



FORWARD KOSCIUSKO COUNTY

TOWN OF **LEESBURG**

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTION DRAFT: MAY 4, 2022

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KOSCIUSKO COUNTY



Kosciusko County
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

K21
HEALTH
FOUNDATION

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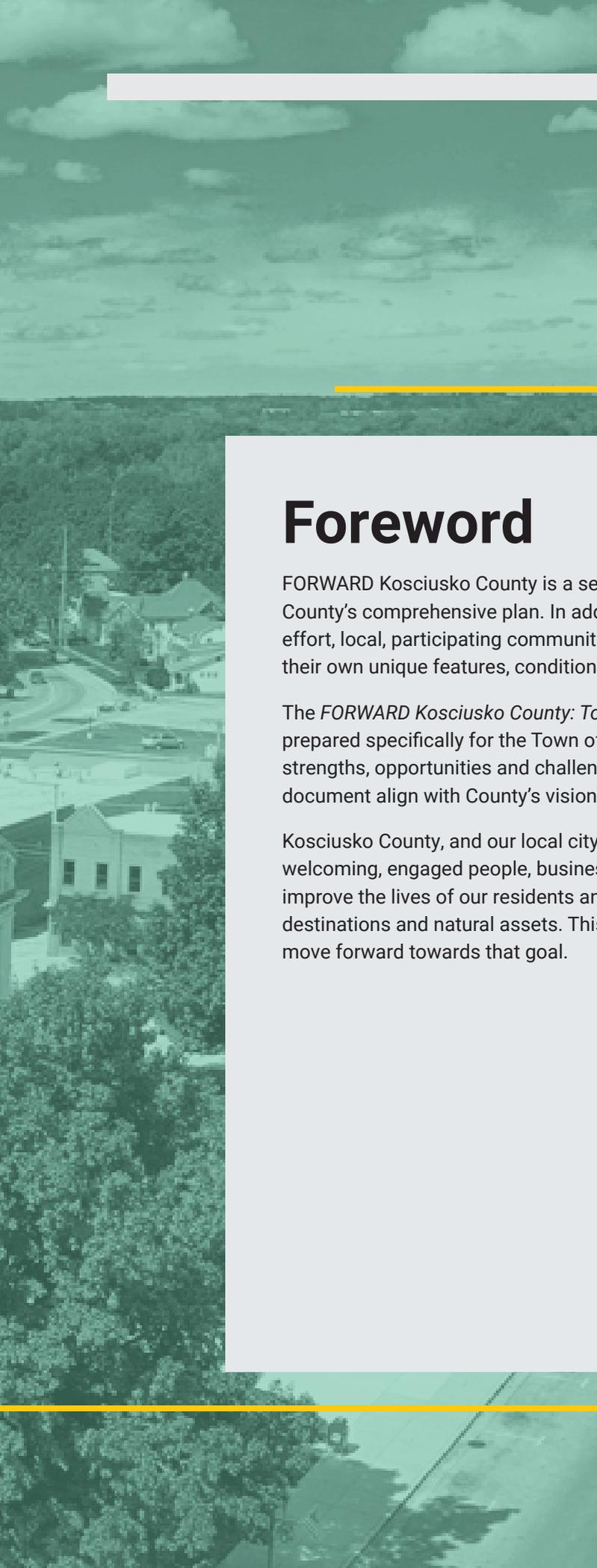
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Foreword

FORWARD Kosciusko County is a set of detailed policy documents that serves as the County's comprehensive plan. In addition to the County document, as a part of the effort, local, participating communities also adopted a comprehensive plan based on their own unique features, conditions and aspirations.

The *FORWARD Kosciusko County: Town of Leesburg Comprehensive Plan* was prepared specifically for the Town of Leesburg and reflects the Town's unique strengths, opportunities and challenges. The recommendations included in the document align with County's vision and goals for the future.

Kosciusko County, and our local city and towns, aspire to be a strong community of welcoming, engaged people, businesses and organizations that continually work to improve the lives of our residents and the condition of our businesses, industries, destinations and natural assets. This plan outlines how the Town of Leesburg can move forward towards that goal.



Kosciusko County Landscape | Visit Kosciusko County

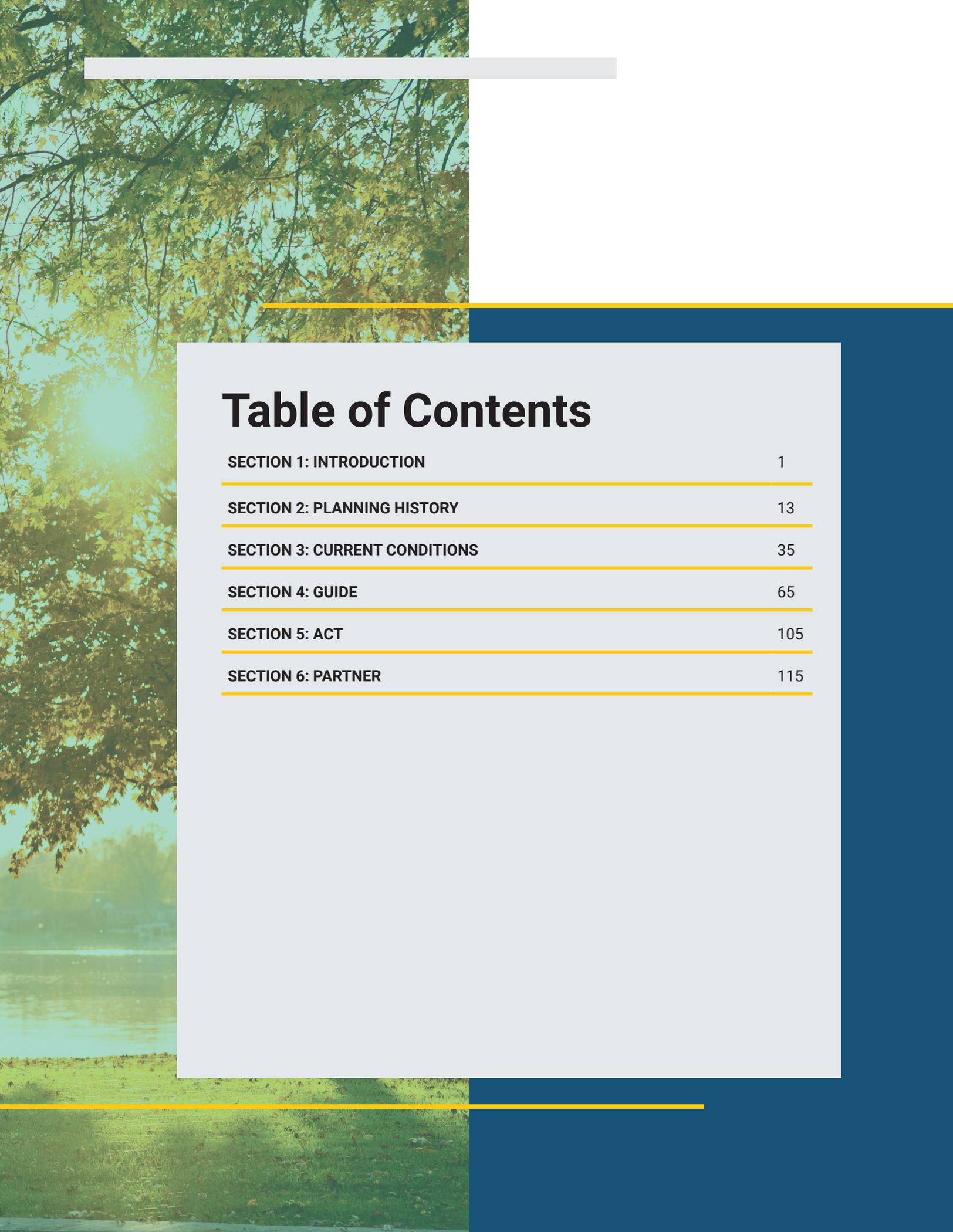
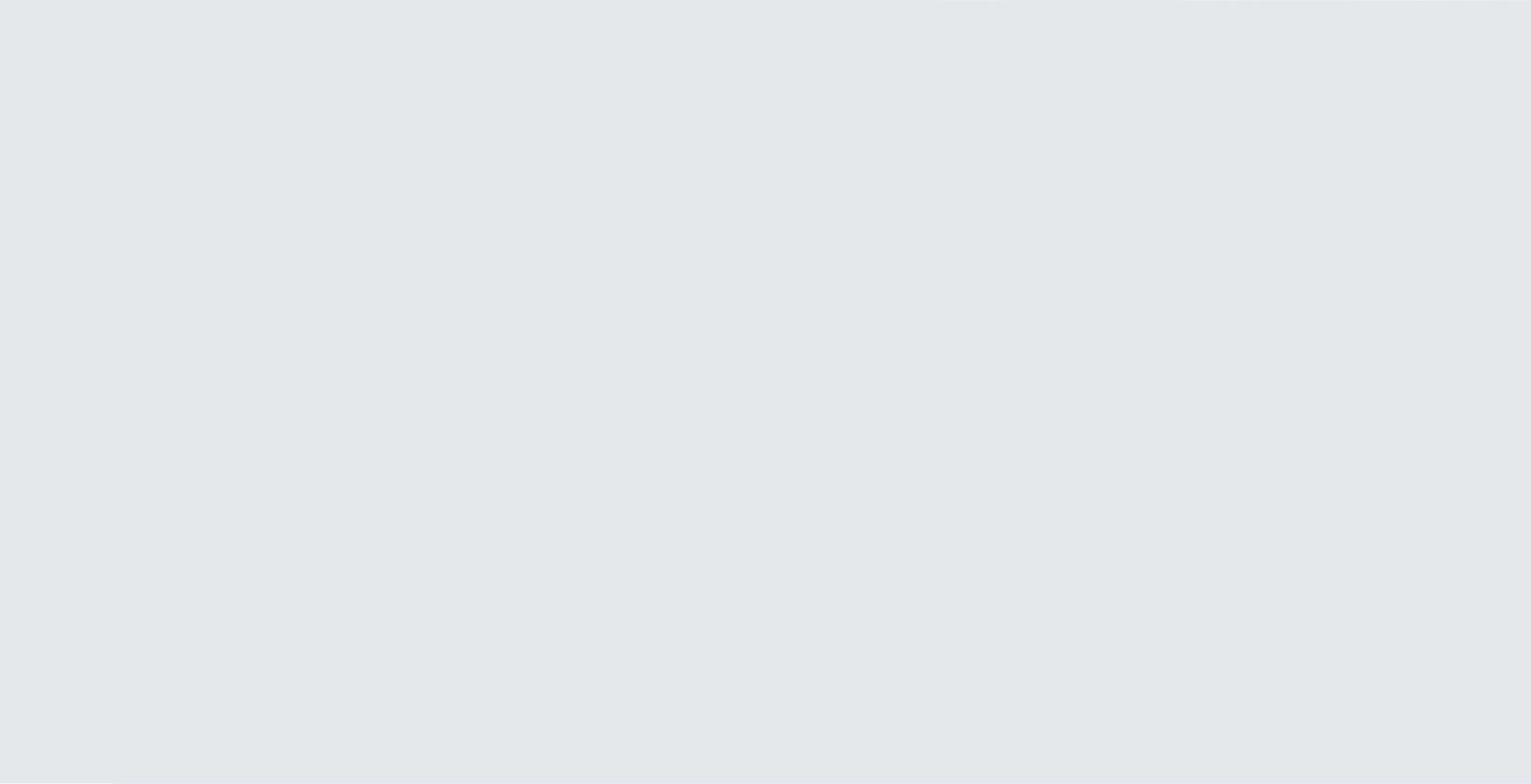


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**SECTION
ONE**

Plan Introduction

Kosciusko County Courthouse, Warsaw, IN | Visit Kosciusko County



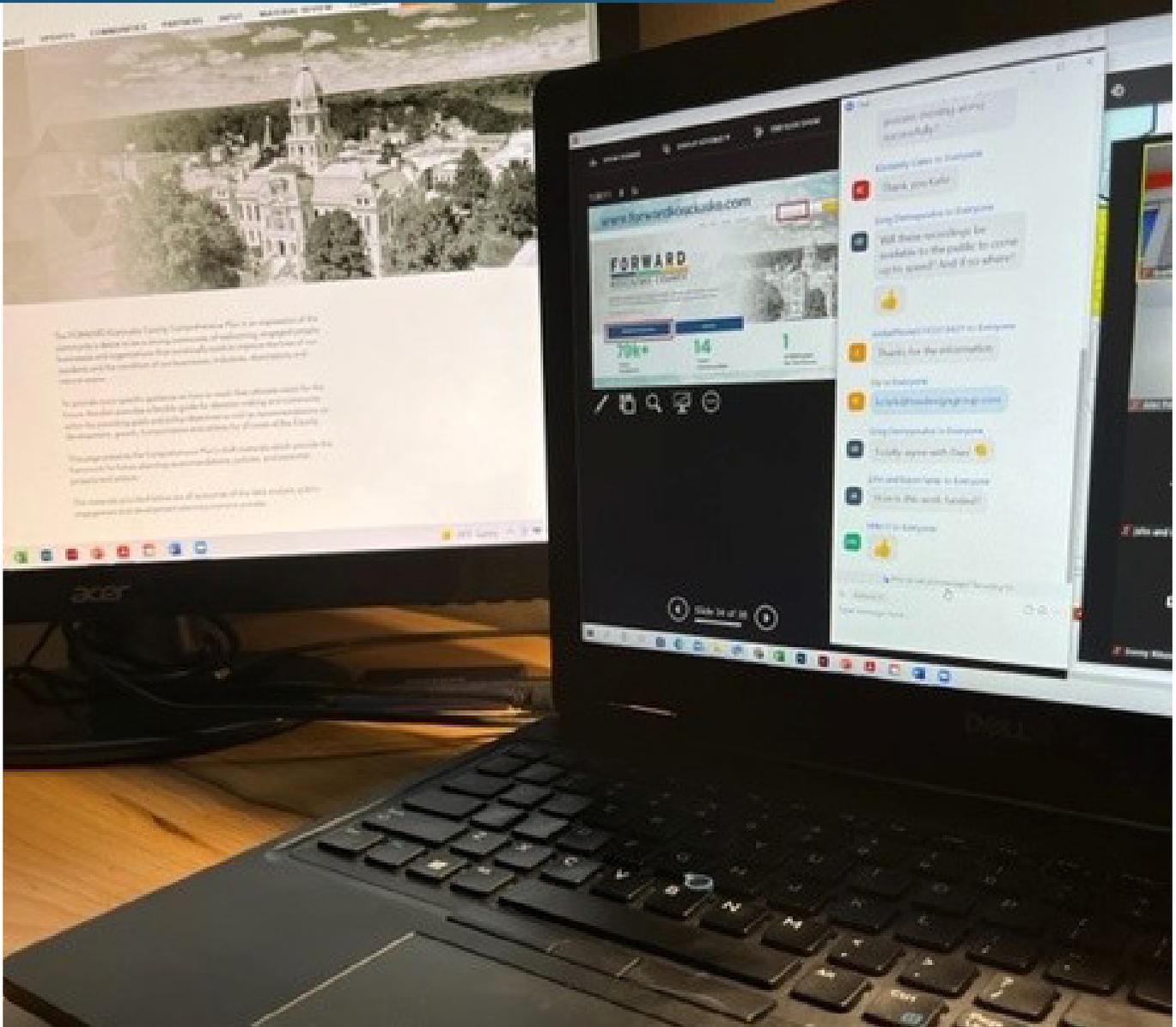
FORWARD Kosciusko County is intended to represent all of us and will be OUR tool to build a better future together.



In its simplest form, planning is a process that brings individuals or groups together to think about a shared goal for their future. When communities plan, it provides for an opportunity to think through specific and unique needs that directly relate to the residents, business owners, employees and visitors of a specific area. By undertaking a planning process, a community can develop and achieve a character of its own. Planning is a community's chance to tell their story and craft their individual dream for the future. Each City, Town and unincorporated area within Kosciusko County is different. The FORWARD Kosciusko County planning effort, is a collaborative opportunity to identify the uniqueness of each of our communities, while also finding ways to stitch our unique assets into a community fabric that ties all of Kosciusko County together.

FORWARD Kosciusko County is a one-of-a-kind update to the County's current 1996 comprehensive plan. The effort - led by Kosciusko County, the local incorporated communities and their strategic community partners - encourages residents, community leaders and community organizations to come together to discuss local challenges, identify unique community features and determine how Kosciusko County and the local communities can grow, evolve and improve. In doing so, the final outcomes will allow for stronger guidance on economic development initiatives, housing development and design, parks and recreation programs, public transportation and county-wide trail connectivity, the design and maintenance of public facilities, as well as the management of local governmental programs.

FORWARD Kosciusko County Public Presentation | TSWDG



A comprehensive plan alone does not ensure change will occur. It must be implemented on a daily basis by elected officials, commission members, city staff and local stakeholders. FORWARD Kosciusko County is intended to encourage cooperation, collaboration and continued, shared investment amongst all implementation partners.

PURPOSE OF THE **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

FORWARD Kosciusko County is a detailed policy document that serves as the County’s comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is a guidance document for local staff and leaders to reference when making decisions about the growth and development of the community. The primary purpose of the plan is to outline a community-wide vision that looks 10 – 20 years into the future. Indiana Code (Series 500 Title 36-7-4) encourages cities, towns, and counties to adopt a comprehensive plan that includes three key elements:

- A statement of objectives for the future development of the jurisdiction,
- A statement of policy for the land use development of the jurisdiction, and
- A statement of policy for the development of public rights of ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities.

Aside from the elements specified in the Indiana Code, the organization of a comprehensive plan can take many forms based on the needs of the community. The final FORWARD Kosciusko County document is comprehensive, both in scale and scope, with recommendations for the entire County and all incorporated communities for land use, housing, economic development, transportation (vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle), utilities, parks and recreation, community facilities, health and wellness initiatives, placemaking components and implementation.

In addition to the County document, as a part of the effort, local, participating communities also adopted a comprehensive plan based on their own unique features, conditions and aspirations. The local comprehensive plans support the county-wide vision and goals outlined as a part of the FORWARD Kosciusko County document.

Town of Pierceton Community Focus Group Meeting, Pierceton, IN | MACOG



FORWARD KOSCIUSKO COUNTY PLAN ADVISORS

A successful county-wide planning process ensures that residents and businesses from all four corners of the County are engaged and heard. In order to do this, the project team recruited several different guiding groups to help communicate information. There were five primary groups acting as plan advisors. Each guiding group is identified below:

Project Steering Committee – This group consists of 30 individuals that were tasked with guiding both the planning process and the development of the final recommendations of the plan. In total, the steering committee consisted of two individuals from each incorporated community, three representatives from County government, two individuals from the Area Plan Commission, and four individuals from strategic implementation partners including the Kosciusko County Community Foundation, K21 Health Foundation and the Kosciusko Economic Development Corporation.

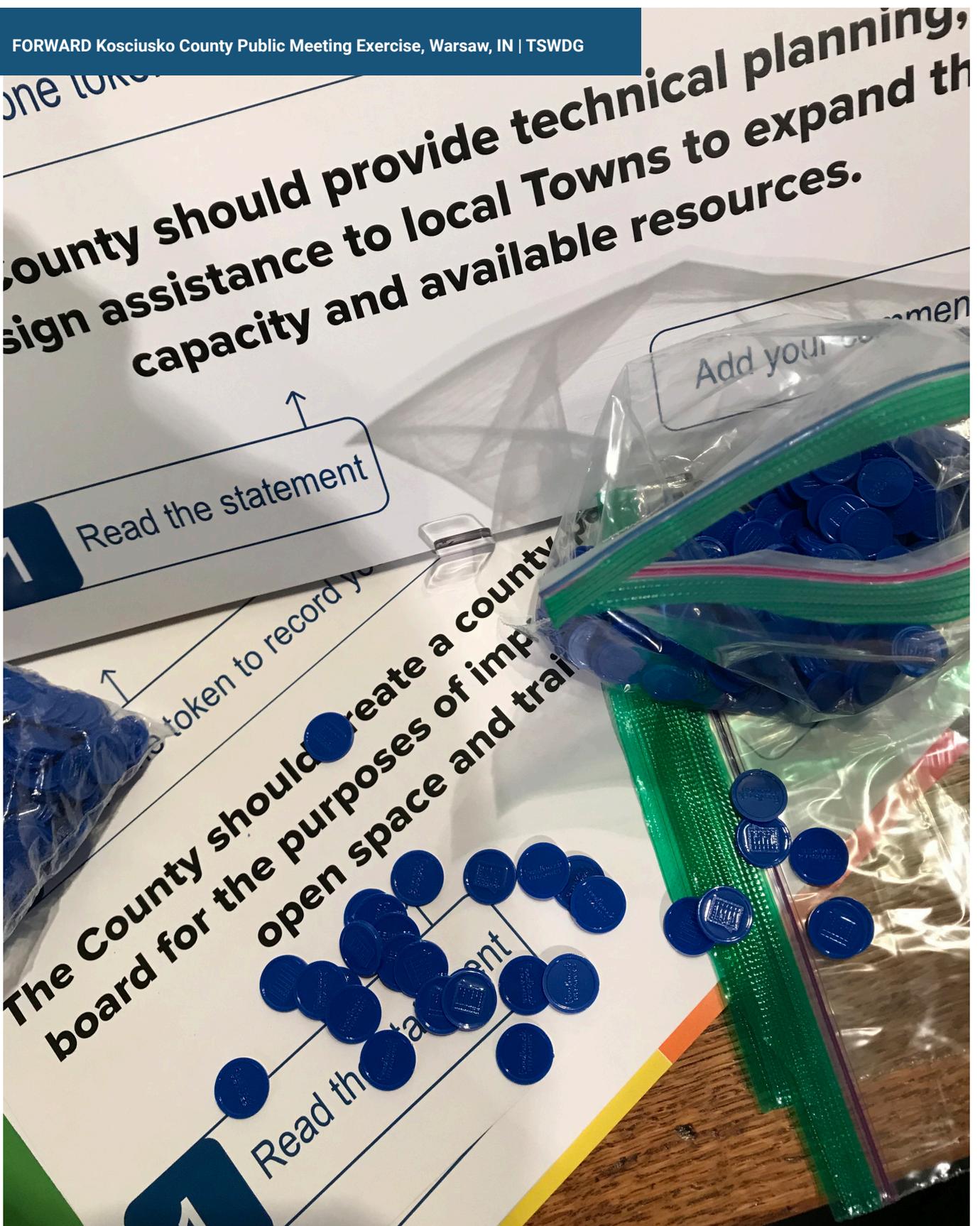
Project Leadership Group – This group is made up of elected and appointed officials and stakeholders from strategic businesses and community organizations. At the end of each phase of work, these individuals were given the opportunity to review key findings and participate in the development of the plan's final recommendations.

Community Committees – These stakeholder groups include individuals who represent a wide array of community interests including local employers, commercial and residential developers, community organizations, public safety officials, leaders in education, and local engineers and planners. Through multiple Zoom meetings, digital presentations and in-person meetings, these individuals and small groups were invited to share thoughts and comments on county-wide aspirations, goals and challenges.

Outreach Committee – This group, consisting of local representatives, community organizations, and members of the local media, was tasked with assisting in the development of project communication logistics, tools, and engagement techniques that were used throughout the process.

Residents of Kosciusko County – Equally as important to the other committees, Kosciusko County is home to nearly 80,000 residents that serve as community experts. All members of the community were encouraged to share their big ideas, challenges and concerns, and hopes for the future.

FORWARD Kosciusko County Public Meeting Exercise, Warsaw, IN | TSWDG



USING THE **PLAN** **DOCUMENTS**

While the plan addresses physical elements of the County, it is general in nature and is intended to guide policies and best practices related to development. The FORWARD Kosciusko County Plan describes strategies for improving our public health, safety and support services; enhancing our lakes, waterways, natural areas and recreational amenities; and supporting growth in our local businesses, industries and tourism destinations. These strategies are intended to be implemented over the course of a 10-20 year timeframe. The Plan was created with the intention that various community partners will help facilitate the implementation. It is not just for public officials and staff members but anyone who is interested in the future of Kosciusko County or their local community. Depending on the user, the final document can be implemented in various ways.

County and municipal staff, especially members of the County Area Plan Commission or local Board of Zoning Appeals, should use the Plan to guide land-use decisions, prioritize capital improvement projects and programs, and pursue funding to assist in implementation. The vision, goals, policy objectives and mapping recommendations should be used as part of the decision-making process during development reviews, re-zonings and economic development incentive discussions. This ensures elected and appointed officials, staff, developers and the community understand the importance of the comprehensive plan and the guidance it provides moving forward.

Community organizations and special interest groups should use this document to inform their own individual strategic planning efforts. While each separate organization or group has their own unique structure and set of resources, many of the County's future needs rely on the assistance and cooperation of these specialty groups and, in some cases, these groups are better suited to lead local improvement and enhancement efforts.

Developers or builders should use this document to understand the development policies and priorities, identify areas for development, and/ or review the current and future population, employment, and market trends.

Residents and business owners should use this document as a guide when making real estate decisions such as where to buy a home or where to locate a business, considering renovating properties, or looking for potential programs and incentives to help their business.



GUIDE

To allow for flexibility and ongoing guidance to Kosciusko County and each local community, a series of goals and policy objectives were developed to account for ongoing and future efforts related to the success of the County's PEOPLE, PLACES, SYSTEMS, DESTINATIONS and PARTNERSHIPS. While the goal statements are broad, overarching ideas, the policy objectives vary in detail but generally are more specific than the goals themselves and identify the shared roles and responsibilities of the County and their implementation partners.

These statements are intended to serve as a check point when considering new projects and initiatives, because they represent the values and needs of the community, local leaders and key stakeholders. The statements should be used by County and local leaders to review and guide investments, plan for county or local-led initiatives and determine if future initiatives and projects are in alignment with the vision outlined within this Plan.

FORWARD Kosciusko County is intended to provide guidance as to how the county-wide vision for the future can and should be translated into regulatory decisions and potential changes to the County's zoning, subdivision and other development-related regulations.



ACT

While the private sector often leads new development efforts, they rely on Counties and local municipalities to provide adequate infrastructure to service their housing projects, business parks and retail centers. The County and each local community can benefit from an itemized list of maintenance, modernization and enhancement needs that are needed now as well as in the future.

FORWARD Kosciusko County is intended to provide guidance as to how capital improvement actions can be integrated into the jurisdiction annual budgeting process.



PARTNER

While local community organizations and special interest groups do not play a primary role in private development decisions or in the implementation of municipal projects, they do have the ability to advance efforts related to community services and specialty development interests.

These groups also have the ability to apply their available staffing resources to supporting local government in specific ways including technical research, local education, marketing and fiduciary roles.

FORWARD Kosciusko County is intended to identify a series of strategic partners and available resources that can kick start and support implementation efforts.

GENERAL PLAN ORGANIZATION

The 14-month planning process established a county-wide vision that supported county aspirations and local community needs. Achieving the long-range vision for the County will require focus and follow through at multiple levels. The final Plan provides the framework for regulatory tools like zoning, subdivision regulations, annexations, and other County or City/ Town policies. While the Plan is not a regulatory tool in and of itself, the recommendations of this Plan are organized to ensure that the County's shared vision of the future has the greatest chance of succeeding. To truly take advantage of the wealth of opportunities found throughout Kosciusko County, county and local leaders and stakeholders will need to use data and input to GUIDE their decision making process, ACT strategically to make necessary improvements and PARTNER to expand local capacity and governmental resources.

The *FORWARD Kosciusko County: Town of Leesburg Comprehensive Plan* materials are organized to provide tools and resources in three primary ways:

GUIDE

The tools and recommendations within this section provide guidance on how to make decisions on public and private land development proposals, the expenditure of public funds, availability of economic development incentives, cooperative community efforts and issues of local concern.

To allow for flexibility and ongoing guidance to Kosciusko County and each local community, a series of goals and policy objectives were developed to account for ongoing and future efforts related to the success of the County's PEOPLE, PLACES, SYSTEMS, DESTINATIONS and PARTNERSHIPS.

These statements are intended to serve as a check point when considering new projects and initiatives, because they represent the values and needs of the community, local leaders and key stakeholders. The statements should be used by local leaders to review and guide investments, plan for local-led initiatives and determine if future initiatives and projects are in alignment with the vision outlined within this Plan.

