



Introduction

1. SUMMARY

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LEGAL MANDATE



PLANNING PROCESS



PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy document intended to guide growth and development decisions in the Town of Schererville for the next twenty years. The Plan is an expression of the community's expectations and aspirations. These aspirations were expressed by the residents in the form of a vision statement. The vision for the Plan is:

The vision for Schererville includes providing residents with choices and options for housing, recreation, shopping, cultural and social activities and where the community is visually attractive and appealing.

It is the aspiration of the residents to want Schererville to be a place where the local government is fiscally responsible, yet attends to the community's needs for expanding services and maintaining its quality of life.

The Comprehensive Plan makes it possible for Schererville to direct its future growth patterns and shape its community character. By creating a framework for future land uses, location of the community facilities, and the allocation of resources, Schererville can manage its growth and invest in the community to the level that most positively impacts its vision for the future.

The Comprehensive Plan's purpose is to support a sensible approach for the community improvements, development and redevelopment. Increased economic activities, an efficient use of its land resources, an attractive Downtown, a transportation network that assures accessibility to all modes of travel, access to open space and leisure activities, and enhancing its sense of place are among items that the Plan will address. As a whole, the Plan aims to foster the quality of life for the Town as a vibrant and attractive community with a variety of activities, uses, and amenities.

The Plan describes the vision for the community as expressed by the citizens. It further provides a set of goals and strategies to promote the expressed vision. It proposes specific recommendations in different areas of concern and supports action steps to address them. The Comprehensive Plan is not a rigid or static set of rules. Rather, it is a fluid and dynamic document. The goals and recommendations are intended to allow flexibility. The Plan is not an attempt to predict the future; it is, however, an attempt to identify the basic core community values and to use them as guides in future decisions concerning growth, development, redevelopment, and improvements in the community.

The Comprehensive Plan has no expiration date, but it should be reviewed on a regular basis to evaluate it against changes in technology, community values, development trends, and to keep the vision current. The Plan recommends a series of actions to change and direct the physical, social, and economic growth and redevelopment for Schererville. The recommendations are provided in different areas such as land use, transportation, environmental conservation, economic development, recreation, and open space. These recommendations will serve as the official policy of the Town for its growth and development as adopted by the legislative body of the Town.

2. LEGAL MANDATE

This Comprehensive Plan is based on community input, existing land uses, development trends, suitability of land uses, economic feasibility, natural features, and the requirements of Indiana law.

Indiana statute, under Title 36, Article 7, as amended, authorizes municipalities to plan to control land use activities in an orderly manner. Local governments are further empowered with the purpose of improving “the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, and general welfare” of the citizens to plan for the future development of the community. Under the provisions of the state law, such plans will be prepared with the following intent:

- That highway systems (and street systems) be carefully planned;
- That new communities grow only with adequate public way, utility, health, educational, and recreational facilities;
- That the needs of agriculture, industry, and business be recognized in future growth;
- That residential areas provide healthful surroundings for family life; and
- That the growth of the community is commensurate with, and promotive of the efficient and economical use of public funds. (IC 36-7-4-201)

Under the statute, a municipality may establish planning and zoning entities to fulfill this purpose. (IC 36-7-4-201) Furthermore, while residents of Schererville support the comprehensive planning process, such action is required by legislative mandate as the basis for zoning and subdivision control ordinances. The Indiana statutes provide for, and require the development and maintenance of, a Comprehensive Plan by each Plan Commission. (IC 36-7-4-501)

Indiana Code 36-7-4-502 and 503 state the required and permissible contents of the Plan, including:

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

The Plan Commission may also compile additional information, permissible by case law, into a Comprehensive Plan. This mandate serves as the foundation for the Town of Schererville Comprehensive Plan.

3. PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process for the Comprehensive Plan started when the Town of Schererville retained The Arsh Group, Inc. to prepare a new Plan for the Town in August of 2008. With its boundaries almost fixed, Schererville’s decisions about growth and development will be less about adding territory and more about qualitative aspects of the community. The Comprehensive Plan, therefore, should tell less about where development must go and more about how development should shape the community.

