



# News Release



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## **Allen County, Fort Wayne Launch Historic Partnership** *Governments request proposals for joint comprehensive plan*

**(Fort Wayne, Ind. / Feb. 3, 2003)** – Allen County and the City of Fort Wayne have launched a project to create the community's first countywide land use and development plan.

The comprehensive plan is intended to create a unified approach to infrastructure expansion and economic development. Its goals also include preservation of the community's character and assets, improvements in quality of life and the promotion of actions that are in the best long-term interests of the community as a whole.

"Our community has changed dramatically since the last comprehensive plans were written," said Allen County Commissioner Marla Irving. "Our urban and rural areas are more connected than ever, and it no longer makes sense for our individual governments to do comprehensive planning without regard to one another."

"Completing the comprehensive plan will help bring jobs and encourage economic development in our community," said Fort Wayne Mayor Graham Richard. "Planning is crucial to economic development and economic development has to be a community effort."

On Tuesday **(Feb. 4, 2003)**, the joint effort will release a Request For Proposals (RFP) seeking qualified firms to help the community draft the new plan. *(A copy of the RFP is attached)*. The RFP will be available through the Allen County Department of Public Purchase web site, at [www.allencounty.us](http://www.allencounty.us). The RFP will also be advertised online through the City of Fort Wayne web site ([www.cityoffortwayne.org](http://www.cityoffortwayne.org)) and through the American Planning Association ([www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)).

The comprehensive plan will include Fort Wayne, Grabill, Huntertown, Monroeville, Woodburn and the unincorporated areas of Allen County. New Haven and Leo-Cedarville are operating under recently adopted comprehensive plans that will be blended into the new plan. Existing comprehensive plans in use by Allen County and the City of Fort Wayne were instituted in the 1970s and 1980s.

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Efforts to develop the plan are being driven by the City-County Communication and Cooperation Committee, a group formed in 2002 to promote coordination of planning among local units of government. The effort also has the support of both the City and County plan commissions in addition to the elected leadership.

Under Indiana law (**I.C. 36-7-4-500**), comprehensive development plans are designed to promote a community's overall safety and welfare. By law, such plans are required to include the following components:

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

Typically, a comprehensive plan attempts to create a 20-year forecast of community needs. Such a plan is ideally updated every five to 10 years.

The benefits of creating a community comprehensive plan are numerous. It serves to capture the goals and values of the community and creates an up-to-date policy guide for physical and economic development. It introduces current planning concepts and encourages efficient use of public resources by coordinating public capital spending.

"Allen County is vastly different than it was when our last comprehensive plans were written," said Charles Bodenhafer, President of the Allen County Plan Commission. "If we are to keep pace with the times and compete economically, we need to update our plans for the future. This comprehensive plan is a turning point for Allen County and Fort Wayne."

"Communities everywhere have found success by looking at the big picture when mapping out their futures," said Dr. James Owen, Past President of the Fort Wayne Plan Commission. "Successful communities plan together, combine resources where possible and, most importantly, they talk to each other."

Proposals for the new plan must be submitted to the Allen County Department of Public Purchase by March 17. Interviews with prospective consultants will be held in mid-April. The current schedule calls for selection of a consultant in early June.

County and City governments have budgeted for development of the plan, one-third paid by Allen County and two-thirds by the City of Fort Wayne.

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