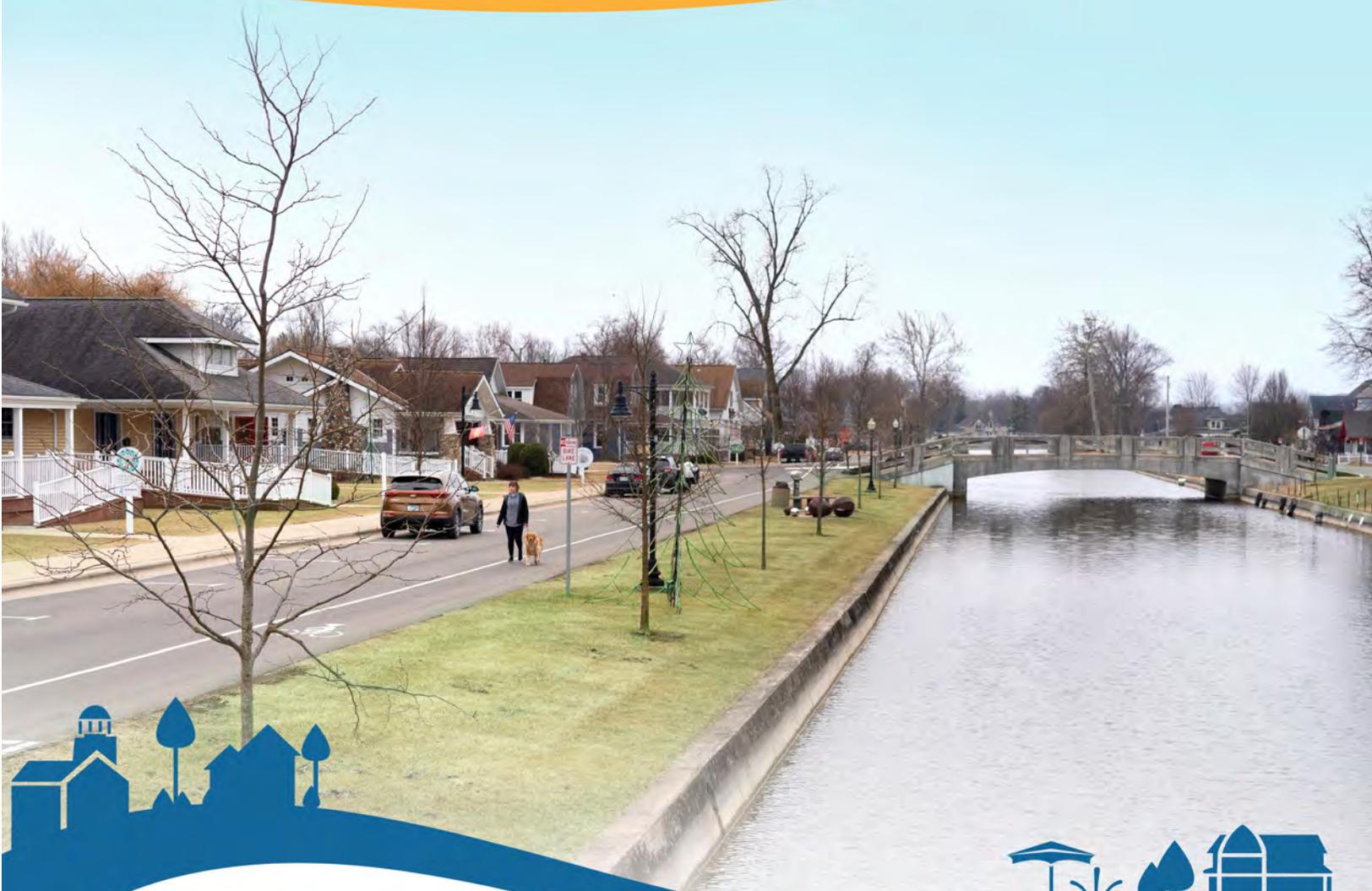


WINONA

LAKE

— IMAGINE 2030 —

comprehensive plan





PREPARED FOR:
Town of Winona Lake





Table Of Contents

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION	4
A Comprehensive Plan for Winona Lake's Future	4
Planning Process	6
A Vision for Winona's Future	10
CHAPTER 2 - COMMUNITY PROFILE	12
Community Profile	12
Setting	13
Who Winona Lake is Today	15
Building a Connected Community	16
Encouraging an Active Community	18
Creating Quality Places	20
Facilitating Strategic Businesses and Housing Development	22
Fostering Environmental Stewardship	26
Ensuring Access to Quality Education	29
Promoting an Engaging Community	32
Enriching Access to Cultural Arts & History	33
CHAPTER 3 - TRANSFORMING WINONA LAKE	35
A Vision Framework for Winona Lake	35
Future Development Concept Map	37
Transformative Strategies	40
CHAPTER 4 - MEASURING OUR SUCCESS	48
Imagine Winona Lake Priority Action Program	48
Implementing the Comprehensive Plan	51

Acknowledgments

The Imagine Winona Lake 2030 Comprehensive Plan would not have been possible without the guidance, direction, and input from the Winona Lake Steering Committee, Town Staff, Community Planning Commission, and the residents of Winona lake.

TOWN COUNCIL

Rick Swaim	Town Council President, Ward 5
Tecy Banta	Council Member, Ward 1
Denny Duncan	Council Member, Ward 2
Jim Lancaster	Council Member, Ward 3
Heather James	Council Member, Ward 4
Adam Turner	Town Attorney

PLANNING COMMISSION

Dave Turner
Bill Zimmer
Bruce Shaffner
Jerry Nelson
Craig Allebach
Jill Serbousek
Rick Swaim



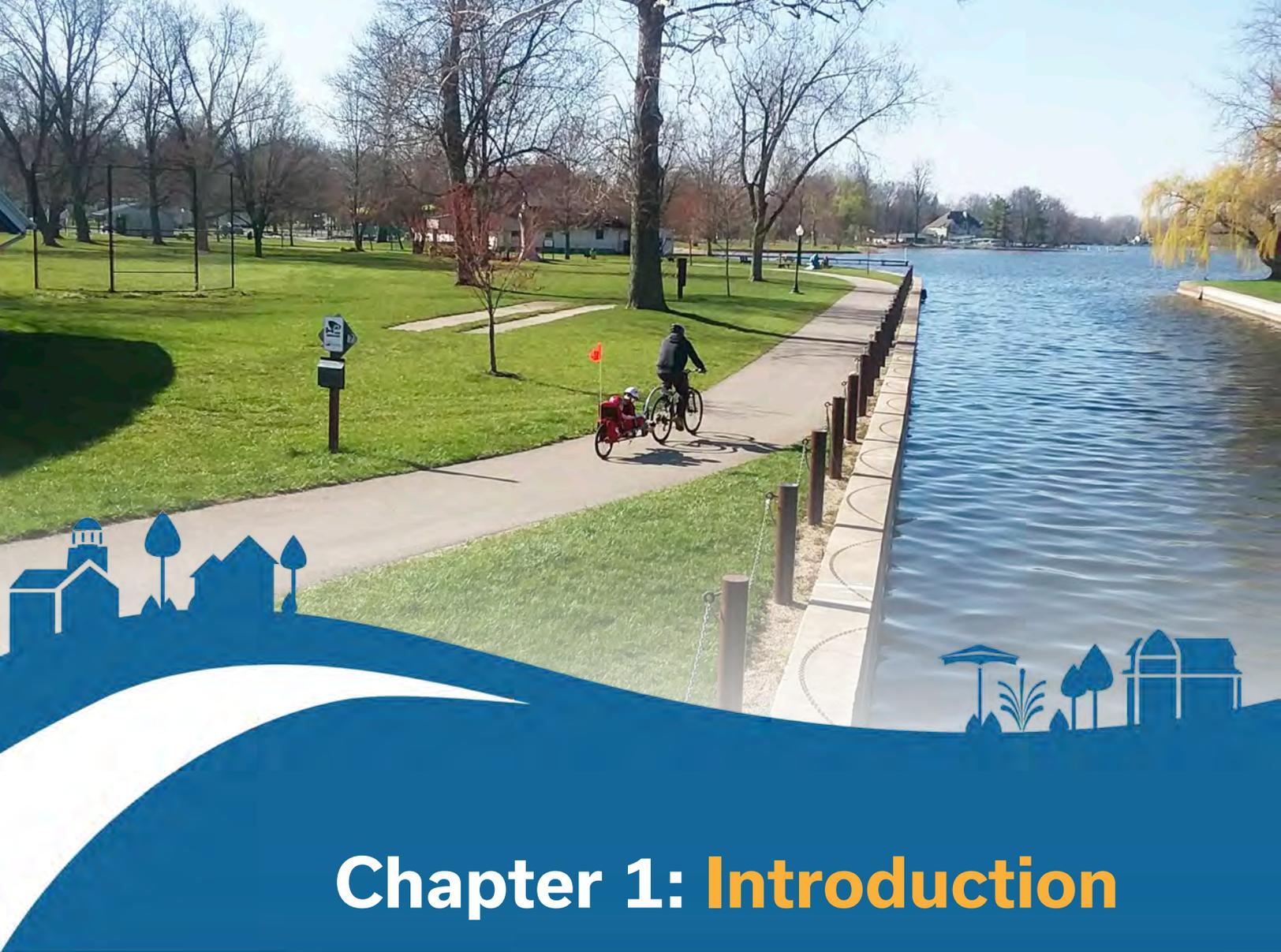
The Plan was endorsed by the Winona Lake Plan Commission on July 11, 2019.

The Plan was adopted by the Town of Winona Lake Town Council on July 16, 2019



STEERING COMMITTEE

Bill Katip	President, Grace College
Bruce Shaffner	Former Town Council President, Town of Winona Lake
Craig Allebach	Town Manager, Town of Winona Lake
Craig Snow	Silveus
David M Turner	Winona Lake Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals
Gene Seiman	Building Commissioner, Town of Winona Lake
Greg Demopoulos	KCV Cycling
Holly Hummitch	Parks Director, Town of Winona Lake
Jennifer Harting	Utility Clerk, Town of Winona Lake
Jill Serbousek	Winona Lake Board of Zoning Appeals
Jim Lancaster	Zimmer Biomet, Town Council Member
John Teevan	Stonehenge HOA
Kent Adams	Clerk-Treasurer, Town of Winona Lake
Meghan Lincoln	Deputy Clerk, Town of Winona Lake
Nate Bosch	Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams, Grace College
Nick Hauck	The Village at Winona
Rich Haddad	K21 Health Foundation
Rick Swaim	Town Council President
Terry White	Winona History Center, Grace College



Chapter 1: Introduction

A Comprehensive Plan for Winona's Future

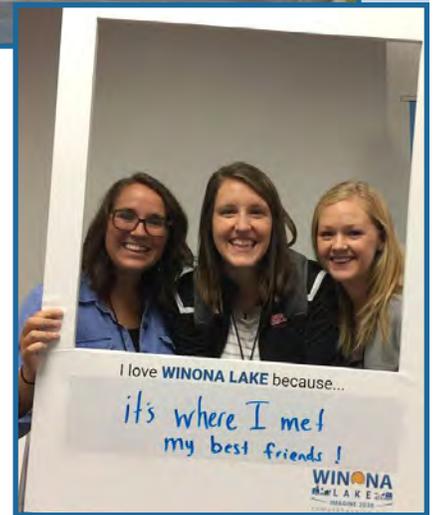
Since its incorporation as a town, Winona Lake has been known as an attractive place to live, play, and worship. From being home to a nationally known evangelist, Billy Sunday and the start for Billy Graham's ministry from a prayer meeting at Grace College to now known for its active living culture. Winona Lake has a distinctive and appealing small-town vibe with a fun and relaxed way of life being a lake town. The Town features a beautiful natural setting to make way for many outdoor recreational opportunities to satisfy all user types and enthusiasts. It also features a thriving entertainment and active community who hosts many events throughout the year, always giving locals and tourists something to do. Winona Lake's popular events include the Fireworks Festival, the Fat, Skinny Tire Festival, and the Art Fair, drawing thousands of visitors from all over the world.

Known as an “active” and “charming” town, the Town knows it must not only relish on their achievements. Maintaining their quality of life and small-town vibe to attract new residents and retain those who have called Winona Lake home for years requires continuous adaptation in an ever-changing world. The Town’s population could see a growth in population by 17 percent over the next decade and would need to plan for new housing options. Winona Lake’s attractiveness brings a unique challenge to a rural community with land limitations: how to accommodate the new people, in a sustainable manner, while preserving what they value so the Town gets better not just bigger.

Winona Lake is on the cusp to see new growth as many properties or areas of town are coming online for redevelopment or being targeted for redevelopment. However, the Town does not have a cohesive vision for these areas. Many town leaders and key property owners have differing viewpoints on what they would like to see these areas become. Additionally, Winona Lake has only been part of larger-scale regional planning efforts in the last five years, whether integral with the City of Warsaw’s 2015 Comprehensive Plan and 2016 Stellar Initiative but has not gone through a similar project themselves to establish a vision and strategies to guide development. The Town’s planning efforts have only been done for a specific area or function in the Town such as repairing roads, the Limitless Park Master Plan, and trail network. Planning at the Town level only occurs in a “piece-mill” fashion using zoning as their primary guide for development.

While these plans are essential to focus on those specific areas; however, only a comprehensive plan confronts the key issues facing Winona Lake in a big-picture way. A comprehensive plan considers the needs, values, and aspirations of all residents, and identify the interrelationships across the many facets that make up a community like transportation, housing, economic development, and land use. In developing this plan, the Town identifies the defining issues that are central to Winona Lake’s success.

The comprehensive plan will guide the Winona Lake Town Council, Plan Commission, key stakeholders, developers and organizations wanting to do business in Winona Lake to collaborate and build partnerships through creating a cohesive vision and make strategic investments to ensure Winona Lake is positioned for success for decades to come. A comprehensive will build a unified community by engaging and empowering all types of residents, regardless of income, age or disability, to participate and develop a Plan that best represents the interests of all residents. This plan is developed by the ideas and input of its residents and key stakeholders and organized by a volunteer group of town officials and staff, business owners, local citizens, and other community leaders, known as the Steering Committee. This plan will serve as Winona Lake’s road map for future land development decisions for the next decade.



