



Strategic Investment Plan

WOODBURN INDIANA

2016

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN for WOODBURN, INDIANA

2016

CONTENTS:

Plan Overview	1
Community Background	2
Community Assets	7
Public Facilities & Services	10
Contextual Research	14
Public Input	16
Action Plan	18

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Community Planning Oversight Committee

Jason Bridge
Dean Gerig
Kevin Heckly
Joe Kelsey, Mayor
Carol Martin
Mike Martin
Lynn Rorick

Other Key Stakeholders

Allen County Capital Improvement Board
Allen County Commissioners
Allen County Council
Allen County Department of Planning Services (DPS)
City of Woodburn
Greater Fort Wayne, Inc. (GFW)
NewAllen Alliance
Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC)
Woodburn Association
Woodburn Chamber of Commerce

Prepared By

Sturtz Public Management Group



PLAN OVERVIEW

The purpose of the *NewAllen Alliance Strategic Investment Plan* (SIP) is to develop a collaborative strategy toward retaining and attracting high-quality jobs to the participating NewAllen Alliance communities of East Allen County, Indiana, including: Harlan, Hoagland, Grabill, Leo-Cedarville, Monroeville, New Haven, and Woodburn. This has been accomplished through the following efforts:

1. Providing a roadmap for the communities to use toward creating an environment for future economic development to occur;
2. Guiding the alignment of the investment of time, talent, and treasure toward common goals for the communities; and
3. Building the capacity for engagement between the communities and organizations that provide community and economic development services within Allen County.

As a product of this initiative, each community will receive a sub-plan such as this tailored to their specific needs and desires. In addition, the overarching investment plan will provide recommendations and resources to aid in the overall collaborative strategy. With the assistance of Sturtz Public Management Group (SturtzPMG), the *Woodburn Strategic Investment Plan* (Plan) was spearheaded by the Woodburn Community Planning Oversight Committee (CPOC), comprised of members of the Woodburn community, with support from the NewAllen Planning Oversight Committee (NewAllen POC), consisting of regional stakeholder representatives and the CPOC.

In late November 2015, a “kick-off” event was held for presenting an overview of the project and the expected outcomes. Between December 2015 and March 2016, SturtzPMG met and regularly communicated with the CPOC, performed stakeholder interviews, conducted a public input workshop, distributed service provider questionnaires, and developed and distributed a community attitude survey. Area demographic, housing, and economic data was also collected to provide additional context to the strategic planning document.

Subsequent meetings were held with the NewAllen POC and CPOC to provide feedback on the information collected, and to discuss the goals and strategies that were later developed into a recommended plan of action. The Plan was then finalized and approved for the NewAllen Alliance and the participating communities to use as a tool for the implementation of strategies toward continued economic development and an improved quality of life. The plan was presented to the Woodburn City Council on September 6, 2016 and approved by resolution.

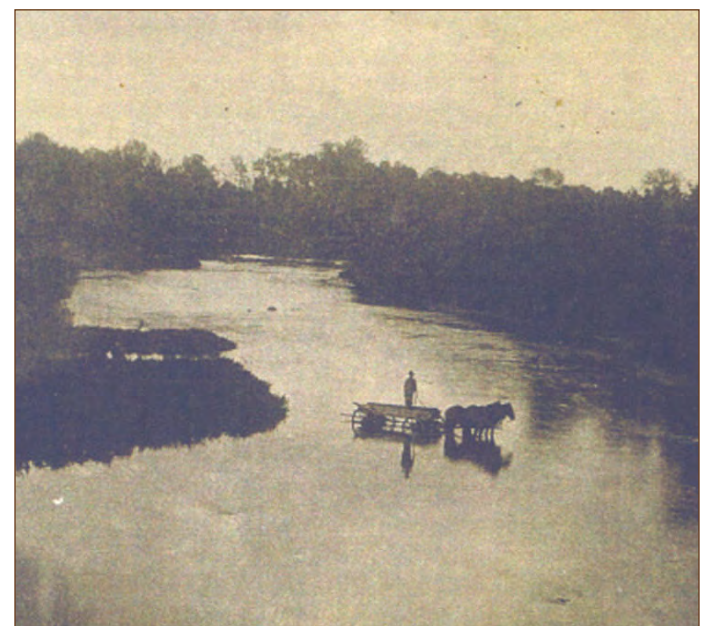


WOODBURN, INDIANA is located in the northeastern corner of the state, a region with a population of nearly 700,000, and within a two-to-three hour drive from major Midwest cities such as Chicago, Detroit, and Indianapolis. Situated along State Road 101 and US 24 on the eastern edge of Allen County and near the Ohio state line, it is approximately seven miles east of Fort Wayne, Indiana's second-largest city.

In 1921, public library services began in Woodburn, and in 1926, a large addition was added to Woodburn's school. In the mid-twentieth century, Woodburn continued to expand through a series of annexations including the Sunset Subdivision and Meyer Addition. At about this same time, Shirley City ceased to exist. Due to the consolidation of the Maumee and Milan Township school systems, Woodburn High School was expanded in the mid-1950s to accommodate more students, followed by the construction of a new school, Woodlan High School, located west of the city in 1958. Adding to the local economy were Woodburn Diamond Die and the B.F. Goodrich tire plant, two corporations that are still in operation.¹ B.F. Goodrich is currently one of the largest employers in Allen County, with a workforce of 1,580 as reported by the IPFW Community Research Institute (CRI).

In the late 1990s, Woodburn built an industrial park on the town's northeast side along State Road 101. In 2012, the long-planned "Fort-to-Port" project was completed which expanded US 24 to a four-lane, limited access highway connecting Fort Wayne, Indiana, to Toledo, Ohio, and added an interchange adjacent to Woodburn's northern corporate boundaries near the Woodburn Industrial Park. As a result, Woodburn has experienced significant growth in the area around the interchange and within the industrial park, a trend that is expected to continue.

¹John D. Beatty and Delia C. Bourne, "Maumee Township & Woodburn," in *History of Fort Wayne & Allen County: 1700 to 2005*, ed. John D. Beatty (Evansville, IN: M.T. Publishing Company, Inc., 2006), 529-531, 533-538.



Maumee River near Woodburn. The picture depicts a team and driver fording the river at a shallow point near Bull Rapids.
Source: Woodburn Historical Society

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

History of Community

Woodburn, Indiana, located in Maumee Township, was platted in 1865 by Joseph K. Edgerton and Joseph Smith. Originally called "Phelps Station," the town was strategically located to take advantage of the nearby Wabash & St. Louis Railroad line as Edgerton had interests in large sections of the forested land which he cut, sawed into lumber, and shipped by rail. To assist this operation, he built two sawmills and a stave factory, turning a profitable business until a forest fire in 1871 destroyed much of his holdings, and halted Woodburn's progress as a town. Swamps and marshland grew in, impeding settlement and agricultural development, until a network of drainage ditches was constructed over the course of 15 years to free up thousands of acres of rich farmland.

Following Edgerton's death in 1893, his land holdings were sold off, leading to settlement by new families. Woodburn grew quickly, becoming an important shipping point for grain and lumber, sparked by the Woodburn Milling and Elevator Company and the Woodburn Lumber Company. In 1895, Otto Knoblauch divided a large tract of his land, adding two separate additions to Woodburn. Shortly afterward, William Gernhardt platted 23 lots, known as 'Shirley City,' next to Woodburn, a move viewed as a reflection of the factionalism between the Mennonites and German Lutherans in the community. At this same time, a new public school opened in Woodburn, sparking a debate between the two sides about its ownership. After the conflict was resolved, a new combined grade school and high school, under Woodburn's jurisdiction, was constructed in 1912. Opening at about this same time were several businesses with enduring histories including the Woodburn Brick and Tile Mill, Stucky Brothers hardware store, Fuelling Drug Store, the Brenneke Store (dry goods), and the Woodburn Equity Exchange.



Woodburn Community Park

Community Leadership

Woodburn is an incorporated, third-class city led by an elected Mayor, Clerk-Treasurer, and five-member City Council. Woodburn also has a Board of Works. However, the Allen County Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals each act on behalf of the City as guided by the Plan-it Allen Comprehensive Plan and the City's zoning ordinance. The City also has collaborated with the Allen County Redevelopment Commission toward the development of a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district that includes the US 24/SR 101 interchange, Woodburn Industrial Park, and downtown Woodburn. City operations are conducted through the various departments including Police, Utilities and Administration. Services related to fire, EMS, and parks and recreation is provided by Maumee Township.

