



EN₂₀₃₀VISION VALPARAISO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED
06.24.13

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July 1, 2013

Mr. Tyler Kent, AICP, Planning Director
Planning Department
City of Valparaiso
166 Lincolnway, Valparaiso, IN 46383
Valparaiso, Indiana

Dear Mr. Kent:

We are pleased to submit the following Comprehensive Plan update document titled "Envision 2030 Valparaiso." With its official adoption by City Council on June 24, 2013, it provides the framework for guiding future development, redevelopment, and community enhancement in the City and surrounding planning area for the next 20 years. It stands as a vision, along with realistic goals and achievable strategies, that residents, businesses, major organizations and institutions, and public officials can support and use as a decision-making tool in the years ahead.

It is important to note that this Comprehensive Plan and its recommended actions and policies are part of a dynamic and ongoing planning process and will be subject to revisions, amendments, and eventual updating as the City continues to grow and future projects are implemented.

A great many individuals materially contributed to the analysis and recommendations presented in this document. We wish to express our appreciation to everyone involved. Particular appreciation is expressed for contributions by the Plan Update Steering Committee, City Planning Commission, and to City of Valparaiso staff members.

It has been a privilege to be involved in the development and preparation of this update to your Plan. We look forward to continued involvement in the discussions and analysis that will follow it.

Respectfully submitted,

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Bret C. Keast, AICP
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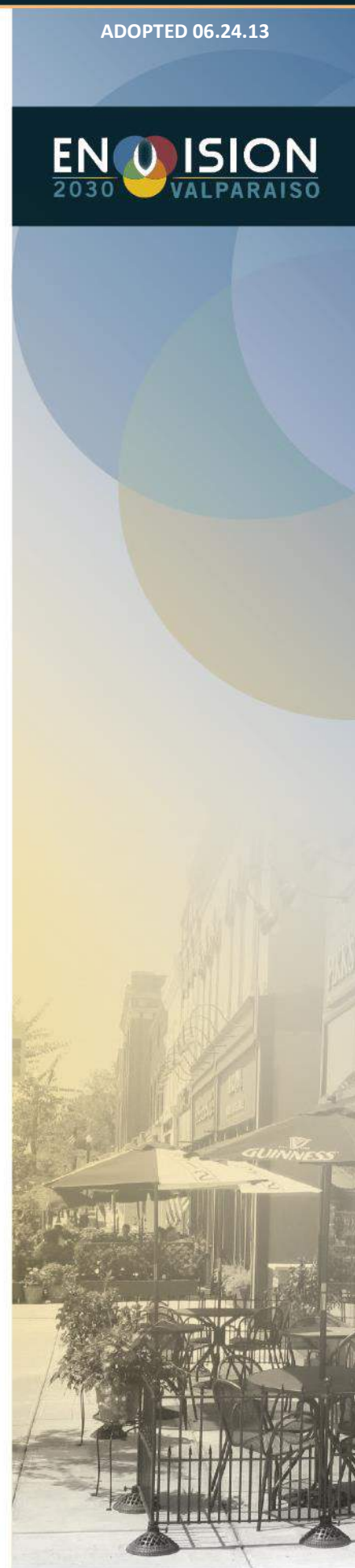
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 The logo features the word "ENOVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font, with a stylized circular graphic element between the "O" and "V". Below it, "2030" and "VALPARAISO" are written in a smaller font.
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Planning Context

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Background

The City of Valparaiso is a vibrant place that has emerged from its roots as an agriculture-centered community, county seat, and small college town. Much of the City's success is founded in its strong Downtown, top-rated Valparaiso University, its proximity to Chicago, and appealing natural areas within and around the City. These advantages have resulted in a well-rounded business community, a quality school system, abundant art and cultural offerings, and beautiful neighborhoods that include quaint and historic areas along with quality, sustainable developments.

Over the past decade, the City has experienced several positive changes. Downtown received a facelift through rehabilitated building facades and streetscape improvements. These changes attracted new tenants in the form of specialty retail shops and restaurants, anchored by the historic Porter County Court House. Most recently, Downtown benefitted from Central Park Plaza, a civic gathering space that hosts live concerts and performances, as well as a Farmers' Market. Commercial areas outside of Downtown received financial incentives for façade improvements, including Cumberland Crossing which was completely redeveloped from a strip-style shopping center to a beautiful, modern lifestyle center. Major road projects provided needed upgrades to infrastructure and improved connectivity. Valparaiso University continues to make facility and campus improvements as it sees through its recent Campus Master Plan. In the past few years, the City has embraced development and facilitated redevelopment, which has resulted in the vigorous place it is today.

Whether an issue is a challenge or an opportunity, the utmost importance should be placed upon this plan as a mechanism for thoughtful public discussion of the choices facing Valparaiso. As the community looks ahead to its near- and longer-term futures, the desires of its citizens are interwoven through all aspects of this plan. From parks to neighborhoods and



Central Park Plaza

Source: www.sehinc.com



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Downtown, there are many community assets that this plan strives to strengthen. Local residents have demonstrated their ability to manage and improve an appealing community for more than a century. This plan seeks to continue this tradition.

Many citizens and community leaders believe that the City is on the brink of significant growth. Whether development pressures increase or not, the City will inevitably experience change. This Comprehensive Plan provides an opportunity to “Envision Valparaiso” for the next 20 years and beyond.

Planning History

Visitors of Valparaiso will notice that the City is unique and offers many interesting visual features. Many people say that the City is highly “imagable,” meaning that it is a memorable place. Valparaiso didn’t evolve into such a likeable community by happenstance - it took visioning, foresight, preparedness, and good leadership.

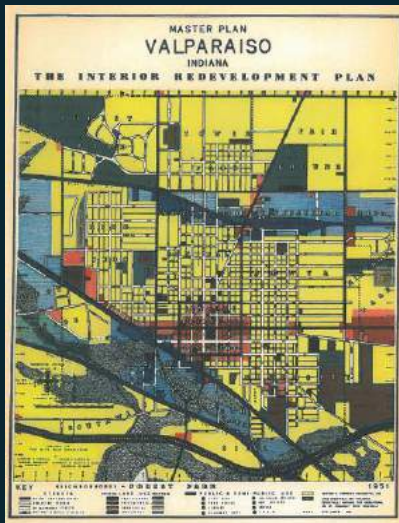
Valparaiso was one of the first communities in Indiana to adopt a Comprehensive Plan, termed the “Master Plan”, in 1925. In 1951, it was replaced with another master plan, which focused on an “Interior Redevelopment Plan” and a “Neighborhood Development Plan of the Two-Mile Jurisdictional Area.” This plan established the foundation for adoption of the zoning and subdivision regulations.

The City’s current plan was adopted in 1991, which was revised in 1995, 2002, and 2003. In 2000, a “Growth Management Plan” was adopted. Other master plans such as the Parks Master Plan, Pathways Master Plan, Water Master Plan, Wastewater Systems Plan, and the Downtown Comprehensive Plan were adopted separately. The Parks Master Plan recently underwent an update (see section below relating to coordination with other plans).

The current plan has served the City well. However, the City has matured beyond the plan’s vision and its current policies. It is a policy of this plan that it is to be revisited every five years, with adjustments to the vision, policies, and recommendations as warranted.

Why Planning is Important to Valparaiso

This Comprehensive Plan is designed as a framework for guiding future development, redevelopment, and community enhancement in the City and its planning area over the next 20 years. The purpose of this plan is to establish a vision, along with realistic goals and achievable strategies, that residents, business and land owners, developers, major institutions, civic groups, members of boards and commissions, and public officials can support and use in their decision-making in the years ahead.



Valparaiso Interior Redevelopment Plan showing future land uses and development areas.

Source: Valparaiso Comprehensive Plan, 1951



Since change in the community is inevitable, the City has taken advantage of this opportunity to determine its destiny through the comprehensive plan process. Along the way, decision-makers, with input from their constituents, made policies decisions, to address:

- How we want our community to appear?
- What type of growth we want and where it is to occur?
- How we achieve our economic objectives?
- What improvements and enhancements are needed?
- What our priorities are for achieving our intended future?

The process of updating the plan proved equally valuable to the plan itself since the document is a snapshot in time. The planning process involved major community decisions about where development/redevelopment will occur, the nature and extent of future development, and the community's capacity to provide the necessary public services and facilities to support this development. This led to pivotal discussions about what is "best" for the community and how everything from taxes to quality of life will be affected.

This long-range planning process provided an opportunity for the City's elected and appointed officials to step back from pressing, day-to-day issues and clarify their ideas on the kind of community they are trying to create and maintain. Through the planning process, they looked broadly at programs for land use, community character, neighborhoods and housing, sustainability, economic development, and provision of public infrastructure and facilities, and how these relate to one another. The Valparaiso Comprehensive Plan represents a "big picture" view of the City, one that is related to the trends and interests of the broader region and the State of Indiana.

In summary, this process offered an opportunity for the community to celebrate its past but, more importantly, to envision its future. The City has a strong history of long-range planning. Therefore, continued success of the City will largely depend on the commitment of citizens and leaders to abide by the policies of this plan.

Legal Basis

Cities in Indiana derive their authority for comprehensive planning from the State. Indiana law requires comprehensive plans to be adopted by resolution, in order to advance the public health, safety, morals, convenience, order, and general welfare of its citizens. The State also requires that a local plan provide "efficiency and economy in the process of development."¹ This focus on fiscal responsibility reflects the values of the State.

¹ 500 Series Comprehensive Plan IC 36-7-4-501

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"Planning" is ... the process of identifying issues and needs, establishing goals and objectives, and determining the most effective means by which these ends may be achieved.

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



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Comprehensive Plan Elements Permitted by the State of Indiana:

- History, population, physical conditions
- Land use and bulk of structures and sites
- Densities
- Community centers
- Neighborhood units
- Areas for redevelopment and conservation
- Public ways
- Water, sewer, drainage, waste, and other utilities
- Pollution
- Flood control and irrigation
- All modes of transportation
- Parks, recreation, forest, refugees, etc.
- Public facilities
- Education
- Land Use
- Conservation of resources
- Other factors that contribute to the social, physical, or economic condition of the community

Source: 500 Series Comprehensive Plan IC 36-7-4-503

The state legislation mandates that plans, as a minimum, contain the following three elements:

- 1) Objectives for future development;
- 2) Policies regarding land use; and
- 3) Policies for development of public property.²

The authorizing legislation permits additional elements, including those listed in the margin to the left. The list is broadly permissive and reflects the State's goal that development occurs pursuant to a comprehensive plan. State law defines the purpose for planning as follows:

- 1) Highway systems are to be carefully planned;
- 2) New communities grow only with adequate public ways, utilities, health, and educational and recreational facilities;
- 3) Needs of agriculture, forestry, industry, and business are recognized in future growth;
- 4) Residential areas provide healthful surroundings for family life; and
- 5) Growth of the community is commensurate with and proportional to the efficient and economical use of public funds.³

The State regulations anticipate a coordinated and visionary approach for the connection of roadways. State legislation specifically calls for careful planning of highways.⁴ The provisions regarding local roadway planning anticipate that future roads will follow the alignment and width of roadways reflected on the Thoroughfare Plan. The characteristics of a roadway may only be changed as prescribed in the adopted comprehensive plan.⁵ This provision allows a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to be incorporated into the comprehensive plan, which may create a stronger connection between public and private implementation of the comprehensive plan.

State law also authorizes and limits housing programs, economic development, and property maintenance. The applicable state laws are reviewed in the applicable sections of this Comprehensive Plan to ensure the City remains on firm grounds, but also to be sure that all planning tools are thoroughly understood.

Use of this Plan

A comprehensive plan, when embraced by the City and its leadership, has great potential to aid the community in achieving its vision of livability and in making tangible improvements. However, comprehensive plans are only effective if their action recommendations are pursued and implemented.

² 500 Series Comprehensive Plan IC 36-7-4-502

³ 200 Series Commission Establishment and Membership IC 36-7-4-201

⁴ 200 Series Commission Establishment and Membership IC 36-7-4-201

⁵ 500 Series Comprehensive Plan IC 36-7-4-506



This plan is a guidance document for City officials and staff, who make decisions on a daily basis that determine the future directions, financial health, and “character” of the community. These decisions are carried out through:

- targeted programs and expenditures prioritized through the City’s annual budget process, including routine but essential functions such as code enforcement;
- major public improvements and land acquisition financed through the City’s capital improvement program and related bond initiatives;
- new and amended City ordinances and regulations closely linked to the Comprehensive Plan objectives (and associated review and approval procedures in the case of land development, subdivisions, and zoning matters);
- departmental work plans and staffing in key areas;
- support for ongoing planning and studies that will further clarify needs, costs, benefits, and strategies;
- pursuit of external grant funding to supplement local budgets and/or expedite certain projects; and,
- initiatives pursued in conjunction with other public and private partners to leverage resources and achieve successes neither could accomplish on their own.

Despite many avenues for action, a comprehensive plan should not be considered a “cure all” for every problem the community faces. This Plan focuses on the responsibilities of the City for its land use and growth planning, where it has a direct role. In other areas, such as education, social services, and arts and culture the City has an indirect but still important role. Of necessity, this plan, as a vision and policy document, is sufficiently general so as to remain relevant over time. Thus, the plan provides a framework for future decision-making: it may not touch on every challenge before the community, but it is meant to set a tone and motivate concerted efforts to move the community forward in the coming years.

It is also important to distinguish between the function of the Comprehensive Plan versus that of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). This plan establishes the overall policy for future land use, mobility improvements, utilities, and other aspects of community growth and economic development. The City’s UDO and official zoning map implement the plan in terms of specific land uses and their building and site development standards. The City’s subdivision regulations, which are contained in the UDO, establish minimum development requirements in conformance with the plan for the subdivision of land; the layout of new or redeveloped streets and building sites; and the design and construction of roads, water and sewer lines, storm drainage, and other infrastructure that will be dedicated to the City for long-term maintenance.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING

The success of the plan depends upon how it is integrated with the operation of local government (planning, policy development, regulation, budgeting and capital investments, and programming through City departments).

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



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1.2 PLANNING PRIORITIES

A Perfect Storm of Studies

The rewriting of this Comprehensive Plan occurred at the same time as other plans and studies were being conducted by the City and other entities. The Porter County Regional Airport recently completed its master plan entitled, "In Plane View: A Clear Vision for the Future." The City completed an update of its Parks Master Plan in 2011. Also, Valparaiso University and Valparaiso Community Schools developed their own master plans. The Downtown Valparaiso Parking Study was finished in 2010 with recommendations to address parking supply and management. Lastly, Porter County has a comprehensive plan that includes many of the same elements addressed in this plan. Each of these plans is referenced with their recommendations integrated as appropriate.

Recently completed plans for other planning jurisdictions were also taken into consideration. Shown by **Map 1.1, Planning Jurisdictions**, is the study area of this plan, which includes the city limits and a two mile radius that is permitted by the State for areas that may be incorporated into comprehensive plans. It shows the relationships of the planning jurisdictions of other cities near Valparaiso, as well as Porter County.

Other entities that support the City and its neighbors have recently conducted studies. These include the Salt Creek Watershed Management Plan and the Porter County Convention, Recreation, and Visitors' Commission Destination Development Study.

The comprehensive nature of this project warranted coordination with each of these and other entities to ensure consistency with their adopted plans.

Coordination with Representatives of Groups and Agencies

Other entities that support and/or impact planning processes of the City were considered as well. These included:

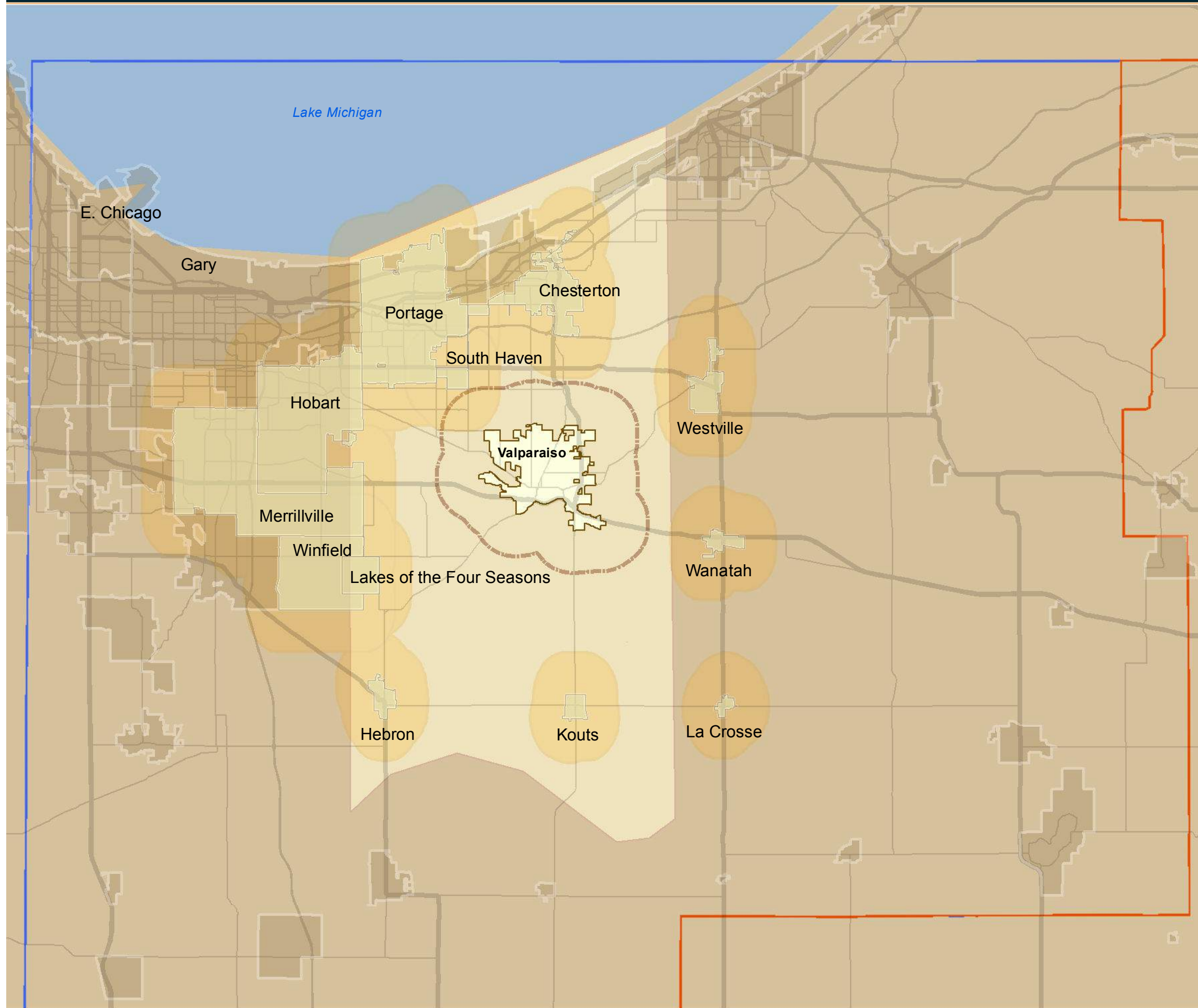
- Porter County;
- Porter County Regional Airport;
- Coalition of Affordable Housing;
- Valparaiso University;
- Housing Opportunities, Inc.;
- Project Neighborhoods;
- Porter Starke Services;
- Habitat for Humanity;
- Opportunity Enterprises;
- Pines Village Retirement Communities;
- Valparaiso Community Schools;

Map 1.1

Planning Jurisdictions

Legend

-  Central Time Zone
-  Eastern Time Zone
-  City Limits
-  2-Mile Boundary
-  Nearby Cities
-  Nearby Cities 2-Mile Boundary
-  Porter County



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- The City of Portage;
- Town of Chesterton;
- Washington, Center, Liberty, Union, Morgan, and Porter Townships;
- Greater Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce ;
- Purdue University North Central, Porter County Campus;
- Lake Michigan Coastal Program;
- Indiana Department of Transportation;
- Save the Dunes;
- Northwest Indiana Community Action (NWI-CA);
- Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC); and
- Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO).

As a part of the public participation process, the City also sought input from:

- Local business owners;
- Representatives for the museums;
- Civic groups and community organizations;
- Housing officials;
- Neighborhood leaders;
- Transit officials;
- Environmental groups;
- Land owners and developers;
- Representatives for land trusts; and
- Local non-profit agencies.

This input was sought during the Citizens' Congress and at key points during the plan development process.

Valparaiso: A City of Neighborhoods

The City's residents consider Valparaiso to be a community of neighborhoods, as opposed to a collection of subdivisions. This community value is manifested in both its physical and social attributes.

Physically, most of Valparaiso's neighborhoods stand out from one another. Cities known for their great neighborhoods are also highly picturesque. Certainly, older neighborhoods have their own unique charm because they were built during a time before the production of model homes and volume building. These established neighborhoods have a variety of lot sizes with homes differing from one another in their size and design. This variety adds interest and a richness of housing choice.

Newer neighborhoods in the City are also interesting and distinguishable. This is due to the fact that City officials have facilitated a creative approach to development. Many of these developments, while offering new structures, mimic older developments with varying lot sizes and building styles, and

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Well established neighborhoods have a unique charm by way of their variety.



Newer neighborhoods are interesting and distinguishable.

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“Freestanding City” means a city whose jurisdiction does not abut the jurisdiction of another city, and is thus, surrounded by rural countryside.

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative

preserving green space through shared open areas. The City took an important step when it adopted the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The UDO further encourages creative design by removing regulatory barriers and creating incentives for quality, sustainable development.

The City stands to benefit from strong neighborhood leadership where people socialize with one another. When people know their neighbors, their social lives are enriched, safety increases when there are more “eyes on the street”, and code enforcement is enhanced as people encourage each other to maintain their properties. The most organized system of neighborhood leadership, and one with legal weight, is a homeowners’ association (HOA). However, most of the City’s neighborhoods are not organized into HOA’s. Other strategies for organizing and empowering neighborhoods are outlined in *Chapter 6, Housing & Neighborhoods*.

A Freestanding City

Valparaiso is a freestanding city, meaning that its fringes do not blend into another city. Those that come to the City drive through miles of pristine countryside to get here. Displayed by *Map 1.1, Planning Jurisdictions*, is the City and its planning area, along with other nearby jurisdictions. It reflects many square miles of rural open space around Valparaiso. Several of the other cities have overlapping jurisdictions, whereas Valparaiso is still surrounded by natural areas and farmland. This overlap means that the cities will need to come to agreement regarding their future boundaries, but it also means that as growth occurs, eventually those cities will blend with one another. The cities surrounding Chicago, which compete with cities such as Valparaiso for positive growth, industry, and jobs, are not freestanding and therefore, lack their own unique identities.

This characteristic is yet another asset that sets Valparaiso apart from other communities. It is also a local value expressed by its citizens and business owners. Therefore, this plan sets policies with a goal of preserving and protecting the rural/urban transition and entrances to the City.

Making the Old New Again

In early 2009, the City compiled a list of accomplishments from the previous five years. The Mayor’s office reported that during that period, over \$40 million in State and Federal grants had been leveraged, which allowed significant public projects and revitalization of older developments to occur. The list of those projects is provided in the inset on Page 1-9, entitled, “Public Projects, 2004 - 2009.” Many of these projects were managed by the City’s Redevelopment Commission.



A major project that is underway is University Village Promenade, a mixed use development that includes housing and retail uses. This project is part of the City's implementation of the Eastgate Plan, which is designed to strengthen the University's connection to Lincolnway, Downtown, and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Public Projects, 2004-2009

New Construction

- City's first roundabout;
- Valparaiso Street project from Evans to Glendale providing a new roadway with sidewalks and curbs and a new expansive sewer trunk line to improve drainage;
- Construction of Vale Park Way;
 - formed a new environmentally-friendly roadway between Valparaiso Street and Campbell Street;
 - included a pathway with environmental features;
- Butterfly Meadows; and
- Village Station in a public/private partnership.

Renovations, Expansion, and Redevelopment

- Comprehensive upgrade of the City's Eastgate area, including the addition of a continuous turning lane, relocating overhead utility lines, and replacing water lines, curbs, and sidewalks;
- Redevelopment of the former County Seat Plaza into a retail village that is now Cumberland Crossing;
- Construction of a new Police Station to replace the one built in 1879 (consolidation of the City's 911 system);
- Paving of more than 43 miles of city roads - more than one third of the City's entire road system;
 - Road Recovery Plan allows for the resurfacing of all roads on a 15-year rotation;
- Addition of a third fire station to further expand service; and
- Comprehensive renewal of the downtown streetscape from Morgan Boulevard on the east to Napoleon Street on the west, upgrading sidewalks, curbs, lighting, signals, electrical, sound and water systems.

Source: City of Valparaiso

Private investment has helped to implement the Eastgate Plan. The Uptown East student apartment and commercial development was recently completed, and property owners of several of the existing commercial buildings have made improvements, taking advantage of the City's matching funds in the Façade Improvement Program.

Another important project that supports and enhances activity in Downtown is the Central Park Plaza. This is an open air plaza that doubles as an outdoor venue at the intersection of Indiana Avenue and Lafayette Street. Design features include a plaza and walkways marked by pavers, landscaped sitting areas, a performance stage, and an interactive water feature. The project creates a downtown park that has the capability of accommodating special events such as concerts and movies.



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Downtown

Several years ago, the City completed the Downtown Valparaiso Focus Block #18 project, installing streetscape features, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, and making façade improvements. These improvements have attracted new tenants to Downtown, which is becoming increasingly known for its excellent restaurants. Downtown has become the pride of the City, bustling with activity on weekdays and weekends, alike. There is, however, room for improvements for entertainment, restaurants, and retail to further enhance this distinctive area. This is an area that has the capacity to attract both families and young people. Additional retail uses will encourage tenants to stay open longer in the evenings and to encourage activities at night.

Historic Residential Areas

The historic residential areas are located north of Lincolnway in the area around Glendale Boulevard, and south of Lincolnway stretching to the commercial frontage along U.S. 30. Most of these homes were built before 1950. A significant effort was made a few years ago to protect one of these neighborhoods with a historic district. However, property owners in the area made it clear that the preservation standards were too restrictive leading to the removal of the designation. Some of the historic structures are in need of repair while others have been converted to multi-unit households. This Comprehensive Plan outlines options to encourage reinvestment and to ensure that the City does not incrementally lose its historic areas (see **Chapter 6, Housing & Neighborhoods**).

VISION STATEMENTS

The **City of Valparaiso** adopted the following Vision Statement with its last update of the Comprehensive Plan:

The people of Valparaiso seek to be part of a quality community that is defined not by political or geographical boundaries, but rather by its "can do" spirit. Valparaiso will continue to be a community of cultural, ethnic, political, and economic diversity where each person has the opportunity to live, learn, work, play and excel in a safe and friendly environment. By welcoming the future and honoring the past, Valparaiso will welcome positive change, solve its local challenges and, when appropriate, actively cooperate in finding solutions to regional problems.

The **Northwest Indiana Regional Plan** includes the following Vision Statement:

"Envision Northwest Indiana: a vibrant, revitalized, accessible and united region.

Stretching from the treasured shores of Lake Michigan to the historic banks of the Kankakee River and committed to an ethic of sustainability:

A vibrant region – Our economy is thriving, our people are well educated, and our environment is clean;

A revitalized region – Growth is planned, urban areas are renewed, and natural and rural areas are valued and protected;

An accessible region – Our people are connected to each other and to equal opportunities for working, playing, living, and learning;

A united region – Celebrating our diversity, we work together as a community across racial, ethnic, political, and cultural lines for the good of the region."



1.3 COMMUNITY PROFILE: ON THE CUSP OF GROWTH

Existing Roadways

Shown in **Figure 1.1, Major Access Corridors**, is the major roads that traverse the City. The community is accessible from all directions. U.S. 30 and the combined SR130/SR2 provide good east-west connectivity. U.S. 30 acts as a bypass route, whereas the State Routes act as “business” roadways, taking traffic through the heart of Valparaiso, turning into Lincolnway through Downtown. Similarly, SR49 splits to carry bypass traffic to the east of the City, whereas the business route turns into Culumet Avenue, which contains a significant portion of the City’s commercial development.

Also revealed in *Figure 1.1, Major Access Corridors*, is a lack of east-west mobility in the northern half of the City. On the west side, there is also a need to create a north-south connection between U.S. 30 and SR130 / Lincolnway.

Displayed in **Figure 1.2, Regional Connections**, is the connections to and from the Chicago metropolitan area. Valparaiso benefits from good intrastate and interstate access, with direct connections to Chicago and other regional and Midwestern markets.

Population Comparisons and Projections

This section describes the demographics of Valparaiso, including the past population growth in the City and in comparison cities across Indiana and the upper Midwest. The selected peer communities include college towns that have fewer than 100,000 residents, with the exception of South Bend that has just over 100,000 persons, but was included due to its familiarity to Valparaiso residents. This section also includes demographic comparisons with these cities, Porter County, and Indiana in order to gauge the relative strengths or opportunities for Valparaiso. Lastly,

Figure 1.1, Major Access Corridors



Figure 1.2, Regional Connections



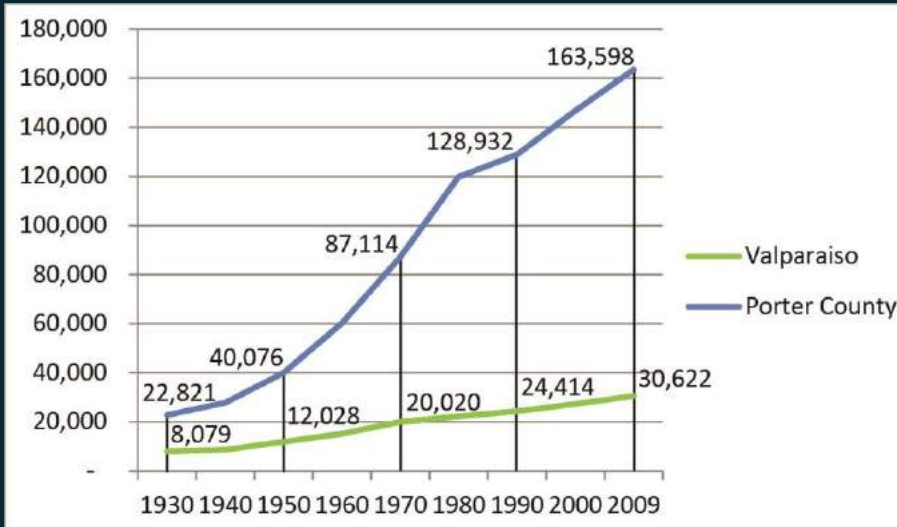
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this section addresses the City's "Readiness for Economic Development" to examine the community's position in the region and state. This chapter concludes with a discussion of three emerging themes relative to the City's population growth – job growth as a driver of population growth, a need for adequate housing, and the role of the natural environment in sustaining future growth.

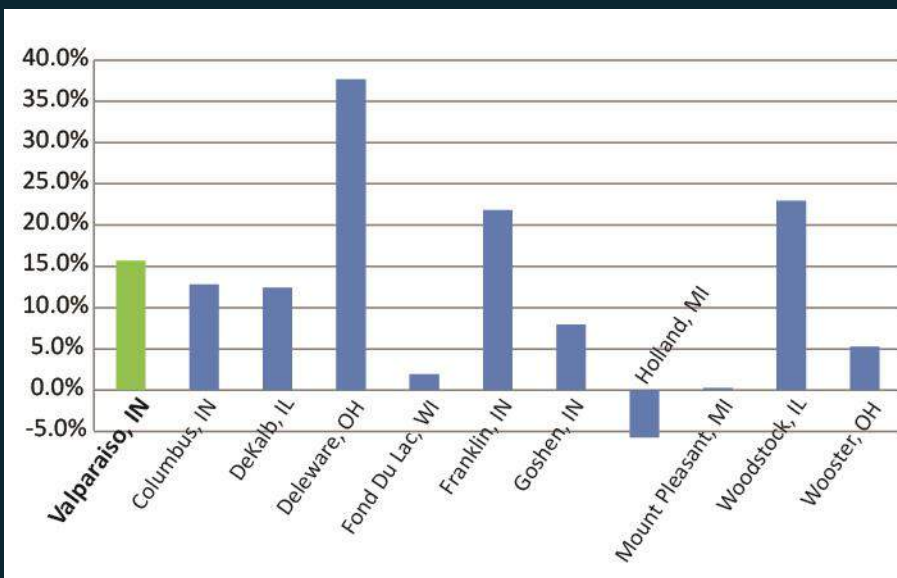
Historical and Future Population

Figure 1.3, Historic Populations of Valparaiso and Porter County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

Figure 1.4, Population Change of Comparison Cities, 2000 to 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

Reflected by **Figure 1.3, Historic Populations of Valparaiso and Porter County**, is the steady population growth of Valparaiso and Porter County since 1930. Relative to Porter County, Valparaiso has not seen the sharp increases that the County has experienced, particularly during the 1970's when their population jumped almost 40 percent. After 1980, the County's growth has slowed, with both the City and County experiencing roughly 10 percent growth per decade, or an annual increase of around one percent.

Shown by **Figure 1.4, Population Change of Comparison Cities, 2000 to 2010**, is the growth of Valparaiso relative to the comparison cities, which exhibits that the City's growth of the last decade is above average. Valparaiso increased its population during this time by nearly 16 percent, which is among the fastest growing of those compared in this analysis.

Exhibited in **Table 1.1, Annual Population Growth and Percent Change**, is the population and percent change between 2000 and 2010 for Valparaiso, Porter County, and Indiana. Generally, the City experienced a slower



rate of growth until 2008 at which time its growth has exceeded that of Porter County.

Shown in **Figure 1.5, Population Projections**, is the high, middle-ground, and low projections of the City's population in the year 2030 and intervening years. The projections assume that growth will continue in its historical trend over the next 20 years, even though some fluctuations will likely occur. They do not reflect a prolonged effect of the current economic downturn. While the slowdown of the past three years is likely to continue in the near-term, the projected growth in VU's student enrollment is likely to offset any decrease in the resident population.

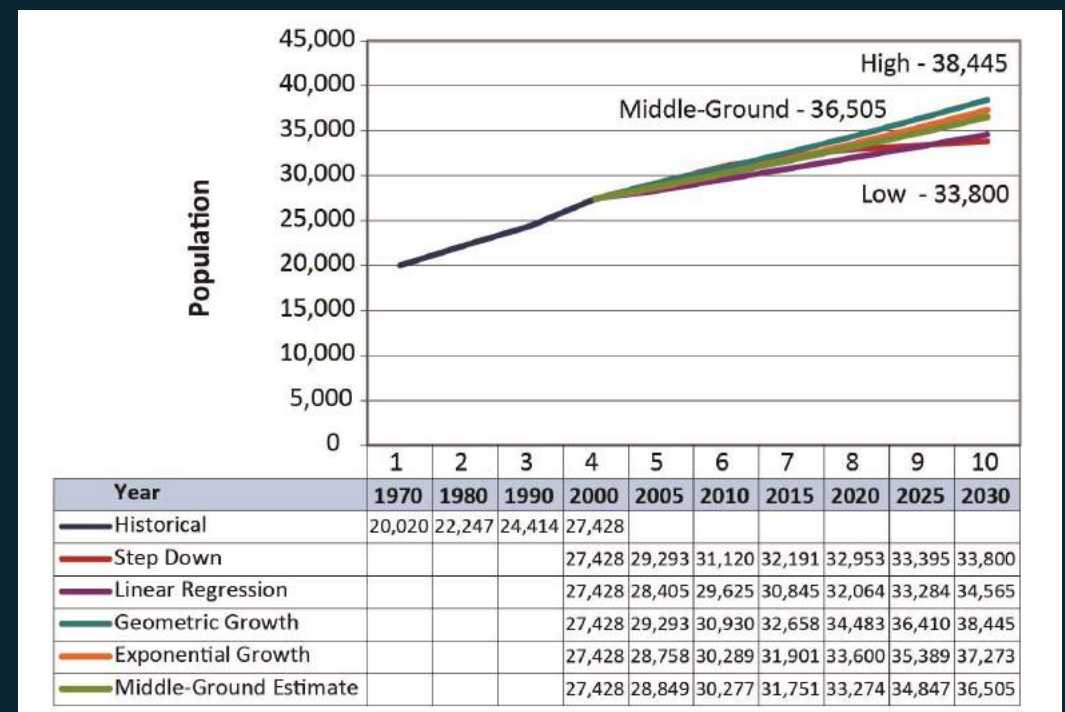
Presently the City is largely populated with Caucasian and non-Hispanic persons. Shown in **Table 1.2, Race and Ethnicity**, very little change in the distribution of race since 1990. There is however, a significant shift in the number and relative proportion of those of Hispanic origin. While still a relatively small percentage, the number of Hispanic persons has grown by more than 100 percent since 2000; from 917 persons in 2000 to 2,263 persons in 2010,

Table 1.1, Annual Population Growth and Percent Change

	Year	Valparaiso		Porter County		Indiana	
		Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
Census Estimates	2000	28,254		147,164		6,091,649	
	2001	28,435	0.64%	148,378	0.82%	6,124,967	0.55%
	2002	28,747	1.10%	149,950	1.06%	6,149,007	0.39%
	2003	28,889	0.49%	151,553	1.07%	6,181,789	0.53%
	2004	29,054	0.57%	153,447	1.25%	6,214,454	0.53%
	2005	29,293	0.82%	155,717	1.48%	6,253,120	0.62%
	2006	29,639	1.18%	158,242	1.62%	6,301,700	0.78%
	2007	29,985	1.17%	160,509	1.43%	6,346,113	0.70%
	2008	30,394	1.36%	162,300	1.12%	6,388,309	0.66%
	2009	30,622	0.75%	163,598	0.80%	6,423,113	0.54%
	2010	31,730	3.62%	164,343	0.46%	6,483,802	0.94%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

Figure 1.5, Population Projections



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Kendig Keast Collaborative, 2010.



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Data Availability

In many cases, the U.S. Census Bureau is the best source for providing data about socioeconomic conditions at the local community level. In 2010, the U.S. Census changed the way it collects certain data; instead of collecting some characteristics, such as income and employment every ten years, it will now be collecting that information annually in the American Community Survey.

increasing from 3.3 percent to 7.1 percent of the total population. This trend is expected to continue in the future.

Table 1.2, Race and Ethnicity

Year	1990	2000	2010
White	97.78%	94.19%	91.80%
Black or African American	0.58%	1.85%	4.00%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.20%	0.68%	0.90%
Asian	1.13%	1.82%	2.80%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	N/A	0.08%	0.10%
Some other race	0.30%	1.37%	2.70%
Hispanic Origin	1.42%	3.30%	7.10%

Source: City of Valparaiso. U.S. Census Bureau. 2009.

Job Growth as a Driver of Population Growth

A key to facilitating community growth is available employment. The level of education is also a key determinant related to the capabilities of the area labor force. This, in turn, influences the types of businesses that may be retained and attracted, as well as the success businesses may have in finding the types of labor skills they require. Valparaiso compares favorably with other college towns, as well as Porter County and the State. Valparaiso University provides the City a competitive edge; the strong collaborative relationship between the University and City leadership provides opportunity for sustaining a strong local economy.

As articulated by stakeholders during the process, it is important for Valparaiso to provide proper opportunities for young adults to enable them stay in the City. As host to Valparaiso University, the City has a constant stream of younger workers who may become future residents and employees (or employers). However, currently, a majority of these students migrate elsewhere upon graduation. Most important will be an effort to diversify the economy so that there are a variety of jobs available in the community for recent graduates. This effort must be part of a larger goal of bringing more jobs to Valparaiso and the region. In order to attract these younger residents to Valparaiso, other niche amenities should be offered and promoted. These opportunities include housing choices that appeal to younger persons and which are affordable given the local employment options. Local recreation and entertainment in the form of "night life" is becoming increasingly important as well. This constituency composes the future workforce and population of Valparaiso so efforts must be made to attract and retain them.



Also, it is essential to focus on the existing core constituency, the 65+ age cohort, so they too, have the proper economic, social, recreational, and housing opportunities. The “graying” of the population is a consideration since the needs of residents are changing: more transportation options for seniors who do not drive, housing alternatives that allow residents to age gracefully in their existing neighborhoods, local health care facilities, and mature learning opportunities.

Need for Adequate Housing

A theme that was articulated during the public input sessions is that Valparaiso has a shortage of quality rental housing and affordable options. Several people commented that there is a lack of attainable housing for purchase. This is evident in a comparison of housing statistics as well as a visible inventory of neighborhood conditions. As businesses recruit talented workers, they look at the City’s housing choices and availability. The limited ability of potential residents to find a suitable home has implications for the City’s future growth. It also curtails residents from moving from their existing home into a larger home or another housing type. Creating more availability and variety of housing is essential for Valparaiso to maintain its population growth and economic competitiveness.

Currently, 57 percent of all dwelling units are owner-occupied and 43 percent are renter-occupied.⁶ A lower rate of homeownership is commonly an indicator of problems with property maintenance and neighborhood integrity. While lower owner occupancy is likely due to Valparaiso being a college town, areas with a high rate of student housing tend to present maintenance issues as well. Although the rate of renter occupancy is across the entire City, there are neighborhoods that have much higher and lower percentages of rental occupancy. An abundance of renters in a particular area can lead to neighborhood-wide issues that would not be present in other areas of the City. A lack of neighborhood integrity and reinvestment can lead to a virtuous cycle that drives away potential investors or new residents. While less likely to impact population growth, neighborhood character and community leadership are important factors when weighing options for housing.

The Role of the Natural Environment

The City has a sound history of environmental stewardship through programs and policies, which includes the work of various other entities. The City’s location on the Valparaiso Moraine provides a beautiful, rolling topography with natural wooded areas, surrounded by a pristine countryside.

In geographic terms, this Comprehensive Plan addresses the current city limits, as well as a two-mile planning area. The natural environment is an

⁶ City of Valparaiso, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

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The Valparaiso Moraine



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important consideration both inside the City and in the lands surrounding it. Protection of these lands from substandard development practices can be implemented through a variety of means. There is a desire to ensure sensitive planning and development practices, as well as the protection of life and property from the adverse impacts of natural disasters.

1.4 PUBLIC PROCESS/STAKEHOLDER INPUT: EARLY AND OFTEN

Local planning is often the most direct and efficient way to involve residents and other stakeholders in determining the vision for their community. The process of plan preparation provides a rare opportunity for two-way communication between citizens and local government officials as to their aspirations for the community and the details of how their shared vision is to be achieved.

The ability to effectively implement the Plan is directly correlated to the amount of citizen and stakeholder participation and the sense of ownership derived from the process. The Plan contains many components and serves numerous functions, such as providing information, describing existing community conditions and characteristics, and establishing policies and strategies for overcoming challenges and capitalizing on opportunities.

Official Public Hearings

The State of Indiana outlines the formal adoption process for comprehensive plans. Once the Plan Commission has certified the plan, it must proceed to the City Council for adoption by resolution. Should the Council reject or amend the resolution, the plan must return to the Commission to prepare changes.⁷

Indiana law requires one public hearing before the Plan Commission may take action. It also lays out requirements for proper notice.⁸ This formal public hearing requirement is how the State ensures that plans are adopted with an opportunity for full knowledge of the public. However, the public had many opportunities for input because they were considered an integral part of the planning process. Their involvement is outlined below.

Citizens' Congress

The comprehensive planning process kicked off on September 20, 2010, with a Citizens Congress, where the general public was given an opportunity to provide input. After a brief overview of the Plan, the current planning context, and the process, participants provided input during two rounds of breakout sessions. Participants chose two of three general subject areas to provide input.

⁷ 500 Series Comprehensive Plan IC 36-7-4-508 and 509

⁸ 500 Series Comprehensive Plan IC 36-7-4-507



Citizens were involved in all stages of public development, through individual and group interviews, a citywide Citizen's Congress, and through meetings of the steering committee.



Focus Groups

On September 20th and 21st, 2010, eight small group interviews were held. Attendees represented the following general interest groups:

- City and County leaders, boards, and commissions;
- Historic and cultural interests;
- Neighborhoods and housing advocates;
- Developers, realtors, builders, and designers;
- Environmental interests;
- Public and private institutions;
- Chamber of Commerce, business, and economic development organizations; and
- Transportation interests.

Steering Committee

The City appointed a Steering Committee of 15 members representing a wide range of interests. This Committee provided oversight and continuous input throughout the process. The group met multiple times to review and comment on each of the eight chapters, and to recommend the Plan for adoption to the City Council.

Planning Staff Connection

The City's Planning Director, Tyler Kent, collected and provided variable input and answered questions. Throughout the plan development process, as the ultimate administrator of the plan, Tyler played an integral role in its development, defining the plan of execution.

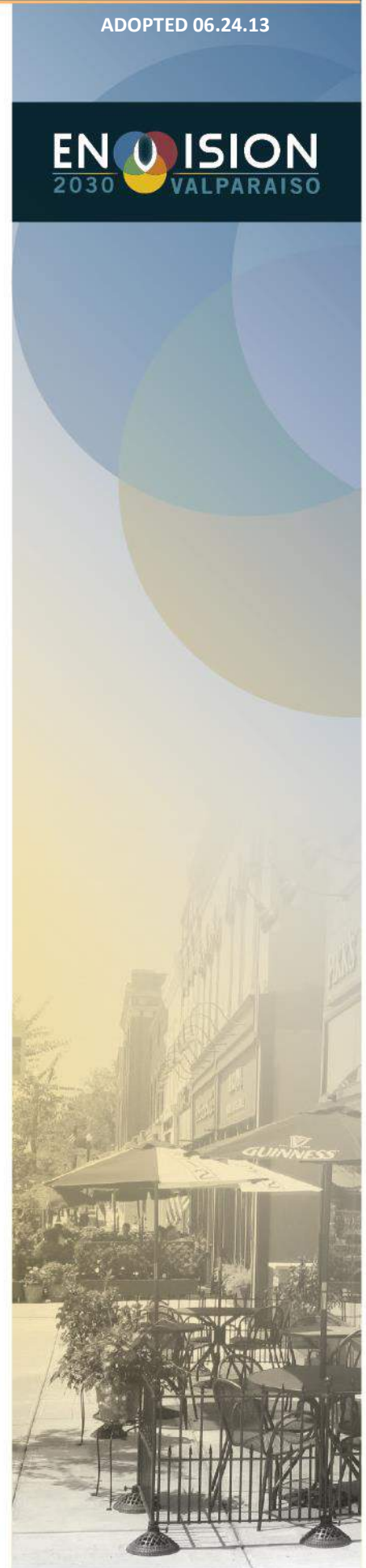
Insights from the Public

At the kick-off meetings, many participants offered valuable, constructive comments. These comments are summarized into several themes that influenced the plan's directions and recommendations. Generally, citizens of Valparaiso understand that growth and change will occur and would like to ensure that they occur in a quality, sustainable manner. The discussion themes are outlined below.

Commercial Development and Redevelopment

An important consideration for Valparaiso is the amount, location, types, and development styles of future commercial development and redevelopment. The continued redevelopment of Downtown warrants further enhancement and protection from becoming overshadowed by other commercial development. Some of the existing commercial areas outside of Downtown have been redeveloped or rehabilitated, which should continue. New commercial development outside of Downtown should be carefully planned so strip commercial development and overbuilding is avoided.

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 The logo for ENOVISION 2030 VALPARAISO features the word "ENOVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font. The "O" is stylized with a colorful circular graphic. Below "ENOVISION" are the years "2030" and the word "VALPARAISO" in a smaller, all-caps font.


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Construction of the new Porter Regional Hospital at SR-49 and U.S. 6

The fact that Porter Hospital is relocating outside the City presents both opportunities and challenges. The hospital will expand substantially and move all of its facilities to the northwest corner of U.S. 6 and SR49, outside of the City limits and just north of the Comprehensive Plan study area. Porter Hospital is one of the largest employers and utility customers in Valparaiso. While the increased distance to work is not likely to deter residents employed by the hospital to move, the City will need to focus on encouraging new tax revenue sources to locate or relocate within the City. Also, the new site will likely increase development pressures along the U.S. 6 and SR49 corridors; therefore policies must be established to guide the City's response to these pressures. There is also a good possibility that this expansion and relocation, along with the establishment of national health insurance and the continued aging of the general population, may attract additional health professionals to the area.

The U.S. 30 Corridor presents a challenge to the City in that there has been pressure to develop "strip-style" as it currently is to the west. Today, there is no reflection of the character of the City along this corridor. However, they took a significant step forward to address these issues with the U.S. 30 Corridor Plan, which is already in the initial stages of implementation. Execution of this plan will transform this corridor into a signature gateway to the community, as well as to Valparaiso University.

Walkable Community

There is a strong desire in the community for residents to be able to walk to schools and to commercial areas outside of Downtown. For the most part, the outlying commercial developments are too focused on automobile access and thus, discourage pedestrian traffic. In some of these areas, and in some neighborhoods, security needs to be enhanced through better street lighting, together with improvement of sidewalks and trails. In other areas, safety needs to be addressed through improved connectivity. In general, consideration must be given to commercial development and redevelopment to make them more of a draw for pedestrians.

The City has completed several projects to enhance pedestrian mobility. Funding has been made available to install pathways and sidewalks, to create a program for safe routes to schools, and to invest in other pedestrian system enhancements. Other opportunities exist to encourage walkability outside of the core Downtown area.

Employing Valparaiso Citizens

Valparaiso is fortunate to have a history of strong businesses, many of them family-owned and operated. Valparaiso University enhances economic opportunity as a major employer, and which helps to insulate the City from severe market swings. However, there is a need for the community to further



develop its job opportunities. There is concern that there are not enough entry-level jobs to keep students in Valparaiso once they graduate, nor to draw a younger labor pool to the area. There is also a need to provide increasing levels of employment so that there are opportunities for advancement.

The focus for creating employment opportunities should be on professional and light industrial uses, as these offer higher wages and opportunities for individual growth. Both business parks in Valparaiso, Eastport and Montdale, are nearly full. Currently there is a lack of sites that are “shovel ready”, meaning there are a relative few sites that have readily available infrastructure so an employer can initiate building on short order. Rather than a site-by-site approach, the City would like to take steps to establish a light industrial/office development with multiple sites available for near- and longer-term development.

Diversity in Home Choices

There is a fairly diverse housing market in Valparaiso in terms of the prices and types of housing. However, there must be continued efforts to expand housing choices in light of changing demographics and consumer demands. Valparaiso University recently announced that its intent to expand its enrollment by almost 50 percent, from 4,100 students to 6,000 students in the next few years. While the anticipated V.U. Master Plan will include a housing plan, it is unlikely that the University will provide dormitory-style housing for all the additional students. There is also a concern that the cost of housing in Valparaiso is becoming increasingly expensive, which may discourage those who work here from living in Valparaiso. Drawing a younger labor pool will require additional housing at affordable costs. Housing policies must be balanced to meet these demands without increasing the relative tax burden on the City.

Not too Slow, Not too Fast

The overall theme from the public and stakeholder input is that recent changes have been positive and should continue to be supported. Certainly, there is recognition that additional changes are needed. However, these changes should occur pursuant to the established policies and directions of this plan. A priority is to maintain the City’s relative compactness, with a focus on infill development and redevelopment within the existing City limits. Growth outward should occur in strict adherence with the policies of this plan, which are based on the future development needs of the community, infrastructure availability, and planning to prevent sprawl and unmanaged growth.

Central to this question is the idea of sustainability, which includes not only a discussion of the rate and pattern of growth but also the manner in which this new growth occurs. Among many other considerations, planning must

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 The logo features the word "ENOVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font, with a stylized circular graphic element between the "O" and "V". Below it, "2030" and "VALPARAISO" are written in a smaller font.

“Valparaiso University has announced that it intends to expand its enrollment by almost 50 percent.”

Source: Northwest Indiana Times



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provide for environmental protection and conservation of resources, improved storm water management, compliance with storm water pollution prevention requirements, and energy conservation. The City has made strides in each of these areas through its Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and through partnerships with environmental planning agencies. Now, the City is poised to take the next steps to ensure its future sustainability.

Mobility

Regarding mobility, this Comprehensive Plan is designed to promote orderly development of the transportation system, considering not only facilities for automobiles and trucks but other modes of transportation as well. In focus group meetings and during the Citizens' Congress, residents expressed strong desires for preserving and improving walkability and bicycling opportunities, maintaining a viable public transit system, providing better options for commuting to Chicago, and seizing the economic benefits of Porter County Regional Airport..

This Plan provides recommendations to incorporate context-sensitive design principles for mobility improvements while considering safety, neighborhood integrity, urban design and community appearance, and historical and environmental considerations—all of which are essential to maintaining community character.

1.5 PLANNING APPROACH

Following is a summary of the remaining chapters of this Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 2, Land Use and Community Character

The purpose of this chapter is to assess the community's long-range development outlook and establish the necessary policy guidance that will be used in making decisions about the compatibility and appropriateness of individual developments within the context of the larger community. The Future Land Use Plan serves as the City's policy for directing ongoing development and managing future growth, preserving valued areas and lands, and protecting the integrity of neighborhoods, while also safeguarding and enhancing community aesthetics. This chapter also includes an assessment of conditions in the City's planning area (outside of the current City Limits) and recommends appropriate land uses based on natural and topographical features, City and County Thoroughfare Plans, and the existing patterns of land use.

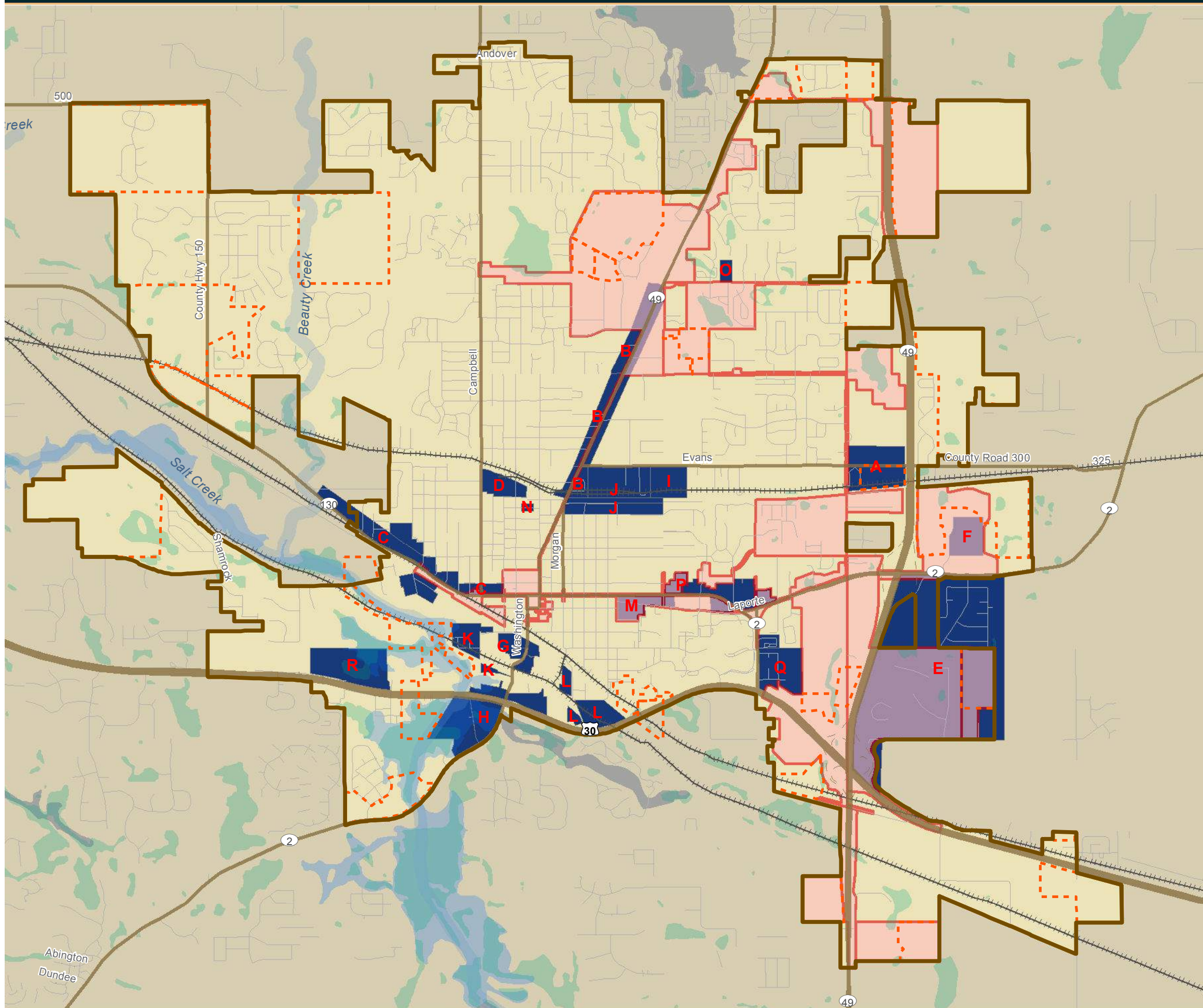
Map 1.2

Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities

Legend

- Land Use Recommendations
- TIF
- Redevelopment Target Sites
- City Limits
- Porter County
- Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
- Flood Zone (A)
- Flood Zone (AE)
- Streams and Rivers
- Railroad

- A: Evans Street between Silhavy and Route 2
- B: Calumet from the RR North to five points
- C: West Lincolnway west of Napoleon
- D: Campbell at the McGill site to Lafayette
- E: Commercial Area east of SR-49
- F: Porter's Vale development
- G: Washington Street south of Downtown
- H: SR-2 south of U.S. 30
- I: Roosevelt north of the RR tracks
- J: Elm Street between Calumet and Roosevelt
- K: South Campbell (Brown St. and West St.)
- L: South Morgan from Axe to U.S. 30
- M: Porter Hospital site
- N: Pine at Washington
- O: Keen Property
- P: Eastgate
- Q: Sturdy Road
- R: West Street and Morthland



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Focus Areas: The University Fringe, Downtown, and Central Place

This section of Chapter 2 discusses strategies and options for three areas (shown in **Figure 1.6, Focus Areas: The University Fringe, Downtown, and Central Place**), including strategies for appropriate transitions between them. The University Fringe includes the recent Eastgate Master Plan area. Policies for this area warrant further development, particularly in light of future improvements to Valparaíso University. Downtown is a distinguishable place, thus, policies address its continued development, particularly on its fringes. Central Place warrants further development, including its relationship to Downtown.

