



JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

DECEMBER 2012

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APPROVED BY:

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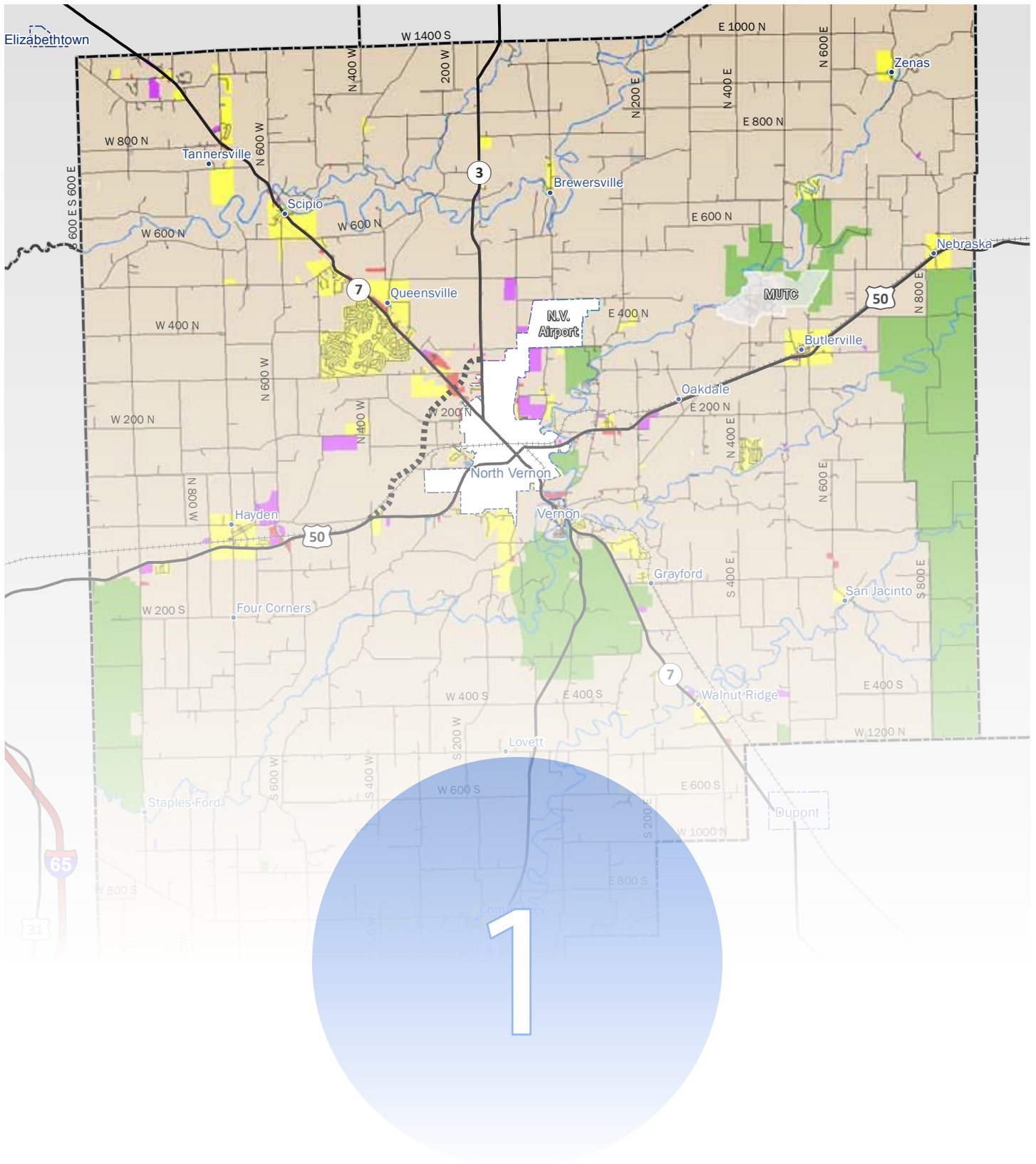
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Community ownership is a key to the success of any plan. For this reason, we wish to acknowledge the participation and hard work of Jennings County's citizens. Residents who participated in interviews, attended focus groups or took part in public meetings all made valuable contributions.

Special thanks are extended to the Jennings County Economic Development Commission board members and Area Plan Commission members who served as the steering committee that guided the planning process.

The members were:

TABLE 1.1 STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
Member	Organization
Jeff Barger	Jennings County Commissioner
Dave Beesley	Jennings County Water
Jessica Brunner	Jennings County EDC
Clyde Campbell	Jennings Water
Ryan Curry	North Vernon Municipal Airport
Chris Ertel	TIF President
Kathy Ertel	JCEDC Executive Director
Larry Fagersten	Indiana National Guard
Ray Hughes	Jennings County APC
Greg Hicks	State Farm Insurance
Albert Jackson	EDC Board President
Brad Kage	Jennings County APC, Attorney
Jerry Lamb	EDC Board Member
Brad Ponsler	Farm Bureau
John Post	Jennings County APC
Jason Sanders	Erler Industries Inc.
Barb Shaw	Jennings County Community Foundation
Cheryl Trisler	Jennings County APC, Executive Dir.
Chuck Waggoner	TIF Attorney
Dan Wright	Mayor of Vernon
Bill Wright	Jennings County APC

We would also like to thank Cheryl Trisler, Executive Director of the Area Plan Commission and Kathy Ertel of the Jennings County Economic Development Commission (JCEDC). The JCEDC also provided a match to secure the planning grant.

Appreciation is expressed to the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs for funding this planning project.

Members of the consulting team who facilitated the process are grateful for the opportunity to continue working with your community.

Scott Burgins, SDG

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INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan is Jennings County's guide to the future. It answers fundamental questions such as:

- ✦ What do we want to change?
- ✦ What do we want to protect?

So, how can a community change the things it doesn't like while protecting the things it does?

One method is land use planning, which lays out the community's priorities and sets goals on how to reach them.

Some have questioned how effective is planning in tough times, but that question is best answered in reverse: Is Jennings County more likely to achieve its goals and are its residents more likely to prosper *with* or *without* a plan for the future?

Decisions made without reference to a plan are frequently reactionary, responding only to specific problems or proposals. But a long term view is needed in order to keep the county from growing or shrinking simply *by accident*. It is vital for decision-makers to have a shared reference point, or at least a collective set of relevant facts.

Other potential benefits of planning include providing services more efficiently, directing development to areas with sufficient capacity to support it, making sure adjacent uses are compatible and protecting property values.

The document is an advisory tool for the county commissioners, mayors, board of public works, plan commission, city and town councils, staff and interested citizens when land use changes are proposed. These

changes cover a wide range of topics such as new roads, subdivisions and commercial developments. The plan also covers environmental issues such as sustainability and smart growth.

But the comprehensive plan is not the same as zoning regulations. That more detailed level of guidance is reserved for ordinances adopted during the zoning and subdivision control process. In many cases, though, the comprehensive plan builds the foundation for regulation changes.

This document reflects community goals, as interpreted through a five-month process including steering committee meetings, interviews and public hearings.

The planning process attempted to be as efficient as possible. To begin, the consulting team reviewed strategies and goals from the county's 1994 comp plan and the *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan*, completed in 2009. Goals and action steps were revised based on current trends – most notably the path of the U.S. 50 bypass – and input from stakeholders and steering committee members.

It is long-range in orientation – intended to reach out 15 to 20 years – but is specific enough to guide the day-to-day activities of the county's elected and appointed officials.

ORIGINS OF THE PLAN

The Jennings County Comprehensive Plan was funded by a grant from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs. The Jennings County Economic Development Commission contributed a match to receive the grant.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

In Indiana, comprehensive planning is permitted by the 500 Series of Title 36-7-4 of the Indiana Code. This law empowers towns, cities and counties to adopt plans. Any plan adopted in Indiana must contain at least the following three elements:

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

In addition, the law provides for a number of optional elements, including, but not limited to parks and recreation, flood control, transit and natural resource protection. While each planning process should be custom-designed to meet community needs, nearly all contain the same core elements as found in this plan:

- ✦ Evaluate existing conditions, including strengths and weaknesses, community character, demographics, natural features, etc.
- ✦ Establish goals and objectives for the future
- ✦ Identify alternatives for meeting the goals and objectives
- ✦ Select the most desirable alternative
- ✦ Devise and adopt tools to implement the plan (zoning, subdivision control, capital improvement programming, etc.)
- ✦ Evaluate the success of the plan
- ✦ Revise the plan

These steps are part of a continuing process. Plans must be evaluated and updated as the community changes. These community changes can be gradual, such as demographic trends, technological change or slow economic growth or decline. Sometimes change

is more sudden, such as the location of a large new industry in a small community or the loss of a major employer.

The Jennings County Area Plan Commission and Jennings County Economic Development Commission oversaw creation of the comprehensive plan. Elements of the process included:

- ✦ **Key Stakeholder Interviews:** Representatives from utility companies, officials from incorporated communities and others were interviewed during the process.
- ✦ **Public Meetings:** A public meeting was held during an APC meeting to gather input from members of the public and present the plan. In addition, all steering committee meetings were open to the public.
- ✦ **Steering Committee Meetings:** The committee met five times to set priorities and discuss options. Review teams made up of local committee members edited every chapter.
- ✦ **Project Website:** This site - <http://www.sdg.us/jennings-county-comprehensive-plan/> - was used to post all of the minutes from steering committee meetings as well as draft chapters of the plan.

USING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

For the comprehensive plan to produce results, it must be understandable and able to be implemented. The following paragraphs will assist in understanding how to use the plan.

TOPIC CHAPTERS

Topic chapters include: community character, land use, economic development, housing, natural resources, transportation, and utility infrastructure. The chapters are mostly self-contained examinations of specific issues. They include research, strategies

and recommendations. Besides making the reader well versed in the topic, they outline years of projects for tackling problems. Several chapters include special sections for Critical Sub Areas. All of the recommendations are gathered together in the Implementation Plan.

TIPS FOR PLAN COMMISSIONERS AND COUNTY OFFICIALS

When properly applied, a comprehensive plan can make the life of the decision-maker easier. Community leaders can point to the research or maps while explaining how they reached their decision. They can refer to the input of the local leaders and residents whose opinions helped shape the plan's goals.

They can also ask themselves how they make decisions *without* a plan. Certainly their experience in Jennings County guides their judgment, but a group of people making decisions based on their *individual perceptions* may not lead to a shared vision of the county's future. The comprehensive plan provides a defensible, unified vision.

CHANGES TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The final word on the Jennings County Comprehensive Plan is that circumstances change, and the plan should be modified to change along with them.

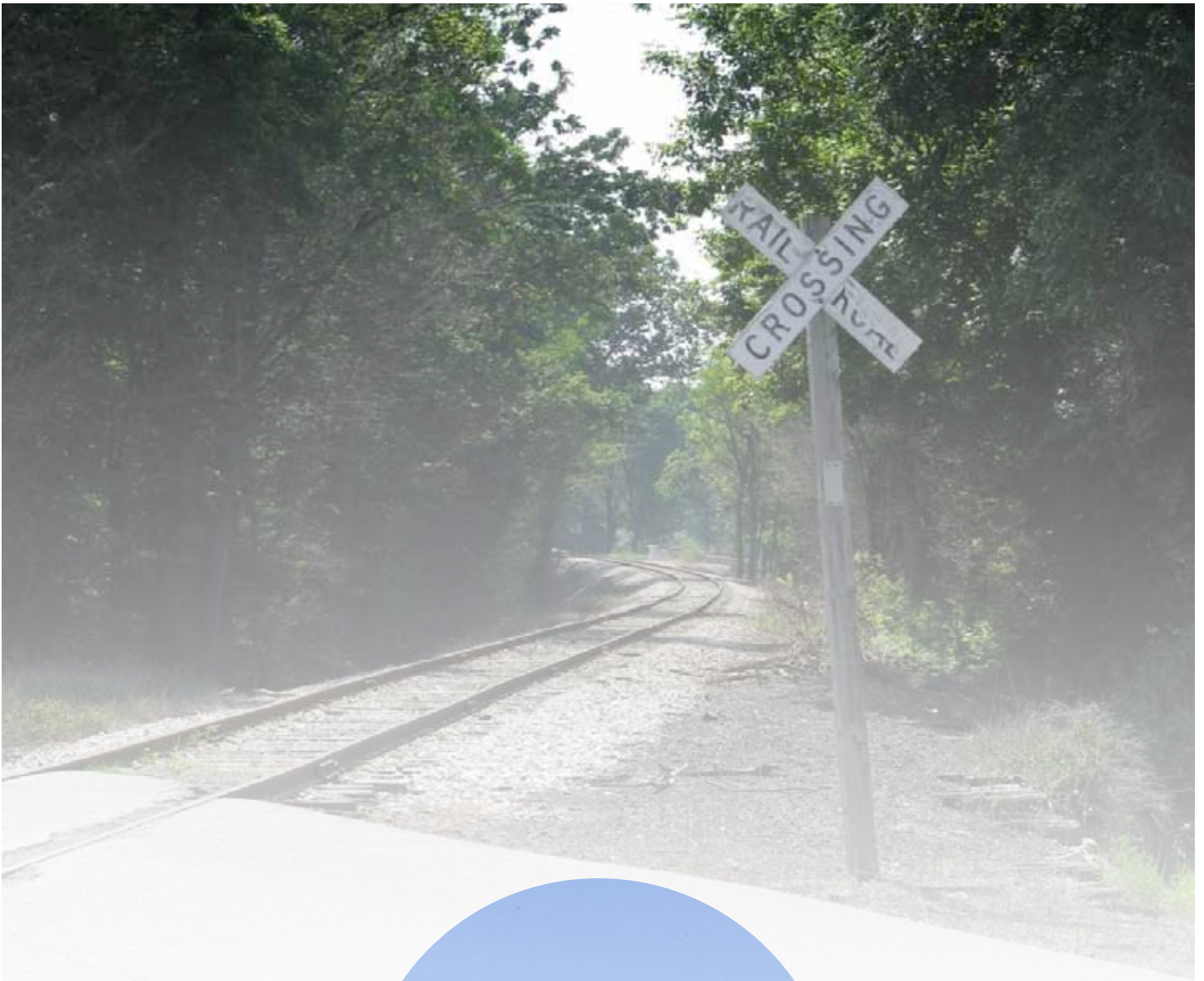
This may not mean a complete update, but every year or so the planning commission and others should review the plan to make sure it is current.

It would be a poor use of the resources poured into creating this plan to let it slowly grow outdated, while the need for current planning does not.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

That depends upon the people of Jennings County. Once the comprehensive plan is completed a county can take many actions – or none at all. The Implementation Chapter provides a step-by-step guide to working toward the plan's goals.

But whatever the final results, the entire community now has a document that lists its challenges and priorities, along with the research, maps and strategies to address Jennings County's future.



3

VISION AND PLAN SUMMARY

“I see this plan as a roadmap to opportunity.”

“I hope it puts us in the right direction for potential growth and preserving areas of natural beauty.”

Those were two of the most common expectations heard during the planning process. But at the same time, community leaders acknowledged that the dismal national economy and other local conditions have left them without a lot of resources to build upon.

As a result, the steering committee created a conservative plan that takes an incremental approach to preparing for the future.

For example, the plan details how a mix of small investments in neighborhood revitalization and carefully considered extension of infrastructure can save taxpayer’s money while also addressing Jennings County’s problems.

The plan shows that more can be done, that even in a depressed economy leaders can set the bar higher. In fact, local government doesn’t have to create any new regulations to see positive results. They simply have to commit themselves to enforcing the rules they already have.

And so this plan is not filled with recommendations for new rules and restrictions. Instead, it is designed to:

1. Show the importance of planning and investment, even if both the local economy and population are not growing.

2. Emphasize the need to revitalize areas that have already been developed instead of allowing growth and the extension of costly infrastructure into new areas.

The plan also corrects some policies from the previous comprehensive plan which has contributed to local problems. For example, that plan, completed in 1994, discouraged zoning for upscale housing. To keep building costs low, it recommended against requiring new housing developments to put in curbs, sidewalks and other community-building infrastructure.

Almost 20 years later, the county now has a shortage of upper-income homes, meaning people with good, local jobs find housing in other communities such as Columbus. There is, however, not a shortage of poorly constructed homes and neighborhoods, some of them in dire need of repair.

Some corrections have been made since the previous plan. For example, subdivisions now require sidewalks and other infrastructure. But again and again steering committee members discussed how waving their own regulations to allow growth almost anywhere and not enforcing simple health and safety rules have led to public expenses.

This is a particular concern in rural areas such as Jennings County. As one steering committee member

said, “One concern about the plan is that land zoned for agricultural use does not mean that ‘anything goes’.”

Despite the challenges, there are many positive signs for the county’s future. One of the biggest is North Vernon winning a \$16-million Stellar Communities grant from the state. That money is being used to revitalize downtown. That sort of improvement can draw more investments for new homes and businesses. The Stellar grant was awarded so that the city could better serve one of Jennings County’s other big assets, the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC).

Both Stellar and MUTC are important because of what they contribute to the community’s quality of life. Although the term is vague, standard indicators of quality of life include wealth and employment, the built environment, physical and mental health, education, recreation and leisure time. Developing the community’s quality of life – along with protecting its beautiful rural landscape – will create a very desirable place to live and work.

The U.S. 50 bypass, now under construction, could also open opportunities for growth along the new route. As an investment in the future, some of that land should be dedicated to industrial development.

The bypass’ likely route will cut through two of the community’s industrial parks, which will leave it with less acreage, including some on a state certified shovel-ready site. One site has 54 acres and the other 40, so even removing the usual land for highway right-of-ways will leave a significantly smaller parcel to market.

The steering committee’s top priorities are summarized in this chapter. At every step of this process, using newspaper notices, public meetings, a project website and other resources, the committee created a planning process that is open and transparent. That same approach will be used as Jennings County takes its next steps toward planning.

KEY FINDINGS

Each chapter contains information on current conditions and future trends. Here are the highlights.

LAND USE

- ✦ One of the largest factors impacting any new development is the location of available sanitary sewers. Since there is currently only one public wastewater treatment plant in the county, most growth will be centralized around it, in areas surrounding North Vernon.
- ✦ The U.S. 50 bypass will prompt changes in land use patterns in upcoming years. A detailed plan has been developed with specific land use recommendations along this route. These recommendations can be found in the Critical Sub Area: U.S. 50 East Bypass Impact Area.
- ✦ Jennings County has done a good job of managing its zoning map to match its future land use map. Few examples of county spot zoning could be identified. As a result, few changes to the future land use map are recommended in this chapter (outside of the area of the U.S. 50 bypass).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ✦ Manufacturing is still a major driver of the economy in Jennings County, as it accounts for nearly one-fourth of local employment and offers wages that are among the highest on average of any industry in the county.
- ✦ Industries in which employment is more concentrated than the national average include: advanced materials, technology, chemicals and chemical-based products, forest and wood products, transportation and logistics, primary metal manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing, machinery manufacturing, transportation equipment manufacturing.
- ✦ Jennings County is a net exporter of labor, with approximately three times as many residents

commuting outside the county for work as commute into it from other counties. The majority of these commuters work in either Bartholomew or Jackson counties.

- ✦ While nearly 23 percent of Indiana residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher, only 9 percent of Jennings County residents have that level of educational attainment.
- ✦ The likely eastern route of the U.S. 50 bypass will cut through two of the community's industrial parks, which will leave it with less acreage, including on a state certified shovel-ready site. As an investment in the future, new land should be dedicated to industrial development.

HOUSING

- ✦ Jennings County's population growth has slowed relative to growth at the state level, increasing by just 2.3 percent since 2000. Slow growth is projected for the next decade.
- ✦ The 44 building permits issued in 2011 amount to less than a quarter the number of permits issued just 10 years prior.
- ✦ Foreclosures are widespread throughout the county and constitute the largest ongoing problem for the Jennings County housing market, according to local real estate agents.
- ✦ Desirable areas likely to experience continued growth are in the northern and western parts of the county, especially areas close to larger towns, like North Vernon. There is also some movement in executive housing throughout the county in the \$200k-\$250k+ range, though activity is still limited, according to local real estate agents.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- ✦ The primary land use is farmland with approximately 36 percent of land being cropland, 6 percent pasture and 57 percent woodland.

- ✦ Approximately 1 percent of county is used for urban and industrial uses.

TRANSPORTATION

- ✦ Completed construction of the U.S. 50 bypass will open up new areas of the county for economic development. Jennings County and North Vernon should work closely together to manage development to the greatest benefit of all.
- ✦ Completion of the U.S. 50 bypass may mean that existing traffic patterns will shift to access points along the new bypass. This means that roads which are adequate to handle current traffic volumes may be subject to increased wear, deterioration, and congestion due to potentially increased volumes of local and regional traffic.
- ✦ The North Vernon Municipal Airport is an important resource for Jennings County residents and business. This asset has also been identified as an important factor in the continued and expanded operations of the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center.

UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

- ✦ Economic development and quality of life are intertwined in Jennings County. There is room here to promote new land for industrial development and other types of economic growth in defined areas while protecting our rural landscapes.

DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Development principles are the foundation of the comprehensive plan and should guide decisions makers as they interpret the document. They answer the question: "What is important to our community?"

LAND USE PLANNING & ENFORCEMENT

We believe in committing resources for fair and consistent code enforcement. Money, time and

political will are all needed to ensure that the rules protecting our quality of life are evenly and fairly enforced.

REINVESTMENT VS. NEW GROWTH

We favor the revitalization of developed areas over allowing growth and the extension of costly infrastructure into new areas. There are long term, costs in new development that later must be paid by local government and taxpayers.

NORTH VERNON

The county will continue working with the City of North Vernon on shared concerns, such as code enforcement and taking advantage of growth possibilities tied to the U.S. 50 bypass.

VERNON

The Town of Vernon's historic buildings and its potential for development as a tourism site must be protected and promoted.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development and quality of life are intertwined in Jennings County. There is room here to promote new land for industrial development and other types of economic growth in defined areas while protecting our rural landscapes.

UTILITIES

Jennings County should direct development toward areas that can be served by water and sanitary sewer systems. The county should continue to cooperate with private and public utilities in future master planning to accommodate this development.

RECREATION AND GREENSPACE

Greenspace and multi-use trails contribute to a community's quality of life, which in turn benefits its economy. More can be done to enhance the county's natural features.

AGRICULTURAL LAND

County regulations need to be updated to balance the rights of both existing farmers and existing rural residences. Operation of existing farms should not be limited by new housing development. At the same time, new industrial level farming (such as CAFOs) should be located away from existing residences. The community should begin a discussion on the location and types of more intensive agricultural practices.

HOUSING

Jennings County must work to improve the quality and attractiveness of its neighborhoods, in particular its affordable housing stock. County-led initiatives toward this goal should include enforcement of standards for rental units, clean-up plans for vacant lots and stricter regulation of manufactured homes. With this work underway, the county will be in a better position to attract investment in higher-rate homes.

U.S. 50 BYPASS

Construction of the U.S. 50 bypass will open up new areas of the county for economic development. Jennings County and North Vernon should work closely together to manage development to the greatest benefit of all.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations from each chapter and Critical Sub Area (CSA) are listed briefly below. Detailed recommendations can be found in each chapter and in the Implementation Plan.

LAND USE

- ✦ Revise the zoning map to adequately reflect community goals in the four areas: (1) Agricultural (2) Residential (3) Industrial (4) Commercial.
- ✦ Update the Zoning Code.
- ✦ Update the Subdivision Code.

- ✦ Create and maintain a Capital Improvement Plan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ✦ Ensure that there is an adequate supply of larger, shovel-ready industrial sites where the planning and zoning, infrastructure, site tests and environmental reports, and ownership status are clearly resolved.
- ✦ Create multiple agricultural zones for different types of agriculture.
- ✦ Define objective development standards within Zoning Ordinances that must be met as conditions for permitted use for new agricultural facilities, rather than have a special exception process for new facilities.
- ✦ Develop a site scoring system based on objective criteria to determine whether new facilities meet the conditions set forth in zoning ordinances.
- ✦ Increase code enforcement to prevent the appearance of blighted commercial buildings.
- ✦ Develop a formal economic development plan for Jennings County.
- ✦ Initiate a countywide branding campaign to promote Jennings County as a regional destination.

HOUSING

- ✦ Make amendments to Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to comply with planning-related state law changes that went into effect in July 2011.
- ✦ Employ basic design standards to improve the appearance of new residential development.
- ✦ Conduct a countywide housing needs assessment to provide a thorough analysis of the housing market and detailed recommendations improving and diversifying the county's housing stock.
- ✦ Make active code enforcement a priority to address the number of houses in foreclosure and

blighted areas.

- ✦ Explore options for neighborhood revitalization in certain areas, including the Country Squire Lakes community and any other areas identified as suitable candidates for revitalization.
- ✦ Pursue housing grant options to fund the aforementioned projects.
- ✦ Form a housing coalition or taskforce to address local housing issues.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- ✦ Abundance of managed lands can be a county resource and should be viewed as a potential economic development resource for the local economy. The community should study opportunities to take advantage of these properties.
- ✦ The unique position of the county between two national wildlife refuges, availability of other managed lands for wildlife activities, and proximity to I-65 corridor uniquely positions county to take advantage of this type of tourism revenue.
- ✦ As surface water from the Muscatatuck River provides water service for the majority of county residents, protection of this resource is of the highest priority. Development protections should be considered along both sides of the Muscatatuck River throughout the community, and especially between North Vernon and the Brush Creek Reservoir. A long term goal of establishing a conservation corridor along the river is also recommended to protect linkages between the various protected forest lands in eastern Jennings County.
- ✦ The potential for failing septic systems to negatively impact local water quality is high. Jennings County should work towards improving the current system of septic system dependent site development review.

- ✦ Prepare a county-wide park and recreation master plan, and marketing plan with North Vernon, IDNR, and USFWS to provide a cohesive campaign to highlight natural resource areas.
- ✦ Consider identification and development protections of significant karst topography within Jennings County. Apply development protections similar to those recommended for the Muscatatuck River watershed. By encouraging the appropriate use of these areas through policy actions and land use controls Jennings County will be taking great steps towards the protection of valuable water supplies while also helping to ensure that potentially high costs associated with development on these unstable surfaces is avoided.
- ✦ Jennings County should work with the Soil and Water Conservation District to explore ways to make informed future land use decisions based upon an analysis of development suitability.

TRANSPORTATION

- ✦ Develop a county-wide long range transportation plan which considers the possible long term effects on local roadways connected to the U.S. 50 bypass corridor and long term needs based upon predicted development growth patterns.
- ✦ Continue to work with INDOT in evaluating the long term traffic needs of the S.R. 7 and S.R. 3 corridors. Ensure that the necessary roadway improvements are in place prior to, or in conjunction with, approved industrial and commercial development.
- ✦ Work with the North Vernon Airport Authority and MUTC to ensure the required airport safety zones are respected and that approved improvements surrounding the airport facility are compatible with the long range plans for airport operations.
- ✦ Work with the North Vernon Airport Authority and MUTC to determine the potential for taking advantage of excess airport capacity and the proximity of the U.S. 50 bypass to develop an

enticing location for additional logistics and military industry development.

UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

- ✦ New commercial, industrial and residential subdivision growth should be directed into areas that are served by existing water and sanitary sewer systems.
- ✦ The county should work with the City of North Vernon to plan for the mid-to-long term growth opportunity in western Jennings County along the U.S. 50 corridor. Until sanitary sewers are available, development should be limited in these areas.
- ✦ The county should develop updated standards for septic systems. Commercial, industrial, and larger residential subdivision developments should be directed toward areas with public sanitary sewer systems.

CRITICAL SUB AREAS

Code Enforcement

- ✦ Consider – over time – stockpiling a fund that would allow the county to pursue legal cases against the most egregious offenders.
- ✦ Further explore other enforcement systems, such as ticketing, to see if they would be more effective.
- ✦ For problem lots, new property owners should first have to obtain permits for land improvements and then, when land meets code regulations, the owners may receive the deed to the land.
- ✦ Farmers and businesses need to be encouraged to purchase the correct permits.
- ✦ It would be beneficial if the APC could find an individual with grant writing experience.

Town of Vernon

- ✦ Vernon should revisit the possibility of requiring some sort of design standards or historic preservation for buildings, at least on the main square.

MUTC Compatible Use Area

- ✦ Establish a MUTC Influence Zone Overlay district. The intent of this district is to identify the areas around MUTC that take into consideration the direct and indirect implications of the training facility. This ordinance should recognize the rights of property owners to continue to use their property as they have in the past. It should also identify types of new development that would be appropriate in the district, and give MUTC the ability to voice any concerns with proposed development before permits are issued. It would also be appropriate to consider requiring a waiver acknowledging the issues in the district prior to approval of new developments.
- ✦ Update Jennings County Zoning Maps and Ordinances to recognize and define land uses compatible with MUTC within the overlay zone. This effort should also be undertaken for areas surrounding the North Vernon Municipal Airport.
- ✦ Jennings County should undertake planning efforts for improved short term and long term housing facilities to accommodate military personnel and training operations participants.
- ✦ It is imperative that the county assess ongoing impacts to local roads from additional traffic volumes and heavy equipment hauling related to convoy vehicles traversing through Jennings County. These assessments should be summarized and incorporated into long range transportation planning efforts. Jennings County should consider developing a county road access plan to manage transportation issues when roads are closed due to MUTC exercises and trainings.

Country Squire Lakes

- ✦ Increase communication between CSL residents and county officials to move toward shared goals.
- ✦ Formalize a comprehensive plan for CSL and its relationship to the rest of Jennings County.

U.S. 50 East Bypass Impact Area

- ✦ Work with U.S. 50 Bypass Community Advisory Committee to provide guidance on selection of a preferred eastern corridor alternative.
- ✦ Support the original land use goals of the U.S. 50 bypass plan identified in the 2009 *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan*. Some modifications are proposed on the updated land use plan to reflect alignment changes made since that plan was developed.
- ✦ Work with APC and City of North Vernon to update the bypass section of the *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan* so that there is one common land use plan adopted for the corridor.
- ✦ Develop a master plan for a business/industrial park on U.S. 50 between North Vernon and MUTC.
- ✦ Work with utility providers to develop an incremental improvement plan to ensure that development does not jeopardize the integrity of the utility services and to ensure planning of appropriate utility improvements to allow for implementation of future development plans.
- ✦ Ensure that appropriate land preservation measures are in place to help protect and preserve watersheds (especially along the Muscatatuck River), prime agricultural land, and greenspace.

NEXT STEPS

Implementation is the most important factor in ensuring the success of a comprehensive plan. The final chapter of this plan includes a detailed implementation guide.

After implementation, periodic review is needed to keep the goals of the plan alive. Every year or so the area planning commission, elected officials and other leaders should review the implementation plan and make note of possible future changes.

For example, the biennial comprehensive plan review team might include:

- ✦ APC members
 - ✦ APC president
 - ✦ One additional BZA member
 - ✦ City council representative
 - ✦ County commission representative
 - ✦ County council representative
- ✦ Other members
 - ✦ Mayors
 - ✦ Economic development representative
 - ✦ School corporation representative
 - ✦ Agricultural representative

A lot of community time and resources went into the completion of this comprehensive plan and it will take even more resources for it to succeed. By working together, the community can ensure that it's moving toward a better-planned, more prosperous future.



4

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

HISTORY AND CHARACTER

HISTORY

Jennings became an official Indiana county effective February 1, 1817. The county was named for the first governor of the state of Indiana, Jonathan Jennings. Jennings County is in south central Indiana and is located southeast of Indianapolis and northeast of Louisville. The county seat is Vernon, the geographic center of the county and one of two incorporated places within the county. The City of North Vernon was founded by two civil war heroes, Colonel Hagerman Tripp and Hiram Prather, and incorporated in 1867. Jennings County has noteworthy historic involvement in the Underground Railroad including row houses with underground tunnels used to hide slaves escaping to the north.

The City of North Vernon in the nineteenth century was known as the “Crossroads of Indiana.” It gained this title in thanks to the more than ninety trains that traveled through the city. The city’s centralized location between Indianapolis, Cincinnati and Louisville has been one of its means of attracting businesses to the

area and made it a historical crossroads of railway shipping. North Vernon has produced several notable writers and poets including Jessamyn West, a famous Quaker writer who is most well known for her acclaimed work “The Friendly Persuasion” that was later made into an acclaimed film starring Gary Cooper.

CHARACTER

Much of Jennings County’s land use is dedicated to agriculture, and the county has maintained its rural feel and charm to this day. North Vernon is the county’s largest city with a population of over 6,000 people but preserves a small town appeal. The rural setting of the county provides many opportunities to enjoy nature and wildlife in parks and along trails.

Jennings County history is preserved and available to the viewing public at the North American House, a museum operated by the Jennings County Historical Society. The North American House museum features historic artifacts on display in a building originally constructed in 1838 as a stage coach stop and inn. The historical society sponsors four events during the year that bring more than 35,000 visitors to Jennings County. These events include the Sassafras Tea Festival and civil war reenactment as well as a Labor Day antique and craft festival. Other events in the county include the soap box derby and Relay for Life in May as well as the Jennings County Fair in June.

Jennings County provides residents and visitors with a range of entertainment options. There are two golf courses: Ford’s Crossing and St. Anne’s. Film lovers in Jennings County can head to select screenings at the historic Park Theatre Civic Centre for a unique film viewing experience. Outdoor lovers have an abundance of opportunities in Jennings County, including Crosley



Historic downtown Vernon, Indiana

State Fish and Wildlife Area and Muscatatuck State Park. The North Vernon parks department maintains the city pool for residents looking to cool off on a hot summer day.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Cultural Resources Map on page 22 shows many of the resources described below and listed on the following pages.

One of Jennings County's most cherished cultural institutions is the Park Theatre Civic Centre in North Vernon. The theater originally opened in 1916 featuring performances of vaudeville acts and silent films. The theatre fell upon rough times in the 1960s and was forced to close its doors due to declining business. In the 1990s a group of individuals created a not-for profit organization to renovate the theatre and open its doors to the public once again. The theatre underwent a 1.3 million dollar renovation and reopened in 2003. The theatre is now one of the centerpieces of a revitalized downtown North Vernon.

Jennings County has seven places designated as historic by the National Register of Historic Places including the Benville Bridge and Edwards Ford Bridge, which are part of the U.S. Army proving ground and are noteworthy achievements of engineering. Also recognized as a place of historical importance is the Vernon Historic District. This district is nearly surrounded by the



Park Theatre Civic Centre in North Vernon, Indiana

Muscatatuck River and is the location of the county courthouse. Vernon is the smallest town in the state with the distinction of being the county seat.

North Vernon has several of its districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places including the Downtown Historic District, the State Street Historic District, and the Walnut Street Historic District. The Downtown Historic District is noted for its significance as the traditional center of commerce and transportation in the area. The State Street Historic District is significant to the social history of the area and for the distinguished architecture of its homes and churches. The Walnut Street Historic District is noted for its historic homes built in a late Victorian Architectural style.

EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

Jennings County Academy of Learning
100 Webster St.
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-7830

Jennings County Special Programs
34 W. Main St.
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-3043 ext. 1

Jennings County Education Center
1200 West O & M
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-2905

Scipio Elementary School
6320 N Hwy 7
Scipio, IN 47273
812-392-2055

Sand Creek Elementary School
1450 W CR 500 N
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-352-9343

North Vernon Elementary School
810 W. Walnut
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-4903

Hayden Elementary School
55 S CR 685 W
Hayden, IN 47245
812-346-2813

Graham Creek Elementary School
7910 S CR 90 W
Commiskey, IN 47227
812-346-4179

Brush Creek Elementary
4275 E. US Hwy 50
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-458-6582

Jennings County Middle School
820 W. Walnut St.
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-4940

Jennings County High School
800 West Walnut Street
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-5588

NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

St. Mary's School
209 Washington St.
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-3445

HEALTHCARE

St. Vincent Jennings Hospital
301 Henry Street
North Vernon, Indiana 47265
812-352-4200

Hospice of Jennings County
245 Norris Avenue
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-5944

Jennings Healthcare Center
701 Henry Street
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-9333

Fire Departments
North Vernon Fire Department
511 Buckeye Street
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-7438

Jennings County-EMS-Rescue
925 South State Street
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-4715

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Jennings County Sheriff
925 South State Street
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-5111

North Vernon Police Department
101 North Madison Avenue
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-2345

PARKS AND RECREATION

Jennings County boasts a wide array of opportunities to experience nature including two national wildlife refuges, two state fish and wildlife areas, a state forest, and a state nature preserve. More information on these parks can be found in Chapter 8 Natural Resources in this plan.

Muscatatuck Park features an opportunity to see many different types of wildlife within its diverse landscape.

Guests of the park can experience cliffs, caves, springs and waterfalls in their time at Muscatatuck Park. The park is also known for its fall foliage and spring wild flowers.

Muscatatuck Park
Vernon Township, Indiana
812-346-2953

Eco Lake Park is a new park that was recently given to Jennings County. The property features 127 acres of fields and forested land with a 14-acre lake that will be designated as an IDNR Public Access Site. Eco Lake Park is open to the public with limited amenities. Fishing, hiking, and picnicking are available.

Eco Lake Park
SR 7 at CR 925 N near Wilson Chapel
812-346-2953

Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge comprises 7,802 acres of preserved forest, wetland and grassland habitat. This refuge is known as an outstanding bird watching site and is visited by approximately 185,000 visitors a year.

Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge
12985 E. U.S. Hwy. 50
Seymour, IN 47274

North Vernon City Park
North Vernon, Indiana
812-346-9371

Twin Cities Raceway Park
445 North County Rd. 25 E
Vernon, Indiana 47282

Ford's Crossing Golf Course
502 South Madison
North Vernon, IN
812-346-4653

Hayden Historical Museum
Hayden, Indiana 47245
812-592-8445

Park Theatre Civic Centre
25 North Madison Avenue
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-0330

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Jennings County Economic Development Commission
1865 West US Hwy 50
North Vernon, IN 47265
(812) 346-2388

Jennings County Chamber of Commerce
524 North State Street
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-2339

Jennings County Area Plan Commission
Vernon, IN 47282
812-352-3005

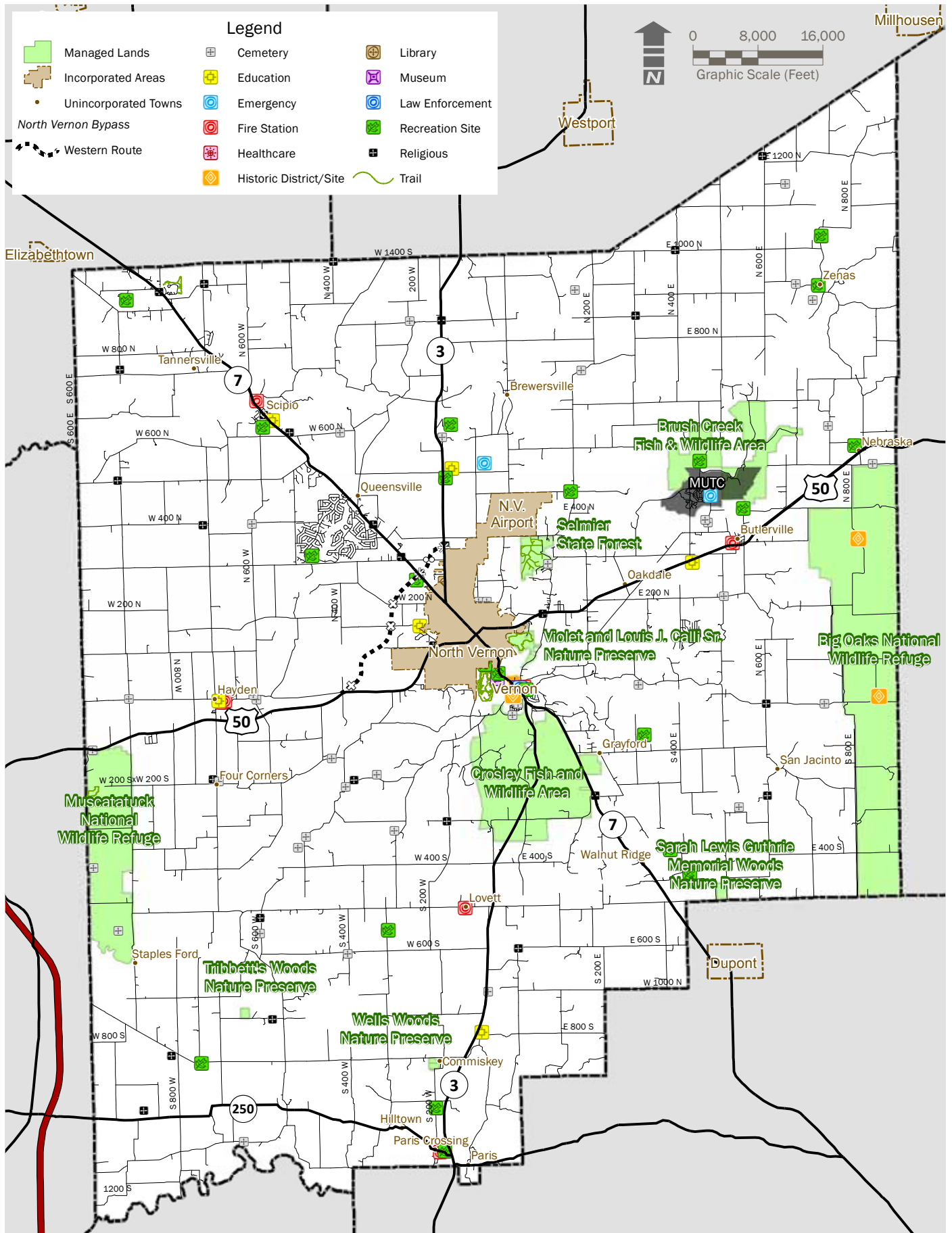
PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND INSTITUTIONS

Jennings County Auditor
Vernon, IN 47282
812-352-3016

Jennings County Courthouse
24 North Pike Street
Vernon, Indiana 47282

North Vernon Mayor's Office
143 E. Walnut Street
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-3789

CULTURAL RESOURCES MAP



North Vernon Utilities Department
275 E Main Street
North Vernon, IN
812-346-4691

North Vernon Street Department
350 Euler Court
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-1616

North Vernon Stormwater/Wastewater Department
725 N. Greensburg Street
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-1496

North Vernon Water Plant
439 9th Street
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-2037

References

- Jennings County Economic Development Commission <http://www.jenningsedc.com/>
- Muscatatuck Park <http://www.muscatatuckpark.com/>
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/profiles/index.cfm?id=31530>
- Jennings County Chamber of Commerce <http://www.jenningscountychamber.com/index.php>
- Jennings County Indiana History and Pioneer Genealogy <http://www.countyhistory.com/jennings/start.html>
- Jennings County Historical Society <http://www.jenningscounty.org/underground.php>
- The City of North Vernon, Indiana <http://www.northvernon-in.gov/history.php>
- Park Theatre Civic Centre <http://www.park-theatre.org/>
- National Register of Historic Places <http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/IN/Jennings/state.html>
- Jennings County Historical Society <http://www.jenningscounty.org>

CHURCHES

Places of worship are prevalent in Jennings County. The following list was compiled based on information in the Yellow Pages and Indiana Home Town Locator.

TABLE 4.1 LIST OF CHURCHES

<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>
First Christian Church	North Vernon
St. Mary's Catholic Church	North Vernon
Wesleyan Church	North Vernon
First United Methodist Church	North Vernon
First Apostolic Church	North Vernon
Bethel Baptist Church	North Vernon
Christ Baptist Church	North Vernon
First Baptist Church	North Vernon
Church of Jesus Christ of LDS	North Vernon
Corinthian Missionary Baptist Church	North Vernon
First Church of the Nazarene	North Vernon
Harvest Baptist Church	North Vernon
Christ's Way Christian Church	North Vernon
Harms Street Church of Christ	North Vernon
Vernon Baptist Church	Vernon
Vernon Presbyterian Church	Vernon
Jennings Church of Christ	North Vernon
Church of God	North Vernon
Lord of Life Lutheran Church	North Vernon
First Assembly of God	North Vernon
Grayford Road Church of God	North Vernon
Scipio Presbyterian Church	Scipio
Butlerville Mennonite Church	Butlerville
Bible Baptist Church	North Vernon
St. Joseph Church	Spencer
North Vernon SDA Church	North Vernon
Queensville Community Church	North Vernon
Church of Christ	North Vernon
Graham Presbyterian Church	North Vernon
Centerville Community Church	Lovett
Pleasant View Church	Sand Creek
Zenas Baptist Church	Zenas

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

This section provides an in-depth look at the Jennings County demographic makeup. It explores important topics such as employment, education, age, and poverty. Each section is comparative, meaning that Jennings County is examined side-by-side with state, and sometimes regional, trends. Additional insights are frequently provided to give the reader a complete and accurate picture of Jennings County today and reveal where it is headed in the future.

Most of the demographic data available for Jennings County as of September 2012 is based on the most recent U.S. Census survey that was taken in April 2010. While the Census Bureau conducts smaller scale surveys between decennial years, the bureau does not analyze geographic areas with a population of 65,000 or less based on the Census Bureau population estimates.

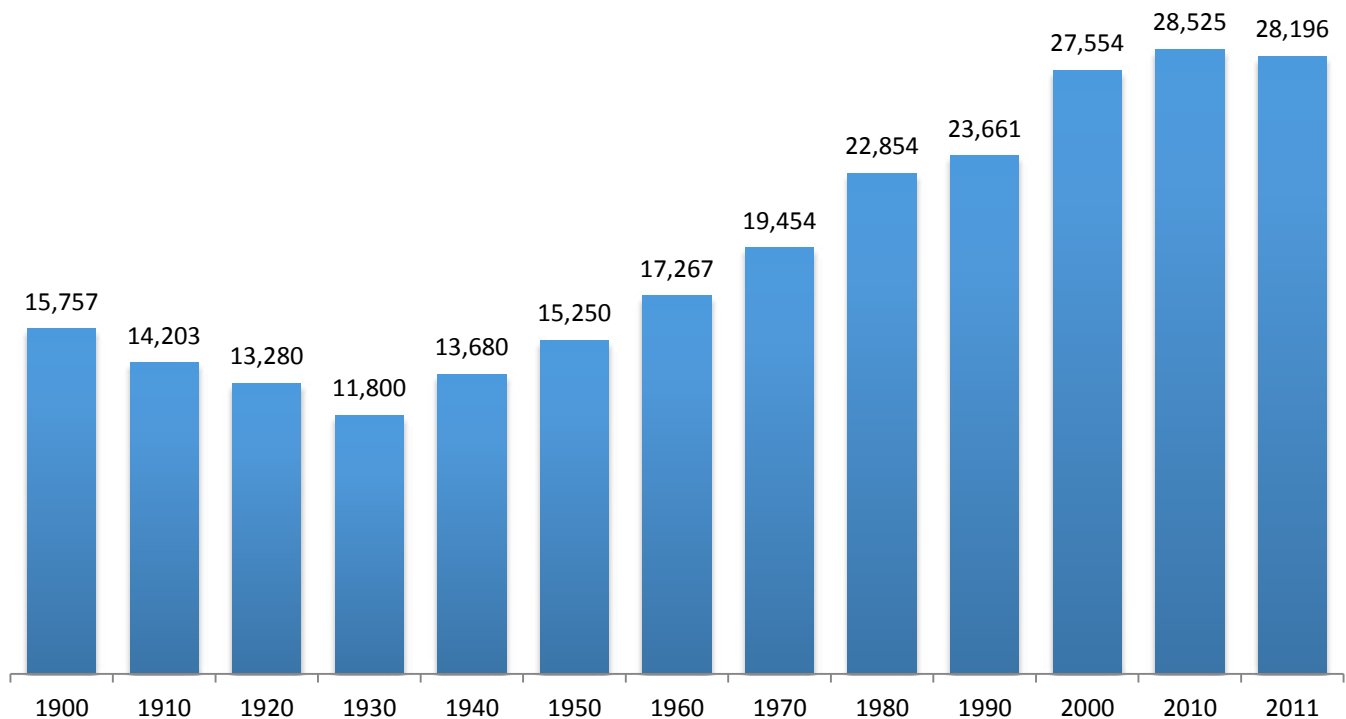
The U.S. Census Bureau made data available for all areas of 20,000 people or more in 2008. Beginning in 2010, and every year thereafter, the nation will have a five-year period estimate available, a resource that will show change over time, even for neighborhoods and rural areas.

The data used in this report comes from sources including the Indiana Department of Education, the Indiana Department of Revenue, and the National Low Income Housing Coalition. Additionally, demographic information estimates for 2011 from the U.S. Census, were used frequently for analysis of Jennings County.

POPULATION

As Figure 4.1 shows, the population of Jennings County grew steadily since 1930 through 2010. The last census, recorded in 2010, revealed a population gain of 971 since 2000. The U.S. Census Bureau in 2000 ranked Jennings County's population as 56th out of 92 Indiana counties; the county still ranked 56th out of 92 counties in 2010. According to the Census Bureau,

FIGURE 4.1: Population by Decade and Current Year Estimate



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

population estimates for July 2011 suggest that the county's population experienced a minor decline of approximately 300 people. The total state estimated population of Indiana in 2011 was 6,516,922, meaning that Jennings County consisted of approximately 0.43 percent of total statewide population.

Figure 4.2 illustrates the population projections by year for Jennings County from 2010 through 2050. The projections are based on the 2010 census population figure. The county is expected to experience steady population growth through 2030. Growth is then projected to level out as the population ages.

Table 4.2 shows population trends over the past fifty years for Jennings County, incorporated places, and townships. Most of the county's townships experienced modest population growth, Campbell Township being the only exception.