Community efforts are supported by the Woodburn Chamber of Commerce, a business league whose purpose is to promote economic development for the benefit of the Woodburn community while also providing services and strategic partnerships to its members. The Woodburn Association, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, acts as an agent to receive financial contributions for local projects, while Woodburn Main Street, formed in 2013, coordinates downtown revitalization efforts.

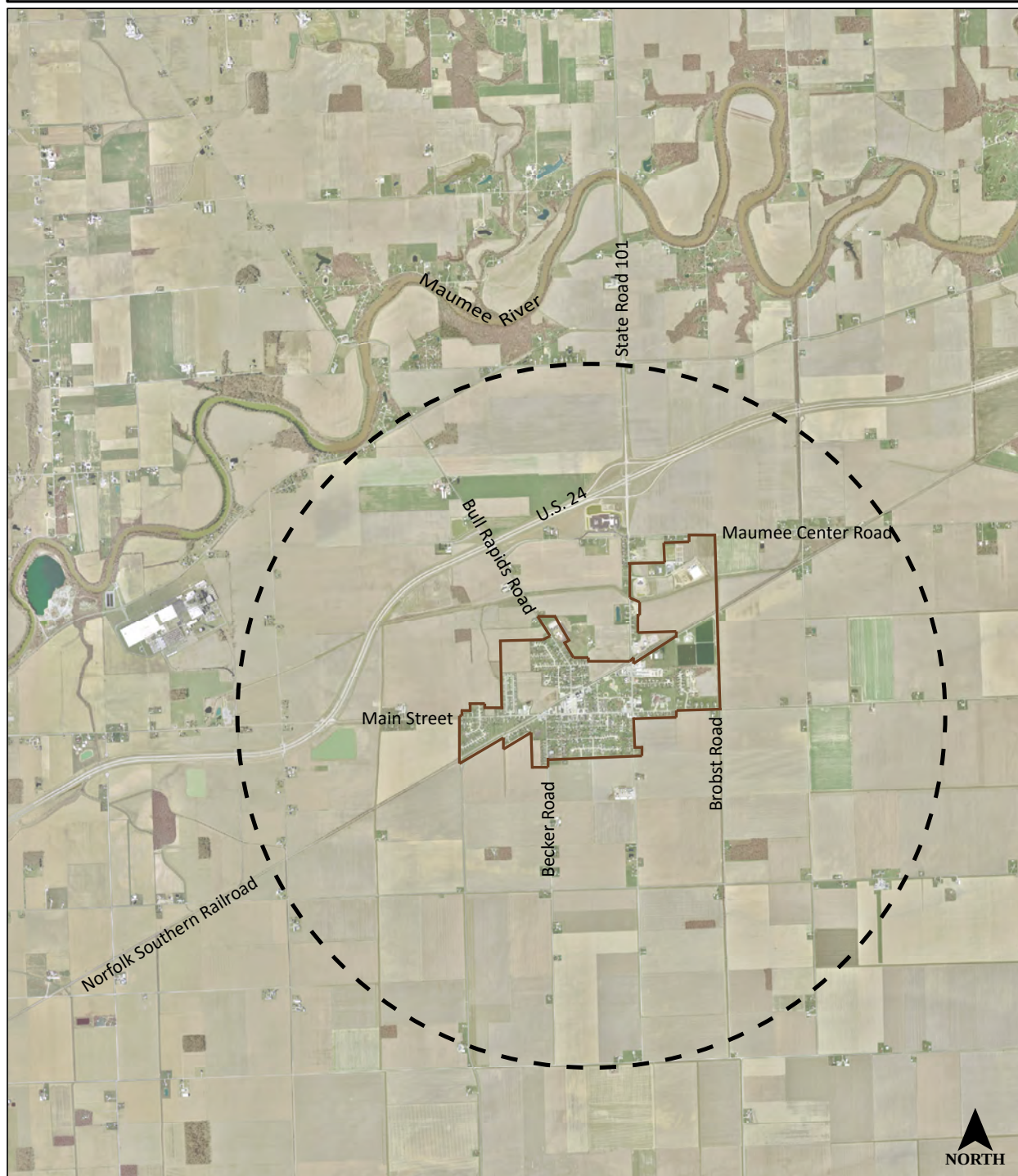
Planning Efforts

Existing plans were referenced that support the development of this Plan including: *Plan-it Allen!* (2007), the combined Fort Wayne and Allen County Comprehensive Plan which includes the City of Woodburn; the *Woodburn Strategic Plan* (2013), the *Woodburn Downtown Revitalization Plan* (2013), the *Wastewater Utility Study for the City of Woodburn* (2015), the *NewAllen Alliance Organizational Action Plan* (2014), the *Maumee Township Parks and Recreation Board Five-Year Park and Recreation Master Plan 2015-2019* and the *2035 Transportation Plan* (2013) by the Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council.

Study Area

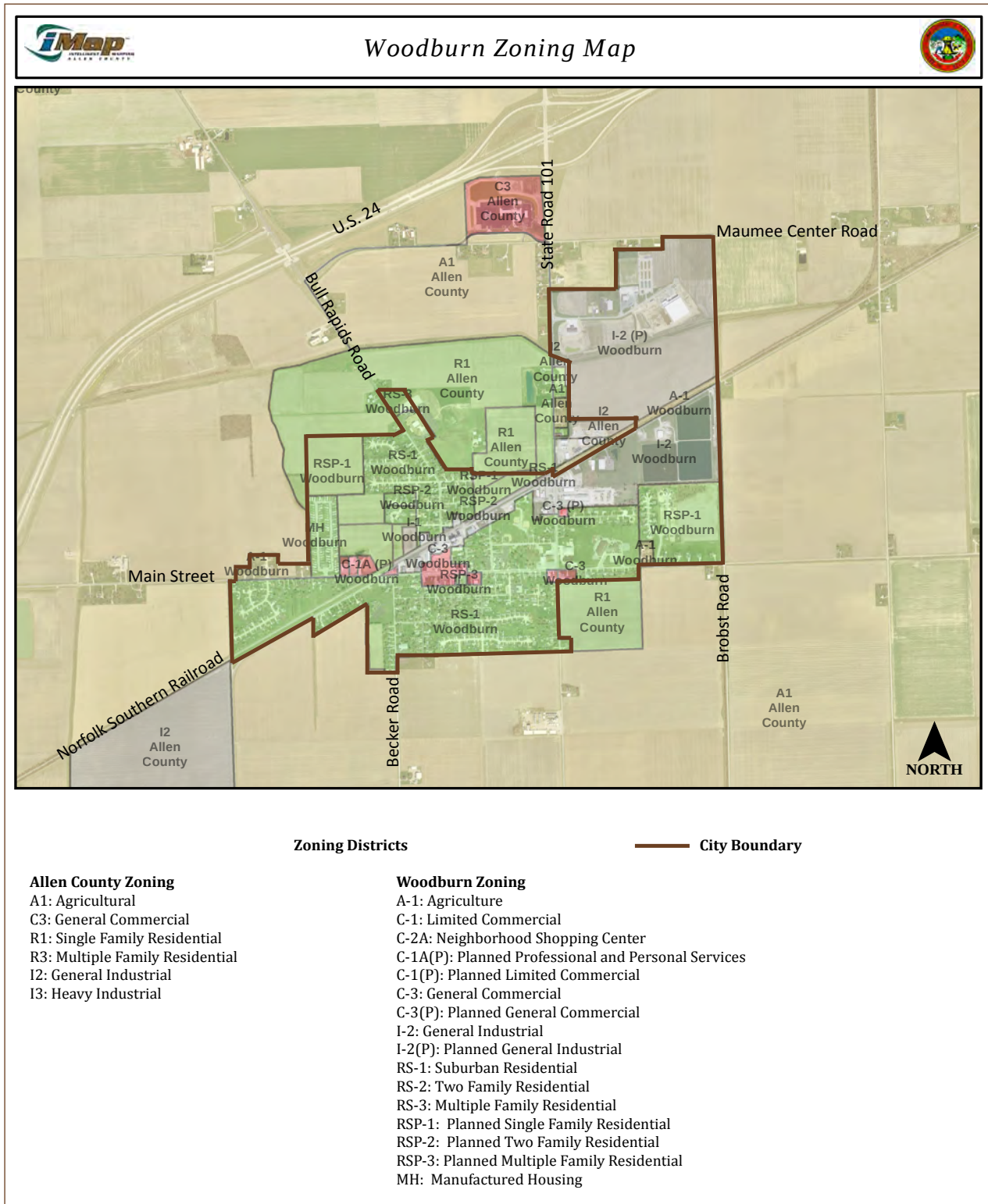
The study area for this plan was developed in reference to the Woodburn city boundaries and unincorporated areas within a two-mile radius from the city center.

