



CHAPTER 7 POLICY PLAN

One of the primary purposes of a Comprehensive Plan is to make statements and policies of community needs and desires. These statements are crafted in terms of goals, objectives, and policies as defined below:

- Goals – These statements describe, in general terms, desired future conditions.
- Objectives – Objectives describe specific future conditions that are to be attained within a specific time period.
- Policies – These statements outline courses of action or rules that will achieve the specified goals and objectives.

GOAL 1: ALLEVIATE AND PREVENT PROBLEMS (INCLUDING LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND) CAUSED BY SPRAWL.

OBJECTIVE A – Encourage focused development in and around the small towns (County Villages) of Yorktown, Daleville, Chesterfield, Gaston, Eaton, Albany and Selma.

Policy i. Develop residential densities that are within compatible transition of adjacent residential densities.

Policy ii. Provide incentives and rezonings to steer residential development to small town fringe areas, away from agricultural land.

OBJECTIVE B – Promote the preservation of higher-yield agricultural land.

Policy i. Finalize and implement through development code revisions recommendations from the Study Committee for Agriculture Preservation.

Policy ii. Investigate the potential use of large residential lot sizes in areas that are deemed predominantly agricultural in use.

Policy iii. Identify, by soil type, areas suitable for residential development and create appropriate performance standards such as lot sizes, sanitary facilities and access.

OBJECTIVE C – Encourage a compactness in urban land development in order to reduce new infrastructure costs.

Policy i. Annex new territory into the City of Muncie when such annexation is necessary to provide space for City growth, where territory is a logical extension of the urban area.

Policy ii. Regulate the expansion and design of public utilities and facilities in order to promote desired growth timing and minimize negative fiscal impacts.

Policy iii. Focus strip commercial development at major nodes and avoid creating small parcels, through platting requirements, along major arterials which promote excessive curb cuts.

Policy iv. Only low-intensity, open-space and agricultural land uses will be designated outside of urban service areas.

Policy v. Public utilities and services shall not be extended to development outside of the urban areas without logical annexation (note: this is not intended to prevent the extension of utilities into existing urban “places” such as Cowan and Royerton for public safety and general welfare purposes).

Policy vi. Encourage a variety and mix of housing types and densities so as to provide choices for all consumers and provide incentives to steer residential development to inner-city areas, away from agricultural land.

Policy vii. Residential development should be planned and developed with the following principles of the Neighborhood Unit concept:

- Residential uses should be buffered from commercial and industrial uses.
- Medium or high density housing, mobile home parks/subdivisions, churches, secondary schools, commercial sites, and other facilities with intense activity should be located along arterials with access to either the arterial street or a collector street; however, preference should be given to arterials. Low density uses should be buffered from these higher intensity uses through the use of fencing, streets, landscaping and/or topographic features.
- Residential areas should be developed with careful attention given to the natural features of the land.
- Low density residential lots should not have direct access to arterial streets.
- Arterial streets, collector streets, and pedestrian walkways should provide convenient access to schools, parks, and other public facilities.

Policy viii. Revise development code standards to encourage more compact development and more easily allow for infill development.

OBJECTIVE D - Provide adequate public services to support both existing and future residents and businesses.

Policy i. Steer development to areas where major infrastructure investments have been made (e.g. I-69, SR 332, the By-Pass, McGalliard Road, Downtown, etc.).

Policy ii. Encourage infill development and redevelopment in inner-city areas.

Policy iii. Provide for the orderly and efficient delivery of public services, facilities and utilities through coordination and communication of inter-agency plans (e.g. sanitary districts, emergency management, drainage board, utility companies, parks department).

Policy iv. Provide urban services such as recreation, emergency services and other facilities in accordance with nationally accepted levels of service (LOS) standards.

- City and County departments, where appropriate, should utilize LOS data for measuring existing service and adopt nationally accepted LOS standards for evaluation of service.
- The capabilities of non-capital public services (such as police and fire) should be enhanced accordingly through the provision of appropriate staffing, equipment, station facilities, training and education.

OBJECTIVE E – Promote a community that efficiently utilizes land, transportation and energy.

Policy i. Develop and annually update a 5-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for effective use of limited public financial resources.

Policy ii. Limit public facilities expansion to areas of planned growth.

Policy iii. Areas that are, or are projected to be, inadequately serviced by capital facilities should be identified and evaluated for possible inclusion in future CIP's.

GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY OF TARGETED INDUSTRIES, TO BROADEN AND STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC BASE OF THE COMMUNITY AND INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR QUALITY EMPLOYMENT.

OBJECTIVE A – Locate industrial and office uses in areas that minimize conflicts with other land uses and that are supported by adequate infrastructure.

