

Hancock County Comprehensive Plan

Frequently Asked Questions

What is happening in Hancock County? For the first time in a little over 15 years, Hancock County is developing a new Comprehensive Plan: Future Hancock. Future Hancock comes at a critical time. As Central Indiana and the greater Indianapolis region have grown rapidly in the last several years, so too have development pressures and opportunities in Hancock County.



With its rural history, Hancock County has long been a boundary of eastern moving pressures in the region, but with recent economic development investments, as well as the growth of local Hancock County communities, portions of the County are seeing tremendous growth and opportunity.

Hancock County is growing county with strong agricultural and rural connections and it requires a Comprehensive Plan that provides targeted recommendations that are informed by the community's needs and desires. The new Comprehensive Plan will:

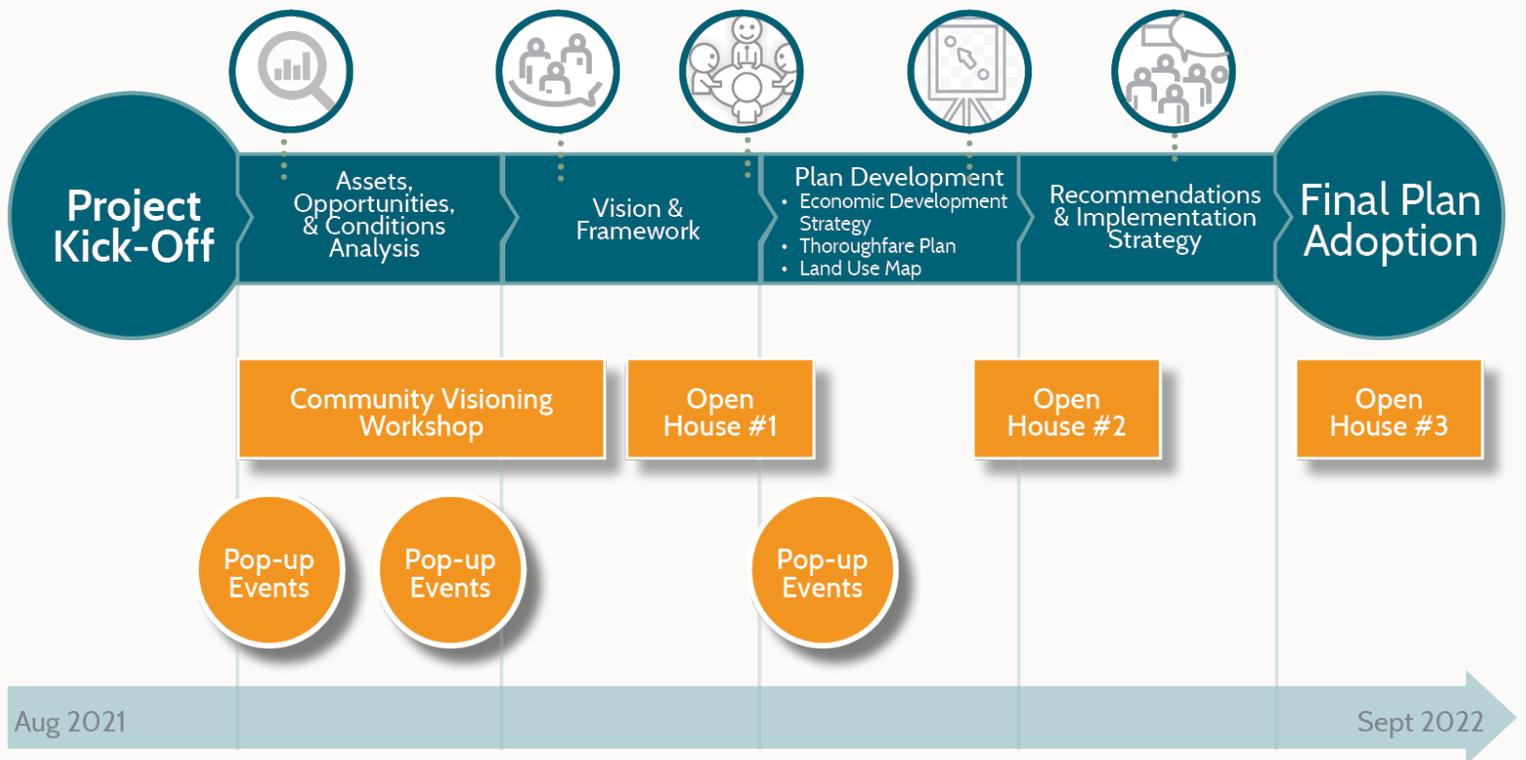
- Develop a County-wide **Vision & Goals** that serve as guiding foundations of the Plan.
- Indicate County-wide **objectives and policies** for future growth and development.
- Detail **existing conditions and background information**, including existing land uses, natural features, transportation facilities, economic conditions, and population trends.
- Propose generally where **future development** should occur and how it should appear, including a Future Land Use Map to plan for future growth or land uses.
- Contain a detailed **Thoroughfare Plan** that includes an analysis of circulation / transportation system and policies for expansion and management.
- Contain an **Economic Development Strategy** that promotes sustainable residential, commercial, and industrial growth based on a sound economic analysis of the County.
- Contain **Community Profiles** with goals that preserve and promote platted communities.
- Offer policies and recommendations for the development of **public ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities**.
- Offer policies and recommendations for **farmland, forest, and natural area preservation**.
- Include a detailed **implementation strategy** that clearly and concisely lists and prioritizes programs, projects, and policies that translate recommendations into direct action.

The Comprehensive Plan can . . .

- Lead to consistent decision making on land development issues. Local officials, residents, and developers can refer to the Plan in making day-to-day decisions.
- Manage growth so that it does not occur in a haphazard pattern.
- Help the County spend money wisely and grow effectively so that service costs do not result in a heavy tax burden on property owners.
- Help preserve its rural aspects, character, and natural resources of Hancock County.
- Provide a sound basis to update land use regulations, such as the zoning ordinance.



Hancock County Planning Process



Why Now?

- **A Growing Community with Rural Roots.** Traditionally characterized by small communities tucked into large expanses of agricultural lands, Hancock County is now experiencing unprecedented growth pressures coming from Indianapolis's growing metro region.
- **Shifting Economies.** Covid-19 has altered the national, state, and regional economic landscape. Now is the time to determine the impact and devise a response to stabilize and enhance the business climate.
- **Identifying Hancock County's Regional Economic Development Opportunities.** The Mt. Comfort Corridor is rapidly growing and quickly establishing itself as a regional economic development corridor while many other opportunities throughout the County are either in infancy or yet to be fully defined. This requires an all-encompassing economic development strategy for the entire County which will be a key element of the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Progressive & Multi-modal Transportation System.** The County is experiencing transportation challenges resulting from development pressures. Traffic patterns and volumes are shifting rapidly in the west end of the county, and it's important to link an efficient transportation system with future land uses throughout the County.
- **Cultivating Small Town Assets.** Hancock County has many small platted communities rich with potential and opportunity to uncover their unique characteristics to enhance the quality of place for tomorrow while preserving their individual identities.
- **Vision for the future.** While each community and town has its own identity and assets, a holistic vision and framework for the future of the entire County is essential.