The Allen County Plan Commission provides oversight to land development within Woodburn, as enforced through the Woodburn Zoning Ordinance, as well as in unincorporated areas around Woodburn, as enforced through the Allen County Zoning Ordinance. Within the planning area, most of the area is zoned for agricultural and residential use. Commercial uses exist along Woodburn Road (Main Street) and at the US 24/SR 101 interchange. Industrial uses are focused along the Norfolk Southern Railroad and within and near the Woodburn Industrial Park.



— City Boundary

- - - Study Area Boundary



WOODBURN, IN



Population
1,609

POPULATION BY AGE

	Number	Percentage
Under 5 years	99	6.2
Ages 5 to 14 years	251	15.6
Ages 15 to 24 years	236	14.6
Ages 25 to 44 years	447	27.8
Ages 45 to 64 years	409	25.4
Ages 65 years +	167	10.4



**Advanced Education:
2-year degree or higher**
31.7%

HIGHER EDUCATION

	Allen County	Indiana
At least a 2-Year degree	36.3%	21.7%



Employment

TOP 3 INDUSTRIES by Employee

- Education & Health
- Wholesale & Retail
- Financial Activities



Households
607



684
Housing Units:
88.7% occupied; 11.3% vacant

**Woodburn Allen
(CDP) County Indiana**

INCOME

Median Household Income	\$50,707.	\$49,124.	\$48,737.
Per Capita Income	\$21,606.	\$25,485.	\$24,593.
Per Capita Income as % of National Average	75.7%	89.2%	86.1%

POVERTY STATUS

All Families	8.3%	15.5%	15.5%
Of Specific Populations:			
Under 18 years	13.2%	22.5%	22.1%
Related children under 18 yrs	13.2%	22.2%	21.7%
18 to 64 years	6.7%	14.2%	14.7%
65 years +	4.2%	6.7%	7.2%

HOUSING

Monthly owner costs 30% or more of household income	13.4%	20.9%	24.7%
Median Year Built	1979	1972	1972
Median Home Value	\$83,100.	\$112,600.	\$122,700.
Owner-occupied	81.9%	69.4%	69.5%
Renter-occupied	18.1%	30.6%	30.5%

DATA SOURCES

U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2010-2014

Community Research Institute - IPFW, ESRI Community Analyst Data (2013)

COMMUNITY ASSETS

An identification of physical community assets and conditions was conducted. A map of several of the assets described below is provided on page 8.

Residential

Areas of concentrated, single-family residential developments exist within the City of Woodburn boundaries, between the Woodburn city limits on the south and the south side of Main Street, north of Main Street along Bull Rapids Road, and along much of Main Street east and west of the downtown commercial district. Much of this housing is thirty or more year's old. Homestead Place, a newer subdivision located on the north side of Woodburn Road and east of the old Woodburn Elementary School, contains homes with assessed values between \$140,000 and \$230,000.

The Woodburn Retirement Community, on Main Street in downtown, is a 12-unit, multi-family senior housing development that is currently at capacity. In addition, tax credits have recently been awarded to redevelop the former Woodburn Elementary School into a 33-unit, senior housing complex called Phoenix Manor. The project is expected to be completed by 2017. On the north side of Woodburn, other housing options include affordable family rental units at Maple Villas and Lynnwood Apartments. Located on the west side of Woodburn, north of Main Street and adjacent to the city limits, is the Woodburn Mobile Home Park.

Commercial and Industrial

Commercial land uses in Woodburn are located along both sides of Main Street, primarily west of Fahlsing Road/SR 101 and north along SR 101 south of the railroad. New development has occurred just north of the city at the US 24 and SR 101 interchange including a Love's Travel Stop and McDonald's restaurant. Recent downtown revitalization efforts have included a streetscape project and the opening of Felger's Meat Market, resulting from identifying the need for a place to purchase fresh food in the 2013 *Woodburn Strategic Plan*.

Industrial land uses may be found south of the railroad on the east side of SR 101 and on both sides of the railroad west of SR 101 and east of Becker Road. Also, with the help of a United States Department of Agriculture grant, the nearly 73-acre Woodburn Industrial Park (Park) was developed over 20 years ago. While it had been slow to develop, its location just south of the new US 24/SR 101 interchange, the first US 24 interchange west of the Indiana/Ohio state line, has spurred interest from large companies. Recent operations that have located in the Park have included Ramco (\$5-6 million investment) and North American Cold Storage (\$12 million investment, abated) which has expanded twice since its initial building. Currently split into ten parcels, enhancements made to the Park by the City have included a road extension and stormwater, signage, and entrance improvements at a cost of \$250,000. Adjacent land to the south and east of the Park is being considered for future industrial growth, but will require the extension of infrastructure.



Homestead Place Addition



Love's Travel Stop at US 24 and SR 101



North American Cold Storage, Inc. - Woodburn Industrial Park



Allen County Public Library - Woodburn Branch

Educational, Recreational and Institutional

The public schools serving Woodburn, including Woodburn Elementary School, Woodlan Intermediate School, and Woodlan Junior/Senior High School, are part of the East Allen County School system (EACS). They are located on the same campus at 17215 Woodburn Road, approximately three miles west of the city limits.

Woodburn Lutheran School (WLS), located at 4412 Park Street directly next to the old Woodlan Elementary School building, has provided Christ-centered education to the Woodburn community and surrounding area for approximately 60 years. WLS incorporates modern technology into its facility, and provides food, health, after-school, and summer programs to its students.

Woodburn is home to several churches serving the spiritual needs of the community including Christ Lutheran Church, Westwood Fellowship, Woodburn Evangelical Mennonite Church, Woodburn Missionary Church, Woodburn United Methodist Church, and Zion Lutheran Church

The Woodburn branch of the Allen County Public Library is located at 4701 SR 101 North. In addition to providing book rentals, other services provided include computer resources with wireless internet, a copy machine, special collections, children's services and tours, and meeting rooms available for rent to non-profit organizations.

Municipal, Government and Other Community Services

Located at 22735 Main Street, the City Hall and Community Center facilities house the city administrative offices, and provide meeting

space for public and community activities. As the structure is owned by Maumee Township, the City of Woodburn leases the space it utilizes.

The City of Woodburn owns and operates a water treatment plant and water tower at 2630 Front Street within the city limits, and another water treatment plant and water tower (the "Woodlan" facilities) at 4420 Webster Road. On Tile Mill Road, the City also owns and operates a three-cell lagoon sewage treatment system capable of handling approximately 30 million gallons of waste.

The Woodburn Community Park, located on Front/Overmeyer Streets, provides active recreation space with ball diamonds, playground equipment and picnic facilities.

