



Framework



The primary objective of the Comprehensive Plan is to address Schererville's short and long term needs. These needs have been identified through a planning process that has involved residents, Town Officials, data collection, and analysis. Residents' needs, expressed preferences, and the analysis, have collectively contributed to the discovery of a set of issues and development opportunities for the Town. The Plan aims to focus on these issues or utilize identified opportunities to guide future land use decisions for the next twenty (20) years. These needs and development opportunities have also framed the objectives for the Plan.

The following list presents land use and development issues and the opportunities that have been identified. A description of the framework elements which have shaped the Plan is also provided in this chapter. The last section outlines the accommodation of diverse land uses and the ways in which they are interrelated.

1. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Land Use

Issues:

- Need for better management of future growth
- Quality and location of multi-family housing
- Lack of quality buildings in many areas
- Abundance of strip centers
- Need for coordinated land uses and development of infrastructure
- Conflicting uses in close proximity
- Future parks and school uncertain
- Perception of Downtown area
- Fully developed and cohesive neighborhoods
- Marginal uses, particularly along major corridors
- Outdated code and standards

Opportunities:

- Available vacant land
- Continued commercial development along major corridors
- Redevelopment potential in many areas offering opportunity to reshape the Town's image and appearance
- Abundance of commercial and retail uses, making the Town very desirable to shop
- Attractive gateways at the Town entry points
- Improvement and development of Joliet Street Corridor
- Cultural facilities

Transportation

Issues:

- Excessive congestion in major corridors
- Truck traffic on major corridors
- Town's major corridors bisect the Town into separate sections
- Limited detour opportunities along major corridors
- Unorganized curb cuts and driveways along commercial corridors
- Congestion along Main Street at US 41
- Coordination of the roadway improvements due to varying jurisdictions
- Coordinated linkage to non-motorized transportation facilities.

Opportunities:

- Transit development on major routes
- Development of a major regional transit center on Main Street
- Expansion of Oak Street to connect to Kennedy Avenue
- Extension of Kennedy Avenue
- Development of Pennsy Greenway as a major local and regional facility
- Access-management strategies

Physical Appearance

Issues:

- Marginal uses along major corridors have created unattractive appearance in several locations
- Lack of systematic streetscape and landscaping throughout the Town
- Need for design guidelines, code updates, and code enforcement
- Abundance of strip malls and parking lots on frontage
- Aging residential uses along Joliet Street and in the older section of the Town
- Lack of curbs, gutters, and sidewalks in some parts of the Town
- Monotonous architecture in new residential developments
- Unregulated signage
- Unattractive retention and detention basins
- Limited sense of place

Opportunities:

- Development of a new sense of the place for the Town
- Creation of public plaza and open space throughout the Town
- Enhancement of the Joliet Street corridor
- Design and performance standards for new developments
- Uniform development signage and visual linkage
- Available development land and redevelopment opportunities





Parks and Open Space

Issues:

- Shortage of sports fields, parks, and open space
- Trail implementation and expansion has been slow
- Location and distribution of parks facilities
- Over burdened amenities and facilities at several parks
- New developments provide park facilities that are not adequate to meet the overall community's needs

Opportunities:

- Trails bisect the Town
- Existing rail rights-of-way and natural areas for trails
- Available land for expansion of recreation fields
- Centralized civic park in Downtown for community wide activities
- Scherwood Golf Course for recreation and green space
- Proposed community center at Scherwood Park
- Ample local and regional open and green space

Quality of Life

Issues:

- Lack of suitable cultural, arts, and entertainment facilities in Town
- Services and programs for senior and older adults
- Choices of transportation
- Choices of leisure services

Opportunities:

- Demand for leisure services and activities
- School for arts, music, and other leisure services
- Downtown as a center for arts, cultural, and entertainment activities
- Availability of corridors for non-motorized trails and walks

2. FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Plan for the future of Schererville is developed using several methods of assessment. Initially, a series of analysis was done in which the existing uses and facilities by type and capacity were evaluated and compared to trends, national standards, or community values. Further, available data were analyzed to determine the social and demographic character of the Town. And finally, the community's vision, the results of an image preference survey, and the goals established by residents, were used to determine the community's desire and preferences. Through this process, a set of issues and opportunities have framed the development of the Plan.

First and most importantly, the two (2) major arterials - US 30 and 41 - have significantly influenced the character of the Plan. These arterials have historically contributed to the development and well being of Schererville. Uncontrolled growth along these corridors could, however, have severe consequences for the Town if growth or development potentials are

hampered. US 30 and 41, while they contribute significantly to the desirability of the Town and its tax base, could also offer additional opportunities for commercial development and redevelopment. Traffic congestion in these corridors could negatively impact the orderly growth and development of the Town. The Plan recognizes the importance of these two (2) highways and employs a set of strategies to assure the future growth of Schererville.

One (1) major strategy is to propose a special district designation for the two (2) corridors. This strategy not only could shape future growth, it could produce an impetus for redevelopment where such opportunities exist. A second concern involves management of the traffic on these corridors. To better manage traffic, and thus assure long term viability of the corridors, several strategies are proposed. These strategies include:

- 1) Limit and reduce the number of curb cuts;
- 2) Concentrate developments along the major intersections;
- 3) Expand capacity by strengthening linkages with reliever roads parallel to them or crossing them.