Town Officials desired that the Comprehensive Plan would describe the kind of community residents want in the future, what it should look like, what features and amenities will be available to its residents, and what life in Schererville should be like in the years ahead. The Town Officials recognized community participation in the planning process was essential in order to achieve this objective.

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The Arsh Group, Inc. used several techniques to obtain information and permit residents to participate in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. These include data analysis, review of existing conditions, image preference survey, and a community visioning workshop. The Arsh Group also held three community meetings to encourage community input and review of different elements of the Plan.

Existing Conditions

This first phase of work consisted of a review and assessment of land use, social, economic and physical conditions, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, open space, and aesthetics. It included community reconnaissance, as well as several meetings with the Town Officials. This information was presented to the citizens during the first community meeting. In this meeting, The Arsh Group also asked for input from the citizens to identify issues and express concerns, which helped determine planning goals. The stated concerns were itemized and tabulated for further assessment.

Image Preference Survey

The Arsh Group also prepared an Image Preference Survey. The survey consisted of a set of images from all types of developments – pleasant, undesirable, and otherwise – in Schererville and from other areas. The residents were asked to participate in the survey and respond to the presented images by expressing their attitudes toward a particular image. The survey results were tabulated and used to identify the values and preferences of the residents for the developments and amenities that are favored or disliked.

Community Visioning

The community visioning was an evolutionary process which consisted of three community meetings. All meetings were advertised by the Plan Commission and were fully open to the public.

The first meeting consisted primarily of input about issues and concerns. It was here that the Image Preference Survey was administered. The second public meeting was in the form of a workshop for the Plan. In this workshop, the residents specifically identified a set of strategies and concepts for improving Schererville's land use, transportation, and other community issues. The residents further described critical areas that they expected the Plan to address and offered solutions for consideration.

In the community visioning workshops, the residents outlined their vision for Schererville. They offered their vision for the Downtown, US 41 (Indianapolis Boulevard), and US 30 (Lincoln Highway) corridors, as well as overall development patterns and character of the Town. They also outlined the goals for the Plan.

The last community meeting was held to get input about the draft framework for the Plan. In this meeting, the residents were also given an opportunity to review and refine the vision statement for the Plan. They were further asked to review goals and supportive strategies, and make suggestions.



SCENES FROM THE COMMUNITY VISIONING MEETINGS

The draft elements of the Plan were also presented for review by the residents. The residents were given an opportunity to respond to these elements. Their responses were considered in the development of final draft of the Plan.

Plan Implementation

This phase of work involved developing the strategies, policies, and implementation steps for the Draft Plan. The strategies and policies were reviewed and refined by the staff and Plan Commission. One part of this review was the development of action steps for implementation of the Plan. The action steps were developed in cooperation with the Town Staff. These steps outline policies, as well as what public and private entities can do to support the development or redevelopment of the Town or different elements of the Plan.

Regulatory Approval

The Plan Commission reviewed all elements of the Plan in a public meeting on July 6, 2009. The Plan Commission adopted the Plan and recommended the Plan for approval to the Town Council. The Town Council held a public meeting on July 8, 2009 and, after review, approved the recommendations of the Plan Commission.