Policy i. Encourage new industries to locate in business or industrial park developments.

Policy ii. Locate industrial and office uses in areas which are accessible by arterial streets and which are supported by adequate infrastructure.

Policy iii. Phase out all nonconforming uses from potential industrial and office areas.

Policy iv. Alter existing zoning districts to minimize land use conflicts (e.g. BV Variety Business Level 1, Level 2, Level 3; II Intense Industrial Level 1, Level 2) and develop appropriate standards and regulations (e.g. no outside storage, outside display or adult businesses in BV Level 1, and outside displays such as auto sales only in BV Level 3; II Level 1 exclusive office/industrial uses with low emissions, noise, etc., and mixed industry for Level 3).

OBJECTIVE B – Strategically develop and/or redevelop industrial and office areas that maximize the potential for future economic development.

Policy i. Provide enough industrial and office sites to accommodate a self-sufficient economic base.

Policy ii. Promote the use of Downtown Muncie as a regional office employment and entertainment center through the provision, where appropriate, of such public improvements as street and intersection improvements, parking improvements and enhancing regional access.

Policy iii. Take maximum advantage of the economic development potential of I-69 by supporting the development of industrial and/or office parks that have ready access to I-69 (e.g. capitalize on interstate and rail access on north side of McGalliard for metal-working, plastics, transportation equipment; capitalize on interstate access on south side of McGalliard for Class 1 industrial park for distribution uses).

Policy iv. Separate and/or buffer heavy industry from light industry, commercial and other land uses.

Policy v. Provide, where feasible and appropriate, shell buildings for speculative industrial development.

Policy vi. Support the development of a business incubator in order to emphasize small business development.

Policy vii. As per the Targeted Industries Study, site industries in accordance with their specific needs, particularly for industrial types identified by targeted industry analysis (e.g. such capitalize on metropolitan proximity and highway access at McGalliard and future West ByPass for Class 1 business park for health services, medical instruments and general offices).

OBJECTIVE C – Diversify the regional economy.

Policy i. As per the Targeted Industry Study, position the economy for emerging national and international economic trends by emphasizing high-tech manufacturing, health care, and information based businesses.

Policy ii. Assist local businesses in increasing international potential through exporting goods and services.

Policy iii. Continue to offer economic development incentives to businesses that satisfy public benefit objectives, such as tax abatement, tax increment financing and public lending.

OBJECTIVE D – Promote a business/industrial community that efficiently and safely uses land, transportation and energy.

Policy i. Develop and annually update a 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for effective use of limited public financial resources and encourage alternate funding sources such as state/federal grants and public/private partnerships.

Policy ii. Focus infrastructure investment on targeted industrial/business park development.

Policy iii. Develop a long-term infrastructure strategy to support and strengthen existing industrial and commercial sites.

GOAL 3: REDEVELOP AND REVITALIZE EXISTING URBAN AREAS.

OBJECTIVE A - Encourage varying densities of residential development with neighborhood and community interconnections with protecting neighborhood integrity.

Policy i. Locate residential and non-residential uses so as to minimize potential land use conflicts.

Policy ii. Provide buffering, screening, separation or other techniques to help minimize nuisances generated from non-residential developments.

Policy iii. Conduct reviews of building, zoning, and subdivision codes and administrative procedures and enforcement at least every five years by an appropriate committee to eliminate disincentives for infill development.

Policy iv. Locate hazardous or offensive industry away from residential uses and impose restrictions to minimize nuisances to nearby land uses.

Policy v. Promote bicycle/pedestrian accessways and easements between neighborhoods, differing land uses, neighborhood amenities and public facilities.

Policy vi. Develop and promote overlay/PUD district applications for redevelopment of existing special areas such as the university village, unique neighborhoods with historic significance, etc.

Policy vii. Residential development should be planned and developed with the following principles of the Neighborhood Unit concept:

- Residential uses should be buffered from commercial and industrial uses.
- Medium or high density housing, mobile home parks/subdivisions, churches, secondary schools, commercial sites, and other facilities with intense activity should be located along arterials with access to either the arterial street or a collector street; however, preference should be given to arterials. Low density uses should be buffered from these higher intensity uses through the use of fencing, streets, landscaping and/or topographic features.
- Residential areas should be developed with careful attention given to the natural features of the land.
- Low density residential lots should not have direct access to arterial streets.
- Arterial streets, collector streets, and pedestrian walkways should provide convenient access to schools, parks, and other public facilities.

OBJECTIVE B – Promote the revitalization of Downtown Muncie as the economic, social and cultural center of the County.

Policy i. Provide resources for implementing public improvements to the Downtown.