Planning Process

Beginning in May of 2018, the Town of Winona Lake kicked off the planning process by organizing a Steering Committee to serve as the lead representative body overseeing the development of the plan. The planning process was designed to engage residents of the Winona Lake community in developing a vision for the Town's future, identify the building blocks the Town values

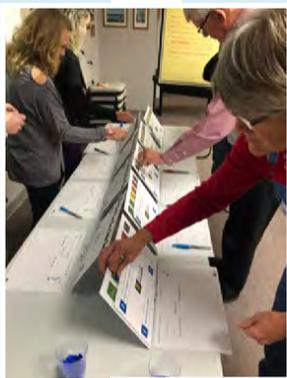
the most, identify the major opportunities and challenges, and action strategies to serve as a guide for local and private decision-making. Additionally, the process was built on the foundation of community involvement through multiple facets that sought input from key stakeholders including Town officials and staff, Winona Lake residents, local business owners, Grace

College staff and students, Warsaw Community School Administration, and other organizations.

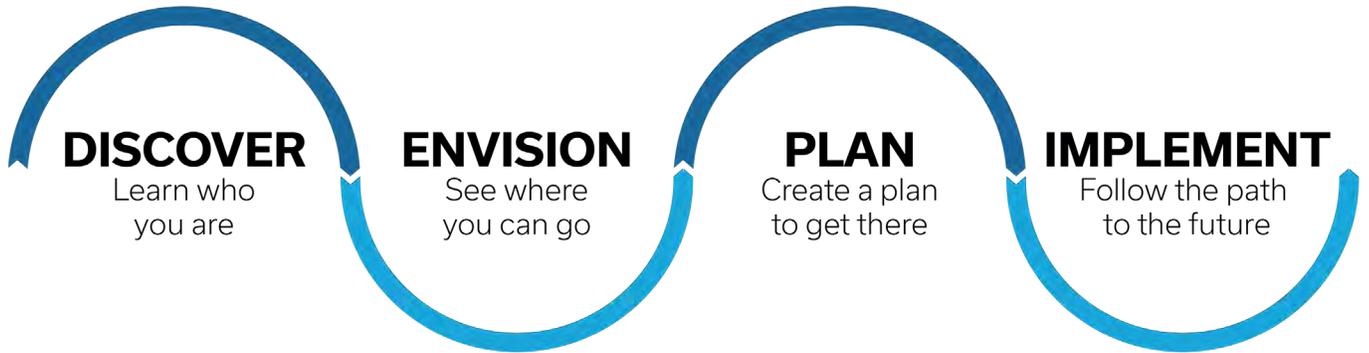
The planning team held monthly Steering Committee meetings to go through the five-step planning process (outlined in the callout box) and report on the progress of the plan development.

THE FIVE-STEP PL

1 ESTABLISH THE COMMUNITY VISION AND CORE VALUES – This integral step set the stage for the plan development. Several meetings involved vision building exercises that led the Steering Committee to identify what they liked and disliked about Winona Lake and community aspects they valued the most. At this time, the Town engaged its residents and key stakeholders through a facet of engagement efforts. Rather than hosting one public event to gather a minuet of input, we went to where the locals hang out—at Limitless Park, the Heritage Trail, at local businesses in the Village, and at Grace College. This allowed us to engage over 640 people. Coupled with an online survey, we received input from 155 individuals to gauge how residents imagine the future of Winona Lake, development preferences, and what they value the most. Results of the Public Input Survey are in Appendix B. The Imagine Winona Lake vision statement answers the question of what kind of town we want to be and sets forth principles (Core Values) that address the physical and social well-being of the town. The vision statement and core values acknowledge Winona Lake is a place of care and inclusion and that community leadership will be a critical component to realize the long-term vision. The Imagine Winona Lake vision statement and values are seen on pages 10 and 11.



2 ANALYZE EXISTING CONDITIONS – The planning team gathered the supporting facts and data to serve as the community profile. Information was collected using U.S. Census data, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Government Finance Tool, and interviews with Town staff, organization leaders, and community facility directors. Details on the Existing



ANNING PROCESS:

Conditions are in Appendix A. Using the existing conditions and the Core Values, the planning team held a series of focus group meetings made up of key stakeholders and technical experts to identify the goals of what they want to see accomplished by 2030, then draw out what Winona Lake is doing well and the major issues the Town needs to address to make these goals a reality.

3 DEVELOP THE ACTION STRATEGIES – This step involved a Future Development Workshop to work through several development scenarios to imagine what properties marked for redevelopment inside the Town’s limits and the outlining properties to establish a cohesive vision and systematically guide land decisions for decades to come. A series of Steering Committee meetings were held to then see how the goals and strategies align with the imagined future development map. The Steering Committee also identified the highest priority strategies that should receive higher attention for implementation in the next 5 years

4 PREPARE PLAN DOCUMENT AND REVIEW – The final plan was the accumulation of steps 1 to 3 and reviewed by the Steering Committee. The Plan was available for public review prior to adoption that included an open house and a 30-day engagement period.

5 ADOPT FINAL PLAN – The Steering Committee presented the final plan to the Town’s Planning Commission for their endorsement and adoption by the Town Council.

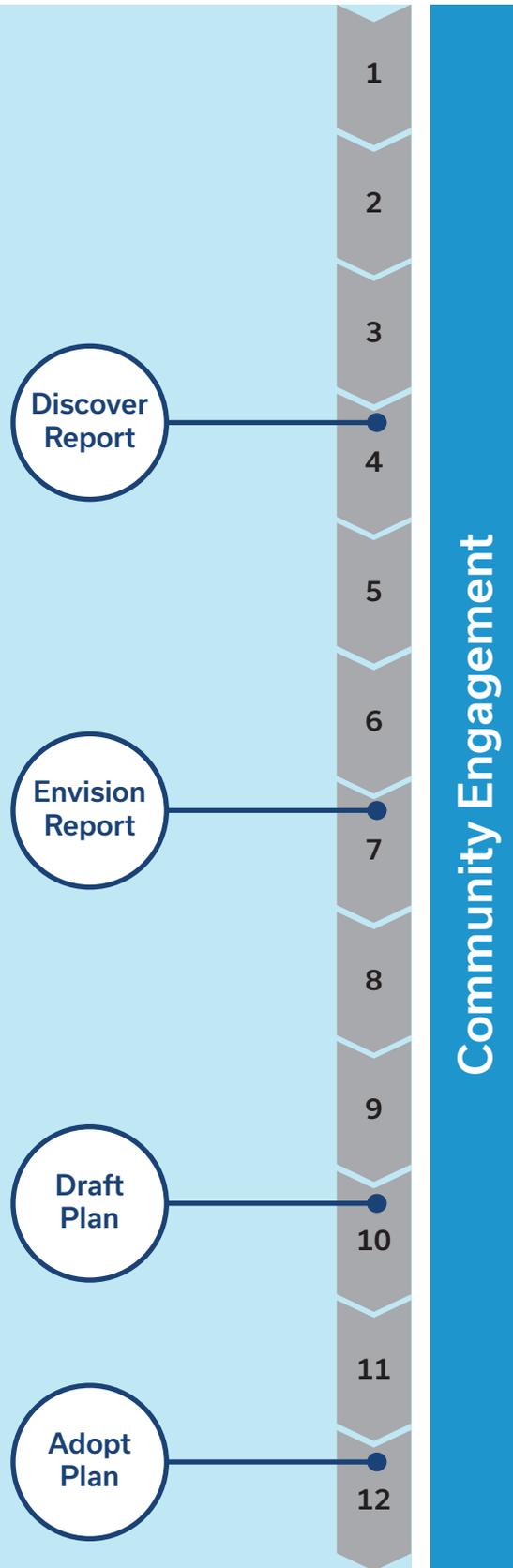


PROJECT TIMELINE

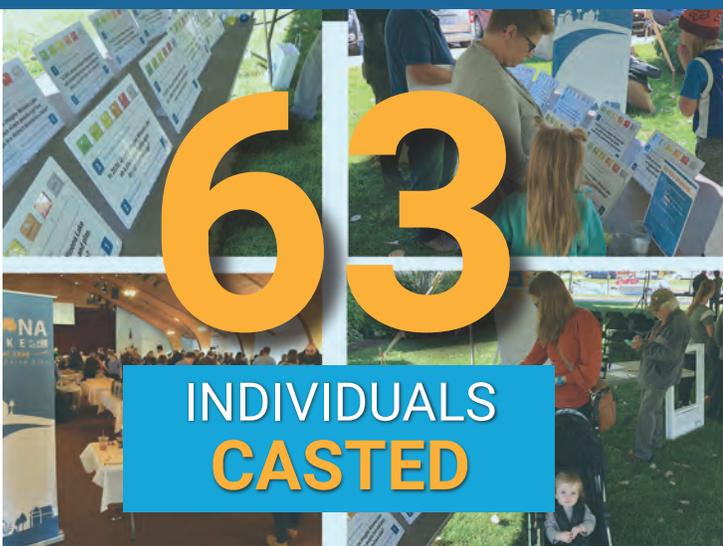
Milestones

Months

Phases



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



A Vision for Winona's Future

“*Winona Lake seeks sustainable growth that is honoring to our natural and historic resources while enhancing our values, culture, and quality of life. Through fostering an active community of care, inclusion, and participation, it is our hope that every person, family, and business can thrive in Winona Lake.*”

WE VALUE...

1

PROMOTING AN ENGAGING COMMUNITY

- Volunteerism
- Community and civic engagement
- Vibrant year-round events and programs
- Streamlined marketing and communication

5

FACILITATING STRATEGIC BUSINESS & HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- Housing is diverse and affordable
- Diverse jobs and services support the local market
- Create quality mixed-use centers that offer a range of living options and affordability, and professional jobs and services

2

ENCOURAGING AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY

- Encourages a healthy and active living lifestyle
- Diverse recreational opportunities to accommodate all users and skill levels
- Access to healthy foods

6

ENSURING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

- Early learning opportunities for families
- Adequate childcare opportunities
- Creating safe, engaging, welcoming, and learning environments
- Strong partnerships between Grace College, Community School systems, and families
- Supports fine arts and music education
- Education and workforce skills development

Early in the planning process, the planning team used the results from the public survey and aspirations collected from popup events to work with the Steering Committee to identify the Core Values that emphasizes and addresses who Winona Lake wants to be. The core values serve as the basis that articulates the characteristics, aspirations, and social attributes the community desires. The Steering Committee **identified eight core values**, highlighted below, to guide future design and development concepts, new policies, and programs for Winona Lake.

3

FOSTERING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

- Development occurs in targeted areas to protect the natural environment
- Cleaner air and water for a healthy community
- Community education and encourages individuals to take ownership to control impacts

4

CREATING QUALITY PLACES (AMENITIES)

- Protecting and enhancing neighborhoods
- Site developments are quality design with a distinct character
- Opportunities for Winona Lake's population to interact and hang out with friends and families
- Safe community
- Encourages everyone to invest locally

7

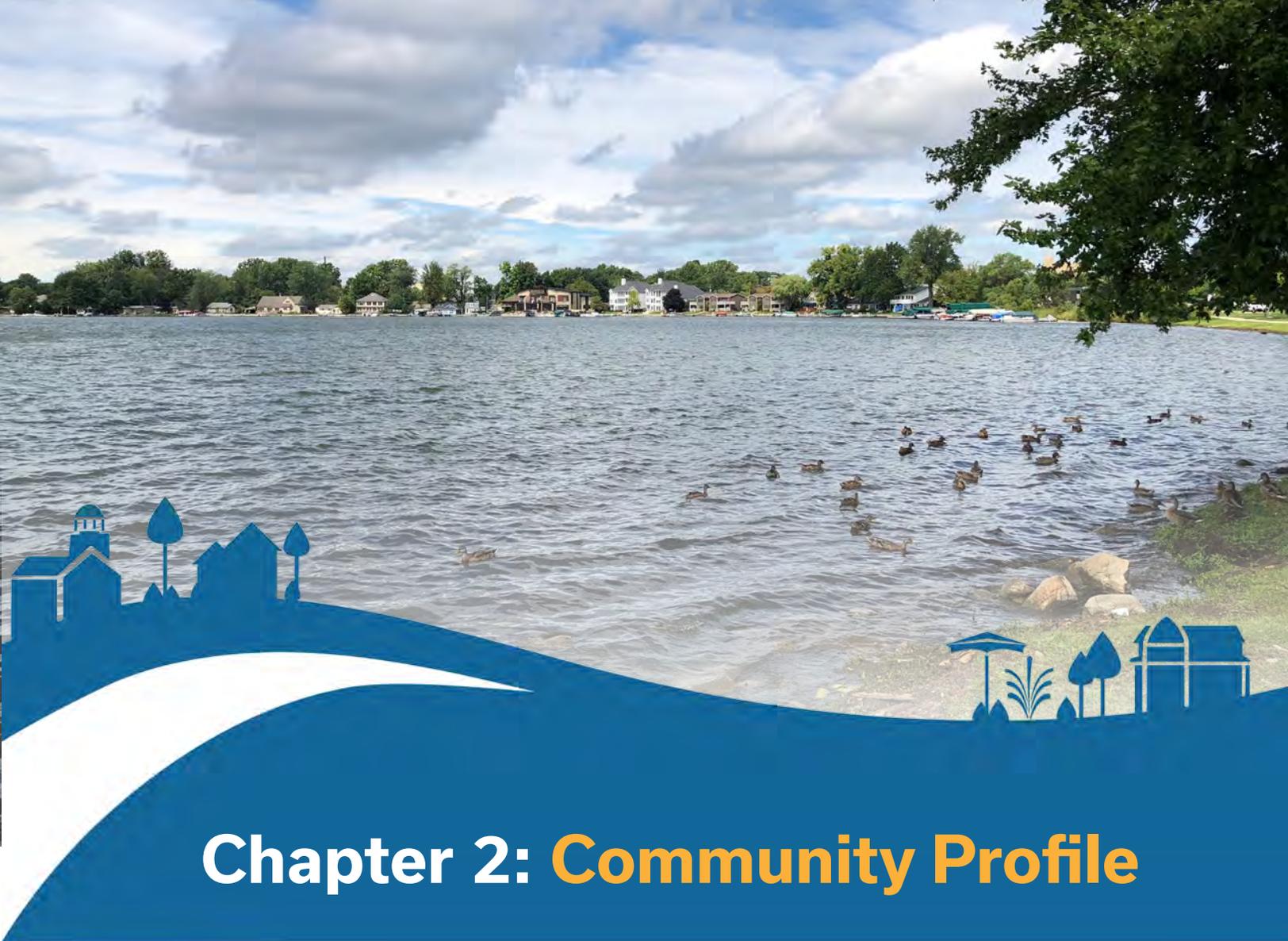
BUILDING A CONNECTED COMMUNITY

- Public infrastructure is accessible and affordable
- Trail network provides access to amenities and services
- Development patterns encourage and support biking and walking
- Transportation system efficiently moves people and goods

8

ENRICHING ACCESS TO CULTURAL ARTS & HISTORY

- Innovative and interactive learning opportunities
- Youth enrichment
- Quality cultural and history venues



Chapter 2: **Community Profile**

Community Profile

Winona Lake is a quaint small town that has become home and a destination for those seeking an active, engaging, vibrant, and welcoming community. Winona Lake is a town of compassion rooted in warm hospitality, natural beauty, and spiritual community.

