

# Town of Hebron, Indiana Comprehensive Plan Update

ADOPTED AUGUST 17, 2010



*Creating the  
Vision for 2030 and beyond*

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**TOWN OF HEBRON**  
INDIANA

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August 17, 2010

To the Citizens of Hebron:

In early 2009, the Town Council requested the Plan Commission to update the *Town of Hebron Comprehensive Plan* pursuant to the requirements of state law.

This document represents a first update of the Comprehensive Plan first adopted in 1996. It contains a Future Land Use Plan Map depicting the pattern of future land use desired by the Plan Commission and Town Council that recognizes the unique history of the Town of Hebron.

This plan update was prepared over the past year with input from a broad array of community representatives. It has been developed utilizing the original pattern of land use established by our town fathers who desired to create a unique small town community. The pattern of streets and residential single-family home building lots shown on the Future Land Use Map originated with the first and subsequent "land subdivision plats" recorded with the Porter County Recorder and incorporated into the Town of Hebron beginning in the late 1800's.

Today's environmental conscious "green" movement is especially important to the future of Hebron. The Plan Commission recognizes the importance of environmental stewardship to the future of Hebron as we seek to preserve the environmental integrity of our parks, open spaces, and sensitive land areas in face of future residential, commercial and industrial growth.

The Comprehensive Plan also recognizes the importance of intergovernmental cooperation. Residents of Hebron rely upon opportunities located in surrounding communities for employment, shopping, health care and many other needs. With this understanding, the Plan Commission respects its role to support and assist in communitywide efforts necessary to support daily needs not only of residents of, and visitors to Hebron, but residents throughout the regional community.

The future of Hebron presents exciting challenges. We believe this Comprehensive Plan Update strikes a balance between the need to recognize and continue the historical single-family community lifestyle established by our Town fathers while encouraging new and upgraded development consistent with future goals and policies set forth in this Comprehensive Plan Update.

On behalf of the Town Council and Plan Commission we would invite your questions and comments.

Don Ensign, President  
Town Council

Scott Sweeney, President  
Plan Commission

# Introduction

## Purpose

A common question is; what is a Comprehensive Plan? And even more specifically, what is the role of the Town Comprehensive Plan?

In general, the Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide land use decisions and provide direction to current and future Plan Commissions, the Town Council and other Town Boards and Committees which will implement it.

The Comprehensive Plan is an “umbrella document,” bringing together plans and studies from other agencies, presenting a coordinated approach to future growth, preservation of areas of specific environmental concern as well as describing land areas needed for future residential, commercial industrial, and recreational development

With this understanding, the Hebron Plan Commission seeks the help and cooperation of its citizens and those interested in participating in the development of the Town of Hebron in implementing the vision set forth in the Plan.

## Planning Process

This Plan was developed with the input and support of many citizens as well as members of a number of Town Council, boards, committees, staff and advisors. The planning process included the following general steps:

1. **Data gathering**, including census, economic, housing, transportation, and other geographic data plus review of existing plans.
2. **Analysis** of existing conditions, trends, and issues from other plans and policies.
3. **Input** from citizens via a web-based survey and a community participation workshop.
4. **Vision, Future Land Use Plan, and implementation strategies** which were subjected to citizen review simultaneously with the Plan Commission review.
5. **Public hearing** held by the Plan Commission on the draft plan.

6. **Plan Adoption by the Town Council** after revisions as deemed necessary by the Plan Commission based on public hearing input and comments.

## Common Themes

Throughout the planning process several overriding themes emerged:

1. **Controlled sustainable growth:** The Plan focuses on extending the historic pattern of development outward from the original town center in a controlled pattern of development that maximizes current and logical future extensions of water, sewer and storm water management infrastructure.
2. **Future uncertainties:** While every effort was made during the planning process to uncover all potential events and actions that might influence the future of Hebron, the Plan Commission recognizes that actions and events beyond the control of Hebron may influence the amount and timing of the growth and development within Hebron. Of specific concern is the possible construction of the Illiana Expressway. Regardless of what alignment chosen this would increase the desirability of Hebron as a residential community and increase opportunities for new business location.
3. **Cooperation with others:** The Plan acknowledges that Hebron depends on other regional communities for certain life-style needs, especially employment. Rather than duplicating efforts, the Plan seeks complementary and cooperative efforts with others to fulfill certain community needs that cannot be supplied alone by Hebron.

