

# 10. Implementation

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## Introduction

The success of a Comprehensive Land Use and Development Plan is measured in terms of its implementation. Only when the recommendations in the Plan are translated into actions can the goals and policies within the Plan be realized.

Plan-it Allen! has been the culmination of a two-year planning process which included the participation, collaboration and consensus of and by Allen County, the City of Fort Wayne, local city and town government officials, boards and commissions, and citizens throughout the community. This initiative is historic in that it is the first time City and County governments have joined together to draft a Countywide Comprehensive Plan. Plan-it Allen! includes a community vision and inclusive roadmap for the next 20 years. The intent of this vision and roadmap is to lay out a path to sustainability, preserve and enhance our unique quality of life and natural environment, and position Allen County as regionally strong and competitive in the global economy.

Implementation of Plan-it Allen! should emulate the collaborative spirit of the Plan's formative process and proceed in a coordinated manner. As land use decisions often impact the entire County, partnering among various entities will be critical to successful implementation. Partners involved with implementation will include, but are not be limited to, the following:

- City, Town and County Elected and Appointed Government Officials;
- City and County Staff, including:
  - Allen County Department of Planning Services;
  - City of Fort Wayne Planning Department;
  - City of Fort Wayne Board of Public Works;
  - Utility Departments; and
  - Economic Development Agencies.
- Local Boards and Commissions;
- School Districts; and
- Members of the Community.

## Role of the Plan

Plan-it Allen! is **advisory** in nature and serves as a guide for how and where our communities should grow. Communities should strive for concurrence with the Plan in rezoning or development approvals. Plan-it Allen!'s goals and policies aim for an "ideal scenerio." These high aspirations mean that sometimes different objectives and strategies may conflict with one another, requiring careful balance. As such, this Plan provides guidance in the decision-making process, but it is not the final word.

## How to Use the Plan

This Plan is to be used by the community as public and private decisions are made concerning development, redevelopment, capital improvements – including community utility-system improvements, economic incentives, and other matters affecting the growth of the community.

The following is a summary of how Plan-it Allen! should be used.

## **1. Annual Work Programs and Budgets**

Individual departments and administrators within Allen County, the City of Fort Wayne and other cities and towns should be cognizant of the recommendations of the Plan when preparing annual work programs and budgets. Many follow-up studies, ordinance revisions and other activities have been recommended in the Plan. Several strategies can be implemented by incorporating these activities into individual work plans. Emphasis on updating development regulations and processes for Plan review should be a priority. Review of the Plan's proposals, as well as the education of our elected and appointed officials about evolving change brought about by the new Plan, should also be essential work-plan elements.

## **2. Development Approvals**

Administrative and legislative approvals of development proposals, including rezoning requests, development plans, and subdivision plats, should be a central means of implementing Plan-it Allen! Therefore, staff comments should include a statement as to whether or not a request is in compliance with the Plan. Zoning codes should be updated jointly by the City of Fort Wayne and Allen County in response to regulatory strategies presented in the Plan.

## **3. Coordinated Capital Improvement Plans**

Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs) should be prepared consistent with the Plan's land use policies and infrastructure recommendations. New, significant community improvements that are not anticipated in the Plan (such as the General Motors facility in the 1980s), and which could dramatically impact the Plan's land use recommendations, should necessitate a review and possible modification of the Plan. It has been suggested that the establishment of a Allen County-Fort Wayne Capital Improvement Board be investigated to coordinate and prioritize capital improvements on a countywide basis.

## **4. Economic Incentives**

Existing economic incentives should be evaluated, and new incentives established, in light of recommendations within the Plan. The development of economic incentives is key to several of the central themes of the Plan which are to encourage infill development, urban reinvestment and create a sense of place within the communities' neighborhoods. These incentives should be integrated with other Plan policies to ensure consistency, particularly with the Plan's land use recommendations. Fort Wayne and Allen County will need to determine appropriate economic and regulatory incentives that could be provided to achieve critical development and redevelopment objectives. These incentives should be awarded to promote implementation of the Plan.

## **5. Private Development Decisions**

It is important that property owners and developers consider the recommendations of the Plan early on in their planning and investment decisions. Public decision makers will be using the Plan as a guide in their development-related deliberations, such as zoning matters, development approvals and infrastructure requests. Property owners and developers should draft proposals which are consistent with the Plan's recommendations.

## **6. Future Interpretation**

As unique situations arise in the future, the Fort Wayne City Council and Allen County Commissioners should call upon the applicable Plan Commissions to provide interpretations of major items that are unclear or not fully addressed in the Plan. The Commissions may call upon outside

experts and other groups for advice. Minor items that require interpretation should be handled by local jurisdictions as they follow the Plan.

#### The Tool – Implementation Matrix

The key to implementation of the Plan is the use of a tool which outlines the steps that should be taken to bring the goals, objectives and strategies to fruition. Some of the outlined steps are very short term in nature and should be taken immediately or within the near term. Many other steps will take longer to accomplish. These long-range actions may take five-or-more years to adequately implement.

The tool that will outline the implementation work plan is the Implementation Matrix. Key implementation steps, along with the identification of the lead department or agency, timing and budget, if needed, are outlined in the Matrix. Action steps included in the Matrix will also be prioritized and ranked. Prioritization is based upon the benefits, relationship to other actions and feasibility of implementation. It is recommended that this Matrix be reviewed monthly by a City/County implementation task force charged to carry out the implementation. This task force will also monitor and evaluate implementation of the Matrix and report on progress to the community and appropriate boards and commissions periodically.

#### Monitoring and Evaluating Plan-it Allen!

Implementation of the Plan will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis using the Implementation Matrix. This will ensure that the Plan is consistently followed and will result in desired changes in the community.

Allen County and Fort Wayne staff will establish an implementation task force to assist with the monitoring and evaluation of the Plan. This group will also assess progress and consider amendments and updates to the Plan. Possible duties include meeting monthly to monitor implementation, educating the public regarding innovative development concepts and providing ongoing input to the Fort Wayne City Council, Allen County Commissioners, local boards, and Plan Commissions. Plan-it Allen! Comprehensive Plan Committee members are excellent candidates for this committee.

#### Updates to Plan-it Allen!

The Plan will be updated on a five-year basis. This is a sufficient time frame to consider major community condition changes that may affect the Plan's policies. If circumstances in the community change significantly prior to the anticipated review, an update could be initiated in a shorter time frame. Fort Wayne City Council and the Allen County Commissioners will initiate the process and establish a new City/County steering committee if warranted.