

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ES-1
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1-1
THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN	1-1
THE 1973 TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE PLAN	1-1
THE PROCESS FOR UPDATING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN	1-3
FORMAT OF THE PLAN	1-4
KEY ASPECTS OF STATE PLANNING LAW	1-4
PRINCIPLES OF SMART GROWTH	1-5
CHAPTER 2: INPUT INTO THE PLAN	2-1
INTRODUCTION	2-1
PUBLIC INPUT	2-1
CONCLUSIONS FROM PUBLIC INPUT	2-5
PUBLIC FOLLOW-UP	2-6
CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY STUDY	3-1
INTRODUCTION	3-1
REGIONAL CONTEXT	3-1
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	3-2
BUILT ENVIRONMENT	3-9
PROJECTIONS	3-25
CHAPTER 4: TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS	4-1
THE FUNCTION OF TRANSPORTATION	4-1
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ISSUES AND CONCERNS	4-1
TRANSPORTATION EXISTING CONDITIONS	4-3
THE 2025 TRANSPORTATION PLAN	4-8
IMPACTS OF LAND USE PLAN	4-9
CHAPTER 5: POLICY PLAN	5-1
CHAPTER 6: LAND USE PLAN	6-1
INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES	6-1
LAND USE NEEDS	6-1
LAND USE PLAN	6-4
DESCRIPTION OF LAND USE PLAN	6-7
CHAPTER 7: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION	7-1
FOLLOW-UP STUDIES AND ACTION PROGRAMS	7-1
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM	7-5
STRATEGIC PLANNING PROGRAM	7-6
CHAPTER 8: RESIDENTIAL AREA POLICY	8-1

LIST OF TABLES

	PAGE
CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY STUDY	3-1
SOIL ASSOCIATIONS	3-3
AGRICULTURAL CENSUS FINDINGS	3-4
DATA FROM AGRICULTURAL USE STUDY	3-5
RESULTS OF AGRICULTURAL STUDY	3-6
POPULATION TIME SERIES	3-9
HISTORICAL POPULATION TRENDS	3-10
ST. JOSEPH COUNTY HOUSEHOLD AND DWELLING UNIT TRENDS	3-13
URBANIZED AREA COMPARISONS	3-15
LAND USE (ACRES)	3-16
COMPARISON LAND USES	3-17
PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PERFORMANCE 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEAR	3-19
 CHAPTER 6: LAND USE PLAN	 6-1
RESIDENTIAL REQUIREMENTS	6-2
PLANNED LAND USES	6-7
 CHAPTER 7: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION	 7-1
FOLLOW-UP STUDIES AND ACTION PROGRAMS	7-1
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM	7-5
STRATEGIC PLANNING PROGRAM	7-6
 CHAPTER 8: RESIDENTIAL AREA POLICY	 8-1
AREA ACTIVITY MATRIX	8-5

LIST OF CHARTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY STUDY	3-1
POPULATION TIME SERIES	3-9
EMPLOYMENT IN ST. JOSEPH COUNTY AND STATE OF INDIANA	3-11
OCCUPANCY AND TENURE COMPARISONS	3-12
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY	3-13
POPULATION PROJECTIONS	3-26
EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS	3-27

List of Figures

	FIGURE #
CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY STUDY	3-1
TOPOGRAPHY	3-1
SOILS	3-2
WATER RESOURCES	3-3
NATURAL HABITATS	3-4
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS	3-5
HISTORICAL LAND USE	3-6
EXISTING LAND USE	3-7
URBAN SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS	3-8
SOUTH BEND BUILDING CONDITIONS	3-9
SUMMARY OF SOUTH BEND RESIDENTIAL CONSIDERATIONS	3-10
CHAPTER 4: TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS	4-1
TRANSPORTATION NETWORK	4-1
TRANSPORTATION PLAN	4-2
CHAPTER 6: LAND USE PLAN	6-1
LAND USE PLAN	6-1
SPECIAL STUDY AREAS	6-2
TOWN PLANS	6-3

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR
SOUTH BEND AND ST. JOSEPH COUNTY, INDIANA

Prepared by HNTB and the St. Joseph County Area Plan Commission

Area Plan Commission

Karl King, President
Gerry Phipps, Vice President
Greg Burris
John DeLee
Gary Gilot
Robert Hawley
Alberta Husband
John McNamara
Dave McKee
Willie Morgan
Rick Podell
Charlotte Sobel
Lloyd Taylor
Tim VanOverberghe
Tim Walz
Roland Kelly, Alternate
Charles Rogers, Alternate
Charles Shields, Alternate
Phil Sutton, Alternate
Sarah Williams, Alternate

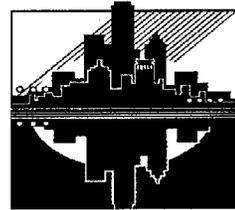
Study Review Committee

Beverly Crone, St. Joseph County
Commissioner
Stephen Luecke, Mayor - South Bend
Karl King, South Bend Common Council
Charlotte Pfeiffer, South Bend Common
Council
Henry Keultjes, County Council
Tim Walz, New Carlisle Town Council
Robert Beutter, Mayor – Mishawaka
David A. Eckrich
Jeff Gibney
Michael Hoskins
James Lyphout
Doug Marsh
Patrick McMahan
Peter Mullen
John Phair
Jesusa Rodriguez
John Schalliol
Donald Sporleder

Staff

Robert W. Sante, Executive Director
John W. Byorni, Assistant Director
Brent Bajdek, Planner
Janel Douhan, Planner
Jeffrey O. Meyers, Planner
John Carlson, Graphics Technician
Fred Marek, Graphics Technician
Former Staff
Jim Voll, Senior Planner
Robert Case, Planner
Travis Parker, Planner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Comprehensive Plan is a tool to guide St. Joseph County and its municipalities into the future. It is a policy document that sets the vision for the county for the next twenty years. A variety of means were utilized to garner input from citizens and public officials on their vision of the community, including public meetings, focus groups, a web site dedicated to the Comprehensive Plan, and a telephone survey.

Issues that are of concern to County residents are many and varied. Public impressions of the inner city and its neighborhoods are lower than for surrounding areas. However, people are aware of the assets they have with regards to redevelopment and economic development, but they are also not oblivious to the challenges facing them. An increasing degree of interdependence between St. Joseph County and Elkhart County is perceived. Also, the growth in the unincorporated areas of the County has prompted environmental and infrastructure concerns.

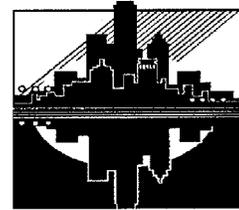
A community study reveals several trends. First, relative to other metropolitan areas in the State, St. Joseph County has done a remarkably good job of containing urban sprawl and preserving agricultural land. Much of this success can be attributed to the implementation of large-lot agricultural zoning, which requires a minimum lot size of twenty acres for residential uses on agricultural land. Second, there is a potential environmental problem in the County, where over-reliance on septic systems may be affecting groundwater quality. Third, a relatively large number of substandard structures exist in inner-city neighborhoods, primarily in areas of land use conflict, where residential and employment-based uses collide. Fourth, population projections show the County gaining about 40,000 people by the Year 2020. Employment projections show the County increasing in office and service sectors, while manufacturing will continue to do better than the State as a whole.

In order to capitalize on the County's strengths in maximizing opportunities and addressing challenges, a policy plan is developed. This policy plan contains the goals of agricultural preservation, economic development, strengthening neighborhoods, environmental conservation, and providing adequate infrastructure. A land use plan is developed in accordance with this policy plan, taking maximum advantage of existing urban service areas, avoiding encroachment of environmentally sensitive areas, avoiding highly productive agricultural land, and promoting neighborhood forms and higher densities.

Key recommendations for implementing the plan include the following: retain the 20-acre rule in agricultural zoning, prohibit septic use in inappropriate areas, target key areas for expansion of municipal service areas, implement a County sewer and water district, and develop and implement a focused neighborhood improvement program based upon quantitative measures of deterioration.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



1.1 THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is a tool to guide South Bend and St. Joseph County into the future. It outlines the vision of the community, as expressed by its citizens, the goals, objectives, and policies that help steer the community to that vision, as well as the individual plans that make that vision a reality.

"An environment that cannot be changed invites its own destruction. We prefer a world that can be modified progressively against a background of valued remains, a world in which one can leave a personal mark alongside the marks of history."

--Kevin Lynch

Plans of this nature help make it possible for cities and counties to control their future. By creating a framework for smart planned growth, communities can approach land use development, public services and resources and public investments in a positive manner.

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that sets the vision for the county for the next twenty years.

Although it is not a zoning ordinance or a regulatory

document, it is an official policy document that is adopted by the legislative bodies of the County and pertinent municipalities, including the City of South Bend. This document plans for the physical, social and economic growth and redevelopment of the County. The plan looks at a variety of areas including land use, transportation, infrastructure and utilities, drainage, environmental conservation, economic development, recreation and open space, and housing.

1.2 THE 1973 TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE PLAN

The previous attempt at updating the Comprehensive Plan took place in 1973, and was a joint transportation-land use plan that utilized funding from two federal agencies: the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

There are several items to note about the Transportation and Land Use Plan:

- Although updated in 1973, it was never officially adopted by appropriate local bodies. The Plan's influence over land development is therefore best described as "informal". Several subsequent implementation items for the Plan, such as the Zoning Ordinance, were adopted, however.
- The emphasis of the Plan is clearly greater on transportation than it is on land use. Several volumes of the Plan are devoted to traffic analysis and forecasts, alternative circulation designs, and other transportation-related elements, while the amount of information on land

use planning is considerably less. This is not a criticism, but it does indicate that the priorities of that time were considerably different than they are now. Today, we recognize that a municipality cannot “pave its way out of congestion”, as new roadway development typically induces increased travel by encouraging a more scattered, low-density land use pattern.

- The 1973 Plan represents the last time the Plan was comprehensively reconsidered. Typically, comprehensive plans should be updated every 5 to 10 years.
- The portion of the Bypass (US 20) east of US 31 did not exist at the time of the Plan, although it was proposed therein. The implementation of the Bypass represents the single most significant influence on transportation and land use patterns within the Plan. The Plan also first proposed the Capital Avenue corridor, which has been implemented in the past few years. Another freeway was proposed extending down US 31 from the north through Downtown South Bend, then bending east parallel to Jefferson Boulevard.
- The planning for new development appears to have been based upon trends and constraints presented in individual traffic analysis zones, small areas designated for traffic analysis that range in size from about ½ to 10 square miles in the urbanized areas. Land use allocation therefore does not seem to have been based upon land use policies; in fact, the only policies of the Plan are transportation-related. This practice contributed to a considerable underestimation of growth in unincorporated areas in the northeast part of the County.
- The Plan considerably over-estimated population and household growth. The Plan’s forecast for 1980 was 274,000, which is 33,000 (13%) greater than the actual figure of 242,000. The 1990 population projection was 352,000, which is off by 105,000 (43%)! This projection error notwithstanding, the error in household figures (from which residential land use projections are derived) is considerably less, since the Plan did not account for the drop in household size that has occurred over the past several decades. The Plan projected about 110,000 households for 1990, which is only 18,000 (20%) off of the actual figure (compared to 43% for population).

Further complicating the picture, it appears that the residential density of the Plan was considerably *higher* than what actually occurred, leading to an under-forecast of residential land required. The Plan’s single-family density ranges from 1 to 8 units per acre, while the actual density average (for all residential development, including multi-family) is around 3 units per acre. Therefore, although the Plan over-forecasted population growth, it under-forecasted residential development.

The Plan also overestimated employment growth, although this was much more modest. Total employment for 1990 was projected to be approximately 151,000, whereas the actual figure was 141,000, a difference of 10,000 (7%). Also, the Plan did not account for the shift from manufacturing to office/retail; for example, the Plan projected 17,400 retail employees in 1990, whereas the actual figure was 26,300. Therefore, industrial development was over-allocated, whereas not enough land was reserved for retail and office growth. Accordingly,



the land use plan allocated a significant amount of heavy industrial development on the southwest side of South Bend, most of which has not come to pass. The area described is immense, and includes approximately a mile to the southwest of the US 20 Bypass along its length from Sample Street to US 31, as well as much of the area on the interior of the Bypass.

In summary, the 1973 Plan provided good guidance for transportation planning for the County, and its recommendations still have validity. However, the land use plan component has been plagued by inaccurate population and employment projections, which appear to have resulted from a combination of questionable projection techniques and emerging demographic/economic trends. The Plan's focus on the immediate environs of South Bend and Mishawaka contributed to an underestimation of the development pressures in the northeast area of the County.

1.3 THE PROCESS FOR UPDATING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The planning process began in the summer of 1998 when HNTB Corporation was selected as the consulting team for the Comprehensive Plan.

The process for developing the Comprehensive Plan is reflected in the organization of this document. The first major phase of the Comprehensive Plan was gathering public input through various means, which included public meetings, telephone survey and access to a web site devoted to the development of the plan. Demographic and economic information was researched and studied and projections for the future of the county were developed. The findings provided a foundation for the Policy Plan and aided in the development of the Land Use Alternatives. These alternatives were generated and later critiqued, which led into the development of the final Land Use Alternative. This alternative was then used to develop the Land Use Plan. The Plan contains several components, which form the elements of the plan, such as housing, transportation, economic development, infrastructure and public utilities, neighborhoods, and agricultural preservation. Once the elements were in place, implementation strategies were researched and developed.

Coincident with the Comprehensive Plan were several planning studies, including the Airport Master Plan, the South Bend Housing Study, several commercial corridor and Downtown studies, and other projects. The information and findings of the studies have been taken into consideration and incorporated into the development of applicable elements of the Plan.

Once all of its individual components were complete, the draft Comprehensive Plan was presented in a series of public forums at various locations in the community. The feedback from these sessions was used to further refine the Plan. The Plan was then taken to the Area Plan Commission and the South Bend City and St. Joseph County legislative bodies for adoption.

1.4 FORMAT OF THE PLAN.

This Plan utilizes the input received and data analysis to define issues that the Plan needs to address. In the following chapters, methods for public input and their results are described, and



existing demographic, economic, and land use trends are analyzed. Using these analyses, future land use trends are projected, so that the land use portion of the Plan will reserve sufficient land to accommodate expected growth, as well as identify market opportunities around which redevelopment activities may be centered. The Land Use Plan is then discussed, along with some of the impacts upon municipal services and facilities. Transportation improvements required to implement the Plan are then discussed, as are impacts upon parks and recreational facilities. Chapter 7 discusses actions that should be taken to implement the Plan.

1.5 KEY ASPECTS OF STATE PLANNING LAW.

While comprehensive planning is an activity primarily undertaken by local government, the State sets out certain standards for such plans. The State's interest in doing this is "for the promotion of public health, safety, morals, convenience, order, or the general welfare and for the sake of efficiency and economy in the process of development" (I.C. 36-7-4-501).

Indiana Code 36-7-4-500 series sets for the standards for developing and evaluating a comprehensive plan. Required elements include the following (I.C. 36-7-4-502):

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

Optional elements include the following (I.C. 36-7-4-503):

- Surveys and studies of current conditions and probable future growth.
- Maps, plats, charts, and descriptive material presenting basic information, locations, extent, and character of pertinent characteristics, including history, population, land use, physical conditions, community centers, neighborhoods, public ways, public and private utilities, environmental conditions, transportation, parks, education, and other appropriate factors.
- Reports, maps, charts, and recommendations setting forth plans and policies for the development, redevelopment, improvement, extension, and revision of the subjects and physical situations of the jurisdiction.
- A short and long range development program of public works projects for the purpose of stabilizing industry and employment and for the purpose of eliminating unplanned, unsightly, untimely, and extravagant projects.
- A short and long range capital improvements program of governmental expenditures so that the development policies established in the comprehensive plan can be carried out and kept up-to-date for all separate taxing districts within the jurisdiction to assure efficient and economic use of public funds.
- A short and long range plan for the location, general design, and assessment of priority for construction of thoroughfares in the jurisdiction for the purpose of



providing a system of major public ways that allows effective vehicular movement, encourages effective use of land, and makes economic use of public funds.

Chapter 5 of this Plan, which outlines the Policy Plan, meets all of the required elements of the comprehensive plan; additional content may be found in Chapter 4 (Transportation Plan), Chapter 6 (Land Use Plan), and Chapter 7 (Plan Implementation). Also, Chapter 8 provides a very specific discussion of objectives and policies for neighborhoods. The Plan also contains several of the optional elements, including studies of current conditions and expected future growth; maps, charts, and descriptive material on the County and its municipalities; and reports and maps for the development and redevelopment of the municipalities. While the Plan contains statements of policy for public services (including infrastructure and transportation), specific plans and capital improvement programs are not set out here, primarily because the Area Plan Commission does not have direct control over capital budgets. Also, the infrastructure items covered in the Plan are administered by a wide variety of public and quasi-public agencies with different service areas, even service areas that extend beyond the County¹.

1.6 PRINCIPLES OF SMART GROWTH.

The topic of sprawl has received much public attention recently, in the nation, the State of Indiana, and St. Joseph County. The 2000 presidential election saw the subject emerge as a national campaign issue, and several environmental groups, including the Sierra Club, have started using the term in their environmental protection efforts. As we shall see in the next chapter, many St. Joseph County residents are concerned about the effects of sprawl on their quality of life.

Despite appearances to the contrary, however, this widespread discussion does not reflect a consensus on the definition of sprawl. Many people equate “sprawl” with suburban growth of any type; unfortunately, this definition’s logical conclusion is that to control sprawl, a community must prohibit growth. In addition to having severe economic ramifications, such a policy is completely unrealistic, as population growth is a variable that communities cannot completely control.

It is much more useful to construct a definition based upon the qualities that sprawl has, and examine how to minimize and/or mitigate impacts arising from these qualities. A short (i.e., not comprehensive) list of these qualities is as follows²:

- Unlimited outward extension of development
- Low-density residential and commercial settlements
- Leapfrog development
- Fragmentation of land use controls and lack of centralized planning
- Automobile-dominated transportation

¹ One specific example is the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG), which has transportation planning and budgeting authority, and which has a multi-county service area.

² After Anthony Downs, “Some Realities about Sprawl and Urban Decline”, The Brookings Institution, 1999.



- Strip commercial development
- Fiscal disparities among localities
- Little policy attention being paid to new low-income housing development

It is important for the reader to understand from this list that sprawl can have serious implications on the fiscal health of municipal governments. The ability of municipalities to provide public utilities and services can end up severely constrained. Studies³ have shown that sprawling development can result in an inefficient delivery of such services as education and roads, higher costs for delivering public services, and inequitable patterns of costing out infrastructure.

According to the measures listed above, it seems that St. Joseph County has fared reasonably well. Comparisons to some other Indiana communities (see Chapter 3) indicate that the County has maintained a relatively high population density in urbanized areas. The creation of an Area Plan Commission that has control over land use in most of the incorporated municipalities has minimized fragmentation of planning and land use controls. The City of South Bend has an active community development and redevelopment program. The County’s agricultural protection zone has effectively provided constraints to unlimited growth in some areas.

“Why should we concerned about continuation of ‘suburban sprawl’? The answer is that sprawl causes, or contributes to, two sets of serious economic and social problems.

The first set occurs mainly in fast-growing areas, but spreads to others too. It includes traffic congestion, air pollution, large-scale absorption of open space, extensive use of energy for movement, inability to provide adequate infrastructures, inability to locate region-service facilities ..., shortages of affordable housing ..., and suburban labor shortages. These problems mainly harm people who benefit from other aspects of sprawl.

The second set of problems ... arise because our development process concentrates poor households – especially poor minority households – in certain high-poverty neighborhoods.”

Anthony Downs (1999:2-3)

Still, some challenges exist. Incomes in unincorporated areas of the County are high relative to the two central cities. Transportation in new growth areas is automobile-oriented. Some leapfrog development has occurred to the north and east of the existing incorporated areas, as well as south along US 31.

One of the responses to the problem of defining and controlling sprawl is the rise of the “smart growth” movement. While smart growth is almost as difficult to define as sprawl, most urban scholars agree that smart growth embodies the following principles:

- Compact urban form with integrated land uses (employment, shopping, and residential) should be encouraged
- Create “transit-friendly” development

³ E.g., “Living on the edge: The Costs and Risks of Scatter Development” (www.farmlandinfo.org/cae/scatter/e-loe.html).



- Encourage tax-base sharing and other measures to minimize income disparities between municipalities⁴

These principles are not merely esoteric beliefs held by municipal planners. Developers, too, are coming to realize the benefits of smart growth. The National Association of Homebuilders has issued a policy statement in favor of smart growth principles as a means of providing greater housing choice and better communities (see <http://www.smartgrowth.org/pdf/smart.pdf>).

All of this is not to say that the Comprehensive Plan adopted smart growth principles *carte blanche*. Rather, the Plan examined community conditions and garnered public input in order to arrive at consensus on what elements and principles the Plan would need to incorporate. Still, the usefulness of the smart growth movement is that it provides a good vocabulary for a discussion of land use planning, a means to relate planning to the everyday functioning of a community, and a sense of urgency that is important to proper Plan implementation. Although the principles of smart growth may appear new, they are essentially a repackaging of traditional planning ideas. Planning has always been concerned about the financial and environmental impacts of growth. Movements associated with smart growth, such as neotraditionalism, deliberately hearken to older concepts of urban development.

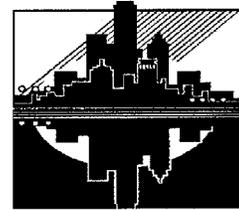
The Plan is constructed to provide a unified vision of the community's future development, and many pieces contribute towards this goal. Therefore, it is on the sum of its content, and the interrelationship between its elements, upon which the Plan should be judged.

⁴ Bartsch, Charles, et al. Smart Growth. Washington DC: Northeast-Midwest Institute. 1999. "An Introduction to the Issue of Smart Growth". (<http://www.nemw.org/ERsmartgrowth.htm>). In addition to these measures, smart growth pundits advocate for changes to State and Federal tax codes that allegedly contribute to income disparities between communities.