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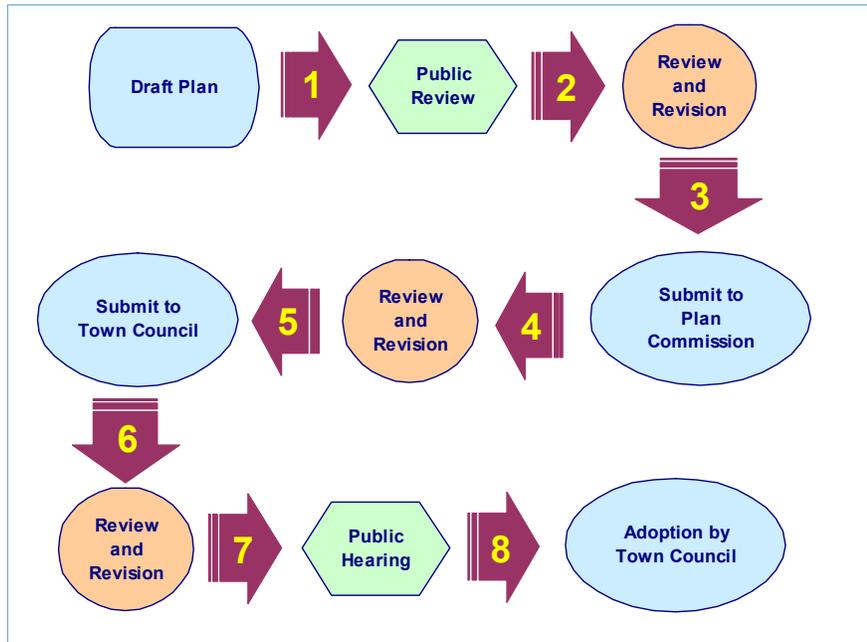
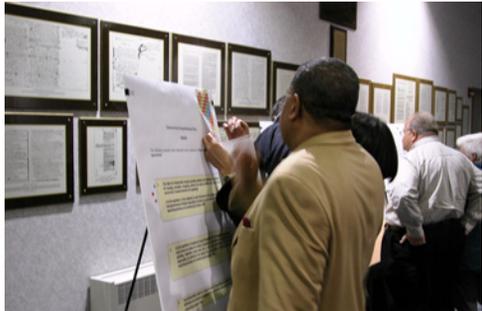


EXHIBIT 1 - PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION WAS A KEY ELEMENT OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

4. PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Schererville Comprehensive Plan, referred in this document as the “Plan,” is comprised of several elements. These elements are described in different chapters. The Plan’s chapters are:

Chapter One - Introduction

This chapter presents the planning process, organization of the Plan, and the statutory basis for the Plan.

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Chapter Two - Community Profile

This chapter provides an overview of Schererville's existing conditions in 2008. The chapter highlights the social and physical character of Schererville. The chapter also presents important trends in land use planning which are expected to influence future development in the community.

Chapter Three - Existing Conditions

This chapter provides a description of the existing land uses in the Town. Also discussed is the area covered by each land use and their predominance and pattern in the community. The transportation system and related issues are also described in this chapter.

Chapter Four - Vision

This chapter forms the backbone of the Plan. It describes the public input process which resulted in the development of vision and goals for the Plan. It also lays out the desires of the residents and establishes a direction for the land use and other elements of the Plan.

Chapter Five - Framework Plan

An overall development plan is presented in this chapter. The Framework Plan offers opportunities, as well as areas needing attention in the Comprehensive Plan. A listing of issues which have influenced the Plan Framework are also outlined.

Chapter Six - Future Land Use Plan

This chapter presents the future of Schererville based on the framework presented in Chapter Five. It describes land uses, growth and development areas, character, and future land use pattern for Schererville. Different elements of the Plan, ranging from land use to zoning, are also described in this chapter. Strategies to meet the goals and action steps to implement them are further presented in the chapter.

Chapter Seven - Transportation Plan

This chapter outlines the overall transportation network for the Town. The Plan recommends several strategies for corridors and other parts of the network. Future road improvements that are necessary to support anticipated growth are also outlined.

Chapter Eight - Subarea Plans

This chapter describes three specific Plan areas located within the Town and provides a general overview of how the Town envisions these areas will develop in the future. The Subarea Plans address topics such as access needs, building form and character, and other objectives by providing a set of policies and design directions for the areas to direct future development.

Chapter Nine - Implementation

This chapter provides the necessary administrative and action steps for implementing different elements of the Plan. It aims to ensure an orderly process for the Plan to remain an effective document which guides future growth and development.