## Plan Organization

This plan is organized by subject area. Each chapter, or “plan element”, contains relevant data (gathered from the census and other sources), public input results and discussion of future trends, before presentation of the community vision statement, objectives, and strategies and the Future Land Use Plan. Where appropriate, citation is made to Indiana Code for required elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

## Existing Conditions

### Physical Landscape

The topography of Hebron is highest in the south west quadrant gradually decreasing in elevation almost 50 feet moving in a northern and eastern direction. Major storm water drainage ways, due to this topography (Dog Lake and Henderson ditches) lie at the eastern and western edges of the Town boundary.

### Municipal Infrastructure

Hebron is proud of its infrastructure system which provides services to every area within the Town boundary. The system has been designed with strategically placed locations allowing for extension of the system into abutting land areas designed for future development. However, these systems which are designed to serve a population approximating 4,000 - 5,000 people will need to be upgraded at some point in time to continue the future growth and development envisioned in this plan.

### Transportation

Indiana State Road 2 serves as the major north-south route both for both local and regional commuting use. While street resurfacing is always an on going matter, Hebron has completed or has scheduled resurfacing of all roads needing attention.

The most notable street project is the recently completed State Road 2 improvements that rebuilt the road, added sidewalks and streetscaping.

However, this plan addresses a future need for street access ways parallel to State Road 2 to provide alternate access to abutting residential areas that can also serve as alternatives to reroute traffic in emergency situations.

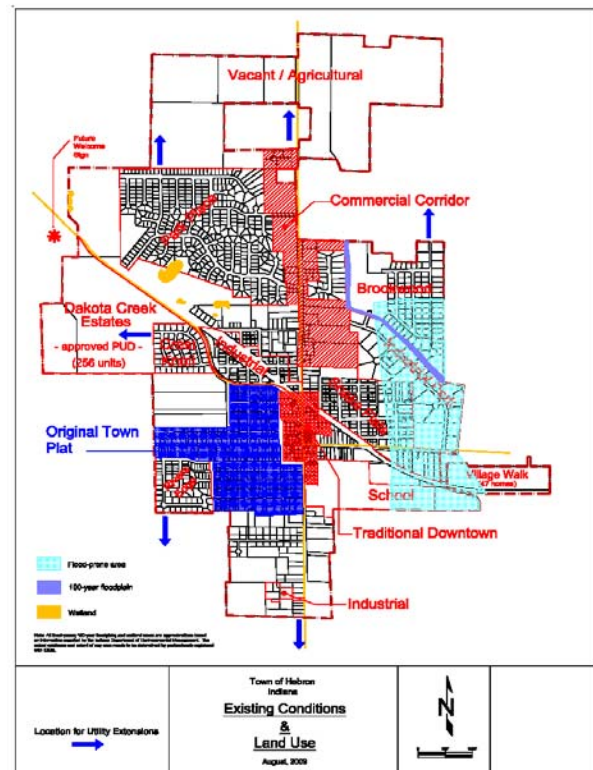
### Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces

Hebron has seven parks easily accessible from surrounding neighborhoods mostly containing playground equipment for young children. The school district and sports complex provide baseball, soccer and football fields for organized sport teams. An active senior center is housed in the community building and there is a walking path on its grounds. Open space and environmental preservation and intercommunity trails and are envisioned for the future.

## Pattern & Existing Land Uses

Hebron can be classified as a true “-traditional neighborhood development (TND)” town characterized by a central business district surrounded by compact residential development. This pattern dates back to Hebron’s founding in the late 1800’s. During the growth years during the 1940 – 1960’s the compact development pattern expanded linearly extending the business district northward. Interestingly, the compact historic pattern of development provides much desired community “walkability.” This easy walk from home to the downtown and linear commercial business district remains today due to the development of close-by residential areas.

This pattern of land use forms the “small-town” character and appeal desired by residents and visitors alike.