CHAPTER 2

INPUT TO THE PLAN



1. INTRODUCTION

Communities develop and implement Comprehensive Plans in order to control land uses and public investments, thereby more effectively managing scarce public and land resources while at the same time providing a higher quality of life to their residents. In addition to these technical objectives, however, the Comprehensive Plan also represents a statement of citizens as to the desired form and content of the community. The determination and delineation of the community's vision is therefore very important to the Plan.

It makes sense, then, to garner input from citizens during the updating of the Plan. Also, a number of groups with citizen constituencies exist that have insights into the community's vision, and whose input should be included.

This chapter describes the process of garnering public input, and the conclusions that were reached.

2. PUBLIC INPUT

Input from the public was derived from several sources. First, a series of open public meetings was held. Second, a web site (www.areaplan.org) was developed to inform citizens of the purposes and process of the Comprehensive Plan, as well as provide a forum for input and comments. Third, focus group meetings were conducted with special interest groups in the community. Finally, a telephone survey was implemented.

2.1. Public Meetings. Six public meetings were held in various locations in South Bend and the County during October and November of 1998. Three of the meetings were in South Bend, at Charles Martin Youth Center, Adams High School, and the Airport Safety Center. The other three meetings took place outside of the City, at Meadow's Edge School south of Mishawaka, Harris Prairie Church in Granger, and North Liberty Elementary School.

In addition to the public meetings, the South Bend planning staff conducted a series of six meetings with students and youth groups. These meetings included Riley High School, Clay High School, Washington High School, Adams High School, Hamilton High School, and the Chamber of Commerce's Youth Leadership Committee.

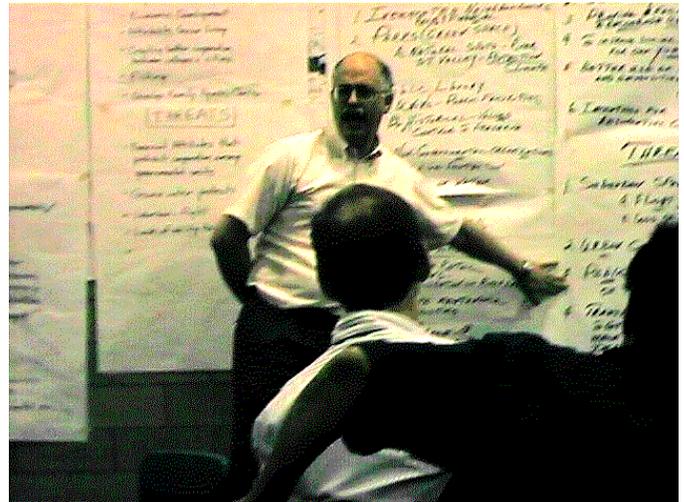
These meetings shared a standard format. After a short presentation of the demographic and economic characteristics of the County (see Chapter 3), participants were divided into small groups to brainstorm strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing

their neighborhoods and community. Once the small groups completed this exercise, the larger group was reconvened to discuss items and issues that arose.

2.1.1. *Strengths.* Participants generally saw existing academic institutions and existing parks and wetlands as strengths. Redevelopment and economic development programs were also cited as strengths, with measures like neighborhood activities, high homeownership rate, and schools being mentioned. The area was seen as having a good transportation network. Public services, such as police and fire protection, were perceived as being of high quality.

2.1.2. *Weaknesses.* Citizen apathy was the most-cited weakness in the County. The perceived decline of activity in Downtown South Bend was cited as a weakness. Existing gateways into South Bend and declining neighborhoods were listed as problems. Many participants noted issues with local government, including city-county conflicts and competition, a perceived lack of public services in the County, property tax inequities and issues, and bureaucracy.

2.1.3. *Opportunities.* People generally saw opportunities in existing neighborhood revitalization and economic development activities. The redevelopment of the Downtown was cited here. Capitalizing on the recreational value of the St. Joseph River was listed. The Comprehensive Planning process was viewed as an opportunity to improve government services. The proposed Capital Avenue Expressway was cited as an opportunity to improve access to suburban areas.



2.1.4. *Threats.* People cited many aspects of government and public services as threats, including poor planning, potential annexation, perceived high crime levels, perceived local government parochialism, perceived lack of vision, and the existing property tax structure. Groundwater contamination was also often cited as a concern. Many aspects of infrastructure were listed here, including urban sprawl and unrestricted growth.

2.1.5. *Conclusions.* Several overall patterns arose as to the concerns of citizens that are shared between the City of South Bend and St. Joseph County, as follows (in no particular order):



- Natural resources preservation and groundwater protection;
- The quality of primary and secondary education;
- Strong neighborhoods and homeownership rates;
- High quality of life;
- Urban growth and sprawl, along with ancillary issues such as annexation; and
- Economic development and redevelopment.

Several issues are primarily concerns of residents of the City of South Bend, including the following (again, in no particular order):

- Redevelopment of commercial corridors, streetscapes, and the Downtown;
- Ethnic diversity;
- Vocational education;
- Urban flight;
- Brownfields (defined as vacant or underutilized properties, usually industrial in use or former use, with perceived environmental issues); and
- Poor planning.

Issues that were primarily concerns of St. Joseph County residents (outside of South Bend) include the following:

- Maintaining a small town or rural atmosphere;
- Farmland preservation;
- The impacts of unrestricted growth;
- Adequate infrastructure and public services; and
- Rezoning.

Overall, the predominant issues revolve around economic development and redevelopment, and the related issues of infrastructure and government services.

2.2. **Electronic Participation.** A World Wide Web site (www.areaplan.org) was established to inform viewers of the Comprehensive Plan process and status. Email addresses to project staff were listed on the site, allowing viewers to email comments. The web site contained many items pertinent to the process, including a description of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan, the project team and schedule, informational maps and graphics, and other items.

While the web site provided the opportunity for additional public input, the primary result is keeping citizens involved in the comprehensive planning process.

2.3. **Focus Groups.** In addition to soliciting input from citizens, meetings were held with local organizations with community development interests or focus. Seven such meetings were conducted, with the following groups (in no particular order):

- Representatives of the African-American community;



- The local home builders association;
- Banking interests;
- Commercial/industrial realtors;
- The South Bend Heritage Foundation;
- Project Future; and
- The Chamber of Commerce Leadership Group.

The responses of these stakeholders generally emphasized economic development more than did the public at-large. Infrastructure, particularly for future industrial development, was a primary concern, as was maximizing future employment opportunities. Urban sprawl was a key issue, and the 20-acre minimum residential lot size in the agricultural zoning district was specifically cited as a tool for helping slow down sprawl. Perceived local government fragmentation and competition was viewed negatively. Strengthening local school districts was viewed as vital to the community's future health.

2.4. Telephone Survey. In order to obtain more input from the citizenry regarding public issues, the Public Opinion Laboratory of Indiana University Purdue University-Indianapolis (IUPUI) conducted a telephone survey in July of 1999. Conclusions of the study are listed as follows:

- Most people rate the quality of life in their neighborhoods as “excellent” or “very good”, with over 64% of respondents reporting one of those two categories. Neighborhoods also figured prominently elsewhere, and were the second-most frequent answer given to questions regarding what people liked about their current residence (the most common answer being access to jobs, etc.). 86% of South Bend respondents stated that protection and improvement of existing neighborhoods should have a higher priority than developing new neighborhoods. However, people are generally not willing to undertake additional taxes or fees to promote neighborhood conservation and redevelopment activities.
- Public safety and schools are the most often-cited reasons for why non-South Bend residents chose not to live in the City. These respondents also saw the City's existing planning and neighborhood activities as less effective than did City respondents. When asked what improvements should be emphasized in South Bend, non-residents replied that neighborhood infrastructure improvements and economic development should be priorities.

South Bend residents generally would like to see more affordable housing, neighborhood improvement, code enforcement, and public infrastructure activities.

- People are very concerned about environmental issues and green space, more so than for any other development issues that were asked. Water quality is of particular interest, with 75% of all respondents indicating concern. This is an interesting finding, particularly since South Bend has a treated public water supply.



In another set of development questions, people viewed infrastructure, farmland preservation, and annexation as the most important development issues, with the threat of annexation still being an important issue but less prominent than the others. Most (62%) people felt that more action should be taken to address sprawl, and 74.3% supported action to minimize farmland conversion. Taken together, these responses suggest that most people feel that preservation of farmland and open space is important to the quality of life in St. Joseph County.

- With regards to public services, only emergency services showed significant public support for increased taxes. Other public services (libraries, infrastructure, parks) were split between support and opposition. Shared services between the City and the County received strong support (77%). There is a willingness to support coordinated City-County planning.

3. CONCLUSIONS FROM PUBLIC INPUT

The public input phase of the Comprehensive Plan resulted in a myriad of different items being discussed. Despite this level of detail, when taken collectively, the data reveal several trends:

- Impressions of the inner city and its neighborhoods are lower than for surrounding areas. However, people are aware of the assets they have with regards to redevelopment and economic development, but they are also not oblivious to the challenges facing them.
- Both City residents and non-residents see neighborhood deterioration and lack of code enforcement within South Bend as serious concerns. Neighborhood infrastructure, such as sidewalks and curb and gutter, are generally desired improvements. Still, most respondents are not willing to undertake additional taxes or fees to address these issues.
- Participants noted a growing dichotomy between St. Joseph County and Elkhart County, which abuts St. Joseph County to the east. The public perception is that Elkhart County has emerged as the dominant industrial center in the two-county region, while St. Joseph County has become the retail, office, and residential community for the region. The two metropolitan areas therefore are growing increasingly interdependent, which will more and more affect the pattern of development within St. Joseph County.
- The unincorporated areas of the County, particularly in the east and northeast, have become popular locations for residential development. These areas have easy access to South Bend, Mishawaka, Elkhart, Niles, the University of Notre Dame, shopping, employment, well-regarded schools, good transportation facilities, and do not have city/town property tax rates. The growth in these areas, however, appears to have triggered a slew of concerns. First, with the development in the Granger area being primarily reliant upon septic systems (unusual for such density), public interest in groundwater contamination is rising. Residents in unincorporated areas are very sensitive



to annexation and the higher property taxes that result, but are also aware that the level of public services they receive is lower relative to cities and towns. The effects of growth on traffic congestion are beginning to be felt, as people feel it takes them longer to travel to South Bend and Mishawaka than it used to. Several participants are worried about the effects of growth on farms, and what the impacts to agricultural production might be.

4. PUBLIC FOLLOW-UP

While the emphasis on public involvement was during the Plan's initial stages, it is worth noting that in August and November of 2001, in preparing for the Plan's adoption, the Plan was presented to the public in a series of community meetings. The presentation walked participants through the development, findings, and policies of the Plan, and provided opportunities for feedback.

It is noteworthy that public reaction to the Plan was generally positive. Some refinements on the communication of the Plan's components were suggested, but the Plan's content was largely upheld. This reaction indicates that the Plan is on-target with regards to the public's perception of community needs and goals. One exception voiced in the public meetings pertains to the 20-acre minimum lot size for residential development in agricultural zones, which is an existing zoning requirement that the Plan upholds (see Chapters 3 and 5 for discussion). The public reaction to this suggestion is best described as ambivalent, with many voices both in support and in dissent. There was little new information on this subject resulting from the public meetings, and accordingly the Plan's recommendation remains unchanged.

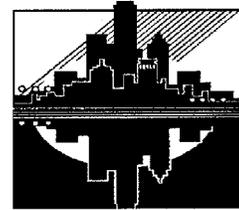
Also, there were some comments pertaining to the limitations on rural development, and establishing caps on the amount of new development allowed around existing small towns in the County. This language was accordingly removed from the Plan, as the comments were seen to have merit. While the general principle of the Plan is to focus new development, as far as possible, to existing urban and town public service areas, providing caps on this development appears to be unnecessary.

There was also discussion regarding the large amount of area potentially open for development due to the City of South Bend's extension of sewer and water service to the IN/TEK plant near New Carlisle, to the west of South Bend. Several citizens proposed that this area constituted a significant new growth area for the County. However, the provision of sewer and water are, in and of themselves, insufficient to promote healthy control of growth and development without the presence of other services. Also, there are some environmental features in this area that the Plan deemed worthy of preservation. Although the Plan designates areas that are most appropriate for future growth, it should be noted that growth is not necessarily precluded in other areas.



CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY STUDY



1. INTRODUCTION.

A comprehensive plan is frequently likened to a “map” that the community can follow in achieving its goals¹. In order to get to a desired destination, one must have a clear picture of that destination and the alternative routes to get there. Just as important, however, is knowing your *origin* on the map. Determining that origin is the purpose of the community study.

The community study serves multiple purposes. It serves as a basis for benchmarking the success (or lack thereof) of the Plan. More importantly, however, the community study helps to establish historical and anticipated trends that can influence the Plan. For instance, if the community desires more jobs, it is useful to define how the community has economically fared historically, what may be expected in terms of future job growth, and the impacts that job growth may have on public services and facilities.

This chapter outlines the results of analyses that help to define these issues. Some of the subjects of study, such as population and employment, are standard aspects of any comprehensive plan. Other subjects, such as farmland preservation, were included because of their importance to the stakeholders discussed in Chapter 2. In most cases, the analyses relied upon existing data sources (exceptions will be noted as they arise).

For those readers not interested in detail, a summary of issues arising from the community study may be found at the end of this chapter.

2. REGIONAL CONTEXT.

2.1. **Metropolitan Area.** St. Joseph County is a single-county metropolitan area, defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census as the South Bend, IN Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The South Bend MSA is adjacent to the Gary, IN Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA), which itself is a component of the Chicago-Gary-Kenosha IL-IN-WI Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA). Another single-county metropolitan area, the Elkhart-Goshen MSA, lies adjacent to the east.

Although it is important to consider these official designations, defining the metropolitan area requires further consideration. As will be noted elsewhere (see discussion under “Employment”, below), the economies of St. Joseph and Elkhart Counties are becoming more interlinked. Elkhart County contains the cities of Elkhart and Goshen, with 51,874

¹ For instance, see Kelly and Becker (2000), *Community Planning: An Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan*, P 63.

and 29,383 persons (2000 Census), respectively.

In addition, the employment areas of St. Joseph County are increasingly serving the Michigan counties that abut the County's northern boundary, namely Berrien and Cass Counties. Berrien County contains the small city of Niles, which lies about 5 miles north of the St. Joseph County line.

- 2.2. **Governance.** St. Joseph County is incorporated under Indiana state law, and accordingly is governed by a County Council, and a three-member Board of Commissioners, which administers the County's executive responsibilities.

The County contains two cities of the second-class², South Bend and Mishawaka³. Several towns also lie within the County, including Osceola, Walkerton, North Liberty, Lakeville, New Carlisle, Indian Village, and Roseland.

The St. Joseph Area Plan Commission has planning and zoning jurisdiction over all unincorporated areas of the County, as well as many of the County's cities and towns, including the City of South Bend. The City of Mishawaka and the Towns of Indian Village and Walkerton have elected not to participate in the Area Plan Commission.

3. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 3.1. **Topography.** The Comprehensive Plan considers topography primarily because areas of steep slope raise erosion issues, and generally provide a constraint to intense development. Figure 3-1 shows the terrain for the County. Generally, the County is characterized by gentle terrain, with slopes primarily staying under 2%.

A ridge is evident running from the southwest to the County's center, then paralleling the St. Joseph River to the east, thereby providing the demarcation for a gentle plateau that covers the southeastern portion of the County. Another gentle plateau enters the County from the north (west of the St. Joseph River), and stops at about US 20, while a third plateau enters from the northeast. The St. Joseph River winds its way through these three plateaus before exiting the County to the north. A fourth plateau briefly enters the County on its west side. The area between this plateau and the other three is low and flat, and as shall be discussed later, constitutes the largest-single area of floodplain within the County.

- 3.2. **Soils.** Development, particularly of the more intense varieties, requires good soil characteristics in order to be tenable. The Comprehensive Plan considers soil

² "Second-class" is not a normative comment on the quality of the cities; instead, it refers to the city classifications specified by state law. Any city in Indiana with a population equal to or greater than 35,000 persons (with the exception of Indianapolis) is a second-class city.

³ Mishawaka, Indian Village, and Walkerton cannot by law be included in the Plan because they are not members of the St. Joseph County Area Plan Commission.



associations that were developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (National Resource Conservation Service) in cooperation with Purdue University.

Figure 3-2 shows the location and extent of soil associations in St. Joseph County. These associations and their areas are listed in the following table:

Table 3-1: Soil Associations

<u>Soil Association</u>	<u>Area (Sq. Mi.)</u>	<u>%</u>
Coupee-Tracy	14.361	3.1%
Crosier-Brookston-Milford	98.01	21.2%
Hillsdale-Oshtemo-Chelsea	15.077	3.3%
Houghton-Adrian-Palms	57.769	12.5%
Morley-Blount	6.189	1.3%
Oshtemo-Fox	9.602	2.1%
Rensselaer-Gilford-Maumee	68.404	14.8%
Riddles-Miami-Crosier	58.357	12.6%
<u>Tyner-Oshtemo</u>	<u>133.823</u>	<u>29.0%</u>
TOTAL:	461.592	100.0%

The most dominant association is Tyner-Oshtemo (134 square miles), which is comprised of deep, well-drained soils, and is primarily located in the northeastern and southwestern parts of the County. During the 1970's, it was thought that this type of soil was suitable for septic use, and the ordinances put in place at that time did not place restrictions on septic use in these areas. Since that time, these soils were re-rated as having severe limitations for septic use, due to poor filtration.

Some well-drained soil associations include Coupee-Tracy, Hillsdale-Oshtemo-Chelsea, and Oshtemo-Fox. These soil types pose few restrictions for development, although their dry nature can place an upper limit on agricultural output.

The Rensselaer-Gilford-Maumee and Crosier-Brookston-Milford associations have “dominantly somewhat poor to very poor” drainage, and generally have severe limitations for non-agricultural uses due to a seasonal high water table. The high water table severely limits the use of septic systems. These soil associations, where adequate drainage exists, can yield relatively high agricultural output.

The Morley-Blount and Riddles-Miami-Crosier associations are described as “dominantly well-drained to somewhat poorly-drained”. The Morley-Blount association has severe limitations for non-agricultural uses because of slow soil permeability, and septic systems should be severely limited. Runoff, erosion, and wetlands are barriers to agricultural production. The Riddles and Miami soils have moderate limitations for septic systems where slopes exceed 12%; septic systems on Crosier soils are severely limited due to a high seasonal water table and relatively slow permeability. Non-agricultural uses on the Riddles-Miami-Crosier association face moderate limitations.



The Houghton-Adrian-Palms association is the most poorly drained of all the associations. The wetness of this association places severe limitations on non-agricultural uses and septic systems.

Based strictly upon soil conditions (and not residential densities, topography, etc.), then over 91% of the County may be considered unsuitable for septic use.

- 3.3. **Agricultural Resources.** The U.S. Bureau of the Census conducts its Census of Agriculture every five years, on years ending in a “2” or a “7” (e.g., 1982, 1997, etc.). Results are tabulated by County. Results from the last four Agricultural Census reports for St. Joseph County are listed as follows⁴:

Table 3-2: Agricultural Census Findings

	1982	1987	1992	1997
Land in Farms (acres)	172,500	174,226	172,348	154,142
% change		1.0%	-0.6%	-10.6%
Cropland Harvested	139,000	126,000	143,000	131,000
% change		-9.4%	13.5%	-8.4%
Number of Farms (all)	1,000	900	780	680
% change		-10.0%	-13.3%	-12.8%
Number of Farms (full-time)	500	460	377	304
% change		-8.0%	-18.0%	-18.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Agriculture (<http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/census97/profiles/in/inp074.pdf>)

As can be seen in the table, up through 1992, agricultural preservation was fairly successful in St. Joseph County. The amount of land in farms stayed relatively constant, despite a drop in the number of farms. From 1992 to 1997, the Census reports some alarming changes in supply, with a loss of over 18,000 acres being reported. A study by the St. Joseph County Area Plan Commission, however, reports that the loss in this time period was much smaller, at around 1,800 acres; much of this loss occurred in areas that were designated in the 1973 Comprehensive Plan for urban uses, and not for agricultural use, i.e., these areas were previously planned for development. Much of this acreage can be accounted for by several major industrial and commercial expansions, including IN/TEK, the Blackthorn expansion, Grape Road, and other areas.

In order to provide a more detailed look at agricultural conversion, a random sample of 29 building permits in agricultural zones was examined, using 1998 aerial photography to determine its current use. This sample included permits issued from 1980 to the end of 1997, representing eight townships. The purpose of this examination was to determine whether the sale of these properties resulted in a conversion of farmland to other uses, and by extension determine the effectiveness of the 20-acre rule in preserving farmland.

⁴ Figures for 1982 and 1987 and the “Number of Farms (all)” and “Cropland Harvested” figures for all years are taken from charts produced the U.S. Census Bureau, and are therefore approximate numbers.