Policy ii. Develop streetscapes that improve pedestrian linkages from the Downtown to surrounding neighborhoods, the University, Minnetrista and Oakhurst Gardens, the Community Civic Center, etc.

Policy iii. Encourage the development of regionally significant recreational and social space in the Downtown which will accommodate community-based activities such as art fairs, cultural and musical events.

Policy iv. Continue to provide programs to retain the appearance, cultural heritage and historic character of the Downtown.

Policy v. Promote mixed use development and appropriate Downtown design standards through ordinance revisions.

OBJECTIVE C – Encourage reinvestment in established urban neighborhoods in Muncie.

Policy i. Revitalize and/or conserve established residential neighborhoods through continuing the active community development programs encouraging homeownership and housing rehabilitation.

Policy ii. Encourage the development of neighborhoods that are attractive both from within and without through a continuing program of civic beautification, tree planting, and enforcement of ordinances that promote orderly development.

Policy iii. Develop neighborhood cohesiveness through the recognition of neighborhood organizations and assist such organizations in the planning and implementation of neighborhood revitalization activities.

Policy iv. Institute provisions allowing for block level PUD redevelopment in existing neighborhoods.

Policy v. Provide incentives for sustainable redevelopment of existing neighborhoods by allowing greater densities or other variable standards in exchange for bicycle/pedestrian, open space and other neighborhood amenities.

Policy vi. Develop targeted neighborhood reinvestment/redevelopment plans for the following neighborhood areas: Anthony/Northside, the Central Business District, Old West End, McKinley/Gilbert, Morningside/McCormick, Whitely, Blain/Southeast, South Central, and East Central.

Policy vii. Further study disparities of property assessment in order to eliminate disincentives for reinvestment/redevelopment.

OBJECTIVE D – Promote a livable sustainable urban community that efficiently uses land, transportation and energy.

Policy i. Develop and annually update a 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to effectively use limited public financial resources and assure that an equitable share of public resources are directed toward the needs and problems of areas targeted for reinvestment/redevelopment.

Policy ii. Provide all neighborhoods with adequate public facilities and services.

Policy iii. Supplement Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other federal entitlement community development programs going to low-to-moderate-income areas with local resources such as the Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT).

GOAL 4: PRESERVE, PROTECT AND MAXIMIZE BENEFITS FROM THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

OBJECTIVE A – Discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas.

Policy i. Continue to identify all ecologically significant/environmentally sensitive areas and promote preservation/conservation designations based on the identified and accepted areas.

Policy ii. Limit the expansion of public facilities (such as sanitary sewers and roads) into environmentally sensitive areas so as to minimize future development in those areas.

Policy iii. Develop criteria for varying standards based on an environmental sensitivity measure such as larger lots in forested areas or larger open space requirements to accommodate significant areas.

OBJECTIVE B – Promote environmentally sensitive development practices.

Policy i. Promote protective construction practices and encourage preservation, through incentives, rather than mitigation in development design.

Policy ii. Revise landscape ordinances to emphasize, through credits, preservation of existing environmental features.

Policy iii. Incorporate County Storm Water and Erosion Control regulations into the City codes and incorporate, into both, water quality provisions for storm water runoff, such as requiring traps and filtering mechanisms for detention outlets, to mitigate pollution from such runoff.

Policy iv. Develop provisions for appropriate ratios of pervious cover, such as open green space, for individual properties to cause no net increase in surface water runoff from the property and for encouraging regional stormwater detention facilities rather than compensatory storage on individual properties.

Policy v. Develop and/or assure that industries meet appropriate and applicable standards regarding air and water pollution and the handling of hazardous wastes as well as quantifiable performance standards for heat, glare, and noise.

Policy vi. Preserve the integrity of the groundwater supplies through the implementation of a wellhead protection ordinance.

OBJECTIVE C – Capitalize on recreational opportunities provided by Prairie Creek Reservoir as a unique community resource.

Policy i. Encourage passive recreational sites and activities at Prairie Creek such as scenic overlooks and habitats.

Policy ii. Develop a strategic master plan for development and preservation in and around the Prairie Creek Reservoir.

OBJECTIVE D - Continue and expand upon the success of the Cardinal Greenway and the White River Corridor Development and utilize this success to launch other greenway and open space development efforts.

Policy i. Revise the subdivision platting requirements to establish levels of service for greenways and open space and to enable the dedication of rights-of-way and easements.

Policy ii. Provide active (e.g. trails, parks with playgrounds) and passive (e.g. overlooks, scenic and historic sites) recreational opportunities in creative ways such as through subdivision covenants utilizing homeowners associations for maintenance/ownership, development credits allowing off-site tree planting/landscaping in strategic locations, and partnerships utilizing elementary schools to provide school-parks particularly in under-served areas.

