



# Future Land Use

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## Introduction

The physical environment of our communities is largely defined by the ways in which we choose to see and relate to our neighborhoods, commercial centers, and cultural destinations. The settlement patterns and characteristics are typically depicted in a Comprehensive Plan by different land uses. These characteristics manifest themselves in the physical form of neighborhoods, districts, parks, buildings, and community facilities.

Understanding how existing land use patterns in Schererville relate to the community’s vision influences the way these patterns will evolve over the next twenty (20) years. It is therefore the primary purpose of this chapter to provide guidance for an orderly and responsible growth pattern consistent with the vision and goals as expressed by the Schererville residents.

Land use in the Town of Schererville and surrounding area has changed substantially since adoption of the 1987 Town of Schererville Comprehensive Plan. This Plan was later updated in 2002 and remains in effect to date. The Future Land Use Plan is the central chapter of the Comprehensive Plan as required by Indiana Code (36-7-4) Section 501. The Plan defines the type, location, and mix of land uses desired by the Town in the future. The elements contained in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan aim to introduce a new set of strategies and policies to guide future growth. These guides frame the regulatory and policy directions of future growth of Schererville. It should be noted that the guides are not designed to discourage or promote development as outlined in this Plan. Rather, they aim to express the manner in which development should be managed and patterned so that it is consistent with the trends and citizens wishes and desires.

The Future Land Use Plan of the Comprehensive Plan addresses the following issues:

- Distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land for housing, business, industry, open space, natural resources, recreation and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public buildings and grounds, and other categories of public and private uses of land.
- Standards of population density and building intensity for the land use designations.

In the following sections, different elements of the Future Land Use Plan for Schererville are presented. Each element is followed by goals for that element and a set of strategies to achieve that goal. Steps necessary to implement the strategies are also provided. The Transportation element of the Plan is presented in Chapter 7 as a separate chapter. Chapter 8, Subarea Plan, presents more detailed and specific information about the strategies and guidelines for the three (3) subareas proposed in the Framework Plan.

## Land Use Definitions

This section describes the Comprehensive Plan land use designations for the Town. These designations are intentionally broad enough to avoid duplicating the Town’s zoning regulations. Additionally, more than one zoning classification may be consistent with a single Land Use Plan use category.

The boundary lines between most land use designations are delineated as specifically as possible, in most cases following parcel lines. The nine land use categories described in this section establish a range and intensity of uses. They are intended to help implement the future vision of the Town, while providing flexibility for development. The assumed densities

Land Use Designation	Range of Residential Density	Maximum Allowable Floor Area Ratio
Very Low Density (Rural)	0.2 – 1 units per acre	
Low Density	2 – 4 units per acre	
Medium Low Density	5 – 8 units per acre	
Medium Density	9 – 12 units per acre	
High Density	13 – 20 units per acre	
Mixed Use	8 – 20 units per acre	0.8
Retail and Business Services		0.4 and 2.0 (Depending on location)
Office, Professional		0.4 – 4 (Depending on location)
Business Park, Light Industrial		0.4- 0.6 (Depending on location)
Industrial (General)		0.5

**TABLE 22 – LAND USE DESIGNATION**

and intensities are listed in Table 22. The land use designations also reflect the goals and policies in this Comprehensive Plan. In this Plan, standards of building intensity for residential uses are stated as the allowable range of dwelling units per net acre.

Standards of building intensity for non-residential uses are stated as maximum Floor-Area Ratios (FARs) based on net acreage. A FAR is a ratio of the gross building square footage permitted on a lot to the net square footage of the lot. The goals, policies, and actions contained in this element provide additional direction on how the various land use designations should be developed to contribute to the overall character and vision of Schererville.

Parks, natural areas, and institutional uses typically have an underlying zoning classification which falls into one of the above categories. The Plan Commission normally makes decisions about the appropriateness of these uses in a district on a case by case basis. For these reasons, no definition for these types of uses is provided.