At least one building permit from each year was included. The following table lists the parcels examined and their characteristics:

Table 3-3: Data from Agricultural Use Study

<u>Number</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Zoning</u>	<u>Township</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
64	80	44	Agriculture	Olive	Farming, woods
85	81	48	Agriculture	Centre	No farming
107	82	66	Res./Agriculture	Penn	Farming
122	83	10	Agriculture	Warren	Questionable
146	84	19	Agriculture	Liberty	Farming
167	84	10	Agriculture	Liberty	No farming
182	85	40	Agriculture	Penn	Farming
207	86	41	Agriculture	Olive	Farming, woods
249	87	100	Agriculture	Olive	Farming
231	87	17	Res./Agriculture	Penn	Questionable
276	88	20	Agriculture	Olive	Farming, woods
298	88	75	Agriculture	Penn	Farming, woods
312	89	25	Agriculture	Olive	Never used for farm
327	89	30	Res./Agriculture	Centre	Never used for farm
351	90	26	Agriculture	Centre	Questionable
373	91	28	Agriculture	Penn	No farming
400	91	31	Agriculture	Centre	Farming
430	92	20	Agriculture	Union	Farming
451	93	49	Agriculture	Olive	Farming, woods
492	94	20	Agriculture	Lincoln	Farming
510	94	40	Agriculture	Olive	Farming
526	95	40	Agriculture	Liberty	Questionable
539	95	55	Agriculture	Union	Farming, woods
555	95	20	Agriculture	Union	Farming
573	96	10	Agriculture	Liberty	Farming
591	96	22	Agriculture	Lincoln	No farming
608	97	25	Agriculture	Liberty	Farming
621	97	20	Agriculture	Liberty	No farming
627	97	20	Agriculture	Madison	Farming

The non-urbanized areas of the County seemed to be well represented by the sample. The parcels ranged in size and year acquired as per the following table:



Table 3-4: Results of Agricultural Study

Size ⁵	1979-1989	1990 - present	Total
1-10 A	2	1	3
11-20 A	3	5	8
21-30 A	2	4	6
31-50 A	4	4	8
51-75 A	2	1	3
76-100 A	1	0	1
Total	14	15	29

Aerial photography from 1998 was used to determine whether the use of the property was non-agricultural. Of the 29-parcel sample, 19 (or 66%) contain farming activities on the land, 2 (7%) appear never to have been farmed, 5 (17%) have been converted to other uses, and 3 (10%) are questionable as to current agricultural use. Of the five parcels that are not used agriculturally, one (1) is ten acres in size, three (3) are twenty to thirty acres in size, and one (1) is 48 acres in size⁶.

A subsequent study by the Area Plan Commission examined all of the building permits within the study period, with nearly identical results. It appears, then, that the minimum lot size requirement in agricultural zones does not result in a large-scale conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural purposes.

3.4. Water Resources and Drainage. Water resources and drainage are important considerations for the Comprehensive Plan, as water is a resource that is publicly available and, in the incorporated areas, publicly provided. This section considers the location and adequacy of these items.

3.4.1. Streams, Rivers, Lakes. Figure 3-3 shows the location of dominant surface water resources in the County. The St. Joseph River traverses the northeastern part of the County, flowing through Mishawaka and South Bend before turning north and exiting the County.

Juday Creek, a coldwater trout stream, runs east-west across the Grape Road Corridor and into the St. Joseph River. The heavy development along the Grape Road Corridor and its environs have significantly affected the water quality and fish population of this stream. Increasing siltation and increased water temperature have contributed to these problems. Efforts to mitigate these issues are underway, including new construction requirements for parking lots.

⁵ Building permits for parcels smaller than 20 acres are presumed to be the result of variances to the zoning ordinance being issued.

⁶ Following this analysis, which was published separately in the newsletter of the Indiana Planning Association, the St. Joseph County Area Plan Commission conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the results, and looked at all the parcels where building permits were issued in agricultural zones. The results of this comprehensive evaluation statistically validated the results of the sample survey.



Several lakes exist within the County. The largest of these, the 278-acre Worster Lake, is the centerpiece of Potato Creek State Park. A group of lakes lies to the west of South Bend, including the North and South Chain Lakes (respectively 78 and 95 acres), the 165-acre Mud Lake, and other smaller lakes.

- 3.4.2. Drainage. The County is bisected by the boundary between two major river basins – the Kankakee and St. Joseph basins; this boundary constitutes the north-south continental divide. The boundary approaches the west side of the City of South Bend, and may impose restrictions on gravity-flow infrastructure, such as sanitary sewer service.

The western portion of the County has a rather large area of floodplain, of approximately 15,000 acres in size. This area lies in the low plain between the western and central-eastern plateaus (see section on topography, above). Another 3,500 acres of floodplain lie in the southern portion of the County.

- 3.4.3. Aquifers. The aquifers within the St. Joseph River Basin are also shown in Figure 3-3⁷. Development within the largest of these, the St. Joseph aquifer, arguably has a higher reliance upon groundwater as a water resource than can be found anywhere else in the State of Indiana⁸. This aquifer contains both consolidated and unconsolidated deposits, with the unconsolidated deposits ranging in thickness from 20 to 80 feet and consolidated deposits from 40 to 100 feet. Rates of groundwater withdrawal in 1987 range from 100 to 1,500 gallons per minute⁹.

The unconsolidated Hilltop aquifer lies in the central to central-eastern portion of the County, and has a 1987 withdrawal rate of about 25 to 150 gallons per minute. Similarly, the unconsolidated Nappanee aquifer has a withdrawal rate of about 50 to 600 gallons per minute¹⁰. Together, the Hilltop and Nappanee aquifer systems comprise a physiographic unit referred to as the Steuben Morainal Lake Area. Along with the St. Joseph aquifer, they drain predominately to the west, towards the St. Joseph River.

- 3.4.4. Quality. The “sole-source” designation of the St. Joseph Aquifer affords it special status with regards to water quality. Federally-funded projects lying within the aquifer must be evaluated for their potential to contaminate the aquifer; potentially-adverse impacts must be corrected before a project can proceed.

⁷ Mapping of these aquifers was provided by the U.S. Geological Survey. Maps of aquifers in the Kankakee River basin are not currently available.

⁸ Fenelon et al (1995), P1. The St. Joseph Aquifer is classified as a “sole-source aquifer”, meaning that it is the primary source (more than 50%) of drinking water for nearby residents; the St. Joseph Aquifer is the only sole-source aquifer designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in the State of Indiana.

⁹ Clendenon and Beaty (1987), as cited in Fenelon et al (1995), p. 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 8.



The most recent published study of groundwater quality in the St. Joseph Aquifer was published in 1995 by the U.S. Geological Survey¹¹. The study cites a 1989 report by the Michiana Area Council of Governments that documents 20 contaminated groundwater sites within the aquifer. In addition, the study reported on ground-water samples collected from 30 monitoring wells that were chosen for their propensity to support future development. Two samples exceeded USEPA guidelines for nitrates. Antimony in one sample exceeded USEPA health advisory concentrations. Methylene-blue-active substances, chloride, dissolved oxygen, and nitrates were found in significantly higher levels in the unconsolidated aquifer; with the exception of oxygen, all of these substances may be attributed to human activity.

A more extensive study is currently underway to determine groundwater contamination in the County. The potential exists for a severe problem, in that any groundwater contaminants in these areas could move towards the public water supplies of the County's large urban centers. The reader should bear in mind that public water supplies are treated prior to distribution; however, treatment of increasing levels of contamination will likely result in increased treatment costs. This situation should be closely monitored.

3.5. Natural Habitats. Environmental conservation and preservation constitutes a strong component of the Comprehensive Plan.

3.5.1. Woodlands. Figure 3-4 shows woodland (terrestrial) and wetlands habitats (palustrine) within the County. Woodlands and wetlands (including near-wetland) habitats are derived from the U.S. Geological Survey's Gap Analysis Program (1998). Generally, the escarpment that serves as the boundary for the southeastern plateau (see topography) contains the most significant concentrations of woodland habitats, presumably because agriculture and urban development are relatively infeasible on these slopes. The ridge defining the northern plateau also contains significant woodland habitat, for similar reasons. Scattered woodland habitat exists throughout the County. Near-wetland habitat is uncommon by comparison, and is mostly found in the southern and southeastern areas of the County.

3.5.2. Wetlands. Scattered wetland areas exist throughout the County. The St. Joseph River is considered a "non-vegetated bottom" wetland following its passage through South Bend. The chain of lakes to the west of South Bend are strong in "emerging-vegetation" wetlands, while the southern plateau has a number of forested and scrub-shrub wetland areas.

¹¹ Fenelon, Joseph M. et al. *Ground-Water Quality in Northeastern St. Joseph County, Indiana* (1995). U.S. Geological Survey.



3.6. **Summary: Environmental Constraints.** Figure 3-5 is a composite showing the primary environmental issues constraining development in the County. To the south and southeast of the developed areas of South Bend, Mishawaka, and Osceola lies the southeastern plateau. The escarpment and its terrestrial vegetation that border the plateau provide moderate barriers to further municipal growth; should these obstacles be overcome, then development will intrude upon the most agriculturally-productive area in the County.

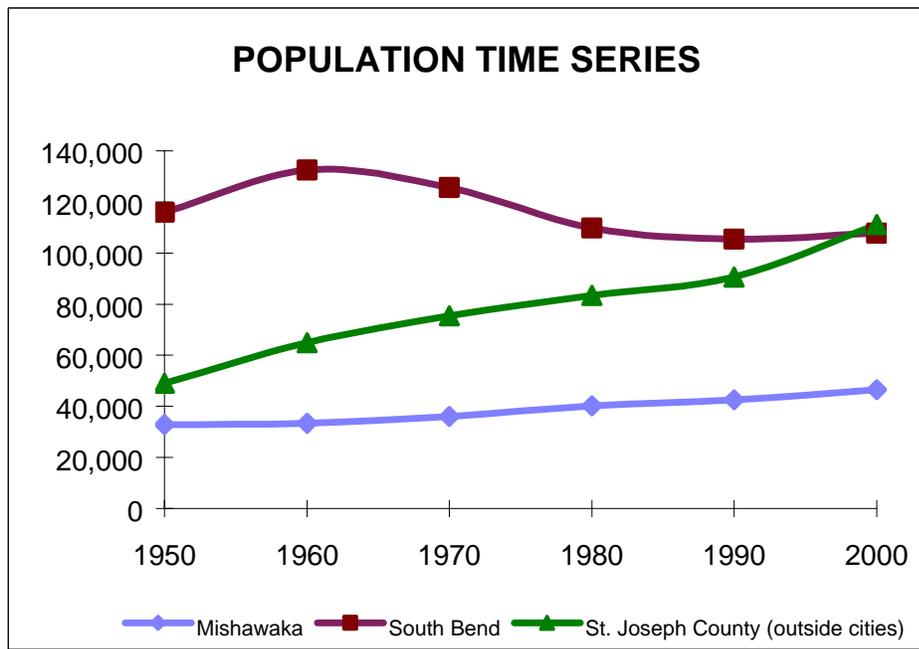
To the west of South Bend lie a number of small wetland and terrestrial habitats. The expansion of urban development significantly to the west of US 31 will result in damage to these habitats.

The floodplain and wet soil conditions in the western part of the County preclude heavy development. Septic systems should be discouraged in this area. Agriculture in non-floodplain areas should continue to be encouraged. The southwestern portion of the County is surprisingly free of constraining conditions.

4. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

4.1. **Population.** Chart 3-1 shows the historical population trends of the County¹²:

Chart 3-1: Population Time Series



¹² As of this writing, not all of the 2000 Census figures are available, but total population figures for municipalities are available



Population figures may be found in the following table:

Table 3-5: Historical Population Trends

Municipality	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
South Bend	115,911	132,445	125,580	109,727	105,511	107,789
Mishawaka	32,913	33,361	36,060	40,224	42,608	46,557
Walkerton	2,102	2,044	2,006	2,051	2,061	2,274
Osceola	1,091	1,350	1,572	1,987	1,999	1,859
North Liberty	1,165	1,241	1,259	1,211	1,366	1,402
New Carlisle	983	1,376	1,434	1,439	1,446	1,505
Roseland	984	971	895	832	706	1,809
Lakeville	736	757	712	629	655	567
Indian Village	57	82	86	151	142	144
Unincorporated areas	49,116	64,987	75,441	83,366	90,558	101,653
St. Joseph County	205,058	238,614	245,045	241,617	247,052	265,559

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; Indiana Business Research Center.

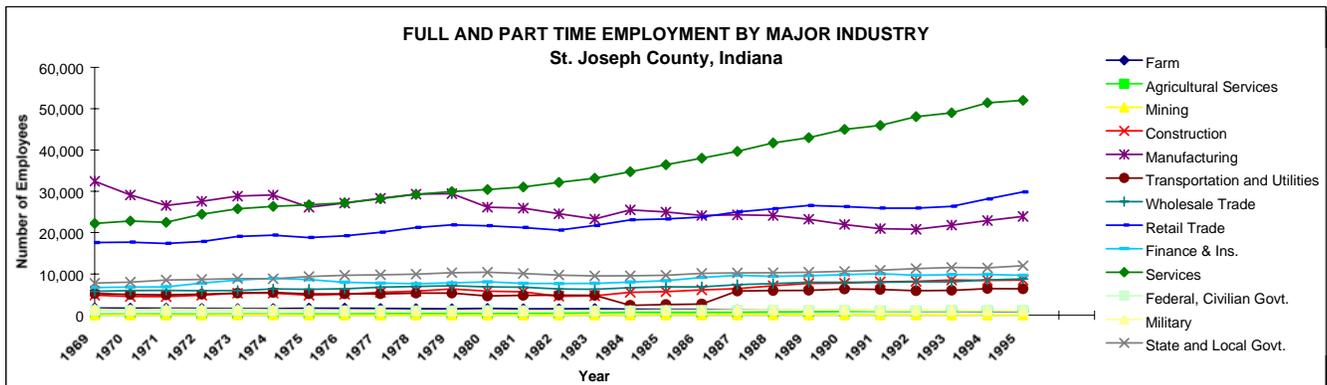
As can be seen, the County's population from 1950 to 2000 has increased by close to 30%. This description masks, however, a slight decline that occurred from 1970 to 1980. The City of South Bend peaked about a decade earlier in 1960, which marks the beginning of a population slide; however, the 2000 Census shows signs of a recovery. Roseland has undergone a population decline over the entire historical period shown, but has seen a marked jump from 1990 to 2000; this is primarily due to the erroneous inclusion of part of the University of Notre Dame's married housing units in the Town. The error has been reported to the U.S. Census Bureau, but a correction has yet to be issued. Lakeville was relatively stable up to the 1990-2000 time period, when its population dropped by about 15%; Osceola saw a minor decline of about 7% during the same time period. Other municipalities in the County are either stable or growing. The combined unincorporated areas of the County grew by more than 10% between 1990 and 2000.



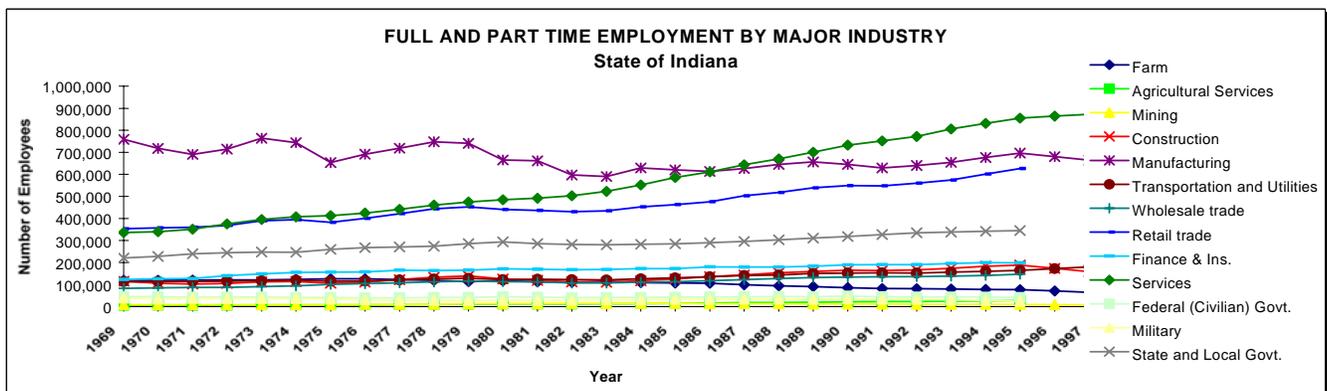
4.2. Employment

The following figures show employment trends over time in St. Joseph County, and compare them to those of the State of Indiana:

Charts 3-2 and 3-3: Employment in St. Joseph County and State of Indiana



(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census)



As can be seen in these charts, manufacturing employment has lost its dominance in the County, having slipped from being the highest-employing sector in the 1960's to being the third-largest employer, after services and retail employment. This is a larger relative decline than that found in the State, where manufacturing retained its dominance to a much later date, and still is larger than retail employment.

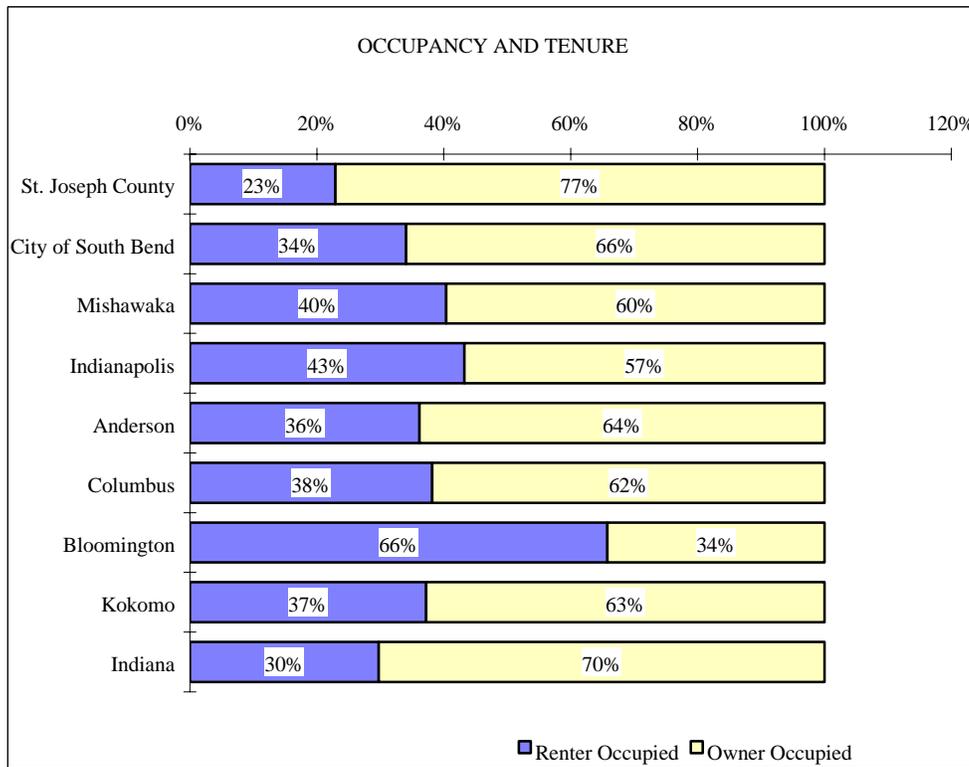
Generally, there has been a steady increase in services and retail employment over time in both the County and the State. Overall, these trends provide some factual basis for the claim, made during the public meetings and focus group interviews, that a dichotomy is emerging in the regional economy, with Elkhart County becoming the industrial center, and St. Joseph County becoming the office/services/retail center.



4.3. Housing

One of the most important characteristics of housing is its tenure (i.e., renter- vs. owner-occupied), which provides clues as to density, income, and lifestyles. Tenure for St. Joseph County, the City of South Bend, and several comparison cities (as well as the State of Indiana) are shown in the following chart:

Chart 3-4: Occupancy and Tenure Comparisons



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990)

As can be seen in the chart, South Bend has a higher proportion of renter housing than the County in general, but the level is still comparable to that of the State, and generally less than that of other cities in the State.

Another important feature of housing is household size. Changes in average household size can have dramatic impacts upon the amount of housing required, even if the population is stable. For example, 1,000 persons can be housed in 333 dwelling units if the average household size is 3.0 persons; if the average household size decreased to 2.5 persons, then 400 dwelling units will be needed to house the population, and an additional 67 housing units will need to be found to house the same population.

Household size trends can be seen in the following table:



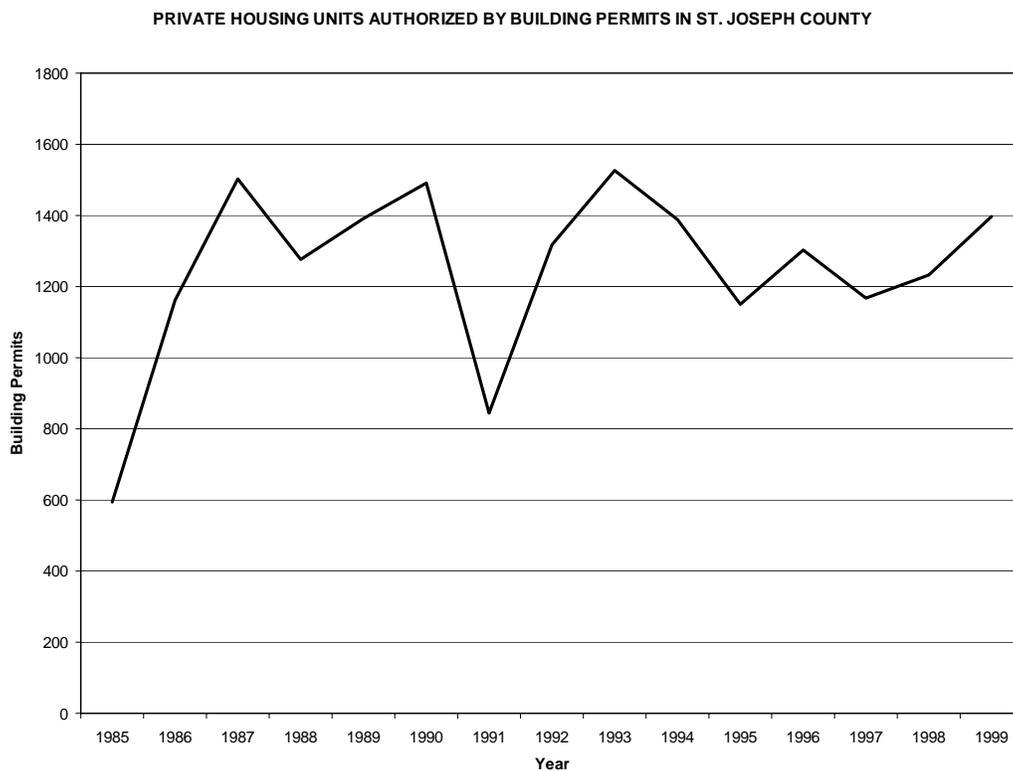
Table 3-6: St. Joseph County Household and Dwelling Unit Trends

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>
Population	244,827	241,617	247,052
Dwelling Units	78,823	91,165	97,956
Households	75,666	86,204	92,365
Persons per Household	3.13	2.68	2.54

As can be seen, household size has been consistently declining over time, paralleling State and National trends. This decline has sparked a rather large surge in construction, despite a stable population.