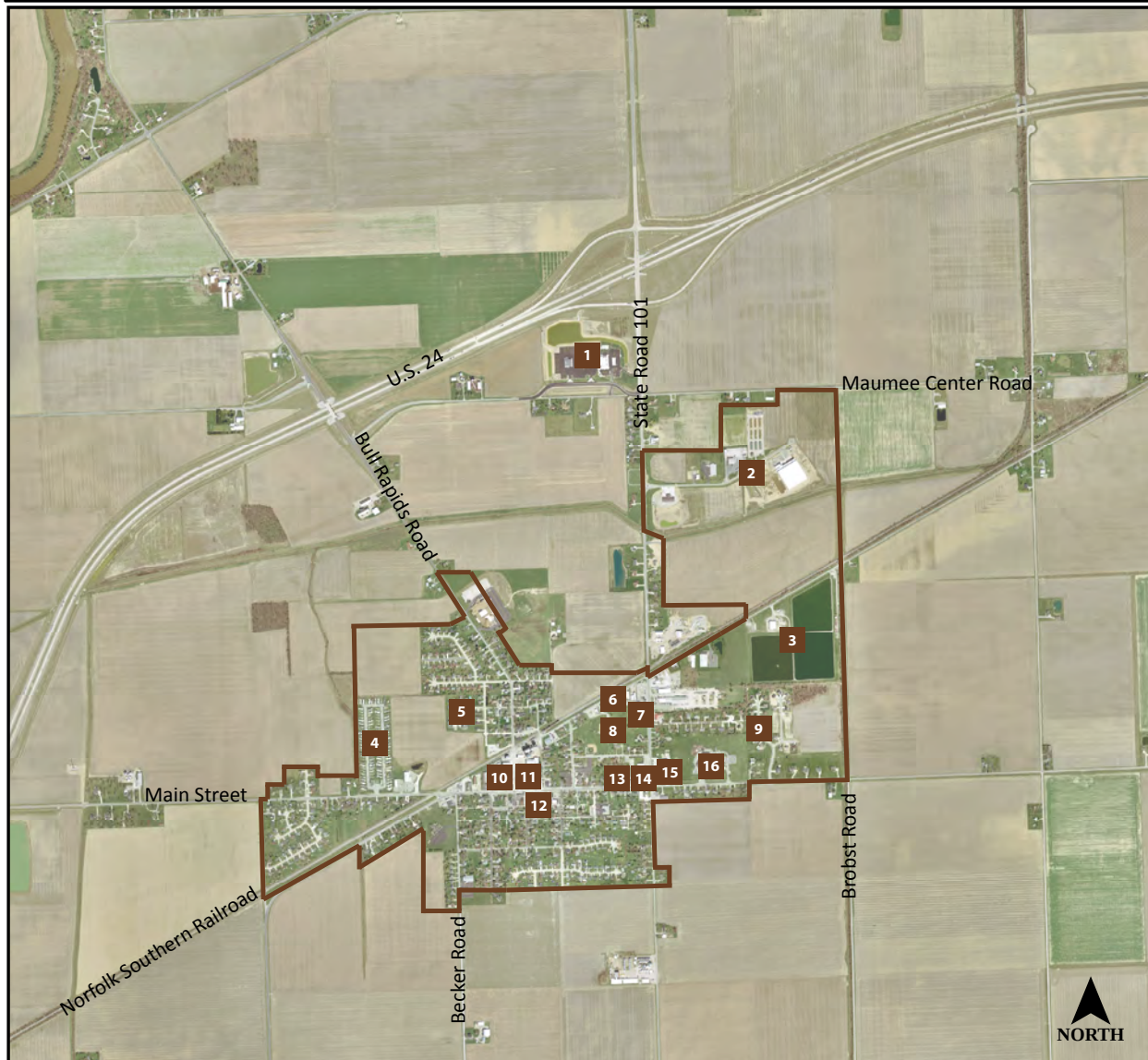
Historic Sites and Structures

According to the Indiana State Historic Architectural and Archaeological Research Database (SHAARD), of the 32 historic sites and structures surveyed in Woodburn, six were rated as being "notable" in terms of the site or structure's level of integrity, remaining historic fabric, alterations, additions, structure relocation, environment and associated history, and include:

Albert Stucky House (4731 Bull Rapids Road)
 Henry Schepelmann House (22529 Main Street)
 Otto Schepelmann Blacksmith Shop (22420 Main Street)
 House (4807 Bull Rapids Road)
 Rosener-Neuenschwander House (22611 Main Street)
 Woodburn Methodist Church (4312 Becker Road)



Woodburn Identification Map



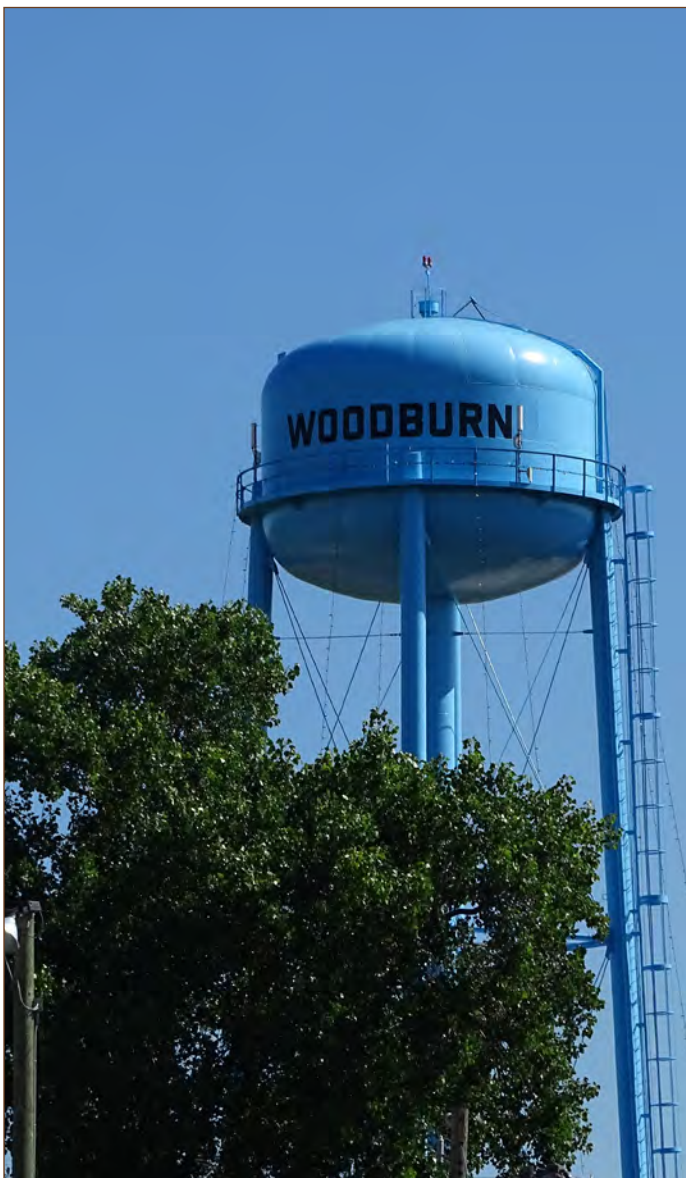
Identified Properties

— City Boundary

1. Love's Travel Plaza
2. Woodburn Industrial Park
3. Wastewater Treatment System
4. Woodburn Mobile Home Park
5. Maple Villas & Lynnwood Apartments
6. Water Treatment Plant
7. Allen County Public Library
8. Woodburn Community Park
9. Homestead Place
10. Police Department
11. Felger's Meat Market & Town Square
12. Woodburn Retirement Community
13. Woodburn/Maumee Township Fire Department
14. Woodburn City Hall & Community Center
15. Woodburn Lutheran School
16. Phoenix Manor Senior Housing (Old Woodburn Elementary)



U.S. 24 Road Sign



City of Woodburn Water Tower

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

A leading factor in the ability of a community to grow is the condition of its public facilities and services, including drinking water, sanitary sewer, transportation systems, and public structures and lands. The intent of this review is to assess the needs for infrastructure in regard to future growth, and is not intended to assess the physical conditions of the system within the city.

Broadband

According to the Indiana Broadband Map last updated in 2014, internet availability within the Woodburn area consists of several wireless providers including AT&T Mobility, LLC; Verizon Wireless; East Allen High Speed Internet; MetaLINK Technologies; Sprint, and WATCH Communications. Wireless speeds range from 768 kbps – 25 mbps for downloads and 200 kbps – 6mbps for uploads. Comcast provides cable modem technology with 100 mbps – 1 gbps upload speeds and 10 – 25 mbps download speeds.

Electric Utility

Indiana Michigan Power (I&M) is the electric distribution service provider for the Woodburn area. As part of the American Electric Power Company (AEP) with operations across 11 states, I&M has the capacity to provide both transmission and distribution upgrades as needed for future development. AEP also transmits power to nearby Paulding Putnam Electric Cooperative (PPEC) territory so capacity is strong throughout the area. Adequate lead time is requested in the event that a large energy investment is needed for a development. Coordination with the companies at the onset of potential development is good practice.

Natural Gas

Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO), the natural gas service provider to the Woodburn area, has sufficient capacity to extend services. Adequate lead time is requested in the event that a large energy investment is needed for development. Coordination with the company at the onset of potential development is good practice.

Transportation

US 24, a major east-west transportation corridor through the Midwestern part of the United States, crosses through northern Indiana and northwestern Ohio providing the most direct access from Fort Wayne, Indiana, to Toledo, Ohio. It also provides direct connections to Interstate 69/I-469, I-80/I-90 and I-75, enabling the traveling public to reach destinations northward into the Great Lakes region and Canada, as well as other large cities on the east coast.



City of Woodburn City Hall and Fire & EMS Station

US 24 has experienced substantial traffic growth over the past several years, at a rate higher than normal for eastern Indiana and northwest Ohio. Major factors contributing to this growth include increased population, developing industry, a greater reliance on intermodal transportation connections with the regional and national rail systems, and the water-based shipping at the Port of Toledo. Two new interchanges near Woodburn, one approximately a mile south of Woodburn Road on Webster Road west of the city limits, and one immediately north of the city limits on SR 101, are the last interchanges in Indiana going east into Ohio, and the first interchanges in Indiana on the way west to Chicago. Acting as a gateway, they provide an opportunity for growth for the community and direct access to all major transportation routes in the Midwest.