However, it is imperative we define and measure current successes and deficiencies as to better prepare the Town for future growth and development. Through a detailed look at the town as it exists today, we can make decisions to build upon what we are getting right, and improve where we are falling short. Detailed in this section of the plan is the setting of Winona Lake-regionally and historically-and analysis of the Town's successes and deficiencies. This analysis will identify gaps and help answer the Town's key challenges to create new solutions. This will also serve as the baseline in forming the goals and strategies for the Town to measure the success of their vision.

Setting

Winona Lake's Regional Context

The Town of Winona Lake is located in Kosciusko County, contiguous to the City of Warsaw, with convenient access to US 30, a major route to Fort Wayne and Chicago. Within a 200-mile radius of Winona Lake, are major metropolitan areas of Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, and Columbus, and smaller metro areas such as South Bend and Fort Wayne. Each providing attractions, shopping destinations, recreational amenities, natural features, and high-quality higher learning institutions drawing people from all over the world. However, the beauty of Winona Lake is it features all of these high-quality amenities and attractions in a smaller setting providing a unique quality of life. Our unique quality of life distinguishes us from other communities in northern Indiana. Our geographic location, natural setting, and spiritual community have strongly influenced our past and will continue to be key values in outlining our future.

Winona Lake's Historical Context

Before Winona Lake, as we know it today, was a small settlement alongside the shores of what was then known as Eagle Lake. Although originally inhabited by the Miami and Potawatomi Native Americans, the modern era history of the region really began in 1881 when the three Beyer brothers, a family of enterprising dairy farmers from Germany, came and purchased the land for their butter and creamery business. They were first drawn to the area for the artisan wells and springs that came out of the hillsides as they saw these sources for natural refrigeration to cool their products.

Over time, the Beyer brothers realized that the area had recreational potential. In 1887, they began clearing the land and created Spring Fountain Park. The Park featured recreational venues including military parade grounds, a racetrack, a switchback railway, rollercoaster, and a large cyclorama featuring paintings of Civil War battles. They connected with the Chautauqua Movement, which was gaining momentum in the U.S., and under that movement entertainers, writers, war heroes, inventors, and famous people of all sorts came to Eagle Lake and Spring Fountain Park to perform. Performances included John Philip Sousa and his band, the New York Philharmonic Walter Damrosch, humorist Will Rogers, social reformer Jane Addams, politician William Jennings Bryan, and many more. At some point during the Chautauqua movement, it was recorded that as many as 250,000 people came to the town in one summer!



Everything changed in 1895 when an entrepreneurial Presbyterian clergyman named Solomon Dickey found Spring Fountain Park and worked out a deal to purchase approximately 160 acres along the lakeshore from the Beyer Brothers. Dickey and his financial backers (John D. Rockefeller, H. J. Heinz, John Studebaker, John Wanamaker, William Jennings Bryan, Alexander McDonald, and others) began a massive building and developmental program. They built the Westminster Hotel and Mount Memorial (named for Gov. James Mount) in 1905. McDonald dredged the canal in 1902, thus creating McDonald Island. The first residence on the island was Dickey's personal residence – Killarney Castle. It was at this time, they changed the name of the town and the lake to Winona Lake.

Little by little Dickey, while continuing the Chautauqua programs, began to nudge the town in the direction of becoming a religious and Bible conference center. Billy Sunday, the world-famous evangelist, decided to move to Winona Lake in 1911, building the Arts and Crafts bungalow on Sunday Lane that is available today for touring. The town was incorporated in 1913. A disastrous fire in 1914 wiped out much of Chestnut Street, but the properties were rebuilt.

In 1920, the British theologian G. Campbell Morgan established his Winona Summer School of Theology. That same year the cyclorama was torn down and construction began on a 7,500-seat tabernacle, which would eventually become known as the Billy Sunday Tabernacle and stood until its demolition in 1992. In 1937, Grace Theological Seminary was founded in the Winona Lake Presbyterian Church and two years later, the school relocated permanently to Winona Lake, with Grace College being founded in 1948 and the college became a four-year liberal arts college in 1954.



In 1944, a group of youth ministers from various parts of the U.S. formed an organization during a lunch meeting in the Westminster Hotel. They named it Youth for Christ and their first full-time employee was a lanky young minister from the west side of Chicago named Billy Graham. Graham worked for YFC full-time for four years and in July of 1949, he was the subject of an all-night prayer meeting in the Rainbow Room of the Westminster which launched his September 1949 Los Angeles crusade. That crusade attracted so much attention, it launched Graham's evangelistic career and although he remained a board member and attached to YFC, he never was employed by them again.



Known for years as the “Home of the World’s Largest Bible Conference,” Winona Lake hosted a full roster of denominational and organizational conventions, particularly in the summertime. The Bible conference movement began to wane; however, and, faced with financial difficulties, the Winona Christian Assembly in 1968 turned over all their assets and liabilities to Grace College and Seminary.

The town had sunk to new lows in the 1980s, with much substandard housing, aging, and decrepit public buildings, and crumbling infrastructure. At that point, a visionary young Grace College student named Brent Wilcoxson devised a plan to re-birth Winona Lake as a tourist attraction once again with artisan shops along the canal, several world-class restaurants, a Greenway trail for hiking and biking that would feature public art installations and much more. He worked on his plan for four years and in 1994 partnered with Dr. Dane and Mary Louise Miller, who provided the funding to make Wilcoxson’s dream a reality. The Miller’s, being one of the four co-founders of the orthopedic giant Biomet, has invested approximately \$40 million in personal funds into developing and maintaining the Village at Winona we see today. Winona Lake has once again, in its third wave of history, become a truly attractive and viable center for living, working, and tourism.



Who Winona Lake Is Today

To aid in defining who Winona Lake is today, the planning team hosted eight focus group meetings using the eight core values as the basis for each meeting and the needed attendance of technical expertise and community leaders. Attendees were first to imagine what they want to see accomplished by 2030 or the high-level goals. Next, they were to identify the areas the Town is doing well to achieve those goals and the areas that are preventing that goal from being achieved today. The outcomes of those meetings and the culmination of stakeholder interviews, census and economic data analysis frames this section of “Who Winona Lake is today.” Outlined below and grouped by the core values are the assets and opportunities that make Winona Lake an attractable place to live - as well as the challenging areas the Town needs to improve. Specific details from the stakeholder interviews and the census and economic data analysis are in Appendix A.

Building a Connected Community

ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

Trail & Sidewalk Network. One of the assets and amenities that makes Winona Lake an attractive place to live is the benefit of having a network of trails and sidewalks connecting users to many of the town’s destinations. It was indicated from the public input survey that one of the top reasons locals love about Winona Lake is living in close access to trails and that the Town has these amenities. The Heritage Trail is approximately 3 miles and extends from the Argonne Road and Park Avenue intersection to the Village, Limitless Park, Grace College, Miller Athletic Complex, and terminates in the southern neighborhood off Roy Street. In addition to the trail system, the Town has nearly 20 miles of sidewalks provided on streets in the Island, the Village, Town Hall, and Grace College. The Town also has plans to add an additional 1.7 miles of trails from the Miller Athletic Complex to Stonehenge Golf Course and 1.3 miles of sidewalks along Wooster Road and S 250 E to Lakeland Christian Academy.

Bikeshare System. In 2018, the Town of Winona Lake and the City of Warsaw, with local sponsorship from Zimmer Biomet, partnered to acquire a bike share system provided by Zagster. The system includes four stations with five bikes at each station available to anyone to rent. Stations are located at Grace College, the Village, downtown Warsaw, and Boggs Industrial Park. This is another asset that adds to the community’s quality of life and gives an opportunity for locals and visitors to make short distance trips on a bike rather than drive to support an active healthy lifestyle.

Policy Changes. Upon receiving the Bicycle Friendly Community’s bronze designation in 2016 in partnership with the City of Warsaw, the Town has been working on developing a Complete Streets Policy. This will allow streets to be designed to accommodate multiple forms of transportation to make the roads safer and friendlier for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. This will also make it easier for locals to have an active healthy lifestyle by having the options to bike and walk to their destinations. While the Town currently does not have road design standards in their zoning ordinance, the Town is pursuing amending the ordinance to create a better partnership with developers to provide the necessary public infrastructure in new construction to service the local population.





CHALLENGES

Underserved Areas. While Winona Lake has made great strides in constructing the Heritage Trail system, there are many underserved areas in the community. Approximately 63 percent of residents indicated in the public input survey that they would like to see an increase in biking and walking connections to destinations. Currently, the trail terminates in the southern area of Town off Roy Street but no connections, yet, have been extended to the west and east giving opportunities for those living in the southern area to access the many town destinations by walking or biking. Although the Town has sidewalks in the town core, many of the older neighborhoods and new housing developments do not have sidewalks. It was also expressed that the Town needs better connections to the City of Warsaw and a trail connection around the lake. Similarly, many parts of the community are not serviced by the public water and sewer systems provided by Indiana American Water.

as the infrastructure did not extend with new development, leaving residential areas on the fringes supported by well and septic. The cost to provide service to these areas would be astronomical due to the distance required to tap in and would need to be studied for configuration of the underground infrastructure. Additionally, there are no incentives offered by the Town to support developers to construct the infrastructure for new development.

New Road Connection. In order to provide a safe and direct path to the town, especially from the east side, it is necessary to have a new road in place. This will provide a safe route for motorists and safer neighborhoods in the streets that border Park Ave. on the west and Kings Highway on the east. In addition, it will provide better access to economic development opportunities on the east side of Winona Lake.

Encouraging an Active Community

ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

Recreational Amenities. It is often a difficult feat for rural communities to acquire the funds necessary to have the amenities available for residents and visitors to be encouraged to live an active healthy lifestyle. However, this is what has made Winona Lake an attractive place to live and visit as they have many outdoor recreational amenities to accommodate all users and enthusiasts. Winona Lake is known as a recreation destination. The town features a 3-mile trail network with opportunities to expand the system to southern residential areas. The Town features two community parks, Limitless Park and Bibler Park. Limitless Park is a fully accessible park to all users and disabilities and was made possible through a complete renovation of the original Winona Lake in 2011. The Town has plans to continue to enhance the park to include a music garden. In addition to the Heritage Trail, Winona Lake features over 10 miles of mountain bike trails-touted as one of the Midwest's most highly desired cycling stops. Mountain biking enthusiasts-beginners and experts will also soon be able to enjoy and hone in on their skills as the Town has plans to construct a bike skills park. Winona Lake's trails have become a driver in supporting the local economy and is vital for the Town to maintain a high-quality trail system for the sustainability of its future.



Support for Healthy Living. There is increasing support from the community to see Winona Lake as a “healthy community.” In conjunction with the amount of biking and walking opportunities, the Town has several businesses and restaurants focused on healthy lifestyles. These range from sports stores to health food stores and restaurants. Perhaps one of Winona Lake's greater assets and opportunities is the partnerships and active advocacy organizations with the shared purpose to develop the area as a great place to live, work, and play by creating a high-quality biking and walking experience. Together, the Kosciusko County Velo (KCV) Cycling Club and the Ride Walk Advisory Committee strives to promote healthy lifestyles, induce social interaction, and economic development opportunities through biking and walking initiatives.

Community Events. Through a given year, the Town, the Village at Winona, and KCV organize nearly a dozen events that attract thousands of people to Winona Lake. Many of these are fitness-related events such as 5K runs and are held on Winona Lake's trails. The most popular fitness-related event hosted by KCV is the Fat & Skinny Tire Festival. This event has become a national draw to all cycling enthusiasts and skill-levels that sees over 2,000 participants and 6,000 spectators. It is credited as an event that every expert cyclist should attempt to compete in at least once.

“ This is an event every racer should do at least once. The format is awesome. The money is good. And the city is one of the friendliest places in America. Everyone was top notch and pro the whole way through. The spirit, style, and atmosphere are what American racing lives on. Thank you so much for your passion and efforts. ”

(Steve Cullen, Racer/Author of Fasturdays: The Story of American Criteriums and Fasturdays Podcast, Boston, Massachusetts)



“ You know an event is something special when racers put it on their calendars early, and other events try to avoid the same weekend. As a multi-time official, we appreciate the hospitality, experience, and teamwork in such a great setting and community. Fat & Skinny is an event to be proud of. ”

(John Longenecker, USA Cycling Midwest Region Official, Angola, Indiana)



CHALLENGES

Aging Community Center. Although the Town has a viable asset of having a community-senior center in Limitless Park to host a range of activities from small group meetings, summer programs, and social clubs to larger community events, the center is dated and deteriorating. The placement of the facility is often a complaint by the elderly given the bit of a walking distance from the parking lot to the front door. Additionally, the community center was built in a flood plain and experiences frequent flooding. This has accelerated the center’s deterioration and many dollars have gone towards repairing the foundation. While the center is large and great to host events and programs it is dated and does not have the desired amenities for the youth-teens and young adults to have a place to hang out. One desired amenity expressed by the Town and the youth is a fitness center.

Air Quality. Some residents are concerned about air pollutants emitted by nearby industrial facilities and automobiles. While industrial businesses provide great economic benefits, they can potentially pose negative effects on the environment and overall health and well-being of nearby residents. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency Toxics Release Inventory (TRI), Indiana ranks 3rd in the nation in the number of TRI facilities that release toxic chemicals primarily due to the concentration of manufacturing in the state. The TRI provides a database where residents can learn more about the type and quantity of chemical releases as well as how the production-related waste is recycled, treated, or disposed of. The Indiana Department of Environmental Management does not operate any ambient air monitors for air toxics, ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and other air pollutants in Kosciusko County because these pollutants are not a widespread concern in the area.