ACT

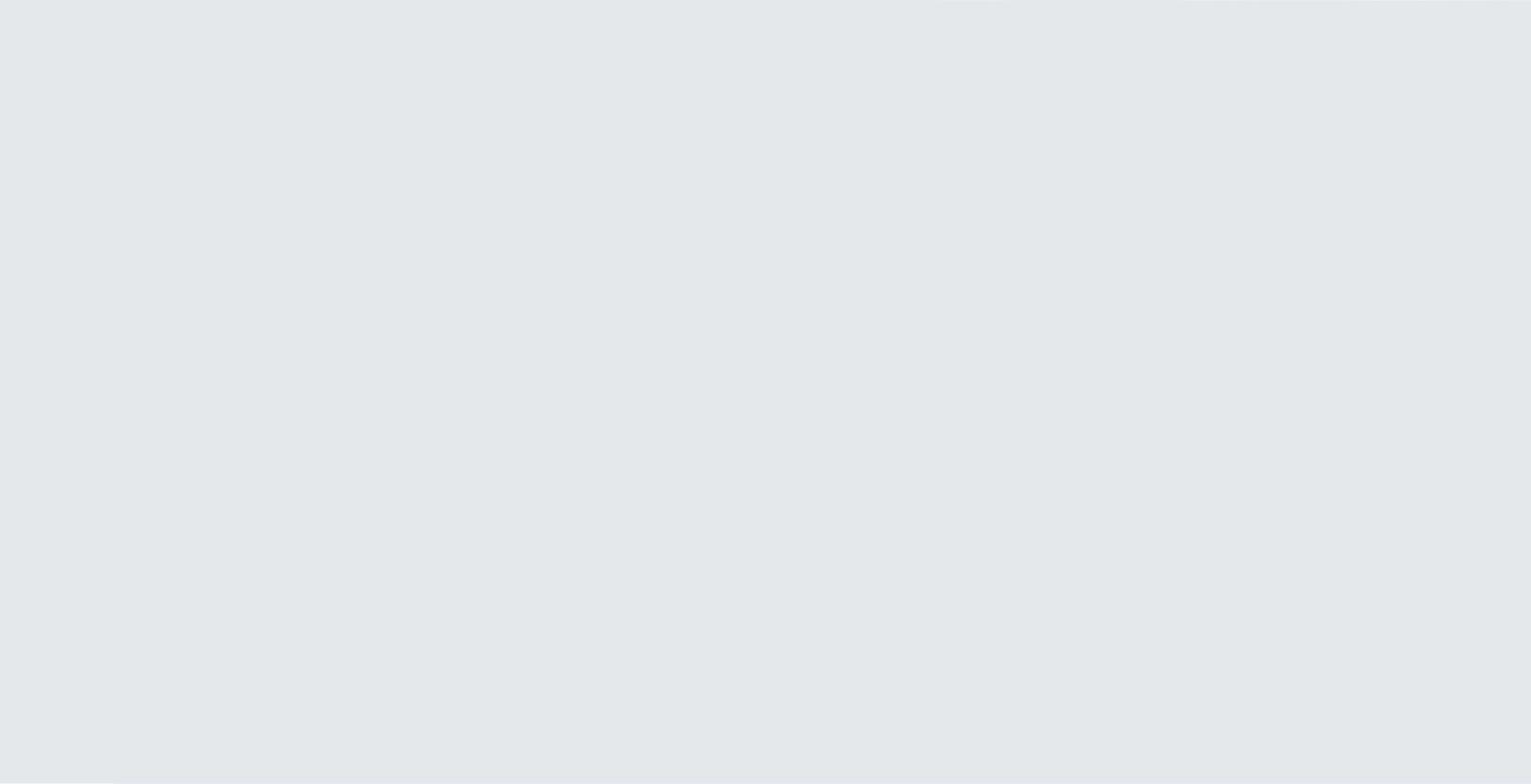
The proposed projects and initiatives within this section provide for the long-term maintenance, modernization and enhancement of the County's public infrastructure including streets, drainage ways, and water, wastewater and stormwater systems.

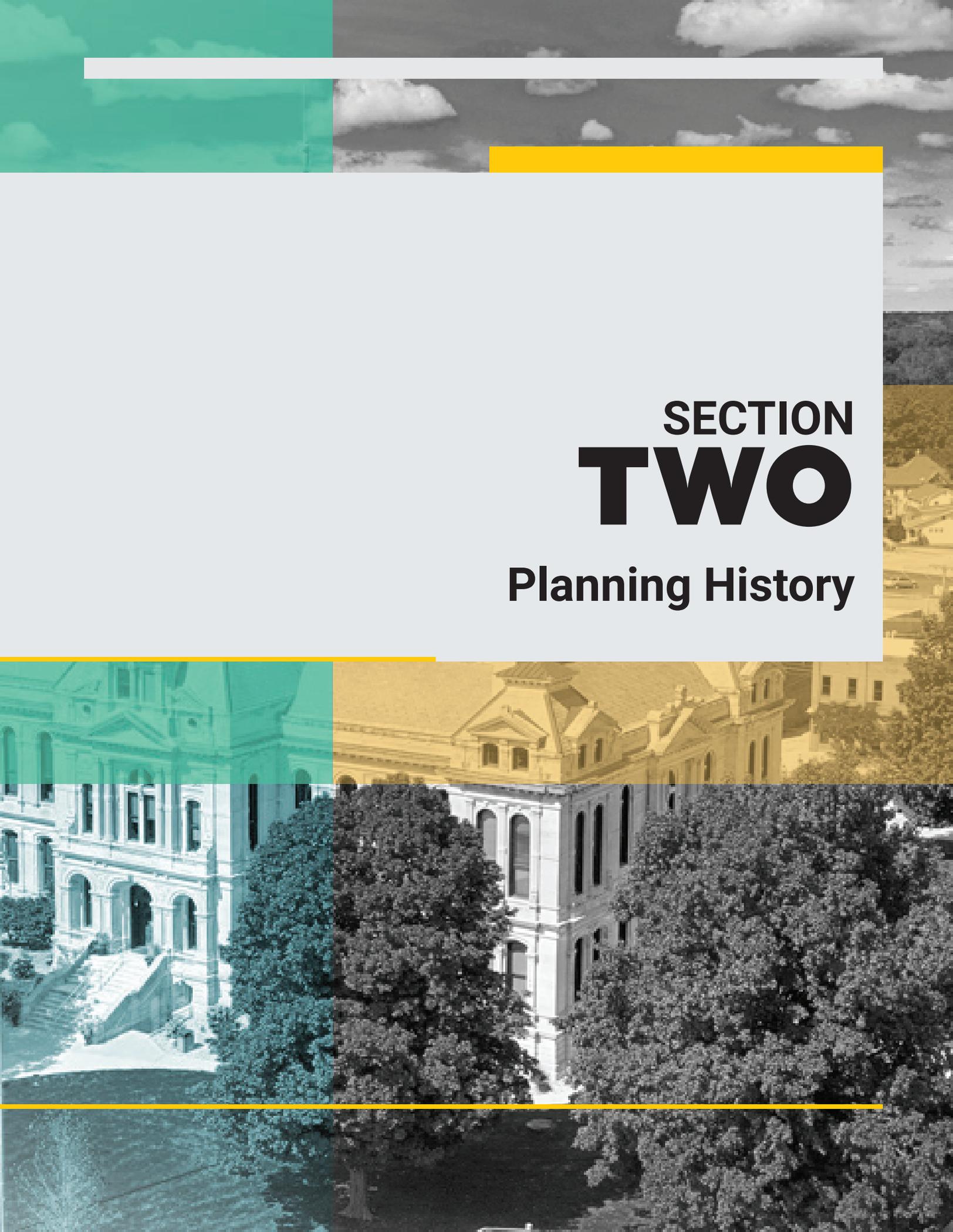
While the private sector often leads new development efforts, they rely on local municipalities to provide adequate infrastructure to service their housing projects, business parks and retail centers. In addition to physical, capital improvements, the strategic actions needed to meet county-wide goals also rely on improvements to community facilities and functions including parks, libraries, community centers, child care and public education.

PARTNER

The potential partners and available resources listed within this section are intended to identify ways in which local community partners can assist in County and local efforts moving forward.

Local community organizations and special interest groups were integral in the development of the *FORWARD Kosciusko County* materials and recommendations. While these groups do not play a primary role in private development decisions or in the implementation of municipal projects, they do have the ability to advance efforts related to community services and specialty development interests.





SECTION
TWO

Planning History

Kosciusko County Courthouse, Warsaw, IN | Visit Kosciusko County





In February 1835, the Indiana State Legislature passed a bill authorizing the creation of thirteen counties in northeast Indiana. Following that legislation, Kosciusko County (named for the Polish general Tadeusz Kosciuszko, who served in the American Revolutionary War) solidified themselves as an official county by 1837. Today, the County is Indiana's 5th largest based on land area calculation.

Kosciusko County is divided into 17 Civil Townships and is home to thirteen individual, incorporated communities: Burket, Claypool, Etna Green, Leesburg, Mentone, Milford, North Webster, Pierceton, Sidney, Silver Lake, Syracuse, Warsaw and Winona Lake. While each individual community has their own history, their own amenities and their own unique vision for the future, they also see the value in using their individual assets to strengthen the broader Kosciusko County region.

To this effect, policies, procedures and tools have been developed and refined as each community, and portions of the unincorporated County, have grown, evolved and changed since their establishment. During the 1960's, County officials and various community organizations recognized that uncontrolled and incompatible residential and commercial development was increasing the cost of government services and negatively affecting the general quality of life for County residents.

Town of Leesburg Industrial Site, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG

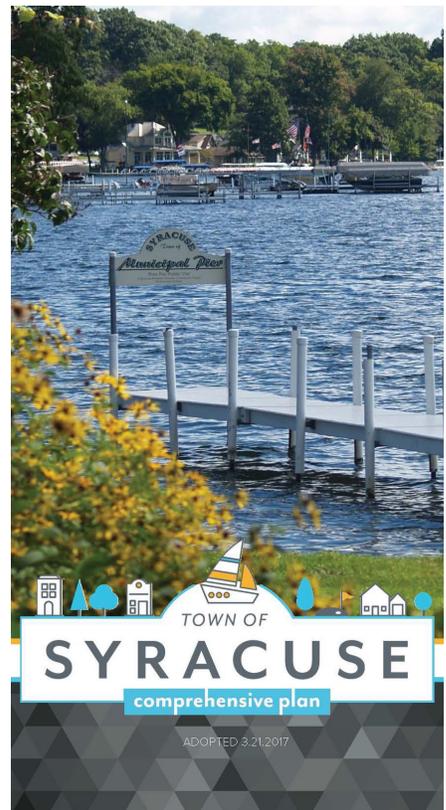


In the early stages, the Kosciusko County Area Plan Commission (APC) worked primarily to establish a County Comprehensive Plan and supporting Zoning Ordinance. From 1967 to 1973, the Commission collected data, and conducted public meetings to devise a Comprehensive Plan for land use, transportation, and community facilities. During this time, the APC also consulted the various communities about the creation of a County Zoning and Subdivision Control Ordinance.

In June 1973, the Kosciusko County Commissioners adopted the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan established policies and objectives for land use, devised a plan for transportation improvements and described available community facilities. During 1974, the APC and citizens' advisory groups drafted land use regulations, which would complement the Comprehensive Plan's policies. In January 1975, the County Commissioners adopted the County Ordinance. Although the County has assumed planning and administrative responsibilities, the individual Town Boards still retained legislative authority within their cooperate limits.

Originally, Claypool, Mentone, Milford, Pierceton, and Silver Lake as well as all unincorporated county areas, participated in planning and land use regulation. Since 1975, Leesburg and North Webster have joined the Plan Commission while Mentone has withdrawn. Syracuse still retains a separate Board of Zoning Appeals (within corporate limits) but follows the County's policies. The City of Warsaw and the Town of Winona Lake both retain a separate Board of Zoning Appeals and have their own comprehensive plans to guide decision making.

Kosciusko County WEL COME NESS Study



RECENT AND ONGOING **PLANNING EFFORTS**

In 1996, the Kosciusko County Planning and Design Studies, which was adopted as the updated Kosciusko County Comprehensive Plan, were undertaken to explore the issues facing Kosciusko County, and its incorporated communities, to provide a guide for local growth management. At the time, Kosciusko County was facing growth pressures and working to take advantage of its opportunities, while managing change in a manner sensitive to the needs of its residents and businesses. The updated Plan was designed to serve as a tool to aid in decision making and guide policy in a manner that is both receptive to growth and development and conscious of unique, local, quality-of-life concerns. Since the Plan's adoption in 1996, the document has served as the primary framework for guiding the future development of Kosciusko County.

As a complement to the County's comprehensive plan, the communities of Warsaw, Winona Lake and Syracuse have all developed and maintained their own individual comprehensive plan. These documents guide the growth and development within those specific municipal boundaries and provide some recommendations on how incorporated and unincorporated land should be developed in ways that benefit both the County and the communities. No other incorporated communities currently have long-range planning document.

The County is now home to just under 80,000 individuals, including strong industries of agriculture, medical device manufacturing, and businesses serving the recreation sector. Kosciusko County is blessed with strong economic driving forces and rich natural-resource aspects that are often in conflict with unmanaged development. Since Kosciusko County is a strong player in the Northern Indiana area, it has traditionally been an appealing site for investment and residential development. As growth progresses outwards into the County from Warsaw, this investment challenges the character and quality of life that many long-term residents associate with their communities. In fact, some of this new development reduces the character and value in itself.

While the County's last plan was updated in 1996, there has been a considerable amount of strategic thinking, long-range planning and specific implementation work going on within and around Kosciusko County for years. These efforts have supplemented the work done in the 1996 Kosciusko County Comprehensive Plan and have allowed local elected and appointed officials as well as key stakeholders to continue thinking about the future of the County as a whole.

The FORWARD Kosciusko County effort did not want to repeat previous work, so the inventory and analysis conducted as a part of this comprehensive planning process builds directly on previous planning efforts. The intention of this plan is to be additive to all previous work done at both regional and local levels. At the onset of this process, nearly twenty strategic plans or initiatives were reviewed and assessed for relevant information, insights into the County and action items that could support the goals of the final plan. While each plan was thoroughly reviewed for the knowledge it offers, this summary serves to highlight the overarching purpose of each document. Where possible, data and statistics from relevant plans have been mentioned, and sourced, within chapters of this document.

Regional Efforts

Northeast Indiana Growing with Vision Regional Development Plan (2021)

The Plan was prepared and submitted as a part of the Indiana's Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI). Through this initiative, the State will encourage neighboring counties, cities and towns to partner in creating a shared vision for their future, mapping out the programs, initiatives and projects that are critical for them to retain talent today and attract the workforce of tomorrow.

MACOG State of Digital Inclusion (2021)

The report, which includes data on the broader Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) for the counties of Elkhart, Kosciusko, Marshall and St. Joseph, is intended to provide a digital inclusion snapshot of the region. The plan includes an inventory of current conditions, summarized survey data (household and speed), innovative metrics specific to the region and recommendations for future consideration.

MACOG On the MOVE Transportation Plan 2045 (2019)

The Michiana on the Move: 2045 Transportation Plan identifies how the Michiana region will address its transportation needs and also provides guidance on how federal, state and local funds will be invested into highways, public transit, freight, bikeways and pedestrian walkways. The Plan also references other local and regional plans in order to coordinate multimodal and intermodal services throughout the community.

MACOG Transportation Improvement Program FY 20-24 (2019)

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a federally-required, short-range plan that provides information regarding the schedule of multimodal transportation projects that are federally funded or deemed regionally significant in the MACOG region. The projects included in the plan range from investments on highways, safety improvements, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and planning studies that will be funded through Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 with local, state and federal funding.

MACOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2020-2024 (2019)

The purpose of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is to provide guidance on the region's economic development initiatives over the course of five years. The CEDS guides the prioritization of regional projects and ensures that those recommendations align with the CEDS goals and EDA's investment priorities. The CEDS also enables MACOG to retain its EDD designation.

Northeast Indiana Regional Cities Initiative Proposal (2015)

The Plan was prepared and submitted as a part of the Indiana Regional Cities Initiative which was designed to help communities across Indiana come together to transform their regions into nationally-recognized destinations to live, work and play. The Plan outlines strategic projects throughout the Northeast Indiana region (Adams, Allen, Dekalb, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells, and Whitley Counties) that will assist in the successful implementation of their 'Road to One Million' vision.

County and Local Efforts

Kosciusko County Housing Strategies (2020)

The Kosciusko County and City of Warsaw Housing Strategy is a proactive strategy for planning and developing housing for which there is documented and quantified demand. The plan uses the inputs provided by the Kosciusko County Residential Market Potential Study and delivers recommendations on providing resources to support housing-driven economic development strategies.

Kosciusko County Residential Market Potential Study (2020)

The presentation slides and supporting data inventoried the residential market potential within Kosciusko County and the City of Warsaw. The analysis explored where the market potential existed at the time, attempted to quantify the number of future residents, as well as their demographic backgrounds, and projected the price points that the residential market might support in both purchase and rental amounts.

Welcomeness Study (2019)

The Plan was created in collaboration with OrthoWorx and a local Advisory Committee to present the findings of a first-of-its-kind study in Kosciusko County that looks at both social inclusion as well as economic development opportunities from the perspective of employee retention. The analysis provides baseline metrics to define ‘social inclusion’ and gives insight into how these metrics impact economic development opportunities focusing in the areas of employee retention, workforce housing, and childcare availability.

Kosciusko Economic Development Corporation Strategic Launch (2019)

The Plan serves as an opportunity to bring capital and human resources together to move Kosciusko County towards positive economic growth by specifically leveraging the County’s stability, area assets, and long-term vision for prosperity. The final document identifies strategic objectives and key results to promote new economic development in an already established and successful community.

Winona Lake Comprehensive Plan (2019)

The Plan serves as a guide for land use, growth and public infrastructure decision making for the Town of Winona Lake. The final plan, born from a process that included extensive public involvement, reflects the analysis of the community, existing land uses, development trends, land use suitability and natural land features.

ALICE Report- Kosciusko County (2018)

ALICE, an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, is a new way of defining and understanding the struggles of households that earn above the Federal Poverty Level but not enough to afford a bare-bones household budget. The information, provided at a county level, was used to supplement the demographic data provided by the US Census.

Syracuse Comprehensive Plan (2017)

The Plan serves as a guide for land use, growth and public infrastructure decision making for the Town of Syracuse. The final plan, born from a process that included extensive public involvement, reflects the analysis of the community, existing land uses, development trends, land use suitability and natural land features.

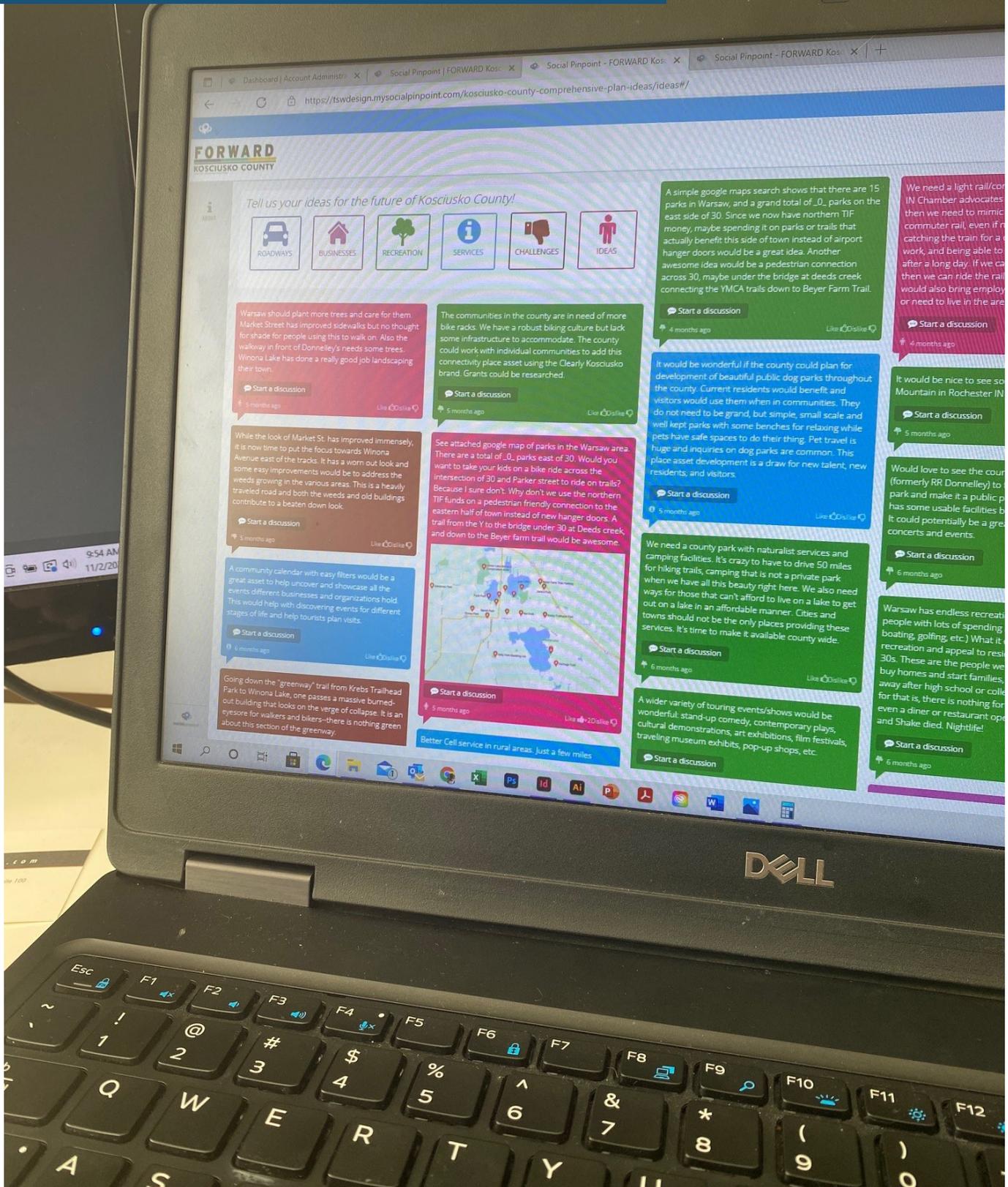
Warsaw Comprehensive Plan (2014)

The Plan serves as a guide for land use, growth and public infrastructure decision making for the City of Warsaw. The final plan, born from a process that included extensive public involvement, reflects the analysis of the community, existing land uses, development trends, land use suitability and natural land features.

Warsaw + Winona Lake Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2013)

The Warsaw + Winona Lake Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan proposes a connected system of 87 miles of multi-use paths, greenways, bike lanes, sharrows, and signed routes along major transportation thoroughfares, utility corridors, and natural features. The Plan creates a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities that make it easier for citizens to choose these modes of transportation in order to commute, exercise, and perform everyday tasks such as walking their children to school, visiting friends, running errands, and more. The plan was updated in 2014 and continues to be monitored and improved based on local needs.

FORWARD Kosciusko County Vision Wall | TSWDG



FORWARD KOSCIUSKO COUNTY EFFORT

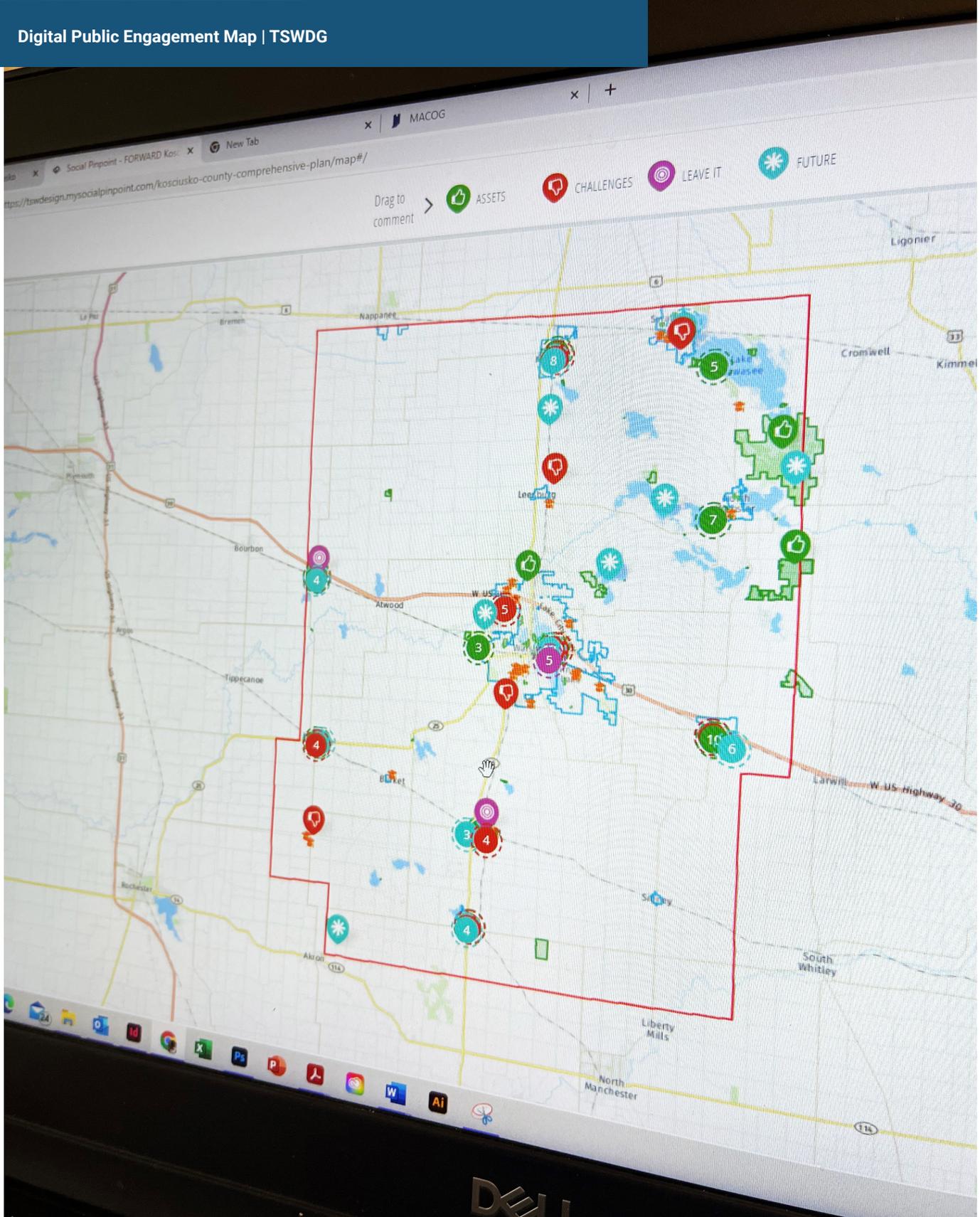
While a tremendous amount of strategic planning was occurring around Kosciusko County, little long-range planning had been done by the County or local communities. Seeing a broader need to craft a strategic plan for the County's future, the Kosciusko County Community Foundation (KCCF) applied for funding through the Lilly Endowment Inc.'s seventh round of Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) initiative. The initiative, which was launched in 1990, is intended to help establish and further develop community foundations throughout Indiana. After successfully completing six previous rounds of GIFT initiatives, in March 2019 the Endowment awarded the KCCF a Community Leadership Planning Grant to undertake a county-wide citizen outreach.

Between July and August 2019, KCCF contracted Becker Consulting to conduct eleven Hometown Chats, inviting citizens to share concerns and aspirations for their communities and compare broad community input with issues previously identified by KCCF's board and community leaders. Additionally, KCCF staff facilitated a chat with the Chamber of Commerce's Young Adult Professionals members to solicit input from young community leaders.

Across the facilitated meetings, five common themes emerged as priorities for the County and the local communities:

1. **There is a strong sense of local pride and support within the County and amongst local communities.**
The people who call Kosciusko County home understand and value the natural and built resources that are available to them.
2. **There is a need for a collaborative, comprehensive, long-range planning effort.**
As the County, and all incorporated communities, continue to think about the future, the benefits of collaboration between the various entities have emerged as a priority for leaders and residents alike.
3. **Improving access to attainable, high-quality and diverse housing options is necessary.**
To ensure that Kosciusko County remains a high-quality place for individuals and families, additional housing options that provide diversity in size, location and price point are needed.
4. **Improving access to daily amenities, including affordable and adequate child care, are needed.**
In many areas of the County, adequate child care facilities are not available, requiring local residents to travel out of their way for child care. In some instances where child care is available, the rates are not affordable, leaving workers caught between prioritizing their family over their career.
5. **Developing alternative workforce pathways would benefit local residents and industries.**
The public-school systems and education programs were seen as common strengths across the County; however, not all of the existing programs matched with local needs. The development of alternative workforce pathways including certifications and trade skills are needed to support established businesses and industries within the County.