This housing activity has continued since 1990, as can be seen in the following chart of building permits issued (for the entire county, including all municipalities):

Chart 3-5: Residential Building Permit Activity (County-wide, including incorporated and unincorporated areas)



Source: Real Estate Center (Texas A&M University)



With the exception of the 1991-1992 recession, building permits (single-family and multi-family combined) have been issued at a consistent level of about 1,000 to 1,500 units per year.

4.4. Land Use

- 4.4.1. Regional Form. The most densely urbanized area of the County is the north central-northeast vicinity, which contains the Cities of South Bend and Mishawaka and the Town of Osceola, as well as the Towns of Indian Village and Roseland and the unincorporated area of Granger. Most of the County's rail and roadway infrastructure has developed to serve this area. The area is well-served by a street pattern that exhibits both grid and radial characteristics.

In comparing the historical and existing land uses (Figures 3-6 and 3-7) to the County's environmental constraints (Figure 3-5) and urban services areas (Figure 3-8), it becomes apparent that much of the growth of the urbanized area has been limited to areas adjacent to urban centers. This limiting of growth can be credited to a variety of factors, including the agricultural preservation zoning policy that effectively provides a growth boundary on the south and west edges of the urbanized area, as well as topographic and drainage features that constrain the extension of gravity-based urban services. There are several areas, including Osceola and Granger, where many residential subdivisions have been developed without public water or wastewater services (although in accordance with local ordinances); it is noteworthy that neither agricultural zoning nor topographic/drainage constraints apply in these areas.

Several urbanized nodes exist outside of the aforementioned areas. New Carlisle, North Liberty, Walkerton, and Lakeville are all radially connected to South Bend/Mishawaka through state and federal highways.

- 4.4.2. Historical Land Use. Figure 3-6 shows the historical urbanized form of St. Joseph County and its constituent municipalities. The 1960 and 1985 layers were derived from digital quads from the U.S. Geological Survey, while the 2000 layer came from the existing land use study (see next section).

Before 1960, the urbanized areas of the County were fairly consolidated. Then the urbanized areas began to expand, primarily to the east and northeast. Since 1980, urban expansion has continued in the east and northeast and, to a lesser degree, has also moved towards the northwest and southwest.

An interesting item to note is how contained the urban expansion has been. Unlike other Indiana communities, the last twenty years has not seen a great deal of urban sprawl in the County. This containment seems primarily due to the implementation of the agricultural protection zoning, which requires a minimum



of 20 acres per residential unit in agriculturally-zoned areas.

The following table compares the St. Joseph County urbanized region to two other Indiana communities – Indianapolis and Muncie/Delaware County.¹³ The population per urbanized acre is shown (residential acres were not used because only total urbanized area for 1960 and 1980 are known). In viewing the table, note that the agricultural protection zoning was adopted in 1979:

Table 3-7: Urbanized Area Comparisons

Year	St. Joseph County			Indianapolis Region (nine-county)			Muncie		
	Population	Acres	Pop/Acre	Population	Acres	Pop/Acre	Population	Acres	Pop/Acre
1960	238,614	25,319	9.42	1,175,000	84,079	13.97	68,063	10,847	6.27
1980	241,617	40,795	5.92	1,306,000	150,743	8.66	77,216	N/A	N/A
2000	260,000	49,637	5.24	1,565,000	500,569	3.13	69,058	21,566	3.20

Population: U.S. Bureau of the Census
2000 Urbanized Area: HNTB Corporation
1960 and 1980 Urbanized Areas: U.S. Geological Survey

In 1960, St. Joseph County had an urban density that was approximately halfway between those of Indianapolis and Muncie. Between 1960 and 1980, urban densities began to drop markedly (Muncie’s 1980 acreage is not known). Between 1980 and 2000, densities in the comparison communities continued to drop, while in St. Joseph County they remained approximately the same.

The importance of this analysis can be found examining Muncie, where the population remained approximately the same between 1960 and 2000, but urbanized area almost doubled. In Muncie, the same number of people have to pay out the taxes to fund twice as many roads, pay twice as many police officers, etc. The Muncie example shows how higher per-person service costs may result from a sprawling urban form.

To repeat, by keeping urban densities high, St. Joseph County has minimized the cost of providing urban services. By examining the character of urban growth and comparing it to current zoning, it becomes apparent that the 20-acre agricultural zoning requirement is the primary policy variable stemming urban sprawl. One of the primary recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan derives from this finding, namely, the retention of the 20-acre rule.

- 4.4.3. Existing Land Use. Current land uses (1999) are shown in Figure 3-7. South Bend land uses were determined through a building-by-building visual survey during 1998 and 1999. Land uses outside of South Bend were categorized with remote sensing using aerial photography. The acreage in each land use category is listed in the following table:

¹³ These communities were chosen due to similar studies that have been conducted for them by HNTB.



Table 3-8: Land Uses (Acres)

Land Use		South Bend	%	Total County*	%
Agriculture	Total	-	0.0%	179,600	69.1%
Employment	Total	3,780	19.4%	4,620	1.8%
	Industrial	2,100	10.8%	3,700	1.4%
	Office/Retail	1,680	8.6%	920	0.4%
Residential	Total	7,300	37.5%	27,900	10.7%
	Single-Family	6,400	32.9%	27,500	10.6%
	Multi-Family	900	4.6%	300	0.1%
	Mobile Home	-	0.0%	100	0.0%
Institutional	Total	4,700	24.1%	7,900	3.0%
	Public/Inst.	2,100	10.8%	2,000	0.8%
	Recreation	1,200	6.2%	5,700	2.2%
	Utilities	1,400	7.2%	200	0.1%
Natural/Vacant	Total	3,700	19.0%	39,900	15.4%
	Vacant land	3,700	19.0%	2,900	1.1%
	Natural/Woodland	-	0.0%	37,000	14.2%
TOTAL		19,480	100.0%	259,920	100.0%

* = Excluding South Bend, Mishawaka, and Walkerton (Mishawaka and Walkerton land use is not included, as they are not members of the Area Plan Commission)

Sources: City of South Bend and HNTB Corporation

4.4.4. Comparison Land Use. Average land uses by category (excluding agriculture) are listed in the following table, using sources compiled by the American Planning Association and from HNTB’s experience. The City of South Bend has a relatively high proportion of industrial land uses relative to other communities. The similarity to Muncie provides a good comparison; both cities serve as industrial centers for a relatively large service area. “Other” land uses in South Bend that are particularly high include institutional uses, including the medical services, public education, and government services that are primarily clustered in the City of South Bend.

By contrast, the County’s primary developed use is residential. Most of the industrial and commercial uses are found in the City of South Bend.



Table 3-9: Comparison Land Uses

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>South Bend*</u>	<u>St. Joseph County*</u>	<u>National Average</u>	<u>New Albany</u>	<u>Muncie</u>	<u>Evansville</u>	<u>Ft Wayne</u>
Residential	46%	63%	52%	47%	54%	53%	35%
Commercial	11%	5%	10%	4%	10%	11%	8%
Industrial	13%	11%	7%	8%	17%	7%	7%
Total Other ¹⁴	30%	21%	31%	41%	19%	29%	50%

* Acreages after netting out agricultural and natural/vacant uses.

Source: The source for the national averages is the publication *Bringing Land Use Ratios Into the '90's*, August 1992, PAS Memo, American Planning Association. Other municipalities listed here are from HNTB's experience or are catalogued by HNTB; New Albany, Muncie, Evansville and Fort Wayne are Class II cities.

- 4.5. **Urban Services.** Standards for urban services frequently are used to determine the level of service needed in a particular area for a specific population. Planning standards that were explored for St. Joseph County include guidelines for the following services: education, libraries, health, recreation, special services, and public safety. Planning standards are guidelines established by professional organizations or governmental agencies. Along with planning standards, service level measurements are also used in certain needs assessment analyses. Service levels are observed national average amounts of resources expended per capita or some unit of size.

The standards detailed in the following table are based on the Social Impact Analysis of the *Development Impact Assessment Handbook*, compiled and published by the Urban Land Institute. There has been and will continue to be a conscientious effort to obtain the most current, accurate, and applicable standards possible.

These standards will be applied to the County's demographic profile in order to determine the "optimum amount of resources that would be required for the satisfaction of needs." (Urban Land Institute) These quantities will then be compared to the actual level of services existing in St. Joseph County.

- 4.5.1. Transportation. The existing transportation system will be examined separately in Chapter 4.
- 4.5.2. Utilities and service areas. To the extent available, information on public water and wastewater distribution and collection systems, including service areas, was collected and mapped (see Figure 3-8). Figure 3-8 does not include any private water or sanitary systems. It should also be noted that numerous households in the County utilize well water and/or septic systems. Generally, with the exception of Granger, Osceola, and their environs, (see Section 3.4, above), the urbanized area has remained confined to existing service areas.

¹⁴ "Other" land uses are not necessarily classified in the same manner as the New Albany classifications. Agricultural uses are excluded from this analysis.



In examining the service areas of public utilities, the remarkable recent extension of South Bend utilities west of the City along the US 20 corridor to the IN/TEK area should be noted.

- 4.5.3. Police. The City of South Bend has 256 full-time police officers, or about 2.51 officers per 1,000 population. This is above the national standard of 2.0 officers per 1,000 population¹⁵. The Police Department has a take-home policy for vehicles, and maintains one vehicle per officer, for approximately 256 vehicles; again, this translates to 2.51 vehicles per 1,000 population, well above the national standard of 0.6 vehicles per 1,000 population¹⁶. Using 1999 and preliminary 2000 data (2001 data are not available), the Unified Crime Reports published by the Federal Bureau of Investigations indicate that crime in South Bend decreased slightly from 1999 to 2000.

The St. Joseph County Sheriff's Department maintains 136 full-time officers and 128 vehicles. This comes out to level-of-service (LOS) ratios of 1.34 officers per 1,000 population and 1.26 vehicles per 1,000 population. The officer LOS is well below the standard LOS of 2.0, but the vehicle LOS is above the LOS standard of 0.6. While crime data are not available for the County outside of the incorporated areas, it should be noted that the preliminary 2000 data note a national trend increase in both property and violent crimes in suburban areas.

- 4.5.4. Fire. The national LOS standard for fire personnel is 1.65 firefighters per 1,000 population, while the vehicles standard LOS is .6 vehicles per 1,000 population¹⁷. The City of South Bend has 248 firefighting personnel, for 2.54 persons per 1,000 population, well above the national LOS standard, while the 48 vehicles make for a LOS of .47, somewhat below the standard LOS.

Fire service in the County is handled through 10 different organizations, and volunteers provide much of the service. An accurate count of full-time and volunteer employees is not available, as several departments have not responded to requests for information, and others admit they do not keep accurate rosters of volunteers. The best available information suggests a full-time roster of about 22 firefighters, supplemented by about 115 volunteers. The Urban Land Institute does not list an ideal LOS for volunteer firefighters.

- 4.5.5. Emergency Medical Service (EMS). The South Bend Fire Department maintains 54 paramedics and 7 emergency vehicles. The national LOS standard is 4.1 EMS full-time personnel per 30,000 population¹⁸; the South Bend LOS is 15.88

¹⁵ Urban Land Institute 1994:93.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸ *ibid.*



paramedics per 30,000 population, well above the LOS standard. It is noteworthy that the South Bend paramedics provide services to the County on contract; for the planning area, the resulting LOS is 7.63, which is still well above the standard.

The national LOS standard for EMS vehicles is 1 per 30,000 population; the South Bend LOS is 2.06, well above the LOS standard. For the planning area, the LOS is 0.99, which is right at the LOS standard.

- 4.5.6. Schools. School performance is of interest to the Comprehensive Plan, not because of any great impact the Plan has on performance, but because performance is a significant factor in residential location decisions. Generally, people with children want to reside in the best school district. During the stakeholder and public meetings, people generally made known that the perceived differences between school systems were important to them. As such, a brief examination was made of school performance data for different public schools districts (private school districts were not mentioned in the public meetings). Performance data for graduating seniors are listed below:

Table 3-10: Public High School Senior Performance by High School (1999-2000 School Year)

<u>District/School</u>	<u>SAT</u>	<u>% grad</u>
South Bend		
Adams H.S.	979	88
Clay H.S.	1010	86
LaSalle H.S.	948	90
Riley H.S.	971	78
Washington H.S.	906	87
Penn Harris/ Penn High School	1015	86
John Glenn	1004	84
Mishawaka	985	82
Union-North/ Laville High School	976	86
<i>State average</i>	<i>999</i>	<i>90</i>

Source: Indiana Department of Education



Performance varies across the County. Only three high schools exceed the State average for SAT scores, and only two high schools exceed the State average for graduation rates. Another four high schools come within 5% of the State average for SAT scores, and another two high schools come within 5% of the State average for graduation rates.

4.5.7. Taxation.

4.5.7.1. *Property Taxes*¹⁹. The most widely-used source of revenue for municipalities in Indiana consists of property taxes. A wide number of county-wide and sub-county property tax districts may be found, including St. Joseph County, the incorporated municipalities (South Bend, Mishawaka, Indian Village, Roseland, Walkerton, New Carlisle, Lakeville, Osceola, and North Liberty), school districts, library service districts, and townships. The State also imposes property taxes for certain activities.

The property tax levy for a particular taxing district is the product of the tax rate and the total assessed value, minus any credits or exemptions that may result (e.g., homestead and not-for-profit corporation exemptions). Several issues exist with property taxation in Indiana that are worth mentioning here. First, Indiana law places a 5% cap on the annual increase of a taxing district's property tax levy. Second, Indiana is one of only two states in the nation that do not use market value in assessing properties; however, all property assessment in the State is currently shifting to a market-based assessment system. A final item to consider is that taxing districts and service areas do not necessarily coincide, particularly when comparing urban and non-urban areas; for example, South Bend property owners pay St. Joseph County property taxes, but do not receive County police or fire protection.

The total assessed value (both real and personal property) for St. Joseph County for the 1998 payable 1999 tax year was \$1,952,384,000, an increase of about 18% from the 1994 payable 1995 figure of \$1,652,871,300. The per-capita assessed value for that same year was \$7,566, which was below the state average of \$9,175; ranked from highest to lowest in terms of per-capita assessed value, St. Joseph County ranks 62nd out of 92 counties.

If property tax rates across the state were uniform, the County's relatively low per-capita assessed value would limit property tax levy generation potential. However, the County's taxing districts have relatively high property tax rates, which may make up for the low per-capita assessed value. Based upon a summary examination of property tax rates across the State, it appears that only Lake County (Gary), which ranks 71st in the State with regards to per-

¹⁹ Figures in this section come from the Indiana State Board of Tax Commissioners.



capita assessed value, contains taxing districts with uniformly higher rates than St. Joseph County. Applying the property tax rate for the major city to the per-capita assessed value figure yields an estimated per-capita assessed value tax levy of \$1,410.98 for St. Joseph County, \$1,828.36 for Gary, \$1,176.97 for Fort Wayne, \$855.38 for Anderson, \$1,416.02 for Indianapolis, and \$1,276.05 for Elkhart.

4.5.7.2. *Income Taxes (EDIT and COIT)*. In addition to property taxes, the State of Indiana allows counties to levy local option income taxes. State law allows three types of income taxes; two of them are utilized in St. Joseph County, and our discussion will be limited to these income taxes. Through the use of interlocal agreements, the County shares the income tax revenue with municipalities within the County.

The Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT) is allowed by State law for financing economic development projects. Direct payments of EDIT funds may be used for acquisition, construction, infrastructure, administrative and operating expenses, business revolving loan funds, and interest related to bond proceeds, provided that the projects are economic development- or redevelopment-based. Allowable rates for EDIT range from 0.1% to 0.5%; the 2001 rate for St. Joseph County is 0.2%.

The County Option Income Tax (COIT) is a general-purpose supplemental revenue source. These funds may be applied to any activity where property taxes can be spent. The rate for County residents can range from 0.2 to 1.0%; non-residents working in the County pay one-fourth the resident rate. The 2001 rate for residents for St. Joseph County is 0.6%.

4.5.8. Other Urban Services.

4.5.8.1. *Health Services*

Medical Facilities. There are three community hospitals/medical facilities within St. Joseph County, with a combined total of 838 beds, a decline from the 1986 total of 1,265 beds²⁰. The number of hospital beds comes to about 3.3 beds per 1,000 population, which is comparable to but slightly below the LOS standard of 4²¹.

Physicians. In 1990, there were 417 physicians in the County, or about 1.69 per 1,000 population²². This represents an increase from the 1985 figure of 1.53

²⁰ U.S. Bureau of the Census (1988 and 1994). *City and County Data Book*. 1991 is the most recent year for which these data (and much of the other health care information) are available.

²¹ Urban Land Institute 1994:93.

²² U.S. Bureau of the Census (1988 and 1994). *City and County Data Book*.



physicians per 1,000 population, and exceeds the national LOS standard of 1.5²³.

Elderly Care. Approximately 14.1% of the County's population was age 65 or over in 1990, as compared to 12.3% in the U.S. in 1990 and 13.1% in the County in 1980. This relatively high level of elderly population results in a higher demand for elderly care within the County.

One measure for the level of service (LOS) for elderly care is the number of nursing home beds per 1,000 elderly persons; nationally, the recommended LOS is 45²⁴. Although the number of beds in nursing homes was not counted in the 1990 Census, the number of persons in nursing homes was included. Assuming that each person represents one bed, and that there was negligible vacancy, then the 2,525 persons in 1990 in St. Joseph County nursing homes represent an LOS of about 72.5, well above the LOS standard.

4.5.8.2. *Parks and Recreation.* The St. Joseph County Regional Parks and Recreation Department and the South Bend Parks Department provide recreation facilities within the planning area. Each of these agencies has prepared a five-year strategic plan, as is required in order to receive parks funding from the State of Indiana. The parks and recreational facilities and capabilities of each of these organizations are considered separately below:

South Bend Parks Department. This department administers about 1,422 acres of recreational space in 71 facilities (including parks and indoor facilities). The department focuses on community, neighborhood, and mini- (or "block") parks and special recreational uses, leaving regional parks to the County.

Eleven of the parks meet the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) definition of a community park²⁵, and have a combined acreage of about 591 acres, for an average park size of about 54 acres. These parks serve multiple neighborhoods within a radius of one to two miles, tend to be areas of relatively diverse environmental quality, and may include areas suited for more intense recreational facilities, such as larger athletic facilities. The NRPA standard for this type of park is 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 persons, while the local standard is 7 acres per 1,000 persons; the City has 5.9 acres per 1,000 persons, thereby meeting the national standard, but falling short of the local standard by about 97 acres.

Thirty of the parks meet the NRPA's definition of a neighborhood park, and have a combined acreage of about 313 acres, for an average park size of about 10

²³ Urban Land Institute 1994:93.

²⁴ Urban Land Institute, 1994:92.

²⁵ The South Bend Parks Department uses recreational standards developed by Purdue University, which are very similar to the NRPA's standards.



acres²⁶. These parks tend to serve one or two neighborhoods within a quarter- to half-mile radius, and tend to be areas for intense recreational activities, e.g., field games, court games, playgrounds, etc. The NRPA standard for this type of park is 1 to 2 acres per 1,000 persons, while the local standard is 3 acres per 1,000 persons; the City has approximately 3.1 acres per 1,000 persons, thereby exceeding all standards.

Twenty of the parks meet the NRPA's definition of a "mini-park", locally referred to as a "block park". The combined acreage of these parks is 19 acres, for an average park size of about one acre. These tend to be specialized facilities that serve concentrated and/or special populations. The NRPA standard for this type of park is 0.25 to 0.5 acres per 1,000 persons, while the local standard is 0.5 acres per 1,000 persons. The City has approximately 0.19 acres per 1,000 persons, falling short of the minimum NRPA standard by about 6 acres, and missing the local standard by about 30 acres.

The remaining ten recreational facilities are "special" parks, including golf courses, linear parks, and trails. The combined acreage for these facilities is about 498 acres. No NRPA standard exists for linear parks or special use facilities, although the South Bend 5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan has identified a need for another 130 acres of golf course space. The Plan does not note any problems with the distribution of parks and facilities within the City. The Plan also identifies a need for an additional 36 acres of recreational facility space, including soccer fields, basketball courts, skating rinks, and neighborhood centers; these facilities may be incorporated into existing parks.

St. Joseph County Regional Parks and Recreation. This department administers about 1,450 acres of parkland in six parks. Four of the parks have an outdoor, passive recreational purpose, serve several communities within a metropolitan area, and rely upon the use of natural or ornamental quality for outdoor recreation; therefore, they meet the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) definition of a regional park²⁷. In addition, the Parks Department operates or anticipates opening three additional properties/facilities with additional area of 194 acres, for a total recreational area of 1,644 acres.

The level of service must be evaluated in terms of St. Joseph County's total population, rather than its extra-urban population; with this assumption, the LOS of the four regional parks is 5.47 acres per 1,000 persons, not including the new planned acreage (which brings the LOS up to 6.2 acres per 1,000 persons). The

²⁶ The NRPA standards state that the desirable size of this type of park is over 15 acres, but this is a guideline, not a rule, and these parks meet all other NRPA criteria of neighborhood parks.

²⁷ Strictly speaking, the NRPA's standard for regional parks includes a minimum size of about 200 acres, a threshold that only three of the six parks meet; however, the size standard is meant to be guideline rather than a strict cutoff point, and all six of the parks meet the NRPA's other criteria for regional parks.



NRPA LOS standard is 5.0 to 10.0 acres per 1,000 persons, so the regional parks do meet the NRPA standard; it should also be noted our calculation does not include the Potato Creek State Park (below), which is more than twice the size of St. Joseph County's combined parkland.