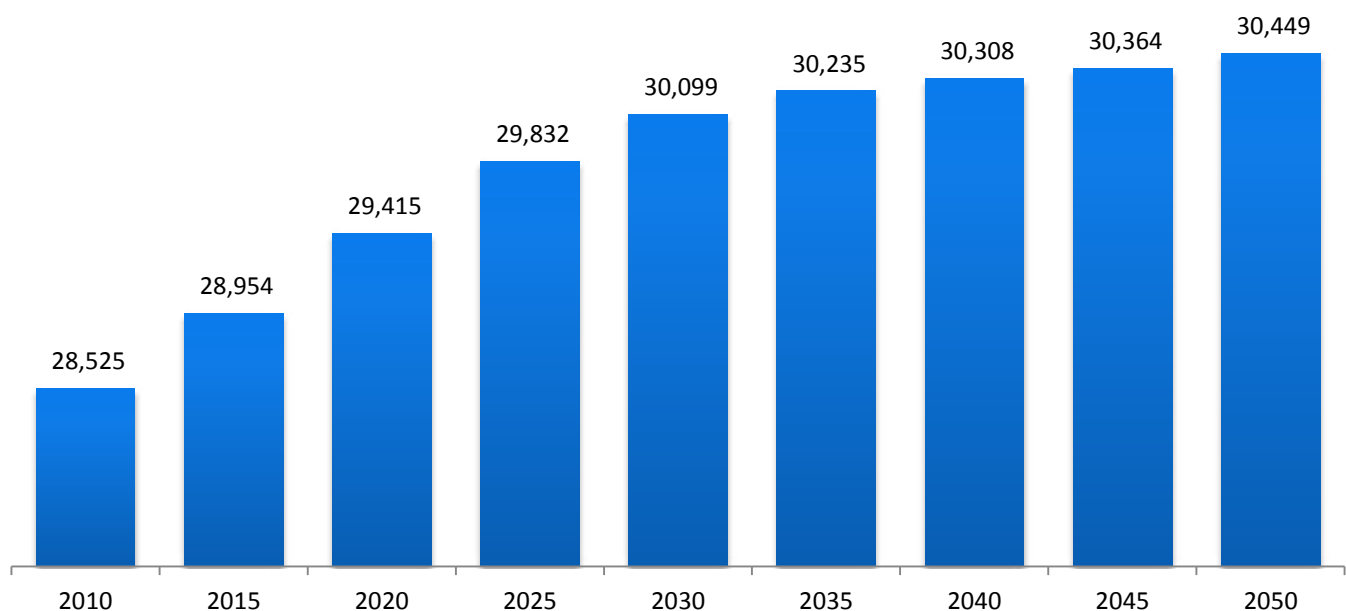
Geneva Township at the northwest corner of the county experienced the greatest population growth since 1970. Two unincorporated communities in that township likely contributed to that area's growth.

Country Squire Lakes and Scipio are both considered Census Designated Places (CDPs) by the Census Bureau. According to the 2010 Census, Country Squire Lakes has the second highest population in the county with 3,571 people. There are 521 people in Hayden, 282 in Butlerville, and 153 in Scipio.

Jennings County's population is less ethnically diverse than the state as a whole. According to 2011 estimates from the Census Bureau, 97.6 percent of the county's population identified as White; this is lower than the state's percent distribution (86.8 percent). In Jennings County, 2.2 percent identified as Hispanic or Latino origin (can be of any race). Larger population centers such as Country Squires Lakes and North Vernon have more ethnically diverse populations. For instance, only 93 percent of people in Country Squire Lakes identify as White; 3.3 percent are some other race and 2.2 percent are two or more races.

According to the most recent census, the male population in Jennings County is 14,288 (50.1 percent) and the female population is 14,237 (49.9 percent).

FIGURE 4.2: Population Projections by Year



Source: STATS Indiana

Figure 4.3:

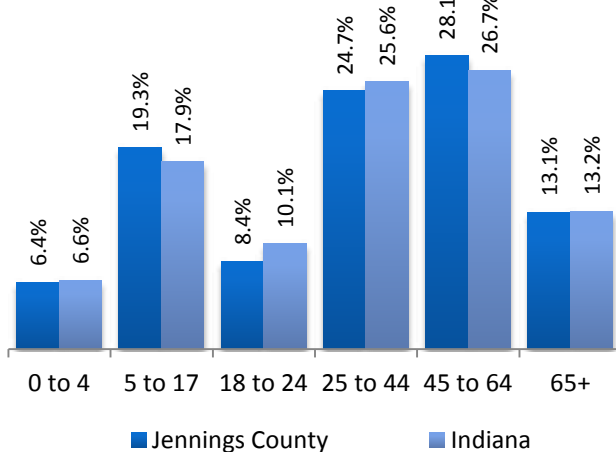
Jennings County, Indiana Townships



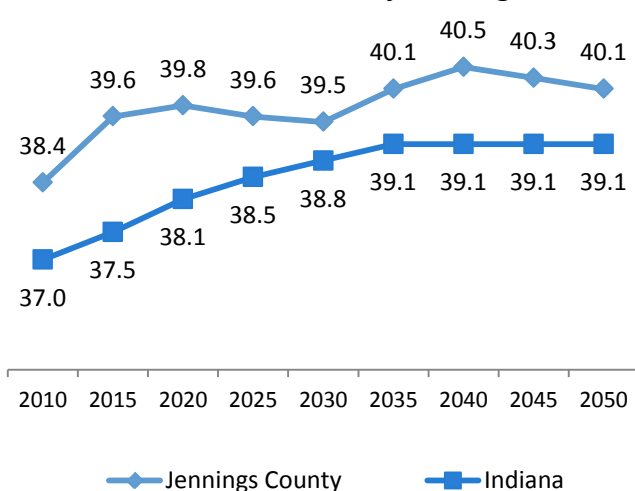
TABLE 4.2. JENNINGS COUNTY POPULATION TRENDS BY TOWNSHIP AND PLACE

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Net Change	% Change
Bigger township	504	574	611	688	726	222	44%
Campbell township	2,653	2,164	1,790	1,588	1,191	-1,462	-55%
Center township	6,844	7,806	7,800	8,593	8,894	2,050	30%
Columbia township	737	774	813	759	868	131	18%
Geneva township	2,640	3,849	5,040	7,469	7,584	4,944	187%
Lovett township	733	809	768	982	1,160	427	58%
Marion township	802	984	972	1,058	1,117	315	39%
Montgomery township	749	941	896	983	978	229	31%
Sand Creek township	752	803	714	818	872	120	16%
Spencer township	1,570	2,093	1,980	2,073	2,326	756	48%
Vernon township	1,470	2,057	2,277	2,543	2,809	1,339	91%
North Vernon city	4,582	5,768	5,311	6,515	6,728	2,146	47%
Vernon town	440	329	370	330	318	-122	-28%
Jennings County	19,454	22,854	23,661	27,554	28,525	9,071	47%

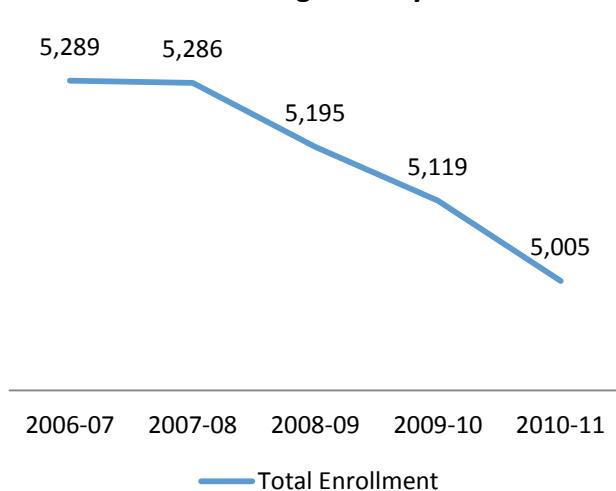
Source: STATS Indiana; U.S. Census Bureau

FIGURE 4.4: Age Distribution (2011 Estimates)

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

FIGURE 4.5: Median Projected Age

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; STATS Indiana

FIGURE 4.6: Jennings County Schools

Source: Indiana Department of Education

AGE

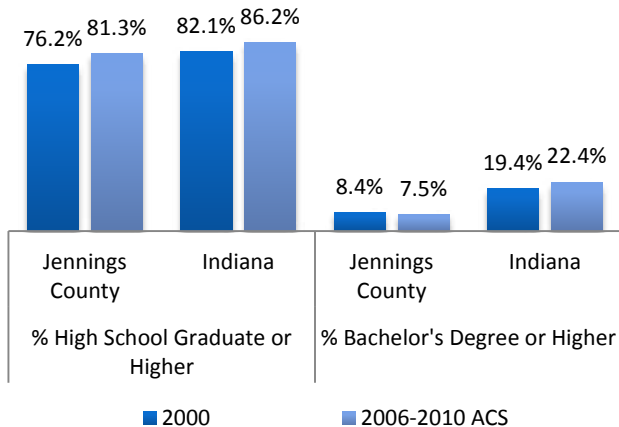
Figure 4.4 shows age distribution estimates for both Jennings County and Indiana in 2011. Jennings County's age distribution differs slightly from the state average. For the age group of 45 and older, Jennings County is shown to have a higher percentage than the state average. For the ages 44 and under, Jennings County's percentage is below the state average. Figure 4.5 shows the median projected age for Jennings County. The age gap for Jennings County and Indiana is projected to increase over the next 10 years, and then reduces slightly between 2025 and 2035, before continuing to increase after 2035. The conclusion to be derived from this data is that Jennings County has an aging population and is not attracting new younger (age 25 to 44) citizens at the same pace as the state.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Figure 4.6 shows the recent school enrollment for Jennings County Schools. The total enrollment record, beginning in the 2006-07 school year, has experienced declining enrollment levels. The data show a peak enrollment of 5,289 students within the Jennings County Schools in 2006-07. Enrollment levels really began to decline after the 2007-08 school year. By the 2010-11 school year, total enrollment was down to 5,005. This represents a 5.4 percent decrease between the 2006-07 and 2010-11 school years. Declining enrollment is troubling but not alarming. More students may simply be attending charter schools which are not subject to the same reporting requirements as public schools.

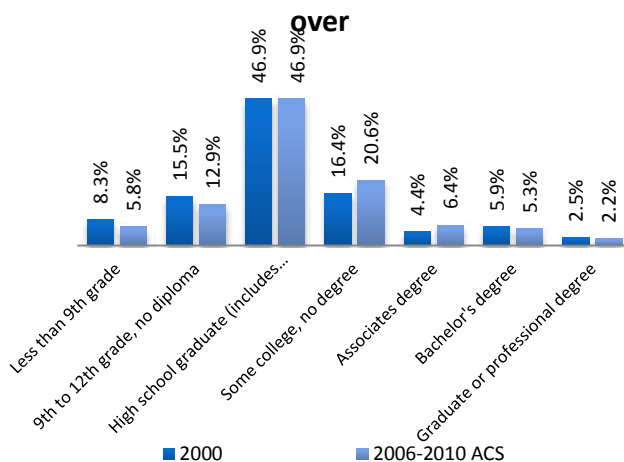
Figure 4.7 illustrates the educational attainment from 2000 to 2010 for both Jennings County and Indiana. Jennings County is slightly lower when compared to Indiana as a whole in attaining a high school degree and significantly lower when compared to Indiana in attaining a bachelor's degree. Jennings County narrowed the gap with the state average in high school graduates from 2000 to 2010. Out of the 92

FIGURE 4.7: Educational Attainment for Population 25+



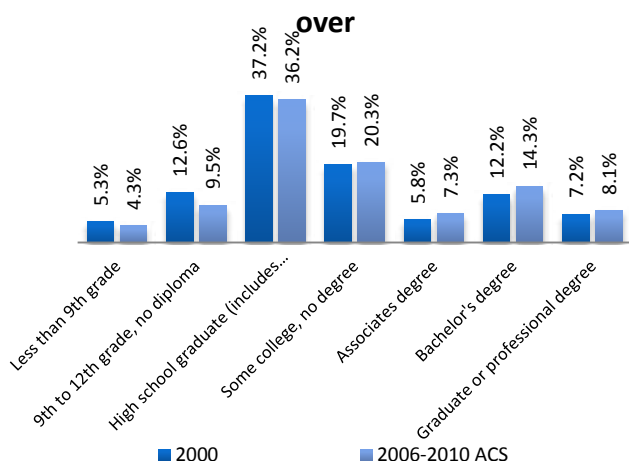
Source: STATS Indiana

FIGURE 4.8: Jennings County Educational Attainment for Adults 25 years and over



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; STATS Indiana

FIGURE 4.9: Indiana Educational Attainment for Adults 25 years and over



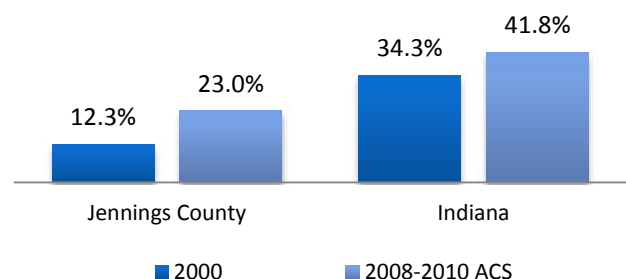
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; STATS Indiana

counties in Indiana, Jennings County ranked 78th in the percentage of those with a high school diploma in 2010. Jennings County has lost ground in terms of adults with college degrees or higher. The county is well below the state average and ranks in last place (92nd out of 92 counties) in terms of adults with a B.A. or higher degree.

Figures 4.8 and 4.9 illustrate detailed educational attainment levels in 2000 and 2010 for Jennings County and Indiana. Figure 4.8 shows that the adult population in Jennings County has made strides in attending some college with no degree and achieving associates degrees. In contrast, the percent of adults with bachelor's degree and graduate or professional degrees declined somewhat between 2000 and 2010. Figure 4.9 illustrates that a higher percent of the state's population has achieved some college or higher.

The percentage of adults 18 to 24 years in Jennings County enrolled in college or graduate school nearly doubled from 12 percent in 2000 to 23 percent, according to the 2008-2010 estimates. However, these percentages were both well below the state average school enrollment. The census does not currently show the percent of adults enrolled in associates degrees, two-year, or other certifications. The increase in associates degrees between 2000 and 2010 in Jennings County (see Figure 4.8) suggests that the demand for this type of degree or certification is in demand by area employers.

FIGURE 4.10: Enrolled in College or Graduate School: Population 18 to 24 Years



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

POVERTY

The poverty rate tracks the percentage of individuals who are below the poverty threshold. Poverty thresholds are the dollar amounts used to determine poverty status, and vary according to the size and age of family members. The same thresholds are used throughout the United States and do not vary geographically. Figure 4.11 shows the poverty rates in 2000 and 2010 for Indiana and Jennings County. Jennings County has followed state trends but has remained slightly lower than Indiana's overall poverty rate.

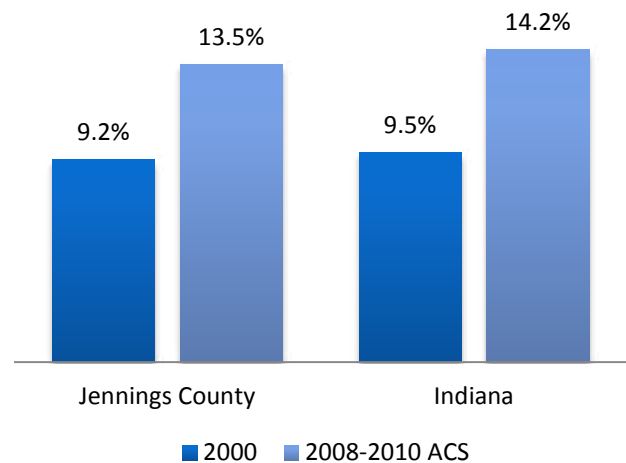
The percent of free lunches served is another indicator of economic distress. As shown in Figure 4.12, the percent of free lunches for Jennings County Schools, at nearly 44 percent, was higher than the state average. The percent of reduced lunches for Jennings County Schools is nearly twice that of the percent of reduced lunches for the state of Indiana.

INCOME

Income is generally the aggregate of wages and salaries, net farm and non-farm self-employment income, interest, dividends, net rental and royalty income, Social Security and railroad retirement income, other retirement and disability income, public assistance income, unemployment compensation, Veterans Administration payments, alimony and child support, military family allotments, net winnings from gambling, and other periodic income. The median divides the income distribution into two equal parts, one having incomes above the median and the other having incomes below the median. For households and families, the median income is based on the distribution of the total number of units, including those with no income.

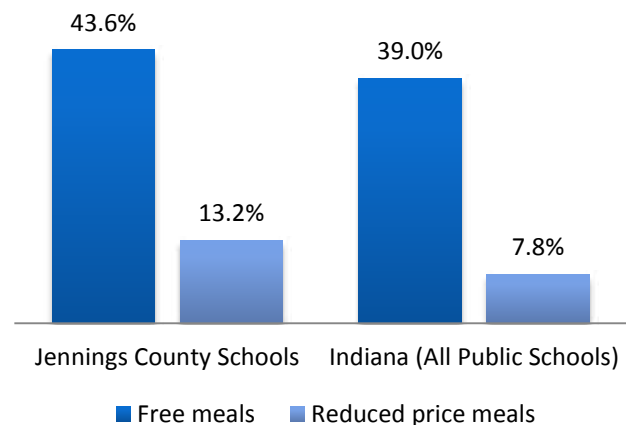
As indicated in Table 4.3, it appears that income levels have risen drastically since 1979 in North Vernon, Jennings County, and Indiana. These income figures come from the decennial census and have not been adjusted for inflation.

FIGURE 4.11: Poverty Rates



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

FIGURE 4.12: Percent Free and Reduced Lunch (SY 2010-11)

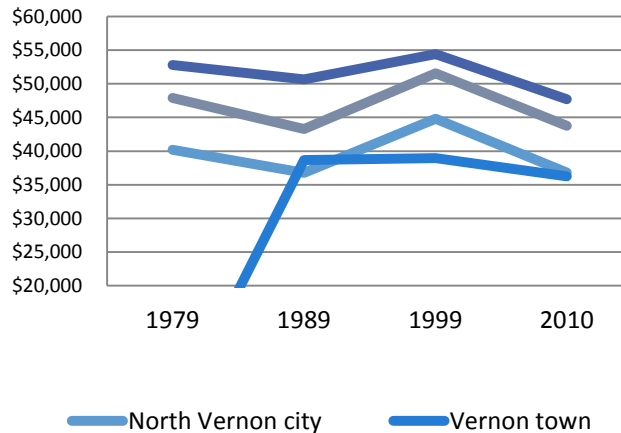


Source: Indiana Department of Education

When inflation is taken into account, a different picture of income levels emerges. Table 4.4 shows median household incomes that have been adjusted for inflation in 2010 dollars. Median household income levels peaked in 1999 and declined. Income levels in North Vernon, Vernon and Jennings County followed state trends but remained below the state average.

As shown in Figure 4.13, incomes have fluctuated in North Vernon, Vernon, Jennings County and Indiana. However, the recent trend has been one of declining income levels.

FIGURE 4.13: Inflation-Adjusted Median Household Income



Source: STATS Indiana, U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Surveys 2006-2010 5-Year Estimates; 1980 Census does not show 1979 income data for places of less than 2,500 people; Vernon had a population of 329

TABLE 4.3 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (NOT ADJUSTED)

	1979	1989	1999	2010	% Change
North Vernon city	\$ 13,385	\$ 20,912	\$ 34,244	\$ 36,830	175%
Vernon town	NA	\$ 22,000	\$ 29,750	\$ 36,250	65%*
Jennings County	\$ 15,951	\$ 24,617	\$ 39,402	\$ 43,755	174%
Indiana	\$ 17,582	\$ 28,797	\$ 41,567	\$ 47,697	171%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

* Percent change from 1989 to 2010; 1980 Census does not show income data for places of less than 2,500 people

TABLE 4.4 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (INFLATION-ADJUSTED FOR 2010 DOLLARS)

	1979	1989	1999	2010	% Change
North Vernon city	\$ 40,202	\$ 36,774	\$ 44,821	\$ 36,830	-8%
Vernon town	NA	\$ 38,687	\$ 38,939	\$ 36,250	-6%*
Jennings County	\$ 27,909	\$ 43,289	\$ 51,572	\$ 43,755	-9%
Indiana	\$ 52,808	\$ 50,640	\$ 54,405	\$ 47,697	-10%

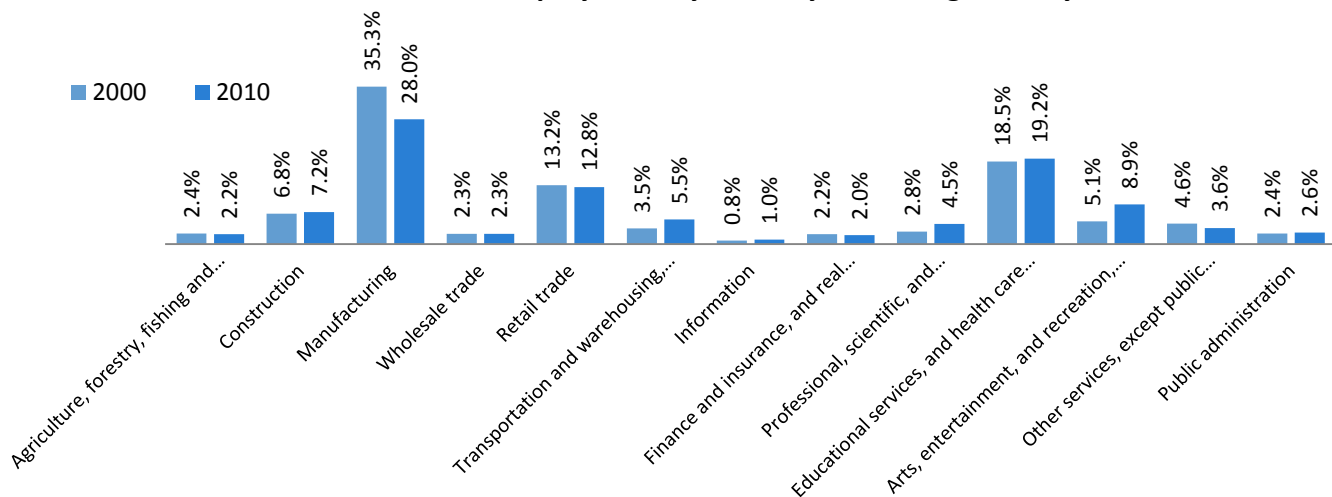
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; BLS CPI Inflation Calculator

* Percent change from 1989 to 2010; 1980 Census does not show income data for places of less than 2,500 people

EMPLOYMENT

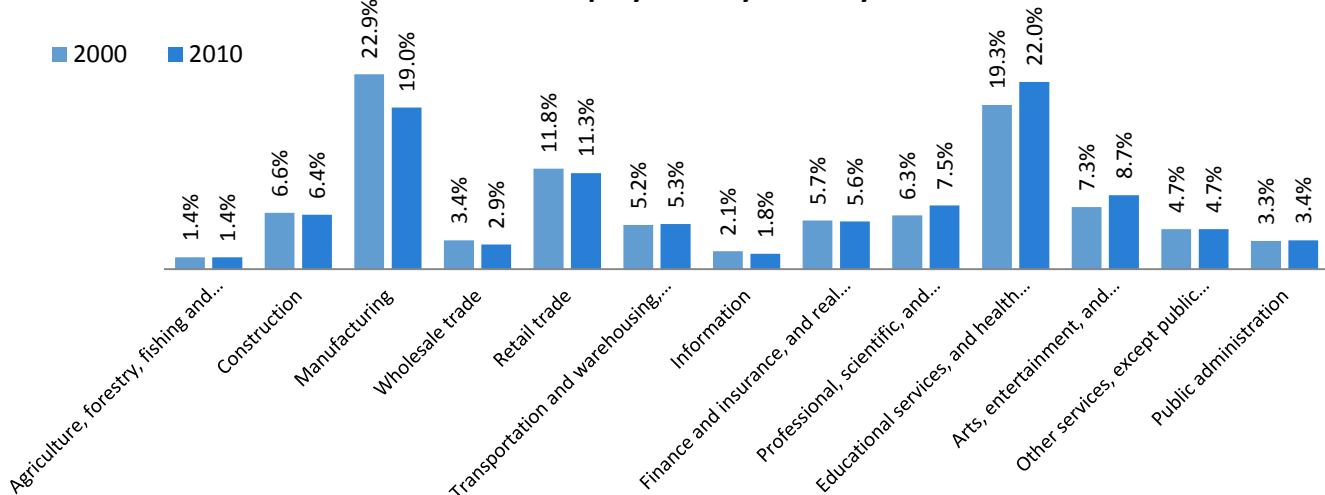
Figure 4.14 depicts changes in employment by industry in Jennings County between 2000 and 2010. Jennings County's largest industries were (1) manufacturing, (2) educational, health, and social services, and (3) retail trade. Jennings County's employment by industry is consistent with the state average in many employment categories, however, manufacturing employment in Jennings County is 9 percentage points higher than the state average. Figure 4.15 shows changes in employment by industry for Indiana during the same time period.

FIGURE 4.14: Percent Employment by Industry in Jennings County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

FIGURE 4.15: Percent Employment by Industry in Indiana



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Recent industry data is also available at the county level from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Table 4.5 shows the percent distribution of employment and average earnings for Jennings County and Indiana. Jennings County has a higher percent of manufacturing jobs than in the state as a whole. The average earnings per job are higher in nearly every industry for Indiana when compared to those in Jennings County, which correlates with the median household incomes from Figure 4.13. Jennings County has a higher average than the state of Indiana for the percent of residents employed in the farm, construction, manufacturing, transportation and warehousing, and government industries.

TABLE 4.5 EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY 2010 (NAICS)

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Pct. Dist. in Indiana</i>	<i>Pct. Dist. in Jennings County</i>	<i>Average Earnings per Job (Indiana)</i>	<i>Average Earnings per Job (Jennings County)</i>
Farm (place of work)	1.9%	6.3%	\$30,423	\$22,453
Nonfarm (place of work)	98.1%	93.7%	\$44,897	\$38,364
Private	85.1%	79.9%	\$43,529	\$36,379
Accommodation, Food Serv.	7.0%	3.8%	\$17,809	\$14,047
Arts, Ent., Recreation	2.0%	0.8%	\$25,834	\$6,500
Construction	5.2%	10.4%	\$50,727	\$45,658
Health Care, Social Serv.	11.2%	D	\$50,340	D
Information	1.2%	D	\$52,801	D
Manufacturing	13.1%	16.6%	\$68,185	\$52,715
Professional, Tech. Serv.	4.4%	1.8%	\$56,432	\$32,809
Retail Trade	10.6%	9.5%	\$26,609	\$21,292
Trans., Warehousing	3.9%	11.7%	\$47,592	\$37,301
Wholesale Trade	3.5%	2.4%	\$63,698	\$38,060
Other Private (not above)	23.1%	7.7%*	\$34,885	\$34,931*
Government	12.9%	13.8%	\$53,895	\$49,809

* These totals do not include county data that are not available due to BEA non-disclosure requirements

D = not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

COMMUTING

County workers are classified into two groups when discussing commuting trends: the work force and the resident labor force. The Jennings County work force is defined as the number of people who work in Jennings County regardless of residence – meaning that they live either in Jennings County or elsewhere. The Jennings County resident labor force is the number of people who live in Jennings County and work in the county or elsewhere. If the size of the work force exceeds the size of the resident labor force, a county is a net importer of workers. Otherwise, the county is a net exporter.

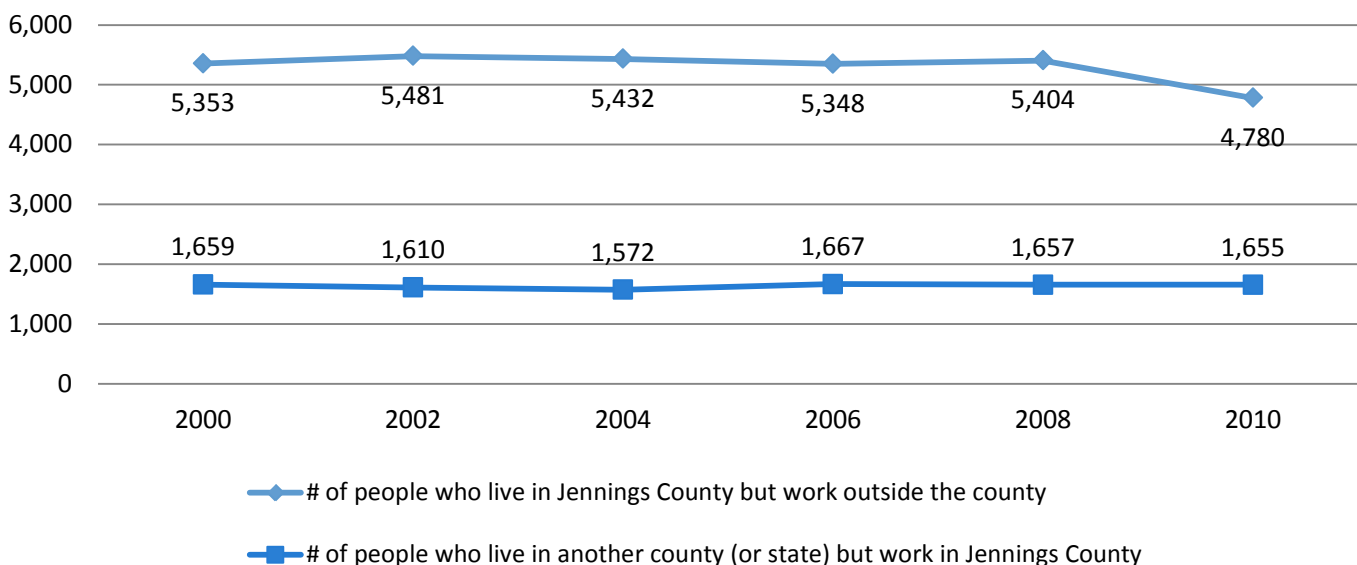
Figure 4.16 shows that Jennings County is a net exporter of workers because the number of people who commute into the county to work is less than the number of people who live in Jennings County but are employed elsewhere.

Although Jennings County is a net exporter of workers, the gap between those entering the county for work

and those leaving recently experienced a decrease. Commuting levels remained largely unchanged between 2000 and 2008, but the number of people leaving Jennings County for work elsewhere noticeably declined in 2010. This change may be due to any number of factors. The economic downturn that began in 2008 forced many workers out of the labor force. The decline in commuters leaving Jennings County may reflect this trend. Jennings County's resident labor force declined from 18,471 in 2008 to 17,530 in 2010. The type of jobs available in Jennings County and the pay associated with those jobs may play a factor in the commuting trends for county residents.

Jennings County receives most of its workers from Jackson, Jefferson, Bartholomew, Decatur, and Ripley Counties. 2,259 residents commute out of Jennings County predominately commute to Bartholomew County, and another 1,341 commute to Jackson County from Jennings County.

FIGURE 4.16: Commuting Trends



Source: Indiana Department of Revenue, STATS Indiana

HOUSING

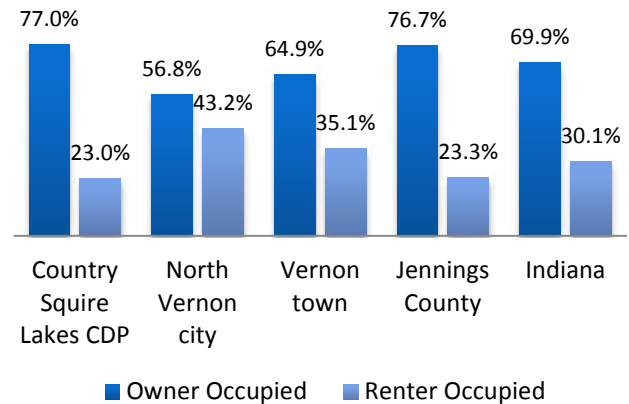
In 2010, Jennings County had 12,069 housing units with an occupancy rate of 88.5 percent. This rate was 1 percentage point lower than the state's overall occupancy rate of 89.5 percent. For that same year, the vacancy rate in Jennings County was 11.5 percent. Among the county's occupied housing units, 77 percent were owner occupied and 23 percent were renter occupied. This differs from the state's occupied housing which had 70 percent owner occupied in 2010.

As shown in Figure 4.17, North Vernon has a higher percentage of rental housing units than Jennings County overall and the state.

Figure 4.18 shows that Country Squire Lakes CDP has noticeably higher percent of vacant housing units than North Vernon and Jennings County as a whole, and the Town of Vernon had the second highest percent of vacant units. However, Vernon has a total of 167 housing units according to the most recent census, and 33 vacant units. In comparison, there are 469 vacant housing units in Country Squire Lakes CDP.

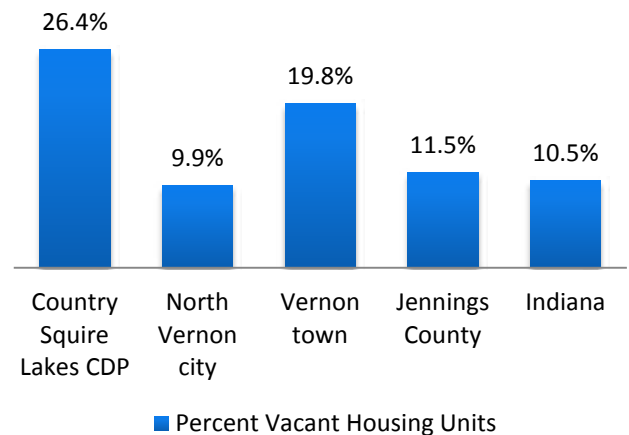
As shown in Figure 4.19, median home values in Jennings County are lower than in the state overall, and median home values are significantly lower in the Country Squire Lakes CDP area.

FIGURE 4.17: Occupied Housing Units Tenure (2010)



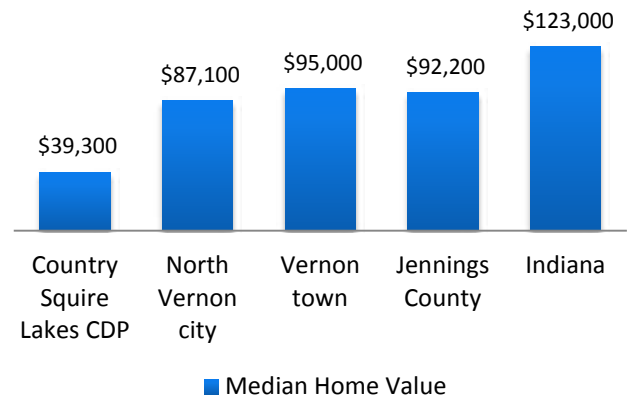
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

FIGURE 4.18: Percent Vacant Housing Units (2010)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

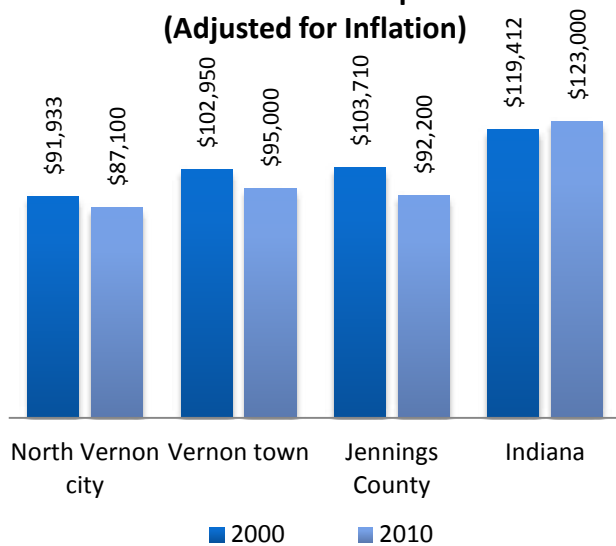
FIGURE 4.19: Median Home Value for Owner Occupied Units (2006-2010 ACS)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

When adjusted for inflation in 2010 dollars, median home values in Jennings County, North Vernon, and Vernon declined between 2000 and 2010. This period saw an 11 percent decrease in median home values, falling behind the state which saw home values increase a modest 3 percent.

FIGURE 4.20: Change in Median Home Values for Owner Occupied Units (Adjusted for Inflation)

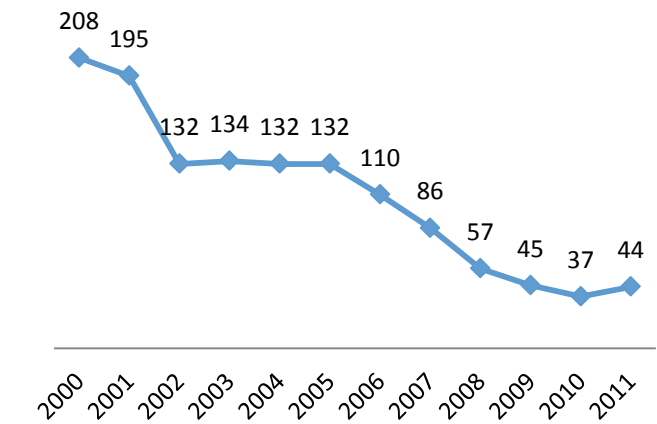


Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Adjusted for inflation to year 2010 dollars

Building permits are another indicator of growth in communities. As Figure 4.21 shows, Jennings County has slowed significantly in issuing building permits since 2005. There was a 72 percent decrease in building permits between 2005 and 2010. However, after reaching a low point in 2010 residential building permits began to show signs of rebounding in 2011.

FIGURE 4.21: Jennings County Residential Building Permits



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

CRITICAL SUB AREA

CODE ENFORCEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Unsafe or woefully derelict buildings and homes can be found in many pockets of Jennings County.

For years, there have been complaints about the lack of local code enforcement needed to address these buildings and their effects on the community. The current economic climate and mortgage foreclosure crisis have presented even greater challenges for the county, with a large number of deteriorating vacant and occupied dwellings.

Such dwellings are a blight on neighborhoods, a potential danger to tenants and emergency responders and require significant amounts of government resources.

There is a disheartening array of problems tied to foreclosed and distressed properties including trash, high grass, security issues, occupied or partially occupied buildings with serious violations such as no heat or broken water pipes and no common area electricity (leading to non-functioning fire alarms).



Home in Jennings County

With foreclosed and distressed properties, determining ownership and gaining compliance with enforcement orders present special problems.

And the consequences spread beyond the property lines. Lack of enforcement has had a noticeable and detrimental effect on the community's scenic beauty and environment, and can result in a continued decline in the assessed valuation of local property.

This section will show that Jennings County has made progress on code enforcement with a very limited budget, but that more work is needed.

SUMMARY OF 2012 JENNINGS COUNTY CODE VIOLATIONS

As of October 2012, 157 code complaints were reported and closed. Of those complaints, 44 were found not to be actual violations.

Complaints about the visual appearance of property were the most numerous, with debris/trash problems being reported more than complaints about overgrown vegetation. A majority of these cases were reopened at some time during the year due to property returning to an unsuitable condition.

In a few instances, properties returned to unsuitable condition after new owners/renters acquired property. These types of cases are the majority of cases that are still open for the 2012 year.

About 20 cases investigated in 2012 had properties that were in need of serious repair. From the files it appeared that it was often difficult to locate the proper owners. Of these properties, about one-third of the owners got a demolition permit, one-third cleaned up

the property to livable conditions, and one-third are still unresolved.

INTERVIEW WITH CHERYL TRISLER

Cheryl Trisler is the Jennings County Area Planning (APC) director who oversees the county's code enforcement. SDG interviewed her about code enforcement techniques in the county and the problems facing the code enforcement office.

Highlights of the conversation include the limited budget facing the department and how this leads to ineffective enforcement of code violation, the time and resources needed for court cases and how fewer exceptions need to be made for permits. This is a summary of Cheryl's concerns and suggestions.

MAIN CONCERNS

- There are enough serious violations that on average 10-15 cases could be brought to court a month. However, this is difficult due to limited resources and time; there is extra work involved when lawyers are needed.
 - Usually if the court finds a problem with a property, the area planning department has to initially hire the contractor and hope that the owners will pay for the costs in a timely manner.
 - On average there are about 50 places a year that need serious repairs or need to be demolished.
 - There is not a tax line item to help improve the enforcement of code violations.
 - Fines are currently not an effective way to enforce or gain resources since many home owners do not have means to pay fines.
- » It is also necessary to first go to court to get approval for fines which requires extra resources and time
 - Lots (especially at Country Squire Lakes) are being sold but the owners are not being held responsible for the condition of property.
 - There are many large (non-single family) buildings in Jennings County that are not meeting code regulations. The APC has not been able to get permission to rehabilitate or demolish these buildings.
 - Individuals and new business owners are constructing new buildings instead of utilizing the structures that are already in place.
 - Farmers and businesses do not always obtain the necessary permits for buildings and zoning regulations.



Home in Jennings County

CODE ENFORCEMENT METHODS: CASE STUDIES

There are many different methods of finding and

CRITICAL SUB AREA

enforcing code violations. A complaint-driven, reactive method and a proactive method are the two most popular techniques that cities and counties utilize for identifying local code violations.

The complaint method uses a phone hotline or online database to collect complaints. Community members are allowed to either call in or fill out an online form to report nuisances.

Advantages:

- This method is used in areas with small populations.
- Depending on the number of code violations this method can be used in departments with limited staff and resources.

The proactive method requires code enforcement staff to be out in the community searching for code violations before they are reported. *(Some of the following information was found in a report drafted by Frank C. Bracco for the Clayton County Community.)*

Advantages:

- A proactive method allows for a county/city to target one neighborhood at a time.



Home in Jennings County

- The biggest advantage of this method involves the Broken Window Theory. The idea behind this theory is that small problems often lead to larger ones. An overgrown lawn could indicate that the owners of the property cannot or will not fix the problems and will allow other violations to soon occur. This small problem will then spread to the entire neighborhood.
- It is ideal to stop these small problems before larger ones occur. This method sets the standard for what is acceptable and communicates to the community that violations no matter how small they are will not be tolerated.

THE TICKETING SYSTEM

An alternative to the county's current system is available and is being used by many communities in Indiana - the ticketing system.

Under this system, a zoning violation is identified. Typically the planning staff issues a warning ticket first, giving the property owner a chance to correct the violation without receiving a fine. If the violation is not corrected within the specified time period, then a ticket is issued that includes a monetary fine. This system can be compared to the ticket system used by the County Sheriff's Department.

Because the current system is so time-intensive, the lack of manpower effectively limits zoning enforcement to a complaint-only basis, meaning someone has to make a formal complaint before the enforcement begins. The ticketing enforcement system takes less time and could result in planning staff being more proactive with enforcement, such as targeting different parts of the county for review or targeting certain uses or cases to follow-up on.

Possible characteristics of the system include:

- Ticketing Scales
 - » A violation notice is sent. If violation is not resolved in 30 days, then:
 - » A small ticket of \$50 is sent out, home owner has another 30 days to comply. If problem is not resolved, then:
 - » Ticket of \$150 will be sent out with notice that if violation is not corrected within 30 days legal action will be taken.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND PARTNERSHIPS

With limited resources various cities are finding ways others can help with the enforcement process, including:

- Public Accountability
 - » Create a website or newspaper column that lists offenders.
- Team with other departments
 - » Once a county makes code enforcement a priority it becomes a community wide initiative and requires the commitment from many different offices.
 - » Collaborative efforts between departments that deal with safety, economic development, community welfare, and code violations are necessary so that everyone can report code violations.
 - » This initiative does require a uniformed and reliable form of violation reporting.
- Use volunteers (*Both examples found in research done for Clayton County-Clayton Archway Partnership*). Examples include:

- » Sioux Falls, SD has a two-part program (<http://www.sioUXfalls.org/code-enforcement/nice-keep.aspx>)

⇒ Project NICE: City staff and volunteers assist an area in cleanup of neighborhood.

⇒ Project KEEP: City staff allow neighborhoods to be more self-monitoring and encourage neighborhoods to maintain the cleanup efforts.

- » Fort Worth, TX created a Code Ranger program that uses volunteer to find violations and encourage better neighborhoods. Each Ranger goes through a three session training period. Below are the issues discussed at each of the three sessions.

⇒ Session 1 (3 hours)

Introduction to the Code Ranger Program
Legal issues
Vehicle use requirements
Code Enforcement Services overview

⇒ Session 2 (3 hours)

Code Violations
Code Ranger Projects
Reporting and Data System

⇒ Session 3 (3 hours) Day 3

Ride-Along: to be completed within 30 days of Session 2

ENFORCEMENT ALTERNATIVES

Many departments are dealing with violators that do

CRITICAL SUB AREA

not have the means to fix up property and have decided on alternative methods for providing assistance before tickets or directly after tickets are issued. These methods include:

- Providing detailed information to the homeowner on who to contact for home and property repairs, locations of waste and debris drop offs, and resources of community organizations that provide assistance.
- A microloan program to assist home owners in repairs.
 - » The City of Tallahassee currently offers loans to owners of single family homes.
 - ⇒ “The goal of the Emergency Home Repair Program (EHRP) is to improve the living conditions of low-income homeowners by removing health and safety hazards and/or architectural barriers from their homes.”
 - ⇒ This is a proactive way to stop houses from depreciating to the point that home owners choose to move out rather than pay for repairs.
- With limited resources many departments partner with nonprofits or groups of volunteers that can provide extra funds and services to families and individuals. The following case state is from Blackford County, Indiana.

BUILD A BETTER BLACKFORD CASE STUDY

Build A Better Blackford (BBB) is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit group in Blackford County, Ind.

BBB just received the Key Award for Supportive

Services Program of the Year from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority.

BBB has torn down more than 100 abandoned homes and does so at a fraction of what it would cost local government. A combination of volunteers, citizen groups, and local governmental support helps make Build a Better Blackford a successful group. Following is an interview with BBB members Jon Creek and Don Goetz.

HOW DO YOU FIND HOUSES THAT NEED TO BE DEMOLISHED?

There are two ways that Build a Better Blackford finds these types of homes. First community members may call and give information on troubled property and second, through delinquent tax sales.

In Blackford County, the commissioner will acquire properties that are not sold at a tax sale and then, if appropriate, transfer the property to the landbank of the Blackford Community Commission. The commission then has the power to make deals with individuals interested in the property. BBB at this point can help in finding buyers and by negotiating deals with potential property owners by offering free



Build a Better Blackford sign

volunteer labor to those willing to pay for dumpster costs. This is a great deal for most individuals since the land is usually sold at a discounted price. This all happens with no cost to the tax payer.

Many communities have the ability to transfer property but either do not use this power or do not know they have it.

AFTER THESE PROPERTIES ARE FOUND WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

BBB does more than demolish buildings, they work behind the scenes building partnerships, finding buyers for property, and working with homeowners to find the best options. They help unravel the problems that are associated with abandoned buildings. Usually neighbors will want to buy the property but consider the cost of demolishing a home not worth it. BBB will find these individuals and work with them to find a way they can afford to restore the property.

Build a Better Blackford first gives advice on affordable options for expenses such as dumpsters to property owners. Then to help reduce costs, a team of volunteers will demolish a house by hand. Finally, Build a Better Blackford has partnerships with community-conscious

contractors to give community members affordable options for leveling out a house.

A two-story home with a basement can cost a property owner close to \$9,000 to demolish. With help from BBB this price can usually be lowered to \$3,000. With community conscious contractors a small house with a sturdy frame, without the aid of BBB, can be demolished for \$3,500; this can be brought down substantially with volunteer power.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE MATERIAL ACQUIRED DURING DEMOLITION?

In order to keep the costs for the homeowner low, volunteers sort material to keep as much waste out of a dumpster as possible.

Wood is a major waste item that Build a Better Blackford attempts to keep out of dumpsters. There are limited options for the disposal of wood. Currently Build a Better Blackford is looking for other communities that would be interested in sharing the costs of a machine that could be used to grind up wood into mulch.

In some instances community members want certain material, such as wood from the property. BBB will often allow individuals to take this material if they help with demolition.

ARE VOLUNTEERS TRAINED IN HOUSE DEMOLITION?

There are a few volunteers who have worked in the construction industry, but for the most part this has been a learn-as-you-go process.

WHAT HAPPENS IF OWNERS CANNOT PAY FOR THE REMOVAL OF MATERIAL?

Build a Better Blackford has a limited amount of funds to help homeowners with demolition costs. The organization has strong partnerships with city departments to aid in the development of more funds



Public Health Notice in Connersville mobile home park

CRITICAL SUB AREA

and to develop ordinances and policies that can more efficiently eliminate unwanted structures.

Build a Better Blackford receives donations from local community members and recently has received a matching grant from United Way. The City of Hartford, working with Build a Better Blackford, received a \$1,500,000 grant through HUD to help improve or remove unsound structures.

Contact information on BBB can be found at the Blackford County Economic Development website, www.blackfordcoedc.org.

WHAT MAKES BUILD A BETTER BLACKFORD SUCCESSFUL?

Teamwork makes Build a Better Blackford a great organization. Majors and officials from Blackford serve on department boards that work closely with BBB and attend the meetings of BBB. All departments of Blackford understand that to make Blackford better, cooperation has to be established between all parties.

Often various city departments will lend equipment needed to save costs for a property owner. For example, a dumpster will usually cost \$456, but it does not matter how much it weighs when the demolition is finished, only how full the dumpster is. The city will often lend machines that will help push down the debris, cutting down the need for additional dumpsters. They will also often lend machines that can rip up floors, which saves volunteer lots of time and energy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Put simply, code enforcement will continue to be a problem for the county until more resources – money, education and political willpower – are directed toward the issue.

The challenges of rural governments are many;

the resources few, but increased efforts in code enforcement is an investment in Jennings County's future that offers protection to its tax base.

Following are some first steps the county can take toward beefing up code enforcement.