Digital Public Engagement Map | TSWDG



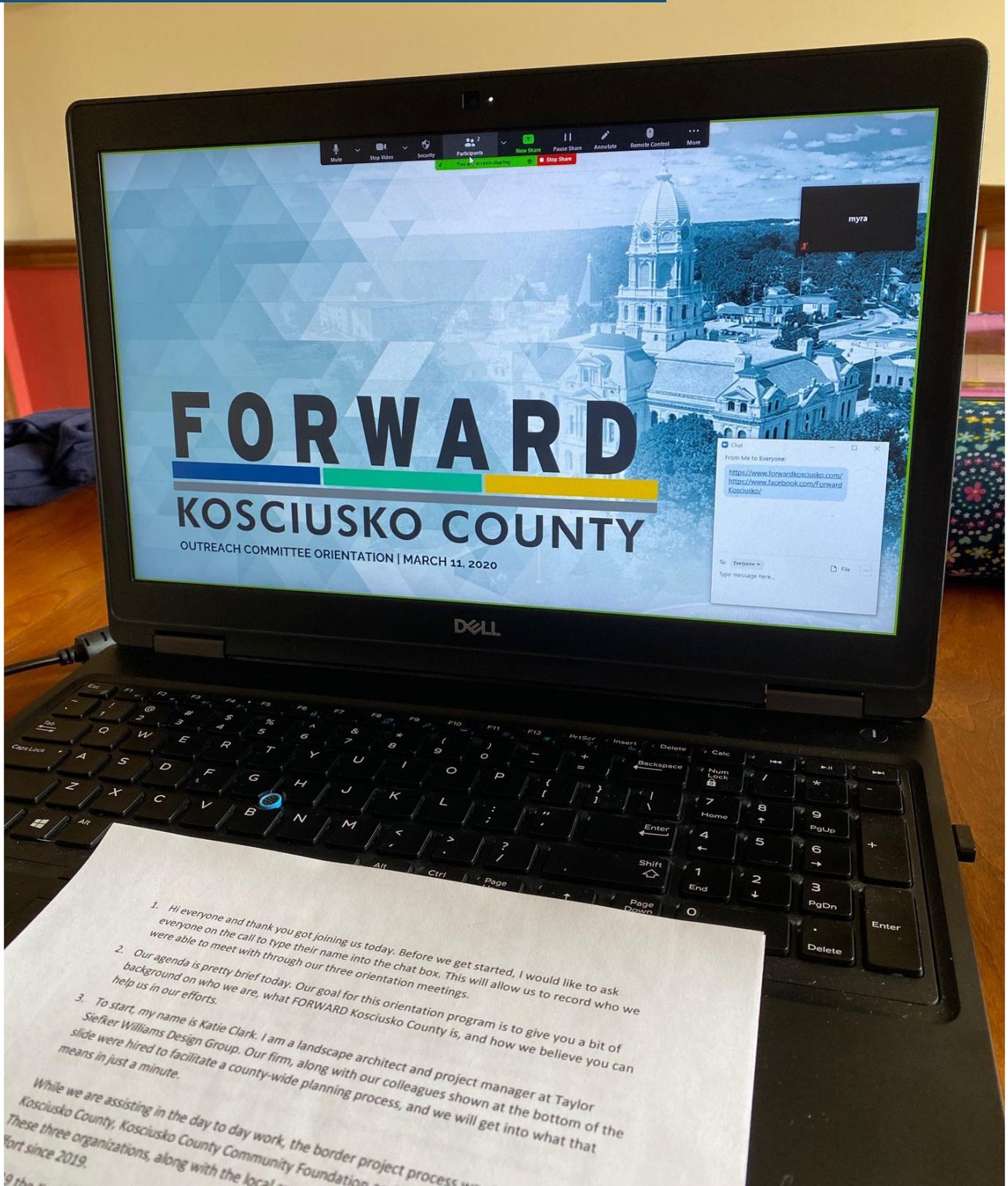
PLANNING PROCESS SUMMARY

With one of the top priorities being Community Planning and Visioning, KCCF, Kosciusko County and K21 Health Foundation, in partnership with the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG), came together to invest in the now named FORWARD Kosciusko County effort, a multi-jurisdictional strategic planning process aimed at identifying the unique, local assets and challenges. The analysis of these assets and challenges would help in establishing a shared vision and creating an actionable plan for the communities to achieve their goals.

In January of 2021, the project team officially kicked-off an anticipated 14-month planning process. The development of the comprehensive plan and associated engagement activities is broken up into four phases. Each phase is detailed below:

- **Phase 1: Launching the Project**
The initial project launch included largely administrative tasks involving collaboration with the various committees involved in the planning process. The primary objectives for phase one included collaborating with the Outreach Committee, making decisions based on community needs, and creating a measurable strategy for outreach and engagement.
- **Phase 2: Information Gathering**
Phase two focused on learning, analyzing, and educating. The primary objectives within this phase included collaboratively reviewing community and county-specific conditions, and determining what the future might look like. Throughout this phase, the community was engaged via stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, public workshops and a community-wide survey.
- **Phase 3: Ideas and Strategy Development**
The idea and strategy development phase focused on dreaming, thinking, and testing. The primary objectives for phase three included collaborating on land use scenarios, analyzing the benefits and implications of ideas, and identifying an appropriate growth strategy for the future.
- **Phase 4: Community Driven Implementation**
The final phase of the planning process is focused on identifying actions, resources, and champions. The primary objectives for phase four include collaborating to identify project partners, analyzing the availability of county resources, and creating a useable set of implementation tools. Following the finalization of the comprehensive plan, the project team will assist the County through the adoption process.

FORWARD Kosciusko County Orientation Call | TSWDG



1. Hi everyone and thank you got joining us today. Before we get started, I would like to ask everyone on the call to type their name into the chat box. This will allow us to record who we were able to meet with through our three orientation meetings.
2. Our agenda is pretty brief today. Our goal for this orientation program is to give you a bit of background on who we are, what FORWARD Kosciusko County is, and how we believe you can help us in our efforts.
3. To start, my name is Katie Clark. I am a landscape architect and project manager at Taylor Siefer Williams Design Group. Our firm, along with our colleagues shown at the bottom of the slide were hired to facilitate a county-wide planning process, and we will get into what that means in just a minute.

While we are assisting in the day to day work, the border project process was...
Kosciusko County, Kosciusko County Community Foundation and...
These three organizations, along with the local...
fort since 2019.

PHASE ONE SUMMARY

LAUNCHING THE PROJECT

Community engagement is important in any long-range planning process because it allows for multiple groups and individuals to come together to think about the future in an organized way. In a project like FORWARD Kosciusko County, where planning is being done often for the first time at both a county and local municipal level, community outreach and engagement is considered critical.

FORWARD Kosciusko County is a process rooted in community ideas and interests. At the onset of the 14-month process, a working group of 65 individuals were identified to participate in the project's Communication and Outreach Committee. Members of the Communication and Outreach Committee represent specialized community organizations, prominent employers, education providers and local community stakeholders. Knowing that each member of the Committee had access to unique contact lists and digital platforms, this group was tasked with assisting in ongoing project outreach to ensure that the wide and diverse geography of Kosciusko County stakeholders were included in the effort, regardless of their location.

To assist the Communication and Outreach Committee, a variety of outreach exercises were developed and incorporated into the process to provide multiple avenues for gathering feedback regarding existing conditions and local issues, needs, and aspirations of local and County residents. Outreach tools and exercises were also used to promote a sense of community and foster stewardship for the plan by underscoring that participants' voices have been heard and that their ideas have influenced the final decisions.

Downtown Leesburg Buildings and Streetscape, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG



TOTAL COMMUNITY
ASSESSMENT REPORTS



PLAN INTRODUCTION
AND HISTORY



COUNTY AND COMMUNITY
CONDITIONS



COUNTY
MARKET POTENTIAL



CHILD CARE NEEDS
ASSESSMENT



FISCAL CAPACITY

PHASE TWO SUMMARY

INFORMATION GATHERING

FORWARD Kosciusko County offers a focused look at all of the opportunities within Kosciusko County and the communities of Burket, Claypool, Etna Green, Leesburg, Mentone, Milford, North Webster, Pierceton, Sidney, Silver Lake, Syracuse, Warsaw and Winona Lake. Through a thorough data collection and analysis process, the existing conditions of the County and the incorporated communities were documented in an attempt to better understand what is happening today across the County and what can be expected for the future.

Data Collection Activities

The complete Community Conditions Assessment documents provide a critical understanding of the conditions that are seen as strengths, as well as those elements that pose future threats to the wellbeing of the County and the local communities. The assessment documents were published in February 2022 as a set of existing conditions reports to serve as an interim deliverable within the comprehensive planning process. The reports summarized the data gathered, highlighted common themes revealed through community feedback, and identified key findings from the preliminary phases of the process. Often times, the key findings identified local and regional trends, opportunities, and challenges that could impact how Kosciusko County evolves over the next several years.

The Community Conditions Assessment documents were organized into six sections that provided detailed information on the history of the project, the current local and county-wide conditions, the market conditions of the area, the availability of childcare and early learning facilities and an assessment of fiscal capacity at a County level. Additionally, a summary of the initial public engagement efforts was also provided.

Community Engagement Activities

2,096

INTERACTIVE MAP:
Total online map views with 647 unique users

40+

STAKEHOLDER AND SMALL GROUP MEETINGS:
Total groups represented through interview process

1,003

VISION WALL:
Total online vision wall views with 345 unique views

452

COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY:
Total survey responses with an 84% completion rate

13

COMMUNITY FIELD TOURS:
Total field tours and conversations held over four days

40+

PUBLIC WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:
Across three initial public open house sessions

Land Use and Growth Workshop | TSWDG



PHASE THREE SUMMARY
**IDEA AND STRATEGY
DEVELOPMENT**

FORWARD Kosciusko County put an emphasis on using data and knowledge gathered during the process to explore growth strategies and the impact those strategies have on built and natural systems. The exploration included within this phase allowed the County, the local communities and their partners to use data and input to drive decision making. This process allowed varying groups to reach a consensus on ideas and recommendations, and also allowed for the identification of strategic improvements needed to support local and county-wide growth and development.

Idea Exploration

A key piece of the final *FORWARD Kosciusko County: Town of Leesburg Comprehensive Plan* was the development of a county-wide future land use map. A future land use map serves as a visual representation of where the County intends for development, redevelopment and preservation to occur. The map and its land use designations describe the desired types, intensity and arrangement of all future development.

Creating a future land use map, especially at both a local and county-wide scale, should take into account a variety of topics and priorities. During the process, four draft development scenarios were published for review and comment. Each scenario showcased a different growth for the County to consider. For each scenario, a series of analytic metrics were prepared to illustrate concentrations of new housing and employment uses and three specific analysis charts were developed comparing impacts to housing, infrastructure costs and loss of agriculture lands.

Community Engagement Activities

7

COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUPS:
Focusing on growth, preservation and priority projects

35+

PUBLIC WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:
Across two public open house sessions

44

LAND USE AND GROWTH WORKSHOP:
Total participants across seven workshop sessions

As a part of the process, the planning team facilitated a highly-interactive workshop charrette over the course of a two-day period.

4

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS:
To explore unique growth and preservation solutions

The workshop challenged participants with the task of making decisions about the general form that new growth should take and the type of transportation system needed to serve it. They grappled with the issues and trade-offs related to placing growth in different locations that deal with environmental, institutional, and infrastructure constraints.

FORWARD Kosciusko County Public Meeting Exercise | TSWDG



PHASE FOUR SUMMARY

COMMUNITY DRIVEN IMPLEMENTATION

If a plan lacks the ability to be successfully implemented, the vision will never be realized. In this final phase of work, the County, local communities and their strategic partners came together to create clear, concise, and fiscally responsible actions that need to be completed over the next twenty years.

Action Agenda Development

Using the recommendations provided in the previous phases of work as a foundation, a set of attainable action steps and implementation strategies were generated to guide future investments at a county and local scale. This complete listing includes previously identified and ongoing priority efforts, as well as new recommendations that support the goals and development objective generated through the FORWARD Kosciusko County effort. The implementation strategies will be developed by local leaders, stakeholders and residents and represent both capital and non-capital improvements throughout Kosciusko County and the participating communities.

To support the development of a realistic set of action items, a fiscal conditions assessment was conducted to analyze fiscal structure, trends, and capacity for accommodating and leveraging development in the county. In addition to an assessment of revenues, trends and available resources, several strategies were recommended for enhancing the County's use of resources to meet objectives, with a particular focus on planning and economic development. These recommendations were used to formulate the final action plan.

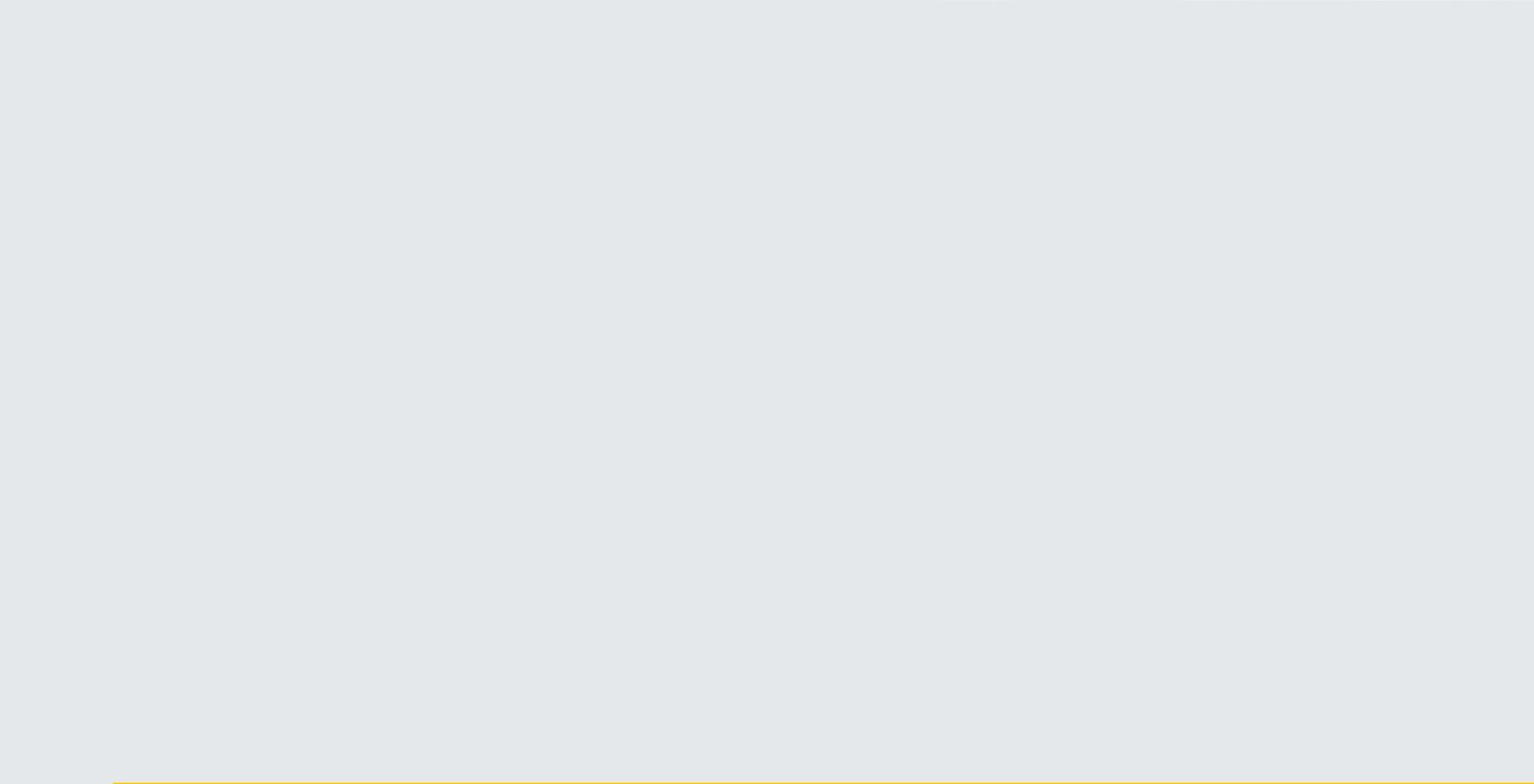
Community Engagement Activities

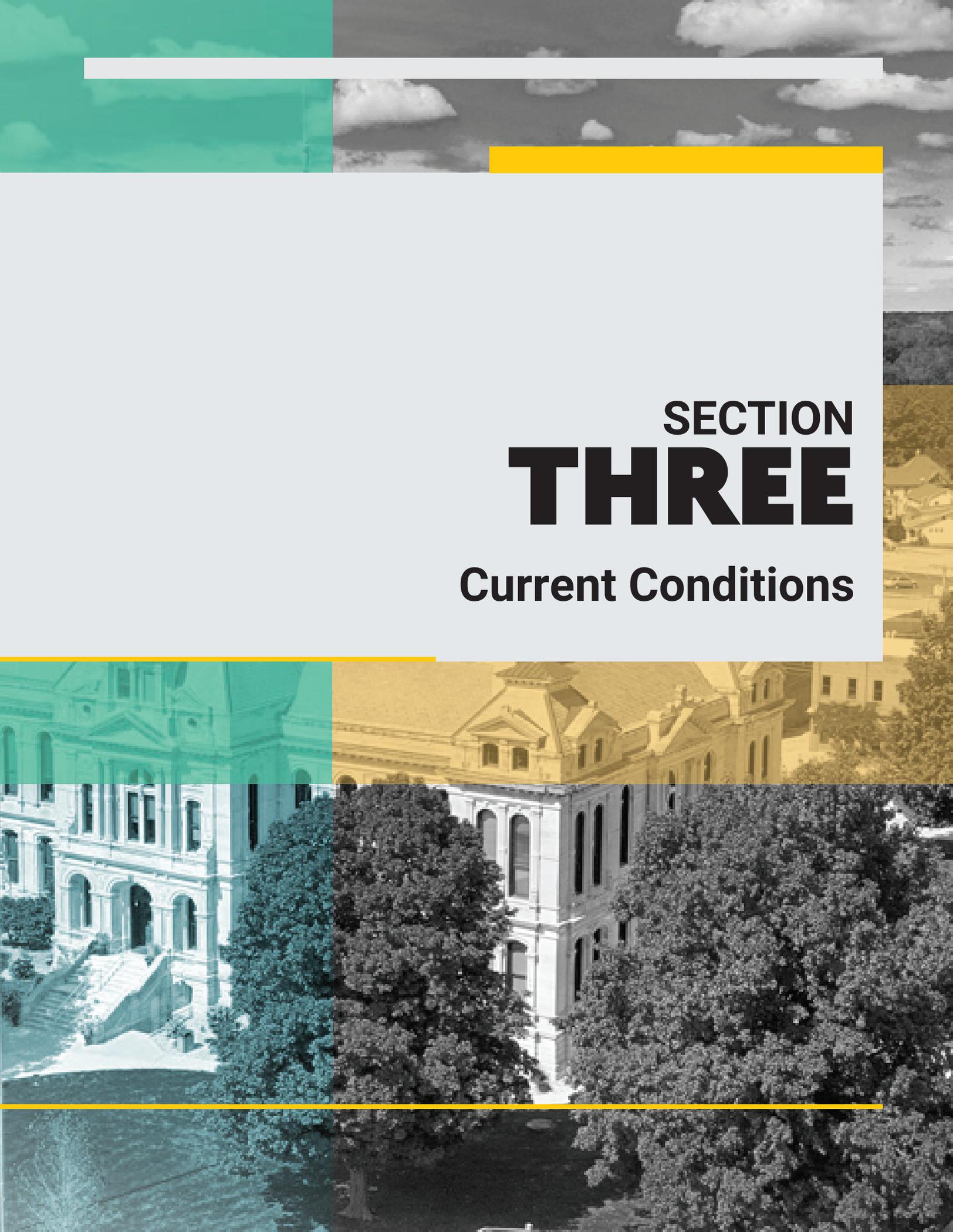
75+

PUBLIC WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:
Across four online presentation sessions

4

COUNTY PRESENTATIONS:
*To the Area Plan Commission, County Commissioners,
County Redevelopment Commission and County Council*





**SECTION
THREE**
Current Conditions

Streetcape and Neighborhood Character, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG





Kosciusko County, and our local communities, are full of opportunities.

It is those opportunities that have allowed Kosciusko County, and many of the incorporated communities, to see slow but steady growth in its population and household base since 2010. During the last ten years, the county population increased by 2.2% and by 2030 the growth is projected to increase an additional 2.5% bringing the estimated population to just over 81,000 residents.

Through this data collection and analysis, the County, and the incorporated communities, can better understand what is happening today and what can be expected for the future. The key finding conclusion statements, highlighted within each community section, set the stage for the goals, objectives, and recommendations outlined within the final FORWARD Kosciusko County Comprehensive Plan. Unless otherwise noted, all data points were gathered from the US Census.

TOWN OF LEESBURG

PEOPLE***Demographic Trends***

Leesburg has seen a slow decline in population since 2000. The Town's population is currently 582 people, which is less than 1% of the County's total population. Leesburg's population has decreased by 12.2% since 2000 and is projected to fall another 2.0% by 2030. Leesburg is predicted to have a stable population over the next decade, neither falling or rising by any great degree.

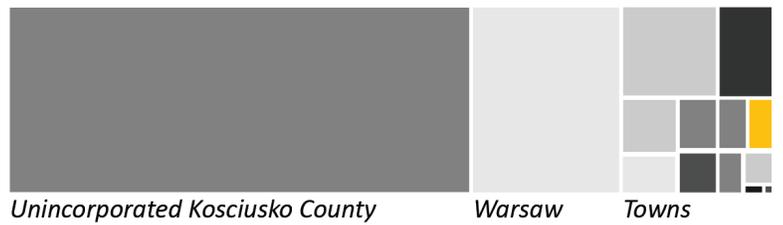
The median age of residents living within Leesburg is 38.6 years, a slight increase from 2010 when the median age was 35.9 years. This increase signifies that the local population is aging, but aging slower than other communities within Kosciusko County. The largest age cohort living within Leesburg are those between 25 and 34 years of age (16.2%). The Town has seen an increased population of those over the age of 65 and a decrease in school-aged children since 2010, which contributes to the Town's rising median age.

The majority (98.8%) of those living within Leesburg identify as Caucasian, while 1.2% identify as two or more races. Approximately 5.2% of residents also identify as Hispanic or Latino in origin, which is a decrease from 14.8% in 2010.

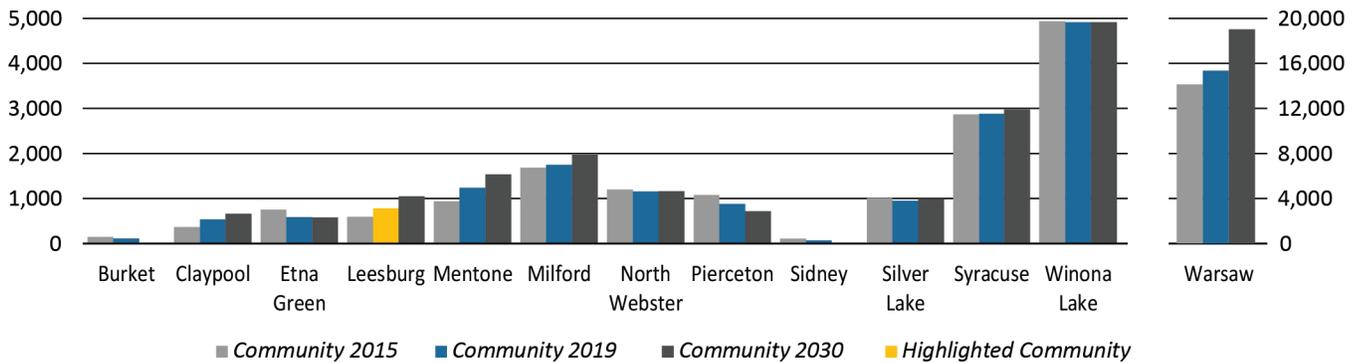
Leesburg's median household income is \$83,021, a \$14,844 (41.7%) increase since 2000 and is \$21,655 (35.2%) higher than the County's median household income. Leesburg has the highest household income within the County. The Town's income per capita (\$22,761) follows a similar trend, rising 30.4% from 2000 to 2019. Per capita income is the average income of an area spread among all residents (including children) and is most often used to describe a community's purchasing power or income per resident. These increases in both median and per capita income are also reflected in the Town's poverty rate (6.8% in 2019), which is tied for the lowest out of communities within the County. Unlike other communities within the County, Leesburg's incomes have increased consistently over the last two decades, with a dramatic rise (41.7%) occurring over the last ten years.

582

Total population (2019)



Population Growth



Income and Poverty



\$83,021

Median Household Income

9.8%

County Poverty Rate

Race and Ethnicity



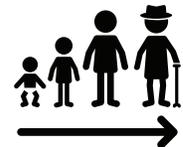
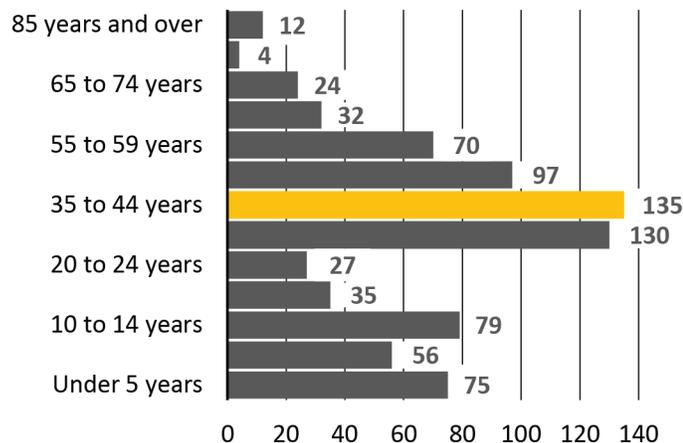
98.8%

Identify as Caucasian

5.2%

Identify as Hispanic

Population Age



38.6

Median Age

Employment and Industry

Of residents 25 years or older, 86.6% have a high school degree or higher and 7.4% have a bachelor degree or higher. Leesburg has seen a slight increase in educational attainment since 2010 where 83.0% of residents over the age of 25 held a high school degree or higher but a decline in residents with a bachelor's degree or higher (12.5%).

Although Leesburg's population has increased over the last decade, the labor force (69.0%) has decreased by 5.7% since 2010. This could be explained by the higher proportion of children under the age of 18 within the Town. Manufacturing industries (31.0%) are the largest employers for Leesburg's residents, while educational services, healthcare and social assistance (16.7%), and retail trade (14.6%) are the next highest employers. The average earning for manufacturing jobs within the County is \$91,815, the second highest out of all major industry types.

The mean commute travel time for Leesburg residents is 19.4 minutes. Most are driving to work alone (79.4%), while 14.9% carpool with others and 3.5% take public transportation. The majority of residents are commuting outside Leesburg (89.2%) for work, but are still staying within Kosciusko County (64.9%). An estimated 7,549 Kosciusko County residents leave the County for work each day.

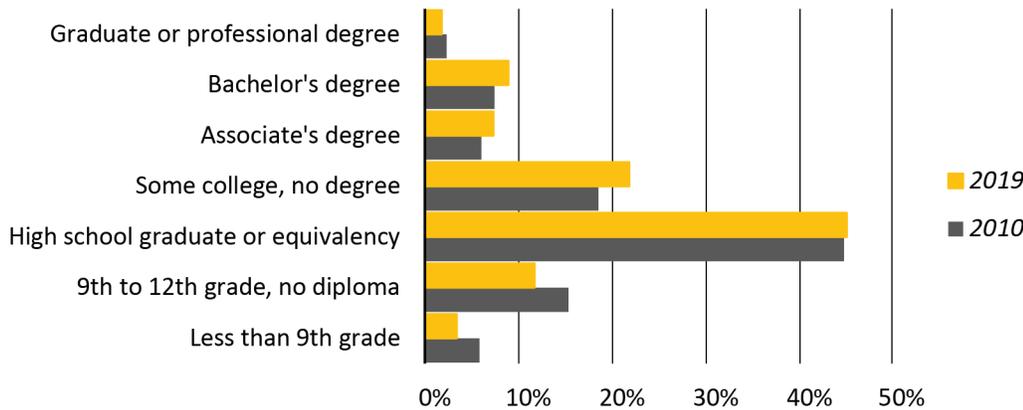
48 Total Residential Labor Force (2019)

100%
Of the local labor force is employed



0%
Of the local labor force is unemployed

Educational Attainment



86.6%
Have obtained a high school degree or higher

Average Earnings for Manufacturing Jobs



\$91,815

Average earnings within the County

Second highest out of all major industry types

Commuting Time



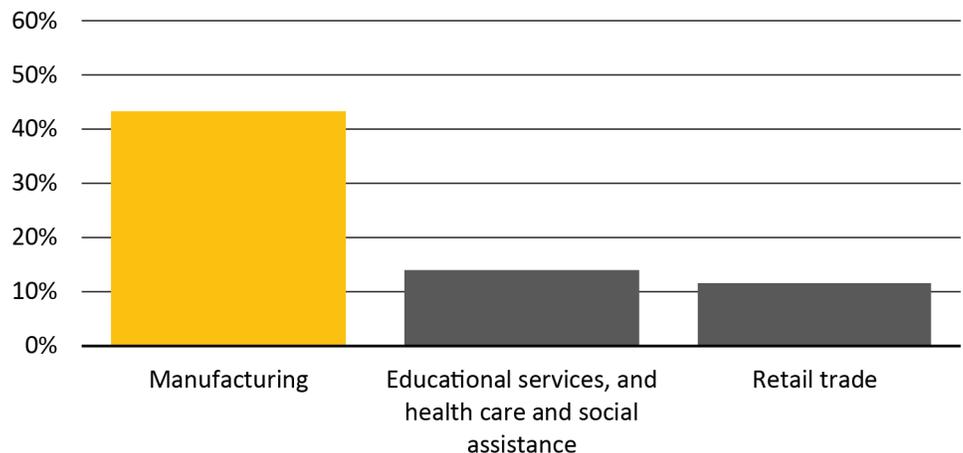
21.9

Average travel time in minutes

85.4%

Of workers prefer to drive to work alone

Local Industries and Earnings



Housing

Leesburg has 251 housing units, adding about 11 units (4.5%) since 2000. The Town's housing stock has seen slow growth but still outpaces other communities within the County. Lack of housing growth could be contributed to a declining population; however, the Town still has a moderately low vacancy rate (8.8%).

