makes the area attractive to people. I love my hometown, but living in small towns in Wyoming has shown me the sense of community that Rushville (and many other Indiana towns) sorely lacks. The town right now is stagnant and will not attract any new jobs of worth.

- We need more industry to come here. In order for them to come, they want people to fill the jobs. People won't come because there is not much industry here. It's the chicken and the egg thing all over again. I know that the lack of natural gas is another factor that hurts our chances of industry coming also. I wish I had all the answers, if I did, I'd run for office.

- Thank you for the opportunity for the people of Rushville and Rush County to express their opinions!

- Downtown has the potential to be charming. But it has become run down and has fallen victim to a declining economy in Rushville. There are some shining exceptions like the Farmer's Market and the Pharmacy. People who live in an older established community don't need antiques. They already own them. There are too many antique stores. A coffee shop or even bookstore would be such a nice addition to this community.

- Rushville needs to be developing more, but not at the expense of cooperation with the citizens surrounding the town. Development comes from having support from an entire county in deciding where to go next. I believe that the industrial park north of town should be filled before expansion to other parts of the county begin

- We could be so much more than what we are .... without losing our charm and small-town feel, but our leadership simply MUST become less resistant to change and the issues that come with modernization.

- Disappointed in the question that refers to "ordinary factory jobs". They bring higher paying skilled jobs with them with management personnel. Maybe that is our problem here, we sell short our blue collar workers. We need to promote the maintenance of properties, fix sidewalks, enforce property maintenance laws, remove unusable structures and improve the aesthetics of the city. Unless you come in from the north, this town looks like a dump. Start with cleaning up along the river on the south side of town and see if Donald Coon would work on cleaning up his property on the south side of the river. Am very proud of how this town pulls together when someone is in need. Am also pleased with local government and Mike's work as mayor. I believe we need to support the local service clubs more than we need to support another bar. They work to do the most good for the most people.

- I hope this has helped. Rushville is great...not perfect, but who or what is nowadays. If Rushville was a person I'd say I trust them and would tell him to quit being so old fashioned and let's make this town more modern for our generation.

- For too long Rushville has lost out to other rural communities, be it the administration, the chamber of commerce or the economic developer, it seems anyone that is hired moves on to bigger and better things. How many administrations have said "were bringing jobs or retail?" The quality of living in Rushville is the image of the very low paying jobs in this town, the cost of living in this town is very low compared to our neighboring towns. I have relatives that live in Florida and they are amazed by how run down this town has become, not only entering the city, but the downtown area and our neighbor hoods. Nobody is proud of this town anymore, is it because local government promised only lies for years? I believe I read somewhere the little ole Batesville is bigger than Rushville is now. Rushville shopping is good for odds and ends, if we really need something we have to leave town to get it and we lose citizens to bigger towns for the convenience. If you're not a farmer, a big name politician, a popular businessman, a lawyer, or school administration, the average person doesn't have a chance in this town. Is there really anybody even trying in this administration? Is it just for popularity or money? Something's got to give, it would be nice for once to see someone that walks the walk and talks the talk!

- I think current leadership is on the right path. It takes money to do a lot of things but if we chip away a little at a time we will make Rushville the Greatest Small Town in America!

- I hope this survey doesn't sit on someone's desk and nothing be done to improve the community. It's a good community and needs out of the box, innovative thinking and touted as a good place to live. After all, a bed room community is an industry within itself

- Our community is DYING!!! This is a great concern as someone who owns a business and is trying to keep it afloat. I grew up here, but sometimes I question my decision to open a business and stay here.

- I'm a lifelong resident of Rush County, and I feel that the Flatrock River is a beautiful feature of our county. We need to preserve our wild spaces and showcase the natural beauty of this area. Enhancing access to the river and beautifying its route will entice visitors who are looking for a place to live where there are opportunities to canoe, kayak, fish and spend time in nature. Young families value green spaces and active lifestyles and the River provides both.