### The People Say...

Efforts should be taken to retain Hebron’s small town and suburban character (66% & 85%) while being proactive seeking new development (92%), including offering incentives (56%) and planning infrastructure services for annexing abutting lands for future development (70%).

## Socio Economic Characteristics

### Population

The US Census Bureau estimate there are 3,725 residents living in Hebron today (2009), an increase of 129 since the 2000. While data for 2010 will be available late this year, future population is expected to increase in the future to over 4,000 in 2017 and possibly 8,000 to 10,000 by 2035; 25 years in the future.

Predicting Hebron's future population is most difficult and certain assumptions are made, including the economic recovery reignites home construction allowing Hebron to grow at a faster rate than Porter County and that transportation access from I-65 and the construction of an Illiana Expressway will stimulate a new regional job center close-by.

### Households

Households, an indicator of the number of dwelling units needed to house the projected population will also increase. Historically, in the decade of the '80's and '90's Hebron's household count increase each decade by approximately 200. During 2000 to 2007, the count increased by over 150 households or the equivalent of a "Brookwood" residential subdivision.

Projections indicate that Hebron will need about 1,500 to 2,400 new dwelling units to house its growing population or the equivalent of 10 to 18 new "Brookwood" single-family residential subdivisions in the future.

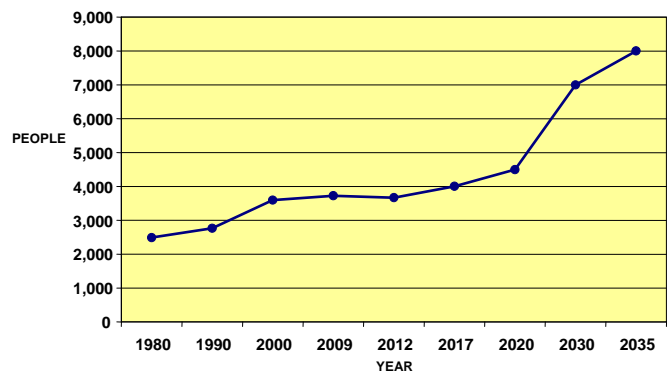
### Jobs and Employment

In good times, Hebron had a workforce about 1,500 people with 20% working in Hebron. A majority of Hebron's workforce travels to other communities throughout the regional area, with 45% of the workforce traveling from 15 to 30 minutes to their jobs. Interesting a rather large number, 25%, travel more than 45 minutes for work.

These journey-to-work travel times demonstrate the importance of job growth and employment opportunities within the regional area to Hebron residents.

The Town of Hebron and its Redevelopment Commission have successfully developed and continue to market the Hebron Industrial Park, in an effort to provide employment opportunities for its residents.

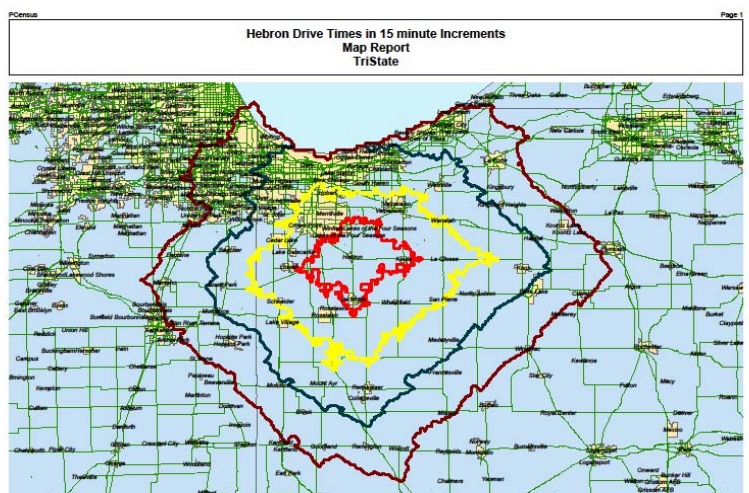
POPULATION GROWTH 1980 - 2035



### *The People Say...*

Hebron should promote commercial (94%) and industrial (74%) development opportunities that will create jobs by providing more land for industry (62%) and other businesses (86%). While there is strong agreement to preserve the historic "Old Town Indiana" character of the downtown (67%), efforts to encourage additional locally owned retail business (94%) should be pursued including hiring someone to actively recruit new businesses to locate in the downtown (54%) with the objective of anchoring the downtown with a "major business" (81%). Use of Redevelopment Commission funds to aid in building façade improvements should be considered (64%)