### Goals, Policies, and Implementation Action Steps

The Future Land Use Plan contains a set of goals, strategies, policies, and action steps that aim to address future growth in Schererville, development of its important commercial corridors, residential areas, commercial and office needs, industrial areas, public and quasi-public uses, cultural needs, and economic sustainability. The Future Land Use Plan consists of fourteen (14) development goals. These goals are grouped in nine (9) different categories, each constituting one element of the Plan. Each goal is followed by a set of strategies to accomplish that goal. A set of policy statements will follow. Policies are intended to provide concise statements of direction based on the information contained within the Plan. They are statements that strengthen decisions that must be made by elected and appointed Town Administrative Officials, Town Staff, and the general community.

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The purpose of the Land Use element is to shape the future physical development patterns for the Town of Schererville. It also aims to preserve, protect, and enhance the current livability and quality of life for the residents. The Land Use element focuses on development that could potentially occur in both the existing Town limits and the Town's Future Growth Area (FGA). The FGA is the area outside of the Town limits that the Town may incorporate in the future.

**GOAL 1: Make Schererville a unique and attractive urban center of the region where people choose to work, live, and play.**

**Strategy: Advance balanced growth with sustainability and management.**

The Town will promote several policies to ensure balanced growth and reduced urban sprawl while maintaining its character as a distinct community with a variety of housing options. The Town will also aim to distribute different land uses at strategic locations where they are most appropriate for the intended purpose. Lastly, the Town will advance the establishment of three (3) special districts to better manage its growth and promote sustainability. Specific policies and action steps to implement this strategy include:

**Policy:**

1. Promote low density residential developments in areas consistent with the existing land uses and in support of maintaining the quality and character of the community.
2. Support establishment of three (3) subareas as special districts (US 30, US 41, and Joliet Street). Prepare Subarea Plans for these areas.
3. Encourage development of housing for those with special needs and seniors in parts of the Subareas where topography, natural environment, noise, and infrastructure are appropriate, particularly along collector and arterial streets and within easy walking distance to major transportation facilities.
4. Promote development of mixed uses in Subareas and along major corridors and collector streets where compatible or complementary to the existing uses.
5. Discourage large residential development that has the look and feel of a single project, does not have variation in terms of building typology and design, or lacks the distinct character of the surrounding neighborhoods.
6. Encourage nonconforming land uses to relocate or redevelop in accordance with current land use and zoning designations.
7. Ensure all new developments conform to Future Land Use Plan and zoning district classification.
8. Promote sustainable practices in development, including design of buildings and sites and incorporation of LEED certified structures and neighborhoods (LEED ND.)

## GOAL 2: Encourage development of commercial uses to include offices, civic uses, and public spaces with pedestrian friendly streets.

**Strategy:** Limit development of strip retail centers, particularly along the major corridors.

Excessive development of strip centers is not sustainable in the long term, and often restrains development of more suitable intensive uses along major corridors. Furthermore, such centers often replace the traditional neighborhood based retail establishments which are more convenient to residents.

**Policy:**

1. Discourage creation of isolated single use developments.
2. Encourage redevelopment of large and older retail centers for more appropriate mixed uses with appropriate design standards for commercial districts.
3. Prioritize commercial uses along major corridors that will expand a diverse tax base, while promoting professional employment uses and activities.

**Strategy:** Encourage the development of a mix of uses and densities throughout the Town.

**Policy:**

1. Encourage and support new developments which include a mixture of compatible commercial land uses and amenities consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.
2. Promote development of mixed uses, particularly in the Subareas consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.
3. Promote development of clean industrial and business parks in the northern section of the Town.
4. Encourage development and maintenance of pedestrian corridors and public spaces in all districts, particularly in commercial and mixed use districts.



ENCOURAGE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS WITH A VARIETY OF USES



EXAMPLE OF STRIP CENTER DEVELOPMENT TO BE DISCOURAGED

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**Strategy:** Promote development of neighborhood based retail establishments.

**Policy:**

1. Encourage development of retail centers on intersections where major residential uses are located, crossed, or proposed.
2. Maintain neighborhood character and scale in these centers with appropriate mixes typically required for a neighborhood commercial district.
3. Promote development of supportive uses and services in neighborhood centers where appropriate and compatible with the neighborhood's needs.