Focus Area: Infill/Redevelopment Opportunities

Identified in **Map 1.2, Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities**, is areas of opportunity for infill and redevelopment. As discussed later in this plan, the City should continue to prioritize development within its existing City limits. The infill and redevelopment areas are currently surrounded by existing commercial or residential development. Therefore, adequate protection and transition strategies are set out in this section (see **Figure 1.7, Eastgate**, which exhibits the redevelopment plan for this special area).

Focus Area: U.S. 30

A study that was completed concurrently with this Comprehensive Plan is the U.S. 30 Corridor Master Plan. U.S. 30 has great potential to further the image of the City, enhance the City's healthy balance of businesses, and act as a gateway into the City and to the University. The Master Plan includes sections addressing the following:

- Existing context, function, and character;
- Functional plan;
- Future land use, character, and design;
- Urban design recommendations; and
- Preferred development scenario, incentives, and implementation.

Figure 1.6, Focus Areas: The University Fringe, Downtown, & Central Place



Source: City of Valparaíso, Kendig Keast Collaborative

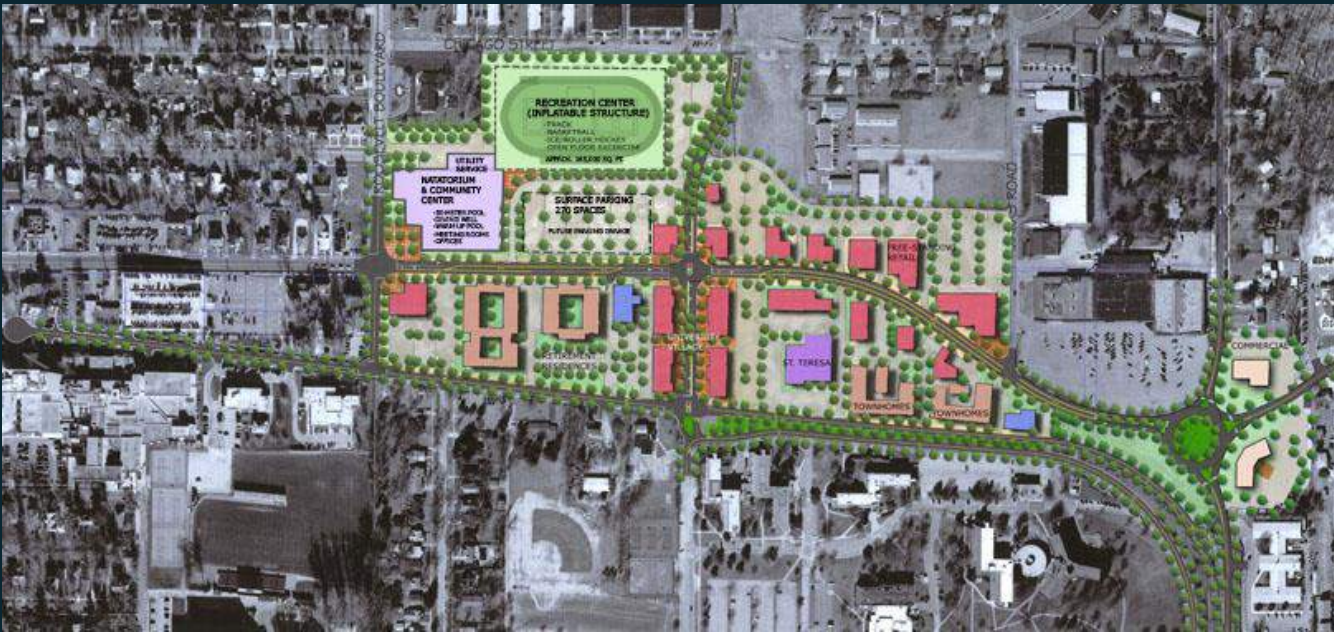


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Focus Area: Airport Influence Area

The Porter County Regional Airport serves a variety of businesses and general aviation customers. It is important to the economic sustainability of the City. It is protected from incompatible development through the City's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), which restricts heights in the SR49 and U.S. 30 corridors. This section outlines strategies to protect the airport operations and its environs. The protected area around the airport is displayed in **Figure 1.8, Airport Protection Zone**.

Figure 1.7, Eastgate


Source: City of Valparaiso

Chapter 3, Sustainability

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate and recommend enhancements to the community's quality of life amenities that are consistent with the City's growth expectations and other physical planning elements in this Comprehensive Plan. These amenities include park and recreation facilities, open space areas, historic and cultural facilities and resources, and leisure opportunities. The Parks and Recreation Areas and Facilities Master Plan Update is summarized, along with key elements of the Pathways and Greenways Master Plan. The chapter also discusses the area's environmental quality and biodiversity and the opportunities to preserve natural features and open space, particularly along corridors, adjacent to natural and man-made water features, at community gateways, and in other key areas.



Chapter 4, Opportunity

This chapter addresses the approach for strengthening the City's economic development. It discusses the City's roles in the region and describes its current assets, including employment centers, as well as its communications, health, education, and training resources. The chapter lays out recommended policies and action steps to attract economic development in a way that will preserve community character. These include economic development strategies to support and retain existing businesses, attract and grow new job-creating businesses, and train the community's workforce.

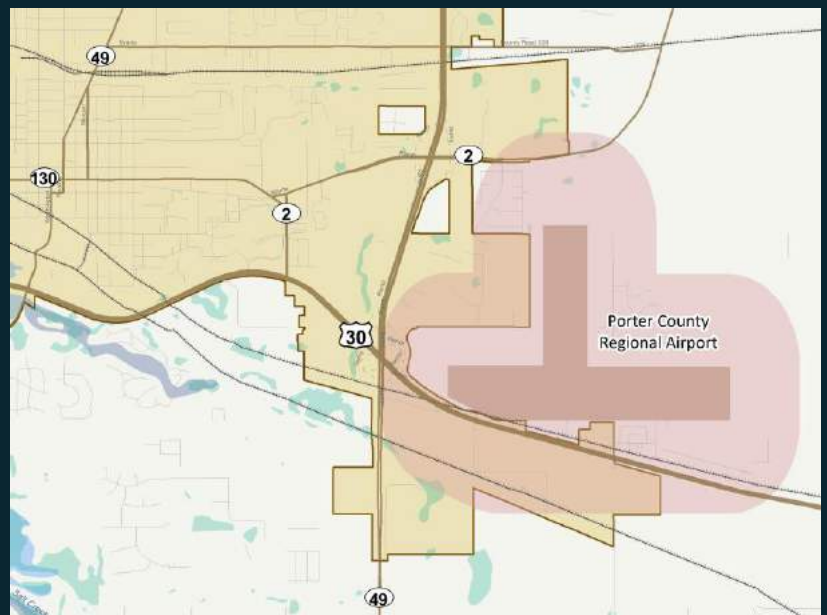
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Chapter 5, Mobility

The purpose of this chapter is to ensure orderly development of the transportation system, considering facilities for automobiles as well as other modes of transportation, such as pedestrian and bicycle circulation (and safety), freight movement, public transportation, air transportation, and their associated needs. Recommendations incorporate context-sensitive design principles that address mobility improvements while accounting for safety, neighborhood integrity, community design, and historical and environmental considerations, all of which are essential for preserving Valparaiso's character and quality of place.

Figure 1.8, Airport Protection Zone



Source: City of Valparaiso, Kendig Keast Collaborative

Chapter 6, Housing and Neighborhoods

The underlying premise of this chapter is to ensure that there is an adequate supply of housing within varying price ranges and of suitable dwelling types to accommodate those desiring to relocate within or to the community. A focus of this chapter is to create and maintain livable neighborhood environments, which includes considerations of infill development in older, revitalizing neighborhoods, and how to ensure quality, sustainable outcomes in new residential development.

Chapter 7, Growth Capacity

The City has relatively few for its future pattern of development. Yet, the City must be forward-thinking and proactive in its short and longer-term planning to grow in a smart and fiscally sustainable manner. Prime among the considerations is efficient use of land, along with a well-coordinated plan for its investments in transportation and utility infrastructure. This chapter sets out the City's policies as to the locations, timing, and sequencing of



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growth, including strategies for reinvesting in established areas and facilitating infill and redevelopment.

Chapter 8, Implementation

The Implementation chapter utilizes the recommendations of the preceding chapters to consolidate an overall strategy for executing the Comprehensive Plan, particularly for the highest-priority initiatives that will be first on the community's action agenda following plan adoption.



Land Use and Community Character

2.1 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND PURPOSE

Residents seek to retain the small-town atmosphere that has characterized Valparaiso throughout its history. There has always been a “sense of place” associated with Valparaiso as a city and a regional center in Northwest Indiana. Most residents identify with the City’s historic Downtown and its highly livable neighborhoods. There are many design and aesthetic elements that combine to create this perception of Valparaiso. The older, tree-lined streets; newer neighborhoods with liberal open space and landscaping; and beautiful parks and greenways complete this picture. Likewise, Valparaiso University contributes to this “place-making” by creating a destination that leaves a lasting impression of the beautiful campus. Lastly, the major businesses and industries that employ residents contribute to the overall impression of the City. The issues that relate to land use, development and redevelopment, urban form and appearance, and Downtown are addressed in this chapter.

Much of the City’s existing land area is developed, so the protection and improvement of existing neighborhoods is of great significance. This was among the many issues that were voiced by residents at the Citizens’ Congress held in September 2010. Additional, continued efforts to beautify and reinvest in the older commercial and industrial areas that do not currently contribute positively to the City’s image is also of primary importance as is addressing the standards of new residential development to continue the City’s success in attracting quality development.

Lastly, the ongoing redevelopment of Downtown must continue to focus on attracting more commercial uses and businesses to the area. Downtown



Many of Valparaiso’s streets are tree-lined, which contributes to its character and adds to its beauty.



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Contributing to the appeal and attractiveness of the historic neighborhoods are their “great streets.”

redevelopment has had great success to this point, which provides sound footing for the future.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish the necessary policy guidance to enable the City to plan effectively for its future development and redevelopment, while respecting the existing and pattern of development. Sound planning will ensure that community growth occurs in harmony with the natural environment and existing neighborhoods, while increasing employment opportunities and improving the commercial areas. The City has many assets and key planning considerations, including:

- The use of land and its context with the natural environment are integral to this Comprehensive Plan. Valparaiso is located at the intersection of beautiful, rolling farmland and a glacial moraine. Sound and sustainable planning will afford the opportunity for the highest quality of development.
- Valparaiso has a unique history of development that was triggered by the extension of the country’s first coast-to-coast highway rather than by the railroad boom. Therefore, the City benefits from a number of well-planned, historic neighborhoods.
- Valparaiso has attracted developers who have refused to take the route of production building. As a result, these developments provide a variety in the housing types they offer, include an abundance of open space and landscaping, and employ sustainable development techniques. This has led to neighborhoods that are beautiful and interesting for residents and visitors alike.
- The City offers a good balance of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses but is deficient in available land for attracting major employers within the City limits.

This chapter includes a Future Land Use Plan, as reflected in **Map 2.1 Future Land Use Plan** (including **Map 2.1.2, Future Land Use Plan, U.S. 30**) and concludes with land use policies and actions.

2.2 PLANNING CONTEXT AND ENVIRONS

Location and Region

Valparaiso is situated in Porter County, which is in Northwestern Indiana, approximately 50 miles southeast of Chicago. The City lies within close proximity to I-65, I-80, I-90, and I-94 by way of SR-49 and U.S. 30, both of which traverse the City. This places Valparaiso within a one-hour commuting distance from the Chicago Downtown “Loop” and confirms its status as an outer Chicago suburb. Valparaiso is also situated approximately 20 miles southeast of Gary, Indiana; 96 miles northwest of Lafayette, Indiana; and 55 miles west of South Bend, Indiana.



Map 2.1.1

Future Land Use Plan

Legend

- Estate Residential
- Neighborhood Conservation
- Suburban Residential
- General Residential
- Urban Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- General Commercial
- Central Business District
- Central Place
- Campus
- Planned Mixed Use
- Business Park
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Institutional
- Public Space
- City Limits
- Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
- Flood Zone (A)
- Flood Zone (AE)
- Streams and Rivers
- Railroad

See
Map 2.1.2

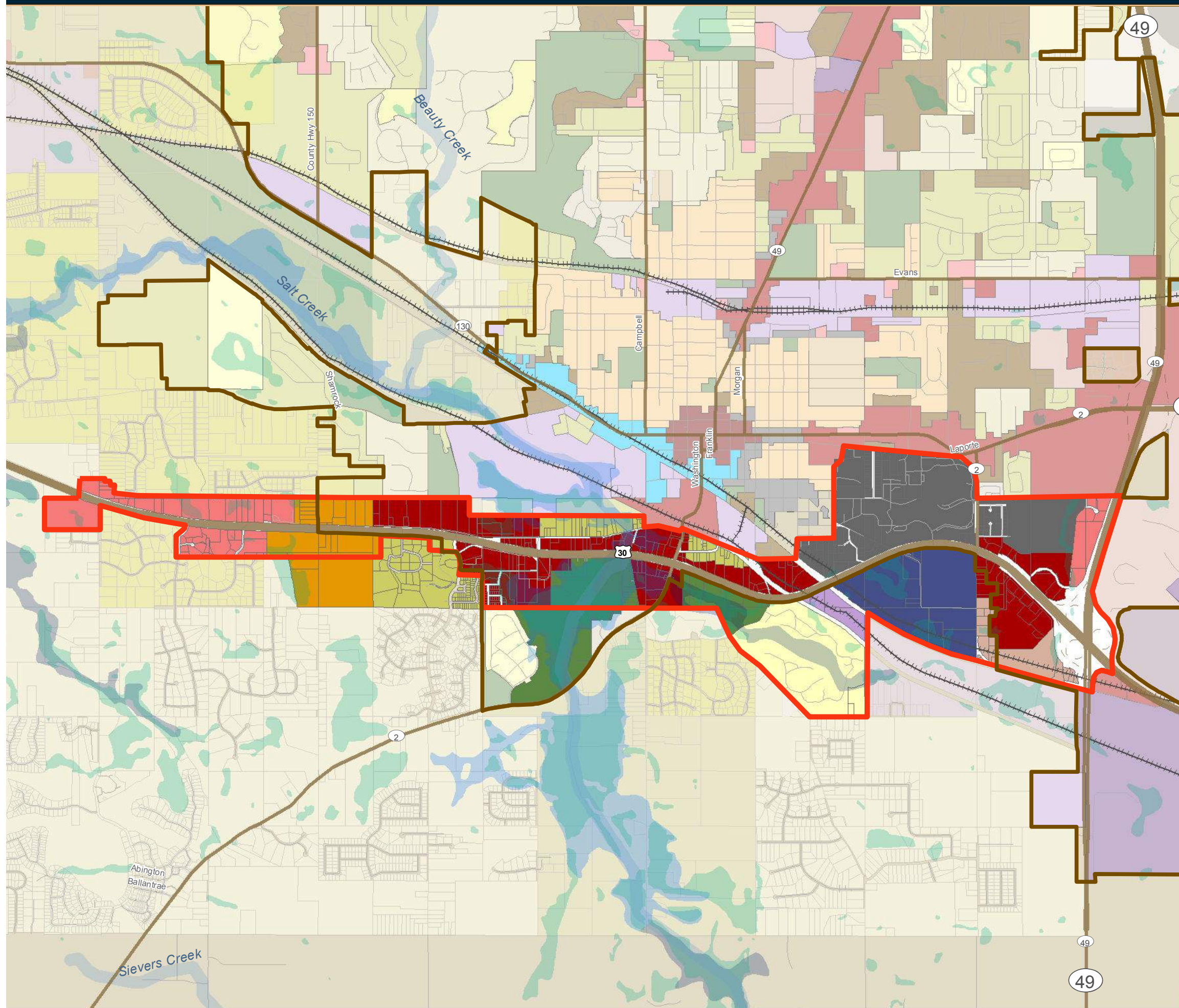
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Map 2.1.2

Future Land Use and Character, U.S. 30

Legend

- Estate Residential
- Neighborhood Conservation
- Suburban Residential
- General Residential
- Urban Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- General Commercial
- Central Business District
- Central Place
- Campus
- Planned Mixed Use
- Business Park
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Institutional
- Public Space
- U.S. 30 Corridor
- City Limits
- Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
- Flood Zone (A)
- Flood Zone (AE)
- Streams and Rivers
- Railroad



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Historically, Valparaiso was established at the site of a small Pottawatomie village along the “Great Sauk Trail,” which linked Rock Island, Illinois on the Mississippi River with Detroit, Michigan. Early settlers in the 1830s later improved this trail into a wagon road. This primitive route eventually formed the course of the celebrated Lincoln Highway, built around 1913. Access to this transcontinental highway supplemented by the diagonal connections with Gary and Indianapolis, Indiana, along with east-west railroads leading to Chicago, established Valparaiso as a strong local hub and robust rural community. Later establishment of the interstate highways and Indiana Toll Road enhanced Valparaiso’s accessibility.

Although there are a few scattered rural subdivisions and businesses around Valparaiso in Porter County, in large part, the City has retained its status as one of the few freestanding communities in the Greater Chicago area. Unlike many communities that are situated closer to Chicago that blend together to form a composite community, Valparaiso is still surrounded by farmland and natural areas to allow it to maintain a distinct edge and thus, its visual identity. This is an important contributor to the community character, which is addressed later in this chapter.

Geography and the Natural Environs

The extent for which geography affects the City’s growth and development cannot be underestimated. Valparaiso is situated on a significant land form known as the Valparaiso Moraine, which was formed approximately 10,000 years ago at the southern edge of the Great Lakes Basin with the final retreat of the Wisconsin Era glaciers. This land formation is characterized by rolling hills, pothole lakes (“kettles”) and wetlands, with occasional irregularly-shaped hills, or “kames”. Within the developed portion of the City, these kames were reduced in their distinctiveness by land grading. With a 150-foot change in elevation, a relatively undisturbed kame is the Pines Family Ski Resort located immediately north of the City on Meridian Road. Another distinctive feature borne by its glacial positioning is that the eastern edge of the City sits atop the continental divide between the Atlantic Ocean, by way of Salt Creek, the Great Lakes, and St. Lawrence River, and the Gulf of Mexico, by way of the Tippecanoe-Wabash-Ohio-Mississippi watershed system.

Because the glacier that formed the Valparaiso Moraine terminated here before receding, the City has an interesting juxtaposition of rolling hills with natural woodlands, gentle ravines, small lakes, and flat prairielands that were first drained and farmed before the end of the 19th Century. In the context of growth and development, Valparaiso benefits and is challenged by its geography. On one hand, there is an abundant supply of developable land to accommodate urban growth while on the other hand there is a warrant to protect the natural environment and its resources which distinguishes Valparaiso from the other Chicago suburbs and Northwest Indiana communities.

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Markers on Lincolnway describe its local significance along the greater Lincoln Highway route.

Further information on the geography, natural resources, and historical context of Valparaiso’s development can be found in the Salt Creek Watershed Management Plan for Porter County. This document, written in 2008, provides a comprehensive analysis of existing conditions and a needs assessment for improving water quality for the Salt Creek Watershed, which makes up a substantial portion of Valparaiso’s incorporated area.



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The Pines Family Ski Resort sits atop a kame and is surrounded by the moraine formation.

Source: Google Earth

A lift station is a pump that brings sewage to a higher elevation to allow it to further gravity flow within the system. These are used in relatively flat areas and have additional cost associated with them.

Also, because the glacier ended here, several small creeks and tributaries originate in Valparaiso and thus, natural drainage patterns in the flatter parts of the City are relatively undefined. This presents a challenge for providing adequate storm drainage, protecting areas from localized but sometimes severe flooding, and establishing gravity-fed sanitary and storm sewer systems that minimize the number of mechanical lift stations (see definition of “lift station” in the margin).

The absence of a significant navigable waterway or reliable stream flows (too close to the headwaters) for water-powered mills slowed Valparaiso’s early industrial development potential, until smaller-scale steam power and electricity became available after 1890. For this reason, the City was bypassed by the labor intensive mills, processing plants, and shipping centers that typified 19th Century industrial development in the Midwest. The lumber barons, railroad magnates, financial tycoons, and captains of industry of the Gilded Age lived in other cities. It was the self-sufficient toil and thrift of Valparaiso’s merchants and laborers, rather than “company-town” wealth and exploitation, that formed the City in its early years. This is reflected by the character of understated homes throughout the community’s longer-established neighborhoods.

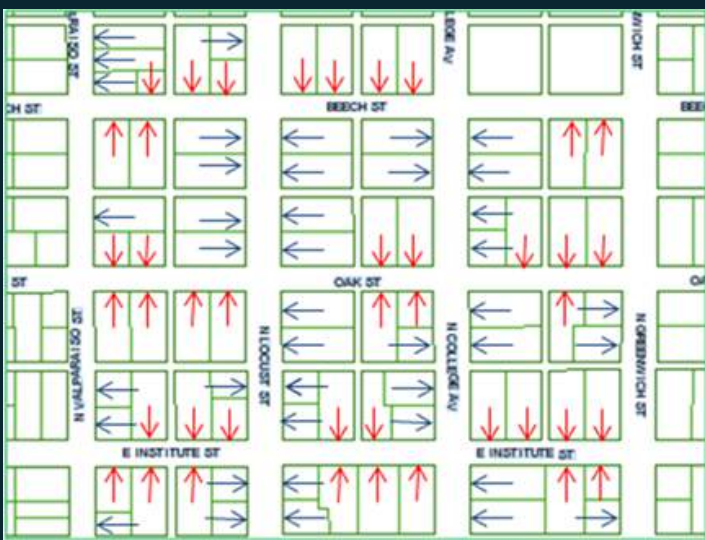
Development Pattern

In many respects, but with one interesting exception, Valparaiso’s development pattern is typical of many smaller farm communities found in predominantly agricultural areas. Early settlement was oriented to the wagon road that preceded Lincoln Highway (Lincolnway). The 350’ by 350’ square, gridiron street pattern resulted in unusually short blocks. Shown in **Figure 2.1, Home Orientation** is 11 blocks of the original 1836 plat of the area

northeast of Downtown, exhibiting the lot pattern and building orientations. The arrows indicate the direction that each house faces. The unique orientation of homes and abundance of corner lots add interest and uniqueness to this neighborhood. While interesting, this design may impede neighborhood cohesiveness and thus, could be among the reasons why there are no active neighborhood organizations in the older parts of Valparaiso. Change the development pattern is not advocated; rather, increased communication and organization is warranted to sustain neighborhood integrity as the homes continue to age.

Unlike many other communities, here, the three principal rail lines skirted the Downtown area rather than traversing it. The original

Figure 2.1, Home Orientation



neighborhoods were platted in 1836, and Downtown was already well established before the first railroad came to Valparaiso in 1858. The location of the rail lines is most likely attributed to the railroad companies' difficulty in obtaining rights-of-way in the areas that were already platted and occupied by approximately 1,500 persons. Only an interurban railroad, operating between 1912 and 1938, directly served Downtown, which ran down the middle of Franklin Street.

Establishment of the Grand Trunk Railroad's Chicago-Detroit Line (at the northern edge of development in 1859) resulted in the creation of an industrial corridor situated eight blocks north of Downtown. This area remains to this day although in a state that would benefit from redevelopment. It was after World War II that highway-oriented manufacturing sites and industrial parks began to contribute to the success of the City.

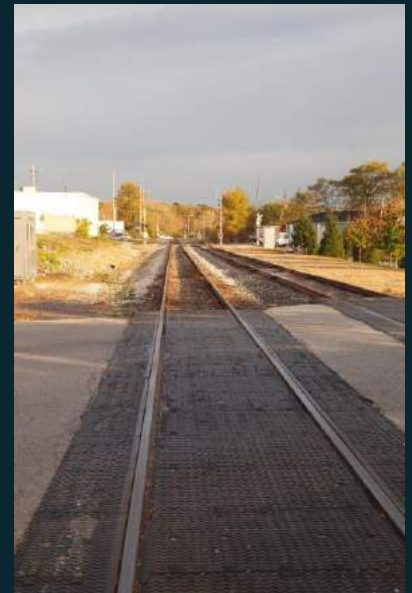
Residential development radiated outward from Downtown after 1900, maintaining the gridiron pattern but having larger and often irregularly-sized blocks. Growth was constrained to the south by the two diagonal railroad lines that flank the edge of the Moraine, along with a small part of the main stem of Salt Creek and the hilly areas around it. Development northward and eastward has continued in both grid and curvilinear street patterns with the latter occurring mostly in the far northwestern and northern edges of Valparaiso. This pattern is typical of post-War suburban development.

The earliest commercial and institutional development took place in downtown and in isolated locations on what is now East Lincolnway, as well as along Calumet Avenue. Development along these corridors gradually created the commercial "strips" that they are today.

Perhaps the most significant stage of development occurred in more recent times with the construction of the SR-49 and U.S. 30 (Morthland Road) at the east and south edges, respectively, of current development. These transportation arteries opened a considerable amount of new land for development. Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, much of the development along U.S. 30 occurred in individually platted lots with direct access to the road. Later, with the onslaught of highway-oriented development along both highways, frontage roads were constructed and significant nodes of development occurred at major intersections.

Most recently, Downtown and now Eastgate are redeveloping as has parts of strip commercial development along East Lincolnway. Until recently, commercial growth along U.S. 30 and SR-49 had the effect of pulling developments away from the original town, leaving behind underutilized buildings and parking lots that began to fall into neglect. In response, focused attention was given by the City to rehabilitate these areas by upgrading roads and infrastructure, establishing flexible design standards appropriate to

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In Valparaiso, the railroads came after rather than before the original town settlement.



This segment of Calumet Avenue typifies the strip pattern of development.



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specific locations, and, in some cases, providing incentives for rebuilding. The Eastgate Corridor Redevelopment Project and other similar efforts are a direct result of City efforts.

Valparaiso University (VU) is situated in the City's southeastern quadrant, at the edge and just outside of the original platted grid of the 19th Century. The original plat ended here because the steeper slopes of the moraine hindered smaller lot development. Thus, the area was well-suited for the planned, pastoral campus-style development. Development began in 1859 at the southern terminus of College Avenue in a small area now referred to as "Old Campus". The largest share of VU's growth occurred after 1950, south of Laporte Avenue and east of Garfield Street. The campus is now comprised of more than 40 buildings that occupy over 300 acres of land; it continues to grow and improve its facilities. However, until the vacation of Porter Hospital, the campus was landlocked by highways and existing non-campus development. Therefore, the University recently completed a campus master plan to guide its development and future growth in the coming years.

Land Use

The term "land use" literally refers to the use of land. In analyzing land use patterns, it is useful for long-range planning purposes to classify and calculate the existing land utilization. Doing so allows an assessment of the relative proportions and distributions of individual land uses, evaluation of existing density patterns, and determination as to the acreage of additional development needed to accommodate the projected population growth. Displayed in **Table 2.1, Existing Land Use** is the acreages and percentages of the individual classifications of existing land use.

Table 2.1 Existing Land Use

General Category	Acres	Percent
Residential - 1 and 2 Family	2,690.1	36.3%
Residential - Mobile Homes	2.1	0.0%
Residential - Multi-family	325.2	4.4%
Commercial	714.8	9.7%
Offices	148.6	2.0%
Public/Institutional	519.5	7.0%
Industrial	524.9	7.1%
Parks/Recreational	20.4	0.3%
Vacant/Natural	2,456.9	33.2%
	7,402.4	100.0%

Source: City of Valparaiso GIS

Instead, it is how uses, districts, and neighborhoods are designed that influences their character. Hence, the character of an area is more distinctly defined by the intensity (height, bulk, and scale) of development, the placement and relative arrangement of buildings and parking areas, the preservation and integration of open space and natural resources, and lastly by other aesthetic design features. While the use of land is an important consideration, more importantly to Valparaiso is the character of development. As shown in the margin on the following page, itself land use has little to do with its character.



A focus on community character is important to Valparaiso. During the public input process for the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and at the beginning of this Comprehensive Plan update, citizens spoke time repeatedly about the strong identity of the City and their desire to preserve and build upon it. To this end, policies and regulations that focus on land use will not be effective in meeting this goal. Nowhere is this more evident than across the community's many neighborhoods that shall a common land use but differ significantly in their character.

The City's commercial areas also exhibit different character. From Downtown to Eastgate and Porter's Vale Shopping Center, each is of a different character while all being of commercial use. For this reason, the policies and directions of this plan, as well as the UDO, aim to distinguish the types of character and then to provide a framework by which they may be achieved.

2.3 COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Character Themes

Following is a description of the community character types and how they apply to Valparaiso and the surrounding environs.

Natural. The natural character type applies to the undeveloped areas. Natural areas are generally large expanses of undisturbed open space, as well as environmentally sensitive features such as woodlands, wetlands, creeks and streams, and the kettle lakes. Few true natural areas exist within the city limits, consisting mainly of small, undevelopable pockets of land along Salt Creek. Other natural areas are situated outside the City, also along Salt Creek and to the northwest of existing development. The most significant natural area is the Moraine Nature Preserve, located east of SR-49 and just south of U.S. 6.

Rural. The rural character type consists of lands that are sparsely developed, and principally of an agricultural use with individual home sites on large acreages. This area provides its residents with near seclusion with a country setting, and away from more densely settled areas. For this reason, it is relatively unusual to find areas of rural character within the city limits. Most of what is rural is the tracts at the edge that have been annexed for eventual development. Given its freestanding state, Valparaiso is surrounded by rural land.

Countryside. This type represents a transition between the rural and suburban character types, which is characterized by informal, usually unplatted groupings of large-lot residential properties. The style and arrangement of these lots maintain separation between the homes creating a mostly rural setting while accommodating low-density development. In these often peripheral areas, countryside development sometimes takes the form of "equestrian" development where prominent fences define the property lines.

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The above images are similar in use but much different in their character.



These images from Aberdeen and along Lincolnway both represent commercial land uses yet their nature of design and hence, character are much different.

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Suburban development is characterized by green spaces, which may include public or privately owned nature areas, those that are heavily vegetated, or those with expanses of open space. This neighborhood and the VU campus are both suburban in character.



Most observers, laypersons and professionals alike, find the auto-urban environments they experience to be generally unpleasant. Strip commercial, older industrial parks, and other nonresidential land uses are subject to frequent criticism as a visual blight, and they routinely score poorly in community preference surveys.



This type of development is found in only a few locations around the City.

Suburban. The suburban character type represents a bridge between rural and urban areas. Development of this type is designed to thoughtfully transition from the least dense natural and rural areas to the forms of development that are dense and of greater intensity and scale. Within suburban development, nature in the form of preserved resources and common open space is incorporated into its pattern and design. Among many good examples of suburban development, the Harrison development characterizes this type by way of its protection of resources and liberal open space.

In a suburban setting, there is much less emphasis on the automobile. This is typically accomplished with open space that is either on private lots where the lots are relatively large or in an arrangement where lots are smaller and clustered around common open space. Golf course developments, for example, are typical of the suburban character.

Regarding nonresidential areas, business park uses that consist of planned or clustered areas with large lots and expanses of green space, are also suburban. They may include a blend of use types ranging from wholesale to light industrial, business service, and office uses provided they are situated in a well-landscaped or even park-like setting. The two most prominent business parks in Valparaiso are Eastpoint Centre and the more traditionally platted area south of Vale Park Road between Valparaiso Street and Cumberland Drive. The former is of a suburban character while the latter is auto-urban (as described below)

Auto-Urban. Development patterns that are auto-urban are generally characterized by roads, driveways, and parking areas that commonly exceed the area of buildings as a percent of ground cover. The strip-commercial areas along Lincolnway, Calumet Avenue, and U.S. 30 compose the more visually significant auto-urban commercial areas in the City. There are many neighborhoods that are auto-urban as well on account of the closely spaced and regular pattern of driveways, front-facing garages, limited separations between homes, and smaller yards with limited open space.

The industrial area situated east of SR-49 and south of U.S. 30 (Morthland Road) is also auto-urban by reason of its buildings and parking, loading, and storage areas all with limited landscaping or open space.

Urban. This character type is distinguished by enclosed space defined by buildings. Urban areas are typified by shallow or no front and side yards, a high floor area ratio, and mostly continuous row of structures that are unbroken by stand-alone parking lots.

Downtown is the only urban area in Valparaiso. This is so as buildings are located on the front building line, two and three-story buildings enclose the

street environs making it a more intimate pedestrian setting, and parking is mostly on-street or in common lots located behind the buildings. To the west along Lincolnway, the development pattern transitions to auto-urban where parking areas are more visible and the businesses are set back from the street.

The near Downtown neighborhoods that are part of the original 1836 plat are also urban by way of their still utilized alleys, relatively small lot sizes, dwellings that are nearer to the front property line, tighter spacing between homes, and more on-street parking. Unlike the newer neighborhoods, few of these homes have attached garages accessed by the street.

Historic Neighborhoods

The originally platted neighborhoods surrounding Downtown contain many residential structures that have recognized historical value and thus, are regarded as historic landmarks. The earliest structures built during the initial settlement were eventually replaced with more substantial homes. The few, oldest structures that remain today were built around 1860, after the railroads had been established. These represent a variety of architectural styles, ranging from the Greek Revival period in the early 1800s to the Arts and Crafts period nearly a century later. The structures identified in **Table 2.2, National Register of Historic Places and Sites**, together with the 15-block Downtown area, have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Table 2.2 National Register of Historic Places Sites

Name	Year Added	Location
Immanuel Lutheran Church	1982	308 N. Washington St.
Loring, Dr. David J., Residence and Clinic (Valparaiso Woman's Club)	1984	102 Washington St
McCallum, William, House	2006	507 E. Lincolnway
Porter County Jail and Sheriff's House (Old Jail Museum)	1976	153 Franklin St.
Porter County Memorial Hall (Memorial Opera House)	1984	104 Indiana Ave.
Rose, David Garland, House	1980	104 Indiana Ave.
Valparaiso Downtown Commercial District	1990	---

The presence of these structures, along with the interest that the community has taken in them, adds to the value of these highly-livable neighborhoods. Maintaining the stability of these neighborhoods is of great significance to many residents. However, residents and neighborhood groups are confronted by the ongoing challenges of maintenance and repair, averting foreclosures, and competing in a housing market with modern structures that are better suited for contemporary lifestyles.

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Alleys, narrower front setbacks, and few driveways and front-loaded garages distinguish these neighborhoods as urban in character.



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McCallum House

Source: Valparaiso Historic
Preservation Commission

In its effort to implement measures to protect the historical integrity of older structures, the Historic Preservation Commission succeeded in establishing a historic district for the Banta School Neighborhood in 2006. These provisions, however, were repealed three years later due to concerns about the costs and difficulties involved in complying with the preservation guidelines. After further considering its alternatives, the Commission has proceeded with steps intended to protect individual sites and structures; the first of these was the McCallum house, a Victorian/Italianate home located near Downtown (pictured in the margin). This site is one of the seven structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The richness of historic buildings and homes, coupled with a reality that there is little protection for most of them is a source of concern for many residents. While the previous effort to establish historic districts and preservation guidelines was eventually thwarted, likely due to real concerns, this plan advocates a renewed effort to seek amenable terms for re-establishing some sense of protection to preserve the value and integrity of these areas and structures.

The City adopted design standards in the UDO, where certain features of each district are identified and addressed by redevelopment standards. In this way, if all or a portion of an existing building is rebuilt, it would remain compatible with the neighborhood. Typical standards include characteristics that define the visual quality of an area, often addressing roof pitch and detail, fenestration, building articulation, and building materials. The City should monitor the difference that the regulations make in the coming years, and subsequently review and revise them as warranted, to ensure their effectiveness in meeting the goals of protecting the integrity of historic neighborhoods and Downtown.

Newer Neighborhoods

Newer neighborhoods are generally north of the Grand Trunk Railroad. In many respects, these auto-urban and suburban neighborhoods are defined by their street layouts. These areas discontinued the use of the traditional 350' x 350' grid block pattern, replacing it with an irregular pattern of rectangular lots and blocks of varying sizes. A result of this incremental succession of developments is many streets that are discontinuous or have staggered tee-intersections. This pattern, while marketable and sometimes necessary due to the topography has hampered the flow of through-traffic and pedestrian and bicycle circulation, which has caused increased traffic and congestion and significant capital expenditures to correct it.

Many streets in the newer areas were established to align with the township rural road system, which follows a one-half mile square grid. While these roads initially succeeded in providing a fair level of service and continuity, many were originally dedicated as 33' rights-of-way (a common practice



*These images reflect the newer
styles of development.*

throughout Indiana). Over the years, these two-lane roadways have become increasingly inadequate for handling growing traffic volumes. They now warrant widening, which is particularly expensive as land acquisition costs often require the removal of structures that were built too close to the roadways.

Unlike many Chicago suburban areas and mid-sized communities in Northern Indiana, with their large stretches of homogeneous tract home development, Valparaiso has done well in providing substantial variations of density and development forms. In many parts of the City, there is a variety of housing choices, including conventional single-family subdivisions, clustered development, townhouses, and multifamily complexes. In most instances, the transitions from one area to the next are well articulated through landscaping and due to the rolling topography of these areas. This is a development pattern that provides visual variety and a “sense of place.” It also provides a healthy variety of housing types for a wide range of family incomes and lifestyles.

The development standards in the UDO include provisions to allow a more creative approach through increased open space requirements, which allow density offsets on less environmentally sensitive portions of a parcel. It also allows for lot averaging and, in some cases, requires a mix of residential types, further increasing the likelihood that a new neighborhood will be of distinctive quality.

The City encourages and in some cases requires pre-application conferences between developers and the staff who is responsible for reviewing their plans. This practice allows for effective, two-way communication before developments are advanced in their design to avoid costly changes.

University Fringe

The University Fringe area includes much of the area between Lincolnway and U.S. 30 from Morgan Boulevard to Sturdy Road. Both sides of Sturdy Road are included, as is the north side of Lincolnway from Sturdy Road to Roosevelt Street. The fringe area includes the VU campus and also incorporates area of the Eastgate Master Plan.

The fringe area overlaps the U.S. 30 Corridor Plan and also the limits of the University’s recently completed master plan. It is recommended that the City Commission a University fringe master plan. This plan should dovetail with the plans for Eastgate, U.S. 30, and the University, and set out the strategies, initiatives, and investments to revitalize and improve the economic sustainability of these areas.

Downtown

During the public input process, many residents concurred with the statement of the one who said, “Downtown is the key to the continued

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success of Valparaiso".¹ In the early 1980's, the City began taking significant steps to revitalize and rehabilitate Downtown. In 1981, the Downtown Improvement Strategy was formed. Six years later, the State chose five pilot cities, including Valparaiso, as pilot projects for the Main Street Program. The City began studying the area with considerable public input. In 1995, the City established a Downtown District Taskforce to establish guidelines. Some buildings of historical importance were demolished over the years, but many remain and have since been rehabilitated. These include the Courthouse, "Old Jail", the Opera House, the former Post Office (now City Hall), First State Bank, Farmers' State Bank, and Business Block buildings on Lincolnway.

The Central Business District (CBD) zoning permits commercial uses typically found in a downtown environment, principally including retail, restaurants, bars, and lodging. It also allows multi-family uses if they are mixed with commercial uses in a building, along with live-work townhomes. New development and redevelopment is subject to architectural standards that are designed to encourage construction that is harmonious with the existing historic buildings.

The City recently amended the land use regulations for Downtown allowing a mix of uses to preserve the vibrancy of downtown. Public improvements like new sidewalks have complemented and inspired private reinvestment in the form of building rehabilitation. With the land use and regulatory adjustments, the City has positioned itself well for continued revitalization. Additional public investment in the form of parking improvements has been recently implemented.

In January 2010, the City completed the Downtown Valparaiso Parking Study.² The report concluded that overall, parking is adequate for Downtown, although it is inadequate during peak hours and there is an insufficient supply of handicap spaces to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The efforts of the City to promote reuse of vacant lease spaces and buildings will contribute to the parking deficiencies in the future. Public input gathered early in the study process indicated the opinion that parking in Downtown is inadequate, inconvenient, and confusing.

In addition to restriping existing lots to gain parking spaces, the study recommended expansion of the public parking lot at Chicago Street and Lafayette Street and to build two parking structures, including a three-story garage on the existing surface parking lot at Jefferson Street and Franklin Street and up to a four-story garage on Lincolnway at Michigan Avenue. However, from urban design and historic preservation perspectives, a three-

¹ The City of Valparaiso Quality of Life Survey, completed in March of 2010, found that almost 80% of residents believe that "the downtown business district must remain vibrant for the City to succeed as a whole."

² Conducted by Walker Parking Consultants

story garage off Lincolnway that doesn't encroach into the historic neighborhood, but is still close to Downtown may be a better suited location than that recommended in the study. Further, the garage recommended on Lincolnway also warrants reconsideration. Michigan Avenue forms the eastern boundary between the auto-urban commercial uses to the east of Downtown and the urban character of Downtown. A three or four-story structure at this location would obstruct the view of Downtown and also consume a prime location that should be reserved for uses that visually complement Downtown. The first recommended parking garage is recommended on a site one block north of Lincolnway, with a secondary site south of Lincolnway, potentially via a public/private partnership that would replace an existing surface lot with structured parking. At the time of this plan, it is unknown whether the sale of Porter Hospital will include the parking garage. If so, there may be an opportunity for the City to assume ownership of the structure, depending on the reuse of the hospital site.

Since January 2010, the City has been working diligently to implement the recommendations of the parking study. As the City undertakes the more significant projects, such as the recommended parking garages, it will be important to time the additional parking spaces commensurate with the demand for them.

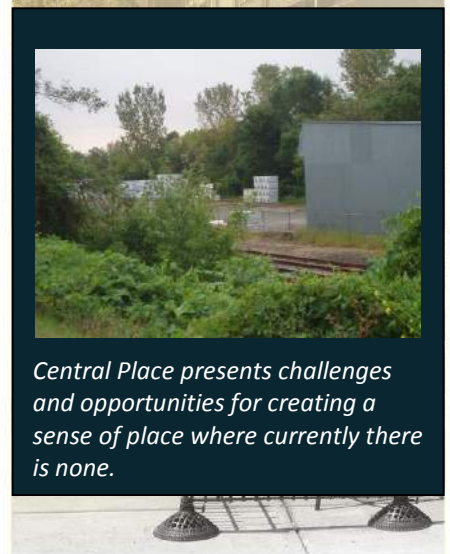
The parking study also recommended the management of parking areas to make the projected changes more effective and efficient, including public information efforts such as brochures, way-finding signage, and website postings.

With much energy and investment, Downtown has become an important and widely valued asset to the City. However, it has yet to reach its full potential. For instance, there are market needs not yet fulfilled, such as additional retail uses like groceries and specialty retail and extended nightlife. The upper floors and entire historical structures, together with some first-level retail spaces remain vacant. Strategies relating to the reuse of vacant spaces and a better mix of uses are discussed in *Chapter 4, Opportunity*.

Central Place

Central Place is essentially the entrance to the City from the west along SR 130 / Lincolnway. It makes a transition from the rural outlying areas to Downtown, and is one of the routes that leads to Chicago. From west to east, the zoning transitions from Commercial, General (CG) to Business Park (BP) and Central Place (CP) just west of Downtown. The CP district extends to the south for about one block, with additional CP zoning between the southern boundary of Downtown and the southern railroad tracks. The district permits residential, institutional, and commercial uses, including hospitality uses such as restaurants, bars, and hotels. Mixed use development is permitted and encouraged. Transit and stand-alone parking uses are also

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Central Place presents challenges and opportunities for creating a sense of place where currently there is none.

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permitted, as Central place presents an opportunity to expand on the existing bus transit station that is on Campbell just south of Lincolnway.

Reflected in **Figure 2.2, Central Place Planning Context and Concepts**, is the opportunities that exist in the area. The existing entry monument should be relocated to the western City Limits near Yellowstone Road in order to signal arrival in Valparaiso and to strengthen its identity. The open space at this intersection should become public parkland to reflect the City's values for its environmental resources. The park could transition into gardens and outdoor education exhibits for the students that attend the Saint Paul Catholic School, as well as nearby Memorial Elementary School and Benjamin Franklin Middle School. To help maintain the future viability of the area, mixed housing should be encouraged to develop to the west and east of the park. There is an existing historic building on the north side of west Lincolnway that once rehabilitated would add interest to this western gateway. The building has recently been approved for inclusion in the facade improvement program. Generally, the entire area should be master planned, involving lot consolidation and resubdivision. The area zoned Business Park (BP) is inconsistent with the vision and these concepts for the area. Therefore, it is advisable to rezone the area to Central Place (CP) as reflected on the Future Land Use Plan.

To the east of Center Street, there is an opportunity for a mix of urban townhomes, live/work units, and neighborhood retail uses. These uses could occur through infill and redevelopment of the existing sites over time. The area to the east and west of the Campbell Street intersection along Lincolnway should transition to an urban transit-oriented development (TOD) area.

Lincolnway is a historic road. Beginning in the early 1900's, it was the first coast-to-coast roadway in the U.S.³ The segment of Lincolnway in central Place should highlight its intended multi-modal character through capital improvement projects for complete streets enhancements such as pedestrian and bicycle paths and liberal open space and landscaping.

Implementation of a plan for this area will require coordination with the property owners involved, particularly to explore means of financing including the potential for creating a tax increment financing district. In order to further develop these concepts, a Central Place special area and West Lincolnway Corridor Master plan is recommended.

Finally, the reference to this area as "Central Place" suggests its location in the center of the City. The name thus, does not convey the area's intended development as an important link between Downtown and West Valparaiso. It is advisable to consider renaming the area to a place that is more

³ Historical marker, 166 Lincolnway, Valparaiso, Indiana

Figure 2.2

Central Place Planning Context and Concepts

- ★ Entry Monument
- ||||| Streetscape Enhancements
- == Railroad Overpass
- Context Areas



● Memorial Elementary School

Master-Planned Urban Neighborhood

- Mixed, Multi-Family Homes
- Garden Park
- Community Gardens
- Lot Assembly, Reparcelsation

(see inset)

Benjamin Franklin
Middle School

Jesse Pilfer
Park

Relocated
Entry
Monument
- Wayfinding

Railroad
Overpass

Urban Townhouses
Neighborhood Retail
Urban Streetscape Enhancements
Multi-Use Path
(to Creekside)

Conservation
Park

Urban TOD

- New Station Facility
- Urban/Mixed Use Housing
- Extension of Downtown Streetscape
- Rehabilitation and Infill

Downtown

City Hall

Porter County
Courthouse

Campbell Street Connections

- Bicycle-Pedestrian Tunnel
- Street Viaduct

Live-Work Loft District

- Rehabilitation/Adaptive Use
- Artisan Production and Merchandising
- Loft Residential



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descriptive of its proximity and role to the City (such as Mid-Town or West-Gate).

U.S. 30 Corridor

The U.S. 30 Corridor warranted special study for two main reasons. First, there was concern that continued commercial development along the corridor may eventually overshadow Downtown and its businesses. Secondly, the auto-urban development along the corridor does not convey or promote the unique and natural attributes of Valparaiso. Therefore, the corridor was the subject of the U.S. 30 Corridor Plan, which was approved by Resolution No. 25-2011 on July 25, 2011. The planned land use for the corridor study area may be found in Map 2.1.2, Future Land Use Plan, U.S. 30. The development and design concepts and implementation strategies are articulated in the master plan. The master plan provides the official policies and guidelines for the development along this corridor and in its defined study area.

Airport Influence Area

The Porter County Regional Airport recently completed In Plane View: A Clear Vision to the Future, which is the future land use, infrastructure, and economic development plan for the airport and its environs. This plan not only looks to the future expansion and changes on the airport property, but also looks beyond its boundaries to an area of influence. The City has interests that dovetail with those of the Airport, particularly to ensure careful and suitable planning to avoid or to mitigate the impacts of incompatible land uses, and to capitalize on the positive economic benefits of the airport.

The principles and recommendations of the plan addressing land use and zoning, transportation, utilities and infrastructure, multimodal connections, landscape and natural systems, community amenities, and economic development supplement those of this plan.

Redevelopment

The City's revitalization efforts have not been limited to Downtown. The City has used tax increment financing to capture tax dollars for reinvestment in infrastructure projects. The three areas include: Consolidated Valparaiso, North Central Redevelopment, and the Medical, Office, and Technology District, which are reflected in **Map 2.2, Redevelopment**. The City's Redevelopment Commission oversees the TIF process and makes decisions regarding redevelopment projects. Current projects are focusing on the City's roundabouts and the University Village development.

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee identified several areas of the City that would benefit from redevelopment, including many within the TIF districts. In addition, several other redevelopment target sites are exhibited in *Map 2.2, Redevelopment*, which warrants future consideration for inclusion in a TIF District. Specifically, there are a few essential areas identified for

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U.S. 30 Corridor presents opportunities for beautification and redevelopment.



Some areas present redevelopment and reuse opportunities.



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redevelopment that are not within a TIF district. These include:

- That portion of “Central Place” that fronts on Lincolnway west of Downtown to the City Limits;
- The area south of Lincolnway along Joliet;
- Industrial development along the Canadian National/Grand Trunk Railroad;
- Business park development south of Laporte and east of SR-49; and
- Evans from SR-49 to N. Silhavy Road

Apartment complexes warrant addressing as well as many of them are in deteriorated conditions. While there may be increasing market demand to broaden housing choice by reason of the Great recession, the City must proceed cautiously with an eye toward quality and sustainability. The issues, options, and strategies for alternative housing are discussed in *Chapter 6, Housing and Neighborhoods*.

Infill Development

Shown by **Map 2.3, Infill Development Opportunities** is the vacant areas that are candidates for infill development. These areas, along with corresponding land uses shown on *Map 2.1, Future Land Use Plan*, are as follows:

- *Area No. 1* – This area is in the northwestern-most corner of the City limits and surrounds a development characterized as Suburban Residential. This area should be developed in a similar suburban character.
- *Area No. 2* – This area is south of Area No. 1 toward Lincolnway. It is situated between large-lot single family development and an area shown for light industrial development on the future land use plan. This area should be developed for single family, but may be developed more densely, consistent with the General Residential zoning on the property.
- *Area No. 3* - This is the light industrial area referenced in Area No. 2. The existing farmland between the railroad tracks and West Lincolnway, the separation from single family, and the relative shallow depth of the property leads to a recommendation for light industrial use for this area.
- *Area No. 4* – The tracts in the vicinity have developed as Suburban Residential. The remaining acreage of this tract should continue in the same manner, with adequate buffers along Ransom Road.
- *Area Nos. 5, 6, and 7* - The area between North Valparaiso Street and Calumet Avenue has developed as a mix of retail commercial with corporate offices and manufacturing uses. The areas near Bullseye Lake Road remain vacant. Area Nos. 5 and 7 should continue in this pattern with business park uses. Area No. 6 should offer neighborhood commercial uses to support the businesses in the area, as well as the neighborhoods to the west.

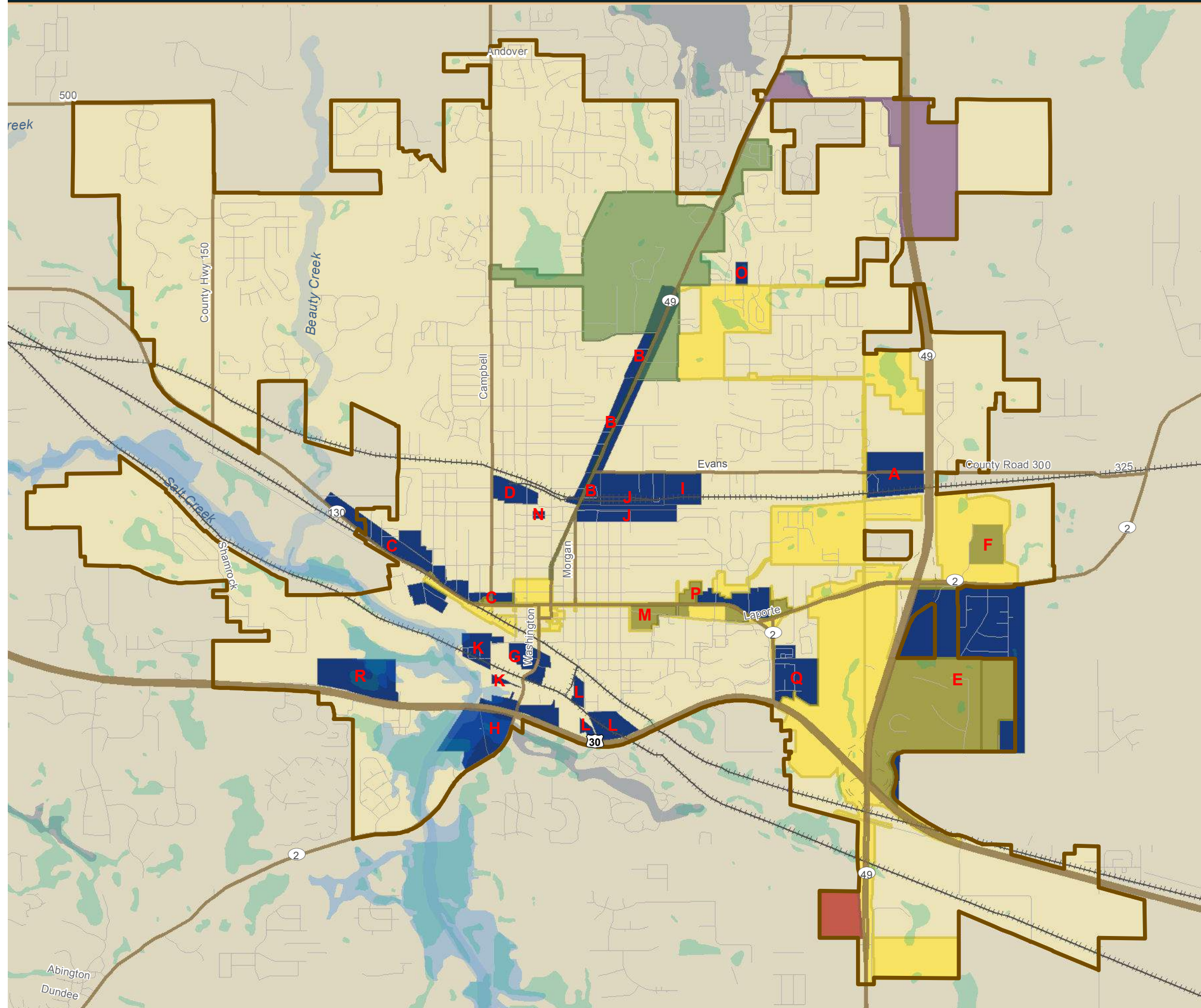
Map 2.2

Redevelopment

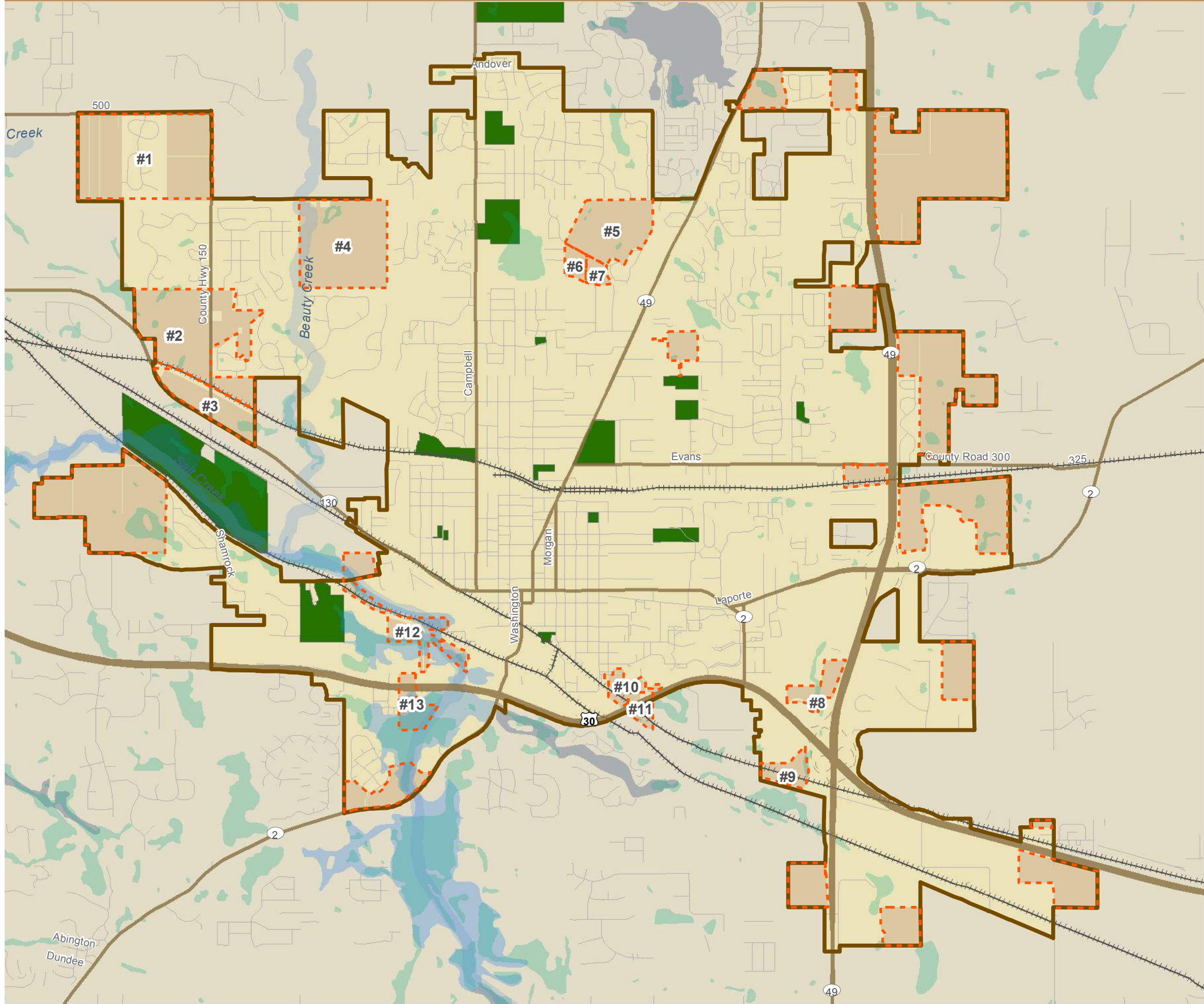
Legend

- Consolidated Valparaiso Allocation Area
- Medical Office Technology Allocation Area
- North Central Economic Allocation Area
- North Coast Allocation Area
- Redevelopment Target Sites
- City Limits
- Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
- Flood Zone (A)
- Flood Zone (AE)
- Streams and Rivers
- Railroad

- A: Evans Street between Silhavy and Route 2
- B: Calumet from the RR North to five points
- C: West Lincolnway west of Napoleon
- D: Campbell at the McGill site to Lafayette
- E: Commercial Area east of SR-49
- F: Porter's Vale development
- G: Washington Street south of Downtown
- H: SR-2 south of U.S. 30
- I: Roosevelt north of the RR tracks
- J: Elm Street between Calumet and Roosevelt
- K: South Campbell (Brown St. and West St.)
- L: South Morgan from Axe to U.S. 30
- M: Porter Hospital site
- N: Pine at Washington
- O: Keen Property
- P: Eastgate
- Q: Sturdy Road
- R: West Street and Morthland



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Map 2.3

Infill Development Opportunities

- Legend**
- Infill Opportunity Sites
 - Vacant Land
 - City Limits
 - City Parks
 - Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
 - Flood Zone (A)
 - Flood Zone (AE)
 - Streams and Rivers
 - Railroad

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- *Area No. 8* - This acreage along Silhavy Road is difficult to access due to the sharp differences in terrain between the property and the adjacent roadway. It is within the area that is formed by the intersection of SR-49 and U.S. 30, which is included in the study area for the U.S. 30 corridor. As shown in *Map 2.1.2, Future Land Use Plan, U.S. 30*, this area is proposed for general commercial, office, and hospitality uses.
- *Area No. 9* - This acreage is also within the U.S. 30 corridor, which is identified as appropriate for a business park. It has frontage with the intersection of U.S. 30 and SR-49, which heightens its exposure for businesses.
- *Areas No. 10 and 11* - The U.S. 30 Corridor Plan identifies these areas as part of the Valparaiso University campus, which are subject to the recently completed VU campus master plan.
- *Area No. 12* - Its location along the railroad right-of-way made this area originally conducive to industrial uses. However, its proximity to residential uses has rendered the site no longer conducive to heavy industry. Instead, the site should be shown as light industrial and zoned accordingly.
- *Area No. 13* - The U.S. 30 Corridor Plan identifies this area for open space. Since it is currently zoned and abuts general commercial zoning and uses, it may be appropriate for this land use.