The other two parks, though they also utilize natural resources for passive recreational purposes, have smaller service areas, and hence meet NRPA's definition of a community park. The combined acreage of the two community parks is 245 acres, which, when compared to the County's extra-urban population, yields an LOS standard of 2.5 acres per 1,000 persons. The NRPA standard is 5.0 to 8.0, indicating a potential deficiency in community park ground. This lack of community parks may be due to the reliance upon regional parks or Potato Creek State Park to provide community park functions.

The Parks Department does not maintain any mini- or neighborhood park facilities in the County. The combined NRPA LOS standard for these facilities is 1.25 to 2.5 acres per 1,000 persons. Mini- and neighborhood park facilities are typically specialized facilities (playgrounds, playing fields, etc.) that serve residential development in neighborhood clusters. The lack of these facilities has several alternate explanations, any of which (or any combination of which) may be true:

- Citizens in the County are relying upon the regional parks for the neighborhood park functions.
- Residential development in the County is not structured in neighborhood clusters, which makes the development of mini- and neighborhood parks infeasible.
- Facilities of the South Bend (and Mishawaka) park systems are serving areas outside of their incorporated limits.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources. This state agency oversees the Potato Creek State Park, a 3,840-acre facility located southwest of South Bend. The park includes Worster Lake, two boat launches, swimming, fishing, 287 campsites, family cabins, hiking trails, a bicycle trail, cross-country skiing, and other programs/services.

The park meets the NRPA definition of a "regional park reserve", as it is larger than 1,000 acres in size, encompasses a unique natural resource (i.e., Worster Lake), serves several communities within about an hour's driving time, and contains areas of natural quality for nature-oriented outdoor recreation.

4.6. Urban Neighborhoods. Comments received from the public and focus groups have indicated concerns over neighborhood quality (see Chapter 2 for details). As such, the community study has paid special attention to neighborhood issues. The exploration of



neighborhood issues was greatly enhanced by the recent development of a building conditions database assembled by the South Bend City Planning Staff. This database utilizes four ratings for each property parcel: good, fair, poor, and dilapidated. A rating of “good” means that the structure is sound, while a rating of “fair” means that minor repairs are needed. A rating of “poor” means that major repairs are needed, while a rating of “dilapidated” indicates that rehabilitation of the structure is economically and/or physically infeasible. The results of the database are shown in Figure 3-9.

The raw conditions are somewhat difficult to interpret, due to the small size of some of the parcels. Therefore, a summary index was developed to highlight areas of concern²⁸. A grid was developed with lines at 1,000-foot intervals; each resultant cell had an area of 1,000,000 s.f. (or about 23 acres). The average building condition rating for residential uses was calculated for each grid cell. Upon consultation with City staff, the top 45% of average ratings were classified as “excellent” areas, the next 25% were classified as “good”, the next 20% were classified as “fair”, and the last 10% were classified as “poor”²⁹. The results are shown in Figure 3-10.

A comparison of areas designated as “fair” and “poor” to the land use map (Figure 3-7) reveals that poor conditions predominate in areas of land use conflict, i.e., where residential and industrial uses abut one another. These areas comprise some of the City’s oldest neighborhoods, and developed in order to provide housing for then-emerging industrial areas. At the time, therefore, this development pattern made sense, but it has evolved into a downward cycle: residences have poor property values because of proximity to industry, while employers remaining in the area cannot expand because of surrounding non-industrial land uses.

5. PROJECTIONS

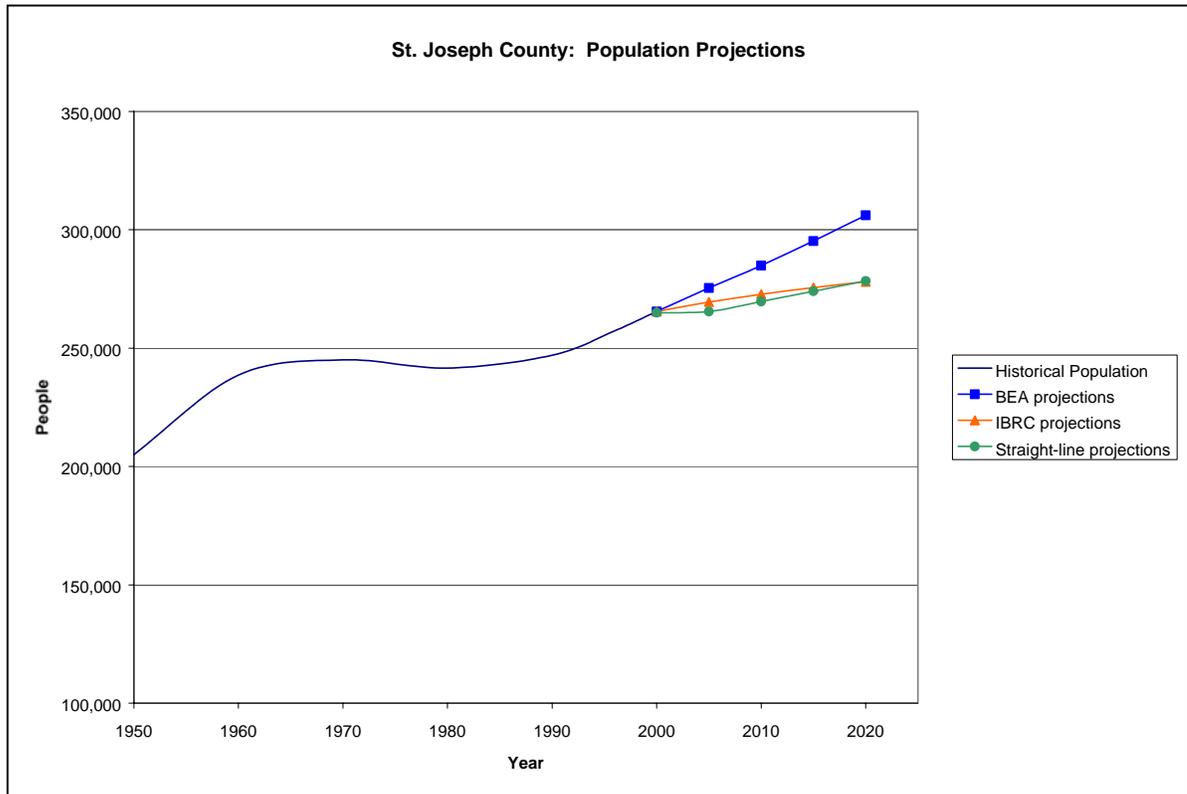
- 5.1. Population. Several sources were used to project population trends to the Year 2020, including the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC), and straight-line extrapolation. The results are shown in the following chart:

²⁸ It should be noted that for the purposes of neighborhood planning, more variables are useful for classifying neighborhoods, including, but not limited to population and employment change, income, poverty, levels of urban services, etc. However, for the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, which is primarily a policy on development and redevelopment, building conditions suffice. This issue will be subject to more intense discussion in Chapter 8.

²⁹ The guiding principle behind this classification scheme is to provide clarity on what areas are most in need of assistance, as well as identifying those areas that are showing the beginning signs of decay.



Chart 3-6: Population Projections

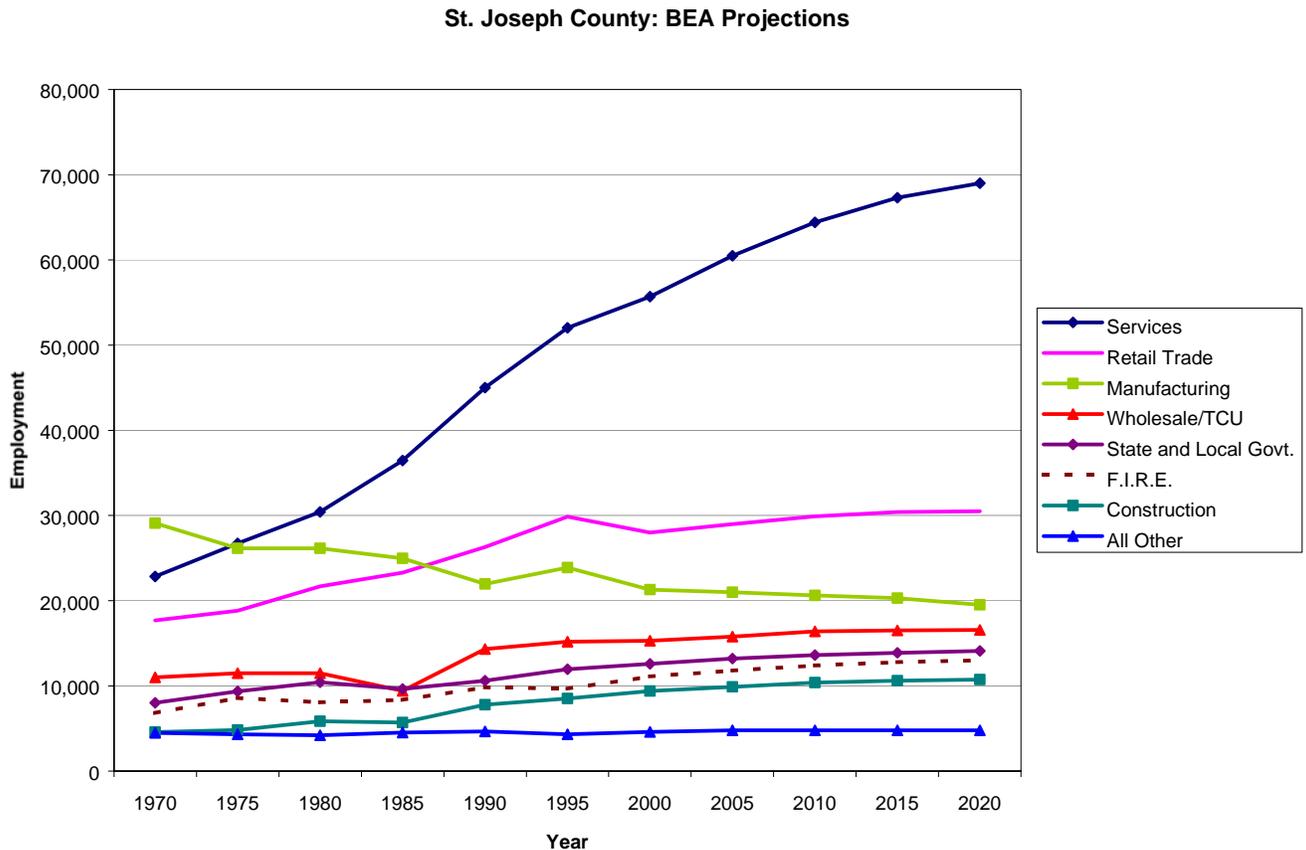


The most aggressive of these projections is the BEA set, which has the countywide population exceeding 300,000 by the Year 2020. Upon consultation with the plan's Study Review Committee, it was determined that this set would be used for forecasting future residential space requirements. The Committee felt that the BEA set reflected recent trends in the County's total population, and that this trend would continue.

5.2. Employment. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis provides sector-based projections of County employment, as evidenced in the following chart:



Chart 3-7: Employment Projections



(Historical employment is used for 1970 to 2000; BEA projections cover the 2000-2020 time period).

The most striking factor in the chart is the continued growth of service employment, underscoring the public’s observations that the county is becoming a service center for a territory extending into surrounding counties. Retail will also continue to grow, albeit more slowly. Manufacturing will continue its slow decline, but will still outperform the State of Indiana, and hence has a very important role to play due to the higher wages paid by manufacturing. The related industrial sectors of wholesale trade and transportation-utilities will continue to grow, due to the investments in transportation infrastructure that have already been made and are continuing in projects such as the Capital Avenue corridor. In summary, total employment is expected to increase from its current level of approximately 160,000 employees to 180,000 by the Year 2020.



6. SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY STUDY

Major findings arising from the community study are listed as follows:

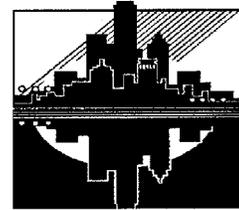
- *The large-lot agricultural zoning ordinance has had an impact on containing urban sprawl*, as measured by comparisons to other Indiana communities. By preserving the agricultural land that surrounds the existing urban areas, the ordinance has helped resist the premature intrusion of urban uses. Comparisons to other Indiana communities highlight how this containment has helped minimize public service costs. This plan therefore recommends retaining the 20-acre rule for agricultural zoning.
- *Potential environmental problems exist in the urbanized unincorporated areas of the County*. This finding has severe public service ramifications. A large, extensive well test is underway in these areas to solidify data on potential groundwater contamination; if the hypothesis that septic system usage is contaminating groundwater is confirmed, then public officials are faced with some uncomfortable choices. Unfortunately, any groundwater problem that exists in these areas affects the primary urban centers of the County, due to the direction of aquifer flow. The situation should continue to be closely monitored.
- *Inner-city neighborhoods in South Bend contain a large number of substandard structures*, particularly where land use conflict is evident (i.e., residential areas adjacent to industrial areas, commercial corridor intrusions into residential areas, and the like). The size of some of these structures is also an issue, with several large, multi-story, obsolete industrial buildings being present. While these areas provide redevelopment opportunities that should be pursued, large sites that can be assembled from these opportunities are rare, and should not be relied upon to accommodate the City and County's long-term employment growth.
- *Population projections* show the County gaining about 40,000 persons by the Year 2020, an increase of approximately 15%. Employment projections also show gains, primarily in the office and retail sectors. Manufacturing will also continue to be a strong regional employer, as typified by the recent AM General, IN/TEK, and Blackthorn expansion projections.



CHAPTER 4

TRANSPORTATION

CONDITIONS



1. THE FUNCTION OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation development and land use are directly linked together. Changes in land use result in changes in demand for transportation facilities, while transportation improvements in turn result in changes in access that affect future development patterns. Hence, transportation considerations take on enormous importance in the Comprehensive Plan, both as an input to and an output of the Land Use Plan.

No matter how it is considered, the primary purpose of transportation is to move people and goods between origins and destinations. The quality of a transportation system is measured in two manners. The first is the level of access it provides to surrounding land uses, and the second is based on the level of service it provides the users who desire access to the land uses.

2. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ISSUES AND CONCERNS

This section provides an overview of the issues and concerns related to the major local transportation system. Issues and concerns were identified through a citizen survey as a part of the overall comprehensive planning process. Additional issues and concerns were identified through a series of meetings with major transportation providers operating within the County. Transportation facilities may be viewed on the attached Figure 4-1. This section has been divided into several subsections relating to the roadway network, mass transit, air, rail, and bicycle/pedestrian transportation facilities.

2.1. Roadway network

One of the primary government services is the provision of streets and roads. For better or worse, the automobile is the most-preferred mode of transportation, and its use is expected to increase. An analysis of surface transportation in the County yielded the following issues:

- U.S. 31 is currently the primary link from the County south to Indianapolis. A Major Investment Study (MIS) concluded in 1998 to upgrade the highway to limited access (i.e., freeway) service. Another MIS is underway to determine appropriate alignments of the freeway.
- The Capital Avenue project aims to connect Interstate 80/90 with US 20 through Mishawaka. This will be one of the primary entry points to the AM General plant and associated industrial development.

- At-grade railroad crossings at McKinley and Highway 23 in Granger are an impediment to motor vehicles.
- The Airport Authority has proposed the relocation of Lincolnway West to accommodate future industrial growth and airport expansion.
- Providing connections between subdivisions continues to be an issue, and its practice should be promoted. Interconnections provide multiple options for access to collector and secondary roadways, thereby easing congestion and lowering accident rates.

2.2. Mass Transit System

An important component of transportation is mass transit. Reasons for implementing an efficient mass transit range from the environmental benefits of fewer cars on the road, to the social justice considerations of providing transportation for people who cannot afford motor vehicles. An analysis of mass transit in the County yielded the following issues:

- There is a need to develop leadership support for transit within the unincorporated areas of the County
- There is a need to expand education regarding transit
- Lack of involvement in economic development plans
- Lack of involvement in “early” land development planning
- Land uses traditionally served by transit being developed outside the transit service area.
- Lack of a funding source for transit
- Need to reduce travel time on the South Shore Line
- Need to improve AMTRAK access (incorporate into transit center)

2.3. Airport Facilities

Issues and Concerns:

- The current runway protection zone for north-south runway is insufficient, and needs to be expanded.
- Need for expanded land for airport and commercial businesses

2.4. Railroad Facilities (Freight)

Issues and Concerns:

- Grade separations need to be provided at Main Street and McKinley Avenue in Mishawaka, and at SR 23 in Granger



2.5. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Issues and Concerns:

- Need to provide “non motorized” transportation alternatives in the county
- Need to connect park areas within the county and city with bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Interconnect residential subdivisions and neighborhoods in the County and incorporated areas with bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Many residential neighborhoods within unincorporated areas in the County currently lack sidewalks

2.6. High Speed Rail

The primary issue and concern with the development of high-speed rail is continued cooperation between multiple state jurisdictions. Specifically each of the states participating in the effort must provide financial resources as well as professional staff to the project. Under the current proposal to connect Chicago and Cleveland with high-speed rail facilities, a stop is proposed in the South Bend area.

3. TRANSPORTATION EXISTING CONDITIONS

3.1. Roadway Network Existing conditions

The overall roadway network puts St. Joseph County within a day’s drive of 28 metropolitan areas, including Louisville, Toledo, Detroit, Chicago, Green Bay, Madison (Wisconsin), Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Davenport, among others. This translates into 22% of the nation’s population being within a day’s drive of the County.

There are two major roadways that establish the spine of St. Joseph County and South Bend. They are the I-80/90 Toll Road and US 31. The Toll Road is a full access control four-lane (two lanes in each direction) high-speed corridor that makes up an important link in the National Highway System. It is clearly the spine of the St. Joseph County transportation system. I-80/90 carries an average annual traffic volume of over nine million vehicles through the County. The traffic on the corridor is comprised of nearly one-third commercial vehicles. This includes “triples” or tractors that haul three trailers over the interstate. Commercial or truck traffic growth has been a significant factor for the Toll Road. Overall annual traffic growth currently averages about 4%. The proportion of this growth related to commercial traffic has been over 6%. The Indiana Toll Road Division of the Indiana Department of Transportation monitors traffic growth and develops forecasts for planning purposes. Current analysis and forecasts indicate that the interstate running through St. Joseph County/South Bend is operating at a level of service “A” and has adequate capacity to handle forecast demand through the year 2020.



An important factor for planning purposes relates to the interaction between the St. Joseph County roadway network and the Toll Road. Traffic from the Toll Road exiting into the county at each of the three interchange points averages over 1.2 million vehicles per year. These vehicles are then utilizing the roads that access business and residential areas of the community. This is an important factor for economic development within the county. The attractiveness of the community for business is a combination of accessibility to other markets and the quality of life provided by the community.

The Toll Road Commission has studied the potential of adding US 31 to the toll system; it concluded that at this point future traffic volumes do not support such a conversion. Nevertheless, US 31 plays an important role in the county roadway network. It links St. Joseph County and South Bend to Indianapolis to the south and Michigan to the north. The roadway is a four-lane arterial that has little or no access control, and is heavily developed at key intersections along its length. The areas between major intersections are generally agricultural in land use. The primary issue with US 31 relates to the poor travel time and safety record between South Bend and Indianapolis. The number of vehicle miles traveled along the corridor is forecast to increase at a rate of 2% per year through the year 2025. Discussions and preliminary studies have been undertaken regarding upgrading the roadway to a freeway status, and the corridor is currently the subject of a Major Investment Study (MIS) by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT).

The overall operation of the roadway network is considered to be acceptable. An exception to this operation relates to some key intersections that are heavily congested, as well as several railroad crossing points, including Olive Street, Ironwood Drive, SR23 in Granger, and McKinley Highway, where rail movement can delay vehicles.

There are some transportation projects proposed within the county and city that are targeted to foster economic development. Primary among these is the Capital Avenue/US 20 extension, which is intended to link the toll road with U.S. 20, and which will play a key role in transporting workers and freight from the new AM General plant expansion. Another project is an expansion of the Toll Road in the vicinity of the Bypass, which will help accommodate growth in the Blackthorn Area. The relocation of Lincolnway West will also help the Blackthorn Area as it continues to expand. Other circulation projects may be necessary in these areas as they grow.

3.2. Mass Transit System Existing Conditions

The existing mass transit system includes a network of bus routes, as well as the Chicago, South Bend and South Shore commuter rail line. The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), based out of Michigan City (Indiana) operates the commuter rail service. Rail ridership from the airport station to Chicago averages over 100 passengers on a typical weekday. Ridership typically increases during the weekend, and is assumed to be recreational in nature. Overall annual



ridership is 164,000 (1999), an increase of 67,100 riders (40%) from 1991. Ridership has been growing steadily since the station's move to the airport, at a rate of about 3% per year. Travel time to Chicago averages 2 hours and 20 minutes, which is not considered a convenient trip for the typical commuter going to work. It is estimated that 30-40 daily riders are commuters; the balance of the ridership is tied to business trips, sightseeing, tourism and shopping in downtown Chicago.

Future plans to improve service include developing high platform stations to reduce time at stations, as well as station sidings to allow for additional trains to operate on the system. There is also a planning process (Major Investment Study) underway for the Westlake Corridor Expansion. These improvements, together with the current proposal to move the station to the west side of the Airport terminal, will have the potential to reduce the travel time to Chicago to 2 hours or less. Funding for the rail line is through state and federal resources. There is no local share contribution for this service.

Local bus transportation for South Bend and Mishawaka is provided by TRANSPO, the South Bend Public Transportation Corporation. TRANSPO is one of the oldest, continuously operating businesses in South Bend having been founded in 1885 as the South Bend Railway Company. There are 183 miles of bus routes and a fleet of 60 buses. Regular bus fares are \$0.75 with a senior citizen and disabled person fare of \$0.35. The interstate system, bus system, and commuter rail service are coordinated through a multimodal facility at the regional airport. The TRANSPO multimodal facility at South Street Station operates on the south side of downtown South Bend. This facility is planned to also incorporate AMTRAK passenger rail service into the station.