**Action Steps**

- Prepare and adopt appropriate residential design guidelines or subdivision regulations to encourage creative and sustainable mixed use developments.
- Update and amend the Zoning Code to ensure that the housing and mixed use types allowed in each zoning district are consistent with the density ranges identified in the Comprehensive Plan.



ENCOURAGE RETAIL CENTERS AT MAJOR INTERSECTIONS



MAINTAIN NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER AND SCALE

Expanding the commercial and industrial base of the Town is an ongoing effort and one that should continue to build Schererville's reputation as a great place to do business. The Town's history of successful economic development suggests that most of its initiatives should continue. Therefore, one objective of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan will be to support these activities. However, diversification and mix of uses will improve long term sustainability of the business environment in the Town. Professional uses and technology based businesses further will provide opportunity for employment for highly skilled residents of the Town.

### **GOAL 3: Diversify the economy of the Town to meet the global challenges and provide quality jobs for a suburban population.**

**Strategy:** Encourage higher intensity mixed-use developments, particularly along corridors and in crosstown areas.

**Policy:**

1. Support developments which include a mixture of compatible commercial land uses, including professional and high technology based uses consistent with the Land Use Plan.
2. Support redevelopment of designated areas to encourage revitalization and development of mixed uses.
3. Promote development of skilled employment uses that improve the Town's current jobs-housing balance.

**Strategy:** Provide infrastructure and facilities that support continued economic growth.

**Policy:**

1. Encourage development of reliever commercial roads along side of major corridors.
2. Link the rate of growth in Schererville to the provision of adequate services and infrastructure.
3. Ensure new development will not negatively impact the adequacy, capacity, or level of service of roadways, schools, police, fire, water supply, and wastewater treatment infrastructure.
4. Promote installation of roads, curbs, sidewalks, lighting, trees, and other public infrastructures that are designed to support pedestrians and alternative modes of transportation.
5. Encourage development of, and access to, high-speed internet and other new technology-based infrastructure in all parts of the Town.
6. Support development and linkage to transit facilities in the Town to improve access to regional employment centers.

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**Action Steps:**

- Prepare a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to assure orderly and efficient public investment in the Town.
- Prepare Economic Development and Marketing Plan for the Town with emphasis for redevelopment and transformation of Downtown.
- Prepare redevelopment and vision plans for the designated redevelopment areas. Market and recruit developers to revitalize the area.
- Spearhead a Downtown Business Association.



DEVELOP PARALLEL ROADS ALONG SIDE MAJOR CORRIDORS



DESIGN STREETS SUITABLE FOR PEDESTRIANS AND ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION



The Town of Schererville takes pride in its quality residential neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are filled with a diverse set of housing options, meeting the needs of a wide range of population. To continue to support development of the Town’s neighborhoods, it is important to focus on policies that maintain the existing character and community values.

The policies of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan are aimed to influence a new pattern for the emerging neighborhoods as they develop and evolve. They are also expected to influence direction of new improvements in the existing neighborhoods, as a key objective of the Plan is to provide a vision for revitalization and reinvestment in existing neighborhoods, particularly in the Downtown area.

**GOAL 4: Support Downtown becoming the social center of the Town with ample cultural and civic activities and amenities.**

**Strategy:** Make Joliet Street in Downtown a lively corridor with a variety of cultural, arts, and social activities and programs.

**Policy:**

1. Support development of mixed use buildings with a variety of activities and uses which promote Schererville’s sense of identity and culture.
2. Encourage placement of businesses, services, and civic facilities in Downtown that provide entertainment, visitor services, and cultural enrichment, as well as extending the hours during which Downtown is an active place.
3. Support development of the Downtown as a redevelopment district.
4. Promote development of open space and public spaces suitable for community and social gatherings and celebrations.

**Strategy:** Incorporate development of the Old Lincoln Highway theme in Downtown planning efforts.

**Policy:**

1. Support developments that promote and celebrate the historic character of the Downtown.
2. Encourage preservation, restoration, and reuse of Downtown buildings where they contribute to the architectural character of the Downtown.
3. Establish a Main Street Program for Downtown.



