



Town of  
**Edinburgh**

**2024 Comprehensive Plan**



**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-30**

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING AND APPROVING  
THE TOWN OF EDINBURGH 2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Indiana Code 36-7-4-509, the Town of Edinburgh, by and through the Edinburgh Town Council, (“Council”) adopted Resolution 2011-7 which approved the 2011 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan;

WHEREAS, the Council later adopted Resolution 2016-13 which approved the Amendment to the 2011 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan;

WHEREAS, Indiana Code 36-7-4-511 requires each amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to be approved according to the procedure set forth in the 500 series of Indiana Code 36-7-4 which requires the adoption and approval of such amendments by the Edinburgh Plan Commission (“Commission”) after conducting at least one (1) public hearing;

WHEREAS, the Commission gave proper notice regarding the public hearing on the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan in accordance with Indiana Code 36-7-4-507;

WHEREAS, on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of November 2024, the Commission conducted the public hearing on the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan and, in accordance with Indiana Code 36-7-4-508, approved the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan by passing Commission Resolution 2024-05 on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of November 2024;

WHEREAS a copy of Commission Resolution 2024-05 certifying the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan to the Council is attached hereto;

WHEREAS, the Council finds that approval of the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan will promote public health, safety, morals, convenience, order, and the general welfare of the Town of Edinburgh and that it will promote efficiency and economy in the process of development of the Town; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that the 2011 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and all amendments thereto should be repealed and replaced by the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan.

WHEREAS, the Council, having found that the Commission met all requirements of Indiana Code 36-7-4 series 500, hereby finds it proper to approve the Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE EDINBURGH TOWN COUNCIL AS FOLLOWS:**

**Section 1.** The Edinburgh Town Council hereby approves the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan which is attached hereto and made a part hereof.

**Section 2.** The 2011 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and all amendments thereto are

hereby repealed and replaced by the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan.

**Section 3.** The repeal of the 2011 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and amendments thereto shall not affect any proposal properly filed with the Town of Edinburgh prior to the effective date of the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan, as such proposals shall continue under the 2011 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and its amendments as if the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan had not been adopted and approved.

**Section 4.** This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption.


**Section 5.** The Edinburgh Clerk-Treasurer shall place one (1) copy of the Town of Edinburgh 2024 Comprehensive Plan on file in the offices of the Bartholomew County Recorder, the Johnson County Recorder, and the Shelby County Recorder, pursuant to I.C. 36-7-4-509(b).

**ADOPTED** this 25<sup>th</sup> day of November 2024.

**EDINBURGH TOWN COUNCIL**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ryan Piercefield, President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Miriam Rooks, Vice President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Debbie Buck

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherri Sweet

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Bryant

ATTEST:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rhonda Barrett, Clerk-Treasurer

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING AND APPROVING  
THE TOWN OF EDINBURGH 2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

# Acknowledgments

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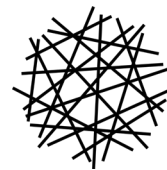
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# Table of Contents

- 01 Executive Summary ..... 9**
  - Purpose of the Plan..... 10
  - Scope of the Plan ..... 10
  - Planning Process ..... 12
  - Vision and Goals..... 13
  
- 02 General Background ..... 17**
  - Demographics ..... 18
  - Anchor Institutions ..... 21
  
- 03 Comprehensive Planning Committee ..... 23**
  - Committee Members..... 24
  - Planning Process ..... 25
  - Public Engagement..... 26
  
- 04 Land Use ..... 29**
  - Key Findings..... 30
  - Existing Conditions ..... 31
  - Community Feedback ..... 31
  - Future Land Use Plan..... 32
  - Goals & Action Items ..... 36
  - Implementation..... 38
  
- 05 Government & Fiscal Capacity ..... 39**
  - Key Findings..... 40
  - Existing Conditions ..... 41
  - Community Feedback ..... 41
  - Goals & Action Items ..... 42
  - Implementation..... 44
  
- 06 Public Facilities & Services..... 47**
  - Key Findings..... 48
  - Existing Conditions ..... 49
  - Community Feedback ..... 50
  - Goals & Action Items ..... 51
  - Implementation..... 52

# Table of Contents (Continued)

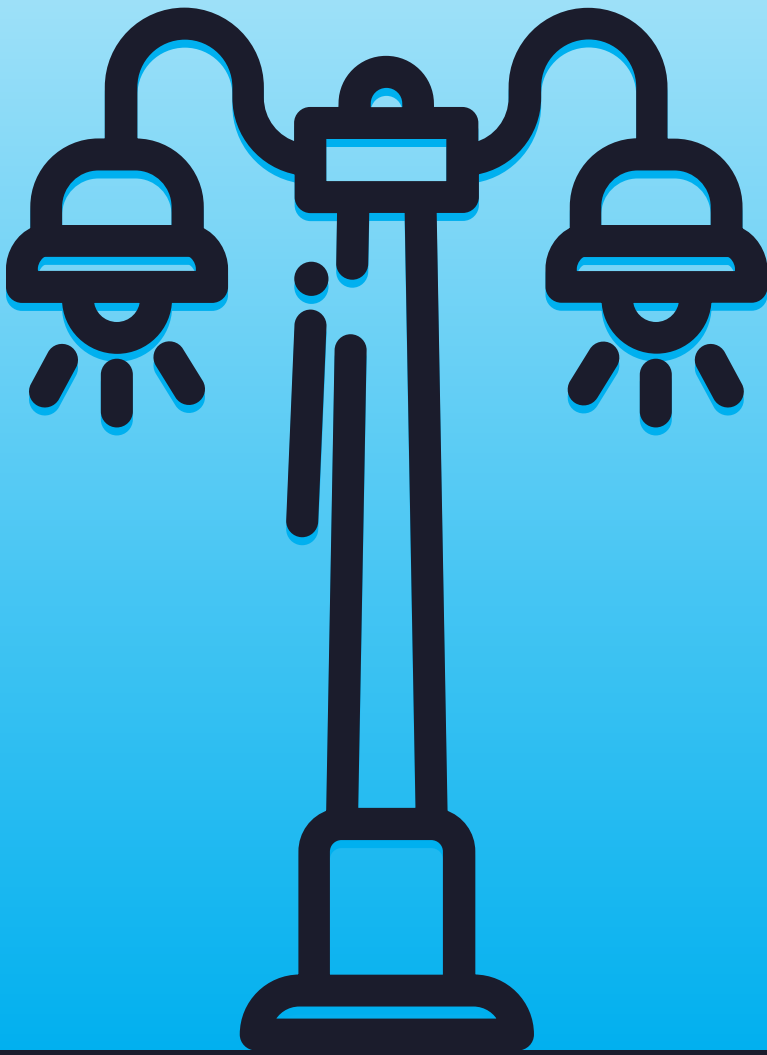
- 07 Placemaking..... 53**
  - Key Findings..... 54
  - Existing Conditions ..... 55
  - Community Feedback ..... 55
  - Goals & Action Items ..... 56
  - Implementation..... 58
  
- 08 Economic Development ..... 61**
  - Key Findings..... 62
  - Existing Conditions ..... 63
  - Community Feedback ..... 64
  - Goals & Action Items ..... 65
  - Implementation..... 68
  
- 09 Housing ..... 71**
  - Key Findings..... 72
  - Existing Conditions ..... 73
  - Community Feedback ..... 74
  - Goals & Action Items ..... 75
  - Implementation..... 77
  
- 10 Transportation ..... 79**
  - Key Findings..... 80
  - Existing Conditions ..... 81
  - Community Feedback ..... 81
  - Goals & Action Items ..... 82
  - Implementation..... 84
  
- 11 Agriculture ..... 87**
  - Key Findings..... 88
  - Existing Conditions ..... 89
  - Community Feedback ..... 89
  - Goals & Action Items ..... 90
  - Implementation..... 91

<b>12</b>	<b>Natural Resources .....</b>	<b>93</b>
	Key Findings.....	94
	Existing Conditions .....	95
	Community Feedback .....	96
	Goals & Action Items .....	97
	Implementation.....	99
<b>13</b>	<b>Parks &amp; Recreation .....</b>	<b>101</b>
	Key Findings.....	102
	Existing Conditions .....	103
	Community Feedback .....	104
	Goals & Action Items .....	105
	Implementation.....	107
<b>14</b>	<b>Broadband Access .....</b>	<b>109</b>
	Key Findings.....	110
	Existing Conditions .....	110
	Community Feedback .....	110
	Goals & Action Items .....	111
	Implementation.....	112
<b>15</b>	<b>Historic &amp; Archaeological Resources .....</b>	<b>113</b>
	Key Findings.....	114
	Existing Conditions .....	115
	Community Feedback .....	116
	Goals & Action Items .....	117
	Implementation.....	119
<b>16</b>	<b>Hazard Mitigation.....</b>	<b>121</b>
	Key Findings.....	122
	Existing Conditions .....	123
	Community Feedback .....	123
	Goals & Action Items .....	124
	Implementation.....	125

# Table of Contents (Continued)

- 17 **Appendix** ..... **127**
- Implementation Table..... 128
- Public Engagement Report ..... 149
- Summary of Public Input Survey ..... 152
- CPC Sign-In Sheets ..... 165
- CPC Meeting Notes..... 169
- Ordinance Analysis ..... 197





# Chapter One:

Executive Summary

# Purpose of the Plan

A comprehensive plan helps guide future growth, development, and preservation for a community. The Town of Edinburgh's last comprehensive plan was adopted in 2011. As the Indianapolis and Columbus metro areas have grown and the cost of suburban housing has increased, demand has risen for the quiet charm of small, rural communities like Edinburgh. With new housing projects in the works, the Town of Edinburgh is poised for growth over the next decade. A new comprehensive plan, developed with insight from community members, will help Edinburgh prepare for growth by identifying existing assets and challenges, and providing a framework for future land use and policy decisions.



The town's last comprehensive plan was developed in 2011.  
*Image Source: Town of Edinburgh*

## What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a guiding document used by elected officials and community leaders which establishes a long-term vision for the community. As a statement of official policy, comprehensive plans are important tools that should be used daily to inform land use, infrastructure, and other community development decisions. Existing conditions research and analysis, including a profile of community demographics and economics and an inventory of the built and natural environment, serves as the foundation for the goals, strategies, and action items outlined in the plan. Community stakeholders, including people living, working in, or visiting Edinburgh, were also asked to provide input to assist in the development of the plan.

According to Indiana Code, at a minimum, comprehensive plans must contain a statement of objectives on future development, a statement of policy for land use development, and a statement of policy for the development of public ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities. While the Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan may establish a framework for future policy changes within local development ordinances, it is not legally binding. The recommendations and Future Land Use Map contained in this document must be enforced through the adoption or amendment of local development ordinances, such as zoning and subdivision control ordinances.

## Scope of the Plan

In 2023, the Town of Edinburgh received a \$50,000 grant from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) to update their comprehensive plan. The planning jurisdiction for this comprehensive plan is the incorporated boundary of the Town of Edinburgh. Previously, the 2011 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan provided land use guidance for the Town of Edinburgh. This new comprehensive plan is expected to guide development in Edinburgh for the next 10 - 15 years.

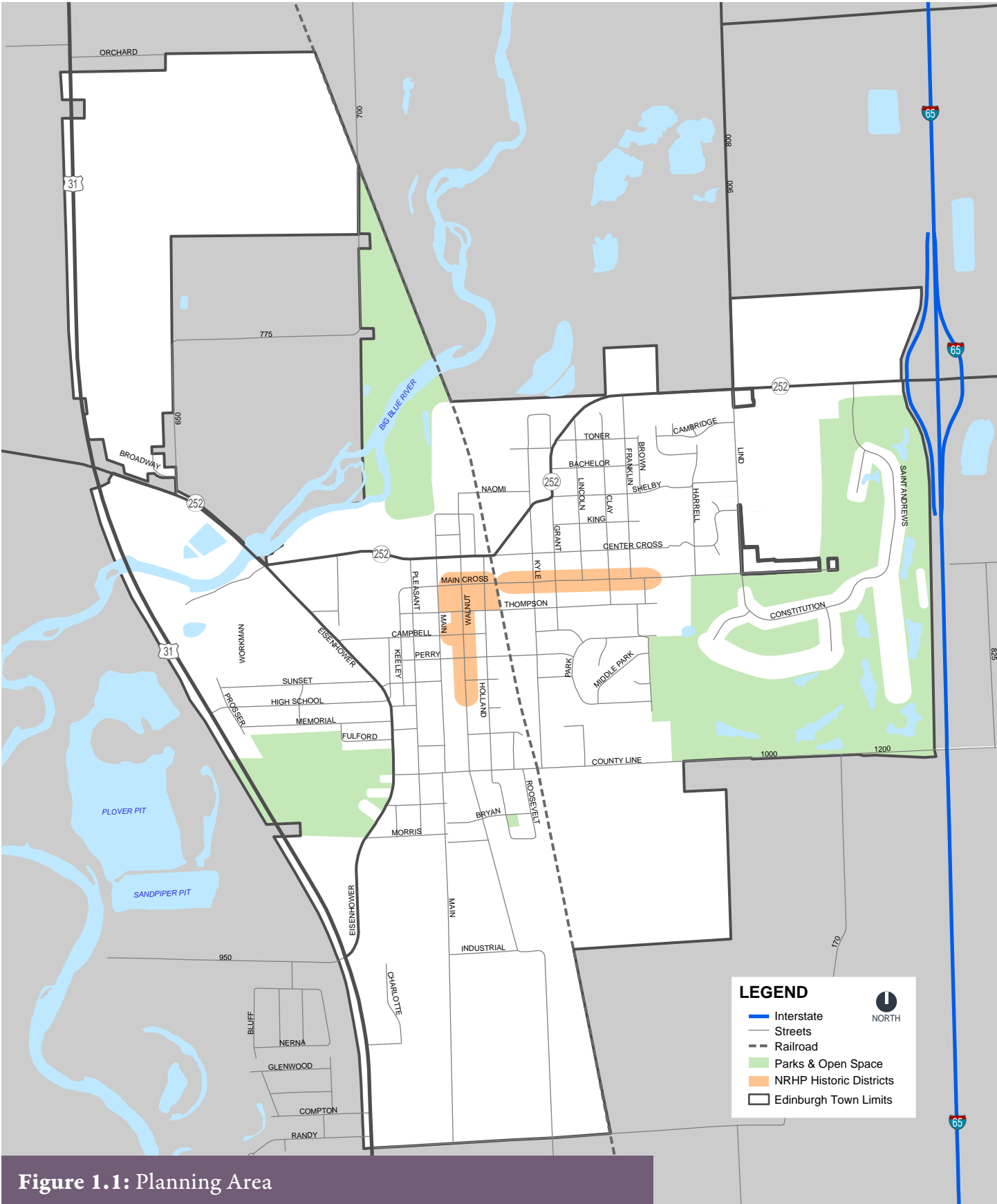


Figure 1.1: Planning Area

# Planning Process

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## Project Development

The Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan was developed over a 9-month period organized into four key phases:

### Phase One – Cast a Vision

The first phase of the planning process involved building a working relationship between HWC Engineering, the town's staff, and the Comprehensive Planning Committee through an initial coordination visit and the first Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting. This phase also involved establishing procedures for communication, finalizing the project schedule, and preliminary research and data collection.

### Phase 2 – Reach a Consensus

In the second phase, the project team facilitated a public engagement process to solicit feedback from residents both in-person and online. Engagement opportunities included a public input survey, public workshop, and focus groups with stakeholders. Information was shared via a project website, social media posts, and press releases.

### Phase 3 – Form the Plan

In the third phase, the project team presented plan recommendations to the Comprehensive Planning Committee and town staff. These recommendations were informed by research, results, and guidance compiled over the course of the planning process. Based on feedback from the Comprehensive Planning Committee, plan recommendations were refined to best represent a shared vision for the future of Edinburgh. The project team presented preliminary findings to the public at the Big Ideas Open House.

### Phase 4 – Practical Action Steps

In the final phase, an action plan was prepared to guide implementation of the comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan was then formatted into a public draft, reviewed, and revised based on input from OCRA representatives, town staff, the Comprehensive Planning Committee, and members of the public. The final draft was presented to the Planning Commission, and finally to the Town Council, for adoption.

## Community Engagement

Through a variety of engagement opportunities, the project team gathered feedback on existing conditions, and proposed goals and strategies for Edinburgh. Through this iterative process, many voices were heard, and consensus was reached. Brief descriptions of engagement opportunities are provided below. For complete findings, see Chapter Three, and the Public Participation Report beginning on page 149 of the Appendix.

### Comprehensive Planning Committee Meetings

A Comprehensive Planning Committee comprised of community leaders and stakeholders convened four times throughout the planning process to share ideas, review research findings and public input, provide guidance on the direction of the plan, and advocate for the community. Sign-in sheets and meeting notes are available on pages 165 - 196 of the Appendix.

### Public Input Survey

The project team launched a survey to gather feedback on Edinburgh's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. A version of the survey was available to community members on the project website, and at the John R. Drybread Community Center. A summary of the survey results can be found on pages 152 - 164 of the Appendix.

### Focus Group Meetings

Five focus groups were held with community stakeholders. These small group interviews provided in-depth information on a range of topics, from housing to quality of life. Key findings from these meetings can be found in the Public Participation Report starting on page 149 of the Appendix.

### Public Workshop & Open House

At these community-wide events, residents and business owners were encouraged to gather and share their thoughts on the future of Edinburgh. These events played an important role in developing and refining the goals and strategies for the Comprehensive Plan.

### Adoption Meetings

At the end of the planning process, meetings were held with Edinburgh's Planning Commission and Town Council. These meetings were open to the public and provided a forum for questions and feedback before final adoption.

# Vision and Goals

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## Land Use

**Edinburgh will balance residential, commercial, and industrial growth while maintaining its charming, historic character.**

- ✦ Refer to the Future Land Use Map as a guide for land use changes and ordinance updates.
- ✦ Understand how development outside of town limits impacts Edinburgh and plan accordingly.

## Government and Fiscal Capacity

**Edinburgh will enhance communication, promote civic engagement, and expand the functional capacity of town departments.**

- ✦ Foster an engaged citizenry through improved communication and expanded participation opportunities.
- ✦ Expand the capacity of town departments to continue to ensure adequate level of service as growth occurs.

## Public Facilities and Services

**Edinburgh will continue to provide quality services and strive to upgrade infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses.**

- ✦ Continue to provide high-quality public facilities and services to Edinburgh residents and businesses.

## Placemaking

**Edinburgh will foster strong quality of place and distinct community character through physical and programmatic improvements.**

- ✦ Promote Edinburgh as a unique destination in South Central Indiana.
- ✦ Invest in strategic capital improvements to create a welcoming, easily navigable community for residents and visitors.

## Economic Development

**Edinburgh will support existing businesses and attract new businesses to the downtown and key corridors to provide job opportunities and desired amenities.**

- ✦ Revitalize Edinburgh's downtown district as a vibrant, economically diverse destination with a desirable mix of uses.
- ✦ Support existing businesses and entrepreneurs in Edinburgh.
- ✦ Collaborate with neighboring counties to attract new employers to designated areas in and around Edinburgh.

## Housing

**Edinburgh will encourage the development of new housing options while uplifting existing neighborhoods.**

- ✦ Support the development of new housing of various types and prices to accommodate a diversity of ages, incomes, and lifestyles.
- ✦ Promote the beautification of existing neighborhoods through local enforcement and grassroots volunteerism.

## Transportation

**Edinburgh will maintain and enhance the transportation network to ensure local and regional connectivity for all users.**

- ✦ Continue to provide an efficient, well-connected transportation network in Edinburgh through maintenance and strategic improvements.
- ✦ Strengthen local and regional connectivity by enhancing the bicycle and pedestrian network.

## Agriculture

**Edinburgh will support the responsible transition of agricultural land within town limits to other appropriate uses over time.**

- ✦ Direct growth and development within town limits with appropriate transitions to agricultural areas in the unincorporated county.

## Natural Resources

**Edinburgh will preserve waterways and surrounding woodlands, and the underlying aquifer to promote ecological health, protect drinking water quality, and provide access points for recreation.**

- ✦ Activate the riverfront in Edinburgh as a destination for residents and visitors.
- ✦ Foster a healthy, thriving environment in Edinburgh for the benefit of current and future generations.

## Parks and Recreation

**Edinburgh will provide enriching indoor and outdoor recreation amenities that promote healthy lifestyles and social connections for residents of all ages and abilities.**

- ✦ Expand the capacity of Edinburgh's Parks and Recreation Department.
- ✦ Build upon existing recreation amenities in Edinburgh's parks and recreation system to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

## Broadband Access

**Edinburgh will promote access to affordable, high-speed internet for residents and businesses.**

- ✦ Demonstrate to providers that Edinburgh is ready for broadband development.

## Historic and Archaeological Resources

**Edinburgh will encourage the restoration and active reuse of downtown historic buildings, preserve the character of historic districts, and share the town's story with residents and visitors.**

- ✦ Restore and reuse historic buildings in Edinburgh to give them new life.
- ✦ Share Edinburgh's history and heritage with residents and visitors.

## Hazard Mitigation

**Edinburgh will mitigate the threat of natural and man-made disasters, and partner with county organizations to respond to and recover from disasters impacting the community.**

- ✦ Safeguard lives and property through proactive planning and intervention.

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# Chapter Two:

General Background

# Introduction

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The Town of Edinburgh, rich in history and natural beauty, is located at the nexus of Johnson, Bartholomew, and Shelby counties in South Central Indiana. Situated between Indianapolis and Louisville, the town is connected to these major metropolitan areas by Interstate 65 and U.S. Route 31. Settled in 1820 by John Campbell and incorporated in 1853, the Town of Edinburgh was the first settlement in Johnson County. The town lies on the Big Blue River, a tributary of the Driftwood River, and owes much of its history to development along the river, and later along the railroad. Edinburgh has three historic districts on the National Register of Historic Places: the Edinburgh Commercial Historic District, the South Walnut Street Historic District, and the Toner Historic District. Each of these districts features stunning historic buildings with an array of styles, including notable examples of Italianate, Late Victorian, and Classical Revival style architecture. These districts contribute to the town's historic charm.