2.4 KEY PLANNING THEMES

Gateways and Entrances

Valparaiso is a freestanding community, meaning that it does not have overlapping jurisdiction with other cities, as shown in *Map 1.1, Planning Jurisdictions*. Even the two-mile planning area around Valparaiso is freestanding, with the exception of the northwest corner of the study area, which overlaps Portage's planning jurisdiction. The relative location of the City results in an experience of definite arrival to the City from the rolling farmlands surrounding it. The only exception is the approach from the west along U.S. 30, which contains large-scale commercial uses and shopping centers through the cities of Merrillville and Hobart.

Valparaiso is accessible via SR-49 from the north and south. The approach to the City from the north is through rolling woodlands that are in a pristine state. This driving experience should be preserved and enhanced through the use of wide natural buffers where the native landscape is retained.

SR-2 approaches the City from the east and the southwest along the Valparaiso Moraine. As stated below in *Economic Stability*, the area to the east is reflected as light industrial on the future land use plan. As this area develops, there is an opportunity for an enhanced linear entryway along SR-2

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 The logo features the word "ENOVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font, with a stylized "O" composed of three overlapping circles in blue, red, and yellow. Below "ENOVISION" is the year "2030" and the word "VALPARAISO" in a smaller, all-caps font.


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 The logo features the word "ENOVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font. The "O" is stylized with a circular graphic containing three overlapping colored segments (blue, yellow, and red). Below "ENOVISION" is the year "2030" and the word "VALPARAISO" in a smaller, all-caps font.

east of the Airport to highlight the City's technology businesses. The City and Porter County Regional Airport should continue their partnership to seek funding for business park entry features, including monument signage and public art exhibits.

The segment of SR-2 to the southwest winds through large green fields with native landscaping. It provides access to large-lot single family subdivisions, which also present opportunities for enhanced entries. Should this be annexed, the City should consider adopting an entryway enhancement program for these and other subdivisions.

Lincolnway traverses Downtown and exits the City as SR-130. Lincolnway converges with Sturdy Road at the traffic circle, each of which is designated as SR-130 in the outlying areas. The area between the western City limits and Downtown is known as "Central Place".

Joliet Road is a narrow, winding rural road that transitions from the country to the City. At one time, this segment of roadway was part of the Lincoln Highway system, although it has gradually become less traveled as other, more direct connections were made in and outside of the City. The developments along this road could be candidates for redevelopment. However, much of frontage remains undeveloped with a well-established tree canopy. The function and character of this roadway should be protected and enhanced through zoning and land development regulations, and redevelopment.

Calumet Avenue transitions to a natural area to the north of the City and becomes Old Route 49. It traverses the Mink Lake Golf Course with vistas of Flint Lake, Mink Lake, and other pothole lakes in the area. Just beyond SR-49, the road provides access to the Moraine Nature Preserve. The natural areas along this roadway should be preserved as they provide linkage between the City's environmental resources and those of the larger region.

Campbell Street provides a pleasing entry to the City from the north. It follows the western boundary of Rogers Lake Park, and eventually provides access to Sunset Hill County Park. The natural frontage of this street should be protected and enhanced.

Both Calumet Avenue and Campbell Street should be protected by a minimum 60' buffer wherein existing hardwood trees are preserved. On Campbell Street, the buffer should extend from the City limits to just south of Vale Park Road, and on Calumet Avenue the buffer should extend from the City limits to Country Club Road. The areas outside of the City should be given priority for annexation to protect the nature and character of these roadway environs.



Economic Stability

Valparaiso is economically strong in the region. As discussed in *Chapter 1, Planning Context*, job growth and opportunities are important to the continued vitality, sustainability, and steady growth of the City. A significant segment of the population, however, is concerned about the future of the job market in the City.⁴ In this chapter, economic development is addressed from a land use perspective. More about the City's role in the region and its future objectives and strategies may be found in *Chapter 4, Opportunity*.

In addition to job creation, there is a concern that the City offers little opportunity for start-up businesses.⁵ Downtown Valparaiso is an important asset to the City, meaning that the City's investments should be protected so that businesses located elsewhere do not detract from it.⁶ Franchise businesses should complement but not dominate local businesses.⁷ As mentioned elsewhere in this chapter, land use regulations are not effective in addressing such differences; however, they may address the design of sites and buildings. The UDO includes downtown design standards for building architecture, dimensions, roof structure, and colors. These standards should be consistently applied and interpreted in order to protect the uniqueness of this valuable asset. Other strategies to increase the diversity of commercial uses and to encourage the reuse of vacant tenant spaces are discussed in *Chapter 4, Opportunity*.

The current zoning map reflects the City's industrial and business uses, as displayed in **Map 2.4, Current Zoning**. It shows heavy and light industrial zoning along the railroad that runs east-west along the northern boundary of the historic neighborhoods south of Evans Avenue. The area runs in a linear-fashion along the railroad for roughly two and one-half miles, which contains several vacant buildings. Some of the tracts are zoned Heavy Industrial (INH). Reuse of the vacant buildings for heavy industrial use would be disruptive to the residential areas that have grown up around them by reason of air pollution, noise, vibration, and traffic impacts. Some of this area is identified for redevelopment in *Map 2.2, Redevelopment*. This presents opportunities for reuse as lighter, non-polluting, and smaller business uses. These tracts should be repurposed to maximize business opportunities that produce few externalities such as traffic, noise, and odors. Uses could include small-scale manufacturing, such as food manufacturing, micro-breweries, and

⁴ The Quality of Life survey report, completed in March 2010, indicated that 73.5% of the population is concerned about the continued existence of good jobs.

⁵ The Quality of Life survey also revealed that roughly 54% of the population either disagrees or is not sure that Valparaiso is "a good place to start and grow a business".

⁶ The Quality of Life survey report, completed in March 2010, indicated that 79% of the population considers Downtown vital to the City's success.

⁷ The Quality of Life survey revealed that about 63% of the population prefers a mix of local and chain businesses, as opposed to exclusively local or exclusively chain businesses.

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There are opportunities for reuse along the rail corridors.



Chapter 4, Opportunity, outlines strategies to assist in bringing more businesses to Downtown.



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other craft or service-based businesses; start-up business incubators; and other types of flexible space. The tracts that are zoned INH should be rezoned to Light Industrial (INL) as reflected by the Future Land Use Plan.

Heavy and light industrial zoning is also along the south side of the rail corridor that runs diagonally from Lincolnway through the southern portion of the City to U.S. 30. Some of the tracts are zoned Heavy Industrial (INH). Reuse of these sites as heavy industrial would be disruptive here as well, where the housing stock is at greater risk of deterioration. Most of this area is identified for redevelopment by this plan. This area presents an opportunity for reuse of the factory-style buildings as art studios or light manufacturing uses. The tracts that are currently zoned INH should be rezoned to Light Industrial (INL) as reflected on the Future Land Use Plan.

In addition to the historic Downtown shopping area, the zoning map reflects the following major commercial uses:

- The length of the U.S. 30 Corridor;
- Almost three miles of frontage along Calumet Avenue; and
- The LaPorte / Lincolnway Corridor.

The area east of Downtown is a transition area, where single family homes have been converted to low-impact commercial uses that form an attractive entrance into Downtown. The Calumet Avenue corridor, together with certain sites along LaPorte/Lincolnway, was developed in a strip commercial style with bland architecture, few amenities, and liberal signage. Much of the frontage in both corridors is identified for redevelopment by this plan. Several sites in these corridors have been redeveloped over the years, ranging from a face-lift under the façade improvement program to a major redevelopment of Cumberland Crossing.

From a regional employment perspective, SR-49 is the City's largest potential job center. The area just north and east of the airport contains upwards of 300-acres of developable land that could be annexed to the City. The frontage on the east side of the highway lends itself to large corporate "Class A" office space in a master-planned business-park. The relocation and expansion of Porter Memorial Hospital at the northwest corner of SR-49 and U.S. 6 is expected to attract development along SR-49. Major medical facilities, regional financial institutions, and technology-based businesses would be well suited for this area. Interior sites, on the other hand (especially those south of U.S. 30), are better suited for light production and smaller-scale distribution facilities that can take advantage of the airport. High visibility, nearby services (including broadband), large readily buildable sites, and easy access to the combined I-90/94, and I-80 corridors, makes this a prime business location. Although large distribution facilities (a major driver industry in Northwest Indiana) could be attracted to this area, they are not advised due to their high impact/low jobs characteristics.



This building is an example of the benefits of the Façade Improvement Program.

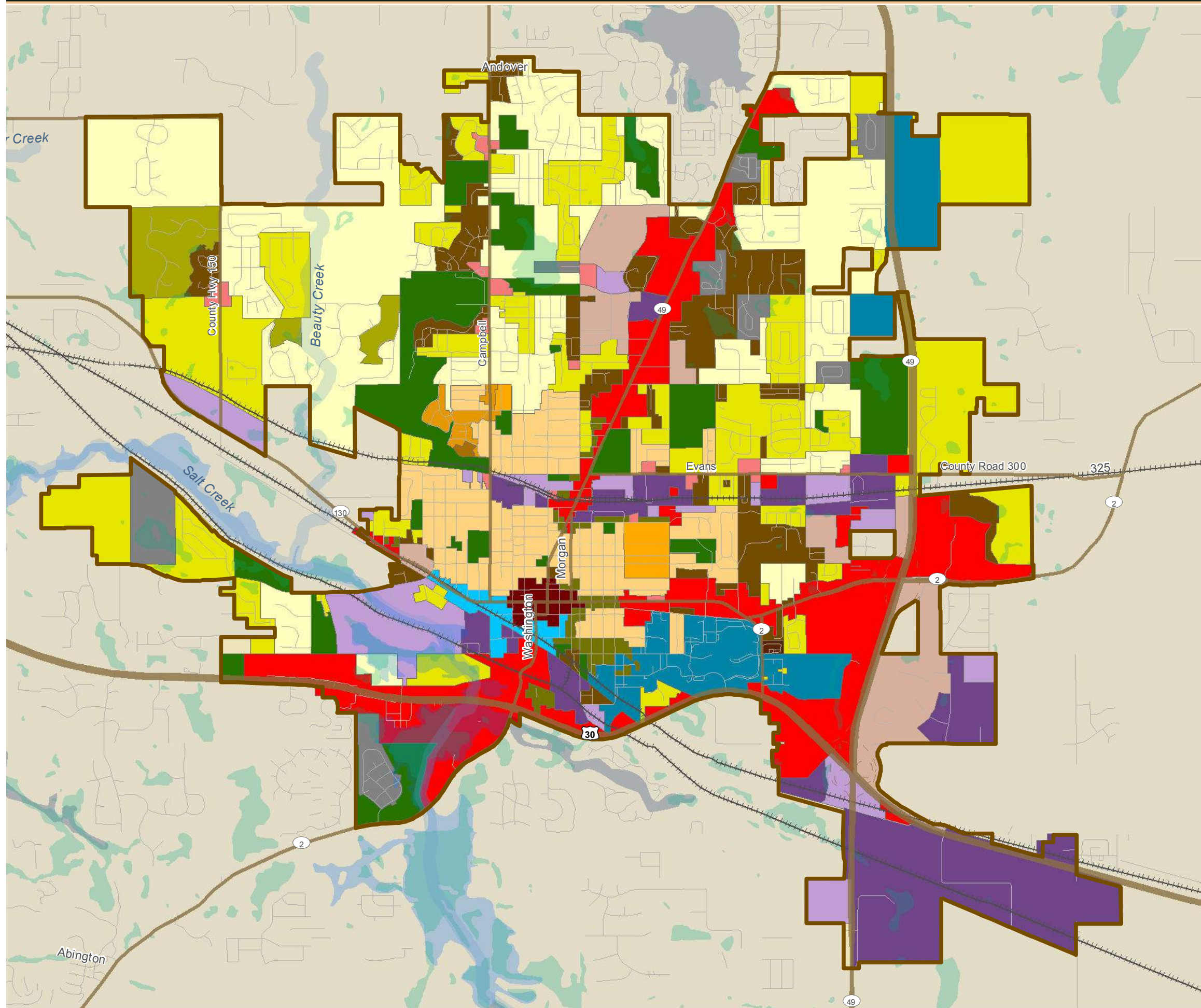


Map 2.4

Current Zoning

Legend

	ER		PS
	SR		CN
	GR		CG
	UR		CBD
	NC 60		CP
	NC 70		CA
	NC 80		BP
	NC 90		INL
	NC-MH		INH
	RT		PUD
	City Limits		
	Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes		
	Flood Zone (A)		
	Flood Zone (AE)		
	Streams and Rivers		
	Railroad		



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On the southern end of SR-49, retail development dominates the western frontage, with an under-utilized shopping center on the eastern side at the LaPorte Avenue intersection. That shopping center is identified for redevelopment. The commercial acreage west of SR-49 between LaPorte Avenue and U.S. 30 fulfills many of the larger-scale commercial needs of the City (home improvements, groceries, and overnight accommodations). Members of the community, as well as those with business interests, expressed the desire to see the remainder of the SR-49 meet the business park needs of the community. This approach would help the City with additional land for "Class A" office and service needs, which would also help to balance future retail uses with uses that produce higher wage jobs.

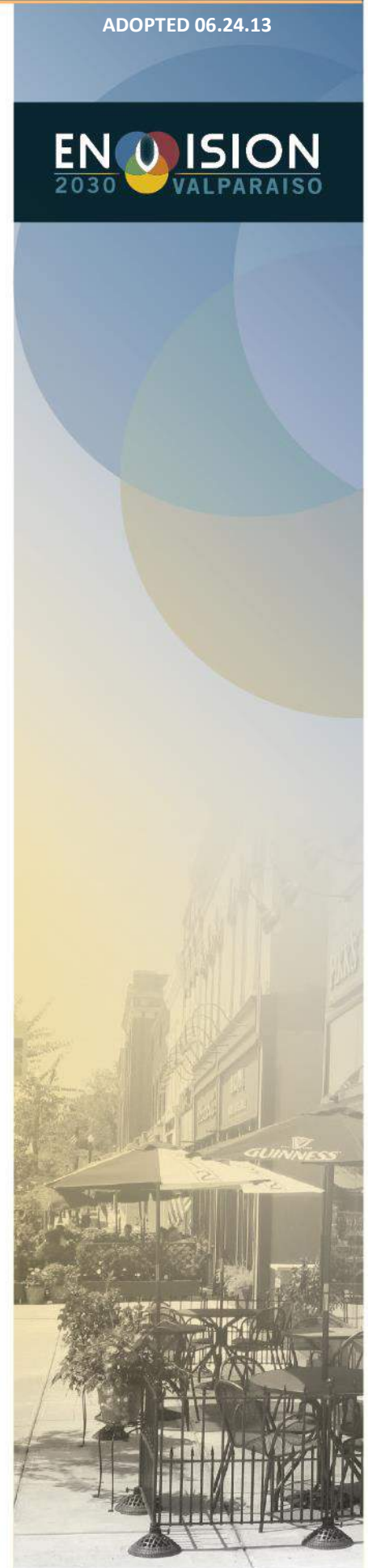
According to business leaders, there is a strong desire for clean industry that may be met by the area near Porter County Regional Airport. Areas that are impacted by the noise and airplane emissions are not optimum for residential uses. Industrial and shipping uses have a better, more symbiotic relationship with airports. Additional acreage for light industrial uses is available to the north and east of the Airport.

Managed Growth

The City's current extent of growth largely correlates closely with the City limits. Outside these boundaries, there are many smaller and medium-sized subdivisions and rural enclaves in unincorporated Porter County. These communities, some of which have been present for over 40 years, afford a rural or lakeside lifestyle to their residents, often with the accompanying notion of lower taxes and living costs.

In some cases, these developments have been established at the edges of the municipal boundary but in most instances, the City has gradually grown out to meet these rural subdivisions. Unless the City has an agreement to provide services, these unincorporated communities may constrain the City's future growth. However, there are several relatively large undeveloped tracts of land around the City that if left to unincorporated development will provide continuing opportunities for long-term expansion - even beyond the horizon of this Plan. This issue is discussed in *Chapter 7, Growth Capacity*.

It is important that the City take steps to protect these critical areas from unincorporated development that may preempt the City from expansion, particularly to the more desirable north, northwest, and northeast locations on the moraine. Statutes, utility extension policies, and municipal finance considerations make it difficult for the City to annex large swaths of undeveloped land for future growth. Similarly, Indiana communities have not been afforded the power of extraterritorial zoning or subdivision control without first obtaining county approval. As a result, the City will need to pursue utility extension policies and public investment strategies that make it



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attractive to become part of Valparaiso. A more detailed analysis of this issue and potential approaches to it are presented in *Chapter 7, Growth Capacity*.

Healthy Neighborhoods

The idea of a “healthy neighborhood” involves personal safety, stability, sustained housing values, convenience to amenities, and desirable aesthetics that complement the neighborhood. More measurable aspects of neighborhood livability include traffic levels, amount of noise, proximity to schools and parks, levels of public service, and time-distance to shopping areas and other desired activities.

As expressed in the focus group and Citizens’ Congress meetings, most participating residents expressed substantial satisfaction in the health of their own neighborhoods. Great concerns were expressed about the future of the older, smaller neighborhood elementary schools, which are facing the need for extensive renovations or even replacement. The concern revolves mainly around the potential loss of a long-standing and neighborhood anchoring school, with the accompanying replacement by bus transportation for neighborhood children. Valparaiso schools have a good reputation in the region, a fact that has contributed greatly to the City’s steady, sustained growth. The Valparaiso Community Schools (VCS) has eight elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and one vocational / technical school. Three of the elementary schools – Central, Memorial, and Park View, as well as Ben Franklin Middle School, are located within the City’s historic neighborhoods. The fact that schools are within easy walking distance and are deeply integrated into the fabric of the historic neighborhoods was a considerable draw for several of the current residents, not only to these residential areas but to Valparaiso.

However, the schools’ popularity, their age, the growth of the City, and changes in school standards have resulted in reported overcrowded conditions in the historic neighborhoods. This issue is being addressed by an ongoing comprehensive facilities evaluation and plan by the VCS. There may be other options to evaluate that would involve the redevelopment of existing sites to increase capacity, such as two-or three-story classroom buildings, structured parking, and/or the use of adjoining or other sites in the vicinity for certain activities. Such options would involve the cooperation and support of residents, as well as flexibility in the application of development standards. The City has an interest in encouraging VCS to analyze the potential for reuse of its sites within existing neighborhoods. The schools’ presence in the neighborhoods brings a certain level of cohesiveness. Also, if the schools become vacant without immediate occupants, the sites could have a negative impact, both to City services and to the immediate neighbors. Reuse of the sites could also have more of a negative impact to existing residential uses. Therefore, this plan recommends that these options be discussed between VCS and the City once the space needs have been evaluated.

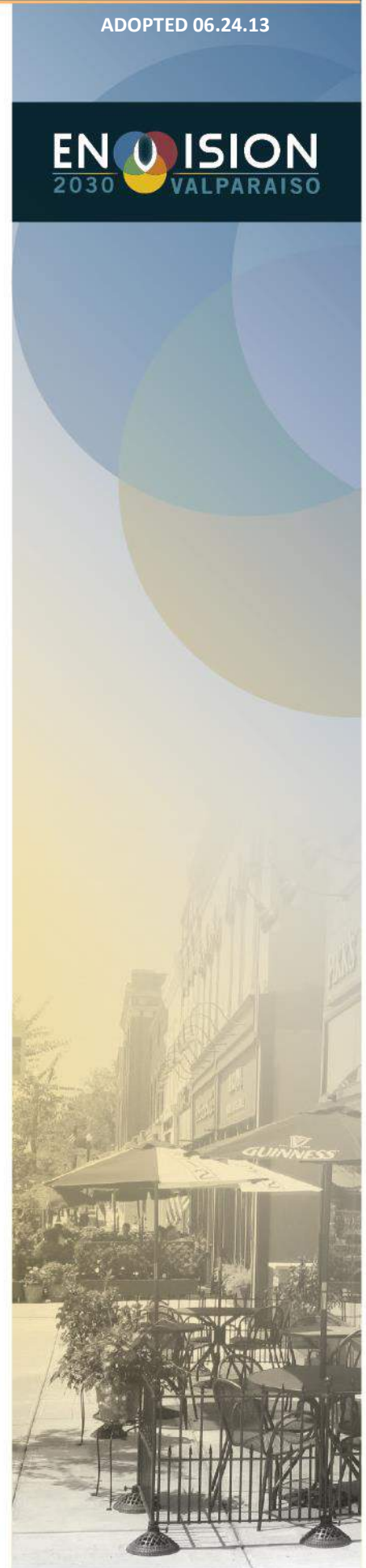
Another ongoing concern expressed by residents is the need for continuing protection of neighborhoods from incompatible development and inappropriately designed or out-of-scale structures and renovations. These issues were addressed by the City in the form of Neighborhood Conservation District standards with the comprehensive revision of the Unified Development Ordinance. The UDO includes updated development standards intended to maintain the stability of existing neighborhoods and ensure that future development or redevelopment adheres to the same high standards that have typified most of the development that has occurred in the past.

One theme that emerged from the Citizens' Congress was a desire to strengthen the City's neighborhoods. It was at times difficult for residents to describe their neighborhood. Some do not have a name for the area in which they live. The key to putting structure around the issues is communication – both among neighbors and between neighborhoods and the City. Valparaíso has recently recognized the importance of neighborhood communication and has devoted a new neighborhood liaison position to the effort. Some cities offer a program to educate community leaders regarding municipal matters. Typically referred to as "City 101", they provide information to the grassroots leadership about the inner-workings of local government. Such programs result in a more informed citizen base that interacts more effectively with city officials. The programs also pave the way for mutual support of the citizens with the decision-makers. Graduates of "City 101s" make better contributions when invited to sit on boards and committees.

Another consideration is the idea of people living in areas that are not in a traditional "neighborhood", and more within a mixed use environment. Another key for further improvement to Downtown would be to provide residential uses directly in the area to bring 24-hour life to it. This plan recommends a mix of residential and commercial uses in Central Place, as well as the potential for residential use in certain business corridors. The UDO addresses mixed use concepts in all commercial and business districts – the regulations are in place to facilitate such developments. However, in order to implement them, this plan recommends that the City identify opportunities for public/private partnerships to provide the additional incentive that may be necessary.

2.5 FUTURE LAND USE

As a guide for land development and public improvements, the plans depicted in **Map 2.1.1, Future Land Use Plan**, and **Map 2.1.2, Future Land Use Plan U.S. 30**, capture and incorporate the City's policies and the community's values regarding development and redevelopment in the coming years. This is significant since the findings and recommendations contained in this plan provide the policy direction for the City's development decisions regarding land use.



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In the future, whenever a zoning decision comes before the Planning Commission and City Council, the staff should consult the Future Land Use Plan as a basis for its initial recommendation. If a zoning request aligns with the Future Land Use Plan and impacts to public infrastructure can and will be mitigated, the recommendation may be to approve the proposed rezoning. If the proposal does not align with the Future Land Use Plan, the recommendation may likely be for denial, unless the plan is amended and other assurances are provided to ensure the appropriateness and compatibility of the proposed use.

There may be instances where, upon further analysis, it is justified to make an exception, and allow a proposed land use to proceed despite that it is contrary to its designation on the Future Land Use Plan. This typically occurs when a more detailed analysis of the subject property within its context reveals that the Plan warrants change. Another common justification occurs when, over time, circumstances affecting the subject property and those in its vicinity have changed. In this situation, it is a signal that it is necessary to review the Future Land Use Plan designation, at least within the area of the proposal.

There are zoning changes recommended in this chapter for three areas of the City. These include the two industrial areas along the rail corridors, where Heavy Industrial should be replaced with Light Industrial, and the area to the west of Central Place between it and the City limits. If the Future Land Use Plan is adopted reflecting these changes, this plan recommends that the City initiate rezoning of those properties pursuant to that policy direction.

The City's decision-makers will also look to the Future Land Use Plan when deciding a development case that includes an opportunity for public investment, such as development or redevelopment in a tax increment financing zone, or where public investment in infrastructure is needed to facilitate the development.

It is the recommendation of this plan to relate the land use plan designations closely with the zoning districts recently adopted in the UDO. This is due to the fact that the UDO districts were formed with the future land use classifications in mind. Because they were thought through in this context, there will be alignment and compatibility between the UDO, Future Land Use Plan, and the policies and directions of the Comprehensive Plan.

2.6 LAND USE POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Protection / Support of Neighborhoods

Policies

- 2.a. Continue close coordination with Valparaiso Community Schools School regarding new campus locations and joint planning for City-school park and recreation areas.

- 2.b. Use individual residential and neighborhood-wide redevelopment projects near non-residential uses as an opportunity to encourage and/or assist with new or supplemental tree planting, landscaping, taller fences, and other measures to enhance screening and buffering.
- 2.c. Continue coordination with area non-profits to address social services, educational attainment and skills training, and other fundamental factors in neighborhood and community revitalization (as well as housing rehabilitation and neighborhood redevelopment considerations addressed further in *Chapter 6, Housing & Neighborhoods*).
- 2.d. Schools, parks, golf courses, and community facilities should be located close to or within residential neighborhoods for accessibility and to provide a focal point for effective and cohesive neighborhood design.
- 2.e. The original historic neighborhoods will continue to be conserved through existing regulatory provisions and proactive planning measures.
- 2.f. New development will be compatible with existing and well-established neighborhoods through appropriate use and design transitioning and cohesive types and patterns of development.
- 2.g. Development patterns will provide for transitions and buffering between various land use intensities. Where land uses of incompatible intensities abut, there will be adequate bufferyards as required in the current development regulations to separate them.
- 2.h. The overall development pattern will transition from urban to suburban to rural with increased distance from the City center.
- 2.i. Adequate buffers will be applied to the northern entrance corridors of Calumet Avenue and Campbell Street.
- 2.j. Potential adverse impacts on adjacent land use types should be considered in the City's development review process (including factors such as noise, odor, pollution, excessive light, traffic, etc.).
- 2.k. New development or redevelopment on infill parcels in developed areas should maintain compatibility with existing uses and the prevailing land use patterns in the area.
- 2.l. Land uses with unusual characteristics or a higher likelihood of raising compatibility issues should be subject to more focused review and approval.

Actions

- 2.1. Design and renovate City buildings and facilities with area character in mind, especially in residential neighborhoods. This can have implications for building size and height; building arrangement and setbacks, roof and window design and façade treatments, extent of site coverage relative to open space and



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- landscaping, type of fencing and screening materials, buffering, and the location of site access and parking.
- 2.2. Use street and drainage improvements as an opportunity to install landscaping and screening that can further enhance the character of a neighborhood, as well as potentially addressing compatibility concerns between varying land use types.
- 2.3. Recognize screening and buffering between differing land use types and intensities as a key contribution and design consideration for pocket, neighborhood, and linear parks.
- 2.4. Work with VCS to discuss the budgetary and site design implications of expansion of the existing schools in the historic neighborhoods. Options could include bulk variances such as setbacks and height, structured parking, and new buildings that exceed a single story.
- 2.5. Following adoption of this plan, work with the City's neighborhood liaison to improve two-way communication between the City and its neighborhoods. More focused communication efforts provide an opportunity to coordinate more closely with key partners and entities, as well as to obtain public input at a more "grass roots" level.
- 2.6. Work with the neighborhood liaison to identify neighborhood leaders and then work with those groups to create a neighborhoods map to provide a basis for robust neighborhood identity.
- 2.7. Consider rezoning the areas that are currently zoned Heavy Industrial (INH) to Light Industrial (INL) along the rail corridors near Evans Avenue and between U.S. 30 and Lincolnway. Allow current heavy industrial users to continue until such time as the uses change.

Enhancement of Commercial Character

Policies

- 2.m. Continue to use special district mechanisms, together with City tax policy (such as TIF) and other incentives, to encourage revitalization and infill development, especially to invigorate commercial activity in the redevelopment areas.
- 2.n. Continue to offer mini-grants to existing commercial property and business owners to help finance building façade improvements, enhanced landscaping, or other site upgrades that might not otherwise occur where no construction or expansion activities are planned that would trigger compliance with newer development standards. Ensure that all areas shown as "Campus" on the Future Land Use Plan will be developed pursuant to all regulations applicable in the Campus (CA) zoning district.

- 2.o. Make efforts to continue to fund the Façade Improvement Program and work to rehabilitate commercial sites along LaPorte, Lincolnway, and Calumet. Consider funding to be made available for the reduction of sign clutter.
- 2.p. Continue to apply the CBD district regulations of the City's Unified Development Ordinance.
- 2.q. Continue to encourage the development and redevelopment of sites in Central Place as mixed use. Encourage and incentivize development that is transit-oriented in the Central Place area.
- 2.r. Downtown will continue to serve as the center of civic uses and activities and as a venue for culture and entertainment.
- 2.s. Reuse and redevelopment of existing property will strictly adhere to the policies and principles of this plan and the provisions of the UDO.
- 2.t. An increased focus will be devoted to corridor revitalization and enhancement.

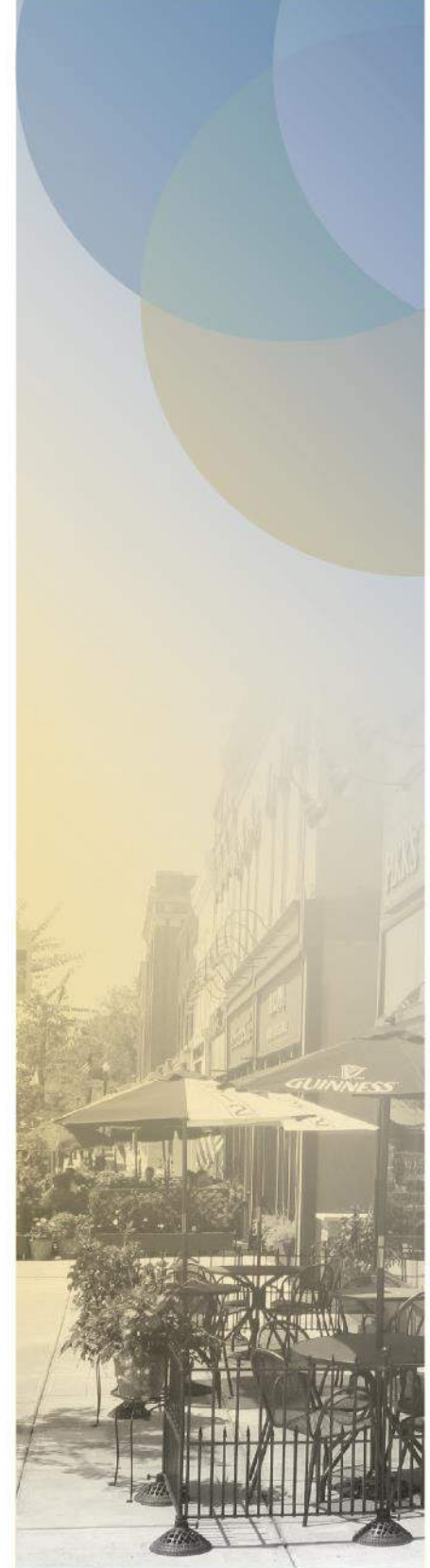
Actions

- 2.8. Facilitate the consolidation of the former Valparaiso Tech Institute property between Yellowstone and Milton south of Park Avenue (and outside of the future park area) for redevelopment as a mixed residential development.

Economic Stability / Continuous Promotion of the City

Policies

- 2.u. Continue to use the City's land use planning and zoning authority to safeguard economic assets (such as the new Porter Regional Hospital, business parks, and Porter County Regional Airport). Residential and/or non-residential uses could alter the area character or, if allowed to proliferate over time, might lead to objections about the operations and/or nature of the pre-existing economic anchors.
- 2.v. Work with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) to incorporate design approaches that further the intended character themes in all construction and rehabilitation projects involving the community's primary corridors. This includes entry corridors to the City, such as U.S. 30, SR-49, SR-2, and Lincolnway. Take the same approach with Porter County regarding future public improvements to Campbell / Meridian and Calumet / Old Route 49.
- 2.w. Through the Planning Department, monitor the future reuse of existing buildings and lease spaces in Downtown to assist in coordinating appropriate timing of public parking improvements relative to the immediate need.



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*Actions*

- 2.9. Design and construct signature gateway and streetscape treatments at the identified high-profile entry points into Valparaiso. The gateway improvements should include monument signage, flags/banners, landscaping, special lighting, as well as public art. These should be carefully sited and of sufficient scale and quality design to stand out from other corridor signage and visual elements.
- 2.10. Consider creation of a technology entrance corridor along SR-2 north and east of the airport to identify future improvements in the right-of-way.
- 2.11. Consider changing the name Central Place to one that better describes the intended character and purpose of the area.
- 2.12. Commission a special area plan for Central place, together with a West Lincolnway Corridor Revitalization Master Plan.
- 2.13. Consider increasing the current 30' landscape buffer that is required along SR-49 to at least 60' for the entire length of the frontage. Within the buffer, consider requiring maintenance of existing hardwood trees unless special permission is granted to remove them.
- 2.14. Consider seeking an alternative location to the potential future parking garage site recommended on Lincolnway at Michigan Avenue. If it is decided to keep the location, work on the design of the building to keep the building at a maximum height of two stories for the portions closest to Lincolnway (e.g. a retail-wrapped building that screens the parking garage) so that the view into Downtown from the east is protected and preserved.
- 2.15. Consider changing the Zoning Map to expand the CP district into the areas that are currently zoned CG and BP to allow development and redevelopment as mixed use.

Promotion of a Healthy Environment*Policies*

- 2.x. Continue with efforts to inventory and subsequently identify protection measures for all sensitive environmental resources throughout the City and planning area.
- 2.y. Continue with efforts to encourage low-impact development strategies to protect the environment and the City's drinking water.



Overall Planning*Actions*

- 2.16. Incorporate the land use recommendations contained in this section into the Future Land Use Plan.
- 2.17. Coordinate Valparaiso University's planning efforts and the U.S. 30 Corridor and SR-49 Plan recommendations with the Future Land Use Plan and other applicable elements of this Comprehensive Plan.
- 2.18. Consider steps to lay out a program for an annual "Valparaiso 101" that targets community leaders and teaches them about all City functions, particularly the objectives, use, and value of this plan.

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Sustainability

3.1 INTRODUCTION

What is Sustainability?

The word “sustainability” has become synonymous with “green” or energy conservation, but a community’s sustainability is much more. Two common definitions of sustainability are:

1. **Conservation/optimization of resources:** The use of resources to meet the present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
2. **Comprehensive system success:** Actions or strategies that provide the maximum collective benefit to environmental, social, and economic systems.

A sustainable community has a housing stock where individuals and families want to live year after year with pedestrian and vehicular mobility to the surrounding thriving businesses. These factors contribute to the quality and resources of the community’s schools. These systems are interconnected, which is why it is so important to address sustainability in this plan. Indicators that Valparaiso is working towards sustainability include:

- Housing that maintains its value;
- Local employment opportunities and a local workforce qualified to fill them;
- Schools and other services that attract residents; and
- A “self-supportive” fiscal structure in which revenues consistently and predictably cover the costs of service provisions.

The liveliness of downtown Valparaiso for the past century is an example of a sustainable area. The area “sustains” or operates on its own, supporting the upkeep of the surrounding neighborhoods and overall quality of life. Reliance on recurring reinvestment and attention from the city to survive is not sustainable, as seen at the large shopping centers on the Calumet Corridor that are in need of redevelopment less than 30 years after construction.

Sustainability refers to...

- Environmental protection
- Urban restoration and reuse
- Alternative/renewable energy + efficiency
- Green buildings
- Waste reduction and recycling
- Open space preservation
farmland preservation and local food
- Economic vitality and local jobs
- “Green sector” economic development
- Public health
- Water/energy conservation, quality, availability
- Housing variety and affordability
- Neighborhood livability
- Auto independency, expansion of transportation options



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Sustainability can include a vast array of practices. In fact, the known impacts of any decision or action can be measured against sustainable goals based on the environmental, social, and economic benefits.

Sustainability and the Comprehensive Plan

A sound plan inherently promotes sustainability. It provides the following benefits to the City:

1. A means for education regarding sustainable growth and its benefits.
2. Objectives aimed at realizing the benefits of future decisions.
3. A structure of policies, programs, and projects for the community to act upon and implement.

While Envision Valparaiso incorporates sustainable principles throughout, this chapter identifies key issues for the City to consider, objectives for achieving long-range goals, and an action plan for implementation.

Figure 3.1, Partners in Sustainability



Partners for a Sustainable Valparaiso

Sustainability is a local and regional, as well as a global objective. As shown in **Figure 3.1, Partners in Sustainability**, involvement of all parties is needed to ensure Valparaiso is a sustainable community. A sustainable community is shaped by:

- Government policies;
- Codes & ordinances;
- Business development and employment practices;
- Involvement of community institutions and service providers; and
- Personal and community behavior patterns.

The City and its surrounding region have already taken actions that reflect sustainable thinking, including developing the following:

- Policy and regulations integrated into the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) that contribute to the City's future viability.
- Environmental programs like the 49 percent landfill diversion, co-mingled recycling program, plastic bag recycling, LED traffic signals, tree inventory/replacement program, bio-diesel and the water conservation task force.
- Valparaiso University campus LEED-certified buildings.
- Salt Creek Conservancy.



- Valparaiso Central Business District (Downtown District) Taskforce, expansion and diversification of Downtown Valparaiso Business Association.
- “Housing Opportunities” organization, which operates the Affordable Housing Program and Housing for the Homeless and partners with Indiana Association for Community Economic Development.

3.2 KEY ISSUES

This section describes the current state of the City with regard to sustainability and its guiding principles. Each question focuses on a general topic that is essential for creating a sustainable community. As described below, Valparaiso is already doing a lot to become a healthy city. However, there are several areas where either greater effort must be focused or where enhanced coordination can create positive impacts that are greater than each individual component.

1. Energy: *What should the City do to foster low cost, reliable energy production?*

The City receives its power from the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO). Service is fairly steady; however, as with much of the area in this part of the country, electrical service can become unreliable during snow and ice storms. High winds may also periodically interrupt service.

To date, the City has facilitated renewable energy at the individual level by allowing solar panels and turbines on residential and nonresidential lots as accessory uses. Wind farms are permitted in the heavy industrial district.

Valparaiso’s economic health is intrinsically impacted by energy costs. As many areas of the country are seeking alternatives to nonrenewable sources, the City could consider supporting and facilitating a community and regional wind industry.

2. Local Food: *What should the City do to promote area food production, sales, and consumption?*

At this time, Valparaiso does not play an active role in facilitating grass roots businesses that grow and sell food, but it also has not created any impediments. However, it is questioned whether individual cultivation of produce on a residential lot would be permitted as the UDO is presently silent on this issue. The City could further study additional programs and/or policies to facilitate local food production.

3. Environmental Conservation: *What should the City do to safeguard our ecosystems, trees, soil, and water resources?*

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The Valparaiso UDO contains several resource preservation provisions. Its performance-based residential development standards further enhance the protection results by allowing density bonuses in exchange for increased open space. It also incorporates “best management practices”, some of which relate to preservation of existing natural resources as an alternative to installation of mitigation structures. Other considerations include:

- a) Allowing and incentivizing rainwater harvesting;
- b) Incentivizing the installation of rain barrels; bioswales, and raingardens (both on new development and retrofit of existing development);
- c) Facilitating the installation of cisterns;
- d) Providing public education for proper installation and maintenance of such systems.

4. *Development: How should the City guide and promote development so that buildings and neighborhoods incorporate sustainable features?*

In addition to environmental conservation provisions (see No. 3, above), the Valparaiso UDO provides for:

- a) Protection of neighborhoods through:
 - i. “Neighborhood Conservation” district that removes obstacles for improving residential properties; and
 - ii. Performance standards (operational and site development standards) for commercial properties near neighborhoods that remove the potential for negative impacts.
- b) Housing choice through:
 - i. The “Traditional Neighborhood Development” concept that rewards innovative design by allowing a greater mix of housing products within a development by right and thereby reduces application processing time;
 - ii. The Mixed Use Development concept, which is similar to the “Traditional Development “ concept but allows a greater mix of uses by right;
 - iii. Regulations that require a mix of housing types and variable lot sizes; and
 - iv. Allowing live-work townhomes in certain areas.
- c) Creative development design through density bonus for increased open space that allows for more creative, sustainable developments.
- d) Pollution prevention through requirements for structural “best management practices” to cleanse storm water runoff.
- e) Adequate tree cover through protection of hardwood trees that are 10” or larger in diameter, with replacement requirements when a protected tree is removed.

Additional regulatory considerations that are pro-sustainability include:

- a) Shared parking;
- b) Required bicycle parking – parking incentives for high-quality facilities for employees;
- c) Incentives for bicycle facilities, lockers, and showers;
- d) Pedestrian connectivity;
- e) Street connectivity;
- f) Street design for “Traditional Neighborhood” developments;
- g) LEED and similar considerations and incentives;
- h) Buffering between districts – minimizing impacts;
- i) Control of infill development to avoid homes that are much larger or smaller than their neighboring homes;
- j) Cottage development option/co-housing;
- k) Outdoor lighting provisions;
- l) Specimen tree preservation for all trees;
- m) Parking maximums;
- n) Limitations on front yard parking;
- o) Allowance of pervious pavement/pavers; and,
- p) “Complete Streets” requirements.

5. Atmosphere: *What should the City do to reduce our contribution to global warming and minimize air pollution?*

Similar to local food production, the City does not have specific programs or policies that are intended to address this issue, but it also does not stand in the way of individual efforts. Future considerations should include the following City initiatives:

- a) Replacing staff fleet vehicles with more efficient vehicles, such as hybrids or electric powered vehicles;
- b) Creating incentives for Energy Star homes;
- c) Continuing to pursue high-capacity commuter transport options to/from Chicago;
- d) Adopting requirements for new public buildings to meet LEED certification; and
- e) Reducing congestion and work travel times by providing flexible work hours and work-from-home capabilities.

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The Recycling and Waste Reduction District of Porter County works to educate the community about reducing waste through community workshops and a speakers bureau.

6. *Managing Waste:* *What should the City do to promote consumer product awareness, increase recycling rates, and reduce the amount of substances entering landfills?*

The City of Valparaiso's Public Works Department provides trash and curb-side recycling to single family homes that are on public streets. Other uses and those residences on private roads receive collection services offered by private companies.

An important aspect of managing waste is education. Citizens must be made aware of existing programs and investments in waste reduction and recycling. This will demonstrate the City's commitment and perhaps catalyze individual involvement.

7. *Strong and Healthy Community:* *How should the City continue to protect its citizens from disease, promote healthy living, civic engagement, cultural and ethnic diversity, while partnering with others to provide these activities?*

The City provides extensive opportunities for indoor and outdoor recreation. It sponsors the annual Popcorn Festival and the County Fair. It hosts the Chicago Street Theater, and is home to the Memorial Opera House, Brauer Museum of Art, Old Jail Museum, and the Indiana Aviation Museum. The City has five golf courses, an extensive parks system with well-connected bike / pedestrian trails, and is close to Indiana Dunes and the Taltree Arboretum and Gardens.

In order to maximize the benefit of public amenities that enhance public health, two components must be considered. The first is education so that residents understand the benefits of these amenities and how they play a role in a healthy citizenry and community. Secondly, the community must be structured to allow citizens to easily take advantage of their amenities. For example, a teenager should not have to rely on a parent to drive them to a park for a sporting event. Instead, neighborhood blocks, proximity of services, and adequate neighborhood infrastructure must be in place to provide the opportunity for independent mobility that enhances individual health and reduces reliance on automotive use, thereby creating multiple benefits. This can be accomplished through the coordination of development regulations and public works standards that result in locally proximate services that are universally accessible.

8. *Balanced Transportation:* *How should the City increase mobility choices by enhancing other forms of transportation besides that for automobiles? How can transportation infrastructure be designed efficiently, safely, with the environment in mind, and be connected to other local and regional networks?*



The City brought its own bus service on-line four years ago – called the V-line. It provides service between Downtown, Valparaiso University, shopping centers, and the northern neighborhoods, as well as express service to the Indiana Dunes. The City also offers commuter service to Chicago on the ChicaGo Dash. It operates out of a former train depot in Central Place, on the west end of Lincolnway.

The location for the bus station was chosen in order to have a multi-modal connection between it planned commuter train service to Chicago. However, thus far studies have shown the commuter service to be infeasible due to a low projection of ridership.

Investment in a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian network is vital to several items already discussed. This demonstrates the relevance of multi-mobility to the success of a truly sustainable urban environment. Future considerations should include:

- a) Continue working to improve bicycle/pedestrian connections;
- b) Continue to improve commuter bus service through ChicaGo Dash; and,
- c) Take advantage of future changes that will eventually make commuter rail more feasible than it is today.

9. *Sense of Place: What should the City do to improve its uniqueness within the region so that it becomes a place whose imagery is widely known?*

Visitors of Valparaiso can immediately distinguish it from “Anyplace, USA”:

- a) Its entrances from the north are through the pristine, wooded Valparaiso Moraine;
- b) One of its principle arteries, Lincolnway, takes visitors straight to its quaint Downtown;
- c) It has an unusually high percentage of neighborhood areas that are historically intact;
- d) Its newer neighborhoods have been creatively developed; and,
- e) Many of its shopping centers and nodes are well-designed.

The City has been augmenting these qualities through sound urban planning. Implementation efforts on the public side include the establishment of Tax Increment Financing Districts and the Façade Improvement Program. This work is accomplished through the Redevelopment Committee.

On the private development side, the City has adopted design standards for the Signature Corridor, Downtown, Eastgate, and the Campus Districts in its Unified Development Ordinance. Over time, as sites in these areas become developed or redeveloped, the regulations are intended to result in highly imageable places.

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These efforts have gone a long way toward elevating the impression that the City makes on its visitors. However, there are still many residents that live in the area that do not know of its many qualities. Future considerations include:

- a) Continue with efforts to secure grant funding to implement the recently adopted U.S. 30 Corridor Master Plan within the public right-of-way;
- b) Develop a program to implement the site improvement concepts that are included in the U.S. 30 Corridor Master Plan;
- c) Explore additional options to protect the entrance-ways into the City from the north;
- d) Continue to work through the TIF districts to improve the visual quality of existing commercial developments;
- e) Enforce all current development regulations that apply to special areas;
- f) Study and implement stronger roadway connections between U.S. 30 and Lincolnway; and,
- g) Develop a program to implement the Central Place concept (further detailed in *Chapter 2, Land Use and Community Character*) to create a place where people live, work, and play.

10. Responsible Government: *What should the City do to provide good government and cost-effective services, meet the needs of our citizens, protect the environment, and cooperate with other governments?*

The City has made obvious efforts in the past to have a proactive approach when it comes to urban planning. This could not have been possible without strong leadership on the part of decision makers, City staff, and grass-roots leadership. Citizens are highly involved and engaged in a myriad of initiatives. Officials at the City also have strong professional relationships with Porter County leaders and the mayoral offices of surrounding cities.

The Valparaiso Economic Development Corporation (VEDC) plays a strong role in providing a healthy economic environment. The Chamber of Commerce achieves many successes by forming and maintaining strong public / private partnerships. It works to advocate for adequate infrastructure (both utility and technological), assist and train local business owners, and coordinate with the Porter County Economic Development Alliance.

During the kick-off meetings for this Comprehensive Plan, community leaders met in stakeholder groups. Participants agreed that they had good professional relationships with each other, but many stated that additional communication would yield greater results.



Further considerations include:

- a) Create a “Community Agenda,” which includes topics that reach across disciplines and interests;
- b) Facilitate leadership dialog by hosting meetings;
- c) Implement the Economic Development policies and actions that are included in *Chapter 4, Opportunity*; and,
- d) Continue to maintain professional relationships.

3.3 SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES

Valparaiso must establish a clear set of objectives that bridge the gap between existing characteristics of growth and the community, and its vision for a sustainable future. Sustainability is not simply addressed through one policy or strategy. Instead, it takes careful and deliberate coordination to ensure that the way the community behaves is in concert with its local resources.

The American Planning Association (APA) has established a series of sustainable policies that should guide future investment in Valparaiso’s people, environment, and development. This chapter builds off of those policies, and customizes them to meet the specific contextual challenges of the City and region. Generally, APA identifies four primary goals for sustainable growth:

1. Reduce dependence upon fossil fuels, extracted underground metals, and minerals;
2. Reduce dependence upon chemicals and synthetic substances;
3. Reduce activities that encroach upon nature; and,
4. Meet human needs fairly and efficiently.

This section sets forth a series of objectives that aim to achieve these goals. The objectives are categorized to correspond to the other chapters in this plan. It is imperative to note that several objectives are relevant in many different categories. This demonstrates not only the broad applicability of sustainability, but also the necessity to address it comprehensively in order to create policies and strategies that actually affect positive long-term change. For example, economic development decisions should not be made simply to meet the objectives of sustainable economic development without meeting the objectives of a sustainable environment. Decisions must aim to align with all the objectives listed below to the greatest extent possible.

1. Sustainable Land Use, Character, & Design Objectives:

- a. Encourage compact development that maximizes investment in infrastructure and minimizes the need to drive.

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Urban agriculture and gardens make use of vacant land and provide a local source for healthy and fresh foods with low transport costs.



Street design should accommodate vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access.



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Compact development can preserve sensitive areas and create a unique local character.



Permeable pavers reduce urban heat island effect and the demands on storm water infrastructure.

- b. Integrate local neighborhood uses — housing, shops, workplaces, schools, parks, civic facilities — within walking or bicycling distance.
- c. Create human-scaled development that is pedestrian-friendly.
- d. Encourage more intense development oriented around public transit.
- e. Permit home-based occupations and work that reduce the need to commute.
- f. Permit local food production and agriculture that reduces need for long-range transport of food.
- g. Guide development to areas with existing or readily available infrastructure and minimize development in outlying, undeveloped areas.
- h. Maintain a well-defined "edge" around the community that is permanently protected from development.
- i. Remediate and redevelop brownfield sites and other developed lands that suffer from environmental or other constraints.
- j. Promote regional and local designs that respect the regional ecosystems and natural functions which support human communities.
- k. Reduce vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled through compact, infill, and mixed use development.
- l. Design local streets that encourage pedestrian and bicycle use and discourage high speed traffic.
- m. Design streets that support/enhance access between neighborhoods and to neighborhood-based commercial developments.
- n. Encourage solar-oriented design in development.
- o. Select building materials with low "embodied energy," which require less energy-intensive production methods and long-distance transport.
- p. Use chemical-free and toxic-free building materials.
- q. Adopt landscape design standards that minimize the use of irrigation as well as pesticides and herbicides.
- r. Encourage compact and clustered residential development, including reduced minimum lot sizes.
- s. Remove regulatory obstacles to using recycled materials for building.
- t. Require responsible stormwater management that reuses and restores the quality of on-site run-off.
- u. Reduce or eliminate impervious paving materials.
- v. Use "cradle-to grave" (life cycle) analysis in decision-making for materials and construction techniques.
- w. Encourage communities and housing developments that are socially cohesive, reduce isolation, and foster community spirit and sharing of resources.
- x. Use local materials and native plants in facility design to reduce transport distances and maintenance.

- y. Provide funding for open space acquisition in strategic or critical areas.
- z. Preserve wilderness areas.
- aa. Encourage urban/community gardens.
- bb. Permit on-site composting of organic waste.
- cc. Create systems of green spaces within and among neighborhoods.
- dd. Encourage development patterns that respect natural systems, such as watersheds and wildlife corridors.
- ee. In order to preserve nighttime “dark skies,” review and expand where appropriate the anti-glare provisions of the Unified Development Ordinance to strengthen outdoor lighting standards that reduce glare, light trespass, and sky glow.

2. Sustainable Economic Development Objectives:

- a. Create financial and regulatory incentives for infill development.
- b. Promote or incentivize the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, where possible, as an alternative to new construction.
- c. Use "cradle-to grave" (life cycle) analysis in decision-making for materials and construction techniques.
- d. Maximize the use of a locally-based or home-based workforce, reducing or eliminating the need to commute.
- e. Actively seek ways to minimize the use of toxic manufactured substances.
- f. Meet or exceed clean air standards.
- g. Minimize or reduce use of chemicals and employ proper disposal and recycling mechanisms.
- h. Use agricultural methods that reduce or minimize use of pesticides, herbicides, and manufactured fertilizers.
- i. Use byproducts of other processes or whose wastes can be used as the raw materials for other industrial processes.
- j. Use recycled or by-products of other businesses, minimizing the use of virgin raw materials.
- k. Prevent activities that emit waste or pollutants into the environment.
- l. Use agricultural approaches that build up rather than deplete topsoil, and conserve or minimize water use.
- m. Fulfill local employment and consumer needs without degrading the environment.
- n. Promote financial and social equity in the workplace.
- o. Create vibrant community-based economies with employment opportunities that allow people economic self-determination and environmental health.
- p. Encourage locally-based agriculture, such as community supported agriculture, providing a nearby source of fresh, healthy food for urban and rural population s.

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Wilderness areas should be preserved, and can be an amenity to surrounding development.



More intensive development around transit increases mobility and creates a vibrant and unique place.



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Hybrid vehicles should be encouraged for both personal and public transit use.



Rain barrels are one way to reduce demands on storm water infrastructure and preserve water resources.

3. Sustainable Transportation & Mobility Objectives:

- a. Encourage more intense development oriented around public transit.
- b. Reduce vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled through compact, infill, and mixed use development.
- c. Use alternatives to the single-occupant automobile, including walking, bicycling, and public transit.
- d. Use vehicles powered by renewable fuel sources.
- e. Design local streets that encourage pedestrian and bicycle use and discourage high speed traffic.
- f. Design streets that support/enhance access between neighborhoods and to neighborhood-based commercial developments.
- g. Provide affordable, efficient transportation alternatives for everyone, especially low-income households, elders, and others that cannot or do not own cars.

4. Sustainable Housing & Neighborhood Objectives:

- a. Integrate local neighborhood uses — housing, shops, workplaces, schools, parks, civic facilities — within walking or bicycling distance.
- b. Promote regional and local designs that respect the regional ecosystems and natural functions which support human communities.
- c. Eliminate disproportionate environmental burdens and pollution experienced by historically disadvantaged communities.
- d. Reduce waste materials and promoting recycling by residents.
- e. Encourage compact and clustered residential development, including reduced minimum lot sizes.
- f. Encourage communities and housing developments that are socially cohesive, reduce isolation, and foster community spirit and sharing of resources.
- g. Clean, conserve, and reuse wastewater at the site, neighborhood or community level, reducing the need for large, expensive collection systems and regional processing facilities.

