

# Initial Results

## Vision Work Group –Meeting 1 Allen County – Fort Wayne Comprehensive Plan

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The first Vision Work Group meeting was held on April 21, 2004. At this meeting the Vision Work Group worked together to identify and build an understanding of the issues and ideas focused on improving the quality of life in Allen County/Fort Wayne. This meeting included an orientation on the Community Comprehensive Plan process, small group discussion of the issues and ideas for the future, and overview and discussion of the ten Community Meetings to be held in May.

There were four primary activities that were conducted as part of this meeting. These activities included a Treasure Card, which asked participants to identify the one thing treasured most about the Allen County/Fort Wayne community. The meeting also included three worksheet activities. The first worksheet focused on identifying the critical issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure a prosperous future for the Allen County/Fort Wayne Community. The second worksheet asked participants to identify essential ideas that address these issues, and strengthen the quality of life in the community. The final worksheet focused on community outreach.

The results from these activities were input into a database, generating over 1,100 ideas. At this point in time, the data has not been categorized; however, major themes have been identified from the critical issues worksheet.

### Treasure Card Themes

The Treasure Card activity revealed a number of important community attributes identified by the participants. The major treasures indicated by participants were the small town atmosphere, the three rivers and greenways, family oriented community values, rich cultural history and community events and festivals

### Critical Issue Themes

The major themes from the critical issues activity are revealed in the following statements. These statements are not presented in any particular order of priority or importance.

**Strengthen Community Identity** - Create a stronger community identity focusing on what makes the area unique, including rich cultural history and unique natural waterways.

**Retain Young Adults** - Too many young educated community members leaving the area (“brain drain”). There needs to be a way to retain these individuals, and incorporate them into a strong local workforce.

**Continue Downtown Revitalization** - There is a strong desire to revitalize the downtown. This should include providing more entertainment opportunities, promoting mixed-use development and incorporating the waterfront in development and planning initiatives (not to compromise environmental quality).

**Grow Inward** - Promote a land use pattern that grows inward, prevents sprawl, and preserves greenspace and agricultural lands.

**Promote Government Cooperation** - Pursue stronger cooperation among county and city governments to avoid the duplication of services.

**Expand and Improve Transportation Options** - Encourage transportation improvements that include high speed passenger rail service, better public transportation, and other forms of alternative transportation which promote pedestrian activities and healthy lifestyles.

**Improve the Quality of the Waterways** - Focus on improving the natural quality of the rivers, and integrate the rivers into the urban environment and community to provide additional recreational opportunities and help in creating a stronger community identity.

**Initiate Airport Development Activities** - Promote the development of the airport, incorporate into the business environment and create amenities near the airport to support and encourage new economic growth.

**Create Job Opportunities** - Create new job opportunities, focusing on attracting new businesses and industry, while not losing sight of existing manufacturing and industrial based job markets.

**Reform Development Review** - Promote new development by creating a streamlined development application process.

**Preserve Community Character** - Preserve and support the small town rural character of the county by preserving family values, the aesthetic character of a small town atmosphere, and rural agricultural land and open spaces.

**Improve Educational Opportunities** - Support and enhance the educational system in the county, and create life-long learning opportunities for all residents, ensuring a strong educated workforce.

**Increase Public Safety** - Increase public safety and crime prevention services.

**Provide More Entertainment Options** - Provide more entertainment activities focusing on the downtown, arts and culture, and meeting the needs of younger age groups.

**Expand Parks and Open Space** - Build more parks and recreational amenities, including a multi-use trail that creates linkages between neighborhoods and the county.

**Improve Housing Stock**- Provide an affordable, diverse housing stock.