Creating Quality Places

ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

The Village at Winona. Winona Lake is unique and unlike most incorporated communities in that, there is not a “traditional” downtown form. It was not until 1994 that a Grace College student imagined Winona Lake as a tourist attraction as in its glory days and partnered with local investors to turn the area we know today into “The Village at Winona.” While the Town does not have the traditional downtown, the Village acts as Winona Lake’s “downtown” and is unlike other downtown areas in small towns which often experience high vacancies with minimal “things to do.” Built on the Lake, the Village is vibrant and has become a premier destination spot with many opportunities to shop, eat, play, and enjoy the Lake. This is another unique quality about Winona Lake that makes it an attractive place to live and do business. Additionally, many of Winona Lake’s popular events such as the Fireworks Festival, the Art Fair, and the Fat & Skinny Tire Fest (in partnership with KCV) are put on by the Village. No doubt the Village has become one of the Town’s greatest assets but the Town and Village property owners must not overlook the many opportunities the Village provides to sustain Winona Lake’s future.



Enhancing & Building New Facilities. Winona Lake knows it cannot only bask, but also relish, and rely on community facilities as they are to sustain the Town’s quality of life and reputation. It is the Town’s vision to be known as a premier recreation destination and in order to sustain this, the Town realizes in an ever-changing world that constantly searches for the next latest and greatest thing they have to be prepared to adapt and provide quality places. The Town plans to expand Limitless Park by completing the second phase, which will make the Park a universally accessible playground. The Town also wants to add a music garden in Limitless Park to add a learning experience while playing. The Town is studying the feasibility to add a bike skills park to enhance the value of their mountain bike trail system. This will give mountain biking enthusiasts an opportunity to hone in on their riding skills to give them a “crash-course” on how to maneuver the trail’s diverse terrain and jumps. Additionally, property owners of the Village are exploring the feasibility to add a new outdoor venue that can be enjoyed and used all “year-round,” which includes having an ice-skating rink in Circle Fountain Park.



CHALLENGES

Redeveloping Properties. Current trends in community development has gone towards focusing on providing the quality of life amenities and creating vibrant dense places for people to be able to walk or bike in shorter distances between their residency, jobs, and hang out spots rather than the “norm” of building single unit jobs and homes in the fringe areas of communities to attract and retain individuals and families. Communities across the nation are accomplishing this by repurposing underutilized real estate assets including open-vacant land and buildings in developed areas to maximize the current infrastructure and preserve the open land on the fringes. While Winona Lake has many of the quality of life amenities that appeals to prospective residents, i.e. trails, shopping, dining, and entertainment, the town does lack the “dense” urban environment as developed properties, including those in the Village are single-unit structures. The Town’s population could grow by 17 percent in the next decade and would need to plan for new housing development to accommodate the new residents. Additionally, the Town has no room to grow in their corporate limits to accommodate the new people and would have to annex farmland for new development. This presents a series challenge as it would not be to the Town’s benefit to continue the same land development patterns of constructing single-unit structures but creatively explore opportunities to create denser developments with the integration of multi-family units.



Limited Places for Young Adults-Grace College Students-to Hang-out. Although there are shopping and dining opportunities in the Village at Winona, these local establishments are not ones that really cater to the youth and in particular Grace College Students. There are limited establishments that are open late for young adults to have a safe place to hang out. The establishments in the Village are considered specialty-niche-destination based businesses selling goods at “higher-end” prices than what teens and college students can afford. Approximately 53 percent of respondents to the public input survey want to see more dining and shopping opportunities and 36 percent would like to see more community gathering spaces in Winona Lake.



Corporate “Buy-In”-Invest in the Community they Work in. Prior to going through the comprehensive planning process, the Town and community leaders had a general idea of their opportunity and challenging areas and ways to address these areas and realized a lot could be accomplished if they had more local businesses investing in the community they work in. This could range from sponsoring a Town program or event to financially backing community development projects

Facilitating Strategic Business & Housing Development

ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

Partnerships with Regional Entities. One of the areas the Town does well in is collaborating and partnering with regional entities. The Town has a strong working relationship with the contiguous City of Warsaw and routinely works together rather in silos on community issues dealt around transportation and economic development. The two entities worked together in 2016 in hopes of being selected as a Stellar Community from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) before OCRA changed the Stellar Communities program into a regional application in 2018. While unsuccessful, the bond has remained and shared similar values in creating vibrant transportation corridors, gateways, and providing a unique biking and walking experience to create a better place to live, work, and play. The Town routinely partners with advocacy organizations such as KCV, housing agencies such as the Warsaw Housing Authority, environmental organizations such as the Watershed Foundation and Grace College's Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams, and economic development with the Kosciusko County Chamber of Commerce. Other economic development partnerships will be increasing with the Kosciusko County Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO).

The Town is pursuing having KEDCO be the main marketer to attract businesses into Winona Lake and help implement development strategies identified from the Imagine Winona Lake 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

Strong Quality of Life to Attract Businesses and Workforce. Winona Lake is a quaint small town that features the many quality of life amenities that prospective businesses and residents consider in their decision to locate in a particular community. Winona Lake has become a destination for those seeking an active, engaging, vibrant, and welcoming community. Winona Lake's deep historical roots and the Village at Winona are the catalysts in making Winona Lake a destination community that serves as the premier center for dining, shopping, and entertainment on the Lake. Winona Lake is home to great public and private school systems. Winona Lake features 3-miles of paved multi-use trails and a bike-share system making it possible to walk or bike to your destination in town. The Town also has 10-miles of mountain bike trails. Other attractions include events hosted by Grace College, Limitless Park and beach access to the Lake.



Expanding the Local

Tax Base. The Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) lists five Community Vitality Indicators to help smaller communities like Winona Lake to develop a preliminary understanding of their community's vibrancy. Two indicators are the Town's Net Assessed Value and Per Capita Income for those living in Winona Lake. The Town of Winona Lake's Net Assessed Value Indicator is often referred to as the property tax base for the Town. Growth in the assessed value is a reflection of construction activity, affecting the Town's budget for capital expenditures and the ability to provide the quality of life amenities that prospective business owners and residents look for in a community. Over the last eight years, Winona Lake's assessed value has increased eight percent from \$155 million in 2010 to \$168 million in 2018. The Per Capita Income Vitality Indicator is a measure of an area's average income and is most commonly

Per Capita Income



used to compare the wealth of one community to another. This gauges the health of the local economy to determine the ability to support local businesses with residents having a higher disposable income through access to higher paying jobs. Winona Lake's Per Capita Income has steadily been increasing since 2000. The income level has increased 47 percent from \$19,025 in 2000 to \$28,034 in 2016.

Policy Changes. While the Town does have an adopted zoning ordinance to govern land development decisions, it is outdated and

needs to be updated to reflect the vision and strategies presented in this Comprehensive Plan. The Town knows and is working on updating their ordinance to include modern design standards and ways to create a better partnership with developers to provide the necessary public infrastructure in new construction to service the local population.

Net Assessed Value



CHALLENGES

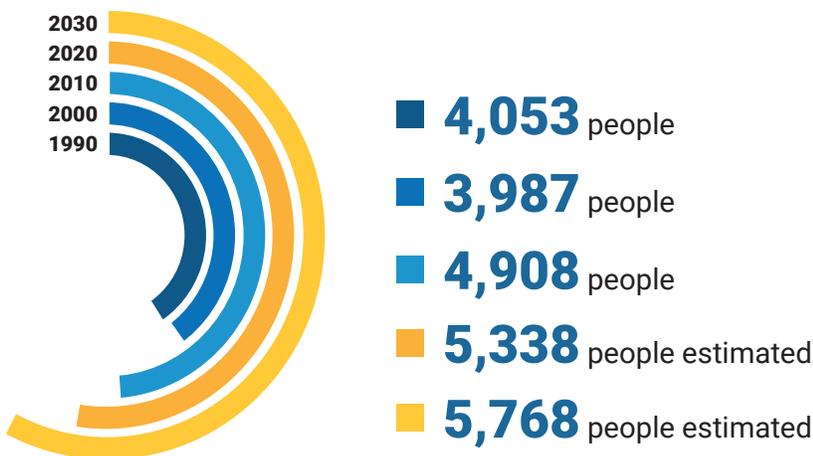
Diverse Job Market. Winona Lake is fortunate to be located next to Warsaw, the “orthopedic” capital in the US. As a leading industry sector, this gives a great opportunity for locals to access higher paying jobs close to home. Although the vibrancy of the Village at Winona is rooted in tourism based merchants and specialty-niche-retailers, there is a need to diversify the job market to attract more professional office and service-based businesses. While the City of Warsaw may have more industrial uses than Winona Lake, the Town could use this as an opportunity to balance the market in the region to attract jobs that are more relevant to Winona Lake. This could aid in maintaining the Town’s small-town charm offering a fun and relaxed community atmosphere. Also, development patterns could support the “denser” mixed-use environment with having living and professional working spaces in the same building. It would be to the benefit of the Warsaw-Winona Lake Urbanized area to create a strong diverse business climate for large and small businesses to thrive. In targeted areas for redevelopment, the Town could create incubator spaces to attract entrepreneurs and help them with business

start-ups. This will expand job opportunities and enhance the skills of the workforce.

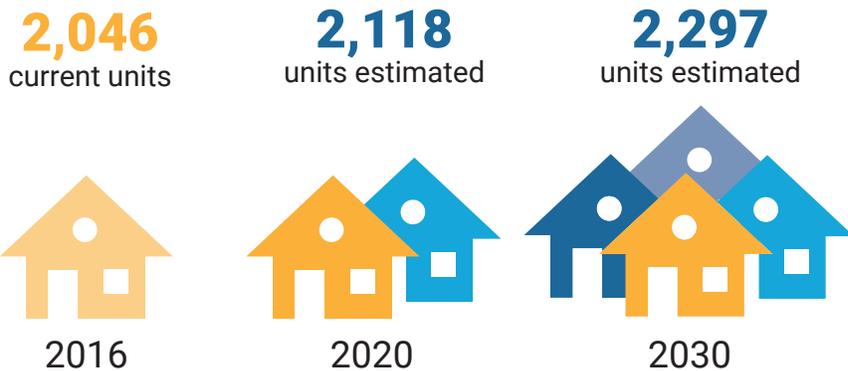
Limited Land to Develop. Winona Lake is consistently viewed as a desirable community to live giving the opportunity to live a fun-active lifestyle with the number of trails and lake activities, a relaxed way of life to unwind and enjoy the lake, and the welcoming atmosphere as a safe and family-friendly community. Managing the Town’s quality of life and small-town vibe to attract new residents and retain those who have called Winona Lake home for years presents a significant challenge of having to continuously adapt to stay relevant in an ever-changing world. Along with adapting, the Town has a significant challenge of being land-locked and not having room to grow outwardly. It is anticipated the Town’s population could grow by 17 percent over the next decade, which means the Town may need to plan for approximately 250 new housing options. This would require the Town to seek annexation to grow its land area but with current state laws dealing with annexations continuously makes it harder for municipalities to use this tool. The Town must creatively

change the way their community should be built over the next decade and how to accommodate new populations in a sustainable manner while preserving what we value so the Town gets better not just bigger. That means exploring opportunities to target key areas in the community to be redeveloped as complete (compact) activity centers to allow new populations to live closer to their jobs and places of entertainment.

Population Projection



Housing Projection



Limited Affordable Housing

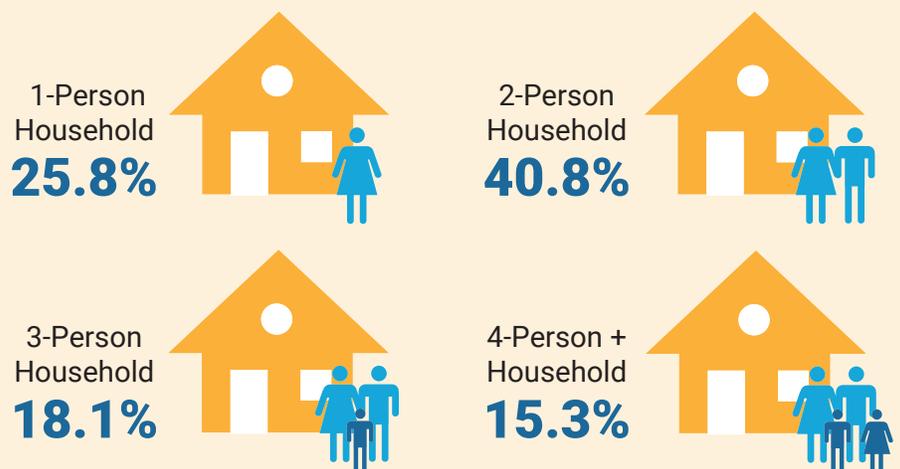
Housing. It is important to preserve the livability of existing neighborhoods while creating a range of new housing options. This would include providing a supply of new “entry-level” or starter workforce housing so those with a limited income can have the opportunity to live in a quality home. Approximately 49 percent of the home

Limited Housing Options. Winona Lake has an inadequate supply of housing options available for the aging and young professionals and families. Winona Lake’s housing composition needs to change as these generations are increasing and demonstrate a demand to live in a more vibrant setting with little yard maintenance and conveniently be able to walk to amenities and services. Most of the housing types in Winona Lake are single-family homes with limited integration of other housing options available in existing residential areas. An additional challenge was expressed by Steering Committee members that many of the single-family homes on the island are being converted into multiple units and rented out.

This is reflective of trends noted from the Census 2016 5-Year American Community Survey, Winona Lake has seen a 10 percent decline in homeownership since 2000 and a 10 percent increase in renters. While the Town wants to ensure housing options are available to those who choose to rent, they also want to encourage reinvestment in the rental properties to not detriment the community’s appealing image and quality of life for all residents.

values in Winona Lake is above \$150,000 with 30 percent of the homes are valued above \$200,000. Property values are also on the rise (partly due to being located on the lake) and assessed in ranges that are not “affordable” for first-time homebuyers and even those still relatively new in the workforce (less than five years). As mentioned beforehand, there is an increasing trend to create urban-dense mixed-use centers to attract towards the aging populations and young professionals entering the workforce. The Town needs to explore opportunities to create mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods with a range of housing so people looking to live in Winona Lake can have an affordable place to live.