SR 101, owned and maintained by the Indiana Department of Transportation, extends 79.42 miles on the eastern side of the state with connections to other roadways at its southern terminus in Kentucky and at its northern terminus in DeKalb County, Indiana. The City of Woodburn is required to coordinate through the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) for any utility crossings traversing the road, any utility work within the right-of-way, or the reintroduction of new property access as properties develop.

The City of Woodburn is responsible for streets and sidewalks within the city limits with the exception of SR 101 which is under the jurisdiction of INDOT. Areas outside the city limits that are within the study area are served by the Allen County Highway Department and INDOT. Staffed by three full-time employees, the City's Street Department provides street cleaning twice a month, additional cleanings for special occasions, and leaf removal between the months of October and early December. The Street Department is also responsible for street sign replacements, curb and crosswalk painting, hot and cold street patching and crack sealing, and minor sidewalk repairs.

A \$400,000 construction grant from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs helped to fund a \$600,000 downtown streetscape improvement project, completed in September 2015, which included the installation of new sidewalks and ramps, streetlights, and trees from Carl Street to Core Street along Woodburn Road (Main Street) including the intersection Bull Rapids Road. A town square project including a community clocktower is currently underway to serve as a community gathering place. Following the streetscape project, INDOT completed improvements to SR 101 from Hetrick Road to Maumee Center Road including milling and repaving, and sidewalk and curb installation.

Several projects, identified for improving traffic circulation, enabling better connectivity of destinations, and promoting the ability for growth in the Woodburn area include:

1. Extension of Hickory Street from Bull Rapids Road to Woodburn Road. Hickory Street currently extends from the north side of the Subway restaurant parking lot (on Main Street/Woodburn Road) to the intersection of Lynnwood and Hickory Streets. The project cost estimate is \$300,000 (non-federal funds), and has property owner support.
2. A new alignment project linking Bull Rapids Road, Sunview Drive, and Woodburn Road. This roadway would alleviate congestion in downtown and open the area up for future residential and commercial growth.

Currently, signalized intersections in Woodburn exist at Main Street/SR 101/Fahlsing Road, at Woodburn Road/SR 101 on the west side of the city, and at the Webster Road/US 24 intersection northwest of the city. The placement of any signalization on state routes is directed and controlled by INDOT.

The construction of a city-wide trail system, connecting major destinations in downtown and providing access to the schools, park, and other proposed trails in the area, was identified as a high priority in the *Woodburn Strategic Plan*. Included in the document is a map depicting existing and desired sidewalks and trails in Woodburn and the surrounding area including those in the proposed Maumee Park, and connecting the Woodlan schools complex to the City of Woodburn. In addition, the 2035 *Transportation Plan* has identified constructing a trail along Bull Rapids Road to Harlan, Indiana, widened road shoulders to facilitate bike travel along SR 101 to Monroeville, Indiana, and widened shoulders along Webster Road and Dawkins Road into New Haven, Indiana, and along the state line.

Water Distribution Infrastructure

The City of Woodburn owns and operates a water treatment plant and water tower at 22630 Front Street within the city limits, and another water treatment plant and water tower (the “Woodlan” facilities) at 4420 Webster Road adjacent to the Woodlan Junior/Senior High School campus. Water utilities are currently maintained through an outside contract. The well-head plat covers most of the city, extending southeast almost to Slusher Road, as well as directly to the south past Highway 14.

Built in the 1950s, the Front Street water treatment plant has two high-service pumps and three wells, but is in need of repairs. It is currently used as the back-up for the Woodlan facilities, which has two high-service pumps and two wells. According to the utility project manager for the City of Woodburn, the water system can pump 400 gallons per minute, and operates at an average of 30% of maximum capacity.

The water distribution system consists of 4-inch to 12-inch water mains, approximately 60% of which are cast iron pipe. Due to the acidity of soil in the area, the cast iron pipes have become damaged resulting in a need to replace them within the next twenty years. Most of the lines to be replaced are 8-inches in diameter and under. Woodburn has two water storage facilities, one with a 100,000 gallon capacity and the other with a 250,000 gallon capacity. The Woodlan water storage facility was constructed in 2004.

In 2014, an 8-inch water main along Main Street from Bull Rapids Road east to Fahlsing Road/SR 101 was replaced. Also, a new 8-inch main has recently been installed along a two-block section of Main Street from Becker Road to Bull Rapids Road at a cost of approximately \$300,000.

A 12-inch water main was extended west along Woodburn Road to serve the Woodlan Schools campus, the Hamptons subdivision across US 24 north of the Woodlan campus, and the Havenwood subdivision located on old US 24 approximately three miles to the west. This water main also provides approximately 140 connections to customers along the route. An 8-inch water main extends south along Fahlsing Road to the city limits and north along SR 101 to serve the Woodburn Industrial Park and approximately 30 homes north of the city limits.

At this time, no analysis of future water infrastructure needs or water distribution system expansion has been undertaken, but should be completed to determine available capacity and facilities within the current water distribution system and the system’s ability to serve new residential, commercial and industrial customers or other municipalities interested in the purchase of water from the Woodburn. Additionally, a prioritized list of maintenance and repair projects should be prepared to assist the City in determining the necessary budgetary outlay for the next decade.

Wastewater Infrastructure

An outside contractor has the responsibility of operating and maintaining the city sanitary sewer system as well as that of any

needed system expansion. The treatment facility, located on Tile Mill Road, consists of a three-cell lagoon system, where each cell is able to treat approximately 10 million gallons of sewage. The facility also includes two aerators on one of the cells and an effluent lift station that pumps to the Maumee River. Six pumps scattered around the Woodburn area comprise the collection system, and are located at 4028 Core Street, 23304 Tile Mill Road (2 stations), 22000 State Road 101, 17215 Woodburn Road, and at the end of Venison Trail in Havenwood Forest subdivision. Although meant to be a total sanitary collection system, it is aging and in need of repairs to the sewer mains and to the lateral lines to residences. In its current state, inflow and infiltration from stormwater often overburdens the system’s capacity.

Dry weather flows average about 168,000 gallons per day, approximately 50% of the available capacity, while wet weather flows usually send the system over capacity. To support certain types of industrial development, a sewer treatment plant would need to be constructed as the current lagoon system cannot treat industrial waste. Recent improvements to the sewer system included a \$3 million project for installation of new sewer lines along the railroad tracks from SR 101 to Woodburn Road, on the southwest side of the city behind residences, and on Woodburn Road southeast of the city behind residences. Additionally, 110 manholes throughout the city were relined and sealed as well as sewer lines were relined in the Havenwood Forest subdivision behind residential properties on the west side of Bull Rapids Road between Ash Street and the north side of Woodburn.

Woodburn is under an Agreed Order with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) to reduce the overflows from the city sewer system to the Maumee River. Once the City of Woodburn completes six months without a violation on its MRO (Maintenance, Repair Operations), the Agreed Order will be lifted.

In 2015, a Wastewater Utility Study was completed by Midwestern Engineers, Inc. to evaluate the public wastewater facilities owned and operated by the City of Woodburn. Primary objectives included addressing the current condition and any deficiencies or needs of the wastewater collection system or treatment facility, projecting future wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) flows and loadings, and providing improvement recommendations and probable costs needed to accommodate future system expansion. This study concluded that, based on future flow projections/projected growth rates, the existing lagoons should be capable of meeting the City’s needs beyond 2030. At the present time, recommendations are to concentrate on increasing capacity by addressing inflow and infiltration issues as well as addressing E. coli, ammonia and phosphorous limits within the existing system. Chlorination and dechlorination improvements have recently been completed. A lagoon ammonia removal system is estimated to cost \$1.6 million and a lagoon phosphorus removal system is estimated to cost \$750,000. According to the study, upgrades to a mechanical plant would range from \$10.5-\$12.5 million depending on the size and intent of the project. These numbers are currently under review to determine the long term costs and benefits of paying for a new mechanical plant compared to investing in an existing system that is inadequate for future needs.