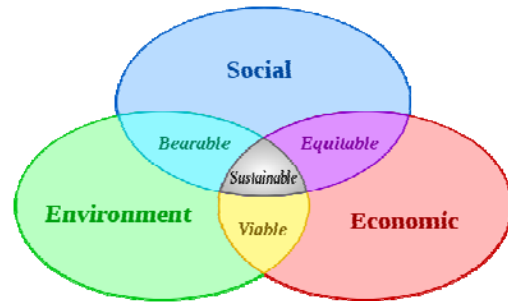
*I feel the future of Hebron relies mostly on attracting businesses that will provide jobs for the local residents and to draw more people to the community...from a survey respondent.*



# A Sensible and Sustainable Future Growth Plan

## *The People Say...*

Only a small portion of residents feel Town leaders have an understanding and a plan for the future (21%), thus prompting the preparation of this Vision for Hebron's future and the update of the Comprehensive Plan.



## Creating the Plan

The concept of “sensible and sustainable growth” began in the 1980’s as a means to bring together two compatible but different ideas; first, the need for sound planning for decisions about future growth; second, the application of common sense to many development issues facing communities today.

A sustainable Future Growth Plan is one that *“meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”*

With this understanding, Hebron can make decisions that not only “make sense” from a community needs perspective today but also considers the impact of today’s decisions upon the future social, environmental and economic needs.

## Applying Smart Growth Principles

There are commonly held principles to be employed to achieve a sensible and sustainable Future Growth Plan, all which have been considered by the Plan Commission in preparing the Comprehensive Plan Update:

1. Compact, contiguous growth.
2. Redevelopment of built-up areas and infill locations.
3. Encouragement of mixed-uses.
4. Providing travel choices.
5. Protecting natural resources.
6. Creating a range of housing choices.
7. Creating livable neighborhoods.
8. Promoting economic development.
9. Creating affordable growth.

## Creating an Affordable Growth Plan

While a portion of the cost necessary for future development will come from sponsors of future development, some costs of future growth will be born by the Town of Hebron. It is the responsibility of Plan Commission to carefully balance the amount and timing of future development with the ability of Town of Hebron to finance required services, especially extensions and improvements of municipal infrastructure.

This Plan incorporates compact and contiguous growth, the lowest cost pattern of future development.

## Annexation and Future Growth

Annexation, the process where Hebron can expand its territorial boundary is clearly part of future growth. There is an underlying policy that abutting lands needing municipal utilities will be annexed and the size of the Town of Hebron will increase in the future.

## Promotion of Economic Development

Employment options and the available quality of life drive the vigor and economic vitality of the community.

This Plan recognizes the importance of identifying land areas for new retail, office and other commercial and industrial uses for promotion by the Redevelopment Commission to increase job opportunities and Hebron’s tax base as well as increase patronage of downtown businesses.

## Governance and Services

### Participation and Involvement

Over the past year, hundreds of people in the Hebron community have been taking about the future...asking what it will be and what plans do we have for it.

Even faced with uncertainties of a recessionary economic recovery and divergent priorities of what is important to Hebron's future, the Plan Commission has worked toward unified solutions that are believed to be the best direction for future growth and development.

Activism and involvement are the lifeblood of good governance and necessary for successful implementation of this Plan.

### *The People Say...*

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Residents (84%) feel they have an average to very good understanding and awareness of community affairs, mostly from "word of mouth" communications (74%) and visits to the Hebron web site (50%). Understandably, the role of the Town Council is well understood (67%), with less understanding of the role and duties of the Plan Commission (19%) and Redevelopment Commission (43%).

Some believe there is a need for better communication between the Town Council and residents (47%) and most (73%) admit to having no knowledge of the Comprehensive Plan.

### Nurturing Future Leaders

The statement "*our youth is our future*" is a common theme in every discussion about the future of Hebron. Efforts to involve young people at an early age who will become future Town leaders, as expressed by the Plan Commission and Town Council "*is one of our most important goals as governmental leaders*".