- ❑ Consider – over time – stockpiling a fund that would allow the county to pursue legal cases against the most egregious offenders.
- ❑ Further explore other enforcement systems, such as ticketing, to see if they would be more effective.
- ❑ For problem lots, new property owners should first have to obtain permits for land improvements and then, when land meets code regulations, the owners may receive the deed to the land.
- ❑ Farmers and businesses need to be encouraged to purchase the correct permits.
 - Permits can bring in steady revenue.
- ❑ It would be beneficial if the APC could find an individual with grant writing experience.
 - Example: No vehicle was authorized for code enforcement. A loan for a vehicle was recently approved; however, interest payments have to come out of current funds.

TOWN OF VERNON

KEY POINTS

- Vernon's historic character needs to be protected. The town previously had a historic preservation ordinance in place in the 1980s but it was repealed. There have been attempts to revive a similar ordinance, but there has been a lack of local support for this type of 'restriction' placed on local building owners.
- Vernon needs to expand its local tax base in order to raise funds for improvement projects. There is great opportunity for Vernon to capitalize on 'historic tourism' opportunities, including expanded options for small retail, food service and local shops.
- Given their limited tax base, the Town of Vernon needs to find innovative ways to fund their improvement projects, including seeking funding through available grant funding programs.



Home on the outskirts of downtown Vernon

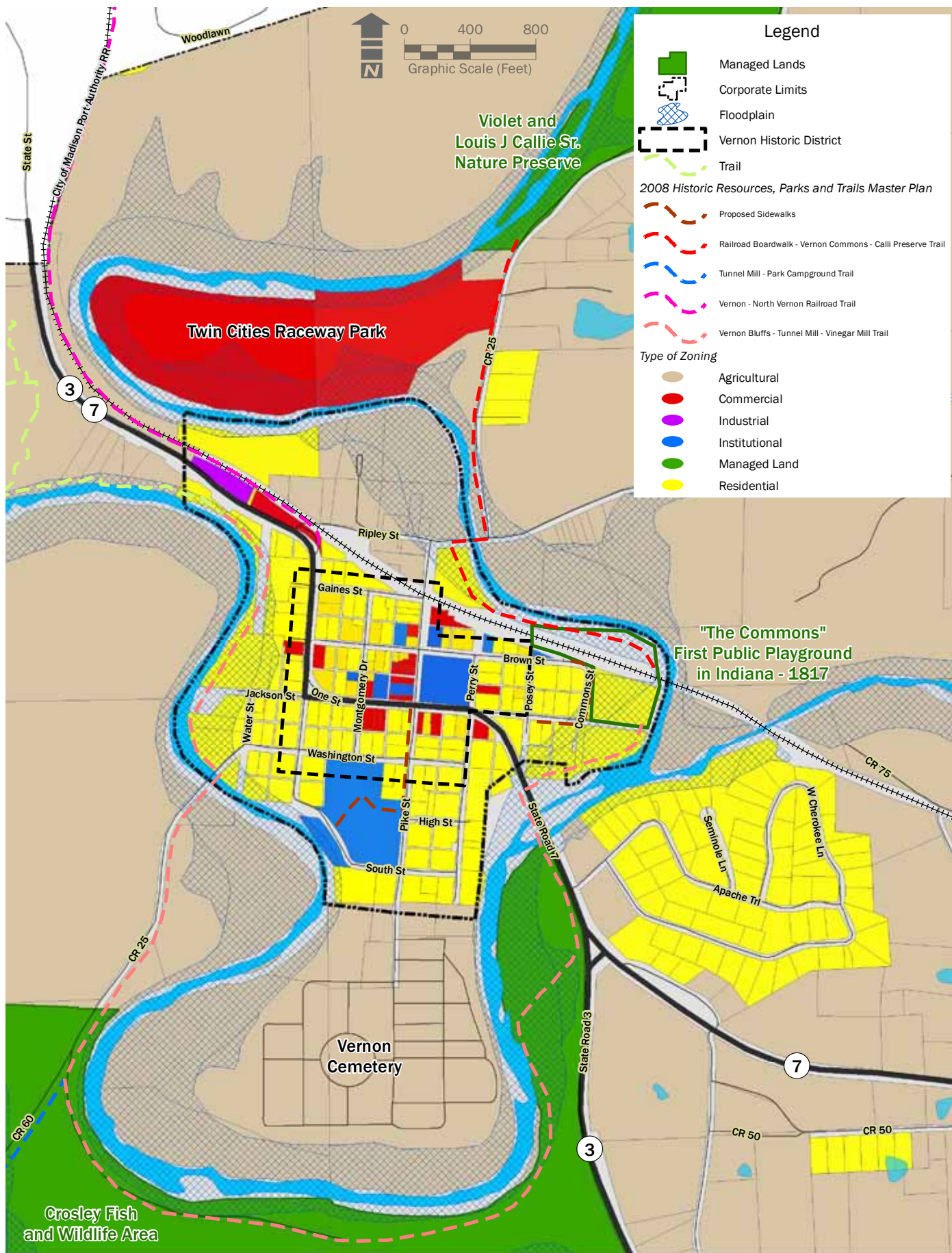
Vernon is a jewel with the potential for much greater recognition – and tourism dollars. Its confining geography has preserved the town's historic layout. There are also many positive signs of growth, such as the recently approved plans for a new tearoom on the square.

The town needs more outside dollars, either from grants or private investment, to keep the revitalization going. To attract those sort of resources, however, the town must do everything in its power to protect its assets.

MAJOR ISSUES AND TOWN HIGHLIGHTS

- One of the most unique aspects of Vernon is the historic character of the community. Vernon is steeped in historic tradition dating all the way back to the original platting and charter for the town (the Vernon website has some great information on Vernon's history).
- The Vernon Historic District covers nearly 90 percent of the physical footprint of the town and includes over 116 contributing structures or sites.
- A historic tour map has been developed, in cooperation with Ball State University, to provide visitors with a summary of the historic treasures available in the town.
- Vernon is largely landlocked, and cannot easily expand beyond the current boundaries due to the historic town charter, making future development potential limited. These limitations also create a strain on the potential

TOWN OF VERNON MAP



for the town to expand its local tax base, making the utilization of existing structures and sites for revenue generating uses extremely important.

sooner or later someone will want to build something that most of the community sees as inappropriate to the town's architecture.

- The town has focused – and needs to continue to focus on – the development of boutique retail, historic tourism, food service and small commercial types of economic development. This increased tax base from these types of establishments can help offset the lack of tax revenue being generated by a high proportion of institutional use buildings.
- There are also a number of important historic sites within Vernon, such as the railroad bridge and the 'Commons' which can be showcased for tourism and recreational purposes.
- Vernon does have a trails plan which provides multi-use connectivity to North Vernon and other important Jennings County locations. They have begun trail construction but progress has been limited to-date due to the need for additional funding.
- Vernon would like to seek grant funding opportunities in the future to help with the implementation of its trails master plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Vernon should revisit the possibility of requiring some sort of design standards or historic preservation for buildings, at least on the main square.
- These regulations do not have to be financially crippling to business owners, they only have to protect the town's main asset – its historic charm. If these guidelines are not in place beforehand, there is no reason to believe that



5

LAND USE

Key Points

- ❑ One of the largest factors impacting any new development is the location of available sanitary sewers. Since there is currently only one public wastewater treatment plant in the county, most growth will be centralized around it, in areas surrounding North Vernon.
- ❑ The U.S. 50 bypass will prompt changes in land use patterns in upcoming years. A detailed plan has been developed with specific land use recommendations along this route. These recommendations can be found in the Critical Sub Area: U.S. 50 East Bypass Impact Area.
- ❑ Jennings County has done a good job of managing its zoning map to match its future land use map. Few examples of county spot zoning could be identified. As a result, few changes to the future land use map are recommended in this chapter (outside of the area of the U.S. 50 bypass).

INTRODUCTION

Indiana law requires a comprehensive plan to develop land use policies. At their most basic, these policies are designed for public health and safety, such as forbidding home construction in flood zones. Other plans are considerably more complicated, but most have similar, overarching goals such as to:

- ✦ Protect existing landowners from new development that might have a negative impact on their property.
- ✦ Direct different types of growth – housing, commercial, industrial, etc. – to areas best suited for them.
- ✦ Achieve a community goal, such as farmland preservation or environmental protection.

A comprehensive land use plan **does not** create the regulations to reach those goals, but it does make clear what the local priorities are, and also begins the discussion on how to achieve them.

To develop Jennings County's land use policies, this chapter takes information about all the goals, concerns and traditional uses of land gathered during the planning process and shows what they would look like mapped out over the next 20 years.

The chapter begins with an elemental review of historic and existing land use patterns, and then examines how Jennings County's plans for the future might be translated into reality.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

GEOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

One of the most significant determinants of Jennings County's current land use patterns was glaciers. The Illinoian glacier encompassed the southeastern portion of the state, including Jennings County, flattening the land as it went.

In terms of elevation, the county is fairly uniform, ranging from about 890 feet above sea level at its highest point in the northeast part of the county to about 530 feet above sea level at its lowest point.

EXISTING LAND USE

With a land area encompassing 377 square miles and a population density of 75 people per square mile, Jennings County is largely a rural, agricultural community. The statewide population density is 182, which means that there are fewer than half as many people per square mile in Jennings County as the state average.

Development is heavily concentrated in the north-central part of the county, in and around North Vernon, though developed land constitutes only a small fraction of the overall land area. The county is largely comprised of cropland and deciduous forests, with cropland predominating particularly in the south and the west. Pastures, grasslands and evergreen forests make up a smaller portion of the land coverage but are interspersed more or less uniformly throughout the county.

Since agriculture plays such an important role in the local economy and lifestyle, it is important to understand how agricultural land use patterns have changed over time. The most recent Census of Agriculture indicates that agricultural land coverage has changed modestly over the past few years. Key findings from the Census indicate that between 2002 and 2007:

- ✦ The number of farms in Jennings County decreased by 8 percent, from 669 to 613
- ✦ The land in farms decreased by 3 percent, from 142,609 to 138,331
- ✦ The average farm size increased by 6 percent, from 213 acres to 226 acres

For comparison, during the same period, Indiana saw an increase of about 1 percent in the number of farms, a loss of about 2 percent of its land in farms and a marginal decrease in the average farm size.

LAND USE TRENDS

Patterns in ongoing development for the various types of land use are summarized below.

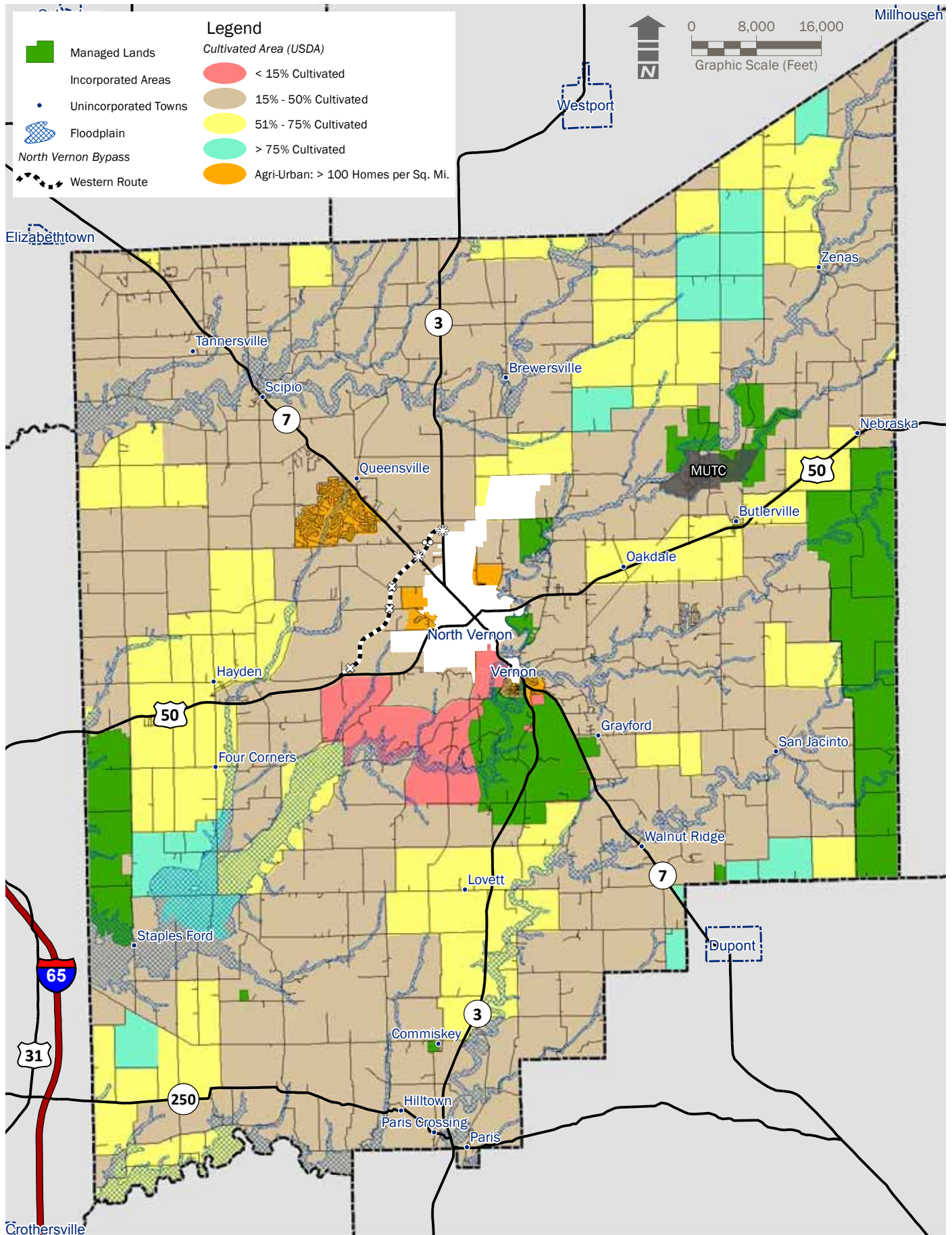
AGRICULTURAL

Although the county's population growth rate is slow, and the national economic downturn has crippled the housing market, there is still some pressure to construct residences and subdivisions in agricultural districts.

This pressure is expected to increase in upcoming years as the economy recovers, especially along the S.R. 7 and U.S. 50 corridors. Since protecting the county's agricultural sector is an important goal, the county will need to strengthen current regulations aimed at farmland preservation, including:

- ✦ The county's current regulations allow single lots to be subdivided without a lengthy plat approval process. This rule is subject to abuse as it does not eliminate the ability to subdivide off multiple lots from a parent tract over the years. This rule should be strengthened to limit only one minor subdivision without going through a formal plat approval process.
- ✦ While Indiana has "right to farm" legislation in place, there are often points of conflict where residences are built in agricultural areas. To protect

AGRICULTURAL INTENSITY MAP



the rights of farmers, the county should adopt rules requiring new residential units in agricultural zoning districts to sign a waiver to reflect their understanding of the agricultural nature of where they are building.

- ✦ While Jennings County recognizes the rights of existing farmers to continue their operations, the county also recognizes that there are hundreds of existing rural residences (not associated with farms) throughout the agricultural districts.

Just as existing farming operations should not be impeded by new residences, existing residences should be protected from new industrial level agricultural facilities. The county should adopt rules to govern where industrial level agricultural operations should be allowed in the community. These rules would apply to Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), large-scale grain elevators or similar intensity operations. Such rules should identify setbacks from existing residential areas.

INDUSTRIAL

Jennings County has had significant success recruiting and retaining high quality businesses. Most growth has been located along S.R. 3 on the north side of North Vernon in the county's industrial park.

As the sites in the current industrial park fill up, the county will need to identify additional lands for growth. In the *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan*, the city identified lands just north of existing sites as the target for industrial expansion.

As North Vernon's plan works well with the selected western route of the U.S. 50 bypass and existing land use patterns, the Jennings County plan will endorse and support that vision. However, the exact location has changed somewhat from the North Vernon plan as the bypass route has been modified since that plan was adopted in 2009. More information can be found in the U.S. 50 East Bypass Impact Area CSA.

Additionally, a new sanitary sewer is being extended from North Vernon to MUTC (near Butlerville) to provide sanitary service for the base. In addition to meeting current demands, the sewer does have the ability to provide sanitary service to U.S. 50 between North Vernon and MUTC – providing the opportunity for another industrial park in this area. A discussion of land use recommendations for this corridor is provided in the MUTC Compatible Use Area CSA.

COMMERCIAL

While industrial growth has occurred along S.R. 3 in North Vernon, commercial growth has occurred along S.R. 7 in North Vernon. With the construction of the bypass, the vision is for commercial growth to continue north along S.R. 7.

RESIDENTIAL

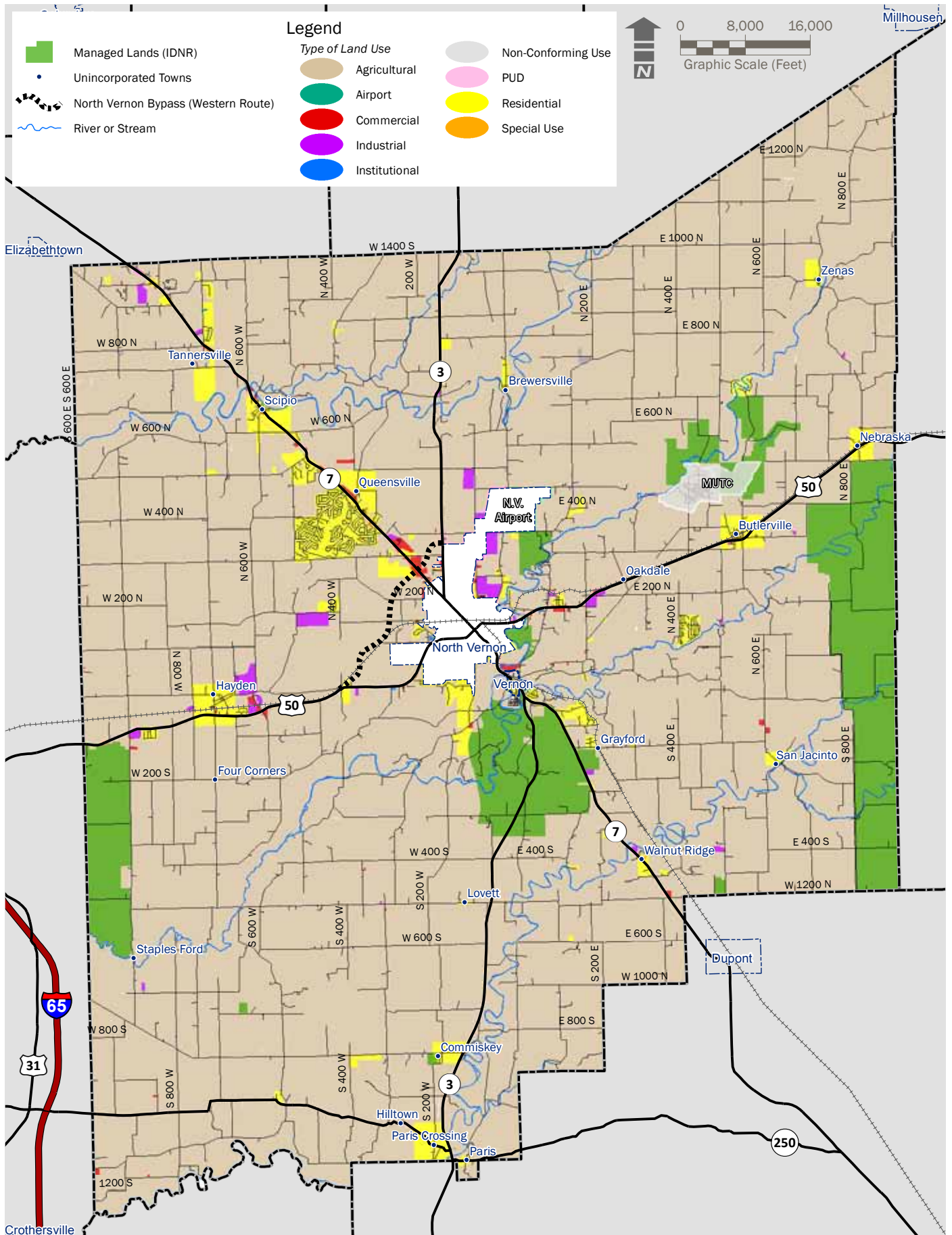
Projections indicate the county will experience 4-5 percent population growth over the 20-year life of this plan.

Because this growth will likely be split between the incorporated and rural areas of the county, it does not represent a significant development in any one area. Accordingly, the focus of the community needs to be on improving the quality of its existing residential neighborhoods.

Still, the bypass will change residential patterns in the county and those changes must be accommodated. Specific recommendations for residential areas follow:

- ✦ There are significant lands in the county already zoned for residential development. These are located along state highways and adjacent to existing incorporated and unincorporated communities. New residential development should be encouraged in these areas prior to rezoning of new land for residential growth.
- ✦ New subdivisions should be directed where they can be served by sanitary sewer systems. This

EXISTING LAND USE MAP



means subdivision growth will need to occur in the area of the county on the perimeter of North Vernon.

- ✦ New residential growth areas will open up as a result of the bypass – especially to the west of North Vernon nearest to the schools. Growth should be encouraged in these areas, as outlined in the U.S. 50 East Bypass Impact Area CSA.
- ✦ Development pressures can be expected along U.S. 50 between I-65 and North Vernon, and along S.R. 7 between Columbus and North Vernon. For the U.S. 50 corridor, development should first be encouraged nearest to North Vernon where it can be served by existing sanitary sewers. For the S.R. 7 corridor, development should first be encouraged in one of the many undeveloped lots already zoned for residential uses. Only after these areas are developed should new rezonings for residential use be considered.
- ✦ Established neighborhoods are the foundation of the community. Investment and redevelopment of existing neighborhoods will be required to preserve them as an attractive place to live.
- ✦ Home based businesses can be unobtrusive. However, there must be limitations on their use to protect established neighborhoods and prevent disruption to fellow residents. A business that needs signage, employee parking, customer parking, deliveries, lighting, storage or similar requirements should be directed to an appropriate commercial or industrial district.
- ✦ Previous plans have emphasized “affordable” housing as the preferred type of housing for new investment. The county now recognizes that what the community needs is a full range of housing choices, including adding higher-end executive and rental housing.
- ✦ Jennings County must work to improve the quality and attractiveness of its affordable housing stock. Initiatives to implement this goal should include adoption and enforcement of standards for rental

units, clean up plans for vacant lots, stricter regulation of manufactured homes and other similar initiatives.

EXISTING ZONING MAP

The Jennings County Existing Land Use Map on page 52 depicts the current zoning classification for all parcels within the county. Only existing land uses for unincorporated areas of the county and for the Town of Vernon are depicted on the Jennings County map, thus avoiding any potential conflict with change in use depicted in future *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan* updates. A detailed description of land uses within the corporate limits of North Vernon can be found in the 2009 *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan* document.

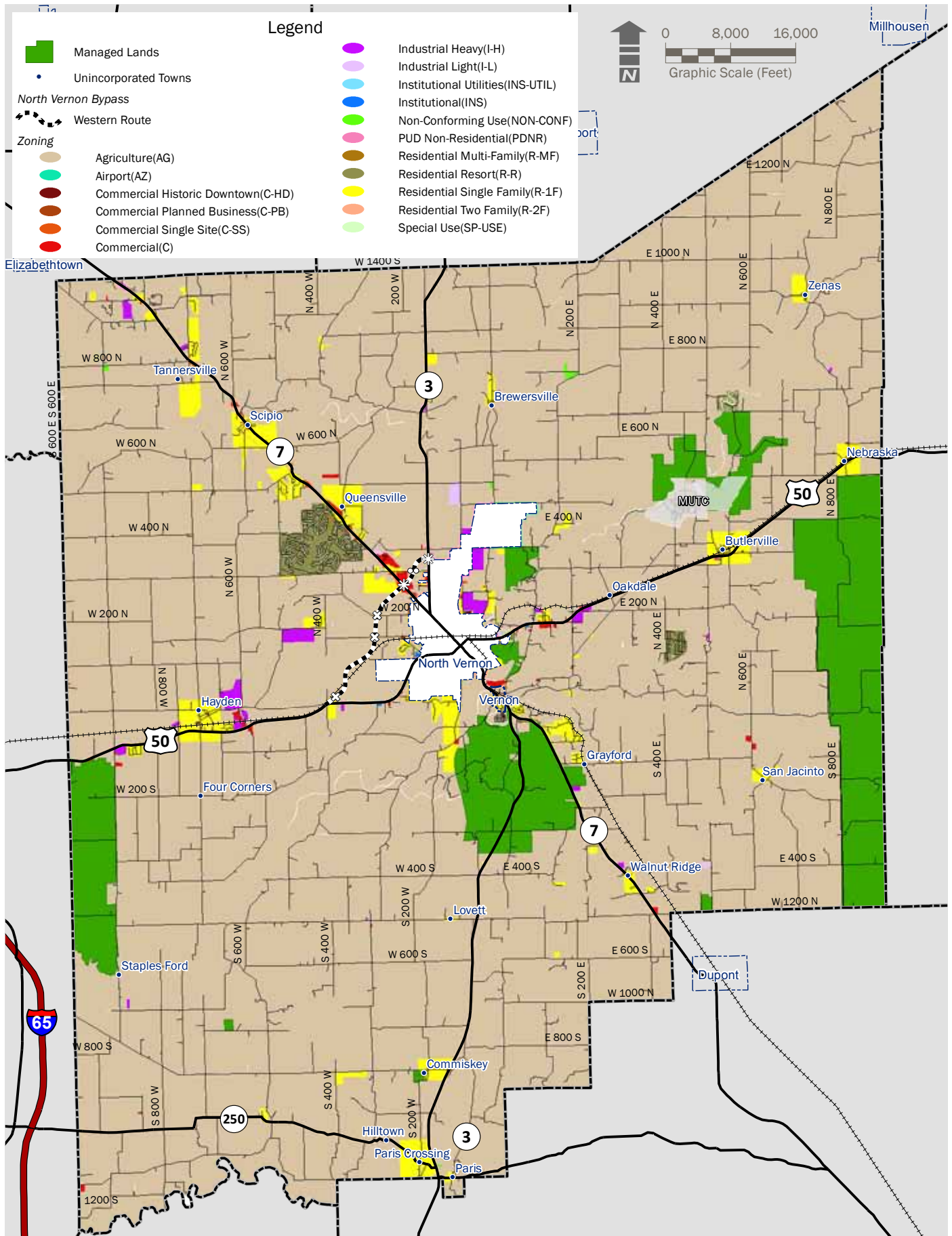
The dominant zoning classification within the county is currently agricultural, which is depicted in light brown on the map. Looking at the map, other clear development patterns begin to emerge, including commercial and residential uses along the U.S. 50 corridor and the S.R. 7 corridor and industrial uses along the S.R. 3 corridor north of the City of North Vernon.

Other scattered residential and commercial developments are visible on the map but a majority of the current development is limited to the west and northwest portions of the county. The abundance of managed lands within Jennings County, as depicted in green, is also readily apparent on the map. A summary of the current Jennings County land use categories is included in Table 5.1 on the following pages.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

Future land use maps draw a lot of attention in a comprehensive plan. They’re eye-opening because they illustrate – via a map – where community leaders think homes, businesses, manufacturing plants and other uses should go in the future.

EXISTING ZONING MAP



By extension, they also specify where they *shouldn't* go.

The future land use map has this core concept: **Communities engage in planning to ensure the needs of the whole community are considered, not just benefits to individuals.**

Community planning is based upon the idea of the public interest. Some flexibility in the use of individual land is given up in exchange for creating a community in which the interests of all are considered. When communities plan, they establish and implement public policy for decisions on development and redevelopment. Plans help a community achieve a character that residents of the community recognize and support.

Because a comprehensive plan is not enforceable by law, the future land use map is not the same as a zoning map. Zoning maps, and their accompanying regulations, are enforceable. They specify where potential uses, such as residential, commercial, light

industry, heavy industry, open space or transportation infrastructure can be located.

While the future land use map does not have the power of law, it can lay the groundwork for changes to the zoning map and regulations. This section is designed to show that the mapping decisions were not arrived at arbitrarily. The steering committee is making these suggestions only after months of research and debate.

The Jennings County Future Land Use Map is on page 57. The map is Jennings County's visual guide to future planning. It is a map of what the community wants to have happen; it is not a prediction. It proposes where future development – for housing, industrial, commercial and other uses – should be directed.

DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

To help understand the committee's reasoning, the following development principles capture some of the core beliefs behind the recommendations.

TABLE 5.1 JENNINGS COUNTY LAND USE CATEGORIES

<i>Zoning Abbreviation</i>	<i>Zoning District</i>	<i>Description</i>
AG	Agricultural	
R-1F	Residential Single Family	Detached Single Family Homes
R-2F	Residential Two Family	Duplexes or Doubles
R-MF	Residential Multiple family	More than 2 units
R-R	Residential Resorts	Resort Living
C-PB	Commercial Planned Business	High intensity commercial uses
C-SS	Commercial Single Site	Medium intensity commercial uses
C-HD	Commercial Historic Downtown	Sites within a downtown area
C-O	Commercial Office	Low intensity uses
I-L	Light Industrial	
I-H	Heavy Industrial	
INS	Institutional	Institutional uses
INS-UTIL	Institutional Utilities	Supplementary utility uses
PUD	Planned Unit Development	
AZ	Airport Zoning	
FP	Floodplain	

LAND USE PLANNING & ENFORCEMENT

We believe in committing resources for fair and consistent code enforcement. Money, time and political will are all needed to ensure that the rules protecting our quality of life are evenly and fairly enforced.

REINVESTMENT VS. NEW GROWTH

We favor the revitalization of developed areas over allowing growth and the extension of costly infrastructure into new areas. There are long term costs in new development that later must be paid by local government and taxpayers.

NORTH VERNON

The county will continue working with the City of North Vernon on shared concerns, such as code enforcement and taking advantage of growth possibilities tied to the U.S. 50 bypass.

VERNON

The Town of Vernon's historic buildings and its potential for development as a tourism site must be protected and promoted.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development and quality of life are intertwined in Jennings County. There is room here to promote new land for industrial development and other types of economic growth in defined areas while protecting our rural landscapes.

UTILITIES

Jennings County should direct development toward areas that can be served by water and sanitary sewer systems. The county should continue to cooperate with private and public utilities in future master planning to accommodate this development.

RECREATION AND GREENSPACE

Greenspace and multi-use trails contribute to a community's quality of life, which in turn benefits its

economy. More can be done to enhance the county's natural features.

AGRICULTURAL LAND

County regulations need to be updated to balance the rights of both existing farmers and existing rural residences. Operation of existing farms should not be limited by new housing development. At the same time, new industrial level farming (such as CAFOs) should be located away from existing residences. The community should begin a discussion on the location and types of more intensive agricultural practices.

HOUSING

Jennings County must work to improve the quality and attractiveness of its core neighborhoods, in particular its affordable housing stock. County-led initiatives toward this goal should include enforcement of standards for rental units, clean-up plans for vacant lots and stricter regulation of manufactured homes. With this work underway, the county will be in a better position to attract investment in higher-rate homes.

U.S. 50 BYPASS

Construction of the U.S. 50 bypass will open up new areas of the county for economic development. Jennings County and North Vernon should work closely together to manage development to the greatest benefit of all.

LONG TERM GROWTH AREAS

The Future Land Use Map depicts two Long Term Growth Areas (LTG's) to help identify the areas with the highest potential for future development and the areas which will likely receive the highest amount of pressure for future greenfield development.

A county-wide effort is needed to evaluate the land use potential for each of these LTG's. This effort should include an evaluation of the highest and best use for portions of each LTG. Factors such as current and future transportation accessibility, planned utility

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

Corporate Limits

Unincorporated Towns

River or Stream

Floodplain

Managed Lands

North Vernon Bypass

Western Route

Potential Eastern Routes

Long-Term Growth

Eastern Area

Western Area

Airport Compatible Use Area

MUTC Compatible Use Area

Type of Land Use

Agricultural

Airport

Commercial

Industrial

Institutional

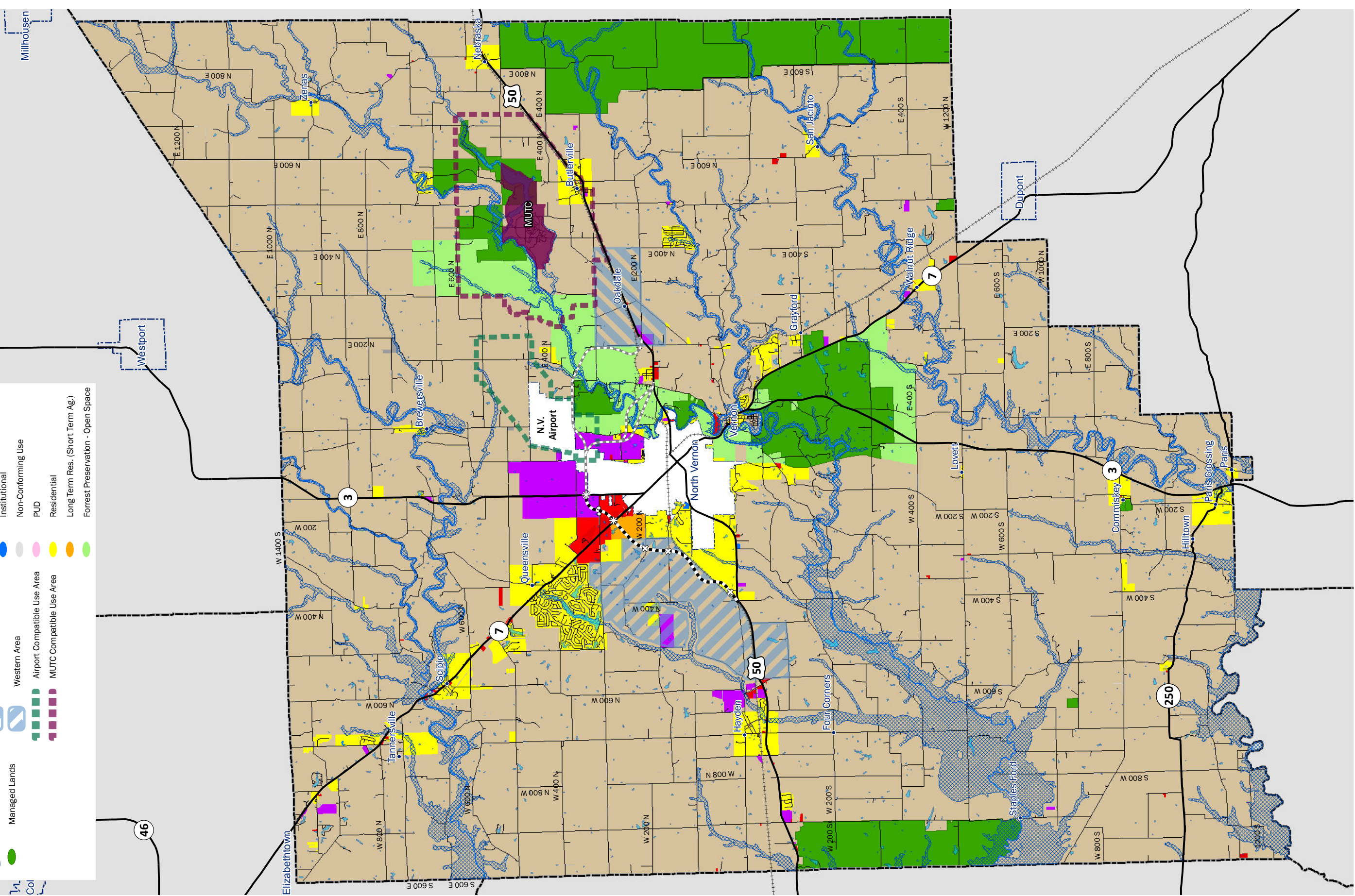
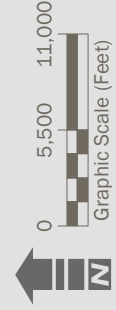
Non-Conforming Use

PUD

Residential

Long Term Res. (Short Term Ag.)

Forrest Preservation - Open Space



infrastructure improvements, adjacent land uses and compatible use overlay zones must be evaluated, in detail, in order to determine specific long term land use recommendations for these areas.

There will be pressure on these areas in the future for piecemeal development on an as-needed basis. In order to prevent future potential issues with this type of development pattern it is recommended that a detailed development master plan be completed prior to approval of any development within the Long Term Growth Areas. These plans should provide a detailed framework for specific land use area boundaries within each Long Term Growth Area, planned transportation and utility infrastructure improvements, use-based development design standards and specific parcel development phasing.

GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE DECISION MAKING

As mentioned, the comprehensive plan does not make a final determination on legally binding ordinances or the zoning map. But the comprehensive plan does list community priorities and identify tools to achieve the plan's goals.

This section introduces important but unresolved land use issues for Jennings County, and outlines possible decision points. With this foundation, decision makers can determine if further action, such as new regulations, are needed in addition to looking at broader rural zoning and land use issues.

Local leaders can get help in making decisions by recruiting people to form technical advisory groups. These volunteer-driven groups, usually comprised of people with direct experience in the subject, can research best practices and help determine local priorities.

FUTURE DECISIONS

CONFINED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS

BACKGROUND

The National Conference of State Legislatures gives this summary of CAFOs:

“The specialization and industrialization of American agriculture during the past several decades has resulted in an increased number of agricultural facilities that house and feed a large number of animals in a confined area. These facilities, known as concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), offer a more efficient system to feed and house animals through specialization, increased facility size and close confinement of animals.

They also pose the problem of increased environmental and health problems for neighboring properties and communities. Because more waste is generated in CAFOs than other less-dense animal farm facilities, the potential for greater air, water and land pollution increases in nearby areas.”



Cattle confined animal feeding operation

For these reasons, state, local and federal authorities regulate CAFOs. These regulations can be very controversial, with heated arguments emanating from the many sides on the issue.

Some argue that the operations produce jobs in rural areas that desperately need them, and that they are simply an extension of traditional agricultural practices. Others argue that CAFOs pollute nearby groundwater and drive down the value of neighboring properties. These statements only scratch the surface of the argument.

STATUS

Current zoning regulations in Jennings County recognize only one type of zoning district for agricultural usages (abbreviated “AG”). The section in the code dealing specifically with CAFOs requires (1) that CAFOs operate in compliance with Indiana law (IC 13-18-10) and (2) that there be a 1,000-foot setback from CAFOs and residential zoning districts and existing residences in agricultural districts.

NEXT STEPS

The county may want to consider adopting additional zoning ordinances to reduce land use conflicts, to set forth objective criteria to govern agricultural permitting and to streamline the permitting process, and to mitigate environmental and health hazards associated with intensive agricultural operations. The remainder of this section is meant to illustrate several zoning options that the community might consider and should not be understood as prescriptive.

A recent report by the Indiana Land Resources Council provides three model ordinances to guide rural Indiana counties seeking to update their agricultural zoning ordinances. These model ordinances are designed specifically to manage growth in agricultural areas strategically and to minimize potential land-use

conflicts. The model ordinances (in summary form) are:

1. Adopt a multiple-tiered zoning system that includes different zoning designations for different types and intensities of agriculture. Zoning districts could include:

- A-1 General Agricultural District: Intended for a variety of agricultural uses and includes the following development standards: maximum lot size of one to two acres, density limitation of one dwelling unit per twenty acres, a minimum yard setback of 50 to 60 feet, a maximum structure height of 30 to 50 feet, and limitation of new residential use or subdivision to special exception.
- A-2 Intensive Agricultural District: Pertains specifically to CAFOs and other intensive agricultural uses and includes the following standards: minimum lot size of 10 to 20 acres, CFO and CAFO minimum setback of 750 to 850 feet from residential zoning districts, a minimum yard setback of 200 to 300 feet, and maximum structure height of 30 to 50 feet, and limitation of residential use within zone to special exception.
- RE Rural Estate District: Provides for less intensive agricultural uses and allows low-density single-family residential uses. Includes the following development standards: maximum lot size of one to two acres; minimum lot width of 150 to 250 feet; different yard setbacks for front, back, and side yards and ranging from 20 to 60 feet; a maximum structure height of 20 to 30 feet; and parking, landscaping, and signage standards.

2. Implement a site scoring system that lays out pre-defined, objective criteria that can be used to guide the approval process for new livestock operations.

Applicants must receive a minimum score on the specified criteria to gain approval. Criteria might include:

- Separation distance between confinement structure and nearest residence, public use area, school, and religious institution
- Odor abatement measures taken
- Manure handling practices
- Presence or absence of a truck turnaround area
- Inclusion of livestock feeding and watering systems that reduce waste
- Permit applicant's environmental violation record for past five years
- Inclusion of a closure plan along with the construction permit

3. Adopt a limited use zoning approach in which conditions for permitted use in an area are stated within the zoning ordinances themselves, rather than rely on a special exception process for new operations. The special exception process tends to over-rely on subjective factors, leaving applicants with little understanding of what criteria must be met to receive a permit. Development standards could include:

- Applications must come with a site plan that includes scale drawings indicating boundaries of the operation, topography of the surrounding areas, location of residential buildings, etc.
- Compliance with county stormwater and runoff requirements
- Sewage permits
- A route plan (to be submitted to the highway department)
- Setback requirements

FUTURE DECISIONS

- Limitations on waste management systems near floodplains

LAND USE QUESTIONS

Unintended consequences to watch for and questions to answer include:

- How much potential remains for siting CAFOs in Jennings County?
- Will there be a negative effect or no effect on the quality of surface and ground water in Jennings County from existing CAFOs?
- Will rural residential sprawl continue in Jennings County and have a negative effect on the ability of farmers to develop CAFOs on their property?
- How much of an effect will rural residential sprawl have on local farmers' ability to adopt more intensive agricultural practices in the future? The greater the nuisance potential to rural nonfarm residences and property value damages the less likely that these more intensive agricultural uses will be permitted in the future.



CVS using design standards, Nashville, IN

COMMERCIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

BACKGROUND

Redeveloping existing commercial areas and infill development offer many benefits to communities with strained utilities. In most cases, necessary infrastructure is in place for properties that are redeveloped or targeted for infill, ultimately reducing the potential financial burden on local tax payers.

STATUS

Commercial architectural standards can be as restrictive or as flexible as the community wishes. Standards for commercial uses should require buildings to present an attractive image to the community. These standards can also be used to help establish a uniform look that could help further a sense of identity (e.g., common streetscape elements, building materials, etc.).

NEXT STEPS

Implementing commercial design standards into the county's zoning ordinance can ensure a minimum design standard for new construction. These standards can also apply to redeveloped or expanded properties.



Typical CVS design with little input from the community

TABLE 5.2 COMMERCIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

	<i>Tools that Require Little Political Will & Resources</i>	<i>Tools that Require More Political Will & Resources</i>	<i>Tools that Require Considerable Political Will & Resources</i>
Building Orientation	Continue to allow building to be placed and oriented in any location on the site, as long as no other provisions of the zoning ordinance are violated (i.e., setbacks).	Amend the zoning ordinance to prohibit a commercial building from “turning its back” to the main thoroughfare.	Amend the zoning ordinance to require development plan approval by the plan commission for all commercial buildings.
Parking Location	Continue to allow parking to be placed in any location on the site, as long as no other provisions of the zoning ordinance are violated (i.e., sight distance).	Amend the zoning ordinance to limit the amount of parking that can be placed in front of the commercial building, in effect pulling the building closer to the road.	Amend the zoning ordinance to prohibit parking in front of a commercial building, so that resulting parking is on side and rear, opening up the commercial building to the road.
Exterior Building Materials	Amend the zoning ordinance to prohibit certain exterior building materials (i.e., concrete block and prefabricated steel panels)	Amend the zoning ordinance to include a section on exterior building materials that lists acceptable materials and gives the developer guidelines for using them (i.e., each wall must have at least 2 different materials, or 80% of the front elevation must be masonry).	Amend the zoning ordinance to create an architectural review committee to approve exterior building material selection for each commercial building elevation.
Signs	Follow existing zoning ordinance commercial sign regulations.	Amend the zoning ordinance to include unique sign regulations for main thoroughfare.	Amend the zoning ordinance to create a sign review committee to approve each commercial sign plan and design.
Landscaping	Rely on existing zoning ordinance landscape standards as only guide.	Amend the zoning ordinance to include a section on landscape standards for the corridor that sets minimum standards for things like buffers and lists multiple options for the developer of each site to choose from.	Amend the zoning ordinance to require the same landscaping for every commercial site on the main thoroughfare, resulting in a uniform look.
Building Design	Rely on existing zoning ordinance developmental standards (i.e., maximum height) as only guide.	Amend the zoning ordinance to include a section on architectural standards that sets minimum standards and lists multiple options for the developer to choose from.	Amend the zoning ordinance to create an architectural review committee to approve each commercial building design.
Trash & Recycling	Rely on existing zoning ordinance developmental standards as only guide.	Amend the zoning ordinance to prohibit this where visible from the road, in addition to requiring screening. Require mandatory curbside recycling.	Amend the zoning ordinance to require this be considered as part of development plan approval by the plan commission for all commercial buildings in the main thoroughfare.

FUTURE DECISIONS

The following table lists different components of commercial design standards and their typical implementation tools, indicating the difficulty in establishing each of the tools in most communities. It is intended to provide the county with options if they decide to pursue additional regulations for commercial development.

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

The following table lists different components of design and planning standards for industrial development. If there are large tracts of undeveloped land available for industrial growth – and they are well removed from competing land uses such as housing - then detailed design standards are probably less important than functional standards (roads wide enough for trucks to turn, etc.).

If, however, there is concern that new industrial development would be close enough to existing, competing uses such as neighborhoods, then a community might want to explore ways to lessen the impact of the new buildings.

Local leaders might also want to install some design standards in order to improve the overall appearance of an industrial area to attract higher-end manufacturers.

The following table is not meant as a set of specific recommendations for Jennings County. Instead, it is intended as a starting point for discussion about what types of standards some communities regulate.

TABLE 5.3 INDUSTRIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

Setbacks	Establish both a minimum and a maximum setback, so that parking lots do not dominate the view of the area.
Open / Green Space	Provide for minimum 25% or greater open space. Valuable natural resources or features, such as floodplain, karst topography, riverbanks and steep slopes shall be preserved and maintained. Open / Green space must contain usable open space and exclude such things as detention ponds, narrow strips of land and other undesirable and difficult to maintain areas.
Buffers	Create a buffer between industrial development and competing land uses by requiring a mix of street trees, shrubs and native plantings. At least 100 foot buffer is recommended.
Landscaping	Require a landscape plan. Define areas to be landscaped, such as parking lot, open space and foundation plantings. Define plant types desired in corridor, such as native vegetation and define minimum plant size at installation, such as a 2.5-inch caliper tree or 24-inch shrub height. Define standards for preservation of existing trees, especially within buffer areas.
Parking Requirements	Provide for parking lot access between adjacent parcels. Parking lots shall be located in rear or side of buildings, not in buffer between buildings and competing land uses.
Refuse Storage	All refuse areas shall be screened and enclosed.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

Local leaders might also want to use some residential design standards in order to improve the overall appearance of new neighborhoods. Design standards can help determine the character of a neighborhood.

The following table lists different components of residential design standards and their typical implementation tools, indicating the difficulty in establishing each of the tools in most communities.

These are not specific recommendations for Jennings County. Rather, these standards can be used to guide discussion about how the county might be able to regulate issues with future residential development.

TABLE 5.4 RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

	<i>Tools that Require Little Political Will & Resources</i>	<i>Tools that Require More Political Will & Resources</i>	<i>Tools that Require Considerable Political Will & Resources</i>
Exterior Building Materials	Amend the zoning ordinance to require that exterior building materials meet quality standards (i.e., vinyl siding minimum width and installation standards).	Prohibit the use of certain exterior building materials (i.e., vinyl siding).	Amend the zoning ordinance to include a section on exterior building materials that lists required materials (i.e., each wall must be 80% masonry).
Landscaping	Rely on existing zoning ordinance landscape standards as only guide.	Amend the subdivision ordinance to require that at least one street tree be planted on each residential lot.	Amend the subdivision ordinance to require the developer to get a landscape plan for the entire subdivision approved by the plan commission and post a financial guarantee to ensure that the landscaping is installed.
Architectural Design	Continue to Rely on existing zoning ordinance developmental standards (i.e., maximum height) as only guide.	Amend the zoning ordinance to include Anti-Monotony Provisions (i.e., limit the number of times the same house design may be used within the subdivision).	Amend the zoning ordinance to include a full set of architectural design standards (i.e., allowable window and roof styles, etc.).
Garage Placement	Continue to allow attached and detached garages to be placed in any location on the site, as long as no other provisions of the zoning ordinance are violated (i.e., setbacks).	Amend the zoning ordinance to allow attached front loading garages only if the impact is minimized by acceptable choice (i.e., garage has a greater front setback than the front elevation of the home).	Amend the zoning ordinance to prohibit front-loading garages.
Accessory Buildings	Rely on existing zoning ordinance developmental standards as only guide.	Amend the zoning ordinance to limit the size and placement of accessory buildings, in order to minimize their visual impact.	Require that accessory buildings be architecturally compatible with the house (i.e., use same building materials and style).

FUTURE DECISIONS

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Jennings County does not have a fully integrated Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which lists the order and timeline for the community's building priorities.

The CIP allows local leaders to manage the community's debts. It is easy to imagine what happens without it: The community finishes paying off one big project (such as a new jail), and then immediately begins the argument over tax assessments and how to pay for the next big project. The CIP allows them to minimize individual battles by laying out the order of future work.

Showing a rational process for construction projects can also help a community's bond rating.

ZONING AND SUBDIVISION ORDINANCES REVIEW

Jennings County's zoning and subdivision ordinances were reviewed by K.K. Gerhart-Fritz, AICP.