Housing Stock



Fostering Environmental Stewardship

ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

Partnerships with Environmental Organizations. Winona Lake routinely partners with environmental groups to ensure the community maintains quality natural resources in the soil, water, and air. The Town works with The Watershed Foundation and the Winona Lake Preservation Association to control erosion along the lake's shoreline. Other initiatives with the Foundation have included deterring the influx of Canadian geese to prevent potential public health risks from droppings. The Foundation is bringing together community partners to install a healthy shoreline with a mix of glacial stones and native plants along the 500 linear feet of shoreline from the edge of the public swimming beach to Cherry Creek. The Association coordinates the management of excess weeds in the Lake and dredging projects as well. The Town also works heavily with the Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams at Grace College to support research on the surrounding streams and the Lake itself to strategically protect these waterways. The Lilly Center includes three freshwater scientists and has the tools necessary to conduct high-quality research. Their staff is experienced at operating K-12 and community outreach

programs, on national and local levels as well. Grace College student interns and volunteers give them the personnel they need to effectively and efficiently conduct these research and education programs.

Economic Benefits from the Lake. Not many communities of any size across the nation can benefit from having the natural features that enhance a community's quality of life such as being built on a lake. Having built on the lake, the Town is fortunate to have amenities for residents and businesses to take advantage of lakefront views, recreational opportunities, and immersive learning opportunities. Studies conducted by the Lilly Center have shown that Kosciusko County lakes contribute over \$313 million annually to local economies. This includes the benefit of attracting both lake-related and specific-businesses. Lake-related businesses contribute over \$147 million and lake specific businesses contribute over \$150 million to local economies. Local businesses have stated their business would not likely be successful someplace else had they not located on Winona Lake. Other businesses have stated the lake fuels 100 percent of their company's goals and mission.



CHALLENGES

Education & Taking Ownership. (Educating homeowners to take ownership to control the “things” they can control) It is always easy to pass the blame onto someone else and to pinpoint the source of pollutants discharged into waterways or emitted into the atmosphere. But greater protection of Winona Lake’s natural features can be mitigated by property owners receiving the proper education to one have knowledge on how they can take action if they witness a detrimental effect and two develop a sense of pride to take ownership to mitigate effects from their personal property. Property owners on septic systems should have their tanks regularly inspected and emptied to prevent contaminating groundwater sources. Other challenging areas to control is the usage of fertilizers on lawns and pesticides on crops who are located adjacent to waterways, and properly cleaning up pet waste.

Aging Infrastructure. Many homes located on the east and south sides of Winona Lake are not served by public water and wastewater as the infrastructure was not carried to these areas as development occurred. Additionally,

the Town does not own these services and handled by facilities located in Warsaw and currently do not have the financial incentives to require and attract developers to install these necessary infrastructure systems in their developments. This is a major financial issue as the cost to extend these systems to underserved areas in town would be astronomical. Additionally, many property owners do not really know how well their water and septic systems are functioning with not having their systems properly inspected and assume their systems are in good condition.

Controlling Invasive Species. Invasive species around Winona Lake challenge economic growth, public health, and recreational opportunities. Species of specific concern currently are the overpopulation of white-tailed deer as well as the common presence of Japanese barberry plants in local forested and urban areas. These species contribute to increased tick populations which pose a serious health risk to local residents from the different diseases carried by ticks.



CHALLENGES (CONT..)

Brownfield Remediation. Although there are a couple of brownfields in Winona Lake, located off Kings Highway, the Town is working on remediating these sites. Additionally, there are several brownfields identified in Warsaw off Argonne Road near the main entrance into Winona Lake. These include the former Gatke and Arnolt properties. The Arnolt Corporation sits on 2.3 acres of land and is located just .1 miles away from Winona Lake. It was a marine engine manufacturer but has been closed since 1991. Because of visible contamination, illegal dumping, and its use as a drug lab in 2015, it has had a demolition order since 2017. Trichloroethylene was found on the site in 1993 and is likely a persisting issue to the surface waters that feed into the Lake. Nearby, a 3 acre brownfield site called Gatke has become a planned site for infrastructure upgrades and private investment. This site too has had reportings of chemicals found in the water supply and illegal activities occur such as individuals were caught producing meth. While there are interests to redevelop the Gatke property into a mixed-use center with co-working spaces, nearby brownfields such as Arnolt hinder developers to want to take on the

financial commitment to remediate these sites. These blighted properties not only pose health and environmental risks but their presence in the area negatively impacts the home values and drawbacks to attract new families, individuals, and businesses.

Water Quality. While the original parts of Winona Lake (the island, the Village, and south of Town Hall) are served with public water and sewer systems, many areas to the east and south are on private wells and septic systems. Groundwater quality is not a great concern for those served by the public water supply, provided by Indiana American Water, as consumers know the water has been properly treated and is monitored for contaminants. However, groundwater contamination caused by chemical spills from nearby industries could post a health risk to residents served by well water, as they draw in untreated and untested ground water. The Town of Winona Lake, Winona Lake Preservation Association, Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams, and the City of Warsaw Stormwater Utility and businesses continue to work together to prevent future spills.



Ensuring Access to Quality Education

ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

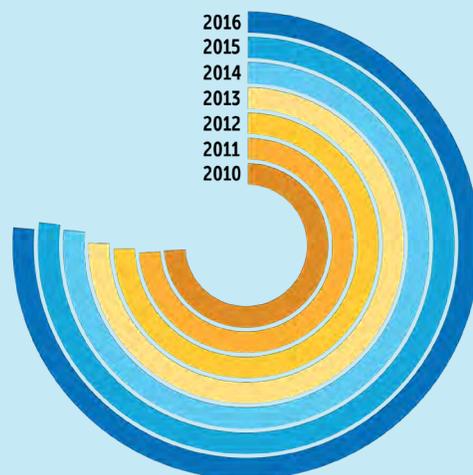
High Quality Education. School systems are often viewed as a community anchor to attract and retain younger families, and the success of a school system can often indicate the success of the community. OCRA’s Public School Enrollment Indicator tracks the trend in enrollment to see if a school system is growing or declining. Since 2010, enrollment in Warsaw Community Schools has increased nearly three percent from 6,903 students in 2010 to 7,089 students in 2016. Warsaw High School is an early college preparedness school that gives students seeking higher education the opportunity to take Advanced Placement coursework and exams and earn dual credits to make it possible to earn an Associate’s Degree while earning their high school diploma. Schools also participate and offer GATE (Gifted and Talented Programs). Additionally, Warsaw Community Schools is pursuing to be credited in offering more education and training initiatives in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Winona Lake also has an exceptional private school system that has a regional reputation and draw for families to want to live in Winona Lake. This provides a great supplement to the

public school system giving families quality education choices.

Presence of Higher Education Institution.

The presence of a higher education institution such as Grace College is a key community asset in Winona Lake’s identity, history, and quality of life. Grace College is known as a liberal art school offering programs in ministry studies, English, history, psychology, business management, and athletics management, and have a major influence in the ability for Winona Lake to offer enriched learning opportunities in arts, music, and ministry. Grace College also has a unique presence in grade schools giving opportunities for college students to mentor high school students. In a given school year, Winona Lake sees over 2,000 students enrolled at Grace College. Many of those students enroll in Grace College because of the setting and quality of life Winona Lake has to offer and end up staying in Winona Lake upon graduation. This is a key opportunity for the Town to pursue providing additional quality places for young adults to hang out in their downtime and reinforce the attraction and retention of Grace College students.

School Enrollment



2016 Grade Level Breakdown



- 7,089 students
- 7,142 students
- 7,106 students
- 7,004 students
- 6,948 students
- 6,889 students
- 6,903 students

Grace College
~2,000
students

ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES (CONT...)

Partnerships with School Systems. The Town of Winona Lake has great working relationships with the public and private school systems including Grace College. Winona Lake is often the place where community leaders come together to discuss ways to strengthen partnerships between academia and industry leaders. Recent endeavors included hosting a Workforce Education Summit at Lakeland Christian Academy. This Summit provided a unique opportunity that addressed ways to make the transition from schools seamless, ensure students possess the skills they

need to enter the workforce. The Warsaw Area Career Center is rated the number one career center in the state, which means there are great partnerships between government entities, local school systems, and industries. The Town routinely partners with Grace College's Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams to provide research and services to ensure the quality of the Town's freshwater supply for its users. Additional opportunity exists to tap into the leaders that graduate from the Kosciusko Leadership Academy to identify strategies to address key community issues in health care, education, and business and entrepreneurship.



CHALLENGES

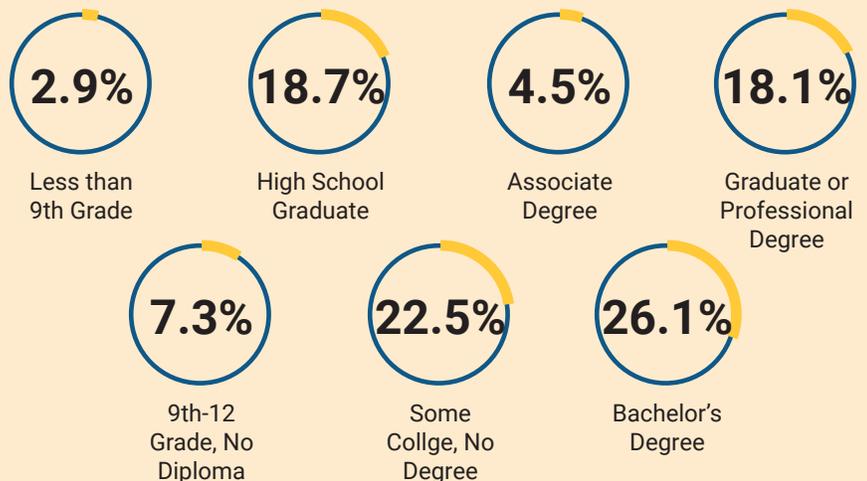
Workforce Development. Winona Lake is part of the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership that prides itself in their efforts to attract and retain a talented workforce. Winona Lake contributes to the draw to the northeast area of Indiana and is an educated town, with 44 percent of the population have advanced degrees. However, there are populations and parts of the town that lag behind in education with three percent of the population have less than a 9th-grade education, seven percent have gone through high school but have not received a diploma, and 22 percent have some college experience with never receiving a degree. While the Town has a lot of quality of life assets that can attract and retain the workforce, the Town does lack quality places to attract young adults and give them a space to hang out. Additionally, the Kosciusko County Chamber struggles to make “trade” professions an attractive job option. The Warsaw-Winona Lake area struggles to compete with the other regional, state, and national cities to create a sustainable economy. Although Warsaw has a strong presence in the orthopedic industry the area needs to explore opportunities to diversify its economy to withstand another economic recession. The other challenge the community leaders face is reaching out to the unskilled workers to ensure they receive proper training to equip them to thrive in the current job market.

Limited Participation for Early Learning Options. To ensure that all residents can take part in the future success of Winona Lake, more educational opportunities are needed. Education goes beyond basic primary, secondary, and university education; it also includes quality daycare and education from birth, continuing education throughout life, and job skills training. Community leaders in education expressed concerns of many families are not sending their children to pre-kindergarten learning services to aid in their children of being

school ready. Many of these families are of low to moderate income earners and Hispanic ethnicity. This is in part due to some of these families are not aware of the need to send their children to early learning services or families choose not to participate. Leaders expressed trailing spouses are not English speaking and often seek help internally with other family members rather than reaching out to the formal help that is available. The Town needs to explore opportunities to embrace and meet the needs of the diverse families and ensure the learning environment is engaging and welcoming to ease those who may be nervous to ask for help.

Limited Childcare Services. The other reason early learning participation is limited is there are limited childcare services. Although there are religious institutions that provide childcare services, there is limited supply for all races, ethnicities, and religions. The childcare services that are in operation are operating under capacity as the current wage offerings are not attractive for staff. If the Town wants to attract new families to the community then there needs to be creative solutions in providing childcare options in workplaces or other civic institutions, and advocate for inclusiveness and participation.

Educational Attainment



Promoting an Engaging Community

ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

Community Spirit & Pride. Winona Lake is a town of compassion rooted in warm hospitality, natural beauty, and spiritual foundation. People want to live, work, and play in Winona Lake because of its quality of life and regarded as a safe, family-friendly, and welcoming to all persons. The community's spirit and pride can be seen now and all the way back to the time the founding fathers set foot into Winona Lake. There have always been qualities that draw people to this area. Whether it was to attend a Bible conference, hear Billy Sunday preach, visit Winona's natural beauty, or attend one of the many popular festivals and events. But the heart of it all has always lied in the passion from the people who call Winona Lake home. This passion will continue to be the main attraction that prospective residents and businesses will use in their decision to locate in Winona Lake.

Community Events. There are so many things Winona Lake residents and visitors can take advantage and enjoy. One of the many draws to Winona Lake is the quality events that are put on by the Town and the Village. The most popular event put on by the Village, in partnership with KCV, is the Fat & Skinny Tire Festival. This event alone draws over 6,000 spectators and over 2,000 participants in the bike races. This has a tremendous tourism impact on Winona Lake and Warsaw's economies. Other popular events include the Art Fair, Canal Days, and the Fireworks Festival. In addition to the formal events, there are many events put on by the local neighborhoods and area schools that could be an opportunity to advertise to the community-at-large to make it possible to offer as events throughout the year.



CHALLENGES

Recruiting Volunteers. Although there are many community events organized by the Town and the Village, it was expressed by staff that it is often difficult to recruit the number of volunteers needed to efficiently run these large-scale events. As mentioned from previous areas, while these events are extremely popular and serve as a tourism draw, it is a lot of work for the few staff who have to organize and manage the number of activities offered during these events.

Streamlined Advertising & Communication System. Though the heart of the Winona Lake spirit lies in the passion of its residents, recruiting volunteers is often a difficult feat. This is partly due to the Town not having a formal system to send residents notices of events and to advertise the need for volunteers. There are opportunities for the Town and the Village to create a volunteer resource system like a 211. The system could include a community calendar of events, volunteer registration system, and contact database. The Town is also looking into updating their website that could serve as an additional resource center.