## Demographics

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### Population

In 2022, the Town of Edinburgh had a population of approximately 4,144 people, according to American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. This indicates limited population growth of 0.5% (or 20 people) from 2012 to 2022. Compared to other communities in the region, Edinburgh is growing rather slowly. In the same ten-year period, Johnson County saw 15.7% growth and Bartholomew County experienced 6.6% growth. With annexations and subdivision development on the horizon, community leaders expect that Edinburgh's population will increase considerably over the next decade.

Compared to other communities in South Central Indiana, Edinburgh lags behind in terms of educational attainment. In 2022, only 9.2% of residents (approximately 286 people) had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 19.6% for Shelby County, 32.4% for Johnson County, and 34.8% for Bartholomew County.

Out of over 4,000 residents, only 2.2% (approximately 68 people) had a graduate degree or higher. Although educational attainment is on the rise in Edinburgh, growth is not keeping pace with other communities.

Edinburgh's population is aging. In 2022, the median age was 40.1 years, higher than the median for Johnson and Bartholomew County. Neighboring communities, such as Franklin, have a median age as low as 34.4 years, demonstrating the community's ability to attract young families with children. A large proportion of older adults and seniors may explain some of the observed differences in educational attainment. Many of Edinburgh's older residents worked in, or continue to work in, blue collar positions. Many of these positions do not require a college education. As the town grows, metrics for age and educational attainment may shift.

Edinburgh faces challenges with low income and high unemployment. The town's median household income is approximately \$51,500 in comparison to Indiana whose median household income is \$67,173. Surrounding counties, such as Johnson County, have a median household income as high as \$82,730. As of 2022, Edinburgh's unemployment rate is 8.1%. This is a substantial decrease from the 2012 unemployment rate of 12.1% but is still nearly twice as high as surrounding communities. Shelby County's unemployment rate is 3.3%, Johnson County's is 3.4%, and Bartholomew County's is 3.6%.

### Housing

The Town of Edinburgh has approximately 1,995 housing units, approximately 87.7% of which are occupied. Edinburgh has high housing vacancy. Approximately 12.3% of housing units are vacant, compared to 5.6% for Johnson County, 7.2% for Bartholomew County, and 7.3% for Shelby County. Out of the occupied units in Edinburgh, 54.7% are owner-occupied and 45.3% are renter occupied. The median home value in the Town of Edinburgh, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, is about \$131,000, which is lower than Indiana's median home value at \$183,600.

# Demographic Snapshot

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**4,144 people**  
2022 Population



**0.5% growth**  
Population Change  
from 2012 - 2022



**40.1 years**  
2022 Median Age



**87.5%**  
2022 Population  
with a High School  
Degree or Higher



**9.2%**  
2022 Population  
with a Bachelors  
Degree or Higher



**2.2%**  
2022 Population  
with a Graduate  
Degree or Higher



**\$51,500**  
2022 Median  
Household Income

*Data Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*

## Demographic Snapshot (Continued)



**1,995**  
2022 Total  
Housing Units



**1,749**  
2022 Occupied  
Housing Units



**12.3%**  
2022 Vacancy Rate



**54.7%**  
2022 Owner-  
Occupancy Rate



**45.3%**  
2022 Renter-  
Occupancy Rate



**\$131,000**  
2022 Median Home  
Value



**2,238**  
2022 Employed  
Civilian Labor Force



**22.3%**  
2022 Employment  
in Manufacturing



**8.1%**  
2022 Unemployment  
Rate

*Data Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*

## Anchor Institutions

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Anchor institutions are entities within the community that play an important role in defining the town's identity and shaping its overall success. Key anchor institutions in the Town of Edinburgh include the following:

### Edinburgh Community School Corporation

The Edinburgh Community School Corporation provides a strong, supportive educational experience for youth in Edinburgh. Faculty and staff facilitate both academic programming and extracurriculars to promote learning, growth, and development. The school corporation includes East Side Elementary and Edinburgh High School/Middle School.

### John R. Drybread Community Center

Opened in 2018, the John R. Drybread Community Center strives to provide a sense of community and inclusivity for everyone. The community center hosts a variety of events and programs each year. Example programming includes the Yard of the Week contest, Edinburgh Farmers Market, and Senior Moments program for elderly residents.

### Edinburgh Wright-Hageman Public Library

The Edinburgh Wright-Hageman Public Library was established in 1921, and named in memory of Charlotte Wright Hageman who graciously offered her house for the use of the library. This library provides an array of services including programming and events for the Town of Edinburgh. It has been serving its community for various years.

### Edinburgh Parks and Recreation Department

The Edinburgh Parks and Recreation Department owns and manages multiple parks, including Bryan Park, Irwin Park, Prosser Park, the Edinburgh Sports Complex, and the Edinburgh Aquatic Center. These parks offer programs and events throughout the year, from organized youth sports to the Youth Club program.



The public library is a valuable anchor institution which provides a range of services for Edinburgh residents.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*



## Indiana Premium Outlets

Indiana Premium Outlets is located just south of Edinburgh at the Interstate 65 and U.S. Route 31 interchange. The mall first opened in 1989 and was acquired by Simon Properties in 2004. Previously named Edinburgh Premium Outlets, the mall put Edinburgh on the map, making the town's name recognizable across the state. Today, the outlet mall is home to over 70 retail stores, including notable brands such as Coach, Nike, and Crocs. Even with the name change, the mall continues to influence life in Edinburgh, serving as a shopping destination for residents and visitors. During the planning process, stakeholders highlighted the importance of the mall as a tourist attraction, and proposed leveraging this attraction to draw visitors to downtown Edinburgh.

## Lions Club

The Edinburgh chapter of Lions Club International serves the community in a variety of ways. The active club facilitates community projects (like food drives), promotes sight (by conducting vision screenings, equipping hospitals and clinics, and raising awareness of eye disease), helps during disasters, and serves youth. The club offers programs and volunteer opportunities for everyone. Participating youth are presented with an opportunity to help the community they live in and gain the courage to speak up about ongoing issues.

## American Legion

American Legion is a non-profit organization that aims to serve veterans, military personnel, and their families. Members provide community support by facilitating events, programs, fundraisers, and scholarship programs to aid and honor those who have served. American Legion Post 233 is located at the intersection of Memorial Drive and Eisenhower Drive in Edinburgh.

The Indiana Premium Outlets draws visitors from across Indiana.

*Image Source: Simon Premium Outlets*



# Chapter Three:

Comprehensive Planning Committee

## Introduction

This comprehensive plan was crafted with the input and knowledge of the people of Edinburgh. The Comprehensive Planning Committee consisted of residents, business owners, local leaders, and other invested community members. This group of individuals provided insight on local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The Committee also provided feedback on draft materials, guiding the direction of visions, goals, and action items. Committee members attended public meetings and workshops, not only to participate, but to answer questions and support the project team. Finally, the Comprehensive Planning Committee was the ultimate advocate for the planning process. The Committee advertised engagement opportunities, and, after the plan’s adoption, is dedicated to ensuring the plan’s long-term success. Sign-in sheets and meeting notes for the Comprehensive Planning Committee are available on pages 165 - 196 of the Appendix.

The Town of Edinburgh worked closely with HWC Engineering to produce this comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan is intended to serve as a framework for future planning and development in Edinburgh. This planning process began with an initial kick-off meeting which involved reviewing a timeline of the process, forming the Comprehensive Planning Committee, and a brief discussion about the community’s most pressing issues and concerns.

## Committee Members

**Table 3.1 Comprehensive Planning Committee**

Name	Affiliation
Michael Chiado	George Utz, Inc.
Sarabeth Drybread	John R. Drybread Community Center
Kami Ervin	Danzer Services, Inc.
Kristen Goecker	Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development
Jason Hester	Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development
Jason Hyer	United Methodist Church
Justin Lollar	Edinburgh Fire and Rescue Department
Ryan Piercefield	Town Council
Hayley Roberts	Not Just Popcorn
Miriam Rooks	Town Council
Ron Ross	Edinburgh Community School Corporation
Stephanie Taylor	Edinburgh Community School Corporation
Daniel Teter	Parks & Recreation Department; Cemetery Department
Debbie Vaughan	Planning Commission; Redevelopment Commission



# Planning Process

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## Phase One - Cast a Vision

Phase One focused on establishing a relationship between HWC Engineering and the Town of Edinburgh. The purpose of this phase was to form a Comprehensive Planning Committee and to build a strong foundation for future communication. During this phase, the project team met with representatives from the Town of Edinburgh to review the timeline for the project, ask questions, and identify challenges. The project team also gathered data and assembled a demographic profile of Edinburgh to gain a baseline understanding of the community.

- ◆ Initial Coordination Visit - January 3rd, 2024
- ◆ Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting #1 - February 28th, 2024

## Phase Two - Reach a Consensus

The comprehensive plan's public engagement process launched in Phase Two. The project team collected feedback from community members through a survey, public workshop, and focus group meetings. These engagement opportunities were advertised on the plan's website, town's website, and community social media accounts. In all, over 430 voices were heard in this phase of the planning process. Findings were summarized in a public participation report.

- ◆ Project Website - February 28th, 2024
- ◆ Public Survey - February 28th, 2024 to March 31st, 2024
- ◆ Focus Group Interviews - March 27th, 2024
- ◆ Public Workshop - March 27th, 2024
- ◆ Public Participation Report - April 12th, 2024

## Phase Three - Form the Plan

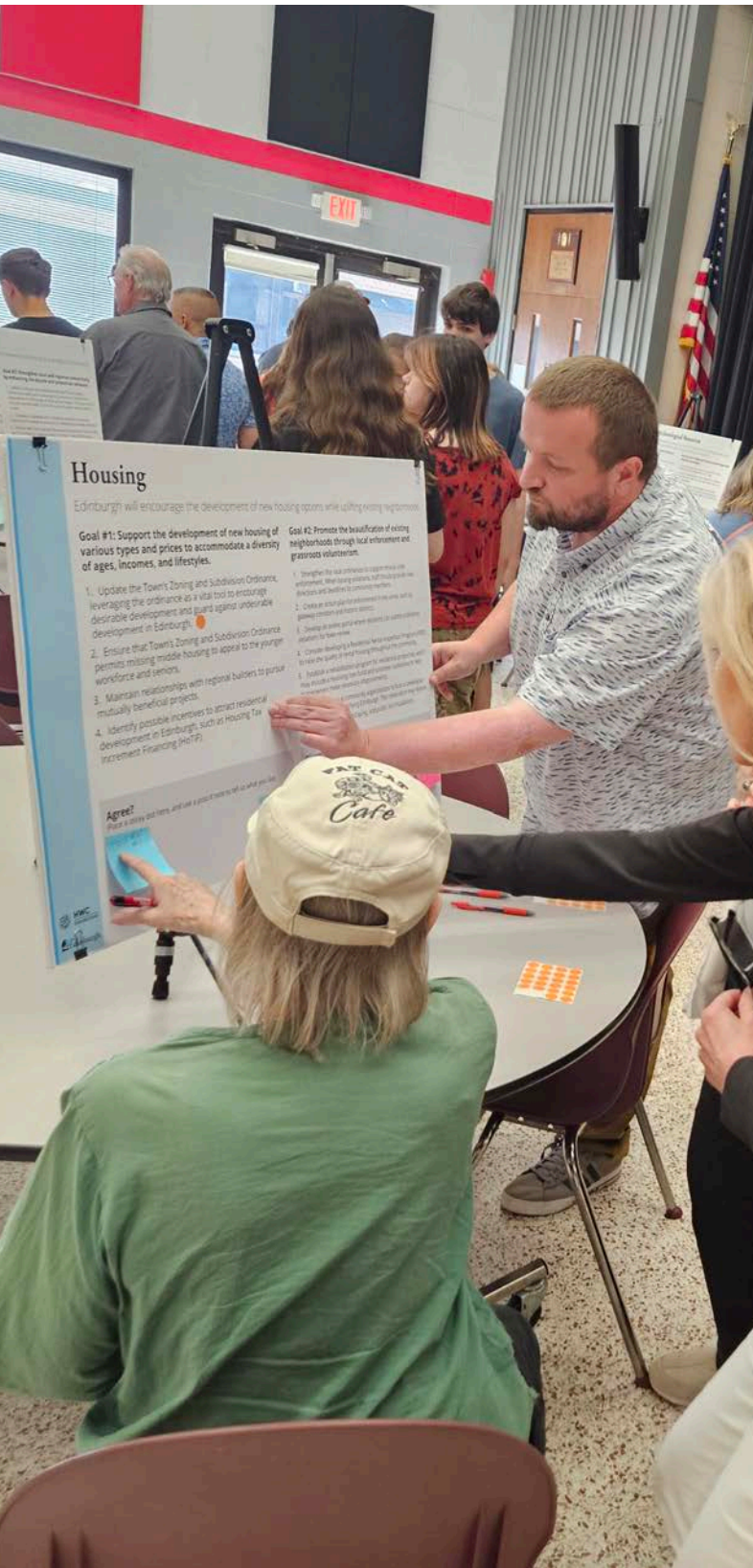
Based on community input from Phase Two, the project team drafted a vision, goals, and action items for each focus area of the comprehensive plan. The project team facilitated multiple meetings with the Comprehensive Planning Committee to review the results of public engagement, as well as these draft materials. Building off feedback from the Comprehensive Planning Committee, the project team produced a rough draft of the plan.

- ◆ Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting #2 - April 17th, 2024
- ◆ Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting #3 - May 1st, 2024
- ◆ Big Ideas Open House - May 15th, 2024
- ◆ First Draft of Comprehensive Plan - June 12th, 2024

## Phase Four - Practical Action Steps

The final phase of the planning process involved producing a public draft of the plan. This draft was presented to the public at a Planning Commission meeting to solicit feedback from the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) and the broader community. After many revisions, the plan was presented to the Planning Commission and Town Council for final adoption.

- ◆ Public/OCRA Draft of Comprehensive Plan - June 20th, 2024
- ◆ Public Presentation of the Plan - July 16th, 2024
- ◆ Final Draft of Comprehensive Plan - September 5th, 2024
- ◆ Planning Commission Adoption Presentation and Public Hearing - November 19th, 2024
- ◆ Town Council Adoption Presentation - November 25th, 2024
- ◆ Post-Adoption Revisions and Final Deliverables - December 4th, 2024



Community members discuss proposed goals for housing development and redevelopment in Edinburgh.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

## Public Engagement

The 2024 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan was built on a foundation of community insight. Before the planning process began, the Town of Edinburgh recognized the importance of transparency and community support. Naturally, local leaders sought to develop a plan that community members could not only trust but rally behind. Over the course of the planning process, the project team gathered feedback from community leaders, residents, business owners, visitors, and other interested parties through online and in-person engagement opportunities. In total, over 460 voices were heard through focus group meetings with stakeholders, a public workshop, a public input survey, and an open house.

### Focus Groups with Stakeholders

On March 27th, 2024, the project team facilitated five in-person discussions with stakeholders that lived in, worked in, or were otherwise invested in the future of Edinburgh. Focus groups were centered around the following topics: Quality of Life, Marketing and Tourism, Downtown, Local Business, and Housing. In these discussions, 25 participating stakeholders used their local expertise to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the Town of Edinburgh. Key findings from these focus group discussions can be found in the Public Participation Report, which begins on page 149 of the Appendix.

### Public Workshop

The project team hosted a public workshop at the Town Hall on the evening of March 27th which gathered insight from 13 community members. Following a brief presentation about the comprehensive planning process, participants were encouraged to complete activities at boards stationed around the room. Each activity was carefully designed to allow participants to highlight assets, identify challenges, and envision the future of Edinburgh. The public workshop also included an activity where participants were asked to map appropriate future land uses for existing and recently annexed land in the Town of Edinburgh.

## Public Input Survey

From February 29th to March 31st, the public input survey collected feedback from 400 participants (approximately 10% of the town’s population). The survey, available online or in-person at the John R. Drybread Community Center, gathered insight into existing conditions, while exploring potential opportunities for the town. By assessing participant satisfaction on a range of topics, from housing to hazard mitigation, the survey results helped identify community strengths and weaknesses. Combined with feedback collected through the public workshop and focus groups, the public input survey helped inform the shared vision, goals, and action items for the comprehensive plan. A detailed summary of the survey results can be found starting on page 152 of the Appendix.



Community members share their ideas at the Public Workshop.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*



Stakeholders discuss needed revitalization efforts in the downtown district at a focus group meeting.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

## Emerging Themes

### Community Pride and Identity

- ✦ There’s a strong sense of pride in Edinburgh’s small-town feel, historic charm, and sense of community.

### Desire for Downtown Revitalization

- ✦ There’s a desire for a vibrant downtown district with active storefronts, restaurants, shops, and enriching programming.

### Housing Affordability and Variety

- ✦ There’s a need for a variety of housing options at different price points to accommodate various demographics.

### Placemaking and Infrastructure

- ✦ There’s a desire for placemaking efforts, including gateway improvements, wayfinding signage, streetscape improvements, public greenspaces, and property maintenance to enhance the Town’s appearance and create welcoming spaces for residents and visitors.

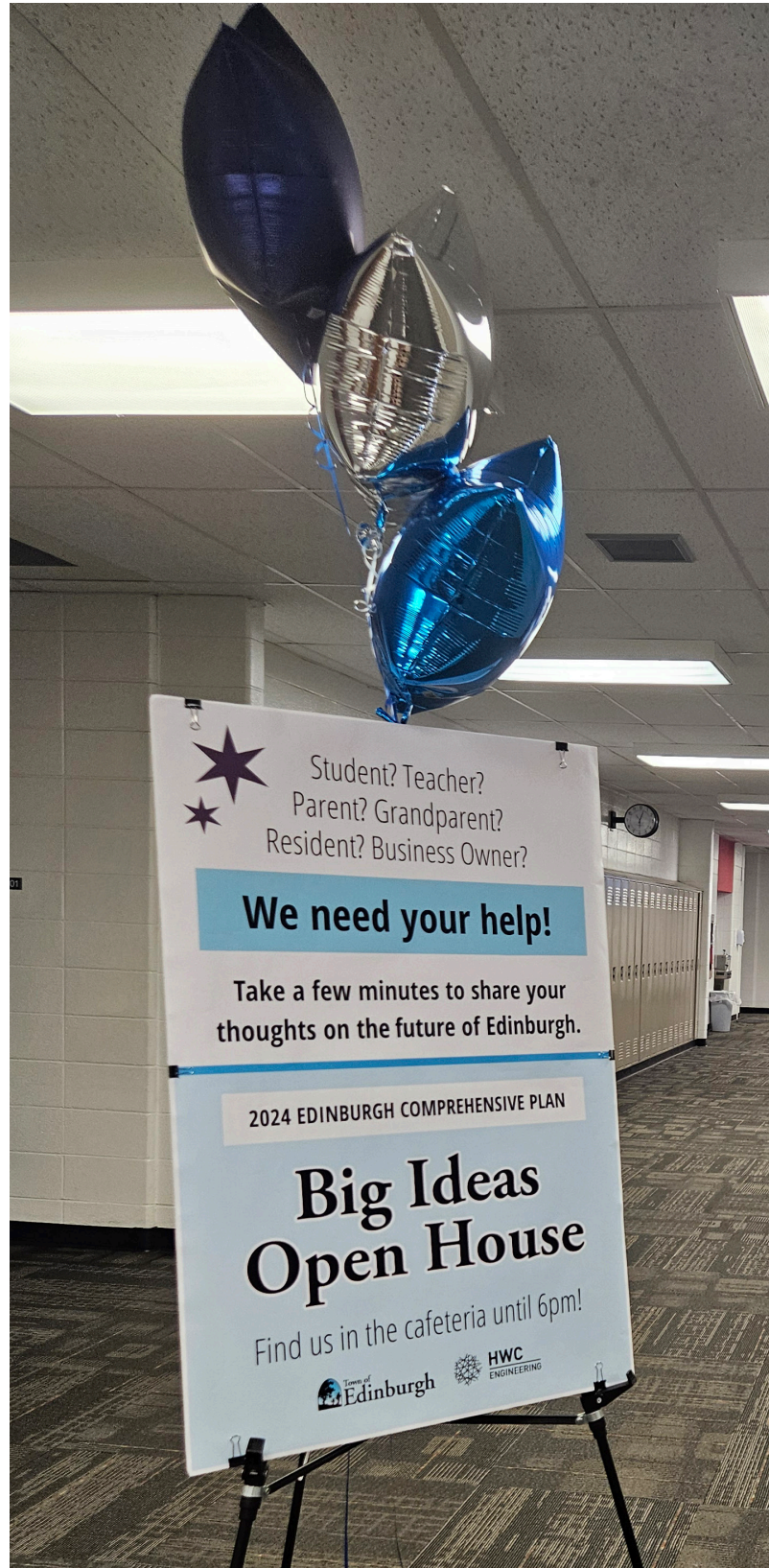
### Recreation and Youth Engagement

- ✦ Enhanced recreation opportunities are desired, with a focus on engaging youth. Suggestions include establishing a gym, activating the riverfront, improving facilities at Irwin Park and the Aquatic Center, and developing a trail system.

## Big Ideas Open House

The Big Ideas Open House took place on May 15th, 2024, from 5:00pm to 6:00pm at Edinburgh High School. The event was scheduled to occur simultaneously with the Annual HSMS Art Show to invite comments from students, teachers, parents, and grandparents. In total, over 30 participants attend the event. The goal of the Big Ideas Open House was to share proposed goals and action items for key focus areas of the comprehensive plan. Using interactive boards stationed around the room, community members were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the direction for each focus area. The project team and Town of Edinburgh staff were available to answer questions and listen to residents' comments and concerns.