Stormwater Drainage Infrastructure

The City of Woodburn maintains a storm drainage system throughout the majority of the community, with storm lines ranging in size from 4-inches to 36-inches in diameter. The City is responsible for maintenance of all lines within the public rights-of-way. Although some minor flooding occurred during a 12-inch rain event several years ago, the system functioned well enough to disperse the water within a 24-hour period. There is the need to improve the stormline under Main Street at a cost estimate of \$200,000 - \$250,000. Currently, the City does not charge stormwater fees, but has discussed the possibility of beginning the practice. If this occurs, a study of capacity and need for future expansion should be conducted.

Fire Department

The Woodburn/Maumee Township Fire Department, located at 22731 Main Street, provides primary response to the study area and has answered approximately 1,000 calls during the last five years. Its average response time for calls is 7 minutes, 20 seconds. A second fire station, for Milan Township, was recently constructed at 17022 Woodburn Road across from the Woodlan Schools complex and covers Maumee Township out to US 24 and I-469 near the Chapel Ridge shopping center. Staffed by volunteers, both stations have EMT ambulances and firetrucks/equipment, although the new station has a two-person full time crew. The New Haven Fire Department provides secondary response to Woodburn, and is dual dispatched on all working structure fires. Response time from the New Haven Department is approximately 20 minutes.

EMS

Woodburn EMS, located with the Woodburn/Maumee Township Fire Department at 22731 Main Street, provides Basic Life Support (BLS) service with Advanced Life Support (ALS) for priority runs. In the past five years, there have been approximately 1,400 EMS runs in the project area. Currently no EMS improvements or expenditures are needed until approximately 2025, as the ambulance was refurbished in the spring of 2011.

Police Department

The Woodburn Police Station is located at 4417 Union Street (Bull Rapids Road). The Allen County Sheriff's Department, New Haven Police Department, as well as several Ohio sheriffs' departments provide backup policing services. The most common types of crime occurring in the study area are due to methamphetamine lab operations, burglaries, and speeding.

Parks and Recreation

Maumee Township provides park and recreation services for the Woodburn Community Park, located on Overmeyer Street. With offices at 5311 SR 101, the Maumee Township Park and Recreation Board (PRB), comprised of four members and headed by the Township Trustee, employs one part-time staff person and seasonal staff as needed to maintain the Woodburn park facilities.



Downtown Woodburn

Woodburn Community Park contains three lighted ball diamonds, playground equipment, two horseshoe pits, a sand volleyball court and basketball court, along with a shelter, picnic area and public restrooms. The park is landlocked and cannot be expanded. Although the PRB does not directly provide community recreation programs, it does facilitate most of the programs available in the township. The Woodburn Youth League, a volunteer organization, organizes baseball and softball for area children, with games played at the park. The park is also the site of many of the events held in conjunction with the annual Woodburn Days celebration, which is planned, promoted, and carried out by community volunteers. Any plans for expansion of the events are limited by the constraints of the present park size.

In addition to the Woodburn Community Park, there are playground facilities at the Woodburn Lutheran Elementary School and athletic facilities at the Woodlan Junior/Senior High School. A new township park, to be called Maumee Park, has been proposed for the property south of the southeast corner of the intersection of Woodburn Road and Fahlsing Road. The nearly 34-acre site, contiguous to 60% of the populated center of the township, has been used for agricultural purposes for the last century. The park development strategy includes constructing a four to five ball diamond complex to replace the three aging ball diamonds at Woodburn Community Park which would be redesigned as a passive landscaped oasis with connective pathways that promote recreational and commuter use.

The Maumee Park plans include an internal trail system that will provide connectivity to not only the Woodburn Community Park, but to the public library, several residential areas, and to the pathways included in the construction of the new US 24 project. The park would also have an accessible playground that meets the standards of the National Playground Safety Institute Standards and reforestation of at least 20% of the site with a blend of native species tree plantings.

CONTEXTUAL RESEARCH

As part of the overall NewAllen Alliance Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) initiative, contextual research was conducted of each community which included site visits with a drive-by tour and meetings with individual Community Planning Oversight Committees (CPOC). Each CPOC was asked to describe what they were hoping to achieve from the planning process. The following is a compilation of common responses given by the communities:

- To establish our community as a great place to live in Allen County
- To improve community identity and pride
- For the rest of Allen County to learn more about our community
- To facilitate new, smart growth that leads to more jobs being created (Hoagland and Leo-Cedarville do not desire industrial growth)
- To retain the authentic heritage of our community
- To improve the volunteer structure and community involvement
- To be better positioned to seek funding for projects

In addition, the six strategic focus areas of the SIP were discussed with each CPOC. Common issues and possible strategies identified include:



New Growth &
Development

To improve developmental regulations to influence the quality of new development as it occurs
To explore alternatives to enhance opportunities to fund and sustain community improvement (i.e. incorporation, economic improvement districts, tax increment financing, etc.)



Economic
Development

To develop a better local understanding of economic development processes
To develop marketable sites for future industry
To increase a community-wide focus on the agriculture industry
To increase space for small business activities
To contribute to the larger economic goal of attracting people to the region by providing an alternative place to live



Redevelopment

To revitalize downtowns
To preserve and repurpose existing vacant structures



Housing

To differentiate by promoting unique elements not common in urban areas
To promote housing for young families and seniors
To promote the rehabilitation of existing, aging housing stock



Infrastructure

To develop a county-wide focus to support broadband development
To understand limitations and opportunities of sewer and water infrastructure to help form approaches to future development



Quality of Life

To create and/or enhance community parks and gathering spaces
To develop sidewalks and trails to improve walkability throughout each community
To connect each community and to larger trail infrastructure through trails and bike lanes
To provide places to enhance community wellness



Bob's Restaurant

Additional contextual research was conducted through interviews with over 30 community leaders throughout Allen County and Northeast Indiana to get a “big picture” perspective of the strengths and weaknesses of East Allen County in addition to gaining a broader understanding of the regional environment and identifying potential opportunities for funding and leveraging other resources. Below is a summary of some of the key findings of this research:

- Due to the proximity of Interstate 469, the recent upgrade of US 24 to an expressway, and the Maplecrest Road extension, momentum and interest in East Allen County appears to be growing.
- Planning will give communities a course of action and align county resources in support of these endeavors.
- East Allen County is a very diverse region consisting of urban, suburban, and rural areas.
- There are significant transportation assets in East Allen County (Interstate 469, US 24, US 30, Adams Center Road and the planned intermodal facility) prompting a need to better understand how to capitalize on them.
- East Allen County should focus on agricultural businesses and industry in addition to the clustering of supportive business and industry to large employers such as Steel Dynamics, Inc. and BF Goodrich.
- Perceptions of the East Allen County Schools Corporation vary. Due to recent consolidation efforts, the loss of a public school in some places has equated to a loss of identity, while others view having five high schools in the system as spreading limited resources over too many facilities.
- Workforce development is important. Programs such as the East Allen County Schools' Associated Builders and Contractors Program, Future Farmers of America Programs, and other professional development training opportunities through the local libraries and schools should be promoted and enhanced.
- The entity with control of the sewer and water systems has significant influence into how, when, and to what level development occurs. There are some who advocate for a county-wide sewer district managed by an appointed board, and others who prefer retaining more direct involvement and oversight by elected officials.
- More housing is needed, particularly for seniors and young families. Communities are encouraged to seek out companies willing to design developments that are unique to their area and that enhance and serve the housing needs, thereby differentiating themselves from other nearby communities and creating an opportunity to attract new residents.
- There is a lack of park and recreational opportunities throughout eastern Allen County.
- There are libraries in four of the seven communities. As these facilities are significant assets, they could potentially be a strategic partner for other community initiatives such as workforce training, co-working space, and the integration of storytelling into community park and trail offerings.
- Restaurants, frequently suggested as a need in most of the communities, can also sometimes serve to attract people to visit.

PUBLIC INPUT

Throughout this planning process, public input was sought to gather information and solicit perspectives on the strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for the Woodburn area. This was accomplished through a community attitude survey of Woodburn residents conducted in March 2016, and at a public meeting on March 29, 2016.

Community Attitude Survey

In March 2016, a survey of Woodburn residents was conducted to gather input for creating a community plan containing specific strategies aimed at guiding the area's future growth and development. The survey was available in several locations in Woodburn, and was also accessible on-line through SurveyMonkey. There were 144 respondents to the survey, accounting for a response rate of 8.9% based upon the most recent population estimate of 1,609. The survey results were then tabulated by SurveyMonkey. In some cases, respondents did not answer every question or did not select the requested number of answer choices. The intent of the survey was to get a general sense of community attitudes rather than to conduct a true statistical analysis. Following is a brief narrative of the outcomes.

