



Rush County COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



GUIDING THE FUTURE
OF **RUSH COUNTY**
Since **2024**

RUSH COUNTY, INDIANA

Certificate Of Area Plan Commission

A petition to Adopt the Rush County 2024 comprehensive plan was presented to The Rush County Area Plan board at a public hearing On October 2nd, 2024.

That public hearing is as follows:

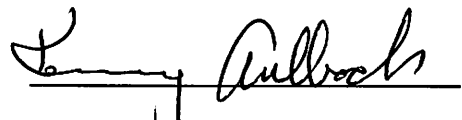
Rush County Area Plan Commission heard public comment on the 2024 comprehensive plan. Asking the commissioners to adopt the plan as written.

Effective Date: This ordinance shall become effective when County Commissioners of Rush County, Indiana have adopted and agreed to the zoning change. Commissioners meeting date will be October 7th, 2024.

I hereby certify that after proper legal notice as required, this petition was heard by the Rush County Area Plan Board on October 2nd, 2024. After public hearing the Area Plan Board voted to forward this petition to the Rush County Commissioners with:

Choose one: ☒ **Favorable**
☐ **Unfavorable**
☐ **No recommendation**


Marvin Rees, Chairman


Kenny Aulbach, Secretary

The attached recommendation to the Rush County Commissioners, for their consideration, is for a recommendation to adopt the 2024 comprehensive plan. The APC board held a public hearing on October 2nd, 2024.

Forwarded to the Rush County Commissioners by the Rush County Area Plan

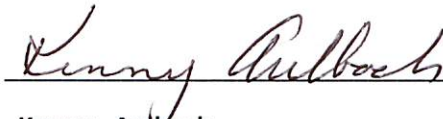
Commission. The petition was approved denied by a majority of the Board of Commissioners of Rush County, Indiana at their meeting on the 7th day of October 2024.



Mark Bacon

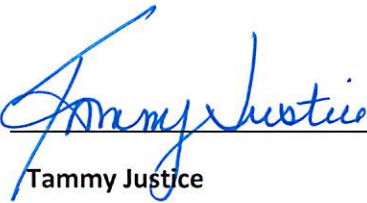


Ron Jarman



Kenny Aulbach

ATTEST:


Tammy Justice

TOWN OF CARTHAGE, INDIANA

RESOLUTION NO. 12-2024

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CARTHAGE, INDIANA, APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE 2024 RUSH COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

RECITALS

- A. The Rush County Plan Commission, in accordance with Indiana Code § 36-7-4-500 et seq., has held a public hearing on the proposed 2024 update to the Rush County Comprehensive Plan.
- B. The Rush County Plan Commission certified its unanimous recommendation that the Rush County Commissioners of Rush County, Indiana ("County Commissioners" and "County," respectively) approve and adopt the updated Comprehensive Plan.
- C. The Rush County Commissioners then unanimously approved and adopted the 2024 Rush County Comprehensive Plan.
- D. The 2024 Rush County Comprehensive Plan includes sub area plans for the Town of Carthage, Indiana.
- E. The Carthage Town Council finds that the proposed update provides for the continued responsible growth and development of the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Council of the Town of Carthage, as follows:

Section 1. The foregoing Recitals are fully incorporated herein by this reference.

Section 2. The Town Council hereby approves and adopts the proposed update to the County's Comprehensive Plan which shall be used in tandem with the current Carthage Comprehensive Plan upon adoption of this Resolution.

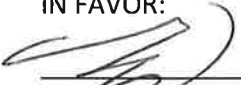
Section 3. This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption.

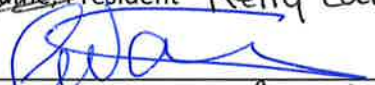
[Signature Page Follows]

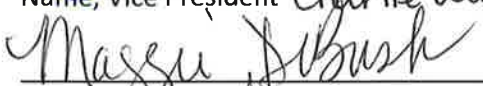
Passed and adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Carthage, Indiana, this 28th day of October, 2024.


THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE
TOWN OF CARTHAGE, INDIANA

IN FAVOR:


Name, President Kelly Land


Name, Vice President Charlie Watkins


Name, Member Maggie DeBusk


Name, Member Jeremy Green

Absent

Name, Member John Abrell

OPPOSED:

Name, President Kelly Land

Name, Vice President Charlie Watkins

Name, Member Maggie DeBusk

Name, Member Jeremy Green

Name, Member John Abrell

ATTEST:


Name, Clerk-Treasurer Rachael Morrow

TOWN OF GLENWOOD, INDIANA

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-11

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF GLENWOOD, INDIANA, APPROVING AND
ADOPTING THE 2024 RUSH COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

RECITALS

- A. The Rush County Plan Commission, in accordance with Indiana Code § 36-7-4-500 et seq., has held a public hearing on the proposed 2024 update to the Rush County Comprehensive Plan.
- B. The Rush County Plan Commission certified its unanimous recommendation that the Rush County Commissioners of Rush County, Indiana ("County Commissioners" and "County," respectively) approve and adopt the updated Comprehensive Plan.
- C. The Rush County Commissioners then unanimously approved and adopted the 2024 Rush County Comprehensive Plan.
- D. The 2024 Rush County Comprehensive Plan includes sub area plans for the Town of Glenwood, Indiana.
- E. The Glenwood Town Council finds that the proposed update provides for the continued responsible growth and development of the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Council of the Town of Glenwood, as follows:

Section 1. The foregoing Recitals are fully incorporated herein by this reference.

Section 2. The Town Council hereby approves and adopts the proposed update to the County's Comprehensive Plan, which includes a sub area plan for the Town of Glenwood, upon adoption of this Resolution.

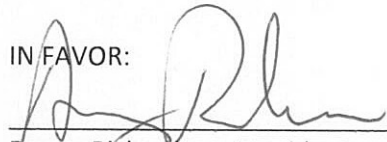
Section 3. This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption.

[Signature Page Follows]

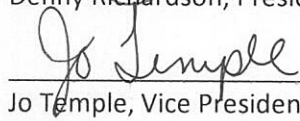
Passed and adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Glenwood, Indiana, this 12th day of November 2024.

THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE
TOWN OF GLENWOOD, INDIANA

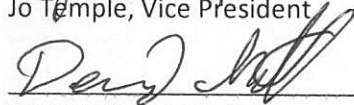
IN FAVOR:



Denny Richardson, President



Jo Temple, Vice President



David Miller, Member

OPPOSED:

Denny Richardson, President

Jo Temple, Vice President

David Miller, Member

ATTEST:



Mary Richardson, Clerk-Treasurer

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to all of those who devoted their time and ideas to the planning process for the future of Rush County. This plan would not have been possible without the guidance and expertise of the Steering Committee, Rush County leadership, and dedicated members of the community.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Kenny Aulbach - Northern District

Ron Jarman - Center District

Mark Bacon - Southern District

COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Charles A. Smith - President, At Large

Dennis Corn - At Large

Kyle Gardner - At Large

Amy Grocox - District 1

Carl Harcourt - District 2

Scott Barnes - District 3

Janet Kile - District 4

STEERING COMMITTEE

Henri Beeler - Local Resident

Virgil Bremer - Farm Bureau Representative

Chris Field - Local Resident

Kyle Gardner - Rushville Special Projects Director

Amy Grocox - Rush County Council

Mike Holzback - Rush County Area Planning Commission Director

Jim Jameson - Superintendent of Rush County Schools

Ron Jarman - Rush County Commissioner

Chuck Kemker - Rush County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Director

Kelly Land - Town of Carthage Council President

Chris May - Rush County Community Foundation Executive Director

Gerald Mohr - Local Resident

Shannon Davis Morrow - Local Resident

Jim Naylor - Farming Community Representative

Mary Richardson - Town of Glenwood Clerk-Treasurer

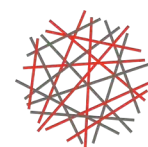
Jessica Roberts - Rush County Purdue Extension Educator

Brad Smith - President and CEO of Rush Memorial Hospital

Charlie Smith - Rush County Council

Jeff Wilson - Milroy Economic Development Corporation

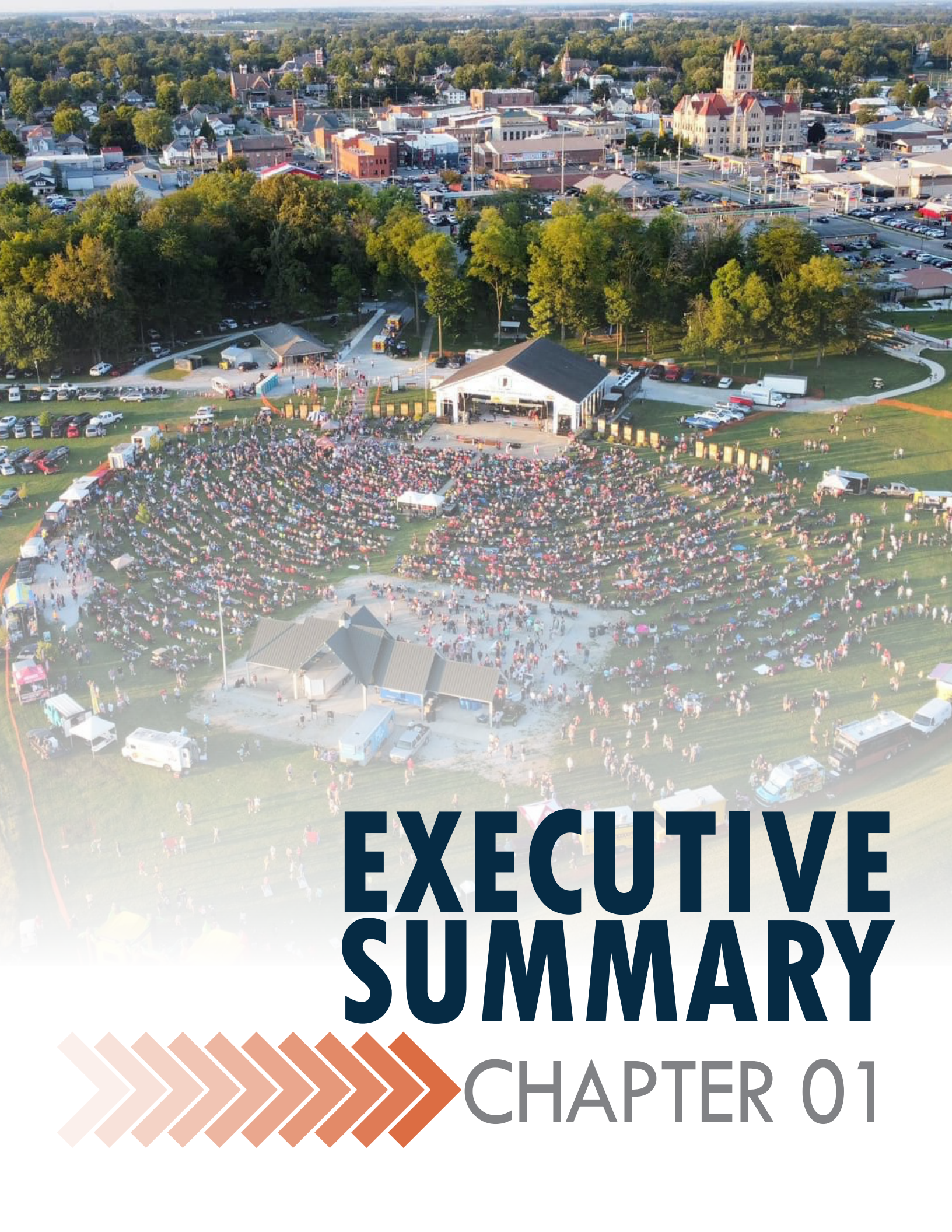
This plan was prepared by:



HWC
ENGINEERING

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	10
INTRODUCTION AND PROCESSES	14
BACKGROUND	22
LAND USE	34
TRANSPORTATION	42
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE	46
HOUSING	52
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	56
QUALITY OF LIFE	60
PARKS AND OPEN SPACE	66
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	70
CARTHAGE FOCUS AREA PLAN	82
GLENWOOD FOCUS AREA PLAN	94



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



CHAPTER 01

INTRODUCTION

Founded on its agricultural heritage, Rush County takes pride in its farming industry and close-knit communities. Rush County is located in East Central Indiana, almost directly between Indianapolis and Cincinnati, Ohio. As population growth from Indianapolis moves eastward, Rush County aims to find a balance between attracting new growth and development while maintaining their agricultural identity and character. To ensure Rush County's future success, this comprehensive plan sets goals and objectives to protect farmland, encourage economic growth, and enhance quality of life.

PLANNING AREA

Rush County partnered with HWC Engineering to update the County's Comprehensive Plan. The planning jurisdiction for this long-range plan includes unincorporated Rush County and the incorporated towns of Carthage and Glenwood. The Rush County Comprehensive Plan identifies a unified vision for the County, as well as action steps to address County-wide priorities.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process for this comprehensive plan update lasted approximately twelve months and was guided by a Steering Committee comprised of elected officials, County staff, residents, business owners, and other community leaders. To engage the public, a project website was established, and several public

engagement events were held, including an online public survey, focus group meetings, public workshops, a public open house, and public presentations.

VISION

The following vision statement was crafted by the Rush County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to help guide the goals, objectives, and action items of this comprehensive plan update:

Rush County's vision is to cultivate a vibrant agricultural community, fostering growth through sustainable practices, ensuring a safe environment, and nurturing a bright future for all.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Farmland throughout the County should be preserved.
- Broadband service should be prioritized.
- Future development should occur near cities and towns or populated areas.
- Rush County should remain a unique, agricultural community.
- Any future alternative energy developments should be value-added and strictly regulated.



Community Members Provide Feedback at the Big Ideas Open House

Source: HWC Engineering

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals named in this comprehensive plan update are broad statements of Rush County's values and desires for the future. These goals should be used to guide future decision-making in the County and provide a framework for specific policies and programs. For each goal topic, a series of objectives have been crafted that will help Rush County accomplish their goals.

Land Use	
Goal	Preserve Rush County's rich agricultural lands by encouraging development and redevelopment near existing communities and along primary transportation corridors.
Objective 1	Designate clearly targeted preservation areas for agriculture, open space, and natural resources.
Objective 2	Designate clearly targeted development and redevelopment areas for residential, commercial, and industrial/manufacturing uses.
Objective 3	Establish up-to-date regulations for all alternative energy development in the County ordinance.
Objective 4	Update the County's zoning ordinance to appropriately regulate value-added agricultural activities.
Objective 5	Support unincorporated areas in building local community capacity.
Transportation	
Goal	Ensure Rush County has an efficient and safe transportation system that addresses agricultural, vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic.
Objective 1	Work with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and other transportation partners in the County to ensure Rush County's needs are being considered with any transportation improvements.
Objective 2	Ensure Rush County has an up-to-date road inventory and asset management plan that allows the County to be fiscally responsible when maintaining the transportation network.
Objective 3	Consider agricultural uses in all road improvement projects.
Objective 4	Explore opportunities to add bicycle and pedestrian options in appropriate areas.
Community Facilities and Infrastructure	
Goal	Enhance Rush County's community facilities and utility infrastructure and maintain a high level of service for existing and future development.
Objective 1	Prioritize the availability of affordable, reliable, and accessible broadband services throughout Rush County.
Objective 2	Ensure proper development ordinances are in place to protect the availability and quality of groundwater.
Objective 3	Develop relationships with public and private utility companies that serve Rush County and learn how their future plans may affect development in Rush County.
Objective 4	Provide an appropriate level of service for County facilities and emergency services, including medical, fire, and law enforcement.
Objective 5	Increase capacity for sewer and water utilities.
Objective 6	Ensure proper stormwater and surface water management practices are in place in Rush County.

Housing

Goal

Ensure Rush County has affordable, diverse, and quality housing available for current and future residents.

- Objective 1 Develop a strategic blight elimination program to help bring blighted properties back onto the housing market.
- Objective 2 Ensure development standards support a variety of housing products.
- Objective 3 Consider developing an incentives toolkit to help attract housing developers to Rush County.
- Objective 4 Improve code enforcement efforts within towns and populated areas in Rush County.

Economic Development

Goal

Build upon Rush County's strong rural and agricultural base by expanding agribusiness, retaining and attracting complementary companies, and providing support to small-town businesses.

- Objective 1 Support all local and regional economic development initiatives, including but not limited to Accelerate Rural Indiana (ARI).
- Objective 2 Support the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) to continue their efforts in providing strong business support throughout the County.

Quality of Life

Goal

Increase the quality of life in Rush County through projects and initiatives that help attract population and elevate the well-being and health of residents.

- Objective 1 Attract new dining, retail, and entertainment options to the communities in Rush County.
- Objective 2 Encourage and support additional and affordable childcare opportunities in Rush County.
- Objective 3 Enhance cultural and art experiences in Rush County.
- Objective 4 Encourage and support more amenities for the local youth population, such as educational opportunities and recreational activities.
- Objective 5 Encourage growth in tourism by improving advertising of existing and upcoming amenities.
- Objective 6 Develop a plan that addresses maintenance and preservation of the historic bridges in Rush County.

Parks and Open Space

Goal

Preserve and enhance open spaces and natural features in Rush County for the benefit of current and future generations.

- Objective 1 Consider developing a county-wide bicycle network that connects Rush County communities and connects the county to networks in adjacent counties.
- Objective 2 Explore recreational opportunities on the Flatrock River and Big Blue River.
- Objective 3 Support Rush County communities in developing and expanding their local parks.



INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 02

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The Rush County Comprehensive Plan is a County-wide strategic planning effort between County leadership and staff, municipalities, non-profits, local businesses, emergency services, utility providers, and the broader community. The plan will guide decision-making on future growth, development, and preservation in Rush County. This project is a response to developing opportunities and ongoing changes that have occurred since the County's previous comprehensive plan was adopted in 2008.

This plan covers topics such as land use, transportation, housing, economic development, quality of life, and other elements vital for sustainable growth throughout Rush County. Research and analysis of existing conditions helped lay the foundation for a set of planning goals and action strategies that will be used by the County and other community leaders for decision-making. However, the Rush County Comprehensive Plan is not solely meant for elected officials and County staff but is also intended to be a document referenced and supported by the entire community.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process included the following phases:

Phase 1 - Cast a Vision

November 2023 – December 2023

- Initial Coordination Visit
- Steering Committee Set-Up
- Data Collection and Demographic Profile
- Steering Committee Meeting #1

Phase 2 - Reach a Consensus

January 2024 – February 2024

- Project Website
- Public Workshops
- Focus Groups
- Public Participation Report

Phase 3 - Form the Plan

February 2024 – May 2024

- Steering Committee Meeting #2
- Steering Committee Meeting #3
- Big Ideas Open House
- Steering Committee Meeting #4
- First Draft of Comprehensive Plan

Phase 4 - Practical Action Steps

June 2024 – November 2024

- Steering Committee Meeting #5
- Public Draft of Comprehensive Plan
- Public Presentations and Video
- Final Draft of Comprehensive Plan
- Plan Commission Adoption Presentation and Public Hearing
- County Commissioner Adoption Meeting
- Carthage and Glenwood Adoption Meetings
- Post-Adoption Revisions and Final Deliverables



Steering Committee Meeting in November 2023

Source: HWC Engineering

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Rush County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was formed by County leaders and consisted of Rush County leaders, business owners, residents, and representatives from towns around the County. Steering Committee members provided specific expertise throughout the planning process and were responsible for advocating for the plan, providing direction on key topics, reviewing draft materials, and attending public events.

The following Steering Committee meetings were held throughout the process:

- Meeting #1: November 20th, 2023
- Meeting #2: February 26th, 2024
- Meeting #3: March 11th, 2024
- Meeting #4: April 29th, 2024
- Meeting #5: May 20th, 2024

Steering Committee Members

Name	Affiliation
Henri Beeler	Local Resident
Virgil Bremer	Farm Bureau Representative
Chris Field	Local Resident
Kyle Gardner	Rushville Special Projects Director
Amy Grocox	Rush County Council
Mike Holzback	Rush County Area Planning Commission Director
Jim Jameson	Superintendent of Rush County Schools
Ron Jarman	Rush County Commissioner
Chuck Kemker	Rush County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Director
Kelly Land	Town of Carthage Council President
Chris May	Rush County Community Foundation Executive Director
Gerald Mohr	Local Resident
Shannon Davis Morrow	Local Resident
Jim Naylor	Farming Community Representative
Mary Richardson	Town of Glenwood Clerk-Treasurer
Jessica Roberts	Rush County Purdue Extension Educator
Brad Smith	Rush Memorial Hospital President/CEO
Charlie Smith	Rush County Council
Jeff Wilson	Milroy Economic Development Corporation

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

To help guide the development of the Rush County Comprehensive Plan, various public events were held to engage community members from all over Rush County and learn their opinions about the important characteristics of Rush County. These events were offered both in-person and virtually. Rush County was eager to participate in these activities, as the combined total attendance of all the meetings was over 100 people, with many people attending multiple meetings.