- I'm not originally from here but I was instantly welcomed and I love being here. Everyone is friendly and I adore everyone I meet. The close-knit community is beautiful and I saw that especially through Heather Sheehan's struggles.

- Rushville has some unique events that can be played up for out-of-town visitors. If we can spruce up the downtown central business district by attracting businesses and reopening the Princess Theater, that will go a long way in helping the entire city out economically. Encourage small businesses. Try and attract "nicer" restaurants (e.g., new Flatrock Grill?) since there isn't really anything like that anymore.

- I hope you are planning to hold some public meetings and/or workshops in the future as part of the comprehensive planning process! I look forward to more updates on the plan's progress! Good luck!

- Without education, employment and cultural opportunities, the people are not able to grow and take pride in their lives and environment. I believe this is a significant contributor to unhealthy lifestyles, drugs and crime.

- Honestly, Rushville is not that bad of a place. Yes there are some bad people and a lack of entertainment, and possible a lack of opportunities. All in all though, to me, Rushville is home. I love coming home after a long trip and seeing Rushville. There are some amazing people here. People that I call family and that I absolutely adore. But Rushville needs development. It needs to look forward and better the community if anyone was ever to come back here. Rushville has taught me a lot over the years. I am 17 and go to school at RCHS. It is true that if you do not have a big farm associated last name, you are not given the time of day. Especially in school. Although I do appreciate all that I have gotten from living in Rush county. I

just wish there was more. I don't want to hate on Rushville because I think of all the amazing people I've met and I wouldn't trade them for anything. So thank you.

- I am an eighteen year old senior at the Rushville High School, and I find that I look forward to college because I will never have to return to this town. This town lacks sophistication and the ability to expand in town options.

- Please read this all. I know the first part of this is about the survey but it does go on to talk about Rushville. While overall this was a good survey I feel that as a teenager some of the questions were harder or impossible for me to answer. I also feel that the hashtag question, while cute, is not very important to me. I would rather tackle other problems within the community, like the underage drinking or drug abuse, before we talk about a hashtag. I felt it took away from the seriousness of the survey. Now on to my views of Rushville. I think the current people in power are doing a great job of getting the communities opinion. While I have grown up here and enjoyed my childhood here I do not plan on coming back after college. Rushville does not offer me the advancements that I would like to have in life. I would love to see Rushville grow and improve and become a place that I would like to return to, but for now my plans are to leave and the only reason I would return is if my family is still here.

- People in our community rise to meet a disaster or a special need head on with immediate response, unselfishly caring to help those in need. There are brilliant people here with connections to the world far beyond this community. We don't build on those or really appreciate them. There are a lot of intelligent people who don't bother because they feel their contributions are unwanted or unappreciated. Communication and interpersonal skill development would go a long way towards improving things. There is a vast well of resources of many kinds in our community and only a few are developed and used. It would take special leadership to tap into this reservoir of talent.

- Seems sad to me when Goodwill is the busiest place in town!

- It could be a great town with proper and motivated leadership that won't pass up opportunities for state assistance due to laziness. We need to figure out a way to get young people to start their businesses and keep their businesses in Rushville. Part of that will be getting the conservative, narrow-minded group to shut it and realize what economic growth means. And it would be great if we got a new newspaper.

- I greatly appreciate this survey. It is nice to see elected officials taking the time to see what folks think.

- I think that it would be awesome if we could get the Amish Community to open up more as far as tourist items similar to Shipshewana, IN. It would be a huge boost for our community! I think you guys are doing an excellent job, please keep up the great work!

- I'm not a native, but there is room for improvement. We need to do something with the old theater, such as The Strand in Shelbyville. (I'm not from there either) People need to be willing invest in their community and accept change or die. One can go 18 miles any direction and have shopping, restaurants, and other choices. We need to build on what we do well and that might be the Amphitheater. Grow it and word will get out, then people have to eat, buy gas, food, and other things while visiting.