K.K. is president of The Planning Workshop, which specializes in planning-related education and communication. She is lead presenter for Indiana's popular "Nitty Gritty" Plan Commission Training Series and is an invited plan commission trainer for the American Planning Association's national conference. K.K. is author of several chapters of the Indiana Chapter's free online *Indiana Citizen Planner's Training Guide*.

K.K. included this note with her report: "My review should not be considered a substitute for legal guidance from their own counsel. Since both ordinances were prepared by the same company at the same time (2006), the expectation is that they work well together. An example of this is that both ordinances use the same set of definitions. I suggest that Jennings County staff could best tell you if the zoning and subdivision ordinances do actually work well together or if there are some points of disagreement."

REVIEW OF BOTH ORDINANCES

1. In general, there is a need to make amendments in order to comply with planning-related state law changes, which went into effect on July 1, 2011.

Because Indiana State Law was changed, it is important that the county's attorney review and assist with these ordinance changes.

State law now allows Unified Development Ordinances, so Jennings County may want to consider consolidating the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance into one document if they are doing updates.

In general, the state law related changes are as follows:

- Make sure any temporary conditions are complied with before issuing permits. Old conditions (pre-2011) may only be enforced if you have an official file on them in your office – see IC 36-7-4-1015 (g).
- Must offer a "sign-up" sheet for every decision, so parties can request notice of any future lawsuits. There is no more writ of certiorari. See IC 36-7-4-1608. This does not necessarily have to go in your ordinances; you could amend the rules of procedure or just change administrative procedures. This would be a good one for their attorney to advise them on.
- Both the zoning and subdivision ordinances are now required to be available to the public, either as part of the county code or as separate documents. They must be filed in the office of the clerk of each participating legislative body, and there must also be copies available for sale. See IC 36-7-4-610.
- Schedule orientation sessions for board and commission members per IC 5-14-1.5-2(c)(6). This doesn't need to be in ordinance or even in rules, but it needs to be done. In the orientation, make sure they understand the difference between conditions and commitments, when they should recuse themselves (no longer limited to financial conflict of interest; now includes bias or lack of objectivity).
- Amend rules of procedure to list residency requirement for each citizen member and establish a procedure for determining compliance – see IC 36-7-4-216 and 905. The new law allows appointment of some nonresidents.
- State law now allows the combination of hearings for one site (i.e., a variance and a rezoning can be conducted at the same

hearing by the same group). Set this up in the ordinance, because it will save applicants and officials time – see IC 36-7-4-403.5.

2. Need to integrate vested rights into both ordinances. IC 36-7-4-1015 says that if a person files a complete application, the granting of the permit or approval, and any secondary, additional, or related permits or approvals required are governed for at least three (3) years after the person applies for the permit by the statutes, ordinances, rules, development standards, and regulations in effect when the application is filed. Development per the permit does have to be completed within ten (10) years after the development or activity is commenced.
3. Need to adopt written commitments for use by plan commission and BZA, instead of traditional conditions (they are easier to track and enforce). Note that written commitments must now be recorded with county recorder, and permanent file on compliance must be kept – see IC 36-7-4-1015 (b).

ZONING ORDINANCE

General observation: The zoning ordinance, adopted only six years ago in 2006, seems to be modeled on older zoning ordinances. It could be refined to further implement current best practices and to make it more user-friendly. I recommend a total rewrite of the zoning ordinance, as opposed to a series of amendments.

1. Amendments required by 2011 state law:
 - Alternate members are now allowed for both plan commission and BZA, and may participate under different circumstances than in the past. They should seek their attorney's advice about whether putting this in the ordinance or a rule is necessary. IC 36-7-220.
 - IC 36-7-4-1111 requires that time be computed in a specific way (the day of the act doesn't

count and the last day is counted, unless it is a weekend, holiday or a day the planning office is closed. Their ordinance needs to reflect that.

2. Purpose Statement – the ordinance seems to be missing the general purposes statement. The Policy Statement in I. A., Enactments & Provisions doesn't quite cover it.
3. Applicability Statement – the ordinance seems to be missing an applicability statement.
4. Interpretation -- I.C. (1), General Provisions, Interpretation needs to go into much more detail, discussing interpretation of uses, zoning map, procedures, etc.
5. Separability – I believe the correct term for I.C. (5), General Provisions is "Severability."
6. Temporary Uses – Instead of placing standards for temporary use of tents in II.B. (7), Office of the Zoning Enforcement Officer, there should be an entire Temporary Uses Section in the Zoning Ordinance.
7. Plan Commission Jurisdiction – Per Indiana Code, the plan commission does not need to send a recommendation to the BZA on special uses, as outlined in II.D.(2)(a). Suggest that extra step in process be removed. Either allow BZA to decide on these special uses directly or change ordinance to allow the plan commission to approve those uses directly as development plans. Clarify duties of the plan commission in this section.
8. Written Commitments – Section II.F. (7) should be entitled "Written Commitment" not Use Commitment, in order to match State law language. Also, 36-7-4-613 has been repealed. Need to cite proper section of code.
9. Development Plan Review – A development plan has special meaning under Indiana planning law. Are all improvement location permits treated like development plans (II.G? (1))? In addition to the

legal description, the address of the parcel should be required (if it has one). Also, you may want to see parking, landscaping, etc. as part of this review. Regarding Plat Approval (II.G. (2)), how can you require a new plat if the property has already been platted?

10. Zoning Certification – Do you actually do this for industrial buildings (II.H.2.)? Wouldn't State Plan Review satisfy your concerns?

11. Variances – Your language in II.N. (3) does not match State Code (IC 36-7-4-918.5). You can add criteria, but you can't leave parts out. Consider adding "the variance requested is the minimum necessary and is not caused by actions of the owner, past or present."

12. Conditions – The intent of the 2011 State Law change is that conditions be replaced by written commitments. Conditions are meant to be temporary restrictions, not permanent.

13. Show Cause/Complaints – This (II.O.) seems like a really cumbersome way to handle violations. Consider moving to ticketing instead.

14. Special Uses – See comments in #8 above.

15. Agriculture Zoning

- Most counties in Indiana now have multiple Agricultural Zoning Districts because AG covers such a wide range of uses and intensity.
- Zoning districts should have their own purpose statement, instead of referring to issues documented in the comp plan.
- How do you keep the new house on non-platted subdivided land in the family? It could be sold and the process repeated over and over until you have a subdivision that lacks proper infrastructure.
- Single-family dwellings are permitted per "B and C", but there is no "C". I would put more limits on allowing residential uses in the A-1

District because of all the conflicts between uses, like prohibiting more than a certain number of lots be created or requiring them to sign a document that they are aware of the area being zoned AG.

- The state may have new CFO and CAFO rules.
- Junk automobile regulations should be pulled out so they apply to all districts.
- Mobile home regulations should be pulled out so they apply to all districts.
- Unnecessary clutter regulations should be pulled out so they apply to all districts.
- Yard Sale regulations should be pulled out so they apply to all districts.

16. Residential Zoning

- Zoning districts should have their own purpose statement, instead of referring to issues documented in the comp plan.
- Seems odd to see performance standards in residential, the least likely districts to have problems. These standards are hard to measure and enforce, but if you really want them, pull out so they apply to all districts.
- I recommend a second septic site for residential lots; it is becoming a fairly common practice around the state.
- A one-square-foot sign for a bed & breakfast is extremely small.

17. Commercial Zoning

- Zoning districts should have their own purpose statement, instead of referring to issues documented in the comp plan.
- See comments in #16 regarding performance standards.
- Set a maximum lot size and/or maximum floor area for C-SS to ensure it remains a neighborhood scale business.

18. Industrial Zoning

- Zoning districts should have their own purpose statement, instead of referring to issues documented in the comp plan.

19. Institutional Zoning

- How do you measure the 1,000-sq.ft. utility area for exempt utilities?

20. PUDs

- Consider setting some minimum standards (i.e., open space, etc.).

21. Flood Districts

- I would recommend the county work directly with IDNR's Division of Water to review their existing flood district regulations. The state has a model ordinance they want local governments to follow and the county will want to make sure the county's standards are up to date.

22. Signs

- Are any signs prohibited? How do you treat moving signs?

23. Parking Standards – Consider reducing minimum number of spaces and setting maximum parking standards in order to limit the amount of impervious surface.

24. Lot Area

- Seems like there is no lot area for AG; there should be some kind of minimum lot size, probably no more than 40,000 sq. ft.
- MF lot size should be at least 3,000 sq. ft. per living unit or a total minimum lot size of 12,000 sq. ft., whichever is the greatest. The standards in C. RESIDENTIAL REGULATIONS (3)(a)(1) and in Table 6-1 are not clearly connected with each other. Consider adding a note on the table.

- Setting a minimum lot area per “family” is probably not legal. There have been lots of court cases related to zoning definitions for family. It is good that your ordinance standard is based on a minimum lot area per living unit, not family - leave as is.

- Many places are now requiring that lots be big enough to support two septic fields (one for now and one for the future, when the first one fails). R-1F has a minimum lot size of 1 acre, which may not always be large enough to support a second septic field. Consider adding this requirement for a second septic field and a note to Table 6-1 that the minimum lot area might need be bigger than one acre in order to support a second septic field.

- Many communities now set maximum lot areas – this would work well for the C-HD District, to ensure it really is used for downtown neighborhood scale development.

25. Front Setbacks

- I strongly believe that front setbacks should be based on the type of street you front on, not the zoning district, with smaller setbacks for smaller streets and vice versa.
- Note that communities are starting to set maximum setbacks also.
- Consider adding an “average” setback provision for non-conforming areas to better accommodate redevelopment.

26. Landscape Regulations – Need to add more detailed landscape requirements for buffers, parking lots, etc. This is becoming a standard practice for many Indiana communities.

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

General observation: The subdivision ordinance, adopted only six years ago in 2006, seems to be modeled on older subdivision ordinances. It could be refined to further implement current best practices

and to make it more user-friendly. I recommend a total rewrite of the subdivision ordinance.

1. Article II, Definitions matches the zoning ordinance definitions. While this is good from a coordination standpoint, many of the definitions in the subdivision ordinance apply only to zoning and are repeated unnecessarily (i.e., “Animal, Domestic”) and could be deleted to shorten this section.
2. Article III, Section 2 (1), Conditional Approval of Primary Plat – I suggest that the ordinance say that, “A sub-divider desiring conditional approval of a primary plat ...shall submit a complete application to the Executive Director.”
3. Article III, Section 2 (2), Conditional Approval of Primary Plat – Reconsider having fee schedules included in an ordinance, because it is too difficult to do yearly amendments to keep up with inflation. Since this refers to an appendix, it is not clear whether the fee schedule is part of the ordinance or part of the commission’s rules.
4. Article III, Section 2 (4), Conditional Approval of Primary Plat – If the commission disapproves a plat, Indiana Code requires that they prepare “findings of fact,” which is what this section describes, but the proper term should be used.
5. Article IV, Section 3, Design Standards, Alleys – The alley standards could be updated. Most planned commercial and industrial areas no longer use alleys for their service areas. It would seem that the county would prefer that those functions take place on the business property and not in an alley that must be maintained by local government tax dollars. Conversely, discouraging alleys in residential areas would not allow construction of much desired new urbanist type developments.
6. Table 4-1, Street Design Standards – Having three different sets of standards for each type of street seems complicated. What happens if the development density changes over time, or is different on opposite sides of the street or on an adjacent parcel. Likewise, sidewalk widths should be standard throughout the community.
7. Article IV, Section 5 (3), Design Standards, Easements – This subsection could be clearer. Can you just state that this is about access easements? Also, requiring all easements to be 50’ wide may be misinterpreted to apply to utility easements, etc.
8. Article IV, Section 6, Design Standards, Blocks – 1600 ft. is excessively long for a cul-de-sac. Pedestrian ways should be built to sidewalk or trail standards, not just “paved.”
9. Article IV, Section 9, Design Standards, Non-Residential Subdivisions – Consider allowing industrial parks to be platted with blocks only. It is difficult to know exactly what size lot will be needed for industrial users.
10. Article V, Section 4, Required Improvements, Sewage Disposal – Consider requiring a second septic site on lots using septic.
11. Article V, Section 9, Required Improvements, sidewalks – Consider allowing trails to be substituted for sidewalks. This would require adopting a set of trail standards.
12. Article VI, Section 2, Plats and data for Conditional Approval – Use Indiana Code terms of “Primary” and “Secondary” Plat, not Preliminary and Final Plat.
13. Article VI, Variances & Modifications -- IC 36-7-4-702 now officially recognizes that the plan commission, not the BZA has the authority to grant waivers from the standards of the subdivision ordinance. Need to set up procedure for this and list state’s criteria for waivers in subdivision ordinance.
14. Do you use a technical review committee (reps from Planning, Surveyor, Hwy Engineer, Health, Utilities, Soil & Water, Schools, etc.)?

15. Green Drainage – May not want to push the use of curb and gutter due to drainage, per modern best management practices.
16. Traffic Calming – Most ordinances have sections on this as part of their Design Standards.
17. Electronic Copies – Do you still do everything on paper? Many Indiana communities now require electronic copies.

MOVING FROM THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO ZONING ORDINANCES

The comprehensive plan is only the first step in updating Jennings County's planning. The most common tools used to ensure that the community goals outlined in this plan are reached include:

1. Revising the zoning map.
2. Updating the zoning code.
3. Updating the subdivision code.
4. Creating a Capital Improvement Plan.

If these actions are not taken, it is difficult to imagine how the community can move toward its goals.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- ✦ Review Critical Sub Area plans for the county.
- ✦ Consult the Implementation Plan to begin discussions on revisions to the zoning and subdivision ordinances.



6

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Key Points

- ❑ Manufacturing is still a major driver of the economy in Jennings County, as it accounts for nearly one-fourth of local employment and offers wages that are among the highest on average of any industry in the county.
- ❑ Industries in which employment is more concentrated than the national average include: advanced materials, technology, chemicals and chemical-based products, forest and wood products, transportation and logistics, primary metal manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing, machinery manufacturing, transportation equipment manufacturing.
- ❑ Jennings County is a net exporter of labor, with approximately three times as many residents commuting outside the county for work as commute into it from other counties. The majority of these commuters work in either Bartholomew or Jackson counties.
- ❑ While nearly 23 percent of Indiana residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher, only 9 percent of Jennings County residents have that level of educational attainment.
- ❑ The likely eastern route of the U.S. 50 bypass will cut through two of the community's industrial parks, which will leave it with less acreage, including on a state certified shovel-ready site. As an investment in the future, new land should be dedicated to industrial development.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

LOCAL ECONOMIC BASE AND LABOR FORCE

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) tracks data on employment and labor force trends at the national, state and local levels. Table 6.1 shows the most up-to-date BLS data on the size of Jennings County's labor force. The labor force includes the sum of the employed and unemployed civilian non-institutional population aged 16 and over who are currently either working or seeking work.

It should be noted that although the number of unemployed workers dropped sharply in the past year, from 1,563 in 2011 to 1,273 in 2012, the size of the overall labor force also declined and the total number of workers employed declined as well. This suggests that unemployment may have dropped in part due to workers dropping out of the labor force (so that they are not accounted for in the official BLS statistics) rather than as the result of any substantive improvements in the local economy. Alternatively, these numbers could indicate that workers (possibly unemployed) moved out of the county during this period. A more detailed

TABLE 6.1 JENNINGS COUNTY LABOR FORCE (2011-2012)			
	<i>Labor Force</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>Unemployed</i>
August 2011	13,979	12,416	1,563
August 2012	13,576	12,301	1,275
% Change	-2.88%	-0.89%	-18.43%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

discussion of Jennings County unemployment trends in the past year is included below.

As Table 6.3 shows (on the following page), the largest employment sectors in Jennings County by number of jobs are manufacturing (1,726 jobs) and transportation and warehousing (952 jobs), followed by health care and social assistance (765 jobs) and educational services (764 jobs).

The average annual wage for employment in all industries in Jennings County was \$33,934 in 2011. By comparison, the statewide average wage in all industries was \$40,248, meaning that Jennings County falls about 16 percent below the state average and places 42nd out of Indiana's 92 counties, a few places above the median county.

Interestingly, the highest average wage per job in any industry in the county was in administrative / waste services, where Jennings was the most highly-ranked county in the state in 2011. Though these jobs offer an average wage of over \$80,000 per year, employment in this industry makes up less than 2 percent of total county employment. Other top-wage industries include construction (\$45,226), public administration (\$39,055), and utilities (\$38,022).

As the largest employment sector, manufacturing accounts for just under a quarter of Jennings County's 7,216 total jobs and provides an average annual wage of \$37,751, while transportation and warehousing, the second largest employment sector, makes up about 13 percent of the labor force and provides a wage of \$35,716. According to data from the Purdue Center for Regional Development and the Indiana Business

Research Center, employment in these two industries tends to be more highly concentrated (as a percentage of the total labor force) in Jennings County than at the national level and in a few sub-industries tends to be much more highly concentrated.

This means that Jennings County firms could either be well off if demand for their products grows or, alternatively, could be vulnerable if demand for their products declines. The sub-industry categories most affected include: advanced materials, technology, chemicals and chemical-based products, forest and wood products, primary metal manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing, machinery manufacturing, and transportation equipment manufacturing.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Table 6.2 shows the level of educational attainment within Jennings County by degree type. While the percentage of Jennings County residents with at least a high school diploma or a G.E.D. tracks roughly with the state average, at 86 percent, the percentage with a Bachelor's degree or higher (9.2 percent) is far less than the statewide average of 22.8 percent. These figures represent the most recent estimates from the American Community Survey.

TABLE 6.2 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (2011)		
<i>Degree</i>	<i>Jennings County</i>	<i>Indiana</i>
High school degree or higher	86%	87%
Bachelor's degree or higher	9.2%	22.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-11 American Community Survey

TABLE 6.3 ANNUAL INDUSTRY DISTRIBUTION OF JOBS AND AVERAGE WAGES IN 2011 (NAICS)

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Establish- ments</i>	<i>Jobs</i>	<i>% Distribution in County</i>	<i>Annual Average Wage Per Job</i>	<i>Rank in State</i>
Total Covered Employment and Wages	434	7,216	100.00%	\$33,934	42
Private	390	5,933	82.20%	\$33,821	45
Agri., forestry, hunting	2	D	D	D	N/A
Mining	2	D	D	D	N/A
Construction	48	750	10.40%	\$45,226	16
Manufacturing	40	1,726	23.90%	\$37,751	77
Wholesale trade	16	196	2.70%	\$32,382	66
Retail trade	63	643	8.90%	\$22,835	24
Transportation, warehousing	29	952	13.20%	\$35,716	76
Utilities	3	19	0.30%	\$38,022	51
Information	4	D	D	D	N/A
Finance and Insurance	24	114	1.60%	\$36,804	60
Real Estate, rental, leasing	13	37	0.50%	\$25,148	38
Professional, technical services	22	D	D	D	N/A
Mgmt. of companies, enterprises	1	D	D	D	N/A
Administrative, waste services	14	127	1.80%	\$84,128	1
Educational services	14	764	10.60%	\$34,796	11
Health care, social assistance	58	765	10.60%	\$24,877	54
Arts, entertainment, recreation	4	16	0.20%	\$7,462	75
Accommodation and food services	26	340	4.70%	\$11,044	57
Other services, exc. public admin.	27	D	D	D	N/A
Public administration	25	190	2.60%	\$39,055	20

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

D = Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information; N/A = Item not available

TABLE 6.4 POPULATION TRENDS										
	1990			2000			2010			1990-2010 growth rate
	Population	Rank in state	% in state	Population	Rank in state	% in state	Population	Rank in state	% in state	
Indiana	5,544,156	-	-	6,080,485	-	-	6,483,800	-	-	16.9%
Jennings County	23,661	62	0.43%	27,554	56	0.45%	28,525	56	0.44%	20.6%
North Vernon	5,311	105	0.096%	6,515	93	0.107%	6,728	97	0.104%	26.7%
Vernon	370	475	0.007%	330	497	0.005%	318	551	0.005%	-14.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Note: Rank in State compares Jennings County to other Indiana counties; North Vernon and Vernon to other Indiana places.

POPULATION TRENDS

The most recent population estimates from the Indiana Business Research Center indicate that Jennings County's 2011 population reached 28,196, which represents a slight decline from the 2010 census. As can be seen in Table 6.4, though, the census data from the past three decades show that Jennings County has grown at a faster rate than the state as a whole, with growth of nearly 21 percent since 1990, compared to about a 17 percent growth rate at the state level. In terms of population, Jennings County ranked 56th out of Indiana's 92 counties as of the 2010 census.

North Vernon is the largest town or city in Jennings County and has grown at an even faster rate than the county as a whole, with nearly 27 percent growth since 1990. As of the 2010 census, North Vernon was the 97th largest town or city in Indiana with a population of 6,728.

INCOME

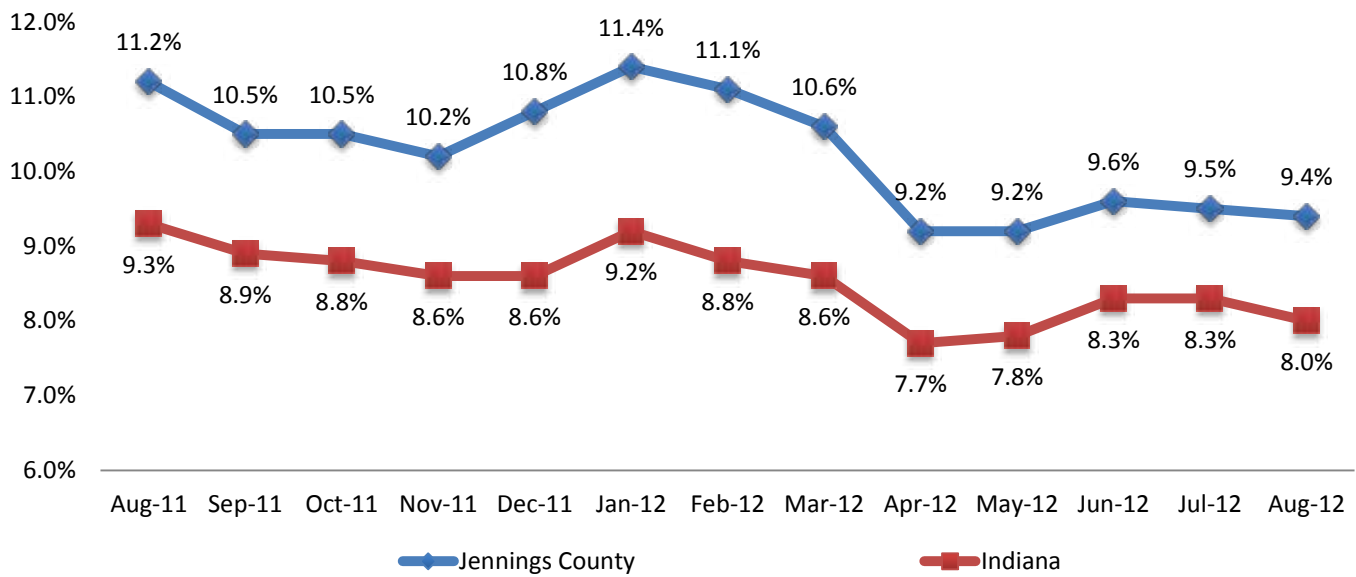
As Table 6.5 shows, Jennings County lags slightly behind the state in terms of per capita income and median household income. Jennings County's \$30,183 per capita personal income is only about 89 percent of the state average, and the median household income of \$41,869 is about 94 percent of the state median. In both categories, Jennings County ranks in the bottom third of Indiana counties.

TABLE 6.5 INCOME OF JENNINGS COUNTY RESIDENTS (2010)

Income Category	Jennings County	County Rank	Indiana
Per Capita Personal Income	\$30,183	58	\$33,981
Median Household Income	\$41,869	61	\$44,616

Source: Indiana Business Research Center, STATS Indiana

FIGURE 6.1: Unemployment Rates for Past Year (Not Seasonally Adjusted)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

UNEMPLOYMENT

The BLS indicates that between September of 2011 and September of 2012, Indiana’s seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate dropped by a full point, from 9.2 percent in 2011 to 8.2 percent in late 2012. While the pace of recovery from the Great Recession is still slow, substantive improvements in unemployment are occurring at both state and national levels.

Figure 6.1 shows unemployment rates by month for Jennings County over the past year, compared to Indiana as a whole (note: these figures are not seasonally-adjusted). Jennings County’s unemployment rate remains higher than state and national averages, but it has dropped at a faster rate than either the state or national unemployment rates since August of 2011, falling 1.8 percent between then and August of 2012. This is reflected in the narrowing gap between Jennings County and Indiana unemployment rates on the right side of Figure 6.1. As noted above, though, a word of caution is needed in interpreting these figures, as the numbers may in part reflect workers leaving the labor force. Workers who drop out of the labor force entirely are not officially counted as unemployed

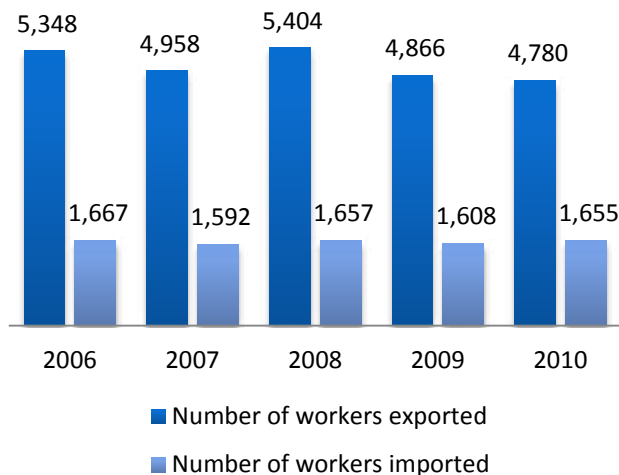
in BLS statistics, though they are unemployed for all intents and purposes.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC BASE AND LABOR FORCE

Jennings County’s economy is tightly linked with the broader regional economy, which is evidenced by the proportion of the county’s work force that commutes outside of the county for work. Of the county’s implied resident labor force—that is, the sum of Jennings County residents who work, regardless of which county they work in—nearly 27 percent commute outside of the county for work, according to IT-40 tax returns. This amounts to an average of around 5,000 out-commuters over the last five years, compared to an average of about 1,600 in-commuters from other counties during that same time period. Figure 6.2 gives a graphic illustration of the number of out-commuters compared to the number of in-commuters in Jennings County covering the last five years for which data are available.

Most of the commuters out of Jennings County travel to Bartholomew County (2,259) and Jackson County

FIGURE 6.2: Commuting Patterns



Source: Indiana Business Research Center, based on IT-40 tax returns

(1,341) for work, while majority of the commuters into Jennings County reside in Jackson (426), Bartholomew (255), and Jefferson (264) counties.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Table 6.6 lists the 10 largest employers in Jennings County. The range in the number of employees at these firms is large, from 730 workers at Lowe's Distribution Center to 120 at Biehle Electric. As might be expected from the discussion above, most of these companies are in either manufacturing or transportation and

warehousing.

Combined, these 10 firms employ just over a third of Jennings County's labor force. The BLS data cited above in Table 6.3 indicates that there are more than 430 employment establishments in Jennings County, meaning that the vast majority of firms in the county are small businesses employing less than 120 workers.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Three local organizations dedicated specifically to economic development activities serve the county: the Jennings County Economic Development Commission (JCEDC), the Jennings County Chamber of Commerce, and the Education and Training Center in North Vernon.

The Jennings County Economic Commission (<http://www.jenningsedc.com/>) acts primarily as a resource for potential and existing businesses by marketing the county to recruit potential firms, identifying funding opportunities for area businesses, and collecting and distributing valuable data on the local business and economic climate.

The JCEDC's goal areas and work plan include the following:

TABLE 6.6 MAJOR EMPLOYERS

<i>Employer</i>	<i>Employees</i>	<i>Year Established</i>	<i>Description</i>
Lowe's Distribution Center	730	1994	Distribution center for home improvement products
O'Mara Contractor, Inc.	400	1974	Highway & street construction, utilities, water, & sewer
North Vernon Industry Corp	315	1996	Gray iron casting equipment
Hilex Poly Co, LLC	275	1987	Plastic bags and plastics recycling
St. Vincent Jennings Hospital	185	1999	Hospital
Metaldyne	176	1994	Machine connecting rods
Martinrea	145	1993	Fuel tubes
Decatur Plastics	144	1989	Plastic injection molding
Erler Industries, Inc.	121	1988	Industrial painting
Biehle Electric	120	1982	Electrical service

Source: Jennings County Economic Development Corporation

- ✦ **Current Industries** – continue good relationships with all industries for future expansions and possible supplier relocations to Jennings County.
- ✦ **Business Retention** – assist in maintaining current business and help promote new business for future expansions.
- ✦ **Workforce Development Program** – assist in training programs, assessing job skills of employees, training grants for industries through the State of Indiana and other programs.
- ✦ **Local Officials** – work with local officials when projects or leads develop.
- ✦ **Area Developers** – continue to work with area developers in Jennings County.
- ✦ **Construction Companies** – continue to work with local construction companies to develop new leads for existing and new industries.
- ✦ **Utility Providers** – continue to work with utility providers on new and existing projects to develop new leads. Jennings County Sites are located in data bases for Cinergy and Hoosier Energy.
- ✦ **Parent Company Visits** – frequently call on local company's parent companies possibly with local officials.

The JCEDC operates the Education and Training Center which provides facilities in support of workforce development, education and training initiatives.

The Jennings County Chamber of Commerce (<http://www.jenningscountychamber.com/>) acts as an advocate for local businesses and generally attempts to promote a business-friendly environment.

South Central Indiana Economic Development (SCIED) (<http://www.southcentralindiana.com/>) is a regional partnership of 10 counties – including Jennings County – and the River Ridge Commerce Center. SCIED promotes the communities in its region, provides site location assistance, and research for business prospects.

AVAILABLE INDUSTRIAL PROPERTIES

Jennings County has a number of properties available for industrial or commercial use, many of which are shovel-ready sites. The following is a sampling of available industrial properties, as compiled by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

The Miller Site is located off of State Highway 3 and is approximately 20 miles away from I-65. The site has full utility service, including electrical, gas, sewer and water, and telecom and internet. The site is divisible and ranges from a minimum size of 10 acres to a maximum of 180 acres.

The North Vernon Municipal Airport Site is located near State Road 3 and State Road 7. Site utilities include electricity, natural gas, sewer and water, and telecom. The site has a maximum size of 200 acres.

North Vernon Park 3 is a shovel-ready site located near County Road 350 North and 4th Street in North Vernon. The site, which is 20 miles from I-65, is zoned as an industrial park and includes a 40 acre site and a 54 acre site, each of which could be further subdivided. Utilities include: electrical, natural gas, sewer and water, and telecom and internet.

The Apsley site is on Deer Creek Road near North Vernon and includes 5 to 80 acres of industrial property located just one mile from the North Vernon Airport. The site is also approximately midway (60 miles) between the Indianapolis and Cincinnati international airports. Utilities include: electrical, gas, sewer and water, and telecom.

NORTH VERNON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

The North Vernon Municipal Airport is a regional airport that has been operated by the city since 1948. In September 2012, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) awarded the airport nearly \$1.4 million to complete upgrades that would provide more parking

and taxiing space for aircraft. The new additions will allow the airport to more easily accommodate large corporate and military planes.

The new investment in the North Vernon Municipal Airport caps off recent runway upgrades. According to the 2012 *Indiana Airports Economic Impact Study*, the airport in North Vernon supports more than 400 full-time jobs related to airport activity and contributes an estimated \$52 million to the local economy in aviation goods, services, and capital expenditures. These numbers are likely to increase when improvements to the airport are completed.

In October 2012, the Aviation Association of Indiana (AAI) named North Vernon Airport of the Year in recognition of its excellence in aviation education, community outreach, economic development, safety and security, and environmental improvement. AAI emphasized the airport's role in improving the community's quality of life and economic opportunities. The airport accommodates an Indiana National Guard base on-site, assists with the corporate needs of the Lowe's Distribution Center, and cooperates with the requirements of Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex.

Maintaining and improving the North Vernon Municipal Airport's high level of service is an important component of the community's quality of life and economic health.

MUSCATATUCK TECHNOLOGY PARK

In 2012, the City of North Vernon applied for and was granted state designation of a Certified Technology Park (CTP). The CTP, called the Muscatatuck Technology Park, is located in the city's TIF district near the North Vernon Municipal Airport. The tech park has the potential to capture up to \$5 million in incremental tax dollars.

The Muscatatuck Technology Park is poised to take advantage of restricted airspace located at Camp Atterbury and Jefferson Proving Grounds to test

integration of unmanned aerial systems with the U.S. National Airspace System. It is anticipated that Indiana/Ohio will be selected as one of six Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Unmanned Aerial Vehicle test sites.

A business plan for the Muscatatuck Technology Park calls for the construction of an initial facility, Muscatatuck One (M1), to provide space for park tenants. Completion of the M1 facility will provide space to accommodate nearly 200 full-time employees, the majority of which would represent new jobs for the community.

AGRICULTURE IN THE ECONOMY

Agriculture has historically played a significant part in virtually every county's economy in the state of Indiana and in many places continues to do so. This is also the case in Jennings County, where the U.S. Department of Agriculture's most recent Census of Agriculture (2007) indicates that there are over 600 farms operating and producing, on average, more than \$100,000 in sales annually. The market value of all farm products sold by Jennings County producers was, according to the most recent data, more than \$63 million. This includes nearly \$36 million in crop sales and just under \$27 million in livestock sales.

Figure 6.3 shows the proportion of the 138,331 acres of Jennings County farmland divided between different types of activity. As might be expected, more than three-quarters of the agricultural land is devoted to crops, with 15 percent devoted to woodland and 9 percent to other uses.

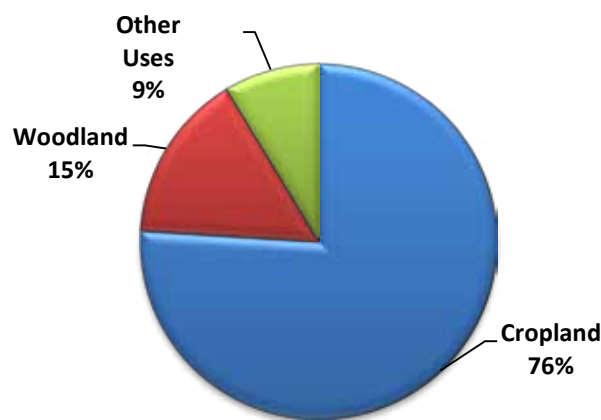
Figure 6.4 shows the number of farms by value of sale in Jennings County. By far the largest category includes farms that gross less than \$2,500 in sales annually, meaning that small farms are prevalent in the county. Recall from above that the average market value of products sold was more than \$100,000 per farm. This indicates that in terms of their market share, the 80

larger farms earning more than \$100,000 per year represent a much larger share of the overall market, despite their small numbers.

Finally, Table 6.7 gives a breakdown of 2007 agricultural sales by commodity group. Ninety-six percent of the roughly \$36 million in crop sales falls in the grains, oilseeds, dry beans and dry peas category. In the

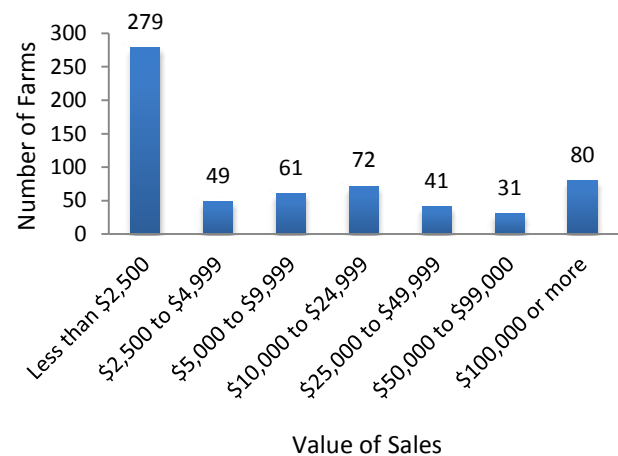
livestock, poultry and related products category, the precise values for poultry and eggs versus cattle and calves were not disclosed for this census, though we can infer from the total sales and the values given for the other subcategories that these two categories comprise about 94 percent of the total value of sales falling under livestock and poultry.

FIGURE 6.3: Jennings County Land in Farms by Type of Land



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2007 Census of Agriculture

FIGURE 6.4: Jennings County Farms by Value of Sales (2007)



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2007 Census of Agriculture

TABLE 6.7 VALUE OF SALES BY COMMODITY GROUP, JENNINGS COUNTY (2007)	
Commodity Group	US Dollars
Total value of crops	\$35,825,000
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas	\$34,480,000
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod	\$516,000
Cotton and cottonseed	\$118,000
Other crops and hay	\$712,000
Total value of livestock, poultry, and their products	\$27,260,000
Poultry and eggs	Not disclosed
Cattle and calves	Not disclosed
Milk and other dairy products from cows	\$657,000
Hogs and pigs	\$857,000
Sheep, goats, and their products	\$68,000
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys	\$69,000
Other animals and their products	\$39,000

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2007 Census of Agriculture

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

North Vernon remains the economic hub of the county, housing all of its major employers. Future development of industrial and commercial sites will likely occur near or around North Vernon as infrastructure such as water and sewer are expanded. For more discussion about development of land around the North Vernon Municipal Airport and the Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex see the land use chapter and MUTC Impact CSA.

The development of new industrial parks is closely aligned with the final route selected for the U.S. 50 bypass. Although selection of the final route will not happen until after this comprehensive plan update concludes, efforts will be made to identify future industrial growth areas tied with the likely bypass routes. Commercial growth is already happening along the bypass's eastern route, which is under construction.

A recent survey of Jennings County employers – covering nearly 58 percent of the county's workforce – found that most offer benefit packages valued between 7 and 35 percent of employee wages. About 62 percent of the companies that responded indicated that they usually have job openings.

As a major partner in the North Vernon Stellar Community projects, the Jennings County Economic Development Commission (JCEDC) is currently heavily engaged in community development. In addition, the JCEDC maintains strong relationships with the South Central Indiana Economic Development marketing group, Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, Indiana Department of Transportation, and Indiana Community Development and Housing Authority. The JCEDC strives to stay fully aware of new federal and state programs and initiatives.

The county's existing housing stock has become an

issue for the JCEDC's business attraction efforts. The current inventory of market rate and executive housing is insufficient to meet demands. There is also a perceived shortage of rental housing. More information on this topic can be found in the housing chapter.

GOALS

SHORT TERM GOALS

- ❑ Continue working on long-term plans to expand the infrastructure capability of delivering water to new businesses and residential areas.
- ❑ Improve signage and gateways to improve access to downtowns and historic destinations such as Vernon.
- ❑ Protect and promote the county's identity as a good place to live, work, and play.
- ❑ Continue working with officials to fully integrate the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center into the local economy.
- ❑ Support efforts to develop the Muscatatuck Technology Park.
- ❑ Promote an environment that encourages the growth and expansion of existing companies and new business and industry recruitment.

LONG TERM GOALS

- ❑ Ensure that there is sufficient infrastructure and developed land available for expanding existing employers or attracting potential new employers.
- ❑ Support local and regional efforts to improve educational attainment levels and workforce training opportunities.
- ❑ Continue efforts to promote existing business

expansion and new business and industry recruitment.

- ✦ U.S. 50 East Bypass Impact Area CSA
- ✦ MUTC Compatible Use Area CSA

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Ensure that there is an adequate supply of larger, shovel-ready industrial sites where the planning and zoning, infrastructure, site tests and environmental reports, and ownership status are clearly resolved.
2. Create multiple agricultural zones for different types of agriculture.
3. Define objective development standards within zoning ordinances that must be met as conditions for permitted use for new agricultural facilities, rather than have a special exception process for new facilities.
4. Develop a site scoring system based on objective criteria to determine whether new facilities meet the conditions set forth in zoning ordinances.
5. Increase code enforcement to prevent the appearance of blighted commercial buildings.
6. Develop a formal economic development plan for Jennings County. One of the key objectives of this plan will be to inventory and prioritize economic development sites in Jennings County in lieu of the U.S. 50 Bypass and recent utility extensions east of North Vernon.
7. Once North Vernon Stellar projects are completed, initiate a countywide branding campaign to promote Jennings County as a regional destination.

Review Project Sheets in the appendix for ideas on:

- ✦ Downtown Plans
- ✦ Capital Improvement Plans
- ✦ Overlay Zones

WHAT TO DO NEXT

Review Critical Sub Areas in this Comprehensive Plan for:

MUTC COMPATIBLE USE AREA

INTRODUCTION

Since its opening in 2005 the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC) has hosted nationally significant exercises for urban warfare and disaster training. The facility has been used to train local, regional, national, and international military and civilian law enforcement and disaster response groups. The facility includes over 120 fully functional training structures containing more than 2,000 rooms for conducting realistic, high stress, combat and rescue mission training exercises.

MUTC has been developed to provide world-class training facilities for a variety of military personnel and civilian first-responders. While the training facilities are completely self-contained, the potential impacts of MUTC on the Jennings County community go well beyond the physical boundaries of the perimeter fence.

All personnel training at MUTC arrive at the facility from elsewhere and periodically stay within the Jennings County community for extended periods of time. The transient nature of these visitors necessitates the need for adequate short and extended stay accommodations

within a close proximity to the MUTC facility. Additionally, equipment and supplies are frequently transported to the facility by training participants on local roads, creating additional volumes on county roads which could potentially accelerate maintenance intervals on these facilities.

KEY ISSUES AND TRENDS

Major topics relating to continued and expanded operations at MUTC were identified in the 2009 Camp Atterbury and Muscatatuck Urban Training Center Joint Land Use Study (JLUS). That study outlined the needs of MUTC operations and the potential impacts on the local community. The following items from the JLUS should be considered in developing policy statements and implementation recommendations for the land surrounding the MUTC facility.

CURRENT AND FUTURE POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL ECONOMY:

Muscatatuck Urban Training Center is a unique economic development opportunity for Jennings County. The JLUS estimated that the total FY 2012 economic impact of both facilities in the study would reach \$616.8 million and that the total amount of military construction would be \$156.8 million. In FY 2009 the MUTC facility alone generated an estimated total of \$21.16 million in construction projects. With MUTC operations potentially expanding, the impact on the local Jennings County economy can be significant. Military personnel, families, and facility visitors all help contribute to this impact and the facility has the potential to continue to increase expenditures on payroll, facility construction, local expenditures, and jobs created; meaning an improved bottom line for Jennings County and its residents.



Makeshift sign for MUTC

CRITICAL SUB AREA

PROVISION FOR THE SHORT AND LONG-TERM LAND USE NEEDS OF MUTC:

Existing land uses surrounding the MUTC facility are typically compatible with the continued operations of the facility. However, with the imminent expansion of the U.S. 50 bypass corridor east of the City of North Vernon and provision of expanded sanitary sewer service to Butlerville, Jennings County is likely to rapidly see development pressures encroaching into the areas immediately surrounding the MUTC facility. With this pressure also comes the potential for additional conflicts due to the nature, and noise, of the training operations. Because of the nature of its operations, the county must work with MUTC and property owners to develop land use guidelines for the areas around the base and the airport so that potentially conflicting land uses can be avoided.

REDUCING ADVERSE POTENTIAL COMMUNITY IMPACTS OF TRAINING OPERATIONS:

There are many activities associated with MUTC training missions which produce loud, and potentially uncomfortable, levels of noise for an area as far away as 1 mile from the facility. Specifically, sound levels created by low flying aircraft, percussion impacts from demolitions, and noise impacts from other training exercises can produce a negative impact on residents and sensitive businesses within this 1 mile area.

In addition to the findings of the JLUS, there are additional considerations which must be addressed in this plan to ensure full integration of the MUTC facility within the local community while also minimizing potential local impacts including:

IMPACTS OF CONVOY VEHICLES AND INCREASED TRAFFIC VOLUMES ON COUNTY ROADWAY INFRASTRUCTURE:

Additional traffic volumes, especially from potentially heavy military vehicles, can place additional burden

on county roads. This additional burden means that a roadway designed to last 20 years under normal traffic conditions may begin to show signs of wear in much less time. The accelerated decay can lead to potential safety issues and can begin to tax the already limited resources of the Jennings County Highway Department.

LONG-TERM HOUSING NEEDS TO SUPPORT MUTC TRAINING OPERATIONS:

Training operations at MUTC necessitate the provision of comfortable long-term or extended-stay housing for groups training at the facility. Many military personnel can be stationed at a facility for an extended period of time. Typically, this means also moving their families with them. These military families become a part of the local community. They also contribute significantly to the local economy. In order to welcome these new families into the community there must be welcoming places for them to live, work, and play. This means that there must be an inventory of clean and inviting short-term and extended-stay market rate housing options available in the Jennings County community. Jennings County should continue to explore ways to promote the development of safe and attractive market rate housing facilities for MUTC trainees and their families.

NORTH VERNON AIRPORT:

Continued and expanded MUTC operations are intrinsically tied to the continued safe operation of the North Vernon Municipal Airport. Jennings County should take steps towards ensuring that the long term needs of the airport facility are accommodated. This should be done in a manner which also encourages surrounding landowners the opportunity to utilize their land in a manner appropriate and compatible with the safety requirements inherent in continued airport operations.



Runway of North Vernon Municipal Airport

RECOMMENDATIONS

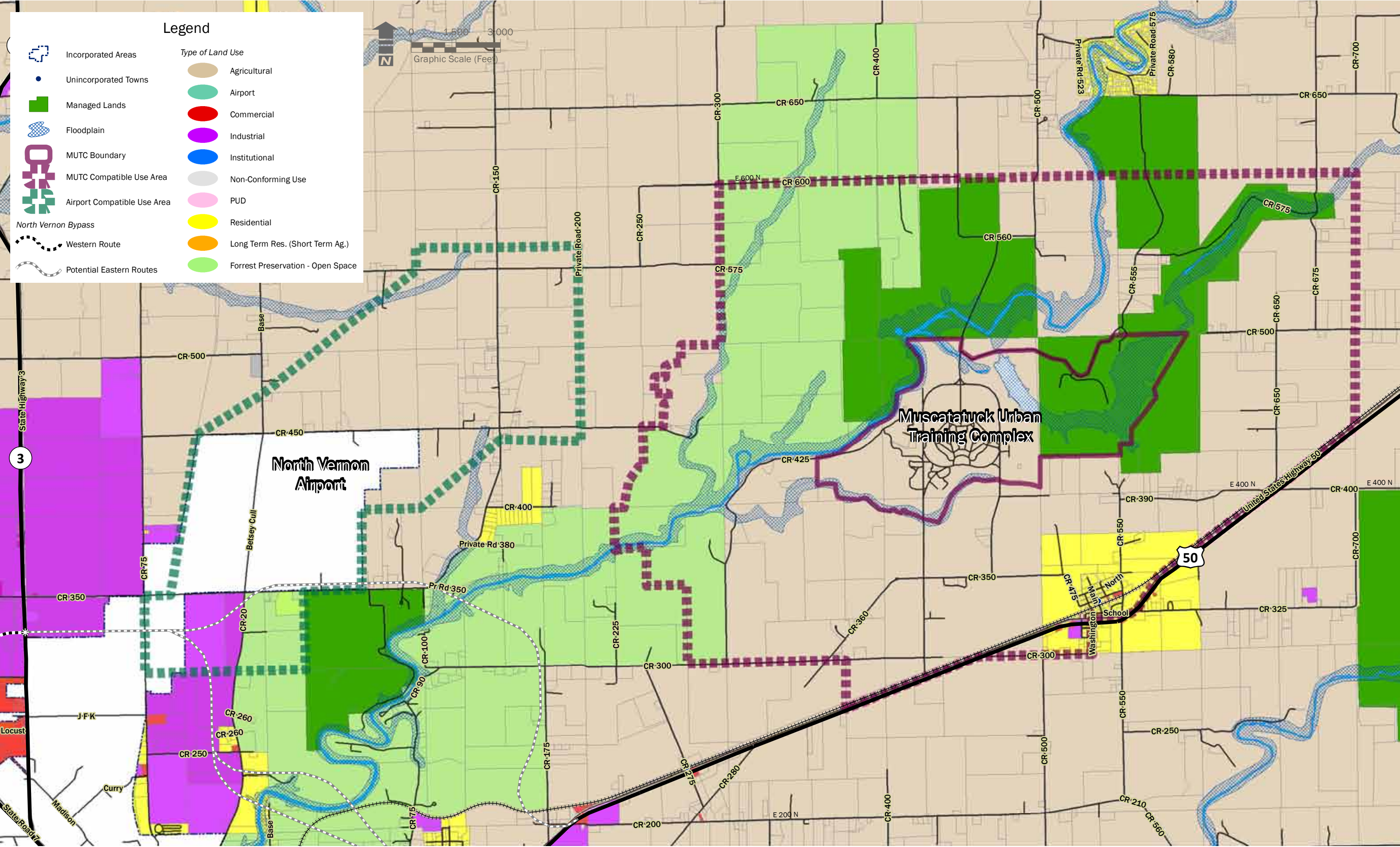
The 2009 JLUS provides guidance on the land use needs and concerns relating to continued and expanded operations at the MUTC installation. After review of the JLUS, and discussing the topic with local residents, the following implementation plan was developed which identifies key steps that the Jennings County community can take to ensure proper development patterns occur adjacent to the MUTC facility. Specifically, the following recommendations have been established to ensure that the long term needs of both Jennings County and the MUTC facility are met in a mutually beneficial manner:

- The primary recommendation of this chapter is to establish an MUTC Compatible Use Overlay district. The intent of this district is to identify the areas around MUTC that take into consideration the direct and indirect implications of the training facility. This ordinance should recognize the rights of property owners to continue to use their property as they have in the past, and plan to in the future. It should also identify new development patterns and land uses that would be appropriate in the district, and provide local residents and MUTC the ability to voice any concerns with proposed development before permits are issued. It would also be appropriate to consider requiring a potential property owner to sign a waiver
- acknowledging the potential issues in the district prior to approval of new developments.
- This Influence Zone Overlay District will be a ‘transparent’ zone which lies on top of existing Jennings County zoning. It can be used to add additional provisions beyond those required by the existing zoning ordinance. For the Jennings County plan it is recommended that the underlying zone will determine the permitted land uses, while the overlay district will clearly define the future uses and special conditions which will be compatible with the known potential conflicts. This can include the design of infrastructure, transportation facilities, required additional setbacks, and buffer zones. This can also include any other provisions that will meet the overlay zone’s intended purpose.
- The Initial recommended size of this overlay district is one mile from the border of the MUTC facility. This size was derived from the findings of the JLUS and from feedback received from local residents. As the county considers further action on this recommendation the actual limits of the overlay district should be examined in more detail to establish the true area of potential effect from MUTC training exercises. The overlay district size should ultimately be determined by the results of the more detailed study.
- Given the potential impacts of MUTC activities on local residents, the county should establish a clear policy on how residents and businesses are notified of potentially disruptive activities scheduled to take place at the facility. It should also work with MUTC leadership to more clearly define, and publish, a formal grievance process for residents who wish to notify officials of recurring issues related to activities at the MUTC facility.