Rush County residents participated in the following engagement activities:

- Four Public Workshops
- An Online Public Survey
- Eight Focus Group Meetings
- A Big Ideas Open House

Community members showed up to learn about the planning process, ask questions, and share their thoughts with the project team. The following list shares the total number of participants for each engagement activity:

- 116 Public Workshop participants
- 720 Online Public Survey Participants
- 79 Focus Group Participants
- 38 Big Ideas Open House Participants



Public Workshop in Carthage

Source: HWC Engineering

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

There were two County workshops held on January 17th and 24th, 2024 for the Rush County Comprehensive Plan held in Milroy and Rushville to learn more about what the public saw as the County's assets and drawbacks, as well as what they would like to see for the future of their County. After a brief presentation, participants were asked to interact with the activity boards, provide written input, and discuss specific comments and concerns with the project team. Key findings from the Public Workshops included the following:

Rush County's assets:

Workshop participants indicated that Rush County is a close-knit, quiet, and agricultural community. Participants considered the friendliness of their neighbors and the safety of the community to be assets. The schools, Amish businesses, the Flatrock and Big Blue Rivers, youth organizations like 4H and FFA, community events like concerts in the park, and the covered bridges were identified as assets.

What Rush County is missing or needs help with:

Participants expressed that the County needed to improve broadband access and housing. Another concern was that more retail and business development is needed in the County. Participants raised concerns about increased vehicular and semi-truck traffic, the need for more amenities like childcare and youth learning opportunities, enhanced infrastructure capacity, and the need for better pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Attendees expressed concern that Rush County has issues such as blight, alternative energy proposals, and large concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). There was also interest in growing tourism opportunities in Rush County.

What residents see for Rush County's future:

The participants shared their dreams for Rush County, which included the preservation of farmland, improved Internet service, and more commercial development. Participants indicated they were not in favor of industrial-scale solar or wind operations in Rush County. One participant shared the idea to have Rush County's population reach 20,000 people. Participants agreed that quality-of-place amenities were necessary as well as more opportunities for kids and youth. Participants wanted to ensure that the growth of the County would stay near Rushville and other incorporated towns to help preserve the rural atmosphere of the rest of the County.

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

Throughout the planning process for the Rush County Comprehensive Plan, there were several topics that were of high importance to the community and the Steering Committee, including education and childcare, culture and recreation, alternative energy, youth and young adults, agriculture, economic development, utilities, and housing. Because they were such important local issues, the project team held focus group meetings for each of these topics on February 6th and 8th, 2024. Community members were invited to these meetings based on their roles in the community. These meetings aimed to understand the topics and discuss potential solutions. Each of these conversations helped shape the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Key findings from the Focus Group Meetings included the following:

Education and Childcare:

- Rush County does not have enough childcare availability for children in the County and parents have to take their children outside of the County for care.
- The cost of childcare and cost of living has risen, making this amenity unattainable for many families.
- The schools in Rush County need more staff and resources to serve more kids and achieve higher goals.

Culture and Recreation:

- Participants would like to see more green space and natural features around the County.
- Rush County has many different cultural activities available throughout the year to engage residents and visitors but should provide more activities for youth.

Alternative Energy:

- Farmland should be preserved for agricultural uses, and small-scale solar development can be installed in places like parking lots or rooftops.
- The County should establish appropriate development standards for alternative energy development.

Youth and Young Adults:

- Rush County's safe and friendly community keeps its residents living there after graduation, but it needs more local commercial amenities to keep its residents in the County to shop and dine.
- The Rush County School System provides youth with many opportunities to grow and learn college and career skills but could offer more local classes to expand these programs.

Agriculture:

- Rush County needs to upgrade its infrastructure to keep up with technological advances in the agriculture industry.

Economic Development:

- It is important to provide better educational opportunities for the existing youth in the County so that they are more equipped to contribute locally after graduation.
- The County needs more small businesses like sit-down restaurants, breakfast places, and other commercial developments.

Utilities:

- The County lacks accessible, affordable, and reliable broadband service.
- There is a lack of availability of water and in some areas, the quality of the water is poor, especially in the Glenwood area.

Housing:

- Rush County needs more housing of different types, prices, sizes, and locations.
- New housing developments should be concentrated in populated areas that already have housing.
- There are many blighted properties in incorporated and unincorporated communities in Rush County.



Public Workshop in Glenwood

Source: HWC Engineering

SURVEY

The Online Public Input Survey was open from January 4th to February 11th, 2024 and generated 720 responses. Responses were well distributed across the 12 townships within Rush County and across different age groups. The largest age group responding to the survey were those between the ages of 55-64 (22.4%). Most respondents lived and worked in the County (93.1%). The survey questions included topics such as quality of life, job opportunities, economic development, transportation, public services, natural resources, zoning, housing, development projects, and alternative energy. Key findings from the Online Public Input Survey included the following:

Quality of Life

- 97.5% of respondents agreed that Rush County is a safe community.
- 92.4% agreed that Rush County is a great place to raise a family.
- Survey results suggested that respondents were divided on the topic of healthcare, where 40% agreed that the current healthcare options meet the needs of residents and 45.1% disagreed.
- 40.1% agreed that the County has good trails and pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure while 42.5% disagreed.

Job Opportunities

- 61.5% of respondents disagreed that there is adequate broadband service in Rush County.
- 45.8% disagreed that there are adequate workforce housing options in Rush County.
- 49.6% disagreed that the County has a good diversity of job opportunities for people of all skill and education levels, but 35.8% agree.

Economic Development

- 81.3% of respondents agreed that more initiatives are needed to promote and expand existing businesses.
- 82.7% agreed that the County should attract new businesses.
- 77.4% agreed that Rush County should pursue more commercial and retail development.
- 78.5% agreed that entrepreneurial initiatives should be supported.
- 79.5% agreed that the County should continue to work on growing the local population and workforce.
- 84.4% of respondents wanted to protect the viability and productivity of farm operations.

Transportation

- 62.9% of respondents agreed that Rush County should prioritize roadway improvements.
- 60% agreed that the County should prioritize bridge and drainage culvert improvements.
- 61.8% indicated that the County should expand pedestrian/bike infrastructure opportunities.

Public Services/Utilities

- 53.1% of respondents agreed that the County needs to update its policies on renewable energy development.
- 40.3% agreed that stormwater management is an issue in Rush County.
- 81% agreed that broadband services should be improved throughout the County.
- Respondents indicated that the capacity for emergency services including police and medical services needs to be expanded.

Natural Resources/Agriculture

- Respondents indicated that the County should preserve its farmland and natural resources. Many respondents agreed that new concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) developed in the County should be regulated.
- 55.8% agreed that Rush County does a good job of protecting agricultural and farming practices.
- 45.1% agreed that Rush County does a good job of protecting the Flatrock River.
- 40.1% agreed that Rush County does a good job of protecting its woodlands.

Zoning

- 67.6% of respondents agreed that the County's zoning is necessary to guard against undesirable development.
- 61.3% agreed that the zoning ordinance should encourage a variety of residential lot sizes.
- 48.6% indicated that the County should improve enforcement of its zoning regulations.

Housing

- The top choices for improving housing options in Rush County were to provide more affordable housing options (61.1%), remove blight in downtown areas (36.5%), provide more rental options (33.9%), and provide more options for seniors and retirees (32.4%).
- The three least popular options for improving housing in the County were to require more stringent development standards for new housing (6.3%), loosen existing development and zoning standards for new housing (10.6%), and provide more upscale housing (10.9%).

Development Projects

- 68.3% of respondents were comfortable with commercial/retail development.
- 69.2% were comfortable with housing and broadband development.
- 55.1% were comfortable with industrial development.
- Respondents were divided on the development of CAFOs, with 34.4% comfortable, 38.1% uncomfortable, and 27.5% unsure.

Alternative Energy

- 53.3% of respondents did not support industrial-scale solar development in Rush County.
- 57.2% did not support industrial-scale wind development in Rush County.
- Outside of Rushville, 64.7% of respondents did not support industrial-scale solar development and 69.4% did not support industrial-scale wind development in Rush County.

Other Concerns

- Access to mental and physical health services is a concern in the County.
- Access to affordable childcare was a common concern amongst respondents.
- Respondents wanted more opportunities for youth such as activities, educational opportunities, and resources for social services.
- The parks and recreational facilities throughout the County should be updated and repaired.



BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 03

INTRODUCTION

Rush County, founded in 1822, is unique for its agricultural heritage, safe and friendly communities, and its strong sense of community pride. Studying the demographics and current trends in the County and its towns related to population, economy, land use, infrastructure, housing, and quality of life is important to help shape the comprehensive plan. This information, in combination with input from the community, guided the Rush County Comprehensive Plan process.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

The change of a population over time is one of the most important factors in determining the success of a community’s future. Between the years 2000 and 2020, Rush County lost over 1,600 people. Rush County had the second-highest population loss compared to its surrounding counties, just ahead of Fayette County. Within the county, every township except Center, Ripley, and Walker Townships lost a significant amount of population between 2010 and 2020.

Median Age

Rush County’s median age of 42.5 years was almost five years older than Indiana’s median age of 37.8 years. It was also older than its surrounding counties except for Fayette County. From 2010 to 2020, Rush County aged by almost three years, which was the most of its surrounding counties. A median age of 42.5 years indicates that the population is soon entering retirement age and this has implications for the comprehensive plan.

ECONOMICS AND WORKFORCE

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is an important indicator of the income-earning potential of a community because educational opportunities typically lead to higher-paying jobs in various industries. Rush County had the lowest educational attainment rate compared to its surrounding counties and to the State of Indiana, apart from Fayette County. In 2020, just over 88% of Rush County’s population 25 years and older had a high school diploma, which was a significant increase from 2010 with just under 70% having a high school diploma. Additionally, 15.2% of the population 25 and over had a bachelor’s degree or greater in 2020, and 4.6% of the population 25 and over had a graduate or professional degree. Higher education attainment in the County was much lower than the State average, with Rush County less than half of the college-educated rate of the State of Indiana.

Median Income

The median household income of a community shows the health of the local economy and is important to keep in consideration when planning for a community’s future. The median income in Rush County in 2020 was \$56,814, which was 2.4% lower than the State median income. Compared to its surrounding counties, Rush County had the third lowest median income behind Fayette and Henry Counties. Between 2010 and 2020, the median income in the County increased by over \$10,000 which was on par with the increase at the State level.

Table 3.1: Population Change (2000 – 2020) by County					
County	2000 Population	2010 Population	% Change (2000 - 2010)	2020 Population	% Change (2010 - 2020)
Decatur	24,555	25,584	4.2%	26,587	3.9%
Fayette	25,588	24,367	-9.8%	23,068	-5.3%
Franklin	22,151	23,194	2.7%	22,750	-1.9%
Hancock	55,391	68,011	38.3%	76,614	12.6%
Henry	48,508	48,921	-0.7%	48,158	-1.6%
Shelby	43,445	44,237	2.6%	44,559	0.7%
Rush	18,261	17,568	-3.8%	16,632	-5.3%
Carthage	934	757	-19.0%	891	17.7%
Glenwood	308	212	-31.2%	307	44.8%
Indiana (State)	6,080,485	6,417,398	5.5%	6,696,893	4.4%

Source: 2000 Decennial Census; 2010, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

County	2010 Median Income	2020 Median Income	# Change (2010 - 2020)	% Change (2010 - 2020)
Decatur	\$46,894	\$60,794	\$13,900	29.6%
Fayette	\$37,038	\$47,465	\$10,427	28.2%
Franklin	\$51,649	\$68,180	\$16,531	32.0%
Hancock	\$61,052	\$75,647	\$14,595	23.9%
Henry	\$41,087	\$51,104	\$10,017	24.4%
Shelby	\$52,292	\$59,712	\$7,420	14.2%
Rush	\$46,685	\$56,814	\$10,129	21.7%
Carthage	\$37,917	\$37,917	\$0	0.0%
Glenwood	\$37,292	\$52,000	\$14,708	39.4%
Indiana (State)	\$47,697	\$58,235	\$10,538	22.1%

Source: 2010, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Employment by County

Employment in Rush County was well-distributed across various industries. The manufacturing industry was the highest-growing industry in the County, growing almost 4% from 2010 to 2020, and it employed over a quarter of the employed population in Rush County. The education and healthcare industries were the next top industries in the County and employed nearly 20% of the employed population. The smallest industries in Rush County were the wholesale trade and information industries, which both decreased in employment from 2010 to 2020. According to the Department of Workforce Development, Rush County's unemployment rate at the end of 2022 was 1.8%.

Major Employers

According to the Hoosiers by the Numbers report, the largest employers in Rush County are:

- Rush Memorial Hospital (Rushville)
- Copeland Corporation (Rushville)
- Intat Precision Inc (Rushville)
- Trane (Rushville)
- Fraley & Schilling Inc (Rushville)
- Kroger (Rushville)
- Rushville Consolidated High School (Rushville)
- Benjamin Rush Middle School (Rushville)
- McDonald's (Rushville)
- Rushville High Vocational Building (Rushville)

Other large employers in the County include:

- Corteva (Rushville)
- Diamond Pet Food [coming Q1-2024] (Rushville)
- Hoosier Pallet (Milroy)

LAND USE

Land Use Patterns

Agriculture

Agriculture is the main land use in Rush County. According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, Rush County has 473 farms, which takes up almost 190,000 acres of its land, or 72.5% of the total land. Out of this, 171,935 acres of land are considered cropland and 560 acres are considered irrigated land. The total acreage of farmland has decreased by over 10% since the 2017 Census of Agriculture, which indicated there was over 211,000 acres of farmland and 557 farms in the County in 2017.

Rush County's farms are doing well in comparison to surrounding counties and the State of Indiana. According to the 2022 Agriculture Census, the County's farms are profitable with a net cash income of \$177,395 which is over \$60,000 more than the State's average net cash income for its farms. Next, Rush County has more high-value farms than the State's average. Farms that make \$50,000 or more make up just over 59% of the County's farms, and just over 35% of Indiana's farms.

The County is best known for its agricultural history. To support this, 17 farms have been recognized as Hoosier Homesteads in the past decade, which means the farm has been owned by the same family for 100 years or more. Additionally, according to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, 85.6% of Rush County's farms are family-owned, which is more than Indiana's 84.7%. Both of these elements illustrate Rush County's strong tie to agriculture.

Industrial

Most of the industrial land use in Rush County is centered around Rushville. The major industrial employers in this area include INTAT Precision, Inc., Trane Commercial Systems, and Copeland Corporation. There are small pockets of industrial and manufacturing land uses across the County, specifically near towns and unincorporated communities.

Commercial

Similar to industrial land use patterns, most of the County's commercial land use is located within the Rushville City limits. The largest commercial employers in the County include Flagstar Bank, Rush Memorial Hospital, Kroger, Save-A-Lot Grocery Stores, McDonald's, Chevrolet/

Buick, Princess Theatre, CVS and Rushville Pharmacy, Barada Associates Inc., and Pizza King Indiana. There are small commercial areas in the incorporated and unincorporated communities throughout the County like restaurants, gas stations, banks, and retail shops.

Residential

Residential uses are concentrated in Rushville, Glenwood, Carthage, and the various unincorporated communities of Rush County. Rural (low-density) residential lots are also scattered throughout the county but are found primarily along county roads and highways.

Table 3.3: Rush County Employment by Industry (2010 – 2020)

Industry	2010	2020	% Change (2010 - 2020)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	6.7%	3.5%	-3.2%
Construction	8.1%	8.2%	0.1%
Manufacturing	21.4%	25.3%	3.9%
Wholesale trade	3.3%	1.1%	-2.2%
Retail trade	12.9%	9.4%	-3.5%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5.9%	8.1%	2.2%
Information	1.5%	0.8%	-0.7%
Finance and insurance, and real estate rental and leasing	4.9%	4.8%	-0.1%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4.2%	6.5%	2.3%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	18.1%	19.5%	1.4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	6.4%	6.2%	-0.2%
Other services, except public administration	4.2%	3.9%	-0.3%
Public administration	2.3%	2.7%	0.4%

Source: 2010, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 3.4: USDA Census of Agriculture Farming Income (2022) by County

County	Net cash income of the operations (Total)	Market value of agricultural products (Total)	Market value of agricultural products (Average per farm)
Decatur	\$153,289,000	\$290,732,000	\$526,689,000
Fayette	\$75,255,000	\$78,720,000	\$264,162,000
Franklin	\$51,786,000	\$103,017,000	\$150,830,000
Hancock	\$127,915,000	\$206,814,000	\$409,533,000
Henry	\$91,982,000	\$200,884,000	\$343,979,000
Shelby	\$124,036,000	\$208,193,000	\$379,915,000
Rush	\$177,395,000	\$222,694,000	\$470,812,000
Indiana (State)	\$114,516,000	\$18,029,033,000	\$336,369,000

Source: 2022 USDA Census of Agriculture

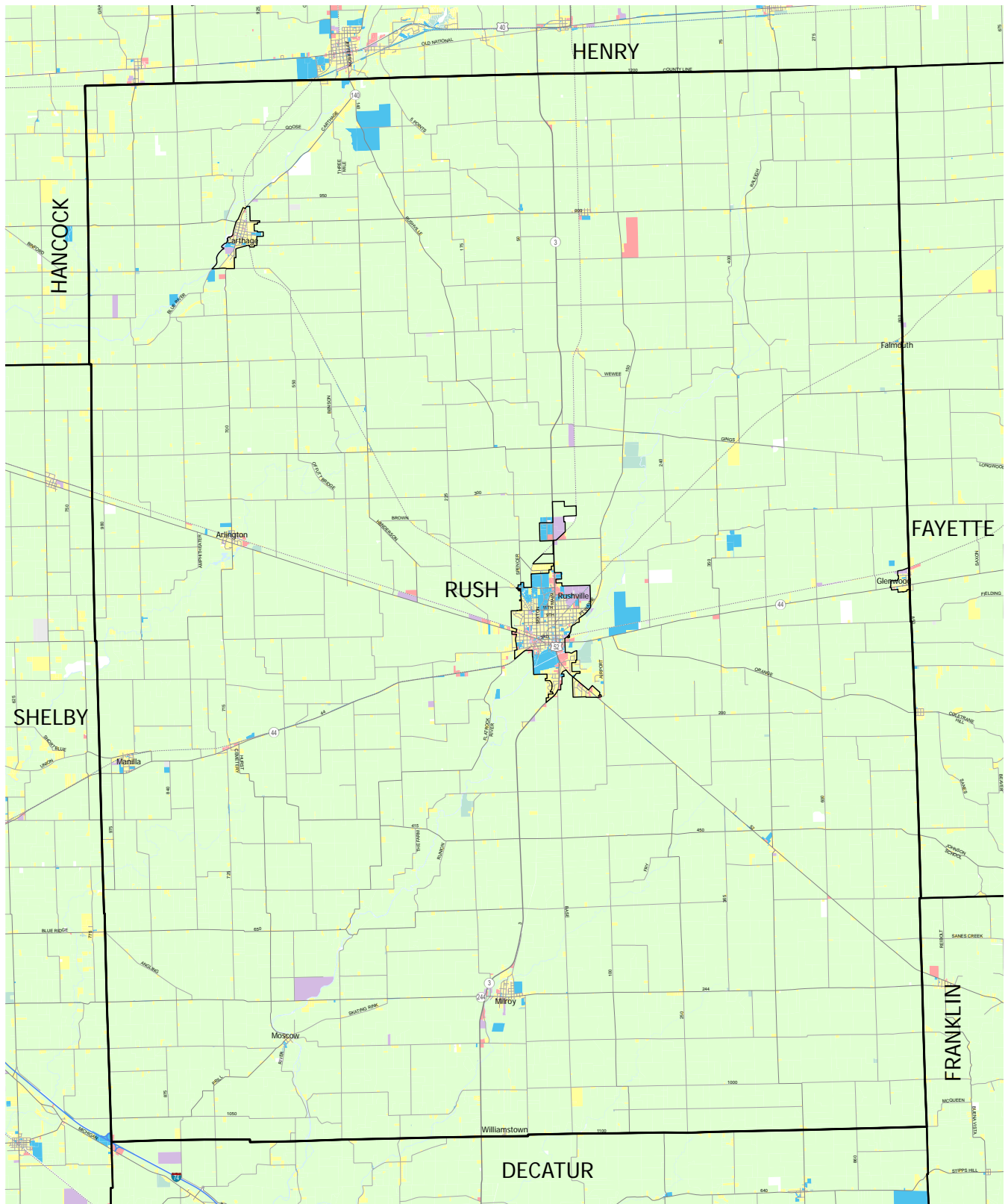


Figure 3.1: Existing Land Use Map

LEGEND



Agricultural



Commercial



Green Space



Industrial



Institutional



Residential



Utility



County Boundaries



Incorporated Boundaries

TRANSPORTATION

Rush County has several major corridors that run through it and connect it to surrounding Counties and even to other major cities like Indianapolis and Cincinnati. Major roads include Interstate 74, State Road 244, State Road 3, State Road 44, and US Highway 52. The Rush County transportation network has 747 miles of roads. According to the County’s Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) Report, the average road condition rating is 5.75 out of 9. Below is a breakdown of the types of roads and their conditions. Rush County also takes pride in its historic covered bridges. Some of the popular bridges include the Offutt Covered Bridge, the Forsythe Mill Covered Bridge, and the Smith Covered Bridge.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Utilities

Rush County is served by the following utility companies for water, sewer, broadband, electricity, and natural gas:

- City of Rushville Water/Sewer (water and sewer)
- Duke Energy (electric)
- NineStar Connect (broadband)
- Rush Shelby Energy (electric)
- CenterPoint Energy (gas)
- Town of Carthage (water/sewer)
- Town of Glenwood (water/sewer)
- Milroy (water/sewer)
- Arlington (sewer)
- Homer (sewer)
- Manilla (sewer)

Public Services

Rush County’s Emergency Management Agency (EMA) locates and coordinates resources in times of major crisis events in the community and also coordinates with state agencies to receive grant funding. Seven volunteer fire departments can be found in Rush County.