Second, community values were an important consideration in development of the Plan. They have established the expectations of the residents for community's outlook, appearance, and services desired. They also provide a useful reference point to start the development of the Plan. These values are reflected throughout the Plan and in all of its elements. The value of the Downtown, as expressed by the residents, has been recognized in the Plan by proposing several treatments, including a special district designation, to strengthen its position in the community. Redevelopment of the Downtown and other areas is expected to improve the physical quality and aesthetic of the Town, while environmental quality of the Town is assured by strong proposals to preserve and enhance the natural resources of the Town.

Another factor that has influenced the development of the Plan was a strong desire of the residents to develop Schererville as a quality community where services are expected, while the community remains fiscally responsible. This, in effect, means that a major principle of the Plan will have to be its sustainability. Growth management, mixed uses, and higher density where appropriate, is considered in the Plan. These developments should be clustered near commercial centers where access to alternative transportation modes can be assured. (See Chapter 7 - Transportation.) Nonetheless, the Plan aims to maintain the primary character of the Town as a single family community with attractive neighborhoods and quality homes.

Strengthening of the neighborhoods is expected to be a major part of the Comprehensive Plan over the next ten (10) to twenty (20) years. These efforts will not only include maintaining and enforcing the codes, but also expanding facilities and supporting land uses which will strengthen the social structure of the neighborhoods. Neighborhood schools, parks, neighborhood based commercial districts, and stronger linkage of subdivisions within the Town will increase the cohesion of different neighborhoods, while development of public spaces will increase socialization among neighbors.

Lastly, accumulating evidence suggests that employing sound growth principals not only add value to communities, but will also have beneficial impact on reducing the tax burden and improving the quality of life of the residents in the long term. The Plan aims to foster sustainability by employing several smart growth principles in its overall development while expanding its economic base as the economic center of the region. These elements are presented in the following exhibit.



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

TOWN OF SCHERERVILLE

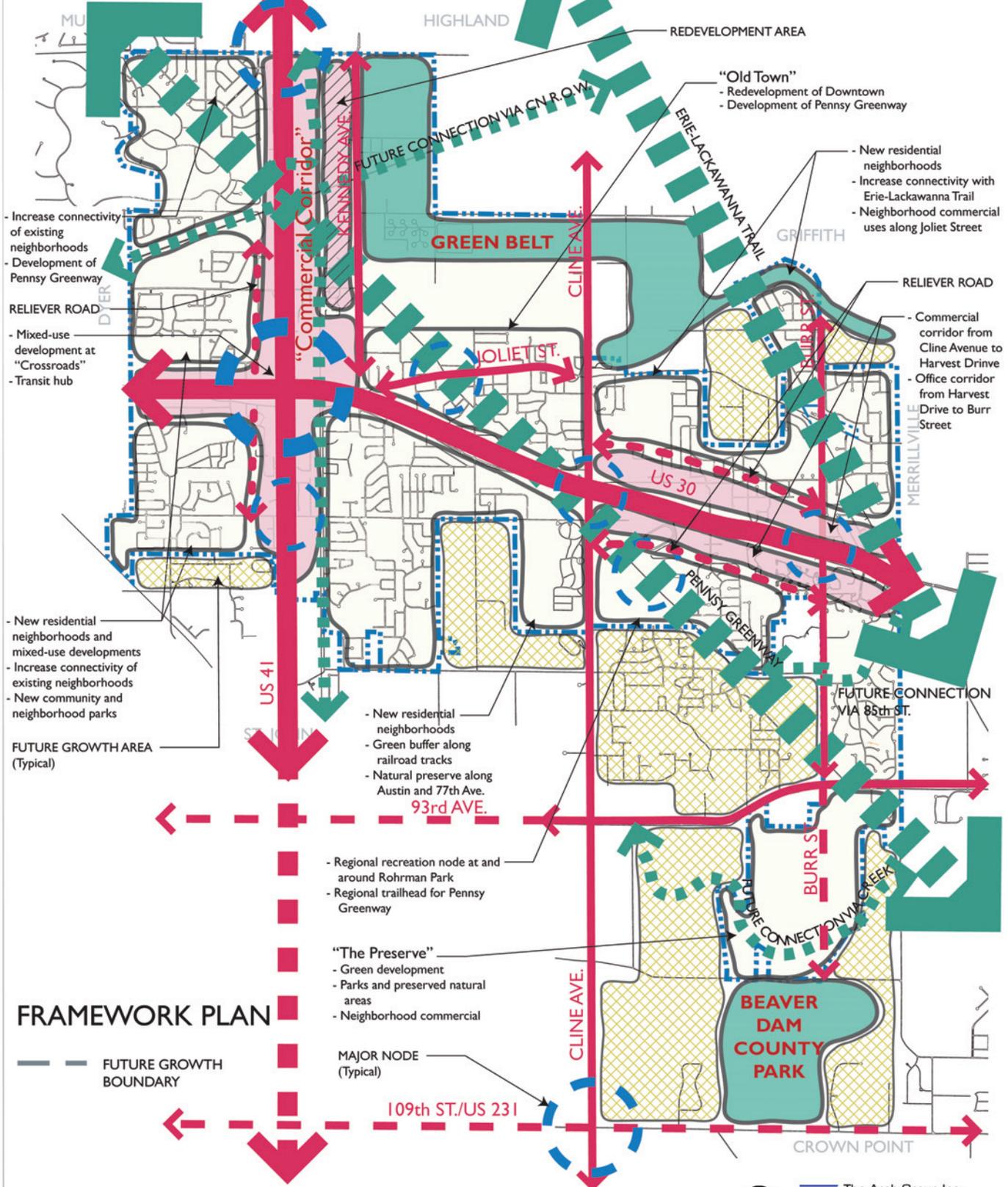


EXHIBIT 8 - FRAMEWORK PLAN