- ◆ All the goals presented at the event were received positively.
- ◆ A couple of participants expressed concern about farmland being redeveloped into housing.
- ◆ One participant was unsure about expanding the capacity of the Parks and Recreation Department. Another was unsure about riverfront activation.
- ◆ One participant was concerned about historic buildings being torn down for parking in the downtown district. Another participant expressed concern about street expansions impacting the downtown character of Edinburgh. Lastly, one participant was unsure about investing in bike lanes without first improving local roads



The Big Ideas Open House was held at the Edinburgh High School to gather feedback on proposed goals and action items.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*



# Chapter Four:

Land Use

# Vision for Land Use

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**Edinburgh will balance residential, commercial, and industrial growth while maintaining its charming, historic character.**

## Introduction

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Edinburgh is a mosaic of land use patterns, each of which was influenced by a different era in the community's history. Access to natural power sources supported Edinburgh's early development. As early as 1826, industries were established around the Big Blue River, including a flour mill, sawmill, distillery, tannery, and woolen mill. These early industries created not only capital from which to develop other enterprises, but a surplus of goods for trade. By 1828, the Madison State Road had reached Edinburgh, connecting Indianapolis, Greenwood, Franklin, Columbus, and Madison, Indiana. The road entered Edinburgh along Main Cross Street, reinforcing development.

Edinburgh's growth remained modest until 1845. In that year, Indiana's first railroad, the Indianapolis and Madison Line, reached the town. For a brief time, Edinburgh became the primary transportation and commerce center for Johnson County and surrounding counties. New development centered around the rail line, accelerating the formation of the downtown district. This district remains the heart of the community to this day. In the decades since, most new development has popped up along major thoroughfares, including State Road 252, U.S. Route 31, and Interstate 65. When the Indiana Premium Outlets, a mall just south of Edinburgh, opened in 1989, it also attracted businesses, shifting development away from the downtown. In recent years, the town has been working to reverse this trend and revitalize the downtown.

Land use decisions within Edinburgh are determined by the Town Council, Planning Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Town Council is responsible for adopting and amending the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, and subdivision ordinance. The primary role of the Planning Commission is to advise the Town Council on these decisions. In Indiana, plan commissions also have exclusive control over the approval process for all subdivisions of land covered by the subdivision ordinance. The Zoning Board of Appeals is responsible for hearing appeals of administrative decisions about zoning and for approving or denying special exceptions, conditional uses, and variances.

## Key Findings

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- ✦ Adopted in 1993, the town's zoning map and local ordinances need an update.
- ✦ Community members are interested in dedicating more land to parks and recreation. At the same time, Edinburgh should encourage the highest and best use for all land. The town should also avoid allowing too many properties to become tax exempt to continue to support a strong tax base for the local school district.
- ✦ When appropriate, Edinburgh should support the responsible transition of agricultural land to residential, commercial, and industrial uses over time.
- ✦ There is an opportunity to annex land along U.S. Route 31 for future subdivision development.
- ✦ Community members want the downtown to remain a mixed-use district. Residential uses should be limited to the second floor and commercial uses should occupy the first floor.

## Existing Conditions

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The Town of Edinburgh is located between Interstate 65 and U.S. Route 31, within the bounds of Johnson, Bartholomew, and Shelby Counties. The community is conveniently situated between Indianapolis (a 30-minute drive) and Columbus (a 15-minute drive). This short commute, paired with the historic charm of the downtown, the scenic Big Blue River, and access to stores and restaurants at the Indiana Premium Outlets, makes the community a desirable place to live.

The historic heart of Edinburgh is along Main Cross Street, roughly between Main Street and Holland Street. This area, considered the downtown core, is home to most of the town's small restaurants and businesses, as well as key institutional uses. Amenities include the town hall, community center, library, restaurants, an event center, a bank, a salon, a barbershop, and a furniture store. Over time, other commercial uses, including a diner, grocery store, bait shop, auto parts store, and more, have popped up along major corridors through the community, including State Road 252, Eisenhower Drive, and U.S. Route 31.

In addition to the institutional uses in the downtown core, Edinburgh is home to two schools (East Side Elementary and Edinburgh High School / Middle School), a large cemetery (Rest Haven Cemetery), and several churches. Many of these institutional uses can be found along Eisenhower Road, while others are scattered throughout the community.

There are several small- and medium-sized industrial operations in Edinburgh. These industrial sites are concentrated along the Louisville & Indiana railroad, which runs north-south through the center of town. Common industrial uses in Edinburgh include veneer mills, plastics and metal manufacturing, recycling centers, and automotive repair facilities.

Directly to the north and stretching to the west, the Town of Edinburgh borders rich natural areas. The Big Blue River flows southwest from Summit Lake State Park near New Castle. This river, stretching nearly 84 miles, then joins with Sugar Creek to become the Driftwood River. These waterways, and adjacent forested areas, could be

activated for recreation, from canoeing to nature trails. Other recreation amenities in Edinburgh include the Edinburgh Sports Complex, Edinburgh Aquatic Center, and Irwin Park.

In the near north, south, and stretching to the east, Edinburgh is surrounded by fertile agricultural land. In the future, there may be opportunities to convert agricultural land within town limits into residential, commercial, or industrial uses. As growth occurs, it may also be appropriate to annex neighboring agricultural parcels for development.

Land use decisions in the Town of Edinburgh are guided by the current zoning map and zoning ordinance, both of which were adopted in 1993. A lot has changed since the 1990s, and community stakeholders recognize the need for an updated ordinance and map to prepare for future growth. Modern ordinances can protect the community from undesirable development and promote desirable development. These ordinances can also be designed to resolve recurring conflicts between residents and local government, encourage property maintenance, and enhance community character.

## Community Feedback

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The Town of Edinburgh has many great assets, but participants of public engagement opportunities indicated that they would like to see more development throughout the town for more housing, retail, parks, and job opportunities for residents and visitors. Conversations with focus groups indicated that participants would like to see future residential development be located on the northwest corridor in town along U.S. Route 31 and directly opposite in the southeast corner of Edinburgh along County Line Road. They desire future commercial development to be in the downtown district on Main Cross Street, on the U.S. Route 31 corridor, and at the I-65 and State Road 252 interchange. Future park development should be located near Eisenhower Drive and Morris Street as well as downtown. Additionally, industrial development should be constructed on the south side of Edinburgh along Main and Walnut Streets.

# Future Land Use Plan

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## Purpose

Land use plans are intended to guide community leaders and elected officials when determining the appropriateness of zoning changes or requests for development. As stated in Edinburgh's 2011 Comprehensive Plan, land use plans should promote a sustainable, market-supportable approach to growth and development to:

- ✦ Protect and enhance existing neighborhoods;
- ✦ Strengthen commercial areas;
- ✦ Protect industrial areas and employment centers;
- ✦ Enhance the town's open spaces and environmental features; and,
- ✦ Maintain areas for community facilities.

In this section, the existing land use map is presented to establish a baseline for Edinburgh. The future land use plan builds on the patterns identified in this map, while also considering current zoning districts, utility service areas, environmental features, and community input. The future land use plan provides a framework for future development but is not a zoning map. Although detailed, the future land use plan is intended to be flexible to accommodate unique or compelling circumstances and creative approaches to development. Over time, the future land use plan's recommendations may be adopted through amendments to the town's zoning map and ordinances.

## Future Land Use Classifications

The future land use plan consists of seven distinct land use classifications, including:

- ✦ Single-family Residential
- ✦ Multi-family Residential
- ✦ Commercial
- ✦ Industrial
- ✦ Institutional
- ✦ Parks and Recreation
- ✦ Downtown

## Single-family Residential

Parcels designated as single-family residential are reserved primarily for single-family detached residential structures. These areas may range in densities and may contain small amounts of duplexes or single-family attached dwellings but are characterized by a predominance of single-family detached residential structures.

## Multi-family Residential

Parcels designated as multi-family residential consist primarily of multi-unit residential buildings which may be renter- or owner-occupied. Multi-family residential areas in the future land use plan reflect existing developments and infill opportunity sites in and near the existing town limits. Areas designated for multi-family residential development can accommodate a variety of dwelling types, from senior housing to affordable housing.

Manufactured home communities are also included in this classification. This refers specifically to parcels which contain required improvements and utilities for the long-term parking of manufactured homes in greater density than a typical single-family neighborhood. These communities may include services and facilities for residents. The future land use plan expects that these communities will not expand in the future but rather remain the same or be replaced by other forms of multi-family housing.

The future land use plan establishes new areas for multi-family residential development based on proximity to transportation and services, promoting greater density where appropriate. New multi-family sites are also distributed to maximize their function as a transitional land use between single-family residential and commercial land uses.



## Commercial

The commercial land use designation indicates areas appropriate for the sale of goods and services, as well as offices for professional services, such as dental, legal, and accounting. These uses range in intensity, height, and size depending on the intended customer base.

The future land use plan identifies areas appropriate for commercial development and redevelopment, such as the downtown core and along major thoroughfares.

## Industrial

Parcels designated as industrial include those involved in the production, manufacturing, distribution or fabrication of goods. These areas depend on proximity to regional transportation networks including the interstate and railroad.

The future land use plan identifies areas appropriate for industrial uses, particularly on the south side of the community near the existing railroad. Other industrial uses are concentrated in this area and there is land available to accommodate additional development.

## Institutional

Parcels designated as institutional include those owned and operated by a governmental or other public agency and established primarily for the benefit of the community. This includes schools, utilities, and government buildings and structures. The future land use plan anticipates that these uses will remain largely as they currently exist in the town. As growth occurs, expansion of some community facilities will need to be considered.

## Parks and Open Space

Parcels designated as parks and open space include any public or private land available for recreational, educational, cultural, or aesthetic purposes. Parks and open spaces in the future land use plan largely reflect existing park spaces, such as Irwin Park, Prosser Park, Bryan Park, the Edinburgh Aquatic Center, and the Edinburgh Sports Complex.

Areas with this designation should be preserved for parks and open space uses. The town should strive to maintain and enhance access to these areas, especially as new residential development occurs.

## Downtown

Parcels designated as downtown are areas where a compatible mix of uses, often on the same lot or within one building, either currently exist or are desired in the future. Residential and office uses in these areas should be generally located on the upper floors of buildings above ground floor commercial uses, including restaurants, retail, and entertainment venues.

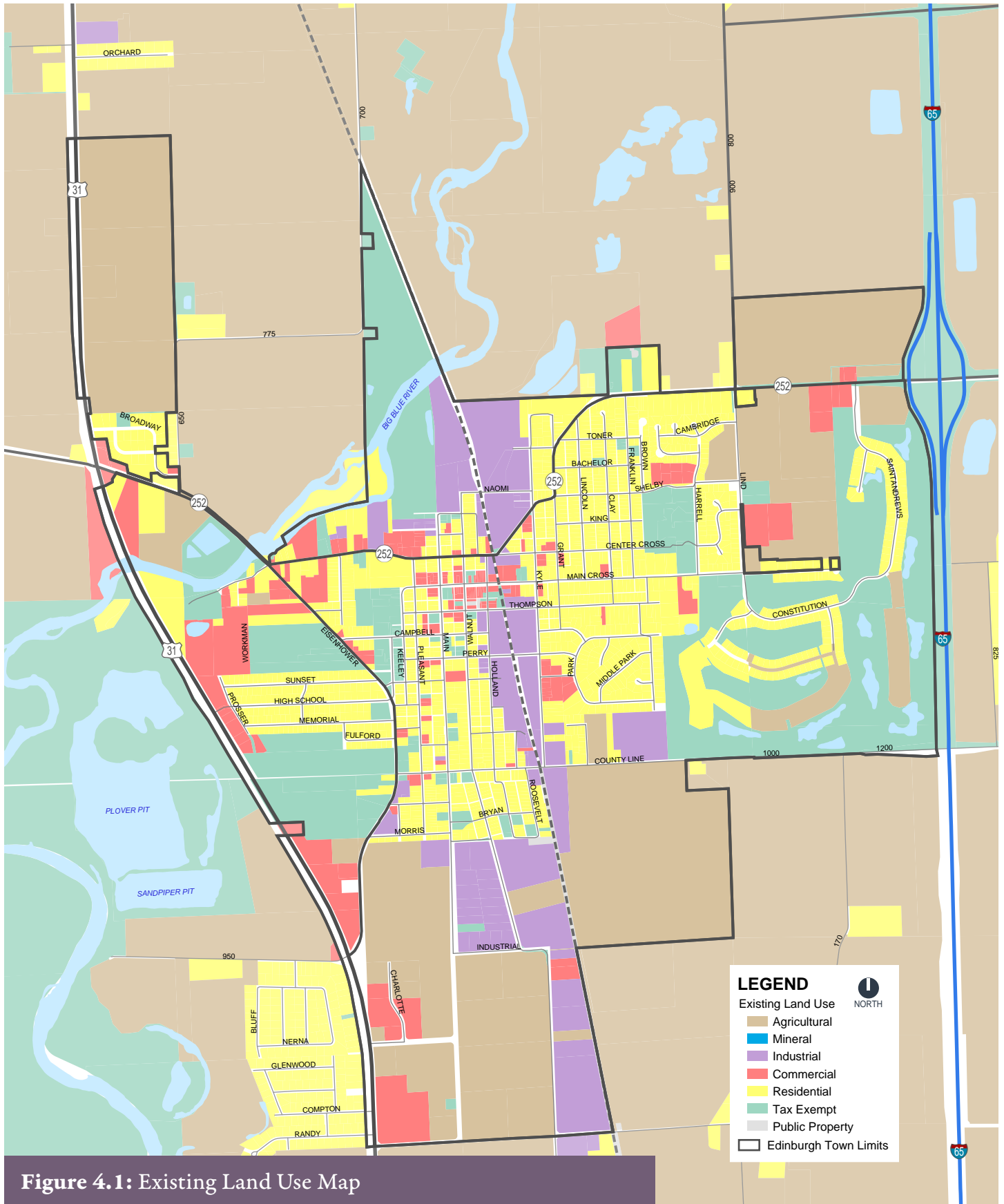


Figure 4.1: Existing Land Use Map

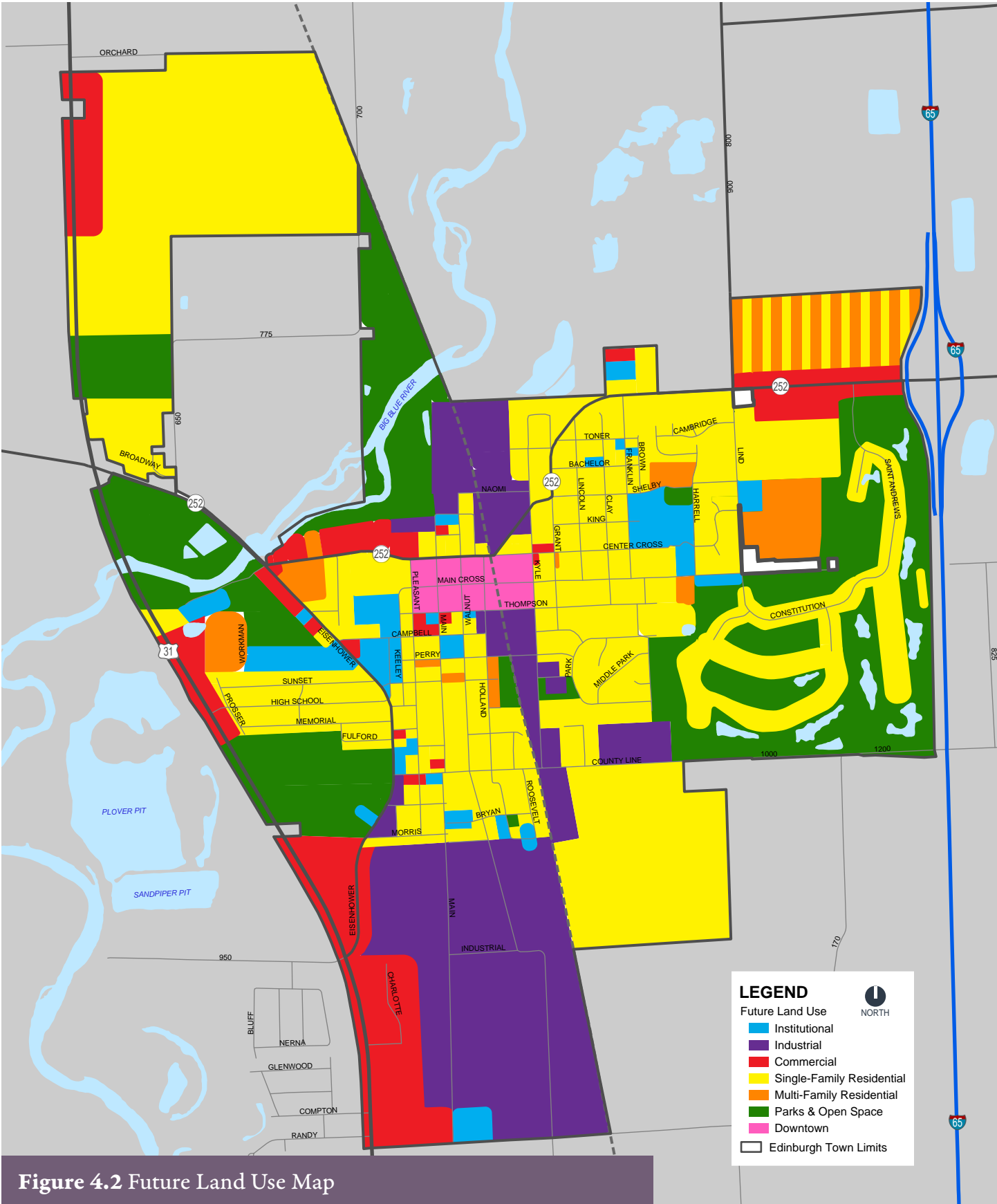


Figure 4.2 Future Land Use Map

# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### **Refer to the Future Land Use Map as a guide for land use changes and ordinance updates.**

Edinburgh currently relies on a Future Land Use Map that is over a decade old, dating back to the 2011 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan. To accomplish desired growth and development, Edinburgh must update the Future Land Use Map to reflect the current state of the community and a shared vision for its future. Once adopted, the new Future Land Use Map and Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan will help guide updates to the zoning map and ordinances.

Edinburgh's zoning map and ordinance were adopted in 1993 and have yet to be updated. Although the town's subdivision control ordinance was updated in 2024, documents need to be revised to implement the vision of the comprehensive plan and reflect changes in development practices. After all, Edinburgh has experienced significant change due to both local and national events over the last several decades. Following the 2008 Recession and COVID-19 pandemic, developers designed more economical, alternative housing products to meet consumer demands. Old ordinances may not accommodate these new housing products, and the difficulty of navigating these out-of-dated ordinances may deter interested developers. Furthermore, the commercial market in Edinburgh has changed drastically due to growth at the Interstate 65/U.S. Route 31 interchange and the introduction of online shopping. By updating the Future Land Use Map and using it as a tool to drive ordinance changes, Edinburgh can encourage residential development throughout the community, promote occupancy in downtown commercial buildings, and accommodate industrial development where appropriate.

## Action Items

- ✦ Publish the Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map on the town's website for easy access. Distribute copies to staff and town officials.
- ✦ Host an annual workshop to educate the Town Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals on how to best utilize the Future Land Use Map and Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan in their official roles.
- ✦ Update Edinburgh's zoning map and ordinances in accordance with the recommendations of the Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map.

## Goal 2:

### Understand how development outside of town limits impacts Edinburgh and plan accordingly.

The Town of Edinburgh is split between three counties: Johnson, Bartholomew, and Shelby County. Town officials and staff should stay up to date on land use plans and proposed development for each of these counties with special attention given to the surrounding unincorporated area within a two-mile radius. The development of new subdivisions, commercial centers, or recreation amenities may impact Edinburgh's roadways and other facilities. By building strong relationships with each county, the Town of Edinburgh may be able to participate in decision-making discussions concerning the surrounding counties. Similarly, the Town of Edinburgh should coordinate with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the Indiana National Guard on land use decisions at the neighboring Driftwood State Fishing Area and Camp Atterbury (located less than four miles from Edinburgh).

In recent years, the Town of Edinburgh has taken steps to annex adjacent properties to support residential development. As the community considers future annexations, it may be appropriate to develop a formal annexation plan to strategically identify areas the community has interest in acquiring. These annexations should benefit the community and annexed property owners, while forwarding the town's vision.

## Action Items

- ✦ Develop an annexation plan to strategically identify areas Edinburgh has interest in acquiring. Annexations should forward the town's vision and contribute to a specific purpose, such as economic development, residential development, or quality of life.
- ✦ Stay informed on decisions regarding nearby unincorporated land in Johnson, Bartholomew, and Shelby County.
- ✦ Coordinate with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and Indiana National Guard on land use decisions at the Driftwood State Fishing Area and Camp Atterbury.

# Implementation

**Vision for Land Use:** Edinburgh will balance residential, commercial, and industrial growth while maintaining its charming, historic character.

**Goal 1:** Refer to the Future Land Use Map as a guide for land use changes and ordinance updates.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Publish the Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map on the town’s website for easy access. Distribute copies to staff and town officials.	Planning Department	–
B. Host an annual workshop to educate the Town Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals on how to best utilize the Future Land Use Map and Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan in their official roles.	Planning Department, Town Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals	Town Budget
C. Update Edinburgh’s zoning map and ordinances in accordance with the recommendations of the Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	Town Budget

**Goal 2:** Understand how development outside of town limits impacts Edinburgh and plan accordingly.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Develop an annexation plan to strategically identify areas Edinburgh has interest in acquiring. Annexations should forward the town’s vision and contribute to a specific purpose, such as economic development, residential development, or quality of life.	Town Manager, Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Stay informed on decisions regarding nearby unincorporated land in Johnson, Bartholomew, and Shelby County.	Town Manager, Town Council	–
C. Coordinate with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and Indiana National Guard on land use decisions at the Driftwood State Fishing Area and Camp Atterbury.	Town Manager, Town Council	–



# Chapter Five:

Government & Fiscal Capacity

# Vision for Government and Fiscal Capacity

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**Edinburgh will enhance communication, promote civic engagement, and expand the functional capacity of town departments.**

## Introduction

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As Edinburgh grows, pressure will continue to build on local government to maintain adequate level of service for infrastructure, services, and amenities. Although the town has several departments, from the Parks & Recreation Department to the Planning Department, some of these departments may only be staffed by a couple of hard-working employees. With that in mind, the town should evaluate opportunities to expand functional capacity. Functional capacity is needed for the effective delivery of services, but also to implement the goals and strategies within this comprehensive plan.