The locations include the Anderson Township Fire Department in Milroy, Glenwood Volunteer Fire Department in Glenwood, Posey Township Volunteer Fire Department in Arlington, Rushville Township Volunteer Fire Department in Rushville, City of Rushville Fire Department in Rushville, Carthage Volunteer Fire Department in Carthage, Manilla Volunteer Fire Department in Manilla, and Raleigh Fire Department in Mays. The City of Rushville Fire Department provides mutual aid to the volunteer fire departments across the County and also has a Safe Haven Baby Box for the benefit of the community. The fire departments also offer ambulance services sponsored by IU Health/ Ball Memorial Hospital and provide basic life support, advanced EMT, and paramedic levels.

Rush County is served by the County Sheriff’s Office. The Sheriff’s Office has many staff, including deputies, courthouse security officers, reserve deputies, civil service processors, correction officers, special deputies, transport officers, dispatchers, the sheriff, and other administrative staff.

Schools

The Rush County School Corporation served a total of 1,914 students during the 2021-2022 school year according to the Indiana Department of Education’s 2022 Annual Performance Report. The school corporation declined in student enrollment between 2018 and 2021 by 7.3%. However, the Rush County School Corporation maintained a graduation rate of 96.6%, which is about 7% higher than the State average. Rushville Consolidated High School has almost double the participation in Career and Technical Programs than the State of Indiana with 79.1% of students involved in these programs, as the school partners with Ivy Tech University and the Whitewater Career Center. The tables below provide a brief overview of key measures for the school system and its schools compared to the Indiana average.

Table 3.5: PASER Report Summary for Rush County (2020)				
Surface Type	Total Miles	Good Condition (7-10)	Fair Condition (4-6)	Poor Condition (1-3)
Gravel	17.44	-	17.44	-
Chip Seal	1.69	1.14	.11	.45
Asphalt	727.64	289.45	108.38	329.81
Concrete	.22	-	-	.22
Closed	2.03	Not Rated	Not Rated	Not Rated

Table 3.6: Rush County Schools (2022)					
School	Enrollment	Certified Teachers	IREAD Passing Rate	Pupil to Certified Employee Ratio	Attendance Rate
Arlington Elementary School	149	14	81.5%	8.2	93.7%
Milroy Elementary School	146	13	100%	10.4	92.8%
Rushville Elementary School East	293	20	92.9%	13.3	92.4%
Rushville Elementary School West	349	17	92.1%	16	91.4%
Benjamin Rush Middle School	317	25	-	11.3	95.6%
Rushville Consolidated High School	660	45	-	12.8	90.0%
Indiana (State)	1,120,125	76,712	80.3%	16.2	92.9%

Source: 2022 IDOE Annual Performance Report

HOUSING

Housing Occupancy

Overall, Rush County lost 41 housing units between 2010 and 2020, which accounted for a decrease of .5% of the housing stock. Housing stock increased in surrounding counties, with the exception of Fayette and Henry Counties. Rush County's owner-occupied housing declined by 7.3%, rental units increased by over 20%, and the vacancy rate declined by almost 2%.

Median Home Value

Home values in Rush County increased by over \$9,000 from 2010 to 2020, which is one of the smallest increases in median home values among the surrounding counties and only about a third of the increase that the State of Indiana saw in that decade. The County's median home value in 2020 was \$115,900. Alternatively, rent prices have increased more in Rush County than in surrounding counties, with a rent increase of \$155 over the past decade. In 2020, Rush County's median rent was \$721.

Age of Housing

Rush County's housing stock is aging, as most of its housing stock was built prior to 1939 (41.8%) and only 8.4% of its housing units built after 2000. As the County grows and develops, housing stock must meet the demands of both current and future residents, and this can be a potential issue with older housing.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local Economic Development Organizations

The Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) serves Rush County to attract and maintain economic development efforts throughout the County. Its purpose is, "Attract New Business. Retain & Expand Current Businesses. Promote Entrepreneurship. Develop Community Infrastructure. Build a Work-Ready Community." The Rush County ECDC offers services such as incentive resources, available site information, and resources on Rush to Work, a job training center located in Rushville.

Rush County is a member of the Eastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (EIRPC) which advocates for economic development in communities throughout the region. The County also participates in the East Central Indiana Regional Partnership (ECIRP) which collaborates with communities' economic development corporations to attract new investment, support existing industries, and enhance the quality of life, place, and opportunity for all residents.

Commuting Patterns

According to data from the 2020 American Community Survey, only 42.7% of the employed population in Rush County was employed in the County, and the other 56.9% worked outside of the County. The main method of transportation to work for Rush County was driving alone as 87.6% of the employed population drove a personal automobile to and from work.

Rush County also participates in the Accelerate Rural Indiana (ARI) region along with Decatur and Shelby Counties. This group formally came together in 2021 to compete for Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) funds through the Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

Table 3.7: Total Housing Units (2010 – 2020) by County

County	2010 Housing Units	2020 Housing Units	# Change (2010 - 2020)	% Change (2010 - 2020)
Decatur	11,060	11,436	376	3.4%
Fayette	10,994	10,818	-176	-1.6%
Franklin	9,455	9,802	347	3.7%
Hancock	27,577	30,640	3,063	11.1%
Henry	21,375	21,233	-142	-0.7%
Shelby	18,978	19,395	417	2.2%
Rush	7,544	7,503	-41	-0.5%
Carthage	334	423	89	26.6%
Glenwood	95	156	61	64.2%
Indiana (State)	2,778,459	2,903,720	125,261	4.5%

Source: 2010, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

QUALITY OF LIFE

Inventory of Community Organizations

- 4-H
- American Legion
- ARC of Rush County
- Arlington East Hill Cemetery Association
- Boy Scouts of America
- Boys and Girls Club of Rush County
- Caldwell Pioneer Acres
- Carthage Lions Club
- Elks Lodge
- Erzell Bever Jr. Community Center
- Imagine: Nation- The Arts and Cultural Council of Rush County, Indiana
- Kappa Kappa Kappa, Phi Chapter
- Mentors of Rush County Empowering Youth Inc. organization
- Psi Iota Xi
- Milroy Street Light Project
- New Salem Lions Club, Inc.
- Phoenix Lodge
- Posey Township Volunteer Fire Department
- Rotary Club of Rushville
- Rush County Biz
- Rush County Chamber of Commerce
- Rush County Community Assistance
- RCCF R.N. Club
- Rush County Fairgrounds
- Rush County FFA
- Rush County Heritage
- Rush County Historical Society
- Rush County Humane Society
- Rush County IN Extension Homemakers
- Rush County Public Library
- Rush County Purdue Extension

- Rush County Schools
- Rush County Senior Citizens Center, Inc.
- Rush County United Fund
- Rush County Veterans Memorial Foundation
- Rush Masonic Lodge #580 F & AM
- Rush Memorial Hospital Fund
- Rushville Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution
- Rushville Lodge 1307 B.P.O.E. Fund
- Rushville Parks Department
- Rushville Public Library
- Rushville/Rush County Community Center
- Shares, Inc. Rush County
- Visit Rush County

Inventory of Healthcare Facilities

- Residential Care Facilities: 1
- Transportation: 6
- Medical Clinic: 29
- Hospital: 1
- Federally Qualified Health Clinic: 10
- Nursing Facility: 2

Inventory of Daycare Facilities

- Elena's Giggles & Grins
- Lots-A-Tots Childcare
- ICAP Milroy Headstart
- Little Stars Learning Academy LLC
- My Bright Beginnings
- A Place to Grow
- Happy Days Childcare
- Daycare Ministry
- Laugh & Learn Playcare
- Lil' Tigers Academy

Inventory of Community Events/Festivals

Rush County values its close-knit community and its agricultural heritage. Each year, Rush County residents attend events put on by the City of Rushville, such as the St. Patrick's Day Party and Parade, 4th of July Parade and fireworks display, car shows, Steam Engine Show, RushFest/Willkie Days Festival, and Halloween and Christmas on Main.

Inventory of Public Art

According to Imagine: Nation- the Arts and Cultural Council of Rush County, Indiana, there are eight murals throughout the County. The following is a list of each mural with a brief description of it.

Chamber of Commerce Mural

- This mural is located inside of the Chamber of Commerce office in Rushville.

Wendell Willkie Mural

- This mural is located on the 3rd Street façade of the building at 302 N Main Street in Rushville.

Fish Moon Brewery Murals

- These murals are located inside of the Fish Moon Brewery in Rushville.

Farmers Market Murals

- There are three murals located at 223 N Main Street in Rushville. They are titled "Leading the Way in Rural Indiana," "Rushville's Greatest Love Story," and "Louis' Ice Cream Shop."

Dog Park Mural

- This mural is located in the dog park at Carol Jenkins Park in Rushville.

El Reparo Murals

- These murals are located inside of the El Reparo restaurant in Rushville by the bar and the cash register.

Shell Mural

- This mural is located on the back of the Shell gas station at 104 S Main Street in Rushville and portrays an abstract community with cars at a Shell station.

Milroy Community Mural

- This mural is located on the west side of the Whitewater Coffee Shop in Milroy at 300 W Main Street.

Glenwood Town Hall Mural

- This mural is located on the south side of the Glenwood Town Hall at 217 N Main Street. It is a collage of several historic photographs of the Town.



Milroy Community Mural

Source: Visit Rush County

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Rushville Parks

Rush County does not have a county parks department or any county parks. Because of this, most residents in Rush County visit the park system in the City of Rushville. The City's parks department is responsible for maintaining all of Rushville's parks, pools, and trail system to provide recreational opportunities for its residents. Rushville Parks Department also offers various activities and programs throughout the year that are free and open to the public. Below is a list of Rushville's parks and their amenities.

Veterans Memorial Park North

- Pickleball courts
- Playground
- Picnic areas
- Walking trail
- Restroom

Waggener Community Pool

- Men's and women's locker rooms
- Mushroom play feature
- Slide
- Diving board
- Swim lanes
- Concession stand
- Shade structure

South Veterans Memorial Park

- Outdoor workout equipment
- Futsal court
- Lighted basketball courts
- Flower beds
- Playground
- Picnic tables
- Walking trail
- Restrooms
- Enclosed shelter

Willkie Park

- Vacant, awaiting restoration and redesign

Laughlin Park

- Basketball courts
- Playground
- Baseball diamonds
- Picnic tables
- Restrooms
- Seasonal concession stand



Overlook Gateway at Riverside Park

Source: HWC Engineering



Overlook Gateway at Riverside Park

Source: HWC Engineering

Riverside Park

- Four shelters
- Playground
- 18-hole disc golf course
- Walking trail
- Prairie ground
- Restrooms
- Seasonal concerts

Overlook Gateway at Riverside Park

- Sculpture garden
- Splash pad
- Playground
- Walking trail
- Shaded sitting area

Carol Jenkins-Davis Park

- Labyrinth
- Walking trail
- Dog park
- Community gardens
- Butterfly garden
- Small orchard
- Pergola

Other Public Recreational Opportunities

There are a few small recreational spaces in the communities around Rush County. The Town of Glenwood has a community park that offers a playground, picnic tables, a shelter, a paved basketball court, and a community center. The Town of Carthage also has McNabb Park.

Some locations near the covered bridges act as recreation spaces, as people gather near them and use the Big Blue and Flatrock Rivers. Additionally, some churches and schools have playgrounds or sports courts that are used by the community. There is a trail that runs along Morgan Street in Rushville.

This page intentionally left blank.



LAND USE

CHAPTER 04

KEY FINDINGS

- According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, Rush County has 473 farms, which account for almost 190,000 acres or 72.5% of the total land in the County.
- Participants of the Public Workshops, Focus Groups, and the Public Input Survey indicated that they wanted to preserve the agricultural land in Rush County by avoiding solar and wind development.
- Residential uses are concentrated in Rushville, Glenwood, Carthage, and the various unincorporated communities of Rush County.
- Results from all the public engagement identified a need for commercial development in Rush County.
- A common theme across all community engagement opportunities was that residents of the County want to keep development within populated areas to avoid overdeveloping its natural environment.

FUTURE LAND USE PLANNING

The Future Land Use Map for Rush County is an important visual guide for future land use planning. It is a required component of a comprehensive plan that helps to illustrate where the County envisions future growth and development to occur. The update to Rush County's Future Land Use Map was developed through review of current land uses, feedback from the Steering Committee, and support from the Rush County Plan Commission and County Commissioners.

What is the difference between a Zoning Map and a Future Land Use Map?

A Zoning Map delineates specific zones within a community and details the legal regulations for properties in each zone. In contrast, a Future Land Use Map projects the intended development patterns and land uses over a longer-term horizon. It outlines the vision for how areas should develop and evolve, guiding decisions on infrastructure, transportation, and public services to support sustainable growth. While a Zoning Map enforces current laws and regulations, a Future Land Use Map is a tool that helps shape long-term development goals, ensuring that future growth aligns with the community's vision.



Round Barn in Arlington

Source: Visit Rush County

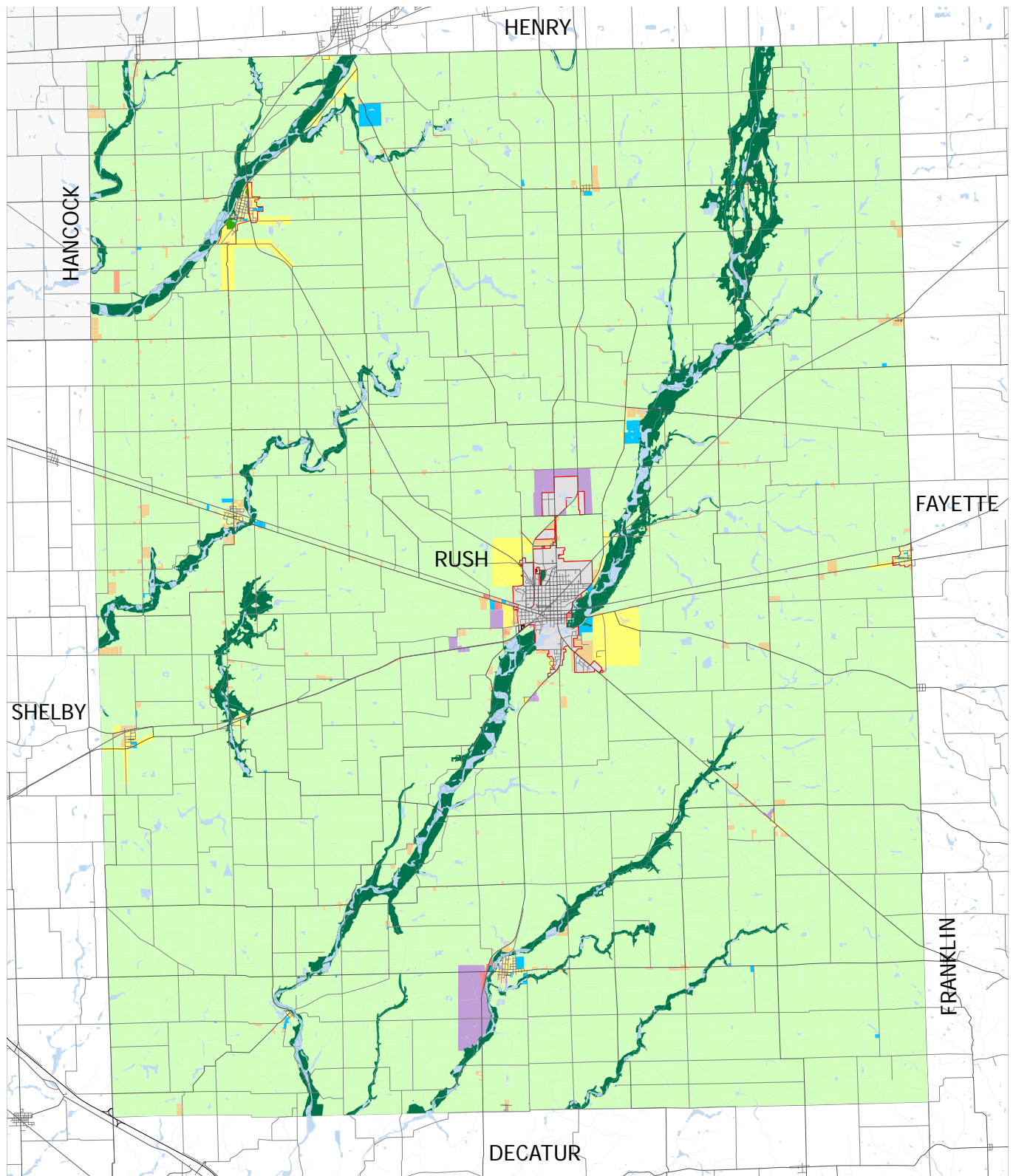


Figure 4.1: Future Land Use Map

LEGEND



 Agricultural/Rural
 Rural Residential
 Residential

 Multi-Family Residential
 Institutional
 Commercial

 Industrial
 Natural Features/Open Space

 Waterbodies
 Rushville

LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

Natural Features/Open Space

Definition: Land that should be preserved for its ecological, recreational, and aesthetic value, such as waterways and parks.

Purpose: The Natural Features/Open Space land use classification encompasses a diverse array of landscapes and ecosystems that contribute to the ecological health, scenic beauty, and recreational opportunities of Rush County. These areas may include forests, wetlands, prairies, rivers, waterways, and parks. These features provide numerous benefits to the County, including wildlife, recreation, and water resources. Preserving and managing these areas responsibly is essential for maintaining biodiversity and supporting ecosystem services.

Agriculture/Rural

Definition: Land used primarily for farming of all intensities, where the landscape is dominated by fields, pastures, orchards, and livestock operations.

Purpose: This land use classification includes farmland, pastureland, and rural areas that play a vital role in the County's economy, heritage, and identity. These areas are characterized by the cultivation of crops, such as corn, soybeans, and wheat, as well as livestock farming, including cattle, pigs, and poultry. Agriculture is the backbone of Rush County's economy, providing food and livelihoods for residents while preserving the rural landscape and supporting rural communities.

Rural Residential

Definition: Land used or designated for residential use outside and away from towns and cities that includes estates, farmhouses, and large lot dwellings.