DOWNTOWN PLAZA CONCEPT



DESIGNS THAT ALLOW FOR A WIDE VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES ALL DAY

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**Actions Steps:**

- Work with the Downtown businesses to develop an ongoing program to market the Downtown to residents and visitors alike, such as directional signs, cooperative advertising, and promotional events.
- Work with Downtown businesses and the Schererville Chamber of Commerce to prepare a Strategic Plan for the Downtown Area. As part of the Plan, identify gaps in available merchandise and services, and recruit experienced vendors who would like to relocate to Downtown Schererville.
- Create a Downtown housing program, possibly using Redevelopment District funds or funds from the Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program as incentives to encourage housing development.
- Designate the Downtown area as an Economic Revitalization Area and Economic Development Target Area. Establish a residential tax abatement program as an incentive to encourage redevelopment.
- Revisit the existing Redevelopment Plan for Downtown to ensure conformance with the Future Land Use Plan.
- Prepare and adopt appropriate architecture design guidelines for the Downtown to encourage creative and sustainable site designs for new developments.
- Install attractive “Downtown Schererville” signs along US 30, Kennedy Avenue, and Joliet Street.
- Explore the development of publicly-owned civic spaces on vacant and underutilized properties in the Downtown, or utilization of such properties for temporary activities, such as displays of public art or community events.

**GOAL 5: Maintain the existing housing stock and promote neighborhood character.**

**Strategy:**      **Enforce property maintenance codes and ordinances. Provide resources to increase the effectiveness of the program.**

**Policy:**

1. Encourage removal of visible household clutter that has a blighting effect in some neighborhoods.
2. Encourage businesses, institutions, and residents to sponsor and engage in the efforts to maintain and sustain community facilities in the Town.
3. Support development of a technology based tracking system for Townwide permitting, code enforcement, and building activities.
4. Develop a uniform Schererville identification program that can be applied to all neighborhoods and subdivisions to promote a positive and unified image.
5. Establish a clean community program and engage residents and businesses in efforts to maintain a clean environment in all parts of the community, including parks, greenways, and highway corridors.

## GOAL 6: Encourage innovation in neighborhood design and development.

**Strategy:** Support smart growth principals in development of residential areas.

**Policy:**

1. Encourage sustainable design in planning and development of neighborhoods.
2. Maintain character of neighborhoods as primarily single family residential.
3. Encourage interconnectivity between neighborhoods while discouraging development of isolated subdivisions.
4. Encourage linking of neighborhoods and developments to trails, schools, and other activity centers in conformance with the Future Land Use Plan.
5. Make neighborhoods more visually appealing by supporting architectural integrity and controlling locations of garages, parking, and signs.
6. Promote development of energy efficient buildings in concert with Federal and State green development initiatives.
7. Provide on-site treatment of runoff in new subdivisions to the extent possible by implementing neighborhood bio-swales, infiltration ponds, and rain gardens.
8. Integrate healthy living concepts in all aspects of neighborhood development and expansion.



DISCOURAGE ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES THAT OVERWHELM THE RESIDENTIAL STREETScape



ENCOURAGE PLANNED RESIDENTIAL VARIETY AND INTERCONNECTIVITY

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## GOAL 7: Reinvest in neighborhoods to enhance character, vitality, and socialization.

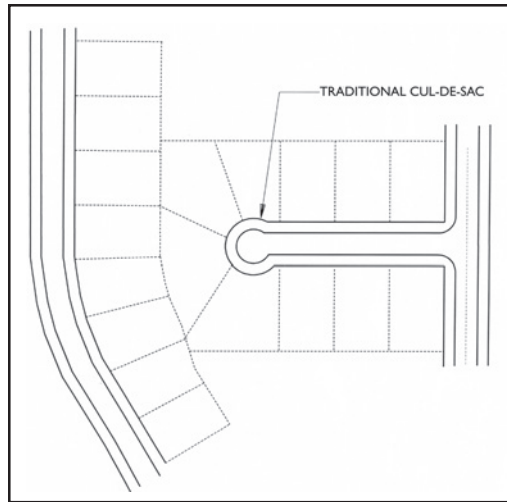
**Strategy:** Build facilities in neighborhoods to promote gathering, picnicking, and other small social activities.