5. Sustainable Energy & Environment Objectives:

- a. Maintain a well-defined "edge" around the community that is permanently protected from development.
- b. Remediate and redevelop brownfield sites and other developed lands that suffer from environmental or other constraints.
- c. Promote regional and local designs that respect the regional ecosystems and natural functions which support human communities.
- d. Eliminate disproportionate environmental burdens and pollution experienced by historically disadvantaged communities.
- e. Use regenerative energy heating and cooling source alternatives to fossil fuels.
- f. Reduce waste materials and promote recycling by residents.



- g. Adopt water conservation measures to minimize environmentally destructive side effects of developing new water sources.
- h. Require responsible stormwater management that reuses and restores the quality of on-site run-off.
- i. Reduce or eliminate impervious paving materials.
- j. Use recycled building materials, helping to minimize the mining of virgin materials.
- k. Recycle building construction waste materials and appropriate deconstruction techniques.
- l. Use regenerative energy alternatives to fossil fuel, or that are working to reduce dependence on fossil fuel.
- m. Do not use, or reduce the use of, cadmium, lead, and other potentially toxic metals and minerals that can accumulate in the biosphere.
- n. Actively seek ways to minimize the use of toxic manufactured substances.
- o. Meet or exceed clean air standards.
- p. Maintain natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation, minimizing disruption of natural systems.
- q. Re-use processed water.
- r. Adopt landscape and park maintenance standards that minimize use of equipment powered by fossil fuels.
- s. Use alternatives to chemical pesticides and herbicides in park and facility maintenance.
- t. Preserve wilderness areas.
- u. Restore damaged natural systems through regenerative design approaches.
- v. Develop responsible alternatives to landfilling of solid waste.
- w. Promote facilities that employ renewable energy sources, or reduce use of fossil fuel for their operations and transport needs.
- x. Promote treatment facilities that remove or destroy pathogens without creating chemically-contaminated byproducts.
- y. Encourage design approaches and regulatory systems that focus on pollution prevention, re-use, and recycling.
- z. Promote innovative sewage and septic treatment that discharges effluent meeting or exceeding federal drinking water standards while minimizing or eliminating the use of chemicals.
- aa. Remove regulatory barriers to composting and graywater reuse systems.
- bb. Clean, conserve, and reuse wastewater at the site, neighborhood or community level, reducing the need for large, expensive collection systems and regional processing facilities.
- cc. Adopt appropriate development and population growth policies linked to carrying capacity of natural systems and community facilities.

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Residential wind and solar energy generators can be sensitively integrated into neighborhood character.



Habitat restoration and preservation can benefit from creative storm water detention and landscaping techniques.



Rain gardens and bioswales are effective ways to manage and clean storm water on-site.

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- dd. Encourage development patterns that respect natural systems such as watersheds and wildlife corridors.
- ee. Preserve and enhance water quality.
- ff. Reduce the use of water.
- gg. Recharge groundwater basins.
- hh. Use flood control and stormwater techniques that enhance and restore natural habitats.
- ii. Prevent wetlands destruction and restore degraded wetlands.
- jj. Encourage the development of renewable energy sources.
- kk. Discourage the use of products that utilize packaging derived from non-renewable, non-degradable resources.
- ll. Promote the recycling of waste materials derived from non-renewable, non-degradable resources.
- mm. Promote the preservation and planting of trees and other vegetation that absorb carbon dioxide and air pollutants.

3.4 IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABILITY

The role of this Comprehensive Plan is to bring the issue of sustainability to the table as a consideration for public policy and regulation. As is the case with other urban characteristics, such as land use, transportation, environment, etc., it is essential that sustainability is seen as an element intrinsic to other aspects of urban development. The previous section includes a comprehensive list of sustainable objectives for Valparaiso. However, in order to provide clear guidance for decision-makers, residents, businesses, and investors, the objectives must be discussed in more detail in order to create a clear and actionable action program. The following recommendations facilitate this outcome.

Community Education Initiative on Sustainability

One of the many challenges in creating a sustainable community is being able to describe what the term means. Many citizens may value the notion of a sustainable community, but few understand their role in helping to create one, more or less the role of their local government, business community, or institutions. The City should establish a Community Education Initiative on Sustainability. This initiative would serve two primary purposes; 1) it will make residents aware of the immediate actions they currently have available to them, and 2) it will make residents aware of larger policies and strategies that should be considered in order to empower a broader cross-section of stakeholders to participate in sustainable behavior. The initiative should focus on the following actions:

1. Integrally involve local residents in setting the vision for and developing plans for the community and region.



2. Establish avenues for meaningful participation in decision-making for all citizens and in particular, historically disadvantaged people.
3. Provide for equitable educational opportunities for all members of the community.
4. Encourage and enable people to use transport other than gasoline-powered vehicles.
5. Educate citizens and public servants about both short- and long-term risks associated with the use and disposal of hazardous materials.
6. Educate citizens on how to reduce levels of consumption and waste generation at the household and community levels.

Adopt a Local and Regional Sustainability Plan

This plan identifies the core objectives to create a sustainable community. However, in order to be properly applied, a more detailed effort should be undertaken to identify specific actions and measurable goals for creating such a community. In partnership with local and regional stakeholders and planning entities, the City should spearhead the drafting of a Local and Regional Sustainability Plan. The plan should address the following:

- What is the Valparaiso Region's definition of sustainability?
- How do our actions at various scales – lot, neighborhood, city, and region – impact us and our neighbors?
- What are our local priorities in creating a sustainable community?
- What data do we have available, and what additional data is needed, to help us assess factors related to future decisions?
- What specific measurable goals or indicators will we establish as benchmarks towards attaining a sustainable city and region?
- What specific actions (i.e. policies, strategies, programs, etc.) are needed to help us attain these goals?
- Who will be responsible for carrying out specific actions?
- How will we adjust our plan over time to respond to attained goals, new technologies, or enhanced knowledge of our environment?

Align Local Partners

Everyone has a role in creating a sustainable city and region. Urban systems are so inherently linked that any shortcoming can compromise the ability to attain long-term stability and health. It is essential that stakeholders at every scale understand their role in advancing this initiative. The following table describes how various stakeholders are involved in attaining a sustainable community. As policies, programs, and projects are considered, each

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stakeholder should be engaged as early as possible in order to maximize the benefit of the individual action and overall sustainability objective.

Stakeholder Category	Role in Promoting Sustainability		
	Policies	Programs	Projects
Citizens	Advocate for sustainable policies and practices within local and regional government	- Take advantage of programs that encourage infill, reuse, and sustainable design - Participate in educational and local programs (i.e. recycling, energy efficiency grants, etc.) at the residential level	- Incorporate sustainable design practices into residential construction - Create and maintain neighborhood-based gardens and open spaces
Local & Regional Government	- Adopt codes that foster sustainable growth and behavior - Modify local building and infrastructure standards to align with sustainable development goals - Incorporate sustainable government administration principles	- Establish local programs (i.e. incentives, tax abatements, etc.) that encourage sustainable decisions by residents, businesses, and institutions - Create partnerships with the development community to foster investment that aligns with the community's vision for sustainability - Provide educational resources about sustainability	- Provide community services and amenities at a local scale that maximizes accessibility and benefit - Use capital improvements as a way of fostering responsible growth - Incorporate sustainable design principles into civic facilities, infrastructure, and services (i.e. LEED-certified government buildings or natural gas transit vehicles) - Where possible, invest in local facilities and infrastructure for recycling, waste management, and alternative energy
Businesses Community	- Advocate for policies that enable sustainable business practices - Incorporate sustainable business management principles into operations and administration	- Establish partnerships with other businesses to create efficiencies with services and resources - Identify opportunities to use business byproducts and resources elsewhere within the community - Partner with local educational institutions to establish curricula that produce a locally relevant work force	- Incorporate sustainable design principles into capital investments - Establish product and service lines that utilize and produce sustainable resources and products
Development Community		Partner with local governments and non-profits to maximize investment in projects that provide the greatest benefit to sustainability	- Incorporate sustainable practices into site development - Incorporate sustainable design principles and building materials into development projects

Stakeholder Category	Role in Promoting Sustainability		
	Policies	Programs	Projects
			• Provide products that are reflective of a sustainable community
Institutions & Non-Profits	• Advocate for policies and codes that advance sustainability at the local and regional scales • Incorporate sustainable business management principles into operations and administration	• Partner with local and regional governments to enhance education on sustainability • Partner with local governments to incentivize sustainable development practices • Provide resources to residents, business owners, and developers who want to understand their role in sustainability	• Incorporate sustainable principles into facilities and capital projects
State and Federal Governments & Agencies	• Align state and federal regulations with local sustainability goals	• Work with local governments to establish criteria for federal or state grants and subsidies • Continue funding programs that encourage sustainable neighborhood development and economic development	• Invest in traditional infrastructure in such a way that encourages sustainable growth • Invest in new types of infrastructure, such as renewable energy, regional and state-wide waste management, and innovative modes of public transportation • Incorporate sustainable design principles into state and federal facilities

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Opportunity

4.1 PURPOSE

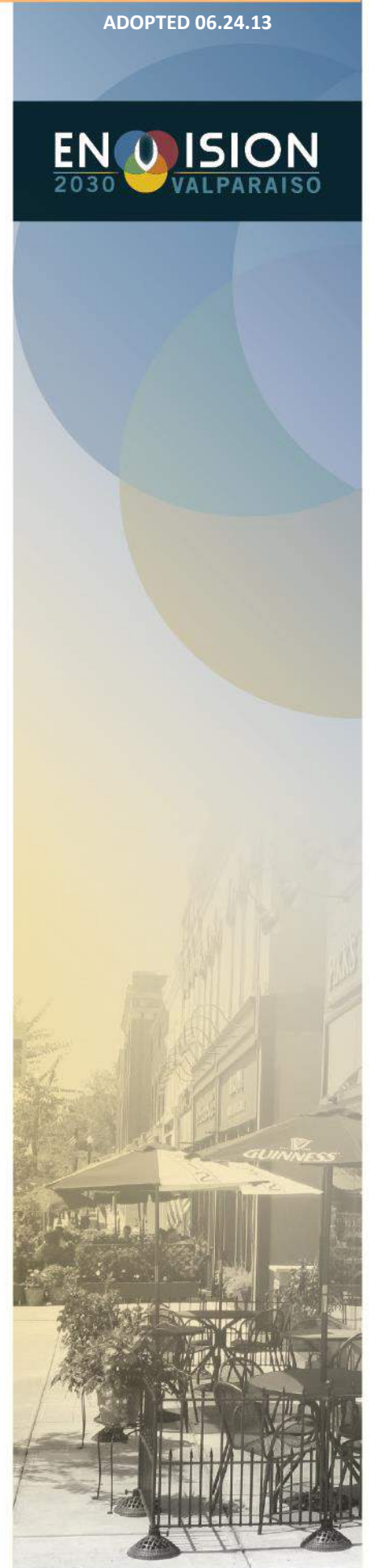
Economic sustainability is critical to Valparaiso's future. The City's economic health will dictate the type and quality of new development and the ability of the City to provide quality public services. It will affect the City's standing as an important economic engine for the Northwest Indiana Region, and impact the City's ability to hold the line on taxes through tax-base growth and by avoiding major new demands for social services.

Economic development however, is as much about quality as it is quantity. It needs to be measured not just by gross tax revenues and jobs growth, but also by job quality and security; the impact on local wages and the environment; and the proportion of locally-owned to absentee-controlled businesses among other factors.

This chapter discusses policies and programs to grow and diversify the City's economy. It includes specific recommendations intended to expand the tax base, promote new capital investment, grow the number of jobs, increase household wealth, and support the formation of new businesses. The recommendations are made with the understanding that Valparaiso's economy is a part of a much larger regional economic system whose overall performance will directly affect the City's own economy.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

Like other fluid systems, such as transportation and energy, Valparaiso's economy is dynamic, interdependent, and constantly in flux. It doesn't adhere to municipal boundaries and is driven by internal as well as external forces. For this reason, the City's economic development policies and programs should be established and implemented within a regional context with the understanding that, "What is good for the Northwest Indiana Region is good for Valparaiso (and vice-versa)." The City's support of the Northwest Indiana Forum – a regional consortium of area business and government leaders – serves as tacit acknowledgment of the importance of a regional economic strategy.



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The Northwest Indiana Region

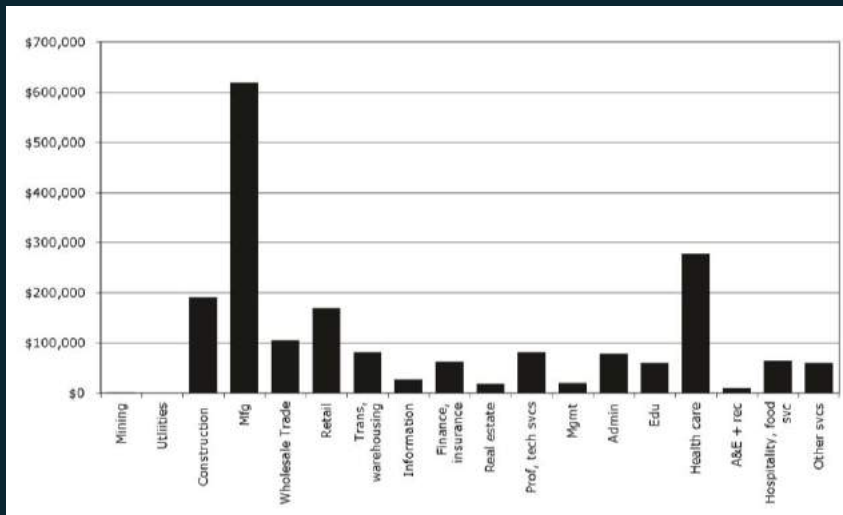
The economy of Northwest Indiana, and by extension Valparaiso, is best understood in relation to the Chicago Metro area (of which Porter and Lake Counties are officially a part) and the “industrial strength” infrastructure that ties the region to the industrial heartland of the Midwest and Northeast (see

Figure 4.1, Regional Context



Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative (U.S. 30 Corridor Master Plan, 2011).

Figure 4.2, Total Annual Payroll by Industry



Source: County Business Patterns, Census Bureau, 2008.

Figure 4.1, Regional Context

Historically, Northwest Indiana has served as the industrial workshop and logistics center for the greater Chicago region, as evidenced by such monolithic industries as U.S. Steel's Gary Works and the many miles of rail and interstate highway that criss-cross the region. Burns Harbor, a Federally designated Foreign Trade Zone, is one of the busiest ports on the Great Lakes.

As shown in Figure 4.2, **Total Annual Payroll by Industry**, as well as Figure 4.3, **Porter County Employment, 2009** and Table 4.1, **Porter County Employment Numbers by Industry, 2009**, major regional employment sectors include manufacturing (including large petrochemical and energy sub-sectors), healthcare, retail, and government. Regional industries rely on the large Metro Chicago labor market, as evidenced by the heavy cross-commuting within the region. Porter County alone experiences a net outward commute of approximately 29,000 trips each working day as displayed in Figure 4.4, *Workers Commuting Into and Out of Porter County*.

The region's industrial image belies the fact that it has long been a major recreational destination for the Upper Midwest featuring the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and more recently, several major casinos. The iconic South Shore Line commuter railroad, with 4.2 million annual riders, symbolizes the

region's long-standing connection to Chicago and to the resort communities of Southwest Michigan.

Other major regional influences include Notre Dame and Purdue Universities; two of the nation's most venerable institutions of higher learning, both with an increasing national profile in the areas of technological innovation and commercialization. Valparaiso University is also consistently ranked as one of the top liberal arts universities in the country.

At the local level, Valparaiso sits at the heart of a three county, Northwest Indiana sub-region consisting of Lake, Porter, and

LaPorte Counties. In 2009, the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) joined with the Northwest Indiana Forum – a regional “super chamber” composed mostly of regional business leaders to form the Northwest Indiana Economic Development District (NWIEDD) – a non-profit economic development entity positioned to compete for Federal grants. This occurred following the 2005 creation of the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA) as a public-private fundraising agency for local projects.

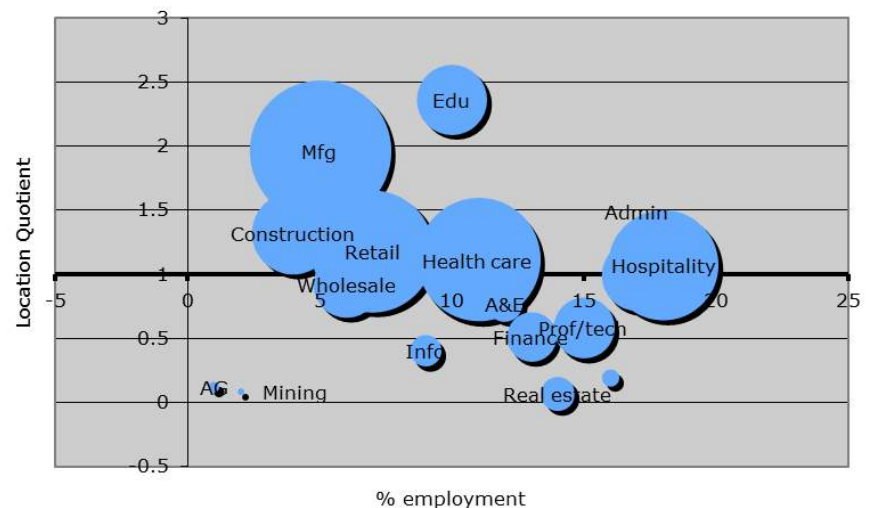
These moves marked a major evolution of the largely advocacy and policy-based economic initiatives of the Forum, into actual resource procurement, business development, and project funding activities.

The purpose of the Forum and the NWIEDD is to elevate the region (as opposed to a myriad of local

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Figure 4.3, Porter County Employment, 2009



Source: STATS Indiana, 2011.

Table 4.1, Porter County Employment Numbers by Industry, 2009

Industry	% of Employment			Location Quotient	
	US	IN	Porter County	IN	Porter County
Agri., forestry, fishing	1.31%	0.73%	0.15%	0.56	0.12
Mining, extraction	0.73%	0.37%	0.06%	0.5	0.08
Utilities	0.64%	0.89%	NA	1.39	NA
Construction	6.81%	7.01%	9.00%	1.03	1.32
Manufacturing	13.51%	25.74%	26.50%	1.9	1.96
Wholesale trade	6.36%	6.72%	5.85%	1.06	0.92
Retail trade	16.64%	17.95%	19.70%	1.08	1.18
Trans, warehousing	4.56%	5.99%	NA	1.31	NA
Information	3.21%	2.19%	1.30%	0.68	0.4
Education services	2.77%	2.68%	6.52%	0.97	2.36
Health care	18.19%	20.01%	20.12%	1.1	1.11
Arts, entertainment, rec	2.20%	2.50%	1.69%	1.14	0.77
Finance, insurance	6.43%	5.53%	3.25%	0.86	0.51
Real estate	2.26%	1.92%	1.54%	0.85	0.068
Prof, technical services	8.56%	5.55%	4.93%	0.65	0.58
Management	2.12%	1.60%	0.40%	0.76	0.19
Administration	8.18%	8.13%	6.68%	6.68	0.99
Accommodation, food services	12.68%	13.62%	16.08%	16.08	1.07

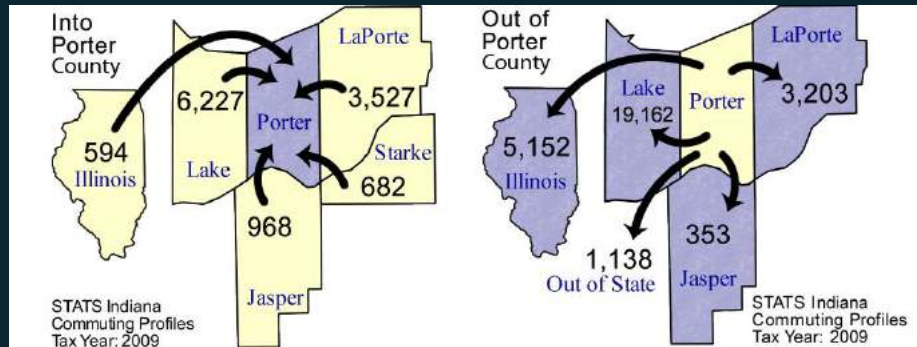
Note: Location quotients measure the relative concentration of industries in a given community relative to comparison areas such as other counties, regions, states, the nation, etc. LQs above 1.0 indicate a concentration of that industry in the subject community. These industries are considered export or “driver” industries that bring new income into the region and have a strong multiplier effect on local employment and wealth creation. In the above graphic, the above-the-line industries of manufacturing, education, retail and construction are all primary industries for Porter County.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2009.

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Figure 4.4, Workers Commuting Into and Out of Porter County



Source: STATS Indiana, 2011.

governments) as the primary global trading unit for Northwest Indiana, and help align local governments, including Valparaiso, around regional opportunities.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

In 2010, the NWIEDD developed a regional comprehensive economic development strategy to identify the region's competitive strengths, as well as economic goals and priorities. The plan recommended that the region focus on the development of several key economic sectors (clusters) based on an assessment of the region's assets including: existing industry concentrations, area educational resources, infrastructure capacity, workforce skills, and global trends.

The clusters include: biomed/biotech (life sciences), defense and security, agribusiness, food processing and technology, information technology and communications, and computer and electronic product manufacturing. (The Northwest Indiana Forum had earlier identified: transportation, distribution and logistics; advanced manufacturing; IT/technology; and professional office as key focus areas.) The plan recommended that regional governments work together to round out the region's already muscular infrastructure with ubiquitous broadband (4-G) service. Aside from "last mile" broadband service, regional CEDS goals that may have specific relevance to Valparaiso include:

"Strategic land assembly"

The goal is to create more "shovel-ready" sites in master-planned business park settings that are appropriately zoned, publicly controlled, and served with necessary infrastructure (i.e. sites that are held, entitled, and served).

Valparaiso has both the need and the opportunity to annex well-located tracts of land for larger business and commercial use. Providing adequate

infrastructure, particularly broadband, will be the key to maximizing the job generating potential of these sites (see **Figure 4.5, Northwest Indiana Broadband Infrastructure Study**).

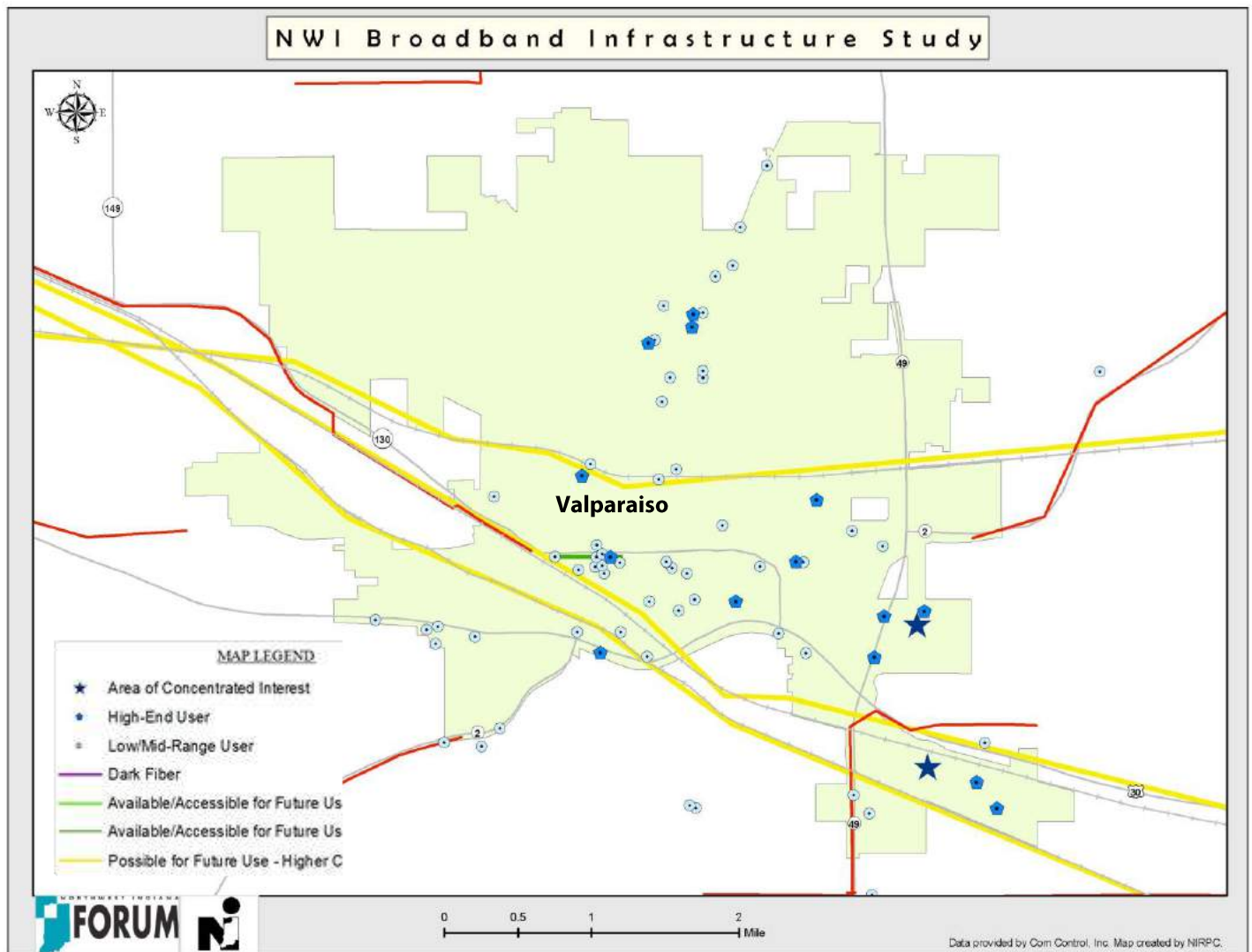
"Partnerships with Higher Education to Provide Customized Job Skills Training"

This has particular relevance to Valparaiso University (VU) and Ivy Tech. The basic premise is to encourage area institutions to support regional/local initiatives by adapting or developing new educational programs alongside regional economic initiatives. An example would be developing an intellectual property or patent law focus at the VU law school to help advance technology commercialization efforts at Purdue and Notre Dame. Another would be developing a supply chain management program at Ivy Tech to help support the regional logistics cluster.

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Figure 4.5, Northwest Indiana Broadband Infrastructure Study



Source: Northwest Indiana Forum (NWIF).

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"Support the development of a regional teaching hospital to support the healthcare industry in Northwest Indiana."

This is an opportunity that may be particularly well suited for Valparaiso given its central location within the region and the proximity to (and potential partnerships with) VU's nursing school and the Porter County Regional Airport.

"Attract technology oriented industries including the creation and expansion of Technology Centers and State Certified Technology Parks."

This is in response to the regional deficiency of such developments as noted in the CEDS plan. Valparaiso has both the opportunity to annex larger tracts of land to develop special technology parks, along with the place-quality and university resources to potentially attract tech-entrepreneurs.

The City's relative proximity to the Purdue Technology Center in Merrillville also makes it a prime location for business accelerator facilities that could potentially attract spin-off companies. Last mile fiber-optic will be key to maximizing this opportunity.

Porter County Regional Airport Zone Development Study

Prepared concurrently with this plan, the purpose of the airport study is to look at economic and land use opportunities and constraints in lands surrounding the airport, including along the SR-49 and U.S. 30 corridors. Preliminary findings of the accompanying market analysis notes that the Porter County area currently lacks large, well-defined industry clusters that could help propel growth in supporting or complementary sectors. It mentions that the lack of direct interstate access and available shovel-ready sites (along with a large supply of currently available, unencumbered sites elsewhere in the county) as being the City's main obstacles to future economic development.

It further states that most future office users will need less than 5,000 square feet of space, and new industrial users under 25,000 square feet. The study further notes that total county employment will increase by under 16,000 jobs within the next 30 years, translating to a land demand of about 400 acres across all sectors (compared to a currently available supply of over 1,000 improved acres county-wide).

The study suggests that a future modern business park surrounding the airport should not be more 75 to 100 acres in size, and meet the State's "shovel ready" criteria (publicly planned and controlled, entitled and serviced with state-of-the-art infrastructure, including high-capacity telecommunications). It should be built with the understanding that such a park is a long-term venture that could take decades to reach build out.



4.3 LOCAL ASSETS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

The City has a rich concentration of assets that are unique within the region. These include, among others: a top-rated university; a large and expandable Porter County Regional Airport; an historic downtown complete with a courthouse square and boutique businesses; quality neighborhoods with good schools; good transportation access including dedicated commuter bus service to Chicago; progressive leadership; and large developable tracts of land that can potentially be annexed to the City. This includes a swath of several hundred acres just east of SR-49 and wrapping around the regional airport.

The main thing that the City lacks according to economic professionals interviewed for this plan include: an adequate supply of development-ready sites (i.e. annexed, entitled, utility-served, available); last-mile broadband service; a diversity of housing choices; area angel/seed/venture capital funds to finance start-up businesses; and civically-engaged corporate and banking communities willing to invest in City and/or regional economic development efforts (this is generally associated with the lack of major locally-based corporations rather than a lack of civic-minded businesses for which the City has many).

Porter County Economic Development Alliance (PCEDA)

The PCEDA is a county-wide organization made up of local government and economic development agency representatives charged with distributing the proceeds of a county economic development income tax (EDIT) to local government projects. The PCEDA manages a multi-million dollar revolving loan fund and maintains a web page featuring available commercial and industrial properties within the County.

Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber is a public/private umbrella organization that serves as an advocate for local business interests. Besides being the City's main marketing arm, it also houses the Valparaiso Economic Development Corporation, who mainly works to facilitate business expansions by: filing tax abatement requests, shepherding projects through the permitting process, and coordinating other available resources in support of new business activity.

Also located at the Chamber is the Valparaiso Redevelopment Authority, a City-chartered organization charged with managing redevelopment activities in the City's tax increment financing (TIF) districts, as displayed in **Figure 4.6, TIF Districts**. The districts' collectively generate \$5 million in annual revenues against \$7 million in total debt. The City has used TIF creatively including the partial funding of the ChicaGo DASH park and ride lot.

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Valparaiso's Regional Role: Northwest Indiana's Talent Center

The many ideas put forth in the CEDS plan, as well as the costs associated with active pursuit of every possible opportunity, underscores the need for the City to think strategically and deliberately about which long-term opportunities it should position itself to pursue. These decisions should be made based on a clear understanding of the City's main assets; (i.e. the things

that distinguish it from other cities in the region) its values; (what things does the City want to encourage or protect) and the quality of place it wants to achieve or maintain (its livability and image).

In other words, the City's economic agenda can't just be a "more is always better" proposition. It needs to be consistent with other elements of the plan in terms of land use, environmental quality, transportation efficiency, and optimizing demands on public services.

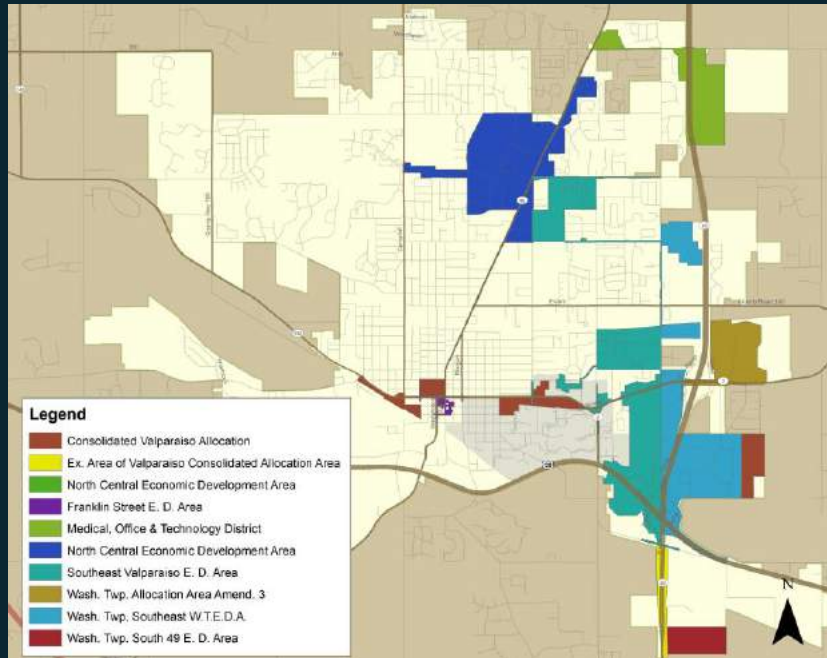
The City's extraordinary place-quality typified by its historic neighborhoods and thriving Downtown, is its number one asset. It, more than the City's regional location, infrastructure capacity, land and labor costs, or taxing and regulatory climate is what sets it apart from other communities in Northwest Indiana. This

place-quality is what will allow it to take advantage of fundamentally different opportunities, particularly in the areas of high-value production, major professional services, and technology entrepreneurship, than most of its neighbors. It is also the factor most at risk from a "take all comers" approach to economic development.

The City's main competitive advantage therefore, is as a regional talent center - a City that builds and attracts new businesses by making itself attractive to business leaders and talented employees who'll want to live there first and foremost. This is a page out of the "Creative Class" theory that postulates that quality jobs follow people, rather than the other way around.

Although this strategy has been largely overplayed throughout the U.S. (not every city is in a position to attract talent), Valparaiso combines a rich set of local assets (university, postcard downtown, a nascent arts scene, a high number of locally-owned artisanal businesses, proximity to major natural assets) all within the close orbit of a major international city - Chicago.

Figure 4.6, TIF Districts



Source: City of Valparaiso, Kendig Keast Collaborative, 2011.



The City is also close to other regional economic engines, such as Purdue, Notre Dame, and Indiana Universities; all with growing reputations as important centers of innovation and technology commercialization. Finally, the City's enviable position as both a college town and seat of government gives it tremendous advantages compared to its neighbors in terms of infusing the City with regular activities and a stable base of employment.

Valparaiso's Niche Opportunities

Using the regional CEDS plan as a baseline, the region's competitive advantage industries best suited to Valparaiso would appear to be clean, technology-based, high-value industries such as: medical and bio-medical/pharmaceuticals; advanced (high value-added) manufacturing; food technology; information technology, and major professional services (i.e. legal, medical, financial).

Industries not particularly well suited for the City are those that have high externalities that could impinge on the City's place-quality. These include major distribution and logistics; heavy manufacturing¹, and regional retail.

These candidate sectors align closely with the Mayor Costas' 2004 Strategic Plan that calls for a careful, targeted approach to economic growth focusing mainly on clean, technology-based industries and professional services.

State Road (SR) 49 and U.S. 30 Corridors

The SR-49 corridor is where many of the earlier mentioned opportunities are poised to play out. The east side of the corridor contains several hundred buildable acres with good visibility and nearby commercial services. The corridor frontage should be reserved for Class A office buildings or major medical use in a planned business park setting whereas interior sites can include a greater mix of light, clean production uses especially closer to the airport.

The City has wisely decided not to position itself for larger logistics operations because of their heavy transportation and infrastructure impacts and relatively low number of jobs. Smaller, high value-added production combined with ancillary warehousing however, could be a fit nearer to the airport especially along the east end of the U.S. 30 corridor and further south toward the fairgrounds.

¹ *Heavy manufacturing* is defined as the manufacture or compounding process of raw materials. These activities or processes would necessitate the storage of large volumes of highly flammable, toxic matter or explosive materials needed for the manufacturing process. These activities may involve outdoor operations as part of their manufacturing process. [Davidson, Michael and Fay Dolnick (1999). *A Glossary of Zoning, Development, and Planning Terms*. American Planning Association. Pg. 145.]

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Technology Park

The same attributes that allow Valparaiso to lay claim to being a regional talent center, also make it a potential candidate for a new technology park similar to that of the current technology park (see **Figure 4.7, Technology Park**). This opportunity could become very real should the City land a new research hospital, but also comes by virtue of the many technology generators already in the region and the stated shortage of such parks as noted in the regional CEDS plan. Such a park would be best suited either along the interior part of SR-49 corridor north of the airport or along the western end of U.S. 30. In either case, high-capacity fiber-optic and reliable low-cost energy will be key.

Figure 4.7, Technology Park



It should be noted however, that most technology parks differ significantly from standard (i.e. corporate) business parks in terms of preferred location, building sizes, and amenity/service needs. Besides having higher capacity utility/service requirements, the buildings usually need greater floor-load capacities, loading docks, wet/dry lab spaces, and clean rooms.

Tech parks also tend to be in lower, horizontal, expandable buildings grouped in stand-alone campus-like settings and may include an on-site business incubator, meeting spaces, and other common recreational amenities that facilitate tenant interaction and business-to-business collaboration. Enhanced services and amenity-rich common spaces are generally more important than highway visibility or lush office suites.

The City should consult state economic development officials as well as area brokers and developers about the potential for a tech-park in Valparaiso and possibly conduct a feasibility study. If deemed feasible, a site should be chosen that best meets the above criteria and which can be patiently built out in phases over a period of years.

Schools and Neighborhoods

Making the most of its opportunities as a talent-magnet will require that the City work hard to protect its existing attraction factors and work to improve others. Perhaps the most important of these is the City's schools. It is difficult to become a talent magnet with just an average or merely "good" school system. It needs to be exceptional; particularly, if the City is going to attract high earning, young 30-40-something, family-oriented professionals (the segment of the workforce most likely attracted to a Valpo-type setting).

Improving the selection and variety of housing is another must. The City needs to offer a range of quality housing options, formats and price ranges, including condos and quality apartments, if it hopes to attract or retain major



segments of the talent workforce including young graduates, empty-nesters, and highly skilled foreign-born professionals.

Working to further improve the City's recreational offerings including bike paths, parks, public events, entertainment choices, and so-called "third place" businesses where people can meet and interact, should also continue to be a major focus for the City. This is also a critical piece of an entrepreneurship strategy designed to link would-be business owners with technical and financial assistance to start new businesses.

Downtown

Downtown Valparaiso is already one of the healthiest small-city downtowns in the entire Midwest. Still, there are things that the City can do to make it even more actively used throughout the week and year. Facilitating the active use of upper-floor space, particularly for offices and housing, is critical for downtown to develop an "after 5:00 PM" life.

Common problems in achieving upper-floor restoration however, are usually twofold: financial feasibility (i.e. the amortized restoration costs often exceed rent revenues), and lack of interest among property owners who no longer need to service a mortgage on their property.

Overcoming this inertia will require that the City work creatively with interested property owners to help facilitate major renovations that leverage multiple resources. Possible tools at the City's disposal includes helping expand credit options to help drive down financing costs, such as low interest revolving loan funds and loan guarantees, as well as helping property owners tap into various tax credit programs.

In other cases, the City may work with potentially interested property owners to explore sub-dividing the ownership of multi-story buildings into separate condo ownership structures; this, with a view to marketing the upper units to condo developers including office condos. This could potentially alleviate the need of the original owners to make needed exterior repairs while allowing them to monetize their underused space.

College Town vs. "UniverCity"

Valparaiso University's potential to help grow the local economy goes well beyond providing markets for youth-oriented businesses or dozens of university jobs. Instead, it is directly related to the City's ability to attract and retain talent.

VU is not currently a major player in the world of technology commercialization, but it is (along with Ivy Tech) a major developer of skilled workers. Working with regional businesses to find internship/externship opportunities for VU students, as well as working to improve the social and

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living environment for faculty and young graduates – including the school's growing contingent of foreign students - is key to retaining (or luring back) this talent within (to) the region.

Exploring ways for the university to support regional economic development initiatives, such as through customized, needs-based educational curricula, and as a conduit to International business through its growing relationship with foreign universities, are other ways to maximize its role as an economic force within the City and region.

Chicago Connection

Finally, a viable talent attraction strategy will require that the City work to reinforce its connection to Chicago both in physical and virtual realms. This involves working to further improve transit connections to Chicago via the Chicago DASH and ultimately commuter rail.

It also involves the City inserting itself into Chicago's trade, financing and marketing circles to get Valparaiso placed firmly on the larger City's radar. Valparaiso should be marketed as an easy and affordable choice for Chicago commuters and service and technology companies that don't absolutely need to be in the heart of the metropolitan area. In essence, Valparaiso should be branded as Chicago's premier "Main Street" suburb for mobile professionals and high-value service/production companies seeking a small city lifestyle but within easy reach of the big city.

4.4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Energize the entrepreneurial environment in Valparaiso.

Policies:

- 4.a. Encourage the development/renovation of flex-space buildings, live-work units, office condos and collaborative co-working environments.
- 4.b. Explore/promote the development of a multi-tenant artisan incubator and merchandising center.
- 4.c. Continue to burnish the City's business-friendly reputation including a single-point-of contact/one-stop approach to business assistance services and permitting.
- 4.d. Celebrate local success stories by implementing an annual mayor's "business of the year", and "start-up of the year" awards.
- 4.e. Encourage the development of entrepreneurship programs in K-12 schools.
- 4.f. Work with local media to educate area consumers about the advantages of supporting locally owned businesses through PSAs and special news features.

- 4.g. Implement an official “local sourcing” directive favoring local and regional suppliers in City procurement of supplies and services.

Actions:

- 4.1. Work with area and downtown businesses to launch a “buy local” (“V”-rated”) campaign.
- 4.2. Facilitate the creation of an entrepreneurs/mentors network that hosts multiple events throughout the year.
- 4.3. Establish a City revolving loan (gap) fund or loan guarantee program for new or expanding businesses. Enlist local banks to contribute both capital and management expertise. Identify permanent capitalization sources (i.e. foundations, pooled bank funds, grants, general funds, EDIT funds, Porter Hospital sales proceeds, etc.) The fund may be set up as a relending program capitalized through the Porter County revolving loan program but geared toward local companies that may not otherwise qualify for the County program.
- 4.4. Enlist City, business, and education leaders to lead development efforts for an angel fund for potential high-growth businesses. Funders may include area foundations and wealthy individuals.
- 4.5. Mobilize the VU business school and Ivy Tech in support of local entrepreneurship. Encourage program expansion and improved visibility/accessibility of entrepreneurship programs. Encourage their sponsorship of regular business plan competitions and publicly accessible technical assistance programs. Encourage VU to host an SBA-sponsored Small Business Development Center.
- 4.6. Use multiple avenues to promote the City’s entrepreneurship programs including a dedicated web portal, social media, and young professionals groups.

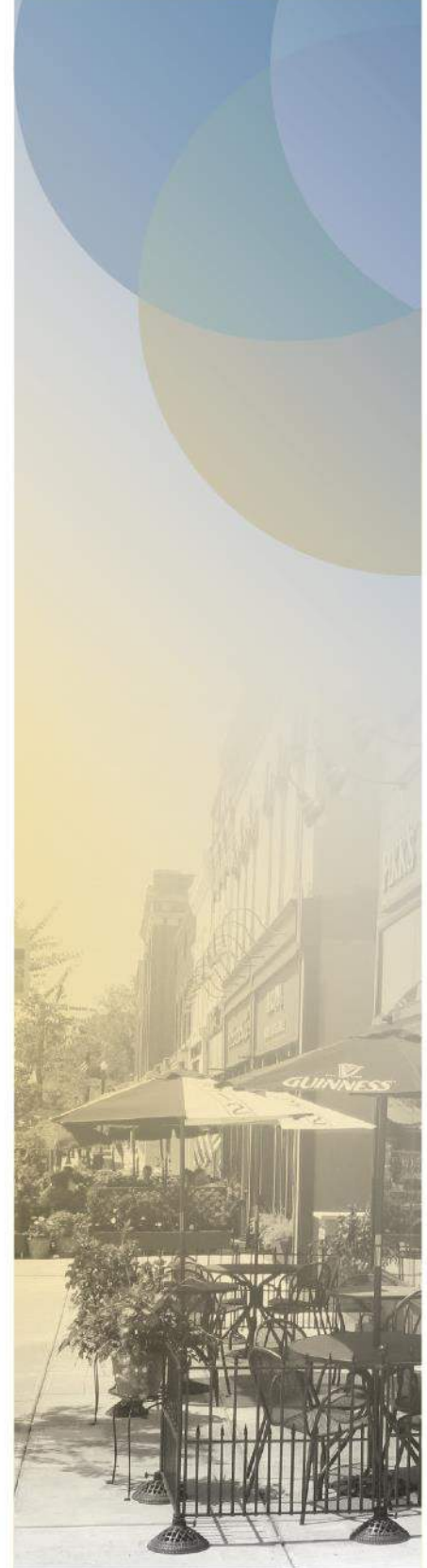
Expand the physical infrastructure to support economic development

Policies:

- 4.h. Pursue aggressive annexation of prime commercial and industrial sites near existing major infrastructure particularly in the SR-49 and U.S. 30 corridors and around the airport.
- 4.i. Invoke extra-territorial planning authority and pre-annexation agreements and waivers of remonstrance to control strategic sites that may be at risk of being marginally developed.
- 4.j. Look for ways to redevelop/reuse existing underused commercial and industrial sites over continuous annexation.
- 4.k. Continue to use TIF creatively to maximize redevelopment opportunities.
- 4.l. Work to reconcile various city boards (school, utilities, etc.) to the cause of economic development.

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- 4.m. Work with regional organizations and service-providers to extend high capacity fiber-optic throughout the region and “last-mile” service in the City.
- 4.n. Strive to develop a state certified, institutionally supported technology park in the City.

Actions:

- 4.7. Extend/expand/reinstitute Downtown’s wireless cloud.
- 4.8. Work with County and airport officials to maximize the economic development potential of the Porter County Regional Airport and environs (including possible designation as a foreign trade zone).
- 4.9. Continue “good faith” outreach to owners of vacant and underused property to facilitate reuse and redevelopment.
- 4.10. Pursue strategic land assembly and opportunistic acquisition of key sites with unusual development potential. Create a City landbank.
- 4.11. Seek state and EPA site assessment/remediation grants for suspected brownfield sites and encourage their enrollment in voluntary cleanup programs.
- 4.12. Align capital improvements plan to the annexation and land planning strategy.
- 4.13. Constantly refresh the City’s web presence including frequently updated information on available properties; economic development/workforce development programs; demographic, housing/labor market information and utility rates. Make sure the City site is linked to regional economic development sites.

Maximize the City’s ability to attract top quality companies and jobs.

Policies:

- 4.o. Adopt a selective approach to the types of companies/industries that the City will actively assist or recruit. Focus on family-supporting jobs that put minimal strain on city resources and the environment. Target selected sectors.
- 4.p. Use zoning, pre-annexation agreements and possible City purchase, to reserve key sites for their highest and best use.
- 4.q. Place specific eligibility requirements on the use of city incentives (such as tax abatements, revolving loan funds, TIF-assisted infrastructure). These should include minimum capital investment requirements, job number/quality thresholds, and target industry preferences.
- 4.r. Continue to enhance the City’s overall place-quality: factors such as quality schools and neighborhoods, parks/trails, vibrant downtown and



campus scenes, and important “global economy” infrastructure such as 4G+ telecommunications, high capacity broadband and regional transit.

Position the City for clean, high wage/high growth sectors by carefully leveraging local assets.

Policies:

- 4.s. Look to take a leadership role in regional economic development policy development and implementation. Take advantage of opportunities to reinforce the City’s progressive reputation in the region.
- 4.t. Look for opportunities to involve the City, VU, and area businesses in intergovernmental and inter-institutional partnerships.
- 4.u. Attempt to make the most of VU’s growing presence in China by initiating more sister-city relationships and trade delegations, and helping place foreign-born graduates.
- 4.v. Explore different avenues to capitalize on the City’s proximity to Chicago including direct marketing, economic development networking, and enhanced transit connections.

Actions:

- 4.14. Encourage VU and Ivy Tech to align educational programming more closely around emerging regional economic specializations; particularly in targeted technology and medical spheres. Encourage VU partnerships with regional research institutions especially in the areas of patent law and business planning/entrepreneurship training and supply-chain management.
- 4.15. Assist with organizing industry networks around targeted sectors.
- 4.16. Facilitate connections between companies and workforce development agencies toward customized, demand-driven skills training.
- 4.17. Protect opportunities for modern office and technology parks on the 49 corridor through aggressive exercise of extra-territorial control and annexation; careful land regulations; facilitated land assembly/transfer; extension of high capacity fiber-optic and active developer/institution recruitment.

Continuously work to improve the City’s overall business climate.

Policies:

- 4.w. Continue regular engagement in regional economic initiatives.
- 4.x. Help facilitate partnerships between City and regional entities around entrepreneurship development, university/business partnerships, workforce development etc.

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4.y. Work to keep taxes, regulations and utility costs in-line with regional averages.

Actions:

- 4.18. Conduct regular surveys and roundtable discussions with local businesses to gauge their overall satisfaction with the City and to troubleshoot problems.
- 4.19. Conduct periodic audits of the City's codes to assure continued relevancy, effectiveness and user-friendliness.
- 4.20. Create a one-stop business resource center at the Chamber of Commerce for sole-source permitting and business assistance information.
- 4.21. Periodically assess service delivery effectiveness including how economic development services are organized, coordinated and packaged both internally and regionally.



Mobility

5.1 INTRODUCTION

A successful, thriving community depends, in part, on a well-planned transportation system. The system must address mobility needs at all levels, from the passer-by or cross-town traveler seeking a direct and uncongested route, to a resident focused on safe streets and convenient access to nearby, routine destinations. Options are essential, both in terms of ways to move around the city (via car or by transit, bike, or on foot) and multiple, alternative paths to get places.

The purpose of this chapter is to ensure orderly development, extension, and improvement of Valparaiso's transportation system, both within the corporate limits and throughout the future growth areas. The approach is "multi-modal" by considering not only facilities for automobiles but other modes of transportation as well, such as buses, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, public transit, and freight movement. The scope ranges from local neighborhood streets to local and major collectors and minor and principal arterial roadways, plus linkages to the region, state, and nation through regional expressways, county and state highways, and interstates, as well as air transport and the potential for commuter rail in the future.

This chapter also works hand-in-hand with *Chapter, 2, Land Use and Community Character*, by highlighting the need to establish and protect the distinct character of particular districts, neighborhoods, and corridors. From a transportation perspective, this may be accomplished through roadway design that is sensitive to its natural and built surroundings, as well as through a commitment to "complete streets" (see insert) improvements in areas where walking, biking, and/or transit uses are as much or more important than getting places by car. Options should apply not only in terms of offering different modes of transportation, but also multiple travel routes and choices on the roadway system. Providing improved mobility also requires promotion and regulation of compact development patterns that encourage alternative land use patterns and thus, shorter trip lengths and reduced vehicle miles of travel (i.e., mixed use developments and compatible commercial uses integrated within or in close proximity to neighborhoods).

Complete streets (sometimes referred to as livable streets) are roadways that are designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transport users of all ages and abilities. Official policies that encourage or require such accommodation are known as complete streets policies. The often referenced reasons for complete streets is because they claim to improve safety, lower transportation costs, provide alternatives to private cars, encourage health through walking and biking, create a sense of place, improve social interaction, and generally improve adjacent property values.

Source: Wikipedia



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The transportation system has a strong influence on the type and quality of growth and should, therefore, be closely coordinated with the community's land use goals and policies for achieving improved community character.

City staff, a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and significant cross-sections of citizens, stakeholders, and local officials participated in kick-off meetings in September 2011. In November 2011, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee participated in thoroughfare planning exercise at which time they provided input as to existing mobility constraints and both proposed and needed roadway extensions, new alignments, and other street and intersection improvements. These engagement processes revealed a number of key transportation issues, which are incorporated in this chapter. During this exercise, the group also highlighted the City's continuing commitment to making intersection improvements, including the installation of roundabouts.

5.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

Valparaiso's transportation system is unique in many ways. Among them is that the community is within a one hour drive to the Chicago metropolitan area (third largest in the U.S.); it is proximate to both I-80 (connecting eastward to Toledo and Cleveland, OH and New York, NY and West to Omaha, NE; Denver, CO; Salt Lake City, UT; Reno, NV; and Sacramento and San Francisco, CA) and I-65 (extending north to its intersection with I-80/I-94 and south through Indianapolis, IN; Louisville, KY; Nashville, TN; Birmingham and Montgomery, AL; to Mobile, AL); and, as a University community, it attracts significant external traffic for sporting and other special events and generates a higher propensity for non-vehicular trips due to student trip movements. For these reasons, existing conditions that warrant consideration in Valparaiso's mobility planning include those outlined below.

Regional Roadway System

Valparaiso is situated along U.S. 30 and SR-49, which provide good east-west and north-south intrastate access. These roadways connect to major freeway and highway connections to the north (I-80/I-94), and west (I-65). These area roadways provide efficient, convenient access to the larger cities and markets throughout Indiana, Illinois, and the surrounding states.

While access to the south is currently limited and may warrant improvement in the future, the lack of major destinations in that direction renders this issue a low priority until the location of the Illiana Expressway is finalized, for which the general location is displayed in **Figure 5.1, Illiana Expressway**. At that point, the City should consider amending this chapter and the Official Intermodal Transportation Plan (hereinafter referred to as the Thoroughfare Plan) to determine the means of connecting its street system to the new expressway.



The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee invested countless hours in their significant contributions to this Plan and its policies and directions.

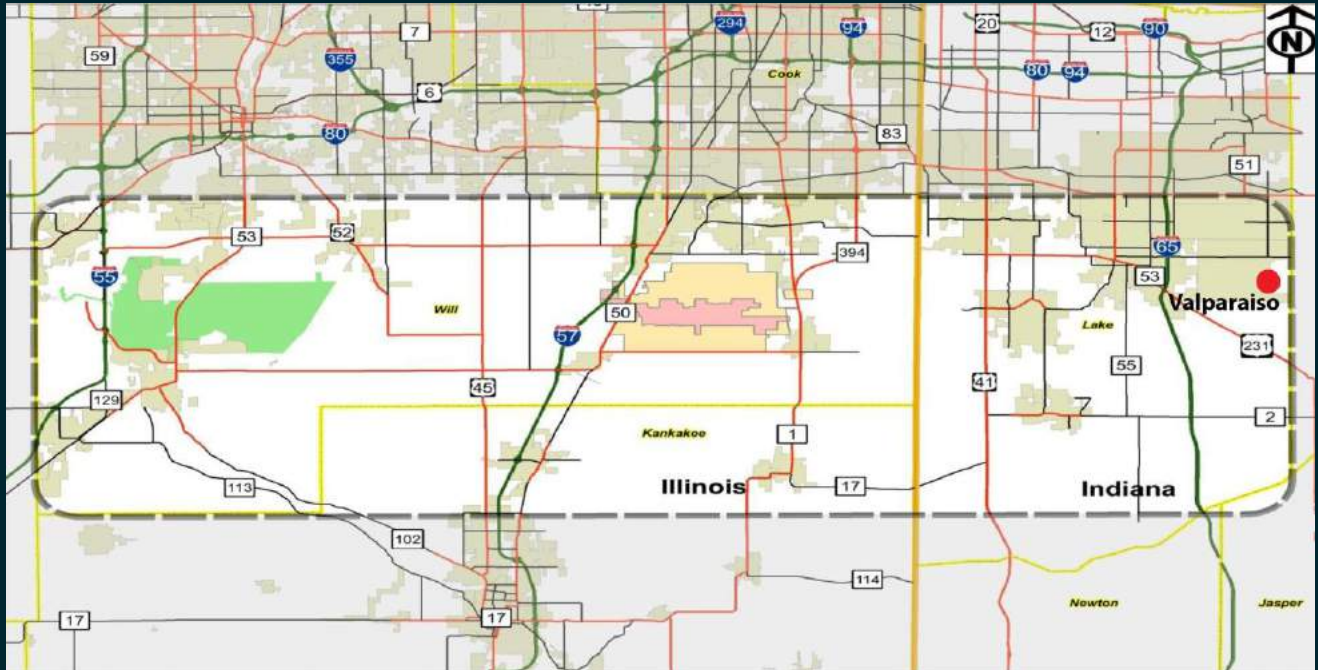


There are several major roads that traverse the City and carry pass-through traffic. The community is highly accessible from all directions. U.S. 30 and the combined SR-130/SR-2 provide good east-west connectivity. These state

routes function as a bypass, whereas U.S. 30 is a “business” roadway, conveying traffic through the southern part of Valparaiso. SR-2 provides access from the south to U.S. 30. Lincolnway / SR-130 is a highly travelled east-west corridor that carries traffic through Downtown and the heart of Valparaiso.

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Figure 5.1, Illiana Expressway



In 2010, legislation was signed to bring Indiana and Illinois together to build the Illiana Expressway, connecting I-55 from south of Joliet to I-65 near Lowell, Ind. The Illiana Expressway will connect drivers on I-55 in Western Will County to I-65 in Lake County, IN. In addition, the Illiana Expressway will serve as an alternate route for motorists traveling the I-90/94 corridor.

Source: Illinois Department of Transportation

SR-49 is an improved four-lane divided roadway from U.S. 30 north to I-94. To the south, it transitions to a two-lane rural highway. The former route of Old SR-49 is known as Calumet Avenue, which is fronted by a significant portion of the City’s older commercial development. There is a lack of east-west mobility in the northern half of the City. On the western side there is also a need to improve north-south connectivity between U.S. 30 and West Lincolnway/SR-130, which should link to Downtown and serve as a new gateway corridor entering the community from the northwest.

Other opportunities for gateways are where SR-2 and U.S. 30 intersect with SR-49. Eventually, the City hopes to coordinate efforts to bring commuter rail



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to the City on the western end near Lincolnway/SR-130, providing another opportunity for a gateway in the area known as “Central Place”.

Current Thoroughfare Plan

The City’s Official Thoroughfare Plan was adopted in 2003 with an associated Intermodal Transportation Plan included as a chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. The plan identifies two functional classes of roadways, including collectors and arterials. Collectors are the roadways that connect local roads to the larger arterial street network. Good examples of collector roads are Harrison Boulevard, Evans Avenue, Glendale Boulevard, and within the planning area, Tower Road through Aberdeen. Each of these collectors is fed by the local residential streets.