Closely tied to expanded government capacity is the need for enhanced communication and civic engagement. In an era of political division, worsened by a deficit in local news reporting and social media gossip, Edinburgh must take steps to communicate with residents and business owners in a transparent, accessible manner. Civic engagement is also needed to leverage community feedback, drive initiatives forward, and build trust in local government.

## Key Findings

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- ✦ Community members value transparency. Edinburgh should take steps to improve communication on local decision making and share updates on ongoing projects and programs.
- ✦ Community members were largely dissatisfied with citizen engagement and participation, particularly amongst teens and young adults. Building off the success of this planning process, Edinburgh should continue to provide opportunities for public engagement, developing the next generation of community leaders, volunteers, and advocates.
- ✦ Current staff are able to adequately manage daily operations, but Edinburgh may need to consider new hires as the town grows.
- ✦ In addition to new hires, Edinburgh may need to invest in new training, facilities, equipment, and technology to maintain an adequate level of service.



## Existing Conditions

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The Town of Edinburgh has 44 full-time staff members and six elected officials that facilitate the daily operations of the community. Since Edinburgh owns and operates its own municipal utilities, many staff members work in utility departments, including the Utility Office and the Electric, Water, and Wastewater Departments. The town ensures public safety and well-being through its Police Department and the Fire and Rescue Department. The Police Department has fourteen dedicated, full-time officers and is supported by a K9 Unit. The Fire and Rescue Department is a paid, standby fire department protecting an area of 35 square miles in and around Edinburgh. The Fire and Rescue Department is equipped with an ambulance service. Other departments include the Parks and Recreation Department and Cemetery Department which respectively manage the town's parks, the Edinburgh Sports Complex, Edinburgh Aquatic Center, and the Rest Haven Cemetery. The Planning Department regulates and enforces the town's zoning ordinances and is responsible for issuing permits for construction and remodeling projects. Finally, the Street Department keeps Edinburgh beautiful by maintaining streets and sidewalks, collecting yard waste, removing snow, and managing signage.

Most local decisions are made by the Town Council, which serves as the legislative and executive branches of government for the town. The Town Council is comprised of five council members elected at-large to serve four-year terms. The Council passes ordinances and resolutions, establishes salaries for town employees, passes an annual budget, and sets utility rates. The town's clerk-treasurer is also an elected position and supports both general town functions and the Town Council.

Other boards and commissions have been established to advise the Town Council, or even to make their own decisions on specific issues in Edinburgh. These groups include the following:

- ✦ Planning Commission
- ✦ Zoning Board of Appeals
- ✦ Economic Development Board
- ✦ Redevelopment Authority
- ✦ Redevelopment Commission

According to the published cash and investment records on the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) Gateway, Edinburgh had a net positive cash balance during 2022. The town's receipts for the year totaled \$38,824,924 while total disbursements totaled \$34,283,766. Edinburgh's total cash balance increased from \$21,290,033 at the beginning of January to \$25,831,191 at the end of December.

## Community Feedback

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Feedback from the Public Input Survey indicated that respondents are not satisfied with the communication of decision-making at the town level and they desire more citizen and government collaboration. Over half of respondents were unsatisfied with the town government's communication to its residents. Additionally, 47.9% of survey respondents were not satisfied with citizen engagement in town activities and indicated that this should be improved. Over a third of respondents indicated that the town needs better collaboration between community and government organizations.

# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### **Foster an engaged citizenry through improved communication and expanded participation opportunities.**

Indiana struggles with poor civic health, according to the 2023 Indiana Civic Health Index. Civic health refers to the extent to which citizens participate in their communities, from governance to interactions with friends, family, and neighbors. Indicators of civic health include the following: Voting and Voter Registration, Social and Community Connectedness, and Civic Awareness and Action. Communities with strong indicators of civic health have higher employment rates, stronger schools, better physical health, and more responsive governments. Overall, civic health is critical to individual, community, state, and national well-being.

In 2020, Indiana ranked 46th in the nation for voting in a presidential election, and in 2022, the state ranked 50th in midterm elections. This disengagement is reflected on the local level. Stakeholders in Edinburgh described the struggle to engage community members in local elections and public meetings. Although civic engagement is low across all ages, many of the most dedicated participants are seniors and there is exceptionally limited participation from teens and young adults. As Edinburgh's population ages, increasing civic engagement amongst younger residents is paramount. By doing so, Edinburgh can develop the next generation of community leaders, voters, and volunteers.

Civic health suffers when community members do not fully trust local government, are confused about government processes, or feel disempowered. Edinburgh can leverage available resources, especially digital resources, to increase transparency and expand participation opportunities. By engaging community members, Edinburgh can enhance pride in the community and local government, while developing a robust, informed citizenry.

## Action Items

- ✦ Continue to use social media, news outlets, and utility bills to share engagement opportunities, updates to local plans and ordinances, and recent investments.
- ✦ Stream Town Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings online to increase accessibility and boost attendance.
- ✦ Create an online portal for the latest Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals meeting materials. Add a QR code to yard signs to allow community members to easily learn about the changes proposed in their neighborhood.
- ✦ Launch a youth taskforce to provide a fresh perspective on local initiatives and develop the next generation of community leaders.
- ✦ Continue to keep the Document Center on the town's website up to date with the latest plans and ordinances.

## Goal 2:

### Expand the capacity of town departments to continue to ensure adequate level of service as growth occurs.

As the community grows, Edinburgh may consider expanding infrastructure and amenities, including upgrading public utilities and recreation opportunities. Although the town departments that oversee infrastructure and amenities are currently operating efficiently, many of them are run by a small team of dedicated staff. Naturally, the town may need to hire additional staff and strategically invest in facilities, equipment, and technology to maintain an adequate level of service. Edinburgh can also expand personnel capacity through alternative methods, such as internships and volunteer networks. Volunteers may be especially helpful for projects and programs centered around parks and community beautification.

## Action Items

- ✦ Invest in the resources (staff, training, facilities, equipment, technology) needed to maintain an adequate level of service as growth occurs.
- ✦ Develop student internship opportunities to support local governmental capacity.
- ✦ Partner with community groups, including religious institutions, social clubs, and service organizations, to recruit volunteers to assist with the implementation of projects, programs, and events.



The Town of Edinburgh administrative offices are located in the Town Hall on Holland Street.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

# Implementation

**Vision for Government & Fiscal Capacity:** Foster an engaged citizenry through improved communication and expanded participation opportunities.

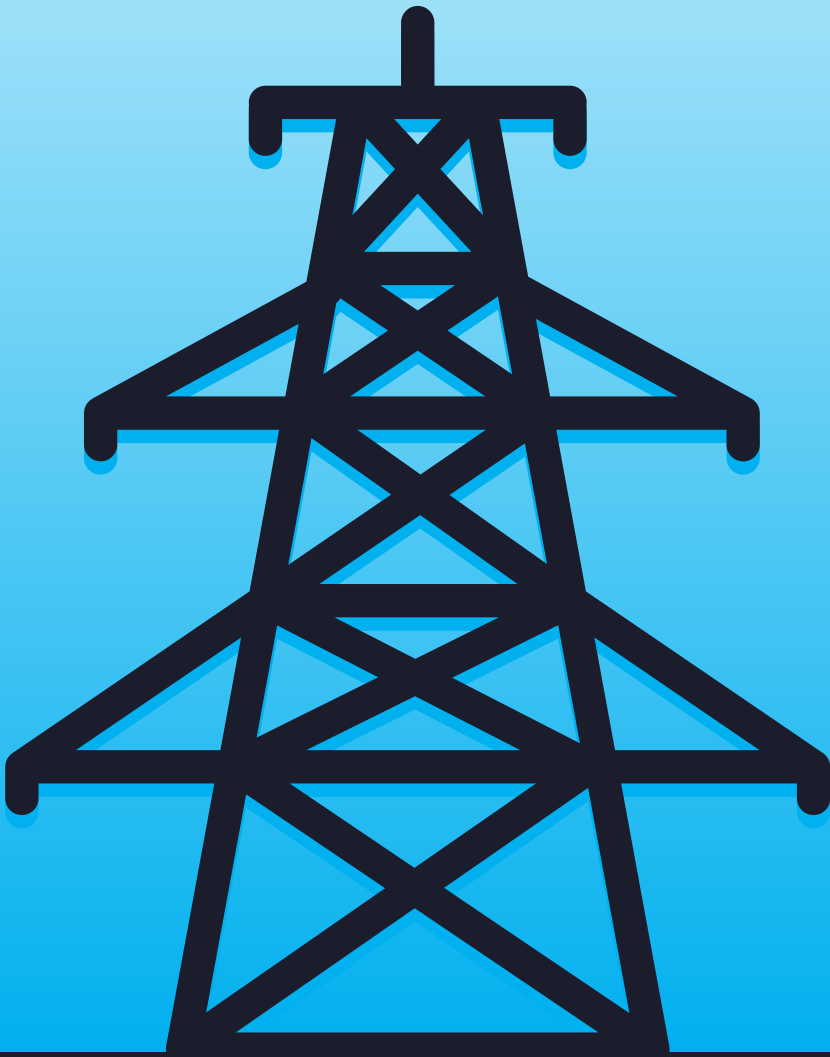
**Goal 1:** Foster an engaged citizenry through improved communication and expanded participation opportunities.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Continue to use social media, news outlets, and utility bills to share engagement opportunities, updates to local plans and ordinances, and recent investments.	Town Council	Town Budget
B. Stream Town Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings online to increase accessibility and boost attendance.	Town Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals	–
C. Create an online portal for the latest Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals meeting materials. Add a QR code to yard signs to allow community members to easily learn about the changes proposed in their neighborhood.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals	Town Budget
D. Launch a youth taskforce to provide a fresh perspective on local initiatives and develop the next generation of community leaders.	Town Manager, Town Council	Town Budget
E. Continue to keep the Document Center on the town’s website up to date with the latest plans and ordinances.	Town Manager	–

**Goal 2:** Expand the capacity of town departments to continue to ensure adequate level of service as growth occurs.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Invest in the resources (staff, training, facilities, equipment, technology) needed to maintain an adequate level of service as growth occurs.	Town Council	Town Budget
B. Develop student internship opportunities to support local governmental capacity.	Town Manager, Town Council	Town Budget
C. Partner with community groups, including religious institutions, social clubs, and service organizations, to recruit volunteers to assist with the implementation of projects, programs, and events.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	—

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# Chapter Six:

Public Facilities & Services

# Vision for Public Facilities & Services

Edinburgh will continue to provide quality services and strive to upgrade infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses.

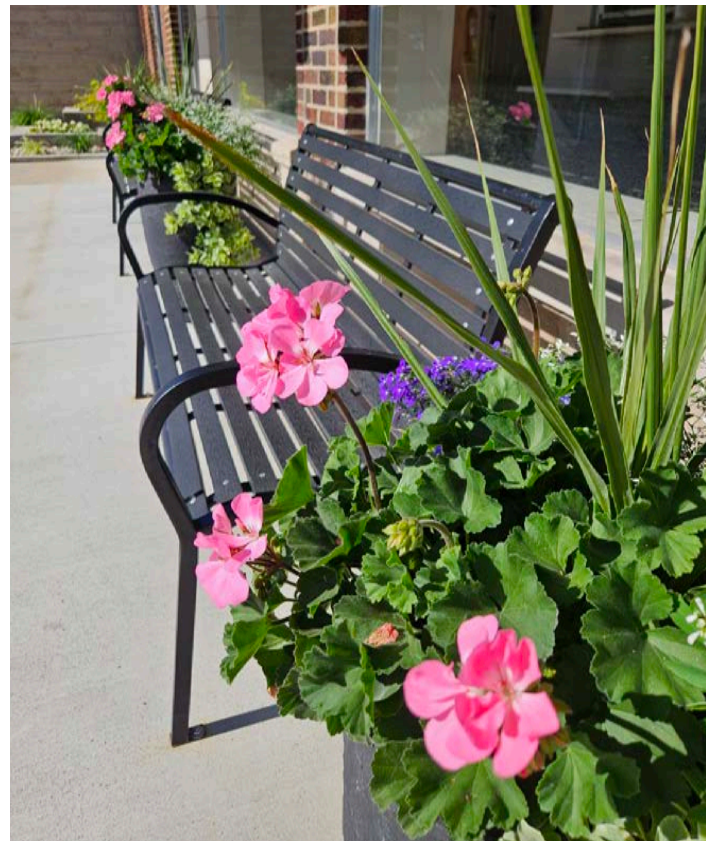
## Introduction

For a small town, Edinburgh offers robust public services, many of which have existed in the community for over a century. From municipally owned utilities to emergency services, the town takes care of its residents. With growth on the horizon, Edinburgh has already taken proactive steps to maintain an adequate level of service by constructing a new fire station and water treatment facility.

Public services also remain relatively affordable, despite some concern from residents. The average household in Edinburgh spends less than \$4,000 on utilities, fuel, and other public services, or approximately 6.8% of annual household expenditures (ESRI, Derived from 2019 and 2020 BLS Consumer Expenditure Surveys). On the Spending Potential Index (SPI), which represents the amount spent on a product or service relative to a national average of 100, Edinburgh has a rating of 69. Based on this index, Edinburgh residents spend less than is typical for Indiana, which has a rating of 89. Even so, no municipality is perfect. Opportunities remain to address ongoing issues, including drainage problems and combined sewer overflow.

## Key Findings

- ✦ Edinburgh owns and operates its own municipal water, wastewater, stormwater, and electric utilities.
- ✦ Edinburgh is actively investing in its public services. Since 2023, Edinburgh has constructed a new water treatment facility and fire station.
- ✦ Stakeholders expressed concern about poor drainage in the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, leading to bad smells and standing water.
- ✦ Edinburgh operates a combination sewer system, which occasionally leads to combined sewer overflow following heavy rainfall. The town has an operational plan to maintain this system and mitigate CSOs. Over time, the town should pursue opportunities to separate wastewater and stormwater.



Edinburgh offers robust public services, including municipal water, wastewater, and electric utilities. The town is protected by a Police Department and Fire and Rescue Department.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*



# Existing Conditions

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The Town of Edinburgh owns and operates its own municipal utilities, including electric, water, wastewater, and stormwater. The mission of Edinburgh Municipal Utilities is to provide reliable utility service at the lowest reasonable cost, as well as provide dependable electricity, potable water, and wastewater treatment.

## Electric Department

The Electric Department, also known as Edinburgh Power & Light (EP&L), is a member of the Indiana Municipal Power Agency (IMPA) and the Indiana Municipal Electric Association (IMEA). The IMPA is a wholesale electric power provider serving cities and towns in Indiana and Ohio. As a member of the IMPA, EP&L can purchase power for the town more economically. Membership to the IMEA, on the other hand, provides Edinburgh with access to valuable training and mutual aid. The IMEA has operated as a statewide service organization representing the concerns of municipally owned and operated electric utilities for over eighty years.

## Water Department

The Town of Edinburgh's Water Department provides clean drinking water for residents. Groundwater is collected from four production wells within the community. These wells are completed in a sand and gravel aquifer. A Source Water Assessment for Edinburgh indicated that the drinking water system is highly susceptible to contamination. To help protect the town's water supply wells, Edinburgh Municipal Utilities has implemented a Wellhead Protection Plan that focuses on public awareness, education, spill prevention, and reporting.

Once collected, groundwater is treated at the town's water treatment plant. In May 2024, the town unveiled its new water treatment facility. This new facility was constructed on the site of the previous plant, built in 1997. Through the years, the old plant became unable to remove iron and manganese and began to leak. The capacity of the old plant was just 1.4 million gallons per day. The new plant is designed to resolve these issues and offer greater capacity. The new facility produces 2.1 million gallons per day and is expandable to 2.8 million gallons per day.

## Wastewater Department

The focus of the Town of Edinburgh's Wastewater Department is to provide uninterrupted service to customers and to discharge the cleanest water possible to receiving streams. Edinburgh's collection system consists of over 30 miles of conveyance, including 15 lift stations, 4 miles of force main, 4 miles of storm sewer, 11 miles of sanitation sewer, and 12 miles of combination sewer. Wastewater is treated at the town's wastewater plant, an extended aeration treatment facility with a capacity of 1.5 million gallons per day. The Town of Edinburgh currently implements a Combined Sewer Overflow Operational Plan (CSOOP) which ensures the periodic maintenance of the collection system.

The Town of Edinburgh operates its own stormwater utility. Although the stormwater utility is supported through a separate fee on monthly utility bills, Wastewater Department employees complete necessary maintenance activities. Edinburgh also operates a Storm Water Program, as required by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). The goal of the program is to prevent pollution of local water bodies.

The Town of Edinburgh provides its own emergency services. The Police Department and Fire and Rescue Department protect the town and its residents, while also ensuring safety at the Indiana Premium Outlets.

## Police Department

The Edinburgh Police Department was established in 1853 when the town itself was incorporated. Since then, the Police Department has endeavored to serve and protect residents. Today, the Police Department prevents, responds to, and investigates crime with a team of fourteen full-time officers led by Chief Doyne Little. The department is supported by two K9 officers, K9 XTA and K9 Batu.



In October 2023, Edinburgh opened a new fire station with modern amenities.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

## Fire and Rescue Department

Edinburgh's Fire and Rescue Department was founded in 1875. One of the early firehouses was located at 107 S. Holland Street at the current location of the Town Hall. The station housed a horse drawn fire apparatus. Over the decades, the Fire and Rescue Department has moved locations and upgraded its equipment to keep pace with the times. In 1974, the Fire and Rescue Department started its ambulance service and began transporting patients. In 1976, growing railroad traffic prompted the construction of a fire station, Station 2, on the east side of the railroad. More recently, in October 2023, the town's newest fire station, Station 41, opened. As the new home of the Fire and Rescue Department, the station offers 9,300 square feet of space, including nine bunk rooms, six bathrooms, recreation space, meeting rooms, a kitchen, and offices. With firefighters on duty 24 hours a day, the modern living space offers a place to rest between runs and provides areas to more efficiently do department business.

## Community Feedback

There is widespread satisfaction with Edinburgh's public facilities and services. Most survey respondents (68.5%) were satisfied with the reliability of Edinburgh Municipal Utilities (water, wastewater, stormwater, electric), although some complained about the affordability of these services. In focus groups, the main complaint about municipal utilities pertained to drainage in the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Following heavy rain, water floods the streets and may remain for days after. Stakeholders complained about smells from the drains, particularly in the downtown district. Over three-quarters (76.1%) of respondents were satisfied with the reliability of emergency services. As Edinburgh grows, community members expressed the need to support the Police Department and Fire and Rescue Department to keep the town safe. Overall, over 70% of respondents were satisfied with the condition of existing government buildings, including the Town Hall and Edinburgh Station 41.

# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### **Continue to provide high-quality public facilities and services to Edinburgh residents and businesses.**

As Edinburgh experiences development and redevelopment over the next decade, community leaders should support local utilities and emergency services, enabling them to maintain an adequate level of service. This may involve establishing a Utilities Master Plan to prioritize needed maintenance and upgrades or offering additional support to the police and fire departments. The town should also take steps to resolve ongoing issues, including flooding and combined sewer overflow.

In a combined sewer system, such as the one that Edinburgh operates, both wastewater and stormwater flow through the same pipes. In dry weather, all wastewater flows to the treatment plant where it is properly treated before being discharged. But during periods of heavy rainfall, stormwater can overwhelm the system. Permitted outfalls are located throughout the system to act as relief points. These outfalls discharge untreated or partially treated stormwater and wastewater into nearby waterways. These discharges are called combined sewer overflows (CSOs).

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), CSOs are a major water pollution and public health concern for approximately 700 communities in the United States. These discharges, which may contain bacteria, debris, or other hazardous substances, can be harmful to people, pets, and wildlife. Edinburgh already implements a Combined Sewer Overflow Operational Plan to maintain its system and mitigate threats, but the community should consider separating wastewater and stormwater in the future.

## Action Items

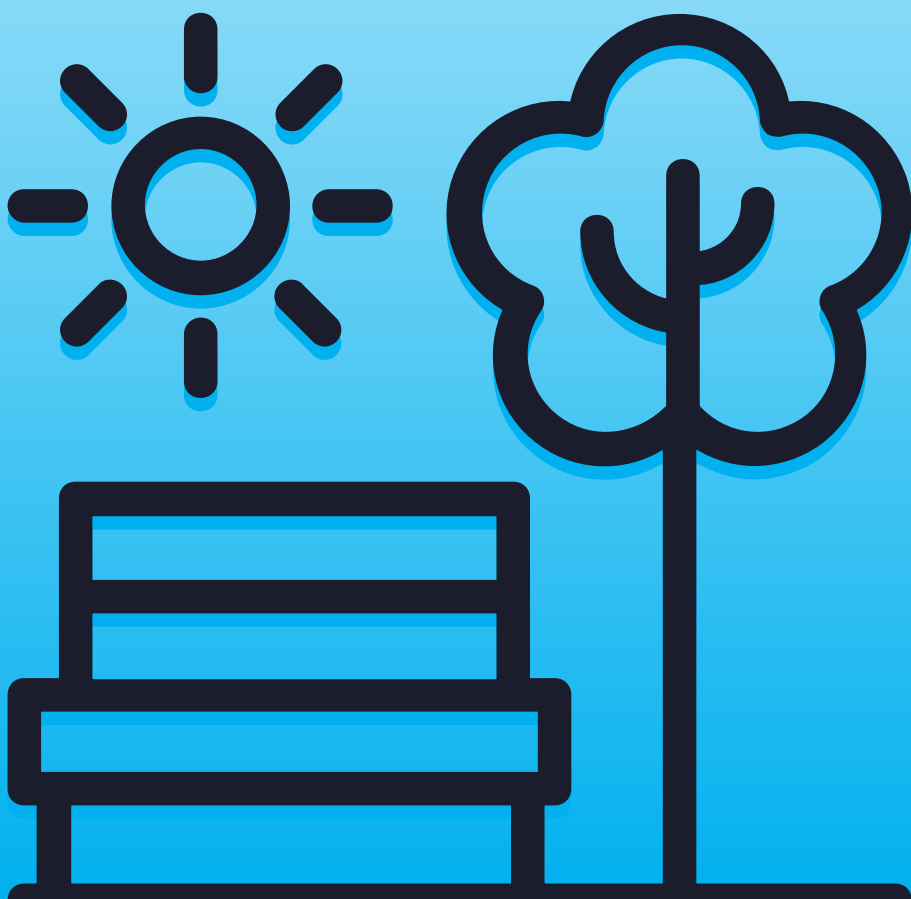
- ✦ Establish a Utilities Master Plan to update and maintain municipally owned utilities to accommodate residential, commercial, and industrial growth in Edinburgh.
- ✦ Continue to support emergency service providers, including Edinburgh's Fire and Rescue Department and Police Department.
- ✦ Pursue opportunities to upgrade the wastewater collection system and mitigate ongoing issues with combined sewer overflow.
- ✦ Identify areas in Edinburgh where flooding issues occur most frequently and seek solutions to improve drainage.