**Policy:**

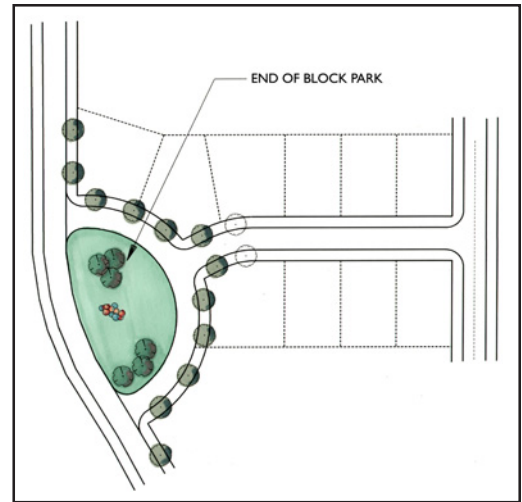
1. Support development of end-of-the-block open spaces, plazas, and green gathering places.
2. Convert small, unused spaces into parks/plazas suitable for socialization.
3. Ensure adequate provision of infrastructure, including sidewalks, street lighting, and street trees in neighborhoods and new subdivisions to promote safety, connectivity, and healthy living.



EXAMPLE OF OPEN SPACE IN A RESIDENTIAL CUL-DE-SACS



TRADITIONAL



PREFERRED

CONCEPT FOR END OF BLOCK PARKS ON RESIDENTIAL STREETS

**Action Steps**

- Update existing building and zoning codes to strengthen appearance and aesthetic provisions.
- Investigate the purchase of alternative building and code software to create a centralized tracking and enforcement system.
- Develop neighborhood education and outreach program to ensure compliance.
- Prepare a pedestrian and bicycle plan for the Town to ensure access from all neighborhoods.
- Modify and amend the Landscaping Ordinance for residential districts.
- Establish a clean community program. This program should include Adopt-a-Highway, Park, and Neighborhood programs.

**GOAL 8: Make schools an integral part of the Town.**

**Strategy:** Cooperate with the School Corporation to assure availability and adequate distribution of education facilities throughout the Town.

**Policy:**

1. Support development of an elementary school on southeast side of Town.
2. Strengthen the position of neighborhood schools by promoting adequate facilities and full access.
3. Encourage and promote development of a higher education facility in Town to ensure lifelong learning.

**Action Steps**

- Work with the School Corporation to develop an elementary school on the southern edge of Town.
- Explore development of a higher education facility with regional higher education institutions.

# 4

## Community Appearance

The Community Appearance element addresses the image or character of the Town's built environment. It prioritizes the relationship between the locations of uses in order to build a strong sense of place. The Community Appearance element includes important concepts and guidelines that apply to the type, location, and character of both private and public developments for new and existing areas of the Town.

Community design strategies and policies that should be employed to attain a strong sense of community identity are described below. These strategies aim to translate the two-dimensional land use requirements into a third dimension by specifying how new developments should look, feel, and function.

### GOAL 9: Maintain a coherent and distinctive physical form and structure that reflects Schererville's unique qualities.

**Strategy:** Integrate quality design in all aspects of the Town's built environment.

**Policy:**

1. Encourage the design and construction of commercial and industrial developments with public amenities and visual appeal.
2. Require compliance with the architectural design guidelines as part of any project approval process.
3. New commercial development must include building frontages with human-scale design elements, varied and articulated facades, and entries oriented to public sidewalks or pedestrian pathways. Blank walls adjacent to pedestrian circulation areas are discouraged.
4. New commercial, industrial, and business park developments must be designed, sited, and planned to include buffers and be compatible with adjacent uses in scale, color, and architectural character.
5. On intersections, development shall be built at the outside corners in order to enclose the space and provide greater definition to the intersection, particularly for pedestrians.
6. Building façades located along pedestrian pathways and public rights-of-way are encouraged to have window openings. Solid blank walls are discouraged.
7. Encourage development and installation of unique gateway features and landmarks for neighborhoods, districts, and corridors in order to make them more easily identifiable, provide better Town orientation, and contribute to developing a sense of place.