The arterial roadway classification is designed and intended to carry the highest volumes of local traffic within and through the community. These facilities have greater rights-of-way, are designed with four or five lane cross-sections, and carry traffic longer distances. Examples of arterial roadways are Lincolnway/SR-130, Vale Park Road, Calumet Avenue, Campbell Street, and Silhavy Road.

The 2003 plan also included a third designation, identifying unimproved gaps in the Thoroughfare Plan. These included:

- A northern extension of Silhavy Road from its current termination at Burlington Beach Road, curving back west to tie into Calumet Avenue;
- Two connections of Vale Park Road – one between Froberg Road and Campbell Street and a second completed connection between Campbell Street and Valparaiso Street;
- A continuation of Campbell Street south of Lincolnway/SR-130;
- A completed extension of Chicago Street east of Silhavy Road; and
- Extensions of both Eisenhower Avenue and McCord Road from their current termini to Calumet Avenue.

The Official Thoroughfare Plan follows typical roadway planning conventions by focusing on collectors and arterials. However, it appears to oversimplify the classifications, and their cross sections do not distinguish between different character areas. For example, Lincolnway/SR-130, U.S. 30, SR-49, and Burlington Beach Road are all shown as arterials, implying that they should all be built to the same standard. Yet, each of these roadways is in its own unique context, and traverses areas of different character. Roads like E. Lincolnway/SR-130 (particularly between S. Campbell Street and Michigan Street) are urban in character while the remaining sections of Lincolnway/SR-



130 and other arterial roadways have an auto-urban character. Still others like Burlington Beach Road and W. Harrison Boulevard are of suburban character. All of the major roadways that have a relatively narrow right-of-way eventually transition to a rural character as they leave the City.

These different character types should be reflected on the plan, each with corresponding cross-sections that distinguish their character. These cross-sections do not affect the functional design of these roadways. Rather, the differences in cross-section relate to the width of rights-of-way, number and width of lanes, width and treatment of parkways and medians, accommodation of pedestrians and bicycles, and other streetscape amenities. Also affecting the character of these areas is the site and building design on the abutting property, which is addressed by the character designations of the Future Land Use and Character Plan (refer to *Chapter 2, Land Use and Character*).

Growth Impacts

Valparaiso's steady population growth has impacted its street system as people travel to and from work, school, shopping, and other destinations. As a result, the service levels of some roads has deteriorated or become more congested and less safe. The City has responded with capital improvements aimed at increasing roadway capacity and improving intersections, including strategies for traffic calming and aesthetic enhancements, such as the roundabouts. The policies guiding the direction of future growth are outlined in *Chapter 7, Growth Capacity*.

Airport

The Porter County Regional Airport is managed by a six member Porter County Regional Airport Authority Board and an Airport Director. This is the second largest and busiest airports in terms of Fixed Based Aircraft in the State of Indiana. It serves local general aviation needs, as well as corporate air service. The airport has two runways – an east-west runway that is 7,000 feet long and a north-south runway that is 4,000 feet long. There are ongoing plans for the airport to expand its facilities and services. The Airport Authority is partnering with the City and Porter County to study the area around the airport in order to ensure that development is appropriate and will complement the long-term plan for airport operations. The Airport Zone Development Plan It is anticipated that the focus will be on office and light industry uses that will support, and will be supported by, airport services. This planning effort is further supported by the City's desire for additional vacant and shovel-ready land to attract and accommodate its target industries.

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Transit – Bus Service

The City offers bus service around Valparaiso and to the South Shore commuter train, as reflected by **Figure 5.2, Routes of the V-Line**. There are five routes, three of which provide access to Valparaiso University. The green and brown lines provide access to Downtown and the business hubs located on Silhavy Road and Porter's Vale Shopping Center. The yellow line provides access to the shopping strip along Calumet Avenue. The green, yellow, and red lines provide connections to residential areas. The orange line is a direct connection to the South Shore train. All lines run during varying times, depending on ridership needs.

Figure 5.2 Routes of the V-Line



Source: <http://www.ci.valparaiso.in.us/index.aspx?nid=499>

The City also provides bus service to and from Chicago. Termed “ChicaGo Dash”, the service runs out of the Valpo Village Station, located in the Central Place area just off Lincolnway/SR-130 adjacent to Downtown. The line connects with three areas in Chicago – one at North Michigan Avenue/West Randolph Street and another at West Wacker/North LaSalle Street. Morning drop-off and evening pick-up occur at South Franklin / Van Buren.

Transit – Commuter Rail

The South Shore commuter rail, owned and operated by the Northern Indiana Commuter Transit District (NICTD), provides service from a station in Dune Park to four separate locations in downtown Chicago. It makes six stops before reaching the outer edges of Chicago and within Chicago, the line makes four additional stops before reaching the Millennium Park station in Chicago.

As discussed in *Chapter 3, Sustainability*, the City has considered its own commuter rail connection to Chicago. The train depot location on Campbell Street just south of Lincolnway / SR-130 was chosen as the ChicaGoDash station in anticipation of a commuter train station as well. Recent studies have shown that, at this time, ridership would be too low to justify initiating the program. However, the concept warrants

revisiting in the future to improve commuter access to and from Chicago and thus, aid the City to continue its healthy, steady pace of growth.

Ongoing Improvements

The City has recently installed roundabouts at Lincolnway / SR-130 and Sturdy Road, Cumberland Drive and Cumberland Crossing Drive, and at



Vale Park Road and Silhavy Road. There are also plans to install roundabouts at Five Points. In addition, a new sidewalk connection was installed along Lincolnway / SR-130, extending from the edge of Downtown east to Garfield Avenue toward Valparaiso University. Other improvements may be made by the Redevelopment Commission who has jurisdiction within several different Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts to make roadway improvements in and around each district.

Potential New Traffic Generators

There are several new businesses and developments that will alter traffic patterns and create increased demands on local and regional infrastructure. These include:

- The construction of the new Porter Hospital at the intersection of U.S. 6 and SR-49 will bring additional traffic to the area. The project is also sparking interest in the area from other related and complimentary health care service providers. Support services, such as hotels and restaurants, are likely to be constructed along both major roadways.
- The expansion of Valparaiso University by a projected 50 percent (from the current enrollment of 4,000 to 6,000 students) within the next five years will increase automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic on and around the campus, as well as increased traffic for University sponsored events and campus activities.
- There will soon be renewed efforts to site uses that further the City's economic development goals near the Porter County Regional Airport as the City partners with the Airport Authority, Porter County, and other entities to implement the Airport Zone Master Plan.

Bikeways / Trails

Valparaiso is known by its citizens to have a relatively strong system of bikeways and trails. The system includes off-street paths that traverse natural areas, as well as sidewalks within street rights-of-way, bike lanes, and bike routes. The City recently supplemented its adopted Pathways and Greenways Master Plan, which was intended to define its goals of enhancing the existing bikeways and trails system.

5.3 CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS / "COMPLETE STREETS"

This plan proposes the use of context sensitive solutions (CSS) to meet the City's transportation needs while at the same time achieving its community character objectives. This is a concept that is promoted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). It is a way of planning and building a transportation system that balances the many needs of diverse stakeholders and offers flexibility in

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 The logo for ENOVISION 2030 VALPARAISO. It features the word "ENOVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font, with a stylized "O" that is a circle containing a smaller circle. Below "ENOVISION" is the year "2030" and the word "VALPARAISO".


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Figure 5.3, Transforming to a “Complete Street”



Source: Photographic simulations by Urban Advantage



the application of design features and guidelines, resulting in facilities that are safe and effective for all users regardless of the mode of travel they choose. The basic principles of CSS include:

- Balance safety, mobility, community, and environmental goals in all projects;
- Involve the public and stakeholders early and continuously throughout the planning and project development processes;
- Use an interdisciplinary team (civil engineers, planners, architects, and landscape architects) tailored to project needs;
- Address all modes of travel;
- Apply flexibility inherent in design standards; and
- Incorporate aesthetics as an integral part of good design.¹

The use of CSS in transportation planning can help ensure projects are responsive to the community’s transportation needs, values, and vision. It is intended to allow projects to move from design to construction faster and with less objection. The ultimate goal is to produce the most livable street environments possible. Therefore, it is closely tied with the concept of “complete streets”, contextual design, as well as community character. An example of the eventual transformation that may occur using CSS is shown by **Figure 5.3, Transforming to a “Complete Street”**.

This plan includes long-range planning for the City’s transportation system, in which CSS facilitates the planning of a transportation network integrated with the Future Land Use and Character Plan (refer to *Chapter 2, Land Use and Community Character*). This approach allows the City to improve existing roadways, and to design new roadways as “complete streets” in specifically chosen locations over time. This is a concept whereby alternative modes of transportation are accommodated on a roadway. However, it is not just the roadway itself that defines the complete street – it also includes the buildings and sites that front it. The complete street does not have a line separating public right-of-way and private property. Rather, it includes semi-public (such as a bike lane) and semi-private (such as a front porch on a home) areas. CSS defines the mobility needs of each of the system users. The transportation network should ensure preservation of rights-of-way needed for the ultimate thoroughfare width based on its long-term need. The spacing of thoroughfares should be standardized and support the strategies of the plan. For example, arterials spaced as far as one-mile apart may carry the

¹ *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities*, ITE: 2006

anticipated volume of traffic, but will typically require four lanes, which may be inappropriate in some contexts, such as Downtown or the surrounding rural areas. Closer spacing of arterials could carry the same volume of traffic and reduce the number of lanes. Likewise, collectors spaced closer together (one-eighth mile) result in shorter block lengths and promote greater pedestrian and bicycling activities. Local streets should connect as frequently as practical to the collector network to keep block lengths short and to promote a more even distribution of traffic.

In general, context sensitive solutions are focused on streets that play the most significant roles in the local transportation network and that offer the greatest multi-modal opportunities – arterials and collectors. While they too, may benefit from the integration of complete street improvements, the application of CSS is less practical along primary mobility routes and freeways, such as U.S. 30 and SR-49, because their intended function is to move very high volumes of high speed traffic. Instead, these arteries should be the focus of their own unique planning and design processes. The City recently completed such a process for the U.S. 30 corridor, and is in the process of implementing that plan. A similar process should be considered for SR-49.

Local streets are also not the focus of CSS. However, they should be interconnected to one another and to the larger transportation network. Issues unique to one local street, such as a lack of sidewalk connectivity or street lighting, should be addressed through development regulations (for new local streets) and through the City's capital improvements program (for existing local streets).

Policies

- 5.a. Public input should be part of the pre-design stage of all capital improvements projects.
- 5.b. During a CIP project management phase, arterial and collector roadways should be designed for multi-modal functionality, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- 5.c. When private development is proposed that involves construction of an arterial or collector street, adherence to the UDO standards for pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be required.

Actions

- 5.1. Include the following roadways in the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for additional study, with the implementation of design elements as an ultimate goal:
 - SR-49 through the City;
 - Joliet Road;

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Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is one way for cities to continue to uphold and further the quality of life for their citizens. CIP projects should be aligned with comprehensive planning efforts. Many cities ensure this occurs by requiring input from planning commissions into the annual approval process

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



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- Washington Street from U.S. 30 to Lincolnway / SR-130 (complete street concept);
- Sturdy Road along Valparaiso University;
- Lincolnway / SR-130 through the City (complete street concept);
- Calumet from Poplar Street to the City Limits;
- Morgan Boulevard from Lincolnway / SR-130 to Calumet Avenue (complete streets concept);
- Calumet Avenue south of Morgan Boulevard;
- Franklin Street south of Calumet Avenue to Lincolnway / SR-130 (complete streets concept);
- Campbell Street from Sheffield Drive to Vale Park Road;
- The interchange of SR-49 with U.S. 30;
- The interchange of SR-49 and Vale Park Road; and
- Laporte Avenue from the round-about to Porter's Vale Boulevard.

5.2 Amend the UDO to include street design standards (rights-of-way, number and width of lanes, bikeway and pedestrian improvements, etc.) that are tied to the character of development. These standards should remain generally consistent with the standards of each functional class, although variations may be warranted in certain circumstances.

5.3 Adopt a policy for context sensitive design and subsequently, develop applicable standards and criteria. For instance, street cross-sections should be developed for each of the City's designated character types, e.g. rural, suburban, auto-urban, and urban.

5.4 Specify within the street cross-sections the provision for and dimensions of individual design elements including sidewalks and crosswalks, trails, bike routes or striped lanes, and parkways and medians.

5.5 Consider amending the UDO to include performance standards for local streets, where the type of access, number of dwelling units served, and the units' average frontages determine the right-of-way, pavement width, parking lanes, curb width, parkways, and sidewalks. Therefore, the right-of-way and street design of local streets are directly tied to development density and hence, traffic volumes.

5.4 EFFICIENCY OF THE STREET SYSTEM

Most of the recent development in Valparaiso generally follows a standard hierarchy of streets, whereby local streets connect to collectors, which, in turn, convey traffic to the arterial road network. However, the curvilinear system



The recent sidewalk and crosswalk improvements along Lincolnway / SR-130 are good examples of complete streets enhancements.



of roadways, particularly within individual, larger-scale developments, has also allowed disconnected streets and a multitude of cul-de-sacs. While marketable for their seclusion and safety, an incomplete network creates congested conditions elsewhere, often on streets that were not designed to bear the burden of increased traffic.

The original part of the City, such as the historic Banta area, follows a traditional “grid” street pattern, where the collector system is effectively replaced by multiple connections between local streets. Such system allows traffic to distribute more evenly. In these areas, some streets naturally collect higher volumes of traffic and thus, function as collector roadways. Care must be taken however, on these roadways so as not to burden or negatively impact the quality of life for the residents that abut them.

Future thoroughfare development must achieve continuity and connectivity to be functionally efficient. To do so, this plan and the development requirements and approval procedures must stipulate and enforce standards to avoid discontinuous and irregular street patterns, particularly on the fringe and in the outlying areas where development is occurring in a noncontiguous manner. The traffic carrying capacity of roadways must be preserved and improved through appropriate design of the street system and adequate standards for property access.

The policies listed in this Subsection, below, should apply in the case of infill development, new development, and redevelopment. They should not apply in the case of minor development, such as the reconstruction of an existing home or an addition.

Policies

- 5.d. Property access to principal arterials should be restricted. Marginal access roads should connect only to intersecting arterial streets where access already exists, joint and cross access agreements should be required where feasible upon a change of use, rezoning, or application for a building permit.
- 5.e. Principal and minor arterial streets are to be reserved for locations where the abutting land use and development within the traffic shed does not exceed 60,000 vehicles per day (VPD) and 30,000 VPD, respectively.
- 5.f. Access to high-intensity land uses along principal and minor arterials should be limited by way of cross- and joint-access standards and, in appropriate locations, marginal access roads.
- 5.g. Property access points should be a minimum distance of 120 feet from street intersections.
- 5.h. A depressed or raised median should be included in the design cross-section of all new principal arterial streets where the abutting property

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Traffic Calming involves changes in street alignment, installation of barriers, and other physical measures to reduce traffic speeds and/or cut-through volumes, in the interest of street safety, livability, and other public purposes. Improvements include:



Speed Humps



Roundabouts



Narrowed Entrances



Chokers

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 The logo for 'Envision 2030 Valparaiso' features the word 'ENVISION' in large, bold, white capital letters. Below it, '2030' is in a smaller font, and 'VALPARAISO' is in a medium font. A stylized graphic of three overlapping circles in blue, yellow, and red is positioned between 'ENVISION' and '2030'.

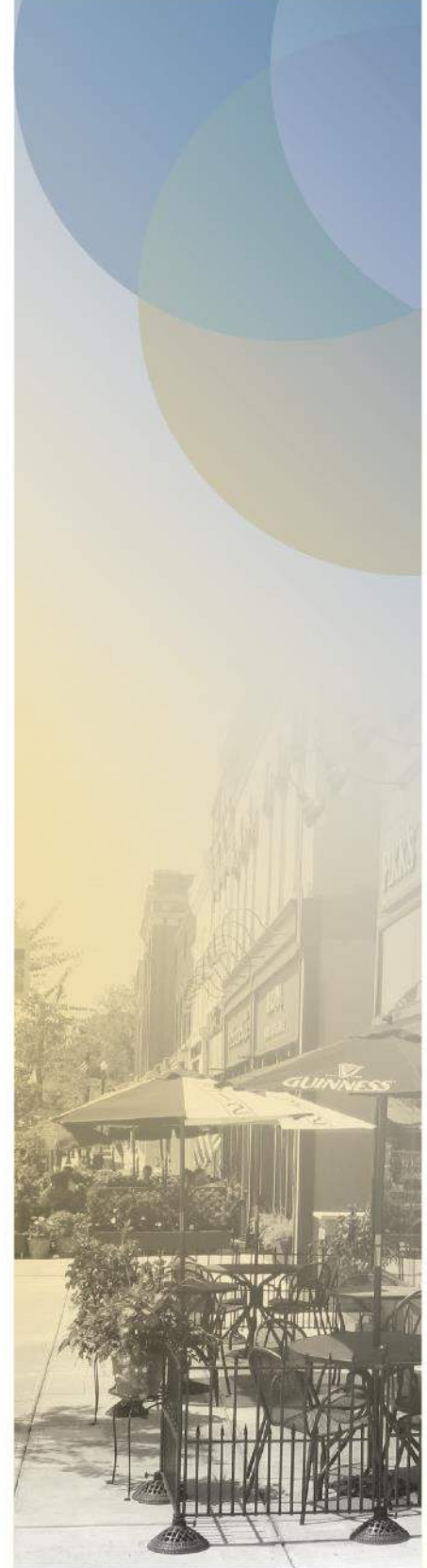
is not yet developed. A median may be included for minor arterial streets, where warranted. For largely developed areas, an access study should be prepared to determine the feasibility of medians.

- 5.i. Access points should be aligned with median breaks, where applicable, and access points across the street.
- 5.j. Access from local streets to principal arterial roadways should be minimized. Rather, they should access a marginal access road or a collector roadway to minimize the impedance of traffic and maximize the traffic carrying capacity of the principal arterial street.
- 5.k. Residential driveway access should not be allowed onto minor or principal arterial streets.
- 5.l. Collector roadways should maintain a spacing of approximately one-quarter to one-half mile, which may be signalized with a principal arterial street.
- 5.m. As warranted by a traffic impact study, acceleration and deceleration lanes should be provided at major points of ingress/egress to facilitate safe turning movements.
- 5.n. Parking should not be permitted on principal or minor arterial streets, except within downtown.
- 5.o. Signal warrant studies should be conducted to determine the location of signalized intersections. The study should include recommendations for additional roundabouts.
- 5.p. Pedestrian crossing improvements should be limited to stop or signalized intersection locations. Such improvements should include crosswalk delineation via reflective paint or pavement texturing, American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements, pedestrian and bicycle actuated signals, pavement markings, and signage. Mid-block crossings should only be installed pursuant to traffic and pedestrian safety studies, where feasible.
- 5.q. An eight-foot wide trail section should be incorporated on one side of all principal and minor arterial streets. The side that will receive the larger sidewalk should be determined by the City Engineer on a case-by-case basis unless a sidewalk master plan has been adopted that identifies the side of the road where the wide sidewalk will be located.
- 5.r. Collectors should be installed concurrent with development and in accordance with the general spacing and policies of this plan.
- 5.s. Additional collectors should be installed according to the recommendations of traffic impact analyses, and pursuant to the following guidelines:
 - Local collector streets are for spacing between arterial and major collector streets where there are no more than 10,000 vehicles per day (VPD).

- Collector streets should cross creeks, major drainageways, and other barriers to provide for street continuity.
 - Collector roadways should not be designated as truck routes, unless special precautions are taken with respect to design (curb return radii, minimum tangent lengths between reverse curves, construction specifications, etc.) and the abutting land uses.
 - Driveways should not access major collector streets and should be allowed for properties abutting no more than 20 percent of the lot frontage abutting local collector streets.
 - Collectors should extend continuously between other collectors and arterial streets or highways.
 - Traffic calming improvements should be used to slow traffic along continuous sections of collector roadways.
 - Sidewalks should be located on both sides of all collector streets.
5. t. Shared driveways and cross-access easements should be required between adjacent and abutting properties to eliminate the need to use the public street for access between adjoining businesses.

Actions

- 5.6 Regularly synchronize traffic signals along arterial roadways to minimize congestion and emissions, maximize efficiency, and maximize traffic carrying capacity.
- 5.7. Review the UDO for possible amendments to allow the design of collector and arterial in accordance with the character designations denoted on the Future Land Use and Character Plan. Regulations for roadways should take the following guidelines into consideration:
- *Performance-based street standards.* The type of access, number of dwelling units served, and the units' average frontages determine the right-of-way, pavement width, parking lanes, curb width, parkways, and sidewalks. The rights-of-way and street design should be directly tied to development density and traffic volumes.
 - *Functional street cross-sections.* Incorporate street design standards, supplementing the requirements for right-of-way with specific standards regarding pavement and lane width, location and width of sidewalks and/or trails, and provisions for on-street bike lanes. The standards should be linked to the functional classification of the street, as well as other operating characteristics.
 - *Safety.* Traffic calming techniques should be incorporated to slow traffic, particularly adjacent to schools, parks, and public buildings.
- 5.8. Perform a street network study to evaluate the connectivity of the existing street system. The study should identify opportunities for extending existing roadways. A subsequent traffic study should



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Access management studies, when implemented, will reduce the incidences of vehicle crashes. Strategies include making improvements such as:

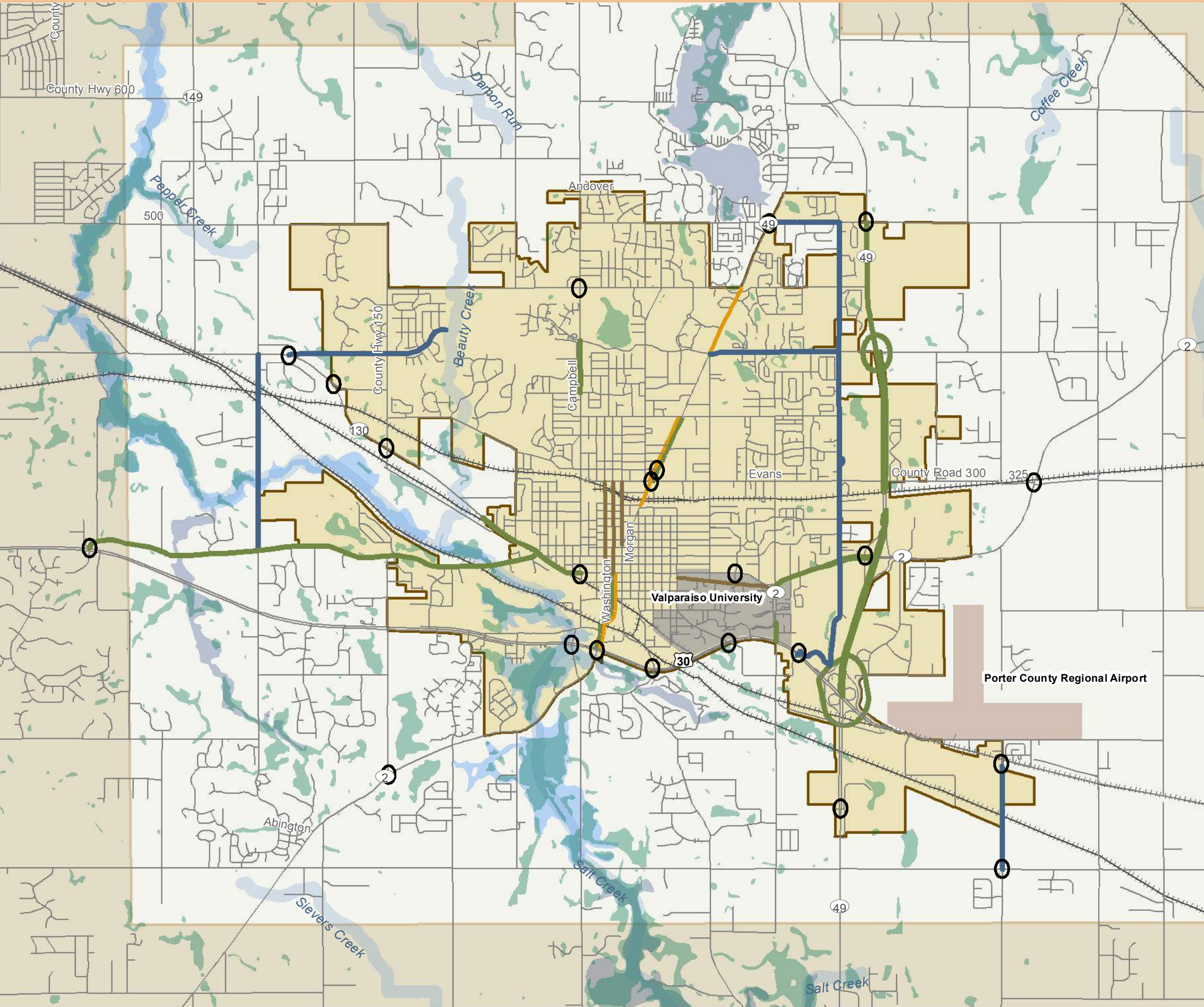
- Adding deceleration/acceleration lanes
- Changing traffic signal operations
- Closing driveway connections
- Installing off-street, site-connecting roadways
- Redesigning intersections

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



determine and prioritize those that would improve safety and ease congestion.

- 5.9. Review and modify, as needed, the UDO provisions that specify the required right-of-way widths of each designated collector and arterial street to determine which may require more or less right-of-way.
- 5.10. Review the UDO to ensure that private subdivisions will not terminate an existing or planned collector or arterial roadway. Allow for a private subdivision to propose a realignment of a collector or arterial road as long as its function and intent is preserved.
- 5.11. Given certain trip generation threshold criteria, require submission of a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) prior to the official acceptance of an application for subdivision or property development.
- 5.12. Perform localized traffic calming studies for existing roadways that are experiencing higher speeds than are considered acceptable. The study should identify the recommended traffic calming measures based upon site-specific conditions. As displayed in **Map 5.1, Future Mobility Projects**, roadways to consider in the study include:
 - Laporte Avenue between Sturdy Road and South Garfield Avenue;
 - Franklin Street;
 - Washington Street; and
 - Lafayette Street.
- 5.13. Study the following roadways for access management improvements and implement recommendations through the City's redevelopment strategies (see Map 5.1, Future Mobility Projects):
 - Sturdy Road from U.S. 30 to the round-about;
 - Calumet Avenue north of Vale Park Road to the City Limits;
 - Calumet Avenue between Poplar Street and West Glendale Boulevard;
 - Sturdy Road between Lincolnway and U.S. 30;
 - Washington Street between East Brown Street and U.S. 30; and
 - SR-2 from U.S. 30 south to the City Limits.
- 5.14. Several sections of roadway need expansion to accommodate increased traffic volumes. The following should be considered for improvement in the City's capital improvements program (see Map 5.1, Future Mobility Projects):
 - 400 North Road from Froeberg Road to U.S. 30;
 - North Sturdy Road between Flemming Road and its terminus near East Glendale Boulevard;
 - Sturdy Road between the round-about and Martin Drive;



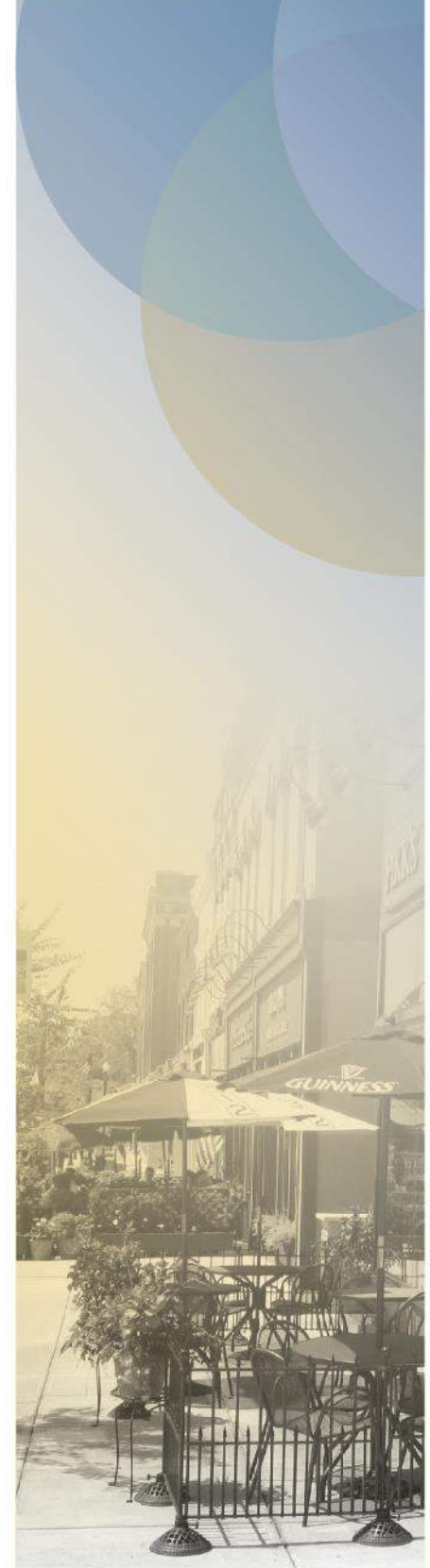
Map 5.1

Future Mobility Projects

- Legend**
- Street Improvements
 - Context Sensitive Enhancements
 - Traffic Calming Improvements
 - Access Management Improvements
 - Unsafe Intersections
 - Valparaiso University
 - City Limits
 - Study Area
 - Airport
 - Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
 - Flood Zone (A)
 - Flood Zone (AE)
 - Streams and Rivers
 - Railroad

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- Along Silhavy Road just north and south of the intersection with East Glendale Boulevard (as an alternative, widen the entire length of Silhavy Road);
 - East 500 North from Calumet Avenue to SR-49 and east of SR-49 to 300 East Road;
 - The railroad crossings at N. Roosevelt Road, N. Sturdy Road, and Silhavy Road;
 - Burlington Beach between Oakgrove Drive and SR-49;
 - North 250 West / Tower Road;
 - North 325 East between East Division Road and U.S. 30;
 - Vale Park Road between Silhavy Road and Calumet Avenue; and
 - Vale Park Road from Froberg Road to its current eastern terminus.
- 5.15. Commission a traffic engineering study to evaluate the warrant for the one-way pair on Jefferson Street / Chicago Street in Downtown and subsequently implement recommended changes or improvements.
- 5.16. Conduct traffic engineering and design studies (to include analysis for the potential installation of roundabouts), for the following intersections (see Map 5.1, Future Mobility Projects):
- Silhavy Road / East Glendale Boulevard;
 - Linwod Avenue / U.S. 30;
 - East Evans Avenue / SR-2;
 - University Drive / Lincolnway / SR-130;
 - All intersections along U.S. 30;
 - North Campbell Street / Lincolnway;
 - Morgan Boulevard / Union Street / Axe Avenue;
 - Union Street / South Garfield Avenue;
 - Laporte Avenue / SR-40;
 - Burlington Beach Road / SR-49;
 - Cool Springs Drive / U.S. 30;
 - Hays Leonard Road / SR-2;
 - Porter County Jail access road at Bertholet Boulevard;
 - East Division Road / North 325 East;
 - North 325 East / U.S. 30;
 - Evans Avenue / SR-49;
 - Evans Avenue / North Sturdy Road;
 - Evans Avenue / Calumet Avenue;



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- Calumet Avenue / East Harrison Boulevard;
- Calumet Avenue / Burlington Beach Road;
- Lincolnway / Froberg Road;
- Lincolnway / Milkhouse Road;
- Lincolnway / 400 North Road; and
- North Campbell Street / Bullseye Lake Road.

5.5 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY

A dense and comprehensive grid of bikeways, walking trails, and other non-motorized linkages is among the highest priorities according to the input of residents, received during the preparation of this plan as well as the City's Pathways and Greenways Master Plan. Achieving a pedestrian mobility system requires advanced planning and effective ordinance provisions to secure the necessary rights-of-way or easements and to assure sustainable design standards. Reconstruction or installation of new sidewalks is an essential element of a complete pedestrian system and for achieving improved walkability.

The City already has a relatively robust system of pedestrian and bicycle linkages. In 2005, the City adopted the Pathways and Greenways Master Plan, and supplemented it with an update in December 2010. This plan indicates that the next steps for the City are to fill in gaps and to continue to extend the system along major roadways including Glendale Boulevard, Evans Avenue, Silhavy Road, and Bullseye Lake Road. A third-level priority is the mostly outlying roadways, many portions of which are not yet within the City Limits.

Additional focus for the pedestrian and bicycle pathway system includes improvements to the existing system through branding and signage, additional amenities, and a maintenance program.

Policies

- 5.u. Trails should be considered in all subdivisions, subject to standards as to the minimum required connections. For subdivisions with rural street standards and an average lot size of one acre or more, trails may be constructed in lieu of sidewalks, subject to certain standards and requirements.
- 5.v. Accessibility provisions should be incorporated in the UDO requiring public access easements at intervals of 600 feet, which should be shown on a primary plat. In the case of private subdivisions, the trail system may also be private provided the connectivity and continuity of the City-wide trail network is not interrupted.



Pathways within greenways have taken a high priority in Valparaíso.



Actions

- 5.18. Amend the UDO to clarify that sidewalks are required along both sides of all streets and one side of every arterial and collector street shall be improved with a sidewalk that is eight feet in width. The side that will not have the eight foot sidewalk should be required to have a five foot wide sidewalk at a minimum.
- 5.19. Prepare and regularly update a sidewalk inventory of all existing and needed ADA accessible ramps and curb cuts. Subsequently, budget annually and include sidewalk projects in the capital improvement program (CIP) with prioritization assigned to areas around schools, parks, and other public areas.
- 5.20. Make regular applications for the INDOT Safe Routes to School Program to improve the conditions and safety of sidewalks around Valparaiso University and in and around the community schools.
- 5.21. Consider adopting requirements for the installation of bicycle racks at commercial developments over 15,000 square feet and for businesses employing more than 10 persons.

5.6 ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The pattern of development contributes substantially to the adequacy of the transportation infrastructure. Scattered, peripheral development limits the continuity of streets, sidewalks, and trails; prematurely burdens existing infrastructure systems; and creates unsafe conditions and other unintended outcomes. Furthermore, it places a fiscal strain on public resources to prematurely improve infrastructure in an inefficient manner. Therefore, growth management has a direct, causal link to the adequacy and efficiency of the transportation system.

Actions

- 5.22. Inventory all roads within the planning area outside of the City Limits to include descriptions and measurements of right-of-way widths, surface types and widths, types of cross-section, locations and widths of culverts and bridges, traffic control devices, and roadway obstructions. Integrate this data into the geographic information system (GIS) for use in capital infrastructure planning and for considering development requirements in these areas. Assign a requisite design capacity for each roadway to identify a level of service standard and the threshold at which the capacity will be exceeded.
- 5.23. Explore the practicality and validity of different approaches for ensuring adequate transportation infrastructure concurrent with new development, particularly in the areas on the fringe and in the periphery of the City. Among the options is concurrency management, which allows development up to a maximum allowable density that does not exceed a threshold of roadway capacity. Alternatively, traffic

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The Indiana Safe Routes to School Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS) is based on the federal program designed to make walking and bicycling to school safe and routine. INDOT is responsible for administering the Indiana SRTS Program that makes federal funding available for eligible activities and improvements. Parameters for funding eligibility include:

- 70-90 percent of funds will be available for eligible infrastructure projects
- 10-30 percent of funds will be available for encouragement, education, enforcement and other non-infrastructure activities to increase safe biking and walking to school
- Children in kindergarten through 8th grade are the primary target for this program
- Projects should help improve access for children with physical disabilities
- High school students, adults, residents, children traveling to school by bus and motorists may be considered secondary beneficiaries
- Trips for non-school purposes are only secondary considerations
- Construction improvements must be located within a two mile radius of the intended school or schools
- The SRTS program is available for private and public schools
- Eligible applicants include individual schools, school districts, local government agencies, state agencies and MPOs
- Non-profit organizations can partner with eligible applicants, but cannot directly receive SRTS project funding in Indiana

Source: www.in.gov

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sheds proportionally allocate allowable densities across the area for which the generated trips originate, which may be coupled with development clustering to allow continued development as there is added capacity.

- 5.24. Prepare a capital improvement plan that identifies the timing and sequencing of capital roadway and other infrastructure improvements, consistent with the Future Annexation and Growth Plan (refer to *Chapter 7, Growth Capacity*). The recommended capital plan should describe the existing roadways and the costs to expand, improve, or reconstruct them; an analysis of the total capacity, level of current usage, and commitments for usage; proposed improvements and the costs attributable to new development; and a quantified generation by land use type, among other requirements.
- 5.25. Consider the use of development agreements within the planning area outside of the City Limits to provide for street, drainage, water, wastewater, and other utility systems. Such agreements would allow the City to extend its planning authority and enforce its development regulations in exchange for continuation of the extraterritorial status for a prescribed period of time.
- 5.26. Continue working with representatives of Porter County to coordinate City and County development review.

5.7 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Due to a concern for rising gasoline prices, commuters are increasingly interested in the opportunities for high capacity transit. In the same way, communities are continuously seeking ways to expand their public transportation options. Advanced planning must occur to avoid short-sighted decisions that may hinder the long-term economic growth of the City and region. Here again, the growth policies of this community and the resulting form and density of development will help determine the warrant for and feasibility of an expanded public transportation system.

Actions

- 5.27. Continue to closely monitor ChicaGo Dash ridership and respond to increased demand by expanding services.
- 5.28. Continue to develop Central Place, including evaluating the benefits of mixed use development in support of this area, as well as Downtown.
- 5.29. During the horizon of this plan, re-initiate a high-capacity transit options study to evaluate the feasibility of transit investments, such as a coordinated, expanded regional bus system; bus rapid transit; and commuter rail transit. A feasibility assessment should forecast future ridership to determine when an increased investment in public transit may be warranted. The study should recommend future funding needs, revenue options, and financing strategies. An organizational



Valparaíso's ChicaGo Dash



approach and governance structure should specify the roles of the transit provider. The transit study should consider transit needs, the propensity for transit use, and the requirements and limitations of collecting and sharing revenues between involved entities.

- 5.30. Coordinate the operating schedules of the V-Line, ChicaGo Dash, and other area transportation providers in a consistent format and in a manner to allow timely and convenient transfers. Establish a regional call center that centralizes the dispatch function and facilitates improved coordination and transit needs matching. A single website for all local and regional carriers providing service would be highly beneficial.
- 5.31. Develop an advertising and marketing campaign to inform the public as to the services and schedules available in Valparaíso, as well as inter-city and regional connections.
- 5.32. Ensure that the development review process includes transit representation, with enough authority to require sites and subdivisions to include provisions for transit connections in strategic parts of the City. This is particularly important for the siting of affordable and higher density housing and mixed use projects in proximity to transit routes. This input into site planning is essential for on-site vehicle routing, safe patron access, and provision of bus stop facilities.
- 5.33. Develop an inventory and GIS database of all transit properties and fixed improvements. Subsequently, prepare a needs assessment to identify capital acquisitions such as shelters, kiosks and displays, signage, benches, refuse containers, public art, and other patron and pedestrian improvements and amenities.
- 5.34. Conduct a feasibility study for connecting the V-Line with the transit services provided in Chesterton, Portage, and Merrillville.
- 5.35. Research and evaluate the feasibility of installing monitors at bus stops to provide real-time information on the arrival and departure of buses, and to display other route information.
- 5.36. Study peer transit systems that are operating their fleet with alternative fuels to discern the costs and benefits of implementing an alternative fuels program for the V-Line.

5.8 CORRIDOR APPEARANCE

One of the City's strengths is that many of its roadways are well designed and attractive. This is due to a combination of high quality development, and, in other areas, the City's redevelopment projects. City standards are responsible for the form of development, including the location and design of buildings, arrangement of parking areas, extent of open space and vegetation, perimeter fencing and bufferyard treatments, and size and placement of signage. It is

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Tree-lined streets make Valparaíso a memorable place.

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important to recognize too, that the design of the roadway itself also forms a sense of place and conveys the character of the community.

Actions

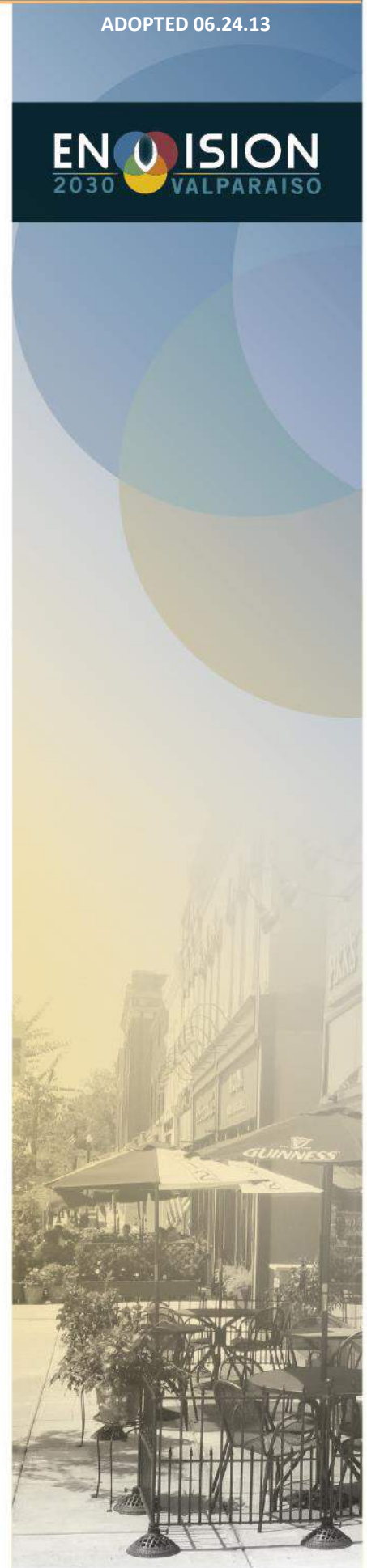
- 5.34. Ensure that the fencing standards outlined in the UDO² are adequate and sufficiently detailed. In particular, consider added specificity as to the type, design (e.g. decorative support columns and horizontal relief), and, in the case of subdivisions and larger developments, the uniformity of fences, walls, and hedges. Furthermore, clarify the submission and approval requirements.
- 5.35. Require neighborhood associations to be responsible for the repair and/or replacement of subdivision fencing and fully compliant with the ordinance standards. For neighborhoods that do not have a neighborhood association, the City should require a provision is added on the land title notifying the owner of record as to the requirements for fencing adjacent to street rights-of-way. Alternatively, the City could make the necessary repairs and assess the property owner.
- 5.36. Amend the cross-section standards of arterial and collector roadways to acquire or require the dedication of sufficient lands for increased green space adjacent to the abutting use (in accordance with the corridor and development character). Additionally, it is important for there to be maintenance agreements and guarantees on behalf of the subdivider and/or neighborhood association regarding the ongoing care and responsibility for this common area.
- 5.37. Coordinate the alignment of new arterials with underground drainage and/or utility transmission lines to incorporate green space adjacent to the streets right-of-way.
- 5.38. Review the "Signature Corridor" regulations and consider additional width for tree protection along major roadways that have significant, mature trees.
- 5.39. Commit funding to prepare a SR-49 Corridor Plan, as was done with the recently completed U.S. 30 Corridor Plan. The design plans should include regulatory recommendations and identified improvements and their costs. An implementation plan should identify priorities, funding options and sources, and a timeline. Design principles for corridor design and enhancement may include:
 - A landscape plan within the highway rights-of-way and particularly at the interchanges of U.S. 30 and SR-2, as well as the at-grade intersections. The plan should incorporate xeriscaping to be more natural in appearance, environmentally sustainable, and to require minimal maintenance.

² Sec. 2.302, Fences, Garden Walls, and Hedges, Art. 2, Permitted Uses and Supplemental Standards

- Increase the vegetative buffer, wherein mature trees would be preserved and landscaping enhanced in areas where few or no mature trees exist, on either side of the highway.
 - Design plans for the bridges and road and railroad overpasses, to include decorative treatments for the purpose of aesthetic enhancement and community branding.
 - Integration of “signature” gateways at the entries to the community, including earthen berms or mounding, monumentation, landscaping, and lighting improvements.
 - Enhanced standards for traffic control devices at the at-grade intersections.
 - Heightened site and building design standards for properties abutting and adjacent to the roadway corridor.
- 5.41. Establish gateway treatments at each of the community entranceways, including the following locations:
- Vale Park east of Silhavy Road;
 - Lincolnway / SR-130 west of Central Place;
 - North Meridian Road just inside of the future City Limits;
 - SR-2 within the Porter County Regional Airport study area; and
 - The intersection of SR-49 and U.S. 30.
- 5.42. In coordination with the Valparaiso University Center for the Arts, consider formation of a public arts commission to create standards for the placement of public art throughout the community, including at highly visible junctions and within road rights-of-way.
- 5.43. Acquire or require dedication of a triangular area as part of the right-of-way at all new or reconstructed intersections of collector and arterial streets to be used as public open space.
- 5.44. In developments that include future intersections, require a study of the area that includes an analysis of the potential for installation of a round-about.

5.9 THOROUGHFARE PLANNING

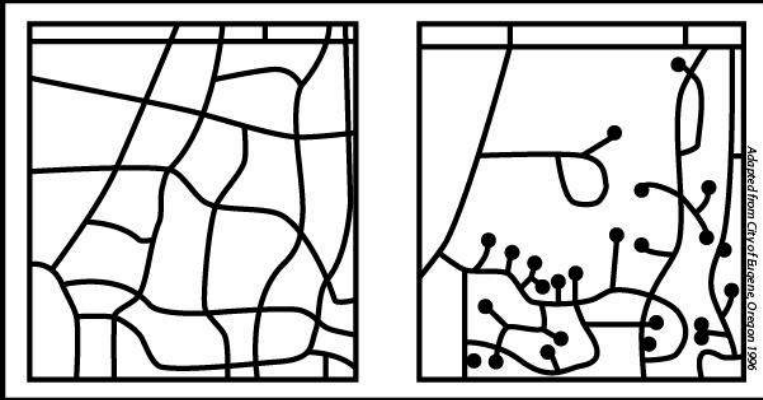
Thoroughfare system planning is a process to assure development of a good and efficient street system to meet future travel needs. The objective of a thoroughfare plan is to preserve adequate rights-of-way on appropriate alignments to allow the orderly and efficient expansion and improvement of the thoroughfare system. Proposed alignments are shown for planned new roadways and roadway extensions. Actual alignments will vary depending on the design and layout of development. Requirements for rights-of-way dedication and construction of street improvements apply to all subdivision of land.



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The proposed thoroughfare system is displayed on **Map 5.2, Thoroughfare Plan**. The plan shows alignments for planned thoroughfares that will be considered in the platting of subdivisions, rights-of-way dedication, and construction of major new roadways or roadway extensions. While consistency is advocated by this plan, there are also standards that directly relate to the individual goals and objectives of this community that merit supplemental standards to the roadway cross-sections. These are outlined below in the following section entitled, *Roadway Classifications*.



Proper thoroughfare planning and implementation ensures continuity of the street system, which is vital to mobility.

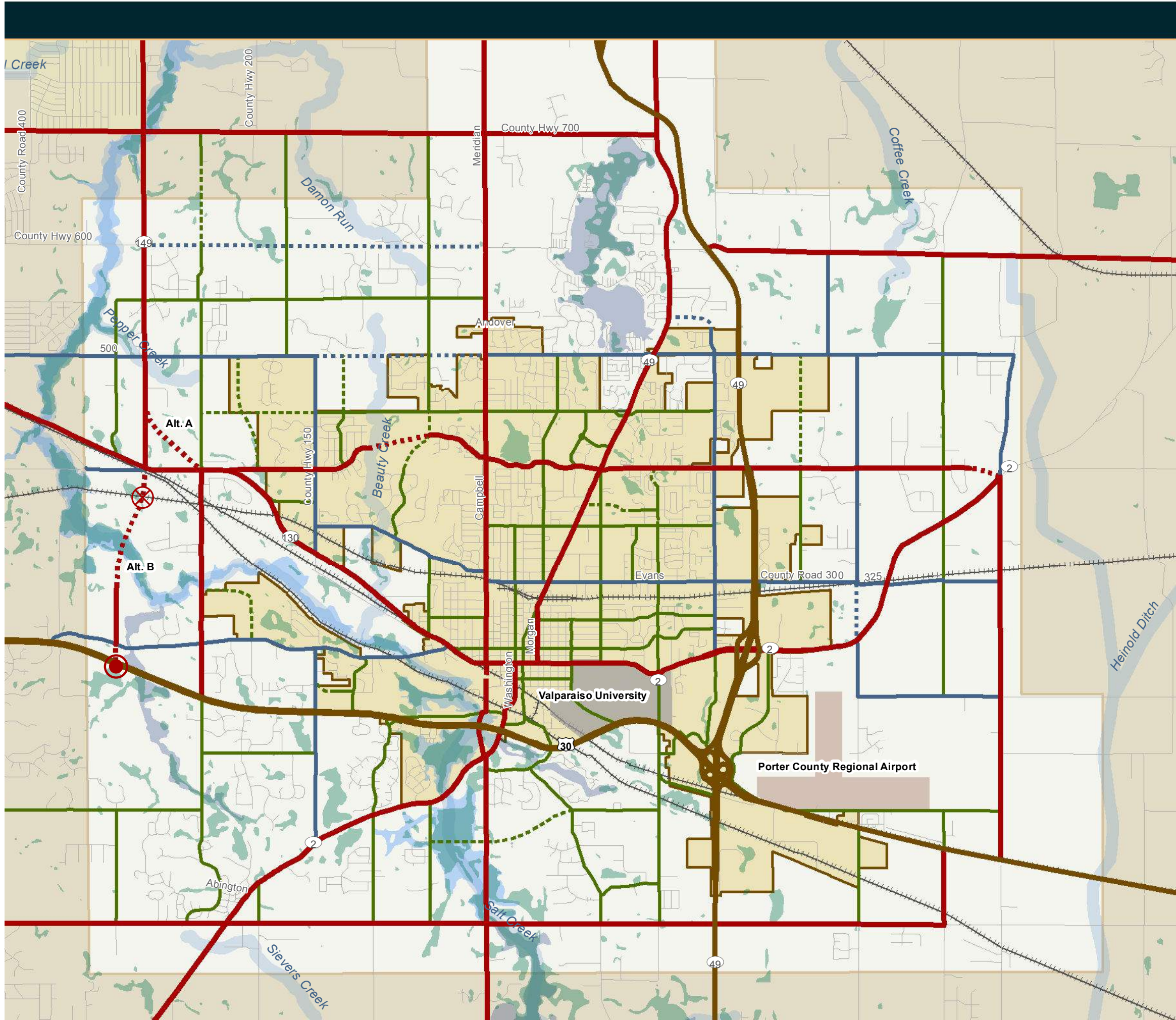
Some of the thoroughfares denoted by the Thoroughfare Plan may be developed as two-lane or multi-lane roadways with various cross-sections depending on the nature of abutting development and the circumstances of each particular roadway. Some existing roadways may warrant widening to mitigate congestion and to adequately convey traffic while other streets identified as arterials or collectors may not ever be widened due to right-of-way limitations. Therefore, the Thoroughfare Plan designation signifies the traffic-handling role of each roadway and the importance of maintaining it in superior condition to maximize traffic capacity.

The plan does not show future local streets because they function to provide access to individual parcels and their alignments will vary greatly depending upon land development plans. Local street alignment will be determined by the City as part of the subdivision development process. Likewise, collectors are required with new development, but are not shown in all cases on the Thoroughfare Plan. Nevertheless, they are vital to an efficient transportation network and must not be overlooked during the subdivision development process. Collectors should be situated to connect arterial streets with other arterial, collectors, and local streets.

Key features and policies of the Thoroughfare Plan are as follows:

- Review of general development plans and primary and secondary plats must be made in comparison with the Thoroughfare Plan.
- The general location and alignment of thoroughfares must be in conformance with the Thoroughfare Plan. Any thoroughfare alignment that is inconsistent with the plan may require a Thoroughfare Plan amendment, with a recommendation of approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission and final approval by the City Council. A change includes any proposal that adds or deletes a thoroughfare, proposes





Map 5.2

Thoroughfare Plan

PLANNED/ EXISTING THOROUGHFARES

- Highway
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Collector
- Intersection (Proposed)
- RR Crossing (Proposed)
- City Limits
- Study Area
- Valparaiso University
- Airport
- Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
- Flood Zone (A)
- Flood Zone (AE)
- Streams and Rivers
- Railroad

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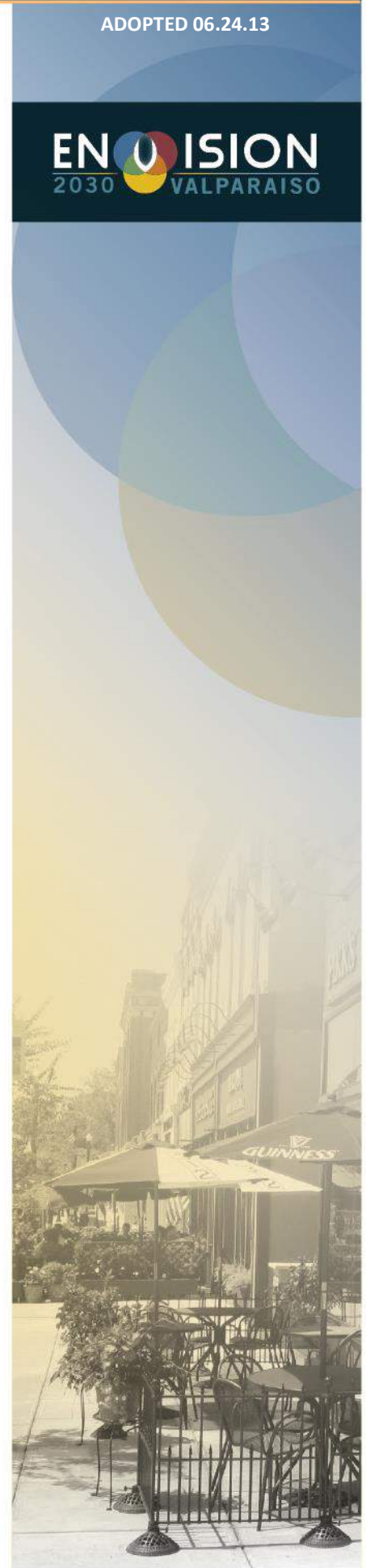
adjusting its designation, or significantly changes the alignment that would affect adjacent lands.

- Variances from the Thoroughfare Plan should not be approved unless there is substantial evidence through a qualified traffic circulation and impacts study establishing a warrant for such amendment and showing how an alternative alignment or area street plan will provide improved circulation and an equal or improved level of service on all affected roadways.
- The necessary rights-of-way, in accordance with the roadway classification and corresponding cross-sections, must be dedicated at the time of secondary platting. Properties proposed for subdivisions that include or are adjacent to an existing thoroughfare with insufficient right-of-way should be required to dedicate land to compensate for any deficiency.
- Existing streets adjacent to land proposed for subdivision should be continued so as to meet the continuity objectives of the Thoroughfare Plan. The arrangement of streets in a new subdivision – including private subdivisions - must make provision for continuation of the existing arterial, collector, and in certain instances, local streets in the adjacent areas.
- Land owners are responsible for the dedication of rights-of-way and may be responsible for constructing sections of roadways located within or adjacent to their property.
- The total width of street rights-of-way must be dedicated at the time of development. The dedication of one-half of the required right-of-way should not be accepted unless the other half already exists or there is a secondary plat on file for the adjacent land.
- To maximize mobility, collector streets must provide access and circulation both within and between neighborhoods. Collectors should connect arterial streets rather than allowing development to have a street system with no points of ingress and egress other than a single point of entrance.
- Collectors must be situated to connect arterial streets with other arterials, collectors, and local streets. Their continuity in the roadway system is essential to its function of distributing traffic within the hierarchical system.
- The fact that a thoroughfare is shown on the Thoroughfare Plan does not represent a commitment to a specific timeframe for construction or that the City or other governing body will build the roadway improvement.

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 The logo for "Envision 2030 Valparaiso" features the word "ENVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter "O" is replaced by a circular graphic composed of three overlapping semi-circles in blue, yellow, and red. Below "ENVISION" is the year "2030" and the word "VALPARAISO" in a smaller, all-caps font.

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- Individual thoroughfare improvements may be constructed by a variety of implementing agencies, including the City, Porter County, Indiana Department of Transportation, the Redevelopment Commission, private developers, and/or intra-governmental agencies.
- The future alignments of local streets are dependent upon land development plans and, thus, are not set forth by the Thoroughfare Plan. However, they shall be in accordance with the City's street design objectives and performance standards.

Roadway Classifications

Roads are grouped into functional classes according to their role for traffic movement and land access. Characteristics of each functional class differ to meet the intended purpose. The functional classification of area roadways includes freeways; principal and minor arterials; major and local collectors; and local streets. Detailed in **Table 5.1, Functional Classifications**, is the roadway type, function, and other characteristics that are typical for each type of roadway.

Standards for development within the City limits, with rare exception, should reflect its urban, auto-urban, and suburban character, with provision for curb and gutter construction, sidewalks, street lighting, signage and sufficient open space.