Purpose: Rural Residential land use classification in Rush County encompasses a mix of single-family homes, farms, and homesteads within the County and in its small communities. These areas are spacious, peaceful, and located away from existing development. Rural residential properties often feature larger lots or acreages, providing residents with ample space for gardening and outdoor recreation. They may also include hobby farms, homesteads, and equestrian properties.

Residential

Definition: Land used or designated for single-family or multi-family residential development located in or near established cities and towns.

Purpose: The Residential land use classification consists primarily of single-family homes or multi-family residential homes in and near incorporated communities in Rush County and are usually more densely developed

than Rural Residential areas. Residential land often features a mix of architectural styles and lot sizes, accommodating diverse preferences and lifestyles.

Institutional

Definition: Land used for facilities and buildings that serve the public, provide services, support community functions, or house organizations dedicated to education, healthcare, government, religion, or culture.

Purpose: The Institutional land use classification indicates properties dedicated to public services, education, healthcare, and community facilities. These include schools, libraries, hospitals, government buildings, religious institutions, and community centers. Institutional land use plays a vital role in providing essential services, fostering community engagement, and supporting social and cultural activities. Institutional land use contributes to the overall quality of life in Rush County by providing educational opportunities, healthcare services, recreational programs, and spaces for civic engagement and cultural expression.

Commercial

Definition: Land used or designated for commercial uses and developments including but not limited to offices, retail, entertainment, restaurants, gas stations, and hotels.

Purpose: The Commercial land use classification in Rush County includes properties dedicated to retail, dining, services, and other businesses that cater to residents and visitors. These include shopping centers, restaurants, grocery stores, banks, offices, and other commercial establishments. Commercial land use provides the County with goods and services, generates economic activity, and supports local employment. Commercial areas are typically located in downtown areas of Rush County's incorporated and unincorporated communities and along major transportation corridors.

Industrial

Definition: Land used or designated for small- to large-scale industrial uses, such as warehouses, manufacturing, distribution, assembly, or other similar uses.

Purpose: The Commercial land use classification in Rush County includes properties dedicated to retail, dining, services, and other businesses that cater to residents and visitors. These include shopping centers, restaurants, grocery stores, banks, offices, and other commercial establishments. Commercial land use provides the County with goods and services, generates economic activity, and supports local employment. Commercial areas are typically located in downtown areas of Rush County's incorporated and unincorporated communities and along major transportation corridors.

GOAL & OBJECTIVES

LAND USE GOAL:

Preserve Rush County's rich agricultural lands by encouraging development and redevelopment near existing communities and along primary transportation corridors.

Rush County is known for its agricultural heritage, but it also boasts various other land uses that are vital to its culture, economic growth, and quality of life. The County's primary goal is to preserve its agricultural assets while also encouraging development. This can be done by locating new development near existing development and along primary transportation corridors.

With most of the County being farmland, it is essential to strike a balance between accommodating growth and preserving the natural assets that make Rush County special. By focusing development and redevelopment efforts near existing communities and transportation corridors, and specifically identifying areas for farmland preservation, the County can minimize the impact on valuable agricultural lands while still meeting the needs of the population.

Rush County will preserve its agricultural heritage and promote sustainable economic development through its updated land use policies and targeted development areas. By ensuring the land is developed efficiently and sustainably, it will do a great service for the future generations of Rush County.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Designate clearly targeted preservation areas for agriculture, open space, and natural resources.

One of Rush County's most precious resources is its agricultural land. Throughout the planning process, participants shared how much they desired for their farmland to be preserved while also attracting new places to live, eat, work, and play. Designating specific areas for agriculture, open space, and natural resources will help to direct any growth and development to more appropriate areas of the County. Delineating areas for agriculture, open space, and natural areas will help protect Rush County's rural character, promote environmental sustainability, and preserve valuable natural assets for future generations.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Update the zoning and subdivision ordinance to include provisions that support the preservation of agricultural lands, open spaces, and natural resources.
- ◇ Consider implementing land conservation techniques such as cluster development, transfer of development rights, and conservation easements to protect sensitive lands while accommodating growth in appropriate areas.
- ◇ Explore potential state and federal funding opportunities to support land preservation efforts.



A Boy and Puppy on a Rush County Farm

Source: Visit Rush County

OBJECTIVE 2:

Designate clearly targeted development and redevelopment areas for residential, commercial, and industrial/manufacturing uses.

Although preserving farmland is one of the key objectives of this comprehensive plan update, participants in the planning process understood that in order to have a bright future, more residential, commercial, and industry is needed within Rush County. Participants at public engagement events indicated a desire for more sit-down restaurants, retail, and entertainment options in Rush County, but not at the expense of losing farms or farmland. Instead, participants indicated a preference in seeing this type of growth near established communities and major road corridors. By identifying specific areas for development and redevelopment, Rush County can allocate resources, streamline permitting processes, and attract investment to areas with appropriate potential for growth and revitalization.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Ensure utilities are readily available in targeted development/redevelopment areas.
- ◇ Encourage the reuse of existing buildings and infill development to optimize land use efficiency and preserve historic resources.
- ◇ Implement incentive programs to encourage private investment in targeted areas, such as tax incentives, grants, loans, and expedited permitting processes.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Establish up-to-date regulations for all alternative energy development in the County ordinance.

In recent years, Rush County has been considered as a location for solar and wind development by various alternative energy development companies. However, a majority of the residents in unincorporated Rush County have indicated that this type of development is not desired and should be highly regulated. Updating the County's development standards can help to ensure alternative energy development aligns with community goals, addresses land use concerns, and takes into consideration potential environmental impacts. Updated development standards can also help outline appropriate setbacks, buffer standards, and decommissioning requirements if the County decides to move forward with permitting an alternative energy project. These updates to the County ordinances will also ensure the preservation of neighboring property values when there is a proposed alternative energy project.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Develop a comprehensive alternative energy ordinance that establishes standards for setback requirements, noise levels, visual impact, screening, maintenance, and decommissioning requirements, environmental mitigation measures, and property value guarantees.
- ◇ Develop clear implementation and enforcement expectations to ensure compliance with the regulations, such as permit application procedures, review and inspection schedules, and enforcement actions for violations.
- ◇ Conduct public education and outreach efforts to raise awareness about the benefits of alternative energy development, address misconceptions or concerns, and promote community engagement in the implementation process by partnering with local community organizations and Rush County government officials.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Update the County's zoning ordinance to appropriately regulate value-added agricultural activities.

Agricultural technologies have advanced significantly since Rush County was founded in 1822. Farming operations have expanded, and crop-growing methods have been modernized, therefore the County should update its regulations for agricultural activities to support these advancements. Updating the County's zoning ordinance to regulate value-added agricultural activities is essential for supporting agricultural innovation and preserving small farms in Rush County. By modernizing these regulations, Rush County can accommodate emerging trends in agriculture and confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), while ensuring compatibility with existing land uses and protecting the agricultural character of the County.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Work to revise the County's comprehensive value-added agriculture ordinance that establishes standards for uses, setback requirements, water quality impact, traffic impact, and environmental mitigation measures.
- ◇ Develop clear implementation and enforcement expectations for value-added agricultural activities to ensure compliance with the regulations, such as permit application procedures, review and inspection schedules, and enforcement actions for violations.

OBJECTIVE 5:

Support unincorporated areas in building local community capacity.

Rush County has several unincorporated communities, including Milroy, Arlington, and Manilla. These unincorporated areas have neighborhoods and amenities, but lack access to resources and services, such as local leadership and funding, making it challenging for residents to address local needs and pursue community initiatives. By providing support and resources to these areas, Rush County can empower these communities to take an active role in community development, infrastructure improvement, and quality-of-life improvement projects. This support may include technical assistance, grant funding, and networking opportunities to help residents build leadership skills, strengthen community organizations, and leverage local assets. By investing in the capacity of unincorporated areas, Rush County can ensure that all residents can participate in shaping the future of their communities.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Work with Prosperity Indiana, also known as the Indiana Association for Community Economic Development, to host leadership development opportunities in Rush County.
- ◇ Support Milroy's incorporation efforts.

This page intentionally left blank.



TRANSPORTATION

CHAPTER 05

KEY FINDINGS

- Rush County has five major corridors, including Interstate 74, State Road 244, State Road 3, State Road 44, and US Highway 52, that connect Rush County to bigger cities, such as Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Shelbyville, Greensburg, Connersville, and New Castle.
- Public engagement results showed that the transportation networks throughout the County need to be updated to account for advances in agricultural technologies.
- Almost half of the County's 727.6 miles of asphalt roads are in poor condition according to the 2020 PASER Report Summary.
- Rush County takes pride in its historic covered bridges and wants to preserve and maintain them.
- Participants of public engagement opportunities indicated an interest in enhancing infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists along existing transportation routes.

GOAL & OBJECTIVES

TRANSPORTATION GOAL:

Ensure Rush County has an efficient and safe transportation system that addresses agricultural, vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic.

Transportation plays a pivotal role in shaping the character and functionality of the future of Rush County. From the rural roads that connect its agricultural land to the higher-traffic arterial highways that facilitate commerce and travel, the transportation network is the most important way to maintain the great quality of life in Rush County and enhance its economic development. As the County continues to grow, it is vital to address current transportation needs and future opportunities.

Feedback throughout the planning process indicated that the transportation network needs to be updated County-wide due to technological advances, wear and tear, and increased traffic. Roads should accommodate more than just the automobile and should consider agricultural equipment, pedestrians, bicyclists, and Amish transportation methods. Providing a better experience for all road users will increase safety for all users.

Because transportation network enhancements are expensive, there are opportunities for the County to partner with different agencies to help fund these projects. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is responsible for upkeeping the thoroughfares under its jurisdiction to ensure its transportation network is safe and efficient for all road users. This includes Interstate 74, State Roads 3, 44, and 244, and US Highway 52. CSX Transportation Company in Rush County is responsible for maintaining its tracks and intersections.

The future of Rush County's transportation network depends on cooperation across the County with government agencies, local residents and business owners, and road users to ensure a safe and efficient system for all road users. Going forward, the County must ensure that bridge and road inventories stay up-to-date to meet the evolving needs of the community while preserving its unique character and natural resources.



Amish Buggy on Rush County Road

Source: Visit Rush County

OBJECTIVE 1:

Work with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and other transportation partners in the County to ensure Rush County's needs are being considered with any transportation improvements.

Collaboration between Rush County and area transportation partners is crucial to ensure that the County's needs are considered in any transportation improvements. These collaborative efforts allow Rush County to leverage resources, expertise, and funding opportunities. By partnering with INDOT and other stakeholders, Rush County can advocate for transportation projects that address local priorities, enhance safety, improve connectivity, and support economic development. Additionally, coordinating with these agencies ensures that transportation plans align with regional and state goals, leading to more efficient and effective outcomes for Rush County residents and businesses.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Be an active participant in Rushville's Safe Streets for All Project (State Road 3 Improvements).
- ◇ Develop a plan, including land use and infrastructure, for the area at Interchange 123 on Interstate 74 in the southwest corner of Rush County.
- ◇ Partner with CSX Transportation Company to prioritize intersection improvements at railroad crossings.
- ◇ Support the expansion of rail to Commerce Park in Rushville.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Ensure Rush County has an up-to-date road inventory and asset management plan that allows the County to be fiscally responsible when maintaining the transportation network.

By having an up-to-date inventory and plan in place for Rush County's roads, the County can accurately assess the condition of its roads, prioritize maintenance and repair needs, and allocate resources effectively. This proactive approach helps prevent costly emergency repairs and extends the lifespan of infrastructure, saving taxpayer dollars in the long run. Additionally, an asset management plan enables the County to identify opportunities for strategic investments, optimize budget allocations, and pursue funding opportunities more effectively. Overall, maintaining an up-to-date road inventory and asset management plan empowers Rush County to be proactive in managing its transportation infrastructure while maximizing the value of every dollar spent.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Ensure the County's road and bridge inventory is updated regularly.
- ◇ Update the County's PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating) Road Rating System annually.
- ◇ Continue to seek and apply for funds for local road projects, such as the Indiana Department of Transportation's Community Crossings Matching Grant (CCMG) program.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Consider agricultural uses in all road improvement projects.

The heart and soul of Rush County is its agricultural heritage. Therefore, agriculture should be a main concern in all road improvement projects, as it is essential to ensure that the County's transportation network supports the unique needs of the agricultural community. Agriculture is a vital economic sector in the County, and many roads serve as crucial routes for transporting agricultural goods, equipment, and supplies. By incorporating agricultural considerations into road improvement projects, Rush County can minimize disruptions to farm operations, reduce wear and tear on agricultural vehicles, and enhance safety for farmers and other road users. By prioritizing the integration of agricultural uses into road improvement projects, Rush County can foster a collaborative and supportive environment that benefits both its agricultural community and the broader population.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ When undertaking road improvement projects, engage with local farmers and agricultural organizations to understand their transportation needs and concerns, including access to fields and transportation of farm equipment and products.
- ◇ When improving transportation networks throughout Rush County, consider factors such as road and intersection width, weight limits, turning and curve radii, drainage, and traffic flow patterns that may affect farm machinery.
- ◇ Implement access management strategies to minimize conflicts between agricultural traffic and other road users, such as separating farm entrances from intersections and limiting driveway density along major roadways.

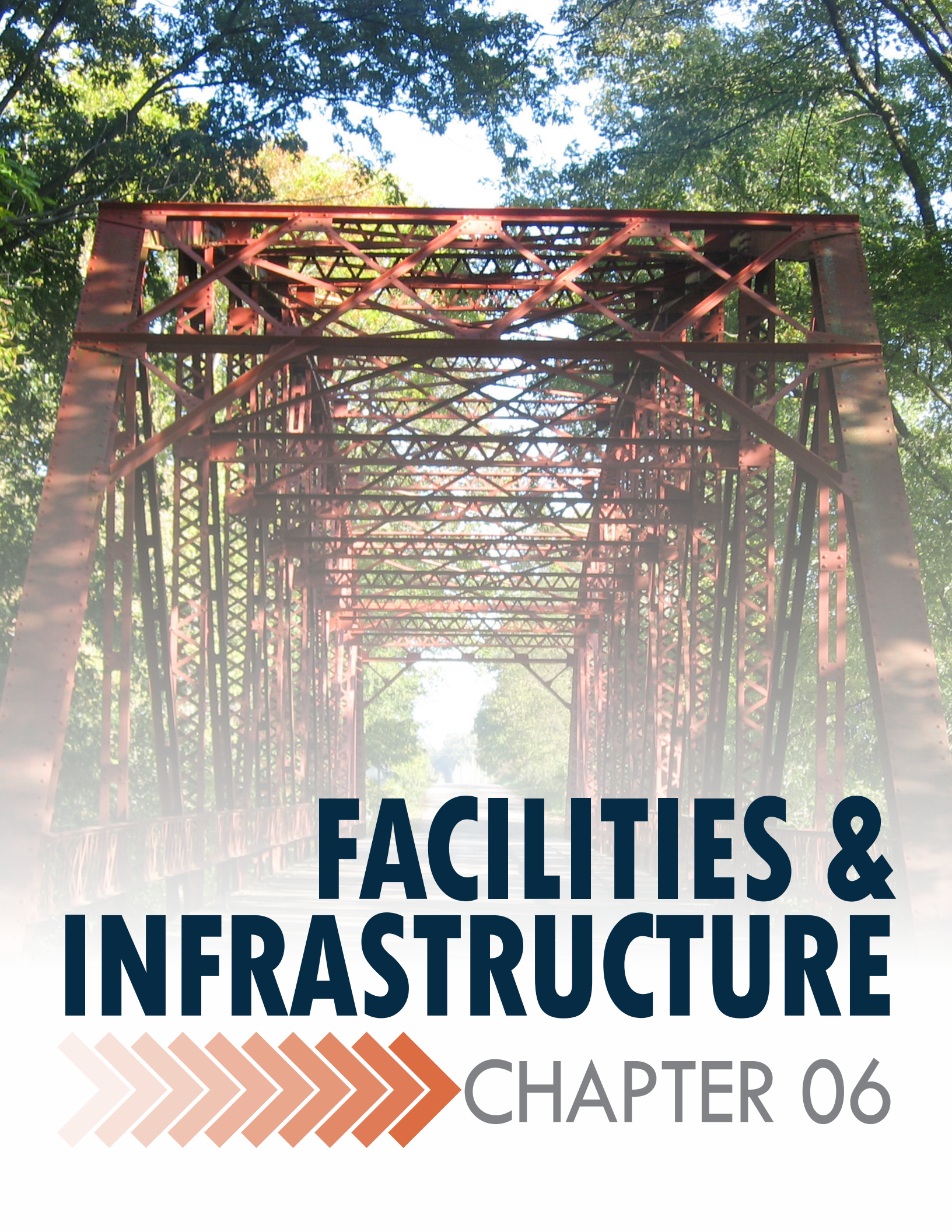
OBJECTIVE 4:

Explore opportunities to add bicycle and pedestrian options in appropriate areas.

By promoting alternative transportation modes in appropriate areas, such as bicycle and pedestrian options, Rush County can improve public health and safety, population growth, and tourism. Additionally, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environments can attract visitors, support local businesses, increase connectivity to other cities and counties, and contribute to the overall quality of life in the County. By strategically identifying and implementing bike and pedestrian options in suitable locations, Rush County can create more inclusive, accessible, and vibrant communities for residents and visitors.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Identify appropriate areas for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure based on available amenities, connectivity to other incorporated and unincorporated communities, population density, and land use intensity.
- ◇ Consider adopting policies that support the development of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, such as a complete streets policy, an active transportation plan, and/or a bicycle and pedestrian master plan.



FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

 CHAPTER 06

KEY FINDINGS

- There are five utility companies that serve Rush County, including City of Rushville Water/Sewer, Duke Energy, NineStar Connect, Rush Shelby Energy, and Vectren.
- The most common theme across all public engagement opportunities was that Rush County needs more accessible, affordable, and reliable broadband service.
- Public engagement results showed that residents want improved utility infrastructure for new development and to better manage stormwater issues.
- Residents in Rush County indicated through the various public engagement opportunities that the capacity of emergency services should be appropriately increased to better serve unincorporated areas of the County.

GOAL & OBJECTIVES

FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL:

Enhance Rush County's community facilities and utility infrastructure and maintain a high level of service for existing and future development.

It is vital to identify a plan for the development, maintenance, and enhancement of the community facilities and infrastructure that support the well-being and economic prosperity of Rush County. These critical components form the backbone of the County and influence its long-term sustainability and economic growth.

As Rush County continues to evolve and grow, it is important to ensure that the community remains accessible and equipped to meet the needs of current and future generations. Through collaboration with the community, innovation, and a commitment to efficiency and sustainability, the County can create a strong foundation for a thriving and resilient community.

To bring Rush County up to date with today's fast-paced technological advancements, it is vital to connect all community members and new developments to broadband services. Upcoming developments in Rush County must be served by quality utilities and emergency services, including broadband. Broadband infrastructure is as important as other utilities like water, sewer, and electric services. By increasing the access to these services in Rush County, current and future development can be of high quality and can serve the population for many years.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Prioritize the availability of affordable, reliable, and accessible broadband services throughout Rush County.

Prioritizing the availability of broadband services throughout Rush County is essential for fostering economic growth, supporting education, and enhancing healthcare access. Access to high-speed Internet enables residents to participate in online learning, access telemedicine services, more easily participate in the community, and connect with job opportunities from home. It also supports local businesses by facilitating e-commerce, digital marketing, and remote work opportunities. By prioritizing broadband infrastructure, Rush County can bridge the digital divide, empower its residents, and attract new residents and businesses.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Support the Rush County Community Foundation's Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII Broadband initiative.
- ◇ Pursue Next Level Connections: Broadband Grant Program funds.
- ◇ Pursue Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funds.



Posey Township Fire Department Training

Source: Posey Township Volunteer Fire Department Inc. Facebook Page

OBJECTIVE 2:

Ensure proper development ordinances are in place to protect the availability and quality of groundwater.

Across all public engagement opportunities, Rush County residents shared concerns about groundwater issues. Therefore, it is crucial to adapt Rush County's ordinances to ensure proper protection of groundwater to enhance public health, support sustainable development, and preserve natural resources in Rush County. Groundwater is a source of drinking water for residents, agricultural irrigation, and commercial and industrial processes. By implementing ordinances that regulate more intense land uses that may have an effect on groundwater, such as construction and certain types of agricultural uses, Rush County can prevent groundwater contamination and overuse. Protecting groundwater quality and availability not only ensures a safe and reliable water supply for current and future generations but also maintains the ecological balance of ecosystems so that Rush County's agricultural industry can remain strong.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Review existing development ordinances in Rush County to assess their effectiveness in protecting groundwater resources.
- ◇ Establish and update appropriate overlay districts, such as wellhead protection and floodplain overlay districts, where future development is subject to additional regulations and safeguards to protect water quality.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Develop relationships with public and private utility companies that serve Rush County and learn how their future plans may affect development in Rush County.