- We need to spend more time fixing things than promoting concerts. Not a fan of amphitheater & its loudness. Attracting jobs would be a plus, 75% drive out of town for jobs. No entertainment, no movie theatre for example. Entries to town are trashy.

- I have attended meetings in the past about changing Rushville but not much seemed to happen. I would like to be involved with a group that would follow through.

- In order for more of anything we need better paying or more jobs in general that can generate revenue and get the poor out of the Durbin and Loma and get them to positive places in their lives. We all facilitate this by not having enough local jobs to help it along....it is sad to see 30 plus year olds working in McDonalds...

- I appreciate the willingness of those attempting to improve the city, but fear none of them seek input from anyone outside their circle, which I believe stymies imagination and creative solutions, so no matter who's running the show, Rushville continues along the same non propitious path.

- Until others that influence whether change occurs or not change Rushville will never grow to what it should be. Its way past time Rushville quit catering to those who influence / donate the most. Do what's best for Rushville and not individual needs.

- I'm not smart enough to say how but I feel there needs to be a focus on jobs so that more of our best and brightest young people would return to our community after completing their education.

- I also feel we have a unique downtown area that could be improved upon to have a quaint appeal and thought that was what the "Smile Fund" was for-it'd be nice to see where that money has gone.

- Need to crack down more on meth, cocaine and heroin. Need more help for families with kids trying to come off of assistance to still have access to help while they get their footing. See to many start low paying jobs and then can't afford child care.

- More parking in downtown is a must. Need more entertainment options to keep kids out of trouble and encourage socializing. Great place to grow up and around in. More business would help the community. Some neighborhoods could stand to be cleaned up. Development is great but try to avoid reducing agriculture. Encourage open minds and being friendly and courteous to those visiting.

- Not all, but far too many. Look at the community from a visitor's standpoint. Would you want to locate there?

- We need to prioritize our economic development on large employers first, in order to increase our tax base and the customer base for locally-owned and operated service businesses, which should be our next priority, closely followed by housing. Because the City's footprint is limited, we will need to engage the support of the County and the APC in order to accomplish any growth.

- We finally have an administration who cares about growth in our community. With the current Mayor and council I can see the possibility of our city going in the right direction.

- I've been gone a while, but still love and cherish where I grew up. I'm a little different as I have a strong liberal history, but believe the current republican leadership is putting up a strong effort towards community improvement. I wish the community would see this and support them!!!

- I grew up in Rushville and loved my childhood there. It was a beautiful, quaint, small town. However, as a former resident, I am now sad when I visit. Perhaps those who never left there don't see how shabby the town looks and has become, but it's quite obvious for those of us who are now living somewhere else. It's hard to see what the town has become. While my heart is still there because of family, I'll stick with my Fishers/Carmel area. It's safe and beautiful here, with much more opportunity.

- Give college graduates a chance to work with city officials to help bring in and build our city up.

- I think there should be options for people to be involved outside of the close-knit group of leaders. Those leaders are doing great things for Rush County, but ask for more people to help and you could be surprised by the outcome. There needs to be a larger diversity of age in input.

- Rushville/ Rush County has potential. People just need to see this and younger generations need opportunities to get involved. Ask community members who have had the opportunity to leave Rushville for a while and then returned. They may have a different perception and outlook.

- The mayor has been taking a progressive approach to many things and has been working hard to improve Rushville. The same cannot be said for the members if the council. As I sit back and think I cannot come up with one thing they have done to improve the quality of life. More progressive minded involvement from them would be a benefit

- We have great leaders and volunteers. Our youth is valued. Therefore we will grow stronger. I love our small town.

- The potential that Rush County and Rushville has is incredible. However, I don't think the current infrastructure of officials and business people are conducive to building any type of future together. There is always going to be politics and disagreements among people. But when that difference can't be controlled and becomes personal, then you have nothing to build on. That hurts the community and a whole, from the actions of only a few.