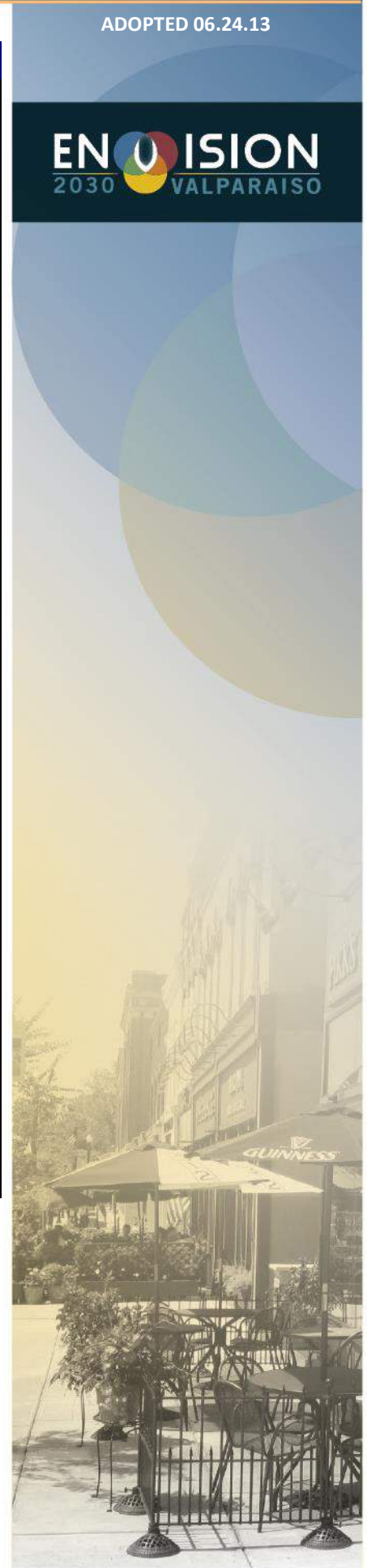


Table 5.1, Functional Classifications

Criterion	Freeway	High Speed and Principal Arterial	Minor Arterial	Major and Minor Collector	Local Street
Functional Role	Entirely through traffic movement with no direct access to property.	Mobility is primary, access is secondary. Connects Freeways and other Arterials.	Connects Freeways, Principal Arterials, and lower classification roadways. Access is secondary.	Collects traffic destined for Arterial network. Connects Arterials to Local Streets. Also land access.	Access is primary. Little through movement.
Roadway Continuity	Inter-city, regional, and interstate.	Connects Freeways to lower classification roadways. Connects major activity centers.	Connects Freeways and Principal Arterials to lower classification roadways.	Continuous between Arterials. May extend across Arterials.	Discontinuous. Connects to Collectors.
Roadway Length	Usually more than 5 miles	Usually more than 5 miles	Usually more than 3 miles	Varies from roughly 1/2 mile to 2 miles	Generally less than 1 mile
Traffic Volumes (VPD = vehicles per day)	40,000 + VPD	20,000 to 60,000 VPD	5,000 to 30,000 VPD	1,000 to 15,000 VPD	100 to 5,000 VPD
Desirable Spacing	5 miles or more	2 miles or more	Generally 1/2 to 2 miles	Generally 1/4 to 1/2 mile	Varies with block length (at least 125 feet between)
Posted Speed	55 to 70 mph	40 to 55 mph	30 to 45 mph	30 to 35 mph	20 to 30 mph
Access	Controlled access. Grade separated interchanges and frontage / service roads.	Intersects with Freeways, Arterials, Collectors, and Local Streets. Restricted driveway access.	Intersects with Freeways, Arterials, Collectors, and Local Streets. Restricted driveway access.	Intersects with Arterials and Local Streets. Driveways limited.	Intersects with Collectors and Arterials. Driveways permitted.
On-Street Parking	Prohibited	Restricted	Restricted	Normally permitted	Permitted
Community Relationship	Defines neighborhood boundaries	Defines neighborhood boundaries	Defines and traverses neighborhood boundaries	Internal and traverses neighborhood boundaries	Internal
Through Truck Routes	Yes	Yes	Permitted	No	No
Bikeways	No	Limited	Permitted	Yes	Yes
Sidewalks	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Local Streets

Local streets allow direct property access within residential and commercial areas. Through-traffic and higher speeds should be discouraged by geometric designs, traffic control devices, and traffic calming techniques. Local streets typically comprise about 65 to 80 percent of the total street system.



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The Thoroughfare Plan does not designate future local streets. This plan establishes standard cross-sections, with alternatives based upon such performance characteristics as type of access, number of dwelling units served, and the units' average frontage. For illustrative purposes, displayed in **Table 5.2, Performance Standards for Local Streets** are variable standards for rights-of-way and street widths based on lot frontage and size and the number of units served. Of course, these must be tailored to the City.

Table 5.2, Performance Standards for Local Streets

Performance Measures		Development Standards								
Lot Frontage (ft) / Lot Area (sf)	No. of Dwelling Units	Total ROW	Travel		Parking		Curb Width (Total)	Parkway Each Side	Sidewalks	
			No. of Lanes	Lane Width	No. of Spaces	Width			Side	Width
Greater than 130' 1 acre +	10 or less	40'	1	12'	0	-	0	14'	0	5'
	11-44	44'	2	8'	0	-	0	14'	0	5'
	45-159	52'	2	11'	0	-	0	10'	2	5'
	160-240	54'	2	12'	0	-	0	10'	2	5'
90' – 129' 15,000 sf - 40,000 sf	10 or less	39'	1	14'	0	-	0	10'	1	5'
	11-44	50'	2	9'	0	-	1	10'	2	5'
	45-159	59'	2	10'	1	7	1	10'	2	5'
	160-240	64'	2	12'	1	7	1.5	10'	2	5'
50' – 89' 5,000 sf– 14,999 sf	10 or less	50'	2	8'	1	7	1	10'	1	5'
	11-44	67'	2	10'	2	7	1.5	10'	2	5'
	45-159	71'	2	12'	2	7	1.5	10'	2	5'
	160-240	71'	2	12'	2	7	1.5	10'	2	5'
Less than 50' Less than 4,999 sf	10 or less	61'	2	9'	2	7	1.5	8'	2	5'
	11-44	65'	2	11'	2	7	1.5	8'	2	5'
	45-159	67'	2	12'	2	7	1.5	8'	2	5'
	160-240	67'	2	12'	2	7	1.5	8'	2	5'



According to the City's Unified Development Ordinance and the City Specifications for Municipal Improvements, the current standard for a local street is a right-of-way width of 50 feet and a pavement width of 30 feet, with two 11-foot travel lanes. These standards do not account for situations where less right-of-way and pavement width may be allowable where there is lower density and hence, fewer trips generated. As a result, there is more rights-of-way and pavement than necessary, which adds to development costs and consumes additional land thereby reducing development efficiency and increasing impervious cover and hence, storm water runoff. Wider local streets are also known to have higher speeds. This plan proposes alternative street cross-sections that better reflect the development character and are more sustainable.

As an alternative to the use of performance standards, the current street standards may include variations, as displayed in **Figure 5.4, Local Street Section Alternatives**. The two alternate cross sections require a minimum 50 feet of right-of-way with minimum pavement widths of 22 and 26 feet. A local

street with a pavement width of 26 feet would be limited for developments with fewer, larger lots taking access to a local street. On-street parking would not be allowed on the narrower street width, while it would be allowed on only one side of the 32-foot street. Such parking restrictions necessitate review of lot sizes, setbacks, and on-lot parking provisions to accommodate parked vehicles out of the public right-of-way. These pavement widths are designed to adequately carry local traffic and sufficiently accommodate fire apparatus, yet are of a width to allow traffic calming. Narrower streets encourage reduced travel speeds, an increased distance between the street and sidewalk, and a wider streetscape.

Local streets may also be adapted to agriculture rural character to include an open or closed ditch system, rather than curb and gutter. The right-of-way within these environments may be reduced to 40 feet with a 20-foot pavement width. The cross section must include provision for stormwater management by way of a sufficient ditch cross section. For very low-density developments, trails may be constructed in lieu of sidewalks. Alternatively, a striped pedestrian/bicycle lane may be used within the right-of-way assuming a minimum pavement width of 24 feet.

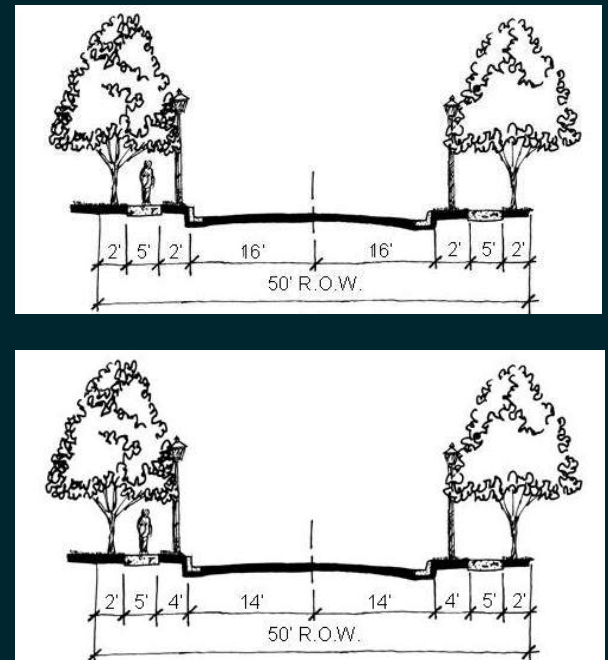
Classifications for alleys and marginal access streets are a function of service and property access and, therefore, are not included in the classification system. This is not to indicate that the plan ignores the use of alleys. In fact, the plan recognizes the valuable contribution of alleys to the urban fabric and establishment of community character and proposes that they be used, as appropriate.

Collector Streets

Subdivision street layout plans and commercial and industrial districts must include collector streets to provide efficient ingress/egress and traffic circulation. Since collectors carry higher traffic volumes than local streets, they require a wider cross-section and added lanes at arterial street intersections to provide adequate capacity for both through-traffic and turning movements. However, since posted speeds are slower and more turn movements are expected, a higher speed differential and thus, closer intersection spacing, may be used. Collectors typically make up about five to 10 percent of the total street system.

This plan proposes classifications of major and local collectors distinguished by volume of traffic. A major collector is designed for 7,500 to 15,000 vehicles per day (VPD), which requires a pavement width of 44 feet. Alternatively, a local collector may allow a pavement width of 36 feet, which is for 1,000 to

Figure 5.4, Local Street Section Alternatives



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7,500 VPD. The review standards must include provisions to distinguish the warrant and criteria for major and local collector roadways.

An option for rural development is collector roads without sidewalks or curb and gutter. This permits development to maintain a rural character and provide a natural versus structural drainage system. In this case, an interior trail system would be necessary to compensate for the loss of sidewalks. Pavement width would be reduced to 32 feet, while the right-of-way requirement would remain at 60 feet to account for the space required for open or covered ditches.

Arterial Streets

Arterial streets form an interconnecting network for broad movement of traffic. Although they usually represent only five to 10 percent of the total roadway network, arterials typically accommodate between 30 and 40 percent of the total travel volume. Since traffic movement rather than land access is the primary function of arterials, managing access is essential to avoid congestion, delays, and unsafe conditions caused by turning movements. Likewise, intersections with other streets should be designed to limit speed differentials between turning vehicles and through traffic to no more than 10 to 15 miles per hour. Signalized intersection spacing should be long enough to allow a variety of signal cycle lengths and timing plans that can be adjusted to meet changes in traffic volumes and maintain traffic progression (preferably one-third to one-half mile spacing) unless signal interconnection is implemented.

The cross-section of arterial streets may vary from four to five (and in some cases six) lanes to a two-lane roadway in the developing rural fringe where traffic volumes do not yet warrant more traffic lanes. Functional classification is not dependent on the number of lanes since the functional role typically remains constant over time, while the roadway's cross-section is widened and improved to accommodate increased traffic volumes. Thus, lower-volume roadways that are continuous over long distances may function as an arterial, particularly within the planning area. A good example of this is Joliet Road, which is a two-lane roadway that may warrant widening as development continues.

This plan advocates a raised or depressed median in all new principal arterial roadways where the land development pattern is not yet established. Medians within the developed and developing areas should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, based upon warrants and constraints, accident records, fatality incidents, and specific design considerations. Minor arterial roadways are proposed to have an undivided street section.



New Roadways / Extensions

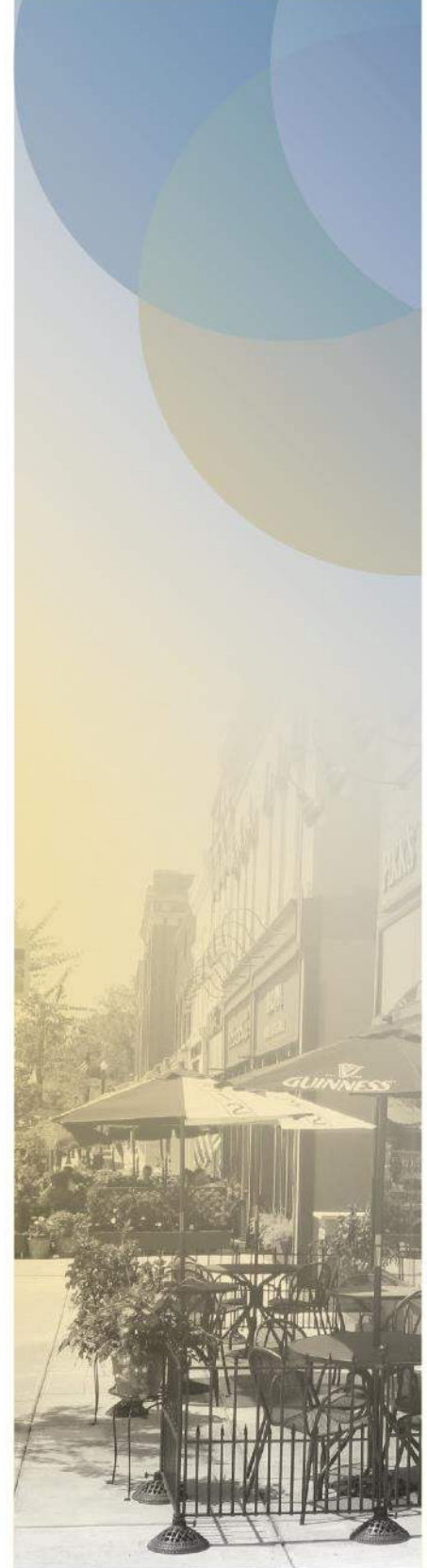
There were several roadway extensions identified that are added to the Thoroughfare Plan:

- A new road between Sturdy Road and State Route 49 about halfway between Laporte Avenue and U.S. 30;
- A new road from the one described above south to connect with Silhavy Road (as an alternative, a connection of Dove Drive to the new road and again to the south to connect with Silhavy Road);
- A connection between Carrsbrook Drive and Eisenhower Avenue and connecting all existing portions of Eisenhower Avenue;
- A connection of North Sturdy Road to Glendale and from just south of Flemming Road northwest to meet Vale Park Road;
- A connection between Campbell Road at its terminus to U.S. 30;
- Extension of State Route 149 from State Route 130 all the way to U.S. 30 (as an alternate, a connection between the intersection at State Route 149 / State Route 130 to North 250 West);
- A connection between West Harrison Boulevard and Lincolnway / SR 130;
- A connection between West 500 North and Burlington Beach Road;
- A State Route 49 “bypass” road to the east in general alignment with Porter’s Vale Boulevard all the way to East 500 North; and
- An extension of Montdale Park Drive east to North 325 East.

Plan Implementation

Implementation of the thoroughfare system will occur as the City grows and, over many years, builds toward that reflected by the Official Intermodal Transportation Plan. The Thoroughfare Plan may be used to make decisions related to the planning, coordination, and programming of future development and other infrastructure improvements. Review of primary and secondary plats in accordance with Article 6, Subdivision Design and Land Development of the UDO must comply with the Thoroughfare Plan to ensure continuity and availability of sufficient rights-of-way for the roadway alignments shown on the plan. It is of particular importance to provide for continuous roadways and through connections between developments to ensure efficient citywide mobility. By identifying locations where rights-of-way are needed, landowners and subdividers may consider the roadways in their subdivision planning, dedication of public rights-of-way, and provision of setbacks for new buildings, utility lines, and other improvements located along the rights-of-way for existing or planned thoroughfares.

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Requirements and Standards

The following criteria are intended to provide policy support for Article 8, Streets and Utilities of the UDO. These policies are to be regulated by the UDO as means of implementing this plan.

- *Location and alignment of thoroughfares* - The general location and alignment of thoroughfares must be in conformance with the Thoroughfare Plan. Subdivision plats should provide for dedication of needed rights-of-way for thoroughfares within or bordering the subdivision. Any changes in thoroughfare alignment that are inconsistent with the plan require the approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission through a public hearing process. A "change" includes any proposal that involves the addition or deletion of a thoroughfare, or change in designation or alignment of thoroughfares that would affect parcels of land beyond the specific tract in question.
- *Location and alignment of collectors* - To adequately serve their functional role, collectors should be placed between arterial streets, with a spacing of one-quarter to one-half mile for local and major collectors, respectively. Collectors must be shown for all proposed subdivisions of land consistent with the Thoroughfare Plan. Where a collector is not shown on the plan, but is warranted due to development density and projected traffic volumes, it is also required and must be shown.
- *Roadway continuity* - To maximize mobility it is essential that collector streets traverse adjacent neighborhoods to provide access and circulation within and between neighborhoods. Collector streets should connect arterials, rather than allowing developments to have a street system with limited points of ingress/egress other than a single point of entrance. The subdivision regulations should be amended to identify warrants and criteria for exemption.
- *Right-of-way and pavement width* - The pavement and right-of-way width for thoroughfares must conform to minimum standards. Properties proposed for subdivision that include or are bordered by an existing thoroughfare with insufficient right-of-way must dedicate land to compensate for any right-of-way deficiency of that thoroughfare. When a thoroughfare extension is proposed to connect with an existing thoroughfare that has a narrower right-of-way, a transition area must be provided. An alternative to the current practice of requiring street widening at the time of subdivision development is a street escrow program whereby funds for street construction are held in escrow until such time as widening of the complete street section is warranted.
- *Continuation and projection of streets* - In accordance with the policies of this plan, existing streets in adjacent areas should be continued, and,



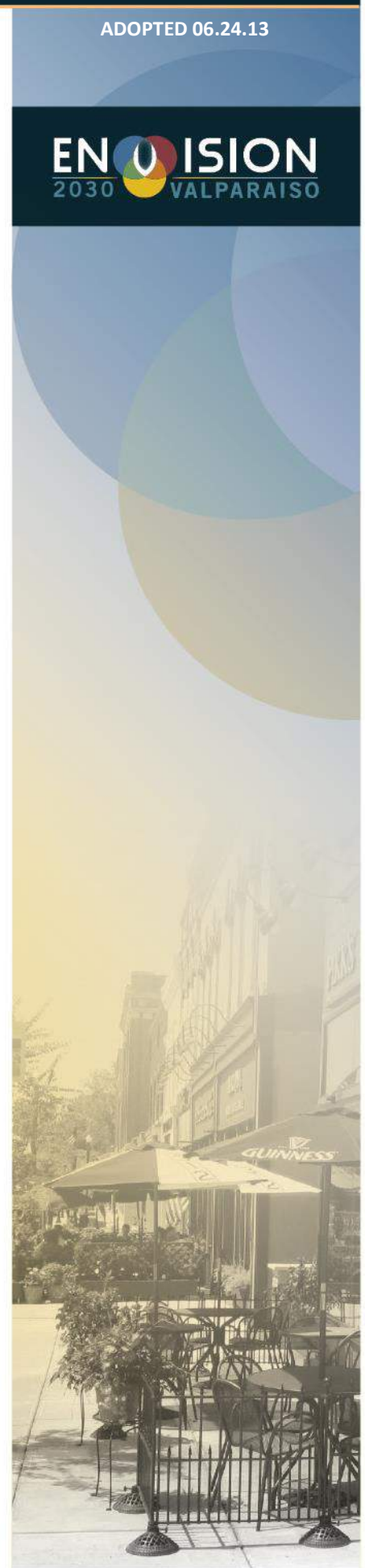
when an adjacent area is undeveloped, the street layout must provide for the continuation of streets into the undeveloped area. In particular, the arrangement of streets in a new subdivision must make provision for continuation of right-of-way for the principal existing streets in adjoining areas – or where new streets will be necessary for future public requirements on adjacent properties that have not yet been subdivided. Where adjacent land is undeveloped, stub streets must include a temporary turnaround to accommodate fire apparatus.

- *Location of street intersections* - New intersections should be planned to align with existing intersections to avoid off-set or "jogged" intersections and to provide for continuity of existing streets.
- *Angle of intersection* – The angle of street intersections should be as nearly at a right angle as possible. Corner cutbacks or radii should be required at the acute corner of the right-of-way line to provide adequate sight distance at intersections.
- *Offset intersections* – It is advisable to have a standard for offset or "jogged" street intersections of 200 feet between the centerlines of the intersecting streets.
- *Cul-de-sacs* - Through streets and perpendicular intersections are preferable to cul-de-sacs. Care should be taken so as not to over utilize cul-de-sacs, which limit through-access, restrict pedestrian circulation, increase *response times*, and generally confuse motorists.
- *Roundabouts* – The City should continue to encourage the installation of roundabouts at intersections.

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Housing & Neighborhoods

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6.1 INTRODUCTION

Valparaiso prides itself on being an independent, successful Northern Indiana community, though a portion of its citizens commute to the Chicago area on a daily basis. The new developments that have been established over the past several years in and around the City have generally addressed the housing needs of the higher income, professional individuals and families, and have added valuable, attractive homes to the community. However, the housing stock that is available for people working in the local service industry, for the elderly, and for special purposes has remained relatively stagnant.

The purpose of this chapter is to address Valparaiso's existing and future housing needs and priorities in the context of its existing housing stock and projected population growth. From the onset of this planning process, housing and neighborhood conditions have been a high priority as residents discussed the need to attract more families to the area, and to address poor housing conditions and neighborhood integrity.

As discussed in *Chapter 2, Land Use and Character*, Valparaiso has a relatively large proportion of its housing stock that was built in the mid-to late 1800's. The City also has a good share of Porter County's historic sites. These areas are a unique part of the City's fabric, and help to form a strong identity, yet they are at risk for decline. Therefore, to bolster the historic housing stock, preserve community character, and defend neighborhood integrity, it will be increasingly important for the City to reinvest in housing and its older neighborhoods.

An anchor for these older neighborhoods is the schools that have become integral to them. The campuses are within walking distance for the children they serve, and they bring neighbors together due to their intimate settings.



Valparaiso offers both an abundance of older homes in historic neighborhoods, as well as quality new development.



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A theme that presented itself early in this comprehensive planning process is to earn a reputation as a “City of neighborhoods”, not simply a collection of subdivisions. Turning this vision into a reality will require deliberate action on behalf of the City, community leaders, neighborhood advocates, and the development community.

General Principles

The following principles are applied to the housing strategy:

- Diverse housing types and price points to accommodate a broad demographic and socioeconomic composition;
- Preservation and prioritization of the existing neighborhoods and housing stock over peripheral greenfield development;
- Active support of the older, well-established neighborhoods with incentives for rehabilitation and reinvestment;
- Quality neighborhood design that emphasizes continuity and system-wide connectivity;
- Complementary land use patterns that preserve character and values, while promoting a balanced mix of residential, civic, and commercial functions; and
- Compliance with the Indiana Building Code regarding the needs of persons with disabilities, e.g. “visitability” standards (see further details regarding these requirements on Page 6-20).

Any long-term strategy and solutions will require partnerships and funding initiatives between homeowners, lenders, developers, the social service community, and the City.

6.2 HOUSING ISSUES

Neighborhoods

Characteristics that make Valparaiso a unique community include the neighborhoods that make up the City. Valparaiso is comprised of a series of distinct, unique neighborhoods -- from the long-established Central, Blalock, and Memorial Neighborhoods to the more recently developed areas and outlying subdivisions. Each of these neighborhoods has a unique character. When taken in total, they are the foundation of a great community.

Although there is little formal neighborhood structure, most of the neighborhoods vary greatly. They differ in the era in which they were developed, the architectural styles of housing, their densities, and neighborhood character. For example, the Central Neighborhood north of downtown is characterized by an older housing stock, with many distinct homes. The tree-lined, gridiron streets are significant to the character of this neighborhood. On the other hand, the neighborhoods north of Vale Park

Road are characterized by single-family, detached housing on large lots with less mature landscaping. A major asset within the older established neighborhoods is the abundance of homes that are of architectural or historical significance.

The most recent inventory of Valparaiso's historic structures was conducted in 1990-91 by the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana (a nonprofit organization that was renamed "Indiana Landmarks" in 2009) as a part of a countywide survey. In Valparaiso, this study identified and rated 209 structures based on their historic significance, architectural merit, setting, and structural integrity. Of the 209 cited structures, 69 were regarded by the evaluators as being "notable" (defined as one worthy of attention or notice, and remarkable) or "outstanding" in historical/architectural merit. The remaining 140 structures were considered important and "contributing" to the overall aesthetic qualities and character in order to bring about value and distinctiveness of a neighborhood or potential historic district.

The City's most dense concentration of referenced homes is in the Washington Street Historic District, which extends north of downtown to Pine Street and from Lafayette Street to Franklin Street. Of the homes within this relatively small area, 83 were included in the inventory. Another larger area of referenced homes is cited as the Banta Neighborhood, which is located east of the Washington Street Historic District. This area contains 51 of the structures listed in the inventory, with 13 of them rated by the evaluators as "notable." (see **Map 6.1, Historic Districts**)

The City recognizes that the 1990-91 historical structure inventory is incomplete and out-of-date. A new inventory needs to be conducted: one that reaffirms the standards for evaluation, broadens the geographic scope to include individual sites, utilizes existing neighborhood boundaries, and looks realistically at the protective measures that are currently available. There was discussion within the context of this Comprehensive Plan Update that an array of implementable measures should be considered to ensure that identified neighborhoods, along with other specific, standalone historic sites, retain their uniqueness. They should be recognized for their contribution to the continued success of these neighborhoods and for the City as a whole. These policies and actions are laid out at the end of this chapter.

Housing Conditions and Age

Valparaiso's blend of historic homes in pre-World War II neighborhoods and newer homes on curvilinear streets with an abundance of open, green space is a testament to the community's values. Although the demolition of historic buildings may only be delayed by 45 or 60 days depending on whether they are rated as "outstanding" (O) or "notable" (N) in the Porter County Interim Report – The Indiana Historic Sites and Structure Inventory, the fact that a large portion of the historic community remains intact reflects the community's respect for and recognized value of these areas. The high quality

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Uses of the Porter County Historic Sites and Structures Inventory Include:

- 1) Administering state and federal programs for historic preservation;
- 2) Nominating places of historic significance to the National Register of Historic Places;
- 3) Planning and executing governmental development projects;
- 4) Promoting citizen awareness of the cultural heritage that are within their communities; and
- 5) Providing a permanent historical record.



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of the newer developments reflects not only the citizens, but also the developers' support of good standards. This mixture results in a City that is highly "imageable", meaning that the community as a whole is distinguished from others, and smaller enclaves of areas are distinguishable from one another.

However, homes that are generally older than 20 years begin to need significant repairs. A little over 88 percent of the City's housing stock is over 20 years old, as displayed in **Table 6.1, Age of Homes**. By 2030, only the homes that will have been constructed since 2010 will be less than 20 years old – 100 percent of homes on the ground today will likely warrant significant repairs or rehabilitation.

Table 6.1, Age of Homes

Year Structure Built	Number of Units	% of Total	Cumulative (%)
Total	13,234	100.0	--
2005 or later	488	3.7	100.0
2000 to 2004	1,073	8.1	96.3
1990 to 1999	2,863	21.6	88.2
1980 to 1989	1,372	10.4	66.4
1970 to 1979	2,532	19.1	56.2
1960 to 1969	1,205	9.1	37.1
1950 to 1959	1,416	10.7	28.0
1940 to 1949	396	3.0	17.3
1939 or earlier	1,889	14.3	14.3

Source: U.S. 2008-2010 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

There are areas of the City that are a priority for property maintenance efforts, particularly within the historic areas, and especially in the residential area south of Lincolnway / SR-130, where the proportion of rental homes is the highest. As the community's housing stock ages, individual neglect may have the effect of neighborhood deterioration. Therefore, it is important for the City to take proactive steps to prevent worsening conditions, and to focus on areas that are already subject to decline.

Homeowner/Renter Occupancy

University communities normally experience higher percentages of renter occupancy of dwelling units due to the transience of nonresident students. Valparaiso is no exception to this occurrence. Provided in **Table 6.2, Renter Occupancy for Comparable University Communities**, is a comparison of Valparaiso's renter occupancy rate with other similar-sized communities having comparably-sized baccalaureate/graduate institutions.

These statistics indicate that Valparaiso's proportion of rental units falls within the normal range found in smaller university communities, but that its rate of renter occupancy is significantly higher than the statewide figures for Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan, and the U.S. The economic difficulties borne

by the 2008-2010 financial crises strongly affected the demand for owner-occupied housing. This has resulted in the following general consequences or trends:

Table 6.2, Renter Occupancy for Comparable University Communities

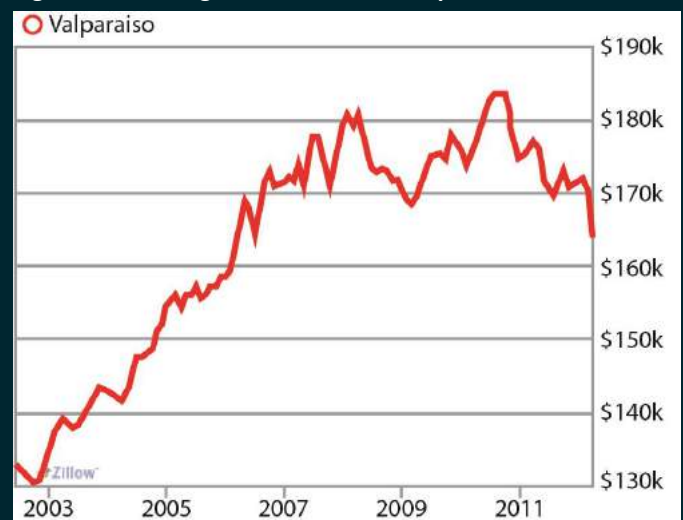
Community	University	Population	University Enrollment	% Students (Enrollment/Population)	% Renter Occupied
Valparaiso, IN	Valparaiso University (Private)	31,730	4,056	13%	45%
Carlisle, PA	Dickenson College (Private)	18,682	2,414	13%	50%
Cleveland, TN	Lee University (Private)	41,285	4,377	11%	51%
Florence, SC	Francis Marion University (Public)	37,056	4,032	11%	40%
Klamath Falls, OR	Oregon Institute of Technology (Public)	20,840	3,783	18%	52%
Wilkes-Barr, PA	Wilkes University (Private)	41,498	5,926	14%	51%
Indiana					30%
Illinois					33%
Michigan					28%
United States					35%

- Home construction activities fell dramatically. Many subdivisions and planned developments have not yet been completed or were abandoned entirely.
- Housing prices stopped increasing and in many cases have fallen. As displayed in **Figure 6.1, Average Home Prices in Valparaiso Since 2003**, the average home price in Valparaiso increased from \$140,000 to \$180,000 between 2003 and 2008, but has fallen to the \$160,000 to \$170,000 range since 2010.
- As the slow recovery proceeds and with an oversupply of single-family housing in many areas, homebuilders have shifted their products to rental housing in order for their businesses to survive.
- Unemployment, the downward pressure on wage levels, and stricter lending requirements have hindered opportunities for young families to purchase their first homes.
- Many pension fund and retirement investment values plunged and then partly recovered. There is however, growing concern that many retiring

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Figure 6.1, Average Home Prices in Valparaiso Since 2003



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baby-boomers will be underfunded and unable to afford continued home ownership and maintenance in the future.

During the comprehensive planning process, Valparaiso residents and public officials raised concerns regarding the City's relatively high proportion of rental housing and expressed a strong preference for owner-occupied housing. Additionally, it was observed that a significant number of the existing rental housing developments are at least 20 years old and are or will be approaching a time when major refurbishment will be needed to maintain quality.

Steering Committee members also expressed concern regarding the potential of increasing the number of single-family residence conversions from owner-occupancy to student rentals. While it may be difficult, or even inappropriate, to stem the current trends toward increased rental housing, the City can take steps to ensure that the quality of rental housing is maintained and improved:

- Some of the site standards for new housing developments, including rental housing, were improved with the update of the Unified Development Ordinance in 2010. These standards, along with the requirements for landscape buffering, should not be compromised.
- The placement of multiple-family rental and condominium developments should avoid major City gateways or entrance corridors, busy intersections, or highly constrained auto-urban sites.
- Many communities have adopted regulations and programs that provide for the regular inspection of all rental units. These measures have been effective in maintaining a minimum standard for rental housing and have acted as a deterrent to cheaply executed conversions.
- While there have been no new conversions of single-family homes to student rentals permitted in established neighborhoods, particularly since the adoption of the UDO in October 2008, those that pre-existed the UDO may be deterred through the strict enforcement of off-street parking requirements, prohibitions of overnight on-street parking, enforcement of the definition of "family" as specified in the UDO, and the application of building design standards. In the case of existing conversions, the City may consider a rental housing conversion program (refer to the case study example on Page 6-21)¹, a code enforcement advocacy program whereby the City partners with the property owner to identify amenable solutions for off-street parking and other code violations, or, in certain instances, applying UDO provisions to mitigate the nonconformity.

¹ The City of Carbondale, Illinois instituted a Single Family Housing Conversion Program whereby the City offers a one-time incentive of \$5,000 for the conversion of a rental home into owner occupancy for a required period of time.

- State law provides allowance for use variances with a determination of approval subject to certain, specified standards. There are allowances for the Board of Adjustment to impose reasonable conditions as part of its approval. Therefore, subject to legal counsel, the City may consider the reasonable conditions that may be imposed to lessen or even mitigate the impacts of the use that is subject to a variance, as well as the grounds for which a use variance may or may not be permitted or denied.
- The development of upper-floor rental and condominium units should be encouraged above downtown storefronts and new mixed-use buildings.

Schools in Established and Historic Neighborhoods

Valparaiso public schools have a very good reputation in the region, a factor that has contributed greatly to the City's steady, sustained growth. Valparaiso Community Schools (VCS) currently operates eight elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and one vocational / technical school. Five of the elementary schools – Central, Cooks Corner, Memorial, Northview, and Parkview Elementary, as well as Ben Franklin Middle School - are located within the City's established or historic neighborhoods. The fact that these schools are within easy walking distance and are thoroughly integrated into the fabric of their neighborhoods has been a considerable draw for current residents to these residential areas and to Valparaiso overall.

For many reasons, the City has a vested interest in keeping schools within its existing neighborhoods. The schools' presence in the neighborhoods establishes a strong sense of community. Due to the fact that many of the children walk to school, there is less automobile, school bus, and other school-related traffic within these neighborhoods.

However, according to VCS leadership, the schools' popularity, their age, growth of the City, and changes in school building standards have resulted in overcrowded conditions in these facilities. The issues are compounded by the age of these structures and their sites' limitations for facility expansion, which are constraints likely to limit their reuse as well. The future of neighborhood schools in Valparaiso is being addressed by an ongoing comprehensive facilities evaluation and plan by VCS. As this study is completed, there will be further dialog among school officials and the community regarding the future of neighborhood schools in some of the City's established neighborhoods.

In recent years planners and citizens, nationwide, have taken increased interest in what has long been portrayed by academic research: people's attachment to a place is important to their engagement in their community and that schools are an integral part of a neighborhood's cohesiveness and identity. This holds true in Valparaiso. Also, there is research that correlates

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Benjamin Franklin Middle School is one of the schools nestled in a neighborhood.



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 The logo features the word "ENOVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font, with "2030" and "VALPARAISO" in a smaller font below it. A stylized graphic of overlapping circles in blue, green, and yellow is positioned between the words.

the value of homes with the presence of neighborhood schools.² This too, is an important consideration for the integrity of the adjacent neighborhoods and the value of area homes.

During the course of the comprehensive planning process, residents of the central area neighborhoods, as well as members of the Steering Committee and Plan Commission, stated a strong preference for maintaining the neighborhood school concept and the deep concern about the future status of the older and smaller neighborhood elementary schools. They expressed the opinion that all options for preserving neighborhood schools need to be considered by VCS officials and the City before any significant actions are taken, and that further study of changing demographics and the patterns and directions of community growth is warranted. Among the options is the redevelopment of existing sites to increase school building capacity. Such options would involve the cooperation and support of the residents and the general population of the City, as well as flexibility in the application of development standards, e.g., setbacks or parking requirements. As VCS moves forward in implementing future capital improvements, it is important to maintain a balance between optimized school operations with the community's desires to strengthen neighborhood cohesiveness and identity.

If, after all options have been considered, a determination is made to vacate any existing neighborhood school, it is important that its site is reused beneficially. A site and building deemed unworthy as a school could be equally and perhaps more unsuitable for another use. With this being the case, these neighborhoods would be confronted by the prospect of a vacant, deteriorating, and, in many cases, an unusable building. This would harm property values and eliminate a long-standing anchor around which these neighborhoods were built. Any plans to vacate existing school sites should be accompanied by a viable reuse strategy.

An excellent example of the adaptive reuse of a former Valparaiso school is the Village Park Enrichment Center, which opened in 1978 in the former Banta Elementary School structure. Managed in partnership between the Valparaiso Department of Parks and Recreation and Pines Village Retirement Communities, the center offers an extensive list of activities for mature adults, including a fitness center, spaces for music and dancing programs, lunches, health screenings, educational programs, and many other social activities.

Other potential adaptive reuses for former school buildings could include professional offices, art studios and galleries, music and dance studios with performance space, or as school corporation administrative activities. Unless well-designed, reuse of these sites for non-institutional purposes can be problematic, causing negative impacts on the existing residential uses and

² "How much is a Neighborhood School Worth?" William T. Bogart and Brian A. Cromwell, October 8, 1998, revised June 2, 1999.

Case Study: New Chicago Elementary School

The former New Chicago Elementary School in North Memphis, TN was built during the early 1960s and remained operable until the late 1980s. Through the partnership of Greater Community Projects, Inc., Church of God in Christ Greater Community Temple (GCT), and the City of Memphis and First Tennessee Housing Corporation (FTHC), the school was converted into Chicago Park Place — a mixed-use structure with 39 affordable rental units for seniors, a police mini-precinct, and a community center. The Salem Community Activities Center, Inc. offers a variety of services including a food pantry, karate classes, after-school tutoring program, volleyball and basketball leagues, GED classes, and also serves as an entertainment venue for parties and weddings.

Source: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. "Back to School: Communities Ace Adaptive Reuse Test." Bridges. Winter 2000.

neighborhoods. It is also important that the intensity of use of the building and site is comparable or lower than that of a public school, unless situated within a commercial area and fronting a major street. Additionally, it is desirable to continue the use of any playgrounds or athletic fields as a community asset.

In the event that the suitable reuse of a school building cannot be secured, the site should be considered for clearing by VCS and made available either as open space or for construction of another building and occupancy that fits into the scale and context of the surrounding neighborhood. The City might also explore the opportunities to use vacated building sites as urban garden plots for use by nearby residents.

City/School Corporation Partnering Opportunities

For the purpose of addressing the neighborhood schools issue, the City would benefit from building and maintaining a strong relationship with Valparaiso Community Schools (VCS). However, there are advantages for cities to partner with school districts in general. Public perception is that cities somehow govern schools, or at least are highly influential regarding school location policies. This perception is likely due to several factors:

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Indiana cities that lost population over the past decade include:

	<u>% Decline</u>
Anderson	-6.0
Gary	-21.9
Hammond	-2.7
Kokomo	-1.4
Richmond	-5.9
South Bend	-6.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

- Cities and school corporations are public, tax collecting entities. They are thus, both seen as local governments.
- Both cities and school corporations collect property taxes, which in most cases are consolidated in tax bills. This creates an inaccurate assumption that the funds end up in the same coffers, which are then administered through a common entity.
- City and school corporations make land use policy decisions that influence the character and urban form of a city.
- City planning documents often make recommendations regarding the siting of schools. Typically these include:
 - Elementary schools should be located within neighborhoods, along collector streets, with good pedestrian access.
 - School playgrounds, athletic fields, and other outdoor recreation areas should be located in concert with park facilities for mutual benefit.
 - Middle schools and high schools should be located along roadways that can handle the traffic impacts, such as major collectors and arterials.
 - Traffic impacts should be mitigated through sound site development, off-site improvements, and day-to-day operational practices.

School corporations commonly make policy decisions that result in the siting of new schools with little (or no) input or influence by city officials. In many cases, however, the independent decision-making of school corporations could result in increased costs. For example, school officials may not avail themselves of city assistance early enough in the site selection and planning process. This could result in premature site investments and building design costs, leading to the need for costly site changes or even redesign. For instance, the site location may not have taken into consideration that utilities are not yet available; the platting of the property might involve a roadway that is shown on the City's thoroughfare plan; or the fire department might not be able to adequately serve the site. Building codes, which apply regardless of site development exemptions, might also overwhelm a budget, whereas earlier coordination may have led to discussion of options prior to design. Therefore, there is potential benefit to the school administrators by working in closer coordination with the City.

The City may also benefit by partnering with the school corporation. Public concern will continue to press regarding school siting issues. Also, while most schools are successful in managing on-site traffic to address safety and convenience, off-site traffic management tends to fall to the City. Also, when a school is removed from an existing neighborhood, there is evidence that



doing so causes a reduction in home property values in the area that was originally served by the school. In a study examining the relationship between local public schools and home prices, it was found that disrupting neighborhood schools reduces home values by as much as 9.9 percent.³

There is evolving public dialogue regarding the advantages and disadvantages of public school policies. The citizens of Valparaiso have been active in the public process that VCS has made available. These ongoing discussions present an opportunity for City officials to formalize and strengthen their relationship with VCS.

Housing Advocate Agencies

Of many cities in Indiana, Valparaiso is in a relatively stable, strong position. It's one percent average annual increase in population, though moderate, exceeded the County and State growth rates during the past decade. The City has not followed the trend of many other cities in the State that are losing population (see inset to left). Other advantages of Valparaiso include its lower unemployment rate than that of the County and State, as well as a lower percentage of population living in poverty. However, there remain needs within the City.

There are several organizations that provide affordable and special needs housing to help prevent/end homelessness in the City and County. Representatives from these agencies participated in the preparation of this plan and provided the following information and input:

Project Neighborhoods. This group is organized by several individuals that have provided housing, at 60 to 65 percent of market value, in the area for over 40 years. It has no "system" per se, nor staff to support it. It works largely with volunteer groups and hopes to keep housing costs for individual dwellings at or below \$500.00 per month. The group is funded through donations, which provide the collateral for bank loans that are repaid by the residents of the homes.

Opportunity Enterprises. This organization serves people with developmental disabilities and is funded through Medicaid and donations. Although this non-profit agency has grown, its clientele is growing as well, especially in an environment of an aging population. A lack of affordable housing in the City has made it increasingly difficult for the organization to keep pace with the growing need, often resulting in living situations where three or more people must live together to make the dwelling affordable for the individuals.

³ "How Much is a Neighborhood School Worth?" William T. Bogart and Brian A. Cromwell, October 8, 1998, revised June 2, 1999

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 The logo for ENOVISION 2030 VALPARAISO features the word "ENOVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font. The "O" is stylized with a colorful circular graphic. Below it, "2030" and "VALPARAISO" are written in a smaller, similar font.


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This is an example of a Habitat for Humanity, Porter County, home nearing finished construction.



Campbell Street Café is exemplary of a Suburban Commercial use that is designed to blend in with the neighborhood.

Porter Starke Services. This not-for-profit provides mental health services. Not all of its clients are in need of housing, but those that need housing assistance present challenges due to financing restrictions. The number of people that are in need of such services has grown, due to state-run hospital closings, and other nursing-style facility closings, as well. Once a facility closes, the patients are relocated to their County of origin. This state-wide policy sometimes results in an unexpected influx of clients.

Porter Starke follows a policy of first placing individuals in group housing, and then transitioning them to become more independent. The transition typically occurs to an apartment. Currently, the agency houses about 60 individuals, but it projects that the number of people in need of group and then affordable apartment housing will double by the year 2017.

Habitat for Humanity. Porter County is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity, International, which has been building homes since 1976, largely in the United States, but also in many countries around the world. The organization coordinates donations of money and labor to build affordable homes for families that participate in the construction of their homes. The families then finance their houses through non-profit mortgages.

The local affiliate has been operating since 1998, and has built 16 homes. Nine of the homes are within Valparaiso. The agency's success is that none of its clients have defaulted on their mortgages. On average, such payments are roughly two-thirds of the private market per square foot.

The local organization is aiming to extend better outreach to families that may qualify for a Habitat home. At this time, the group is seeking to increase its clientele through better communication.

Generally, the City is an advocate for the provision of affordable homes, particularly on infill lots. In fact, the City has partnered with local and regional agencies to meet the community's affordable housing needs, including discounts or waivers of permit costs and liens. Of course, such discounts and waivers are on a case-by-case basis and subject to a good and reasonable proposal on behalf of agency requests. By way of example, from January 2011 to its expiration on October 31, 2012, the City waived all permit and tap fees for single- and two-family dwellings.

Housing Opportunities. This is the housing agency that serves Northwest Indiana. It works to provide housing choices to low-income families, prevent foreclosures and homelessness, and works to transition individuals and families from homelessness into housing. Funded primarily through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the agency provides rent and utility assistance to those who qualify. In Valparaiso, the organization has eight transitional housing units and 14 permanent rental units. Ten of the 14 units are available for families, and four are available for

individuals. The agency also assists its clients to find dwellings that are privately owned. Doing so, however, has become challenging in Valparaiso due to relatively high rents, and also reluctance to rent to low-income families. These factors have led to the placement of several families in cities outside of Valparaiso.

Pines Village Retirement Communities. This organization focuses on housing for the elderly. It operates two campuses in Valparaiso. Pine Village has 111 “apartment-style” rental units. The Meridian is a suburban-style development with 63 occupied cottages and duplexes. The agency also manages two places that offer activities to the elderly – a senior center on Beech Street and the Campbell Street Café, located within The Meridian.

All units are considered independent living, with assistance as needed for low-income aging in place. The agency has identified a need for independent housing for the elderly, as well as assistance to elderly citizens that are living in traditional homes they can no longer maintain.

The Meridian Woods development is a 39 acre planned unit development (PUD). Currently, 21 acres are undeveloped, which includes current plans for a 110 unit, two-story apartment building with below-ground parking. Additionally, there are 11 unbuilt duplex lots plus three other parcels yet to be developed.

All of the above organizations have accomplished successful projects, and quite often work in partnership with one another. However, the key participants agreed that there is a lack of central, organized leadership to coordinate these much-needed and growing efforts.

No Place Like Home – Porter County, Indiana, Plan to End Homelessness

The City recently partnered with the above agencies, plus 16 others, to study housing needs in Porter County. The resulting 10-year plan, completed in January 2012, was the “No Place Like Home, Porter County, Indiana, Plan to End Homelessness”. The study found that homelessness is growing, which is caused by several factors. For instance, the study found that there are 44 percent more individuals living below poverty since 1989, there is a lack of affordable housing (i.e., demand exceeds the supply of transitional, emergency, and permanent affordable housing), and rents have steadily increased. The median annual earnings and household income have also declined in Porter County since 2000.⁴

There is a group of leaders dedicated to the cause of affordable housing that formed the Coalition of Affordable Housing (the “Coalition”) in 1999. The Coalition focuses on issues unique to Porter County. It is working to better

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The Coalition for Affordable Housing participating agencies include:

- Catholic Charities
- City of Valparaiso
- Community Services of Starke County
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- First Contact
- First United Methodist Church of Valparaiso
- Gabriel’s Horn
- Geminus Head Start
- HealthLinc Community Health Center
- Horizon Bank
- Housing Opportunities
- Mental Health America of Porter County
- New Creation Business Advocates
- Pines Village Retirement Communities
- Porter County Aging and Community Services
- Porter County Red Cross
- Porter-Starke Services
- Rebuilding Together
- Salvation Army of Porter County
- The Caring Place
- United Way of Porter County
- Veterans Administration

Source: No Place Like Home, Porter County, Indiana Plan to End Homelessness

⁴ No Place Like Home, Porter County, Indiana, Plan to End Homelessness



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coordinate efforts and to reduce redundancies, confusion, and time spent addressing individual cases.

Strategies of the housing plan are expressed through “best practices,” meaning that they have been found to be effective in other communities. These include:

- *Housing first* – Providers focus on placing homeless individuals and families in a dwelling, and then turn their focus to the issues that resulted in homelessness in each individual case.
- *Housing with supportive services* – Housing is combined with health and other service needs to keep individuals and families housed.
- *Discharge planning* – Providers work with institutionalized persons to plan for housing prior to their discharge.
- *Critical care intervention* – Providers tailor a comprehensive plan for persons to be released from an institution.
- *Income security* – Individuals are provided with information regarding Social Security and/or food stamps, and with training opportunities.
- *Coordinated system of care*– Individuals are assigned specific programs tailored to their individual needs.

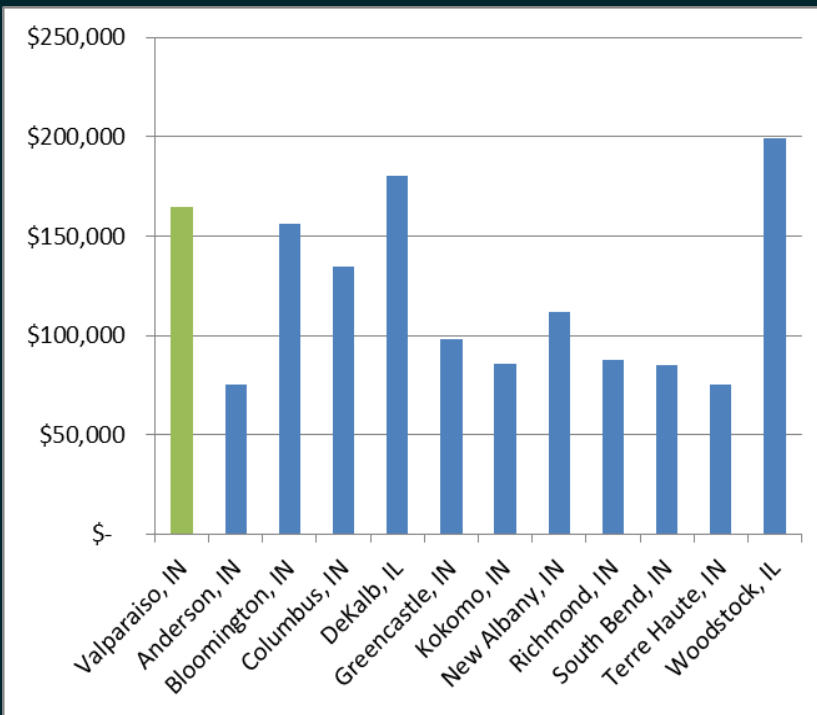
The housing plan reported that Valparaiso had the third highest percentage of people below poverty of all the incorporated areas in Porter County. Poverty is defined by an annual income of \$17,374 for a family of three and \$22,314 for a family of four, according to the U.S. Census. The estimated income considered to be “self-sufficient” in the Porter County is \$39,803 for a family of three and \$47,395 for a family of four. According to the analysis, it is those who live above the poverty line, but not to the level considered “self-sufficient”, that has grown significantly over the past 10 years. In 2009, almost 30 percent of the County population earned less than \$35,000.⁵ The City itself fared better than the County with only 22.3 percent of its families earning less than \$35,000 annually (see **Table 6.3, Family Income Levels, 2010**)⁶. However, this means that nearly one in four families in the City is in need of affordable housing.

Table 6.3, Family Income Levels, 2010

Family Income	% of Total	Cumulative Total (%)
Less than \$10,000	5.9	5.9
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1.3	7.2

⁵ No Place Like Home, Porter County, Indiana, Plan to End Homelessness

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2010 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

Figure 6.2, Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes

Source: U.S. Census, 2010

Table 6.3, Family Income Levels, 2010

\$15,000 to \$24,999	7.3	14.5
\$25,000 to \$34,999	7.8	22.3
\$35,000 to \$49,999	14.4	36.7
\$50,000 to \$74,999	22.9	59.6
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13.5	73.1
\$100,000 to \$149,999	17.6	90.7
\$150,000 to \$199,999	5.1	95.8
More than \$200,000	4.4	100

Source: 2008-2010 American Community Survey, 3-Year Estimates

A perception of many people who provided input to this plan and particularly those that contributed to this chapter is that housing is more expensive in Valparaiso than in other cities. The housing plan compared rents as a percentage of income in 2000 and 2009 and found that the cost burden in Valparaiso had increased significantly. Paying more than 30 percent of household income for rent is considered cost burdened. One third of Porter County's renter households are considered cost burdened.⁷ Within the City, 47 percent of renting households are cost burdened.⁸

⁷ No Place Like Home, Porter County, Indiana, Plan to End Homelessness

⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2010 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates



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ElderStyle is a public-private partnership formed in 2007 between the Valparaiso Department of Parks and Recreation and Pines Village Retirement Communities that integrates efforts to support healthy living and to create a network of community choices that will enable older adults to live well. The ElderStyle Initiative engages multiple sectors—city departments, service providers, businesses, health care professionals, nonprofit organizations, and faith communities—to build a network and coordinate with local community resources that will create vibrant and healthy community environments

Source: ElderStyle Initiative Strategic Plan, Valparaiso, Indiana

Owner-occupied housing is more costly in Valparaiso than other cities in Indiana. Displayed in **Figure 6.2, Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes** is the median value of owner-occupied homes for college/university communities in Indiana and nearby states. Other than DeKalb and Woodstock, Illinois, Valparaiso's median value of owner-occupied units is the highest of these communities. Analysis of Valparaiso's values in relation to the comparison cities indicates that it is relatively costly to own a home in Valparaiso.

The above findings point to a trend whereby an increasing percentage of the population are unable to keep pace with rising rents and home costs. As a result, as the housing plan concluded, there is a growing risk of homelessness. It is therefore, reaching a point for which the City must raise its awareness and focus on the growing housing issues in the community.

Housing for the Elderly

More than one-half of the nation's Baby Boomers has reached or surpassed the age of 50.⁹ In order to accommodate the needs of an aging population, all levels of government must be involved. Northwest Indiana Community Action (NWI-CA) conducted a needs assessment in 2011, which included a survey of older adults. It found that 30 percent of older adults surveyed believe that housing is a core life need. It also reported a survey by the American Association of Retired People (AARP), which concluded that more than eight out of 10 elderly people would prefer to "age in place." Four out of five seniors plan to remain in Northwest Indiana. The Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults (CASAO) found that older adults were less likely to rate elderly services as "excellent" or "good" when compared with national averages. This indicates that there are needs that are not being met. As Valparaiso's population ages, these needs will increase unless they are addressed in the near term.

The CASAO survey also found that roughly one in four older individuals have experienced difficulty in finding proper housing. About the same percentage of the elderly spend more on housing than is considered acceptable by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standards. Almost one-half of survey respondents reported having problems maintaining their homes. This is particularly critical for Valparaiso due to its aging housing stock.

The City's Department of Parks and Recreation recently partnered with The Pines Retirement Communities to address the needs of the growing elderly population. The partnership is referred to as "ElderStyle", which works to address the needs of the City's elderly citizens, including those that remain significantly active. The group oversaw the creation of the ElderStyle

⁹ Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults, Northwest Indiana Community Action, 2011



Initiative Strategic Plan, which includes goals and strategies to meet a broad range of the existing and anticipated needs of the elderly population. In the area of housing, it focuses on providing appropriate and affordable housing, as well as continued support for “aging in place”. The plan also stressed the importance of reducing barriers and reducing threats to safety, fostering change, and providing support resources.

The private market has been addressing the needs of the elderly through several development styles, ranging from single-family homes to mid-rise, multi-family buildings (see **Table 6.4, Elderly Housing Types**). The difference between these and non-age-restricted developments is negligible from a zoning perspective. However, there are several implications to be considered. For example, the level of medical care that is needed in these developments ranges from none to daily, skilled nursing care. As the required level of care increases, there are impacts to mitigate, such as required parking, site access, and traffic circulation.

6.3 LEADERSHIP IN HOUSING

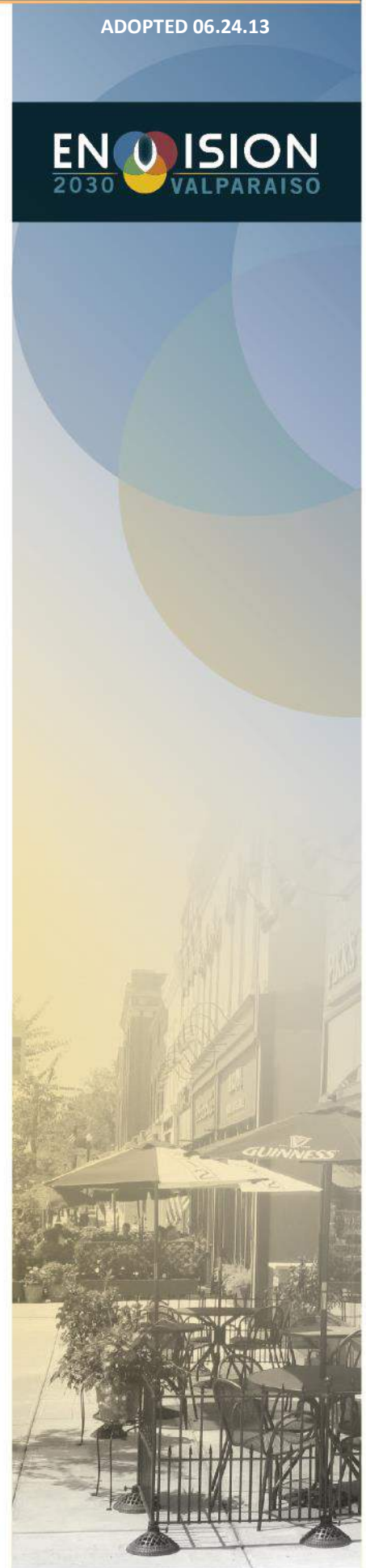
Several of the housing officials and advocates that participated in this plan have projected their best estimates for housing needs for certain housing types. As cited and summarized in this chapter, there have been several studies conducted to assist these organizations and the City in determining the necessary focus. However, currently there is not a centralized housing authority. Furthermore, there has not been a study conducted to project specific housing needs in terms of the types and numbers of dwelling units.