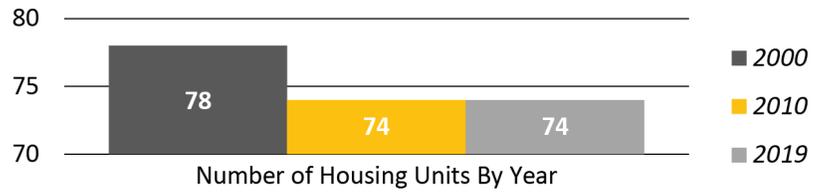
The housing within Leesburg is aging with 54.6% of housing built before 1960. Since 2010, approximately 5 units have been built within Leesburg, which is just 2.0% of the Town's total housing stock. This is slightly less than the County, where the housing units built after 2010 make up just 4.2% of the total units.

The most common type of housing structures within Leesburg are single-unit detached, making up 92.4% of total housing units. The next highest are 2-unit, multi-family housing (2.4%) and single-unit, attached structures (2.4%). The occupied households within the Town are predominately owner-occupied (84.7%), with 81.7% of units being family households and 14.0% as single-person. The percentage of rented households (15.3%) in Leesburg is lower than the County total (25.2%). The Town has a total of 22 vacant housing units of its total 251 (8.8%).

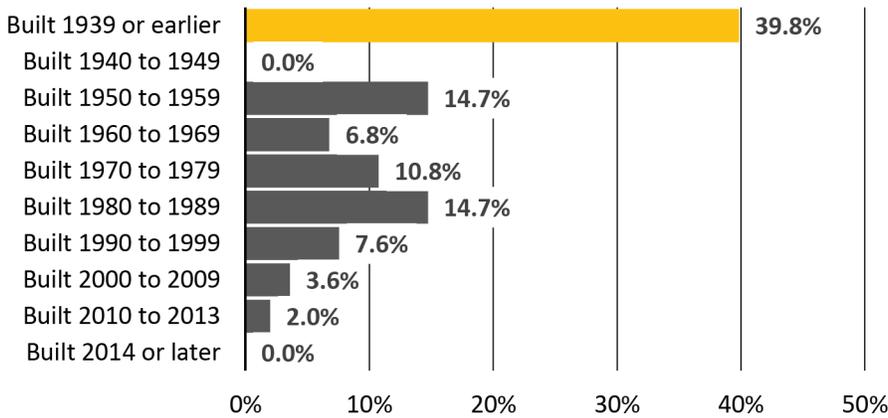
The median home value in Leesburg is \$115,800, which is less than the County's median value (\$150,000) but higher when compared to communities within the County as a whole. Although Leesburg's home values are lower, they have been sharply rising since 2000 (increase of 60.7%) when the median home value was \$84,100.

Currently, based on Zillow Research data on the prices of homes being sold within the Community, there is a large difference between the sales prices and the median assessed value of the homes as defined by the US Census. In 2019, the median home sale price was \$234,502 (compared to an assessed value of \$115,800), an increase of 33.5% since 2000 (\$175,623), and has increased 4.9% from 2019 to 2020 alone.

251 Total housing units



Age of Housing



54.6%

Of local housing units were built before 1960

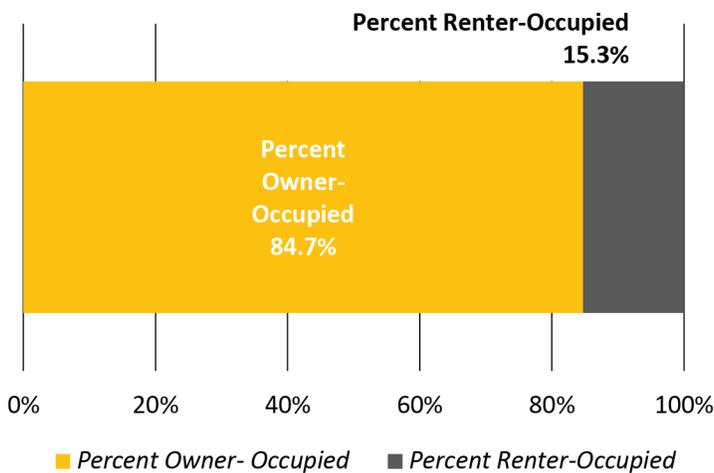
Home Value



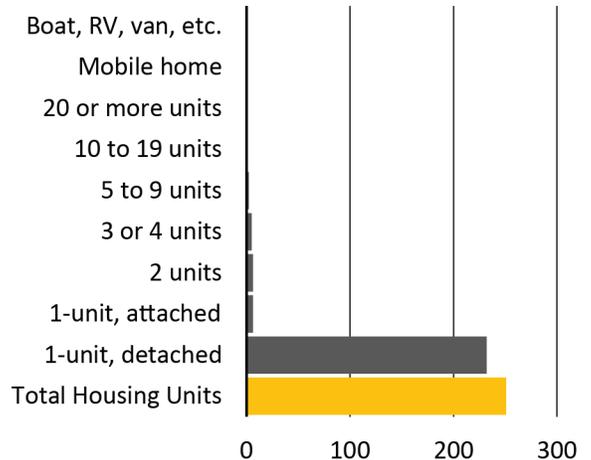
\$115,800 Median Home Value

Versus a median home sale price of \$234,502 (Zillow Research)

Housing Occupancy



Housing Type



TOWN OF LEESBURG

PLACES

Existing development

Land use is the term used to describe the type of activity or development occurring on a parcel or within a structure located on the parcel. An existing land use map can often reveal development patterns that have occurred over time, potential conflicts or challenges, and opportunities for growth. Using Kosciusko County Assessor Office Class Code information at the property level, existing land uses were identified within the Town. Due to the way the data is aggregated, some inconsistencies may exist. Leesburg's existing development patterns include the following:

Residential

Single-family homes front historic Van Buren and Prairie Streets with additional neighborhood development being located west of SR 15, north of School Street and east of Old SR 15. Multi-family residential units are located on the upper floors of existing downtown buildings along Main Street; however, some remain vacant due to needed repairs and egress requirements. While the Town's available land is largely built out, there is room for residential expansion north of School Street adjacent to the Maple Leaf Farm's headquarters.

Commercial/ Industrial

The SR 15 roadway traveling through of Leesburg features several commercial businesses including Dollar General, a restaurant, and several service-oriented businesses. SR 15, which provides connectivity to Warsaw and Milford, is a highly traveled roadway and provides these businesses both access and visibility. Within the core of Leesburg, Van Buren Street is home to the majority of the Community's downtown office and commercial spaces, which include a variety of shops, restaurants, and bars.

In addition to local, commercial development, the Town is home to two regionally significant businesses: Maple Leaf Farms and Hop Lore Brewing. Maple Leaf Farms is a leading poultry producer that operates out of its campus headquartered in Leesburg. Their facility is located in a former school building on the north side of School Street. Hop Lore Brewery is located in the former Old Leesburg Mill and offers visitors the opportunity to taste and purchase craft beers and food. There is one small industrial development, Deatsman Grain, which is located south of Van Buren Street immediately adjacent to the rail corridor. Two large quarries, which produce asphalt, gravel and sand, sit immediately south of the Leesburg boundary.

Government/ Civic

Leesburg Town Hall, and the majority of all government/civic land uses, are located at or near the intersection of Van Buren and Pearl Street. The Plain Township Fire Department and Leesburg Elementary School are located just outside the southern town boundary along Old SR 15.

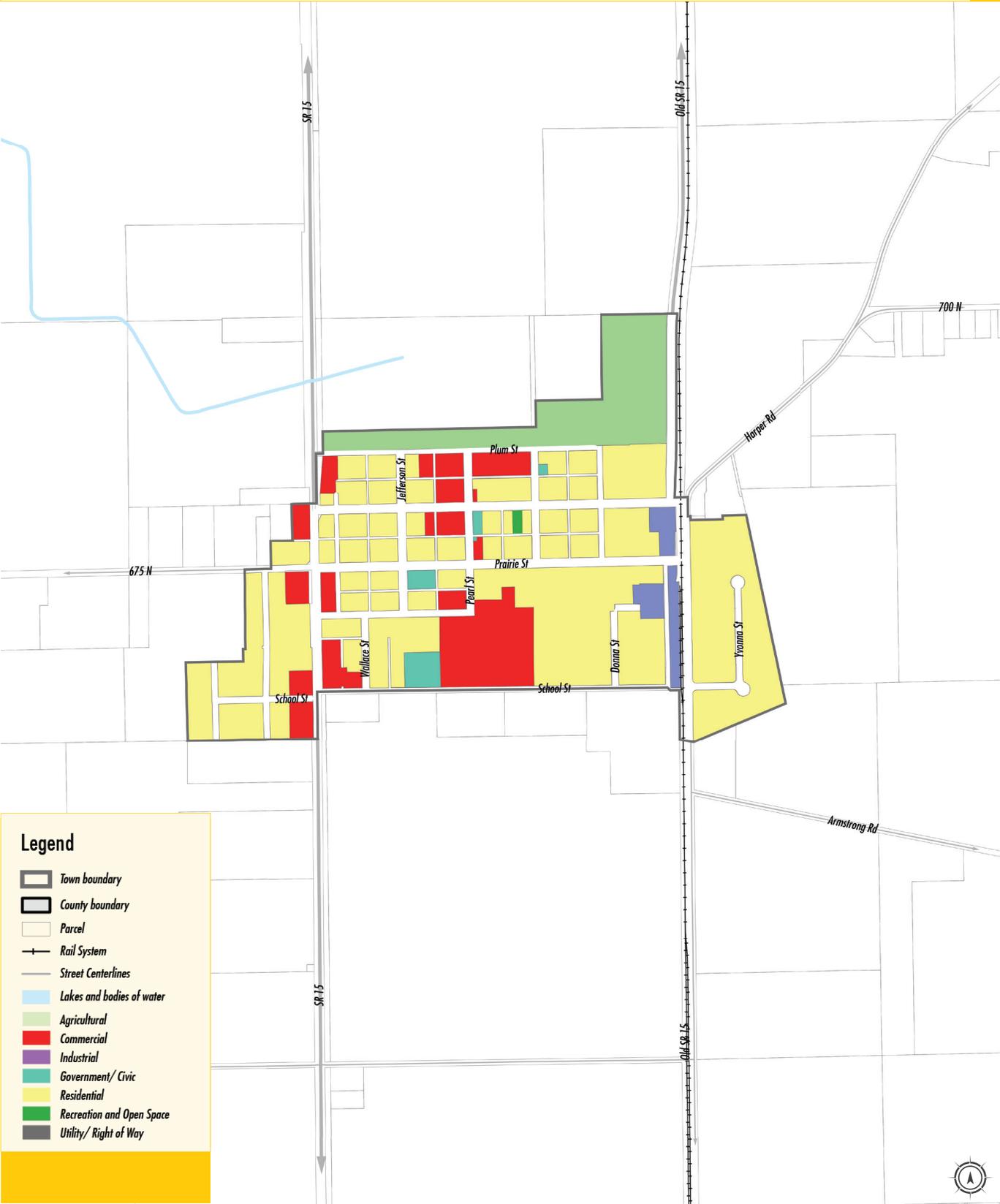
Recreation and Open Space

Leesburg has two designated recreational spaces. The largest is located south of Maple Leaf Farms, along School Street, and includes two baseball fields and one softball field. This recreational land was once part of the original elementary school facility before the new school building was constructed. The fields are open for public use and maintained by Maple Leaf Farms. The Town also has a small pocket park east of downtown along Van Buren Street, which includes a small gazebo.

Agriculture

Agricultural land uses surround Leesburg to the north, east and west. Two large quarries, which produce asphalt, gravel and sand, sit immediately south of the Leesburg boundary.

Existing Development Map



Zoning

Zoning refers to municipal or local regulations that govern how property can and cannot be used in certain geographic areas. A zoning map and/ or ordinance includes designated districts that determine the appropriate uses and development criteria for each parcel of land. Within each district, there are regulations stating the permitted types of development, lot sizes, building area, setbacks, etc. In addition to preventing conflicts, zoning can play a major role in preserving the Community's character and enhancing the local quality of life.

Leesburg joined the Kosciusko County Area Plan Commission (APC) in 2020. The APC is a cooperative effort between Kosciusko County and many of the incorporated towns and is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on rezoning requests, ordinance amendments and right of way vacations to the County Commissioners or associated Town boards. The Town of Leesburg, is divided into the following zoning districts:

Public Use District: The district is designated for and limited to uses that benefit the public. These uses may or may not be taxed and are owned and operated either privately or publicly.

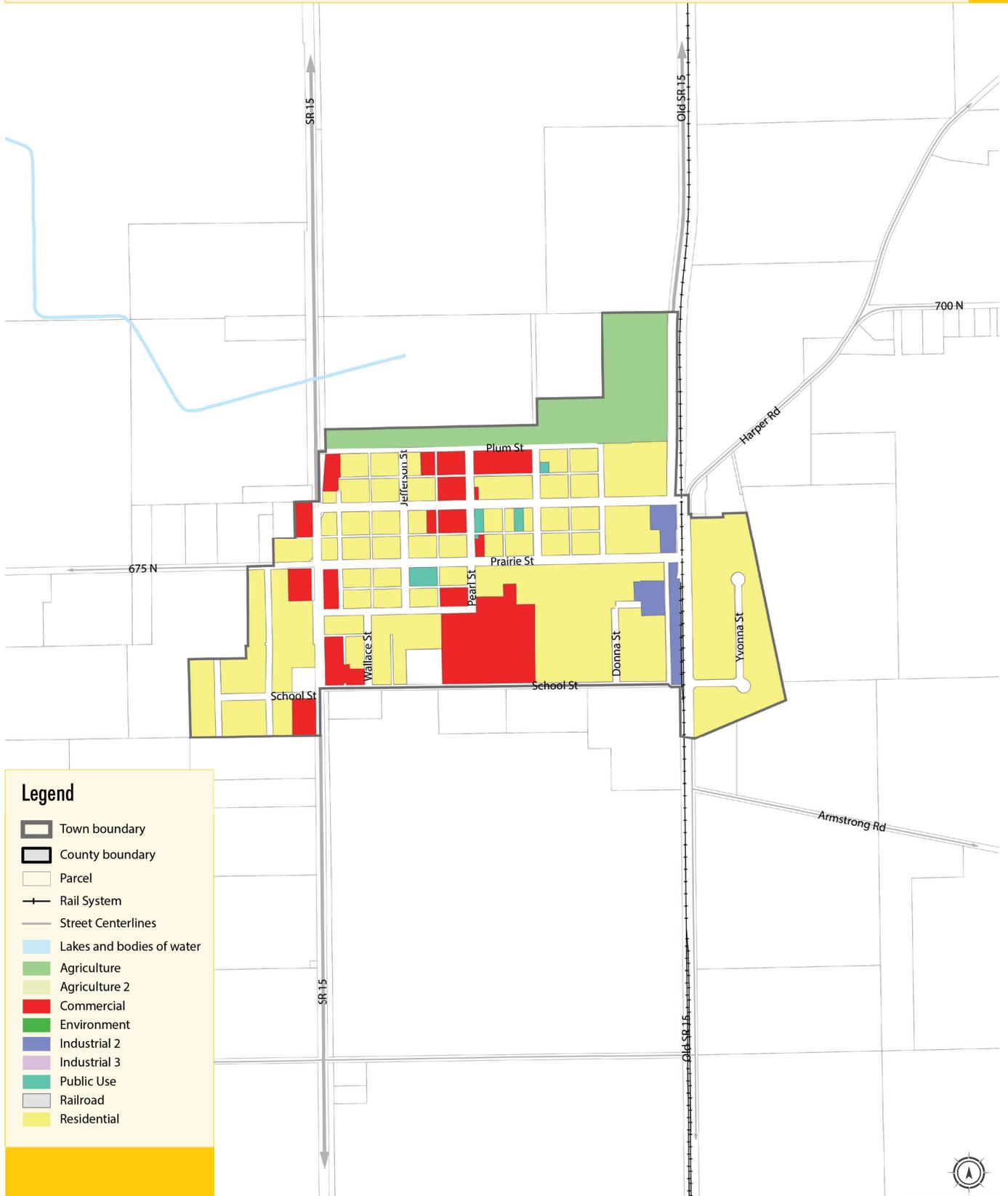
Agricultural District: The purpose of this district is to protect prime agricultural land and related uses from undesirable urban growth. It establishes a quarter (1/4) mile protective zone for livestock operations to protect them from urban development that is not compatible.

Residential District: The residential district is limited to dwellings as well as public and semi-public uses that are normally associated with residential neighborhoods.

Commercial District: The commercial district is primarily for retail or service uses.

Light Industrial District: This district is intended to provide areas for industrial uses such as the operations associated with fabricating, manufacturing, processing, wholesaling, warehousing, and ancillary-related offices.

Existing Zoning Map



Development and Redevelopment Opportunities

A key component to planning for future growth and development requires addressing the unique opportunities and needs of older or transitioning parts of the town. These areas present an opportunity to conserve land resources, leverage existing infrastructure, repurpose existing structures and capitalize on economic development tools if appropriate.

Historic Features and Districts

Leesburg has a small downtown core that spans approximately two blocks along Van Buren Street and along Pearl Street. The area includes multiple buildings such as Town Hall, the post office, and a number of shops and restaurants. While the area serves as the center of the Community, there is no Main Street organization to oversee the area. Additionally, buildings within the downtown core are in need of structural and façade improvements.

Contributing to the informal downtown core, there are a number of structures classified by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Office of Historic Preservation. The Indiana State Historic Architectural and Archaeological Research Database (SHAARD) allows users to search cultural resource information on known historic resources throughout Indiana. The data contained in SHAARD was collected from previously conducted cultural resource inventories, National Register nominations, and cultural resource management projects. The SHAARD is an ongoing initiative, and the associated data will undergo staged enhancements and constant updating however it offers insight into properties that may be of historical significance. The database uses four primary classifications for properties and structures:

Outstanding- Meaning the property has sufficient historic or architectural significance that is listed, or is eligible for individual listing, in the National Register of Historic Places.

Notable- Meaning the property does not merit the outstanding rating, but is still above average in its importance. Notable structures may be eligible for the National Register.

Contributing- Meaning the property is at least 40 years old, but does not meet the criteria of outstanding or notable. These resources are important to the density or continuity of the area's historic fabric. Contributing structures can only be listed in the National Register as part of a historic district.

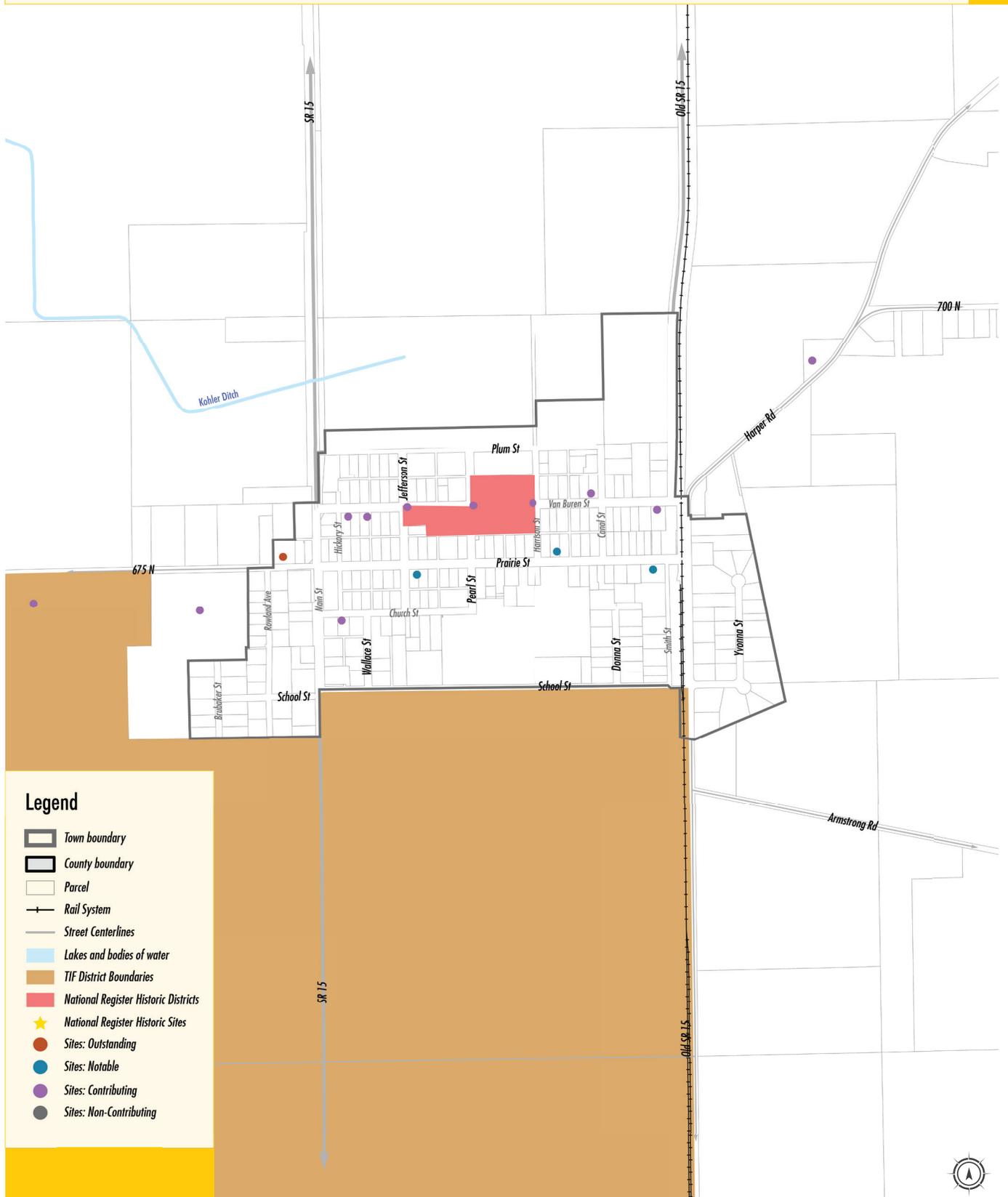
Non-contributing- Meaning the property is not included in an inventory unless it is located within the boundaries of a historic district. These properties are not eligible for listing in the National Register.

Leesburg has a single historic district along Van Buren Street, which includes both commercial and residential properties. This district was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1993 and is one of the few designated historic districts within the County. The historic district encompasses 14 contributing structures 4 notable structures and one outstanding property. The historic district, and the contributing structures were developed between about 1865 and 1936 and includes notable examples of Italianate, Late Victorian, and Early Commercial-style architecture. While the historic district serves as the center of the community and is noted for its historic significance, there is no Main Street organization to oversee enhancements or preservation activities.

Development Incentive Districts

There is a large tax increment finance (TIF) district located to the south of the Town. A TIF district is an economic development tool used by local governments to encourage development or redevelopment in an area of the Community where private investment has not occurred or is difficult because of a number of limiting factors. The Leesburg TIF district includes the area from CR 150 W to Old SR 15 and extends from Leesburg's southern boundary to CR 400 N, just north of the City of Warsaw. Although the district is not within the Town proper, the TIF district poses an opportunity for the Town if development were to occur within any of the undeveloped parcels, or if redevelopment were to occur at the existing quarry.

Existing Development and Redevelopment Opportunities Map



TOWN OF LEESBURG

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Motorized

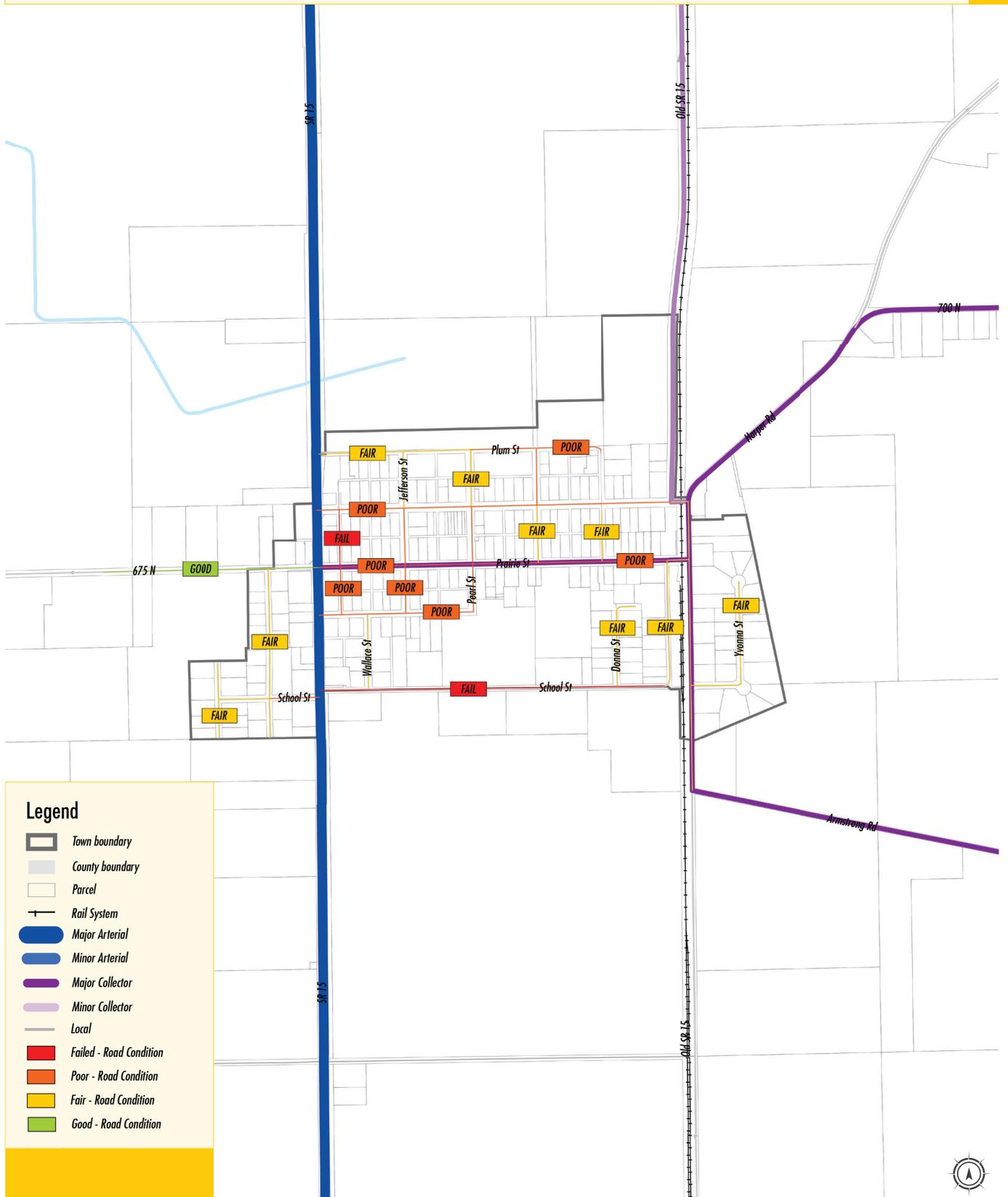
Roadways within and surrounding the Town of Leesburg can be classified under the Highway Functional Classification system established by the Federal Highway Administration. This system was established to group streets and highways into classes based on the level of service they are intended to provide. These classifications not only allow the road network to be evaluated and maintained in an efficient manner, but also rate roadways based on their level of mobility and accessibility.

Leesburg is primarily serviced by roads classified as Local Collectors. These roads possess a high degree of accessibility but are limited in their mobility due to limited speeds and frequent stops. Major Collectors in the Community include East Prairie Street and Old SR 15, as well as 700 North Road and East Armstrong Road leading out of the Community. The highest road classification within Leesburg is SR 15 classified as a Principal Arterial-Other, running north-south through the western edge of the Community.

The overwhelming amount of traffic in the Community is through traffic moving north and south along SR 15 with an average of over 10,000 daily trips. At times, higher traffic volumes can be seen along Prairie Street and Armstrong Road. This is most likely local traffic connecting to SR 15 for its higher speed limits and regional connection.

As stated previously, SR 15 provides the most direct access for residents and offers the greatest range for travel connections. Following SR 15 south leads to the county seat of Warsaw, with the cities of Wabash and Marion following further south. Moving north, SR 15 offers a direct connection to the City of Goshen and an indirect route to the City of Elkhart via US 33.