- I recommend that the city and county continue to force abandoned and unsafe properties to fix up or tear down the buildings. Eliminate abandon vehicles as well. Please clean up the town to make room for progress. Next fix the sidewalks and make good walking paths through town so people are not walking on the roads. Make the town user friendly. Many trees along the street need cut down to clean up these areas. Re-plant new trees. Clean up the town and make it an appealing place to live then people will want to move here. Business and industry scouts look for towns where they would like to live when selecting where they will build or expand.

Rushville's Youth Planning Objectives

Contents

Objectives

Increase Downtown Population

- **Purpose (Why):**
  - Rushville prioritizes downtown revitalization, and this is only possible by increasing the downtown population. More people choosing to live downtown leads to more businesses opening to attract those potential customers. This leads to the kind of vibrant, charming downtown that will increase quality of life for current residents and attract new residents, including young families.
  - It is difficult to support small, local businesses with downtown Rushville's current demographics, but there is a lot of opportunity in downtown Rushville as well. According to a 2013 survey conducted by Indianapolis' Metropolitan Planning Organization and Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors, nearly 4-in-10 Central Indiana residents would ideally like to live in a small town or rural setting (Northup). There is demand for a peaceful charming downtown like Rushville. Additionally, there is potential space to be developed. The upper floors of many downtown buildings sit vacant. These could serve a higher and better use as multi-family housing, condominiums, affordable housing, or senior housing.
- **Priorities (What, How):**
  - Encourage redevelopment of upper floors of downtown commercial buildings.
    - Empty or underutilized floors are redeveloped by a single developer or partnership (because an incremental, property-by-property approach will have less likelihood of success, take more time and more capital, and provide lower returns).
    - Land acquisition can be accomplished through a few different strategies:
      - Master lease
        - Least capital required
        - Long-term lease from current property owners
        - Property owners have an interest, because most of these floors are currently not producing income

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- o Developer has interest because cash flow can be generated (by sub-leasing apartments to tenants) with little capital cost.
- **Responsible parties (Who):**
  - o **Overall project plan should be developed in conjunction with municipal government, planning consulting and downtown community members and property owners, including:**
    - ▪ Heart of Rushville
    - ▪ Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation
    - ▪ Rush County Chamber of Commerce
  - o **Development could led by local Indiana developers who focus on community development, including:**
    - • Flaherty & Collins (Indianapolis)
    - • Milestone Ventures (Indianapolis)
    - • Keller Development (Fort Wayne)
    - • Englewood Development Company (Indianapolis)
    - • Pioneer Development Services (Greenwood)
    - • TWG Development (Indianapolis)
  - o **The project could involve affordable units and Low Income Housing Tax Credits, so project partners would include:**
    - ▪ Local housing authority
    - ▪ Indiana Housing and Community Development Association
- **Draft Timeline (When):**
  - o Draft plan within 2 years
  - o Find developer within 3 years
  - o Project completion in 5 years
- **Funding Sources (How):**
  - o **Low Income Housing Tax Credits** (LIHTC) are available if affordable units are included in development.
  - o **HOPE VI Main Street Grants** are designed to "rejuvenate older, downtown business districts while retaining the area's traditional and Historic character. To do this, the Main Street program provides assistance to smaller communities in the development of affordable housing that is undertaken in connection with a Main Street

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revitalization effort. Obsolete commercial offices or buildings can be reconfigured into rent producing affordable housing" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2014).

o **HUD's Section 108 Program** uses CDBG allocation's as security for loans, so that annual allocations can be used to finance large projects. As Rushville is not an entitlement community, application must be in partnership with the State of Indiana, through the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority.

o **Housing Tax Increment Financing (HoTIF)** uses additional tax dollars from redevelopment of housing (the tax increment) to finance land acquisition, construction and rehab of residential units, and infrastructure improvements. The financing tool is confined to a geographic area. Therefore, if a HoTIF was established downtown, a portion of taxes generated downtown would fund improvements downtown. To use this financing tool, a redevelopment commission must me established.