Bus service is provided throughout South Bend and Mishawaka on 15 routes that are focused on Downtown South Bend (except for the #15 line). These routes extend as far north as Auten Road, South to Berkshire, west to Mayflower (including the airport terminal) and east to Bittersweet. The primary riders of the bus include elderly residents, transit-dependent persons (who do not own or cannot afford an automobile), the Logan Center for independent living, Goodwill, and other facilities for mentally disabled, and professionals commuting to work. An additional service that is provided by TRANSPO is the battery operated local transit or BOLT, which provides access to South Bend's central business district from the South Street Station. It operates on 15 minute headway (which means it shows up at a stop every 15 minutes) and all riders need to do is flag the bus down and they can ride it for a quarter.

Total unlinked trips on TRANSPO were 2,058,978 in 1999, a number which has been steadily increasing. Ridership increases are due to a variety of factors including stable fares, the opening of the South Street Station, media coverage, and advertising. An additional factor that is more difficult to measure is "indirect" marketing. TRANSPO has undertaken an extensive effort of learning what their customers want out of the system and is striving to fill those needs through service amenities and improvements. These include plans to increase the number of shelters along routes, improve lighting,



signing, and schedules. The TRANSPO staff is proposing to undertake a comprehensive analysis of routes and schedules including an origin and destination study in order to identify unserved areas and develop future routes and trip times ultimately expanding ridership.

3.3. Airport Facilities Existing Conditions

The South Bend Regional Airport and St. Joseph County Airport Authority provide a multi-modal facility, one of the few such facilities in the U.S. based at an airport. The airport is the focal point of both freight and passenger transportation and coordinates ground and air transportation modes. Airport operations are broken into 2 major categories. These include itinerant operations and local operations. Itinerant operations serve air traffic that is not permanently based at the airport, such as charter or corporate travel from other airports. Local operations include air carrier, air taxi, general aviation and military operations.

The airport provides passengers access to commercial air carriers providing service to hub and other regional airports throughout the country as well as Canada and Mexico. The airport provides service to more than 875,000 passengers annually on air carrier service. This is anticipated to remain stable through 2010. Air taxi annual passengers total 20,852 persons, a figure that is anticipated to increase to nearly 30,000 by 2010. Air taxi service includes commuter aircraft, corporate jets, and regional jets.

An on-going master plan project has identified opportunities for both runway expansion and commercial/business development through the relocation of Lincolnway West on the south side of the airport.

Manufacturing creates a reasonably strong demand for local air freight shipments. Companies such as Honeywell and AM General, which heavily utilize just-in-time delivery of sub-assembled parts, rely on airport facilities. United Parcel Service and Federal Express are the two primary international shipping corporations located at the airport. Recent data show that 15,000 tons of freight has been moved through the airport facility (1999). Future freight movement is anticipated to be between 35,000 and 43,000 tons annually by the Year 2020.

Although not directly linked together by use, the airport also provides a focal point for interstate travel, bus service, and commuter rail. Transit modes operate successful stations within the terminal building, providing their riders safe convenient parking and all weather amenities.



3.4. Railroad Facilities (Freight) Existing Conditions

The movement of freight by rail is significant throughout the county. There are three national railroad lines serving the county. These include the Canadian National (CN), Norfolk Southern (NS), and the Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad (not to be confused with the South Shore commuter rail line, which operates on the same rail line). The Norfolk Southern operates 80 trains through the county per day. Canadian National operates 30 to 40 trains per day. The Chicago South Shore line operates 10 to 12 trains carrying freight per day.

Areas where at-grade rail/roadway crossings raise concerns are found in South Bend at Greenlawn, Olive, Ironwood, and other streets; in Mishawaka at McKinley, Jefferson and Main Streets; and SR 23 in Granger. Currently, a project is proposed for constructing a grade separation at the SR 23 crossing.

It is worth noting that New Carlisle has received County approval for proceeding with a feasibility study, which would examine improvements to the grade separation at the US 20 railroad underpass. The study will examine several issues including drainage, aesthetics, traffic, roadway radii, and other items.

A definitive survey of rail-utilizing industries has not been conducted; however, we may expect these industries to be located in some of the older urbanized areas with good rail access. These areas include the Sample Street and Blackthorn (the older, eastern section) industrial areas in South Bend.

3.5. High Speed Rail

Since 1996, the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI) advanced from a series of service concepts, into a well-defined vision to create a 21st century regional passenger rail system (Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Executive Report). The Midwest Regional Rail Initiative is proposing a 3,000-mile rail network with the City of Chicago acting as a major hub in the system. It introduces modern train equipment operating at speeds up to 110 miles per hour. It also focuses on multi-modal connections and reliable on-time service.

Ultimately the system will link nine states, including the five Midwestern states of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The Chicago to Toledo-Cleveland Corridor could result in a South Bend station, although this is not certain. Although this system is in the planning phase, it has garnered a great deal of support throughout the Midwest. Current planning time lines indicate projects to start within a ten-year time frame. The market for high-speed rail is primarily focused on the cost-conscious business user who is traveling between 100 and 500 miles.



Based upon these characteristics, the County and its municipalities should become involved with the MWRRI. By increasing access to Chicago and other metropolitan areas, the implementation of the initiative has economic development potential.

4. THE 2025 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

In its capacity as a regional metropolitan planning organization (MPO), which coordinate federally funded transportation projects for metropolitan areas, the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) has developed the 2025 Transportation Plan. The Plan comprehensively evaluates transportation needs within the community, and evaluates and prioritizes a number of suitable projects including roadway maintenance, construction, and reconstruction, congestion management systems, transit, and alternative transportation modes such as walking and bicycling.

Associated with the 2025 Transportation Plan is the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which outlines expenditures on all types of federally-funded transportation projects for the upcoming three-year period.

MACOG's planning area includes both St. Joseph and Elkhart Counties. The Transportation Plan's projects for St. Joseph County can be viewed in Figure 4-2.

Some of the more notable projects contained in the Transportation Plan and the TIP, in addition to noteworthy projects (such as US 31, Capital Avenue, and Lincolnway West) listed in Section 1 (above), are listed as follows (this list is *not* comprehensive):

- Beginning in 2001, a multi-year project to SR 23 will add travel lanes for a distance of over twelve miles stretching from Kern Road to Main Street (South Bend). Portions of the project will be complete by the Year 2010; the Prairie Avenue portion will be complete by 2025.
- Another SR 23 project located east of Gumwood through Granger would include the construction of a railroad grade separation.
- Portions of SR 331 from the U.S. 20 Bypass north through Mishawaka will be upgraded to limited-access service, with travel lanes added. The project will be complete by 2010. This alignment will become the south end of the Capital Avenue project.
- Portions of SR 4 from Walnut Road to SR 23, a distance of over 2.5 miles, will be upgraded from two lanes to four lanes. The project will be complete by 2010.
- Portions of Bittersweet Road in Granger will be upgraded from two to four lanes. The project extends a distance of about 6.7 miles. Substantial portions of the project will be complete by 2005, while the remainder of the project will be complete by 2025.



- Portions of Cleveland Road in South Bend will be upgraded from two to four lanes, for a total distance of about 8.3 miles. The project is expected to be complete by 2020.
- Portions of Douglas Road will be upgraded from two to four lanes, for a total project length of about 6.9 miles. The project will have an at-grade intersection with the Capital Avenue corridor, and should be complete by 2015.
- Portions of Grape Road will be upgraded from two to four lanes, for a project length of over two miles. The project will be complete by 2015.
- Portions of Ironwood Road will be upgraded from two to four lanes, for a project length of 6.6 miles. Substantial portions of the project will be complete by the Year 2005, with the remainder being complete by 2025.
- Jefferson Road will be upgraded from two to four lanes from Byrkit Street to Bittersweet Road, a distance of over 2.5 miles. The project will have an at-grade intersection with Capital Avenue. The first portion of the project should be complete in 2001, with the second phase completed by 2015.
- Portions of Mayflower Road will be upgraded from two lanes to four lanes, for a distance of about 2.4 miles. The project will be complete by 2025.
- McKinley Highway (Old US 20) will be subject to a project that will upgrade the facility to four/five lanes, for a distance of about 10 miles. The project will be substantially complete by 2005, with the remainder being complete by 2015.
- Portions of Portage Avenue will be upgraded from two lanes to four lanes, for a distance of about 4.7 miles. The project will be complete by 2025.

As can be seen, the Plan has a mix of projects, and primarily is geared towards improving access to urbanized areas, particularly to the unincorporated areas to the north and east of South Bend and Mishawaka. Some projects, particularly the planned improvements to SR 23 and U.S. 20 (west of South Bend) serve emerging residential and employment centers on the west side of the City of South Bend.

5. IMPACTS OF LAND USE PLAN

Although not described until Chapter 6, the Land Use Plan impacts upon the transportation network by affecting the quantity and distribution of origin and destination points. The anticipated residential and employment development will generate new demands on the capacity of the existing roadway network. The roadway segments with the worst anticipated impact are listed as follows:



Route	Direction	Roadway Segment	2000 ADT*	2020 LOS ¹	Source
I-80/I-90		US 31 to US 33	22,500	F	INDOT
US 20		LaPorte Co. Line to Walnut Road	8,040	E	MACOG
		Walnut Road to Quince Rd.	6,910	F	MACOG
		Quince Rd. to Pine Rd.	7,950	F	MACOG
		Pine Rd. to US 31	8,770	F	MACOG
US 31		Osborne Rd. to Roosevelt Rd.	22,710	F	INDOT
		Roosevelt Rd. to US 20	27,100	F	INDOT
Lincolnway West		E of Chapin Street	21,180	D	MACOG
		E of Ardmore Trail	20,940	D	MACOG
		E of Bendix (RR Xing)	19,450	D	MACOG
SR 2		E of LaPorte Co. Line	16,040	E	MACOG
SR 23		E of Ireland Road (RRXing)	3,330	E	MACOG
		S of SR4 (RRXing)	6,260	D	MACOG
		N of US 6 (RRXing)	7,000	D	MACOG
		Maple Ave. to SR 4	5,710	D	INDOT
		SR 4 to Mill St.	7,590	D	INDOT
		Mill St. to IR 145	6,100	D	INDOT
		IR 145 to Crumstown Hwy.	5,880	D	INDOT
		Crumstown Hwy. To Orange Rd.	5,310	D	INDOT
		Orange Rd. to Mayflower Rd.	7,810	D	INDOT
		Mayflower Rd. to Ireland Rd.	8,050	D	INDOT
		Ireland Rd. to US 20	5,740	D	INDOT
		US 20 to Olive St/Locust St.	11,550	E	MACOG
		Olive St/Locust St. to Indiana Ave.	10,140	E	MACOG
		Madison St. to South Bend Ave.	17,800	D	MACOG
		South Bend Ave. to Twyckenham Dr.	18,920	D	MACOG
		S of Brick Road	15,910	F	MACOG
		Adams Rd.. to Michigan State Line	8,390	F	MACOG
		Marshall Co. Line to Madison Rd.	6,470	D	MACOG
	Madison Road to Roosevelt Road	7,670	D	MACOG	
SR 331		Marshall County Line to Patterson Road	6,928	D	INDOT
		Patterson Road to Kelly Road	8,454	D	INDOT
		Kelly Road to Jackson Road	8,595	D	INDOT

* Where source year is not 2000, 2000 ADT estimated by a 2% growth rate per year.

¹ "LOS" stands for "Level of Service". Transportation planners have developed a system for classifying roadway levels of service ranging from "A" (best) to "F" (worst); the categories retained in this table are "D" (congestion resulting in loss of speed and maneuverability), "E" (operating at or near capacity; speed low but uniform), and "F" (traffic exceeds capacity; breakdown in traffic flow, i.e., stop-and-go traffic).



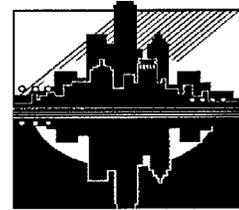
Acknowledgements:

- Indiana State Toll Highway Authority, Mike Puro,
- Project Future, South Bend Indiana
- MACOG, Sandra Seanor, Director
- TRANSPO, Mary McClain General Manager
- South Shore Line, John Parson, Marketing Manager
- South Bend Regional Airport, Mike Guljas, Assistant Director
- Area Plan Commission of St. Joseph County; Robert Sante, Executive Director
- Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Executive Report, WisDOT – Office of Public Affairs
- Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, Indiana, Roger Sims



CHAPTER 5

POLICY PLAN



The Policy Plan is one of the core elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the Policy Plan is to provide a central organizing scheme for all of the development activities of the County and its municipalities. While broad in orientation and scope, the Policy Plan translates the larger principles of the Comprehensive Plan to a high level of detail. In such a manner, the Plan assists the City and County planning staff in their day-to-day activities.

Five principles that arise from citizen input and the community study guided the development of the Policy Plan. These principles include the following:

- *Agricultural preservation.* Most respondents (75%) to the phone survey indicated that they were in favor of preserving farmland. Also, this was an important issue noted in the public meetings held in the County.
- *Employment opportunities.* The focus groups held this as their most important issue. Public meetings within the City of South Bend also placed this issue as a priority.
- *Adequate infrastructure.* This principle arose from many different corners, from concerns over growing traffic and controlling sprawl to the provision of public water and sewer.
- *Neighborhood quality.* This was the most important issue for residents of the City of South Bend. County respondents also rated the issue very highly.
- *Environmental preservation.* The community study noted the wide variety of environmental concerns regarding future urban growth, including wetlands, floodplains, and groundwater issues.

These principles are the foundation of the Policy Plan. Every goal, objective, and policy has a tie to at least one of these principles (and in several cases, to more than one). *Goals* are defined as desired future conditions, and have the clearest connection to the guiding principles discussed above. *Objectives* are more specific and measurable future conditions that indicate the success or lack thereof in meeting a desired goal. *Policies* are the actions intended to realize goals and objectives.

The division between Plan development and Plan implementation must be noted here. The St. Joseph County Area Plan Commission was the primary agency responsible for the development of the Plan; however, implementation will primarily depend upon other city, town, and county departments and agencies.

GOAL 1: ALLEVIATE AND MINIMIZE THE LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND.

Objective A: Minimize the amount of new development in areas with high agricultural importance.

Policy i: Maintain the minimum residential lot size of 20 acres in agriculturally zoned areas.

Policy ii: Implement farmland preservation programs as they become available, potentially including a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program.

Policy iii: Direct public utility investment away from areas designated as being of high agricultural importance, including the Rennselaer-Gilford-Maumee, Crosier-Brookston-Milford, Riddles-Miami-Crosier, and Houghton-Adrian-Palms soil associations (see Map 3-2).

Issues addressed by Goal #1:

- Agricultural areas have economic importance for the community and the State.
- Indiscriminate urban growth has the potential to constrain agricultural activities unnecessarily.

Objective B: Minimize sprawl and satisfy the demand for rural housing by focusing rural residential development in and around the small towns of Lakeville, Walkerton, North Liberty, and New Carlisle, where infrastructure and urban services are available.

Policy i: In order to preserve rural character, rural residential developments will have reduced street right-of-way widths and private street lighting.

Policy ii: Annexations shall be discouraged that would result in the creation of unincorporated islands, peninsulas, or other irregular boundaries, provided that such restrictions would not be detrimental to planned growth and development.



GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTY AND ITS MUNICIPALITIES.

Objective A: Ensure that suitable areas are available for future industrial development.

Policy i: In addition to establishing industrial areas that meet the County's industrial needs to the Year 2020, establish reserve industrial areas for use in the time period following 2020.

Policy ii: No fewer than two areas in the County should be reserved for new and/or expanding heavy industrial uses. These areas will have no fewer than 1,200 and no more than 2,000 acres (gross, including existing heavy industry uses). Heavy uses are those industrial uses that incorporate outdoor activities and/or emit relatively high impacts on surrounding properties, including noise, vibration, odor, light, glare, air emissions, and/or heat.

Policy iii: Heavy industrial uses should have frontal access to State highways and/or major arterial streets. These uses will also have access to railroad lines. Topography shall have less than 3% slope. Sites will have full access to municipal water, wastewater, and sanitation services.

Policy iv: Where soil associations are unsuitable for heavy development, particularly the Crosier-Brookston-Milford, Houghton-Adrian-Palms, and Rennselaer-Gilford-Maumee associations, require heavy development to implement additional structural supports for stability.

Policy v: Reclaim brownfield areas for light industrial development through acquisition, environmental assessment and mitigation, and infrastructure development/redevelopment.

Policy vi: No fewer than three areas in the County will be reserved for new and/or expanding light industrial uses. These areas will be no smaller than 200 and no larger than 1,600 acres (gross including existing light industry

Issues addressed by Goal #2:

- Quality employment centers are vital to the short- and long-term functioning of the community.
- Total employment in the County is expected to increase by about 13% to the Year 2020. The plan should accommodate enough land for businesses and new employment.
- Manufacturing activities are becoming more capital- and land-intensive. Certain industries will experience an increase in the amount of land required per employee.



uses). Topography shall have less than 5% slope. Sites shall have full access to municipal water, wastewater, and sanitation services.

Policy vii: Light industrial uses will be located in areas with highway access, preferably with ready access to a limited-access highway interchange (i.e., within one mile).

Objective B: Locate employment uses in such a manner that conflicts with residential land uses are minimized.

Policy i: Fashion a land use plan that ensures physical separation and/or buffering between employment and residential uses.

Policy ii: Develop and implement performance standards that minimize the noxious impacts of industries. Items to be considered include noise, odor, vibration, light, glare, air emissions, and heat.

Policy iii: Truck and automobile traffic generated by employment uses should not travel through residential areas.

Policy iv: In areas designated for residential use, parking facilities to serve adjacent non-residential uses may be allowed if such facilities are adequately landscaped and buffered, and if the only permitted access to neighborhood streets is for emergency vehicles.

Objective C: Develop quality business areas to meet the retail and service needs of the planning area.

Policy i: Provide for functionally sized commercial sites at the regional, community, and neighborhood levels. “Regional” activities are defined as being 50 acres in size and serving more than 75,000 persons. “Community” activities are defined as being 20 acres in size and serving a population of approximately 20,000 to 50,000 persons. “Neighborhood” activities are defined as being 5 to 10 acres in size, and serve populations of less than 10,000 persons.

Policy ii: Promote the upgrading, rejuvenation, and beautification of all functional, existing commercial centers.

Policy iii: Where feasible, design future commercial sites for convenient access and safety; minimize curb cuts and distracting signage, and encourage access between adjacent development.

Policy v: Automobile traffic generated from commercial uses should not travel through residential areas.



Policy vii: Promote the use of downtown areas, particularly Downtown South Bend and Mishawaka, as regional office/service employment centers. These downtowns shall be defined by identifiable boundaries. Land use designations shall reinforce the distinction between the downtowns and the surrounding areas. Landscaping and street trees shall be used to reinforce the distinction between downtowns and adjacent districts.

Policy viii: Office uses shall be discouraged on the ground floor of buildings fronting on downtown streets with major retail importance.

Policy ix: Satellite business centers shall be located on major automobile and public transportation routes, particularly at the intersections of major arterial roadways.

Policy x: South Bend will cluster future commercial development in commercial activity centers along major transportation arteries. Strip commercial development will no longer be an acceptable development option.

Policy xi: Highway-oriented business centers shall be located in outlying areas, at the intersection of highways or at limited-access interchanges.



GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF THE COUNTY AND ITS MUNICIPALITIES.

Objective A: Promote the development and/or maintenance of community and neighborhood character.

Policy i: Ensure that identifiable neighborhoods have adequate civic meeting space in community centers or equivalent facilities.

Policy ii: Ensure that infill residential development in older neighborhoods is consistent with the housing characteristics and physical fabric of the existing neighborhood. Qualities to be considered should include such items as scale, landscaping, setbacks, color, materials, lighting, building silhouette (i.e., shape of building and pitch of roof), and proportion of elements (windows, façades, doorways, etc.).

Policy iii: Highlight the unique and distinctive features of neighborhoods and corridors within the County through the development and implementation of small area plans. Areas to be considered for small area planning include established neighborhoods, mixed-use developments, and other areas of distinctiveness.

Policy iv: Implement corridor overlay districts to address specific issues among major gateways, including Capital Avenue, U.S. 31, etc.

Objective B: Promote a livable, sustainable urban community that efficiently uses land, transportation, and energy.

Policy i: Assure that an equitable share of public resources are directed towards existing urban areas through the development and annual maintenance of a 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Policy ii: Supplement Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other federal entitlement community development programs targeted to low- to moderate-income areas with local resources, such as the Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT).

Objective C: Encourage new development to take place in traditional neighborhood forms.

Policy i: Medium or high-density multi-family housing, or other facilities with intense activity (such as churches, secondary schools, and commercial sites) should be located along arterials with access to the arterial street (preferable) or to a collector street.



Policy ii: Low density multi-family and single-family residential lots should not have direct access to arterial streets.

Policy iii: Direct residential frontage on major arterials or within 350 feet of the intersections of two major arterials shall be discouraged.

Policy iv: Confer a density bonus to residential projects that include significant public recreational facilities or other public facilities that benefit the entire neighborhood.

Policy v: Residential developments should be designed to include adequate open spaces in either private yards or common areas to partially provide for residents' open space and recreation needs.

Objective D: Encourage population growth within existing urban service areas.

Policy i: Revise development code standards to encourage infill development in older neighborhoods. These revisions should consider easing development standards (such as bulk, setback, and minimum lot size) for well-established, older areas; waiving or amending on-site parking requirements for replacement commercial establishments; and/or establishing planning variances for infill development based upon their contribution to the well-being of the community.

Policy ii: Conduct a survey and assessment of marginal and/or underutilized land within urban service areas that could be suitable for redevelopment for residential uses, and implement land banking and residential development initiatives for these areas.

Objective E: Focus limited City resources on revitalization/redevelopment activities that achieve the greatest level of impact per dollar expended.

Policy i: For South Bend's neighborhoods, develop and implement a neighborhood classification scheme that incorporates physical conditions, such as buildings and infrastructure; land use; population and employment change; and social conditions, such as income, poverty, and welfare recipients.