Nearly 72% of respondents had lived in Woodburn more than 10 years, while approximately 14% had lived in the community for five years and fewer. Also, just over 64% lived or owned a business or property within the Woodburn city limits. In terms of age, 23.6% of the respondents were between 25 and 34, 23.6% between 35 and 44, and almost 21% between 45 and 54, accounting for the largest segments taking the survey. Overall, 41.8% were satisfied and 33.3% were somewhat satisfied with Woodburn as a place to live, and almost 8% responded that they were somewhat dissatisfied to dissatisfied.

When asked to describe Woodburn's current identity, of the 113 comments received, phrases that appeared most often included "small town," "small city," and "small farming community." The next most frequent characteristics mentioned referenced that Woodburn was growing and improving. When asked to describe Woodburn's identity in 10 years, the most often used words included "growing" and "thriving" particularly in job opportunities and businesses while "small town" was referenced a similar number of times. Respondents also frequently described Woodburn as a "great place to live and work" or phrases with a comparable sentiment. Regarding the assets that best apply to Woodburn, the top three chosen were (in order): friendly, small-town atmosphere; rural location; and affordable community.

The next question, in which two of four possible options could be selected, asked respondents to choose what types of business development would be preferred in Woodburn. Of the 241 responses received by 126 respondents, the retail option received just over 34% of the responses followed by industrial at 26.1% and other at 24.9%. Taking the write-in comments as a whole, 14 of them related to needing more restaurants, including fast food and family-friendly types. There were 11 mentions for a grocery store, nine for a fitness facility, eight for different types of small shops, and seven for a drugstore. Other suggestions were received 6 or fewer times each.



City of Woodburn Public Workshop

Note: Write-in comments for specific retail types were counted as a vote for "Other" causing the overall vote tallies to be distorted and the comments for each option to be mingled.

Respondents were next directed to rank seven listed items based on what was most needed in Woodburn. The top four items were (in order): park improvements, health/wellness center, quality housing to buy and rent, and service-oriented businesses. With respect to the most important recreational need in Woodburn, respondents most often chose a gym or fitness facility followed by improvements to Woodburn Community Park and trail development as their answer. Over 85% supported a phased approach to park development.

Respondents were also asked to choose what transportation improvements were most important for Woodburn to pursue. The option receiving the most votes was area walking and biking paths while sidewalk repairs and installation and street repairs and reconstruction were second and third respectively. Another question, in which two of seven possible options could be selected, asked which of several listed public services were most needed or needed improving. In total, 237 responses were given by 124 respondents. Youth and recreational programs received 35.4% of the responses followed by water at 24.5%, and wastewater at 11.0%.

To complete the survey, respondents were asked to provide other comments or suggestions. Of the 38 responses received, the most commonly noted were parks-related to include general improvements to or expanding existing facilities and building a splash pad. Multiple respondents made comments to keep up the good work, that Woodburn is a great place to live, and that Woodburn needs more restaurant choices. All other suggestions were mentioned three or fewer times.



Woodburn Community Park

Community Input Meeting

On March 29, 2016, a public meeting was held at the Woodburn Community Center to discuss the accomplishments that the community had made in the three years since the completion of the Woodburn Strategic Plan and to provide input on priorities for the next five years. Fifteen people were in attendance.

A top priority identified during the meeting included increasing the size of the Woodburn Industrial Park so that more shovel-ready ground would be available to facilitate new industrial growth. With the recent improvements to US 24, the area has become more desirable for development. Although there is acreage to the south of the existing industrial park that is already zoned for industrial use, it is not within the City's control. Complicating this, a structure would need to be constructed for crossing the ditch to gain access to the site, which is also located along the rail line. Additional farm acreage located east of the industrial park could be obtained by the City either through purchase or an option once a plan is put together to develop the site.

The meeting discussion also focused on how best to approach improving parks within Woodburn. Previous park planning efforts identified needing to address issues within Woodburn Community Park and to develop a new park on the southeast corner of Fahlsing and Woodburn Roads. There has been some disagreement within the community in regard to which park should receive the most attention in terms of time and

resources. Upgrades to the existing park would need to focus on addressing ADA issues, vacating the roadway that cuts through the park, and sprucing up the park and its amenities. This work would cost much less than the estimated \$4 million design for the new park which would include playgrounds and a splash pad. Some believe these attractions should be added in the Community Park, keeping the immediate focus there to serve families and young children with a more long term goal of building the proposed new park. As Allen County has a deficit of parks, Woodburn could be poised as a strategic county gateway for more regional park investment. Other suggestions made during the meeting included building a stadium to conduct tractor pulls, derbies and concerts, and to have a place for a farmers market.

Also discussed was that preliminary engineering work is being done to explore the construction of a wastewater treatment plant. The cost is more significant than addressing some of the basic ammonia needs of the existing lagoon system, however there is concern about putting investment into a current system that may not be adequate 15 years from now.

While a streetscape project was recently completed in Woodburn, plans for a town square at the corner of Bull Rapids Road and Main Street have yet to be realized. Likely to be completed in 2016, a local family has volunteered to pay for a clock-tower at the site and the Woodburn Main Street organization is actively working to raise matching funds to acquire the space.

ACTION PLAN

Through the synthesis of research and community discussion detailed throughout this document, a plan of action was developed. Overarching strategies are those established by the NewAllen Alliance. Plan elements are presented in a manner that is both individual to the community, but also complements activities conducted throughout East Allen County. The action plan also acts as an implementation tool by listing the strategic action, responsible parties, potential resources, and a targeted time period for implementation.

1. MANAGE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
1.1	Explore obtaining site control on agricultural land adjacent to the Woodburn Industrial Park for future industrial development.	Allen County DPS, City of Woodburn, GFW	Allen County Capital Improvement Board, Allen County Redevelopment Commission, Office of Community and Rural Affairs CEED Program, Woodburn TIF District, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)	0-1 years
1.2	Explore site control of additional industrial land, proceed with TIF district expansion, and shovel-ready certification.	Allen County DPS, City of Woodburn, GFW	Allen County Redevelopment Commission, City of Woodburn, Office of Community and Rural Affairs Shovel Ready Program	1-3 years
1.3	Seek opportunities for funding to build essential industrial park infrastructure.	Allen County DPS, City of Woodburn, GFW	Allen County Capital Improvement Board, Allen County Redevelopment Commission, Office of Community and Rural Affairs CEED Program, Woodburn TIF District	1-3 years
1.4	Update the zoning ordinance to reflect more appropriate development guidelines.	City of Woodburn	Allen County DPS	0-2 years

2. CREATE A RURAL AND SUBURBAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
2.1	Promote awareness of small business development training and capital resources.	GFW, NewAllen Alliance, Woodburn Chamber of Commerce	Brightpoint, Indiana Small Business Development Center, Northeast Indiana Innovation Center, USDA	On-going
2.2	Support the development of economic development initiatives focused on the agricultural industry.	GFW, NewAllen Alliance, Woodburn Chamber of Commerce	Purdue Extension, Indiana Farm Bureau, Indiana Department of Agriculture, USDA	On-going
2.3	Support and collaborate on workforce development efforts.	East Allen County Schools (EACS), GFW, Woodburn Chamber of Commerce, NewAllen Alliance	Area Institutes of Higher Education, Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs, Indiana Workforce Development, Workone Northeast	On-going
2.4	Seek collaborative opportunities with the Allen County Public Library to provide support to local business including: informational materials, training, technology and space.	Allen County Public Library, NewAllen Alliance, Woodburn Chamber of Commerce	Brightpoint, Indiana Small Business Development Center, Northeast Indiana Innovation Center, USDA	0-2 years

3. PRESERVE AND CAPITALIZE UPON OUR AUTHENTIC HERITAGE

	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
3.1	Participate in a branding and marketing effort in collaboration with NewAllen Alliance.	NewAllen Alliance, Woodburn Chamber of Commerce, Woodburn Main Street	East Allen County Schools, Local Fundraising, NewAllen Alliance	0-2 years