Housing organization representatives are committed to increasing the quality of living for their respective clientele. Their efforts are making differences in the lives of many at-risk citizens. Some of these groups partner with one another, largely on a case-by-case basis. The work that is conducted by these organizations could be significantly enhanced by a public or non-profit agency assuming a leadership role in providing housing for people at lower, or increasingly declining, income levels. The two most significant action items recommended in this chapter include:

6.1. Consider assigning staff to:

- Coordinate the work of all agencies that are involved in providing housing.
- Provide leadership and oversight of a Comprehensive Housing Plan (see 6.b, below).
 - Work with departments of the City, such as Planning, Building, Engineering, and Administration (specifically, the Neighborhood Coordinator) to:
 - Keep them informed of housing issues in the community;

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 The logo for ENOVISION 2030 VALPARAISO features the word "ENOVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter "O" is replaced by a circular graphic composed of several overlapping colored segments (blue, green, yellow, orange, red). Below "ENOVISION" is the year "2030" and the word "VALPARAISO" in a smaller, all-caps font.


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- Participate in the development of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to ensure that connectivity and access are further enhanced within the City;
- Coordinate efforts to implement the policies and actions of this chapter; and
- Promote public awareness programs that inform homeowners and renters of ways to reduce utility costs with alternative energy and conservation practices.



Table 6.4 - Elderly Housing Types

Common Use Nomenclature	Other Associated Nomenclature	Level of Care ¹	Typical Housing Type	Zoning Regulation Implications	Example
Retirement Community	Active Adult Community; Age-Restricted Housing	None	Single family residential	May need special permission for recreational uses	
Co-housing	N/A	None	"Clustered" housing, or multiplex	1) Need allowances for shared facilities ("Common House") 2) Parking is in a separate lot (versus individual, on-site drives/garages)	
Independent Living	Congregate Care	1	Cottage or apartment	Tend to offer increased open space	
Board and Care Facility	Adult Residential Facility; Group Homes; Micro-Community	1	Typically in an existing single family home	May have statutory protection to a certain maximum number of persons per household	
Assisted Living	Residential Care for the Elderly; Personal Care Home	1	Range from single family to apartments	Could consider reduced parking requirements.	
Alzheimer Care Facility	Memory Care; Dementia Care	2	Tend to be multiplexes	Could consider reduced parking requirements	
Nursing Home	Skilled Nursing Facility	3	Tend to be multiplexes	Could consider reduced parking requirements	
Continuing Care Retirement Community	Fee for Service Continuing Care Retirement Community	Jan-32	Mix of unit types	1) May need to be a Planned Development due to mix of housing 2) Could consider reduced parking requirements	

¹ Levels of care:

Level 0 – No special or additional care needed

Level 1 – Occasional daily routine services that do not require skilled medical personnel such as laundry, entertainment/companionship, transportation, toileting, bathing, grooming, dressing.

Level 2 – Skilled nursing care is required but constant care/supervision is not.

Level 3 – 24 hour, seven days a week care is required, and care is given by a registered nurse, licensed vocational nurse, and/or certified nurse's aide.

2 "Aging in place" concept, with services geared to individual needs.

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The HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) is a type of Federal assistance provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to states in order to provide decent and affordable housing, particularly housing for low- and very low-income Americans. It is the largest Federal block grant to states and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income families, providing over \$2 billion each year. The program is commonly referred to as the **Home Investment** or **Home Partnership** Program, and is often operating in conjunction with other housing and urban development programs, such as the CDBG program.

Source: Wikipedia

6.2. Develop a Comprehensive Housing Plan that will:

- Incorporate all of the housing-related portions of the CASAO survey, as well as the No Place Like Home and ElderStyle plans;
- Align the policies and actions of this Comprehensive Plan Update;
- Perform a detailed demographic analysis that projects the dwelling unit types and related services by specific housing needs;
- Provide specific implementation strategies (including funding options) to meet targeted housing needs. These should include methods for seeking Federal funding through the HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) administered through HUD.
- Specify the conditions by which multi-family housing may be acceptable and appropriate, including site selection and location criteria, separation and buffering policies, and building and site design standards.
- Develop an inventory of undeveloped and underdeveloped sites that provide suitable locations for higher-density housing. Particularly:
 - Identify sites that are suitable for special needs housing due to their proximity to services for the elderly, disabled, and other citizens of special needs.
 - Target small homes within the community (i.e., units of less than 1,200 square feet), and clusters of such dwellings, for preservation and rehabilitation, as needed, to maintain the affordability of the local housing stock.

6.4 HOUSING POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Affordable and Diverse Housing

Policies

- 6.a. Encourage a variety of alternative housing styles to be developed through application of Division 3.600 of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).
- 6.b. Encourage vertical, mixed-use buildings (residential use on upper floors above ground-level retail, office, or services) in Downtown.
- 6.c. Continue to incorporate and zone adequate land to accommodate low-density residential development that will maintain a rural or suburban character. Otherwise, those seeking larger-lot living arrangements will look to property and developments in the outlying, unincorporated areas, which may contribute to a sprawling development pattern and reduced tax base.
- 6.d. In concert with cluster and conservation development, encourage mixed housing types.



- 6.e. Support the UDO's provisions for lot averaging to promote a broader variety of unit sizes with different price points. These regulations establish an average, rather than a minimum, lot size whereby lot sizes are required to vary in width, with a certain percentage being narrower and the remaining being wider than the average. The smaller, narrower lots may be used for market rate housing.
- 6.f. Locate affordable housing developments near areas with the highest level of services (e.g. schools, parks, transit routes).
- 6.g. Integrate affordable housing units within new multi-family developments to ensure better long-time maintenance of these units.
- 6.h. Use housing as a marketing and economic development tool to attract prospective employers and residents.
- 6.i. Use the UDO provisions to guide the types, patterns, and designs of housing developments that complement market demand while preserving and enhancing community character.
- 6.j. Downtown housing should complement its commercial, entertainment, and open space amenities.

Actions

- 6.3. Consider financial, regulatory, and other incentives (discounted permit costs, lien waivers, etc.) to encourage affordable housing.
- 6.4. Study the parking needs of different types and sizes of housing, research typical parking ratios used in other communities, and consider whether the current parking requirements warrant amendment. Such amendment may require parking deferral whereby space is reserved should additional parking be needed in the future.
- 6.5. Continue to conform with the requirements of the Indiana Building Code¹⁰ concerning the percentage of multi-family units required to be ADA accessible.
- 6.6. Coordinate with the Valparaiso Area Chamber of Commerce to monitor housing-related inquiries and concerns of major employers, small businesses, and economic development prospects. Of particular interest is the socioeconomic profile and potential home purchasing power (or rental needs) of workers in the area's businesses and industries.
- 6.7. Identify and recruit development companies with a track-record of building quality housing in small-lot, attached, and higher-density formats, as well as in mixed-use, downtown, and transit-oriented development settings.
- 6.8. Partner with major employers to ensure existing and prospective employees have access to affordable housing.

¹⁰ 675 IAC 13 (*Indiana Building Code*)



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- 6.9. Evaluate and mitigate any regulatory or procedural impediments to affordable housing.
- 6.10. Consider the integration of a certain percentage of affordable housing units in new multi-family developments to meet increasing, long-term needs.
- 6.11. Partner with the social service community to pursue funding for first-time homebuyers, low-income families, and persons with disabilities.
- 6.12. Continue to conform with the Indiana Building Code concerning “visitability” standards.¹¹
- 6.13. Utilize the UDO housing palette associated with each residential district, to facilitate more than one housing type.

Neighborhood Protection

Policies

- 6.k. The City will consider adoption of measures that protect the residential and historic character of established neighborhoods and protect structures of recognized historical or architectural significance
- 6.l. The City will strengthen its partnership with Valparaiso Community Schools (VCS) to:
 - Accomplish the policies and actions of this plan;
 - Provide options to increase the potential for neighborhood schools to be remodeled and expanded in their existing locations;
 - As warranted, assist VCS in the development of new school sites to identify potential roadblocks and inform the corporation of site development and subdivision regulation requirements in the planning stages of the school site; and
 - Locate recreational facilities that will complement new and existing school locations, and to provide pedestrian linkages.
- 6.m. The City will encourage and support the adaptive reuse of decommissioned school sites in a manner that minimizes adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods.
- 6.n. The City will continue to reinvest and revitalize public infrastructure, which lays the foundation for well-maintained and cohesive neighborhoods.
- 6.o. The City will strive to eliminate neighborhood blight and unsightly conditions through proactive programming and public assistance in order to improve the quality of life of owners and neighbors.

¹¹ 675 IAC 27 (Indiana Visitability Code, for 1-2 family), 675 IAC 13 (Indiana Building Code, for multi-family)

- 6.p. Code enforcement will be used as an effective tool for maintaining the health, safety, and appearance of neighborhoods.
- 6.q. Partnerships with and among local organizations and government entities will be formed to solve housing problems that incur financial burdens.

Actions

- 6.14. Create an initiative to utilize tax increment financing (TIP) as local funding for community and economic development/redevelopment activities in established neighborhoods, and especially Downtown.
- 6.15. Together with the current rental registration requirement, consider a bi-annual rental inspection program that will enable the City to identify and enforce property maintenance standards. This type of program is important not only for the safety of occupants, but it also serves to maintain property values and helps to stabilize mature or at-risk neighborhoods.
- 6.16. Promote neighborhood pride and stimulate resident involvement in improvement activities, including:
 - Seasonal “clean up, fix up” events.
 - “Neighborhood Pride” days focusing on beautification.
 - Annual “amnesty pickup” of large refuse items with the assistance of City crews and volunteers.
- 6.17. Form a target-area capital investment program focused on infrastructure improvements within at-risk neighborhoods. This is to provide a dedicated source of annual funding for use in making infrastructure improvements and thus, leveraging private reinvestment through rehabilitation, redevelopment, building additions, and/or infill development.
- 6.18. Work with local lenders to form low-interest loan pools for housing rehabilitation. If local lenders keep these loans in their portfolio instead of selling them to secondary markets, they may be able to “stretch” some of the lending requirements, such as loan-to-value ratios and closing costs.
- 6.19. Seek the participation of churches, civic organizations, schools, and businesses in neighborhood improvement and revitalization efforts.
- 6.20. Develop and fund a program that provides incentives to transform converted multifamily structures back into single-family occupancy.
- 6.21. Create incentives for homeowners in historic neighborhoods to protect and enhance the historic character of the neighborhood to promote increased property values. Such incentives may include fee waivers, assistance in securing low interest loans, grants or subsidies for energy efficient and historically conforming renovations, and/or a freeze on the

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Case Study: Rental Housing Conversion Program, Carbondale, IL

Recognizing the importance of home ownership within the community to strengthen and revitalize established residential neighborhoods, the City of Carbondale adopted an ordinance creating the Single Family Housing Conversion Program, which is designed to stimulate and encourage the conversion of single family houses that have been registered rentals to owner-occupied housing. The City's commitment includes:

- A \$5,000 grant given to approved home buyers of a single family home that has been registered with the City's Mandatory Rental Housing Inspection Program for more than two years. The home must also be located in a residential zone within the corporate limits of the City.
- The City will waive all applicable permit fees for home improvements for two years after the purchase.
- The City will provide the homeowner with a housing inspection by a Building and Neighborhood Services Housing Inspector.

Source: Carbondale, IL.
www.ci.carbondale.il.us



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pre-renovation taxable value for a period of five or 10 years.

Neighborhood Preservation

Policies

- 6.r. The City will aim to stabilize and improve housing and property conditions to improve livability, foster an improved sense of community, maintain property values, and boost the City's image and marketability.
- 6.s. The City will continue to recognize its historic residential and commercial areas and individual sites as highly significant assets to its fabric and image.
- 6.t. Neighborhood schools will continue to be supported by the city in recognition of their significant contribution to the quality of life of those who live around them.
- 6.u. The City will continue to value the integrity of important historical resources.

Actions

- 6.22. Consider a full range of options to protect historic areas and determine which is the most suitable for each individual neighborhood or area. Ensure the process for making such determination is of the highest level of inclusiveness. Begin the process with public education efforts to reveal the importance of protecting historic areas and the associated benefits to property values. Target participation by the owners of the properties that will be the most impacted by any standards, guidelines, or policies that are adopted (those who own the historic properties or properties that are within the historic areas). Options to consider include:
 - Update the 1990-91 historical structures study, using evaluation criteria that are consistent with City and neighborhood goals and objectives.
 - Review the Banta historic district amendment that was repealed for potential redrafting to a level that is more viable and accepted by the community. This option may be the most restrictive, and one that could be used to inhibit demolition of buildings that have been identified as fully protected through the amendment adoption process.
 - Explore an ordinance developed in partnership with homeowners that sets building standards referencing architectural styles that exist in the district. This option would not prohibit demolition, but could set standards for additions, infill development, and rebuilt

structures to be compatible with the distinctive image of its surrounding area.

- Initiate a technical support program for those seeking to renovate, rebuild, or build on vacant lots within the historic area. This would involve educational materials and promoting the City's values prior to, and during, the building permit process.

Quality Neighborhood Design

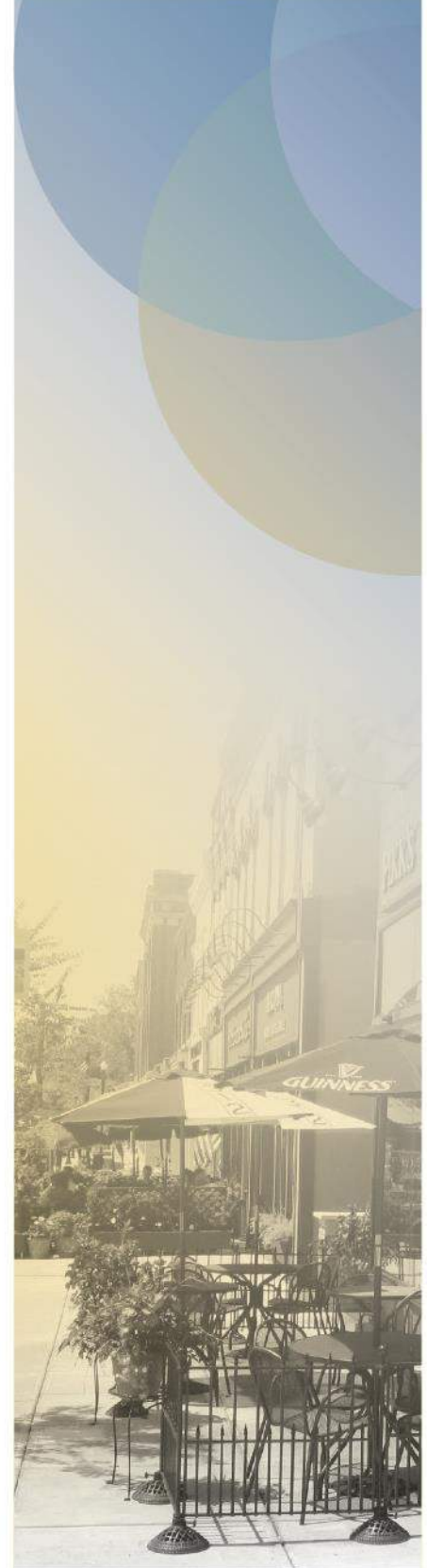
Policies

- 6.v. The City will continue to utilize the UDO to protect the integrity of neighborhoods from incompatible architecture, building quality, landscaping, and uses.
- 6.w. The design of neighborhoods should be site specific and accommodating to each housing type - while concurrently maintaining visual and functional standards that complement surrounding land uses.
- 6.x. Street, sidewalk, and trail networks should maximize connection points to the existing street pattern and the City's trail system.
- 6.y. Tree preservation and open space will be used to enhance neighborhood character thereby warranting protection in the design of subdivisions.

Actions

- 6.23. Actively enforce the UDO's street tree requirements, tree preservation provisions, and landscape buffering requirements.
- 6.24. Enforce the UDO requirement for trails and sidewalks that provide linkages between existing pathways.
- 6.25. Provide regular maintenance of pedestrian amenities, including crosswalks and signals, replacing obsolete traffic signs, and synchronizing traffic signals.
- 6.26. Use the earlier recommended suitability guidelines to site higher-density housing near major roadways, and with adequate separation and buffering from low-density housing areas. This may be done by providing for increased density in transition areas near arterial streets.
- 6.27. Create a checklist of quality of design criteria for use in evaluating proposed developments. This list should include:
 - A focal point, whether a park or central green, school, community center, place of worship, or suburban commercial activity.
 - Equal importance of pedestrian and vehicular circulation. Street design which accommodates, but also calms, necessary automobile traffic. Sidewalks along or away from streets, and/or a network of

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 The logo features the word "EN" in white, a stylized "V" in a circle with blue, yellow, and red segments, and the word "ISION" in white. Below this, "2030" is in white and "VALPARAISO" is in blue.


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off-street trails, provide for pedestrian and bicycle circulation (especially for school children) and promote interconnectivity of adjacent neighborhoods.

- A variety of dwelling types to address a range of needs among potential residents (based on age, income level, household size, etc.).
- Access to schools, recreation, and daily conveniences within close proximity to the neighborhood, if not within or at its edges (such as along bordering major streets).
- An effective, well-connected street layout that provides multiple paths to external destinations (and critical access for emergency vehicles) while also discouraging non-local or cut-through traffic.
- Appealing streetscapes, whether achieved through street trees or other design elements, which “soften” an otherwise intensive atmosphere and draw residents to enjoy common areas of their neighborhood. This should include landscape designs consistent with local climate and vegetation.
- Compatibility of fringe or adjacent uses, or measures to buffer the neighborhood from incompatible development.
- Set-aside of conservation areas, greenbelts, or other open space as an amenity, to encourage leisure and healthful living, and to contribute to neighborhood buffering and definition.
- Use of local streets for parking to reduce the lot area that must be devoted to driveways and garages, and for the traffic calming benefits of on-street parking.
- Respect for historic sites and structures, and incorporation of such assets into neighborhood design.
- Encouragement to integrate mixed uses, to provide commercial and other amenities within walking distance.



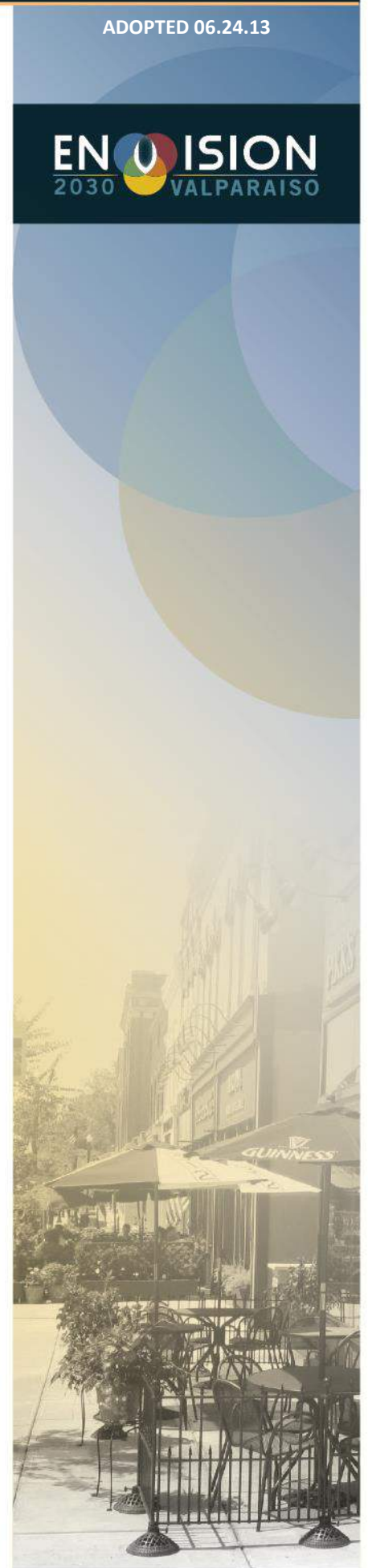
Growth Capacity

7.1 INTRODUCTION

When a community is poised for ongoing growth, as is Valparaiso, a long-range planning process provides an opportunity to assess the City's readiness to accommodate this new population and economic development and to do so in a way that is fiscally responsible and will maintain the continuity of and enhance community character. This requires assertive efforts by municipal government to plan the timely extension of adequate infrastructure, provide quality public services, logically sequence future development, and form an annexation strategy that is in line with the City's capacity to serve anticipated growth.

The purpose of this chapter is to clarify and establish City policy regarding how growth and new development will be accommodated in an orderly and beneficial manner that is consistent with other fiscal and community considerations. Chief among these are utility infrastructure and public service capacities as well as efficient land and roadway network utilization to maintain and achieve a desired urban form and character. With regard to critical public safety services, the paramount concern is the City's ability to serve its current geographic area and residents while also preparing for the service demands that will come with the absorption of currently vacant lots, population growth, and the eventual resumption in the rate of land development that occurred prior to the recession.

This chapter also assesses the growth opportunities and challenges facing the community in coming decades, and considers where Valparaiso may need to improve its tools or the mechanisms in place to effectively respond and ensure beneficial physical and financial outcomes from ongoing growth.



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7.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

Attractors of Development

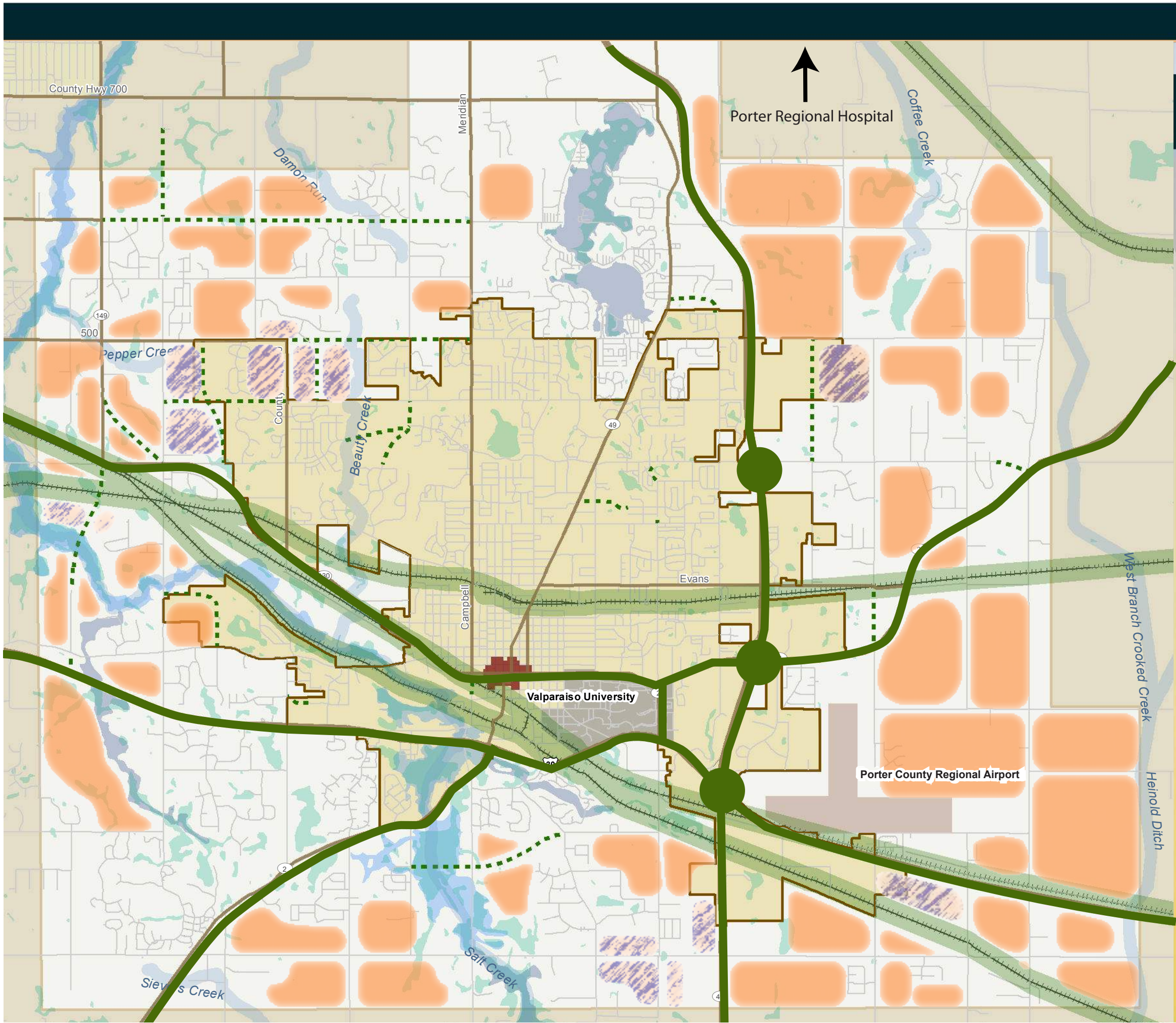
Key attractors for Valparaiso's growth planning are exhibited in **Map 7.1, Development Attractors and Impediments**, which include:

- Many Choices in Direction:* Like many freestanding communities in Indiana, Valparaiso is literally surrounded by farmland in nearly all directions. This has afforded many opportunities for developers to purchase raw land for new subdivisions and commercial areas at competitive prices. This abundance of potentially developable land has also provided the City many challenges in establishing adequate thoroughfares and utility services in an efficient manner as development extends out into formerly rural areas.
- Recent Northward Trend:* In more recent years, most (but not all) of Valparaiso's growth has occurred northward in an incremental fashion. Undeveloped areas north of the City have proven to be more desirable due to its more variable and rolling terrain, presence of woodlands, and better proximity to existing schools, parks, and the roadway system. On the other hand, southward residential growth, while still occurring, has been impeded by the lack of direct street connections between the Route 30 corridor and the original City development, the presence of railroad tracks, and the greater distance to community parks and schools.
- Route 30 Bypass Corridor:* The principal highway serving Valparaiso was U.S. 30, "Lincoln Highway," which ran east-west through Downtown until the 1960s when it was replaced by the four-lane bypass at the south edge of the City. The new corridor immediately attracted significant amounts of highway-oriented commercial development, which continues to this day.
- Indiana Route 49 Corridor:* This north-south corridor located at the eastern edge of the City has taken on greater significance in recent years, serving as Valparaiso's main gateway from the Indiana East-West Toll Road (I-80). It has attracted many of the City's newer office parks, traditional shopping centers, and "big box" retail occupancies. The recent relocation of Porter Regional Hospital to SR 49 and U.S. 6, four miles north of the City will strengthen the attractiveness of the SR 49 corridor for establishment of new medical service and health related facilities.
- Southeast Industrial Expansion:* Valparaiso's traditional industrial "cores" were situated along the three railroad lines that traverse the City from east to west. With the passage of time and new transportation trends, industrial development was supplanted by the establishment of industrial parks with better highway access, near the U.S. 30 and SR-49



The U.S. 30 Corridor continues to be an attraction for commercial development due to its volume of traffic and visibility.





Map 7.1

Development Attractors and Impediments

- Legend**
- Developable Land
 - Areas with/or in close proximity to sewer and water
 - Interchanges
 - Planned Street Connections
 - Railroad Corridor
 - City Limits
 - Study Area
 - Downtown
 - Airport
 - Valparaiso University
 - Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
 - Flood Zone (A)
 - Flood Zone (AE)
 - Streams and Rivers
 - Railroad

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corridors, particularly at the intersection of the two highways. These include the Eastport and Montdale Industrial Parks, Pratt Industries, the Aldi Distribution Center, and Northcoast Distributors. The abundance of land, well suited for "shovel ready" industrial development projects, near the Porter County Regional Airport enhances the attractiveness of this area.¹

General Impediments to Development

Some natural and human-built features have created barriers that impede the direction of growth or restrict the ability for a developer to realize the land's full potential. Examples of growth impediments include:

- *Flood Prone Areas:* The flood prone areas along Salt Creek are shown in Map 7.1, *Development Attractors and Impediments*. Much of non-flooding areas in the vicinity of Salt Creek are hindered by steep topography, poor access, older industrial uses, and the presence of the City's wastewater treatment plant.
- *Kettle ("Pothole") Lakes:* When the final Wisconsin Glacier receded, it left behind many natural kettle lakes and ponds of varying sizes. These include the significant cluster of Flint Lake, Loomis Lake, Long Lake, and several smaller spring-fed kettles immediately north of the City limits. Over the past 60 years, this unincorporated area has attracted many cottages and second homes that are served by a water and sewer conservancy district along with and other Porter County services. There are also many smaller kettle lakes and ponds scattered throughout the City's incorporated area, many of which followed natural succession and are now bogs and marshes, while others are being maintained by their property owners as small lagoons, ponds, subdivision "water features," and even golf course water hazards. Development and infrastructure planning efforts must take these natural water bodies into consideration, as they often affect the continuity of streets and utilities. They are nevertheless worthy of protection, as they can be made aesthetically attractive and often provide valuable assistance to stormwater management efforts.
- *Railroad Corridors:* The two northeast-to-southwest active rail lines that span the City along Salt Creek have acted as barriers to southward development. These include the Chicago, Ft. Wayne & Eastern Rail Road (Rail America) that roughly parallels Route 30 and the Norfolk Southern

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Highlighted above are the small kettle lakes and ponds in various natural states.



¹ Porter County Regional Airport Study (Draft) City of Valparaiso, 2012.

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Railroad, which is 1,000 to 2,000 feet south of the Rail America line.

- *Moraine Ridge:* The originally settled portions of Valparaiso were situated on top "high ground" of a moraine from the Wisconsin Glacier. The hilltop positioning of the Valparaiso University campus and the moderately steep ridge to the south around Graceland Cemetery was sufficient to deter southward growth - at least until establishment of the U.S. 30 Bypass.
- *Porter County Regional Airport:* While listed as an attractor to industrial development, it is also important to maintain certain restrictions that protect the runway approach zones from encroachment by inappropriate land uses - mainly residential and institutional development. Approach zones for the airport have been delineated as a part of the 2012 Porter County Regional Airport Master Plan.

7.3 QUANTITY AND DYNAMICS OF GROWTH

The major factor determining future physical development in Valparaiso is the demand for growth borne by its population and economic projections. Plans for future growth in terms of land area, commercial square-footage, and number of housing units should be consistent with accepted population and economic projections for the same period.

Population Increase and Future Land Development Demand

The population analysis and projections contained in Chapter 1, Planning Context, include several future alternatives for Year 2030 population based on different demographic techniques. The "Middle Ground Estimate" of the 2030 population is 37,831 persons, representing an increase of approximately 6,250 persons from the 2010 level.

This projected population change can be transformed into a land development/redevelopment demand forecast by multiplying the increase by the generalized intensity of existing residential and nonresidential development. Estimates of future development are presented in **Table 7.1, Land Development Demand, 2030.**

Table 7.1, Land Development Demand, 2030

Land Use Category	Population		Development Intensity	Developed Land (Acres)		
	2010	2030		2010	2030	Change
Residential	31,730	37,831	10.5 ac. per person	3,018	3,598	580
Nonresidential			16.6 ac. per person	1,908	2,275	367
<i>Total</i>				4,925	5,872	947

The calculations in *Table 7.1, Land Development Demand, 2030* provide estimates of base future development demands of 580 acres and 367 acres of commercial and noncommercial uses, respectively. Some of this development will occur in already established areas of the City in the form of redevelopment, rather than in undeveloped or agricultural areas at the edges of the City.

Available Vacant Parcels

Several major subdivisions, mostly at the northern and northwestern edges of the City, had been approved and were under development when the 2009-10 housing collapse occurred. The collapse and accompanying period of economic recession led to a five year "pause" in housing development, leaving approximately 1,109 vacant subdivision lots or newly constructed speculative homes available for purchase. This represents a backlog that could accommodate approximately 3,000 new residents, nearly one-half of the City's projected 2012 to 2030 population growth. The availability of these already developed lots and empty homes is likely to defer a significant amount of new residential development activity for years to come. The available lots and houses by subdivision are listed in **Table 7.2, Vacant Lots and Homes, 2012**.

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Table 7.2, Vacant Lots and Homes, 2012

Approved and Available for Building (* = estimated)	
Arbordale	4
Audubon Estates	16
Autumn Trail Condominiums	5
Beauty Creek Estates at Windsor Park North	62
Beauty Creek Villa Homes	184
Bridgewater Estates	42
Brigata Hills	70
Campbell Meadows	8
Essex Park	19
Executive Park PUD	30
Fairfield Greens	31
Harmel Park	6
Harrison West	14
Hawthorne, Phase 1	15
Keystone Commons	1
Manchester Meadows	7
Meridian Woods *	20
Mystwood, Phase 1	38
Naillieux's Addition (Cook Corners-Hemlock)	5
North Hampstead *	92
Pepper Creek	25
Pepper Creek Villa Homes *	44
Villas of Vale Park	34
Windsor Park	7
Woodside Valley, Unit B (Oak Grove Circle)	1
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>780</i>
Final Plat Pending	
Brigadoon	291
Flat Rock	38
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>329</i>
Total	1,109

Source: City of Valparaiso, Planning Department

7.4 GENERAL PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Working with the Land

Given the clear direction of growth, and the progression of recent residential growth into more varied and interesting terrain to the north and northwest, Valparaiso has an opportunity to establish a “green” framework for future development. This would involve such strategies as protecting natural drainage ways and their associated riparian areas, and identifying unique natural landmarks and asset areas that are worthy of early public acquisition (and/or private conservation methods).

Such steps would reap both environmental and practical benefits over the long-term. This includes preservation of ecological services that reduce the need for costly infrastructure while protecting public water supplies and other health and safety factors (e.g., storm water absorption and flooding attenuation, aquifer recharge, water quality protection, erosion control, reduced “heat island” effect of urbanization, etc.). These areas can also provide strategic park sites and valuable open space for passive recreation, ensuring that natural relief will be available amid the more intensive urban environment likely to emerge over time. Additionally, preserved open space is a prime amenity for nearby residential and nonresidential development, reinforcing suburban or rural character and boosting community aesthetics and image.

Just as these green framework principles can be applied to newly developing areas, the City has made substantial investments to re-apply them to the public infrastructure of established areas. These include the creation of the Vale Park Road “Spine” Greenway, the stormwater detention facility on East Chicago Street, and the proposed Pathway System improvements, which are part of the Park and Recreation Department's plans for future improvements.²

Coordinated Growth

A new future land use plan for growth at the edges of the City limits and into the unincorporated areas of Porter County will provide a basis for coordinating a range of other community-building investments by the City (and others), particularly through the City's multi-year capital improvements planning and programming. This will help to ensure that the thoroughfare network and other infrastructure and public facilities are extended and

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The Vale Park “Spine” Greenway is exemplary of the City's investment in “green” infrastructure.



² City of Valparaiso Pathways and Greenways Master Plan Update, December 2010, Dept. of Parks and Recreation. This is an update to the original plan, which was prepared in 2005.

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located consistent with anticipated directions, types, and intensities of new development. Additionally, coordination with Valparaiso Community Schools and Valparaiso University on future facility siting is essential. This can provide opportunities for joint City parkland acquisition and development in conjunction with new public facilities, as well as advance planning for area trail linkages as residential and nonresidential development plans take shape.

It is ironic, and ultimately unfortunate, that people who move to more remote locations just outside cities intending to get away from denser, in-city living can end up as being part of a trend that gradually erodes rural character through piecemeal, less regulated development. This dispersed development activity can begin to impact daily quality of life as traffic increases and raises safety issues on minimally improved county roads and at intersections. Eventually, the City—and its existing taxpayers—may have to bear the burden of bringing substandard infrastructure and public facilities up to municipal standards when previously developed land is annexed and such standards were not met originally.

Fiscally Responsible Growth

Orderly growth within the current corporate limits and ultimately into strategic unincorporated areas, is critical to the City's long-term viability. The City has a responsibility to its residents and taxpayers to ensure a growth pattern that makes good fiscal sense, particularly in terms of the infrastructure investments needed to keep pace with growth. The integrity of public safety services must also be maintained as the service areas for police, fire, and emergency medical response are stretched by geographic expansion.

Most of Valparaiso's recent development activity has been contiguous to existing developed areas of the community. Going forward, it will be essential to apply appropriate zoning in fringe areas and to use the City's annexation capabilities to ensure that Valparaiso continues to avoid a more scattered and "leapfrog" development pattern that can outstrip the City's ability to finance and provide necessary infrastructure, parks and recreation, and other public facilities and services. Besides straining local government resources, a trend toward sprawl can also undermine community character and the overall quality of life. Undesirable traffic congestion, particularly on the narrow rural roadways, often arises when new developments depend on the original County roadway system as their primary means of access. Also, it is important that the provision of parks and other public facilities remains commensurate with new growth.

The challenge—and opportunity—for Valparaiso is how best to absorb and sustain ongoing economic development and quality new residential development while ensuring a sound financial footing for municipal services,



among other community values (housing affordability, natural resource protection, downtown vitality, aesthetics and image).

Environmentally Sensible Growth

Based on the expressed desires of many residents, retirees, University and business leaders, and major employers, there is a clear and growing market opportunity for more creative design of both residential and non-residential projects in the community's new growth areas. This should include conservation design approaches that preserve significant amounts of permanent open space, capitalize on scenic vistas, and incorporate environmental features on sites as development amenities, which is happening to some extent in some newer northern edge projects. This is very much in line with the current green building movement across the Midwest and nationwide, especially through the leadership of the National Association of Home Builders and its state and regional affiliates.

7.5 Municipal Infrastructure

Utility Services

The City's sewer and water utility services, operated by Valparaíso City Utilities (VCU), serve approximately 35,000 persons and are considered to be adequate to provide services through the Year 2030. Storm sewers, however, are in need of continued upgrading. The City is continuing to invest in stormwater system improvement and enhancements to best management practices. Following are descriptions of the water, sanitary sewer, and storm water management systems.

Water Distribution - The VCU Department of Water Works maintains over 200 miles of water lines by means of two integrated water systems operating in different pressure zones, one serving the northern half of the City and the other serving the southern half. These systems are interconnected at the VCU Water Department's Evans Avenue administrative offices and garage complex. The area within which water utilities are extended is displayed in **Map 7.2, Water Service Area**.

The northern system receives its ground water supply from well fields located near Flint Lake and the Valparaíso Country Club, and water is treated at a plant situated east of Flint Lake at Wesley Road and Calumet Avenue. The northern system's service area covers the City's incorporated area north of the Canadian National (formerly Grand Trunk) railroad tracks and also reaches westward to an unincorporated subdivision at Tower Road and Apple Grove Lane. The northern system also supplies water under contract to supply the Valparaíso Lakes Conservancy District distribution system, which

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Valparaíso City Utilities provides water, sanitary, and stormwater management services to the City.



Flint Lake (North) Water Treatment Plant and Storage

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provides water to homes and businesses in the unincorporated lakes area immediately north of the City.

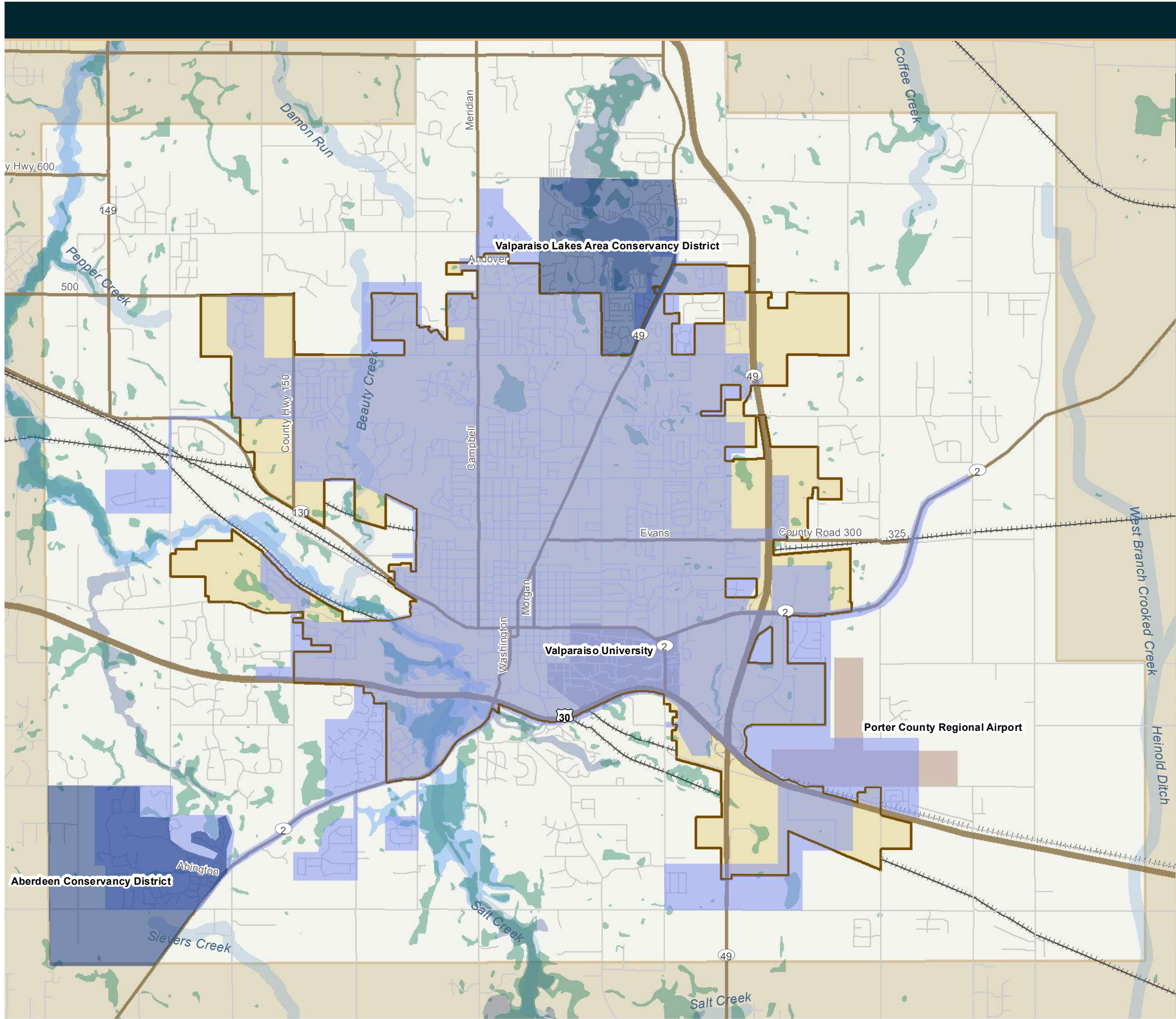
The southern water system is supplied by a well field on the premises of Porter County Regional Airport. Its treatment plant and pumping facility are immediately north of the airport on Redbow Drive. The existing water treatment plant was initially built in 1963. VCU is presently engaged in an engineering study to consider replacement alternatives. The southern distribution system serves all incorporated areas south of the Canadian National Railroad. It's services have also been extended westward to the unincorporated Aberdeen neighborhood and golf course (developed on the former Porter County Farm premises), eastward along SR 2 to the Jet Corr manufacturing plant and Washington Township School at N. 400 E. Road, and to the Porter County Jail and Fairgrounds/Exposition Center immediately south of the City limits on SR 49.

The average water demand for the service areas is approximately four million gallons per day, with dry summer peaks that double this amount. The systems together include three, two million gallon elevated storage tanks, with an additional two million gallon ground-level tank situated at each of the water treatment plants. These storage facilities are considered to be sufficient, with no current plans to add or replace water storage.

Valparaiso enjoys an Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating of 3; only one other Indiana community has an equal score. Forty percent of this rating is based on water supply capabilities and hydrant locations.

Although the systems are adequate in meeting these demands, VCU is considering improvements and investments:

- Many of the water mains are 40 to 70 years old and made of cast iron. The Department spends approximately \$500,000 each year to replace these deteriorated or aging distribution lines.
- Water supplies from Airport well field have been reported to be high in hardness, requiring higher-cost treatment water softening operations. VCU is investigating softening equipment options along with alternatives to replace or supplement wells in the airport well field with groundwater supplies from a new area southeast of the city.
- Additional wells will be needed to expand the "firm" capacity of the system, which can be provided within the City's existing well fields. VCU estimates that the fields themselves will have sufficient capacity for the next 50 years.
- VCU is investigating the implementation of automated water line flushing devices that will improve drinking water quality and reduce the



Map 7.2

Water Service Area

- Legend**
- Effective Water Service Area
 - Aberdeen Conservancy District
 - Valparaiso Lakes Area Conservancy District
 - City Limits
 - Study Area
 - Valparaiso University
 - Airport
 - Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
 - Flood Zone (A)
 - Flood Zone (AE)
 - Streams and Rivers
 - Railroad

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labor requirements for manual flushing. The utility is also considering water treatment plant filter backwash reclamation equipment to improve water use efficiency and conserve supplies.³

- The City's wells range in depth between 130 and 150 feet in depth, and the well fields rely on aquifer recharge from the immediate local area to maintain their capacities. It is important to prevent drinking water supplies from becoming polluted by managing potential sources of contamination in the areas in the vicinity of the City's three well fields. Much can be done to prevent pollution, such as the wise use of land and restriction of chemical spills.

Sanitary Sewer System - The VCU Water Reclamations Department operates 228 miles of sanitary, storm, and combined sewers. The sanitary sewer system's service area, which serves all incorporated areas, is shown in **Map 7.3, Sewer Service Area**. It also receives and treats sanitary sewage under contract from the Valparaiso Lakes Conservancy District north of the City and the Nature Works Conservancy District, which provides sewer service to the Aberdeen neighborhood.

Sanitary flows are transported by gravity within two principal sewer sheds, which generally follow the City's topography. These gravity flows are aided by 28 lift stations, 5 of which accommodate flows greater than one million gallons per day. Flows from the originally developed parts of the City and areas to the north, west, and south move directly to the Elden Kuehl Pollution Control Facility (EKPCF) on Joliet Rd. near Salt Creek. The southeastern quadrant of the City drains to Koselki Ditch, which is a tributary to the Kankakee River and terminates at the Sturdy Road Lift Station. From there, the flows are pumped by force main to the EKPCF.

The EKPCF treats an average wastewater flow of 5.5 million gallons per day and has a current designed capacity to treat peak flows of 18 million gallons per day. The conventional activated sludge plant includes tertiary mixed-media filters and ultraviolet post-treatment to the outfall flows before finally entering Salt Creek.

Residential customers generate 90 percent of all sanitary wastes, and the remaining 10 percent is from commercial and industrial accounts. There are five businesses or industries that are required to provide significant amounts of pretreatment to comply with regulations.

Because Salt Creek eventually drains into Lake Michigan and is part of the Great Lakes watershed, the EKPCF is subject to highly stringent National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit requirement. Although 12 to 14 percent of the City's wastewater collection system is

³ Strategic Plan 2010-2015, Valparaiso City Utilities, December 2010.

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Elden Kuehl Pollution Control Facility



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composed of combined sanitary/storm sewer lines, the plant maintains 100 percent compliance with the State of Indiana issued NPDES Permit and the Site Specific Biosolids (sludge) Land Application Permit.

Although the collection and treatment facilities are well positioned to accommodate Valparaiso's projected growth and development, VCU is continuing to make adjustments and improvements to the wastewater collection and water reclamation systems, as follows:

- VCU is conducting an aggressive program to televise and record the internal condition of sewers as a means to identify and correct infiltration and inflow issues with its older sewers.
- The utility is investigating future nutrient removal requirements and composting of biosolids.
- Investment in sanitary/storm sewer separation is continuing, as there are currently five major separation projects that have begun or about to begin.
- Over the past 10 years, VCU has conducted several engineering studies of the capacity and efficiency of the Sturdy Road lift station, which drains a sewer shed area of 8,400 acres of land that is expected to accommodate most of the City's future industrial development. While past studies have considered enlargement of the facility, and even the establishment of a new waste treatment facility to supplement the EKPCF, current recommendations are to improve the metering and control systems of the existing facility.

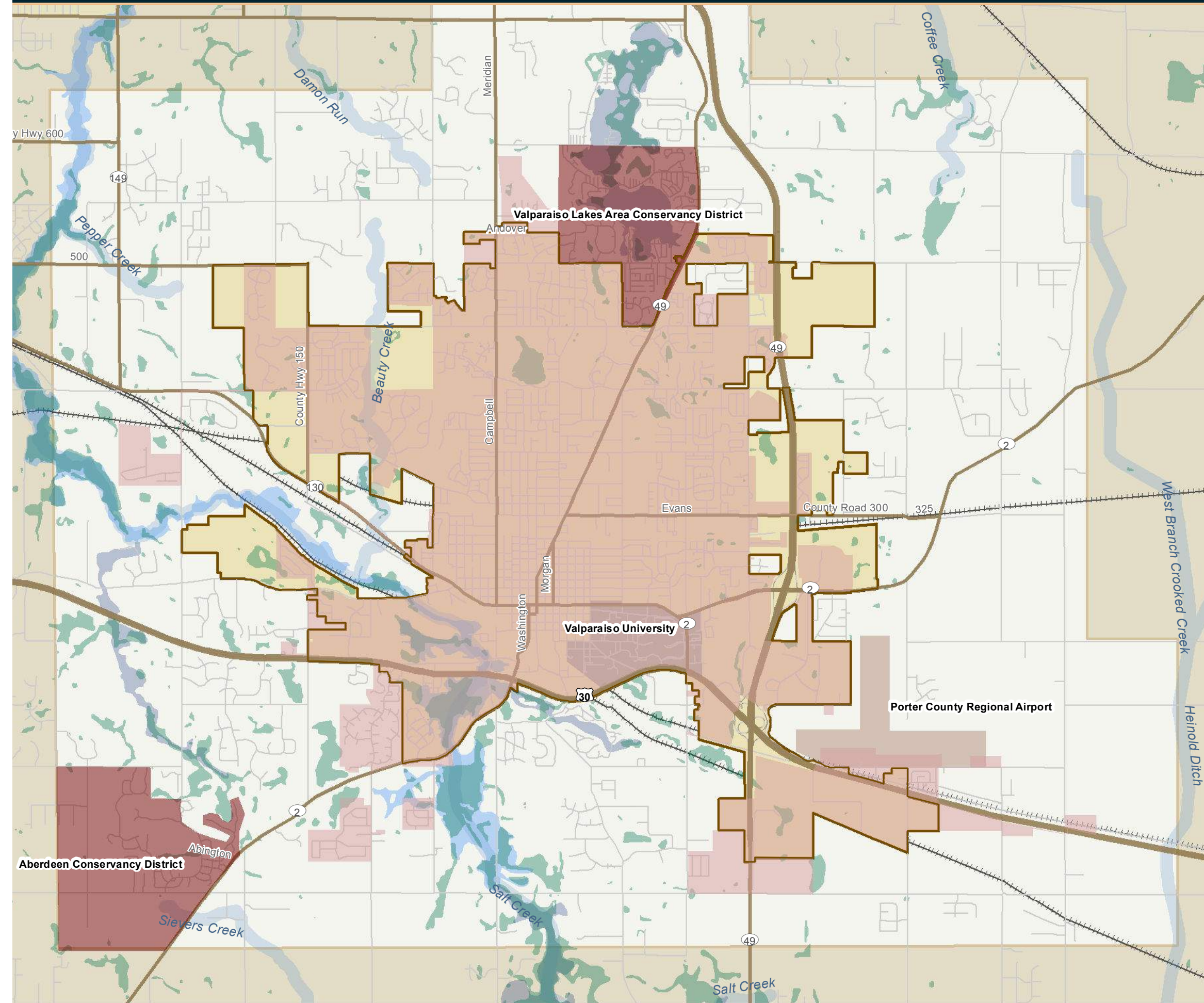
Stormwater Management - Valparaiso is located along the continental divide between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River watersheds. The majority of the City's drainage enters the Salt Creek watershed, which terminates at Lake Michigan. The southeastern quadrant is drained by the Koselki Ditch and Stimson Drain, which are in the Kankakee River watershed that eventually drains to the Mississippi River. Although the topography of Valparaiso is not particularly dramatic, it is complex and presents a number of challenges from a storm drainage standpoint. For instance:

- Because the City is situated at the headwaters of a continental divide, natural drainage patterns are complex; and the area's creeks, streams, and 19th Century agricultural ditches have relatively low capacities.
- The lack of pronounced ravines and the low stream grades causes water to drain slowly (or, "stay around longer") when there is a major precipitation.

Map 7.3

Sewer Service Area

- Legend**
- Sewer Service Area
 - Aberdeen Conservancy District
 - Valparaiso Lakes Area Conservancy District
 - City Limits
 - Study Area
 - Valparaiso University
 - Airport
 - Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
 - Flood Zone (A)
 - Flood Zone (AE)
 - Streams and Rivers
 - Railroad



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- Alterations of drainage patterns in the Great Lakes watershed are regulated by a U.S./Canada treaty; diversions of surface runoff away from Salt Creek or its tributaries are subject to regulations of the International Joint Commission.

Adding to these challenges, parts of the storm water drainage system are a combined sanitary/storm system, collecting both sanitary sewage and storm water runoff in a single pipe to deliver it to the treatment plant to be treated. Combined sewers can cause serious water pollution problems and thus, are no longer used in new development. While requiring all new land developments to separate the two utilities, the City is also utilizing a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program to maintain and benefit the community's water quality. The MS4 program was established as a result of the 1987 Amendments to the Clean Water Act; it requires designated entities, such as Valparaiso, to develop a stormwater quality management program consisting of a variety of construction requirements, regulatory measures, public education strategies, and management practices to reduce pollutants in stormwater and runoff.⁴

As described in the sanitary sewers and treatment section of this chapter, the City has been continuously engaged in storm/ sanitary sewer separation construction projects.

The City has also adopted a stormwater master plan in 2009, which was prepared in response to the significant local flooding that occurred in September 2008, when the remnants of Hurricane Ike passed through Northwestern Indiana leaving a record intensity of rainfall. The plan identified 17 priority stormwater management improvement projects with a total cost of \$15 million. The City is well into the implementation of this plan.

Transportation Infrastructure

The street system, public transit, and other mobility infrastructure elements are fundamental elements required to support City growth. These improvements are described in *Chapter 5, Mobility*. The extensions of arterial and major collector streets are important growth inducing elements, as they open new undeveloped areas for subsequent commercial and residential growth. The most significant of these street extension projects include the following:

- Construction of a new east-west connector between Sturdy Road and SR-49 about halfway between Laporte Avenue and U.S. 30;

⁴ A Citizens Guide to the MS4 Program, Northwest Indiana MS4 Community Partnership.

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The City continues to invest in stormwater system improvements.



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- Establishment of a new arterial or collector street paralleling SR-49 to the east, in general alignment with Porter's Vale Boulevard northward to East 500 North.
- Completion of West 500 North Road by constructing the missing link between Froberg Rd. and N. Campbell St. (Meridian Rd.), connecting into Burlington Beach Road;
- Extension of SR 149 from SR 130 southward to U.S. 30.

7.6 ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF GROWTH

Haphazard growth is highly inefficient. Costs associated with the provision of both capital and social infrastructure are much higher than they are for more contiguous patterns of development. This is particularly relevant when the community is confronted by limited resources and increasing demands for public services. In addition to its fiscal consequences, unplanned growth often degrades environmental resources by prematurely committing rural areas to the impacts of urban development. Phased and orderly growth mitigates this situation by comprehensively addressing the impacts of development on the natural systems. Piecemeal and sporadic development is detrimental to any type of comprehensive framework.

There are six fundamental forms of urban growth, five of which are considered acceptable:

- Scattered Development
- Corridor Development
- Infill
- Contiguous Development
- Cluster Development
- Redevelopment

Scattered Development

Often referred to as "leapfrog" development, this form represents the unacceptable pattern of random development, in which development skips over empty land to build in a remote location. It is a major cause of another common term, "urban sprawl." Leapfrogging often occurs in areas where there are few land use regulations or development standards that properly assign infrastructure costs to the developer. In other cases, developers attempt to move beyond city boundaries to avoid their land use and development regulations. Leapfrogging has also been inadvertently encouraged in many localities by obsolete tax policies that favor greenfield development.

Corridor Development

This common form of development occurs along major highways, taking advantage of the access afforded by an existing highway and its accompanying utility services. Corridor development, particularly auto-oriented commercial development, is usually considered desirable and is often encouraged for infrastructure cost savings and to allow unified design. Care must be taken, however, to manage the intensity of development and avoid overbuilding, which can place undue stress on the roadways and infrastructure and result in clutter.

Corridor development, over time, results in the establishment of peninsulas of development, which sets the stage for later infill.

Contiguous Development

This form of new development provides for gradual outward growth adjacent or in very close proximity, to existing development. When carefully planned, this development form is highly efficient and least obtrusive to existing neighborhoods or businesses. Under real-world circumstances, perfectly staged contiguous development rarely occurs; land ownership patterns or natural features usually result in small amounts of short-distance skipping, occasional leapfrogging, or checkerboard patterns of development. This form of development has been occurring in Valparaiso for many years.

Cluster Development

Clustering is a form of contiguous development that results in better land utilization by preserving natural assets while still allowing some degree of development on smaller, constrained building sites. Cluster development provides return on investment to property owners and addresses area housing needs (including incorporation of townhomes, patio homes, and other housing options in a well-planned setting). In the best designs, natural features are preserved and incorporated as development focal points and amenities, thereby adding value for both the developer and home owners over time, especially when homes and/or other uses are arranged and oriented to take advantage of open space views. By setting aside natural areas, ponds, and open space, cluster designs are also effective at reducing both storm water runoff and water quality impairment. Better drainage practices can reduce site infrastructure costs, and more compact development generally requires less linear feet of street, water and sewer lines, sidewalks, other utilities, and other infrastructure components.