### *Our Youth Say...*

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A group of middle and high school leaders were gathered to discuss Hebron's future. After schooling to become a plumber, dentist, biologist, doctor, musician, sport announcer, etc., all but two said they will reside in, or around, Hebron probably in recognition of their statement that "Hebron has a very good quality of life" and "good to very good schools". They say - Hebron has "just about enough of everything", "I feel safe here", "the people know everyone", "we can walk to everything", we have

small school classes", "we like our rural small town landscape", being cited as a few of Hebron's desirable characteristics.

While liking the smallness, growth is needed - small locally owned shops, the Town Center, more jobs, a "place for teens to 'hang-out'" and recreational trails were mentioned.

### Hebron Town Services

From public safety, to refuse collection to providing parks, citizen give above average high marks to services provided and friendless and helpfulness of Town staff. Street conditions, storm water drainage, refuse collection and street lighting rated best. Nuisance abatement, zoning and code enforcement rated lowest.

## Quality of Life

### *The People Say...*

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Overall, a vast majority (79%) say Hebron merits a very good to good grade as a place to raise children with a clear majority rating the schools and overall quality of life in Hebron as good to very good. Needing attention are social activities, medical services and personal shopping needs.

## Town Hall Campus Project

In 2004, a study commission by the Town Council offered the recommendation that a multi-purpose Town Hall Campus project be undertaken to house a variety of services in a community meeting and recreation center.

### *The People Say...*

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Action to plan this project should be done (66%) and include a Town office & police station (75%), meeting rooms for community group use (75%), swimming pool & fitness center (58%), home for the Chamber of Commerce (58%) and home for a YMCA (53%).

Survey respondents said the Town Hall Campus could be placed at the community center (29%) or be located at the north end of Town (20%) or lastly at the present site of the Town Hall (18%), with no overwhelming preference indicated throughout the planning process.

## Hebron's Vision of the Future

### Defining the Future Vision

The term "vision" as used in this context, is a broad statement that expresses a consensus regarding what the Town of Hebron should be like in the future. As such, the vision addresses issues of visual character and community aesthetics as well as population and economic growth and prosperity. It also addresses non-visual issues such as what one will experience living in the community, local philosophy regarding quality of life and how various components of the community interact with one another.

In other words, the Vision for the Future, seeks to place into words the collective opinion of the community for the pattern of land uses desired in the future including public services supporting the living environment and community social activities desired by Town residents and visitors.

### The 2030 Vision Statement

#### Statement of Objectives for Future Development

(I.C. 36-7-4-502 (1))

*In 2030 Hebron is predominately a single-family home community proud of its history and traditions communicated through it's "Pioneering Spirit" shown both its architectural appearance and family orientated social values serviced by a vibrant downtown comprised of locally owned businesses patronized by residents within walking distance living in surrounding defined neighborhoods and where a majority of the workforce is employed within a short commute to jobs within Hebron and in surrounding close-by communities.*

#### The People Say...

We have many of the same goals, ideals and vision for the future.....a consensus statement of 50 plus people participating in the public workshop future planning exercise.



## Policies and Strategies

### "Carrying-Out" The Vision Statement

The following policies and strategies have been identified as the means to achieve the desired end-state of the Town of Hebron based on the 2030 Community Vision Statement. The 2030 Vision is a broadly stated goal or objective that describes what Hebron "seeks to achieve in the future". Policies provide clear guidance for decision-making indicating the Town's direction to achieve the 2030 Vision Statement. Strategies provide guidance on "how Hebron intends to accomplish each policy".

### Policies for Land Use Development

(I.C. 36-7-4-502 (2))

#### **Policy 1 – Community Character**

Assure an attractive and distinctive community with a thriving central business district surrounded by residential neighborhoods.

#### **Strategies:**

- Create regional identity and recognition as a desirable place to live, shop and conduct business based on the theme "Pioneering Spirit".
- Support commercial development that serves both resident and visitor needs.
- Participate in intergovernmental collaboration and coordination necessary to fulfill the objectives of the Vision Statement.
- Promote new development that respects the natural environment, takes advantage of incremental utility system expansion and promotes "walkability" between neighborhoods and commercial businesses.
- Ensure cost efficient necessary municipal supplied services.