Policy ii: Areas that are deemed excellent under the neighborhood classification scheme should be subject to monitoring, preservation, and maintenance activities.

Policy iii: Areas that are in good condition, but are showing signs of decline should be subject to improvement activities.



Policy iv: Areas that are in fair to poor condition should be subject to more extensive revitalization activities and focused planning.

Policy v: Areas that are in poor condition and cannot be revitalized by private market activities *only* should be subject to renewal activities, including, but not limited to property acquisition and site assembly, environmental assessment and mitigation, infrastructure construction/reconstruction, etc.



GOAL 4: PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

Objective A: Discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas.

Policy i: Require the preparation of geo-technical studies where development is proposed on land containing steep slope (defined as grade equal to or over 10%).

Policy ii: Require large lot sizes where areas of floodplain and steep slope are developed for urban purposes.

Policy iii: Continue the use of large-lot agricultural zoning in environmentally sensitive areas.

Policy iv: Development should be avoided in areas with important natural habitats, including wetlands and forested areas (refer to Map 3-4).

Objective B: Regulate on-site sewage disposal systems (OSDS) to minimize the public health and environmental hazards of untreated waste.

Policy i: OSDS shall meet the requirements of both State and local policies; if these policies should ever contradict one another, then the most restrictive policy shall apply.

Policy ii: Require new development to tie in to sanitary sewer and water systems when available. Where connection to a sanitary sewer system is not economically feasible, a minimum one-half acre (½) lot size will be required for subdivisions with individual on-site sewage disposal systems with soil types that have a soil loading rate ≥ 0.60 gpd/sf for the absorption fields sizing per Indiana State Department of Health Rule 410. A larger minimum lot size for each particular soil type will be required for subdivisions with individual one-site sewage disposal systems with soil types that have a soil loading rate < 0.60 gpd/sf for the absorption fields sizing per Indiana State Department of Health Rule 410. A minimum setback distance of onsite sewage disposal systems from retention ponds and lakes will be required per Indiana State Department of Health Rule 410.

Issues addressed by Goal #4:

- In some areas (not all), the use of septic systems has the potential to adversely affect groundwater quality.
- Wetlands, water quality, and natural vegetation may be negatively affected by indiscriminate growth.
- Environmental features have recreational and aesthetic value that should be preserved for the enjoyment of the population.

Policy iii: Require subdivision applicants proposing OSDS to provide information on the environmental impacts of the OSDS, including soils, wells within



¼-mile radius, topography, plans for the treatment and disposal of sewage and the provision of a domestic water supply, and plans for operations and maintenance.

Policy iv: Builders of homes using OSDS shall provide water conservation and waste-flow reduction by the use of water-saving devices and state-of-the-art water conservation methods for all new construction and the replacement of any components of existing structures.

Objective C: Conserve open space and protect natural and scenic resources.

Policy i: Establish development requirements for greenways and open space for residential, commercial, and industrial uses within the subdivision process.

Policy ii: As feasible, locate passive recreational facilities (e.g., parks) in environmentally sensitive areas, such as wetlands, forests, etc.

Policy iii: Notify appropriate parks and recreation boards of proposed large residential developments.

Policy iv: Utilize the subdivision process to identify and reserve potential trail corridors for future public use, and, where possible, obtain public dedications for trail corridor development.



GOAL 5: PROVIDE ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND URBAN SERVICES.

Objective A: Provide utility services to support both existing and future residents and businesses.

Policy i: Encourage development in areas where infrastructure and urban services are available or where they can be easily provided.

Policy ii: Establish and implement a reasonable surcharge to be levied upon users of municipally-provided utility services who are not likely to be annexed in the near or mid-term future.

Policy iii: Development shall be discouraged where it is not continuous to existing developed areas, which would require significant extensions of water and sewer lines across underdeveloped tracts unless paid for by the developer, and which would exceed the existing capacities of public facilities and infrastructure.

Objective B: Provide different modes of transportation throughout the County.

Policy i: Continue the development of linear parks and greenways within the community.

Policy ii: A consistent, logical and integrated transportation system will be developed that encourages a variety of transportation options. A high priority will be placed on efficiency and safety in all transportation modes.

Policy iii: Support the planning for bicycle and pedestrian systems within the County and its municipalities.

Policy iv: Parking policies will reflect the relationship between parking supply and incentives to utilize alternative modes of transportation, particularly in areas of concentrated development. The existing parking supply will not be reduced until significant alternatives are in place

Objective C: Implement key thoroughfare improvements.

Policy i: Improve the surface transportation network through the completion of key projects including construction of SR 331 and the reconstruction of US 31.

Policy ii: Provide for safe, efficient internal movement within developments and external connection between developments by providing a sufficient quantity of local streets and related facilities supporting bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular movement.



Policy iii: Require neighborhood street design that promotes optimum access but diverts through traffic to arterial streets and highways.

Policy iv: The city will support routes for "through traffic" which are safe and efficient and that travel on arterial rather than local roads.

Policy v: Promote the interconnecting of subdivisions for vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Policy vi: Where appropriate, incorporate "New Urbanist" principles of neighborhood design into implementation tools.

Objective D: Promote the expansion and/or upgrading of community facilities throughout the planning area.

Policy i: Encourage other public and quasi-public entities to develop and publish plans for their future long-term needs.

Policy ii: Assist such entities as requested in acquiring information and/or preparing studies relevant to their plans.

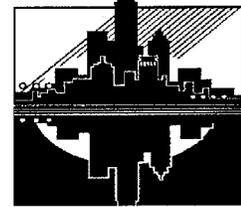
Policy iii: Review such plans and adopt them as part of the Comprehensive Plan, as necessary.

Policy iv: Update tools for implementing the Comprehensive Plan, e.g., zoning and subdivision ordinances.



CHAPTER 6

LAND USE PLAN



1. INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Land Use Plan was developed through a process of interpreting the Plan's guiding principles and translating them into four different land use alternatives, as well as growing and developing from the Policy Plan in Chapter 5. These alternatives each possessed either a managed growth or economic development focus, but addressed them using different approaches. These alternatives were then pared down to two alternatives, one focusing completely on managed growth and the other on economic development. Since both of these elements are imperative to an effective plan, the most effective and positive components were combined to become one preferred alternative that addresses the core issues of the city and county.

The guiding principles for the final land use plan were described in the Policy Plan (Chapter 5), and are listed again as follows:

- *Agricultural preservation.*
- *Ensuring future employment opportunities.*
- *Adequate infrastructure.*
- *Environmental preservation.*
- *Neighborhood development and redevelopment.*

2. LAND USE NEEDS

In Chapter 3, the preferred population and employment projections were described. This section translates these projections into the amount of space required to accommodate those uses.

2.1. Residential Requirements. The preferred scenario has the County's total population increasing from approximately 265,000 in 2000 to about 305,000 in the Year 2020. Using a projected household size of about 2.45 persons (a decrease from the current 2.65) in the Year 2020 results in a demand for about 16,300 additional housing units (including Mishawaka and other areas not included in the Plan). Also, as the household size of the existing population continues to decrease, another 8,000 units will be required. The total anticipated residential demand is expected to be approximately 24,000 units by the Year 2020, or about 1,200 per year (compare to Chart 3-5 in Chapter 3, which shows that residential building permit activity over the past few years has averaged about 1,000 to 1,500 units per year).

The following table calculates some targets for residential land allocations, using some different estimates of the mixture of densities and the ratio of multi- to single-family:

Table 6-1: Residential Requirements

<i>St. Joseph County (including South Bend) – High Multi-family Mix</i>			
Assume: 24,000 new housing units from 2000 to 2020 with a mix of 75 percent single family units and 25 percent multi-family units.			
Single Family Land Requirement			
Total units: 18,000			
	<u>5 units per acre</u>	<u>2.5 units per acre</u>	<u>1 unit per acre</u>
Raw Land	3,600 acres	7,200	18,000
Trans./Other: (1)	720	1,440	3,600
Total (2)	4,320	8,640	21,600
Multi-Family Land Requirement			
Total units: 6,000			
	<u>14 units per acre</u>	<u>10 units per acre</u>	<u>8 units per acre</u>
Raw Land	429 acres	600	750
Trans./Other: (1)	86	120	150
Total (2)	515	720	900
<i>St. Joseph County (including South Bend): High Single-Family Mix</i>			
Assume: 24,000 new housing units from 2000 to 2020 with a mix of 95 percent single family units and 5 percent multi-family units.			
Single Family Land Requirement			
Total units: 22,800			
	<u>5 units per acre</u>	<u>2.5 units per acre</u>	<u>1 unit per acre</u>
Raw Land	4,560 acres	9,120	22,800
Trans./Other: (1)	912	1,824	4,560
Total (2)	5,472	10,944	27,360
Multi-Family Land Requirement			
Total units: 1,200			
	<u>14 units per acre</u>	<u>10 units per acre</u>	<u>8 units per acre</u>
Raw Land	85 acres	120	150
Trans./Other: (1)	17	24	30
Total (2)	102	144	180
(1) Assumes that Transportation and other improvements occupy 20 percent of land area.			
(2) Includes Transportation and other improvements.			



This exercise demonstrates the tradeoffs required for accommodating new growth. The lower the densities, the more land is required. Also, the higher the ratio of single-family to multi-family, the more land is required.

So which scenario is the most realistic? The existing land use study (Chapter 3) indicates a strong local preference for single-family (88% of the City of South Bend and 99% of the extra-urban County). To propose a 25% multi-family allocation, therefore, is unrealistic; however, allocations in the 5%-10% range are achievable.

Existing residential densities (combined single- and multi-family) average about 2.8 units per acre (5.2 units per acre in the City of South Bend and 2.1 units per acre in the rest of the County). Keeping in mind our guiding principle of ensuring adequate services, and knowing that services are best provided at higher densities, it is recommended that the *minimum* average density be 2.5 units per acre for new single-family development, and 10 units per acre for new multi-family development.

- 2.2. **Employment Requirements.** Space requirements for commercial and industrial land uses are notoriously difficult to predict. Different employment sectors vary widely in their land use needs; even businesses within those sectors are not consistent in their demand for space. In addition, changing technology plays an important role, reducing the space requirements of some businesses (e.g., computers have gotten smaller and faster), and increasing the space requirements of some others (e.g., as the ratio of capital per laborer increases in manufacturing establishments).

Estimates differ, but current absorption of industrial land in the City and County ranges from about 150 to 200 acres per year. Assuming this trend continues to the Year 2020, then about 3,000 to 4,000 acres of industrial land will be required. Similarly, estimates of office/retail absorption range from about 75 to 100 acres per year, resulting in a requirement of 1,500 to 2,000 acres by the Year 2020.

Developer feedback on employment requirements. It is noteworthy that conversations with several industrial/office developers yield lower estimates than those presented above¹. According to their estimates, the current countywide office market contains about 3.1M square feet of office space. In the Year 2000, the county office market absorbed about 60,000 square feet of office space (which, when applied against a rule-of-thumb of about 10,000 square feet of space to one acre of land, results in land absorption of about 6 acres)². It was suggested that office absorption estimates in the range of 10 to 25 acres per year be utilized, which is about one-third of the estimates provided above (but which, again, do not include retail).

¹ Conversation of Jon Hunt with Holladay Corporation and Grub and Ellis, Cressy and Everett, February 1, 2001.

² These estimates do not include retail employment.



Similarly, the developers felt that the industrial absorption estimates above were somewhat unrealistic. Their conclusion was that the rates sustained in the 1999-2000 time period were unusually high, and that such absorption cannot be sustained over the long run. They suggested that an annual absorption of about 50 to 100 acres was much more realistic³.

Balancing the two sets of estimates. With the study review committee endorsing the extremely aggressive set of projections, and the developers advocating for a moderate approach, the land use plan takes the middle ground. Employment centers are therefore broken out into “prime” and “reserve” categories. The “prime” category accounts for the absorption estimates put forth by the developers; the “reserve” category accounts for the remainder. Reserve land will not be available for development until the prime land has been sufficiently occupied; The Area Plan Commission, in its annual evaluation of the Plan, will evaluate such characteristics as acres absorbed, market prices, etc. and determine if the reserve land should be opened for development. Reserve land may also be held for industries that either have unusually large land use requirements and/or are particularly noxious.

The location of the prime areas was determined in accordance with the policy plan (Chapter 5), i.e., those employment centers that had the best access to urban services up to the lower set of absorption estimates were designated as prime. The remainder of the acreage, up to the greater absorption set, was designated as reserve. The emphasis on urban services is important, as the breakdown of employment centers essentially becomes a “phasing” of growth, a technique advocated by smart growth advocates that is described in more detail below.

3. LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan is shown in Figure 6-1. The Plan has four areas of focus, which are listed as follows:

- The plan has several areas of focus for residential growth. The residential growth has three facets, the first being new growth focused on the northwestern and southern parts of the City of South Bend, infill growth in the northeastern part of the county, and rural growth in some of the smaller towns and communities throughout the county.
- Commercial growth areas are primarily focused in current urbanized areas like South Bend and Mishawaka. This commercial growth's purpose is to strengthen existing urban retail and commercial areas, as well as creating new areas to serve

³ In HNTB's experience, it is unusual for developers to comment that the absorption estimates of a comprehensive plan are too high; usually, the reverse is true. Moreover, the developers interviewed consider their estimates to be liberal.



- new population growth.
- The industrial growth areas occur throughout the northern portion of the county, with the exception of a proposed center located on the southwest side of Walkerton.
 - The plan suggests several areas that could benefit from further study than the comprehensive plan. These special study areas occur primarily along transportation corridors, but all possess different elements that will be focused upon. (Figure 6-2)

The “smart growth” standards outlined in Chapter 1 provide a good framework for balancing some of the inherent tensions between the principles outlined in the beginning of this chapter. In particular, there are several smart growth techniques that are employed here, which are listed as follows:

- *Urban growth boundary.* The current agricultural zoning ordinance originally was developed to protect prime farmland soils, as well as to prohibit extensive use of septic systems where it would be inappropriate. However, whether by accident or design, these protected areas form a continuous boundary around existing urban areas that largely restricts growth. By focusing growth within existing and planned urban service areas, the ordinance maximizes population densities and, by logical extensions, helps to minimize costs of public services. The historical evidence for the success of the ordinance is discussion in Chapter 3.

The land use plan retains the use of the agricultural zoning ordinance as an urban growth boundary.

- *Phased growth.* It is necessary for the land use plan to accommodate the projected growth of the community. However, smart growth advocates state that by phasing growth, the development of public facilities and services can be timed in such a manner so as to provide greater efficiency and minimize disruption.

A simple example illustrates this point. Consider two potential commercial sites to be developed, both of which will require the extension of sanitary sewer facilities. One site is adjacent to the existing sewer service area, the other is located two miles further away. The development of the more distant site would require a larger investment in sewer trunk lines than the closer site. Furthermore, the trunk lines implemented to accommodate the more distant site may require reconstruction when the development of the closer site results in additional demand. By ensuring that the closer site is developed *first*, these problems are minimized.

While phased growth has some useful and positive implications for public service provision, the concept actually arose from uncertainties in the population and employment projections (see Chapter 3 for more details). While the historical



trend from 1970 to the present shows moderate growth, the trend since 1990 is much more aggressive. Since projections are extrapolations of historical trends, there are two different sets of projections, one being aggressive and the other moderate, depending upon the assumed historical trend. As noted in Chapter 3, the study review committee felt it appropriate to utilize the most aggressive projection set. However, if actual growth is more moderate, then the amount of land reserved in the Plan is excessive, and may provide a forum for sprawling development patterns.

The phasing of growth represents a compromise between accounting for more aggressive projections and making sure that growth occurs in an orderly fashion. The plan has two “tiers” of residential, commercial, and industrial growth. The first tier accounts for the growth expected under the moderate projection set. The second tier accounts for the remainder of growth that would be expected under the aggressive projection set, and is held in reserve until the first tier is developed. The determination for releasing the second or reserve tier for development is a task assigned for the annual review of the Plan (see Chapter 7).

- *Integrated land uses.* A natural tension exists between land use types. Typically, people want to have their residences free of intrusions from noise, traffic, odor, glare, etc. that might be associated with commercial and industrial developments. However, they also want to live relatively close to where they shop, work, and play.

The policy plan (Chapter 5) outlines actions for minimizing impacts of different land use types on each other. Also, to the extent reasonable, the land use plan accommodates all types of land uses within practical proximity to one another. Finally, the special area studies recommended in the plan allow for a more focused consideration of mixed land uses appropriate to that level of analysis.



4. DESCRIPTION OF THE LAND USE PLAN

4.1. Overview of Draft Final Land Use Plan. The draft final alternative favored by the Advisory Committee contains the following proposed uses (additional area only; refer to Chapter 3 for existing land use acreage):

Table 6-2: Planned Land Uses (Additional Area Only)

St. Joseph County/ South Bend		
Land Use	Acres	Percent
Commercial (Office/Retail)	2,100	12%
Prime	1,000	6%
Reserve	1,100	6%
Industrial	5,600	31%
Prime	2,000	11%
Reserve	3,600	20%
Residential	10,300	57%
Total	18,000	100%

4.2. Analysis of Land Use Plan. The following sections look at some of the characteristics and impacts of the land use plan.

4.2.1. Population. Under this plan the County’s total population is expected to increase by about 40,000. The targeted areas for growth are capable of handling buildout growth, infill growth or both. Looking at Figure 6-1, there are several areas of growth projected to occur that are in existing towns and cities, and/or follow the existing pattern of growth in the county. The impacts these populations will have on services and others facets of development will be discussed later in this chapter.

4.2.2. Economy. Industrial land uses within the County increase by 5,000 acres, or 50%. Almost half of this increase, 2,400 acres, is located on the west side of South Bend for both industrial growth and an airport expansion. This site is well positioned for both rail and highway access and has little conflict in terms of the surrounding land uses. This particular site opens the opportunity for mixed commercial and industrial development.

Commercial land in the County increases by 2,000 acres, or about 12%. This land use is distributed throughout the City of South Bend and sections of Mishawaka.

Transportation. The impacts of the land use plan upon the transportation network are listed in Chapter 4 (Transportation Conditions).





4.2.3. Public Utilities. New developments are encouraged in areas containing public utilities, such as water and sewer, or are expected to have service extended during the planning period. Of new residential growth, 50% is steered to existing water and sewer service areas. Another 25% is steered to expanded service areas; conversations with city engineers indicate that existing treatment capacity can support this growth, and distribution projects are already planned north of the toll road. The remaining 25% occurs in Granger (and is infill development).

In order to serve the future population at the current levels of service it will be necessary to appropriately address development and the types of services that will need to be provided for that new development. We have seen in Chapter 3 the different levels of service of police and fire service; applying these standards to new development yields ranges of 97 to 114 new police officers (both City and County), and 94 to 100 new firefighters (both City and County).

4.2.4. Parks and Open Space. An increase in population in any given area produces new demands for recreational facilities. It is important to offer amenities to future and current residents to maintain a high quality of life. It is therefore necessary for the County to look at its regional facilities as well as incorporate more local, neighborhood parks in some of the smaller jurisdictions (e.g., Lakeville, New Carlisle, etc). The City of South Bend needs to implement its current expansion plans for parks, as well as continue to expand its parks to support the future growth areas. A greenway system is planned in St. Joseph County that will connect many of the City's parks with some of the County's parks, making a network of recreation opportunity for a large majority of residents.

4.2.5. Other. This plan identifies several Special Study Areas that will require detailed studies to look further at the potential growth and land uses within each area. The areas are located as depicted in Figure 6-2 and described below:

- *Blackthorn*- this area possesses an economic development focus to determine the industrial park's expansion opportunities, looking at environmental, acquisition and circulation issues.
- *Capital Avenue*- a corridor study is underway coinciding with a roadway extension project. The new AM General plant, located on



this corridor, will increase the importance of this route, which will experience higher volumes of traffic.

- *US 31*- a Major Investment Study (MIS) is underway for the upgrading and/or relocation of this corridor. Because of its importance as a corridor and its purpose of providing a route both north and south throughout the state, it requires a special study to look at not only the impact of expansion or relocation, but the types of development that occur along this route.
- *Southwest South Bend*- this area, in the vicinity of SR 23 and US 20/31, is a potential area for industrial expansion; the study would look conduct site suitability and analysis studies for a future industrial park.
- *US 20 interchanges*- these interchanges might hold some commercial and/or industrial potential for the Cities of South Bend and Mishawaka, and the County should cooperate with these cities to discuss and study their possibilities.

4.3. **Town Plans.** Figure 6-3 shows the towns included in the Plan (the City of South Bend, the only participant municipality not discussed here, will be the subject of more detailed discussion later in the Plan). Each town has been subject to a general assessment of development opportunities and constraints in accordance with the Plan, and development plans for each town are set forth. The development plans, which are not meant to substitute for more detailed small area studies, serve several purposes within the context of the general plan. First, they are intended to help the vitality, character, and identity of each town without unduly straining the town's resources. Second, they help to satisfy the demand for rural housing without allowing indiscriminate growth in the countryside. Third, they help to encourage new growth within existing municipal service districts.

It is important to remember that the Comprehensive Plan is a conceptual document that identifies generally the quantity and location of land uses. The reader should not interpret any projected acreages or areas for these smaller communities as hard and fast "rules" that will be strictly applied. Instead, the projected growth areas and absorption rates reflect a reasonable balance between market forces and the planning policies outlined in Chapter 5.

Individual plans are briefly discussed below:

- *Lakeville.* This community constitutes a major entryway into the County from the south side. As such, particular attention should be paid to urban design. A corridor plan for US 31 is already proposed; this concept should be expanded upon with gateway markers at the north and south sides of town, and a corridor overlay zone that controls setbacks, architectural design, signage, and



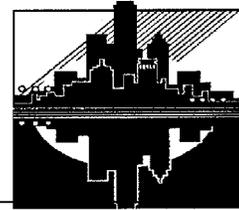
lighting along the commercial portion of the corridor. A neighborhood park is proposed for the southeastern portion of town. Bicycle-pedestrian facilities connecting the Town to Potato Creek State Park should be investigated.