4. CELEBRATE COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH INVESTMENT IN CENTERS OF ACTIVITY

	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
4.1	Participate in an initiative to physically improve local community parks and downtowns based on collective branding and landscape design. Involvement includes development of a "Quality of Life" design plan that unifies the look of the community at major entrances, in the downtown area, and within the Woodburn Community Park with investments into street lighting, sidewalks, furnishings, signage, landscaping, and park improvements.	City of Woodburn, Maumee Township Trustee, NewAllen Alliance, Woodburn Association, Woodburn Chamber of Commerce	Local Fundraising, NewAllen Alliance	0-2 years
4.2	Pursue funding to implement "Quality of Life" design plan.	City of Woodburn, Maumee Township Trustee, NewAllen Alliance, Woodburn Association, Woodburn Chamber of Commerce	Allen County Capital Improvement Board, Local Fundraising, Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs Place-Based Investment Grant, Regional Cities funds	0-2 years
4.3	Support infill commercial development within downtown Woodburn.	Woodburn Chamber of Commerce, Woodburn Main Street, NewAllen Alliance	Private investment, NewAllen grants and loans, Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs Historic Renovation grants, USDA loans	On-going
4.4	Complete downtown streetscape improvements, mural and town square.	City of Woodburn, Woodburn Main Street	Local Fundraising, Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs Downtown Enhancement Grant, Woodburn TIF District	0-5 years
4.6	Explore the establishment of a co-op to support reinvestment efforts.	NewAllen Alliance	Private Investors	0-2 years
4.7	Explore a collective contract for maintenance of quality of life investments.	NewAllen Alliance	Allen County Parks Department	0-2 years
4.8	Support the connection of communities through trails and bike lanes/shoulder improvements both internally to the City throughout East Allen. In respect of Woodburn, support and pursue the addition of bike lanes/shoulder improvements along Bull Rapids Road to Harlan and State Road 101 to Monroeville.	Allen County Highway Department, NIRCC	Allen County Highway Department, Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)	On-going
4.9	Pursue the development of a regional park at the southeast corner of Woodburn and Fahlsing Roads building off the "Gateway to the Heartland" concept. Explore modifications to the existing design to include a track with stadium seating for large events, and a farmers market.	City of Woodburn, Maumee Township Trustee, Woodburn Association	Allen County Government, Allen County Capital Improvement Board, Indiana Department of Natural Resources Land and Water Conservation Fund, Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, Maumee Township, Woodburn TIF District	3-5 years

4. CELEBRATE COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH INVESTMENT IN CENTERS OF ACTIVITY

	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
4.10	Pursue the development of a public or private fitness center.	City of Woodburn, Private Developers	Private Investment, BF Goodrich	0-2 years

5. PROVIDE A RANGE OF QUALITY HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
5.1	Support the rehabilitation of existing homes.	Area Housing Non-profits	Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Program	0-5 years
5.2	Support additional new housing, particularly in the \$125,000 villas up to \$225,000 range.	Private Developers	Private Investment	0-5 years

6. PROVIDE ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE

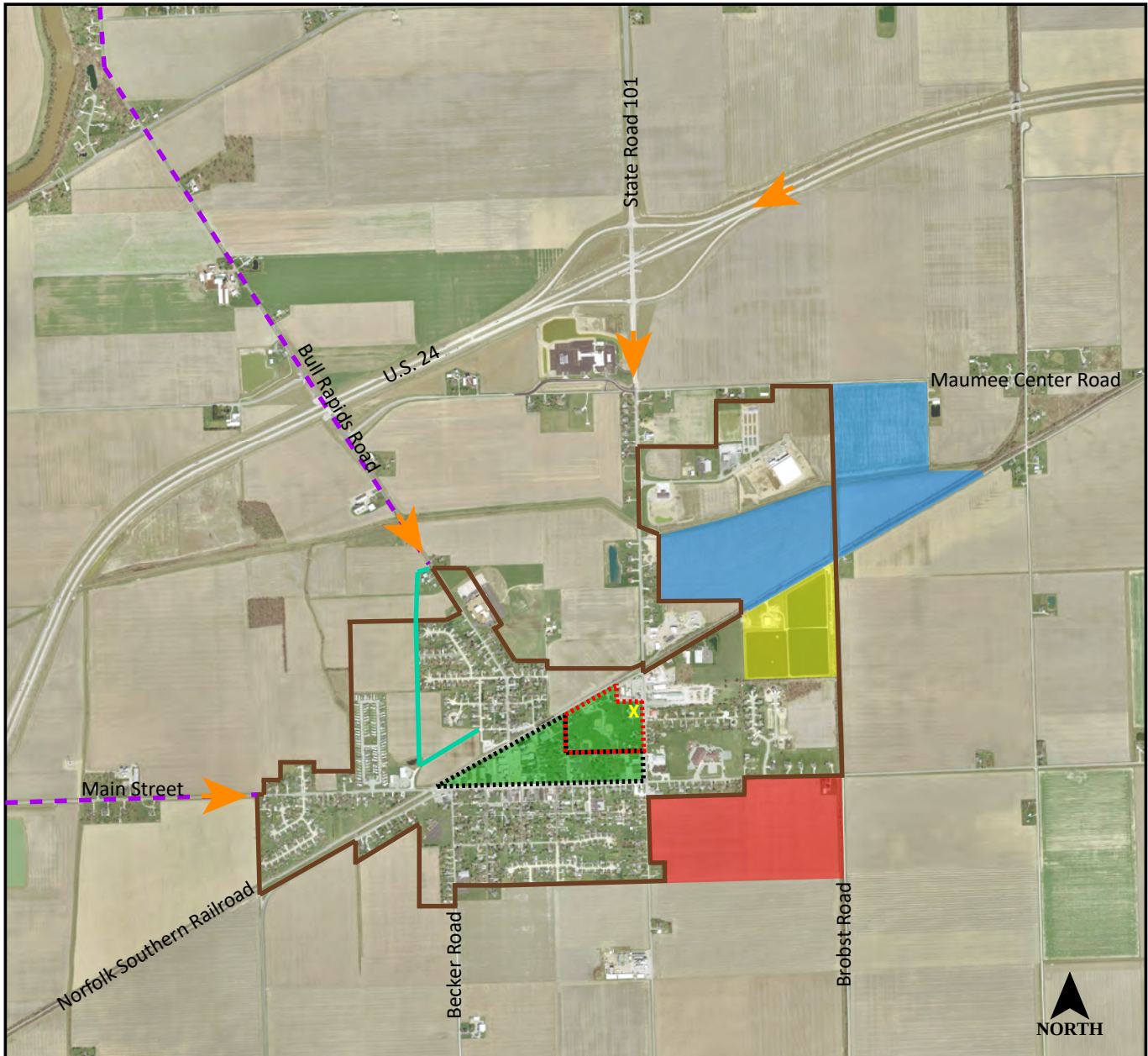
	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
6.1	Upgrade the capacity of the city's wastewater treatment system.	City of Woodburn	Indiana Finance Authority State Revolving Loan Fund, Woodburn Sewer Utility, Woodburn TIF District, USDA	0-5 years
6.2	Improve stormwater trunkline along Woodburn Road.	City of Woodburn	Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, Indiana Finance Authority State Revolving Loan Fund, Woodburn TIF District, USDA	0-5 years
6.3	Pursue funding to construct a new road linking Bull Rapids, Sunview Drive, Hickory Street and Woodburn Road.	City of Woodburn	City of Woodburn, INDOT, Woodburn TIF District	0-5 years
6.4	Continue an annual sidewalk installation program in addition to annual ADA ramp improvements to address sidewalk needs throughout the community.	City of Woodburn	City of Woodburn, INDOT	On-going
6.6	Explore and pursue the opportunity to enhance broadband speed and reliability throughout the community (both business and residential areas).	GFW, NewAllen Alliance	Community Resources, Private Investment, USDA	0-5 years

7. ENGAGE AND CONNECT TO SUPPORT INVESTMENTS

	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
7.1	Participate in an on-going NewAllen Strategic Advancement Committee to oversee Strategic Investment Plan implementation.	Allen County DPS, NewAllen Alliance, Woodburn Chamber of Commerce	Not Applicable	On-going
7.2	Work with a newly hired Community Development Liaison to advance initiatives.	Allen County DPS, NewAllen Alliance, Woodburn Chamber of Commerce	Allen County, NewAllen Alliance	On-going
7.3	Foster and participate in community leadership development activities.	Allen County DPS, GFW, NewAllen Alliance, Woodburn Chamber of Commerce	Local Business Sponsors, Local Foundations	On-going



Woodburn Action Plan Map



- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| City Boundary | Quality of Life Improvement Area |
| Downtown Area Boundary | Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements |
| Woodburn Community Park | Industrial Park Expansion |
| Future Roadway Extension | Future Regional Park |
| Bike Lane/Shoulder Improvements | Allen County Library |
| | Gateways |



**NEWALLEN
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ALLEN COUNTY, INDIANA

WOODBURN, INDIANA

NEWALLEN ALLIANCE, INC.
1240 US 930 EAST
NEW HAVEN, IN 46774

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