Rush County is served by five different utility companies, and developing strong relationships with these utility providers is essential for the County to make informed decisions, coordinate planning, and develop sustainably. By establishing partnerships with these entities, Rush County can gain valuable insights into future infrastructure projects, service expansions, and potential impacts on development. Understanding utility companies' plans allows the County to proactively address infrastructure needs, avoid conflicts with ongoing projects, and ensure that development initiatives align with future utility service availability. Collaborating with utility companies also enables Rush County to leverage resources, coordinate infrastructure upgrades, and optimize investments in public services. Ultimately, by fostering strong relationships with utility providers, Rush County can promote responsible growth, enhance infrastructure resilience, and support the well-being of its residents and businesses.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Continue to be engaged in the Connersville Water Expansion Project.
- ◇ Hold regular meetings with the utility companies serving Rush County to share information and coordinate on upcoming projects, development plans, growth projections, ordinance updates, and utility needs.
- ◇ Coordinate the timing of infrastructure and utility projects to minimize conflicts and maximize efficiency.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Provide an appropriate level of service for County facilities and emergency services, including medical, fire, and law enforcement.

Rush County offers emergency services by way of its Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Department. Providing appropriate capacity for emergency services is essential for ensuring the safety and well-being of residents and visitors. Moreover, adequate emergency service capacity is essential for attracting residents, businesses, and visitors to the county, contributing to economic development and community vitality. Prioritizing the provision of sufficient resources, personnel, and facilities for emergency services demonstrates a commitment to public safety and identifies Rush County as a desirable place to live, work, and visit.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Establish a level of service that is appropriate for Rush County emergency services and evaluate annually.
- ◇ Continue to update and improve the Rush County Courthouse.

OBJECTIVE 5:

Increase capacity for sewer and water utilities.

Increasing capacity for utilities is vital for supporting sustainable growth in Rush County. By expanding utility capacity, Rush County can accommodate population growth, attract new businesses, and promote economic development opportunities where appropriate, and preserve the County's farmland. Investing in these utilities demonstrates a commitment to long-term infrastructure planning and public health, making Rush County prime for continued development in already developed areas.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Identify areas in Rush County where water and sewer infrastructure are needed.
- ◇ Identify funding sources to support sewer and water infrastructure projects, including grants, loans, bonds, system development fees, revolving loan funds, and public-private partnerships.

OBJECTIVE 6:

Ensure proper stormwater and surface water management practices are in place in Rush County.

As weather events become more severe, it is important for Rush County to be proactive and identify areas of the County that are at risk. The County has seen issues with flooding in the past, therefore ensuring proper stormwater and surface water management practices in Rush County is crucial. By implementing effective stormwater management measures, Rush County can reduce the risk of property damage, infrastructure deterioration, and environmental degradation caused by stormwater runoff. By adopting best practices in stormwater and surface water management, Rush County can promote sustainable development, safeguard public health, and ensure the long-term health and vitality of its natural resources.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Review zoning ordinances to ensure agricultural land use definitions are up-to-date and comprehensive.
- ◇ Review permitted uses and uses requiring special approval (special exception or conditional use) to ensure standards are up-to-date and address water management in ways that are appropriate for Rush County.
- ◇ Partner with the City of Rushville on its Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant for stormwater issues.

This page intentionally left blank.



HOUSING

CHAPTER 07

KEY FINDINGS

- The median home value in Rush County increased by over 27% between 2010 and 2020, which indicates that the local cost of living increased.
- Almost half of Rush County's homes were constructed before 1940, indicating an aging housing stock.
- A common theme throughout public engagement opportunities was that the towns and communities throughout the County have issues with blighted properties.
- The Public Input Survey results showed that the top choices for improving housing options in Rush County were providing more affordable housing options, removing blight in downtown areas, providing more rental options, and providing more options for seniors and retirees.
- The Public Input Survey results showed that the three least popular options for improving housing in the County were to require more stringent development standards for new housing, to loosen existing development and zoning standards for new housing, and to provide more upscale housing.

GOAL & OBJECTIVES

HOUSING GOAL:

Ensure Rush County has affordable, diverse, and quality housing available for current and future residents.

Housing has been a nationwide need over the last decade as populations grow and lifestyle preferences change. Rush County is no exception to this. Rush County's housing stock has decreased over the past decade, and residents have expressed a need for more housing units. Rush County is dedicated to addressing the housing needs of the community while preserving its unique character and heritage. The primary goal is to preserve Rush County's rich agricultural lands by encouraging residential development and redevelopment near existing communities and along primary transportation corridors.

Rush County is known for its farmland and close-knit communities. As the County strives to meet the housing needs of its residents and promote sustainable growth, it is essential that the agricultural heritage is preserved and respected. By locating new housing near existing communities and heavily traveled corridors, the impact on agricultural lands can be minimized while still meeting housing demands.

It is important to work with different agencies as Rush County aims to reduce blight and attract housing to its incorporated and unincorporated communities. By working together to balance the needs of the community with the preservation of the agricultural landscape, Rush County can become even more resilient, vibrant, and inclusive for generations to come.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Develop a strategic blight elimination program to help bring blighted properties back onto the housing market.

Throughout the planning process, a common theme was how to address blighted properties in communities around the County. Therefore, developing a blight elimination program is important for revitalizing communities, increasing property values, and improving overall community well-being in Rush County. Blighted properties not only detract from the visual appeal of incorporated and unincorporated communities but also pose safety risks and contribute to declining property values. By implementing a strategic blight elimination program, the County can rehabilitate or demolish blighted properties and bring them back into the housing market increasing the availability of housing options for residents. Additionally, repurposing blighted properties supports economic development, stimulates investment, and fosters community pride.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Support the Rush County Community Foundation's Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII efforts on blight elimination.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Ensure development standards support a variety of housing products.

As the County aims to attract more population and retain its existing population, it is important to provide housing options for a variety of price points, age groups, and lifestyles. Ensuring the County's development standards support a variety of housing products and have context-appropriate design standards is crucial for meeting the diverse needs and preferences of Rush County residents. By updating development standards that encourage innovation in housing design and options, Rush County can create more inclusive communities where all residents can find housing that meets their needs in all phases of life.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Review and update development standards to ensure infill residential development can occur.
- ◇ Consider requiring context-sensitive design elements so that infill residential development fits the context of existing neighborhoods (porches, overhangs, etc.).
- ◇ Review and update development standards to include a range of lot sizes and housing products appropriate for Rush County.



A Home in Rushville

Source: MIBOR BLC



A Home in Manilla

Source: MIBOR BLC

OBJECTIVE 3:

Consider developing an incentives toolkit to help attract housing developers to Rush County.

Developing a toolkit to attract developers to Rush County is essential for stimulating residential development, addressing housing shortages, and promoting economic growth. By offering housing incentives appropriate for Rush County, the County can create a more attractive environment for developers to invest in housing projects. These incentives help offset development costs, reduce financial barriers, and encourage developers to choose communities across Rush County as their preferred location for housing projects. Additionally, new housing can lead to job creation, increased property values, and expanded tax revenues. This toolkit can encourage investment in housing, ultimately contributing to the availability of affordable, quality housing options for residents.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Develop a county-wide housing study to assess the gaps between current needs and what Rush County's housing market is currently providing.
- ◇ Identify available parcels, redevelopment sites, or infill opportunities suitable for residential development within Rush County that can be shared with developers.
- ◇ Review zoning approval and permitting processes to ensure approval processes are clear and streamlined.
- ◇ Consider developing a Housing Tax Increment Finance (HoTIF) to incentivize developers to invest in Rush County.
- ◇ Explore public-private partnerships as well as infrastructure financing options to facilitate housing development.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Improve code enforcement efforts within towns and populated areas in Rush County.

Throughout the public engagement process, participants emphasized the need for code enforcement in Rush County's incorporated and unincorporated communities. To maintain property values and enhance the visual appeal within Rush County's communities, it is important to improve the County's code enforcement within towns and populated areas. By enforcing codes consistently and effectively, Rush County can promote a sense of pride and accountability among residents while fostering a positive community environment. Ultimately, by prioritizing code enforcement efforts, Rush County can create healthier, safer, and more attractive communities for its residents to live, work, and thrive.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Review existing codes, ordinances, and zoning regulations related to property maintenance and nuisance abatement and update as appropriate to streamline the code enforcement process.
- ◇ Consider adding staff capacity in the Planning Department by hiring a full or part-time code enforcement officer.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 08

KEY FINDINGS

- The farms in Rush County are profitable, with an average value of \$470,812 per farm according to the 2022 USDA Census of Agriculture.
- The median income in Rush County in 2020 was \$56,814, which is 2.4% lower than the State median income.
- The largest industries in the County are manufacturing, educational services, healthcare, and social assistance.
- The Public Input Survey results showed that 81.3% agreed that more initiatives are needed to promote and expand existing businesses.
- Participants of public engagement opportunities indicated that Rush County should pursue more commercial and retail development.

GOAL & OBJECTIVES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL:

Build upon Rush County's strong rural and agricultural base by expanding agribusiness, retaining and attracting complementary companies, and providing support to small-town businesses.

Rush County takes pride in its largest industry: agriculture. Rush County's approach to economic development is grounded in the recognition of its strong rural and agricultural base as a foundation for future growth and diversification. By expanding agribusiness, retaining and attracting complementary companies, and providing support to small-town businesses, Rush County can leverage its agricultural heritage and rural character to drive sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

Rush County's rich agricultural lands and rural communities offer unique opportunities for business innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment. By supporting agribusiness expansion, it can capitalize on emerging trends in agriculture and agritourism, while preserving the rural landscape and heritage that define Rush County. Additionally, retaining and attracting complementary companies will help diversify the economic base, create job opportunities, and stimulate business growth. Additionally, providing support to small-town businesses is essential for revitalizing downtowns, promoting Main Street vitality, and enhancing the unique character of the incorporated and unincorporated communities in the County.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Support all local and regional economic development initiatives, including but not limited to Accelerate Rural Indiana (ARI).

In 2021, Rush County came together with Shelby and Decatur Counties to create the Accelerate Rural Indiana (ARI) region in order to compete for Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) funding through the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC). The ARI region developed a compelling regional development plan and was awarded \$20 million for their efforts. In 2023, the region competed once again for READI funding and was awarded \$30 million to invest into the region.

Additional recent local economic development initiatives include the Rush County Community Foundation's efforts in pursuing Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII funds through Lilly Endowment, Inc. efforts from the Rush County Chamber of Commerce, and the County's participation in the Eastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (EIRPC). Projects being pursued with GIFT VIII funding stand to have an impact on economic

development within Rush County. The EIRPC recently completed a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) which is a five-year plan to help the participating counties strengthen and diversify their economies.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Be an active participant in the Rush County Community Foundation's Lilly Endowment Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII funding initiative.
- ◇ Partner with Accelerate Rural Indiana (ARI) to implement the Regional Development Plan and access Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) funds.
- ◇ Partner with the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC), Eastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (EIRPC), and the East Central Indiana Regional Partnership (ECIRP) to ensure the County stays involved in all local and regional economic development initiatives.
- ◇ Support efforts made by the Rush County Chamber of Commerce and the Heart of Rushville.



IEDC Representatives Visit the ARI Region for READI 2.0

Source: HWC Engineering

OBJECTIVE 2:

Support the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) to continue their efforts in providing strong business support throughout the County.

The Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) is a partnership between the City of Rushville, Rush County, and the private sector. Supporting the Rush County ECDC is essential for fostering economic growth, attracting investment, and promoting community development initiatives throughout Rush County. The ECDC plays a crucial role in providing resources, guidance, and support to local businesses, entrepreneurs, and community organizations by helping to stimulate job creation, business expansion, and economic diversification. In 2021, the Rush County ECDC adopted a Strategic Plan, outlining strategies specific to economic development in the County. This Strategic Plan should be used to guide economic development efforts in Rush County.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Support the Rush County ECDC in implementing the Rush County ECDC Strategic Plan.
- ◇ Support expansion of rail to the Commerce Park in Rushville.
- ◇ Strive to expand hotel room opportunities throughout Rush County.



Rush County ECDC Celebrates a Groundbreaking

Source: Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation



QUALITY OF LIFE

CHAPTER 09

KEY FINDINGS

- The Public Input Survey indicated that 97.5% of respondents agreed that Rush County is a safe community.
- Rush County has many different community events and festivals throughout the year that are popular among residents and tourists.
- Participants of the Public Workshops identified the schools, Amish businesses, the rivers, youth and community organizations, community events, and the covered bridges as assets of Rush County.
- Conversations during Focus Group meetings indicated that there is a gap between the availability of childcare in the County and the number of children in need.
- A common theme throughout the public participation process was that the County's youth need more educational and recreational opportunities.

GOAL & OBJECTIVES

QUALITY OF LIFE GOAL:

Increase the quality of life in Rush County through projects and initiatives that help attract population and elevate the well-being and health of residents.

Rush County is more than just a collection of communities, cornfields, and roads - it's a vibrant and diverse community where people come together to live, work, and thrive. As the County moves into the future, it is essential to prioritize the factors that contribute to a high quality of life, including access to healthcare, educational opportunities, recreational amenities, commercial businesses, and a strong sense of community.

Through strategic planning and collaboration, Rush County aims to cultivate an environment where residents can lead fulfilling lives, achieve their full potential, and build lasting connections with one another. By focusing on projects and initiatives that promote population growth and enhance overall well-being, such as attracting new commercial opportunities, encouraging more childcare and youth activities, and promoting tourism through the County's historic bridges, Rush County can have a brighter and more prosperous future.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Attract new dining, retail, and entertainment options to the communities in Rush County.

As Rush County aims to attract more population and expand its economic base, it is important to attract new commercial opportunities including dining, retail, and entertainment options. The availability of diverse dining, retail, and entertainment options enriches residents' experiences, encourages social interaction, and strengthens community cohesion. Attracting new businesses also helps retain local and tourist spending within Rush County, reducing the need for residents to travel out of the county for goods and services. By cultivating an enhanced commercial environment, Rush County can create a more dynamic community.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Support the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) in their business recruitment and retention efforts.
- ◇ Review zoning regulations to ensure they support the development of dining, retail, and entertainment businesses in appropriate areas of Rush County.
- ◇ Work with County government officials to create tax-incentives or expedited permitting options to encourage investment in commercial development.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Encourage and support additional and affordable childcare opportunities in Rush County.

As Rush County grows its population, the gap between the need and availability of childcare will continue to increase. Encouraging and supporting additional and affordable childcare opportunities in Rush County is essential for promoting workforce participation, supporting working families, and enhancing economic prosperity. Additionally, quality childcare services provide children with a safe, nurturing environment that supports their early development and school readiness and puts less burden on the Rush County Schools system. By investing in childcare infrastructure and supporting providers, Rush County can lay the foundation for a brighter future for both children and families.

ACTION STEP

- ◇ Support the Rush County Community Foundation's Lilly Endowment GIFT VIII initiative that aims to improve childcare opportunities in Rush County.



Fish Moon Brewing Live Entertainment

Source: Fish Moon Brewing @fishmoonbrew on Instagram



Rush County Fair

Source: City of Rushville

OBJECTIVE 3:

Enhance cultural and art experiences in Rush County.

Vibrant murals dot Rush County's landscape and attract residents and tourists to see them. These murals and other cultural and art experiences in Rush County enrich the life of the community, foster creativity, and promote economic development from tourism. Cultural and art experiences also serve as platforms for storytelling, preserving local heritage, and promoting cultural understanding. Investing in cultural and art experiences in Rush County can help new residents understand the local culture and history and can help elevate the sense of place in Rush County.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Establish a placemaking board or commission that focuses on enhancing the appeal and cultural identity of Rush County.
- ◇ Commission artists to create murals, sculptures, and installations that celebrate Rush County's heritage.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Encourage and support more amenities for the local youth population, such as educational opportunities and recreational activities.

There are several organizations in Rush County that encourage and promote education and recreation for youth, including 4-H and Future Farmers of America (FFA). These organizations help connect Rush County youth to their community and increase opportunities for retention after high school or college graduation. Additional investment is needed in youth-focused amenities in Rush County. The Rush County Community Foundation is spearheading efforts on the Love Community Center, a \$20 million + investment in partnership with the Lilly Endowment, Inc., Rush County, and Rush Memorial Hospital that will co-locate the library, senior center, daycare, food pantry, and YMCA-like facility. Public sentiment indicated that more youth amenities are desired, including providing access to the public library system in Rush County that could help provide educational opportunities and programming for the children, teenagers, and young adults residing in the unincorporated areas of Rush County.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Continue to support efforts of the Rush County Community Foundation in the development of The Love Community Center (LCC).
- ◇ Establish a youth advisory council comprised of children, young adults, and parents from diverse backgrounds to provide ideas and feedback on the development of additional youth amenities.
- ◇ Consider working with Rushville to expand membership of the Rushville Public Library, which provides youth activities and services, to be inclusive of all County residents.

OBJECTIVE 5:

Encourage growth in tourism by improving advertising of existing and upcoming amenities.

Rush County has amenities that attract tourists from around the State, including organized events and historic covered bridges. By effectively promoting local amenities such as historical sites, natural attractions, cultural events, and recreational activities, Rush County can attract visitors, increase tourism spending, and stimulate economic growth. Improved advertising helps raise awareness of the unique offerings of Rush County, enticing travelers to explore and experience all that the County has to offer. Moreover, increased tourism can support local businesses, create job opportunities, and generate revenue for the communities in Rush County.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Work with Visit Rush County to craft engaging marketing materials such as descriptions, photography, videos, and virtual tours of Rush County's amenities, attractions, experiences, and upcoming events.
- ◇ Collaborate with local hotels, Bed and Breakfasts, and other lodging accommodations to expand lodging opportunities throughout Rush County.

OBJECTIVE 6:

Develop a plan that addresses maintenance and preservation of the historic bridges in Rush County.

Rush County takes pride in its historic covered bridges. Some of the popular bridges that make the County unique include the Offutt Covered Bridge, the Forsythe Mill Covered Bridge, and the Smith Covered Bridge. Developing a plan to address the maintenance and preservation of these bridges is crucial for preserving the County's cultural heritage, ensuring public safety, and maintaining infrastructure integrity. By implementing a maintenance and preservation plan, Rush County can protect these structures from deterioration, ensuring they remain safe and functional for future generations to appreciate and enjoy. Additionally, maintaining historic bridges enhances community pride, attracts visitors, and supports heritage tourism, contributing to economic development and local identity.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Develop a maintenance and preservation plan for each bridge and identify potential funding sources to complete the work, such as grants, and public-private partnerships.
- ◇ Explore opportunities for adaptive reuse of historic bridges, such as converting them into pedestrian use along future trail corridors.

This page intentionally left blank.



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



CHAPTER 10

KEY FINDINGS

- The City of Rushville has eight parks each with different amenities that draw visitors from around the County.
- Some of the communities around Rush County have small open spaces, including church and community playgrounds.
- Conversations with Focus Groups indicated that people tend to gather near some covered bridges to recreate and access the rivers.
- Participants of public engagement opportunities indicated that they would like to see more green space and natural features preserved around the County.
- According to Public Input Survey respondents, only 35.8% agreed that Rush County does a good job of capitalizing on its natural features as recreational opportunities.

GOAL & OBJECTIVES

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE GOAL:

Preserve and enhance open spaces and natural features in Rush County for the benefit of current and future generations.

Rush County boasts a rich tapestry of natural features, including the Big Blue River and the Flatrock River, open spaces, and expansive farmland. These amenities provide countless benefits, from supporting biodiversity and ecological health to offering opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Natural waterways and open spaces play an important role in the County's cultural heritage and rural character. Going forward, Rush County will balance the protection of these natural resources with the development of economic opportunities.

Rush County aims to explore strategies to preserve and enhance its open spaces and natural features, fostering a deeper connection to its environment and enriching the quality of life for all who call this County home. Preserving these resources in Rush County will create a legacy of sustainability and stewardship that will endure for generations to come.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Consider developing a county-wide bicycle network that connects Rush County communities and connects the county to networks in adjacent counties.