CRITICAL SUB AREA

- ❑ It will be important that Jennings County update zoning maps and ordinances to recognize and define land uses compatible with MUTC within the overlay zone. This effort should also be undertaken for areas surrounding the North Vernon Municipal Airport. Current zoning ordinance must be examined to help determine future actions which must be taken to redefine and rezone land to meet the development needs of these critical areas. It is recommended that this process include MUTC officials, airport officials, and surrounding landowners.
- ❑ Jennings County should undertake planning efforts for improved short term and long term housing facilities to accommodate military personnel and training operations participants.
- ❑ It is imperative that the county assess ongoing impacts to local roads from additional traffic volumes and heavy equipment hauling related to convoy vehicles traversing through Jennings County. These assessments should be summarized and incorporated into long range transportation planning efforts. Outcomes of this effort can be suggested convoy routes, long term transportation improvements, and budgeting for long term maintenance needs on impacted roads. Jennings County should consider developing a county road access plan to manage transportation issues when roads are closed due to MUTC exercises and trainings.

MUTC AND AIRPORT COMPATIBLE USE AREAS MAP





7

HOUSING

Key Points

- ❑ Jennings County's population growth has slowed relative to growth at the state level, increasing by just 2.3 percent since 2000. Slow growth is projected for the next decade.
- ❑ The median home value in Jennings County declined by 17 percent between 2000 and 2011.
- ❑ The 44 building permits issued in 2011 amount to less than a quarter the number of permits issued just 10 years prior.
- ❑ Foreclosures are widespread throughout the county and constitute the largest ongoing problem for the Jennings County housing market, according to local real estate agents.
- ❑ Desirable areas likely to experience continued growth are in the northern and western parts of the county, especially areas close to larger towns, like North Vernon. There is also some movement in executive housing throughout the county in the \$200k-\$250k+ range, though activity is still limited, according to local real estate agents.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

This chapter of the comprehensive plan assesses the conditions of the local housing stock and develops policies to address the demand for a range of housing options.

Table 7.1 compares data for Jennings County and the state of Indiana on key housing indicators and shows how these indicators have changed since the 2000 census. Details from the table are discussed below.

INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT: SINGLE FAMILY

The majority of housing units in Jennings County are occupied by single families. The most recent data available on Jennings County housing are from the Census Bureau's 2009-2011 American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS data reveal the following trends:

- ✦ Between 2000 and 2011, the Jennings County's total housing stock grew by a modest 5 percent, compared to statewide growth of 10.4 percent during the same period.

TABLE 7.1 JENNINGS COUNTY HOUSING DATA (2011)

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Jennings County, 2011</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>% change, 2000-2011</i>	<i>Indiana, 2011</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>% change, 2000-2011</i>
Current Population	28,196	-	2.3%	6,516,922	-	7.2%
Projected Population, 2020	29,415	-	-	6,852,121	-	-
Total Housing Units	12,048	-	5.0%	2,796,599	-	10.4%
Occupied Housing	10,858	90.1%	7.1%	2,469,444	88.3%	5.7%
Owner-Occupied	8,297	68.9%	3.5%	1,738,222	62.2%	4.1%
Renter-Occupied	2,561	21.3%	20.9%	731,223	26.1%	9.6%
Vacant Housing Units	1,190	9.9%	-10.9%	327,155	11.7%	66.9%
Median Home Value	\$91,800	-	-17.0%*	\$123,200	-	-3.2%*

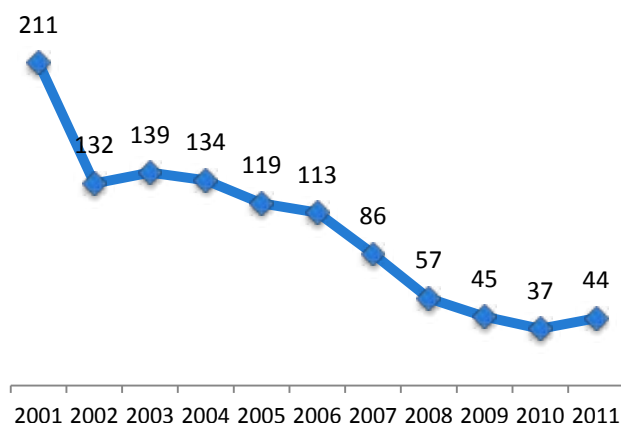
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2011 American Community Survey; STATS Indiana

*Percentages reflect real change in inflation-adjusted 2011 dollars

- At the same time, Jennings County's population growth also slowed relative to growth at the state level, increasing by 2.3 percent compared to statewide population growth of 7.2 percent since 2000. Jennings County is also projected to grow at a slightly slower rate than the rest of the state over the next decade.
- Owner-occupied units make up about 69 percent of Jennings County's occupied housing stock, while renter-occupied units make up about 21 percent. These proportions differ somewhat from the statewide proportions, where about 62 percent of the occupied housing stock is owner-occupied and

about 26 percent renter-occupied.

- While the statewide number of vacant housing units increased by more than two-thirds between 2000 and 2011, Jennings County saw a decrease of 11 percent in the number of vacant units during this same time period.
- Adjusted for inflation, the median home value in Jennings County declined by 17 percent between 2000 and 2011, compared to a 3 percent decline at the state level.
- In 2011, nearly a quarter of Jennings County's 12,048 housing units were mobile homes, compared to only about 5 percent at the state level.

FIGURE 7.1: Jennings County Building Permits Filed 2001-2011

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

BUILDING PERMITS

Building permits are good indicators of housing growth and can also be indicators of economic growth. Over the last 10 years, the number of residential building permits issued in Jennings County has dropped precipitously. The 44 building permits issued in 2011 amount to less than a quarter the number of permits issued just 10 years prior. Although residential construction at the national level continued to rise until about 2007, when the housing market first began to sour, the downward trend in Jennings County began several years earlier, in 2001.

INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT: APARTMENTS AND RENTAL UNITS

As of 2011, nearly a quarter of Jennings County's population lived in rental housing, slightly less than the statewide proportion, and there are a total of 2,561 rental units out of nearly 11,000 total occupied housing units. Rental housing has also grown at a much faster pace in Jennings County in the past decade than at the state level, increasing by nearly 21 percent compared to statewide growth of only about 10 percent. Nearly 54 percent of Jennings County renters spend 30 percent or more of their income on rent in 2011, slightly more than the statewide average of 51 percent.

CURRENT MARKET SNAPSHOT

To get a better idea of the current housing market in Jennings County, we took a snapshot of the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) real estate listings in Jennings County for October 2012. This analysis includes only properties listed in the MLS system for Jennings County and does not include properties listed by real estate brokers who are not members of the MLS.

As shown in Table 7.2, there are four types of properties listed in Jennings County: apartments or multi-family homes, single-family homes, manufactured or mobile

homes, and residential lots. Of the 173 properties listed in Jennings County, 142 are in North Vernon, while one is in Vernon, four are in Commiskey, 12 are in Scipio, and 14 are in Butlerville.

Table 7.3 shows that a majority—67 percent—of the properties listed are valued at less than \$100,000. 12 percent of the properties are valued between \$100,000 and \$150,000; 8 percent are between \$150,000 and \$200,000; and the remaining 12 percent are over \$200,000. Nearly three-quarters of the properties listed are single-family homes, and although there are homes available in each of the price categories listed here, about three-quarters of the homes listed fall in the middle range—between \$25,000 and \$150,000.

FORECLOSURES AND SHORT SALES

As of October 29, 2012, there were five bank-owned properties for sale in Jennings County. Repossessions have a negative effect on property values. This effect can be seen most clearly in areas like Country Squire Lakes where property values have fallen and code enforcement is problematic. Reductions in property values also translate into reduced tax revenues for local government.

TABLE 7.2 PROPERTIES FOR SALE BY CITY (OCTOBER, 2012)

	<i>North Ver- non</i>	<i>Vernon</i>	<i>Scipio</i>	<i>Butlerville</i>	<i>Commiskey</i>	<i>Total</i>
Apartments / Multiple Family Home	5	0	0	0	0	5
Single-family Home	102	1	6	11	3	123
Manufactured / Mobile Home	3	0	2	0	0	5
Lots / Land Residential	32	0	4	3	1	40
Total	142	1	12	14	4	173

Source: Realtor.com, 16 October 2012

HOUSING TRENDS

LOCAL REALTOR PERSPECTIVES

Local realtors were asked their opinions on residential land use issues and current trends in the local housing market. The following section summarizes their comments.

GENERAL TRENDS

- ✦ Foreclosures are widespread throughout the county and constitute the largest ongoing problem for the Jennings County housing market.
- ✦ There is little-to-no growth in county housing, and a significant portion of the movement in the current market involves groups of investors purchasing homes at foreclosure auctions either to be used for rental housing or to be rehabilitated and resold.
- ✦ Rental housing is in short supply in places, though there is demand for it.

FORECLOSURES

- ✦ The foreclosure problem noted above has had repercussions beyond the housing market, as local banks have suffered significant losses, local government has lost tax revenue, and some

families may be doubling or tripling up in single homes.

- ✦ One realtor said, “There are really two separate markets: foreclosures and arm’s length transactions.”
- ✦ The area around Country Squire Lake is particularly slow, and there is an especially large concentration of foreclosed manufactured and mobile homes in that area.

ANTICIPATED FUTURE GROWTH

- ✦ With few exceptions, growth has stalled in the Jennings County housing market, and there is not much building going on currently. Developers are reluctant to build spec homes, for example, and most of the home sales are foreclosure sales.
- ✦ There may be some halting signs of improvement, as one realtor indicated that she believed the market has been picking up in the past few months.
- ✦ Desirable areas likely to experience continued growth are in the northern and western parts of the county, especially areas close to larger towns, like North Vernon, and employment opportunities.
- ✦ There is also some movement in executive housing throughout the county in the \$200k-\$250k+ range, though activity is still limited.

TABLE 7.3 PROPERTIES FOR SALE BY PRICE (OCTOBER, 2012)

	<\$25k	\$25k-\$50k	\$50-\$75k	\$75k-\$100k	\$100k-\$150k	\$150k-\$200k	>200k	Total
Apartments / Multiple Family Home	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	5
Single-family Home	4	21	23	33	18	12	18	129
Manufactured / Mobile Home	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	5
Lots / Land Residential	17	6	4	3	4	2	5	41
Total	21	29	29	42	22	14	23	180

Source: Realtor.com, 16 October 2012

CHALLENGES

- ✦ There is an ongoing problem with banks being unwilling or unable to lend to potential homeowners. Realtors indicated that banks are often unable to lend to homeowners in large part because of tighter lending requirements as the result of the housing and financial crises.
- ✦ Anecdotally, one realtor noted that he recently had a couple with a credit rating of nearly 750 that was unable to get a \$25,000 loan for a down payment on a foreclosure home that was selling for only \$50,000.
- ✦ Country Squire Lakes was consistently singled out as an area with an especially high foreclosure rate as well as a larger concentration of housing in need of rehabilitation.
- ✦ One realtor indicated that the area where there is most unmet demand for housing is for modest-sized homes in the \$100,000 to \$130,000 range.
- ✦ Rental housing continues to be in low supply in some parts of the county. In particular, the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center tends to draw in short-term residents who only plan to live in the area for two to three years and who may require rental housing that currently is not available.

HOUSING ALTERNATIVES

According to the 2009-2011 American Community Survey, Jennings County closely tracks the statewide statistics in its clear preference for detached, single-family housing. These units comprise 69 percent of the county's total housing stock, while about 73 percent of the statewide housing stock consists of detached, single-family units.

At 9.9 percent, the vacancy rate in Jennings County is lower than the statewide vacancy rate of 11.7 percent. And as noted above, the number of vacant units has actually declined by close to 11 percent since 2000, while at the same time the number of vacant units at the state level actually increased by a substantial margin.

SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

The availability of rental housing for low-income tenants is important. In Indiana, such housing typically comes in the form of Section 8 housing developments. This program is income based and the eligibility guidelines are set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

TABLE 7.4 PROJECT-BASED SECTION 8 DEVELOPMENTS

<i>Development</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Telephone</i>
Ivy Park Apartments	31 Ivy Park	North Vernon	(765) 529-5520
North Vernon Senior Housing	45 Henry Street	North Vernon	(812-346-6232
Valley Court	Unknown	North Vernon	(317) 794-5899
Village Apartments of North Vernon	500 Hayden Pike	North Vernon	(812) 346-1128
Harmony House Apartments	151 Moir, Avenue	North Vernon	(812) 346-2801
Lincoln Place Apartments	934 Veterans Drive	North Vernon	(812) 346-8548
North Vernon Senior Housing	45 Henry Street	North Vernon	(812) 346-6232
Oak Meadows Apartments	1450 Oak Meadow Drive	North Vernon	(812) 346-9683
Valley Court of North Vernon	500 Hayden Pike	North Vernon	(812) 352-8544
Village Apartments	555 Brownstown Road	North Vernon	(812) 346-1128

Source: Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority; United Way of Jennings County

According to the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority website, “A project-based Section 8 development provides rental assistance to make affordable rental units [for] low-income people. When you get help through a project-based section 8, you have to live in that particular housing development.”

Table 7.4 lists the project-based Section 8 housing development in Jennings County.

LOCAL HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS

Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) assist communities with housing development. Jennings County is currently served by three Housing Development Organizations: the Southern Indiana Housing and Community Development Corporation, Ohio Valley Opportunities Inc., and Southeastern Indiana Community Preservation and Development. Each organization is based outside of Jennings County but serves the greater region.

HOUSING GRANTS

As shown in Table 7.5, organizations located within Jennings County have received over \$1.5 million in housing grants in the past decade and a half, though the most recent grants were received in 2002.

PRIORITIES AND ACTION ITEMS

The community is not growing, foreclosures are widespread, home values have declined substantially in the past decade, and residential construction has come to a standstill. Given these factors along with the costs associated with extending utilities to new areas, improvements of existing residential neighborhoods should be given a higher priority than development of new residential areas.

GOALS

SHORT TERM GOALS

- ✦ Control and improve the quality of housing by having developers meet design standards with their local properties and requiring lots to be adequately served by water and sewer infrastructure.
- ✦ Restore deteriorating and foreclosed properties while encouraging the development of a diverse housing spectrum that includes upper-income and rental properties.

LONG TERM GOALS

- ✦ Encourage sustainable and green housing development that protects the county's environmental and groundwater resources.

TABLE 7.5 JENNINGS COUNTY HOUSING GRANTS

<i>Year</i>	<i>Grant Recipient</i>	<i>Grant Type</i>	<i>Grant Amount</i>
1997	Jennings County	Owner Occupied Rehabilitation	\$224,996.85
1999	Ohio Valley Opportunities Inc.	Rental Rehabilitation	\$750,000.00
2001	City of North Vernon	Feasibility Study	\$18,950.00
2002	County of Jennings	Housing Needs Assessment	\$30,000.00
2002	City of North Vernon	Rental Rehabilitation	\$496,625.00
Total			\$1,520,571.85

Source: Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- ❑ Make amendments to zoning and subdivision ordinances to comply with planning-related state law changes that went into effect in July 2011.
- ❑ Employ basic design standards to improve the appearance of new residential development.
- ❑ Conduct a countywide housing needs assessment to provide a thorough analysis of the housing market and detailed recommendations improving and diversifying the county's housing stock.
- ❑ Make active code enforcement a priority to address the number of houses in foreclosure and blighted areas.
- ❑ Explore options for neighborhood revitalization in certain areas, including the Country Squire Lakes community and any other areas identified as suitable candidates for revitalization.
- ❑ Pursue housing grant options to fund the aforementioned projects.
- ❑ Form a housing coalition or taskforce to address local housing issues.

COUNTRY SQUIRE LAKES

Country Squire Lakes' problems are Jennings County's problems, and as the obstacles are intertwined, so are the solutions. They will require CSL residents and county leaders to work together.

With approximately 3,500 residents, CSL is the county's second largest community, according to the 2010 Census. County government assumed ownership of about 950 tax delinquent properties and recently agreed to take over some of CSL's roads, further deepening the relationship.

CSL, a private development, is managed by Elite Property Management Services of Indiana. Residents are represented through a seven-member board of directors and five committees for roads, the lake, etc.

Elite's property manager for CSL is Jesse Angel. In an interview for this planning document, Angel said there has been progress in making the private community financially solvent.

Because the county does not pay resident fees for the approximately 950 parcels it owns, CSL's operating



Home with yard debris

budget has been cut by about 25 percent, Angel said. Also, if the county took over all of CSL's streets, management could shift the money that now goes toward street repair to other problems such as repairing the dam, he said.

County officials said there is a lot of work to be done before granting those requests, including assurances that substandard housing won't be allowed on the 950 plots.

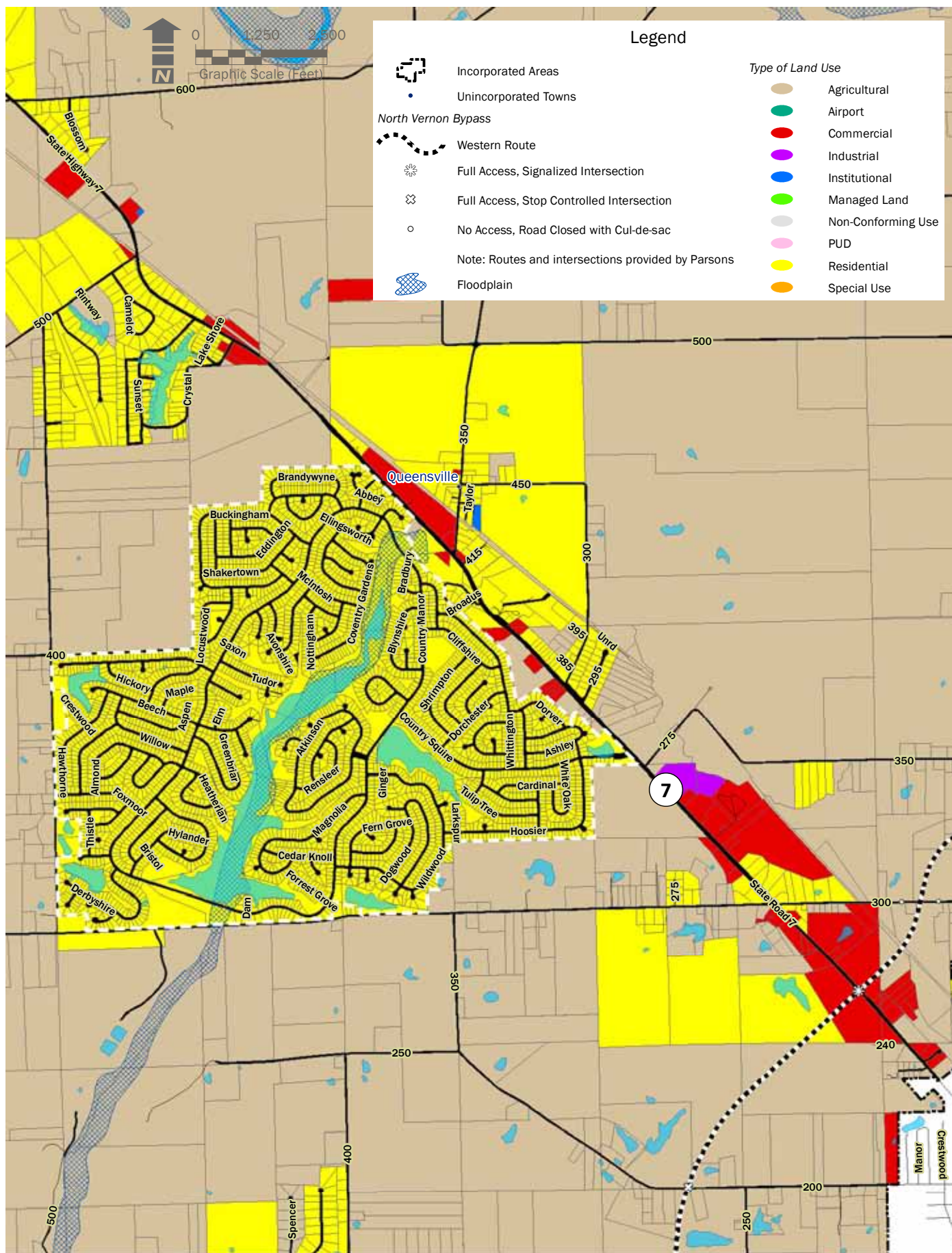
A detailed game plan for CSL's future is beyond the scope of this plan. However, there are some initial steps that the two sides can take toward cooperation in tackling problems.

The first is increased communication. Although it is not essential, initial meetings between the sides should probably be facilitated by an independent third party. These discussions should be steered away from past recrimination and moved toward shared goals.



A rusted home in Country Squire Lakes

COUNTRY SQUIRE LAKES MAP



Topics of these early meetings could include:

1. Leadership development of CSL residents so that the area can engage in sustained and long-term redevelopment.
2. Enforcement action on derelict and abandoned property.
3. County plans for the lots it owns.
4. County acquisition of the remaining CSL roads.

Once dialogue has been established and both sides are well represented, the next step would be formalizing a comprehensive plan for CSL and its relationship to the rest of Jennings County.



Country Squire Lakes includes a diverse mix of home styles

CRITICAL SUB AREA



CSL Clubhouse sign



Home for sale in Country Squire Lakes



8

NATURAL RESOURCES

Key Points

- ❑ As surface water from the Muscatatuck River provides water service for nearly half of county residents, protection of this resource is of the highest priority. Development protections should be considered along both sides of the Muscatatuck River throughout the community, and especially between North Vernon and the Brush Creek Reservoir.
- ❑ There is potential in Jennings County to capitalize on its significant inventory and quality of managed lands as an additional source of economic development. Providing wildlife related services and amenities, including hunting, fishing, hiking, and biking the county can begin to take advantage of the unique resources available.

INTRODUCTION

River bottoms and forested rolling uplands have long provided the means for sustenance for residents of Jennings County. Early Native American Indians once used the rich floodplains to grow grain crops and used the forested uplands for harvesting abundant wild game. Evidence of this pattern has been unearthed in artifacts found in the Muscatatuck River Valley dating to approximately 8,000 to 9,000 B.C.

Modern Jennings County residents follow a similar living pattern on the land, albeit at a larger scale. Jennings County boasts an abundant agricultural heritage which continues today with nearly 42 percent of land being used for cropland and pasture.

Jennings County also boasts an abundance of natural areas with nearly 57 percent of land being woodland or wetland. Most of the forested land remaining in Jennings County occurs on steeply sloped upland areas or in wetland areas of local floodplains. The typical characteristics of forested land prove difficult

for productive uses other than forestland, perpetually preserving these areas in a naturally occurring state.

Similar to most Indiana counties, Jennings County has a small proportion of land currently being used for urban and industrial uses. Approximately 1 percent of Jennings County is currently urban or industrial in nature with a majority of this developed area being focused in the central portion of the county near the communities of North Vernon and Vernon.

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

Jennings County has an approximate total land area of 242,278 acres or approximately 380 square miles (Soil Survey p. 1). According to the most recent soil survey, the most significant active land use in the county is for agricultural purposes with approximately 36 percent of land being cropland, 6 percent pasture and 57 percent woodland (Soil Survey p. 1).

The highest elevation in the county is approximately 896 feet above sea level in an area of Columbia

Township northeast of Zenas. (Soil Survey p. 4) and the lowest elevation in the county is approximately 527 feet above sea level and occurs along the Muscatatuck River where it leaves Jennings County (Soil Survey p. 4)

KARST TOPOGRAPHY

Jennings County is home to numerous areas of karst topography, which is an area of soft or soluble rock that has been eroded away through time by groundwater. The result is voids or pockets in the remaining harder rock known as karst.

Karst areas are difficult to develop due to potential for sink holes, caves, and other features which create difficulties in location and construction of structures.

Karst areas can also provide groundwater through a direct linkage to subterranean aquifers which are used for groundwater. This makes karst areas potential hotspots for water contamination from groundwater containing silt and other suspended solids. Areas of Jennings County with high potential for karst topography are highlighted on the Environmental Resources Map.

HYDROLOGY

MAJOR STREAMS/RIVERS

The major flow of surface water in Jennings County is for the east-northeast to the west-southwest. Understanding surface flow is important in understanding where water is coming from and in determining potential for non-point source pollution and its impacts on the local water supply. Non-point sources of pollution can be derived from many varied sources such as fertilizers, urban runoff, erosion sediments, roadway and agricultural salts, and human and animal waste. There are five major water bodies in Jennings county including:

- ✦ Sand Creek (major stream)
- ✦ Vernon Fork of Muscatatuck River (major stream)

- ✦ Graham Creek (major stream)
- ✦ Muscatatuck River
- ✦ Wyloosing Creek

There are also countless tributaries and drainage areas providing water to the major streams and rivers in Jennings County. Every county or municipality which depends on surface water for drinking water supply must understand surface water flow in order to help alleviate potential pollution issues. Knowing and understanding the sources of water for these features in Jennings County is important since a significant amount of the county's population derives its drinking water from surface water sources, specifically the Muscatatuck River. Given the sensitive nature of these important resources, Jennings County should take extra measures to ensure that they are protected from potential sources of pollution.

WETLANDS

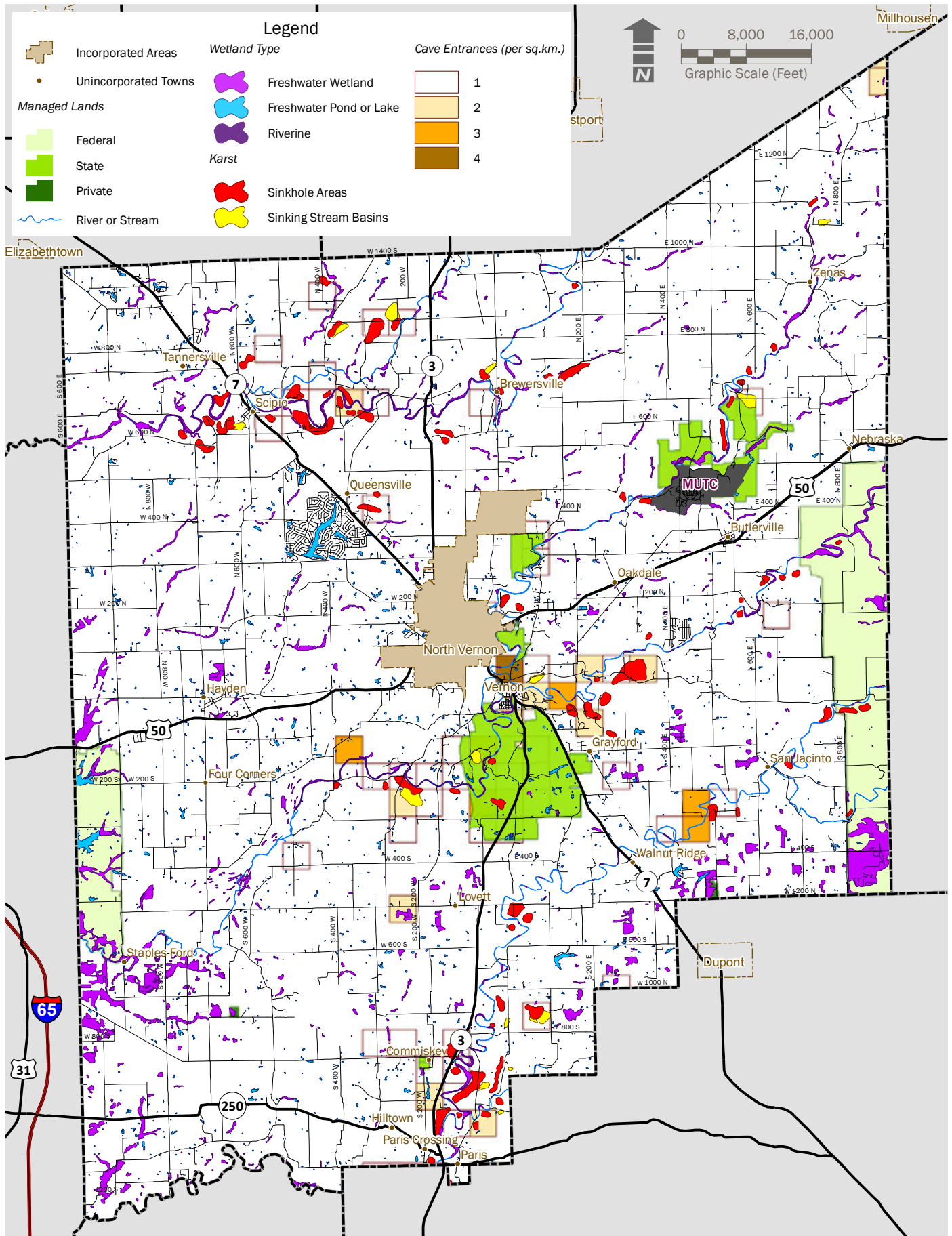
Jennings County has small wetlands scattered throughout the county but no real concentrations in a specific area. Wetlands serve an important role in cleaning and processing freshwater and provide valuable habitat for many ecologically important plant and animal species. It is important that wetland habitat be appropriately identified and protected from the detrimental effects of agricultural practices and development.

GROUNDWATER/AQUIFERS

Jennings County has three distinct aquifers systems which have been identified including:

- ✦ New Albany Shale of Devonian and Mississippian age (low quality)
 - ✦ Silurian and Devonian Carbonates (generally capable of meeting domestic water usage (typ. depth of 60-125 ft.)
- ✦ Maquoketa Group of Ordovician age (minor groundwater source in Jennings County)

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MAP



Water quality from bedrock aquifers in Jennings County is typically suitable for domestic use although sulfur water has been reported in scattered locations. A significant amount of the water supplied by Jennings Water, Inc. is derived from groundwater resources in and around Jennings County.

WATERSHEDS

The entire Jennings County watershed drains to the East Fork of the White River and its tributaries. There are four main watersheds serving public drinking water needs in Jennings County including:

- ✦ Vernon fork of the Muscatatuck River which supplies water to the Brush Creek Reservoir and MUTC.
- ✦ North Vernon Watershed supplying the Muscatatuck River and water supply for the City of North Vernon Utilities (North Vernon, Vernon, Country Squire Lakes).
- ✦ Scottsburg - Stucker Fork watershed supplying the Muscatatuck River.
- ✦ Mitchell Bedford Watershed supplying the East Fork White River.

Brush Creek Reservoir and the Muscatatuck River are the main sources of water for Jennings County, supplying over 50 percent of the county's population (North Vernon and Vernon) with daily water needs. In relation to other locations, Jennings County currently has relatively few sources for drinking water making the protection and preservation of the existing water sources very important. Natural disasters, drought, and pollution are the main threats to the current water sources in Jennings County. The limited number of supply sources means that one unforeseen event could significantly disrupt the ability to supply water to homes and businesses in the county for an extended period of time. Pollution on the Muscatatuck River is of primary concern since most of the water supply for residents and businesses comes from the river and pollution can come from a variety of possible sources

such as:

- ✦ Agricultural runoff
- ✦ Point source pollution
- ✦ Industrial effluent
- ✦ Leaking septic systems
- ✦ Underground storage tanks
- ✦ Unlined waste disposal sites

Water supply is also limited to concentrated locations within the county. This places limits on areas available for development and also places additional development pressures on those areas which have access to the water supply.

FLOODPLAINS/FLOODING

Floodplains in Jennings County have a tendency to be narrow and of minimal impact to development potential due to the geologic and topographic conditions of the region. Many of the major streams and rivers in the county are deeply entrenched with nearly level floodplains located along the reaches in certain isolated locations. The entrenched nature of the streams in Jennings County means that flooding along these systems occurs less frequently than what is typical for other portions of the state.

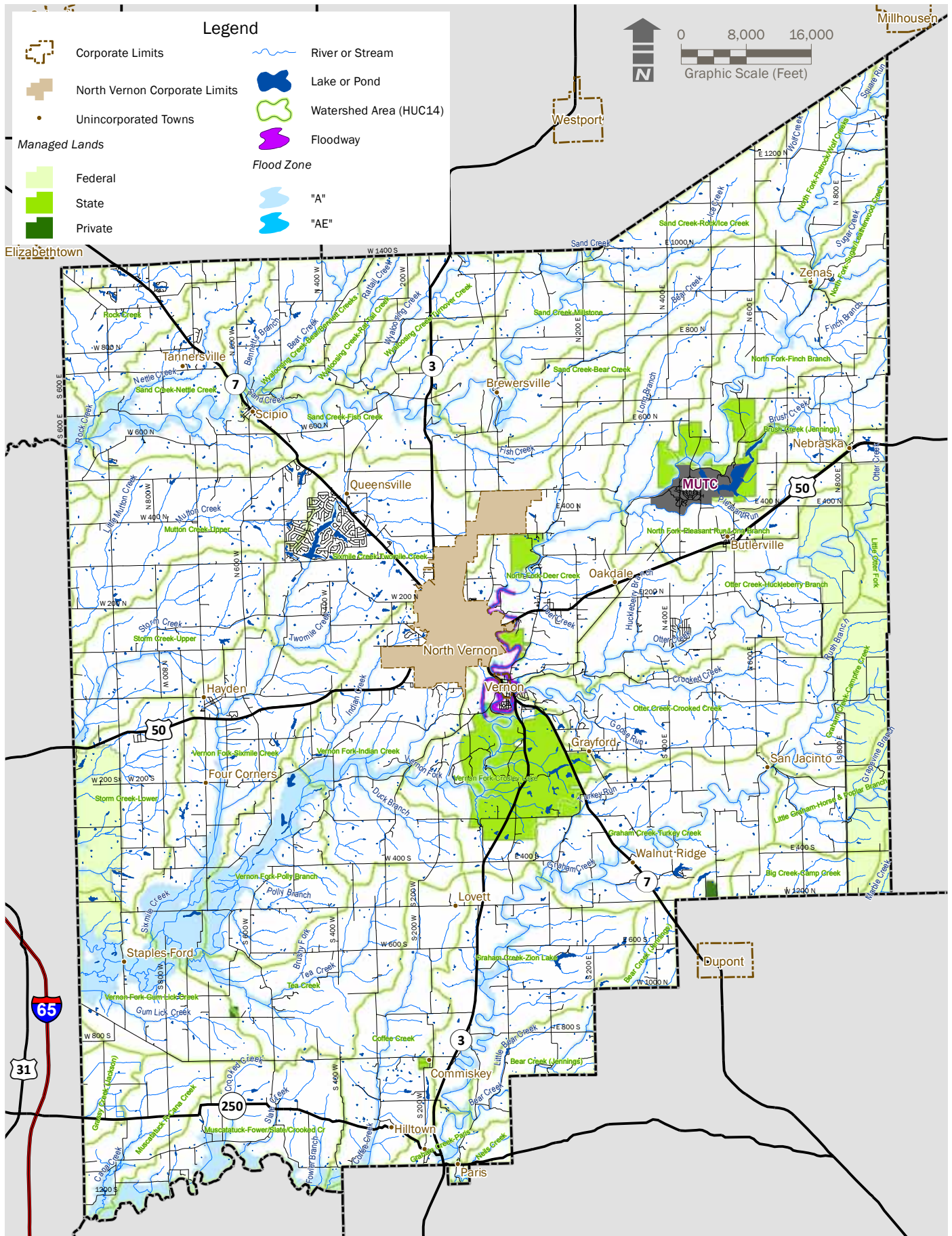
Temporary local flooding can occur along the flat level floodplains of the streams and in locations where the soils are easily saturated and slow draining. The soil survey identified certain soil types which are more prone to seasonal flooding. These locations should be considered when determining future development potential of sites within the county.

Refer to the Watershed Map for rivers, lakes, floodways, and food zones in Jennings County.

SOILS

Soils in Jennings County do present a significant barrier to land development. Prime farmlands in the

WATERSHED MAP



northern half of the county are well drained and very productive but a significant portion of the soil types in the remainder of the county are not well drained. In addition, soil depths and types over most of the county do not contain characteristics conducive to the treatment of waste water via septic systems. As you can see from the Soils Suitability Map on page 110, nearly all of Jennings County soils are classified as not suitable for septic systems, meaning that choices are limited for development in areas not serviced by a municipal sanitary sewer connection.

PARKS AND RECREATION/ NATURAL AREAS

Jennings County enjoys a significant amount of managed lands (federal, state, or local preserves) within its boundaries, a large proportion of which are publicly accessible. Having managed lands assists the county in numerous ways including protecting sensitive or endangered natural ecosystems, providing ample recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, and providing ample space for wildlife habitat. Below is a brief summary of the major parcels of managed lands within Jennings County.

FEDERAL MANAGED LANDS

- ✦ Part of Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge (former Jefferson Proving Grounds) lies on the eastern border of Jennings County. The entire property encompasses nearly 50,000 acres of land formerly known as the Jefferson Proving Grounds. Approximately 7,700 acres of this refuge lie within Jennings County.
- ✦ Part of Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge is also located within Jennings County's borders. This refuge encompasses 7,724 Acres total and receives in excess of 170,000 visitors annually. A recent study on the economic impacts of the Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge noted that 27 percent of its annual visitors are non-local, meaning they

traveled more than 50 miles to reach the location, and they spent an average of \$65 per person per day in the local economy. It was also found that local visitors spent on average \$28 per person per day.

STATE MANAGED LANDS

Jennings County is also home to three state wildlife areas which are managed by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Combined, these lands encompass nearly 7,000 acres of varied natural habitat. Below is a summary.

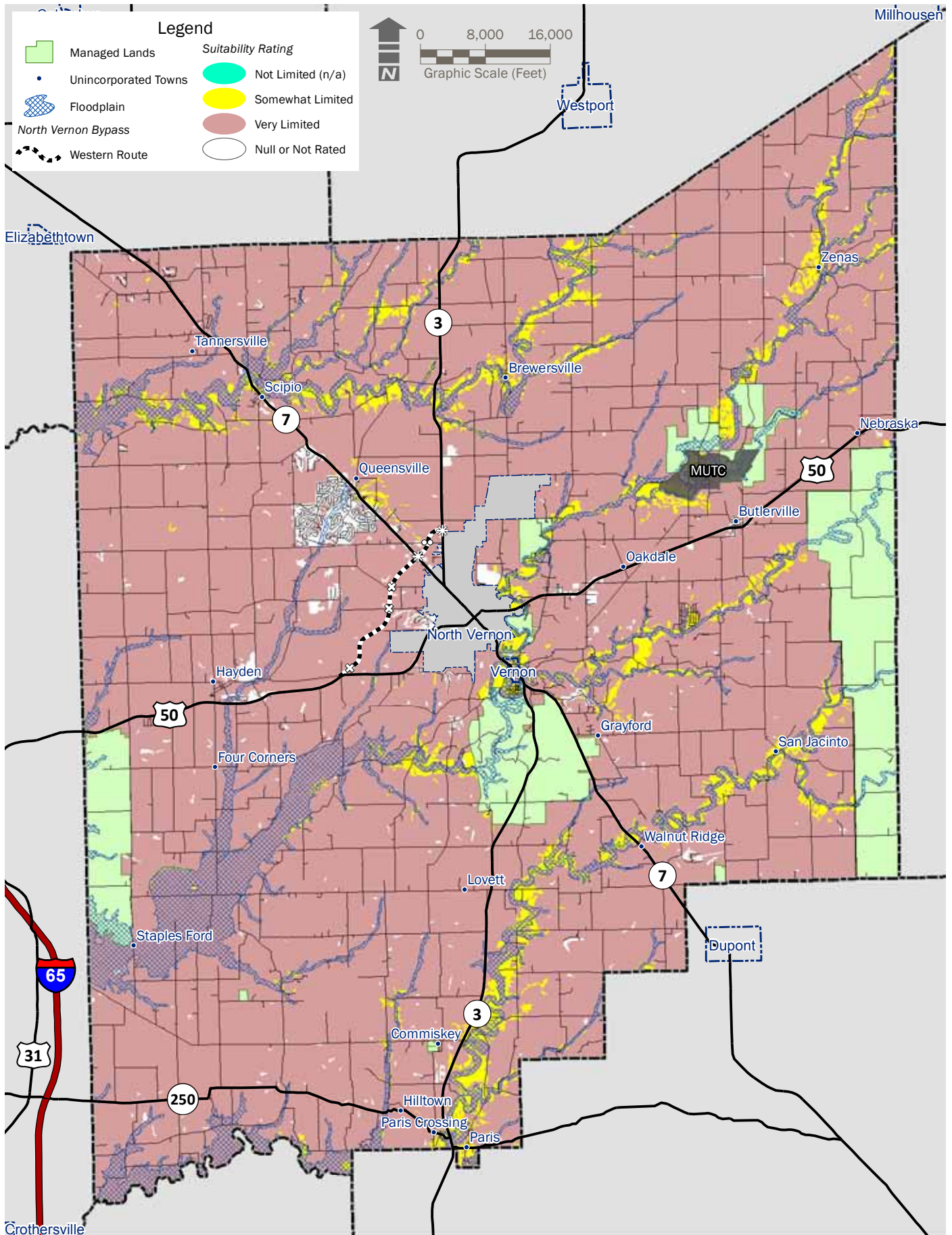
- ✦ Selmier State Forest is a 355 Acre wooded parcel located on the eastern boundary of the City of North Vernon. This property is open to numerous recreational activities including hiking, fishing, hunting, and camping.
- ✦ Crosley Fish and Wildlife Area is a 4228 Acre area located southeast of the Town of Vernon. This wildlife area is a regional draw for hikers and hunters on a year-round basis.
- ✦ Brush Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area is 2402 Acres surrounding the Brush Creek Reservoir. Originally established to help protect the reservoir, and its critical water supply, from runoff and pollution. This area is now adjacent to the MUTC facility and remains an ecologically important area within the county.

COUNTY/REGIONAL PARKS AND NATURE PRESERVES

There are also a number of other locally managed and private preserves within Jennings County including Muscatatuck County Park (86 Acres) which was formerly a state managed facility. Following is a list of additional outdoor resources available to Jennings County residents and visitors.

- ✦ Violet and Louis J. Calli Sr. Nature Preserve
- ✦ Tibbett's Woods Nature Preserve

SOILS SUITABILITY MAP



- ✦ Well's Woods Nature Preserve
- ✦ Sarah Lewis Guthrie Memorial Woods Nature Preserve
- ✦ North Vernon People Trail

In addition to the resources listed above, Jennings County currently has the following additional projects in planning and development stages. When completed, they will add to the generous inventory of recreational areas that Jennings County residents and visitors will be able to enjoy.

- ✦ Eco Lake Park
- ✦ Muscatatuck Trail

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MANAGED LANDS

There is significant potential in Jennings County to capitalize on its significant inventory and quality of managed lands as an additional source of economic development. Providing wildlife related services and amenities, including hunting, fishing, hiking, and biking the county can begin to take advantage of the unique resources available. The proximity of the county to major metropolitan areas and I-65, coupled with the relatively low out of state license fees in Indiana can add up to significant tourism revenue if initial investments are focused towards the development of appropriate amenities and marketing campaigns.

The potential economic impact of this industry is often overlooked by rural communities but the numbers are staggering. In 2011 people participating in hunting, fishing, and wildlife recreational activities spent \$32.2 billion on travel related expenses, approximately \$43.2 billion on equipment and gear, and approximately \$14.6 billion on licenses, fees, and memberships. (2011 USFWS National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation) In Indiana, wildlife related expenditures contributed approximately \$1.8 billion to the local economy including approximately

\$700 million for trip related activities (food, fuel, lodging, etc.). While not all communities are suited to capitalize on this large and growing industry, Jennings County has the resources and land available to be able to take advantage of this type of recreational tourism opportunity.

TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

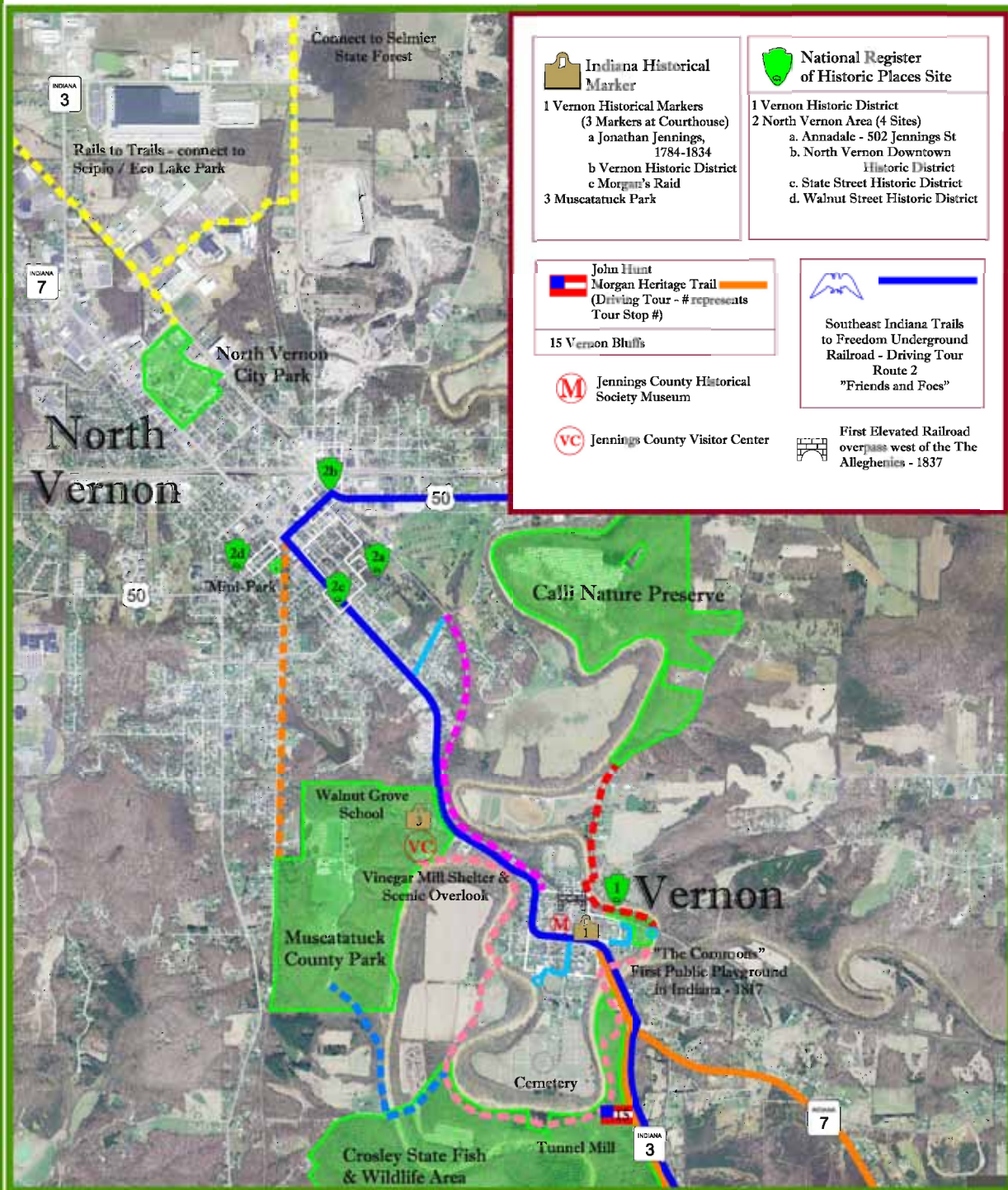
Jennings County enjoys the benefits of a developing trails system. A majority of the existing and planned trails are located near the largest population centers in the county, among the City of North Vernon and the Town of Vernon. The Vernon—Muscatatuck Park—North Vernon Trails Master Plan presents a comprehensive vision for connecting key Jennings County community assets and cultural resources via the development of extensive trail and sidewalk improvements. Following is a list of the trails identified in the Trails Master Plan:

- ✦ North Vernon Rails to Trails
- ✦ Vernon – North Vernon Railroad Trail
- ✦ Vernon Bluffs – Tunnel Mill – Vinegar Mill Trail
- ✦ Tunnel Mill – Park Campground Trail
- ✦ County Park – North Vernon Rails to Trails
- ✦ Railroad Boardwalk / Vernon Commons – Calli Preserve Trail

These trails are strategically placed to provide improved shared-use access to many key historic and natural features in the county, such as:

- ✦ North Vernon Mini-Park
- ✦ Walnut Grove School
- ✦ Muscatatuck County Park
- ✦ Town of Vernon Historic District
- ✦ Crosley State Fish and Wildlife Area
- ✦ Tunnel Mill
- ✦ The “Commons” Playground Site
- ✦ Calli Nature Preserve

Vernon - Muscatatuck Park - North Vernon Trails Master Plan



Proposed Trail Legend

- Existing Park
- Proposed Sidewalks
- Proposed Overlook
- North Vernon Rails to Trails
- Vernon - North Vernon Railroad Trail
- Vernon Bluffs - Tunnel Mill - Vinegar Mill Trail
- Tunnel Mill - Park Campground Trail
- County Park - North Vernon Rails to Trails
- Railroad Boardwalk / Vernon Commons - Calli Preserve Trail



FPBH, Inc.