Existing Transportation Systems Map



Legend

- Town boundary
- County boundary
- Parcel
- Rail System
- Major Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local
- Failed - Road Condition
- Poor - Road Condition
- Fair - Road Condition
- Good - Road Condition



Roadway Character and Condition

The roadways within and surrounding Leesburg, while rural in nature, vary in character. Van Buren and Prairie Streets, both of which run east-west through Town, are the Community's most complete streets and offer the most character. Consisting of two travel lanes, the street corridors also include curbs, tree lawn buffers and sidewalks for the majority of their length. These corridors, as well as north-south Pearl and Jefferson Streets, are also constructed of historic brick. On-street, parallel parking is permitted along portions of Van Buren and Pearl Streets. Outside of those unique corridors, Leesburg's roadways consist of two-lane roads, approximately 20-24' in width, that lack shoulders, curbs and centerline pavement markings.

While SR 15, the primary north-south corridor leading in and out of the Town, includes wider travel lanes, a center left turn lane, pavement markings and roadway shoulders, but there are no additional corridor enhancements.

As an incorporated community, Leesburg is responsible for the public right of way within the town boundary. Kosciusko County, and many of the incorporated communities, utilize the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating System (PASER) to visually assess and rate the condition of local roads. The PASER system rates the condition of the road from 1 (failing) to 10 (excellent). With this information, local governments are able to project future conditions of the pavement and plan for the most effective maintenance. Pavement conditions, as defined by the PASER system, have been collected on a regular basis for County roads from 2016 to 2020, including all roads within the Town of Leesburg. Approximately half of the roadways within Town are classified as a "Fair" rating or below, with only one primary roadway segments being noted in "Failed" condition. School Street (from Wallace Street to Smith Street is classified as 'Failed' as well as Hickory Street (north of Prairie Street).

Based on available data, there are no known roadway improvement projects currently being planned or considered by INDOT, Kosciusko County or the Town of Leesburg.

Rail Corridor

Running north-south through the eastern edge of Leesburg is the Norfolk Southern Marion District Railroad (NS) line. The predominantly east coast rail company is well known for shipping coal and grains from Indiana counties for sale through domestic markets and national export. The rail corridor runs along the eastern edge of the Town, parallel to adjacent roadways, with two existing crossings that impact both vehicular and pedestrian safety. At both Van Buren and Prairie Streets there are crossing arms and signals to indicate the presence of trains.

Public Transportation

The Kosciusko Area Bus Service (KABS) provides countywide, demand-responsive public transportation service. The service is operated by Cardinal Services of Indiana, a not-for-profit corporation that provides services for persons with disabilities and other life challenges. Ridership in 2019 was about 58,000 trips, a slight reduction from the 2018 figure of about 59,000 trips. The system owned 12 ADA-accessible vehicles in 2019, and received funding from fares and contributions from Kosciusko County, the Indiana Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Federal Transit Administration.

Typical Roadway Character, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG



Non-Motorized

To compliment a community's vehicular transportation system, often a series of sidewalks, multi-use paths and trails are established to provide residents and visitors with transportation alternatives. These non-motorized systems can be used for both commuting and recreational purposes. In the case of Leesburg, there are only limited non-motorized facilities currently in place within the Community.

Currently, the only non-motorized infrastructure within the Community are sidewalks running on both sides of Van Buren and Prairie Streets from one side of the Community to the other and terminating at the railroad located along the Town's eastern boundary. Sidewalks are also present along portions of Jefferson, Pearl and Harrison Streets. In these locations, the sidewalks are approximately five feet wide and are in varying conditions. Additional sidewalks and the remnants of previous sidewalk can be found throughout the Community; however, their widths, conditions, and level of connectivity vary.

There are no other trails or dedicated biking infrastructure existing within the Community. It is important to note that while Leesburg Elementary School is located within walking distance of many residents, there are no facilities or routes in place for pedestrians or bicyclists to safely navigate the railroad crossings or the Old SR 15 corridor.

Typical Pedestrian Sidewalks, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG



TOWN OF LEESBURG

UTILITY SYSTEMS

Water and Wastewater

Sewer services are managed directly by the Town of Leesburg, who in turn send wastewater south to the American Water Company treatment plant in Warsaw. This plant is permitted to treat 3.9 million gallons a day and handles both solid and liquid waste from Leesburg, local Warsaw residents, the Town of Winona Lake, and two mobile home parks in unincorporated Kosciusko County.

The existing water and wastewater systems have the capacity to handle additional residential, commercial and industrial development. Maintenance and regular repair to the Town's water and wastewater systems, including the repair of original stormwater infrastructure which has begun to collapse in certain areas within the Town. There is no public water system within Town. Residents and businesses use wells for water service. In the past some locations have shown contaminants within the water, this makes future well locations difficult.

Gas and Electric

In terms of providing electric and gas utilities to residents and businesses the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) is the main provider to Leesburg and its surrounding residents. Leesburg also falls within the service area of the Kosciusko Rural Electric Membership Corporation (REMC), who provides electric utilities to Kosciusko County residents.

Broadband

According to BroadbandNow, a digital database that utilizes data from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and local service providers, there are 10 internet providers in Leesburg, with 7 of those offering residential service. The majority of service within the town is gained through DSL or satellite providers, although commercial service is available through cable/fiber. Due to the way broadband data is reported, and collected at the FCC, some zip codes report having a higher number of providers and subscription plans available to local residents. While there are numerous providers, coverage varies depending on the specific provider. Broadband speeds are measured by upload and download speeds and are measured in Megabytes per second (Mbps). The average download speed within Leesburg is 38.9 Mbps, which is 64% slower than Indiana's average. For reference, the Federal Communications Commission defines broadband as a minimum download speed of 25Mbps and upload speed of 3Mbps.

Rural Indiana Stats, an application managed by Purdue University and the Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs, offers an alternative view of local broadband statistics. The application, which aggregates FCC data at the Census tract level, reports that 16.1% of area residents do not have internet access, 5.7% have no computing device, and nearly 12.2% of residents use only a mobile device.

Because of the way data is aggregated and reported, both databases use geographic boundaries that include the Town of Leesburg as well as unincorporated areas of the County in the statistics identified above.

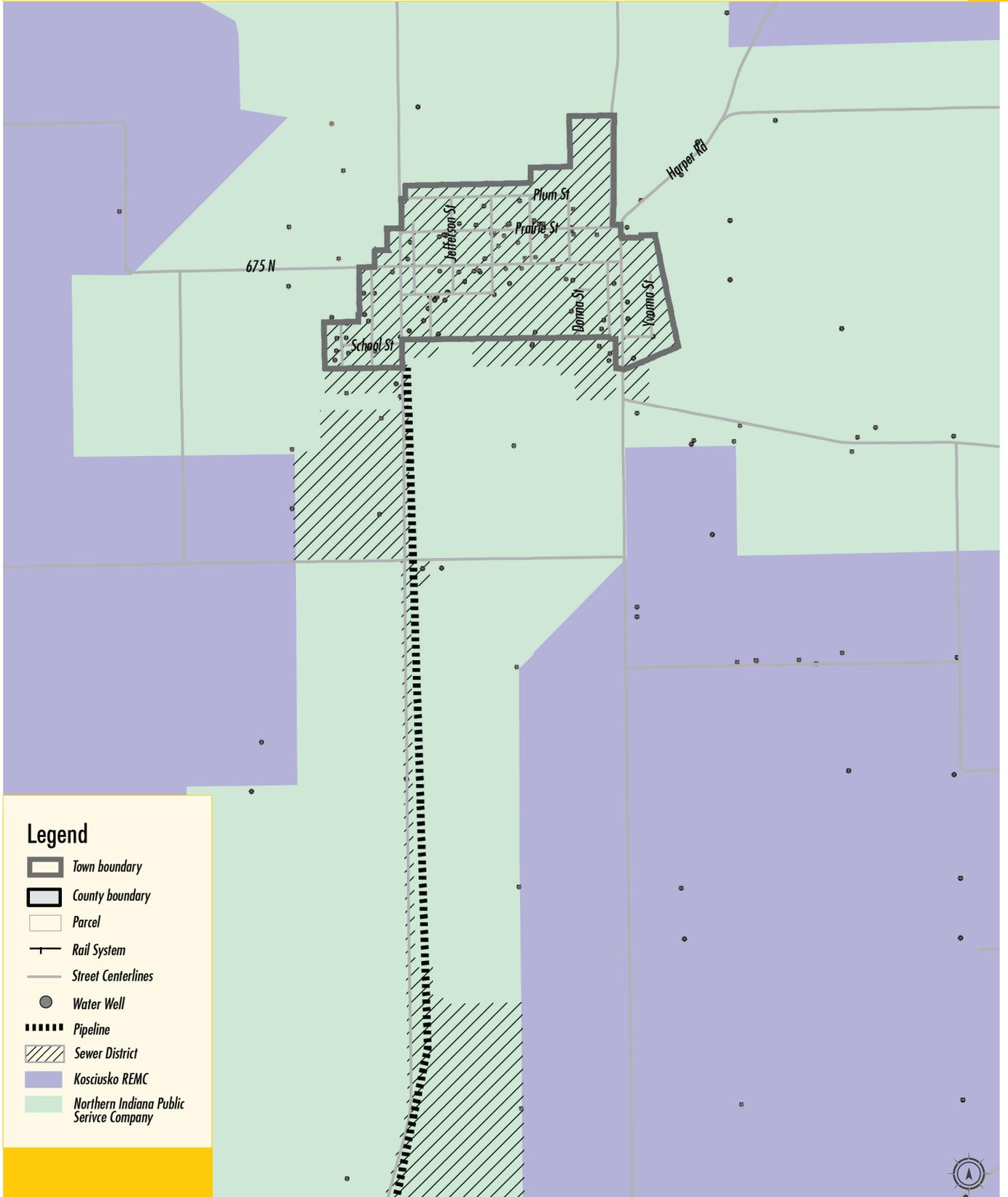
Public Safety Systems

Leesburg receives fire protection services from the Plain Township Volunteer Fire Department, whose station is located just north of Leesburg Elementary.

The Town currently has a contract with the county sheriff for policing needs.

The old fire station located directly behind the Town Hall along Pearl Street and is home to EMS services contracted through Lutheran Health Services.

Existing Utility Systems Map



Legend

- Town boundary
- County boundary
- Parcel
- Rail System
- Street Centerlines
- Water Well
- Pipeline
- Sewer District
- Kosciusko REMC
- Northern Indiana Public Service Company

TOWN OF LEESBURG

DESTINATIONS***Community Facilities and Support Services*****Government Facilities**

Leesburg's government building sits on the corner of Van Buren and Pearl Street, with the old firehouse just behind it, and the town post office is within the commercial buildings directly west. The town does not have a public library.

Public Health Facilities

Leesburg does not have any form of healthcare offices within the town, forcing residents to travel to Warsaw or other larger communities for all healthcare related needs. The nearest hospital is within Warsaw which is approximately seven miles away.

Schools and Learning Institutions

Leesburg Elementary School is located just to the south of town along Old SR 15 and is part of the Warsaw Community School Corporation. The school was originally in town, but was moved to update facilities and provide for increased students. Students then commute to Edgewood Middle School (grades 6-8) and Warsaw Highschool (grades 9-12).

Child Care and Early Childhood Facilities

Based on a search of INconnect, an online database of childcare or early childhood facilities, Leesburg does not have any stand-alone childcare or early childhood facilities within the Town, forcing parents to take their children outside of the community for such services. The nearest facilities lie in Warsaw or Milford. There was a daycare within town, but it was recently closed. INconnect allows any individual to search for care providers by a variety of criteria and provides listings for both licensed and unlicensed, centers, homes and ministry-based facilities.

Grocery and Convenience Stores

While the Town lacks a formal grocery store, there is a Dollar General at the corner of School Street and SR 15, which provides access to pantry staples. The closest available location for buying fresh foods is located in Warsaw, approximately seven miles to the south of the Town. Leesburg is in a food desert, or an area where people have limited access to a variety of healthy and fresh foods. The Town has been working to replace the local grocery store which once occupied a building in the downtown area. These efforts are ongoing.

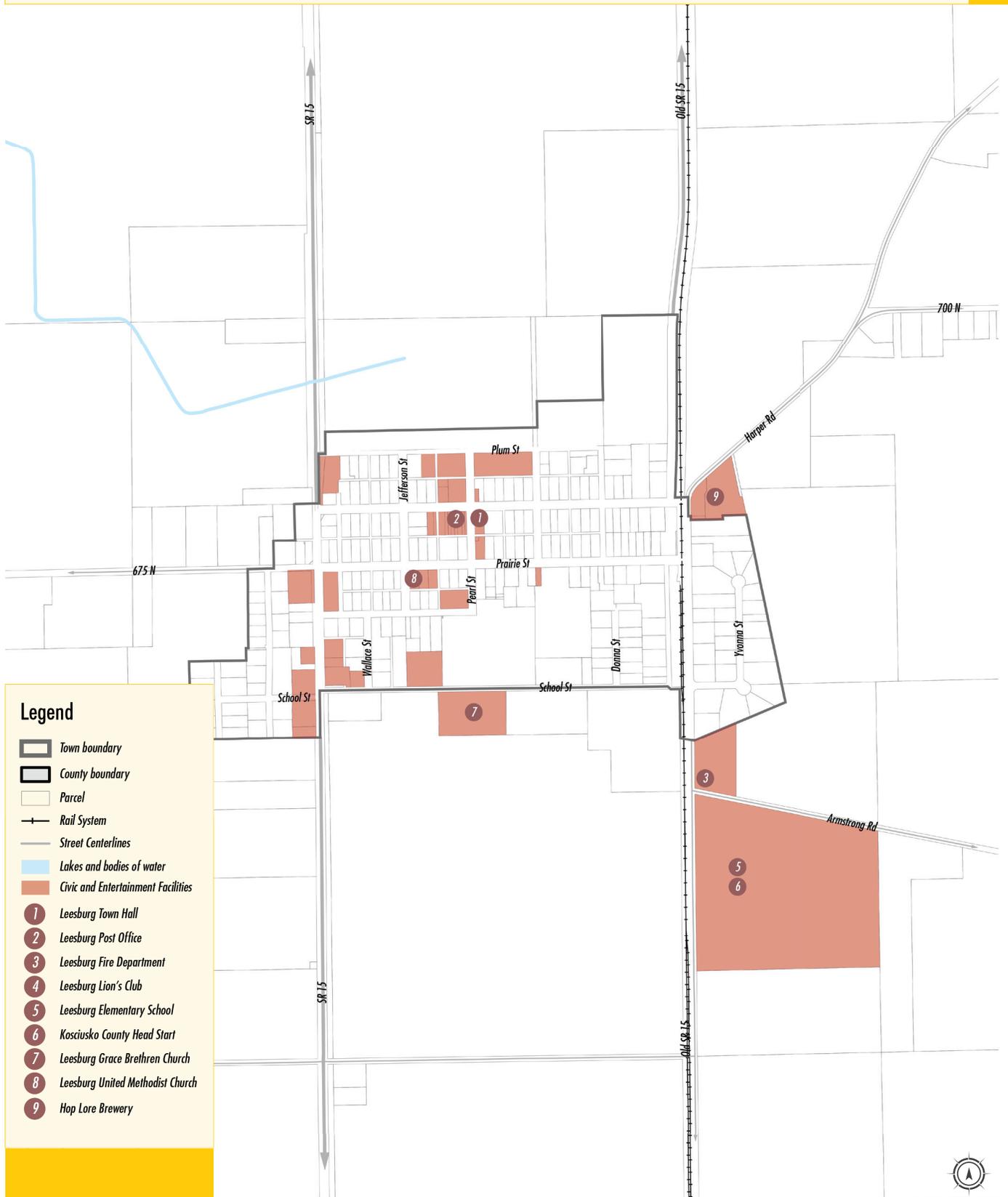
Civic and Entertainment Facilities

Leesburg's Lions Club provides event space for those in the community, and hosts a variety of events throughout the year. While Leesburg lacks some of the larger entertainment options seen in other communities, the town does have a number of restaurants and bars, including a Hop Lore Brewery on the east end of Van Buren Street which has become a regional draw.

Religious and Cultural Facilities

There are two religious' institutions within Leesburg.

Existing Community Destinations Map



Parks and Recreation

Leesburg has only one dedicated park located near Van Buren and Harrison Streets. Clover Park was donated to the Town and offers a gazebo and paved walkway for passive recreation and contemplation. In addition to the passive space, Leesburg also offers recreational spaces in the form of athletic fields maintained by Maple Leaf Farms, Inc. and a set of playground equipment on the Leesburg Elementary School grounds.

The Leesburg Summer Recreational facility is positioned along School Street on the grounds of the town's former elementary school, now operated by Maple Leaf Farms, and includes two baseball fields, and one softball field. Maple Leaf Farms, Inc. kept the school's former ball fields when they assumed ownership of the land and the main building. The company now maintains the fields as a public amenity to the town for summer sports leagues.

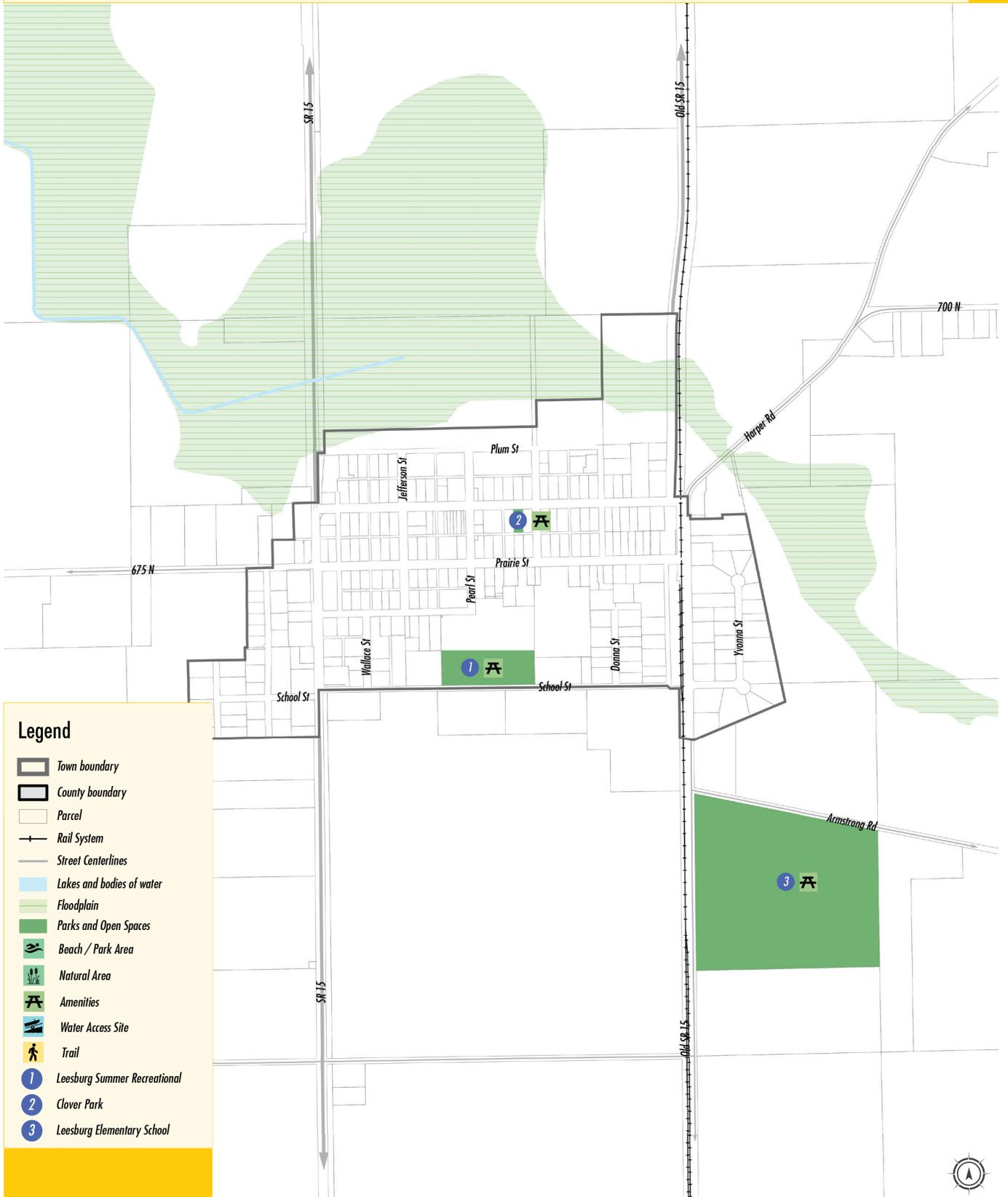
The Leesburg Elementary School is located just outside of town limits along Old SR 15. Playground equipment is located on school grounds and accessible for public use; however, concern has been expressed with the safety of accessing the school grounds by foot. Pedestrians – children of particular concern – have to cross the railroad tracks and Old SR 15 without any designated pedestrian connectivity safety measures. For this reason, the community desires the inclusion of a playground that is more centrally located within town limits.

Lakes and Waterways

While there are no dominant waterways impacting the Town of Leesburg, Kohler Ditch, a smaller drainage channel to the north of Town, does include a floodplain along the north side of the community which drastically limits development.

While there are no bodies of water within the town boundary, the town is close to both Oswego and Tippecanoe Lake and are within a 15-minute drive of other major lakes within the county. Oswego and Tippecanoe Lake are both accessible to the public through a public access point located at Grassy Creek near the Edmund and Virginia Ball Nature Preserve.

Existing Parks, Recreation and Waterways Map



Legend

- Town boundary
- County boundary
- Parcel
- Rail System
- Street Centerlines
- Lakes and bodies of water
- Floodplain
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Beach / Park Area
- Natural Area
- Amenities
- Water Access Site
- Trail
- 1 Leesburg Summer Recreational
- 2 Clover Park
- 3 Leesburg Elementary School



TOWN OF LEESBURG

KEY FINDINGS

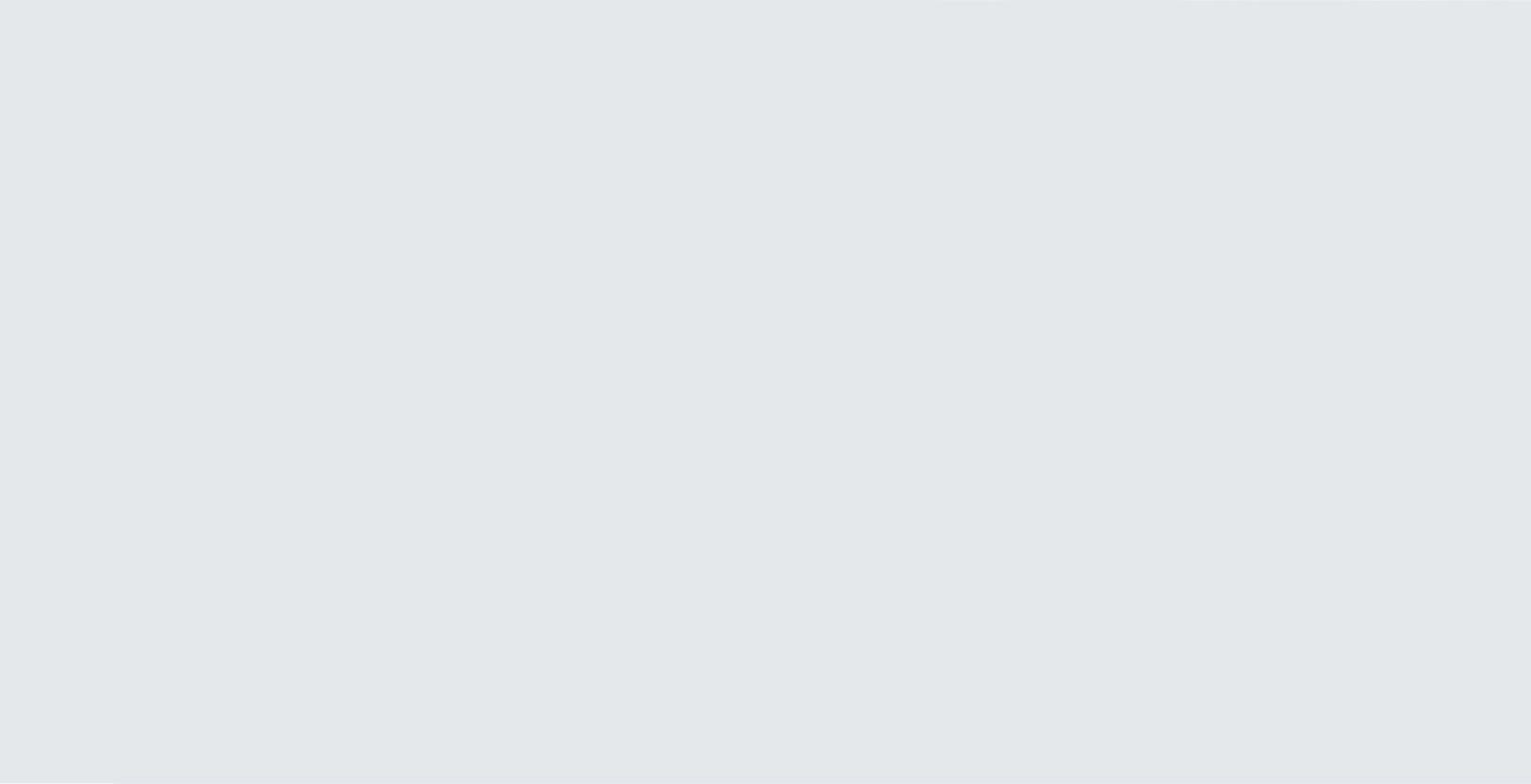
The key findings of the Leesburg community condition assessment have been organized into two key categories: Strengths/ Opportunities and Weaknesses/ Threats. Strengths and opportunities are internal, positive attributes of your department and/or system. These are things that are within your control. Opportunities are external factors in your environment that are likely to contribute to your success. Conversely, weaknesses and threats are negative factors that detract from your strengths. These are things that you might need to improve on to be competitive. Threats are external factors that you have no control over. You may want to consider putting in place contingency plans for dealing with them as/ if they occur.

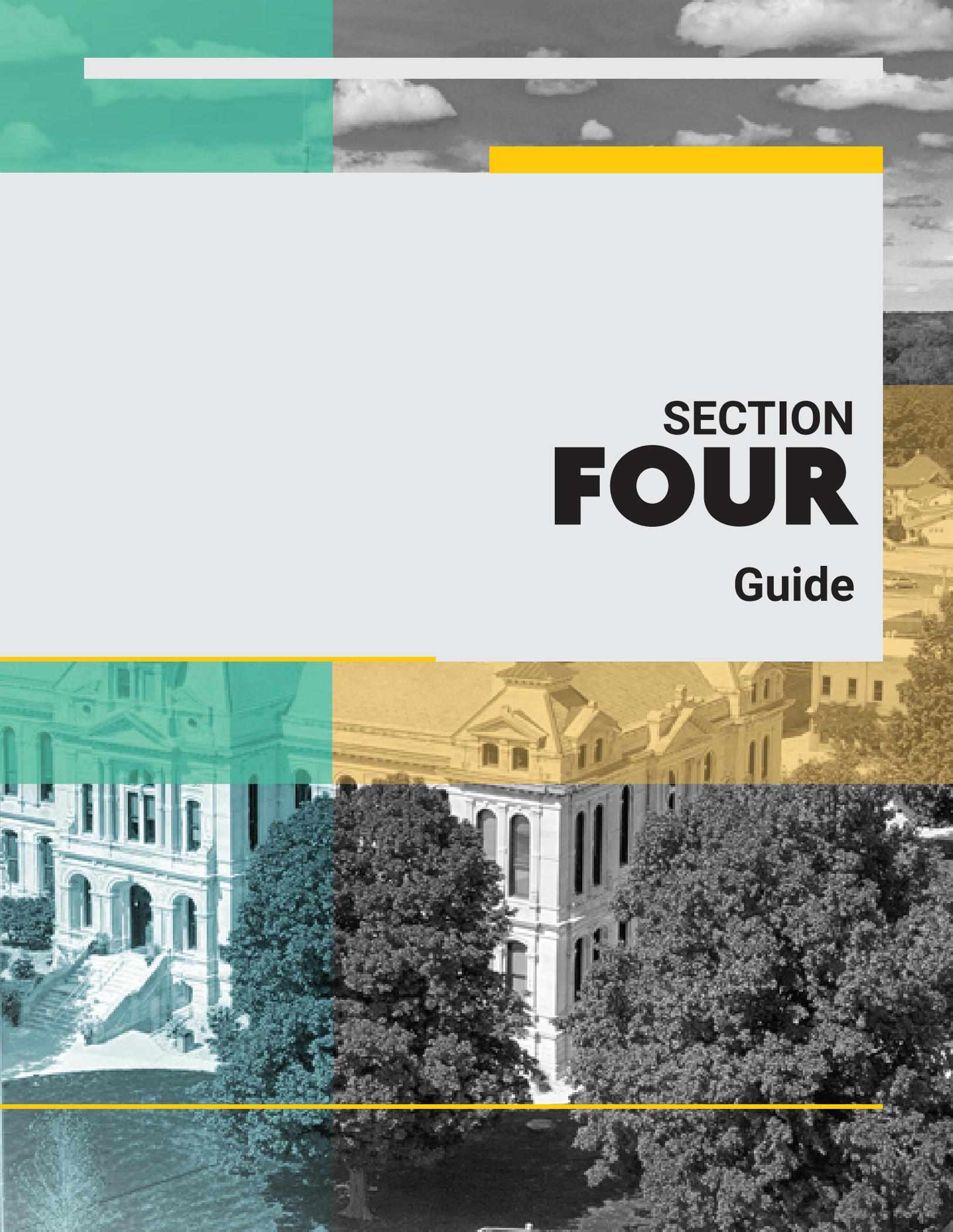
Strengths and Opportunities:

- Leesburg is located directly off SR 15, which gives the community a large advantage in attracting commercial and retail businesses along the Town's western edge.
- The Town has a designated historic district and a number of contributing structures that add value to the community. The historic brick streets are a unique feature in Leesburg.
- While it is located outside of town limits, Leesburg Elementary is a major anchor for the community and could be an asset that helps draw in new residents looking for quality schooling away from a larger city.
- The Lions Club serves as a community facility offering entertainment and gathering options for local residents.
- The existing sidewalk infrastructure within the Town can be improved and expanded to provide alternative transportation routes to local residents.
- Maple Leaf Farms is a huge anchor business, not only within Leesburg, but within the entire county. There are existing partnerships between the Town and the company which benefit local residents.
- The expansion of agritourism businesses such as Maple Leaf Farms and Hop Lore Brewery would benefit the Town and draw new visitors to the area.
- There are opportunities for future residential development along Old SR 15 and along School Street, to the east of Maple Leaf Farms.