Enriching Access to Cultural Arts & History

ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

Rich Heritage. Winona Lake has a rich heritage highlighted by its early days of being known as a “Bible Conference Community” having hosted many religious events during the Chautauqua Movement. It was here in Winona Lake that launched Billy Graham’s evangelical ministry and was home to the world-famous evangelical Billy Sunday. The area we know today as the Village at Winona was imagined by a Grace College student in the early 90’s who saw the Town as a tourist destination. His dream became a reality backed by local investors who have worked to turn the Village and Winona Lake into a premier small-town destination community. Winona Lake must support and value the town’s history and cultural amenities as vital contributors to the town’s identity, economy, and quality of life.

Culture & Entertainment. The social, entertainment and dining opportunities in Winona Lake have become major assets to the Town’s culture and economy. The many biking opportunities, shopping and dining in the Village at Winona, and community events such as the Fat & Skinny Tire Festival and the Art Fair are all vital to Winona Lake’s attractive quality of life. Additionally, the special events and sport team competitions put on by Grace College are another tourist draw providing residents and visitors greater opportunities for entertainment. There are other opportunities to expand or add new events around specific art or local culture throughout the year.

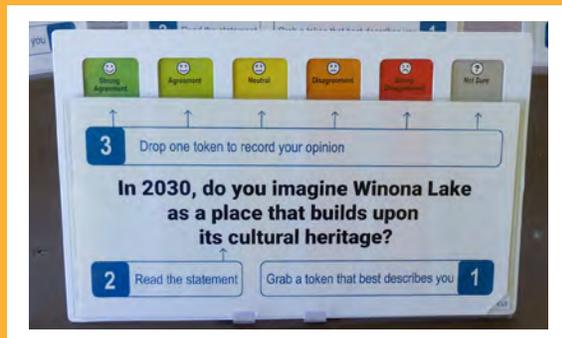
CHALLENGES

Youth Enrichment. There are multiple opportunities for the youth in Winona Lake to be enriched by art and music, several of those opportunities are either expensive for families to have their kids participate or are located outside of Winona Lake. Many of the current arts and culture activities either cater to older adults or young children. There exists a gap in developing activities that attract young professionals to network and garner appreciation for the local art and culture.

Garnering Interest. Although Grace College is home to the Winona History Center filled with elements that tell Winona Lake's story, there is limited interest from the community who come to view the Town's relics. History Center staff expressed while the Town has a great resource to formally preserve Winona Lake's history, the Center lacks the modern technology that could help make it more attractive for people to want to come and explore. Additionally, the use of the word "museum" does not come across as a thrilling topic of discussion amongst locals. Another effort to garner interest amongst locals has revolved around the need for a multipurpose performance venue that can host indoor and outdoor music and art events. While the Wagon Wheel is located a mile north of the town, Steering Committee members who serve on the Wagon Wheel Board have stated, as a board, we are exploring the opportunity to

build a larger center that could accommodate the needs the Town is looking for. The challenge is then where to construct the new venue. There has been an interest to construct the new venue in Winona Lake but the challenge is finding the acres of land needed to accommodate for parking. However, this would be a great opportunity for the region and Winona Lake, in particular, that will only add to the Town's cultural and entertainment experience.

Local Champion. Although Winona Lake's identity is expressed through its deep historical roots, the Town does not have a local champion to ensure its historical roots and cultural amenities remain vital to Winona Lake's quality of life. The Town values its historical upbringing and as new generations of people make Winona Lake their home, they do not want to see their historical identity become lost or forgotten. Steering Committee members expressed a need for a local champion with a vision to ensure the Town's historical value remains a priority and reflective in new development as well as to oversee historical preservation efforts. This is important to preserve Winona Lake's historical identity and physical elements to anchor the Town's social fabric and quality of life. Having a local champion could help improve the awareness and visibility of the Town's cultural resources.





Chapter 3: Transforming Winona Lake

A Vision Framework for Winona Lake

The Imagine Winona Lake vision strives to incorporate sustainable practices as a vital component to maintaining their small-town identity while allowing future growth. Such practices relate to preserving their natural features while enhancing their quality of life and vibrancy.

TOWN'S VISION:

Winona Lake seeks sustainable growth that is honoring to our natural and historic resources while enhancing our values, culture, and quality of life. Through fostering an active community of care, inclusion, and participation, it is our hope that every person, family, and business can thrive in Winona Lake.

While the vision statement describes the type of place Winona Lake wants to become, the next series of pages outlines the transformative strategies that will aid Winona Lake to create a more sustainable community. The framework for realizing Winona Lake’s vision is illustrated in the Future Development Concept Map and outlined by the transformative strategies. Therefore, to realize the vision, implementation will require coordination between the Town, community leaders, and regional organizations and advocacy groups. Additionally, monitoring and tracking the progress of the Plan will show measurable results in making the vision a reality.

The Future Development Concept Map applies the vision statement to show how the Town should direct new development and redevelopment in the decades to come. Developed through the public input survey, series of Steering Committee meetings, and the Future Development Workshop, the Future Development Concept Map illustrates the preferred growth concept that depicts where the Town would like to see growth and the desired manner to accommodate housing, jobs, additional quality of life amenities, and transportation infrastructure over the next 10 years.

The preferred growth concept evolved from several rounds during the Future Development Workshop. The Workshop was centered on a board game theme that presented two different development scenarios. The first scenario had attendees strategically identify lands that could be available for infill development and redevelopment in the event that acquiring new properties into the Town limits is not a viable option. The second scenario allowed groups the ability to expand the Town limits to accommodate new employment and residential development. Groups were encouraged to align the Town’s core values with their proposals to maximize the use of existing infrastructure, encourage walkable mixed-use development patterns to support an active and connected community, increase employment opportunities, and create quality places.



The Future Development Concept Map is framed into six character areas to help the Town and its partners focus on the quality and character of future land uses, provide general guidance for future planning decisions while allowing zoning to implement the vision at the parcel level.

These character areas establish a framework to retain Winona Lake’s small-town identity, encourage new and redevelopment to occur in the town center and employment centers, support the integration of mix of uses, appropriately expand its employment and residential areas, and preserve Winona Lake’s natural features and contiguous farmlands, where feasible. These areas provide strategic direction to attract new residents, employers, and visitors. As these areas are developed, they will ensure the realization of Winona Lake’s vision. Descriptions for each of the character areas are defined and illustrated on the subsequent pages following the Future Development Concept Map. A complete list of the strategies is located in Appendix C. The Action Strategies is organized by the core values. It includes the department and/or organization responsible for implementing the strategy. Additionally, a priority level is indicated next to the strategies the Town should first consider to implement in the next 5 years.

The Future Development Concept Character Areas include:

- **Neighborhood/Town Center – Live/work area**
- **Civic Area – Community Center, Municipal Services, & Parks**
- **The Village – Entertainment area**
- **Gateway Corridor – Live/work area**
- **Learning Center – Grace College & Jefferson Elementary area**
- **Greenway Corridors**

Future Development Concept Map

The Future Development Concept Map illustrates how Winona Lake plans to accommodate new residents, jobs, mixed-use areas, open space, and transportation infrastructure over the decades to come. As Winona Lake looks to modestly and sustainably grow, the Future Development Concept Map encourages new and redevelopment initiatives to first be focused in targeted centers to maximize or enhance the use of the existing infrastructure and preserve open spaces and farmlands. A high-level vision is to have the centers connected by a multi-use trail “greenway” corridors to enhance the mobility and safety for all users. This also serves as a strategy to maintain the small-town identity and preserve the character of existing neighborhoods.

The following series of pages describes in more detail of the desired land uses and development patterns in the character areas, with illustrations of how the character areas may develop.



FUTURE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT MAP

LEGEND



Proposed Development

- Mixed-Use (Commercial & Residential)
- Multi-Family
- Single-Family
- Public Facilities (Community Center, Town Hall, & Parks)
- Preserved Land
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Corridor

Existing Features

- Streets
- Trail
- Water Bodies
- Town Limits

Disclaimer: This Future Development Concept Map does not constitute for zoning regulations or zoning districts. The proposed development areas does not represent exact locations but are approximate conceptual locations. This is only a conceptual map reflecting the Town's vision to guide future development decisions.

Transformative Strategies

Neighborhood/Town Center – Live/work area

The Neighborhood-Town Center Character area reflects the desire to preserve Winona Lake’s small-town character while planning for the need to diversify housing options to be more attractive and affordable to prospective homebuyers. While the predominant residential use in Winona Lake today are detached single-family homes, there is a projected need for the Town to plan for new homes and offer diverse housing options to be attractive to prospective families and individuals. In order to appropriately accommodate the number of homes needed, it is encouraged the Town focuses residential development to include a range of affordable housing options such as

townhomes and/or multi-family dwelling units. The pattern of development should focus on integrating a mixture of uses in a denser setting. This may include buildings with residential units located above ground floor retail, restaurants, or professional office spaces. This area is imagined as a vibrant living and working area that is walkable and takes on a denser mixed-use setting to attract younger families and individuals. Additionally, to balance the regional job market, it is encouraged to attract professional office and service-based businesses. The town center can also contain parks or common plaza spaces to reinforce a sense of place, and promote social interaction.

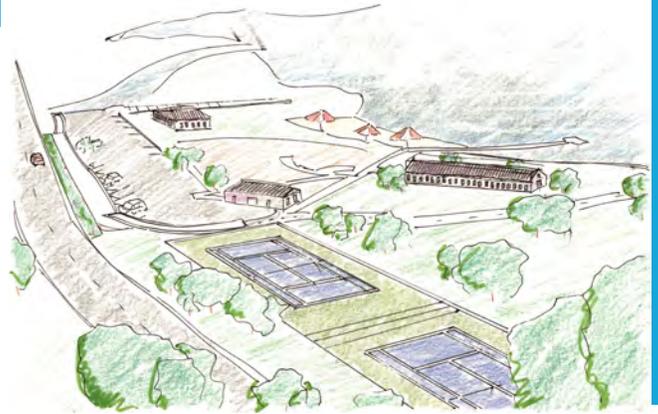


TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGIES

1. Amend the current zoning ordinance to make public infrastructure systems (roads, sidewalks, trails, water, and/or sewer) accessible by requiring developers to include these services in new developments, where feasible.
2. Explore the feasibility and encourage the location of a new elementary school is placed off a trail to provide a safe and accessible means for students to bike or walk to school.
3. Retain the “small-town” vision with strategic development of activity centers and support the City of Warsaw in corridor redevelopments with quality services, housing, jobs, amenities, and natural features.
4. Identify targeted lands for redevelopment and new development to accommodate a mix of uses and services to enhance the community’s livability and quality of life.
5. Encourage developers to construct mixed-use developments that include jobs, workforce housing, and recreational spaces in targeted development areas to enhance the livability, create quality places, and promote active, healthy lifestyles via walking and biking.
6. Promote a “shop local” initiative and marketing campaign to support local businesses and the local economy.
7. Identify new nightlife opportunities and gathering spaces such as eateries to provide college students and young adults places to hang out.
8. Systematically study the fiscal impacts and feasibility of expanding the Town’s jurisdiction, where appropriate.
9. Balance the attraction of new business development to support the local tax base and local economy such as local retail businesses, and professional office jobs.
10. Integrate a variety of affordable and market value housing options in new developments to ensure housing needs are met for all residents

Civic Area – Community Center, Municipal Services, & Parks area

The Civic Area Character area reflects the vision of developing a new modern community center. The current community-senior center is outdated and becoming costly to maintain. The location for a new center is encouraged to be positioned for residents and visitors to take advantage of the lake. This would be a great asset to Winona Lake and have the ability to offer additional learning programs and be a conference venue for the Town to host large events and meetings. The Civic Area also includes Town Hall and municipal facilities such as the Parks and Street Departments. New facilities are planned for this area to enhance the administrative functions and services to Winona Lake residents. There is also an opportunity to partner with the Wagon Wheel to position a new performance venue in this area offering unique learning and enrichment in arts and music.



This area is imagined as the “play” district being home to Limitless Park and a potential new bike skills park. There are three phases for the full development of Limitless Park into a universally accessible playground, with phase one and parts of two completed. The remaining phases will add a raised walking path, accessible playground, new accessible restrooms, and a larger parking lot. The Town is also exploring the opportunity to enhance this area with an enriching learning experience by adding a music garden. This will give users the opportunity to enjoy the sounds of music while they play. Other enhancements could include trail amenities such as lighting, fix-it stations, and drinking fountains. Additionally, the southern end of this area could include a new bike skills park. This will give mountain biking enthusiasts the ability to hone in on their skills to learn how to navigate and maneuver through the mountain bike trail network.

TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGIES

1. Install biking and trail amenities, such as lighting, signage, fix-it stations, and drinking fountains, to provide a better walking and biking experience.
2. Complete the Bike Skills Park by December 31, 2019.
3. Develop a feasibility plan for a Music Garden to be installed at Limitless Park by December 31, 2019.
4. Construct a new Town community center to enhance the community’s quality of life and the encouragement for social interaction and opportunities to live an active healthy lifestyle.
5. Continue to maintain Winona Lake parks and seek recreational grants for maintenance and procuring new equipment to ensure facilities adequately serve residents needs and enhance the experience on park grounds.
6. Develop and integrate environmental educational opportunities to residents and students.
7. Develop more year-round community events and activities to attract residents and visitors.
8. Increase promotion of local events to regional communities (i.e. South Bend & Fort Wayne) to establish Winona Lake as a “tourism destination community.”
9. Create an online system to streamline event registration, recruitment for volunteers, and event promotion.
10. Update the Town’s website to include a community calendar, provide notice for meetings and events.
11. Explore the feasibility and build a new multipurpose indoor venue (convention center) for music, arts, and history.

The Village – Entertainment area

While the Town is not looking to recreate the Village, it is imagined this area to continue to be the premier entertainment and dining experience. The Village has always been a viable asset in Winona Lake's identity and quality of life and will continue through the future. It is encouraged the Town and the Village property owners to explore unique ways to integrate new nightlife opportunities and gathering spaces to give young adults a place to hang out. It is also encouraged to offer spaces and events for residents and visitors to enjoy year-round. Additionally, the Village could supplement the Civic Center area to have biking and trail amenities such as drinking fountains and fix-it stations to enhance the user experience and mobility between character areas.



TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGIES

1. Conduct a feasibility study for the location and installation of an ice-skating rink to expand the opportunities to be active year-round.
2. Promote a "shop local" initiative and marketing campaign to support local businesses and the local economy.
3. Encourage local businesses to invest their financial resources to support local events and development of needed venue spaces and quality of life amenities.

