



To: Mike Dale, Hancock County Area Plan Commission Executive Director
From: Meredith Perks, Associate Planner, Vandewalle & Associates
Date: Monday, March 21, 2022
Re: Future Hancock Comprehensive Plan Update

Below is a progress report regarding the Future Hancock Comprehensive Plan. The items below reflect highlights of recent activity and forecast upcoming actions. Information on the Future Hancock plan can also be found at <https://futurehancock.com/>.

Recent Activity:

Initial Drafts: This month, work continued on preliminary drafts of the Future Land Use Map, Thoroughfare Plan and Economic Development Strategy. Preliminary drafts were reviewed with County Staff as well as with the Future Hancock Steering Committee and planners from the Towns and City. The Steering Committee meeting held on March 4th was designed to present the drafts and answer clarifying questions. An additional meeting with the Steering Committee is being scheduled for late March/early April to gather input and direction on next steps with the drafts. A public meeting will be scheduled to review the drafts for later in the Spring.

Steering Committee Meeting: A meeting of the Future Hancock Steering Committee was held on March 4th. The meeting included the approval of the previous Steering Committee meeting summaries, which are attached here, as well as discussion of the draft Vision and Framework. The Vision and Framework is being updated based on feedback from the Steering Committee and public input through the January Open House and online survey. Initial drafts of the Future Land Use Map, Thoroughfare Plan, and Economic Development Strategy.

Meeting with Staff: The Consultant Team and County Staff leads have established monthly check ins and updates to stay informed on the planning process and progress. A meeting with staff was held to discuss the Future Land Use Map and other topics relevant to the development of the draft Thoroughfare Plan and Economic Development Strategy.

Future Hancock Website: The project website, <https://futurehancock.com/>, has been updated regularly with new information, including public input event details and online questionnaires. Residents are able to sign up for email updates on the website and provide comments.

Upcoming/Ongoing Actions:

- Draft Future Land Use Map
- Draft Thoroughfare Plan
- Draft Economic Development Strategy
- Public Meeting to Review Drafts

Attached

- Steering Committee Summaries for December and January



Steering Committee Meeting #2
December 3, 2021
Meeting Summary

December Meeting Purpose: review the work completed to date and begin discussing themes and ideas to inform the Vision & Framework.

Steering Committee Attendance:

- Mike Burrow
- Mary Gibble
- Jason Faucett
- April Fisher
- Pat Haley
- Steve Long
- Jack Parker
- Bill Spaulding
- Jonathon Sparks

Not in Attendance:

- Ryan Maxfield
- Jason Faucett

County Staff:

- Mike Dale
- Randy Sorrell

Consultant Team:

- Scott Harrington, Vandewalle & Assoc.
- Lupita Alvarez, Vandewalle & Assoc.
- Meredith Perks, Vandewalle & Assoc.
- Mike Higbee, OBE Advisors
- Lou Savka, Triad

Meeting Summary:

- The Steering Committee was provided with a summary packet of the data and public input collected to date, which included the State of the County data, Stakeholder & Community Input Summaries, and Progress Reports. The Committee was asked to review the information ahead of the meeting and come prepared to discuss the following questions:
 - From the data presented – what resonates? What surprises you?
 - From the stakeholder and community input received to date, what resonates with you? What surprises you?
 - From the information provided and your own experience, what themes should be included in the development of the Future Hancock Framework? The Framework serves as a foundation for the Comprehensive Plan elements, identifying key themes and principles that then drive recommendations.
- Co-chairs Mary Gibble and Jack Parker kicked off with a round of introductions.
- Following the introduction, Vandewalle & Associates reviewed the state of the County and opened the floor for questions and discussion. The notes from the discussion are listed below:



Steering Committee Summarized Discussion:

- There's a desire to see a focus on building a community versus an economic engine.
 - How do we attract people to come and stay and grow?
 - Need to provide amenities to support quality of life
- Group shared that Ball State shared a presentation a few days before Committee meeting and expressed in presentation that:
 - Top priority/attractor is schools
 - Focus on quality/affordable housing
 - Amenities to support resident
- Committee discussed "common themes" to consider, those included:
 - Maintaining small town and rural feel
 - Controlled development / balanced growth
 - High-paying jobs
 - Sense of community
 - Amenities are always priority – such as parks
 - Need to add rooftops / housing but in a responsible manner
 - Providing a comprehensive community for those that live and work here
 - Creating stronger City/towns that cater to the needs of the community versus sprawl
 - Directing new infrastructure where development is



Steering Committee Zoom Update
January 7, 2021
Meeting Summary

January Meeting Purpose: brief update on work completed to date and discussion of the draft Vision and Framework.

Steering Committee Attendance:

- Mike Burrow
- Mary Gibble
- Jason Faucett
- April Fisher
- Pat Haley
- Steve Long
- Jack Parker
- Bill Spaulding
- Jonathon Sparks
- Peter Uberto
- Jason Faucett

Not in Attendance:

- Jeannine Gray

County Staff:

- Mike Dale
- Randy Sorrell
- Gary Pool

Consultant Team:

- Scott Harrington, Vandewalle & Assoc.
- Lupita Alvarez, Vandewalle & Assoc.
- Meredith Perks, Vandewalle & Assoc.
- Mike Higbee, OBE Advisors

Meeting Summary:

- Following the public input received to date and the feedback from December Steering Committee meeting, the consultant team prepared the draft Vision and Framework.
- The Steering Committee was sent the draft Vision & Framework ahead of the meeting along with a Survey where they were asked to rate their level of agreement for each statement.
- The survey results were then used to guide the January Steering Committee discussion.
- The conversation was focused on the Vision & Framework components with the most diverse opinions, including Vision, Objective B, Objective C, Objective D, Objective F.
- The Steering Committee feedback is summarized below:



Steering Committee Feedback

- **Vision Statement:**
 - Consider rewording “friendly and caring residents”
 - Possible phrases to consider included:
 - Hoosier hospitality
 - Welcoming
 - Engaging and caring
 - Engaged and welcoming
 - Welcoming
 - Community-minded
 - Vibrant and inviting
 - Vibrant and welcoming
 - More emphasis on rural community and history
 - Condense statement – overall felt too long and wordy
- **Objective B:** Strengthen the Sense of Community and Identity while Diversifying Lifestyle Choices
 - After consultant provided explanation of the objective, Committee shared that they overall liked this objective
- **Objective C:** Diversify Employment and Housing Options to Improve the Live-Work Balance
 - Agreement that establishing programs for local junior and seniors is extremely important for retention efforts
 - Committee asked that team provide more explanation on the housing piece – it felt like housing needed to be its own objective
 - The use of the word “variety of housing types” was a concern and needed to be further expanded on
- **Objective D:** Invest in a Robust and Efficient Transportation System Concurrent with Development
 - There were differing opinions about including mass transit in the objectives
 - Determined that mass transit is needed for workforce mobility and it would be more closely tied to growing employment opportunities, particularly along Mount Comfort
- **Objective A:** Enhance Intergovernmental Coordination Mechanisms to the Benefit of all County Residents
 - Expressed the need to expand on the first initiative so it states that there’s a need to work collaboratively with the City and Towns on identifying growth areas versus identifying it for them
- **Objective F:** Prioritize Growth Areas and Investments in Supporting Infrastructure and Services
 - Discussed that there needed to be emphasis on stabilizing and providing support for areas that are lagging not just growth areas
 - There was discussion about the statement “to prioritize growth areas and related public investments so that services infrastructure are available prior to or concurrent with development” and the desire to remove the phrase “prior to”
 - Group also discussed incorporating language about Hancock’s role in the region