Bicycle networks, which often consist of sidewalks, multi-use paths, bike lanes, and more, are integral recreation amenities. By providing easy, convenient travel for cyclists, bicycle networks enhance community connectivity, promote active lifestyles, and enhance the safety of vulnerable roadway users. Designed to accommodate all ages, bicycle networks provide an opportunity to relax, have fun, and connect with family and friends. In Rush County, there is an opportunity to build on existing infrastructure, bridge gaps, and plan for a cohesive bicycle network. In addition to connecting local amenities, this network could be expanded to adjacent counties, providing miles of safe pathways. Over time, the bicycle network can be integrated into the community's identity to enhance character and stimulate tourism.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Pursue funding through the Indiana State Department of Health Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity (DNPA) to develop a County-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- ◇ Develop a County-wide Bicycle Master Plan to determine key routes, connections between communities, and integration with existing infrastructure.
- ◇ Establish relationships with the neighboring counties of Shelby, Decatur, Franklin, Fayette, Henry, and Hancock and identify ways to integrate future bicycle networks in Rush County to the networks in neighboring counties.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Explore recreational opportunities on the Flatrock River and Big Blue River.

The Flatrock River and Big Blue River are important assets in Rush County. Exploring these rivers presents Rush County with a chance to harness their natural beauty and potential for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. These rivers offer unique settings for a variety of outdoor activities, including kayaking, canoeing, fishing, and wildlife observation. By promoting recreational access to these waterways, Rush County can encourage outdoor recreation, environmental stewardship, and an enhanced quality of life for its residents. Additionally, developing recreational opportunities on the Flatrock and Big Blue Rivers can attract tourists, boost local economies, and support businesses that cater to outdoor enthusiasts. By embracing these natural assets and exploring recreational opportunities on the rivers, Rush County can unlock their full potential as valuable community resources while preserving their ecological integrity for the future.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Consider adding a “blueways and greenways” component to bicycle and pedestrian planning initiatives in Rush County and explore the potential for water trails and greenways along the rivers.
- ◇ Partner with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to identify locations to install public canoe/kayak ramps on the Flatrock River and Big Blue River.
- ◇ Add amenities, such as interpretive signage, trash cans, and picnic tables, in appropriate areas in the public right-of-way of local historic bridges to create spaces to recreate in and around the river.
- ◇ Establish a river clean-up task force to improve the cleanliness of the rivers, historic bridges, and their surrounding areas.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Support Rush County communities in developing and expanding their local parks.

While most of the parks and recreation amenities in Rush County are located in the City of Rushville, there are several small parks in the unincorporated communities within the County, such as Arlington and Manila. These small parks are often adjacent to churches or playgrounds at former school buildings. Although privately owned, these playgrounds and parks are often used by the nearby residents and are vital outdoor spaces where residents can connect, exercise, play, and relax. In the future, it may be wise for the County or Townships to acquire these properties so they can be transitioned formally to public use. Developing a park taskforce and supporting park development efforts can be helpful in keeping these recreational amenities available to residents in the future.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Establish a park taskforce that helps Rush County communities maintain and update their local parks and playgrounds.
- ◇ Support the Rush County Community Foundation's efforts on Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII to obtain park and playground equipment.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



CHAPTER 11

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

LAND USE GOAL:

Preserve Rush County's rich agricultural lands by encouraging development and redevelopment near existing communities and along primary transportation corridors.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Designate clearly targeted preservation areas for agriculture, open space, and natural resources.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Update the zoning and subdivision ordinance to include provisions that support the preservation of agricultural lands, open spaces, and natural resources.	Plan Commission
Consider implementing land conservation techniques such as cluster development, transfer of development rights, and conservation easements to protect sensitive lands while accommodating growth in appropriate areas.	Plan Commission
Explore potential state and federal funding opportunities to support land preservation efforts.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 2:

Designate clearly targeted development and redevelopment areas for residential, commercial, and industrial/manufacturing uses.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Ensure utilities are readily available in targeted development/redevelopment areas.	Commissioners
Encourage the reuse of existing buildings and infill development to optimize land use efficiency and preserve historic resources.	Plan Commission
Implement incentive programs to encourage private investment in targeted areas, such as tax incentives, grants, loans, and expedited permitting processes.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 3:

Establish up-to-date regulations for alternative energy development in the County ordinance.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Develop a comprehensive alternative energy ordinance that establishes standards for setback requirements, noise levels, visual impact, screening requirements, maintenance requirements, decommissioning requirements, environmental mitigation measures, and property value guarantees.	Plan Commission, Commissioners
Develop clear implementation and enforcement expectations to ensure compliance with the regulations, such as permit application procedures, review and inspection schedules, and enforcement actions for violations.	Plan Commission
Conduct public education and outreach efforts to raise awareness about the benefits of alternative energy development, address misconceptions or concerns, and promote community engagement in the implementation process by partnering with local community organizations and Rush County government officials.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 4:

Update the County's zoning ordinance to appropriately regulate value-added agricultural activities.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Work to revise the County's comprehensive value-added agriculture ordinance that establishes standards for uses, setback requirements, water quality impact, traffic impact, and environmental mitigation measures.	Plan Commission, Commissioners
Develop clear implementation and enforcement expectations for value-added agricultural activities to ensure compliance with the regulations, such as permit application procedures, review and inspection schedules, and enforcement actions for violations.	Plan Commission

OBJECTIVE 5:

Support unincorporated areas in building local community capacity.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Work with Prosperity Indiana to host leadership development opportunities in Rush County.	Commissioners
Support Milroy's incorporation efforts.	Commissioners

TRANSPORTATION GOAL:

Ensure Rush County has an efficient and safe transportation system that addresses agricultural, vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Work with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and other transportation partners in the County to ensure Rush County's needs are being considered with any transportation improvements.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Be an active participant in Rushville's Safe Streets for All Project (State Road 3 Improvements).	Commissioners
Develop a plan, including land use and infrastructure, for the area at Interchange 123 on Interstate 74 in the southwest corner of Rush County.	Plan Commission, Commissioners
Partner with CSX Transportation Company to prioritize intersection improvements at railroad crossings.	Commissioners
Support the expansion of rail to Commerce Park in Rushville.	Rush Co ECDC, Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 2:

Ensure Rush County has an up-to-date road inventory and asset management plan that allows the County to be fiscally responsible when maintaining the transportation network.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Ensure the County's road and bridge inventory is updated regularly.	County Engineer
Update the County's PASER Road Rating System annually.	County Engineer
Continue to seek and apply for funds for local road projects, such as the Indiana Department of Transportation's CCMG program.	County Engineer

OBJECTIVE 3:

Consider agricultural uses in all road improvement projects.

Action Item	Responsible Party
When undertaking road improvement projects, engage with local farmers and agricultural organizations to understand their transportation needs and concerns, including access to fields and transportation of farm equipment and products.	County Engineer
When improving transportation networks throughout Rush County, consider factors such as road and intersection width, weight limits, turning and curve radii, drainage, and traffic flow patterns that may affect farm machinery.	County Engineer
Implement access management strategies to minimize conflicts between agricultural traffic and other road users, such as separating farm entrances from intersections and limiting driveway density along major roadways.	County Engineer, Plan Commission, Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 4:

Explore opportunities to add bicycle and pedestrian options in appropriate areas.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Identify appropriate areas for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure based on available amenities, connectivity to other incorporated and unincorporated communities, population density, and land use intensity.	Commissioners
Consider adopting policies that support the development of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, such as a complete streets policy, an active transportation plan, and/or a bicycle and pedestrian master plan.	Plan Commission, Commissioners

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL:

Enhance Rush County's community facilities and utility infrastructure and maintain a high level of service for existing and future development.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Prioritize the availability of affordable, reliable, and accessible broadband services throughout Rush County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Support the Rush County Community Foundation's Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII Broadband initiative.	Commissioners
Pursue Next Level Connections: Broadband Grant Program funds.	Commissioners
Pursue Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funds.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 2:

Ensure proper development ordinances are in place to protect the availability and quality of groundwater.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Review existing development ordinances in Rush County to assess their effectiveness in protecting groundwater resources.	Plan Commission, Commissioners
Establish and update appropriate overlay districts, such as wellhead protection and floodplain overlay districts, where future development is subject to additional regulations and safeguards to protect water quality.	Plan Commission, Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 3:

Develop relationships with public and private utility companies that serve Rush County and learn how their future plans may affect development in Rush County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Become involved in the Connersville Water Expansion Project.	Commissioners
Hold regular meetings with the utility companies serving Rush County to share information and coordinate on upcoming projects, development plans, growth projections, ordinance updates, and utility needs.	Commissioners
Coordinate the timing of infrastructure and utility projects to minimize conflicts and maximize efficiency.	County Engineer, Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 4:

Provide an appropriate level of service for County facilities and emergency services, including medical, fire, and law enforcement.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Establish a level of service that is appropriate for Rush County emergency services and evaluate annually.	Commissioners
Continue to update and improve the Rush County Courthouse.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 5:

Increase capacity for sewer and water utilities.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Identify areas in Rush County where water and sewer infrastructure are needed.	Commissioners
Identify funding sources to support sewer and water infrastructure projects, including grants, loans, bonds, system development fees, revolving loan funds, and public-private partnerships.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 6:

Ensure proper stormwater and surface water management practices are in place in Rush County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Review zoning ordinances to ensure agricultural land use definitions are up-to-date and comprehensive.	Plan Commission, Commissioners
Review permitted uses and uses requiring special approval (special exception or conditional use) to ensure standards are up-to-date and address water management in ways that are appropriate for Rush County.	Plan Commission, Commissioners
Partner with the City of Rushville on its Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant for stormwater issues.	Commissioners

HOUSING GOAL:

Ensure Rush County has affordable, diverse, and quality housing available for current and future residents.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Develop a strategic blight elimination program to help bring blighted properties back onto the housing market.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Support the Rush County Community Foundation's Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII efforts on blight elimination.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 2:

Ensure development standards support a variety of housing products.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Review and update development standards to ensure infill residential development can occur.	Plan Commission
Consider requiring context-sensitive design elements so that infill residential development fits the context of existing neighborhoods.	Plan Commission
Review and update development standards to include a range of lot sizes and housing products appropriate for Rush County.	Plan Commission

OBJECTIVE 3:

Consider developing an incentives toolkit to help attract housing developers to Rush County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Develop a county-wide housing study to assess the gaps between current needs and what Rush County's housing market is currently providing.	Commissioners
Identify available parcels, redevelopment sites, or infill opportunities suitable for residential development within Rush County that can be shared with developers.	Commissioners
Review zoning approval and permitting processes to ensure approval processes are clear and streamlined.	Plan Commission
Consider developing a Housing Tax Increment Finance (HoTIF) to incentivize developers to invest in Rush County.	Commissioners
Explore public-private partnerships and infrastructure financing options to facilitate housing development.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 4:

Improve code enforcement efforts within towns and populated areas in Rush County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Review existing codes, ordinances, and zoning regulations related to property maintenance and nuisance abatement and update as appropriate to streamline the code enforcement process.	Plan Commission, Commissioners
Consider adding staff capacity in the Planning Department by hiring a full or part-time code enforcement officer.	Plan Commission, Commissioners

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL:

Build upon Rush County's strong rural and agricultural base by expanding agribusiness, retaining and attracting complementary companies, and providing support to small-town businesses.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Support all local and regional economic development initiatives, including but not limited to Accelerate Rural Indiana (ARI).

Action Item	Responsible Party
Be an active participant in the Rush County Community Foundation's Lilly Endowment Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII funding initiative.	Commissioners
Partner with Accelerate Rural Indiana (ARI) to implement the Regional Development Plan and access Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) funds.	Commissioners
Partner with the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) and the East Central Indiana Regional Partnership (ECIRP) to ensure the County stays involved in all local and regional economic development initiatives.	Commissioners
Support efforts made by the Rush County Chamber of Commerce and the Heart of Rushville.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 2:

Support the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) to continue their efforts in providing strong business support throughout the County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Support the Rush County ECDC in implementing the Rush County ECDC Strategic Plan.	Commissioners
Support expansion of rail to the Commerce Park in Rushville.	Commissioners
Strive to expand hotel room opportunities throughout Rush County.	Commissioners

QUALITY OF LIFE GOAL:

Increase the quality of life in Rush County through projects and initiatives that help attract population and elevate the well-being and health of residents.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Attract new dining, retail, and entertainment options to the communities in Rush County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Support the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) in their business recruitment and retention efforts.	Commissioners
Review zoning regulations to ensure they support the development of dining, retail, and entertainment businesses in appropriate areas of Rush County.	Plan Commission
Work with County government officials to create tax-incentives or expedited permitting options to encourage investment in commercial development.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 2:

Encourage and support additional and affordable childcare opportunities in Rush County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Support the Rush County Community Foundation's Lilly Endowment GIFT VIII initiative that aims to improve childcare opportunities in Rush County.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 3:

Enhance cultural and art experiences in Rush County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Establish a placemaking board or commission that focuses on enhancing the appeal and cultural identity of Rush County.	Commissioners
Commission artists to create murals, sculptures, and installations that celebrate Rush County's heritage.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 4:

Encourage and support more amenities for the local youth population, such as educational opportunities and recreational activities.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Continue to support efforts of the Rush County Community Foundation in the development of The Love Community Center (LCC).	Commissioners
Establish a youth advisory council comprised of children, young adults, and parents from diverse backgrounds to provide ideas and feedback on the development of additional youth amenities.	Commissioners
Consider working with Rushville to expand membership of the Rushville Public Library, which provides youth activities and services, to be inclusive of all County residents.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 5:

Encourage growth in tourism by improving advertising of existing and upcoming amenities.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Work with Visit Rush County to craft engaging marketing materials such as descriptions, photography, videos, and virtual tours of Rush County's amenities, attractions, experiences, and upcoming events.	Commissioners
Collaborate with local hotels, Bed and Breakfasts, and other lodging accommodations to expand lodging opportunities throughout Rush County.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 6:

Develop a plan that addresses maintenance and preservation of the historic bridges in Rush County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Develop a maintenance and preservation plan for each bridge and identify potential funding sources to complete the work, such as grants, and public-private partnerships.	County Engineer, Commissioners
Explore opportunities for adaptive reuse of historic bridges, such as converting them into pedestrian use along future trail corridors.	Commissioners

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE GOAL:

Preserve and enhance open spaces and natural features in Rush County for the benefit of current and future generations.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Consider developing a county-wide bicycle network that connects Rush County communities and connects the county to networks in adjacent counties.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Pursue funding through the Indiana State Department of Health Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity (DNPA) to develop a County-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.	Plan Commission, Commissioners
Develop a County-wide Bicycle Master Plan to determine key routes, connections between communities, and integration with existing infrastructure.	Plan Commission, Commissioners
Establish relationships with the neighboring counties of Shelby, Decatur, Franklin, Fayette, Henry, and Hancock and identify ways to integrate future bicycle networks in Rush County to the networks in neighboring counties.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 2:

Explore recreational opportunities on the Flatrock River and Big Blue River.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Consider adding a “blueways and greenways” component to bicycle and pedestrian planning initiatives in Rush County and explore the potential for water trails and greenways along the rivers.	Plan Commission, Commissioners
Partner with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to identify locations to install public canoe/kayak ramps on the Flatrock River and Big Blue River.	Commissioners
Add amenities, such as interpretive signage, trash cans, and picnic tables, in appropriate areas in the public right-of-way of local historic bridges to create spaces to recreate in and around the river.	Commissioners
Establish a river clean-up task force to improve the cleanliness of the rivers, historic bridges, and their surrounding areas.	Commissioners

OBJECTIVE 3:

Support Rush County communities in developing and expanding their local parks.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Establish a park taskforce that helps Rush County communities maintain and update their local parks and playgrounds.	Commissioners
Support the Rush County Community Foundation’s efforts on Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII to obtain park and playground equipment.	Commissioners



CARTHAGE FOCUS AREA PLAN

CHAPTER 12

KEY FINDINGS

- According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the Town of Carthage had a population of 891 residents.
- Feedback from the Public Workshop held in Carthage indicated that preserving the farmland around the Town is of utmost importance to the Town's residents.
- The downtown area at Main Street and Mill Street is the heart of the Town of Carthage and should be the targeted area for future commercial development.
- Residents of Carthage indicated that to attract new residents, the Town must restore blighted properties.

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Carthage is a small, close-knit community located in the northwest corner of Rush County on the Big Blue River. It was first platted in 1834, and was named after Carthage, North Carolina. According to the 2020 census, the Town's population was 891 people, which was an increase from the population of 757 residents in 2010. The median age for the Town was 34.6 years in 2020, which is younger than Rush County (42.5 years) and the State of Indiana (37.8 years). The median income in the Town of Carthage in 2020 was \$37,917, which was about a third less than the County, at \$56,814. In Town, residents can enjoy the Ercel Bever Jr. Community Center, a historic United States Post Office operating since 1835, and small family-owned grocery and convenience stores.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

In addition to the County-wide public engagement opportunities, the planning team held a Public Workshop in Carthage and had specific questions on the Public Input Survey for Carthage residents to answer. The Carthage Public Workshop was held on January 17th at the Ercel Bever Jr. Community Building to identify assets, issues, opportunities, and goals for the Town of Carthage. Participants at the workshop shared their vision for the future of Carthage as well as its assets and needed improvements. Key findings from the Workshop included the following:

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

Carthage's assets:

Meeting participants emphasized that Carthage's assets include their strong agricultural base and quiet, small-town atmosphere. Additionally, participants noted they like the camaraderie and the safety of the town. A landmark in the Town is the train yard, which was reported to be loved by residents.

What Carthage is missing or needs help with:

It was indicated by meeting participants that additional law enforcement and speed enforcement were needed. Participants indicated there was a blight issue that could be solved by cleaning up properties. Other concerns voiced by workshop participants included the need for improved roads, businesses such as restaurants and a bank, and additional leadership to serve the Town.

What residents see for Carthage's future:

Meeting participants indicated they were happy with their Town and wanted the Town's agricultural base to remain a priority. Industrial solar or wind energy developments were not viewed favorably, nor were large housing developments. Participants indicated that small, local businesses were preferred. Most importantly, meeting participants wanted to ensure farmland was preserved in and around Carthage.

What land uses do residents want to see and where?

If residential growth were to occur, meeting participants indicated that the south side of the Town along Henly Avenue was most appropriate. Other appropriate areas for new residential included the center of Town and the north side of Town near the Dollar General. Park or open space is desired near 1st and Walnut Streets. Retail uses are desired near the center of Town near the Post Office, Pavey's Grocery, the library, Carthage Town Hall, and the Ercel Bever Community Building. Meeting participants did not respond favorably to having land uses that included manufacturing and industrial uses, but noted that if these were to occur, the most appropriate location is by the fire station.

SURVEY

The Public Input Survey was open from January 4th to February 11th. During that time, 26 responses were received from participants from the Town of Carthage. The two most represented age groups are 50-64 years old (30.8%) and 35-44 years old (26.9%). Nearly all respondents (88.5%) from Carthage agreed that its downtown is in good condition and important to their small-town feel, but blight removal efforts are needed. Over half of respondents (57.7%) agreed that



Carthage Town Sign

Source: Town of Carthage

Carthage should encourage residential development both within and outside of its downtown area, but over a third of respondents (38.5%) disagreed with both of those sentiments. Respondents from Carthage indicated the Town should prioritize police services, farmland protection, infrastructure improvements, broadband access, blight removal, and economic development.

LAND USE

Land Use Classifications

Natural Features/Open Space

Definition: Land that should be preserved for its ecological, recreational, and aesthetic value, such as waterways and parks.

Agriculture/Rural

Definition: Land used primarily for farming of all intensities, where the landscape is dominated by fields, pastures, orchards, and livestock operations.

Rural Residential

Definition: Land used or designated for residential use outside and away from towns and cities that includes estates, farmhouses, and large lot dwellings.

Residential

Definition: Land used or designated for single-family or multi-family residential development located in or near established cities and towns.

Institutional

Definition: Land used for facilities and buildings that serve the public, provide services, support community functions, or house organizations dedicated to education, healthcare, government, religion, or culture.

Commercial

Definition: Land used or designated for commercial uses and developments including but not limited to offices, retail, entertainment, restaurants, gas stations, and hotels.

Industrial

Definition: Land used or designated for small- to-large-scale industrial uses, such as warehouses, manufacturing, distribution, assembly, or other similar uses.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

LAND USE GOAL:

Ensure the Town of Carthage remains a strong agricultural community while providing residents with amenities such as small businesses and job opportunities.