# Implementation

**Vision for Public Facilities & Services:** Edinburgh will continue to provide quality services and strive to upgrade infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses.

**Goal 1:** Continue to provide high-quality public facilities and services to Edinburgh residents and businesses.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Establish a Utilities Master Plan to update and maintain municipally owned utilities to accommodate residential, commercial, and industrial growth in Edinburgh.	Town Council, Electric Department, Water Department, Wastewater Department	Utility Budgets
B. Continue to support emergency service providers, including Edinburgh’s Fire and Rescue Department and Police Department.	Town Council, Fire and Rescue Department, Police Department	Town Budget
C. Pursue opportunities to upgrade the wastewater collection system and mitigate ongoing issues with combined sewer overflow.	Town Council, Wastewater Department, Stormwater Utility	Stormwater Utility Budget, OCRA Stormwater Improvements Program
D. Identify areas in Edinburgh where flooding issues occur most frequently and seek solutions to improve drainage.	Town Manager	Town Budget



# Chapter Seven:

Placemaking

# Vision for Placemaking

Edinburgh will foster strong quality of place and distinct community character through physical and programmatic improvements.

## Introduction

By and large, Edinburgh residents and business owners are proud of the community they call home. During focus groups, participants described Edinburgh as a small, tight-knit community with great hospitality. Residents rally to support one another and to welcome new residents. One stakeholder remarked, “It’s [like a] cocoon. You are taken care of here. The people care.” Edinburgh draws people in with its quaint, historic character and convenient access to amenities, and people stay for the community. Yet, stakeholders also suggested that the town could be enhanced with some much-needed physical and programmatic improvements. Many of these improvements should focus on revitalizing the heart of Edinburgh – the downtown district, restoring the district as a destination for residents and visitors alike. This effort can be complemented by strategic capital investments aimed at enhancing navigability and walkability throughout the downtown core.

In short, Edinburgh is due for much needed placemaking. Placemaking is a process that involves planning, designing, and managing public spaces to create quality places that people want to spend time in. Placemaking improves quality of life in a community by making it more inviting, encouraging social interaction, and stimulating economic development. Placemaking inspires community pride and makes people more attached to the places they live, work, and play. Towns that embrace placemaking promote a stronger sense of belonging and connection amongst residents.

# Key Findings

- ✦ Approximately 73% of survey respondents agreed that Edinburgh has a strong sense of identity and community pride.
- ✦ Edinburgh has great potential to become a unique destination in South Central Indiana. Roger Brooks, Tourism and Downtown Expert for the Destination Development Association, remarked that Edinburgh has the most potential of any community in Johnson County.
- ✦ Community members envision a downtown brimming with restaurants, retail, entertainment, public art, and community events.
- ✦ Festival Country Indiana, the tourism and destination management agency for Johnson County, is willing to partner with Edinburgh on destination development efforts.



The downtown district plays a key role in Edinburgh’s identity and character.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

## Existing Conditions

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Although Edinburgh is a charming town with kind, hard-working residents, visitors' first impressions may be tainted by vacant commercial spaces, outdated infrastructure, poor property maintenance, and a lack of wayfinding signage. Like other small Indiana communities, Edinburgh has been limited in funds and capacity to make major investments downtown and along key corridors. Fortunately, opportunities lie ahead.

Before a series of changes brought growth to a halt, downtown Edinburgh was once a thriving district. The dissolution of the interurban line, creation of the Indiana Premium Outlets, and corresponding growth of competing suburban communities resulted in a lack of investment in the town. Yet, Roger Brooks, Tourism and Downtown Expert for the Destination Development Association, believes that Edinburgh has the most potential of any community in Johnson County. With the support of Festival Country Indiana, the tourism and destination management agency for Johnson County, determined community leaders, and dedicated volunteers, it's possible to revitalize and promote Edinburgh as the next destination in South Central Indiana.

Revitalization efforts should build on existing assets centered in and around the downtown district. Assets include the following:

- ◆ Public murals,
- ◆ Custom pole banners and flower baskets on streetlights,
- ◆ Historic buildings (with some recent restoration work),
- ◆ Public spaces, including a library and community center,
- ◆ Some wayfinding signage, including welcome signs,
- ◆ And community events and festivals, from the Farmers Market to the Fall Festival.

## Community Feedback

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Across multiple public engagement opportunities, residents openly shared their love for Edinburgh. In fact, among residents and business owners, Edinburgh is widely regarded as a great small-town brimming with community connections. In addition to its generous people, stakeholders indicated that the town has many assets, including its historic downtown, festivals and events, and parks. These assets help define Edinburgh's unique identity and culture.

In the public workshop, participants expressed their desire for future projects and programs in Edinburgh. Community members were most interested in efforts to improve the downtown district, enhance gateways into town, attract new development, and beautify the town while maintaining its historic character. On the public input survey, over half of all respondents (56.8%) were dissatisfied with the overall appearance of the town. In focus groups, community members envisioned a vibrant downtown full of restaurants and shops, busy with people of all ages. Community members were proud of their local events and festivals, but indicated interest in additional programming, as well as a flexible, centrally located, outdoor venue to accommodate social gatherings.

# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### Promote Edinburgh as a unique destination in South Central Indiana.

Edinburgh is a unique community with much to offer residents and visitors. With strategic investment, the community could become a genuine destination for restaurants, retail, and entertainment in South Central Indiana. Great destination development begins by identifying community leaders. This plan has already assembled a driven Comprehensive Planning Committee consisting of experienced community advocates with an interest in Edinburgh's success. With these community leaders at hand, the next step is to recruit supporting partners. Festival Country Indiana is a valuable resource, and its talented staff are more than willing to provide the expertise and funding for destination development. This destination development should focus on downtown Edinburgh but may later extend to other parts of the community, such as the riverfront. A reimagined downtown district may feature flexible greenspace, public art, and effective marketing and promotion.

When evaluating potential projects and programs, Edinburgh should leverage tactical urbanism. Tactical urbanism is an approach to community building that uses short-term, low-cost projects to catalyze long-term change. With little upfront investment, Edinburgh can test creative ideas. Traffic cones, hay bales, and spray paint can help the public envision what an activated alleyway or a pocket park would look like in their community. If these temporary measures are successful, Edinburgh can transition these projects into more permanent fixtures.

## Action Items

- ✦ Collaborate with Festival Country Indiana, the tourism and destination management organization for Johnson County, to leverage available expertise, capacity, and funding.
- ✦ Create a flexible public greenspace in downtown Edinburgh to accommodate community events, including festivals, farmers markets, and live performances.
- ✦ Continue to enhance downtown Edinburgh with public art, such as murals, sculptures, and memorials.
- ✦ Experiment with tactical urbanism, an approach to community building that uses short-term, low-cost projects to catalyze long-term change. Discover creative ways to enhance the downtown by setting up temporary plazas, parklets, and alley activations.
- ✦ Develop a 'Visit Edinburgh' page or website to promote community events, restaurants, shopping, and recreation opportunities in the community.
- ✦ Partner with students from Franklin College or Edinburgh Community High School to create engaging social media content for Edinburgh.



## Goal 2:

### Invest in strategic capital improvements to create a welcoming, easily navigable community for residents and visitors.

Edinburgh can complement destination development efforts with strategic investments in wayfinding signage and infrastructure. Wayfinding refers to the process of navigating through a physical space, including knowing where you are, where you're going, and how to get there. Currently, Edinburgh has a relatively basic set of wayfinding signage, including welcome signs and street signs. Improved signage and gateway features would make visitors feel welcome to the community and help them navigate to destinations and parking. Signage should incorporate the town's official branding to promote a cohesive identity for Edinburgh. Alongside major investments in the downtown area, Edinburgh should consider enhancing major corridors through the community. Although it may seem minor, modern streetscapes fit with attractive lighting, street furnishings, and landscaping can strengthen first impressions, encouraging people to stay longer, return more often, and recommend the community to others.

## Action Items

- ✦ Improve gateways into the community through attractive signage and landscaping that reflects the town's current branding.
- ✦ Install wayfinding signage along main corridors in and around Edinburgh to direct visitors to key destinations, such as the downtown district, library, town hall, parks, and overflow parking lots.
- ✦ Enhance streetscapes in the downtown district and along main corridors to include improved lighting, sidewalks, street furnishings, and landscaping.



A mural painted on the side of the Sakura Event Center in downtown Edinburgh.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

# Implementation

**Vision for Placemaking:** Edinburgh will foster strong quality of place and distinct community character through physical and programmatic improvements.

**Goal 1:** Promote Edinburgh as a unique destination in South Central Indiana.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Collaborate with Festival Country Indiana, the tourism and destination management organization for Johnson County, to leverage available expertise, capacity, and funding.	Town Manager	–
B. Create a flexible public greenspace in downtown Edinburgh to accommodate community events, including festivals, farmers markets, and live performances.	Town Manager, Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget, IDNR Land and Water Conservation Fund, Local Foundations
C. Continue to enhance downtown Edinburgh with public art, such as murals, sculptures, and memorials.	Town Manager, Community Center Director, Town Council	Town Budget
D. Experiment with tactical urbanism, an approach to community building that uses short-term, low-cost projects to catalyze long-term change. Discover creative ways to enhance the downtown by setting up temporary plazas, parklets, and alley activations.	Town Manager, Community Center Director, Town Council	Town Budget, IDOH Tactical Urbanism Demonstration Project Grant Program
E. Develop a ‘Visit Edinburgh’ page or website to promote community events, restaurants, shopping, and recreation opportunities in the community.	Town Manager, Community Center Director, Town Council	Town Budget
F. Partner with students from Franklin College or Edinburgh Community High School to create engaging social media content for Edinburgh.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	–

**Goal 2:** Invest in strategic capital improvements to create a welcoming, easily navigable community for residents and visitors.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Improve gateways into the community through attractive signage and landscaping that reflects the town’s current branding.	Town Manager, Street Department, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Install wayfinding signage along main corridors in and around Edinburgh to direct visitors to key destinations, such as the downtown district, library, town hall, parks, and overflow parking lots.	Town Manager, Street Department, Town Council	Town Budget
C. Enhance streetscapes in the downtown district and along main corridors to include improved lighting, sidewalks, street furnishings, and landscaping.	Town Manager, Street Department, Town Council	Town Budget

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# Chapter Eight:

## Economic Development

# Vision for Economic Development

**Edinburgh will support existing businesses and attract new businesses to the downtown and key corridors to provide job opportunities and desired amenities.**

## Introduction

Based on feedback from community leaders and members of the public, Edinburgh needs to employ a multi-part economic development strategy to ensure future success. This strategy should focus on both small businesses and medium-sized firms and should include supporting existing firms while also attracting new ones. Small businesses, from restaurants to boutiques, are the lifeblood of the downtown commercial district. Without them, the downtown would be a husk of itself. Medium-sized firms, on the other hand, employ a greater portion of the population. These firms offer well-paying, reliable jobs with opportunities for advancement. Both types of employment are valuable to the community.

Geographically, economic development in Edinburgh should occur in two focus areas: the downtown district and the industrial area on the south side of the community. Vacant storefronts are available downtown, but to attract new businesses to this district, revitalization efforts are needed. Entrepreneurs will be drawn to the district when they see that the community is invested in its success. Edinburgh can also ensure that this area thrives by providing existing business owners with helpful resources and networking opportunities.

The south side of the community, from Morris Street to W 900 N, is the ideal location for medium-sized industrial and commercial firms. Developable land is available from U.S. Route 31 to the railroad with access along Main Street and Walnut Street. Existing firms in this area include Hisada America, Ditech, Sacoma International, and Hoosier Metalform. In addition to attracting new employers, Edinburgh can connect these firms to resources for expansion and retention.

## Key Findings

- ✦ Community members want to see the downtown district thrive. During public engagement opportunities, they called for support for existing small businesses, as well as the attraction of new restaurants, retail, and entertainment to the downtown core.
- ✦ Historically, Edinburgh’s dominant industry has been manufacturing. From 2012 to 2022, manufacturing employment in Edinburgh declined by 9.4%. To reverse this trend, Edinburgh should attract employers in target sectors, including advanced manufacturing.
- ✦ Edinburgh has access to several economic development partners in Johnson County and Bartholomew County.



Edinburgh has a rich manufacturing history. Today, the community produces a variety of products, from wood veneer to automotive parts.

*Image Source: Google Earth*

# Existing Conditions

Throughout its long history as a railroad community, the Town of Edinburgh has supported various manufacturing firms producing a range of products, from wood veneer to automotive parts. These products were shipped across the state and the nation. Today, manufacturing remains the town’s largest industry, employing 22.3% of workers. Hoosiers by the Numbers reports that four of five top employers in the Edinburgh area are in manufacturing. However, between 2012 and 2022, manufacturing employment in Edinburgh declined by 9.4%, according to American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

With fewer manufacturing positions available, residents are forced to find positions in other industries. Although some of these industries offer well-paying jobs, such as professional, scientific, and management positions, other industries, like accommodation and food services, may not provide sustainable wages. Many of these higher paying positions are also located outside of the community. In 2022, 71% of residents worked outside of town. To promote local economic development and support a strong tax base, it is important for Edinburgh to attract businesses, rather than become a population of commuters.

With convenient access to the Interstate, rail, and land, Edinburgh is prime for commercial and industrial development. By collaborating with local economic development organizations, Edinburgh can attract employers in targeted sectors. Targeted sectors for Johnson County include advanced manufacturing, health and life sciences, defense, logistics, and international business. Many of these industries offer a range of positions to accommodate workers with different educational attainment and skill sets.

Edinburgh is also home to several small businesses, many of which are based in the downtown district. These small businesses are often run by a handful of employees but play an important role in the town’s vibrancy. The success of downtown businesses is often contingent on the success of the district itself and its ability to attract customers. Small businesses also thrive when given logistical and financial support from governmental and non-profit organizations. Aside from maintaining a ‘Business Directory’ on the town’s website, Edinburgh does little to connect entrepreneurs with small business resources.

Situated in three counties, Edinburgh has access to several economic development partners. In Johnson County, Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance leads the way. Aspire can assist with business attraction, retention, and expansion efforts. Aspire also provides comprehensive member services for entrepreneurs, small businesses, and large corporations. In Bartholomew County, the Greater Columbus Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is ready to help. Originally founded in 1976, the EDC was one of the first local economic development organizations in the state. Over the years, the EDC has successfully recruited companies that today employ more than 7,500 people. The EDC has also supported over 400 local expansions. The EDC provides information, expertise, and training. Other valuable organizations include the Franklin Chamber of Commerce (Johnson County) and Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce (Bartholomew County).

**Table 8.1 Top 5 Employers in the Edinburgh Area**

Name	Industry
Danzer Veneer Americas	Plywood and Veneer Manufacturer
Hisada America, Inc.	Automobile Parts and Supplies Manufacturer
Central Trucking Inc.	Trucking
Amos Hill Assoc., Inc.	Plywood and Veneer Manufacturer
Georg Utz, Inc.	Reusable Plastics Manufacturer

*Data Source: Hoosiers by the Numbers - Business Lookup Tool*



A mural on the John R. Drybread Community Center.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

## Community Feedback

Community feedback from public workshops, focus groups, and the public input survey highlights the importance of economic development as it pertains to the daily lives of residents. Strong economic development leads to ample job opportunities and a rich quality of life. A healthy ecosystem of businesses, from larger firms to small entrepreneurial endeavors, influences where people eat, shop, work, and play.

As the town exists currently, 69.6% of survey respondents were unsatisfied with retail, restaurant, and entertainment options in Edinburgh and over half of respondents were unsatisfied with the job opportunities in town. Survey respondents indicated that the town needs more development, such retail and shopping (77.3%) and restaurants and entertainment venues (90.5%), especially in the downtown district. Although industrial development and warehousing (49.4% undesired) and office space (46% undesired) were less popular on the public input survey, these forms of development may be appropriate in certain parts of the community. These uses also support job opportunities and a robust tax base for the town.

Public workshop participants indicated that economic development should be concentrated downtown along Main Cross Street, along the U.S. Route 31 corridor, and at the Interstate 65 interchange at State Road 252. These areas are prime for commercial development, although industrial development may be more appropriate on the south side of Edinburgh along Main Street and Walnut Street.



# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### **Revitalize Edinburgh’s downtown district as a vibrant, economically diverse destination with a desirable mix of uses.**

Edinburgh’s downtown district, although full of historic character, has faced many challenges over the decades. From the introduction of the mall (now the Indiana Premium Outlets) to the advent of online shopping to the pandemic, brick-and-mortar stores struggle to stay in business. Hundreds of children and families attend games at the Edinburgh Sports Complex each weekend, but few trickle into the popcorn shop downtown. Some of Edinburgh’s vacant storefronts have been haphazardly converted into residential units, while others remain empty. Community members want to reverse this trend. At the public workshop, the most popular wish for the future of Edinburgh was to restore the vibrancy of the downtown district. Survey respondents mirrored this sentiment. One respondent commented, “I wish Edinburgh government would concentrate more on the downtown area. Build it up, restore more buildings, attract more businesses and interest in the town.” By developing a Downtown Revitalization Plan, Edinburgh can take steps to transform the downtown into an economically diverse destination with a desirable mix of uses. Festival Country Indiana, the destination management organization for Johnson County, is a willing and able partner in the effort.

## Action Items

- ✦ Partner with Festival Country Indiana to develop a Downtown Revitalization Plan to assess existing conditions and outline recommendations for downtown Edinburgh.
- ✦ Establish a Main Street Organization to organize community events, encourage the restoration and reuse of historic buildings, and promote downtown Edinburgh to residents and visitors.
- ✦ Create a downtown business attraction program which identifies desirable downtown businesses for recruitment and connects those businesses to a toolkit of resources and incentives.
- ✦ Amend the town’s zoning ordinance to limit residential uses to upper stories in traditionally commercial areas of downtown Edinburgh.
- ✦ Acquire and repurpose vacant lots in the downtown district for desirable uses, such as infill development, flexible greenspace, and visitor parking.

## Goal 2:

### Support existing businesses and entrepreneurs in Edinburgh.

Edinburgh does not have a chamber of commerce or merchants' association for local business owners. Without a formal organization, it can be difficult for business owners to network with one another, collaborate on downtown events and programming, share resources, and advocate for their collective interests. During focus group meetings, local business owners expressed their interest in establishing an organization like this. While a new organization gets off the ground, the town should encourage business owners to join the Columbus or Franklin chambers to connect with other successful business professionals in the region. The town can also connect existing businesses and entrepreneurs to programs and resources to start or grow their business. Valuable business resources are available through the South East Indiana SCORE Chapter, Indiana Small Business Development Center (ISBDC), Greater Columbus Economic Development Corporation, and Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance.

### Action Items

- ✦ Form an Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce or Merchants Association to build relationships and advocate for the interests of business owners in local decision-making.
- ✦ Encourage local business owners to join the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce or Franklin Chamber of Commerce to expand their professional network.
- ✦ Connect local business owners to programs and resources to start or grow their business, such as coaching and microlending.

## Goal 3:

### **Collaborate with neighboring counties to attract new employers to designated areas in and around Edinburgh.**

Due to its unique location, the Town of Edinburgh has access to multiple local economic development organizations. Edinburgh should partner with these organizations on traditional economic development efforts, leveraging their resources for business attraction, expansion, and retention. The town can also make itself more attractive to potential firms by updating the 'Business' page on its website. By creating a simple, attractive landing page for potential firms, Edinburgh demonstrates that it's a modern, business-friendly community with great amenities, a talented workforce, available property, strong partners, and recent investments. The town is focused on self-improvement and would be a great fit for interested firms, large and small..

## Action Items

- ✦ Partner with Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance, Franklin Chamber of Commerce, Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development, and Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce to leverage additional resources when attracting new businesses.
- ✦ Expand the 'Business' page on the Town of Edinburgh's website to serve as a one-stop shop for prospective employers with information on the town, available properties, supporting organizations, and recent investments.

# Implementation

**Vision for Economic Development:** Edinburgh will support existing businesses and attract new businesses to the downtown and key corridors to provide job opportunities and desired amenities.

**Goal 1:** Revitalize Edinburgh’s downtown district as a vibrant, economically diverse destination with a desirable mix of uses.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Partner with Festival Country Indiana to develop a Downtown Revitalization Plan to assess existing conditions and outline recommendations for downtown Edinburgh.	Town Manager, Town Council	Town Budget, Festival Country Indiana Budget
B. Establish a Main Street Organization to organize community events, encourage the restoration and reuse of historic buildings, and promote downtown Edinburgh to residents and visitors.	Town Manager, Community Center Director, Town Council	–
C. Create a downtown business attraction program which identifies desirable downtown businesses for recruitment and connects those businesses to a toolkit of resources and incentives.	Town Manager, Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance, Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development	–
D. Amend the town’s zoning ordinance to limit residential uses to upper stories in traditionally commercial areas of downtown Edinburgh.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–
E. Acquire and repurpose vacant lots in the downtown district for desirable uses, such as infill development, flexible greenspace, and visitor parking.	Town Manager, Redevelopment Commission, Town Council	Town Budget

**Goal 2: Support existing businesses and entrepreneurs in Edinburgh.**

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Form an Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce or Merchants Association to build relationships and advocate for the interests of business owners in local decision-making.	Town Manager, Economic Development Board	–
B. Encourage local business owners to join the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce or Franklin Chamber of Commerce to expand their professional network.	Town Manager, Economic Development Board	–
C. Connect local business owners to programs and resources to start or grow their business, such as coaching and microlending.	Town Manager, Economic Development Board	–

**Goal 3: Collaborate with neighboring counties to attract new employers to designated areas in and around Edinburgh.**

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Partner with Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance, Franklin Chamber of Commerce, Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development, and Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce to leverage additional resources when attracting new businesses.	Town Manager, Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance, Franklin Chamber, Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development, Columbus Area Chamber	–
B. Expand the ‘Business’ page on the Town of Edinburgh’s website to serve as a one-stop shop for prospective employers with information on the town, available properties, supporting organizations, and recent investments.	Town Manager	–

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# Chapter Nine:

## Housing

# Vision for Housing

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**Edinburgh will encourage the development of new housing options while uplifting existing neighborhoods.**

## Introduction

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Edinburgh’s historic, small-town character, combined with its access to amenities and bustling cities via Interstate 65 and U.S. Route 31, makes it a prime location for new development.