There are varying degrees of cluster developments, ranging from the basic provision of grouped cul-de-sacs and a small amount of common open space, to extreme "preservation" clusters with as much as 80 percent of the area left natural and relatively high net densities within the areas that accommodate the building pads.

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Meridian Woods, an example of cluster development in Valparaiso.



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Valparaiso's geography and abundance of natural areas provide many opportunities for cluster development, and a few developments that approach the cluster form have already been built. The City's new Unified Development Ordinance, adopted in 2010, includes provisions that permit cluster and establish appropriate standards for design inclusion of common areas as a part of development. The 40-acre Meridian Woods Subdivision is an example of a cluster development that has been developed and marketed for senior independent living. Another, larger scale example of cluster development is the award winning Aberdeen golf course neighborhood immediately southwest of the City.

Infill

Infill development is a highly desirable form of development, which occurs when leftover land plots get developed--often years after development has passed by. The advantages of infill development are that significant investments in additional infrastructure are rarely needed to support infill development. Also, public services such as transit or neighborhood schools are already in place and immediately available. Potential infill locations for Valparaiso are described in *Chapter 2, Land Use and Community Character* and shown on *Map 2.3, Infill Development Opportunities*.

Redevelopment

Redevelopment in Valparaiso has already taken place in locations such as the East Lincolnway corridor (Eastgate) and other smaller sites near downtown. Future redevelopment opportunities have arisen from the presence aged or obsolete industrial buildings, older shopping centers and large stand-alone commercial buildings, and underutilized institutional structures. Potential redevelopment opportunities in Valparaiso are described in greater detail in *Chapter 2, Land Use & Community Character* and shown on *Map 2.2, Redevelopment*.

7.7 GROWTH AREAS

The recommended pattern of future development is intended to contribute substantially to the adequacy of the transportation and utility infrastructure and to the provision of other public services. In accordance with this intent, a future land use and community character plan is presented as *Map 2.1.1, Future Land Use Plan* in *Chapter 2, Land Use and Community Character*. The bulk of growth associated with this plan is shown in **Map 7.4, Future Growth Areas**.

These areas include a combination of infill and contiguous (or nearly contiguous) development that add up to about 800 acres of residential development and 600 acres of nonresidential development, including:

- Three residential infill sites west of the current City limits, which are virtually surrounded by existing development.

Map 7.4

Future Growth Areas

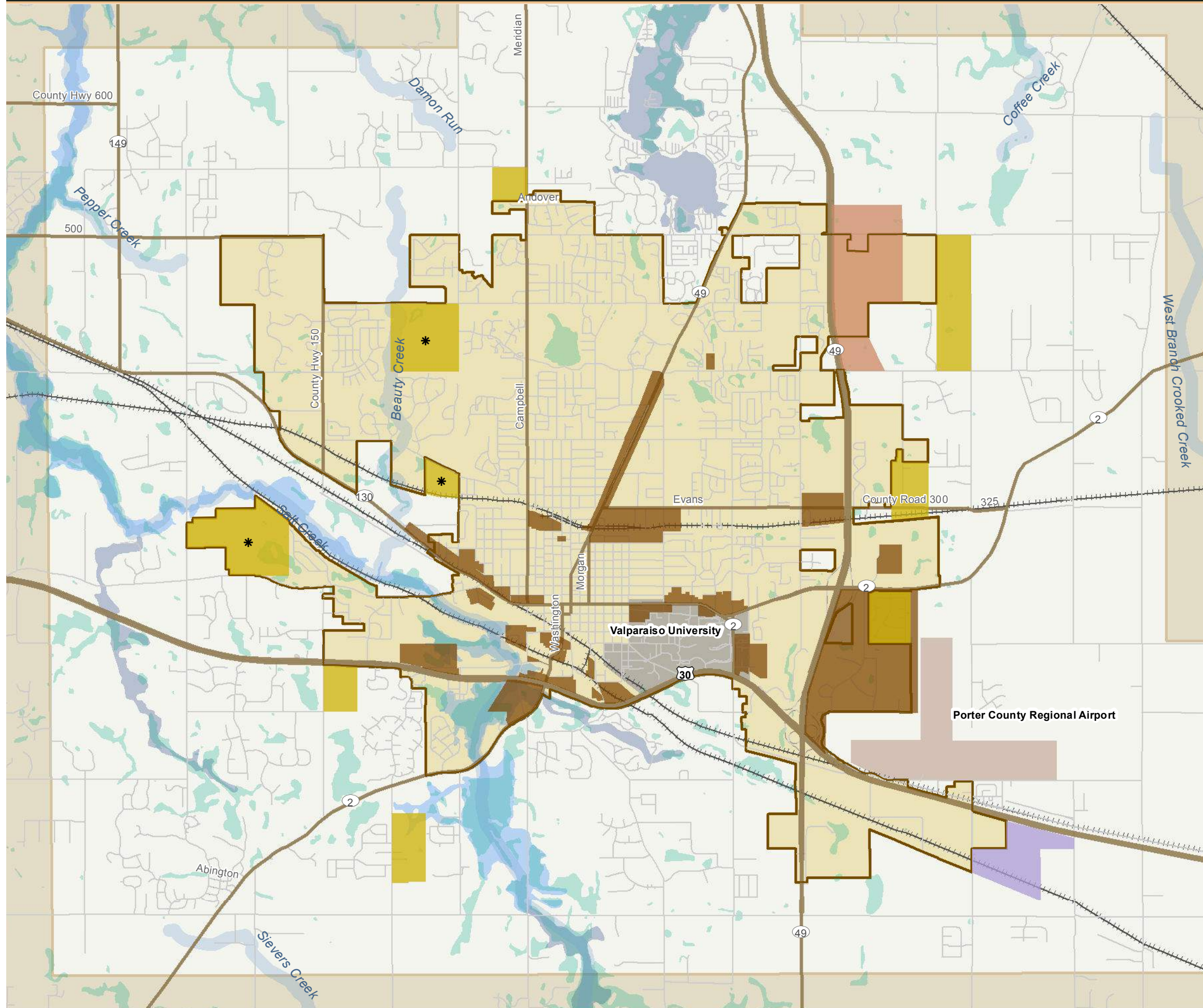
Legend

- * Infill Development
- Commercial/Medical
- Industrial
- Residential
- Redevelopment Target Sites
- City Limits
- Study Area
- Valparaiso University
- Airport
- Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
- Flood Zone (A)
- Flood Zone (AE)
- Streams and Rivers
- Railroad

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- Similar infill or contiguous development sites at the east edge of the City.
- Industrial park expansion to the southeast.
- New commercial or medical-related development east of Route 49, taking advantage of the diamond interchange currently being built at the highway's intersection with Vale Park Rd. (400 N.)

As a guide for land development decisions and public improvements, the plan depicted in *Map 2.1.1, Future Land Use Plan* captures and incorporates into the City's vision and values where it will grow over the course of the next two decades. Provided in *Map 7.4, Future Growth Areas* is further direction and prioritization on the sequence of this growth. These maps are significant since the findings and recommendations contained in this plan provide the basis for the City's Unified Development Ordinance, Capital Improvements Plan, and annexation policies as the primary tools for implementation.

7.8 ANNEXATION

Annexation is the legal process by which a municipality adds land to its boundaries to increase its total incorporated area. It is used to allow the municipality to provide services, manage land use and growth, maintain development standards, collect revenues, and enhance its overall well-being.

Background

Indiana law allows cities to annex property regardless of the preferences of property owners ("involuntary annexation"), as long as they follow specific procedures and meet certain conditions related to providing adequate public notice, conducting fiscal analysis, adopting an annexation ordinance, and filing the adopted annexation ordinance with the State.

During this process, property owners and residents of the areas to be annexed can oppose the intended annexation—but generally only on the basis of procedural grounds—they cannot oppose an annexation proposal simply because they wish to stay outside of the municipality or even because they believe that annexation will affect them adversely. Similarly, county and township governments can contest annexation only on procedural matters.

Annexation Requirements

Essentially, Indiana municipalities have the freedom to annex land unilaterally so long as statutory procedures have been satisfied. Additionally, they must ensure that the land is urban in character, or intended to be urban in the future. In determining this, at least one of the following criteria must be met:

1. The area is at least 12.5 percent contiguous, the density of the territory is at least three persons/acre; 60 percent of the territory is subdivided; or the

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territory is zoned commercial, industrial, or business;

OR

2. The territory is contiguous, except that at least 25 percent rather than 12.5 percent of the boundary must coincide with municipal boundaries; and the land is needed and can be used by the municipality for its development in the reasonably near future.⁵

These provisions limit municipalities from involuntarily annexing large chunks of rural or undeveloped land; prevent the establishment of artificial barriers that block the growth of neighboring municipalities; and prohibit the practice of extended "reaching out," often for miles along a public highway to involuntarily annex an industrial site or similarly valuable property.

Indiana annexation provisions also require the annexing municipality to prepare fiscal plans prior to annexation. It must document that the municipality will be able to deliver all services within the time frame specified by statute (capital improvements within three years and non-capital within one year). The annexation statute does not provide detailed criteria for the contents or analyses in a fiscal plan, only the demonstration that future municipal residents affected by the annexation are treated fairly.

The Need for Annexation

Valparaiso's borders are highly irregular; they have largely been defined by incremental expansions outward by developers and businesses that chose to enter the corporate limits through voluntary annexation. Also, with the notable exceptions of the north edge Lakes Area, Aberdeen, and some Porter County-owned properties; the City has established voluntary annexation as a condition of extending municipal sewer and water services.

In some areas, the City's outward expansion through annexation has been physically blocked by the presence of long-established rural subdivisions, which were originally built with minimal County development standards. City officials have resisted annexing these areas because of the unacceptably high costs with limited financial returns associated in:

Maintaining their deteriorated public facilities,

- Providing public services to areas that are isolated or have indirect access to the City's street system.
- Connecting residences into City sewer and water systems, or
- Upgrading the streets, runoff control, and utilities to comparable City

⁵ Annexation in Indiana: Issues and Options, 1998, Center for Urban Policy and the Environment, School of Environmental Affairs.

standards.

Because Indiana Law does not provide extraterritorial land use authority (zoning and subdivision standards), it is important that areas intended for future City development be brought within the City limits in order that this future development, when it occurs, conform with this plan and with City zoning and development standards. It will provide improved continuity in implementing the Thoroughfare Plan, extending sewer and water services, and completing water main "loops" that make the system more efficient and reliable.

Areas to be Annexed

The recommended annexation plan is illustrated in **Map 7.5, Annexation Areas**. The following areas are recommended for eventual expansion through the Year 2030:

- Undeveloped areas west of the present City limits out to the recommended extension of SR 149 to the west and 500 N. Road to the north. This will enclose significant natural areas, floodplain, and developable land reaching out to the future Brigadoon Subdivision.
- Extension one-half mile northward on SR 49 beyond 600 N. Road to establish appropriate land use restrictions and development requirements for future corridor development reaching out to the new Porter Regional Medical Center.
- Extension to the east, squaring off the borders and accommodating future residential and commercial development that is proposed in this area.
- Expansion eastward on U.S. 30 to accommodate future industrial park expansion. Additional annexations should be considered in accordance with the Airport Study's industrial expansion recommendations, as these plans materialize. Because utility extensions will be involved in the further development of this area, annexations would expect to be entirely voluntary.

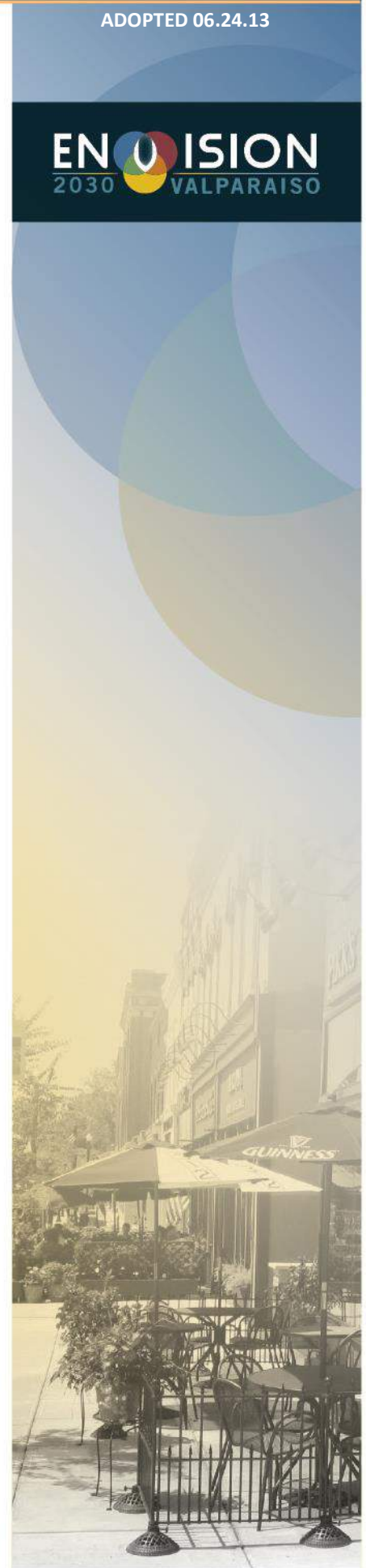
7.9 POLICIES AND ACTIONS

General Planning

Policies

- 7.a. Effectively manage future growth to achieve a compact and fiscally responsible pattern of development.
- 7.b. Preserve the community's rich and valued open spaces and environmental resources while forging more sustainable development practices.

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 The logo for ENOVISION 2030 VALPARAISO features the word "ENOVISION" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter "O" is stylized as a colorful circle with segments in blue, green, yellow, and red. Below "ENOVISION" are the years "2030" and the word "VALPARAISO" in a smaller, all-caps font.


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- 7.c. Strengthen the integrity and livability of existing neighborhoods through appropriate infill development, redevelopment, and continued reinvestment in streets and infrastructure.
- 7.d. Maintain the status of Downtown as a local and regional destination of culture, entertainment, and community gathering.
- 7.e. Preserve community heritage through historic restoration and neighborhood integrity improvements.
- 7.f. Enhance the character and aesthetic attractiveness of the community and its neighborhoods, districts, and corridor.
- 7.g. Strengthen the correlation of incremental zoning decisions and development approvals with the policies, recommendations, and maps contained in the Comprehensive Plan.

Actions

- 7.1. Approve only those development proposals that are consistent with the growth management principles brought forward in this plan.
- 7.2. Preserve the natural appearance of frontage along the SR-49 by maintaining current land use, setback, and buffering restrictions.
- 7.3. Refrain from granting zoning use variances that adversely affect densities, increase traffic, or strain existing utility services.
- 7.4. Coordinate with Porter County to achieve uniform development standards for future growth in the peripheral unincorporated areas.
- 7.5. Establish an educational initiative with the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and other public bodies stressing the importance of the Comprehensive Plan's role in guiding decisions on development approvals, zoning map amendments, use variances, capital budgeting, and similar planning decisions.

Infrastructure

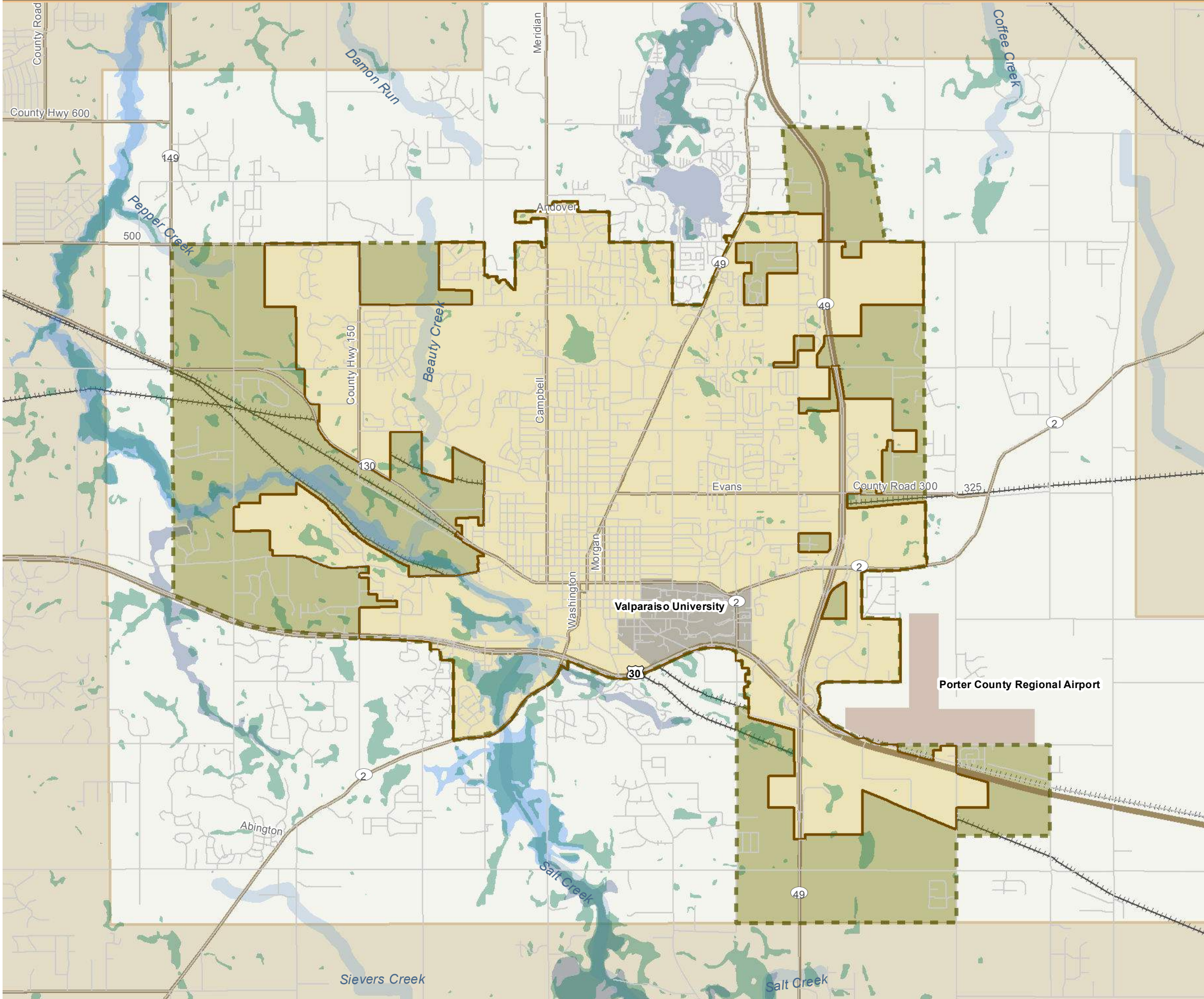
Policies

- 7.h. Maintain current investment practices for improving the City's water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer utilities.
- 7.i. Coordinate future land development with the availability of or ease in expanding utility and street services.
- 7.j. Except under rare circumstances, require a municipal annexation agreement as a condition to extending utility services.

Actions

- 7.6. Maintain existing programs, policies, and instructional activities that promote wellhead protection.





Map 7.5

Annexation Areas

- Legend**
- Future City Limits Expansion
 - Annexation Area
 - City Limits
 - Study Area
 - Valparaiso University
 - Airport
 - Wetlands, Ponds, and Lakes
 - Flood Zone (A)
 - Flood Zone (AE)
 - Streams and Rivers
 - Railroad

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- 7.7. Implement proposed improvements to the south (airport) water supply. Expand the water supply capacity as needed.
- 7.8. Implement recommended improvements to the sanitary sewer system, including replacement/rehabilitation of older sewers, separation of the remaining combined sewer/storm lines, and improvements to the Sturdy Ave. lift station.
- 7.9. Continue to implement the 2010 Stormwater Management Plan to alleviate localized flooding.
- 7.10. Implement the street system extensions recommendations presented in *Chapter 5, Mobility*.
- 7.11. Develop a municipal service plan to establish the timing and means of infrastructure provision to the preferred future growth areas.
- 7.12. Consider the possibility of annexation, special assessments, and other measures to upgrade the services of the Lakes Conservancy District.

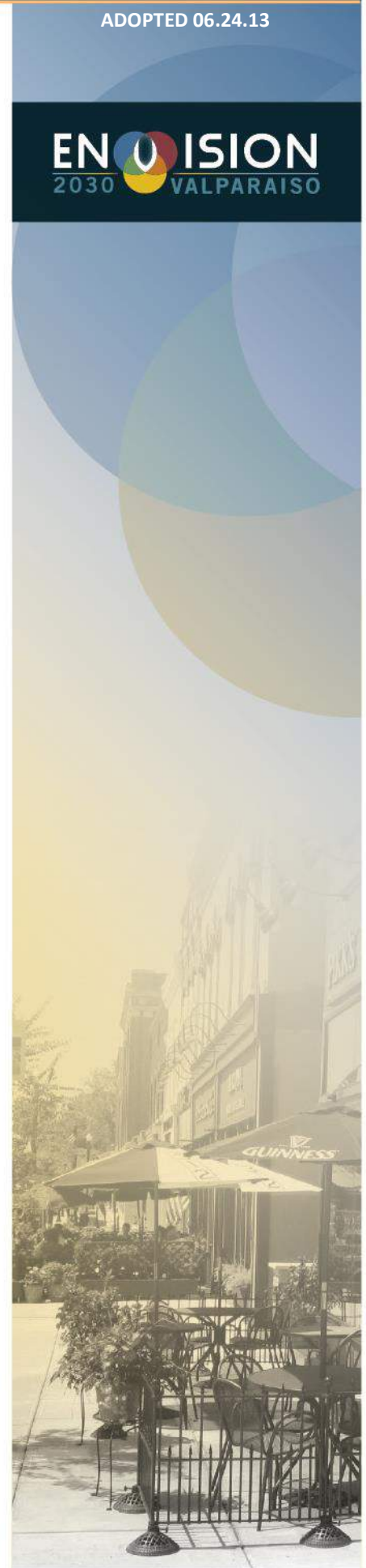
Growth Areas and Development Forms

Policies

- 7.k. Continue to promote infill development, redevelopment opportunities, and reinvestment in the established neighborhoods.
- 7.l. Promote cluster and conservation development for new residential areas.
- 7.m. Establish municipal investment priorities in the future growth areas designated in *Map 7.4, Future Growth Area*.

Actions

- 7.13. Determine the appropriate zoning of the infill development tracts and initiate rezoning as appropriate. Care must be taken to ensure that the neighborhood character is preserved and compatibility with existing uses is observed.
- 7.14. Study the infrastructure needs of the infill opportunity sites and prepare a schedule of capital improvements, including the timing and methods of funding the improvements.
- 7.15. Incorporate bonuses into the zoning provisions whereby increased height and/or floor area may be achieved for meeting certain prescribed development standards. This may help to make future infill development more feasible.
- 7.16. In accordance with *Chapter 2, Land Use and Community Character*, define areas that warrant redevelopment and designate appropriate ones as redevelopment districts. Subsequently, prepare necessary redevelopment plans to determine the type and general form of development to serve as a basis for design and implementation.



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- 7.17 Pre-zone the preferred future growth areas to be consistent with the future land use plan. Such zoning should allow flexibility as to the development type, provided the development character is compatible with the surrounding area.
- 7.18. Initiate annexation of the properties within the preferred future growth areas. (see *Map 7.4, Future Growth Areas*)

Annexation

Policies

- 7.n. Adopt and adhere to a policy of growth and utility expansion only through annexation.
- 7.o. Avoid piecemeal peninsular annexations unless requests are accompanied by long-term development plans that include contiguous infill growth outward to the area of initial development.
- 7.p. Undertake fiscal impact studies for major annexation measures to ensure positive net paybacks on long-term investments in infrastructure expansion, new parks, and other municipal services.

Actions

- 7.19. Conduct the required technical and financial studies, then adopt a future annexation plan that represents the longer-term City borders.
- 7.20. Continue existing requirements of pre-annexation agreements as a part of the subdivision approval process.



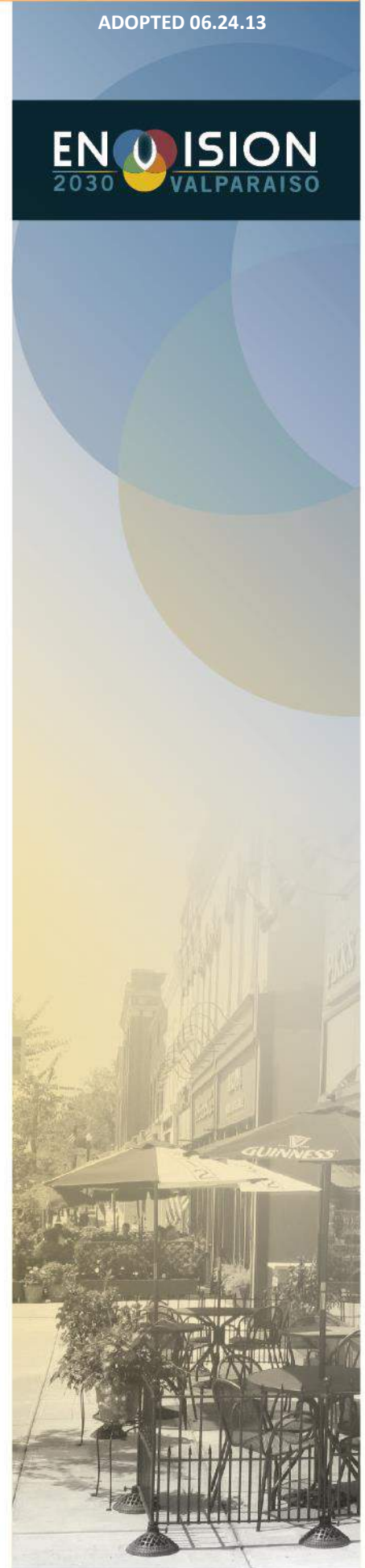
Plan Implementation

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This plan establishes a shared vision as to how Valparaiso should develop over the next 20 years and beyond. With the vision in place, the community must now direct its resources to implement the plan. Each of the goals, policies, and recommended action statements identified throughout the preceding chapters of this plan must now be transformed into specific programs, initiatives, and/or new standards. The purpose of this chapter is to integrate the elements of the plan together to provide a clear path for sound decision-making.

This chapter outlines the organizational structure necessary to implement the plan, strategic directions, priorities for implementation, and a process for regular evaluation and appraisal of the plan to ensure it is kept relevant and viable. Implementation is an essential step in the plan development process. It requires the commitment of the City's leadership, including the Mayor and City Council, Plan Commission, other City boards and commissions, and City staff. It is also necessary for there to be close coordination with and joint commitment from other organizations that significantly influence Valparaiso and its growth, including:

- Porter County;
- Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT);
- Valparaiso University;
- Valparaiso Community School Corporation;
- Neighboring cities (Portage and Chesterton);
- Ivy Tech Community College;
- Chamber of Commerce of Valparaiso;
- Valparaiso Economic Development Corporation (VEDC);
- Porter County Economic Development Alliance;
- Valparaiso Redevelopment Commission;



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- Purdue North Central—Porter County; and
- Other organizations, agencies, and groups.

Each preceding chapter outlines specific issues to be addressed to achieve what is envisioned by community residents. The recommended action plan initiatives in these chapters accumulate to form a large number of potential actions that relate to policy and regulatory changes, program initiatives, and capital investment projects. While these recommendations are far-reaching and intended to be accomplished over the 20-year horizon of this plan, near-term initiatives must be put in place to take the first steps toward implementation.

These initiatives must then be prioritized, with recommendations on the sequencing of activities, the capacity to fulfill each initiative, and the ability to obligate the necessary funding. Those determined as being top priorities and viewed as feasible in the short-term are assembled into a five-year action plan. In addition to implementing these targeted initiatives, the broader policies set forth by the plan text and maps may be used in making decisions regarding the physical and economic development of the community.

8.2 METHODS AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

To be successful, the City must regularly refer to this plan; and the plan's recommended strategies, actions, and initiatives must be integrated into ongoing governmental practices and programs. The recommendations must be referenced often and widely used as the foundation for decisions pertaining to the timing and availability of infrastructure improvements; City-initiated and owner-requested annexations; proposed development/redevelopment applications; zoning map amendment requests; expansion of public facilities, services, and programs; and annual capital budgeting, among other considerations. Each City Council member, staff person, and member of boards, commissions, and/or committees has an obligation to use this plan in guiding their decisions.

The plan has been formulated to guide the growth and economic development of the community. It should act as a guide for the City in its general activities, annual work programs, and capital projects.

The primary means of implementation include:

- *Regulatory Changes.* Although Valparaiso's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) has been rewritten within the past five years, portions of it need to be reviewed and updated to ensure consistency with this plan. Specific code change recommendations are presented later in this chapter.
- *Formation of New Policies.* As new development or redevelopment plans

are proposed, staff and the City's advisory boards, together with the City Council, must take the policies and recommendations of this plan into consideration. The text of this plan, coupled with the future land use, thoroughfare, and growth capacity plans, should weigh heavily in future decisions by the City officials, residents, and other stakeholders in achieving the shared community vision.

- *Capital Investment Programming.* The City should regularly update its list of capital investment initiatives: a five-year plan that identifies capital projects for street and pathway systems, as well as water, wastewater, and drainage improvements along with other public buildings and municipal services. These capital improvements must be coordinated with the objectives of this plan and implemented in a consistent manner with the future land use and growth plans, the thoroughfare plan, parks and recreation system recommendations, and other relevant plans.
- *Special Projects.* The City should identify special projects, programs, and initiatives to achieve the organizational, programmatic, and/or developmental objectives presented in this plan. In some instances, these may include further studies, detailed special area plans (individual neighborhoods, downtown, or designated corridors), or initiating or expanding on key existing City programs. These tend to be more administrative in nature, which may support or influence physical improvements or enhancements, but themselves focus on community betterment.

8.3 PLAN ADMINISTRATION

A host of community leaders must take "ownership" of this plan and maintain a commitment for its ongoing, successful implementation. The City's management and staff, together with its boards, committees, and organizations, will have essential roles in implementing the plan and, thus, ensuring its success. As future regulatory, policy, or administrative decisions are made, the responsible parties must continually refer to the plan for guidance on such actions.

Education and Training

A necessary first step is to conduct individual training workshops with the Plan Commission, City Council, and City department managers, as well as each of the other boards and committees that have a role in plan implementation. These are the groups which, individually and collectively, will be responsible for implementation. The importance of their collaboration, coordination, and communication cannot be overstated. The training initiative should include:

- Discussion of the roles and responsibilities of each individual commission, board, or committee and their function in the organization.
- A thorough overview of the entire plan, with particular emphasis on the segments that most directly relate to their charge.

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The role of committees, commissions, and organizations in the successful and sustainable implementation of the plan cannot be understated. Listed below are relevant boards, commissions, and committees that may be key partners in implementing this plan:

- Porter County Community Foundation
- Valparaiso Lakes Area Conservancy District
- Woodland Savanna Land Conservancy
- Valparaiso Community Festivals & Events
- Board of Zoning Appeals
- Historic Preservation Commission
- Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission
- Plan Commission
- Site Review
- Valparaiso Redevelopment Commission
- Valparaiso Economic Development Corporation
- Economic Development Commission



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- Implementation tasking and priority-setting, allowing each group to establish its own one-, two-, and five-year agendas in coordination with the strategic agenda of the Mayor and City Council.
- A concluding question-and-answer session.

Role Definition

The City Council assumes the lead role in implementing this plan. Its chief responsibility is to decide and establish the priorities and time frames by which each action will be initiated and completed. In conjunction with the City Administrator and subordinate departments, they must manage the coordination among the various groups responsible for carrying out the plan's recommendations.

Lastly, it is also responsible for the required funding commitments, whether it involves capital outlay, budget for expanded services, additional staffing, further studies, or procedural changes. The hierarchy and roles of implementation are as follows:

City Council

- Establishes overall action priorities and time frames by which each action of the plan will be initiated and completed.
- Considers and sets the requisite funding commitments.
- Offers final approval of projects/activities and associated costs during the budget process.
- Provides direction to the Plan Commission, City Administrator, and departmental staff.

Plan Commission

- Recommends to City Council an annual program of Comprehensive Plan actions to be implemented, including guidance as to the time frames and priorities.
- Prepares an Annual Progress Report for submittal and presentation to the Mayor and City Council (see the Plan Amendment Process later in this Chapter for more detail).
- Ensures that decisions and recommendations presented to the City Council are consistent with the plan's policies, objectives, and recommendations. This relates particularly to decisions for subdivision approval, development plan review, major street extensions, zoning map amendments, ordinance text amendments, and annexation.
- Ensures that the plan influences the decisions and actions of other boards and committees.

City Departments and the Planning Director

To varying degrees, all departments are responsible for administering this plan. Several City departments were involved in the formation of this plan and are, therefore, familiar with its content and intended outcomes. They are vested as implementers and should ensure that their budgets and annual work programs are in line with the plan.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Jurisdictions have long acknowledged that many growth management issues are regional, rather than local, in nature. Watershed and environmental protection, economic development, land use, transportation, housing, and the effects of growth and change are issues that usually cross the borders of communities and impact not only Valparaiso, but also Porter County, Portage, Chesterton, and other nearby communities.

As a result, the financial health of Valparaiso is partly affected by the County and all of Northwestern Indiana, meaning that the well-being and success of one can be largely affected by the other. In addition, cooperation is now more important than ever due to the severe limitations of public sector resources brought on by the recent economic recession. Coordinating among entities allows for more efficient service provision. Therefore, the idea of managing the growth of the City, for instance, will not be effective without the effective coordination of Porter County and its adherence to its own adopted plans.

In the past, peripheral, unplanned growth has had grave impacts on the City and its ability to provide adequate public services and meet the expectations of its future constituency. The type and quality of this development not only impacts the character of Valparaiso, but also impacts its resources as residents living in nearby unincorporated areas often drive into the City for their shopping and service needs.

In many respects, the locational identity of a significant number of “Greater Valparaiso” residents has been blurred because important institutions such as the school corporation and public library (Porter County) have been established to serve City and non-City residents, alike. Portions of the City boundary itself are complicated and non-distinct. With the City’s responsibility to provide infrastructure to areas outside the municipal boundary, the need for intergovernmental coordination is more crucial than ever.

The elected officials of Valparaiso and Porter County must recognize their interdependence and the need to cooperate in the administration of sound growth management policies. Strong intergovernmental cooperation will be instrumental in effective implementation of this plan and the continuing financial health of both jurisdictions. Each of the governmental agencies share common interests and goals, including enhancing economic development, and providing for quality housing, services, and infrastructure needs. These goals can be more effectively achieved through mutual cooperation and coordination.

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Recommended Strategies for Intergovernmental Cooperation

- Create a City/County planning advisory council, which should include both elected officials and representatives from each agency's planning commissions. The council should meet regularly to consider and act on projects and initiatives that are of mutual interest and benefit.
- Develop a memorandum of understanding between City and County elected officials, with a goal of enhancing the City's ability to manage its future pattern of development and municipal boundaries, protect the resources of both parties, and ensure sound fiscal management practices for delivery of urban- and rural-level public services.

8.4 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Shown in *Table 8.1, Significant Plan Implementation Measures, 2012 to 2030* (at the conclusion of this chapter) is the key action items and capital projects recommended for implementation, with more detail found within the individual plan chapters. These strategies and investments highlight the steps to be taken by the City, often in coordination with other jurisdictions, organizations, or agencies. This table is intended as a quick reference. It should be kept up-to-date and used on an annual basis. Each year, the projects that are substantially complete should be removed, with the corresponding years advanced one year, and a fifth year of programmed actions added. In this way, this table may be used on an ongoing basis and provided to the City Council to keep them apprised of the progress of implementation.

Unified Development Ordinance Amendments

Many of the provisions in the UDO, which was adopted in 2009, were formulated in anticipation of this plan. For instance, an entirely new set of zoning districts were established to reflect community character types rather than traditional land use classifications. Additionally, provisions relating to land development standards and natural resource protection standards were updated to reflect best practices and current community desires. Nevertheless, some adjustments are needed to accommodate the findings and recommendations presented in this plan. Key changes, which are presented in the previous chapters of this plan, include

Zoning Provisions

- Monitor the effectiveness of the UDO's redevelopment standards, which were revised to promote the compatibility of new structures and home additions in established neighborhoods.
- Revise the zoning map to accommodate the recommendations and impending projects related to the U.S. 30 Corridor Study, Porter County Regional Airport Master Plan, and updated Valparaiso University Campus Plan.

- Consider rezoning the areas that are currently zoned Heavy Industrial (INH) to Light Industrial (INL) in the rail corridors; specifically, the corridor that runs along Evans Avenue and the diagonal corridor between U.S. 30 and Lincolnway. Allow current heavy industrial users to continue until such time as the uses change.
- Add provisions to the UDO that accommodate the increasing trend for urban agriculture and the expansion of local food supply, incentivize rainwater harvesting, protect local aquifer recharge areas, and assist in the implementation of stormwater best management practices.
- Amend the zoning map, as needed, to "pre-zone" industrial parks and other strategic economic development areas, in accordance with *Map 2.1.1, Future Land Use Plan*.
- Determine the appropriate zoning of potential infill development tracts and initiate zoning map amendments, as appropriate.

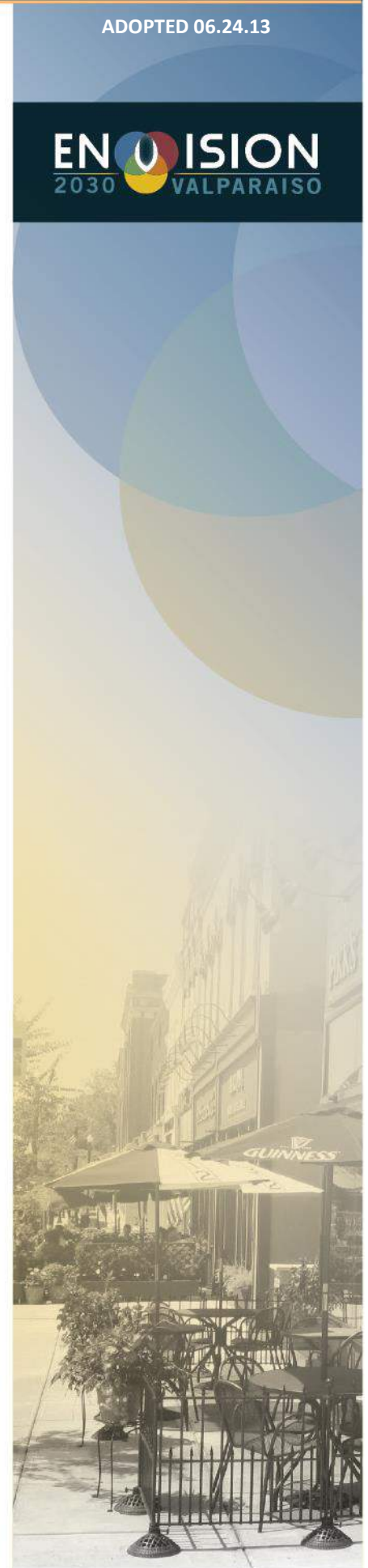
Subdivision and Land Development Standards

- Amend the UDO to include street design standards (rights-of-way, number and width of lanes, bikeway and pedestrian improvements, etc.) that are tied to the character of development.
- Consider amending the UDO to include local street design standards based on the scale of development, projected traffic, functional classification, and intended pedestrian use.
- Consider updating the UDO's off-street parking requirements (parking ratios) to reflect current parking needs for various commercial and residential uses.

Growth Management and Annexation

Identified in *Map 2.1.1, Future Land Use Plan*, is the future growth and infill areas within Valparaiso's planning area. Implementation of this plan is essential if the City is to grow in a fiscally responsible manner, preserve its character, protect the quality of its entrances and open spaces, secure the protection of sensitive resources, and effectively control its destiny. Indiana annexation laws provide an effective means by which the City may accomplish its growth management objectives. Following is the advisable approach:

- First and foremost, prepare infill development standards to allow new development to occur on infill tracts and ensure it is of comparable scale and character to the surrounding development. To provide an incentive for this desirable form of development, the City should establish expedited review standards.
- Prepare a three- to five-year annexation plan for lands designated for



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development on the future land use plan. In most instances, the basic framework for streets, utilities, and other public services has been established in these areas, thereby providing appropriate justification for municipal annexation.

- Prepare a fiscal impact model to determine the relative impact of the proposed annexation and the proposed future development, including an assessment of the expense of providing the required City facilities and services. In order to comply with Indiana law, the fiscal evaluation must be performed concurrently with the annexation plan.

Capital Investments

Closely related to the ability of the City to manage its growth is the adequacy of its existing infrastructure and its ability to maintain it. The requirement to keep pace with development in terms of increasing capacities and service needs is significant. This strengthens the cause for managing growth to ensure that new development occurs within the areas where infrastructure and services already exist.

Capital improvement strategies include:

- Tie the capital improvements program to the growth plan, allowing the City to assess its long-term infrastructure needs and to stage improvements concurrent with growth.
- Prepare financially constrained infrastructure improvement plans. Resources should be directed to serving infill projects followed by those that are contiguous to the service area. All projects should be within the defined growth area.
- In coordination with the future land use plan, approve new development project applications and zoning map amendments only in areas where there is existing adequate street and utility infrastructure or where they may be readily extended without financial burden on the City.
- Carefully consider the prudence of any future utility extension requests that do not adhere to the growth policies of both this plan and any future updates to the Porter County plan.
- Utilize available density bonuses in the UDO that provide incentives for development clustering and reduce the need for infrastructure construction since there are fewer roads, utilities, and storm drainage facilities needed. This optimizes the efficiency of roads and utility services.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Valparaiso City Utilities' continuing programs for the City's water, sanitary sewer, and storm drainage systems are described in *Chapter 7, Growth*

Capacity. These programs include completion of the 2010 - 2020 Stormwater Master Plan, replacement of aging water and sanitary sewer lines, enhancement of the City's water supply, and sanitary lift station improvements.

Downtown and Campus Area Redevelopment

- Amend the zoning map and refine the "Campus" district provisions of the UDO, based on the reuse of Porter Medical Center property and the updated Campus Plan for Valparaiso University.
- Create increased urban living options within and immediately adjacent to downtown
- Continue improvements to increase access and interactivity between downtown and the Valparaiso University Campus. Conversion of the Porter Medical Center property should include provisions for bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

U.S. 30 Corridor Development

The City has already received State funding to begin implementation of the U.S. 30 Corridor plan. Efforts to secure grants and other sources of funding should continue. Implementation details are presented *Chapter 4, Opportunity*, of the U.S. 30 Corridor Study and are summarized as follows:

- New entrance portals at Sturdy Rd., SR 2/Washington Street, and Hayes Leonard Rd.
- Streetscape and decorative lighting improvements for the entire corridor and entrances.
- Overhead pedestrian/bicycle crossing of U.S. 30 west of Sturdy Rd.
- Morthland Drive Conservancy Park southeast of the U.S. Highway 30/SR 2 intersection.

Parks and Pathway System Master Planning

Valparaiso has an excellent system of parks and is enhancing its network of trails and pathways. In 2010, the City Parks Department adopted a five-year park system master plan and, one year later, updated its Pathways and Greenways Master Plan. These plans, which have their own implementation sections, recommend the establishment of over 70 miles of designated on-street or off-street bikeways and pedestrian pathways within the City and surrounding area. However, the Pathway Plan does not coincide with the planning area of this plan, thus it warrants amendment to ensure new development contributes to the pathway network.

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Streets and Transportation

In addition to the paths and bikeways to be developed and improved by the Parks Department referenced above, *Chapter 5, Mobility*, has outlined a series of street and highway improvements to be evaluated and implemented over the next 20 years. Those projects that are needed to support near-term growth development are also referenced in *Chapter 7, Growth Capacity*. Projects to be initiated within the next five years are intended to support continuing growth along SR 49 and to improve traffic conditions in locally congested areas.

Neighborhood Investment and Strategies

The affordability of housing to all Valparaiso citizens remains an important issue for the community. In the interest of accommodating persons of all economic strata, mechanisms must remain in place to provide for attainable housing.

In addition, the City must act to protect, stabilize, and strengthen neighborhood environments, while revitalizing ☐ neighborhoods and rehabilitating the older housing stock.

Key strategies to improve neighborhood quality and housing affordability include:

- Continue the administration and funding of housing and neighborhood improvement programs described in *Chapter 6, Housing and Neighborhoods*. These include:
 - Establishment of provisions for inclusionary housing under certain specified circumstances, which may be accomplished by way of a housing bonus program. In these instances, a developer would be permitted greater overall density (using alternative housing types or via lot size adjustments) in exchange for providing affordable units.
 - Adherence to the Unified Development Ordinance's (UDO) current lot size formula that provides for an average rather than a minimum size lot in new subdivisions. This allows a mixture of lot sizes, thereby accommodating different floor plans, sizes, and prices of units while fending off monotony at the same time.
 - Use of the established provisions of the UDO to promote the development of market rate housing, whereby planned developments larger than 30 units are required to provide a mix of housing types.
- The City should update the currently outdated survey of potentially historic structures and consider re-adopting, with modifications, standards for the construction and remodeling of dwellings in designated historic neighborhoods.

- The City and Valparaiso Community Schools (VCS) should strengthen its partnership in examining the requirements for school building replacement and the appropriate reuse of vacated school structures.
- The City should strengthen its neighborhood planning programs. In coordination with individual neighborhoods, at least one small area plan should be developed each year. These plans would focus on specific area improvements and relevant code enforcement issues, which would identify and prioritize future capital projects, possible zoning district amendments, enhancement projects, or other special initiatives or programs.

Economic Development

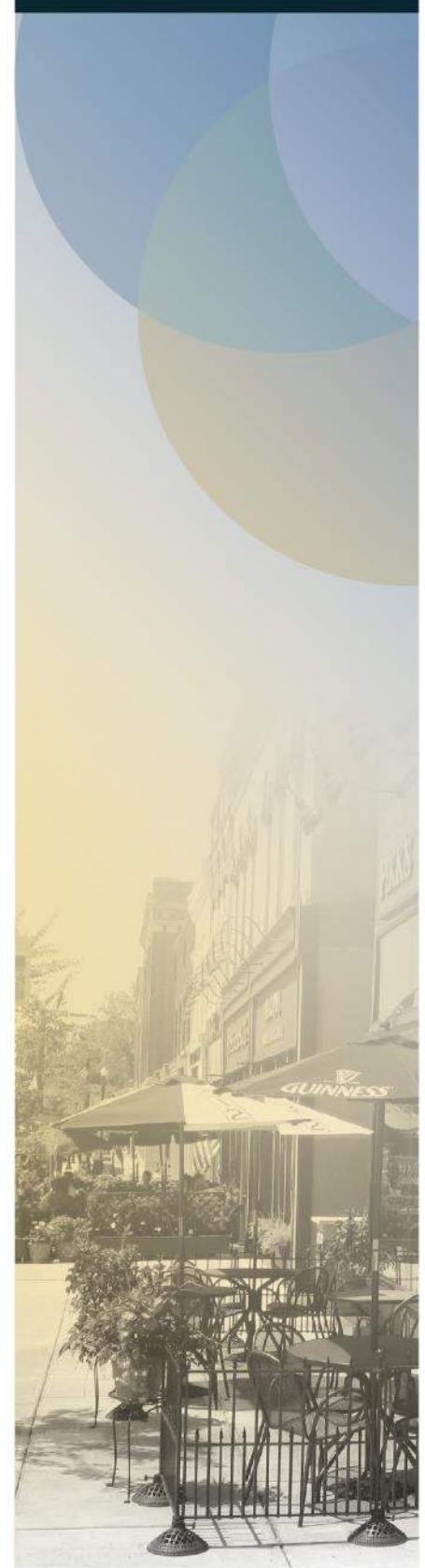
The City should continue to work closely with Porter County Economic Development Coalition and Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce in attracting new industries and promoting economic development at a strategic level. As outlined in *Chapter 4, Opportunity*, the City needs to continue with its ongoing efforts to identify and develop "shovel-ready" industrial development sites in order to respond to opportunities, which are certain to occur as the current economic recovery proceeds.

Specific implementation measures include:

- Work with area businesses and the Downtown interests to launch a "buy local" and other programs or campaigns to stimulate citizen awareness of locally-owned businesses and other opportunities.
- Facilitate the creation of an entrepreneurs/mentors network that hosts multiple events throughout the year.
- Establish a City revolving loan (gap) fund or loan guarantee program for new or expanding businesses, with the participation of local banks to contribute both capital and management expertise.
- Enlist City, business, and education leaders to lead development efforts for an angel fund for potential high-growth businesses.
- Mobilize the VU business school and Ivy Tech in support of local entrepreneurship.

Plan Amendment

This plan must remain flexible and allow for adjustment to change over time. Shifts in political, economic, physical, and social conditions, and other unforeseen circumstances will influence the priorities of the community. As future development and redevelopment continue, new issues will emerge, while others may no longer be relevant. Some action statements may become less practical, while other plausible solutions will arise. To ensure that it



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continues to reflect the vision and remains relevant and viable over time, this comprehensive plan must be revisited on a routine basis, with regular amendments and warranted updates.

There are two types of revisions that can be made to the plan: minor plan amendments should occur biannually, and more significant updates handled every five years. Minor amendments may include revisions to the land use and growth plan or thoroughfare plan as the development pattern unfolds. Major updates will involve reviewing the base conditions and growth trends; re-evaluating the goals, policies, and recommendations; and formulating new ones in response to changing needs and priorities.

Annual Progress Report

A progress report should be prepared annually by the Plan Commission, with the assistance of the Planning Department staff and presented to the Mayor and City Council. This ensures that the plan is regularly reviewed and modifications are identified for the minor plan amendment process. Ongoing monitoring of plan consistency with the City's ordinances must be an essential part of this effort.

The Annual Progress Report should include:

- Significant actions and accomplishments during the past year including the status of implementation for each programmed task.
- Implementation constraints including those encountered in administering the plan and its policies.
- Proposed amendments that have come forward during the course of the year, which may include revisions to the plan maps, or other recommendations, policies, or text changes.
- Recommendations for needed actions, programs, and procedures to be developed and implemented in the forthcoming year, including a recommendation of projects to be included in the capital improvements programs, non-capital programs and initiatives to be funded, and priority coordination needs with the public and private implementation partners referenced earlier in this chapter.

Amendment Process

In addition to the Annual Progress Report, minor plan amendments should occur every two years, allowing proposed changes to be considered concurrently. Amendments may need to be made in a lesser time, in the event of a major opportunity for development.

Any proposed amendments must be consistent with the goals and policies set forth in the plan. Careful consideration should also be given to guard against

site-specific plan changes that could negatively impact adjacent areas and uses or detract from the overall vision and character of the area.

Factors that should be considered include:

- Consistency with the goals and policies of the plan;
- Adherence with the future land use, growth, thoroughfare, and corridor or neighborhood redevelopment plans;
- Compatibility with the Porter County plan and related plans of surrounding areas;
- Impacts on the provision of infrastructure and public services;
- Impact on environmentally sensitive and natural areas; and
- Contribution to the vision of the plan and character of the community

Five-Year Update/Evaluation and Appraisal Report

A more formal evaluation and appraisal report should be prepared every five years. This report should be prepared by the Planning Department staff and approved by the Director, with input from various City departments, Plan Commission, and other boards and committees. The report involves evaluating the existing plan and assessing how successful it has been in implementing the vision and goals. The purpose is to identify the successes and shortcomings of the plan, evaluate circumstances that may have changed, and make recommendations on how the plan should be modified. The report should review baseline conditions and assumptions about trends and growth indicators, and it should evaluate implementation potential and/or obstacles related to any unmet goals, policies, and recommendations.

The result of the evaluation report will be a revised comprehensive plan. More specifically, the report should identify and evaluate the following:

- Summary of plan amendments and major actions undertaken over the last five years.
- Major issues in the community and how these issues have changed over time.
- Changes in the assumptions, trends, and base studies including the following:
 - The rate at which growth is occurring relative to the projections put forward in the plan;
 - Shifts in demographics and other growth trends;
 - The area of urban land that is designated and zoned and its capacity to meet projected demands;
 - City-wide attitudes and whether changes necessitate amendments to the vision and goals;

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- Other changes in the political, social, economic, or environmental conditions that dictate a need for plan amendment; and
- Ability of the plan to continue to successfully implement the vision.

Individual statements or sections of the plan must be reviewed and rewritten to ensure that the plan provides sufficient information and direction to achieve the intended outcome.

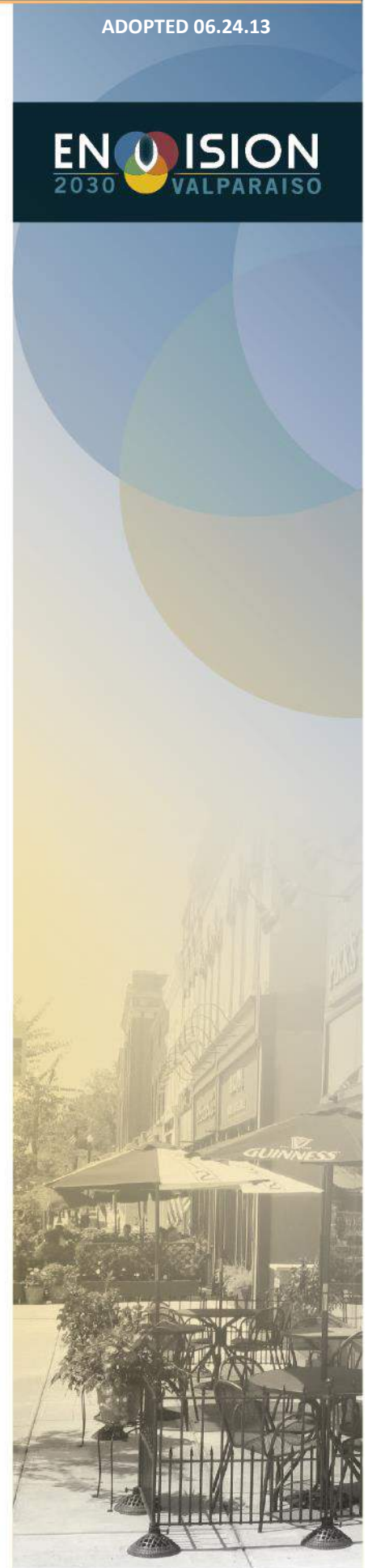
- Conflicts between goals and policies that have been discovered in the implementation and administration of the plan must be resolved.
- The action agenda should be reviewed, and major actions accomplished should be highlighted. Those not accomplished should be re-evaluated to ensure their relevancy and/or to revise them appropriately.
- The time frames for implementing the individual actions should be re-evaluated. Some actions may emerge as a higher priority given new or changed circumstances, while others may become less important.
- Based upon organizational, programmatic, and procedural factors, as well as the status of previously assigned tasks, the implementation task assignments must be reviewed and altered to ensure timely accomplishment.
- Changes in laws, procedures, and missions may impact the ability to achieve the goals. The plan review must assess these changes and their impacts on the success of implementation, leading to any suggested revisions in strategies or priorities.



Table 8.1, Significant Plan Implementation Measures, 2012 to 2030

	Project	Further Study	Policy/Legal Change	Operational Change	Capital Improvement
Chapter 2, Land Use and Community Character					
1	Rezone rail corridor from heavy (INH) to light (INL) industrial		X		
2	Consolidate surplus Ivy Tech property for future mixed-use		X		
3	Design/construct gateway and streetscape projects	X			X
4	Design/develop SR 2 "Entrance Corridor"	X			X
5	Create a fringe area plan around Valparaiso University	X			
6	Widen SR 49 required buffer requirements from 30' to 60'		X		
Chapter 4, Opportunity					
7	Establish City revolving loan fund to expand businesses	X	X	X	
8	Establish Airport area foreign trade zone	X	X	X	X
9	Establish SR 49 "Tech Corridor" Master Plan	X			X
Chapter 5, Mobility					
10	Implement proposed street / intersection improvements	X			X
11	Amend UDO subdivision street cross-section standards	X	X		
Chapter 5, Housing & Neighborhoods					
12	Revise residential parking regulations to promote affordability	X	X		
13	Adopt affordable housing percentage standards	X	X		
14	Establish low-interest housing rehabilitation loan pools	X		X	
15	Prepare individual neighborhood plans and capital programs	X			
16	Adopt incentives for conversions back to single-family housing	X		X	
17	Update historical structures survey	X			
18	Re-establish locally specific historical preservation guidelines	X	X		
Chapter 6, Growth & Capacity					
19	Continue sanitary sewer inspection/rehabilitation program				X
20	Continue sanitary sewer separation projects	X			X
21	Implement proposed improvements to the Sturdy Road Lift Station				X

ADOPTED 06.24.13


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Table 8.1 Significant Plan Implementation Measures, 2012 to 2030

22	Complete implementation of the 2010 Stormwater Management Plan Projects				X
23	Identify and rezone potential infill areas	X	X		
24	Prepare and adopt an annexation plan and program	X	X	X	
U.S. 30 Corridor Improvement Plan					
25	Develop west gateway at Hayes Leonard Road	X			X
26	Develop Smoke Road-Campbell Street access entrance	X			X
27	Develop Greenwich Street access entrance	X			X
28	Develop Sturdy Road portal and streetscape	X			X
29	Construct bike/pedestrian bridge near Sturdy Road	X			X
30	Develop Morthland Drive Conservancy Park	X			X
31	Establish Corridor Development Design Guidelines	X	X		

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The logo is a circular emblem with a dark blue background. It features a stylized, symmetrical design in a lighter blue-grey color, resembling a stylized 'K' or a pair of wings. The emblem is bordered by concentric circles in yellow and red. The text 'KENDIG KEAST' is written in a white, serif, all-caps font across the middle of the emblem, and 'COLLABORATIVE' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif, all-caps font below it.

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