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Expand Farmers' Market

- **Purpose (Why):** The Heart of Rushville Farmers' Market is an important cultural offering in downtown Rushville. Investing in this event and expanding its impact will have great benefits for downtown. A larger farmers' market will:
  - Create an attraction that can attract young families and young professionals,
  - Draw more residents downtown,
  - Provide fresh food and increased quality of life for all of Rushville, and
  - Expand opportunities for local entrepreneurs to create and grow small businesses.
  - Provide a market outlet for local farmers to produce crops for local consumption, which often yield higher revenue acre per acre.
- **Priorities (What, How):**
  - Year round market
    - A winter market expands business opportunities for local growers and craftspeople. The weekly format with low overhead reduces barriers to entry into the market and allows more entrepreneurs to start small businesses.
    - While a spring, summer, and fall market provides an abundance of fresh produce, many communities also have successful winter markets. A winter market can offer a diverse range of products, from groceries such as eggs, meat, cheese, and winter produce to locally made food (such as preserves, honey, coffee, and baked goods) and locally made crafts (including soaps, décor, and other home goods).
  - Shared retail space for local goods as extension of market
    - A shared retail space is an excellent resource to encourage and enable local entrepreneurs to start small businesses. Small businesses can drive job creation and economic growth, while also attracting young professionals and young families.
    - By implementing a model similar to an antique mall, with one owner or lessee renting out space (booths or tables) to businesses, overhead would be very low for new businesses. This will encourage would-be entrepreneurs to try selling their goods with very little risk.

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- Shared retail space could be owned leased by the city or a local organization, such as Heart of Rushville. The location should be downtown, near the current farmers' market.

o Allow SNAP benefits to be used at Farmer's Market

- By simply applying online and sending the USDA supporting documents, the Heart of Rushville Farmers' Market can begin accepting SNAP benefits and offering fresh, local food to residents who are in need.

- Many communities also find local private donors (such as local charities, churches, and food pantries), to support a "Double Your Dollars" program. SNAP recipients can receive 1-to-1 matching funds if they use their SNAP benefits at the farmers' market. This increase the amount of fresh, healthy food that low-income households receive and incentivizes patronage of the farmers market, increasing revenues for local farmers and small businesses.

- **Responsible parties (Who):**

  o **Year Round Market:** This effort should be lead by Heart of Rushville. Local growers, craftspeople, and makers should also consider organizing as guild.

  o **Shared Retail Space for Local Goods:** This is a collaboration between the city and Heart of Rushville. These partners need to develop a more specific plan in the 18 months to provide forward momentum.

  o **Allow SNAP Benefits to Be Used at Farmers' Market:** Heart of Rushville can apply to the USDA to accept these benefits.

- **Timeline (When):**

  o Heart of Rushville: apply to accept SNAP benefits within 12 months.

  o City of Rushville and Heart of Rushville: Develop plan for shared retail space location and business plan in next 18 months.

  o Heart of Rushville: Establish a winter market for winter of 2016-17.

- **Funding Sources (How):**

  o **Vendors** are a key source of revenue for any farmers' market, and market analysis should determine if these fees can be raised to support more marketing.

  o **U.S. Department of Agriculture** offers several grants and programs to support farmers' markets. Helpful information is available at

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http://www.fns.usda.gov/ebt/usda-grant-resources-farmers-markets. These grants include:

- **Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)**
  - Focus: Improve and expand farmers' markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture and other direct producer to consumer market opportunities.
- **Federal State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMI)**
  - Focus: Applied research projects that address barriers, challenges and opportunities in marketing, transportation, and distribution of U.S. food and agricultural products.
- **Sustainable Agriculture and Research (SARE)**
  - Focus: Competitive grants program supporting research, education and sustainability includes such areas as producer grants and sustainable community innovation.
- **Community Food Projects Competitive Grants & Hunger and Food Security Programs**
  - Focus: Meeting the food needs of low-income people, increasing the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs and meeting specific state, local or neighborhood food and agriculture needs.
- **Outreach Partnership Agreements**
  - Focus: Ensure that information and technical assistance programs are effectively targeted to women, limited-resource, socially disadvantaged, and other traditionally underserved procedures.
- **Value Added Producer Grant Program**
  - Focus: Locally-produced agriculture food products. Priority is given to small to medium-sized family farms. 10% of funds reserved for beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers. 10% of funds reserved to develop local/regional supply networks linking independent producers with businesses and cooperatives.
- **Business and Industry (B&I) Guarantee Loan Program**

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- Focus: Establish and facilitate processing, distribution, aggregation, storing and marketing of local/regional food products. Help new and existing rural businesses gain access to affordable capital. Priority will be given to projects benefiting underserved communities. Through 2012, at least 5% of funds will support initiatives in local and regional agriculture.

- **Housing & Community Facilities Programs**
    - Focus: Assist in the development of essential community facilities. Construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and community and public services including the purchase of equipment required for a facilities operation. Provide loans and grants for the construction, acquisition or renovation of community facilities or for the purchase of equipment for community projects.

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Encourage and Enable Small Businesses Downtown

- **Purpose (Why):** Economic growth depends on the growth of small businesses and on a quality of life that can attract skilled workers, young professionals, and young families. A vibrant downtown is key to attracting these residents, and a vibrant downtown is dependent upon successful small businesses and a healthy entrepreneurial environment.

- **Priorities (What, How):**
  - Façade improvements and infrastructure improvements could be funded through low-interest loans, revenue from a TIF district, or a business improvement district.
  - Shared space and incubators can encourage entrepreneurs, lower barriers to entry into the market, and attract young professionals that want to start businesses or be in an energetic environment characterized by a strong entrepreneurial culture. Shared spaces and incubators can look different depending on the industry.
    - Restaurants could benefit from a "rotating restaurant" space, where a tenant rents for a short time, perhaps six months, and tries their restaurant concept. Successful business could "graduate" and move to permanent space available downtown.
    - A shared commercial kitchen could make it possible for Rushville residents to start producing and selling preserves, baked goods, or other commercial foods with less risk and lower overhead.
    - A shared office space could provide low-rent workspace for technology-based businesses, such as developers, or any business that primarily requires office space and computer workstations, such as architects, marketing professionals, and other professional services. A shared space could offer low overhead for new businesses and opportunities for creative collaboration.
    - Light industry or "makers" would benefit from a shell building available for discounted rental prices for a portion of the building. Flexible space arrangements mean small business can rent as much or as little space as necessary, thus keeping costs down until the business is ready to grow. Shared equipment and tools could also be available at such a facility.
  - For any incubator or shared space program, a requirement of participation should be that the mature business locates downtown after "graduation," thus creating a culture of entrepreneurship along Main Street.

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- o   Participation is such programs must also include business training, business plan assistance, and business development assistance. Entrepreneurs can be paired with established business owners in Rush County as mentors.
- **Responsible parties (Who):**
  - o   The City of Rushville should work with Rush County Chamber of Commerce and Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation to create an implementation plan for the above recommendations.
- **Draft Timeline (When):**
  - o   Plan conception within next 18 months
  - o   Façade improvement program developed and available in 2017
  - o   Rushville Small Business Incubator developed and operational by 2018
- **Funding Sources (How):**
  - o   **Tax Increment Financing** can finance improvements necessary to attract more customers downtown. To create additional tax revenue (the tax increment), property values need to increase. This can be accomplished by establishing a small business incubator, growing local businesses, and increasing demand for downtown retail space.
  - o   **Under a Business Improvement District (BID),** downtown businesses would agree to form a BID, contributing some extra tax dollars to finance improvements that directly benefit them. All projects financed by the BID would be constructed within the boundaries of the BID.