INCORPORATE PUBLIC SPACES IN ALL DEVELOPMENTS, SUCH AS THIS STREETScape

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**Strategy: Encourage provision of landscaping and streetscaping in all areas.**

**Policy:**

1. Develop distinct entry points at the Town boundaries and Downtown area to provide a sense of arrival and a positive community image.
2. Encourage design of two-way entries with a center median and other amenities at all intersections with major corridors.
3. Encourage development of clear focal points, such as a park, plaza, or a community facility. Focal points shall have ample public spaces and shall be within walking distance from any point in a neighborhood.
4. Encourage livable street design standards for new roadway development and for improvements or rehabilitation of existing roadways.
5. Use appropriate landscaping and vegetation to reduce the effects of water runoff in developing areas.
6. Minimize impervious surfaces and provide for recharge and cooling by installing street landscaping, parking lot landscaping, and construction of rain gardens and bio-swales.
7. Encourage planting of trees, markers, public arts, and other landscape features along Schererville's corridors to make them interesting, appealing, and inviting.



CLOCKTOWER USED AS A DISTINCT ENTRY MARKER



DEVELOP CLEAR FOCAL POINTS THAT ARE WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE FROM NEIGHBORHOODS



ENCOURAGE PUBLIC ARTS ALONG SCHERERVILLE'S CORRIDORS



INCORPORATE LANDSCAPING IN PARKING AREAS

**Strategy:** Promote and maintain a high quality living environment.

**Policy:**

1. Discourage large residential developments that have the look and feel of a single project.
2. Encourage variation in terms of building typology and design, as well as a distinct character of the buildings, sites, and neighborhoods.
3. New neighborhoods shall be designed to maximize direct pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connections both within the neighborhood and to surrounding neighborhoods.

**Action Steps**

- Prepare an Architectural Design Standard and Code for the Town.
- Review and amend as necessary the Schererville Landscape Ordinance to be consistent with the Community Appearance policies.
- Join and get involved with the Tree City, USA program.
- Institute a Community Arts and Culture Committee to promote arts, culture, and community enhancement efforts.
- Install appropriate landscaping along major arterials throughout the Town.
- Explore the possibility of enhancing pedestrian corridors and trails with plantings, landscaping, or public arts.
- Establish a tree planting program that will work with neighborhood residents to plant street trees on blocks that do not have street trees or are missing street trees.
- Prepare and implement a gateway enhancement program.

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EXAMPLES OF ACCEPTABLE HOUSING VARIATIONS

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The presence of opportunities to participate and provide available support and resources for cultural engagements are essential ingredients for enriching the communal life in any urban society. Different studies have shown that the availability of arts and cultural facilities significantly contributes to the health of a community. Arts, culture, and creative expression are important factors of how communities fare and compete to advance in a competitive world where cultural amenities are increasingly highly valued for the livability of a community.

### GOAL 10: Make arts and culture an integral part of life in the Town.

**Strategy:** Facilitate development of arts and culture facilities in Town.

**Policy:**

1. Support development of arts and culture based businesses in the Downtown.
2. Promote Downtown as a place for the “creative class” to live and work.
3. Develop, finance, and implement public art projects in the Downtown and in conjunction with redevelopment and public improvement projects.
4. Support expansion of Redar Park as a new civic park with facilities to accommodate a variety of cultural activities.
5. Support development of a community festival area in the Downtown.
6. Encourage provision of prominently displayed public art and monuments in new developments, entry points, along public corridors, and in connection with public uses in the Town.

**Action Steps**

- Institute a Community Arts and Culture Committee to promote arts, culture, and community enhancement efforts.
- Identify potential areas for installation of public arts.
- Prepare a master plan for Redar Park as a new civic park with facilities to accommodate a variety of cultural activities.
- Explore funding for public arts through a tax abatement program.