Objective 1:

Designate clearly targeted development areas for residential and commercial uses.

The Town of Carthage is proud of its largely agricultural heritage, and want the Town to retain its small-town and agricultural feel for generations to come. This sentiment was shared by residents of Carthage with the project team throughout the planning and engagement process. To ensure that new developments do not take away from the agricultural charm of the Town, it is important to establish areas where development should occur. It was indicated that appropriate areas for new development to occur is near preexisting development, especially in the downtown near the intersection of Main Street and Mill Street.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Target future residential development along Henley Avenue.
- ◇ Target future commercial development near Main Street and Mill Street.

Objective 2:

Designate clearly targeted preservation areas for agriculture, open space, and natural resources.

With an abundance of farmland around the Town of Carthage, it is vital to set growth boundaries to preserve and protect this land. Carthage residents want to ensure that the Town stays unique to surrounding communities, which requires its land and natural features to be protected from future development, including alternative energy development. Areas near the Big Blue River and Carthage Creek, as well as all farmland outside of Town limits should not be developed to ensure these resources are protected.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Preserve the area around the Big Blue River and Carthage Creek.
- ◇ Prevent future development from encroaching on existing farmland, especially outside the Town limits of Carthage.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL

Enhance Carthage's transportation network to make it a safe place for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

Objective 1:

Implement traffic calming measures to slow down vehicular traffic and improve safety for all road users.

Streets should be a safe place to be for all road users, from drivers to kids walking to a friend's house. As the road network grows or is improved, it is important to consider all road users in the design of the road corridor. Simple improvements, like adding sidewalks and curb ramps, should be considered so that more users can be accommodated. Improvements like these should be prioritized in areas that have higher traffic levels, starting with the downtown area at Main Street, Mill Street, First and Second Streets, and in residential areas on Henley Street, Walnut Street, and East Street.

ACTION STEPS

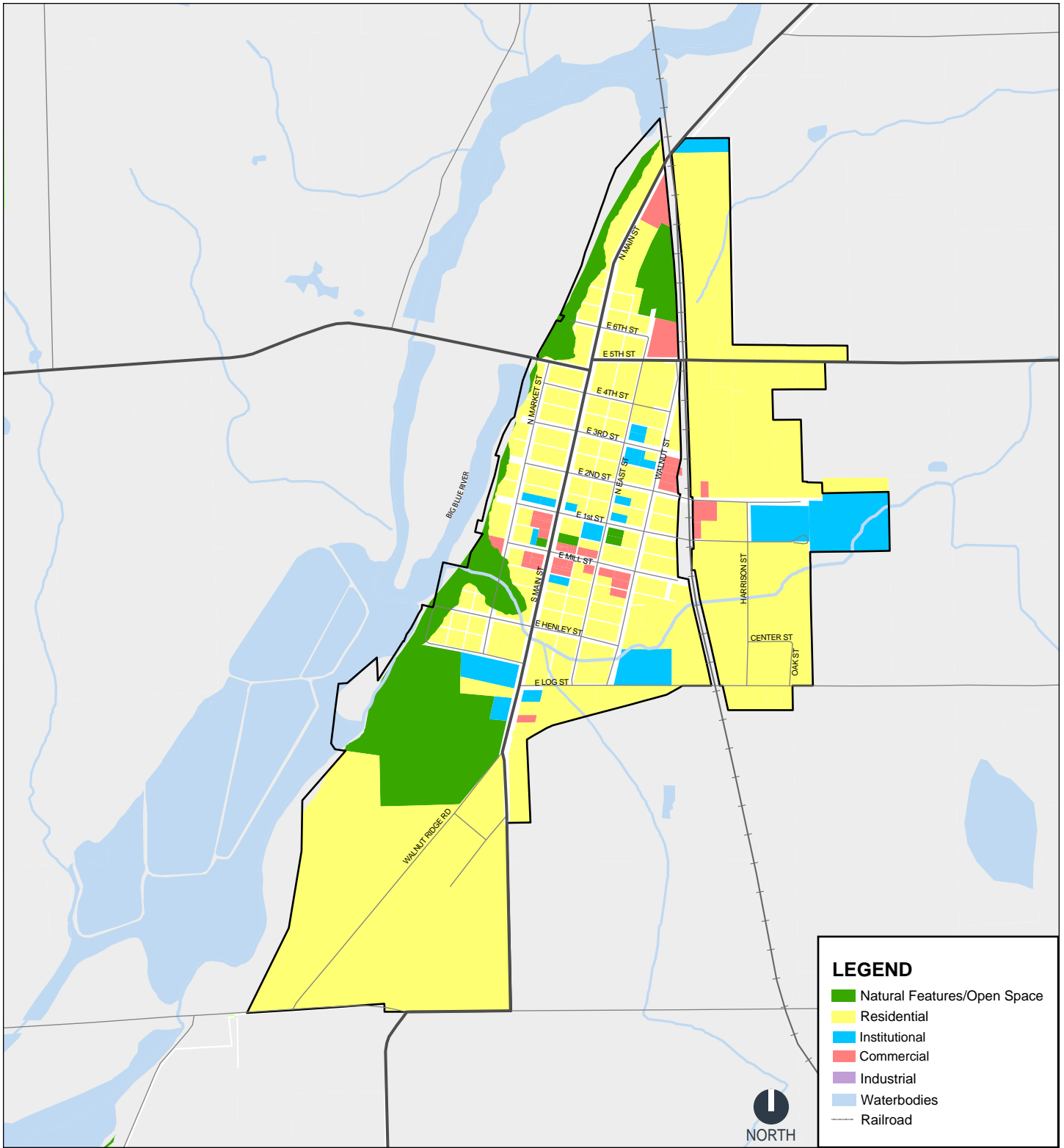
- ◇ Install speed limit signage along Main Street.
- ◇ Consider speed bumps in residential areas to slow vehicular traffic down and ensure the safety of kids playing in the neighborhood.
- ◇ Update and add more crosswalks at key intersections in the downtown area of Carthage, especially on Main Street at Mill Street and First Street.
- ◇ Purchase and install radar speed signs on streets with high traffic volumes.

Objective 2:

Enhance roadways to improve safety and make Carthage more welcoming to visitors.

Keeping the streets and infrastructure up to date is important to ensure Carthage is safe for residents and visitors. The Town should work towards having an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant street and sidewalk network, which takes into account handicap parking and accessible sidewalks. Additionally, updating the Town's sidewalks will improve connectivity throughout the Town, connect residents to local amenities, and create a more inviting and attractive environment. All of these improvements can make Carthage more welcoming and encourage local business growth.

ACTION STEPS



Carthage Future Land Use Map

Map Source: HWC Engineering

- ◇ Repave Mill Street.
- ◇ Prepare a sidewalk inventory and develop a plan to become ADA compliant.
- ◇ Establish an inventory and maintenance plan for all roads and sidewalks that is updated annually.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL

Upgrade community amenities and utility infrastructure to enable Carthage residents to maintain and improve their quality of life.

Objective 1:

Prioritize the availability of affordable, reliable, and accessible broadband services throughout Carthage.

Connection to the internet is vital in the 21st century. Prioritizing the availability of broadband services in Carthage is essential for fostering economic growth and increasing the quality of life for all residents. Having connection to high-speed internet enables residents to access amenities that Carthage cannot currently offer residents, such as higher education and healthcare services. It also supports local businesses and small business growth by facilitating e-commerce, digital marketing, and remote work opportunities. Carthage needs access to broadband services to bridge the technological divide, support its residents, and attract new growth.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation to support the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII Broadband Initiative
- ◇ Engage with the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) to pursue the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) Next Level Connections: Broadband Grant Program funds.
- ◇ Engage with the Rush County ECDC to pursue BroadbandUSA's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funds.

Objective 2:

Ensure proper stormwater and surface water management practices are in place.

Feedback from public engagement events indicated



Carthage in Winter

Source: Wikipedia

that the Town of Carthage has issues with stormwater and surface water management, which can impact agricultural practices and the quality of life of residents. It is important that the Town of Carthage address and encourage stormwater management standards and participate in local initiatives to improve these issues.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Engage with the City of Rushville on its Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant for stormwater issues and learn how this project can help the Town of Carthage.
- ◇ Develop an inventory and improvement plan for areas in Town with drainage issues.

Objective 3:

Increase law enforcement efforts throughout the Town of Carthage.

The Town of Carthage is currently under the jurisdiction of the Carthage Police Department. Feedback from public engagement opportunities indicated that the Town of Carthage desires additional law enforcement to slow down traffic traveling through Town and enhance overall safety in the Town.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Consider hiring an additional law enforcement officer to join the Carthage Police Department or investigate opportunities to partner with the Rush County Sheriff's Department to hire an officer to cover the Town of Carthage.

HOUSING GOAL

Attract new housing development, while maintaining Carthage's small-town community feel.

Objective 1:

Participate in Rush County's efforts to develop a strategic blight elimination program that takes into consideration Carthage's unique needs.

Feedback from the various public engagement opportunities indicated that there are many blighted properties in Carthage that could be revitalized and brought back on the housing market. As of 2020, there were 51 vacant housing units in Carthage (12% of the total housing units in the Town). Improvements to these properties can have a positive effect on property values in Carthage and may retain and even attract new

residents to the community. Blight improvements may also enhance the aesthetics of the Town and increase a sense of community pride.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation and support the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII efforts on blight elimination.
- ◇ After developed, work with Rush County to implement the blight elimination program in Carthage.

Objective 2:

Attract more affordable housing options to the Town of Carthage.

Between 2010 and 2020, the median gross rent increased by over 13% in the Town of Carthage from \$613 a month to almost \$700 a month. To help reduce the effects of this rent increase, the Town should attract more cost-effective housing for its current and future residents. There are many different forms of low-cost housing, such as new townhomes, single-family homes, and restoring existing blighted housing units. The development of new housing units could also attract new amenities to the area, such as restaurants and a convenience store due to an increase in the population.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Work with Rush County to update development ordinances to allow for varying lot sizes and housing products, such as duplexes and townhomes.
- ◇ Collaborate with local utility providers and work with them to expand utilities to areas in Town that could support new housing.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL

Maintain a rural atmosphere while attracting and supporting new amenities in the Town of Carthage.

Objective 1:

Attract and support the growth of small businesses in Carthage.

According to Hoosiers by the Numbers, the Town of Carthage has several businesses that provide amenities and job opportunities to the residents of the Town. Throughout the planning process, Carthage residents indicated that they wanted more amenities, such as

restaurants, a coffee shop, and other small businesses to cater to the needs of the community. To support this new development, potential business owners need access to local and State resources, such as grants and revolving loans to get their business started.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Work with the Rush County Community Foundation to develop a fund to help facilitate façade and interior improvements for spaces for new businesses in Carthage.
- ◇ Collaborate with the Rush County ECDC and the Rush County Chamber of Commerce to provide small business owners with resources for starting and growing a business in Carthage.
- ◇ Review development ordinances and other local ordinances related to business development to ensure they are user-friendly and that potential business owners can understand what steps are needed to open a business in Carthage.

Objective 2:

Increase Town representation with the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) and the Rush County Chamber of Commerce so that Carthage has a stronger role in economic development decision-making within the County.

The Rush County ECDC helps support various economic development initiatives throughout the County. Its board consists of 34 members from different entities around the County, including businesses and government representatives. Currently, the City of Rushville and the unincorporated area of Milroy are represented. This corporation helps make important decisions about economic development opportunities in Rush County and supports local businesses to grow and thrive in the County. By establishing representation from the Town of Carthage on the Rush County ECDC board, the Town of Carthage will be better represented in County-wide decision-making. Becoming involved with the Rush County Chamber of Commerce will help support Carthage's businesses and help with economic growth in the future.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Identify a resident or a Town Elected Officer to get involved with the Rush County ECDC.
- ◇ Identify a resident or a Town Elected Officer to get involved with the Rush County Chamber of Commerce.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE GOAL

Preserve natural features and establish open space amenities for the residents and visitors of Carthage.

Objective 1:

Develop the first Town park.

Throughout the public engagement process, Carthage residents expressed interest in a public park in Carthage. Currently, there are no existing park spaces in the Town. Carthage has a Veterans' Memorial at Main and Mill Streets, which features benches, a gazebo, and trees. According to the 2020 American Community Survey, Carthage has a lower median age than any other Town in Rush County (34.6 years) and over a third of the Town's population is under the age of 18. This indicates that public space with a playground or youth amenities could be needed. Establishing a park in the Town can also attract more residents as open space and parks are an important quality of life amenity.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation to apply for funding through the Rush County Parks Fund for the development of a park facility in Carthage.
- ◇ Coordinate with local churches and community organizations in Carthage to gather volunteers to help build and maintain the new park.

Objective 2:

Expand recreational opportunities on the Big Blue River.

The Town of Carthage sits just east of the Big Blue River in Rush County. The Big Blue River flows for nearly 84 miles throughout east-central Indiana, starting in Mt. Summit, Indiana and ending in Edinburgh, Indiana. Throughout Rush County, residents and visitors enjoy kayaking and canoeing on the river, and expanding these recreational opportunities is vital to increasing the use of the river and enhancing the quality of life for Carthage residents. Providing public access to the river in Carthage could attract tourists from surrounding areas within Rush County to the Town as there are few public access points on the river currently, and Carthage could capitalize on this opportunity to enhance access to natural features in the Town.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Partner with Rush County and Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to establish a public access site on the Big Blue River in Carthage.
- ◇ Work with local businesses in Carthage to market the Big Blue River and other local attractions near Carthage such as Woods Campground.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

LAND USE GOAL:

Ensure the Town of Carthage remains a strong agricultural community while providing residents with amenities such as small businesses and job opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Designate clearly targeted development areas for residential and commercial uses.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Target future residential development along Henley Avenue.	Plan Commission
Target future commercial development near Main Street and Mill Street.	Plan Commission

OBJECTIVE 2:

Designate clearly targeted preservation areas for agriculture, open space, and natural resources.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Preserve the area around the Big Blue River and Carthage Creek.	Plan Commission, Town Council
Prevent future development from encroaching on existing farmland, especially outside the Town limits of Carthage.	Plan Commission, Town Council

TRANSPORTATION GOAL:

Enhance Carthage's transportation network to make it a safe place for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Implement traffic calming measures to slow down vehicular traffic and improve safety for all road users.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Install speed limit signage along Main Street.	Street Department, Town Council
Consider speed bumps in residential areas to slow vehicular traffic down and ensure the safety of kids playing in the neighborhood.	Street Department, Town Council
Update and add more crosswalks at key intersections in the downtown area of Carthage, especially on Main Street at Mill Street and First Street.	Street Department, Town Council
Purchase and install radar speed signs on streets with high traffic volumes.	Street Department, Town Council

OBJECTIVE 2:

Enhance roadways to improve safety and make Carthage more welcoming to visitors.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Repave Mill Street.	Street Department, Town Council
Prepare a sidewalk inventory and develop a plan to become ADA compliant.	Street Department, Town Council
Establish an inventory and maintenance plan for all roads and sidewalks that is updated annually.	Street Department, Town Council

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL:

Upgrade community amenities and utility infrastructure to enable Carthage residents to maintain and improve their quality of life.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Prioritize the availability of affordable, reliable, and accessible broadband services throughout Carthage.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation to support the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII Broadband Initiative.	Town Council
Engage with the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) to pursue the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) Next Level Connections: Broadband Grant Program funds.	Town Council
Engage with the Rush County ECDC to pursue BroadbandUSA's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funds.	Town Council

OBJECTIVE 2:

Ensure proper stormwater and surface water management practices are in place.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Engage with the City of Rushville on its Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant for stormwater issues and learn how this project can help the Town of Carthage.	Town Council
Develop an inventory and improvement plan for areas in Town with drainage issues.	Town Works, Town Council

OBJECTIVE 3:

Increase law enforcement efforts throughout the Town of Carthage.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Consider hiring an additional law enforcement officer to join the Carthage Police Department or investigate opportunities to partner with the Rush County Sheriff's Department to hire an officer to cover the Town of Carthage.	Police Department, Town Council

HOUSING GOAL:

Attract new housing development, while maintaining Carthage's small-town community feel.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Participate in Rush County's efforts to develop a strategic blight elimination program that takes into consideration Carthage's unique needs.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation and support the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII efforts on blight elimination.	Town Council
After developed, work with Rush County to implement the blight elimination program in Carthage.	Town Works, Town Council

OBJECTIVE 2:

Attract more affordable housing options to the Town of Carthage.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Work with Rush County to update development ordinances to allow for varying lot sizes and housing products, such as duplexes and townhomes.	Plan Commission, Town Council
Collaborate with local utility providers and work with them to expand utilities to areas in Town that could support new housing.	Town Works, Town Council

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL:

Maintain a rural atmosphere while attracting and supporting new amenities in the Town of Carthage.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Attract and support the growth of small businesses in Carthage.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Work with the Rush County Community Foundation to develop a fund to help facilitate façade and interior improvements for spaces for new businesses in Carthage.	Town Council
Collaborate with the Rush County ECDC and the Rush County Chamber of Commerce to provide small business owners with resources for starting and growing a business in Carthage.	Town Council
Review development ordinances and other local ordinances related to business development to ensure they are user-friendly and that potential business owners can understand what steps are needed to open a business.	Plan Commission, Town Council

OBJECTIVE 2:

Increase Town representation with the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) and the Rush County Chamber of Commerce so that Carthage has a stronger role in economic development decision-making within the County.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Identify a resident or a Town Elected Officer to get involved with the Rush County ECDC.	Town Council
Identify a resident or a Town Elected Officer to get involved with the Rush County Chamber of Commerce.	Town Council

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE GOAL:

Preserve natural features and establish open space amenities for the residents and visitors of Carthage.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Develop the first Town park.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation to apply for funding through the Rush County Parks Fund for the development of a park facility in Carthage.	Town Council
Coordinate with local churches and community organizations in Carthage to gather volunteers to help build and maintain a new park.	Town Council

OBJECTIVE 2:

Expand recreational opportunities on the Big Blue River.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Partner with Rush County and Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to establish a public access site on the Big Blue River in Carthage.	Town Council
Work with local businesses in Carthage to market the Big Blue River and other local attractions near Carthage such as Woods Campground.	Town Council



GLENWOOD FOCUS AREA PLAN

CHAPTER 13

KEY FINDINGS

- According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the Town of Glenwood had a population of 307 residents.
- Feedback from the Public Workshop held in Glenwood indicated that preserving the farmland around the Town is important, but residents want amenities closer to the Town such as a gas station.
- The Town wants to attract more diverse housing options, such as apartments and senior housing.
- Residents of Glenwood indicated that blighted properties are a barrier to attracting economic development.
- In both the Public Input Survey and Public Workshop, residents indicated they had concerns about water quality.

INTRODUCTION

Glenwood, Indiana is a Town on the eastern border of Rush County that is led by small-town values, guided growth, and preservation of its historical, cultural, and natural heritage. The Town was first laid out in 1882 under the name Vienna. According to the 2020 census, the Town's population was 307 people, which was an increase of 95 people from the 2010 census. The median age for the Town was 55.1 years in 2020, which is significantly older than Rush County (42.5 years) and the State of Indiana (37.8 years). The median income in the Town of Glenwood in 2020 was \$52,000, which was almost a 40% increase from the median income of \$37,292 in 2010. Glenwood residents and visitors can enjoy the Community Center and Community Park, Glenwood Inn, churches, and various community events like community suppers.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

To understand the specific conditions in Glenwood, the project team held a separate Public Workshop in the Town of Glenwood and had questions specific to the Town's current conditions in the Public Input Survey. The Glenwood Public Workshop was held on January 24th at the Glenwood Community Center to identify assets, issues, opportunities, and goals for the Town of Glenwood. Participants at the workshop shared their vision for the future of their Town as well as its assets and needed improvements. Key findings from the Workshop included the following:

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

Glenwood's assets:

Workshop participants indicated that the Town of Glenwood is a quiet, safe agricultural town with a rich history and boasts many long-time residents. Participants identified the Town's assets to include the Dollar General, Glenwood Inn, the Fire Department, the park, and the Community Center. They also expressed that the grain elevator holds importance in the Town and that it should be protected.