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Develop Bike Infrastructure and Multi-Use Trails

- **Purpose (Why):** Trails and bike infrastructure are amenities that attract young families and young professionals, as well as provide alternative transportation solutions for young people or people without automobiles. Trails have also been known to have a positive impact on property values and development activity, such as Indianapolis' Cultural Trail.

- **Priorities (What, How):**
  - A system of bike infrastructure and trails should be planned, with phasing. An example map of potential routes shows some possibilities. The map outlines the following trails:
    - **North/south bikeway** connecting the school campus, 16th Street, South Veterans Memorial Park, Downtown Rushville, and Riverside Park.
    - **Flatrock Greenway** providing a multi-use trail along the Flatrock River.
    - **East/west bikeway** connecting the east and west sides of town, and the two ends of the Flatrock Greenway, to Downtown Rushville.
  - These suggested bikeways can have varying levels of infrastructure improvement, from simply painting bike lanes to construction separate grade multi-use paths. The proposed forms are shown on the map, and a description of each form is outline below.
    - **Separate Grade:** This is similar to a sidewalk, but designed for bicycle use. It is separated from street grade by a curb, and ideally by a buffer of grass or trees. This is the safest bikeway and most convenient to riders, but requires the most land and expense. These bikeways can either separate pedestrian and bike traffic (with a sidewalk and a separate bikeway) or combine traffic in a multi-use trail. A multi-use trail should be at least 12 feet wide for ease of use. Separate grade bikeways are proposed along Morgan Street and near the school campus for the safety of younger riders.
    - **Protected Bike Lane:** A bike lane separated from traffic by bollards can be an inexpensive but very safe way of protecting bike traffic. This type is proposed along 10th Street and could be used along the residential sections of Morgan Street. Though a separate grade bikeway is ideal in this area, cost and land availability may require an alternative solution, and a protected bike lane would work well.

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- **Marked Bike Lane:** This basic bike lane is identified with paint and, ideally, striping or green paint in the lane itself (and across intersections). This informs drivers of bicyclists, but offers little separation, aside from separating traffic. Therefore, this type is proposed only along less travelled portions of Third Street downtown.
- **Flatrock Greenway:** This greenway would be an asphalt multi-use trail following the Flatrock River. A portion of the trail would follow the railroad east of Rushville. This may require land acquisition along the railroad, unless the railroad owns enough right-of-way to donate a portion (a safe distance from the tracks) to the city.

- **Responsible parties (Who):**
    - The City of Rushville will need to coordinate with Rush County and the Area Planning Commission to accomplish some of these trails, as they lie along the Flatrock River outside of city limits.
    - The City of Rushville should work with community members and a planning consultant to complete a detailed bicycle/pedestrian plan.

- **Draft Timeline (When):**
    - City of Rushville begins bicycle/pedestrian planning process in 6 months.
    - Bicycle/pedestrian plan prepared by 2017.

- **Funding Sources (How):**
    - Funding sources for these infrastructure improvements are include Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grants, Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants, and for the portions along Sexton Street serving the school campus, Safe School USDOT funding.

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Potential Bike Infrastructure

Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community

Legend

Type of Improvement

— Flatrock Greenway
— Marked Bike Lane
— Protected Bike Lane
— Separate Grade
— Separate Grade/Protected Bike Lane

Destinations

1. Middle School
2. Elementary School
3. High School
4. South Veterans Memorial Park

5. Post Office
6. Library
7. Grocery (Kroger)
8. Riverside Park

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Table of Objective Locations Within Comprehensive Plan Document

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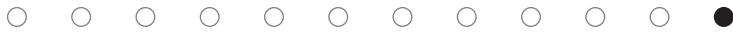
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