PUBLIC ARTS IN MEDIANS, OR IN FRONT OF BUILDINGS, ADD TO THE COMMUNITY'S SENSE OF PLACE



# 6 Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

Parks and recreation facilities play a key role in the physical and social health of a community. People come to see history, play in a sports tournament, walk or run on a trail, view and hear a concert, or simply stroll in a natural area. These choices collectively shape the quality of life of a community.

Scenic views are an amenity for residential and nonresidential properties. New developments typically tend to locate around an amenity: a river or lake, leafy green streets, or a park. The amenities of parks, trails, natural resources, and greenways are often the catalysts for revitalization of a community, or desirability of an area.

## GOAL 11: Make parks, recreation, and open space an integral part of the community's well being.

**Strategy:** Expand park facilities to meet the National Standards and trends.

### Policy:

1. Support guidelines of the Master Plan of the Park Department as established and amended from time to time.
2. Support expansion of Rohrman Park boundaries to promote youth sports and other desired facilities.
3. Support expansion of Redar Park as a new civic park with facilities to accommodate a variety of recreational and cultural activities.
4. Support acquisition and development of additional park land in underserved areas in accordance with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and in conformance with the Future Land Use Plan.
5. Support voluntary contribution of land or cash for development of parks or preservation of open space in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan and in collaboration with the Schererville Parks Foundation.
6. Support and coordinate the extension of trails and pedestrian facilities and other transportation improvements to link neighborhoods with parks, schools, and other community facilities.
7. Support development of a community center.
8. Explore, where feasible, the integration of site design and planning techniques that conserve natural systems and hydrologic functions in parks and greenways as a part of the broader Town wide storm water management system.
9. Integrate healthy living concepts in all aspects of park development and expansion.

### Action Steps

- Prepare a master plan and develop an acquisition strategy for Rohrman Park expansion as a youth sports center.
- Prepare master plan for a Civic Park in Downtown.



CONCEPT FOR A CIVIC PARK

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The preservation of open space and natural corridors in Schererville is key to enhancing the quality of life in Schererville. Such effort is also essential in the Town's goal for improving its sustainability and balancing its urban growth with the availability of natural resources.

There are still many opportunities to shape future developments as Schererville continues to grow. Natural resources can be preserved through a combination of public and private efforts, including the purchase of land by the Town, conservation easements, grants, private donations, cluster developments, transfer of development rights, and development regulations. The Comprehensive Plan aims to establish a solid policy direction and foundation for the preservation of key resources that reflect pristine natural areas, scenic viewsheds, and opportunities to preserve the environment of the Town.

### **GOAL 12: Protect and preserve Schererville's natural resources and environment in all aspects of development.**

**Strategy:** Encourage preservation and protection of the environment in all aspects of development.

**Policy:**

1. Support and encourage the application of sustainable practices and green building principals, energy conservation, and environmental stewardship standards.
2. Encourage preservation and conservation of sensitive sites and natural resources in all new developments and trail corridors and greenways.
3. Support the award of density credits for voluntary preservation of sensitive resources in planned developments.
4. Promote development of storm water retention, detention, and rain garden systems that are connected to a broader Town wide storm water management system in all developments, trail corridors, and greenways.
5. Use appropriate landscaping and vegetation to reduce the effects of water runoff in developing areas.
6. Minimize impervious surfaces and provide for recharge and cooling by installing street landscaping, parking lot landscaping, and construction of rain gardens and bio-swales.
7. Support the preservation of a natural green area on the northern part of the Town and along the Turkey Creek corridor. Develop trails as appropriate within the corridor.
8. Support the development of alternative transportation modes and pedestrian linkages that improve air quality and reduce environmental impact.
9. Support the installation of plug in stations at major activity centers and service stations for electric powered vehicles.

**Strategy:** Support regional efforts to coordinate transportation and environmental stewardship.

**Policy:**

1. Support regional efforts to promote development of transit facilities in the Town.
2. Support the development of a South Shore commuter train station on Kennedy Avenue in Highland.
3. Support acquisition of natural and sensitive areas by the State of Indiana for an expansion of Hoosier Prairie.