A subdivision of approximately 850 lots has already been proposed northwest of town along U.S. Route 31. Once completed, this subdivision will increase housing in Edinburgh by nearly a third. Based on conversations with stakeholders, new housing could not come at a better time. The town is in desperate need of new development to accommodate current and future residents. Of the nearly 2,000 existing housing units in Edinburgh, approximately 65% are aging (i.e., were built before 1980). New housing in the community should be diverse, ranging in style and price, to meet the needs of all residents. Most housing should strive to balance quality with affordability to accommodate residents with low- to middle-income, such as recent graduates, young families, and seniors. In the future, there may also be a market for limited custom or luxury housing units to accommodate managerial-level staff and their families.

In addition to supporting new development, Edinburgh should strive to maintain beautiful, high quality neighborhoods in the heart of the community. From the Timbergate neighborhood to the town’s two residential historic districts, many of Edinburgh’s most charming homes can accommodate families for generations to come. With the support of code enforcement and grassroots volunteerism, Edinburgh can promote proper maintenance of existing properties and ensure that neighborhoods remain attractive, inviting places for residents and visitors alike.

# Key Findings

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- ✦ In May 2024, the Town of Edinburgh’s annexation along U.S. Route 31 was approved. This annexation will accommodate a proposed subdivision of over 800 homes.
- ✦ Timbergate is the newest subdivision in Edinburgh. The earliest homes in the neighborhood were constructed in the early 2000s. Construction has recently resumed in the neighborhood with lots available for new development.
- ✦ Some vacant commercial buildings in the downtown district have been repurposed for residential uses, to the dismay of local business owners.
- ✦ The median home value in Edinburgh increased 53% from \$85,000 in 2012 to \$131,100 in 2022. Despite the increase, this value remains lower than any of the surrounding counties or nearby cities.



A home in the Timbergate subdivision.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*



# Existing Conditions

Although Edinburgh's population only grew by 0.5% from 2012 to 2022, the town saw a 13.5% increase in housing units over the same period, or a change from 1,757 to 1,995 units. This level of housing growth outpaces Shelby County (2.1%), Bartholomew County (6.9%), and Johnson County (12.5%). Edinburgh's current housing growth already outpaces surrounding counties and the State of Indiana (4.8%). If the proposed subdivision is built along U.S. Route 31, Edinburgh could see housing growth of over 43% in the next decade, making it one of the fastest growing communities in the region.

Approximately 54.7% of housing units in Edinburgh are owner-occupied, 45.3% are rental units, and 12.3% are vacant. Edinburgh is the only town, when looking at state trends and local comparison communities, that experienced an increase (17.7%) in vacant units between 2012 and 2022. While an increase in total housing units with a relatively stable population is likely the cause for a rise in vacancies, the current vacancy rate is still a cause for concern. Edinburgh's vacancy rate is higher than surrounding counties and nearby cities. If not properly secured and maintained, vacant units can negatively impact community character, property values, and safety.

According to American Community Survey data, Edinburgh's median home value has increased 52.8% from \$85,800 in 2012 to \$131,100 in 2022. While this increase outpaces Shelby County (32.6%), Bartholomew County (44.2%), and Indiana (48.8%), it falls short of Johnson County (65.0%).

However, when looking at Zillow's home sale data, Edinburgh's homes have seen a 113.5% increase in value from \$84,964 in 2012 to \$181,360 in 2022. This growth outpaces all surrounding counties, including Johnson County (111.3%). This increase is more closely related to actual market conditions in the community and aligns with trends seen across the State. When looking at either metric, Edinburgh's home values remain considerably lower than surrounding communities.

According to Zillow's Home Value Index, a typical home is \$204,995 in Shelby County, \$224,219 in Bartholomew County, and \$276,992 in Johnson County. More affordable housing will likely promote growth in the coming years, drawing people to the community, before Edinburgh's prices catch up to its peers.



Newbury Pointe offers single-family attached homes for seniors.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*



A home in the South Walnut Street Historic District.  
*Image Source: Google Earth*

## Community Feedback

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Throughout community engagement opportunities participants indicated that Edinburgh needs more diverse housing options. Approximately 63% of survey respondents were dissatisfied with the lack of housing options for different ages and lifestyles. In focus groups, participants added to this sentiment, describing the need for a variety housing types at a range of prices, from apartments for recent graduates to single-family attached homes for seniors.

At the same time, Edinburgh should preserve its historic, small-town character by putting care and attention into existing neighborhoods. Approximately 57% of survey respondents indicated that Edinburgh should focus on rehabilitating existing housing units before building new ones. Additionally, nearly half of respondents were dissatisfied with property maintenance, especially along main corridors through the community and within historic districts. During focus groups, stakeholders noted that some rental properties are in particularly poor condition. Poor property management, the temporary nature of rental situations, and a lack of accountability from owners or residents may contribute to the neglect of rental properties. To improve the appearance of existing neighborhoods, community members called for revised ordinances to support ethical code enforcement. Community members also expressed interest in volunteer programs to assist with home repair and beautify the neighborhood.

# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

**Support the development of new housing of various types and prices to accommodate a diversity of ages, incomes, and lifestyles.**

Zoning and subdivision control ordinances are crucial tools for any community, big or small. Communities can leverage these tools to encourage desirable development and guard against undesirable development. Ordinances can also ensure a level of maintenance and attractiveness for a community's residential and commercial properties. With growth on the horizon, Edinburgh needs these tools now more than ever. By updating the town's ordinances, Edinburgh can streamline the development process, while outlining clear expectations for future development. These expectations should reflect community values, such as ensuring that future neighborhoods are connected to the downtown, parks, schools, and other community amenities. By promoting physical and social connections, development ordinances can ensure that Edinburgh does not become a bedroom community for residents working in Indianapolis, Franklin, and Columbus.

By developing strong relationships with regional developers, Edinburgh can support additional projects in and around the community. If done right, new subdivisions (on annexed land) can support the local tax base, ensuring that Edinburgh continues to provide an adequate level of service while unlocking funds for enhanced amenities. When the time is right, Edinburgh can promote appropriate infill projects to increase downtown density and leverage economies of scale, creating a vibrant live-work-play district along Main Cross Street.

## Action Items

- ✦ Update Edinburgh's zoning and subdivision control ordinance, leveraging the ordinance as a vital tool to encourage desirable development and guard against undesirable development.
- ✦ Ensure that Edinburgh's zoning ordinance permits missing middle housing to appeal to the younger workforce and seniors.
- ✦ Maintain relationships with regional builders to pursue mutually beneficial projects.
- ✦ Identify possible incentives to attract residential development in Edinburgh such as Housing Tax Increment Financing (HoTIF).

## Goal 2:

### **Promote the beautification of existing neighborhoods through local enforcement and grassroots volunteerism.**

Existing neighborhoods should be just as charming as new subdivisions. By strengthening local ordinances, Edinburgh can use code enforcement to promote property maintenance, alleviating the build-up of trash, discarded appliances, and abandoned vehicles in front lawns. Due to staff limitations, enforcement should initially focus on the areas most visible to residents and visitors, such as gateway corridors and historic districts. By beautifying these areas, Edinburgh can enhance first impressions and catalyze change in the rest of the community. Other enforcement efforts may include developing an ordinance violation portal and a rental inspection program. In addition to enforcement, Edinburgh should recruit volunteers to assist with home repair and maintenance (particularly for seniors) and participate in other beautification efforts, including trash removal, landscaping, and public art installations.

## Action Items

- ✦ Strengthen local ordinances to support ethical code enforcement. When issuing violations, staff should provide clear directions and deadlines to community members.
- ✦ Create an action plan for enforcement in key areas, such as gateway corridors and historic districts.
- ✦ Develop an online portal where residents can submit ordinance violations for town review.
- ✦ Consider developing a Residential Rental Inspection Program (RRIP) to raise the quality of rental housing throughout the community.
- ✦ Establish a rehabilitation program for residential properties, which may include a revolving loan fund and volunteer assistance to help homeowners make necessary improvements.
- ✦ Partner with local community organizations to host a celebration centered around beautifying Edinburgh. This celebration may feature trash removal, basic landscaping, and public art installations.

# Implementation

**Vision for Housing:** Edinburgh will encourage the development of new housing options while uplifting existing neighborhoods.

**Goal 1:** Support the development of new housing of various types and prices to accommodate a diversity of ages, incomes, and lifestyles.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Update Edinburgh’s zoning and subdivision control ordinance, leveraging the ordinance as a vital tool to encourage desirable development and guard against undesirable development in Edinburgh.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Ensure that Edinburgh’s zoning ordinance permits missing middle housing to appeal to the younger workforce and seniors.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–
C. Maintain relationships with regional builders to pursue mutually beneficial projects.	Town Manager, Planning Department	–
D. Identify possible incentives to attract residential development in Edinburgh such as Housing Tax Increment Financing (HoTIF).	Town Manager, Town Council	HoTIF Funds

**Goal 2: Promote the beautification of existing neighborhoods through local enforcement and grassroots volunteerism.**

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Strengthen local ordinances to support ethical code enforcement. When issuing violations, staff should provide clear directions and deadlines to community members.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Create an action plan for enforcement in key areas, such as gateway corridors and historic districts.	Planning Department	Town Budget
C. Develop an online portal where residents can submit ordinance violations for town review.	Planning Department	Town Budget
D. Consider developing a Residential Rental Inspection Program (RRIP) to raise the quality of rental housing throughout the community.	Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget
E. Establish a rehabilitation program for residential properties, which may include a revolving loan fund and volunteer assistance to help homeowners make necessary improvements.	Town Manager, Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget, IHEDA Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Program
F. Partner with local community organizations to host a celebration centered around beautifying Edinburgh. This celebration may feature trash removal, basic landscaping, and public art installations.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	Town Budget



# Chapter Ten:

## Transportation

# Vision for Transportation

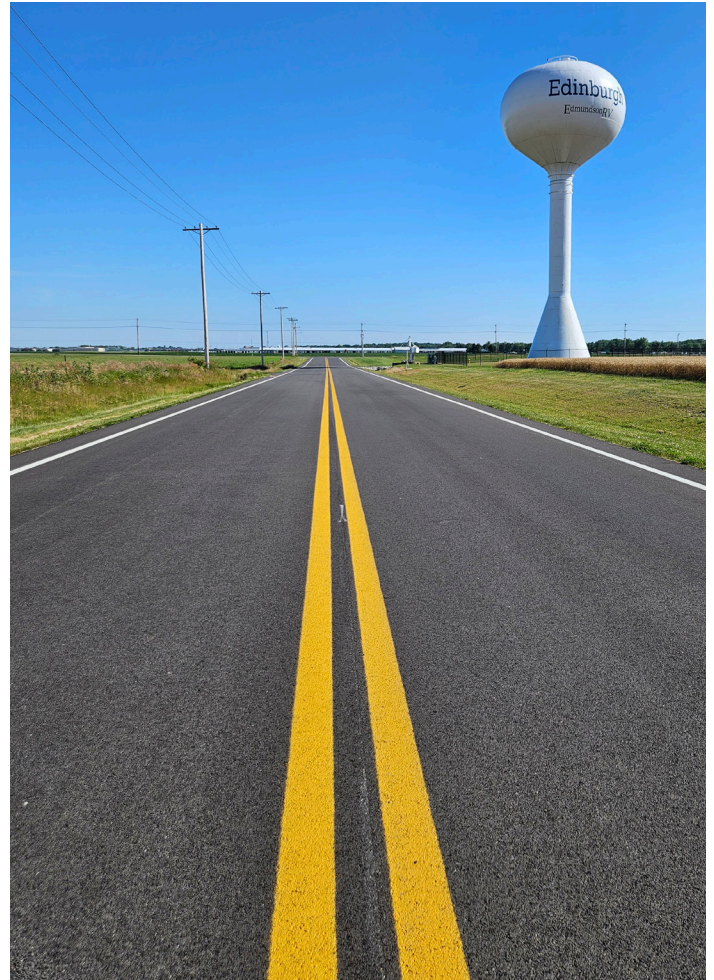
Edinburgh will maintain and enhance the transportation network to ensure local and regional connectivity for all users.

## Introduction

Located between Interstate 65 and US Route 31, the transportation network in Edinburgh plays a vital role in the community’s economic development and quality of life. Residents, visitors, and business owners expect travel to be quick and efficient from one part of the community to the next, and to other communities in the region. So far, Edinburgh has met these expectations but as the community grows, Edinburgh will need to maintain this same level of service. Growth also comes with new opportunities. Across community engagement opportunities, residents called for improved bicycle and pedestrian connections. These connections, whether in the form of sidewalks, bike lanes, or multi-use trails, would encourage active lifestyles, support social and emotional well-being, and promote economic development in the downtown.

# Key Findings

- ◆ Interstate 65 and U.S. Route 31 are major thoroughfares with exits in Edinburgh. Both thoroughfares are conducive to future development.
- ◆ Community members are generally satisfied with the transportation network in the community, particularly road conditions and connections.
- ◆ Edinburgh’s sidewalk network is inconsistent. Some neighborhoods have well-maintained sidewalks with ADA-accessible curb ramps while other neighborhoods have no sidewalks at all.



The Town of Edinburgh used READI funding to extend Main Street from Industrial Drive to W 900 N.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*



## Existing Conditions

Edinburgh's transportation network is built from various roadways and pedestrian facilities that allow for safe and efficient travel for residents, workers, and visitors. Main Cross Street, the historic center of the community, is home to most of the town's small restaurants and retail stores. Other commercial uses are located along Eisenhower Drive, a significant north-south connector, and State Road 252, a major east-west connector for the community. Eisenhower Drive and State Road 252 are officially classified as major collectors by INDOT and are eligible for federal transportation funding. U.S. Route 31, a principal arterial, forms the western boundary of Edinburgh while Interstate 65 forms the eastern boundary. Most industrial uses are served by Walnut Street and Kyle Street.

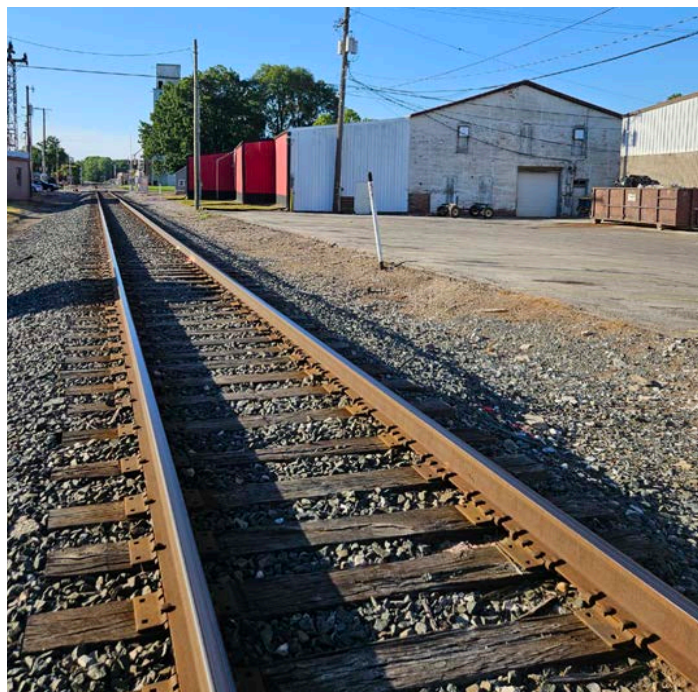
Edinburgh has a single railway crossing through the center of town from north to south. The Louisville & Indiana Railroad (LIRC), owned by Anacostia Rail Holdings, was formed in March 1994 to acquire 106 miles of rail line between Indianapolis and Louisville. LIRC connects with CSX, NS, INRD, and PAL railroads. There is a rail spur within town limits, just north of the LIRC's intersection with Naomi Street, and another just south of town at George Utz, Inc.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are limited, apart from sidewalks and crosswalks. This network is inconsistent. Condition and connections are largely dependent on the neighborhood itself. There are no multi-use, recreational trails within town limits.

In terms of recent investments, Edinburgh received funding from Indiana's Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) for an extension of Main Street from Industrial Drive to W 900 N. Construction concluded in Fall 2023. In the next few years, INDOT will begin construction on an \$8.7 million project targeting State Road 252. The project will include reconstructing the road, adding sidewalks to both sides of State Road 252 between Eisenhower Drive and Lincoln Street, and installing new inlets to improve storm drainage. From Lincoln Street to Lind Drive, pedestrian facilities will be constructed on the south side of State Road 252.

## Community Feedback

Throughout the planning process, community members expressed their satisfaction with Edinburgh's transportation network. Local roadways are well-maintained with great connections to the region via Interstate 65 and U.S. Route 31. Approximately 62.1% of survey participants agreed that roads and sidewalks are well-maintained and generally in good condition. Over 76% felt that it was safe for residents to walk to destinations (parks, post office, shopping) within Edinburgh. However, as the community grows, residents look forward to necessary improvements. In focus group meetings, residents explained that the sidewalk network is inconsistent. In some areas, recently installed sidewalks are perfectly level with ADA-accessible curb ramps. In other areas, sidewalk connections are missing entirely. During a focus group meeting, one elderly resident explained her decision to walk on the road in fear of the trip hazards posed by the sidewalks in her neighborhood. Community members are overwhelmingly supportive of additional bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to connect key destinations within the growing community to existing neighborhoods and new subdivisions.



The Louisville & Indiana Railroad passes through Edinburgh.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### **Continue to provide an efficient, well-connected transportation network in Edinburgh through maintenance and strategic improvements.**

Edinburgh can continue to enhance its transportation network through routine maintenance and strategic improvements. To start, the town may consider updating its street standards, ensuring that future projects incorporate best practices for roadway design. Good roadway design promotes safety, efficiency, and connectivity for all users. In addition to updating these standards, Edinburgh should complete an Asset Management Plan. Through this plan, Edinburgh can prioritize future improvements and leverage state and federal funding.

In coordination with downtown revitalization efforts, Edinburgh may explore options to convert Main Cross Street into a two-way, improving access to downtown businesses and public spaces. A redesign of the street should intentionally preserve parking to minimize the need for new lots. As the downtown gains popularity, Edinburgh should coordinate with local businesses and property owners to develop an action plan for public parking. This plan should prioritize the use of vacant and underutilized spaces for overflow parking with clear, attractive signage to direct visitors to these lots. A parking plan will be especially helpful as the downtown hosts more community events and sees the development of restaurants and nightlife.

## Action Items

- ✦ Update Edinburgh's street standards to follow best practices and include bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- ✦ Complete an Asset Management Plan approved by the Indiana Local and Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) for local roadways in Edinburgh, leveraging the Indiana Department of Transportation's Community Crossings Matching Grant Program and other funding sources.
- ✦ Evaluate options to convert Main Cross Street into a two-way to improve access to downtown businesses.
- ✦ Coordinate with business and property owners to develop an action plan for public parking in downtown Edinburgh. This may include the creation of designated overflow lots and signage to direct visitors to these lots during community events and peak times.

## Goal 2:

### Strengthen local and regional connectivity by enhancing the bicycle and pedestrian network.

Throughout the public engagement process, stakeholders expressed their interest in developing a trail system to connect key destinations in the community, including the downtown district, Big Blue River, Edinburgh Sports Complex, and Edinburgh Aquatic Center. Although it will be a challenge to add bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to a largely established community, there are significant benefits from doing so.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities play an important role in community health and wellness, connectivity, and local economic development. Access to trails, sidewalks, and safe crossings encourage residents of all ages to be more active, improving both mental and physical health. Multi-use paths, also known as greenways, accommodate a variety of activities, from walking to rollerblading to biking, while protecting vulnerable roadway users from traffic hazards.

Over 100 households in Edinburgh (approximately 6%), do not have access to a personal vehicle. To help these residents get to work, school, groceries, and community resources, safe bicycle and pedestrian routes are crucial.

Trails and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes also encourage residents and visitors to take their time as they explore, stopping for a meal, sweet treat, gift, or souvenir. Downtowns thrive off foot traffic and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure brings it to them, whether from neighborhoods within the community or via regional connections. As Edinburgh grows, the town should consider developing a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to outline future projects and harness the benefits of multi-modal transportation.

## Action Items

- ✦ Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to assess community needs and outline priority projects to connect key destinations in Edinburgh and the greater region. This plan should consider the feasibility of a multi-use trail system with potential routes.
- ✦ Complete a Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Inventory to identify hazards and needed connections in Edinburgh's sidewalk network.
- ✦ Partner with the Parks & Recreation Departments for Franklin and Columbus on opportunities to connect trails in the region.

# Implementation

**Vision for Transportation:** Edinburgh will maintain and enhance the transportation network to ensure local and regional connectivity for all users.