#### **Objective 2 – Residential Land Use**

Assure attractive and safe residential neighborhoods with close-by access to park and recreation activities that also provide a range of housing types and choices.

#### **Strategies:**

- Acknowledge and preserve "historic" older residential neighborhoods.
- Encourage high-quality, well-designed residential developments having a wide variety of housing choices.
- Consider increased density for residential and mixed-use developments sited within walking distance of the commercial corridor.



### **Objective 3 – Economic Development**

Assure current and future viable commercial and other business districts that serve the needs of residents and visitors alike while enhancing tax base.

#### **Strategies:**

- Empower the Redevelopment Commission with downtown, commercial and industrial development expansion and promotion duties supplied with sufficient planned and zoned land areas for future needs.
- Collaborate with others establishing regional job centers that will provide employment for Hebron residents.

### **Policies for Development of Public Places, Lands, and Structures**

(I.C. 36-7-4-502 (3))

#### **Objective 4 – Park, Recreation, Open Space, Trails and Public Structures**

Assure a supply of parks, recreation facilities, dedicated open space, and a regionally interconnected trail system that provides a range of recreational opportunities and enhances the overall community image and quality of life experience.

#### **Strategies:**

- Designate a multi-purpose walkway and trails system with interconnections to regional systems.
- Empower the Parks and Recreation Board with facility maintenance and long-ranged planning responsibilities.
- Pursue with county and regional agencies, a regional recreational facility along the Kankakee River.
- Implement the “Hebron Town Center” project, by formation of a special study committee to determine location, size, and activities to be housed.



### **Policies for Development of Public Ways and Utilities**

(I.C. 36-7-4-502 (3))

#### **Objective 5 - Transportation**

Assure the provision of a safe and efficient street and road network that provides movement of vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists throughout Hebron and the region.

#### **Strategies:**

- Support construction of the Illiana Expressway and early alignment determination for southern Porter County.
- Maintain street surfaces including new street connections that provide SR 2 parallel north-south passageways.
- Support regional public transit connections to job centers located in remote regional locations.

#### **Objective 6 – Municipal Supplied Utilities**

Assure that municipal supplied utilities, water, wastewater and storm drainage are sufficient for current needs and are incrementally expandable to serve future needs.