- *New Carlisle.* Primary access to this community comes from US 20, which becomes Michigan Street as it passes through town. Several areas of infill residential development are proposed along the town's street grid. Currently, the Town is experiencing a significant development surge, with residential developments occurring to the south of Town. Industrial development is occurring to the east, in the vicinity of the IN/TEK plant, which the Town is in the process of annexing. New commercial growth is designated for the northeast side of Town. New Carlisle has received County approval for proceeding with a feasibility study, which would examine improvements to the grade separation at the US 20 railroad underpass. The study will examine several issues including drainage, aesthetics, traffic, roadway radii, and other items. With the implementation of the underpass, improvements should include provisions for pedestrian and bicycle transportation.
- *North Liberty.* The intersection of SR 4 and SR 23 form an opportunity for the town center of this community. Areas of infill and new residential development are proposed, as is a neighborhood park in the northwestern part of town. Bicycle-pedestrian facilities connecting the Town to Potato Creek State Park should be investigated.
- *Osceola.* This community constitutes a gateway into the County from the east. As with Lakeville, particular attention should be paid to urban design. The SR 933 Corridor should be expanded, and setbacks more carefully controlled through the implementation of an overlay zone.
- *Roseland.* With an interchange to the Toll Road, and with SR 933 bisecting the community, this area represents a community crossroads. Commercial development should fill in the SR 933 corridor, and gateway treatments be implemented at the north and south ends of the corridor.



CHAPTER 7

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION



Any discussion of Comprehensive Plan implementation walks a fine line between the general and specific. Implementation actions must be defined, and therefore specific; however, the Comprehensive Plan is by nature a general, conceptual policy document, and indeed must be general in order to retain its flexibility in the face of new, emerging conditions. This chapter therefore suggests direction for plan implementation, but the specifics are left to later studies and examination.

As stated in earlier chapters, the timeframe of the Plan is to the Year 2020. Highly specific action items tend to have shorter timeframes than more general ones. In order to integrate action items into the Comprehensive Plan, our discussion must remain somewhat general. It is not the plan's purview to exhaustively list every possible action item that should be used to implement the plan's vision. However, the plan does need to provide directions for implementation, even if it is not carried to great detail.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the next steps that the participant communities should undertake to implement the Plan. The discussion is broken down into several sections, as follows:

- *Follow-up studies and action programs* identify studies, ordinances, and other activities that need to be undertaken to implement the Comprehensive Plan.
- The *Intergovernmental Coordination and Community Involvement Program* outlines programs to maintain open lines of communication with outside agencies and members of the community.
- The *Strategic Planning Program* integrates the Comprehensive Plan with the ongoing operations and budget and capital improvements of the County and its municipalities. The Strategic Planning Program also includes provisions to ensure a regular review of the Comprehensive Plan and its implementation efforts.

1. FOLLOW-UP STUDIES AND ACTION PROGRAMS

Management

Create a Plan Commission Work Plan. The Comprehensive Plan covers a broad variety of issues and subject matter. In order to implement the Plan, the Area Plan Commission should, on an annual basis, prioritize the activities for that year and develop a strategy for moving those items forward.

Regulations and Public Services

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

The current County and City zoning ordinances were adopted more than 40 years ago; While periodic updates have made the ordinances more responsive to land use and development issues that have arisen since its inception, these updates did not generally consider all aspects of the ordinances. The adoption of this Plan recommends that the ordinances be revised. The ordinances of member municipalities of the Area Plan Commission are similarly outdated. These same comments also apply to the subdivision ordinances.

Design Standards Manual. To foster intergovernmental coordination and clarify development requirements, the plan commission should create a Design Standards and Specifications Manual that will address plat requirements, design principles, specifications and standard construction details for public improvements. The manual will provide guidelines for designing streets, blocks, lots, easements, open spaces, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and other site amenities. The specifications section would address the construction and installation of these features. Having all of these standards in one document provides clear, one-stop-shopping for information on improvements throughout the county. With the entire county covered by these requirements, it will be important to address the different design conditions between urban and rural areas.

Public Utility Extensions. Chapters 2 and 3 document the need for the provision of public water and sewer service to several unincorporated areas of the County. With this need established, two strategies exist for extending public water and sewer to these areas, as follows:

- *Have municipalities (i.e., South Bend and Mishawaka) extend their service boundaries to unincorporated areas.* Where feasible, this option constitutes the most direct approach. Engineering issues can complicate the extension of service areas, particularly over large distances. Financing the required infrastructure and operations also requires consideration, both for distribution and expanded treatment facilities; user surcharges present one possible solution to this issue.
- *Implement a Countywide Sewer and Water District.* In this option, a separate Sewer and Water District takes on the responsibility for developing and maintaining the required infrastructure. By enabling more focused treatment and distribution service areas, engineering and financing issues can be addressed according to the needs of the service



areas.

Sub-area Plan Implementation

The City in conjunction with various neighborhood groups has formulated several neighborhood and corridor plans. These plans include but are not limited to corridor plans for Downtown, South Michigan / South Main Streets, Lincolnway West, Western Avenue, Portage Avenue, and Miami Street as well as neighborhood plans for Rum Village, Southeast Neighborhood, River Park, Keller Park, the Northeast Neighborhood, and LaSalle Park. It is important that the City together with neighborhood groups continue to work together to implement these plans and to keep them current.

One example of these plans is the current effort to develop a plan for the Northeast Neighborhood. This vicinity provides a gateway into both the City of South Bend and the University of Notre Dame. Several major highways and roadway arterials intersect here as well.

Like some other neighborhoods of the City, this area has been subject to deterioration over the past several years. Several key businesses including a Goodwill store and a grocery store have pulled out of the neighborhood. A relatively large number of University students and faculty reside in the area.

The Northeast Neighborhood Revitalization Organization, a partnership that includes the University, the City of South Bend, Madison Center and Hospital, St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, Memorial Hospital and neighborhood residents would like to redevelop the neighborhood into a pedestrian-friendly environment. The University, the City, and the hospitals have budgeted funds for a five-year period for this purpose. The University also owns scattered properties in the Northeast Neighborhood, which were voluntarily acquired from residents leaving the area; some of the structures have been demolished. Potential activities that have been put forth include implementing a variety of housing options and appropriate retail.

One issue that should be the subject of further study is the alignment of Juniper Road. This roadway traverses the University campus, and is crossed many times a day by pedestrians. While none have yet occurred, University officials have expressed concern regarding the potential of vehicle-pedestrian accidents.

Residential District Plans. The area to the north of the Cities of South Bend and Mishawaka has the towns of Indian Village and Roseland, as well as several sizable residential districts that are not contained within any municipality (including, among other areas, the Census Designated Places of Georgetown and Granger). Other districts are emerging on the western and southern perimeters of the City of South Bend. Given the historical and projected



importance of these areas as growth centers for the region, particular care should be taken to ensure that the levels of development, infrastructure, and public services are commensurate with one another. Circulation and environmental quality are of special concern in these areas.

Indiana-Sample Street Industrial Corridor. This older area on the City of South Bend's south side has seen disinvestment and deterioration in recent years. The area also contains certain types of land-intensive uses (e.g., scrap yards) that are inappropriate for high-density urban neighborhoods. Due to the historical investment in the area's infrastructure, the reutilization of this area for industrial development is a key component of the City's revitalization and the County's economic development. While planning efforts for revitalization of specific areas (e.g., the Studebaker plant) has taken place, planning for the revitalization of the entire corridor should commence.

Special Study Areas. Chapter 6 discussed several special study areas that will require detailed studies to determine potential growth and land uses. The reasons for conducting special studies are specific to those areas, but generally these are areas of potential competition of land use, and/or are affected by transportation improvements. These areas include:

- The Blackthorn Economic Development Area
- The Capital Avenue Corridor
- The US 31 Corridor
- Southwest South Bend
- US 20 (Bypass) interchanges

Institutional District Planning Areas. Large community institutions serve a variety of functions, including employment, community services, and enhancing quality of life. In addition, the County's institutions generally are surrounded by residential land uses, raising some potential for land use conflicts. These areas should therefore be subject to more detailed scrutiny, in terms of land use, public facilities, social aspects, and the like. Examples of such institutions include Indiana University-South Bend, University of Notre Dame, South Bend Community School Corporation, Penn Harris School Corporation, Memorial Hospital, St. Joseph Medical Center, etc. University of Notre Dame, IUSB and Memorial Hospital have recently developed site master plans that should be examined for areas of overlap with the Comprehensive Plan.

Area-wide Plan Preparation

Greenways and Bicycle-Pedestrian Planning. Currently, the County's development ordinances do not contain provisions pertaining to on- or off-street bicycle/pedestrian pathways. These pathways may be in many forms, and can be added to roads, either existing or planned, or may be off-road in nature. The St. Joseph River greenway is a good start towards developing a network of alternative transportation facilities. The Michiana Area



Council of Governments has prepared a region-wide plan for implementing bicycle and pedestrian trails that can serve as a backbone for planning local systems.

Neighborhood Strategy. As noted many times previously, the Comprehensive Plan has explicitly considered the issues facing existing urban neighborhoods. These areas need to be made more suitable for infill development and revitalization, yet be sensitive to public resource constraints. Chapter 8, Neighborhood Typology discusses this notion in much more detail.

City/County Economic Development Strategy. Several groups coordinate economic development policy, including the City of South Bend and the *Project Future* group. These groups should continue to cooperate in planning County-wide economic development strategy.

2. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

Annexation Issues. The issue of annexation is one of the most emotional ones facing Indiana communities. From the perspective of cities and towns, the annexation process, when conducted in accordance with State law, helps the municipalities to provide services, manage growth, and ensure their communities' well-being. Citizens and landowners in unincorporated areas threatened by annexation are generally opposed to the increase in property taxes that annexation invariably brings, and are frustrated that annexation proceedings are under the purview of officials that they did not help elect.

In other parts of the State, a balance typically emerges between these interests, with municipalities controlling the right to annex, and landowners controlling the right to remonstrate (i.e., sue in court that the annexation is unwarranted). In St. Joseph County, however, the balance of power is tipped heavily in favor of unincorporated landowners, due to a provision in the State annexation law that imposes higher requirements on the Cities of South and Mishawaka than those found in the rest of the State.

When is annexation in St. Joseph County justifiable? Some of the possible situations are listed as follows:

- *When landowners in unincorporated areas receive urban services, but do not pay their fair share for those services.* This is most often the case with moderate- to high-density development that is adjacent to incorporated areas. It is difficult for municipalities to withhold fire protection to these areas, for example. Also, public water and sewer service areas typically extend outside of the municipalities, to provide for anticipated growth.
- *When the lack of urban services in unincorporated areas imposes external costs on adjacent areas.* For example, areas with groundwater contamination from high-density



septic tank usage potentially threaten the water supply of incorporated areas.

- *Where land is needed for future urban growth.* The expansion of the Blackthorn industrial areas to around the Bypass is a good example.

The Area Plan Commission should lead a dialogue with municipalities and county officials to formulate a strategy based upon these principles.

3. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROGRAM

Ongoing, periodic review of the Plan. Planning is not a process with a definitive beginning and end. Rather, it is an on-going process that reacts to new information and developments, and tries to incorporate changing conditions into municipal activities. Conditions that may change include population and migration, employment, income, physical conditions of buildings and/or infrastructure, the natural environment, social and community goals, and the like.

A disciplined schedule of Plan review is helpful in Plan implementation. Noting areas of the Plan's success helps to build support for future planning activities, while less successful components of the Plan may suggest a need for refinement and/or amendment. The County and City planning staff should therefore annually conduct a thorough review of the Plan, asking whether the conditions on which the Plan was predicated still hold.

Also, prior to preparing annual municipal operating budgets, the County and City planning staff should conduct an assessment of the impacts of the activities that implement the Plan¹. This assessment should consist of the following activities:

- Identifying the programs and projects done to implement the Plan.
- For each implementing program/project, develop criteria that can be used to measure the effectiveness of the program, apply those criteria, and write a report summarizing the strengths and weaknesses of the program.
- Consider alterations of existing programs to improve their efficiency and effectiveness and, where necessary and appropriate, their removal.
- Identify new programs, if any, that could be implemented.

Capital Improvements Program (CIP). A CIP is a multi-year capital programming and budgeting process. Certain agencies already engage in multi-year capital budgeting. With the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, all County and municipal agencies with significant capital requirements should coordinate and consolidate their capital budgeting processes using the CIP model.

Items that should be considered in the CIP include land acquisition, stormwater facilities, water and wastewater collection and treatment facilities, roads, alternative transportation

¹ This discussion follows Anderson, *Guidelines for Preparing Urban Plans* (1995:123).

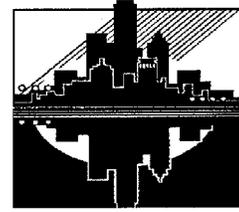


facilities (e.g., sidewalks, greenways), parks, police and fire stations/substations, and large equipment items (i.e., fire trucks, street department trucks and equipment, etc.).



CHAPTER 8

RESIDENTIAL AREA POLICY



Relative to typical Indiana comprehensive plans, the St. Joseph County Comprehensive Plan is somewhat unusual in its emphasis on existing urban areas. As was discussed in Chapter 2, much of the public input focused on the quality of existing residential areas. Also, as was seen in Chapter 3, South Bend's inner city has special needs with regards to land use conflicts, infrastructure and building quality.

In order to address these issues, this plan proposes a residential area policy. While the database development to-date has focused on the City of South Bend, the methodology and results apply to any residential area in the scope of the Plan. The logic behind the residential area policy is to focus residential-based activities where they result in the greatest impact. The policy therefore requires three major elements: an assessment and categorization of residential areas by conditions, a determination of what activities could be implemented to improve each type of residential area, and prioritizing activities within an overall improvement strategy. These elements are discussed below.

1. *Assessment.* For the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, the residential area assessment relies upon building conditions (See Chapter 3). Map 3-10 (in Chapter 3) describes the results of the assessment. The categories divide average building conditions into four categories, with the top category containing 45% of the residential area, and the bottom category containing 10%. As noted above, the assessment is currently limited to the City of South Bend; however, the methodology could equally apply to other areas of the County.

This assessment scheme coincides well with the City of South Bend's proposed expanded assessment categories, which will incorporate non-physical characteristics such as population, income, crime, and housing market data.

2. *Activities.* The South Bend City staff has developed a large list of activities for residential area conservation, improvement, revitalization, and renewal strategies, and assigned an appropriate strategy and set of activities to each residential area based upon existing conditions. Some of the activities are general in nature (such as code enforcement), while other activities are specific to one type of area only (such as acquisition and demolition in blighted residential areas).
3. *Prioritization.* The purpose of this step is to help decision-makers focus scarce resources for the most appropriate strategy and set of activities within specific types of residential areas. In considering how to prioritize activities, it becomes apparent that each type of area requires an increasingly intensive public focus, as described below:

- Tier I (“Conservation and Maintenance Conditions”) areas require periodic monitoring and normal maintenance, so that future trouble spots can be quickly detected and corrected.
- Tier II (“Improvement Conditions”) areas, which contain the beginnings of decay, require day-to-day enforcement and improvement activities in order to alleviate problems and prevent further decline.
- With the progression to Tier III (“Revitalization Conditions”) areas, which have already undergone extensive decay, more specialized solutions are required. An emphasis on detailed and comprehensive planning, a broader array of housing, public improvements, public safety, and related programs is required.
- Moving to Tier IV (“Renewal Conditions”) areas, where market forces have failed, relatively large-scale acquisition, relocation, demolition, and public facilities development are required.

Residential areas not only have particular types of activities prioritized by conditions, but the activities themselves are prioritized for particular residential areas within a specific area strategy. In most instances, enhanced code enforcement will be prioritized for only one type of residential area. However, in some limited cases the same type of activity, i.e., community policing, may be suggested for several area types, i.e., Tier I through Tier IV. The key distinctions in applying the same activity in two different types of residential areas will be in the intensity, duration, and amount of resources allocated based on residential area conditions. In keeping with this general philosophy, what follows is a more detailed, but illustrative, description of the activities required in each type of residential area:

Tier I (Monitoring and Conservation Strategy). This type of residential area would be targeted for a set of monitoring, review, and spot remediation activities, coupled with small-scale enhancement activities. The focus would be on maintaining high quality physical conditions and providing small-scale amenity programs that mesh with the existing physical fabric and housing types. For example:

- An area-wide code enforcement monitoring program.
- An annual review of physical conditions and infrastructure and a regular public maintenance program.
- Implementation of small-scale enhancement, aesthetics and amenity activities, i.e., historic street lighting, entranceway signage and landscaping and other special streetscape improvements.
- Implementation of neighborhood watch programs.
- Provision of building block grants to individuals and groups undertaking small-scale beautification projects.
- Prevention of zoning for non-residential uses.



Tier II (Enforcement and Improvement Strategy). This type of residential area would be targeted for increased public action, resources, enforcement and planning activities. For example:

- Enhanced code enforcement in targeted areas.
- Implementation of neighborhood watch programs with a case-by-base application of community policing activities.
- Minor housing fixup and painting, to prevent further property deterioration.
- Housing ownership (downpayment assistance and the like), as homeowners typically have greater interest in property values and quality.
- Development of neighborhood action teams and neighborhood partnership centers, to foster a sense of neighborhood identity, interest, and pride.
- Curb/sidewalk cost sharing, so public amenities are available within these areas, at a cost that both property owners and the City can afford.
- City fix-up blitz so that areas with minor problems may be quickly restored.
- Scattered-site housing infill incentive program, i.e., tax abatement, etc.

Tier III (Focused planning and Revitalization Strategy). An increased focus on special planning design and capacity building activities coupled with increased housing assistance and other public actions and investments are apparent here, as follows:

- Enhanced and systematic property maintenance enforcement, so that the impacts of deteriorated properties on overall property values are minimized.
- Code enforcement rehabilitation fund, so that substandard properties can be brought back up to the standards of the housing code.
- Community policing, in conjunction with neighborhood watch programs, to increase police presence and therefore keep crime from escalating.
- A smoke detector program, to increase public safety and lower fire fighting costs in the neighborhood.
- A police housing subsidy, so that the residential presence of police officers acts as a further deterrent to crime.
- General housing rehabilitation programs, so that low-income persons wishing to improve their properties have the means to do so.
- Residential tax abatement, to encourage infill housing development projects in areas with increasing numbers of vacant lots.
- Acquisition, rehabilitation, and resale of key properties to stimulate area-wide revitalization.
- Community organization development, to instill an active interest in and advocating for the quality of the neighborhood.
- Rezoning compatibility assessments, so that the effects of rezoning requests on surrounding properties are carefully considered.
- Special area studies/plans, so that specialized design and investment solutions can be developed for substandard areas.



- Curb/sidewalk subsidies, so that all areas of the City have access to adequate public facilities.
- Targeted recreational facilities, to address underserved areas and raise property values.
- Development of neighborhood action teams, neighborhood centers and neighborhood partnership centers to foster a sense of neighborhood identify, interest, and pride.
- Use area-wide downzoning where needed to minimize conflicts between residential and employment uses.

Tier IV (Renewal Strategy). Activities in this type of neighborhood focus on the following:

- Redevelopment planning, to coordinate the large investments required to renew a dilapidated area.
- Acquisition and demolition of dilapidated structures.
- Relocation assistance.
- Site assembly, for packaging to developers for industrial, commercial, or residential development.
- Public facility development, so that deficiencies in public infrastructure are corrected.

The following matrix summarizes the application of illustrative activities to areas by program type:



Table 8-1: Area Activity Matrix

Category	Activity	Area Types			
		Tier I Monitor	Tier II Enforce	Tier III Plan	Tier IV Renewal
Code Enforcement	Code Enforcement Rehab fund			X	
	Enhanced code enforcement		X		
	Enhanced property maintenance enf.			X	
	Monitoring of potential problem areas	X			
Public Safety	Community policing			X	
	Neighborhood watch program	X			
	Police housing subsidy			X	
	Smoke detector program			X	
Housing	Acquisition rehab/resale			X	
	Infill housing incentives		X		
	Housing ownership programs		X		
	Housing rehabilitation programs			X	
	Residential tax abatement			X	
	Targeted paint/fixup program		X		
Redevelopment	Acquisition/demo of dilapidated str.				X
	Public facility development				X
	Relocation assistance				X
	Site assembly				X
Capacity Building	Community organizations			X	
	Neighborhood action teams		X		
	Neighborhood centers		X		
Planning	Redevelopment plans				X
	Rezoning compatibility assessment			X	
	Special area studies/plans			X	
	Zoning for non-residential uses	X			
	Area-wide downzoning			X	
Physical Infrastructure	Annual review of physical conditions	X			
	Beautification block grant program	X			
	City fixup blitz		X		
	Curb/sidewalk cost sharing		X		
	Curb/sidewalk subsidy			X	
	Monitoring of potential problem areas	X			
	Small-scale enhancement activities	X			
Targeted recreational facilities			X		



Acknowledgements:

This chapter was developed in close coordination with the City of South Bend's NSPT group, consisting of representatives from City departments and the Area Plan Commission, which meets regularly to discuss issues of neighborhood quality and public services to neighborhoods. At the time the content of this chapter was developed, the NSPT consisted of the following individuals:

George Adler, Community Development
John Byorni, St. Joseph County Area Plan Commission
Kathy Davis, Neighborhood Code Enforcement
Jack Dillon, Environmental Services
Don Fozo, Building Commissioner
Gary Gilot, Public Works
Betsy Harriman, Parks and Recreation
Jon Hunt, South Bend Community and Economic Development
Richard Kilgore, Police Department
Alex Koenig, Neighborhood Planning
Marco Mariani, Neighborhood Planning
Pam Meyer, Community Development
Jennifer Mielke, Neighborhood Planning
Ann-Carol Nash, Legal Department
Cathy Roemer, Controller's Office
Bert Prawat, Fire Department
Marcia Qualls, Department of Public Works
Wanda Shock, Crime Prevention
Sherece Tolbert, Neighborhood Planning