What Glenwood is missing or needs help with:

Participants expressed concerns that the co-op on the north side of town emits corn dust and ammonia fumes into surrounding properties. Meeting participants reported that there is a need for new housing units, such as apartments and senior housing. Participants want to see more small businesses in Town, such as a gas station and a restaurant. Additionally, meeting participants indicated they wanted to see the Town clean up blighted properties, invest more in the Community Park and Community Center, and better maintain sidewalks and streets. Lack of broadband service was noted as an issue, and several meeting participants had concerns with industrial-scale alternative energy developments and stormwater and surface water management.

What residents see for Glenwood's future:

Workshop participants indicated that they wanted to see the Town take steps to protect agriculture and farmland. Participants emphasized that the Town should prohibit the development of industrial-scale solar and wind industries. They indicated that Glenwood should be a town for people to locate when looking for solace from fast-paced urban life, and should focus new development to housing, small businesses, and a gas station.

What land uses do residents want to see and where?

The participants of the Glenwood Public Workshop indicated that future residential development should occur on State Road 44 and on Pearl Street. Feedback from residents indicated they preferred to see retail development directed in the center of Town along County Road 850 West near the Post Office and Glenwood Town Hall.



Glenwood Community Center

Source: Town of Glenwood

SURVEY

The Public Input Survey was open from January 4th to February 11th. Throughout this period, there were 36 respondents from Union Township, with 7 respondents specifically from the Town of Glenwood. The two largest age groups who responded from Glenwood and Union Township combined were 35-44 years and 65-74 years (both 22.2%). Most respondents (72.2%) agree that the Town's existing homes are important, but there should be a focus on removing blight and encouraging new residential development within the Town (77.8%). Many respondents disagree that Glenwood's homes (61.1%) and infrastructure (55.6%) are in good condition. The respondents from Glenwood emphasized concerns with water quality, broadband access, and road conditions, and they indicated that they wanted the area to remain primarily agricultural.

LAND USE

Land Use Classifications

Natural Features/Open Space

Definition: Land that should be preserved for its ecological, recreational, and aesthetic value, such as waterways and parks.

Agriculture/Rural

Definition: Land used primarily for farming of all intensities, where the landscape is dominated by fields, pastures, orchards, and livestock operations.

Rural Residential

Definition: Land used or designated for residential use outside and away from towns and cities that includes estates, farmhouses, and large lot dwellings.

Residential

Definition: Land used or designated for single-family or multi-family residential development located in or near established cities and towns.

Institutional

Definition: Land used for facilities and buildings that serve the public, provide services, support community functions, or house organizations dedicated to education, healthcare, government, religion, or culture.

Commercial

Definition: Land used or designated for commercial uses and developments including but not limited to offices, retail, entertainment, restaurants, gas stations, and hotels.

Industrial

Definition: Land used or designated for small- to-large-scale industrial uses, such as warehouses, manufacturing, distribution, assembly, or other similar uses.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

LAND USE GOAL:

Attract appropriately scaled growth to Glenwood while preserving the historic agricultural heritage of the Town.

Objective 1:

Designate clearly targeted development areas for residential and commercial uses.

Glenwood is proud of its agricultural heritage, and wants to preserve this agriculture. To ensure that new residential and commercial developments do not encroach on the Town's farmland, new growth should be directed in areas that are already developed and have access to utilities. In Glenwood, areas appropriate for new development include land along State Road 44 and County Road 850 West. Additionally, the Town indicated that new residential development should occur along Pearl Street. Future development should be buffered from agricultural uses, as each land use has different needs that may conflict with each other.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Target future residential development along Pearl Street.
- ◇ Target future commercial development near the intersection of State Road 44 (State Street) and County Road 850 West and along the County Road 850 West corridor between the railroad tracks and State Road 44 (State Street).
- ◇ Review Rush County development ordinances to ensure there are appropriate buffers between new growth areas and agricultural uses.

Objective 2:

Designate clearly targeted preservation areas for agriculture, open space, and natural resources.

Like many other communities in Rush County, Glenwood was founded on its abundant agriculture. The residents of Glenwood indicated it is important to preserve its farmland to maintain a small agriculture-based community. Therefore, it is vital to identify where growth should be located and where to preserve and protect land from residential, commercial, industrial, and alternative energy development.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Prevent future development from encroaching on existing farmland.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL

Enhance Glenwood's transportation network to make it a safe place for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

Objective 1:

Coordinate with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) on any plans for future improvements to State Road 44 (State Street).

The Town of Glenwood sits on State Road 44, which connects many nearby cities including Rushville, Connersville, and Shelbyville. Because of its proximity to bigger cities, it is important to ensure that the transportation network in Glenwood can support higher traffic levels as it grows. Enhancing streets throughout the Town will significantly improve safety for pedestrians and drivers and reduce potential accidents in and around Glenwood. Additionally, upgraded streets will make the Town more welcoming to visitors, support future growth, and boost local businesses by creating a more attractive and accessible environment.

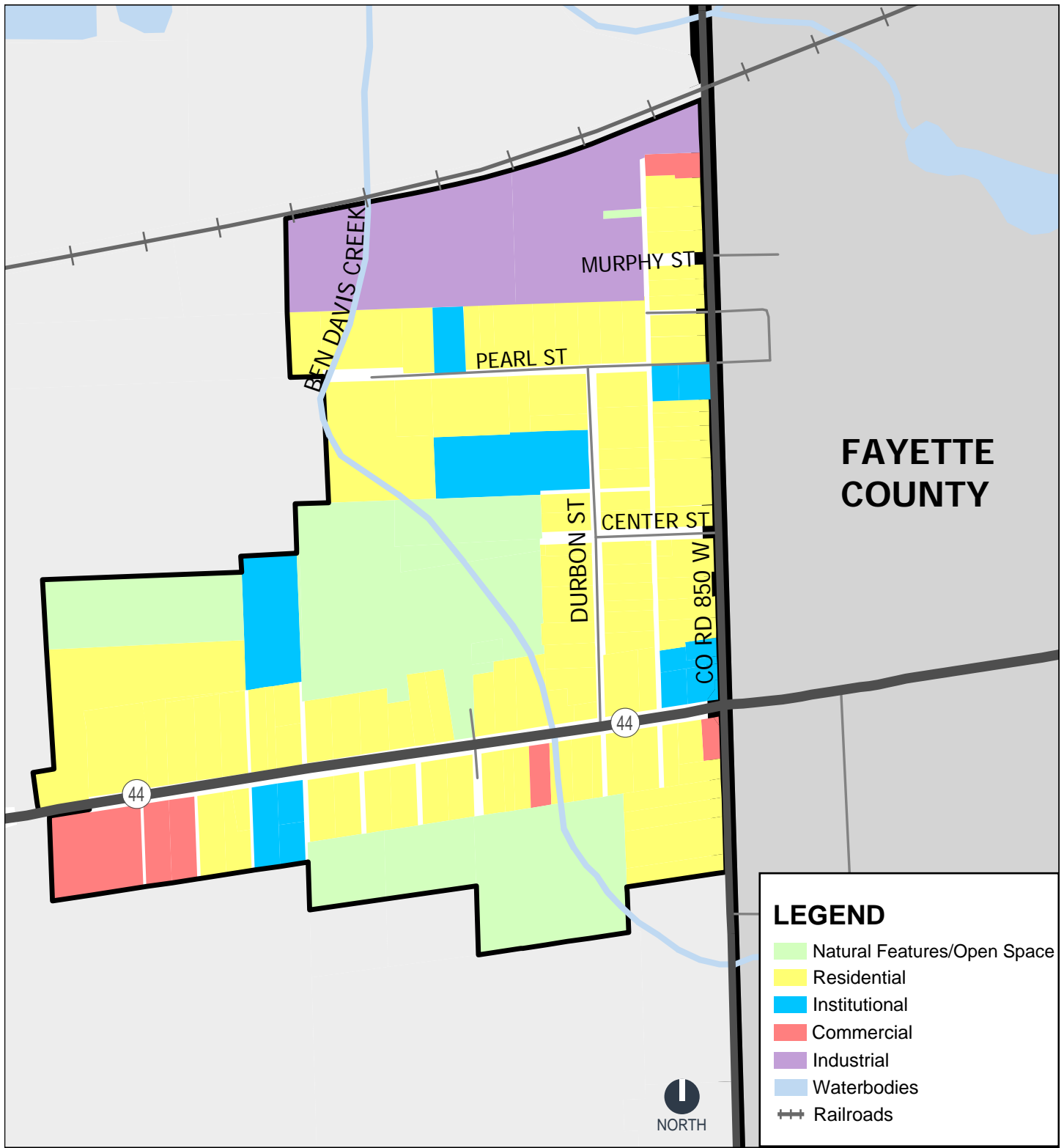
ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Have a representative from the Town establish a relationship with the Greenfield District of INDOT and meet at least annually to review future projects or improvements for the corridor.

Objective 2:

Improve pedestrian safety along Town streets.

Enhancing pedestrian infrastructure in Glenwood is vital to protecting residents and fostering a more walkable, vibrant community. Enhanced safety measures, such as better lighting, crosswalks, and sidewalks, will encourage walking and promote healthier lifestyles. Additionally, safer streets can increase foot traffic to local businesses and contribute to a stronger sense of community by making public spaces more accessible and inviting for all residents.



Glenwood Future Land Use Map

Map Source: HWC Engineering

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Complete an inventory (including condition) of existing sidewalks in Glenwood.
- ◇ Identify where Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements are needed in the sidewalk system.
- ◇ Develop an implementation plan to add more sidewalks where needed and to upgrade any existing sidewalk facilities to become ADA-compliant.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL

Upgrade community amenities and utility infrastructure to enable Glenwood residents to maintain and improve their quality of life.

Objective 1:

Prioritize the availability of affordable, reliable, and accessible broadband services throughout Glenwood.

Improving access to broadband services in Glenwood is essential for fostering economic development and improving quality of life. With better connectivity, Glenwood's local businesses can expand their efficiency, attracting new customers and creating jobs. Additionally, residents will have improved access to various amenities that the Town cannot currently offer, such as online medical care, higher education, and remote work opportunities, making Glenwood a more vibrant and resilient community.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation to support the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII Broadband Initiative
- ◇ Engage with the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) to pursue the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) Next Level Connections: Broadband Grant Program funds.
- ◇ Engage with the Rush County ECDC to pursue BroadbandUSA's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funds.

Objective 2:

Ensure all residents of Glenwood have access to quality drinking water and promote efficient stormwater and surface water management.



Glenwood, Where Rush County Begins

Source: Glenwood Community Facebook Page

Feedback from public engagement events indicated that the Town of Glenwood has issues with stormwater, water quality, and surface water management, which impacts agricultural practices and the quality of life and well-being of residents. The Town should continue participating in conversations about extending water utilities from Connersville to Glenwood, as this may be an opportunity to add capacity and improve water quality for area residents. Additionally, it is important for local officials to engage with the Rush County Soil and Water Conservation District to understand how to best encourage residents and farmers to use best management practices on their land in order to maintain and improve water quality.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Engage with the City of Rushville to see how Glenwood can participate in the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant for stormwater issues.
- ◇ Engage with the Rush County Soil and Water Conservation District and learn what local programs may be available that could positively impact water quality in the area.
- ◇ Stay engaged in the discussions to bring drinking water from Connersville to Glenwood along State Road 44.

Objective 3:

Increase law enforcement efforts throughout the Town of Glenwood.

The Town of Glenwood is currently under the jurisdiction of the Glenwood Police Department and is served by a Town Marshall. Feedback from public engagement opportunities indicated that the Town of Glenwood desires additional law enforcement to enhance overall safety in the Town.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Consider hiring an additional law enforcement officer to join the Glenwood Police Department or investigate opportunities to partner with the Rush County Sheriff's Department to hire an officer to cover the Town of Glenwood.

HOUSING GOAL

Improve housing choices in Glenwood and ensure a mix of housing options are available.

Objective 1:

Improve blighted properties in Glenwood.

Glenwood residents indicated throughout the planning process that the Town has several blighted properties. Cleaning up these blighted properties can offer new housing units, enhance the Town's appearance, increase local property values, and improve overall safety. This will also attract new residents and businesses to Glenwood and improve the Town's economy and contribute to a healthier and more vibrant community.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation to support the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII efforts on blight elimination.
- ◇ Connect residents with local churches or assistance programs to help with property maintenance and/or improvements.

Objective 2:

Attract more diverse housing options to the Town of Glenwood.

Between 2010 and 2020, Glenwood's housing stock grew by 61 units, which shows that the Town is growing. To support more growth, the Town should consider supporting and encouraging the development of diverse housing options, including apartments, townhomes, duplexes, and senior housing. Attracting these different options to Glenwood will ensure that the needs of various demographics are met and supported, including young families, and seniors. This will give Glenwood residents the opportunity to stay in the community as their housing needs change.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Ensure that the Rush County development ordinances allow for different lot sizes and housing products like duplexes, apartments, senior housing, and townhomes in Glenwood.
- ◇ Collaborate with local utility providers to increase the availability of utilities to areas of Glenwood that are appropriate for new residential development.

Objective 3:

Improve code enforcement efforts in the Town of Glenwood.

To increase property values and ensure public safety within the Town of Glenwood, it is important to improve code enforcement efforts within the Town, especially on blighted properties. Code enforcement ensures that buildings and properties are well-maintained, reducing hazards and preventing blight. It also helps to uphold Glenwood's standards, fostering a more attractive environment that can attract new residents and businesses. By addressing issues such as abandoned properties, illegal dumping, and unsafe structures, Glenwood can become a safer and more appealing place to live and work.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Collaborate with Rush County to provide additional support so that more code enforcement activities can take place within the Town of Glenwood.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL

Encourage and support small business growth in Glenwood.

Objective 1:

Pursue particular businesses that are desired in Glenwood, such as a gas station, restaurant, and convenience store.

The Town of Glenwood has several businesses that support and serve its residents, such as a car repair shop, a convenience store, a restaurant, and others. In order to support growth of the Town of Glenwood, it is necessary to attract new and additional amenities to the Town. Residents expressed interest in attracting a gas station, small restaurants, a convenience store, and other small businesses to the Town throughout the public engagement opportunities.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Work with the Rush County Community Foundation to develop a fund to help facilitate façade and interior improvements for spaces for new businesses in Glenwood.
- ◇ Collaborate with the Rush County ECDC and the Rush County Chamber of Commerce to provide small business owners with resources for starting and growing a business in the County.
- ◇ Review ordinances to ensure they are user-friendly and potential business owners can understand what steps are needed to open a business in Glenwood.

Objective 2:

Increase Town representation in County economic development decision making with the Rush County ECDC and the Rush County Chamber of Commerce.

The Rush County ECDC helps support various economic development initiatives throughout the County. Its board consists of 34 members from different entities around the County, including businesses and government representatives. Currently the City of Rushville and the unincorporated area of Milroy are represented. This corporation helps make important decisions about economic development opportunities in Rush County and supports local businesses to grow and thrive in the County. By establishing representation from the Town of Glenwood on the Rush County ECDC board, Glenwood will be better represented in County-wide decision-making.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Identify a Glenwood resident or Town Elected Officer to get involved with the Rush County ECDC and the Rush County Chamber of Commerce.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE GOAL

Preserve open space in Glenwood.

Objective 1:

Establish a facilities plan for the Glenwood Community Park and Community Center.

The Town of Glenwood has a Community Park and Community Center that is well-loved by the community. The park provides Glenwood with a playground, picnic tables, a shelter, grills, and a paved basketball court, and the Community Center has a full kitchen and furniture and can be rented out for events. A maintenance plan to upgrade equipment should be considered to ensure the park and center remain assets in the Town of Glenwood. Opportunities to replace aging park equipment should also be considered.

ACTION STEPS

- ◇ Prepare a maintenance plan for the Community Center, which would include items like general property maintenance and future replacement of kitchen equipment.
- ◇ Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation to see if grant funds are available to help fund modern playground equipment at the Glenwood Community Park.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

LAND USE GOAL:

Attract appropriately scaled growth to Glenwood while preserving the historic agricultural heritage of the Town.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Designate clearly targeted development areas for residential and commercial uses.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Target future residential development along Pearl Street.	Plan Commission, Town Council
Target future commercial development near the intersection of State Road 44 (State Street) and County Road 850 West and along the County Road 850 West corridor between the railroad tracks and State Road 44 (State Street).	Plan Commission, Town Council
Review Rush County development ordinances to ensure there are appropriate buffers between new growth areas and agricultural areas.	Plan Commission, Town Council

OBJECTIVE 2:

Designate clearly targeted preservation areas for agriculture, open space, and natural resources.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Prevent future development from encroaching on existing farmland.	Plan Commission, Town Council

TRANSPORTATION GOAL:

Enhance Glenwood's transportation network to make it a safe place for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Coordinate with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) on any plans for future improvements to State Road 44 (State Street).

Action Item	Responsible Party
Have a representative from the Town establish a relationship with the Greenfield District of INDOT and meet at least annually to review future projects or improvements for the corridor.	Town Council

OBJECTIVE 2:

Improve pedestrian safety along Town streets.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Complete an inventory (including condition) of existing sidewalks in Glenwood.	Town Council
Identify where Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements are needed in the sidewalk system.	Town Council
Develop an implementation plan to add more sidewalks where needed and to upgrade any existing sidewalk facilities to become ADA-compliant.	Town Council

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL:

Upgrade community amenities and utility infrastructure to enable Glenwood residents to maintain and improve their quality of life.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Prioritize the availability of affordable, reliable, and accessible broadband services throughout Glenwood.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation to support the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII Broadband Initiative.	Town Council
Engage with the Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) to pursue the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) Next Level Connections: Broadband Grant Program funds.	Town Council
Engage with the Rush County ECDC to pursue BroadbandUSA's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funds.	Town Council

OBJECTIVE 2:

Ensure all residents of Glenwood have access to quality drinking water and promote efficient stormwater and surface water management.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Engage with the City of Rushville to see how Glenwood can participate in the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant for stormwater issues.	Town Council
Engage with the Rush County Soil and Water Conservation District and learn what local programs may be available that could positively impact water quality in the area.	Town Council
Stay engaged in the discussions to bring drinking water from Connersville to Glenwood along State Road 44.	Water Utilities, Town Council

OBJECTIVE 3:

Increase law enforcement efforts throughout the Town of Glenwood.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Consider hiring an additional law enforcement officer to join the Glenwood Police Department or investigate opportunities to partner with the Rush County Sheriff's Department to hire an officer to cover the Town of Glenwood.	Town Council

HOUSING GOAL:

Improve housing choices in Glenwood and ensure a mix of housing options are available.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Improve blighted properties in Glenwood.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation to support the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII efforts on blight elimination.	Town Council
Connect residents with local churches or assistance programs to help with property maintenance and/or improvements.	Town Council

OBJECTIVE 2:

Attract more diverse housing options to the Town of Glenwood.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Ensure that the Rush County development ordinances allow for different lot sizes and housing products like duplexes, apartments, senior housing, and townhomes in Glenwood.	Plan Commission, Town Council
Collaborate with local utility providers to increase the availability of utilities to areas of Glenwood that are appropriate for new residential development.	Water Utility, Town Council

OBJECTIVE 3:

Improve code enforcement efforts in the Town of Glenwood.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Collaborate with Rush County to provide additional support so that more code enforcement activities can take place within the Town of Glenwood.	Plan Commission, Town Council

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL:

Encourage and support small business growth in Glenwood.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Pursue particular businesses that are desired in Glenwood, such as a gas station, restaurant, and convenience store.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Work with the Rush County Community Foundation to develop a fund to help facilitate façade and interior improvements for spaces for new businesses in Glenwood.	Town Council
Collaborate with the Rush County ECDC and the Rush County Chamber of Commerce to provide small business owners with resources for starting and growing a business in the County.	Town Council
Review ordinances to ensure they are user-friendly and potential business owners can understand what steps are needed to open a business in Glenwood.	Town Council

OBJECTIVE 2:

Increase Town representation in County economic development decision making with the Rush County ECDC and the Rush County Chamber of Commerce.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Identify a resident or a Town Elected Officer to get involved with the Rush County ECDC and the Rush County Chamber of Commerce.	Town Council

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE GOAL:

Preserve open space in Glenwood.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Establish a facilities plan for the Glenwood Community Park and Community Center.

Action Item	Responsible Party
Prepare a maintenance plan for the Community Center, which would include items like general property maintenance and future replacement of kitchen equipment.	Town Council
Engage with the Rush County Community Foundation to see if grant funds are available to help fund modern playground equipment at the Glenwood Community Park.	Town Council

This page intentionally left blank.