Weaknesses and Threats:

- The town has seen population decline since 2000 and is expected to see that trend continue in the next ten years.
- Leesburg's aging infrastructure, including streets, water and wastewater systems, needs immediate repairs in order to continue to adequately serve residents.
- The Town is landlocked, and has little available land to develop being that it is not within a floodplain.
- The lack of residential amenities including grocery and convenience stores, child care and early childhood education facilities and public health facilities negatively impacts the Town's ability to draw new residents in the future.
- The Town has portions of roadways that have been categorized as 'Failed' condition per the PASER rating system. Improvements will be needed.
- The existing railroad line, which runs along Old SR 15 has a high amount of traffic which makes it difficult to cross. This poses challenges to connecting the elementary school, and the amenities the school offers, to the broader community.
- There is no local water service within Leesburg. Residents and businesses use wells for water service. In the past some locations have shown contaminants within the water, this makes future well locations difficult.
- There is no formal Main Street organization that is recognized by the State of Indiana (or the National parent organization). This could limit the Town's ability to apply for a receive funds for downtown initiatives.





SECTION
FOUR
Guide

Typical Neighborhood Character, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG





FORWARD Kosciusko County captures the vision of where the county and each local community wants to be at some point in the future. The *FORWARD Kosciusko County: Town of Leesburg Comprehensive Plan* includes recommendations for land use, housing, economic development, transportation (vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle), utilities, parks and recreation, community facilities, health and wellness initiatives, and placemaking components.

The information included within this section is deliberately broad. While specific topics are addressed, the details of how ideas and recommendations are implemented is left open ended. This allows for flexibility and adaption in how the Plan is used moving forward.

To provide county governments, local governments and strategic partners with strategic direction on any number of issues that are critical to the County's future, a series of guidance tools were developed as a part of the FORWARD Kosciusko County effort. These tools are intended to serve as a check point when considering new projects and initiatives, because they represent the values and needs of the community, local leaders and key stakeholders.

Historic Town Hall, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG



To allow for efficient decision making across the community, this GUIDE section is organized into five parts that individually and collectively will contribute to the Town of Leesburg's success.

County-wide Vision

A **VISION STATEMENT** reflects the values and aspirations of a community; it broadly captures the desired direction of the community and begins setting the stage for unique goals and strategies within a plan. Vision statements form a strategic framework which gives appointed officials and decision makers the long-term perspective needed to make rational decisions as community issues arise.

County and local officials should follow the plan's vision when identifying future projects and policies impacting the greater community.

Goals and Objectives

GOALS broadly identify the community's desired physical, social, cultural, and economic outcomes from the unique strategies and projects identified in a comprehensive plan. **POLICY OBJECTIVES** express the type of action necessary to achieve the vision and goals and are typically action focused, incorporating specific strategies, projects, partners, and funding to assist in their successful completion.

Goals and Policy Objectives begin to indicate how local decision makers should begin taking action in order to achieve the vision of the community, identifying where responsibility should fall and what steps are needed to achieve success.

Land Use and Development

The **FUTURE LAND USE PLAN** identifies desired land-use classifications, densities, and locations for growth within Kosciusko County's urban and rural regions. Based upon existing conditions analyses, current land uses, and community input, the map provides a foundation for elected officials and community leaders to follow when addressing land use decisions such as rezoning requests or development plans.

The map and accompanying text provide detailed recommendations for elected officials to reference when making land use decisions and helps prevent future land use conflicts.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Leesburg's **FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN** addresses the current challenges and future demands of the community, presenting a number of strategies and projects identified throughout the plan's creation which target specific needs of each town and city. This plan assists community leaders in meeting both the financial and physical needs for infrastructure that supports new residential, commercial, and industrial growth.

The Future Infrastructure Plan should be used by elected officials when determining the allocation of funding and resources towards capital improvement projects for infrastructure such as roads, stormwater systems, and/or sewer expansions.

County-wide Connectivity

Although supporting enhancements to roadways and vehicle infrastructure is a key aspect of community planning, so is the development of pedestrian connections and linkages between communities. The **FUTURE CONNECTIVITY PLAN** identifies projects that begin to connect residents and visitors to destinations within the County through trail systems, sidewalk extensions, and dedicated bike routes. All of these networks are working together to improve the safety of users and efficiency of travel.

The linkages identified within the Future Connectivity Plan should be used by community leaders when allocating funding for new infrastructure or recreation space, and should be considered when developing new destinations, employment hubs, and retail centers within the County.

Downtown Historic District Architecture, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG



COUNTY-WIDE

FUTURE VISION

Our past has provided us with a strong foundation.

Kosciusko County has a history of fostering the industries of agriculture, medical device manufacturing, and businesses serving the recreation sector. Today, the County is home to just under 80,000 individuals; we are known for our unique destinations and waterways, our strong economy and our high quality of life. Kosciusko County, and our local city and towns, are full of assets and opportunities that can build a bright future.

Our future is reliant on our ability to work together to become a stronger community.

Kosciusko County, and our local city and towns, aspire to be a strong community of welcoming, engaged people, businesses and organizations that continually work to improve the lives of our residents and the condition of our businesses, industries, destinations and natural assets.

Our collaborative actions will allow us to create a thriving community that all can enjoy.

Kosciusko County, and our local city and towns, are committed to prioritizing the needs of our community's people, places, systems, destinations and partnerships to cultivate a community that:

1. Ensures the safety, wellness and success of our local residents, employers and business owners.
2. Provides for balanced, planned and orderly growth.
3. Plans for effective public services and facilities.
4. Creates and nurtures unique destinations for local and regional enjoyment.
5. Manages local resources and plans for continued reinvestment throughout the County.

OUR COUNTY-WIDE

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**PEOPLE**

Ensures the safety, wellness and success of our local residents, employers and business owners.

We will EMBRACE our strong sense of community and our growing cultural diversity.

We will STRENGTHEN our local communities and residents by providing increased opportunities for housing, education, child care, workforce development, recreation and personal health and well-being.

We will ATTRACT new residents by providing thriving residential neighborhoods, vibrant commercial and retail destinations, high quality business areas and active civic places.

1. Support the development of programming which assists new residents with entering and becoming integrated into the community.
2. Encourage collaboration and sharing of resources between each community in order to continue annual festivals and other events.
3. Encourage the development of diverse and attainable housing options within the county to fill the needs of new home buyers and those working, but not living, within the county.
4. Support the development of child care and early learning facilities and programs.
5. Promote the development of grocery stores and fresh food markets within each community to improve access to produce and shrink food deserts.
6. Support improvements to alternative transportation systems (sidewalks, trails, public transit) to increase access to community amenities throughout the County.
7. Support equitable access to healthcare in all areas of the County.
8. Support the development and growth of local arts and theater facilities and initiatives within the County which promote and enhance local culture.
9. Encourage the development and expansion of outdoor recreation facilities and amenities.
10. Encourage the development and use of a county-wide brand to promote the strengths and opportunities of the City, Towns and County.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES			
COUNTY	LOCAL CITY AND TOWNS	ORGANIZATIONS	
---	LEAD <i>By identifying local needs and opportunities</i>	---	
SUPPORT <i>By sharing the knowledge and expertise of staff</i>	LEAD <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>By sharing the knowledge and expertise of staff</i>	
LEAD <i>Through development decisions and incentives</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in the development review process</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
SUPPORT <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	---	LEAD <i>By developing training programs and local advocacy</i>	
SUPPORT <i>Through development decisions and incentives</i>	---	LEAD <i>Through site identification and marketing</i>	
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>By providing administrative and financial assistance</i>	
SUPPORT <i>Through development decisions and incentives</i>	---	---	
SUPPORT <i>Through development decisions and incentives</i>	LEAD <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>By providing administrative and financial assistance</i>	
SUPPORT <i>Through adoption and implementation of brand</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through adoption and implementation of brand</i>	LEAD <i>Through the development of a consistent brand</i>	

OUR COUNTY-WIDE

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**PLACES**

Provides for balanced, planned and orderly growth.

We will **VALUE** our historic and historically significant resources, districts and structures.

We will **GROW** our mix of land uses to include various housing types, employment opportunities, hospitality facilities and residential support services.

We will **BALANCE** the needs of our County's agricultural industries by protecting prime farmland from incompatible development

1. Encourage commercial development and redevelopment within existing downtowns and commercial corridors.

2. Support the redevelopment of historic buildings and sites and ensure that the character remains consistent with the surrounding context.

3. Encourage mixed-use and higher density residential developments within each community and support the availability of a greater range of housing types and sizes (single-family, duplexes, multi-family, etc.).

4. Support the increase of code enforcement capacity within each community to ensure compliance with site design, building, construction and maintenance standards.

5. Support the development of alternative housing types such as tiny homes, accessory dwelling units, and manufactured/modular housing to improve housing affordability and availability within the county.

6. Encourage and prioritize the repurposing of existing commercial and industrial sites.

7. Encourage building practices and infrastructure improvements which preserve natural areas and amenities.

8. Encourage the preservation and conservation of productive agricultural land.

9. Support the expansion of agritourism by providing for appropriate industrial and commercial uses within agricultural areas.

10. Encourage partnerships between local organizations, educational institutions, and farmers to identify current innovations and sustainable practices for agricultural uses.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES			
COUNTY	LOCAL CITY AND TOWNS	ORGANIZATIONS	
LEAD <i>Through development decisions and incentives</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in the development review process</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in the development review process</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in the development review process</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	---	
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in the development review process</i>	SUPPORT <i>By providing administrative and financial assistance</i>	
SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	---	LEAD <i>By convening local parties and moderating discussions</i>	

OUR COUNTY-WIDE

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**SYSTEMS***Plans for effective public services and facilities.*

We will ensure that public and private utility systems are maintained, improved and modernized so that they can adequately SERVE current and future residents and businesses.

We will maintain and improve our vehicular transportation system to safely and efficiently MOVE residents, visitors and products.

Through new routes and facilities, we will LINK residents, visitors and communities to one another.

1. Support equitable access to reliable and affordable broadband services within both urban and rural areas of the county.

2. Encourage the development, expansion and maintenance of wastewater systems along lakefronts to protect water quality.

3. Support the extension or expansion of public and private utilities into appropriate underdeveloped areas.

4. Support the expansion of local emergency services (police, fire, EMS) as development occurs and new residents enter the county.

5. Partner with INDOT to improve safety along state roadways traveling through local communities.

6. Encourage the maintenance, repair and enhancement of high-traffic county roads which connect residents and visitors to employment centers and amenities within Kosciusko County.

7. Encourage new growth to minimize access points on to high-traffic roads and encourage the development of new collector streets and roads.

8. Support the development of transportation alternatives, such as bike infrastructure and trails, which can connect to communities outside the county and draw visitors.

9. Support the expansion of pedestrian infrastructure to increase pedestrian accessibility within communities and connect residents to destinations.

10. Support complete street policies within the county to encourage the creation of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure during planned roadway improvement projects and new development.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES			
COUNTY	LOCAL CITY AND TOWNS	ORGANIZATIONS	
SUPPORT <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	---	
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	---	
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	---	---	
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	LEAD <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>	

OUR COUNTY-WIDE

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**DESTINATIONS**

Creates and nurtures unique destinations for local and regional enjoyment.

We will PRESERVE our unique lakes, waterways, natural features and environmentally sensitive areas.

We will develop new opportunities for ENJOYMENT by creating, enhancing and activating local parks and open spaces.

We will highlight, PROMOTE and educate the community on the unique experiences and features found throughout Kosciusko County.

1. Support the protection and restoration of local lakes, watersheds, natural drains, rivers and riverbank areas, forested lands, and natural habitats.
2. Support the preservation and use of public easements and rights-of-way to access local lakes and water bodies.
3. Support safe access and activities along the Tippecanoe River.
4. Support an increase in parkland to ensure an equitable access to parks, and open spaces based on the needs of county residents.
5. Support the development of facilities and programming that enhance and promote park, recreation, and cultural destinations.
6. Support the development of new connections between park spaces within the incorporated communities which allow for pedestrians and cyclists to access multiple sites without the need of a vehicle.
7. Support the development of additional destinations, attractions and amenities as they become feasible.
8. Promote the educational opportunities offered by Grace College-Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams, The Watershed Foundation, and the Wawasee Area Conservancy Foundation for residents and visitors interested in exploring the county's natural features.
9. Encourage the promotion of each community's unique assets in promotional campaigns which tie into a county-wide marketing effort.
10. Support the development and use of a county-wide brand for Kosciusko County and the incorporated communities.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES		
COUNTY	LOCAL CITY AND TOWNS	ORGANIZATIONS
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in the development review process</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>
LEAD <i>By using development and regulatory tools</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in the development review process</i>	SUPPORT <i>By sharing the knowledge and expertise of staff</i>
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>
LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>
SUPPORT <i>Through development decisions and incentives</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through site identification and marketing</i>
SUPPORT <i>By sharing the knowledge and expertise of staff</i>	SUPPORT <i>By sharing the knowledge and expertise of staff</i>	LEAD <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>
SUPPORT <i>Through adoption and implementation of brand</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through adoption and implementation of brand</i>	LEAD <i>Through the development of a consistent brand</i>
SUPPORT <i>Through adoption and implementation of brand</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through adoption and implementation of brand</i>	LEAD <i>Through the development of a consistent brand</i>

OUR COUNTY-WIDE

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**PARTNERSHIPS**

Manage local resources and plans for continued reinvestment throughout the County.

We will **COLLABORATE** with one another to better understand our local assets, concerns and goals.

We will **SUPPORT** the goals of the County and local communities by providing resources and assistance.

We will **INVEST** in policy, programs and capital improvements that support the shared success of our local communities and Kosciusko County.

1. Encourage partnerships with local, regional, and state partners to ensure funding for future transportation projects matches the current and projected needs of communities within the County.
2. Encourage community engagement and increased communication between residents, businesses, town staff, and community leaders.
3. Continue to strengthen partnerships between towns and county, regional, and statewide governmental bodies which can provide administrative assistance or funding.
4. Promote the achievements and ongoing actions of community members who are advancing the vision of this plan within their community.
5. Develop programming in coordination with local schools to introduce students to civic leadership and encourage them to enter leadership roles within their communities.
6. Encourage collaboration between municipalities, transportation agencies and organizations to facilitate the expansion of existing transportation systems and inform residents of their progress and availability.
7. Support the sharing and distribution of resources throughout the county so no individual community is unable to progress their future initiatives.
8. Support the exploration and adoption of economic development tools to increase and diversify revenue and funding sources.
9. Support the implementation of the recommendations outlined within this document to plan for and implement future facility and infrastructure improvement projects needed to guide and support growth.
10. Support the concentration of resources around highly visible projects that stimulate additional investment and local benefits.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES			
	COUNTY	LOCAL CITY AND TOWNS	ORGANIZATIONS
	LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	LEAD <i>By identifying local needs and opportunities</i>	---
	SUPPORT <i>By participating in collaborative discussions</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in collaborative discussions</i>	LEAD <i>By convening local parties and moderating discussions</i>
	LEAD <i>By convening local parties and moderating discussions</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in collaborative discussions</i>	---
	SUPPORT <i>Through continued communication</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through continued communication</i>	LEAD <i>Through the development of marketing platforms</i>
	SUPPORT <i>By participating in training program efforts</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in training program efforts</i>	LEAD <i>By developing training programs and local advocacy</i>
	LEAD <i>By convening local parties and moderating discussions</i>	SUPPORT <i>By participating in collaborative discussions</i>	---
	LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying local needs and opportunities</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through research, studies and financial discussions</i>
	SUPPORT <i>Through development decisions and incentives</i>	SUPPORT <i>By identifying specific community needs</i>	LEAD <i>Through tool identification and education</i>
	LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>By providing administrative and financial assistance</i>
	LEAD <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>Through strategic public planning and investment</i>	SUPPORT <i>By providing administrative and financial assistance</i>

Clover Park, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG



FUTURE LAND USE

CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS

The Future Land Use Plan includes 12 land use categories ranging from dense, mixed use areas and business parks to traditional residential neighborhoods, parks, open space, and agricultural uses. These categories are consistent with the scenario development exercises conducted in the Idea and Strategy Development phase and are intended to match the broad development projections accounted for in regional planning efforts.

The recommended future land use designations provided a level of specificity to the Future Land Use Plan by determining appropriate uses, and character elements including density, development form, landscaping, and access. The designations still provide for development flexibility, which will allow the proposed development pattern to respond to economic and market changes over time, but provide a more defined set of criteria that can be used by County and local leaders and staff when making decisions on future development proposals.

Example character images are included for reference only. Not all categories are used at a local scale.

Mixed-Use Center

Mixed-Use Centers have a diverse mix of residential and employment uses. They are a significant source of employment and essential services. They are walkable and easily accessible via multiple transportation modes. Mixed-Use Centers incorporate a vibrant mix of residential and employment uses. Mixed-Use Centers provide residents with a vibrant blend of opportunities to live, work, shop and play within a closely defined area. Buildings range from mid-rise residential or mid-rise commercial towers to townhomes and small corner shops. Mixed-Use Centers offer employment and housing options and are important economic growth areas for businesses. Large parking areas and other auto-oriented land uses are typically located at the edges.



Village Center

Village Centers have a mix of housing and neighborhood-oriented commercial and office uses that are compatible with a transition to lower density areas. Block structure and street connectivity supports a pedestrian friendly environment. Village Centers are active areas with buildings two to four stories in height and usually placed right up to the sidewalk with parking available on-street. Away from the "main street," density quickly diminishes, thus minimizing impacts on nearby neighborhoods. Streets have trees and wide sidewalks. The primary public investment in these areas will be upgrading streets and walkways to create safe high-quality pedestrian environments.



Urban Neighborhood

Urban Neighborhoods are a mix of housing that is compatible with a transition to lower density areas. Urban Neighborhoods are predominately residential but are distinguished from other neighborhoods by the wide variety of housing options they provide. Housing choices should include single-family detached dwellings, townhomes and low- to mid-rise condominiums or apartments. These neighborhoods will have concentrations of shops and offices along key corridors or at key intersections, providing important services and job opportunities within walking distance of residences. Urban Neighborhood streets will be very pedestrian friendly, providing excellent connectivity to shopping, schools and other community services. Public investments in these areas will focus on parks, pathways, transit stops, pedestrian-oriented landscaping and road improvements.





Office

Office is generally low to high density office buildings supported by convenient surface and structured parking. Office areas are usually at major intersections or along major arterials and rely heavily on car access. These areas typically include mid-rise office buildings and low- to mid-rise residential buildings for condos or apartments and may include multifamily housing. Streets in these areas emphasize efficient movement of vehicles. Bold lighting and linear landscaping features such as esplanades and tree-lined boulevards can all work to distinguish and identify these areas. Gateway landscaping, monuments and other devices will provide visibility from the freeway and guide visitors to destinations.



Commercial

Large-scale retail buildings and offices. Usually located along highway corridors or at highly visible intersections. These Commercial areas, commonly at the intersection of major streets, are easily accessed via automobiles. Buildings in these areas tend to be on separate parcels and stand one to five stories with offices, restaurants and a range of retail and commercial uses. In addition to jobs and services, Commercial areas also may include multifamily housing in low- to mid-rise apartment buildings or condominiums. Landscaping and urban design will enhance the visitor's experience and is used to separate sidewalks from major roads and define pedestrian routes in large parking lots.



Industrial

Industrial areas, which offer important employment opportunities, occupy large areas of land and usually are near major roads and heavy rail lines. Evolving technology and the need for freight movement through the County to the rest of the country and internationally means this sector can offer good opportunities for jobs. Logistics and warehousing, a growing industry with strong potential for upward mobility of skilled workers, would thrive in such areas. These areas include a mix of low- and medium-density industrial buildings and industrial yards and have large surface parking for cars and trucks. Street lanes are wide and intersections are large.

Residential Subdivision

Residential Subdivisions are a mix of medium and small lot single family detached homes. Single-family dwellings are the dominate land use in these areas. Some shops, restaurants or institutional land uses such as schools and religious centers that serve neighborhood residents may be located at the edges or at key intersections. These areas rely primarily on cars for access, although traffic on neighborhood streets is expected to be low. New neighborhoods may provide better pedestrian access to community services through shorter block lengths, narrower streets, sidewalks and greenbelts with hike and bike trails and might also provide improved access. Public investment will focus on protecting quality of life by providing amenities such as parks, trails, and road improvements.



Large Lot Subdivision

Large Lot Subdivisions have large lots of at least one acre per unit. This housing type may be in a subdivision or independently located to support smaller farming and agricultural lifestyles. Homes are detached and are typically one to two stories. As an option, this development type permits open space development, where homes are located in small lot neighborhoods, with common open space preserved in perpetuity. Large Lot Subdivisions have supporting retail and commercial uses at major intersections.



Rural Housing

Rural Housing is generally located in farming areas and have lots between 1 to 5 acres. These residences support farming, agriculture, and tourism industries. Rural residential housing is carefully placed and designed to have minimal impact on sensitive lands. In addition, this development type may provide open space buffers between residential uses and employment areas. Retail and commercial uses that support farming and agriculture may also be located at major intersections.





Public & Institutional

These are land uses developed which serve a community's social educational, health, cultural, and recreational needs. They may include government owned or maybe privately owned and operated facilities.



Open Space/Park

Lakes, rivers, streams and parks form a vital system of green space throughout the County. Open space provides recreational areas for residents and helps to enhance the beauty and environmental quality of neighborhoods. Parks provide intrinsic environmental, aesthetic, and recreation benefits. They are also a source of positive economic benefits. They enhance property values, increase municipal revenue, bring in homebuyers and workers, and attract retirees.



Agricultural

Agricultural land is typically land devoted to agriculture, the systematic and controlled use of other forms of life—particularly the rearing of livestock and production of crops—to produce food for humans. It is generally synonymous with both farmland or cropland, as well as pasture or rangeland.

TOWN OF LEESBURG

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The future land use map is a community's visual guide to future planning and is a complement to the written goals and policy objectives found within this Plan. The future land use map should bring together most, if not all, of the elements of the comprehensive plan and should serve as a representation of what the local communities and the county want to have happen in the future.

The local future land use map was developed to meet the following broad objectives:

Preservation

Protecting or preserving the use of land is impactful for environmental reasons, but it also provides opportunities for local industries and businesses to grow.

The Future Land Use Map preserves our lakes, waterways and natural features. With over 100 lakes and waterways throughout the County, the preservation of these natural features and their supporting tributaries and floodplains is of primary concern. The Future Land Use Map works to minimize potential conflicts by limiting development and the removal of land or change in topography within environmentally protected and sensitive areas. The supporting objectives encourage the development and enforcement of building practices and infrastructure improvements that preserve natural areas and amenities including site design, building, and construction compliance measures.

The Future Land Use Map preserves our productive agricultural lands. Kosciusko County's strong history is rooted in its agricultural heritage, identity and economic opportunity. There are over 260,000 acres of land identified as farmland according to the 2017 Agricultural Census. The County is ranked 4th among Indiana counties and 8th across the United States, recording a market value of over \$298 million. The Future Land Use Map strengthens the agricultural industry by delineating clear growth areas within incorporated communities, supporting policy improvements to strengthen the use and development of agricultural industries, and supporting agritourism activities and destinations.

Complements

Kosciusko County is full of established places and unique destinations. Future development activities can be done in a way that complements our existing neighborhoods, downtowns and tourism destinations.

The Future Land Use Map supports growth within the incorporated communities. Based on the *2020 Kosciusko County Housing Strategy and Market Potential Study*, nearly 4,300 households have the potential to move to Kosciusko County each year. Nearly 60% of these households are projected to be accommodated within the unincorporated areas of Kosciusko County. Predominantly, the housing preferences of these individuals include rentals and detached houses. While these potential residents need diverse housing products, they also demand a variety of community amenities including workplaces, community centers, grocery stores, recreation areas, child care facilities and health care options. The Future Land Use Plan supports the development of these necessary community spaces to provide local residents with choices and a high quality of life.

The Future Land Use Map provides for opportunities that support business growth and expansion. The industries within Kosciusko County have always been unique when compared to the surrounding region, from the poultry and egg industries, which dominated the County in the early 20th century, to the current biomedical manufacturing of

present day. Part of the biomedical manufacturing field's success is due to Kosciusko County's proximity to other large metros in the area, including Fort Wayne, South Bend, Indianapolis, and Chicago. These hubs allow the firms to attract skilled workers from outside the County and State. The Future Land Use Map accommodates growth within local industries by delineating areas for commercial and industrial land use expansion that align with areas of existing transportation and utility infrastructure.

Strategic Growth

The County has seen steady population growth since 2000, with the bulk of the growth occurring within the City of Warsaw and the Towns of Winona Lake and Syracuse. While all three of these areas are anticipated to continue to grow, the remaining incorporated areas have the ability and desire to accommodate future growth.

The Future Land Use Map identifies feasible sites for residential, commercial and industrial development.

During the field visits and online communication with each community within the County, multiple areas for new residential, commercial, and industrial development were identified by each town. While many communities are currently landlocked based on their existing boundaries, the Future Land Use Map identifies sites within and adjacent to the community that are best suited for new or enhanced development.

The Future Land Use Map supports residential housing growth and diversity within all incorporated areas. A theme that was heard throughout public engagement and reinforced by the housing study is a need for more workforce housing or housing types within the price range of the County's working class. To answer the potential housing deficit that exists, the Future Land Use Map supports the development of housing for new families, young professionals, and recent high school/college graduates, in addition to more options for empty nesters and retirees.

Activation

The towns have unique backgrounds that set them apart from one another, including economic, religious, social, and educational factors playing a part in their development over the past decades.

The Future Land Use Map leverages local historic assets. Kosciusko County has a past rich in local history that stands out from other rural communities across the state. While the County itself has a diverse past that has been influenced by its agriculture, industries, and numerous natural resources, each town within the County has their own unique pasts that shaped the communities of today. While Kosciusko County would benefit from new development, both commercial and residential, there is also a need to improve existing structures within the County. The Future Land Use Map encourages the reuse of existing downtown buildings to provide community amenities and activate local downtown areas and business districts.

The Future Land Use Map encourages the development and use of community facilities, parks and open spaces.

There are numerous community facilities and recreation spaces within the individual communities of Kosciusko County. While the scale of available opportunities varies depending on the community, there is a shared commitment to recreation and community outreach across the County. The Future Land Use Map not only supports the development of new community recreation facilities and spaces, but also identifies strategies that can be used to activate these areas for residential enjoyment.