**Goal 1:** Continue to provide an efficient, well-connected transportation network in Edinburgh through maintenance and strategic improvements.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Update Edinburgh’s street standards to follow best practices and include bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	Street Department, Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Complete an Asset Management Plan approved by the Indiana Local and Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) for local roadways in Edinburgh, leveraging the Indiana Department of Transportation’s Community Crossings Matching Grant Program and other funding sources.	Street Department, Town Council	Town Budget, INDOT Community Crossings Matching Grant
C. Evaluate options to convert Main Cross Street into a two-way to improve access to downtown businesses.	Town Manager, Street Department, Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget
D. Coordinate with business and property owners to develop an action plan for public parking in downtown Edinburgh. This may include the creation of designated overflow lots and signage to direct visitors to these lots during community events and peak times.	Town Manager, Street Department, Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget

**Goal 2: Strengthen local and regional connectivity by enhancing the bicycle and pedestrian network.**

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
<p><b>A.</b> Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to assess community needs and outline priority projects to connect key destinations in Edinburgh and the greater region. This plan should consider the feasibility of a multi-use trail system with potential routes.</p>	<p>Planning Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Street Department, Town Council</p>	<p>Town Budget, IDOH Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Program</p>
<p><b>B.</b> Complete a Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Inventory to identify hazards and needed connections in Edinburgh’s sidewalk network.</p>	<p>Street Department, Town Council</p>	<p>Town Budget</p>
<p><b>C.</b> Partner with the Parks and Recreation Departments for Franklin and Columbus on opportunities to connect trails in the region.</p>	<p>Edinburgh Parks and Recreation Department, Franklin Parks and Recreation Department, Columbus Parks and Recreation Department</p>	<p>Town Budget, Indiana Trails Program</p>

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# **Chapter Eleven:**

Agriculture



A view of Edinburgh's water tower through a field of wheat.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

## Vision for Agriculture

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**Edinburgh will support the responsible transition of agricultural land within town limits to other appropriate uses over time.**

## Introduction

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Over its 200-year history, most of the land in Edinburgh has been developed for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses, leaving very few agricultural lots remaining. Any remaining agricultural lots are on the fringes of the community, surrounded by other uses. As Edinburgh grows, the town should support the responsible transition of remaining agricultural land to other appropriate uses. At the same time, Edinburgh should support agricultural uses outside of town by establishing appropriate buffers, attracting value-added agriculture businesses, and expanding the local farmer's market.

## Key Findings

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- ✦ Agriculture makes up less than 15% of all land use in Edinburgh. The remaining farmed properties are largely surrounded by other uses.
- ✦ When surveyed, the greatest portion of respondents (44%) agreed that existing agricultural land within Edinburgh's town limits should be developed in the future.
- ✦ Community members recognize the importance of agriculture in South Central Indiana. Agriculture should remain a dominant use in the surrounding, unincorporated county.



## Existing Conditions

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As of June 2024, less than 350 acres within Edinburgh's corporate limits are consistently farmed, indicating that agriculture makes up less than 15% of all land use. This primarily includes large lots south of County Line Road. Some agricultural land here is owned by real estate firms and has already been improved, through the addition of roads, to accommodate future commercial or industrial uses. Additional agricultural land is located along State Road 252 near the Interstate 65 interchange.

## Community Feedback

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The future development of Edinburgh's remaining agricultural land is a delicate topic. Agriculture is an important industry for rural, Midwestern communities and an important part of Indiana's history and heritage. Agricultural land is aesthetically pleasing, contributing to the community's quaint character and quiet atmosphere. However, when surveyed, the greatest portion of respondents (44%) agreed that existing agricultural land within Edinburgh's town limits should be developed in the future. Approximately 36% of respondents disagreed and 21% were unsure of whether to develop this land. As new uses are proposed, the Town of Edinburgh should refer to the Future Land Use Map, development ordinances, and public feedback to ensure that the proposed use is an appropriate fit.



A field of wheat on the south side of Edinburgh.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### **Direct growth and development within town limits with appropriate transitions to agricultural areas in the unincorporated county.**

Within town limits, Edinburgh should support the responsible transition of agricultural land to the highest and best use. Areas in the south side of town, particularly along Main Street and Walnut Street, may be best suited for industrial and commercial uses. Large swathes of agricultural land elsewhere in the community could accommodate new residential development while land along well-traveled corridors may support commercial uses.

In unincorporated areas surrounding Edinburgh, agriculture should remain a dominant use. The Town of Edinburgh can support farmers by requiring buffers between agricultural and nonagricultural uses. Buffers come in many forms but are generally areas of land with permanent vegetation designed to intercept pollutants, noise, dust, and other objectionable materials. For example, in an update to the town's development ordinances, Edinburgh could require a buffer between an industrial site within town limits and an agricultural site outside of town.

Edinburgh can also enhance economic development opportunities for regional agricultural producers. On a small scale, Edinburgh could attract more vendors to the local farmers market, providing another venue for agricultural producers to sell fresh produce, preserves, meat, eggs, plants, and baked goods. On a larger scale, the town could welcome value-added agriculture businesses. Value-added agriculture is a movement that involves manufacturing processes, marketing, and services that increase the value of primary agricultural commodities. Through value-added agriculture, South Central Indiana farmers and communities can get more out of agricultural production.

## Action Items

- ✦ Update Edinburgh's zoning and subdivision control ordinance to require buffers between agricultural and nonagricultural uses.
- ✦ Partner with Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance and Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development to attract agriculture-related businesses to Edinburgh.
- ✦ Continue to expand the Edinburgh Farmers Market by attracting new food vendors.

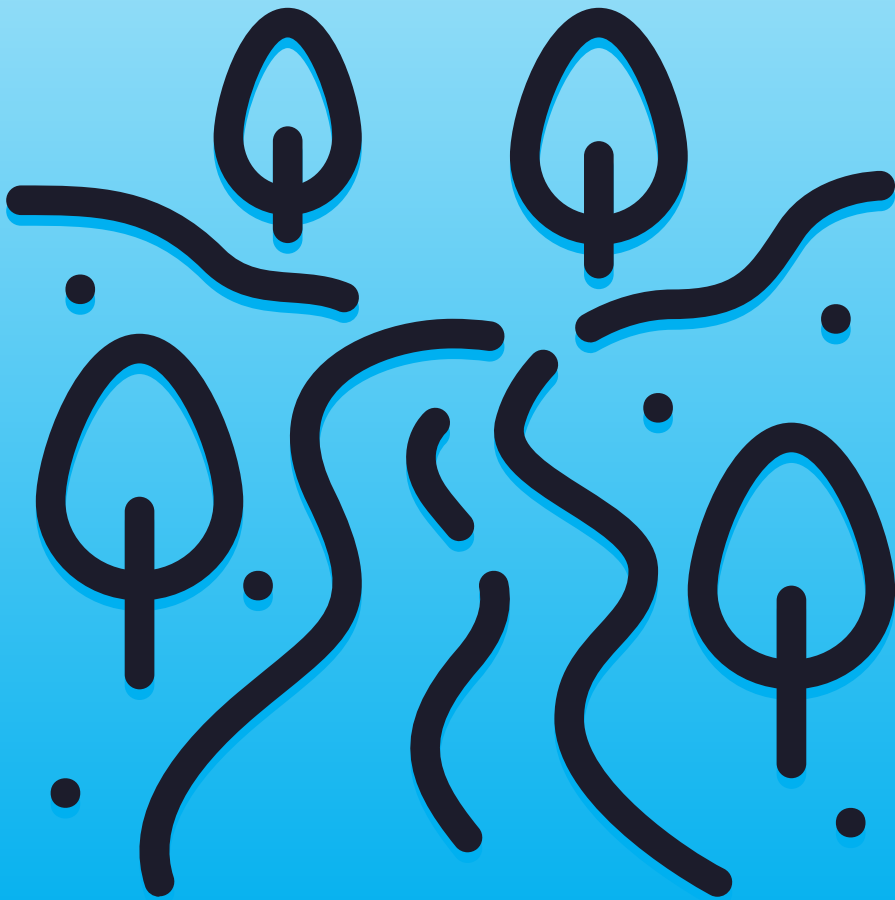
# Implementation

**Vision for Agriculture:** Edinburgh will support the responsible transition of agricultural land within town limits to other appropriate uses over time.

**Goal 1:** Direct growth and development within town limits with appropriate transitions to agricultural areas in the unincorporated county.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Update Edinburgh’s zoning and subdivision control ordinance to require buffers between agricultural and nonagricultural uses.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Partner with Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance and Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development to attract agriculture-related businesses to Edinburgh.	Town Manager, Economic Development Board, Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance, Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development	–
C. Continue to expand the Edinburgh Farmers Market by attracting new food vendors.	Community Center Director	Town Budget

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# Chapter Twelve:

Natural Resources

# Vision for Natural Resources

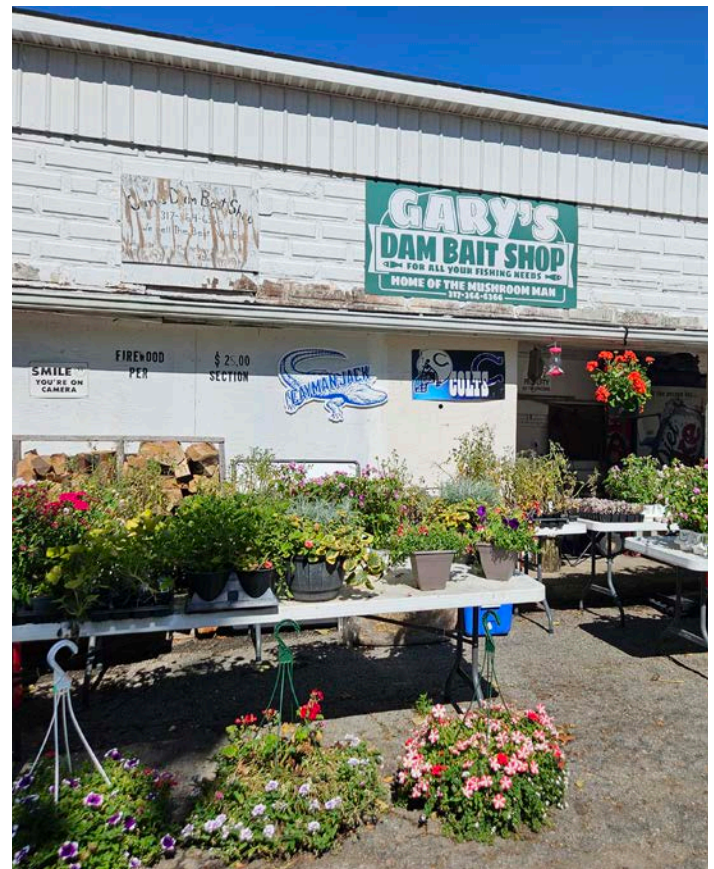
Edinburgh will preserve waterways and surrounding woodlands, and the underlying aquifer to promote ecological health, protect drinking water quality, and provide access points for recreation.

## Introduction

Nestled along the Big Blue River, the Town of Edinburgh is home to stunning natural resources, from the flowing river itself to mature hardwood trees along its banks. These natural resources are concentrated in the northwest corner of the community where a green corridor extends from Irwin Park to the Driftwood State Fishing Area. Past town limits, this greenery transforms into rolling hills which continue southwest into Brown County. In the coming decades, there is an opportunity to embrace the Big Blue River as an outdoor recreation destination for residents and visitors. As Edinburgh makes plans to activate the riverfront, the town must also take steps to protect ecological health and drinking water quality, ensuring that future generations enjoy Edinburgh’s natural resources and stunning beauty at their peak.

# Key Findings

- ✦ The Big Blue River flows through the northwest corner of Edinburgh before joining with the Driftwood River. Community members are interested in opportunities to activate the riverfront as an outdoor recreation destination.
- ✦ To ensure that future generations can enjoy Edinburgh’s natural resources, the town can practice environmental stewardship. This may include expanding recycling options, protecting groundwater, upgrading the wastewater system, and caring for the urban forest.
- ✦ Edinburgh’s drinking water comes from a vast underlying aquifer. The town protects this aquifer through its Wellhead Protection (WHP) Plan.
- ✦ Edinburgh provides drop-off recycling services at the Edinburgh Recycling Depot. Residents complained about the accessibility of recycling, calling for longer hours of operation or curb-side recycling.



A bait and tackle shop serves visitors to the Big Blue River.  
Image Source: HWC Engineering

# Existing Conditions

Natural resources in Edinburgh consist of the river, trees, and underlying aquifer. The 83.8-mile-long Big Blue River rises in northeastern Henry County at the Summit Lake Reservoir. The river then flows generally southwestward through Rush, Hancock, Shelby, and Johnson counties. Eventually, the river flows through the northwest corner of Edinburgh. Approximately one mile west of Edinburgh, the Big Blue River joins with Sugar Creek to form the Driftwood River. The Driftwood River is part of the watershed of the Mississippi River via the White, Wabash, and Ohio rivers.

After the Miami Nation ceded the land for present-day Edinburgh in the Treaty of St. Mary's in 1818, it was not long before the Big Blue River attracted settlers to the area. In 1826, James Thompson built the Thompson Mill on the Big Blue River. By 1850, Thompson erected a larger four-story brick mill. Flour produced in the mill was used by the Union Army during the Civil War. After a fire in 1872, John A. Thompson, a son, built a six-story brick-mill, shipping flour across the country. The stone dam constructed to support the mill was the first of its kind in the Midwest. In World War I, Will Irwin of Columbus purchased the mill to generate electricity for the Union Starch and Refining Company. For a time, the mill was owned by the town to generate electricity for local use. In 1957, the mill was razed.

Today, a historic marker overlooks the Big Blue River on the former site of the Thompson Mill. A small green space with a picnic table allows residents and visitors to enjoy the river and reflect on its history. The stone dam, which has stood for over 150 years, has lost its structural integrity and is scheduled for removal. Removal of the dam will mitigate safety hazards and pave the way for more water recreation in the area.

The Town of Edinburgh relies on groundwater from an underlying aquifer to supply drinking water to customers. This vast aquifer consists of highly transmissive sand and gravel deposits. Edinburgh has a Wellhead Protection (WHP) Plan to protect drinking water extracted from this aquifer. The WHP Plan focuses on public awareness, education, spill prevention, and reporting.



The Big Blue River winds through northwest Edinburgh.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*



# Community Feedback

The Town of Edinburgh sits on the Big Blue River, which is a great natural amenity for residents and visitors. In the public input survey, respondents were split on whether the river had sufficient public access points for fishing, kayaking, and wildlife viewing. The Comprehensive Planning Committee clarified that the town has an access point at Irwin Park, but this area could be enhanced to make the river more accessible. Approximately 66.2% of survey respondents agree that Edinburgh has woodlands and natural resources that should be protected from future development. While the focus should be on preservation, stakeholders also demonstrated interest in riverfront activation. This could include installing a trail and supporting small-scale commercial development along the riverfront. Desirable businesses may include a family-friendly restaurant, ice cream shop, and outdoor outfitter, in addition to the existing bait and tackle shop.

State Road 252 crosses the Big Blue River in Edinburgh.  
*Image Source: HWC Engineering*



# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### Activate the riverfront in Edinburgh as a destination for residents and visitors.

Up until this point, most of the destination development efforts in Edinburgh have focused on the downtown. While developing a thriving Main (Cross) Street should be the town's priority, there is also an opportunity to make Edinburgh an outdoor recreation destination in the coming decades. By unlocking the riverfront as a key asset, Edinburgh can bring together new residents from subdivisions along U.S. Route 31 and residents from the town's older neighborhoods in one unique space. At the same time, the community can attract visitors from across Central and Southern Indiana.

Edinburgh may consider developing a Riverfront Activation Plan to outline a shared vision and key projects for the Big Blue River. Future initiatives may include installing a multi-use trail along the river, upgrading amenities at Irwin Park, hosting festivals and events, and crafting a space that feels historic, significant, and full of natural beauty through the installation of monuments and public art. These improvements can be complemented by efforts to care for the environment, such as preventing erosion and promoting clean waterways.

## Action Items

- ✦ Develop a Riverfront Activation Plan to enliven the Big Blue River. This may include expanding the trail system, installing a modern playground, adding benches and picnic tables, and building shelters for public and private events.
- ✦ Partner with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to upgrade the boat launch at Irwin Park, enhancing access to the Big Blue River for boating and fishing.
- ✦ Partner with community organizations to facilitate community events along the riverfront, from live performances to boat races.
- ✦ Support improvements to the Irwin Park campsites to provide overnight accommodation for visitors and recreation opportunities for residents.
- ✦ Showcase the river's history, including the story of the Thompson Mill and Dam, through historical markers, monuments, and public art.
- ✦ Repair and enhance the environment along the river by restoring the natural flow of water and pursuing streamline stabilization techniques to prevent erosion.

## Goal 2:

### Foster a healthy, thriving environment in Edinburgh for the benefit of current and future generations.

Residents treasure the natural environment in Edinburgh, from the town's dazzling river to its mature trees. To ensure that future generations can enjoy this natural beauty, the Town of Edinburgh must take steps to protect the environment. Local sustainability efforts may focus on improving recycling options and protecting groundwater. In the short term, recycling can be improved by extending the hours at the recycling center. In the long term, Edinburgh should consider expanding trash services to include curbside recycling. Recycling is necessary to keep materials, from paper to aluminum, in circulation and out of landfills. To help residents better understand the importance of groundwater, the town should launch a public awareness campaign. Highly visible projects, like installing a rain garden downtown, can also serve as an educational tool.

Other sustainability measures may center around wastewater and the urban forest. As the town grows, the Wastewater Department should evaluate options to reduce combined sewer overflow, protecting the quality of local waterways. To protect and care for the town's urban forest, Edinburgh may consider establishing an Urban Forestry Committee. This dedicated group would oversee the development of a plan for the care of trees and shrubs in right-of-way and other public spaces. Tree cover provides important habitat and food sources for native wildlife, but also benefits humans by keeping temperatures cool and contributing to community character.

## Action Items

- ✦ Extend the hours at the recycling center.
- ✦ Consider expanding trash services to include curbside recycling.
- ✦ Continue to implement the Wellhead Protection (WHP) Plan to safeguard drinking water quality.
- ✦ Launch a public education campaign about the importance of protecting groundwater. This may include posting tips for residents on utility bills, hosting pop-up events, or distributing information at community events and festivals.
- ✦ Install a rain garden in downtown Edinburgh to reduce runoff, filter pollutants, and recharge groundwater.
- ✦ Promote the quality of local waterways by considering opportunities to reconfigure the wastewater system and reduce combined sewer overflow.
- ✦ Establish an Urban Forestry Committee to oversee the development of a written plan for the care of trees and shrubs along streets and other public areas.

# Implementation

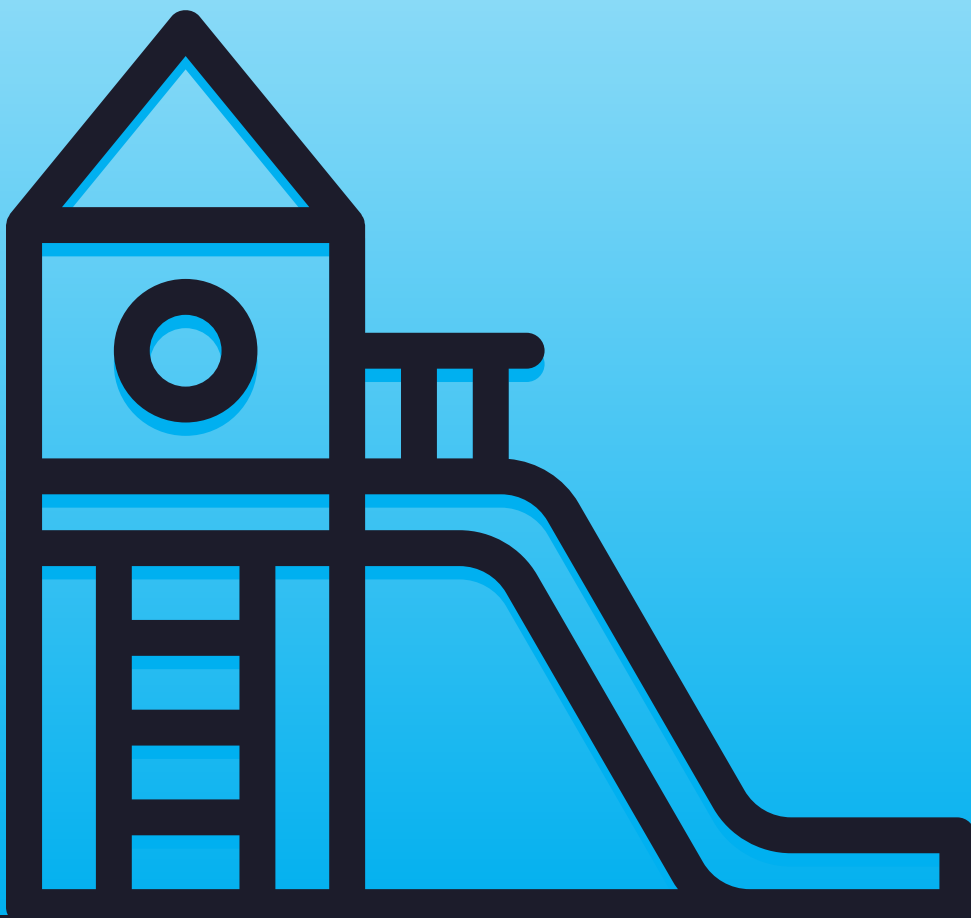
**Vision for Natural Resources:** Edinburgh will preserve waterways and surrounding woodlands, and the underlying aquifer to promote ecological health, protect drinking water quality, and provide access points for recreation.