Gateway Corridor – Live/work area

The Gateway Corridor is imagined to be a live-work environment at the main intersection into Winona Lake at Park Avenue and Winona Avenue. This intersection is programmed to be reconfigured with a roundabout to improve the safety for all users and the flow of traffic. This area represents where new employers could locate to diversify the regional job market and the local tax base. Employment can capitalize on the convenient access to major arterial corridors such as US 30. Employment uses could include light manufacturing, fabrication assemblies, light industrial centers, flex space buildings, and corporate offices. Residential development should also be encouraged in a mixed-use setting as in the Town Center providing a transition into Town and the Village. Additional uses in the Gateway Corridor should support a mixture of affordable residential units, neighborhood-scale retail, and offices. Street design should accommodate for biking and walking to give access and a safe environment to the Village and Warsaw. Additionally, site designs should support an attractive and safe pedestrian environment with connections between the sidewalk and front door, and convenient access to the Village and Warsaw.



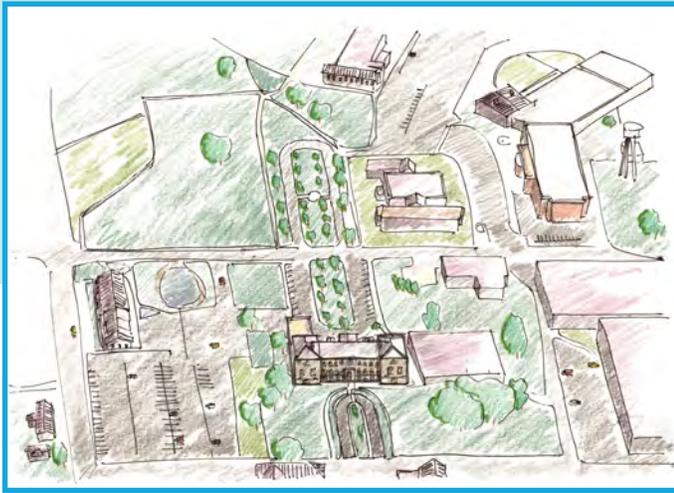
TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGIES

1. Incorporate public art with new developments, at gateways, and other key destinations.
2. Retain the “small-town” vision with strategic development of activity centers and support the City of Warsaw in corridor redevelopments with quality services, housing, jobs, amenities, and natural features.
3. Identify targeted lands for redevelopment and new development to accommodate a mix of uses and services to enhance the community’s livability and quality of life.
4. Encourage developers to construct mixed-use developments that include jobs, workforce housing, and recreational spaces in targeted development areas to enhance the livability, create quality places, and promote active, healthy lifestyles via walking and biking.
5. Balance the attraction of new business development to support the local tax base and local economy such as local retail businesses, and professional office jobs.
6. Integrate a variety of affordable and market value housing options in new developments to ensure housing needs are met for all residents.
7. Identify new nightlife opportunities and gathering spaces such as eateries to provide college students and young adults places to hang out.
8. Work with local Economic Development Organizations to create and implement a “Doing Business in Winona Lake” program, expand existing businesses, support entrepreneurs, and implement programs to build a skilled workforce, and attract new businesses to the community.
9. Install broadband fiber optic infrastructure in targeted areas of Town identified for the location of new businesses.

Learning Center – Grace College & Jefferson Elementary area

The Learning Center area makes way for Grace College to supply the region with the intellectual abilities and ambiance to inspire academic excellence, leadership, and creativity. The presence of Grace College has also been a great community asset in Winona Lake's identity and quality of life. Grace College offers many programs to prepare students to excel in the workforce raising talented business leaders, ministers, artists, and teachers. Additionally, Grace College adds to Winona Lake's culture and entertainment

by offering residents and visitors the opportunity to enjoy live performances and sporting events. Grace College also has plans to add more student housing on its campus, plazas, and pedestrian amenities. Jefferson Elementary School is also located in this area off Kings Highway. Grace College has a mentoring program with Warsaw High School but could expand to mentor elementary students.



TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGIES

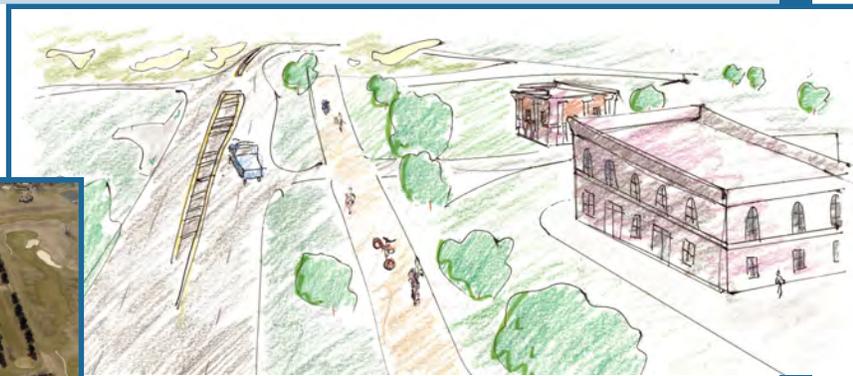
1. Modernize current historical assets such as the Winona History Museum to make history learning fun and exciting
2. Develop three summer learning camps by 2022 at Grace College to bring students regionally to the Grace College campus and Winona Lake Community.
3. Encourage more partnering between schools and organizations with the Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams and the Winona History Center.
4. Continue to support recruiting initiatives directed towards high school and college graduates to retain a talented workforce.
5. Encourage and promote more participation in non-athletic events such as the recent history presentations on Theodore Dreiser or STEM-oriented activities.
6. Install sidewalks along Wooster Road to enhance the safety of users and offer an alternative form of travel to area destinations.
7. Explore the feasibility to make biking and walking easier and safer around the lake and to nearby neighborhoods and schools.
8. Encourage the development of more such programs, including classes in the evening so men can participate, not just women during the daytimes.
9. Increase promotion of local events to regional communities (i.e. South Bend & Fort Wayne) to establish Winona Lake as a "tourism destination community."

Greenway Corridors

Winona Lake imagines its key destinations and community assets be accessible with Greenway Corridors. These corridors are designated through preserved lands with some use of local roads to provide efficient and safe connections to assets such as Grace College, Jefferson Elementary School, the Village, Limitless Park, community center, and Town Hall. Additional connections will be made to the proposed character areas of the Neighborhood-town center, and the Gateway Center as well as to Warsaw. While not shown on the Future Development Concept Map, the sidewalk network is also essential to accessibility. Winona Lake is continuing to expand the sidewalk network and eliminate gaps to improve walkability throughout Winona Lake along key corridors such as Wooster Road, S 250 E, and Pierceton Road.

TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGIES

1. Continue progress on Ride/Walk Initiatives – extend the trail system to underserved areas of the Town and to Warsaw.
2. Adopt and implement a complete streets policy in 2019.
3. Amend the current zoning ordinance to make public infrastructure systems (roads, sidewalks, trails, water, and/or sewer) accessible by requiring developers to include these services in new developments, where feasible.
4. Install sidewalks along Wooster Road to enhance the safety of users and offer an alternative form of travel to area destinations.
5. Explore the feasibility to make biking and walking easier and safer around the lake and to nearby neighborhoods and schools.
6. Explore the feasibility and encourage the location of a new elementary school is placed off a trail to provide a safe and accessible means for students to bike or walk to school.
7. Install biking and trail amenities, such as lighting, signage, fix-it stations, and drinking fountains, to provide a better walking and biking experience.



Other Transformative Strategies

In addition to the character areas illustrated on the Future Development Concept Map, other transformative strategies were identified that address community-wide issues or are programmatic. These focus on the values of **Building a Connected Community, Facilitate Strategic Business & Housing Development, Ensuring Access to Quality Education, Enriching Access to Cultural Arts & History, Fostering Environmental Stewardship, and Promoting an Engaging Community.**

TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGIES

1. Conduct a parking study to identify the parking needs in key activity areas of the Town.
2. Construct a new road from the Village to Pierceton Road and to 250 E for enhanced access and safety.
3. Pursue investing infrastructure (water & sewer) improvements in underserved areas of the Town to ensure the needs for everyday living and employment are met
4. Continue to pursue INDOT's annual Community Crossings Match Grant to improve local roads identified in the Town's Road Asset Management Plan
5. Make public infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, and fiber) accessible and of high quality to attract new businesses and residents.
6. Systematically study the fiscal impacts and feasibility of expanding the Town's jurisdiction, where appropriate.
7. Update and adopt the Town's new Zoning and Development Standards that is reflective and supportive of Winona Lake's Vision identified in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan.
8. Educate prospective homeowners and first-time home buyers on available programs, incentives, and financial assistance when purchasing a home in Winona Lake.
9. Increase the enforcement and provide incentives on rental properties to maintain an appealing image for prospective homeowners and businesses.
10. Encourage 10 households to enroll in existing housing programs that could benefit them and their community in 2019.
11. Purchase dilapidated housing structures that can be repaired or demolished for redevelopment.
12. Encourage a healthy culture by offering more healthy food options at a Farmer's Market, active modes of transportation, and reduce harmful emissions in the atmosphere to provide cleaner air in the region.



13. Protect the Winona Lake Community through the reduction of invasive plants and deer population.
14. Install four streamflow sensors around Winona Lake to better measure water, sediments, and nutrients entering and leaving the lake by 2022.
15. Increase the number of lake-friendly certified farmers upstream of Winona Lake from 0 to 10 by 2024 to reduce sediments and nutrients entering the lake.
16. Develop a detailed nutrient budget for Winona Lake that quantifies all major nutrients sources by 2025.
17. Develop and integrate environmental educational opportunities to residents and students.
18. Work with the childcare coalition to develop more options sponsored by local employers, as well as any independent organizations, i.e. faith community or from other organizations.
19. Encourage the availability of free or low-cost Wi-Fi throughout the county, as well as making greater use of existing public library resources.
20. Develop two more early learning pre-school centers, focusing primarily on low-income or Hispanic families.
21. Encourage more heavy promotion of existing ENL (English as a New Language) classes being conducted by local organizations.
22. Consider development and promotion of public access cable television, with incentives for local program origination and dissemination.
23. Partner with local schools, churches, and other community groups to recruit volunteers to perform neighborhood cleanups, paint homes, participate in Habitat for Humanity projects, and other similar community-based projects.
24. Continue to work with community partners, such as the City of Warsaw, Warsaw Community Schools, Grace College, and Kosciusko County CVB to develop and promote cultural art programs and facilities.
25. Organize a historical cultural arts council that inspire local champions, creates programs and enrichment opportunities targeting youth and pursues funding.



Chapter 4: **Measuring our Success**

Imagine Winona Lake Priority Action Program

The following Action Program lists the highest priority action strategies Winona Lake will first focus implementing to begin achieving their vision. Winona Lake's core values and transformative strategies are the frameworks of seeing the vision implemented. The core values serve as the basis that articulates the characteristics, aspirations, and social attributes the community desires. The Steering Committee identified eight core values to guide future design and development concepts, new policies, and programs for Winona Lake.

The eight core values are **Building a Connected Community, Encouraging an Active Community, Creating Quality Places (Amenities), Facilitating Strategic Business & Housing Development, Fostering Environmental Stewardship, Ensuring Access to Quality Education, Promoting an Engaging Community, and Enriching Access to Cultural Arts & History.** The Action Program aligns the highest priority strategies with the core value it reinforces.

Imagine Winona Lake Action Program

Priority	Strategy	Value
A	Continue progress on Ride/Walk Initiatives – extend the trail system to underserved areas of the Town and to Warsaw	Building a Connected Community
B	Adopt and implement a complete streets policy in 2019	Building a Connected Community
C	Amend the current zoning ordinance to make public infrastructure systems (roads, sidewalks, trails, water, and/or sewer) accessible by requiring developers to include these services in new developments, where feasible	Building a Connected Community
D	Install sidewalks along Wooster Road to enhance the safety of users and offer an alternative form of travel to area destinations	Building a Connected Community
E	Install biking and trail amenities, such as lighting, signage, fix-it stations, and drinking fountains, to provide a better walking and biking experience	Encouraging an Active Community
F	Retain the “small-town” vision with strategic development of activity centers and support the City of Warsaw in corridor redevelopments with quality services, housing, jobs, amenities, and natural features	Creating Quality Places
G	Identify targeted lands for redevelopment and new development to accommodate a mixed of uses and services to enhance the community’s livability and quality of life	Creating Quality Places
H	Make public infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, and fiber) accessible and of high quality to attract new businesses and residents	Facilitating Strategic Business & Housing Development

Imagine Winona Lake Action Program

Priority	Strategy	Value
I	Update and adopt the Town's new Zoning and Development Standards that is reflective and supportive of Winona Lake's Vision identified in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan	Facilitating Strategic Business & Housing Development
J	Systematically study the fiscal impacts and feasibility of expanding the Town's jurisdiction, where appropriate	Facilitating Strategic Business & Housing Development
K	Protect the Winona Lake Community through the reduction of invasive plants and deer population	Fostering Environmental Stewardship
L	Work with the childcare coalition to develop more options sponsored by local employers, as well as any independent organizations, i.e. faith community or from other organizations	Ensuring Access to Quality Education
M	Develop more year-round community events and activities to attract residents and visitors	Promoting an Engaging Community
N	Create an online system to streamline event registration, recruitment for volunteers, and event promotion	Promoting an Engaging Community
O	Explore the feasibility and build a new multipurpose indoor venue (convention center) for music, arts, and history	Enriching Access to Cultural Arts & History
P	Continue to work with community partners, such as the City of Warsaw, school systems, and Kosciusko County CVB to develop and promote cultural art programs and facilities	Enriching Access to Cultural Arts & History

Implementing the Comprehensive Plan

The Imagine Winona Lake 2030 Comprehensive Plan serves as the policy document to guide growth and development over the planning horizon. It sets a general framework for local decision-making and provides direction for land use planning and zoning efforts, budgeting priorities and coordination with other public and private organizations. This chapter outlines the roles for the Town of Winona Lake and Planning Commission, as well as implementation tools necessary to carry out the listed strategies in achieving the vision.

ROLE OF THE TOWN GOVERNMENT

The comprehensive plan should be used on a daily basis by Town staff, committees, Plan Commission, and Town Council to review and evaluate site plan proposals to ensure they are consistent with the Plan's vision, prioritize capital expenditures on public infrastructure, and encourage economic development. Town Council should refer to the Plan when approving development proposals and updating its Capital Improvement Plan.