Policy iii. Provide regional and community connections to the Cardinal Greenway and promote and encourage partnerships for development of a regional White River Corridor.

Policy iv. Establish a trail thoroughfare plan for greenways/bikeways.

OBJECTIVE E – Promote an environmentally attractive community that effectively uses land, transportation and energy.

Policy i. Develop and annually update a 5-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for acquisition and construction of strategic greenway links in the trail thoroughfare plan.

Policy ii. Promote partnerships for acquisition/preservation of environmentally sensitive and ecologically significant areas and consider establishing an on-going funding source in the CIP as the public contribution.

Policy iii. Encourage recreational opportunities that are financially self-supporting and consider user fees and appropriate concession opportunities as alternative and/or supplemental funding sources.

GOAL 5: IMPLEMENT KEY THOROUGHFARE IMPROVEMENTS

OBJECTIVE A – Create a sustainable intermodal transportation system that encourages opportunities for modal choice.

Policy i. Improve the surface transportation network through the completion of key projects including construction of the western portion of the Muncie ByPass, upgrade, and protect, the arterial links to the Towns of Eaton, Gaston, Albany, Selma, Yorktown and Daleville and the surrounding counties, and upgrade/widen western Muncie arterials such as McGalliard, Bethel and Morrison.

Policy ii. Provide for safe, efficient internal movement within developments and external connection between developments by providing a sufficient quantity of local streets and related facilities supporting bicycle, pedestrian and vehicular movement.

Policy iii. Institute ordinance revisions to require sidewalks and/or roadside trails in new developments and, where feasible, in the redevelopment of existing developed areas and update design standards for streets, sidewalks and trails (e.g. pavement/walkway widths, traffic calming improvements, etc.).

Policy iv. Continue the development of linear parks and greenways within the community.

OBJECTIVE B – Promote an intermodal community that efficiently uses land, transportation and energy.

Policy i. Develop and annually update a 5-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to maximize the use of local transportation dollars for roadway and alternative transportation improvements.

Policy ii. Promote the development of all modes of travel (vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, rail and air) through programming and coordination of capital improvement projects.

Policy iii. Promote project efficiency and effectiveness through establishment of a coordination committee with partners from all modes of travel, utilities, and developers.

GOAL 6: ENHANCE THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE A – Enhance design requirements for new development promoting continuity.

Policy i. Develop provisions that set out specific standards and recommendations for new development pertaining to landscaping, open space, lighting and, where appropriate, architectural compatibility.

Policy ii. Institute appropriate review procedures for adherence to design standards.

Policy iii. Promote new signage provisions and encourage pilot signage projects and/or funding for amortization of nonconforming signage.

Policy iv. Encourage programs and provisions that promote retrofitting existing development to meet the new standards.

OBJECTIVE B – Provide urban design connections to major activity centers such as Ball State University, Ball Memorial Hospital, the Downtown and recreational/cultural centers.

Policy i. With continuity of streetscape design, provide for distinct connection of Ball State University and the Downtown.

Policy ii. With continuity of design, provide monuments and/or public spaces at major activity centers to provide a sense of mutual identity and focus.

Policy iii. With continuity of streetscape design, provide for connections between major activity centers and neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVE C – Enhance landscaping and design standards along major gateways of the County and entryways of the City.

Policy i. Implement corridor overlay districts to address specific issues along major gateways.

- McGalliard Road/SR 332 – signage and landscaping
- Bethel Avenue – signage and landscaping
- SR 32 – emphasize rural and historic themes
- Muncie ByPass – signage, landscaping and visual interest
- SR 67 – signage, landscaping and visual interest
- Hoyt Avenue – unified setbacks and streetscape
- Madison Street – unified setbacks and streetscape

Policy ii. Develop monumental spaces at major entryways into the City such as McGalliard Road, SR 32, SR 3, SR 67, US 35, and Wheeling Avenue.

OBJECTIVE D – Promote a well-maintained aesthetically pleasing community that efficiently uses land, transportation and energy.

Policy i. Develop and annually update a 5-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for effective use of limited public resources that includes maintenance of public infrastructure.

Policy ii. Dedicate an annual apportionment for the maintenance of sidewalks and curbs and investigate programs and policies for public/private cost sharing of such maintenance.

Policy iii. Encourage and, where feasible, institute an “immediate response” approach to repair of streetscape features such as curbs and sidewalks,

Policy iv. Promote public streetscape features such as lighting, signals and signs that are aesthetically enhanced with continuity of design and encourage dedicated and alternative sources of funds for such improvements, including improvements associated with new developments.