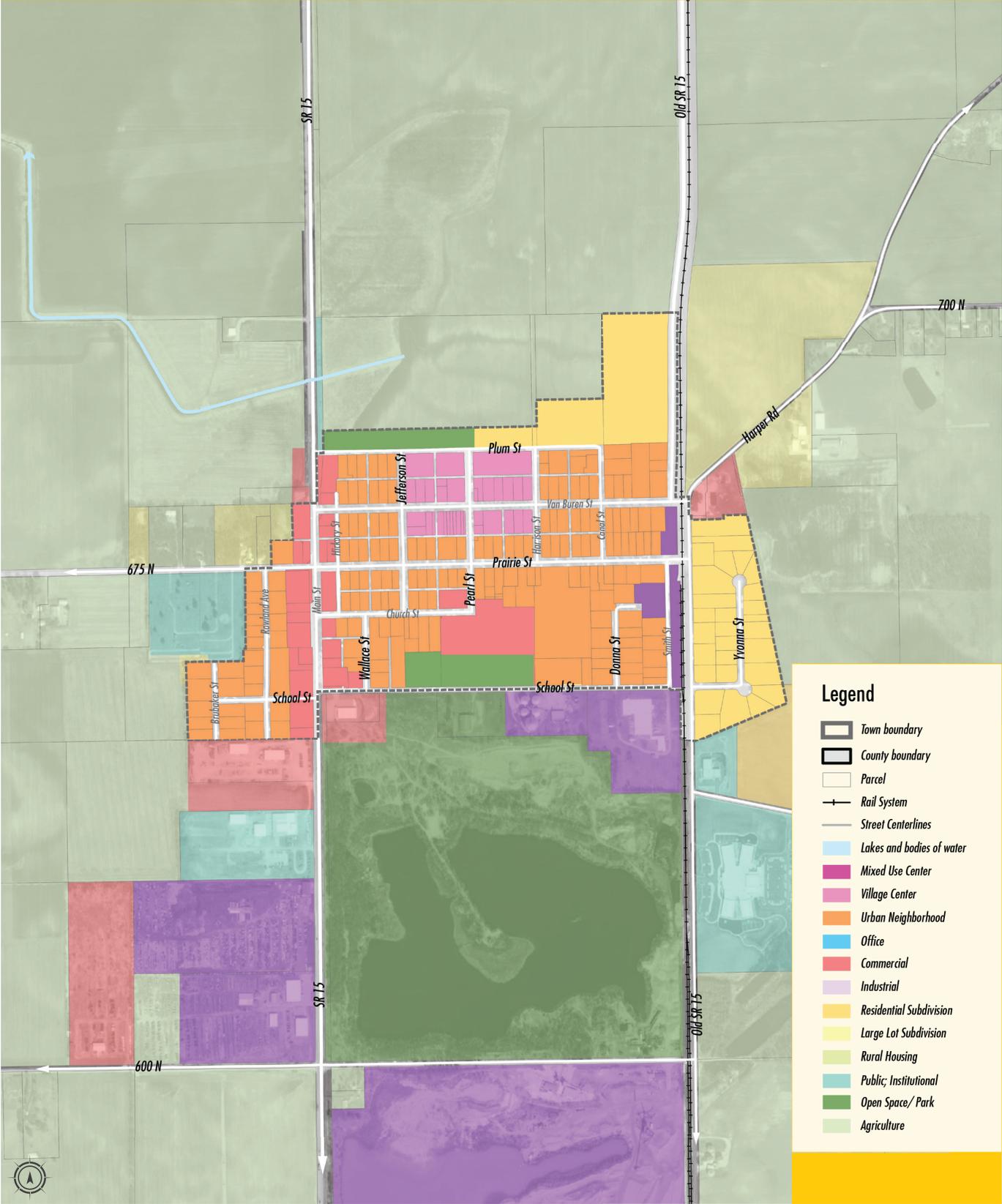
TOWN OF LEESBURG

LAND USE AND GROWTH OBJECTIVES

To support the overall objectives of the FORWARD Kosciusko County Future Land Use Plan, the Town of Leesburg should work to:

- Encourage active commercial and office uses along Van Buren Street in an effort to rehabilitate and activate existing downtown buildings and structures.
- Encourage residential redevelopment on upper floors along Van Buren Street in an effort to rehabilitate and activate the downtown.
- Support the identification and preservation of historically significant areas or structures.
- Encourage and prioritize the development and enhancement of existing commercial and industrial sites along SR 15 and Old SR 15.
- Encourage the development of new zoning regulations to minimize regulatory challenges when establishing child care facilities and programs.
- Encourage higher density residential development within Leesburg and support the availability of a greater range of housing types and sizes (single-family, duplexes, multi-family, tiny homes, accessory dwelling units etc.).
- Support the increase of code enforcement capacity within Leesburg to ensure compliance with site design, building, construction and maintenance standards.
- Support the development and expansion of facilities and programs to enhance and promote local history and cultural destinations such as the Town's historic district.
- Along the SR 15 corridor, support the implementation of economic development tools including TIF Districts to fund future infrastructure improvements.
- Encourage development to utilize site design standards that are complimentary to adjacent agricultural uses.
- Encourage neighborhood reinvestment by providing resources for building repair, maintenance and sidewalk improvements.
- Strategically annex new development into the Town of Leesburg as development occurs.
- Partner with Maple Leaf Farms to develop community amenities which benefit both residents and workers, including new recreational and playground facilities.
- Partner with community organizations to establish community amenities including grocery stores, and medical offices which fill the needs of residents and those living in the surrounding county.

Future Land Use Plan



Downtown Leesburg Streetscape, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG



TOWN OF LEESBURG

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

County-wide there are over 1,200 miles of roadway, ranking Kosciusko County the 3rd largest county in terms of roadway volume. While vast in length, the County's roadway corridors are nearly all rural in character and serve a primary function of moving people and goods across and through the County. While local communities manage and oversee numerous corridors, many of the primary transportation routes running through the County and the local communities are under the jurisdiction of the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). The vehicular transportation system can be categorized into five primary corridor classifications.

Major arterials are high-speed roadways that provide high levels of mobility. They connect activity centers, employment hubs and other important destinations to one another and prioritize regional efficiency and speed.

Minor arterials carry lower traffic volumes than major arterials but are still busier than most other roadways. These corridors connect major arterial corridors to one another and provide connectivity across or through cities and towns.

Major and minor collectors provide traffic circulation within cities and towns and connect neighborhoods, commercial areas and industrial areas to one another. These corridors often lead to larger roadways to provide cross-county connectivity.

Local roadways include all other corridors not classified as an arterial or collector. These roads are traditionally used for local trips and provide direct access to local development areas. At the county scale, these local roadways are often paved but feature limited enhancements including pavement striping, shoulders and/or drainage ditches.

Local communities are responsible for the public right of way within the unincorporated areas of the County. To visually assess, rate and monitor the condition of local roads, local communities utilize the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating System (PASER). The PASER system rates the condition of the road from 1 (failing) to 10 (excellent). With this information, local governments are able to project future conditions of the pavement and plan for the most effective maintenance. Data from 2020 show that about 40% of roads are in "good" or "excellent" condition, while about 60% are in "fair" or worse condition. Generally, "poor" conditions are primarily found on roads within the smaller communities.

TOWN OF LEESBURG

FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Ensuring that public utility and transportation systems remain accessible, efficient and well connected is critical to the ongoing success of Kosciusko County. The FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN addresses the current challenges and future demands of the County and the local communities by presenting a number of objectives and strategies which target specific needs of each town and city.

The local future infrastructure map was developed to meet the following broad objectives:

Safe and Efficient

To serve Kosciusko County, roadways and utility systems require maintenance, safety and efficiency improvements. The quality of life for many people is significantly affected by how well roadways and utility systems function at both residential and business scales.

The Future Infrastructure Plan establishes the function and role of county corridors. Using the existing County classifications as a guide, the Future Infrastructure Plan classifies each corridor based on its function to better identify the role of the roadway within the County and local community. Classifications based on function allow traffic capacity to be properly allocated by mode and planned street improvements can be consistent with those corridor functions. The Future Infrastructure Plan utilizes transportation categories that align with state and federal agencies to consistently define the role and function of county-wide corridors.

The Future Infrastructure Plan supports the ongoing maintenance and modernization of utility systems. As Kosciusko County and the local communities continue to age, the existing streets, paths, sidewalks and utility systems will all incur increased maintenance costs. The needs of the infrastructure systems are inherently linked with the development of the surrounding land, along with the alignment of maintenance and modernization activities to support that development. The Future Infrastructure Plan encourages strategic planning for infrastructure improvements by quantifying necessary maintenance and enhancement projects.

Coordinated

Accommodating growth in the County will need to include strategic planning in areas with limited transportation and infrastructure facilities. In order to attract a wide range of interest from the private development community, the County, and their local community partners, will need to continue exploring ways to help plan for transportation and utility expansion. This expansion should offset the costs associated with utility infrastructure in these key development areas.

The Future Infrastructure Plan highlights areas of potential growth. Focused expansion of housing, commercial and light industrial uses is seen within or adjacent to each of the incorporated communities. This focused approach allows private development to utilize existing transportation and utility systems wherever possible. In areas where service and systems may need improvement, the Future Infrastructure Plan delineates potential areas of growth so that cooperative efforts can begin to effectively plan for system maintenance, modernization and upgrades in advance of development efforts.

The Future Infrastructure Plan identifies partners and cooperative efforts. The maintenance and expansion of infrastructure systems requires the participation and cooperation of private entities and state agencies. Often times, local communities and the County may find it difficult to make needed improvements when funding is coming from multiple sources. The Future Infrastructure Plan supports cooperative efforts between private property owners, local municipalities and state agencies by identifying potential improvement and enhancement opportunities.

Adaptable

The needs of all users, including drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and those with limited mobility, should be considered when improvements and additions are made to the County's expanded transportation network is needed as the County's system expands.

The Future Infrastructure Plan supports the development of complete transportation systems. The needs of bicyclists and pedestrians must be integrated in all roadway projects. If a roadway is designed to discourage vehicular speeding, it can be comfortably used by pedestrians and bicyclists alike. A multimodal approach must be used in developing roadways to include bike and pedestrian facilities alongside the vehicle corridors. The Future Infrastructure Plan supports the development of multi-modal corridors by identifying strategic policies and projects that would improve the movement of vehicles and pedestrians to minimize conflicts.

The Future Infrastructure Plan encourages the development of a comfortable pedestrian environment. The majority of the County's roadways are designed to efficiently move vehicles through the local communities and across the County. There are instances where that vehicular environment creates a physical divide within key development areas. Within many of the local towns, state roadways or primary county thoroughfares also serve as the front door to downtown districts. These same areas also accommodate a high degree of foot traffic due to the local restaurants, shops and offices that front these roadway corridors. The Future Infrastructure Plan delineates areas where streetscape improvements can be made, with state and county support, to provide for an enhanced streetscape character that still allows for maximum vehicular capacity and function.

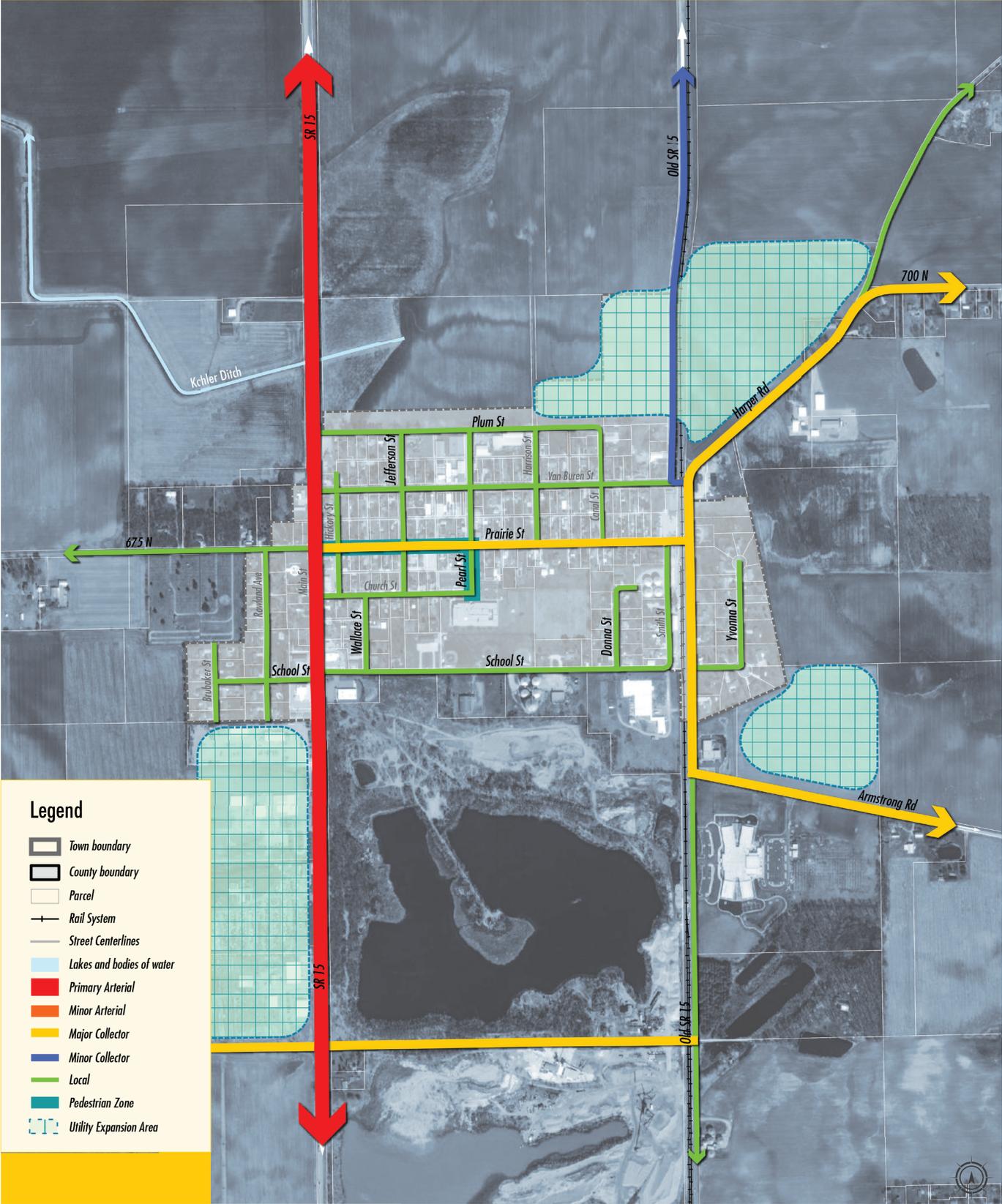
TOWN OF LEESBURG

INFRASTRUCTURE OBJECTIVES

To support the overall objectives of the FORWARD Kosciusko County Future Infrastructure Plan, the Town of Leesburg should work to:

- Provide for appropriate transportation and utility extensions to meet the needs of development.
- Maintain a high level of service for all public infrastructure systems through continuous monitoring, evaluation, and maintenance.
- Encourage new growth and development along SR 15 and Old SR 15 to minimize curb cuts and driveways in an effort to control traffic and vehicular turning movements.
- Encourage the maintenance, repair and enhancement of Van Buren Street, SR 15, Old SR 15, Pearl Street, and other high-traffic roads to ensure a PASER rating of 'Good' or higher.
- Support complete street policies within the Town to encourage the creation of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure during planned roadway improvement projects and new development.
- Partner with INDOT to improve vehicular safety along SR 15 and Old SR 15 by developing traffic calming measures to reduce speed.
- Partner with INDOT to provide a pedestrian scaled streetscape character (sidewalks, street lighting, pedestrian furniture, banners and wayfinding, along SR 15 from School Street to Plum Street.
- Encourage collaboration with local transportation and utility infrastructure improvements with County land use, growth, and economic development policies.
- Maintain existing water, wastewater, stormwater and electrical infrastructure.
- Encourage planning and strategic investment in modernization, maintenance and enhancement of failing or deficient water, sewer, stormwater and electrical infrastructure.

Future Infrastructure Plan



Typical Leesburg Sidewalk Character, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG



TOWN OF LEESBURG

CONNECTIONS AND DESTINATIONS

Sidewalks, multi-use pathways and on street bicycle facilities are becoming an ever more important amenity in communities throughout the County. These biking, jogging, and walker amenities provide opportunities for recreation and leisure travel and in some instances provide an alternative means of transportation for those who may live and work in the area. While a strong emphasis is traditionally put on larger community's such as Warsaw, Winona Lake and Syracuse to make investment in trails and pathways, there is an increasing demand for the County to prioritize the completion of non-motorized transportation as well. In order for a sidewalk or path system to be effective, the sidewalks, trails and/or multi-use paths need to be a complete system, meaning key destinations are linked together. By connecting key destinations and activity centers to residential neighborhoods and subdivisions, efficient and safe connections can be made so that children and adults have the opportunity to move through their neighborhoods and visit key areas within the community.

For experienced cyclists, a series of signed bicycle routes can be used to travel from one community to another. These routes were identified through a cooperative effort to define and provide signage for a network of bicycle routes using county roadways. The routes were selected by a group of experienced cyclists using criteria such as safety of the road, directness of routes between destinations and overall attractiveness. The total mileage of roads in the network marked thus far is approximately 200 miles and provides connections to established routes in Warsaw, Winona Lake, and Syracuse as well as St. Joseph, Elkhart and Marshall County facilities.

Only short walking trails currently exist for beginning cyclists or pedestrians in many of the incorporated towns, with larger pathway systems provided in Warsaw, Winona Lake and Syracuse. Sidewalks are generally available in older portions of local communities, including Claypool, Etna Green, Leesburg, Mentone, Milford, North Webster, Pierceton, Silver Lake, Syracuse, Warsaw, and Winona Lake. Outside of these facilities, which are all located within incorporated areas or developed nature preserves, there are no additional pathways connecting local communities or county destinations to one another.

Each engagement opportunity facilitated during the FORWARD Kosciusko County process outlined 'connectivity' as common theme and aspiration. Residents spoke on the need to connect regional destinations and improve accessibility to parks, lakes, and other natural resources for both personal enjoyment and visitor draw. One of the Plan's primary goals – developed directly from public input - was the development of new pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that expands upon existing trails to create a county-wide network.

Creating a connected network of multi-use trails and pathways is politically and socially one of the hardest projects the county could attempt. However, accomplishing this would have the most long-lasting impact on the County's trail system.

TOWN OF LEESBURG

FUTURE CONNECTIVITY PLAN

Although supporting enhancements to roadways and vehicle infrastructure is a key aspect of community planning, so is the development of pedestrian connections and linkages between communities. The **FUTURE CONNECTIVITY PLAN** identifies projects that begin to connect residents and visitors to destinations within the County through trail systems, sidewalk extensions, and dedicated bike routes. All of these connectivity components work together to improve the safety and efficiency of travel across the broader transportation network.

The local future connectivity plan was developed to meet the following broad objectives:

Link

In addition to providing a safe and comfortable place for residents to enjoy recreational activities, trails and multi-use pathways often function as viable transportation corridors. These connectivity amenities can be a crucial element when creating a county-wide and even regional multi-modal transportation system.

The Future Connectivity Plan provides opportunities to link local communities and destinations to one another.

Additions in the form of trails and pathways will improve county-wide quality of life and encourage pride in the local community by establishing a network of safe paths and sidewalks to connect subdivisions, parks, businesses, schools, and other community destinations. These paths and sidewalks will be designed to meet the needs of a variety of users with the goal of increasing the accessibility of all pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the County. The Future Connectivity Plan established a primary goal of connecting communities and destinations to one another through an integral series of trails, pathways and blueway routes.

Additional study, public input and design would be needed to identify potential and preferred routes for county-wide trails and pathways; however, there is ongoing support for the idea with many local communities actively working together to envision appropriate routes for county-wide connections.

Enhance

Trails and multi-use pathways, have all the traditional conservation benefits of preserving green space, but can also provide added benefits by way of their linear nature. As tools for ecology and conservation, trails have the opportunity to preserve important natural landscapes, provide needed links between fragmented habitats and offer tremendous opportunities for protecting plant and animal species - especially within watersheds and along riparian corridors.

The Future Connectivity Plan supports the preservation of natural waterways. Kosciusko County is well known for its various lakes and waterways which draw in thousands of residents and tourists each year. The County has over 100 inland lakes, the most out of all counties in Indiana, and is home to the Tippecanoe River, the largest river within the County. The river and lakes and waterways form a natural trail system. The waterways allow visitors to travel extended distances to reach destinations or simply float to another landing upstream or downstream. The creation of trails and multi-use pathways along the natural waterways in the County will enable the preservation of critical habitats and allow users to experience the natural environment in a responsible way. The Future Connectivity Plan supports water quality and habitat preservation by prioritizing the development of amenities along the river, lake shorelines and streambeds.

The Future Connectivity Plan will enhance local communities and county destinations through wayfinding, informational and branding signage. While the majority of county trails and pathways will travel through rural areas within the local communities to reach unique destinations, the pathways also provide the opportunity to inform users of the local history and culture. Future routes will have the ability to link users to historic features and unique places that tell the history of the County and local communities through consistent signage and interpretive panels. The Future Connectivity Plan encourages the development of unique features based on local communities and destinations along the county-wide routes.

Connects

Just as arterial roadways provide the key east/west and north/south connectivity for vehicles, establishing primary corridors for bicycles and pedestrians is also an important part of the road network.

The Future Connectivity Plan encourages the development of safe paths and roadway crossings. Roadway, sidewalks, trails, designated bicycle lanes, and other areas of public circulation should be designed to provide the highest level of safety for the protection of local residents and to ensure that there are transportation choices for people of all ages and abilities. Pedestrian facilities must meet ADA accessibility requirements. Safe, convenient and interconnected transportation networks should be provided for all major modes of transportation. The Future Connectivity Plan provides recommendations for the development of an integrated, safety-oriented pedestrian and bicycle system to increase mobility choices and provide convenient access to schools, designated development areas, parks and other recreation areas throughout the County.

The Future Connectivity Plan creates opportunities for increased residential health and wellness. Trails and multi-use pathways create opportunities for recreation and transportation by providing people of all ages and abilities with attractive, safe, accessible places to bike, walk, hike or jog. In doing so, they make it easier for people to engage in physical activity. With more health-focused initiatives in progress throughout the County, residents are gaining a better understanding of the positive impact trails and multi-use pathways have on public health. The Future Connectivity Plan identifies potential routes and improvements that will provide recreation and transportation options to all residential areas within the local communities.

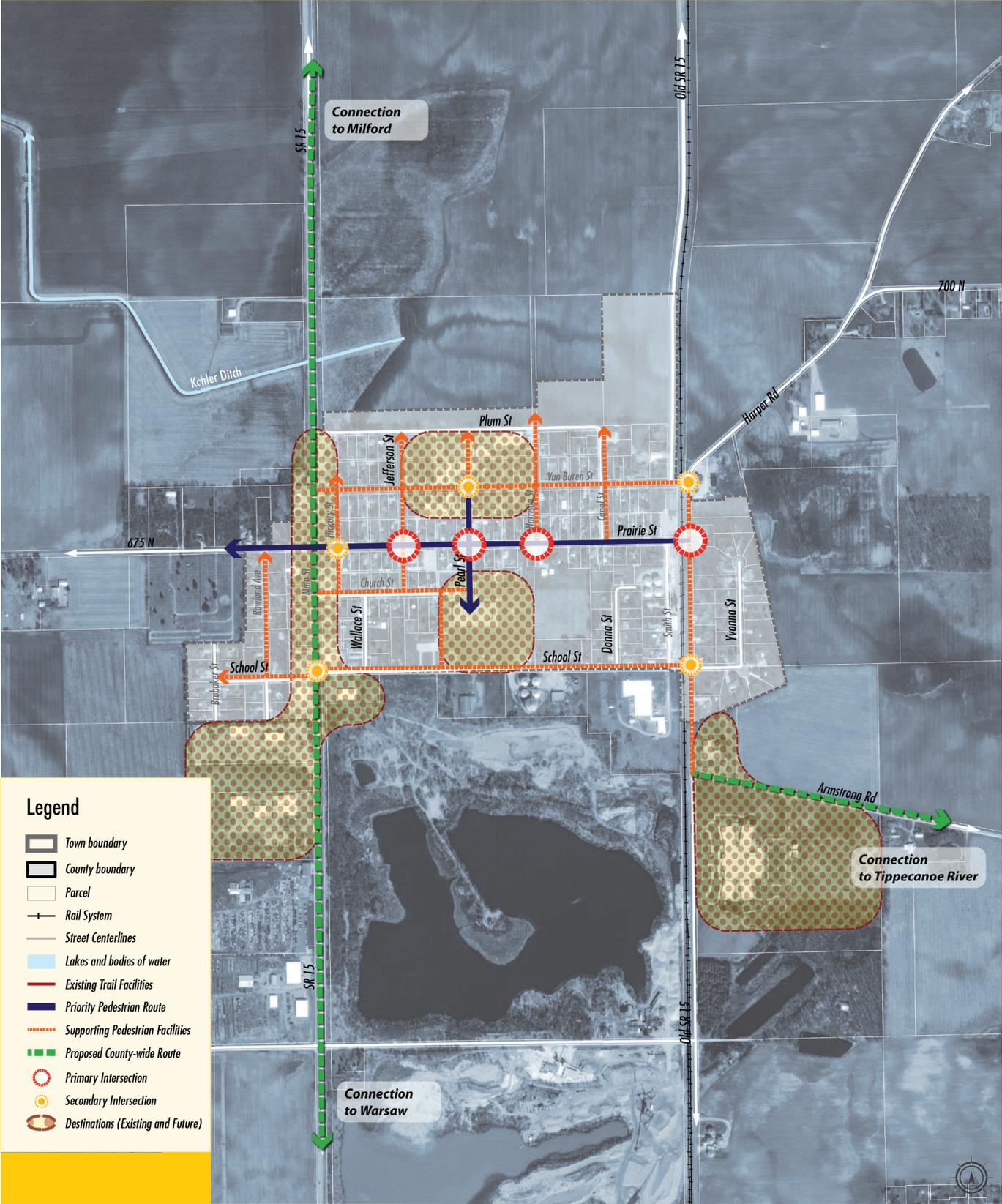
TOWN OF LEESBURG

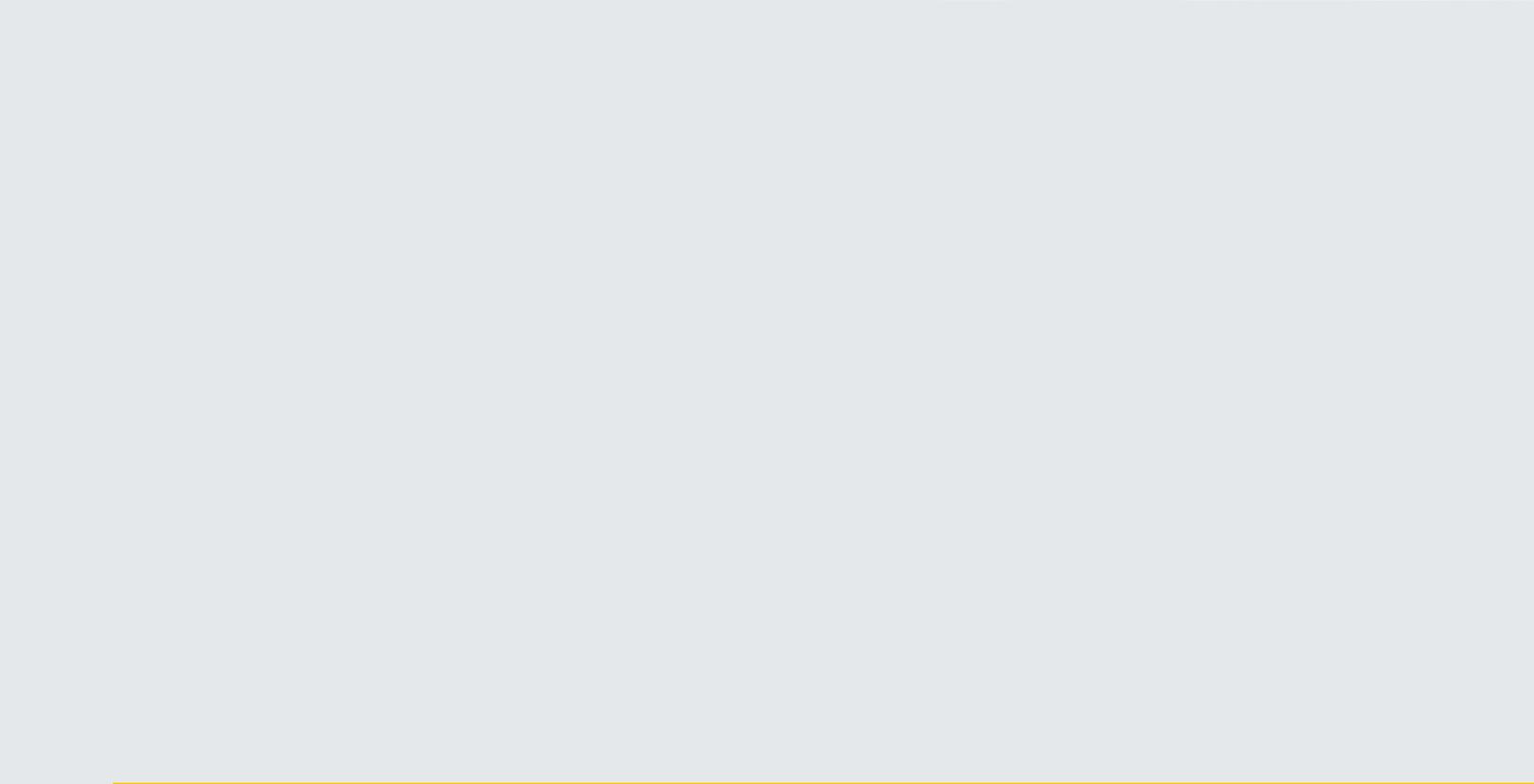
CONNECTIVITY OBJECTIVES

To support the overall objectives of the FORWARD Kosciusko County Future Connectivity Plan, the Town of Leesburg should work to:

- Promote pedestrian activity and walkable streets within Town.
- Establish the Van Buren Street corridor as a priority pedestrian and bicycle improvement area by developing a cultural walking trail to establish a central pedestrian spine, and celebrate the local community and culture.
- Encourage safety improvements along SR 15 and Old SR 15 to provide for slower vehicular speeds, and high-visibility crosswalks which will allow for a more comfortable pedestrian experience.
- Support the development of transportation alternatives, such as on-street bike infrastructure and shared use paths, which can connect communities outside the county and draw visitors.
- Provide ADA-compliant facilities and equipment for disadvantaged members of the community.
- Support the expansion of pedestrian infrastructure to increase accessibility and connect residents to destinations such as Town Hall, commercial businesses, Leesburg Elementary School, and the various recreation/park spaces.
- Support complete street policies within the Town to encourage the creation of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure during planned roadway improvement projects and new development.
- Support improvements and modernization to pedestrian crossings at the intersections of SR 19 and Main Street, Pearl Street, Walnut Street, State Street and Pleasant Street.
- Support the development of sidewalk improvements to fill existing gaps in the sidewalk system.
- Support the development and use of residential cost share programs to facilitate the construction of sidewalk improvements.
- Establish a wayfinding signage system throughout the Town that directs pedestrians and motorists to key businesses and community facility destinations.