**Action Steps**

- Amend the Town’s municipal codes to encourage application of green building design, energy conservation, and environmental stewardship standards.
- Develop cooperative agreements with state and regional agencies to develop and fund transit facilities in the Town.



ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES, SUCH AS THIS PARKING LOT RAIN GARDEN



PROTECT ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS, SUCH AS THE TURKEY CREEK NATURAL AREA

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The provision of adequate infrastructure in a community impacts its growth patterns and quality of life. Typically, streets and sanitary sewer lines are considered the most important elements of infrastructure. In planning for future infrastructure, it is also important to note that Schererville must focus on its street systems (sidewalks, curbs, trees, lights, street signs, etc.) rather than just the street pavement itself. Storm water systems have also become an important element in the Town's infrastructure as it grows and develops. New sustainable methods have been developed in recent years to better manage storm runoff.

The goals and strategies established for infrastructure should be incorporated into the Town's Capital Improvement Plan and implemented in such a manner that would assure continued growth and efficient use of resources.

## GOAL 13: Maintain a reliable level and quality of water, sanitary, road maintenance, police, and fire protection services.

**Strategy: Assure adequacy of infrastructure for residents.**

### Policy:

1. Implement a systematic infrastructure repair and replacement program focusing on street systems (sidewalks, curbs, street trees, street lights, street signs, public arts, etc.) rather than street improvement.
2. Support the preparation and completion of a five year Capital Improvements Plan for the Town.
3. Plan for site acquisition and construction of a new fire station in close proximity to US 30 and US 41.
4. Support development of a new fire station and a police substation on the southern boundary of the Town.
5. Encourage development of, and access to, high-speed internet and other new technology-based infrastructure for all parts of the Town.



INVEST IN TOTAL STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

**Strategy:** Provide infrastructure and facilities that support continued economic growth.

**Policy:**

1. Encourage development of reliever commercial and service roads along side of major corridors.
2. Condition the rate of growth in Schererville to the provision of adequate services and infrastructure.
3. Ensure new development will not negatively impact adequacy, capacity, or level of service of roadways, schools, police, fire and medical services, water supply, and wastewater treatment infrastructure.
4. Plan for the extension of appropriate utilities south to assure an orderly process of development for the Future Growth Area.
5. Support and encourage partnerships with developers to provide an infrastructure capacity adequate to serve planned development and future growth areas.
6. Explore and support development of alternative financing for development of infrastructure in Town.

**Action Steps**

- Prepare and adopt a Capital Improvement Plan for the Town.
- Explore new Allocation Areas (TIF Districts) to support infrastructure development in the designated areas.
- Identify and acquire a site for a new fire station and a police substation on the southern boundary of the Town.
- Update the Subdivision Control Ordinance provisions to create infrastructure standards and systems requirements for new developments, including future extension and capacity needs of adjacent areas.

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The purpose of this element is to establish additional standards for certain uses and areas to address the needs of Schererville as expressed by the residents and consistent with Chapter 4, Vision, of this Plan. These standards are intended to improve sustainability, reduce adverse effects on surrounding property owners and the general public, to improve the business environment, to further energy conservation efforts within the Town, to enhance the environment for walking, cycling, and mass transit use, and ensure that high quality development is maintained throughout Schererville.

**GOAL 14: Establish zoning regulations and districts that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and complimentary to the established patterns and development characteristics of the Town.**

**Strategy:** Update Schererville’s land use and development code to be consistent with Schererville’s Comprehensive Plan recommendations.

**Policy:**

1. Support development of an Overlay District classification for three (3) Sub-areas: US 30, US 41, and Joliet Street (Downtown) corridors.
2. Support development of architectural design guidelines that will promote higher standards of architectural design, landscaping, and urban design.
3. Support zoning regulations that prohibit incompatible uses to expand in the overlay districts and other sensitive areas.

**Action Steps**

- Update the Town’s Subdivision Control Ordinance to conform with the Comprehensive Plan policies.
- Prepare and adopt a new Zoning Map consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.
- Update the Town’s Zoning Code to conform with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Prepare and adopt Architectural Design Guidelines Ordinance for all zoning districts.