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www.fpbhonline.com

Source: FPBH, Inc.

When completed, the trails system will provide residents and visitors of Jennings County communities the opportunity to enjoy the beauty and intrigue of these, and other, rich natural features and historic context free from the constraints of an automobile. The county should continue to encourage and support the City of North Vernon and the Town of Vernon in the development of the trails system for the benefit of all county residents and visitors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Abundance of managed lands can be a county resource and should be viewed as a potential economic development resource for the local economy. The community should study opportunities to take advantage of these properties.

 - The unique position of the county between two national wildlife refuges, availability of other managed lands for wildlife activities, and proximity to I-65 corridor uniquely positions county to take advantage of this type of tourism revenue.
- As surface water from the Muscatatuck River provides water service for the majority of county residents, protection of this resource is of the highest priority.

 - Development protections should be considered along both sides of the Muscatatuck River throughout the community, and especially between North Vernon and the Brush Creek Reservoir. Such protections could include increased erosion and sediment control practices, development limitations, stormwater runoff quality provisions for new development, or other protections. A long term goal of establishing a conservation corridor along the river is also recommended to protect linkages between the various protected forest lands in eastern Jennings County.
- The potential for failing septic systems to negatively impact local water quality is high. Jennings County should work towards improving the current system of septic system dependent site development review. More detailed descriptions of this issue are located in the Utility Infrastructure chapter.
- Prepare a county-wide park and recreation master plan, and marketing plan with North Vernon, IDNR, and USFWS to provide a cohesive campaign to highlight natural resource areas.
- Consider identification and development protections of significant karst topography within Jennings County. Apply development protections similar to those recommended for the Muscatatuck River watershed. Since karst areas are significant contributors to the local aquifers, steps should be taken to reduce the potential for groundwater pollution of these sensitive areas. Strategies for enhancement of sediment and erosion control measures, as well as the reduction of chemical and biological contaminants should be explored to help protect the integrity and safety of county wells. By encouraging the appropriate use of these areas through policy actions and land use controls Jennings County will be taking great steps towards the protection of valuable water supplies while also helping to ensure that potentially high costs associated with development on these unstable surfaces is avoided.
- Jennings County should work with the Soil and Water Conservation District to explore ways to make informed future land use decisions based upon an analysis of development suitability. Factors such as riparian buffers (geologically and topographically possible due to deep stream geology), Floodplain/aquifer protection, and

future development potential based upon soil classifications and suitability for septic and building improvements should be a key consideration as the county explores the development potential of land beyond currently developed areas.

References:

- County Soil Survey
- 2010-2011 Muscatatuck Visitors survey: <http://www.indianaeconomicdigest.net/main.asp?SectionID=31&SubSectionID=116&ArticleID=65033>



TRANSPORTATION

Key Points

- ❑ Completed construction of the U.S. 50 bypass will open up new areas of the county for economic development. Jennings County and North Vernon should work closely together to manage development to the greatest benefit of all. Specific issues surrounding the U.S. 50 bypass corridor have been addressed in more detail in the U.S. 50 East Bypass Impact Area CSA in this document.
- ❑ There is potential in Jennings County to capitalize on its significant inventory and quality of managed lands as an additional source of economic development. Providing wildlife related services and amenities, including hunting, fishing, hiking, and biking the county can begin to take advantage of the unique resources available.
- ❑ Completion of the U.S. 50 bypass may mean that existing traffic patterns will shift to access points along the new bypass. This means that roads which are adequate to handle current traffic volumes may be subject to increased wear, deterioration, and congestion due to potentially increased volumes of local and regional traffic.
- ❑ The North Vernon Municipal Airport is an important resource for Jennings County residents and business. This asset has also been identified as an important factor in the continued and expanded operations of the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC). Efforts should continue to limit the development of land surrounding to uses which will be compatible with the continued safe operations of the airport.

INTRODUCTION

Transportation infrastructure is a key component to ensuring that Jennings County remains relevant in an increasingly competitive environment for businesses and residents. Maintenance to the existing transportation network is a continual source of financial burden for many counties and municipalities across the State of Indiana. As existing infrastructure continues to age up to and beyond its functional capacity, this financial burden will only continue to

increase. In today's world of aging infrastructure and increased use, it is becoming difficult for most counties to maintain their existing transportation infrastructure at acceptable levels, not to mention being able to provide improvement to allow for much needed residential, commercial, and industrial expansion.

Jennings County currently has many positive transportation related assets at its disposal. INDOT is in the process of completing a significant investment in the improvement of vital county roadways in the

form of major upgrades to the U.S. 50, S.R. 7, and S.R. 3 corridors. Likewise, the North Vernon Municipal Airport is seeing increased daily traffic as a result of the recently opened MUTC. Added up, these investments have created an opportunity for the county to continue to plan for the long term needs of the community with carefully planned and focused investment in the local transportation network. The following text describes the major components of the transportation network in Jennings County and provides recommendations for continued provision and expansion of this important community asset.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

INTERSTATE ACCESS

Jennings County has no direct interstate access within its boundaries but does benefit from interstate access within close proximity on the western and northern boundaries of the county. The closest interstate access for Jennings County is to I-65, which is located approximately 3 miles west of the Jennings County / Jackson County line near the City of Seymour. Direct access to I-65 is achievable via U.S. 50, which traverses the central portion of the county. This exit is located approximately 13 miles west of the City of North Vernon.

I-74 is also accessible for Jennings County residents. The closest I-74 access is located 21 miles northeast of the county at the intersection of S.R. 3 and I-74 in Greensburg, IN in neighboring Decatur County.

U.S. 50

U.S. 50 is a major east west national highway corridor with a length of approximately 3,000 miles. In Jennings County, U.S. 50 traverses through the central portion of the county, through the heart of the City of North Vernon. U.S. 50 provides the most direct access for county residents to Interstate 65 west of Jennings County. It also provides a direct connection to the City

of Seymour to the west and the Town of Versailles, and eventually Cincinnati, Ohio to the east. U.S. 50 is also an important corridor for the MUTC facility and provides direct connection between MUTC and I-65.

INDOT is currently in the process of design and construction for a U.S. 50 bypass around the north side of the City of North Vernon. The west portion of the bypass to S.R. 7 is currently under construction and the east portion of the bypass from S.R. 7 back to the original U.S. 50 alignment is currently under environmental review and scheduled for opening in 2015. The importance of the U.S. 50 bypass for the future of Jennings County is discussed in more detail in the Critical Sub Areas portion of this planning document.

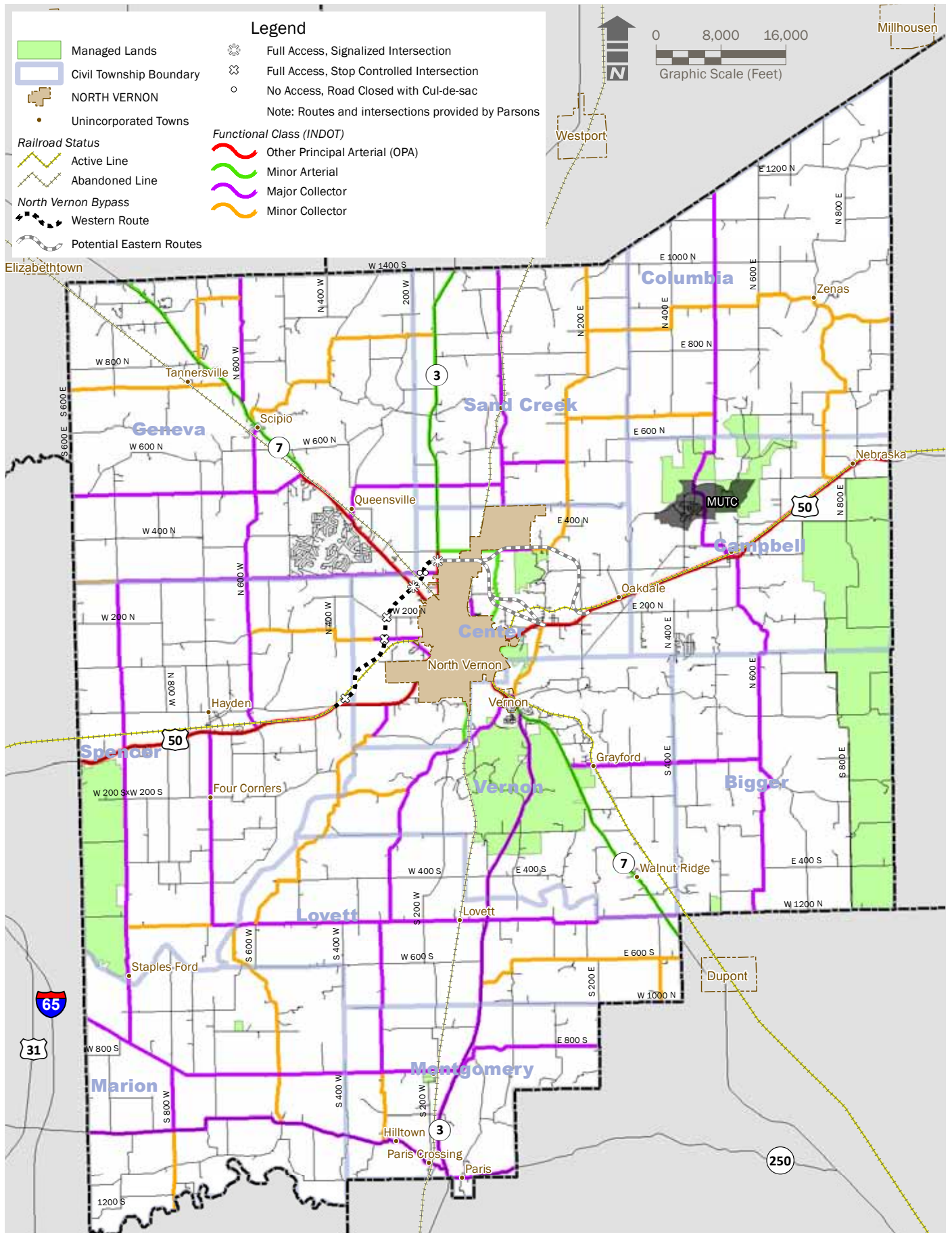
S.R. 7

State Road 7 (S.R. 7) is a regional corridor which runs from the southeast corner of Jennings County to the northwest corner of the county. S.R. 7 is the most direct link for Jennings County to Madison, Indiana and the Ohio River to the south. The road runs through the Town of Vernon and the City of North Vernon and continues in a northwesterly direction into Bartholomew County and Columbus, IN to the north. S.R. 7 has become an important travel corridor for Jennings county residents commuting to work in nearby Columbus, IN and, as a result, has become an important commercial and residential corridor. There are numerous residential developments which have occurred along this corridor northwest of North Vernon, including the county's largest residential development, Country Squire Lakes. Much of the county's residential and commercial development occurs along this corridor with a concentration of development occurring between the City of North Vernon and Bartholomew County to the northwest.

S.R. 3

State Road 3 (S.R. 3) is a regional corridor connecting Jennings County to Greensburg, IN and I-74 to the

TRANSPORTATION MAP



north and Charlestown and S.R. 62 to the south. The Park 3 Industrial complex is located on this corridor just north of the City of North Vernon. Most major development along this corridor in the north is currently limited to locations within the corporate boundaries of North Vernon but additional industrial growth at the industrial park is supported in the 2009 North Vernon Comprehensive Plan, which means future development pressure beyond what is currently developed is likely.

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Jennings County currently has two active rail lines operating within the county boundaries. The Madison Railroad, a short line track operated by the City of Madison Port Authority (CMPA) Madison Rail Line, operates a single line track between North Vernon and Madison, Indiana on the Ohio River. The total length of the track is 25 miles and is operated out of former Jefferson Proving Grounds site on the southeast edge of Jennings County. The Madison Railroad mainly provides commodity hauling and storage services for a variety of materials including plastics, steel, and scrap metal. Service for the Madison Railroad terminates in the Park 3 Industrial Complex and the line provides service to the following locations in southern Indiana: Madison, Dupont, Vernon, & North Vernon

The other rail line serving Jennings County is operated by CSX. This line provides services from St. Louis, MO through Cincinnati, OH, and has connection to the eastern United States via linkage to the vast network of more than 21,000 miles of track owned and operated by CSX (CSX Website, www.csx.com). The location of this line adjacent to the current and future U.S. 50 corridor east of the City of North Vernon presents opportunities for providing multi-modal (rail and truck) transportation access from a single site within the county. This line also connects to many other Indiana communities including the following locations: Vincennes, Seymour, Hayden, North Vernon, Butlerville, and Osgood.

PUBLIC TRANSIT/TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

(From 2007 Indiana Statewide Public Transit Needs Assessment)

Jennings County currently has no publicly funded transit service but there are a number of agencies and services which provide scheduled and limited transit services for county residents. The largest of these services is Catch-a-Ride, operated by the non-profit Life Time Resources. This service operates in Jennings County and provides custom, scheduled transit services for people of all ages and incomes. This service offers flexible scheduling and competitive fare options for Jennings County residents and includes services such as route deviation, and demand response services including rural route, and same day service. Catch-a-Ride is the only service provider outside of the Columbus MPO (Columbus Transit) with a passenger fare structure in place (state study, p. III-10).

Jennings County is also served by a variety of other private and non-profit transit services which are available to consumers who meet specific eligibility criteria and/or who are receiving member services from the various providing agencies including job training, mental health, medical care, and counseling services. These services are not typically available to the general public in Jennings County.

AIRPORT

The North Vernon Municipal Airport is the only operating municipal airport in Jennings County. The airport was opened in 1944 and has two operating runways. Runway 5/23 has a total length of 5002 feet and runway 15/33 has a total length of 2730 feet. In 2009 the airport averaged 23 aircraft per day with 51 percent of the activity coming from local general aviation and 24 percent derived from military activities. In the Atterbury Muscatatuck Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) the North Vernon Municipal Airport

was identified as an important strategic resource for continued and expanded operations at the MUTC facility.

The airport has recently undergone significant upgrades to allow for streamlined operations and to accommodate larger aircraft. A recent runway upgrade will allow for large military aircraft, such as the C-130 Hercules, to safely land and taxi at the airport. The airport also contributes a significant positive economic impact to the region. The recently released 2012 Indiana Airports Economic Impact Study noted that the North Vernon airport contributes over \$52 million annually in direct and indirect economic output. The study also noted that the airport operation has helped to create and sustain 426 jobs with an estimated annual payroll of \$19.5 million.

County land use and development decisions can impact airport operations. Safety and noise issues at the facility can render certain land uses incompatible with continued operations at the airport. There are also federal clear zone requirements for airport operations which must be taken into considerations as future land use decisions are made. The previously mentioned JLUS also provided specific safety and noise recommendations surrounding military operations at the airport, which are also addressed in the MUTC Critical Sub Area Chapter in this plan. Expanded airport access and capacity can help create new economic development opportunities but will require that current airport lands be protected and that land uses surrounding the airport facility remain compatible with the operating needs of the airport.

PLANNED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

While there are no significant long range transportation plans available at the county level, there continues to be significant investments made by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) in improving significant state roads within Jennings County. The U.S.

50 Bypass is one of those major investments. The west portion of this bypass is currently under construction at an estimated cost of \$22 million. The east portion of this bypass is currently in planning phases and is scheduled to be completed by 2015. The impacts of the U.S. 50 East Bypass are discussed in further detail in the Critical Sub Area portion of this chapter. In addition to this major bypass investment, the INDOT Long Range Transportation Plan has identified the following major roadway project scheduled to take place in Jennings County between now and 2030:

2011-2015 funded projects

- ✦ U.S. 50 from U.S. 31 to western urban area boundary of North Vernon, added travel lanes from 2-4 lanes (9.03 miles).
- ✦ U.S. 50 from western UAB of North Vernon to eastern urban area boundary of North Vernon, added travel lanes from 2 to 4, 3.9 miles.

2016-2020 funded projects

- ✦ U.S. 50 bypass from western UAB to eastern UAB of North Vernon.

2026-2030 funded projects

- ✦ U.S. 50 added travel lanes from east UAB of North Vernon to S.R. 101, 27 miles.
- ✦ S.R. 7 added travel lanes from S.R. 3 to U.S. 31, 2-4 lanes, 14.9 miles.

The planned access points along the new U.S. 50 West Bypass are classified to continue to be eligible for federal funding under the state transportation improvement program. However, many of the roads feeding into these locations are currently classified as minor collectors or local roads; making them currently ineligible for federal transportation funds. Since these roadways will potentially be receiving additional traffic volume after the completion of the bypass the county should begin monitoring them for accelerated decay and additional maintenance requirements. These roads should also be studied on a periodic basis

to determine if they are eligible for an upgrade in classification which will make them eligible for federal transportation funding.

an enticing location for additional logistics and military industry development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Develop a county-wide long range transportation plan which considers the possible long term effects on local roadways connected to the U.S. 50 bypass corridor and long term needs based upon predicted development growth patterns.
- ❑ Any roads which have a direct connection to planned U.S. 50 bypass access points should be included in the system for detailed evaluation of predicted future traffic volumes and appropriate long range planning efforts. Additional efforts should be made to monitor the condition of these roadways since increased traffic volumes can lead to premature decay of the roadway condition.
- ❑ Continue to work with INDOT in evaluating the long term traffic needs of the S.R. 7 and S.R. 3 corridors. Ensure that the necessary roadway improvements are in place prior to, or in conjunction with, approved industrial and commercial development.
- ❑ Work with the North Vernon Airport Authority and MUTC to ensure the required airport safety zones are respected and that approved improvements surrounding the airport facility are compatible with the long range plans for airport operations. This recommendation also includes the addition of a North Vernon Airport Compatible Use Overlay District. A more detailed description of this issue, and the details of the intent of a compatible use overlay district are discussed in the MUTC Compatible Use Area CSA section of the plan.
- ❑ Work with the North Vernon Airport Authority and MUTC to determine the potential for taking advantage of excess airport capacity and the proximity of the new U.S. 50 bypass to develop

U.S. 50 EAST BYPASS IMPACT AREA

INTRODUCTION

Jennings County and the City of North Vernon are in the midst of experiencing the first major transportation development in many decades. The announced investment by the State of Indiana and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) in the U.S. 50 bypass around the City of North Vernon is a significant development which carries with it great opportunity. An investment of this nature also can fundamentally alter existing development patterns within the community.

Jennings County must begin to immediately address the potential impacts that a completed U.S. 50 bypass corridor will bring. Careful consideration of the long term development needs of the community, along with focused investment into the existing core communities surrounding the bypass, will allow the county to leverage the highest possible potential from this investment. Planning ahead will also help alleviate some of the potential long term negative consequences typically associated with a large scale project of this nature, consequences such as:

- Fragmented development patterns and incompatible land uses,
- Disinvestment in core neighborhoods and downtown commercial districts,
- Deteriorating local infrastructure due to increased demand on local roadways at bypass access points,
- The tendency for sprawl development near the improvements due to increased development demand in areas experiencing no organic population growth.

KEY ISSUES AND TRENDS

The 2009 *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan* included a development plan for the U.S. 50 bypass. The plan was based upon an early version of the proposed routing. While some details of that plan have changed, it is the intent of this plan to generally follow the planning goals established in that plan. More specifically, the plan identifies residential growth to the west along U.S. 50, commercial growth along S.R. 3, and industrial growth further north along S.R. 7.

Since the completion of the *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan*, INDOT has started construction on the U.S. 50 west bypass (west of S.R. 3). This choice shifted the route further east towards North Vernon. This shift means that land uses originally identified in the North Vernon Comprehensive Plan need to be revised to ensure appropriate land development.

Routing for the U.S. 50 east bypass (east of S.R. 3) has been refined to three potential alternatives. The included map shows the three alternatives currently being considered and the context of the surrounding area. Selection of the final preferred alternative will not be identified until after completion of this Jennings County Comprehensive Plan. The Steering Committee for this plan has appointed a representative to the U.S. 50 East Bypass Community Advisory Committee to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan's goals are adequately represented in the selection of the final preferred alternative.

This is a significant project with potential impacts to the surrounding land use and community context. The project will consist of approximately 10 miles of new roadway which will be constructed as a bypass around the west, north, and east sides of the City of North Vernon. All project corridors have a proposed right of

way section which is 300' wide. This accommodates future expansion needs for the roadway but also means that approximately 36 acres of land must be purchased per mile to accommodate this width. With an estimated construction cost for the west end bypass being \$22 million, the project also represents a major financial investment in the Jennings County community. The project will be completed in the following two sections:

- The west section of the bypass, which is currently under construction, is scheduled for completion in late 2013.
- The preferred alternative for the east bypass will be selected in early 2013 with construction scheduled for completion in late 2015.

Regardless of the preferred alternative selected for the U.S. 50 east bypass, there are a several factors which will play an important role on the long term impacts the bypass will have on county land use and development patterns.

- First, there are currently plans being implemented which will extend sewer utility services east of North Vernon into the county along the existing U.S. 50 corridor. These services are primarily intended to provide for the long term needs of general economic development along the corridor and MUTC. New utility service will also be able to accommodate additional residential, commercial, and industrial growth along U.S. 50 between North Vernon and Butlerville through additional forced main connections or lift stations.
- There are active railroad tracks, owned by CSX, which run parallel to U.S. 50 in the east-central portion of Jennings County. The proximity of this rail service, along with the presence of

the North Vernon Airport in this portion of the county, provides excellent opportunities for provision of multi-modal transportation options connecting to larger cities such as St. Louis and Cincinnati. The completion of the U.S. 50 bypass will enhance this potential with its direct connection to the I-65 corridor and the larger markets of Louisville and Indianapolis.

- There is an abundance of level, productive farmland in the portion of Jennings County directly adjacent to, and along, all of the potential U.S. 50 Bypass corridor alternatives. The nature of this land makes it ideally suitable to accommodate future development due to the level, well-draining characteristics of the land. But the productive nature of this land also brings the potential for conflicted interests in determining the best long term use of these parcels.
- MUTC is located very near the terminus points for all of the U.S. 50 east bypass alternatives. Continued operations at this facility bring increased demand for supporting services and facilities such as housing, commercial development, and supporting industries.

All of these factors combine to provide a catalyst for increased demand for development along the U.S. 50 east bypass corridor. While increased development demand can provide a positive economic development climate for the county, careful steps must be taken to ensure that the proper controls are in place to avoid long term conflicts with the needs and demands of potentially competing land uses. Care must also be taken to ensure the safety, quality, and integrity of the utilities supplying this portion of the county to insure they are capable of handling the increased capacity demands which inherently follow increased development pressures.

CRITICAL SUB AREA

In addition, there will be additional pressures placed on locations along the entire U.S. 50 bypass corridor where direct access to the freeway is available. Typically, these areas see increased demand for commercial and industrial development due to the proximity and ease of access to a major roadway network. Care must be taken in these locations to ensure that appropriate development is encouraged which will enhance the overall character and quality of life for Jennings County residents. Care must also be taken to ensure that this potential future development does not detract from the local business in the heart of the urban areas in North Vernon and Vernon, causing their eventual decline and decay. Care must also be taken to limit development growth to areas which have been prepared for development with appropriate transportation and infrastructure improvements prior to allowing development to occur.

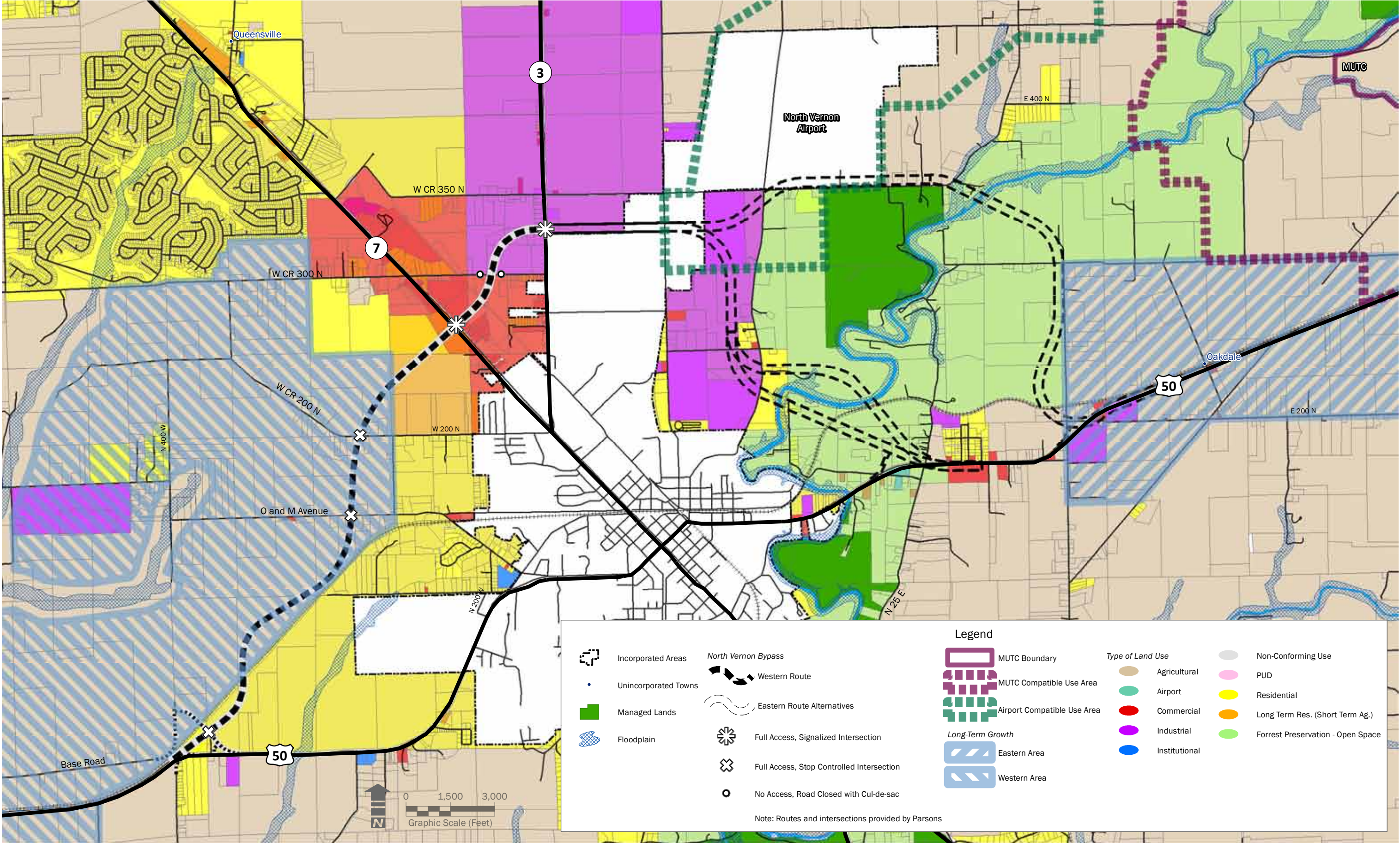
preservation in the area, compatibility with Rose Acre Farms, and the demand for the location.

- ❑ Work with utility providers to develop an incremental improvement plan to ensure that development does not jeopardize the integrity of the utility services and to ensure planning of appropriate utility improvements to allow for implementation of future development plans.
- ❑ Ensure that appropriate land preservation measures are in place to help protect and preserve watersheds (especially along the Muscatatuck River), prime agricultural land, and greenspace.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Work with U.S. 50 Bypass Community Advisory Committee to provide guidance on selection of a preferred eastern corridor alternative.
- ❑ Support the original land use goals of the U.S. 50 bypass plan identified in the 2009 *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan*. Some modifications are proposed on the updated land use plan to reflect alignment changes made since that plan was developed.
- ❑ Work with APC and City of North Vernon to update the bypass section of the *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan* so that there is one common land use plan adopted for the corridor.
- ❑ Develop a master plan for a business/industrial park on U.S. 50 between North Vernon and MUTC. The study should make recommendations on the land use controls, how to balance agricultural

U.S. 50 EAST BYPASS IMPACT AREA MAP





10

UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Key Points

- ❑ One of the largest factors impacting any new development is the location of available sanitary sewers. Since there is currently only one public wastewater treatment plant in the county, most growth will be centralized to areas surrounding North Vernon
- ❑ Septic issues in rural parts of the county can pose significant health hazards, create water quality issues, and decrease the value of rural property. Steps must be taken to ensure that approved development with no access to municipal waste systems have adequate land to provide for long term sanitary sewer needs.
- ❑ Jennings County should direct growth to where it can best be served by public infrastructure. By developing where infrastructure exists or is planned (especially sanitary sewer), the long term public costs for development can be limited.

INTRODUCTION

Historically, most significant development in Jennings County has occurred in and around North Vernon because of the availability of sanitary sewers.

In a similar manner, most growth that is foreseen in the next 10-15 years can occur within areas already served by sanitary sewers – or in areas where service is currently being extended. Consequently, upgrading and incremental expansion of these existing/planned sanitary sewers will be critical in order to maintain capacity for growth along the new US 50 bypass and to the east toward the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC).

Development potential along U.S. 50 between North Vernon and I-65 will be limited since this area is difficult to serve because of the lack of sanitary sewer capacity in this area. Development of a mid-to-long-term plan to serve this area is important to the future growth of the county.

There will continue to be many areas of the county without access to sanitary sewer systems. Since these areas will need to be served by on-site septic systems, the Land Use section of this plan recommends these areas be limited to low intensity residential and agricultural uses. More specific development standards for septic systems should be developed for these areas.

JENNINGS COUNTY SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Jennings County, like many Indiana counties, has limited sanitary sewer access away from the most highly developed portions of the county. This means that new development is frequently dependent upon the use of septic systems for the proper disposal of waste water. Septic systems are a good way to provide for sanitary service in rural areas of the county if they are adequately designed and well maintained. Unfortunately, many of these systems are well

designed but lack regular maintenance over the long haul which keeps them from functioning properly. In the case of an existing system, one of the only ways for the county to discover that they are working improperly is to receive complaints from nearby residents or businesses. By this time, environmental damage very well could have occurred.

As is the case in many Indiana counties, the older septic systems in many of Jennings County's neighborhoods are not up to current codes. Likewise, many homeowners are not educated on the proper maintenance of septic systems and do not know how to prevent problems before they become a major issue. Another issue is that many residents do not check the suitability of a building site for septic installation prior to purchasing property and many people purchasing existing homes are not aware of problems with the septic system until after the purchase has been completed. For a site which does not have adequate space for another system to be installed, this could equate to a very large repair bill.

Many of the small subdivisions within Jennings County were built with the assumption that a small package treatment facility or eventual connection to a municipal sanitary system would be completed. Many of the septic systems in these locations were designed for short term functioning to get them by until a

longer term, permanent solution, was completed. But more often than not, the permanent solution never materialized and the existing septic systems are beginning to fail at alarming rates. There are also cases within the county where municipal service has been denied to residents and neighborhoods even though the nearest facility is only one-quarter of a mile away. Multiple examples of this have occurred in Jennings County near existing municipal sanitary service.

To address these issues, the county will need to adopt stronger regulations for new septic systems. These regulations will need to require larger lot sizes, and provide guidance for the types of development that will be allowed on septic systems.

JENNINGS COUNTY SANITARY SEWERS

JENNINGS NORTHWEST REGIONAL UTILITIES – SANITARY SEWER

Sanitary sewer service for the northwest quarter of Jennings County and the Country Squire Lakes community is provided by Jennings County Northwest Regional Utilities (JNRU). The existing private waste water treatment plant treats an average of 352,000 gallons per day.

Wastewater is treated at the wastewater treatment facility, which is located on the south side of CR 300 N along Six Mile Creek. The current capacity of the treatment plant is 1.7 million gallons per day.

Recent upgrades have been made to the existing wastewater treatment plant. The existing vacuum sewer systems have been replaced along with piping to the lagoons. The only current issue associated with the plant is an order from IDEM that all the sludge in the lagoon is to be removed within 5 years.

Most of the gravity collection system used by JNRU is plastic pipe that was installed in the early 1970s.



Work being done on a basin of the Jennings Northwest Regional Utilities waste water treatment plant in 2008.

Smoke testing has shown many leaks and areas of infiltration. Almost all of the existing sanitary sewer lines will need to be replaced in the near future.

SUMMARY OF JENNINGS NORTHWEST COUNTY UTILITIES SANITARY ISSUES

- ✦ The existing sanitary sewers are reaching an age where they will need to be repaired in the coming years. Testing has been done to identify areas that will need to be repaired for the system to continue to function properly.
- ✦ IDEM has ordered the sludge from the existing lagoons to be removed within the next 5 years.

NORTH VERNON– SANITARY SEWER

The City of North Vernon operates a sanitary sewer utility. There are currently 38 miles of sewer pipe of which approximately 60 percent is combined sewer. There are 20 pump stations which connect to three main sewer lines. Four of the lift stations experience surcharging during significant rain events. The City of North Vernon’s wastewater is treated by a 2.2 million gallon per day (average design flow) activated sludge type wastewater treatment plant with at peak design flow of 4.76 Million gallons per day. Flows ultimately discharge into the Muscatatuck River.

There is one Combined Sewer Outfall located at the wet weather pump station at the waste water treatment plant. During significant rain events, flows in excess of the plant’s capacity are pumped to a 1 million gallon equalization basin for storage. Once the flow has been reduced, flow from the storage basin is pumped back to a location at the plant for full treatment. When the total flow to the equalization basin is greater than 1 million gallons, the excess flow is discharged to the river.

The city is under an Agreed Order with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) for the implementation of their Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Long Term Control Plan (LTCP). This

plan identifies mandated improvements to be completed to the sanitary sewer system.

The city has significant inflow and infiltration into the system. Smoke testing and other efforts have resulted in the elimination of many downspouts and related flows into the system. However, they continue to discover field tiles and other undocumented pipes that drain into the system.

Currently, Jennings County and the City of North Vernon are in the process of extending sanitary sewer service east to Butlerville and the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC). The sewer has been designed with the intention of serving a future industrial park and other development along U.S. 50 between North Vernon and MUTC. It is a 10” forced main system with a new lift station which will be installed at the MUTC facility. This system, when complete, will enable the current MUTC wastewater treatment plan to be taken off line. The current MUTC system serves the military installation, Butlerville, Campbell Township, and the Brush Creek School.

The new forced main is being installed by the county but will ultimately be owned and maintained by North Vernon. The lift station, with pumps rated at 460 gallons per minute, is scheduled to be in operation by the end of 2013. The system has also been designed to allow individual homes to connect to it via grinder pumps, as well as subdivisions and industrial complexes with a larger lift station and forced main. The cost of the system was partially funded through the Indiana Economic Development Administration.

There have been discussions of the development of a satellite sanitary sewer treatment facility for North Vernon. Refer to the Infrastructure Chapter of the 2009 North Vernon Comprehensive Plan for more detailed information on this topic.

SUMMARY OF NORTH VERNON SANITARY ISSUES

- ✦ The sanitary sewer system is operating at sufficient

rate. Upgrades to eliminate CSOs, collection problems with the lift stations that are surcharging, and yearly maintenance of all existing lines are all needed to position the utility for the future. While there is capacity for modest development, these limitations must be addressed to keep the community competitive in recruiting new business and industry.

CAMPBELL TOWNSHIP RURAL SEWER DISTRICT – SANITARY SEWER

The existing MUTC wastewater treatment facility will be taken offline. All flows from Butlerville, Campbell Township and Brush Creek School will be directed to the new lift station.

A new sanitary sewer force main is currently under construction. A new lift station will be constructed at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex next spring, and in operation by the by the end of 2013. The new lift station will have the ability to pump 460 gallon per minute.

The new force main has been designed to allow individual homes to connect with a grinder pump. Larger subdivisions and industrial parks will be allowed to connect using a new lift station.

JENNINGS COUNTY DRINKING WATER

JENNINGS WATER, INC.

Jennings Water, Inc. is a private utility system which serves over 3,000 households, businesses and schools directly, including an estimated 11,000 individuals. The utility also provides water to the following regional utility systems:

- ◆ Jennings Northwest Regional Utilities, serving 1,300 households in Country Squire Lakes

- ◆ Hayden Water, serving 1,000 residences and businesses in Spencer Township.

Roughly half of the population in Jennings County is supplied by Jennings Water. Jennings Water utilizes regional groundwater sources for its water and treats all drinking water at wholly owned, independent facilities. The groundwater wells for Jennings Water are located to the west, in Reddington in Jackson County.

SUMMARY OF JENNINGS WATER ISSUES

- ✦ Jennings Water has an interest in expanding to several small areas in the county.

JENNINGS NORTHWEST REGIONAL UTILITIES – DRINKING WATER

Drinking water is provided to the northwest quarter of Jennings County and the Country Squire Lakes community by Jennings County Northwest Regional Utilities. Water supply is purchased from Jennings County Water.

The current system has adequate capacity for its needs. There are some concerns with the pressure that is supplied in certain areas. No major improvements are scheduled in the immediate future.

NORTH VERNON - DRINKING WATER

The City of North Vernon operates its own water utility. The utility currently pumps approximately 1.5 million gallons per day of water. The utility is currently under construction with a water system improvements project. This work is scheduled to be completed in 2013. Upon completion of the improvements, the capacity of the water treatment plant will be increased to 5 million gallons per day filtration capacity, providing a substantial increase over the current production. The completion of this water project will help to support ongoing economic development efforts in the community.

Water storage is currently provided in the system through the following:

- ◆ The city currently has two 300,000 gallon elevated water storage tanks.
- ◆ A 1 million gallon ground storage tank is provided at the water treatment plant.

The city's current water source is the Muscatatuck River. Since the quality of the water from the river is not a constant, the water utility is evaluating options for improving the quality of its water source. Options being evaluated include development protections along the Muscatatuck River, obtaining water directly from the Brush Creek Reservoir, or development of a raw water storage reservoir.

SUMMARY OF NORTH VERNON DRINKING WATER ISSUES

- ✦ With the planned improvements to the water system, the community's drinking water infrastructure will be well suited to accommodate modest growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ The most cost effective areas for future growth for Jennings County will be in areas surrounding North Vernon because of the availability of existing infrastructure. New commercial, industrial and residential subdivision growth should be directed into areas that are served by existing water and sanitary sewer systems.
- ❑ Development in western Jennings County along the U.S. 50 corridor is currently limited since sanitary sewer service is not available. Development will likely require the construction of a new wastewater treatment facility to serve this area. The county should work with the City of North Vernon to plan for this mid-to-long term growth opportunity. Until sanitary sewers are available, development should be limited in these areas.

- ❑ The county should develop updated standards for septic systems. First, the county should require lots to be large enough for both a primary septic system, and a backup system in the event the first system fails. A lot size with a minimum of 1 to 2 acres (or more if the site has large changes in elevation) may be necessary. Second, the county should limit the use of septic systems to low intensity residential developments. Commercial, industrial and larger residential subdivision developments should be directed toward areas with public sanitary sewer systems.

References

- May 12, 2010 Plain Dealer Article: <http://plaindealer-sun.com/main.asp?SectionID=3&SubSectionID=40&ArticleID=12748>

A photograph of a golf course with a large blue circle containing the number 11 overlaid on it. The background shows a green golf course with a path, trees, and a fence in the distance. In the foreground, there are orange flowers.

11

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The success of this comprehensive plan is in the hands of Jennings County's residents -particularly its elected and appointed officials.

Although every citizen plays a role in steering the community's future, it is the officials who make the day-to-day decisions that determine what a community looks like.

For evidence of those officials' ability to influence the future, look at the previous comprehensive plan, completed in 1994. That document **discouraged** zoning for upscale housing. To keep building costs low, it recommended against requiring new housing developments to put in curbs, sidewalks and other community-building infrastructure.

Now, almost 20 years later, there is a shortage of upper-income homes, meaning people with good, local jobs find housing in other communities such as Columbus. There is, however, **not a shortage** of poorly constructed homes and neighborhoods, some of them in dire need of repair.

Some corrections have been made since the previous plan. For example, subdivisions now require sidewalks and other infrastructure.

But this plan hopes to show that more can be done, that even in a depressed economy Jennings County leaders can set the bar higher. Through a mix of small investments in neighborhood revitalization and carefully considered extension of infrastructure, the community can design a better future.

In fact, local leaders don't have to create any new regulations to start to see positive results. They simply have to commit themselves to enforcing the rules they

already have.

A lot of community time and resources went into the completion of this comprehensive plan and it will take even more resources for it to succeed.

This section details the steps needed to make the plan work, but the burden of implementation falls upon the Jennings County Area Plan Commission. The comprehensive plan is their guiding document, and the decisions they make based upon it can only be made easier if the community understands its goals and reasoning.

HELPING PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THE PLAN

To get the most out of planning, some effort is needed to help stakeholders understand its basic goals and tools. Following are two strategies for getting the word out about how planning can help build the community's future.

TRAINING FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

All planning process participants have the responsibility to explain and support the comprehensive planning process, respect the others involved and to encourage citizen participation. It is important that elected and appointed officials get the training they need to do the best job they can on planning and zoning matters.

State law and even our local ordinances are often complicated. Kentucky now requires their plan commission members to receive training in order to serve; Indiana's laws do not currently require that, but training is always a good idea. The following suggestions can assist the county in getting that

training to public officials:

- ✦ Take advantage of membership in the American Planning Association (APA). This group publishes a magazine, several newsletters, books and reports on planning topics, and also hosts an annual national conference that includes sessions for citizen planners. For more information consult www.planning.org
- ✦ Become a member of the Indiana Chapter of the American Planning Association (IN-APA). This group offers annual conferences that include sessions for citizen planners and offers the **INDIANA CITIZEN PLANNER'S GUIDE** free online at www.indianaplanning.org. This publication includes several chapters that can be used as training materials for elected officials, plan commission members, board of zoning appeals members, neighborhood organizations, and citizen committees and contains information specific to Indiana. The chapters include:
 - ◆ Part 1: Plan Commission Basics
 - ◆ Part 2: Board of Zoning Appeals Basics
 - ◆ Part 3: Avoiding Pitfalls
 - ◆ Part 4: Communications
 - ◆ Part 5: Rules of Procedure
 - ◆ Part 6: Ethics
 - ◆ Part 7: Comprehensive Plans
 - ◆ Part 8: Zoning Ordinances
 - ◆ Part 9: Subdivision Control Ordinances
 - ◆ Part 10: Site Plan Review
- ✦ Attend or offer to host a "Nitty Gritty" Training Session. These low-cost basic training sessions for citizen planners are held several times per year around Indiana, and are sponsored by IN-APA, Indiana Farm Bureau, Purdue Cooperative Extension Service, Ball State's College of Architecture and Planning, the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors and IUPUI's Center

for Urban Policy & the Environment.

- ✦ Use Purdue Extension's Land Use Team Publications, on such topics as Public Hearings and Agricultural Land Preservation, available at <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/landuse/landuse2/pubs.html>. The Purdue Land Use Team is also available to present several different land use programs in your community; contact your local extension office for more information. In addition, Purdue offers their "IP Video Series" training, which is free and broadcast live to extension sites around Indiana. Past presentations are available at <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/landuse/video.html> and have included topics such as, "Green Infrastructure" and "Staying Legal."
- ✦ Support planning staff in their efforts to receive continuing education, and request that they share the results with local planning officials.

EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ABOUT PLANNING AND ZONING

Most citizens do not understand planning and zoning because it is not something they encounter every day. The normal human reaction is often to fear what we do not understand. For this reason it is important to educate the public on the importance of planning and zoning and how it works.

During creation of a comprehensive plan, it is important to keep the process in the spotlight. Developing a relationship with local media representatives will help get the message out in newspapers and on radio. The county's website should include information about dates of upcoming public meetings. All public meetings and hearings should have an educational component, where the purpose of the plan and an overview of the process are explained.

After the public hearing and adoption of the plan, the county should make the plan available on-line and in local libraries, as well as consider providing training sessions for anyone interested in how to use the plan.

Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals hearings can also be educational opportunities. Many people in the audience have never attended one of the meetings and don't know what to expect. The surrounding property owner notification letters should be written so they are easily understood. The commission or board president can help make the meeting more understandable by making some remarks at the beginning, explaining what will happen at the meeting. They can also assist by delivering a "play-by-play" or translation of the meeting, so that it is understandable to people in the audience.

The commission and board can also remove much of the mystery of why they make certain decisions by sharing what state and/or local law criteria they are required to consider. The criteria can be posted on the wall, included on the back of the agenda, etc. Having a public discussion before voting will also help clarify why you are voting the way you do.

HOW IS THE PLAN ADOPTED?

After a comprehensive plan is completed, there is still one more important step to finish in the planning process. The comprehensive plan is not official until it is adopted. The Jennings County Area Plan Commission, North Vernon City Council, Vernon Town Council and the Jennings County Board of Commissioners all must adopt the comprehensive plan.

WHAT ADDITIONAL PLANNING IS NEEDED?

Comprehensive plans include all of the major land use elements, but they do not take the place of technical studies for issues such as infrastructure and roads. To complete future planning for Jennings County some additional research is needed.

These studies are described below:

Capital Improvement Plan: This document is related to the Infrastructure Master Plan but is broader in scope. It lists the approximate location, size, time of availability and estimates of costs for public facilities or improvements to be financed with public facility fees, usually over a five-year period. This plan can include road improvements.

Parks Master Plan: This plan takes a long term look at the outdoor and recreational needs of a community. It is required in order to qualify for park grants from the state.

Thoroughfare Plan: This plan identifies the general location and classification of roadway facilities that serve traffic from existing and planned development in the county. The plan also indicates where major roadway improvements – either on existing or new alignments – are to be implemented.

FUNDING SOURCES

A list of potential funding sources for the implementation items derived from the Jennings County Comprehensive Plan is included in the Appendix.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

This document provides years' worth of suggestions for projects. It can be overwhelming to think about undertaking all of the recommendations.

Fortunately, it's possible to look ahead to the near future and take the steps needed to implement the comprehensive plan. The following chart summarizes all of the actions steps accumulated from each of the comprehensive plan chapters. Each item is grouped under a subject category and provided a timeline and responsible party responsible for carrying out the task. It is intended that the Jennings County commissioners and plan commission use this chart on an annual basis to benchmark their progress for implementing this plan.

JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Category	Action Item	Implementation Timeline			Responsible Party
		Short Term (1-5 Years)	Mid Range (5-12 Years)	Long Term (13-20 Years)	
Land Use	Revise the zoning map to adequately reflect community goals in four areas: (1) Agricultural (2) Residential (3) Industrial (4) Commercial.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • City Council • County Commissioners
	Update the zoning code to address these issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments required by 2011 state law • Purpose Statement and Applicability Statement • Interpretation and Severability • Temporary Uses • Plan Commission Jurisdiction • Written Commitment • Development Plan Review • Zoning Certification • Variances • Conditions • Show Cause/Complaints • Special Uses • Agriculture Zoning • Residential Zoning • Commercial Zoning • Industrial Zoning • Institutional Zoning • PUDs • Airport Zoning • Flood Districts • Signs • Parking Standards • Lot Area • Lot Width • Front Setbacks • Landscape Regulations 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • City Council • County Commissioners

JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Category	Action Item	Implementation Timeline			Responsible Party
		Short Term (1-5 Years)	Mid Range (5-12 Years)	Long Term (13-20 Years)	
Land Use	Update the subdivision code to address these issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditional Approval of Primary Plat • Design Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alleys ○ Streets ○ Easements ○ Blocks ○ Non-Residential Subdivisions • Sewage Disposal • Sidewalks • Plats and Data for Conditional Approval • Variances and Modifications • Green Drainage • Traffic Calming • Electronic Copies 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • City Council • County Commissioners
	Create and maintain a Capital Improvement Plan.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • City Council • County Commissioners
Economic Development	Ensure that there is an adequate supply of larger, shovel-ready industrial sites where the planning and zoning, infrastructure, site tests and environmental reports, and ownership status are clearly resolved.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Council • County Commissioners • Area Plan Commission • JCEDC • Utilities • County Commissioners • County Council
	Create multiple agricultural zones for different types of agriculture.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • Utilities • County Commissioners • County Council

JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Category	Action Item	Implementation Timeline			Responsible Party
		Short Term (1-5 Years)	Mid Range (5-12 Years)	Long Term (13-20 Years)	
Economic Development	Define objective development standards within zoning ordinances that must be met as conditions for permitted use for new agricultural facilities, rather than have a special exception process for new facilities.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • County Commissioners • County Council
	Develop a site scoring system based on objective criteria to determine whether new facilities meet the conditions set forth in zoning ordinances.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • County Commissioners • County Council
	Increase code enforcement to prevent the appearance of blighted commercial buildings.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	Develop a formal economic development plan for Jennings County. One of the key objectives of this plan will be to inventory and prioritize economic development sites in Jennings County in lieu of the U.S. 50 bypass and recent utility extensions east of North Vernon.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JCEDC
	Once North Vernon Stellar projects are completed, initiate a countywide branding campaign to promote Jennings County as a regional destination.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JCEDC
Housing	Make amendments to zoning and subdivision ordinances to comply with planning-related state law changes that went into effect in July 2011.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	Employ basic design standards to improve the appearance of new residential development.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	Conduct a countywide housing needs assessment to provide a thorough analysis of the housing market and detailed recommendations improving and diversifying the county's housing stock.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • County Commissioners • Housing Authority
	Make active code enforcement a priority to address the number of houses in foreclosure and blighted areas.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	Explore options for neighborhood revitalization in certain areas, including the Country Squire Lakes community and any other areas identified as suitable candidates for revitalization.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • County Commissioners • Housing Authority
	Pursue housing grant options to fund the aforementioned projects.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Commissioners

JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Category	Action Item	Implementation Timeline			Responsible Party
		Short Term (1-5 Years)	Mid Range (5-12 Years)	Long Term (13-20 Years)	
Housing	Form a housing coalition or taskforce to address local housing issues.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JCEDC City of North Vernon County Commissioners
Natural Resources	<p>Abundance of managed lands can be a county resource and should be viewed as a potential economic development resource for the local economy. The community should study opportunities to take advantage of these properties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unique position of the county between two national wildlife refuges, availability of other managed lands for wildlife activities, and proximity to I-65 corridor uniquely positions county to take advantage of this type of tourism revenue. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Plan Commission City Council County Commissioners JCEDC Jennings County Tourism
	<p>As surface water from the Muscatatuck River provides water service for the majority of county residents, protection of this resource is of the highest priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development protections should be considered along both sides of the Muscatatuck River throughout the community, and especially between North Vernon and the Brush Creek Reservoir. Such protections could include increased erosion and sediment control practices, development limitations, stormwater runoff quality provisions for new development, or other protections. A long term goal of establishing a conservation corridor along the river is also recommended to protect linkages between the various protected forest lands in eastern Jennings County. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Plan Commission City Council County Commissioners Jennings Water Soil and Water Conservation District
	The potential for failing septic systems to negatively impact local water quality is high. Jennings County should work towards improving the current system of septic system dependent site development review. More detailed descriptions of this issue are located in the Utility Infrastructure chapter.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Plan Commission County Commissioner Utilities Soil and Water Conservation District
	Prepare a county-wide park and recreation master plan, and marketing plan with North Vernon, IDNR, and USFWS to provide a cohesive campaign to highlight natural resource areas.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks and Recreation

JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Category	Action Item	Implementation Timeline			Responsible Party
		Short Term (1-5 Years)	Mid Range (5-12 Years)	Long Term (13-20 Years)	
Natural Resources	Consider identification and development protections of significant karst topography within Jennings County. Apply development protections similar to those recommended for the Muscatatuck River watershed. Since karst areas are significant contributors to the local aquifers, steps should be taken to reduce the potential for groundwater pollution of these sensitive areas. Strategies for enhancement of sediment and erosion control measures, as well as the reduction of chemical and biological contaminants should be explored to help protect the integrity and safety of county wells. By encouraging the appropriate use of these areas through policy actions and land use controls Jennings County will be taking great steps towards the protection of valuable water supplies while also helping to ensure that potentially high costs associated with development on these unstable surfaces is avoided.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • City Council • County Commissioners • Utilities • Board of Public Works and Safety • Soil and Water Conservation District
	Jennings County should work with the Soil and Water Conservation District to explore ways to make informed future land use decisions based upon an analysis of development suitability. Factors such as riparian buffers (geologically and topographically possible due to deep stream geology), Floodplain/aquifer protection, and future development potential based upon soil classifications and suitability for septic and building improvements should be a key consideration as the county explores the development potential of land beyond currently developed areas.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • Soil and Water Conservation District • County Commissioners
Transportation	Develop a county-wide long range transportation plan which considers the possible long term effects on local roadways connected to the U.S. 50 bypass corridor and long term needs based upon predicted development growth patterns.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • City Council • County Commissioners • County Surveyor • Streets Department • County Highway Department

JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Category	Action Item	Implementation Timeline			Responsible Party
		Short Term (1-5 Years)	Mid Range (5-12 Years)	Long Term (13-20 Years)	
Transportation	Any roads which have a direct connection to planned U.S. 50 bypass access points should be included in the system for detailed evaluation of predicted future traffic volumes and appropriate long range planning efforts. Additional efforts should be made to monitor the condition of these roadways since increased traffic volumes can lead to premature decay of the roadway condition.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • City Council • County Commissioners • County Surveyor • Streets Department • County Highway Department
	Continue to work with INDOT in evaluating the long term traffic needs of the S.R. 7 and S.R. 3 corridors. Ensure that the necessary roadway improvements are in place prior to, or in conjunction with, approved industrial and commercial development.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Council • Streets Department • Board of Public Works and Safety • Area Plan Commission
	Work with the North Vernon Airport Authority and MUTC to ensure the required airport safety zones are respected and that approved improvements surrounding the airport facility are compatible with the long range plans for airport operations. This recommendation also includes the addition of a North Vernon Airport Compatible Use Overlay District. A more detailed description of this issue, and the details of the intent of a compatible use overlay district are discussed in the MUTC Compatible Use Area CSA section of the plan.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • City Council, County Commissioners • MUTC • North Vernon Municipal Airport
	Work with the North Vernon Airport Authority and MUTC to determine the potential for taking advantage of excess airport capacity and the proximity of the new U.S. 50 bypass to develop an enticing location for additional logistics and military industry development.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Council • County Commissioners • JCEDC • MUTC • North Vernon Municipal Airport
Utility Infrastructure	The most cost effective areas for future growth for Jennings County will be in areas surrounding North Vernon because of the availability of existing infrastructure. New commercial, industrial and residential subdivision growth should be directed into areas that are served by existing water and sanitary sewer systems.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of North Vernon • Utilities • JCEDC

JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Category	Action Item	Implementation Timeline			Responsible Party
		Short Term (1-5 Years)	Mid Range (5-12 Years)	Long Term (13-20 Years)	
Utility Infrastructure	Development in western Jennings County along the U.S. 50 corridor is currently limited since sanitary sewer service is not available. Development will likely require the construction of a new wastewater treatment facility to serve this area. The county should work with the City of North Vernon to plan for this mid-to-long term growth opportunity. Until sanitary sewers are available, development should be limited in these areas.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of North Vernon • Utilities
	The county should develop updated standards for septic systems. First, the county should require lots to be large enough for both a primary septic system, and a backup system in the event the first system fails. A lot size with a minimum of 1 to 2 acres (or more if the site has large changes in elevation) may be necessary. Second, the county should limit the use of septic systems to low intensity residential developments. Commercial, industrial and larger residential subdivision developments should be directed toward areas with public sanitary sewer systems.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • County Commissioners
CSAs	Code Enforcement: Consider – over time – stockpiling a fund that would allow the county to pursue legal cases against the most egregious offenders.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	Code Enforcement: Further explore other enforcement systems, such as ticketing, to see if they would be more effective.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	Code Enforcement: For problem lots, new property owners should first have to obtain permits for land improvements and then, when land meets code regulations, the owners may receive the deed to the land.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	Code Enforcement: Farmers and businesses need to be encouraged to purchase the correct permits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits can bring in steady revenue. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	Code Enforcement: It would be beneficial if the APC could find an individual with grant writing experience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: No vehicle was authorized for code enforcement. A loan for a vehicle was recently approved; however, interest payments have to come out of current funds. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission

JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

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		Short Term (1-5 Years)	Mid Range (5-12 Years)	Long Term (13-20 Years)	
CSAs	<p>Town of Vernon: Vernon should revisit the possibility of requiring some sort of design standards or historic preservation for buildings, at least on the main square.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> These regulations do not have to be financially crippling to business owners, they only have to protect the town's main asset – its historic charm. If these guidelines are not in place beforehand, there is no reason to believe that sooner or later someone will want to build something that most of the community sees as inappropriate to the town's architecture. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town of Vernon Area Plan Commission
	<p>MUTC: Establish a MUTC Influence Zone Overlay District. The intent of this district is to identify the areas around MUTC that take into consideration the direct and indirect implications of the training facility. This ordinance should recognize the rights of property owners to continue to use their property as they have in the past. It should also identify types of new development that would be appropriate in the district, and give MUTC the ability to voice any concerns with proposed development before permits are issued. It would also be appropriate to consider requiring a waiver acknowledging the issues in the district prior to approval of new developments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Influence Zone Overlay District will be a 'transparent' zone which lies on top of existing Jennings County zoning. It can be used to add additional provisions beyond those required by the existing zoning ordinance. For the Jennings County plan it is recommended that the underlying zone will determine the permitted land uses, while the overlay district will clearly define the future uses and special conditions which will be compatible with continued military operations. This can include the design of infrastructure, transportation facilities, required additional setbacks, and buffer zones. This can also include any other restrictions that will meet the overlay zones intended purpose. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Plan Commission

JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Category	Action Item	Implementation Timeline			Responsible Party
		Short Term (1-5 Years)	Mid Range (5-12 Years)	Long Term (13-20 Years)	
CSAs	MUTC: Update Zoning Maps and ordinances to recognize and define land uses compatible with MUTC within the overlay district. This effort should also be undertaken for areas surrounding the North Vernon Municipal Airport. Current zoning ordinance must be examined to help determine future actions which must be taken to redefine and rezone land to meet the development needs of these critical areas. It is recommended that this process include MUTC officials, Airport officials, and surrounding landowners.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	MUTC: Jennings County should undertake planning efforts for improved short term and long term housing facilities to accommodate military personnel and training operations participants.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	MUTC: Assess ongoing impacts to local roads from additional traffic volumes and heavy equipment hauling related to convoy vehicles traversing through Jennings County. These assessments should be summarized and incorporated into long range transportation planning efforts. Outcomes of this effort can be suggested convoy routes, long term transportation improvements, and budgeting for long term maintenance needs on impacted roads. Jennings County should consider developing a county road access plan to manage transportation issues when roads are closed due to MUTC exercises and trainings.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission
	Country Squire Lakes: Increase communication between CSL residents and county officials to move toward shared goals. Topics of early meetings could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership development of CSL residents so that the area can engage in sustained and long term redevelopment. • Enforcement action on derelict and abandoned property. • County plans for the lots it owns. • County acquisition of the remaining CSL roads. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • Country Squire Lakes residents • County Commissioners
	Country Squire Lakes: Formalize a comprehensive plan for CSL and its relationship to the rest of the county.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • Country Squire Lakes residents

JENNINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Category	Action Item	Implementation Timeline			Responsible Party
		Short Term (1-5 Years)	Mid Range (5-12 Years)	Long Term (13-20 Years)	
CSAs	U.S. Bypass: Work with U.S. 50 Bypass Community Advisory Committee to provide guidance on selection of a preferred eastern corridor alternative.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • JCEDC
	U.S. Bypass: Support the original land use goals of the U.S. 50 bypass plan identified in the 2009 <i>North Vernon Comprehensive Plan</i> . Some modifications are proposed on the updated land use plan to reflect alignment changes made since that plan was developed.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • JCEDC • City Council, County Commissioners
	U.S. Bypass: Work with the APC and City of North Vernon to update the North Vernon Comprehensive Plan so that there is one common land use plan adopted for the corridor.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • City Council
	U.S. Bypass: Develop a master plan for a business/industrial park on U.S. 50 between North Vernon and MUTC. The study should make recommendations on the land use controls, how to balance agricultural preservation in the area, compatibility with Rose Acre Farms, and the demand for the location.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • City Council • County Commissioners • MUTC • JCEDC
	U.S. Bypass: Work with utility providers to develop an incremental improvement plan to ensure that development does not jeopardize the integrity of the utility services and to ensure planning of appropriate utility improvements to allow for implementation of future development plans.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission • JCEDC • Utilities
	U.S. Bypass: Ensure that appropriate land preservation measures are in place to help protect and preserve watersheds (especially along the Muscatatuck River), prime agricultural land, and greenspace.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Plan Commission



APPENDIX

APPENDIX

APPROVAL OF PLAN BY JENNINGS COUNTY EDC

BOARD MEETING MINUTES: DECEMBER 20, 2012

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARIES

MEETING 1: AUGUST 29, 2012

MEETING 2: SEPTEMBER 19, 2012

MEETING 3: OCTOBER 31, 2012

MEETING 4: NOVEMBER 14, 2012

MEETING 5: NOVEMBER 28, 2012

PRESENTATION OF PLAN TO AREA PLAN COMMISSION

DECEMBER 3, 2012 MEETING MINUTES

FUNDING SOURCES

PROJECT SHEETS

AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

CREATING A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

DOWNTOWN PLAN / MAIN STREET PROGRAM

OVERLAY ZONES

PARTNERING

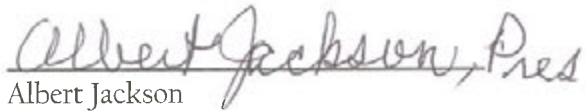
STREAM CORRIDOR PROTECTION

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

JENNINGS COUNTY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
BOARD MEETING
December 20, 2012

Present: Albert Jackson, John Hall, Chris Ertel, Jerry Lamb, Kathy Ertel, & Traci Wahlman

Cory Whitesell with HWC presented the Jennings County Comp Plan for recommendation to adopt the plan. Chris Ertel made the motion to approve the plan, submit to OCRA, and to pass on to the area plan with a favorable recommendation to adopt the plan. Jerry Lamb seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Handwritten signature of Albert Jackson in cursive script, reading "Albert Jackson, Pres".

Albert Jackson

EDC Board President

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #1 AGENDA

Jennings County Comprehensive Plan • August 29, 2012

Attending Steering Committee Members		
<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Email</i>
Jeff Barger	County Commissioners, APC	jeffro412@yahoo.com
Jessica Brunner	Jennings County EDC	jbrunner@jenningsedc.com
Chris Ertel	Redevelopment Commission, TIF	chris.ertel@bankibt.com
Kathy Ertel	Jennings County EDC	kertel@jenningsedc.com
Larry Fagersten	MUTC	larry.fagersten@us.army.mil
Brad Lage	Jennings County APC attorney	
Albert Jackson	Jennings County EDC	
Jerry Lamb	Jennings County EDC	jerryalamb@yahoo.com
Brad Ponsler	Indiana Farm Bureau	bponsler@infarmbureau.org
John Post	Jennings County APC	postjk1976@yahoo.com
Barb Shaw	Community Foundation	jccfdirector@comcast.net
Cheryl Trisler	Jennings County APC	cbtrisler@jenningscounty-in.gov
Dan Wright	Town of Vernon, Mayor	dwright@fpbhonline.com
William Wright	Jennings County APC	

Consultants:

- Scott Burgins, SDG
- Cory Daly, HWC
- Catie Kosinski, SDG
- Cory Whitesell, HWC

I. Introduction

- Scott Burgins introduced the consulting team:
 - Scott Burgins, 800-939-2449, sburgins@sdg.us
 - Catie Kosinski, 800-939-2449, kosinski@sdg.us
 - Cory Whitesell, 317-347-3663, cwhitesell@hwcengineering.com
 - Cory Daly, 317-347-3663, cdaly@hwcengineering.com
- Steering committee members introduced themselves briefly.
- Meeting notes, draft reports, and public information will be posted on the project website: www.sdg.us/jennings.php

II. Fundamentals of a Comp Plan

- Scott explained that the Jennings County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) found a grant to fund the planning process. The EDC provided the match and there is no cost to the county for this plan. However, the plan needs to be completed in a short timeframe to meet the grant deadline of December 31, 2012. As a result, the plan approval process is somewhat different; the EDC needs to approve the plan before the deadline. Other approving bodies – the Jennings County Area Plan Commission (APC), North Vernon, Vernon, and county

commissioners – can approve the plan after the grant expires. Cory Whitesell said that a public hearing will be held before the grant expires. He stressed that the plan won't get to every issue due to the timeframe, but it can focus on priorities. He noted that North Vernon will not be updating its plan. The county's current plan, approved in 1994, is out of date but a solid plan.

- Scott reviewed the fundamentals of a comprehensive plan. He said that this information can help committee members respond to questions from the community. Some of the benefits of planning include: directing development to areas with sufficient capacity to support it, protecting property values, and making sure adjacent uses are compatible. The SDG/HWC team has a history of creating plans that are realistic, practical, easy to understand and implement.
- Scott asked the steering committee members to share their biggest hopes for the county and this planning process. Their responses are included below:
 - Put us in the right direction for potential growth and preserves areas of natural beauty
 - Better code enforcement and zoning
 - Road map to opportunity
 - Want to see economic development and jobs
 - Land use that protects land values
 - Tie in with North Vernon plan
 - Protect county for conservation
 - Economic development, improve standards, protect heritage
 - Compatible development around MUTC and economic development
 - Encourage partnerships
 - Industrial land development is at a standstill; need land around infrastructure, spec buildings, industrial sites on rail, and sewer near MUTC
- One concern about the plan is that land zoned for agricultural use does not mean that “anything goes”

III. Role of the Steering Committee

- Scott said the role of the steering committee is to bring ideas and comments to the meetings. He asked that people not “stew in silence” about topics. This is especially important with such a compressed planning timeframe.

IV. Demographic Profile

- Catie Kosinski reviewed a draft demographic profile of Jennings County. The data show a slowly growing community that is projected to continue steady growth for the next forty years. Population growth in Geneva and Vernon townships has outpaced other areas in the county. According to the 2010 Census, Country Squire Lakes has the second highest population in the county.
- Educational attainment levels in the county are well below the state average; the county ranks 92nd out of 92 counties in terms of adults with a B.A. or higher degree. Several committee members were surprised by this. It was pointed out

that area employers may require certifications and two-year degrees that would not be counted as Bachelor's Degrees. The data shows the educational attainment of the county's residents not the workforce that includes many commuters from nearby counties.

- When adjusted for inflation, median household income levels peaked in 1999 and declined. It was noted that data – when available – for Vernon will be added to comparisons with North Vernon and Country Squire Lakes.
- The county's economy remains dependent on manufacturing.
- Jennings County is a net exporter of workers. However, the county's resident labor force lost nearly 950 workers between 2008 and 2010.
- When adjusted for inflation in 2010 dollars, median home values in Jennings County and North Vernon declined between 2000 and 2010. The Country Squire Lakes community has a noticeably higher percent of vacant housing units than North Vernon and the county as a whole.

V. Determining Priorities

- Several steering committee members submitted responses to a survey that asked them to rank their priorities for Jennings County. The top priorities based on their responses included:
 - Economic development
 - Code enforcement
 - Water supply
 - Country Squire Lakes
- Cory Whitesell led the steering committee through an exercise to identify areas in the county that they want to protect. Responses included:
 - Natural resources
 - MUTC
 - Water supply/river
 - Vernon's historic district
 - County park
 - Reservoir
 - Nature preserve
 - Covered bridges
- Next, Cory asked people to identify aspects of the county that need to change. Responses included:
 - Quality of life/community image
 - Clean up properties, especially in Vernon
 - Community has become more transient
 - Only one sewer plant in the county
- When asked to identify critical sub areas (CSAs) that the comprehensive plan will look at in depth, the steering committee overwhelmingly agreed that the bypass impact area was the most important. The following reflects the CSA priorities identified by the steering committee:

1. **Bypass Impact Area:** The planned US 50 bypass impact area influences land use, housing, economic development and creates a new destination in the county.
2. **MUTC:** Maintaining a compatible use area “beyond the wire” is important. An overlay zone may be a tool to protect this area from residential development.
3. **Code Enforcement:** This is especially a problem in Country Squire Lakes but also in other areas.
4. **Country Squire Lakes:** Jennings County currently owns several hundred homes in this development and has tried to take over two main roads. The area’s reputation is hurting the county’s housing market by association.
5. **Quality of Life:** Preserving the county’s natural resources and small town charm is important to the county’s image.

VI. Focus Group Invitees

- The consultants plan to conduct focus groups in September. One focus group will be with Country Squire Lakes residents.

VII. What’s Next

- Revise public survey to focus on CSAs and write press release
- Post North Vernon Comp Plan, current Jennings County Comp Plan, and revised demographic profile on the project website
- Upcoming meetings:
 - SC #2: Wednesday, September 19th at noon
 - SC #3: Wednesday, October 31st at noon
 - SC #4: Wednesday, November 14th at noon
 - SC #5: Wednesday, November 28th at noon

The Fundamentals of a Comprehensive Plan

Reasons for Planning

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Promoting a healthy community | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrating nature | <input type="checkbox"/> Good drainage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Growth management | <input type="checkbox"/> Flood mitigation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic development | <input type="checkbox"/> Public safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural preservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean water |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infill development | <input type="checkbox"/> Good schools |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife management | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting the arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creating transportation choices | <input type="checkbox"/> Utility support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The future of our children | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural preservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Providing recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Land use problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic preservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Keeping out bad stuff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging a variety of housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Healing community |

Why do communities plan?

One of the reasons communities engage in a planning process is to ensure that the needs of the whole community are considered, not just benefits to individuals. Community planning is based upon a concept of the public interest.

Some flexibility in the use of individual land is given up in exchange for creating a community in which the interests of all are considered. When communities plan, they establish and implement public policy, a guideline for decisions on development and redevelopment. Plans help a community achieve a character that residents of the community recognize and support.

If all our communities were the same, one plan would suffice for all. But each is different, and a plan should enhance the unique characteristics of each place.

Why do you want to plan?

Planning's Fundamental Goal: Improve our community

Two things that distinguish a great place from an ordinary place and that are something we plan for:

1. Satisfactory local government services
2. Desirable community amenities (Quality of life)

Benefits of Planning

1. It can lower operating costs for local government
2. It can help local government provide services more efficiently
3. It can help ensure that developers pay their fair share of improvements
4. It can direct development to areas with sufficient capacity to support it (i.e., new industries where utilities are available)
5. It can coordinate development and future capital expenditures such as streets, sewage treatment plants, civic buildings, and schools
6. It can save you from paying in the future for remedies for poorly planned development, such as purchasing right-of-way or easements to widen streets or extend utilities
7. It can protect property values
8. It can preserve and enhance community character
9. It can improve quality of life
10. It can make sure adjacent uses are compatible
11. It can plan for safe streets and sidewalks
12. It can prevent unwise development, such as subdivisions without proper sewage disposal
13. It can protect environmental quality

Requirements of a Comp Plan

In Indiana, comprehensive planning is permitted by the 500 Series of Title 36-7-4 of the Indiana Code. This law empowers cities, towns, and counties to adopt plans. Any plan adopted in Indiana must contain at least the following three elements:

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

Optional: In addition, the law provides for a number of optional elements, including, but not limited to parks and recreation, flood control, transit, natural resource protection, conservation, flood control, farmland protection, education, and redevelopment of blighted areas. Most comprehensive plans in Indiana have some of these optional elements.

Most plans also contain maps showing future streets and desired future land use patterns.

Future land use and transportation maps are not required in Indiana. Land uses usually are divided into categories, and different colors or patterns are used to show areas for future residential, commercial, industrial, open space, institutional, and agricultural uses.

Normally, locations should not be overly specific. For purposes of the comprehensive plan, it is more important to establish that a school should be located in a certain area than to designate the specific site for the school -- locations should be approximate, not exact.

The Planning Process

While each planning process should be custom-designed to meet community needs, nearly all contain the same core elements:

1. Evaluate existing conditions, including strengths and weaknesses, community character, demographics, natural features, etc.
2. Establish goals and objectives for the future
3. Identify alternatives for meeting the goals and objectives
4. Select the most desirable alternative
5. Devise and adopt tools to implement the plan (zoning, subdivision control, capital improvement programming, etc.)
6. Evaluate the success of the plan
7. Revise the plan

These steps are part of a continuing process. Plans must be evaluated, changed and updated as the community changes. These changes can be gradual, as through demographic trends, technological change, or slow economic growth or decline. Sometimes change is more sudden, such as the location of a large new industry in a small community, the loss of a major employer, or a natural disaster (flood, etc.).

In Indiana, it is the plan commission's responsibility to prepare and adopt a plan and to recommend it to the town council for adoption.

Effective Plans

Some features are common to most plans:

1. **Emphasis on physical development**, but recognize that physical development of a community is interrelated with social and economic factors, and take that into account.
2. Comprehensive and general.
3. **Realistic and practical**.
4. The planning process offers the opportunity to dream, but the plan should recognize what is possible.
5. Long-range.
6. **Easy to understand**. There are no extra points for length or weight. The plan should be as simple and as clear as possible.

7. Easy to distribute. Recognize that the internet is here to stay and your plan should be available on-line. Consider distributing CDs, not just paper copies.
8. Reflects a community consensus.

There are five simple rules to keep in mind when developing an effective comprehensive land use plan:

1. The plan should be general; it is a guide to development, not a tool for determining the precise location of each feature.
2. The plan should be designed to build on strengths and to lessen weaknesses.
3. The plan should be developed with implementation tools in mind – know how you will make your vision happen.
4. The plan should have a long-range component aimed at shaping the community for 15-20 years.
5. The plan is not an ordinance; the council adopts by resolution. A resolution is more appropriate than an ordinance, because the plan is a guideline, not a regulation.

Why we need you

A plan that does not have the support of the majority of those who will be affected by it is doomed to fail! Local leaders like you are key players in arriving at that consensus. Not only do you share your observations and views about the community, you can ensure that the full range of views is sought and considered. People will become involved because you ask them to.

The Plan must result from an effective citizen participation process. Elected officials will not be guided by the plan's policies unless these officials know that the plan represents the wishes of their constituents.

What is your biggest concern about the plan?

Your biggest hope?

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #2 SUMMARY

Jennings County Comprehensive Plan • Sept. 19, 2012

Attending Steering Committee Members		
Name	Organization	Email
Jeff Barger	County Commissioners, APC	jeffro412@yahoo.com
Dave Beesley	Jennings County Water	
Jessica Brunner	Jennings County EDC	jbrunner@jenningsedc.com
Clyde E. Campbell		
Kathy Ertel	Jennings County EDC	kertel@jenningsedc.com
Larry Fagersten	MUTC	larry.fagersten@us.army.mil
Ray Hughes	Jennings County APC	
Jerry Lamb	Jennings County EDC	jerryalamb@yahoo.com
Brad Ponsler	Indiana Farm Bureau	bponsler@infarmbureau.org
John Post	Jennings County APC	postjk1976@yahoo.com
Cheryl Trisler	Jennings County APC	cbtrisler@jenningscounty-in.gov
Chuck Waggoner	Redevelopment Commission (attending for Chris Ertel)	chuck@northvernonlaw.com
Dan Wright	Town of Vernon, Mayor	dwright@fpbhonline.com
William Wright	Jennings County APC	

Consultants:

- Scott Burgins, SDG
- Cory Daly, HWC
- Catie Kosinski, SDG
- Matt Maloney, SDG
- Cory Whitesell, HWC

I. Update

- ✓ Researched CSAs
- ✓ Made additions to Demographic Profile (Town of Vernon)
- ✓ Posted Jennings County Comprehensive Plan Survey to JCEDC site; sent out press release
- ✓ Posted SC Meeting 1 notes to project website

II. Action Item

- Indiana Department of Transportation's U.S. 50 Bypass Community Advisory Committee (CAC) has invited comp plan SC member to attend November meeting.
 - Kathy Ertel will serve as the steering committee's representative to the CAC.

III. CSA: Code Enforcement

- Scott reviewed the draft "Consequences of Planning Decisions" with the group. This chapter is intended to help people making planning decisions explain reasons for regulations to the public.
- Scott asked steering committee members to think of intersections and other areas in Jennings County that could be included in this chapter of the final plan.

- Enforcement issues were discussed. For example, decisions made about land use can live on for years. Allowing piecemeal development can lead to competing uses and problems with providing services. Making exceptions and spot rezones can create future problems. Costs of providing services to rural developments are transferred to tax payers.
- Local issues:
 - Keep permit fees commensurate with surrounding areas
 - APC budget is limited; revenues primarily come from fees
 - Trash, litter, debris, and older homes are problems in the county
 - Demolition is expensive
 - APC updated the county's Subdivision Ordinance in 2006; amendments were made ahead of this comprehensive plan update
 - Airport is planning to update its zoning district to prevent residential development in areas around runway
 - Waste management and failing septic systems are problems, especially in unincorporated areas such as Paris, Paris Crossing, Butlerville, etc.
 - Water lines are also an issue
 - IACT no longer advocates the use of interlocal agreements between county and city planning departments
- The consultants have scheduled to visit "hot spots" in Jennings County with planning staff on Thursday, October 4, 2012.

IV. CSA: Quality of Life

- Scott reviewed the draft "Making the Case for Planning" chapter.
- Scott asked what quality of life issues the plan should address.
- Quality of life priorities:
 - Lack of businesses and jobs to keep kids here; brain drain
 - Amenities to attract families to the area
 - Diverse housing mix that includes housing for seniors, apartments, and efficiency units
 - More shopping and eating options
 - Housing in Vernon

V. CSA: Bypass Impact Area

- Cory Daly explained that plans for the U.S. 50 Bypass were prepared by Parsons Engineering. The west portion of the bypass is under construction and following a different route than planned in the North Vernon Comprehensive Plan.
- There are currently several options for the north portion of the bypass that are under review. The CAC could accept recommendations from the county's planning steering committee before making a decision early next year.
- There are several areas that will be impacted by the north portion of the bypass: the North Vernon Airport, Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC), Selmier State Forest, etc.
- The North Vernon Comprehensive Plan was completed before construction of the bypass and shows the west route closer to the city's corporate limits with areas zoned

for light industrial and residential development nearby. The bypass route on the west side will actually be farther out in the county.

- In the North Vernon Comprehensive Plan, the north portion of the bypass passes through areas preserved from development along the Muscatatuck River and through the Selmier State Forest.
- Cory asked the committee if they wanted the north bypass to remain a limited access one.
- Allowing development – especially dense residential – on the north side of the proposed U.S. 50 Bypass near MUTC is not advised.
- The proximity of the North Vernon Municipal Wastewater facility near the city's east side will likely draw development to that area.
- There is potential for more land zoned for industrial in the north bypass area.
- One consideration to keep in mind is that this plan does not want to create challenges with the North Vernon Comprehensive Plan maps.
- MUTC wants to maintain transportation access to the North Vernon Airport. However, MUTC has no preference for zoning along the bypass.

VI. CSA: MUTC Impact Area

- Cory said that HWC will review the Joint Land Use Study Implementation Plan for recommendations for local jurisdictions.
- MUTC has its own sewer treatment facility.
- Any development along the proposed U.S. 50 Bypass will likely have drainage issues.
- Discussion of Influence Zone Overlays for MUTC and airport:
 - Allows for compatible uses such as agriculture; Rose Acres is an intense agricultural zone
 - Protects future residents from noise, etc.
 - Potential for development of defense-related business/industry in between MUTC and Airport
 - Perception of land owners has changed about overlays

VII. People to Interview for Comp Plan

VII. What's Next

- SC #3: Wednesday, October 31st at noon
- SC #4: Wednesday, November 14th at noon
- SC #5: Wednesday, November 28th at noon

Consultant Team

- Scott Burgins, 800-939-2449, sburgins@sdg.us
- Catie Kosinski, 800-939-2449, kosinski@sdg.us
- Cory Whitesell, 317-347-3663, cwhitesell@hwcengineering.com
- Cory Daly, 317-347-3663, cdaly@hwcengineering.com
- Project Web Site: www.sdg.us/jennings.php

Comprehensive Plan Timeline

Preliminary Work

- ✓ **Review/Summarize planning documents**
 - Most recent county comp plan
 - North Vernon comp plan
 - Zoning, etc.
- ✓ **Decide CSAs**
- ✓ **Demographic Profile**
- ✓ **Public Priorities Survey**

Meetings

- ✓ **SC #1: Wednesday, August 29th at noon**
 - Present preliminary findings
 - Explain deadline
 - Approve scope and CSAs
 - Assign review teams
- ☐ **September**
 - Conduct Interviews/Focus Groups
- ✓ **SC #2: Wednesday, September 19th at noon**
 - Present outlines with CSAs
- ☐ **SC #3: Wednesday, October 31st at noon**
 - Discuss chapter first drafts Part I
 - Discuss findings from public input
- ☐ **SC #4: Wednesday, November 14th at noon**
 - Discuss chapter first drafts Part II
- ☐ **SC #5: Wednesday, November 28th at noon**
 - Present final drafts

Approval Process

- ☐ **December 2012**
 - Jennings County EDC approves

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #3 SUMMARY

Jennings County Comprehensive Plan ● Oct 31, 2012

Attending Steering Committee Members		
Name	Organization	Email
Jessica Brunner	Jennings County EDC	jbrunner@jenningsedc.com
Kathy Ertel	Jennings County EDC	kertel@jenningsedc.com
Larry Fagersten	MUTC	larry.fagersten@us.army.mil
Ray Hughes	Jennings County APC	
Jerry Lamb	Jennings County EDC	jerryalamb@yahoo.com
Brad Ponsler	Indiana Farm Bureau	bponsler@infarmbureau.org
John Post	Jennings County APC	postjk1976@yahoo.com
Jason Sanders	Erler Industries Inc.	jsanders@erler.com
Barb Shaw	Jennings County Community Foundation	bshaw@jenningsfoundation.net
Cheryl Trisler	Jennings County APC	cbtrisler@jenningscounty-in.gov
Chuck Waggoner	Redevelopment Commission	chuck@northvernonlaw.com
William Wright	Jennings County APC	

Consultants:

- Scott Burgins, SDG
- Cory Daly, HWC
- Lacey Dannenberg, SDG
- Matt Maloney, SDG
- Cory Whitesell, HWC

Others:

- Clyde Campbell, Jennings Water Inc.
- Corinne Finnerty, McConnell Law

I. Update

- ✓ Toured County
- ✓ Attempted to schedule CSL focus group
- ✓ Posted SC Meeting 2 notes to project website

Introductions

- Opening Statements
 - Everything is going to move quickly from this meeting forward in order to finish by December.
 - Review teams were assigned to each chapter of the updated comp plan. Every person should read and review at least two chapters.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #3 SUMMARY

Jennings County Comprehensive Plan ● Oct 31, 2012

- A Stakeholder list was passed around. Everyone was asked to list individuals who they thought should be involved in this process.
- Survey is on the JCEDC website and individuals should be encouraged to fill it out and tell others.

II. Development Principles - Review of the 1994 CP and 2007 North Vernon CP

- Housing: Issues of zoning requests, the selling of one-acre parcels of land, and if the county should encourage home businesses were discussed.
 - Issue with two different documents between North Vernon and Jennings County participants in the meeting agreed that both documents need to have same set of priorities
 - There is not a historical review committee for the county. It was stated that the county talked about having one in 1994 but it was never followed through on.
 - The old CP wanted to encourage home business by avoiding regulation. It was explained in the meeting that this hinders downtown growth. Businesses should be encouraged to open downtown.
 - If individuals want to work from home, the downtown has areas for “live work spaces”
 - Plan must clearly define what is considered a home business. Is all self-employment a home business?
 - It has been observed that home business will follow rules at beginning and then start to creep over, which affects residential areas. Residential areas should be preserved.
 - Old CP states that the plan commission should avoid zoning for upscale housing. Committee discussed how this may hinder growth and be a bad practice.
 - Regulations for mobile homes and trailer parks were discussed along with confined feeding operations.
 - Easy, hard, hardest options for mobile home should be discussed so that committee can pick what option is best for CP.
 - Plan needs to introduce a distance that confined feeding operations must be from certain structures and areas such as schools, residential etc.
- Infrastructure:
 - The old CP indicated that the county has full range of property tax supported debt instruments. It was discussed that this wording should be more generic to encourage the county to be more proactive.
 - No one at the meeting knew if the county has an integrated road and bridge plan.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #3 SUMMARY

Jennings County Comprehensive Plan ● Oct 31, 2012

- North Vernon has only one waste water plant. There has been discussion of a new one for past 10-15 years.
- Jennings Water needs to be notified of all new buildings a head of time.
- It was explained that there are many rules and laws that the county might not be utilizing at this point to help enforce regulations.
- Code enforcement:
 - Different methods for code enforcement were discussed along with practices that work and don't work.
 - Kathy believes the county is in a "broken window phase," and the county needs to set a precedent for taking care of properties to get out of this phase.

III. Discussion of Future Land Use Map

- A map of the county was used to pinpoint areas that could be used for specific development.
 - For example, the northern part of Jennings County is popular for farmland but is also ideal for regular housing, especially for those who commute to Columbus for work.
- It was explained to the committee that the most cost effective way to develop an area is to keep development tight. This means that development needs to be guided.
 - Development can be guided through strategic placement of infrastructure and needed amenities such as sewage and water.
- The committee was asked what they envision for growth. Is growth 5-acre lots or subdivision type lots?
 - It was discussed how areas with homes and farmland could run into problems, best to keep the two separate as much as possible.

IV. What's Next

- SC #4: Wednesday, November 14th at noon
- SC #5: Wednesday, November 28th at noon

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #4 SUMMARY

Jennings County Comprehensive Plan • November 14, 2012

Attending Steering Committee Members		
<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Email</i>
Jeff Barger	Jennings County Commissioner	Jeffro412@yahoo.com
Jessica Brunner	Jennings County EDC	jbrunner@jenningsedc.com
Kathy Ertel	Jennings County EDC	kertel@jenningsedc.com
Larry Fagersten	MUTC	larry.fagersten@us.army.mil
Corrine Finnerty	McConnell Law	corinne@mcconnelllaw.net
Ray Hughes	Jennings County APC	
Greg Hicks	State Farm Insurance	greghicks@greghicks.net
Albert Jackson	Jennings County EDC	
Jerry Lamb	Jennings County EDC	jerryalamb@yahoo.com
John Post	Jennings County APC	postjk1976@yahoo.com
Cheryl Trisler	Jennings County APC	cbtrisler@jenningscounty-in.gov
Chuck Waggoner	Redevelopment Commission	chuck@northvernonlaw.com
Dan Wright	Mayor of Vernon	dwright@fpbhonline.com
William Wright	Jennings County APC	

Consultants:

- Scott Burgins, SDG
- Cory Daly, HWC
- Catie Kosinski, SDG
- Cory Whitesell, HWC

Others:

- Wayne Stearns

I. Updates

- Finished draft chapters
- Posted SC 3 meeting notes on project website:
<http://www.sdg.us/jennings-county-comprehensive-plan/>

II. Discussion: Future Land Use Map

Cory Daly led the discussion about the county's future land use map. He started by focusing on the three remaining proposed routes for the east route of the U.S. 50 bypass. Since completion of the *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan* in 2009, the west route of the bypass shifted closer to the city

than was originally thought. The SR 7 commercial corridor area is already growing, and industrial development has gone along the SR 3 corridor. There is ample opportunity for residential and commercial development near North Vernon.

Cory Daly explained that the county's land use is good with minimal spot development centered around existing communities. The draft future land use map does not suggest many changes in the county; most of the changes are around the greater North Vernon area along the U.S. 50 bypass. Cory asked committee members if they had preferred routes for the east side of the bypass, which has been narrowed down to two options.

Cory Daly and Cory Whitesell suggested that one of the two alternate southern routes may be the most cost effective. They pointed out that Parsons, the engineering firm working on the route analysis, is interested in input from this steering committee on preferred routes. A few committee members expressed a preference for the north route, but Kathy Ertel was quick to point out that the likely route is going to be what INDOT can afford to do. She said that environmental reviews of the proposed routes have not been completed and could ultimately determine what INDOT decides. As the draft future land use map shows, all of the bypass routes go through the resource management corridors along the Muscatatuck River, the primary water source for the City of North Vernon and much of Jennings County. The lighter green color on the map along the Muscatatuck River indicates that surface water quality needs to be protected. The committee supported the idea of having a flexible land use plan with regard to the final U.S. 50 bypass route.

The draft future land use map shows a new industrial area outside of the MUTC buffer zone along U.S. 50. Currently, force main sewer improvement work is being completed out to MUTC that will accommodate industrial and residential development between North Vernon and MUTC. Access points along the bypass are not known on the east side; the comprehensive plan will need flexibility for the future.

If the community were not limited by infrastructure capacity, many committee members expressed long-term interest in industrial development along the southwest side of North Vernon. There is acreage that could be zoned industrial on the west side if sewer infrastructure were added. Future utility investment on the west side of North Vernon may open up an industrial corridor closer to I-65. This would cater to industrial development that wants to locate near an interstate. It was noted that the U.S. 50 bypass makes the industrial areas near the North Vernon Municipal Airport more convenient. However, the steering committee supported the long-term goal of developing industrial growth between North Vernon and Seymour. The 2009 *North Vernon Comprehensive Plan* still includes long-term plans to build a waste water treatment plant on the west side of the city. It was recommended that the future land use map include "bubbles" for likely residential development close to schools and another for industrial development with the understanding that growth depends on construction of the new satellite plant. Residential is already growing between Aden and North Vernon but should be discouraged until infrastructure extensions are made.

Mayor Wright expressed concern that all the gateways into Vernon and North Vernon would be industrial. The committee supported light industrial zoning on the west side of North. The plan can include different levels of industrial development with design standards. The plan can also recommend that development not occur in certain areas until specific conditions are met – such as the construction of a new sewer plant.

III. Development Principles

Scott Burgins explained that development principles are the foundations for decisions made by the Jennings County Area Plan Commission and county commissioners. The following shows discussion, revisions, and additions to the draft development principles.

- Land Use Planning & Enforcement
 - Comment: “We need it in writing.”
- Reinvestment vs. New Growth
 - Revision: Preserving neighborhood characteristics in North Vernon and Vernon.
- North Vernon
 - No comment.
- Vernon
 - Comment: “We have a lot of visitors in the county for wildlife refuge. Our parks are our great resources. We could add a development principle for natural resources.”
 - Revision: Add Natural Resources development principle.
- ED
 - No comment.
- Utilities
 - Comments:
 - “Water is a long-term deterrent to growth.”
 - “Sewer extension is a bigger problem than water.”
 - “IDEM puts a lot of regulation on surface water treatment plants.”
 - “We may need a ground water plant or raise rates.”
 - “Surface water treatment may become cost prohibitive.”
 - Revision: Cut “public” water.
- Ag land
 - Comments:
 - “Farm Bureau encourages CAFOs – do not use their advice.”
 - “Farm Bureau gives you the variables – you can adjust the distances, requirements. You can talk to people in Fayette, Blackford counties, etc.”
- Housing
 - Comments:
 - “Add language about promoting the development of market rate and rental housing, and high to middle level housing.”

- “Include stipulations for driveways, sidewalks, etc. that will promote higher end housing.”
- U.S. 50 Bypass
 - No Comment.

IV. Draft Chapters

- The draft chapter need to be vetted by steering committee review teams.
- The consultants will send chapters in Word format via email.
- Review teams will read materials and submit comments and revisions by Monday, November 26, 2012.

V. What Needs to Happen

- Last steering committee meeting is Wednesday, November 28th
 - Review Land Use and Implementation chapters
- Present plan to APC and public on Monday, December 3rd
 - SDG/HWC will be on the agenda at 7pm
 - This will not be legally advertised but SDG will send a press release to publicize the meeting
 - SDG will invite the JCEDC board to attend
- North Vernon Redevelopment Commission – meeting on December 17th
- Mid-December: JCEDC board meeting to approve plan

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #5 Notes

Jennings County Comprehensive Plan • November 28, 2012

Attending Steering Committee Members		
<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Email</i>
Jessica Brunner	Jennings County EDC	jbrunner@jenningsedc.com
Chris Ertel	TIF District	chris.ertel@bankibt.com
Kathy Ertel	Jennings County EDC	kertel@jenningsedc.com
Ray Hughes	Jennings County APC	
Jerry Lamb	Jennings County EDC	jerryalamb@yahoo.com
John Post	Jennings County APC	postjk1976@yahoo.com
Cheryl Trisler	Jennings County APC	cbtrisler@jenningscounty-in.gov
William Wright	Jennings County APC	

Consultants:

- Scott Burgins, SDG
- Cory Daly, HWC
- Catie Kosinski, SDG

I. Update

Scott reviewed activities and updates since the previous steering committee meeting. The consultant team emailed chapters for review, revised the development principles and economic development chapter, and sent a press release about the December 3rd APC meeting. A summary of the previous steering committee meeting was posted to the project website. Scott asked Cheryl to provide an introduction about the planning process at the upcoming APC meeting. The JCEDC board is set to vote on the plan at a meeting on December 20th. The APC will want to keep the momentum going after the EDC approves the plan. Ultimately, the county commissioners will need to approve the plan. Final chapters will be posted on the project website the week of December 3rd (<http://www.sdg.us/jennings-county-comprehensive-plan/>).

II. Review: Land Use Chapter

Cory presented the Future Land Use Map that incorporates feedback from the steering committee, stakeholders, and interviews. The map shows revised growth areas from what was proposed in the 2009 North Vernon Comprehensive Plan. Cory noted that the new Jennings County Comprehensive Plan recommends specific steps to take in long-term growth areas. Phasing development and implementing design standards should provide flexibility in addressing long-term growth.

Discussion of proposed long-term growth areas included:

- **West of North Vernon toward Hayden:** This area needs a detailed plan for development that would identify appropriate land uses, infrastructure, transportation,

etc. Such a plan could include phases that are 15-20 years in the future. At this point, it is uncertain what will change when the U.S. 50 bypass is completed. The dynamics of the area are still unknown.

- **Eastern side of North Vernon:** The committee now has a better idea of bypass routes. The bypass creates another future growth corridor surrounding the Oakdale area between Butlerville and North Vernon. Infrastructure is in place for future economic development.
- **Industrial areas:** North Vernon and Jennings County is losing industrial land for the bypass. This comprehensive plan can be used to leverage for grants to develop future industrial land to compensate for what is lost.
- **Compatible use areas around North Vernon Municipal Airport and MUTC:** There was extensive discussion of how to characterize these areas in the plan.
 - Map shows the airport with the same boundaries as the North Vernon Comprehensive Plan.
 - The plan includes discussion of economic development issues related to MUTC.
 - The compatible use areas are not designed as restrictive. The plan attempts to identify conflicts that might occur as development pressures increase.
 - The plan is intended to guide decisions in these sensitive areas and to encourage neighborly relations between MUTC and the community.
 - Some committee members expressed concerns with the joint land use study and proposed overlay zone.
 - This comprehensive plan acknowledges the benefits of having MUTC in the community.
 - MUTC can provide guidance and recommendations.
 - The plan shows a 1-mile buffer around MUTC.
 - Several committee members expressed concern that people need to be informed about potential issues in the buffer zone.
 - The zone is not restrictive.
 - It was suggested that the plan use the word “consideration.”
 - The committee discussed the possibility of amending zoning regulations to include buffer areas around high noise areas such as the race track to protect people from noise nuisance.
 - Requiring residents to sign an informed consent form is one option to explore for sensitive development areas.

Cheryl asked for a map that shows the boundaries of the TIF districts. Kathy said that the JCEDC can provide a TIF map.

Cory noted that the county’s new future land use map should be used to update the North Vernon Comprehensive Plan.

The committee may need to revisit how much support the APC needs to get the plan passed after the New Year.

Cory said that maps would be updated and language changed in the Land Use Chapter to reflect the steering committee's discussion.

Scott led the group through the text of the Land Use Chapter. He emphasized that the plan is conservative in nature and recommends incremental growth as infrastructure is expanded. It makes a strong case on some issues and some course corrections. It is intended to help you educate the public as the community move forward with implementing the plan.

The Land Use Chapter includes some things that are required in the comprehensive plan such as the future land use map. A recreation and greenspace development principle was added after the previous steering committee meeting. The chapter also includes discussion of issues for future decisions. These are areas that the community and APC can explore through technical advisory committees. They include CAFOs, design standards and a capital improvement plan. Scott said that information for residential and industrial design standards will be added in the final chapter.

III. Discussion: Guidelines for Future Decision Making

One area that the plan has not focused is the Town of Vernon. Cory said that he would talk with Mayor Wright about issues to include in the plan. Cheryl pointed out that Vernon is about to have its post office hours reduced which may negatively impact how county government functions. The final plan will discuss historic preservation in Vernon and include a map of the town that will show trails planned in the surrounding area. Another issue to address in Vernon may be street parking.

This section of the Land Use Chapter provides a brief discussion of some topics that did not get covered thoroughly in the report.

The discussion of combined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) does not commit the county to any position. It simply provides background information on the issue with some recommendations based on lessons learned in other communities.

Other topics for future decision making include commercial design standards and a capital improvement plan. The committee asked that residential and industrial design standards be added as well. Again, these discussions provide information but no recommendations. However, a committee may want to explore these topics in the future.

The Land Use Chapter concludes with a thorough review of the county's zoning and subdivision ordinances. K.K. Gerhart-Fritz, AICP, who prepared the review, is available for workshops with the APC and county commissioners.

IV. Review: Implementation Chapter

Scott reviewed the Implementation Plan which includes a table of all recommendations in the plan. This table shows the timeframe and responsible parties for each action step. The Appendix will include a list of potential funding sources.

V. Review Team Check-in

All edits suggested by review teams have been incorporated. Scott noted that the final draft of the Code Enforcement CSA will emphasize the importance of cooperation between city and county.

VI. Steering Committee Check-in

Scott asked steering committee members if they thought this plan is going to help Jennings County. Kathy asked that the plan include some language to convey that the county encourages and supports North Vernon's Stellar Communities projects.

VII. What's Next

- APC Meeting: Monday, Dec. 3 at 6 p.m. (w: JCEDC & Redevelopment Commission)
- JCEDC Meeting: December 20 at noon

Area Plan Commission
December 3, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.
Minutes

The Area Plan Commission held a regular meeting on **December 3, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Conference Room of the Government Center in Vernon, Indiana.

Those present: President Scott Hurtle, Chad Ebinger, Ray Hughes, Gary Driver, Travis Shepherd, William Wright, Jeff Barger, John Post, APC Attorney Brad Kage, Building Inspector Matt York and Executive Director Cheryl B. Trisler.

The **first item** of business was the reading, correction and approval of the minutes from the November 5, 2012 meeting. After review of the minutes, Ray Hughes made the motion to approve the minutes as prepared. Travis Shepherd seconded the motion. This passed unanimously with 8 members voting in favor.

The **second item** of business was the rezone request of John and Karen Branham. They would like to rezone their property at 225 Jackson St, Vernon from Residential Single Family to Commercial Single Site. They would like to operate at Tea Room at the location.