MAINTAIN OPEN DIALOGUE WITH COMMUNITY

The Winona Lake community has been involved through the planning process, community involvement should not stop there. Maintaining an open dialogue and consistently encouraging community involvement after the Plan is adopted is a key for successful implementation. The Town should be on the forefront actively communicating the Town's vision and action strategies to the community to foster a sense of pride and ownership in the Town in which they live in and unity to achieve the vision. Simple procedures to communicate with the greater community could be to make sure the Plan is accessible online, hard copies are available at the municipal building or library, routinely update the Town's website, regularly inform the public through the newsletter of development and policy changes, as well as seek input when evaluating the comprehensive plan.



SERVE AS LEAD COORDINATOR WITH OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS AND PRIVATE ENTITIES

Along with continuing communication with the community, the Town should take the initiative to serve as the lead coordinator to begin the process of implementing a strategy. While the Town may not ultimately be the responsible party to implement a strategy, the Town should be the lead coordinator in contacting the responsible party to start the process. In doing so will cultivate long-lasting partnerships with developers, home builders, government entities, and other community organizations to work together on future projects and programs.

ROLE OF THE PLAN COMMISSION

In Winona Lake, as elsewhere, it is the Plan Commission's primary responsibility to prepare and oversee the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan Commission are trustees of the Town's future and have a responsibility to ensure the Town supports smart growth principles and are good stewards with their public resources to ensure future generations can benefit living and working in Winona Lake.

The Plan Commission is also responsible for preparing, overseeing, and making recommendations to amend the Town's Zoning Ordinance; more details on the purpose for zoning ordinance are under the Implementation Tools section of this chapter. The Plan Commission will spend most of their time hearing zoning petitions, approve or deny proposals to subdivide land, and review and approve site plans to ensure the development and land use comply with the zoning standards and supports the vision of this Comprehensive Plan. Likewise, the Plan Commission will make recommendations to the Town Council on proposals to amend the text of the zoning ordinance and/or amend the zoning map following a petition for rezoning. Other duties for consideration may include overseeing the Town's annexations and utility extensions policies; assist the Winona Lake Redevelopment Commission in recommending revitalization areas; location for new public facilities; and improvements or extension of public rights-of-way.



IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

Zoning Ordinance

The purpose of a zoning ordinance is to govern the subdividing of lands, regulate the uses on the land in terms of scale, intensity, and appearance, and implement the land use policies from the Comprehensive Plan. Likewise, the zoning map and regulations should reflect the vision of the future land use map. Zoning is an important regulatory tool for implementing the Town's vision by establishing the types of uses to be allowed on specific properties and prescribe the character and intensity of permitted development. It is one of the Plan Commission's primary responsibilities to oversee the Town's various development ordinances and ensure they are concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan.

While the Comprehensive Plan is a guiding policy document for growth and development in the community and setting guidelines for the quality, character, and intensity of new development over a long-term, the zoning ordinance operates at a parcel level dealing with development on a daily basis to ensure the vision of the Comprehensive Plan is carried out. However, the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning do not always operate harmoniously as they are accompanied by constant changes in the real estate market, community desires, and/or local decision makers.

Areas to review and make improvements, if necessary, include modify the zoning map and district standards to better reflect the future land use map; revise the plan development process to allow additional flexibility in regards to housing density and mixed-use developments; monitor impacts on stormwater management and use of best management practices (BMPs); requirements for developers in land dedications and exactions; and, define the type and scale of new development to require a traffic impact study.

Capital Improvement Plan

Like the Zoning Ordinance, the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is another implementation tool in carrying out the Plan's action strategies. The Town uses the CIP to plan, budget, and finance the purchase and/or construction of capital improvement projects within a 10-year period. Eligible projects include constructing large capital infrastructures such as roads or utilities, Town facilities, and parks, equipment or other fixed assets. All projects should then be reviewed, prioritized, and programmed with cost estimates and funding mechanisms, into the Town's capital budget for each fiscal year. A capital budget is the Town's annual budget that lists projects to be implemented in the current fiscal year. Therefore, the CIP is updated annually to reflect shifting priorities, emerging issues, changes in technology, and alterations from projected revenue. The CIP allows the Town to weigh project costs and benefits, and analyze the fiscal impacts to prioritize for the most beneficial public improvements while staying within budget constraints.

It is important to note that projects listed in the CIP are not guaranteed to make it into the annual capital budget. Therefore, the Town should analyze all of the projects included in the CIP each year during an update. Additionally, the review of the Comprehensive Plan update should correspond with the preparation of the Town's annual capital budget and CIP. This ensures resources are aligned with proposed changes in the upcoming fiscal year.

Town Revenue Sources

Many of the action strategies in the Comprehensive Plan can be implemented through administrative decision-making or Town funded programs, details provided below. However, others may require outside assistance, in which case the Town should proactively search for external grant opportunities.

The Town of Winona Lake utilizes several revenue sources to finance capital improvement projects. These includes:

General Fund

The Town's General Fund accounts for the revenue collected from all Town enacted funding sources including property taxes, utility fees, and any permits. The General Fund pays for personnel and department operations, with a small percentage available for capital improvements. The amount used for capital improvements is set by Town Council prior adoption of the annual capital budget.

Land Exactions

An Impact fee is one land exaction tool the Town could use to implement public infrastructure and facilities. Impact fees are intended to require developers to pay a fee, prior to acquiring building permits, to help offset the cost impacts from the new development in order for the Town to efficiently serve the community for public safety, utility services, parks, and transportation. These fees are established based on the capital and operation effects of new development. Currently, the Town does not have an impact fee policy but could review and determine the feasibility to enact such a fee.

Fee-in-Lieu's is another land exaction tool to implement public infrastructure and facilities. They operate differently than impact fees in that they are not based on the impacts of development but the requirement for developers to construct public infrastructure or facilities to serve the area. Fees can be used as subject to final site plan approval, and the Town may work with a developer to pay a fee-in-lieu of constructing the public infrastructure or facility so long as the infrastructure or facility is proportionate and reasonably tied to the development area. Example fee-in-lieu's can be applied for constructing bicycle and pedestrian facilities like sidewalks or trails, and parklands.

Tax Increment Financing

The town of Winona Lake currently has one main local incentive in the form of a TIF, located between Grace College and the Lake along Park Ave. Development within this district allows the town to receive tax revenue from the increase in assessed property values, and use those funds to reinvest back in the district, typically used for the (re)development of public infrastructure. TIF funds may also be used as a local match for federal and state projects.



Public-Private Partnerships

A public-private partnership (PPP) is a business relationship between a private-sector company and a government agency for the purpose of completing public projects. PPPs can be used to finance, build, and operate capital projects. The Town is looking to partner with the Kosciusko County Economic Development Corporation to market properties in the Town for economic development, attract new businesses, and workforce development.

POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of grant sources available to the Town of Winona Lake to enhance transportation infrastructure, support new community facilities and community revitalization efforts. Many of the sources described below require communities to have an adopted Comprehensive Plan or specific master plan for the applicable functional area, in which case the Imagine Winona Lake 2030 Comprehensive Plan can be used to leverage grant applications. Identified grants in the following sections are not an exhaustive list but are potential sources the Town could utilize in the next five years. Additionally, the Town of Winona Lake should routinely work with other public or private entities to offset project development costs, especially those having regional impacts.

Transportation Funding

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) administers the federal transportation program. The Town of Winona Lake can apply for federal funds through a regular call for projects. The Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) can assist the Town to plan and apply for transportation funding through INDOT and other state programs.

Community Crossings Match Grant Program

On March 23, 2016, Indiana Governor, Mike Pence, signed House Bill 1001 and Senate Bill 67 into law, which made available additional funding to incentivize local governments to begin inventorying, assessing and improving their community assets of local roads and bridges. In April 2017, Governor Eric Holcomb signed House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1002 into law, continuing the Community Crossings Match Grant fund by committing to invest hundreds of millions of dollars for local road and bridge projects. Unlike the 2016 legislation, communities such as Winona Lake with a population of less than 10,000 are required to submit eligible projects at a 25 percent match rather than 50 percent. Eligible projects include preventative maintenance, rehabilitation, and reconstruction of road and bridge infrastructure. Winona Lake applied and awarded Community Crossing monies in 2016, 2018, and 2019.



Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT)

The Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT), also known as CEDIT, County Economic is an optional tax available to all counties in Indiana. Revenue is divided among the county, cities, and towns, and must be used for economic development or public infrastructure projects. Kosciusko County has adopted CEDIT. The Town may use their apportionment as a local match for federal and state projects.

Wheel Tax (Local Option Highway User Tax)

The Local Option Highway User Tax is available to all counties. Kosciusko County approved a Wheel Tax in June 2014. Distributions are made to the cities and towns as well as the counties. The Town may use their apportionment as a local match for federal and state projects.

Motor Vehicle Highway Account (MVHA)

MVHA revenue is an account of the General Fund of the State of Indiana, which, by statute, is credited with the collection of the first six cents of the motor fuel and fuel use taxes, plus the statutory fees for motor vehicle registration and operation. These highway user taxes are collected by the State and then a portion is distributed back to the cities and counties for administration. The MVHA is the principal source of revenue for the overall operation of street and highway departments. MVHAs uses include the purchase of materials, labor costs, and/or equipment purchases required in the maintenance and construction of streets and roads. The Town may use their apportionment as a local match for federal and state projects.

Winona Lake Sidewalk Program

The Town does have a sidewalk improvement program that provides a 50/50 match with a \$5,000 cap to homeowners to help improve a portion of the sidewalk in front of their home. The Street Department routinely checks its local streets for broken sidewalks and will make necessary repairs at no expense to the adjacent property owner. The Town budgets approximately \$15,000 a year to conduct sidewalk improvements. Although the Town of Winona Lake has made many strides in improving its sidewalk infrastructure, many gaps still remain. As an additional funding opportunity, the Town may be eligible to receive monies from INDOT's Small Communities Sidewalk Program. This program helps rural communities to construct and/or update existing sidewalks.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES FUNDING

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides a Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program to rural communities with no more than 20,000 residents to aid in constructing or improving essential community facilities such as hospitals, health clinics, schools, public safety buildings, community centers, museums, local food systems and other community-based initiatives. More details on how to acquire the Rural Development Community Facilities Grant is available on the USDA's Rural Development website.

United States Fire Administration

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) offers a number of fire service grants the Town of Winona Lake's Volunteer Fire and EMS Departments could pursue to offset costs for equipment, staffing, and fire prevention measures. One grant program Winona Lake may be eligible for is the Assistance to Firefighters used to purchase equipment, protective gear, and vehicles as well as training initiatives.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (INDNR) offers several community facilities grants such as Fire Management and Recreational Trails. Fire Management grants is a 50/50 match that helps volunteer fire departments purchase vehicles and equipment. The Town has received Fire Management grants in purchasing equipment. The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a state match grant to aid local communities in land acquisition and/or developing multi-use trails. The RTP reimburses a local community up to 80 percent of the project expenses upon project approval. More details on these programs are located on the Indiana Department of Natural Resources website.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is available for local communities who have a state-approved Park and Recreation Board and Five-Year Master Plan. The LWCF is a state match grant that provides 50 percent of the costs for land acquisition and/or development of parks and recreational facilities upon project approval. More details on the LWCF are located on the Indiana Department of Natural Resources website.



Measuring Success - Documenting Progress

Regular evaluation and monitoring of the Imagine Winona Lake 2030 Comprehensive Plan is another key component for successful implementation. If the plan is to be a valuable resource to the Town, the Town must establish a method to measure the successes and challenges in achieving the vision and implementing the action strategies. Continual monitoring on the progress of implementing the Plan will keep key decision-makers such as Town Council and Plan Commission, and Town staff, partnering organizations and the public informed about the Plan's effectiveness. Additionally, monitoring the Plan will help identify what aspects of proposed projects and programs are working and areas that need improvements. This contributes to the Plan being a living document, as the Town can review and update the Plan every five years to stay current with changing community needs and resources that come available.

PLAN EVALUATION

The Imagine Winona Lake 2030 Comprehensive Plan lists recommended action strategies over the planning horizon along with the foreseeable time for implementation. In order to document the progress of the Plan, two critical components must be in place. While it may not be feasible to implement all strategies within the planning horizon, Town Council and staff should take the identified high priority strategies from the Action Program and create a Five Year Performance Program. The Five Year Performance Program will serve as one of two components for monitoring the Plan; the second is an Annual Progress Report.

Five Year Performance Program

Although the Action Program identifies the overall strategies, the next step is to create a Five Year Performance Program that goes deeper to identify the actionable items necessary to accomplish a specific strategy. The Five Year Performance Program should include:

- Specific action steps for each priority strategy (project or program) to be undertaken;
- A timeline to begin work on each action step (e.g. Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, etc.); and
- An indication of the department and/or organization responsible for implementation.

Following the Five Year Performance Program, the Imagine Winona Lake 2030 Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and updated every five years to determine the overall progress and response to arising issues or new community needs and aspirations. This leads to the second component for monitoring the Plan.

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Along with the Five Year Performance Program, the Town should monitor the performance of implemented strategies by using an Annual Progress Report. Performance monitoring provides an assessment of whether strategies that have been implemented in previous years are continuing to achieve the Town's vision. For instance, when a specific strategy is implemented, performance monitoring will assess the results of the strategy. The Annual Progress Report should include:

- A list of implemented projects or programs from the Five Year Priority Action Program;
- Description of the implementation status and results stating whether the projects or programs are working or not working;
- If a project or program is not working, evaluate the need to continue and/or identify ways to make it better, with consideration by Town Council;
- List any completed projects in the current year; and,
- Next fiscal year's work program.

The Annual Progress Report should be presented to the Plan Commission to hear their considerations and submittal to Town Council at the end of each year.

At the end of the fifth year, the Annual Progress Reports should be documented as one report to assess the overall progress of the Five Year Performance Program and determine necessary updates to the Winona Lake Comprehensive Plan to respond to arising issues or community needs and aspirations.

One suggestion the Town could undertake in creating the Annual Progress Report is holding at least one joint Town Council-Planning Commission Workshop at the beginning of the year to assess what happened the previous year, identify what needs to be done in the current year, and brainstorm unique ways to implement the strategies needed in the current year.