Future Connectivity Plan







**SECTION
FIVE**
Act

Neighborhood Streetscape, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG





While components of the Plan's final recommendations will rely on the efforts of private companies and community organizations, the County and local municipalities have the opportunity to make strategic actions in the short and long term to meet county-wide goals related to development, preservation, maintenance, modernization and long-term enhancement.

This ACT section provides implementation guidance by applying FORWARD Kosciusko's county-vision, goals and policy objectives to both county-wide and local contexts. The projects and initiatives included are efforts that county departments and local officials can execute within the roles and responsibilities of their current municipal structure, which provides a realistic framework for change.

The identified projects and initiatives are all expected to contribute to Kosciusko County's shared vision and goals for the future; however, it is critical to remember that no single project is a complete solution for the County's documented challenges. While the list of projects and initiatives will make a county-wide impact, what might be more impactful is the introduction of a cooperative strategic investment planning effort that aligns the activities at a county and local level.

Existing Downtown Businesses, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG



TOWN OF LEESBURG

PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

FORWARD Kosciusko County: Town of Leesburg Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide guidance as to how capital improvements and strategic administrative actions can be integrated into both the County and local jurisdiction's annual budgeting and grant application processes.

The efforts and initiatives contained within the action plan represent those identified as the highest priority by the greatest number of residents. These high-priority actions will require resources from multiple sources and partners. Due to the diverse nature of the County's priorities, the action plan is shown as a series of Mid- to Long-Term Priorities.

Mid- to Long-Term Priorities are projects and initiatives that provide opportunities for strategic investment in Kosciusko County's people, places, systems and destinations and feature actions that focus on maintenance, modernization, streetscape enhancements, connectivity, community programs and recreation efforts. The listed projects, while critical to the maintenance and improvement of the Town, will require significant capital investment.

Funding resources have been identified for each proposed project and while some projects can be done primarily with local funds, some also have the opportunity to utilize state or federal funding sources as well. An estimated investment horizon has been recommended based on physical conditions, local interest and overall improvement need. At any time, projects can be elevated or downgraded based on available funds and regional need. The action plan should be used as a tool to begin discussion and planning for these projects now, so that the construction/implementation can occur within a 10- to 20-year timeframe.

Identified projects have been organized by location to outline how the Town of Leesburg can provide investment at differing scales.

Using the Recommendations

Although the *FORWARD Kosciusko County* effort outlined several specific projects and unique programming opportunities for the Town, it does not identify local priorities and or make recommendations on yearly capital improvement allocations to cover proposed improvement initiatives.

A capital improvement plan (CIP) is a community planning and fiscal management tool used to coordinate the location, timing and financing of capital improvements over a multi-year period — usually 4-6 years. Capital improvements refer to major, non-recurring physical expenditures such as land, buildings, public infrastructure and equipment. However, smaller initiatives and local programs can also be accommodated within the format.

The Town of Leesburg should undertake a prioritization process to formally rank the benefits and projected impacts of each proposed effort against County goals and objectives. Once finalized, the priority list can be used to create a yearly capital budget for implementation.

Determination of which projects should take precedence should be decided upon by local governing bodies and should be based on available resources. Additional public input can be used to finalize the improvements listed within the yearly capital budget.

Existing Industrial Business, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG



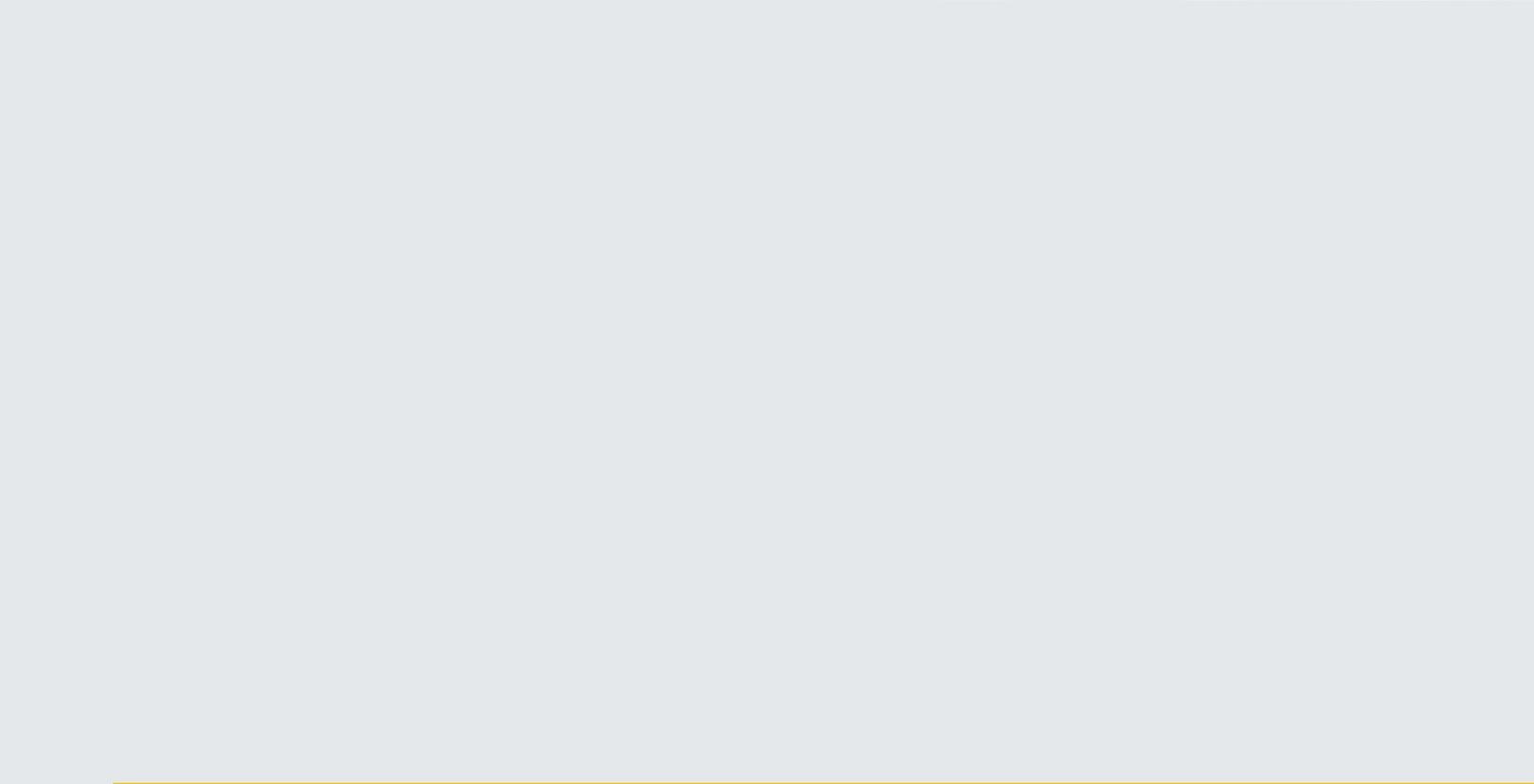
TOWN OF LEESBURG

MID- TO LONG-TERM PRIORITIES

Project (by Category)	Estimated Expenditures by Time Period Ending Date					Funding Source
	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	
Administrative and Planning						
Strategically annex new areas into the Town as growth occurs	Costs can be accommodated through existing staff roles					Local
Plan for the expansion of public utilities based on the future land use map	Costs can be accommodated through existing staff roles					Local
Partner with the County to identify and map prospective locations for child care or early learning facilities	Costs can be accommodated through existing staff roles					Local
Community Development	\$10,000	\$70,000	\$150,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	
Complete an inventory and conditions assessment of existing downtown buildings		\$50,000	\$50,000			HUD OCRA
Establish and implement a downtown building façade/structure improvement program		\$20,000				HUD OCRA
Establish a local book borrowing program	\$10,000					Local
Improve applicable downtown building ingress/ egress to meet local and state regulations			\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	Local
Bike/Pedestrian Facilities	\$25,000	\$300,000	\$150,000			
Improve and maintain a sidewalk connection along Van Buren Street from SR 15 to Old State Route 15		\$150,000				OCRA
Improve and maintain a sidewalk connection along Pearl Street from Plum Street to Maple Leaf Farms headquarters			\$150,000			OCRA

Project (by Category)	Estimated Expenditures by Time Period Ending Date					Funding Source
	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	
Construct a sidewalk along Old State Route 15 from Prairie Street to the Leesburg Elementary School		\$150,000				OCRA
Establish and implement a neighborhood sidewalk matching grant program to facilitate the construction of new sidewalks	\$25,000					Local
Parks and Recreation		\$30,000				
Partner with the Lions Club and Leesburg Summer Recreational to construct a new playground for children ages 2-12		\$30,000				LWCF
Roads	\$7,500	\$1,440,000	\$169,000			
Reconstruct Hickory Street from Church Street to Van Buren Street		\$340,000				FHWA INDOT Local
Reconstruct School Street from Rowland Avenue to Smith Street		\$1,100,000				FHWA INDOT Local
Provide a structural overlay to Canal Street from Van Buren Street to Plum Street			\$6,500			FHWA INDOT Local
Provide a structural overlay to Church Street from SR 15 to Pearl Street			\$15,000			FHWA INDOT Local
Provide a structural overlay to E Harper Road from Old SR 15 to Van Buren Street			\$1,500			FHWA INDOT Local
Provide a structural overlay to Harrison Street from Van Buren Street to Plum Street			\$6,000			FHWA INDOT Local
Provide a structural overlay to Jefferson Street from Church Street to Prairie Street			\$20,000			FHWA INDOT Local
Provide a structural overlay to Pearl Street from Church Street to Plum Street			\$20,000			FHWA INDOT Local

Project (by Category)	Estimated Expenditures by Time Period Ending Date					Funding Source
	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	
Provide a structural overlay to Plum Street from corporate boundary to Canal Street			\$30,000			FHWA INDOT Local
Provide a structural overlay to Prairie Street from Rowland Avenue to Old SR 15			\$40,000			FHWA INDOT Local
Provide a structural overlay to Van Buren Street from Hickory Street to Canal Street			\$30,000			FHWA INDOT Local
Provide preventative maintenance to Donna Street from Church Road to School Street	\$1,000					FHWA INDOT Local
Provide preventative maintenance to N Brubaker Street from the dead end to School Street	\$500					FHWA INDOT Local
Provide preventative maintenance to Rowland Avenue from the dead end to W 675 N	\$2,000					FHWA INDOT Local
Provide preventative maintenance to S Brubaker Avenue from the dead end to School Street	\$500					FHWA INDOT Local
Provide preventative maintenance to S Old SR 15 from Yvonna Street to Armstrong Road	\$1,000					FHWA INDOT Local
Provide preventative maintenance to W School Street from Rowland Avenue to Brubaker Street	\$500					FHWA INDOT Local
Provide preventative maintenance to Yvonna Street from the dead end to Yvonna Street	\$2,000					FHWA INDOT Local





**SECTION
SIX**
Partner

Maple Leaf Farms Headquarters, Leesburg, IN | TSWDG





Plan implementation is the process of putting a set of recommendations into effect. It is a process that takes time, technical knowledge, staff availability and financial resources. During the creation of the Plan, there were multiple engagement opportunities where organizations, businesses, and residents were able to express their concerns and aspirations about the community's future. In addition to sharing ideas for consideration, residents, business owners and community partners were also able to weigh in on how their organization or interest group could support the Town's efforts in the future.

A major benefit for the Town of Leesburg, which sets it apart from other communities, is the support from local organizations and businesses who push the initiatives and programs within the Town and broader County. Communities such as KEDCO, the Community Foundation, and K21 Health Foundation actively support efforts at the regional and local levels, providing technical and monetary support for towns working to improve the quality of life for their residents. While many of the community's organizations have already been part of this planning process, all groups within the County could assist with the final implementation of this plan and should be encouraged to do so.

Kosciusko County Courthouse, Warsaw, IN | Visit Kosciusko County



While the *FORWARD Kosciusko County: Town of Leesburg Comprehensive Plan* is primarily a tool for County and municipal staff, the Plan can also be used to inform the development of individual business and organization strategic planning efforts. Though each separate organization or group has its unique structure and set of resources, many of the County's future needs rely on the assistance and cooperation of these specialty groups. In some cases, these groups are better suited to lead local improvement and enhancement efforts. Aligning organizational plans with county-wide efforts could yield larger and quicker results- especially related to topics outside of land use, development and public infrastructure improvements.

Local community organizations and special interest groups were integral in the development of the FORWARD Kosciusko County materials and recommendations. While these groups do not play a primary role in private development decisions or the implementation of municipal projects, they do have the ability to advance efforts related to community services and specialty development interests. The potential partners listed within the ***potential local and regional allied organizations*** section are intended to identify potential ways in which local community partners can assist in County and local efforts moving forward.

Local community organizations and special interest groups can also apply their available staffing resources to support local government in specific ways including technical research, local education, and marketing. These groups can serve a critical fiduciary role as the County or local communities seek out and apply for available grants and funding mechanisms. The ***potential financial resources*** and tools listed within this 'Partner' section are intended to identify potential funding opportunities or tools that may apply to the projects, programs and initiatives outlined with this Plan.

Partnership opportunities, including organization and funding recommendations, are organized by the FORWARD Kosciusko County goal topics of PEOPLE, PLACES, SYSTEMS, DESTINATIONS and PARTNERSHIPS.

TOWN OF LEESBURG

POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES: PEOPLE

Ensures the safety, wellness and success of our residents, employers and business owners.

Local and Regional Allied Organizations

K21 Health Foundation

K21 Health Foundation is a private foundation that focuses on improving health and wellness for the residents of Kosciusko County. The foundation leverages funds to identify health needs in the community and advance prevention and healthy living through investments and grants.

Kosciusko Cares

Kosciusko Cares is a Youth Services Bureau that advocates for, supports, and promotes healthy youth development within the county. Their goal is to develop a safe community with abundant positive lifestyle choices for children and families.

Kosciusko Community Senior Services

This organization develops programming in response to the needs of seniors in Kosciusko County, with major programs including Mobile Meals, handicapped van transportation, and a Senior Activity Center.

Kosciusko County Community Foundation

The foundation works to strengthen connections and build the community by acting as a catalyst and providing strategic funding to projects and organizations which create lasting impacts in the county.

Kosciusko Leadership Academy (KLA)

The mission of KLA is to develop informed and innovative leaders who can skillfully guide the community in the future through educational programs, unique seminars, building networks, and supporting the next generation of leaders.

LaunchPad

LaunchPad seeks to strengthen the climate of early learning in Kosciusko County by focusing on the most recent research for children, birth to age five, and meeting the needs of our youngest citizens.

Live Well Kosciusko

Live Well Kosciusko seeks to transform Kosciusko County, IN into a thriving place to live, learn, work, play, and visit through four key community coalitions which focus on a tobacco-free county, employer wellness, community well-being, and fighting cancer across the community.

United Way of Kosciusko County

The United Way of Kosciusko and Whitley County has evolved over the years into an organization that focuses on the needs of young children within each community through investments, building partnerships, and being stewards of community resources.

Financial Resources and Tools

HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

This program strives to provide habitable and affordable housing for low- and moderate-income persons by improving the quality of existing housing stock.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

This program is a dollar-for-dollar federal tax credit that incentivizes the investment of private equity in the development of affordable housing. The project owner must agree to comply with Chapter 42 regulations and maintain an agreed open percentage of low-income units, as well as meet requirements for a 15-year compliance period and a subsequent 15-year extended use period. The maximum request is \$1.2 million in tax credits.

Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Pilot Program (OOR)

This program uses Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the rehabilitation of owner-occupied housing for low- and moderate-income households. There is a local match required.

TOWN OF LEESBURG

POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES: PLACES

Provides for balanced, planned and orderly growth.

Local and Regional Allied Organizations**Builders Association of North Central Indiana (BAKFC)**

The BAKFC is a membership organization that serves, advances and protects the welfare of the building industry through customer quality assurance, education of our members, and contributions to the community.

Kosciusko County Chamber of Commerce

This organization serves as the voice business community, supporting local entrepreneurs and developing partnerships to support a strong local economy and attract new industries to the county.

Kosciusko County Board of Realtors, Inc.

This organization exists to assist local realtors and businesses in obtaining education and information that will assist them in their daily work and participate in many community-wide programs within the county.

Kosciusko County Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO)

KEDCO works to build, convene, and show Kosciusko County's talent, ideas, and unique capital. They provide support to local businesses, serve as liaisons to local governments, identify sites for new development, and foster connectivity within the community.

Kosciusko County Farm Bureau

This group began as an insurance company that expanded coverage options for Hoosier farmers but has evolved into a statewide organization that provides a wide range of financial products and supports the health of agricultural-related businesses in their communities.

Local Chamber of Commerce

Local chambers exist to further the interests of small businesses in their community and are essential to economic growth in an area. They not only provide business support but also assist in marketing, developing partnerships, and hosting educational events for local business owners.

Main Street Warsaw

Also known as the Warsaw Community Development Corporation, this organization was formed to find solutions to vacant storefronts and other issues in downtown Warsaw. They work to encourage the economic development of Warsaw's Central Business District through investments in people, businesses, and land.

Financial Resources and Tools

Developer Funded Infrastructure

Similar to impact fees, communities can also fund infrastructure improvements by having the developer cover those costs directly. These can include roadway improvements, stormwater infrastructure, and other related utilities that may need to be expanded due to development. However, the improvement must be directly related to and proportionate to the new development's impact.

Impact Fees

An impact fee is a charge on new development to pay for the cost of infrastructure and related services that are necessitated by and benefit the new development. The fee is based on the type of development assessed for the increased burden on infrastructure. Fees contribute to a non-reversing fund and can be used for infrastructure improvements and amenities including park and recreation and multi-modal projects.

Residential Tax Increment Financing

Effective July 2019, new legislation was signed by Governor Holcomb to allow TIF for residential property (SEA 566). This legislation is targeted at rural communities to fund infrastructure for single-family housing growth. Residential TIF must be executed through a Redevelopment Commission.

Tax Abatement

Tax abatement is a phase-in of property taxes and is intended to encourage development in areas that would not otherwise develop. Tax abatement is one of the tools widely used by municipal governments to attract new businesses to the community. It encourages investment in new equipment or facilities that will improve the company while stabilizing the community's economy. Communities may develop procedures for abatement application and policies regarding the amount and length of the abatement that will be approved. Procedures may also be developed to ensure compliance with the terms in the statement of benefits.

TOWN OF LEESBURG

POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES: SYSTEMS

Plans for effective public services and facilities.

Local and Regional Allied Organizations

Kosciusko County VELO (KVC)

Kosciusko County Velo (KCV) Cycling strives to develop and promote healthy lifestyle opportunities in and for our community through bicycling. KVC strives to make the community a better place to live, work, and play through community awareness, developing healthy opportunities, and creating mutual partnerships.

Kosciusko County REMC

KREMC is an electric cooperative that serves over 18,500 households and businesses within the county and greater region. The organization is also working to extend broadband services throughout Kosciusko County.

Financial Resources and Tools

Bonds

Bonds are backed by the credit and taxing power of the issuing jurisdiction. A bond is a government debt issued to raise money for needed capital improvements. Its retirement is paid for by property tax and other predictable forms of local income.

Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund

This revolving loan fund can be used to provide low-interest loans for infrastructure projects that facilitate economic development.

Tax Increment Financing

A Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district is used by many communities to fund local infrastructure improvement projects. Tax rates for developments within the district are locked at a set rate, and as property values rise within the district, any additional tax revenue generated is used to fund improvement projects within the district instead of using it for typical purposes. TIF can be very effective at directing new development to an area.

INDOT Community Crossings Matching Grant Fund Program

In 2016 this program provided a 1-1 match for eligible projects up to \$1 million. In the second year (2017), INDOT funded 75% of the project of communities under 10,000. Eligible projects included bridge and road preservation type projects along with ADA sidewalk projects that intersect with any road project, roundabouts, and road reconstructions. Trails and enhancement-type projects are not eligible and only construction costs are eligible. In the upcoming years, this program is expected to change and the community should reference INDOT's website for more information.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

The main goal of the CMAQ Program is to fund surface transportation improvement projects to reduce overall congestion and improve air quality. These funds are released in collaboration between INDOT and local Indiana MPOs and can be used for a variety of projects including, but not limited to, acquiring alternative fuel vehicles for public transit applications, purchasing alternative fuels, and establishing publicly-owned alternative fueling stations and other needed infrastructure.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

The Highway Safety Improvement Program's goal is to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads through the implementation of infrastructure-related highway safety improvements. There are several improvements this program helps fund, such as improving the visibility of curves through signs and markers, installing emergency power battery backups at traffic signals, installing raised medians, upgrading guardrails to meet current standards, and more.

Local Public Agency (LPA) Program

INDOT shares gas tax revenue from the state Motor Vehicle Highway Fund and Local Road and Street Fund with LPAs towards capital improvement needs. Communities must have a local employee in charge of ERC training, projects must be ADA compliant, provide matching funds and meet project eligibility.

Transportation Alternatives Funding

The Transportation Alternatives (TA) program will receive about \$780 million to carry out all TA projects, including SRTS and RTP projects across the country, which represents about a 35% reduction from the current \$1.2 billion spent on these programs. Under the bill, states will sub-allocate 50% of their TA funds to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and local communities to run a grant program to distribute funds for projects. States could use the remaining 50% for TA projects or could spend these dollars on other transportation priorities.

TOWN OF LEESBURG

POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES: DESTINATIONS

Creates and nurtures unique destinations for local and regional enjoyment.

Local and Regional Allied Organizations

Clearly Kosciusko

Clearly Kosciusko is a county-wide voice created in partnership between the Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams, Kosciusko County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Kosciusko Chamber of Commerce, and the Kosciusko Economic Development Corporation which supports tourism within the county and stands as a unifying brand for all businesses and organizations within the community to rally behind.

Lily Center for Lakes and Streams

The Lilly Center is a research and education center at Grace College that studies and recommends lake-focused best practices which support the economic and social growth of the community's lakes without negatively impacting their fragile environments.

Local Lake Conservation Associations

Lake conservation associations provide several benefits to the lake they oversee and the surrounding community including general maintenance, applying for grants, educational outreach, putting on local events, and ensuring the health and safety of residents and visitors using the lake.

The Watershed Foundation

The Watershed Foundation takes a proactive approach in addressing the threats to Kosciusko County's lakes including stopping water pollution at its source, educating youth and adults on keeping the community's water clean, and partnering with local organizations to protect and enhance the community.

Visit Kosciusko County

The Kosciusko County Convention and Visitors Bureau is the official destination organization that promotes and assists in the development of the visitor brand experience to leisure, group, and corporate travel markets resulting in increased spending, economic growth and quality of place.

Financial Resources and Tools

Arts Project Support (APS)

Arts Project Support (APS) grants provide funding to Indiana arts and non-arts organizations to support a distinct aspect of the organization's art activities, such as a one-time event; a single production; an exhibition; an educational seminar; or a series of related arts activities, such as art classes or training sessions.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

LWCF federal grants can be used to protect important natural areas, acquire land for outdoor recreation and develop or renovate public outdoor recreation facilities such as campgrounds, picnic areas, sports/playfields, swimming facilities, boating facilities, fishing facilities, trails, natural areas and passive parks. It provides grants for 50% of the cost of acquisition and/or development. To be eligible, the group must be a legally established park board and have a current 5-year park and recreation master plan on file in the Division of Outdoor Recreation. The minimum grant request is \$50,000 and the maximum request is \$500,000 with a local match requirement.

Indiana Trails Program (ITP)

Matching assistance program that provides funding for the acquisition and/or development of multi-use recreational trail projects. The minimum funding available is \$10,000 and maximum funding available is \$200,000 and a 20% match is required. Both motorized and non-motorized projects may qualify for assistance. This program was formally recognized as the "Recreational Trails Program", but was changed to reflect the change from federal to state funding in 2021.

TOWN OF LEESBURG

POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES: PARTNERSHIPS

Manages local resources and plans for continued reinvestment throughout the county.

Regional Allied Organizations

Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG)

MACOG is a voluntary organization of local governments that studies and attempts to resolve issues in the communities within its jurisdiction. The organization addresses issues of transportation, transit, economic development, environment, and other items which impact a specific community or the region as a whole. MACOG provides technical assistance and planning services to help its local communities create strategic plans with goals to develop as high quality hometowns. MACOG also serves as a conduit to help.

Accelerate Indiana Municipalities (AIM)

AIM works as an official voice for municipal government within Indiana, with more than 460 cities and towns as members. The organization works to foster, promote, and advocate for the success of Indiana municipalities as hubs of innovation and talent, and as the driving forces of the state's economy.

Arts Organization Support (AOS)

The Arts Organization Support (AOS) provides annual operating support for the ongoing artistic and administrative functions of eligible arts organizations that align with the Indiana Arts Commission's Public Funding Imperatives. It is a two-year grant commitment.

Indiana Arts Commission (IAC)

This state program works to positively impact the cultural, economic, and educational climate of Indiana by providing opportunities to enhance the artistic resources of Indiana communities. The Commission supports the growth of arts in local settings and provides resources for regional or local organizations trying to influence and culture of arts in their community.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

The mission of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources is to protect, enhance, preserve, and wisely use natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the benefit of Indiana's citizens through professional leadership, management, and education.

Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)

INDOT's mission is to plan, build, maintain, and operate a transportation system that encourages safety, mobility, and economic growth. They assist smaller communities through Local Public Agency (LPA) Programs, Community Crossings grants for paving projects, and Transportation Alternative funding for roadway, sidewalk, trail, and streetscape projects.

Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC)

This statewide organization offers programs and initiatives for companies creating jobs in Indiana. They actively work to improve the state's quality of place, infrastructure, and developable sites to build economic strength by attracting new businesses and talent. The organization offers several incentives and programs for new or expanding businesses, which include technical support and data collection.

Indiana Finance Authority (IFA)

To provide economic efficiencies and management synergies and enable the State of Indiana (“State”) to communicate as one voice with the various participants in the financial markets, the Indiana Development Finance Authority, the State Office Building Commission, the Indiana Transportation Finance Authority, the Recreational Development Commission, the State Revolving Fund Programs and the Indiana Brownfields Program were consolidated into a new and separate entity called the Indiana Finance Authority (“IFA”) on May 15, 2005. The Indiana Health and Educational Facilities Finance Authority was also merged into the IFA, effective July 1, 2007. As the successor entity to these formerly separate debt-issuing entities, the IFA is authorized to issue revenue bonds payable from lease rentals under lease agreements with various state agencies and to finance or refinance the cost of acquiring, building and equipping structures for state use including state office buildings, garages, highways, bridges, airport facilities, correctional facilities, state hospitals and recreational facilities related to State parks. The IFA also manages the Wastewater and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loan Programs and the Indiana Brownfields Program.

Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority (IHCDA)

IHCDA’s partners with developers, lenders, investors, and nonprofit organizations that serve low- and moderate-income Indiana families. They provide government and private funds to invest in well-designed projects that will benefit communities and those living within. IHCDA provides funds, incentives, data collection, and educational services.

Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA)

OCRA works with local, state and national partners to provide resources and technical assistance to aid communities in shaping and achieving their vision for the community and economic development. They award grants to fund projects including, but not limited to, public gathering places, water/sewer infrastructure, restoration of historic structures, community facilities, broadband infrastructure, and revitalizing commercial districts.

Indiana Office of Tourism Development (IOTD)

The Indiana Office of Tourism Development offers a matching grant to cities, towns, counties and nonprofit entities located in Indiana that are involved with tourism promotion and development.

Indiana Small Business Development Center

The Indiana Small Business Development Center offers technical support and entrepreneurial guidance through regional partners to assist small business growth and sustainability within the state. In addition to offering workshops throughout the state, they also provide market research, business planning, and valuation services for small businesses.

Prosperity Indiana

The Indiana Association for Community Economic Development (Prosperity Indiana) is a statewide membership organization that seeks to fund members, build and retain relationships, and address local and national issues which may impact Indiana communities. Prosperity Indiana provides tools, research, online resources, and technical assistance for housing rehabilitation and construction, real estate development, industrial and business development, social services, and employment generating activities.