Commonly known as: 225 Jackson St, Vernon, IN 47282
Map Number: 40-12-11-220-006.000-013
Legal Description: Vernon Pt Lots 27, 28, 29

After discussing the request, Gary Driver made the motion to approve the rezone. William Wright seconded the motion. This passed unanimously with 8 members voting in favor. The Vernon Town Council will hear the request on December 6, 2012.

The **third item** of business was the rezone request of Jennings Water, being represented by Russell Richardson and/or David Beesley. They would like to rezone 0.20 acres from Residential Single Family to Institutional Utility. They would like to build a booster station on the property.

Commonly known as: 3335 N Brush Creek Dr, Butlerville, IN 47223
Map Number: 40-08-22-310-049.001-002
Legal Description: Bu Trickey Pt Lot 7

After a discussion, Chad Ebinger made the motion to approve the rezone of 0.20 acres from Residential Single Family to Institutional Utility. Gary Driver seconded the motion. This passed unanimously with 8 members voting in favor. The rezone request will be heard by the Jennings County Commissioners on December 10, 2012.

The **fourth item** of business was Scott Burgins of Strategic Development Group. He would like to bring the board and the community up-to-date on the progress being made by the Steering Committee on the Jennings County Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Burgins made the board aware of some of the proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan. After the draft has been prepared, there will be a public hearing for the community to voice their opinions on the Comprehensive Plan. The Area Plan Board will make the decision on when the public hearing will be held. No action was taken at this time.

Old Business:

APC Attorney Brad Kage advised the board that he has filed the legal paperwork with the courts against Robert and Wilma Graper. Building Inspector Matt York also displayed current photos of the progress being made.

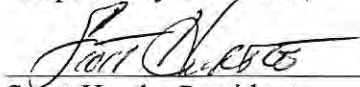
New Business:

Director Trisler gave each board member a copy of the Yearly Income Report for January thru November 30, 2012.

Adjournment:

With no further business to discuss, Chad Ebinger made the motion to adjourn. Travis Shepherd seconded the motion. This passed unanimously with 8 members voting in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Hurtle, President

Jennings County Area Plan Commission



Cheryl B. Trisler, Executive Director

Jennings County Area Plan Commission

Funding Sources

A list of potential funding sources for implementing the Jennings County Comprehensive Plan is shown below.

FUNDING TYPE	FINANCING	ADMINISTERED BY:	WHO QUALIFIES	FUNDING TO BE USED FOR
State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF)	low-interest (2.7-3.95%) loans, 20-year term Note: An additional .50% reduction may be permitted if a non-point-source project is financed along with a point source project.	Indiana Finance Authority SRF	Incorporated cities/towns, counties, sanitary/conservation or regional sewer/water districts Private & Not-for-profit facilities are eligible only for DWSRF loans	Planning/design/construction of Treatment plant improvements Water line extensions Water storage facilities Wetland protection and restoration; On-site sewage disposal; BMP for ag & stormwater; Riparian Buffers & Conservation; Wellhead Protection Planning/design/construction of Treatment plant improvements Sewer line extensions to unsewered Combined sewer overflow corrections
Small Issue Loan Program	low-interest; 10-year term up to \$150,000; reduced closing costs no cost SRF PER review	Indiana Finance Authority	SRF-eligible communities	Any project addressing existing pollution abatement: Wastewater, Drinking Water Non-point source
Arsenic Remediation Grant Program	Grant Program	Indiana Finance Authority	Municipalities, political subdivisions, privately owned Community Water Systems and non-profit Nontransient Noncommunity Water System Must serve less than 10,000 residents	Construction of Treatment Facilities (Precipitate Process, Adsorption Processes, Ion Exchange Processes, Membrane Filtration, Point of Use Devices) Planning & design Activities System Consolidation System Restructuring

FUNDING TYPE	FINANCING	ADMINISTERED BY:	WHO QUALIFIES	FUNDING TO BE USED FOR
Rural Community Assistance Partnership Revolving Loan Fund	short-term financing (\$100,000) for predevelopment costs associated with proposed water & wastewater	Rural Community Assistance	Serve rural areas that aren't located within the boundaries of a municipality with a population of 10,000 or greater.	Existing water or wastewater systems and the short-term costs incurred for replacement equipment, small-scale extension of services, or other small capital projects that aren't part of O&M.
Rural Development (RD)	Grants up to 75% of project cost and loans 40yr term; 4.25-4.5% interest	US Dept. of Agriculture	Rural areas/towns with population <10,000 including municipalities, counties, special-purpose districts, not-for-profit corporations Lower income areas qualify for more grant assistance.	Developing water and waste disposal systems in rural areas
Rural Development Planning Grants	Grants for up to 75% of cost of planning or up to \$15,000 25% match required	US Dept. of Agriculture	Rural areas/towns with population <10,000 including municipalities, counties, special-purpose districts, not-for-profit corporations Must be qualified for the "poverty" bracket - 80% of the statewide nonmetro MHI	Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Planning

FUNDING TYPE	FINANCING	ADMINISTERED BY:	WHO QUALIFIES	FUNDING TO BE USED FOR
Rural Development Community Connect Grant Program	Broadband Grants minimum \$50,000 (no max) matching funds required	US Dept. of Agriculture	Project must: (a) serve a rural area (b) serve one and only one community recognized in latest U.S. census; (c) Deploy Basic Broadband Transmission Service, free for 2 years to all Critical Community Facilities; (d) Offer Basic Broadband; (e) Provide a Community Center with at least 10 computer access points	Establish broadband access to rural communities which are unserved
Community Focus Fund (CFF)	Grants up to \$600,000, minimum 10% local match (\$350,000 for Fire Stations)	Office of Community & Rural Affairs	Non-entitlement cities, towns or counties Must either benefit areas at least 51%+ low-to moderate income OR eliminate slum or blight; cost per beneficiary may not exceed 5000	Projects that contribute to long-term community planning and development Projects that will prevent/eliminate slums or blight, or projects that serve a low to moderate income population Often requires income survey to determine low-income eligibility
CFF Planning Grant	Grants up to \$50,000, \$30,000 (for single utility), minimum 10% local match	Office of Community & Rural Affairs	Non-entitlement cities, towns or counties Must either benefit areas at least 51%+ low-to moderate income OR eliminate slum or blight; cost per beneficiary may not exceed 5000	Planning activities for projects that will prevent/eliminate slums or blight, or projects that serve a low to moderate income population. Planning activities must be completed w/in 12 mos. Often requires income survey to determine low-income eligibility

FUNDING TYPE	FINANCING	ADMINISTERED BY:	WHO QUALIFIES	FUNDING TO BE USED FOR
Watershed Projects Grant (104(b)(3))	Grants 5% local match	IN Dept. of Environmental Management		Projects that lead to the reduction and elimination of pollution, increase the effectiveness of the NPDES program
Flood Control Revolving Fund: Rural Water Supply	Loans up to \$150,000	IN Dept of Natural Resources	Cities, towns, conservancy districts, special assessment districts, with population under 1,250 who have been authorized to maintain/operate the system; entity is unable to borrow funds elsewhere; cannot exceed 2% of assessed valuation	Projects that establish or modernize water supply systems
Public Works & Economic Adjustment Grants	Grants for up to 50% of project costs, 80% if severely distressed; 20-50% match required	Economic Development Administration	Counties, cities, towns, sewer districts Sometimes townships and economic development corporations	Projects the will lead to job creation and retention in severely distressed communities including water and wastewater projects
Industrial Development Grant Fund (IDGF)	Grants (typically \$2,500 per job) Typically not exceed 50% of cost	Indiana Economic Development Corp.	City, Town, County, Special taxing district, economic development commission, nonprofit corporation, corporation established under IC 23-17, Regional water, sewage, or solid waste district, Conservancy district	Construction of airports, facilities, tourists attractions; sanitary sewer lines, storm sewers or drainage; water; roads; sidewalks; rail spurs and sidings; information and high tech. infrastructure; property; surveys

FUNDING TYPE	FINANCING	ADMINISTERED BY:	WHO QUALIFIES	FUNDING TO BE USED FOR
Special Appropriations Projects (SAP)	Grants average award \$2,000 to \$300,000 45% local match required	Congressional Appropriation	Incorporated cities/towns, counties, sanitary/conservation or sewer/water districts qualify for SAP, also known as the State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG)	water, wastewater, non-point source and stormwater infrastructure SRF, CDBG, USDA, RD can be used as local match
Federal Transportation Aid to Local Communities	Federal Aid Approx. \$30M available per year 80/20 match	INDOT	Roadway must be on Federal Aid System Group III Cities & Towns (<50,000, but above 5,000) Group IV Towns (<5,000 population)	Roadway improvements
Hazard Elimination and Safety (HES)	Federal Aid Approx. \$6M available per year 90/10 match	INDOT	Roadway must be on Federal Aid System Group III Cities & Towns (<50,000, but above 5,000) Group IV Towns (<5,000 population)	Safety improvements at Intersections, signage, pavement markings, signal modifications, lighting improvements

AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION



Agricultural land boosts local economies directly through sales, jobs, support services, and businesses such as feed and seed stores, farm machinery retailers, and secondary businesses such as food processing. It also provides stabilizing diversity to the state's economy. Farmland is one of Indiana's most important resources.

Farmland demands fewer public services than residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. This irreplaceable natural resource provides high quality and increasingly popular locally-grown food as well as water filtration, groundwater recharge, floodwater storage, habitat for wildlife and recreation. Maintaining the scenic, cultural, and historic features of agricultural landscapes also preserves a rural way of life and a scenic getaway.

Loss of prime farmland occurs due to a myriad of reasons. According to Rick Chase, Ag and Natural Resources Educator at the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service, the five most common reasons agricultural land is converted to other uses are as follows:

Increased Demand on Land

During the 1990s, population and economic growth in the U.S. stimulated competition for land. This demand has caused increased development pressure on lands previously used for production of agricultural crops, commodities, livestock, or forests. Agricultural land is desirable for building because it tends to be flat, well drained and generally is more affordable to developers than to farmers or ranchers.

Agricultural Business Realities

Farming is a risky business subject to the fluctuations of nature and government policies, and further aggravated by the farmers' inability to set prices for their products. Over time the land owned by farmers becomes their insurance against unplanned events. Land is often used as a hedge against future economic demands, such as those caused by poor health, retirement, or economic recession. This is also one reason many farmers want to retain control over the fate of their private property

Local Zoning Policies

In an attempt to discourage sprawl, many local communities in Indiana have required large lot minimums for residential development. These minimums usually range from five to 40 acres. The intention of these minimums is to discourage homebuilders in rural areas by

requiring the purchase of large lots (5-10 acres in most cases). However, the result is usually the opposite of what is intended. People's desires to build homes in the country outweigh the cost of large tracts of land. So persons who really want only a small tract of land for a home feel forced to purchase a larger tract. The result is often a loss of agricultural land and continuation of sprawl in agricultural areas.

Other Government Policies

Tax policies such as tax abatements for industry, capital gains taxes, and income tax deductions for homeowners contribute to the conversion of farmland to non-farm uses. These policies provide financial encouragement for nonfarm businesses and new homebuilders to invest in new construction.

Highway construction policies can contribute to farmland depletion. The construction of new highways contributes to the loss of much prime farmland. It is more desirable to build roads on flat, productive land than on rocky hills with little topsoil. Highways and interstates also make it more convenient for workers to live farther away from their places of work. Most people want better, more convenient highways, but easy commutes from rural residences to urban centers give homeowners the incentive to live farther away from work.

The building permit and development approval process is often more expensive and lengthy in urban areas than in the rural community. Consequently, land developers are attracted to the plentiful land and fewer regulations in rural counties.

The Desire for a Rural Setting

The rural character of agricultural areas can be attractive to families wanting to escape urban centers. Persons fleeing cities often cite noise, pollution, crime, and weak educational systems as problems that plague urban areas. The rural life is often characterized as slower, more peaceful, and having less pollution and crime. However, as more people move to the country, an increased demand for public services, retail businesses, and more subdivisions often result, thus creating some of the same problems from which people were retreating when they left the cities.



Farmland Preservation Techniques

The issue of farmland preservation is more than preserving farmland – it encompasses the landscape in cities, suburbs, rural communities and transportation zones between town and country. Farmland preservation efforts are destined to fail if they are anti-development or

anti-growth. To be successful, the efforts must preserve prime farmland and direct industrial, residential and commercial growth to areas less suitable to farming.

Techniques for farmland preservation can be implemented in several ways, such as the examples listed below:

1. Enact agricultural preservation programs and policies for agricultural land.

- Assess and document existing or remaining farmland in the county.
- Identify and map agricultural soils and resources in the county.
- Initiate agricultural land mapping and monitoring programs, such as GIS, in order to document the amount of land in farm production and the rate at which it is being converted to non-farm uses.
- Compile and annually track data on the rate of urbanization and the conversion of agricultural land.
- Adopt agricultural zoning ordinances as an appropriate technique for protecting agricultural land. Such agricultural zones would limit non-agricultural development to densities and development patterns that are consistent with the continuation of agriculture.
- Create agricultural zones with minimum lot areas of at least 40 but preferably 160 acres where dense residential development is prohibited.
- Plan and zone for smaller residential lot sizes, townhouses, and apartments within already urbanized areas to increase development density, removing pressure for development on farmland.
- Update zoning and subdivision ordinances to support and encourage conservation design, which allows development and farmland to co-exist.
- Update the comprehensive plan to establish clear goals and policies with regard to community character, agricultural protection, and suburban growth
- Update the comprehensive plan to address the preservation of Agricultural Land and to specify programs and techniques for its protection
- Use the county comprehensive plan to identify agricultural priority areas and other areas suitable for development.
- If applicable, eliminate exemptions from the subdivision ordinances and processes that would result in the division of agricultural land into parcels that are too small for commercial farming.

- Enact enabling legislation to adopt the following programs: Agricultural District Programs, Purchase of Development Rights and Transfer of Development Rights.
 - ✓ Agricultural District Programs are voluntary programs designating special areas for agricultural use only. In exchange for enrollment in the program, farmers receive benefits that vary from state to state. The State of Kentucky has such a program and details can be found on their website at: www.conservation.ky.gov/programs/agdistrict/.
 - ✓ Purchase of development rights (PDR) programs pay landowners for the development rights to their property. An appraisal is made of the difference between the property value as agriculture land and its value if sold for development. The landowner is paid the difference, and the land is permanently protected from development. Several states, including Michigan, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania have these programs. Indiana has adopted such a program, but the funding is limited.
 - ✓ Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs allow the transfer of development rights from one parcel of land (sending parcel) to another (receiving parcel). The sending parcel is then permanently protected by a conservation easement. This shift in land uses allows locally designated growth areas to receive the growth while protecting agricultural lands. Communities will need to identify areas where increased density would be appropriate so that such a receiving zone can be established. In Indiana, TDR's are not widely used.
- Adopt policies and ordinances, such as a right-to-farm law, that recognize prime farmland as an important environmental, economic, and community asset.
- Implement policies to limit premature expansion of urban infrastructure (such as roads and sewers) into agricultural areas.

2. Use development design principles to integrate development with agricultural preservation.

- Direct growth to already built-up areas, where developable land is available, through infill development, brownfield redevelopment, and transit-oriented development.
- Encourage greater housing densities in developed areas with existing infrastructure, ultimately reducing pressure on perimeter agricultural land.
- Develop incentives to encourage development where infrastructure is in place.

- Use clustered designs and conservation development techniques on non-prime farmland in areas where development of agricultural land is unavoidable.

3. Encourage farming practices that sustain the soil, fertility, and environmental quality of the land.

- Practice soil conservation and erosion control to keep fertile soil on the fields. This includes practices such as no-till farming, tilling along contours, and installing windbreaks.
- Reduce the use of environmentally damaging fertilizers and pesticides.
- Install natural buffers and filter strips along water bodies to slow water runoff and filter agricultural fertilizers, pesticides, and other chemicals.
- Practice crop rotation to maintain healthy soil.
- Integrate some natural habitat and wetlands into agricultural land management plans for wildlife protection.
- Practice conservation irrigation (using only the amount of water that is absolutely necessary for plant growth) to conserve groundwater resources.



4. Reduce the incentive for farmers to sell their land by improving the profitability of farming.

- Help maintain the viability of small farms by promoting, marketing, and supporting alternative farming strategies such as specialty and niche farming, roadside stands and markets, organic or other value-added produce, small-scale farming operations, alternative crops, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) operations, which connect local growers to local consumers.
- Encourage local farmers to use state and federal programs that assist farmers who protect natural resources.
- Apply lower property tax rates or tax credits to agricultural land, making agriculture more profitable.
- Work with farmers to discover innovative ways to use farmland for mutual benefit, such as wind farms, bio-fuel production, on-farm composting of municipal yard waste, and irrigation of crops with treated municipal wastewater.



Sources:

Policy Guide on Agricultural Land Preservation, American Planning Association, 1999

Agricultural Land Preservation, Sustainable Development Series, Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission and the Campaign for Sensible Growth, 2004

Agricultural Land Protection in Indiana by Rick Chase, Ag & Natural Resources Educator, ID 225, Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service, 1999

How Important is Central Indiana Farmland?, Compilation of Resources by Shelby County Community Preservation Group

Protecting Prime Farmland in Indiana, by B. R. Wheeler and G. C. Steinhardt, Department of Agronomy; and C. A. Sargent, Department of Agricultural Economics, Purdue University, Agronomy Guide, AY 245

The Deck Is Stacked Against Farmland, by Tom Condon, courant.com, August 31, 2008

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) identifies capital projects (and some major equipment purchases) during a five year period, providing a planning schedule and identifying opportunities for financing the projects in the plan. Capital Improvements Plans coordinate community planning, financial capacity, and physical development.

A CIP typically includes:

- List of capital improvements (projects or major equipment) to be made
- Projects ranked by priority
- Project cost estimates
- Plan for financing the projects
- Schedule for construction or completion of the projects

There are a number of benefits that may be realized from the Capital Improvements Plan process including:

- Coordination between capital needs and operating budgets
- Enhancement of the community's credit rating, control of its tax rate, and stability in debt service obligations
- Identification of the most economical means of financing capital projects
- Coordination of public capital investments with other public and private development initiatives (Massachusetts Municipal Association, 1997)

The process for developing a Capital Improvements Plan varies by community but may include the following steps:

- Establish a capital planning committee (often the department heads or superintendents)
- Inventory existing assets
- Evaluate projects that have been previously approved, are incomplete, or have not been implemented
- Assess the community's financial capacity

- Identify new projects by soliciting and evaluating requests from staff
- Prioritize projects
- Develop a financing plan
- Adopt a Capital Improvements Plan
- Monitor and manage the projects included in the plan
- Update periodically (typically annually)

The inventory of assets should include all buildings and major equipment and, if possible, utilities, roads, and sewers. It should document the need for replacement, expansion, or repair of all physical assets in the community. This is facilitated by documenting the year the facility (or equipment) was purchased or acquired, the date(s) of improvement(s), the condition and extent of use of the facility or equipment, and any scheduled dates for reconstruction, expansion, or replacement (Massachusetts Municipal Association, 1997).

While some communities use specific “grading systems” for establishing the priority ranking of their projects, including cost-benefit analysis is not always necessary. Some priorities are difficult to establish using fixed systems and may not reflect the social or political realities of the community. Nonetheless, establishing a prioritization for projects is important for scheduling and budgeting purposes.

The financing plan should include not only the estimated initial cost of construction, but also estimates of the annual operating and maintenance costs. These represent long-term financial commitments and should be included in the long-term operating budget.

Source: I-69 Community Planning Program Toolbox

CREATING A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Neighborhood associations can be defined as a voluntary association of homeowners and businesses gathered together to protect their property values and to improve the neighborhood. A neighborhood association can build relationships among neighbors, create a unified voice in local government decision making and provide the basis for neighborhood improvement.

Neighborhood associations are different from homeowner associations, where developers create a set of covenants, conditions and restrictions for each lot in their subdivision in addition to common areas in the development. Homeowner associations are generally mandatory for property owners where they exist, and they can be recorded on individual property deeds.

Components of a successful neighborhood association include:

- **Defining Clear Goals & Objectives**

Clearly defined goals promote communication and provide members with direction and a sense of accomplishment. Goals and objectives need to be realistic and attainable.

- **Written Operating Procedures**

To ensure continuity from year to year, especially when officers and leaders change, your association needs to have written operating procedures and policies, such as a set of bylaws. The written procedures should address the purpose of the association, the boundaries it serves, titles and duties of your group's leadership, when and how leaders are selected, frequency of meetings, voting procedures, definition of membership, etc.

- **Democratic Process of Leadership/Officer Elections**

Through the election of officers/leadership, members are able to participate in the development and direction of the association. Election of officers such as president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, also helps to promote officer/leadership accountability to the members.

- **Solid Leadership**

A neighborhood leader needs to have the vision and the ability to build consensus, to delegate duties and authority to others, to encourage neighbor involvement and maximize neighborhood talent.

- **Committees**

Committees allow the neighborhood leadership to delegate issues (identify and research problems and solutions) and meet its goals by involving a number of members. Standing committees, which operate continually, could address key issues such as newsletter and communication, welcome, safety, social functions, etc.

- **Neighbor Input and Involvement**

The key to a vital and active association is members - neighbors involved in their association. A neighborhood association serves as the foundation to bring neighbors together to address neighborhood issues, promote team building, and serve as a vehicle for neighbors to pool their resources and maintain the integrity of their neighborhood.

- **Funding**

Neighborhood associations have expenses and should operate with a budget capable of supporting association goals. Membership dues are the main source of funding for neighborhood associations. The association leadership, specifically the treasurer, should provide a monthly report of the revenues, expenses and balance on hand.

The Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations in Florida suggests the following steps to determine if there is support for a neighborhood association in your area:

1. Inventory the neighborhood – get together with neighbors and friends and form a committee to identify housing, schools, businesses, recreation areas. Determine what can be improved.
2. Find a meeting place and select a meeting date convenient to most.
3. Create meeting announcement flyers and distribute as many places as you can think of.
4. Request articles in local papers announcing meeting.

5. Invite community leaders (both local and surrounding areas), heads of community organizations, House and Senate representatives, police and/or sheriff, city/county department heads, etc who can explain the benefits of an association in your neighborhood.
6. Night of meeting – have your committee set-up tables and chairs; set out refreshments; have greeters at the door with sign up sheets and “interest lists” – put out nametags.
7. Introduce your special guests and have them say a few motivating words.
8. Have audience members introduce themselves (name/occupation).
9. Discuss if there’s a need for an association.
10. Invite questions, comments or concerns from the audience.
11. Invite attendees back to second meeting
12. Thank everyone for coming.
13. Have the committee assist with clean up.

Source: Organizing Neighborhood Associations, Hillsborough County, Florida Office of Neighborhood Relations, 2003 (full text available at www.hillsboroughcounty.org)

DOWNTOWN PLAN / MAIN STREET PROGRAM



Rensselaer, IN Downtown Plan

Downtown plans and “Main Street” programs are similar in that they are plans with specific goals for specialized areas. Downtown plans refer generally to a type of plan that can be prepared by the local planning authority or a consultant. Using a range of approaches, Main Street Programs are more structured and are accredited by a national entity that reserves the right to the name Main Street as a protected brand. Both serve the community for a common goal, and are able to complement each other in revitalizing the downtown area(s).

Problems evolving in many small community downtown’s stem from a number of trends ranging from access and parking, changing roles of the downtown, and the phenomenon of big box retail offering more varieties of goods, to name a few. Historically, downtowns and main streets have been the vibrant centers of many communities. However, when chain stores and strip developments are located on the fringes of a community, these areas suffer. Fueled by the automobile and convenience of the one-stop-shop, many downtowns and main streets have become less competitive for business and a lively citizen presence.

There are many good examples of small Indiana communities such as Madison, Crawfordsville, and Newburg which have revitalized their downtowns through well conceived planning programs.

Downtown plans generally identify ways to revitalize downtowns that have suffered from population and commercial decline. They are meant to be a guide for the future. They promote smart use of existing land, identify area development needs, encourage pedestrian friendly streetscapes, analyze existing traffic and plan for future traffic, and identify methods and incentives to spur growth and revitalization.

General issue categories are usually condensed into unique goals with milestones—based on cost—to reach them (immediate, short-term, long-term). The ultimate goal of a downtown plan is to provide a lasting influence that revitalizes an area to where it becomes self-sustaining.

In addition to making recommendations for physical development, downtown plans may also include an economic analysis of the current conditions. From this they can include

suggestions on how to increase the economic vitality based on community needs or how to institute promotion and marketing programs for the downtown area.

Main Street Programs

Most Main Street programs exist as nonprofit, single-entity organizations, or as a sub-entity of organizations that already have a vested interest in the area in which the Main Street program is to be implemented.

Main Street programs seek to revitalize downtown areas that have lost pedestrian traffic and commercial activity into the sustainable areas they once were. This established process has been distilled into four points:

1. Organization
2. Promotion
3. Design
4. and Economic Restructuring



Mooresville, IN

These four points are further supported by eight principles that guide the implementation of a successful Main Street program. For more information on these principles, as well as the four points and the entire Main Street program visit <http://mainstreet.org/>.

The Main Street program is monitored by a national organization that oversees and accredits all Main Street programs. This allows for a strong network of cities with Main Street programs and provides credibility for the endeavor.

Source: I-69 Community Planning Program

OVERLAY ZONES

An overlay district is a “transparent” zone that lies on top of the existing zoning. It is typically used to add additional design standards or restrictions beyond those required by the existing zoning. Unless specifically modified by the overlay district, development adheres to the base district (existing zoning).

Overlay Districts are used differently in different communities, but they generally are used to unify streetscape and architecture without monotony, control traffic problems and signage, and provide for open space and landscaping. Overlay Districts do not attract development, but they ensure that the development that occurs is higher quality.

An overlay district is usually used when there is a special public interest to be served that does not coincide with already mapped traditional zones. An overlay district may cover parts of several zones or only a portion of an underlying zone. Generally, the underlying zone determines the permitted land uses, while the overlay district restricts the design, requires additional setbacks, or sets into place any other restrictions that meet the district’s purpose. In cases where there is a conflict between the requirements of the overlay district and the underlying zoning, the overlay restrictions apply (Zoning News, 1991).

Overlay districts are most common for:

- Downtown areas
- Historic areas
- Corridors
- Airport development
- Natural resource areas (rivers, shore lines, etc.)

Some of the other types of overlay districts are:

- Transit supportive (or oriented) development
- Infill
- Pedestrian walkability

In some cases the overlay district may reduce the requirements for setbacks, landscaping, or parking to preserve a specific character (such as in a downtown area). An overlay district in some instances will modify the permitted uses of the district in order to preserve or promote the character of the district.

The following can be regulated in an overlay district:

- Lot size
- Accessory buildings
- Building height and area
- Architectural design
- Landscaping
- Storage and loading areas
- Parking
- Lighting
- Signage
- Access points
- Development review procedure
- Land uses



Westbrook, ME Overlay Zone

A local government's authority to create an overlay district is implied in the delegation of the power to enact zoning restrictions and create zoning districts. One purpose of zoning is to ensure consideration for the character of areas and their suitability for conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of the land (Pace, 2001). In Indiana the statutes say that "A geographic area may be subject to more than one (1) district," hence authorizing the use of overlay zones.

Overlay zones are adopted the same as any other zoning amendment. When the text amendment is made creating the regulations for the overlay zone, a map amendment should also be adopted to establish the boundaries for the overlay zone. When an applicant seeks to vary from the requirements of an overlay district, they must apply to the Board of Zoning Appeals for a variance just as they would if they were varying from the requirements of the base district.

Source: I-69 Community Planning Program Toolbox

PARTNERING

Communities can gain many advantages and economies of scale from partnering with other local governments to conduct planning activities and provide certain services. Planning issues do not necessarily follow municipal boundaries. Therefore, planning at a regional level can provide a better picture of issues and result in more effective solutions. Regional planning or partnering provides opportunities to recognize and respond to needs and opportunities in a collective fashion.

Communities are becoming more connected as cities and towns experience growth in and around their jurisdictions. Commute patterns regularly extend beyond where a person lives; and large developments (residential, commercial or industrial) in one area affect the growth and traffic patterns of the entire region. Regional planning or partnering can be an effective way to address these issues at an appropriate scale. Multiple communities' resources are collectively applied for the betterment of the region.

Specific benefits from regional planning or partnering include:

- Economies of scale in providing municipal services such as water, sewer, electric, etc. and sharing revenue.
- Additional resources that may not otherwise be available.
- More effective environmental solutions and management since streams, wetlands, lakes, etc. do not respect political boundaries.
- Educational opportunities from collaboration.
- Clear agreements regarding annexation and municipal services for newly annexed areas.



A local government can manage its own growth and predict the growth around it, but it cannot manage the growth for an entire region. With regional/ intergovernmental planning, the entire region's growth can be planned for and managed more effectively.

Consolidating a Service

Neighboring towns, cities and counties can partner and pool their financial and personnel resources in providing a particular service. For example, a city or town could partner with

the county to provide planning services. The two governments could benefit by hiring one planning director instead of duplicating this service in each government entity.

Many smaller communities cannot dedicate the needed financial resources to planning efforts due to limited budgets. Providing these services could cause a financial burden on the local government, and therefore, planning services might not be offered. Partnering to provide planning, or other, services is an option to provide the service but not create an overwhelming financial burden.

Partnering for a Project

Local governments can also partner for a particular project or planning effort. If both the city and county have a need to update their comprehensive plan, the two individual projects can be combined. Partnering also allows for better coordination between the two entities.

Partnering on a project allows for multiple benefits. By planning on a larger scale, issues that extend beyond an individual city's jurisdiction can be better addressed. Environmental issues such as watershed planning or stream restoration do not stop at a town, city or county border. By allowing multiple entities partner to plan for this issue, the result will be significantly better than if each entity created a separate plan.

By partnering on a particular project, administrative and overhead costs can be decreased. This can lessen the money and time each entity would need to dedicate to the project or allow additional tasks to be completed that would otherwise not be possible. For example, if two communities partner on a plan, then both communities can consolidate steering committee and public meetings, advertising for hearings, reproduction and printing expenses, and the time to coordinate and manage the project. This could decrease the amount of financing each community would have to provide or allow the plan to expand the scope of the plan.

Many communities rely on neighboring cities or towns for various economic needs. Many residents routinely commute out of their own community daily for work or shopping. If a community builds a large regional retail development, it can greatly affect the economic vitality of a neighboring community's small downtown or Main Street. Regional coordination can allow both communities to receive economic benefits.

Intergovernmental Agreements

Indiana Code specifies various requirements for intergovernmental or interlocal agreements. Additional or varying requirements for particular types of projects may apply; refer to IC 36-1-7 for all requirements.

According to Indiana Code 36-1-7-3, interlocal agreements must contain the following:

- The agreement duration.
- The purpose of the agreement.
- The manner of financing, staffing, and supplying the joint undertaking and of establishing and maintaining a budget for the agreement.
- The methods that may be used in accomplishing the partial or complete termination of the agreement and for disposing of property upon partial or complete termination.
- Administration through:
 - A separate legal entity, the nature, organization, composition, and powers of which must be provided; or
 - A joint board composed of representatives of the entities that are parties to the agreement, and on which all parties to the agreement must be represented.
- The manner of acquiring, holding, and disposing of real and personal property used in the joint undertaking, whenever a joint board is created under subdivision (5)(B).

Source: I-69 Community Planning Program Toolbox

STREAM CORRIDOR PROTECTION

A stream corridor is defined as the stream, its floodplains and a transitional upland fringe. The United States has more than 3.5 million miles of rivers and streams that, along with closely associated floodplain and upland areas, comprise corridors of great economic, social, cultural, and environmental value. These corridors are complex ecosystems that include the land, plants, animals, and network of streams within them. They perform a number of ecological functions such as modulating streamflow, storing water, removing harmful materials from water, and providing habitat for aquatic and terrestrial plants and animals.

Stream corridors also have vegetation and soil characteristics distinctly different from surrounding uplands and support higher levels of species diversity, species densities, and rates of biological productivity than most other landscape elements.

Human activity has an impact on stream quality and its ability to function. Industry, agriculture, urbanization and changing land use patterns all contribute to deterioration of important stream elements such as water quantity, water quality, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

Common environmental problems documented in stream corridors can include: eroding stream banks, inadequate stream buffers, exposed pipes, altered stream channels, fish migration barriers, pipe outfalls, in-stream construction sites and trash dumping locations.



Stream corridor protection can take several regulatory and non-regulatory forms. Regulatory forms of stream corridor protection are typically local ordinance measures such as:

- Riparian Buffer Ordinances
- Stormwater Management Controls
- Erosion Control in Subdivision and Site Plan Review Ordinances
- Septic System Standards and Management
- Floodplain protection ordinances

Communities and their residents can undertake non-regulatory stream corridor protection measures such as:

- Building rain gardens in low spots to catch fast-flowing runoff from storms.
- Disallowing leaves, grass clippings, sand, or other debris onto the street and into storm drains, which run into streams and lakes. Yard waste can add nutrients, increase siltation, and carry contaminants such as motor oil to the streams.
- Never pour anything down a storm drain. The water is not treated before it goes into streams and lakes.
- When building, preserve wetlands and trees. Design walkways, driveways, and parking areas with materials that let water to soak through.
- Clean up after pets. Studies using DNA fingerprinting show that high levels of bacteria in some streams and beaches are from animal and not human waste. Much of that waste comes from wild critters such as gulls, geese and deer, but much also comes from pets.
- Don't use chemicals on lawns and open spaces. Excess fertilizer and pesticides wash off the land and into the water that can increase algae in the lake near streams.
- Convince local officials to leave ample waterfront areas undeveloped.
- Plant native plants, grasses, trees and bushes along stream banks. Streams surrounded by a healthy mix of vegetation including grasses, shrubs and trees buffer the effects of surrounding land uses, which might otherwise harm water quality.
- Keep litter out of streams.

Sources:

Stream Corridor Restoration, Principles, Processes and Practices, Federal Interagency Stream Restoration Working Group, 2001

Protecting Our Streams, Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions, 2005

Ten Ways to Protect Lake Superior (or your local watershed), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, 2008

Protect Our Streams brochure, Mid-America Regional Council

Jennings County Comprehensive Plan Public Survey



1. What about Jennings County would you most like to change?

Response
Count

25

answered question

25

skipped question

0

2. What about Jennings County would you most like to protect?

Response
Count

24

answered question

24

skipped question

1

3. Please rank your TOP THREE PRIORITIES to be addressed in Jennings County. Choose from and indicate which issue is (#1) most important (#2) very important (#3) and also important.

Priority Issues

	US 50 North Vernon northwest bypass impact area	Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex (MUTC)	Code enforcement	Country Squi Lakes
Priority #1	20.0% (5)	8.0% (2)	12.0% (3)	12.0% (3)
Priority #2	20.0% (5)	16.0% (4)	24.0% (6)	24.0% (6)
Priority #3	20.0% (5)	28.0% (7)	12.0% (3)	28.0% (7)

4. How would you rate the following Agricultural issues?

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Not a Problem	Uncertain	Response Count
Protecting farmland	12.0% (3)	44.0% (11)	36.0% (9)	8.0% (2)	25
Community support of agriculture	12.0% (3)	32.0% (8)	48.0% (12)	8.0% (2)	25
answered question					25
skipped question					0

5. How would you rate the following Economic Development issues?

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Not a Problem	Uncertain	Response Count
Available land for new industries	12.0% (3)	32.0% (8)	56.0% (14)	0.0% (0)	25
Appropriate infrastructure in growth areas (water,sewer,etc.)	20.0% (5)	64.0% (16)	8.0% (2)	8.0% (2)	25
Utilizing vacant properties	44.0% (11)	52.0% (13)	4.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	25
Adequate available space for smaller businesses	12.5% (3)	41.7% (10)	45.8% (11)	0.0% (0)	24
Improvement of existing Industrial Park	4.0% (1)	52.0% (13)	36.0% (9)	8.0% (2)	25
Access to the existing Industrial Park	8.0% (2)	32.0% (8)	48.0% (12)	12.0% (3)	25
Airport improvements	4.0% (1)	16.0% (4)	72.0% (18)	8.0% (2)	25
answered question					25
skipped question					0

6. How would you rate the following Housing issues?

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Not a Problem	Uncertain	Response Count
Condition of older neighborhoods	32.0% (8)	64.0% (16)	0.0% (0)	4.0% (1)	25
Condition of mobile home parks	60.0% (15)	28.0% (7)	4.0% (1)	8.0% (2)	25
Location of mobile home parks	32.0% (8)	24.0% (6)	32.0% (8)	12.0% (3)	25
Availability of single family homes	20.0% (5)	36.0% (9)	40.0% (10)	4.0% (1)	25
Availability of rental housing	28.0% (7)	36.0% (9)	32.0% (8)	4.0% (1)	25
Availability of housing for seniors	28.0% (7)	36.0% (9)	16.0% (4)	20.0% (5)	25
Availability of multi-unit housing	24.0% (6)	28.0% (7)	28.0% (7)	20.0% (5)	25
Location of residential development	20.8% (5)	29.2% (7)	45.8% (11)	4.2% (1)	24
Recreational opportunities	28.0% (7)	48.0% (12)	24.0% (6)	0.0% (0)	25
answered question					25
skipped question					0

7. How would you rate the following Land Use issues?

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Not a Problem	Uncertain	Response Count
Enforcing existing regulations	44.0% (11)	24.0% (6)	20.0% (5)	12.0% (3)	25
Controlling location of subdivisions	8.0% (2)	40.0% (10)	40.0% (10)	12.0% (3)	25
Controlling look of subdivisions	28.0% (7)	32.0% (8)	32.0% (8)	8.0% (2)	25
Controlling rural and/or on-farm businesses	4.2% (1)	25.0% (6)	50.0% (12)	20.8% (5)	24
answered question					25
skipped question					0

8. How would you rate the following Natural Resources issues?

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Not a Problem	Uncertain	Response Count
Protecting wetlands	8.0% (2)	36.0% (9)	44.0% (11)	12.0% (3)	25
Protecting lakes & streams	8.0% (2)	56.0% (14)	24.0% (6)	12.0% (3)	25
Protecting groundwater	28.0% (7)	40.0% (10)	20.0% (5)	12.0% (3)	25
Protecting steep slopes	8.3% (2)	37.5% (9)	37.5% (9)	16.7% (4)	24
answered question					25
skipped question					0

9. How would you rate the following Transportation issues?

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Not a Problem	Uncertain	Response Count
Bicycle / pedestrian trails	40.0% (10)	32.0% (8)	20.0% (5)	8.0% (2)	25
County road conditions	40.0% (10)	40.0% (10)	16.0% (4)	4.0% (1)	25
City/town road conditions	16.0% (4)	56.0% (14)	24.0% (6)	4.0% (1)	25
Traffic congestion	36.0% (9)	36.0% (9)	24.0% (6)	4.0% (1)	25
Curb and sidewalk conditions	40.0% (10)	40.0% (10)	8.0% (2)	12.0% (3)	25
answered question					25
skipped question					0

10. How would you rate the following Utilities issues?

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Not a Problem	Uncertain	Response Count
Sewage service	20.0% (5)	32.0% (8)	40.0% (10)	8.0% (2)	25
Water service	4.2% (1)	25.0% (6)	62.5% (15)	8.3% (2)	24
Broadband / telecom availability	36.0% (9)	40.0% (10)	24.0% (6)	0.0% (0)	25
Drainage and flooding	4.0% (1)	56.0% (14)	36.0% (9)	4.0% (1)	25
answered question					25
skipped question					0










11. How would you rate the following Quality of Life issues?

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Not a Problem	Uncertain	Response Count
Amount of existing parks and greenspace	12.0% (3)	32.0% (8)	52.0% (13)	4.0% (1)	25
Need for new parks and greenspace	16.0% (4)	20.0% (5)	60.0% (15)	4.0% (1)	25
Need for walking/biking trails	32.0% (8)	44.0% (11)	20.0% (5)	4.0% (1)	25
Sidewalks	24.0% (6)	52.0% (13)	16.0% (4)	8.0% (2)	25
answered question					25
skipped question					0

12. Other thoughts about land use planning:

	Response Count
	14
answered question	14
skipped question	11

13. What part of Jennings County do you consider your home:

		Response Percent	Response Count
North Vernon		60.9%	14
Vernon		4.3%	1
Brewersville		0.0%	0
Butlerville		4.3%	1
Commiskey		8.7%	2
Country Squire Lakes		0.0%	0
Hayden		4.3%	1
Lovett		4.3%	1
Nebraska		0.0%	0
Paris		4.3%	1
Paris Crossing		0.0%	0
Queensville		0.0%	0
San Jacinto		0.0%	0
Scipio		4.3%	1
Zenas		4.3%	1
Other (please specify)			2
answered question			23
skipped question			2

Q1. What about Jennings County would you most like to change?

1	I would like the zoning of my own property upgraded from agriculture to commercial. I live on 5 acres about 500 ft. outside the city limits north on Hwy #7. Part of my property is residential and part of it is agriculture. I think it should all be rezoned to commercial because there are only commercial businesses surrounding me. Looking north on hwy #7 from the 3&7 junction (east side of hwy only) the zoning should all be commercial all the way out to the new bypass. From the 3&7 junction north to the bypass there are 17 property owners. 15 are businesses, 2 are residents. It is time the entire strip was zoned commercial. Thank You, Wayne Stearns	Nov 14, 2012 8:33 AM
2	More semi-skilled workers.	Nov 13, 2012 10:21 AM
3	create more industry	Nov 6, 2012 12:44 PM
4	Downtown and surrounding areas look horrible.	Nov 6, 2012 8:44 AM
5	Business Infrastructure	Nov 6, 2012 8:36 AM
6	COUNTRY SQUIRE LAKES	Oct 30, 2012 3:50 AM
7	Beautify North Vernon. And have APC uphold county ordinances to get rid of the eye-sores.	Oct 24, 2012 6:11 AM
8	zoning	Oct 22, 2012 6:50 AM
9	More job opportunities for the youth of the county to return to.	Oct 8, 2012 12:15 PM
10	Economic Development, we need to land some good paying jobs for the people of jennings county.	Oct 1, 2012 5:44 AM
11	Zoning	Sep 27, 2012 5:41 PM
12	Having places for teens and young adults to hang out! CSL needs big changes! Just like some of the run down places need cleaned up!!!	Sep 27, 2012 11:33 AM
13	Lack of interest in our teens as a whole. Would love to a youth center with mentoring for our teens, activities and positive role models.	Sep 22, 2012 2:43 AM
14	The difficulty of finding jobs and jobs for our youth. It seems like the only places hiring are factories and McDonalds usually employees mostly adults. Our kids have no way of making their money and learning responsibility.	Sep 21, 2012 6:04 PM
15	poverty and drug problem	Sep 21, 2012 10:33 AM
16	Opportunities for youth	Sep 21, 2012 6:58 AM
17	Political corruption and the culture of political influence on the decisions made within the country.	Sep 20, 2012 11:10 AM
18	Poverty, joblessness and sub-par education are paramount concerns.	Sep 19, 2012 9:23 AM
19	Needs more fun activities	Sep 19, 2012 6:14 AM
20	We need more proactive road management, especially for the roads effected by	Sep 18, 2012 11:29 AM

Q1. What about Jennings County would you most like to change?

the bypass. There will be several county and city roads that will see an increase in traffic. For example, CR 200 N from the bypass to the current intersection of hwy 3 & 7 will see traffic from the bypass that doesn't want to go all the way to the north end of the bypass to go to a location south of the north end, such as shoppers to JayC or the new Walmart; Therefore, we need to be more proactive in regards to the increased traffic on such roads or we will have a situation like what we had with Base Rd. when Hwy 3 N was closed earlier this year. Also, if we want to attract industry on the north side of the city, we'll want the roads that will receive industrial traffic from the bypass to the industrial parks and airport to be sufficient for such travel while maintaining safe and quality routes for local travel. And we must not forget about when the current Hwy 50 becomes the "old Hwy 50" and its continued maintenance. Although it will see less traffic, there will still be plenty of traffic, for example, to the schools and downtown; Therefore, there must be comprehensive maintenance plans in place by both the county and city so that this important travel artery will continue to be maintained properly.

21	CSL	Sep 18, 2012 7:38 AM
22	CSL	Sep 18, 2012 7:16 AM
23	Embrace new ideas and growth	Sep 18, 2012 7:09 AM
24	Quality of Life	Sep 18, 2012 6:50 AM
25	close country squire lakes and quit importing poverty into the county. fix the sr 50 and sr 3 & 7 intersection to promote traffic flow. reengineer sr 3&7 north of sr 50 to facilitate safe turns.	Sep 17, 2012 12:42 PM

Q2. What about Jennings County would you most like to protect?

1	I would like to see fewer old run down mobil homes parked all over the county.	Nov 14, 2012 8:33 AM
2	The natural beauty of the area.	Nov 13, 2012 10:21 AM
3	farm land	Nov 6, 2012 12:44 PM
4	Traffic flow and parking.	Nov 6, 2012 8:44 AM
5	various parks	Nov 6, 2012 8:36 AM
6	QUALITY OF LIFE	Oct 30, 2012 3:50 AM
7	Do what you can to keep MUTC thriving.	Oct 24, 2012 6:11 AM
8	pedestrian walkways	Oct 22, 2012 6:50 AM
9	The rural lifestyle of Jennings County.	Oct 8, 2012 12:15 PM
10	The current employers who pay well.	Oct 1, 2012 5:44 AM
11	Downtown buildings	Sep 27, 2012 5:41 PM
12	Downtown area. It's our history!	Sep 27, 2012 11:33 AM
13	Green space.	Sep 22, 2012 2:43 AM
14	Our natural resources and hometown feeling.	Sep 21, 2012 6:04 PM
15	nature and small town hometown feel	Sep 21, 2012 10:33 AM
16	Historical documents, small town community feeling	Sep 21, 2012 6:58 AM
17	Sense of community that has been building within the downtown area while protecting our children from both the influence of life-altering drugs.	Sep 20, 2012 11:10 AM
18	The people! People are what make communities strong. Programs and structures contribute to that only insofar as they help people. When the people are degraded by poverty and unemployment, programs will not help them.	Sep 19, 2012 9:23 AM
19	The nature	Sep 19, 2012 6:14 AM
20	Although the bypass will be beneficial, we must protect our natural and privately-owned social resources. For example, we must keep in mind that although the Selmier State Forest protects wildlife, that same wildlife also needs other, more open habitat such as that adjoining the Forest to the west; Therefore, we should try to maintain as large a distance as possible in order to have such wonderful wildlife for generations to come. Also, in the same area, we can't forget about privately-owned "social resources" such as St. Anne's Golf Course. Golf is probably this nation's largest hobby. Also, imagine the economic benefits it can provide, not so much from the direct sale of memberships, but think about who plays golf and what is next to St. Annes? That's right, those involved in business and the potential for business development. However, such "resources" also help to provide a quality of life that citizens expect from their communities.	Sep 18, 2012 11:29 AM

Q2. What about Jennings County would you most like to protect?

21	Quality of Life	Sep 18, 2012 7:16 AM
22	Natural Resources	Sep 18, 2012 7:09 AM
23	greenspace	Sep 18, 2012 6:50 AM
24	we have little to protect.	Sep 17, 2012 12:42 PM

Q12. Other thoughts about land use planning:

1	When I read the building permits in the newspaper it seems every request to do something simple on your residential property or to develop a piece of commercial property takes a variance to get it done. The ratio of variances to permits seems high.	Nov 14, 2012 8:33 AM
2	grow mutc towards jpg. leave farm ground for farming	Nov 6, 2012 12:44 PM
3	Get serious about improving what Jennings Co. already has and making it nice and not spending new money on new projects until what is there is fixed.	Nov 6, 2012 8:44 AM
4	You need a plan for small business manufacturers i.e incubator system	Nov 6, 2012 8:36 AM
5	MORE LAND WITH WATER AND SEWER AVAILABLE FOR USE.	Oct 30, 2012 3:50 AM
6	Glad North Vernon is addressing water pipe issues. Will solve lots of future problems.	Oct 24, 2012 6:11 AM
7	Continue to improve the quality of life and job opportunities while maintaining the rural lifestyle of Jennings County.	Oct 8, 2012 12:15 PM
8	The balance of jobs per the population makes it difficult for those who want to work to find jobs that are nearby. We also need a youth center so that our kids have safe places to go and have fun! Jennings County lacks in the area concerning our youth significantly!!!	Sep 21, 2012 6:04 PM
9	Jennings County needs a Youth Center and more recreational business opportunities encouraged for families	Sep 21, 2012 6:58 AM
10	Again, the political corruption and "cronyism" aspects of city and county government is a problem. It not only is unfortunate for current residents, but it is bad enough that prospective residents and businesses from locating to our area.	Sep 20, 2012 11:10 AM
11	-The condition of public parks in North Vernon is deplorable, especially for a community that provides little else in the way of public amusement. -The design and flow of the downtown is centuries-old and completely inadequate for modern life. The bypass will help some of those issues, but revitalization is necessary. - The stretch of road from St Vincent Jennings Hospital west to Brookside drive is narrow and lacks sidewalks. There are many children, elderly folks and disable folks that walk or ride this street. THIS HAS TO BE FIXED!	Sep 19, 2012 9:23 AM
12	Needs more and diverse recreational activities for children	Sep 19, 2012 6:14 AM
13	Protect Muscatatuck Urban Training Ctr	Sep 18, 2012 7:09 AM
14	real standards for housing in places like csl, ie outlaw camping out as a housing solution for the poor.	Sep 17, 2012 12:42 PM

Q13. What part of Jennings County do you consider your home:

1	South of Vernon off 7	Oct 24, 2012 6:11 AM
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Q13. What part of Jennings County do you consider your home:

2 Weston

Sep 18, 2012 11:29 AM