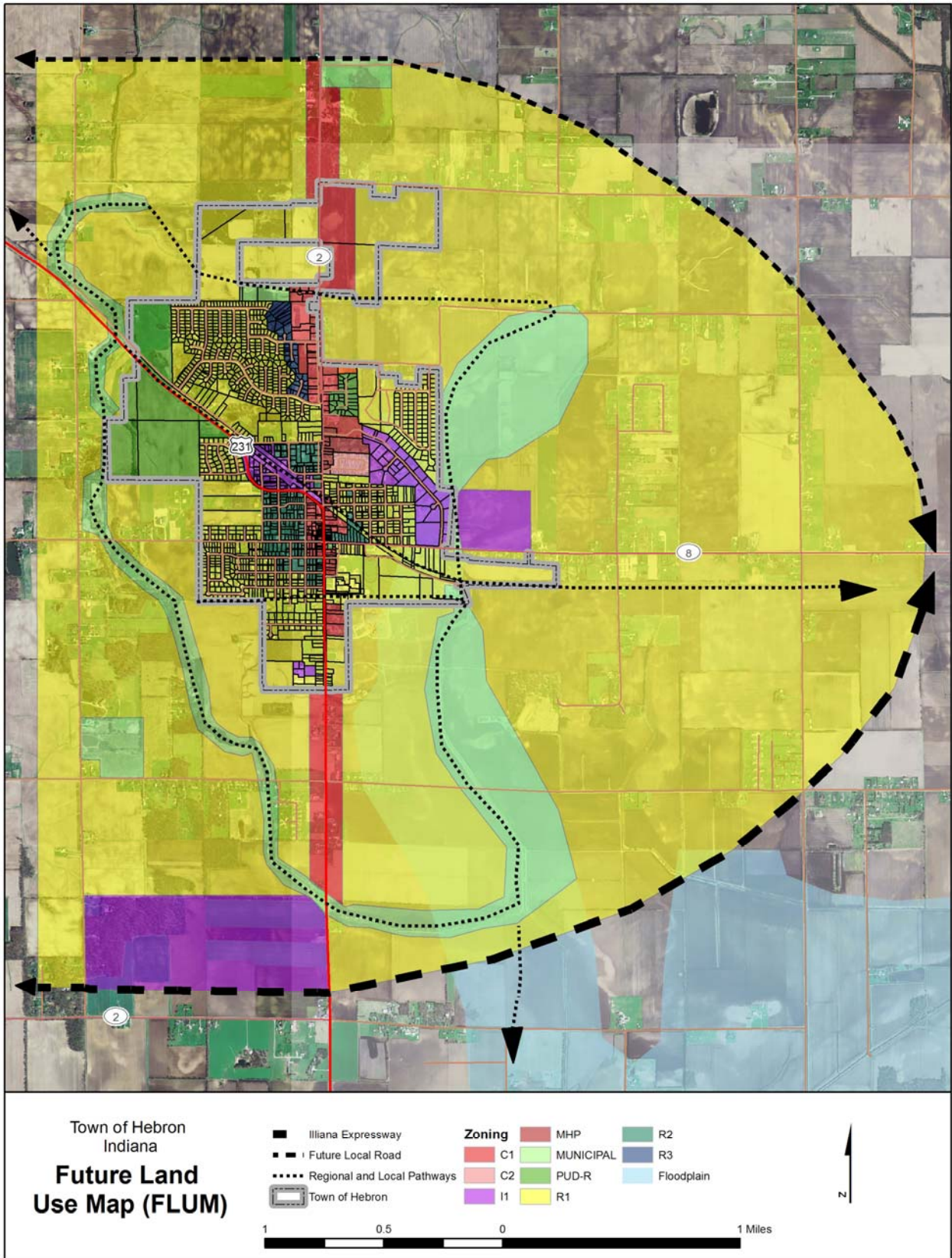
#### **Strategies:**

- Engage in future utility planning necessary to time installation of utilities with projected population growth.
- Establish short and long term capital improvement schedules for required municipal utility investments.

### **FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

(I.C. 36-7-4-503 (3))

The Future Land Use Plan Map on the following page is a graphic representation of the 2030 Vision Statement, objectives and strategies and other recommendations of this plan. It shows the location and uses of land, transportation improvements, public buildings and structures, parks and open spaces. A larger scale map is available for viewing in the Town Hall.

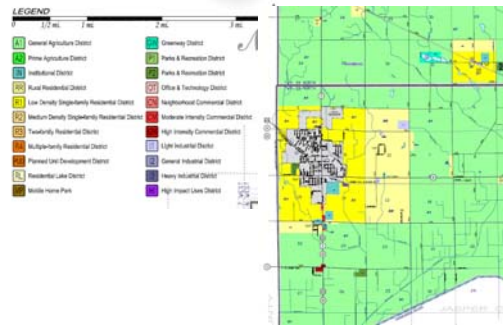


# FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

## Porter County, Indiana

PORTER COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION

This is an official map for the Porter County Plan Commission, adopted on June 15, 2010, and was developed in the Town of Hebron, Indiana, in 2010. It is a public document and is the property of the Porter County Plan Commission. It is not to be used in any way that would imply endorsement or approval by the Porter County Plan Commission. It is not to be used in any way that would imply endorsement or approval by the Porter County Plan Commission. It is not to be used in any way that would imply endorsement or approval by the Porter County Plan Commission.



### Regional Context

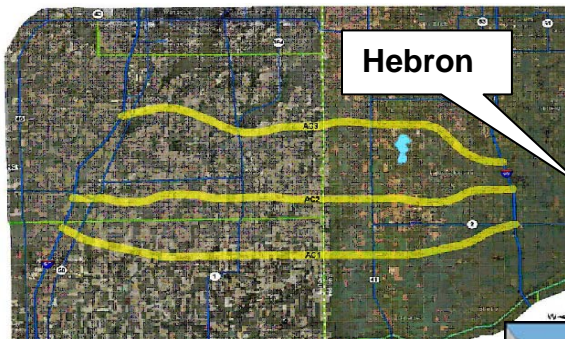
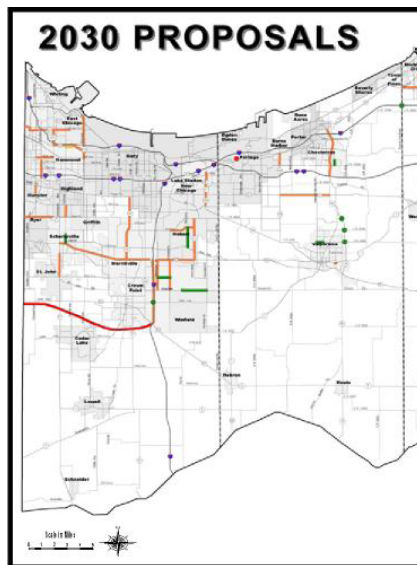
Future growth of Hebron contemplates annexation of land now being guided by the Porter County Plan Commission. This Plan recognizes and implements the work of the County Plan Commission shown in the County Commissioners adopted 2020 Land Use and Thoroughfare Plan, characterizing Hebron as part of “small town urban fringe development” having a county gateway entry from I-65.

### Major Influencers

Hebron’s future is interrelated with several future decisions, the most important being construction of the Illiana Expressway, which NIRPC transportation planners have scheduled in their 2030 Transportation Plan, the Regional Development Authority proposed “New Start” commuter rail line servicing Cedar Lake/Lowell and Valparaiso, the extension of Veterans Memorial Bike Trail from Crown Point to Hebron with the American Discovery Trail, and future construction of the Veterans Memorial rail-to-trail project. These improvements will increase the desirability of Hebron as a place to live.

### How the Plan was Prepared

On May 12, 2010, over 50 people gathered together to discuss the future of Hebron. With facilitation services of NIRPC staff, small groups discussed input data, established future growth policies and “literally mapped out” where future development should take place. After three hours of small work group discussions and formal presentations of their work to all attendees, a clear pattern of future land uses desired by those in attendance emerged.



The Hebron Redevelopment Commission, in its role to promote future economic development opportunities benefiting Hebron, has studied the need for and optimum location of a new major regional job center. They recommended a new job center be developed requesting the Plan Commission inclusion of their preferred site, shown on the Future Land Use Map.

The Plan Commission has consolidated this information using the “mapping” and recommendations to produce the Town of Hebron Future Land Use Map.

## Implementation

### Legal Function of the Plan

Indiana Code, Section 36-7-4-504 states, *“that after the comprehensive plan is approved for a jurisdiction, each governmental entity within the territorial jurisdiction where the plan is in effect shall give consideration to the general policy and pattern of development set out in the comprehensive plan”*.

Specifically Indiana Code addresses:

- Location of utilities.
- Construction of public building.
- Development & use of public lands.
- Sale & transfer of public lands.
- Zoning & land use ordinance administration.
- Subdivision & annexation approvals.

While the Comprehensive Plan has taken a long-ranged look at the future examining the physical systems needed throughout the entire geographic area that will likely become Hebron in 2030, is also provides the legal basis for the implementation of land use regulations and provides coordination and guidance to implement the Vision.

### Guide for Decision Making

The Hebron Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for land-use decision making and a framework for decisions that will impact the future growth of Hebron while maintaining and enhancing the quality of life.

### Strategies May Change

Because not all strategies can be implemented at once and some specific actions may change as detailed action plans are developed, this Comprehensive Plan must be viewed as a living document, subject to changes and modifications over time. Obviously the most important unknown variable is financial; gathering sufficient resources to implement specific strategies.

Achieving the Vision of Hebron for the year 2030 will take major commitments from Town leaders, strong public/private sector cooperation, access to state and federal financial resources and input and assistance from Hebron residents.

While the final shape, form and scale of future development is yet unknown, it will eventually be refined implemented by the Plan Commission and Town Council under the watchful eye of the citizens of Hebron.

#### Town Council

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