**Goal 1:** Activate the riverfront in Edinburgh as a destination for residents and visitors.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Develop a Riverfront Activation Plan to enliven the Big Blue River. This may include expanding the trail system, installing a modern playground, adding benches and picnic tables, and building shelters for public and private events.	Town Manager, Planning Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Partner with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to upgrade the boat launch at Irwin Park, enhancing access to the Big Blue River for boating and fishing.	Parks and Recreation Department, Indiana Department of Natural Resources	Indiana Department of Natural Resources Budget
C. Partner with community organizations to facilitate community events along the riverfront, from live performances to boat races.	Community Center Director, Parks and Recreation Department	Town Budget
D. Support improvements to the Irwin Park campsites to provide overnight accommodation for visitors and recreation opportunities for residents.	Parks and Recreation Department	Town Budget, IDNR Land and Water Conservation Fund
E. Showcase the river's history, including the story of the Thompson Mill and Dam, through historical markers, monuments, and public art.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	Town Budget
F. Repair and enhance the environment along the river by restoring the natural flow of water and pursuing streamline stabilization techniques to prevent erosion.	Town Manager, Parks and Recreation Department	Town Budget

**Goal 2: Foster a healthy, thriving environment in Edinburgh for the benefit of current and future generations.**

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Extend the hours at the recycling center.	Town Manager, Johnson County Recycling District	Trash and Recycling Budget
B. Consider expanding trash services to include curbside recycling.	Town Manager, Johnson County Recycling District	Trash and Recycling Budget
C. Continue to implement the Wellhead Protection (WHP) Plan to safeguard drinking water quality.	Water Department	Water Utility Budget
D. Launch a public education campaign about the importance of protecting groundwater. This may include posting tips for residents on utility bills, hosting pop-up events, or distributing information at community events and festivals.	Water Department	Water Utility Budget
E. Install a rain garden in downtown Edinburgh to reduce runoff, filter pollutants, and recharge groundwater.	Town Manager, Water Department, Stormwater Utility, Parks and Recreation Department	Stormwater Utility Budget
F. Promote the quality of local waterways by considering opportunities to reconfigure the wastewater system and reduce combined sewer overflow.	Town Council, Wastewater Department, Stormwater Utility	Stormwater Utility Budget, OCRA Stormwater Improvements Program
G. Establish an Urban Forestry Committee to oversee the development of a written plan for the care of trees and shrubs along streets and other public areas.	Town Council	Town Budget



# Chapter Thirteen:

Parks & Recreation

# Vision for Parks & Recreation

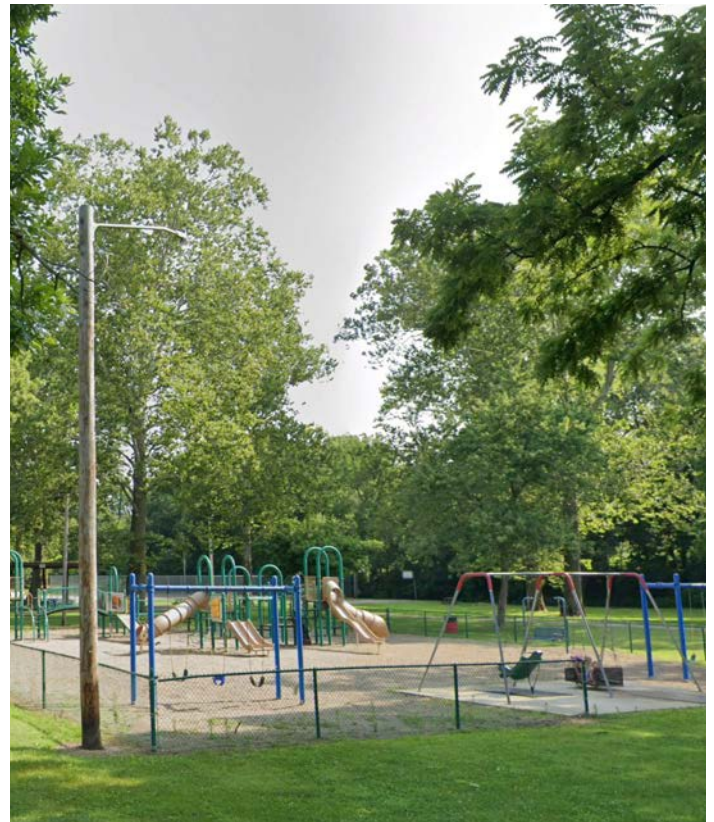
**Edinburgh will provide enriching indoor and outdoor recreation amenities that promote healthy lifestyles and social connections for residents of all ages and abilities.**

## Introduction

From RV camping along the Big Blue River to afternoon baseball games at the Edinburgh Sports Complex, Edinburgh offers excellent parks and recreation facilities. As the community grows, Edinburgh should pursue opportunities to renovate and expand these amenities. In focus groups, stakeholders called for improvements to Irwin Park and expressed interest in a community-wide trail system. Others were interested in a community gym or recreation center, whether publicly or privately owned and operated. To support these improvements, Edinburgh should consider expanding the capacity of its Parks and Recreation Department. This may involve creating a Parks Board, developing a Five-Year Master Plan, and establishing a dedicated volunteer group. By taking these steps, Edinburgh can continue to meet the needs of new and existing residents, while also attracting visitors. Investment in parks and recreation sends a clear message that the Town of Edinburgh wants to promote active lifestyles and create opportunities for joy and play throughout the community.

# Key Findings

- ✦ Edinburgh’s parks and recreation system includes three parks (Irwin, Bryan, Prosser), the Edinburgh Sports Complex, and the Edinburgh Aquatic Center. Community members are generally satisfied with the maintenance of these facilities, but upgrades and expansions may be needed as Edinburgh grows.
- ✦ Expanding the capacity of the Parks and Recreation Department will help Edinburgh maintain an adequate level of service now and into the future.
- ✦ Edinburgh may consider acquiring property downtown for a public plaza. This flexible greenspace could be designed to accommodate events and festivals throughout the year.
- ✦ All programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department focus on youth. There may be an opportunity to expand programming to include adults, from young adults to seniors.



Irwin Park offers river access, RV campsites, shelter houses, a playground, and a paved track to residents and visitors.

*Image Source: Google Earth*

# Existing Conditions

The Parks and Recreation Department manages three parks, the Edinburgh Sports Complex, and the Edinburgh Aquatic Center. The Parks and Recreation Department also offers a host of recreation programs for children in the community.

## Irwin Park

Located on the north side of Edinburgh off Main Street, Irwin Park is the largest park in the community at over 44 acres. The park is bordered by the Big Blue River and has much to offer in terms of outdoor recreation. Visitors can rent one of three shelter houses or reserve one of 12 RV campsites. The park is also equipped with a playground, sports field, and paved running track. Access to the scenic waterway allows for nature walks, fishing, kayaking, and canoeing.

## Bryan Park

Located on the south side of Edinburgh off Bryan Street, Bryan Park is a small, half-acre park featuring a swing set, jungle gym, basketball court, and picnic tables. Bryan Park is a great neighborhood park for nearby residents.

## Prosser Park

Located by the Rest Haven Cemetery off Fulford Drive, Prosser Park is a small, half-acre park featuring a swing set, jungle gym, basketball court, and a small shelter equipped with a picnic table and grill. Prosser Park is also a great neighborhood park.

## Edinburgh Sports Complex

The Edinburgh Sports Complex is a regional attraction, drawing families from Edinburgh and surrounding communities for youth baseball and softball games. Located off Eisenhower Drive, the complex features six playing fields, a covered playground, concessions, administrative building, and restroom facilities.

## Edinburgh Aquatic Center

Located by East Side Elementary School, the Edinburgh



The Edinburgh Sports Complex is a regional destination for youth baseball and softball.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

Aquatic Center has a pool, two water slides, water play area, picnic tables, concessions, and restroom facilities. The Aquatic Center opens for the summer season on Memorial Day weekend. The pool is open daily from noon to 6pm.

## Recreation Programs

The Parks and Recreation Department offers recreation programs for youth, including B.A.S.E., Youth Club, and Rec League Baseball/Softball/T-ball/Midgets. Before and After School Enrichment (B.A.S.E.) is an annual program that assists parents with childcare before and after school hours. Children participate in homework time with staff members, enjoy fun crafts and activities, and work on study skills in a supportive environment. Youth Club is a summer day camp program which provides an opportunity for kids to participate in fun events, field trips, hands-on learning, and crafting with friends. Youth Club is offered for children in grades K-5 for approximately eight weeks. Participating children are dropped off and picked up at the Edinburgh Parks and Recreation building. Rec Leagues are offered during the summer for children between 3 and 15 years old. Games are held at the Edinburgh Sports Complex.

## Timbergate Golf Course

Edinburgh is also home to the Timbergate Golf Course, located just off Interstate 65 on State Road 252. Built in 1999, the Timbergate Golf Course is a public course owned by the Town of Edinburgh. The course features a total of 18 holes, eleven ponds, and several bunkers. Timbergate is also a residential neighborhood with homes overlooking the course.

## Other Nearby Facilities

Other nearby parks and recreation facilities include the following:

- ◆ Driftwood State Fishing Area (Johnson County / Bartholomew County, Indiana)
- ◆ Johnson County Park (Johnson County, Indiana)
- ◆ Heflin Park (Bartholomew County, Indiana)
- ◆ Blue's Canoe Livery (Bartholomew County, Indiana)

Just a short drive from Edinburgh, Franklin and Columbus have many parks to offer for residents and visitors. The nearest state park, Brown County State Park, is just a half-hour drive away.

## Community Feedback

Feedback from community engagement opportunities, including the survey, public workshop, and focus group discussions, indicated that participants were generally satisfied with parks in Edinburgh. Over two-thirds of survey respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the maintenance of the town's parks. Over half of the survey respondents were satisfied with the parks' accessibility, safety, and available amenities (i.e., equipment and facilities). However, 41.3% of respondents indicated that they were unsatisfied with programming opportunities in the town's parks and almost half of respondents believed that connectivity was lacking between parks and other town amenities.

Currently, programming by Edinburgh's Parks and Recreation Department is focused on youth. Community members agreed that there could be more options for adult participants, including outdoor movie nights, concert series, adult rec teams, marathons, or group exercises classes (e.g., yoga in the park). To improve connectivity, stakeholders suggested developing a trail system between key town amenities, including the river, downtown, Edinburgh Sports Complex, and Indiana Premium Outlets. Other suggestions included the adaptive reuse of the old fire station as a fitness center and the development of a public plaza downtown with an amphitheater and flexible programming space.



# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### **Expand the capacity of Edinburgh’s Parks and Recreation Department.**

As Edinburgh grows, the Parks and Recreation Department will serve an increasing number of eager families seeking to exercise, play, and relax in their community. To maintain an adequate level of service and expand services to include new, exciting amenities, the town should consider strengthening the capacity of this department. The Parks and Recreation Department is currently operated by seven full-time staff members. A Parks Board could be established to support these staff. The Parks Board would oversee recreational needs of the community, including maintenance and construction of facilities and trails. The board would also help organize community programs and festivals. Furthermore, by developing a Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Edinburgh could outline a long-term vision for parks and recreation facilities in the community, identifying plans for future facilities, programs, and staff.

The capacity of the Parks and Recreation Department could be further expanded through additional revenue-generating opportunities. Currently, the department offers pool passes, shelter reservations, RV reservations, concessions, and youth programs to drive revenue. Adding to or expanding these offerings may provide the department with more funds for future investments. The department could also be supported by a volunteer association like a “Friends of Edinburgh Parks” group. Volunteers could help with beautification efforts, event facilitation, promotion, and more.

## Action Items

- ✦ Establish a Parks Board to oversee recreational needs in Edinburgh, including the maintenance and construction of park facilities, trails, community programming, and festivals.
- ✦ Develop a Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan that follows guidelines set forth by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and plans for future facilities, programming, and added staff capacity.
- ✦ Identify appropriate revenue-generating opportunities within the Edinburgh’s parks and recreation system with insight from the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- ✦ Encourage the formation of a “Friends of Edinburgh Parks” or similar volunteer group to support the Parks and Recreation Department.

## Goal 2:

### **Build upon existing recreation amenities in Edinburgh's parks and recreation system to meet the needs of residents and visitors.**

Edinburgh already has great parks and recreation offerings; however, the needs of residents and visitors are ever changing. To keep up with demand, Edinburgh should build upon existing recreation amenities, upgrading these facilities to create something new and exciting. Throughout the public engagement process, community members emphasized the need for upgrades to aging facilities, including the Edinburgh Sports Complex, Edinburgh Aquatic Center, and Irwin Park. These facilities have served as regional destinations for years but are now facing growing competition from newer facilities in Franklin and Columbus. With some improvements, these facilities could once again stand out as must-visit recreation destinations in South Central Indiana.

The town could also explore opportunities to repurpose underutilized land for parks and recreation. In the downtown, stakeholders have called for a public plaza or flexible greenspace to host the farmers market, annual festivals, and concert series. Floodplains can also be repurposed for recreational space. And, in new subdivisions, Edinburgh could require commitments from developers to offer recreation amenities or develop pedestrian connections to an existing park, recreational area, or open space. This requirement will prevent isolation and inactivity, which are both detrimental to mental and physical health. New residents should feel excited and connected to their community through beautiful parks and lively programming.

## Action Items

- ✦ Consider upgrades to existing amenities, including the Edinburgh Sports Complex, Edinburgh Aquatic Center, and Irwin Park, so that they may continue to serve as regional destinations.
- ✦ Explore opportunities to acquire vacant parcels in the downtown core for future park amenities, including a public plaza, flexible green-space, or pocket park.
- ✦ Update Edinburgh's development standards to support the use of floodplains for public recreation and open space.
- ✦ Update Edinburgh's development standards to require new subdivisions to offer parks and recreation amenities or be located within walking distance of an existing park, recreational area, or open space.

# Implementation

**Vision for Parks & Recreation:** Edinburgh will provide enriching indoor and outdoor recreation amenities that promote healthy lifestyles and social connections for residents of all ages and abilities.

**Goal 1:** Expand the capacity of Edinburgh’s Parks and Recreation Department.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Establish a Parks Board to oversee recreational needs in Edinburgh, including the maintenance and construction of park facilities, trails, community programming, and festivals.	Town Council	–
B. Develop a Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan that follows guidelines set forth by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and plans for future facilities, programming, and added staff capacity.	Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget
C. Identify appropriate revenue-generating opportunities within the Edinburgh’s parks and recreation system with insight from the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget
D. Encourage the formation of a “Friends of Edinburgh Parks” or similar volunteer group to support the Parks and Recreation Department.	Parks and Recreation Department	–

**Goal 2: Build upon existing recreation amenities in Edinburgh’s parks and recreation system to meet the needs of residents and visitors.**

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Consider upgrades to existing amenities, including the Edinburgh Sports Complex, Edinburgh Aquatic Center, and Irwin Park, so that they may continue to serve as regional destinations.	Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget, IDNR Land and Water Conservation Fund
B. Explore opportunities to acquire vacant parcels in the downtown core for future park amenities, including a public plaza, flexible green-space, or pocket park.	Town Manager, Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget, IDNR Land and Water Conservation Fund
C. Update Edinburgh’s development standards to support the use of floodplains for public recreation and open space.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–
D. Update Edinburgh’s development standards to require new subdivisions to offer parks and recreation amenities or be located within walking distance of an existing park, recreational area, or open space.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–



# Chapter Fourteen:

Broadband Access

## Vision for Broadband Access

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**Edinburgh will promote access to affordable, high-speed Internet for residents and businesses.**

## Introduction

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In the last decade, access to affordable, high-speed Internet has become paramount. From online homework assignments to telehealth to remote work, Internet access has become an integral part of daily life for many Hoosiers. Internet access is also crucial for business owners who need to research market trends, order supplies, manage finances, hire staff, and advertise to customers. Besides allowing us to do necessary tasks with ease, Internet access also enhances our lives, making it easier to keep in touch with friends and family, and offering endless entertainment. As Edinburgh welcomes new residents and businesses, the town must take steps to promote broadband investment in the community.

## Key Findings

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- ✦ The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) reports that Edinburgh has 100% broadband coverage; however, options are limited, especially for fiber.
- ✦ Over half of respondents on the public input survey were dissatisfied with the availability of affordable, high-speed Internet options in Edinburgh.
- ✦ Edinburgh may be able to promote broadband development by taking steps to become a Broadband Ready Community.

## Existing Conditions

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According to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) National Broadband Map, Edinburgh has complete broadband coverage and approximately six providers, although not all providers are consistently available throughout the community. In March 2024, the FCC increased the minimum broadband speed to 100 megabits per second (Mbps) for downloads and 20 Mbps for uploads. The following three providers meet the FCC's new requirements for broadband: Xfinity (Fiber), Sparklight (Cable), and Starlink (NGSO Satellite).

Despite having full coverage, residents are not fully satisfied with their service. Healthy competition amongst broadband providers should be encouraged to ensure that broadband remains affordable, and services are reliable. As the community grows, there are areas where broadband will need to be extended to serve new subdivisions and businesses.

## Community Feedback

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Feedback from survey respondents indicated that broadband services in Edinburgh should be improved to connect residents and local businesses in the town and the surrounding communities. Over half of respondents of the public survey indicated that they were “unsatisfied” or “very unsatisfied” with the availability of affordable, high-speed Internet options in Edinburgh. Of the 55.3% of respondents who were not satisfied with the availability of affordable, high-speed Internet, almost 30% of those were “very unsatisfied.”

# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### **Demonstrate to providers that Edinburgh is open to broadband development.**

Fiber broadband is considered the gold standard for broadband networks because it is faster, more reliable, and more energy efficient than other types of broadband. Although most of Edinburgh has access to cable or satellite Internet, fiber is limited to select neighborhoods along U.S. Route 31. To demonstrate that Edinburgh is interested in additional broadband development, Edinburgh can become a Broadband Ready Community.

The Broadband Ready Communities Program was created as a tool to encourage broadband development throughout Indiana by serving as an information resource and certifying local communities as being broadband ready. Certification sends a signal to providers that a community has taken steps to reduce barriers to broadband infrastructure investment. The certification process is simple and involves adopting an ordinance and filing an application with supporting documentation. More information, including a current application, can be found on Indiana Broadband's website.

As Edinburgh works to promote broadband access, the Bartholomew County Broadband Initiative (BCBI) may be a valuable partner. The goal of the BCBI is to bring high-speed Internet to all of Bartholomew County, a mission they've had great success in. The BCBI has already brought fiber Internet, provided by GigabitNow, to Columbus and the surrounding area. Edinburgh may reach out to the BCBI for information on best practices and potential connections with providers.

## Action Items

- ✦ Adopt Indiana Broadband's Model Ordinance/Resolution for Broadband Ready Communities (BBRC).
- ✦ Apply to be a certified Broadband Ready Community to signal to the telecommunication industry that Edinburgh has taken steps to reduce barriers to broadband infrastructure investment.
- ✦ Partner with the Bartholomew County Broadband Initiative to share best practices and forge connections with potential providers.

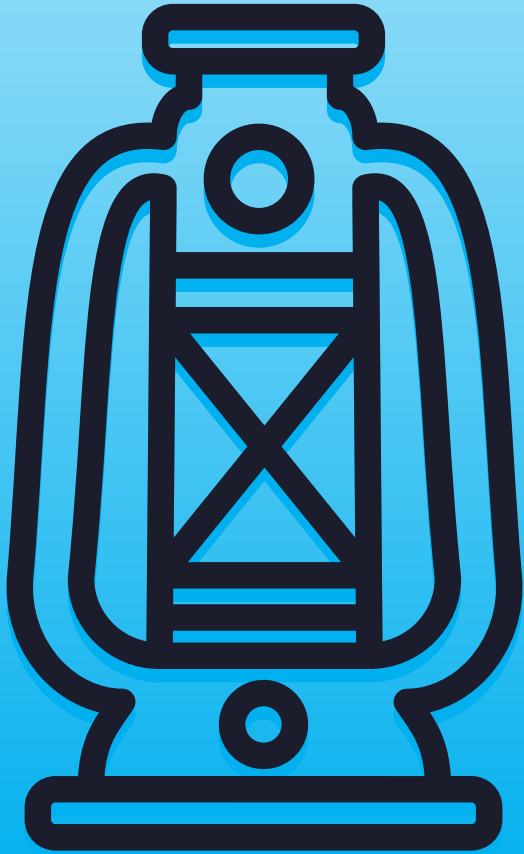
# Implementation

**Vision for Broadband Access:** Edinburgh will promote access to affordable, high-speed internet for residents and businesses.

**Goal 1:** Demonstrate to providers that Edinburgh is open to broadband development.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Adopt Indiana Broadband’s Model Ordinance/ Resolution for Broadband Ready Communities (BBRC).	Town Council	–
B. Apply to be a certified Broadband Ready Community to signal to the telecommunication industry that Edinburgh has taken steps to reduce barriers to broadband infrastructure investment.	Town Manager	–
C. Partner with the Bartholomew County Broadband Initiative to share best practices and forge connections with potential providers.	Town Manager, Bartholomew County Broadband Initiative	–





# Chapter Fifteen:

Historic & Archaeological Resources

# Vision for Historic & Archaeological Resources

Edinburgh will encourage the restoration and active reuse of downtown historic buildings, preserve the character of historic districts, and share the town’s story with residents and visitors.

## Introduction

Edinburgh is a community rich in history. The town lies in the traditional territory of the Myaamia (Miami) people. In 1818, the Miami Nation ceded land, which included present-day Johnson County, to the U.S. government in the Treaty of St. Mary’s, two years after Indiana statehood. The land was later settled by John Campbell who came into the area in 1820. In 1822, Louis Bishop and Alexander Bishop established the original plat for Edinburgh. Over the centuries, the town has been greatly influenced by the development of various forms of transportation, including the Madison State Road (roughly following present day U.S. Route 31), the Madison and Indianapolis line, an interurban line, and state and federal highways. With each of these transportation developments, new people came to Edinburgh to trade, establish a business of their own, or to find work. Many of the buildings from throughout Edinburgh’s history remain, contributing to the town’s charming character.

Edinburgh’s residents and business owners take great pride in the community’s historic character, especially in the downtown district. As the town looks to the future, it is important to preserve this history and heritage. To do so, the community should leverage resources to restore historic buildings and consider new and creative ways to share Edinburgh’s story.

## Key Findings

- ✦ Edinburgh’s residents and business owners understand the importance of historic preservation. Historic buildings and districts are considered valuable community assets.
- ✦ More could be done to connect business owners with resources for the rehabilitation and re-use of historic buildings in the downtown district.
- ✦ The town has a rich history which should be shared with residents and visitors.



The Town of Edinburgh is home to three National Register historic districts. This wayfinding sign directs visitors to the Edinburgh Commercial Historic District on Main Cross Street.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

# Existing Conditions

The Town of Edinburgh has three historic districts on the National Register for Historic Places. These districts are the Edinburgh Commercial Historic District, Toner Historic District, and the South Walnut Street Historic District.

## Edinburgh Commercial Historic District

The Edinburgh Commercial Historic District is the heart of Edinburgh. This nine-acre district is roughly bounded by Main Street, the alley north of Main Cross Street, the railroad, and Thompson Street. Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1991, the district contains 48 contributing buildings and only 5 non-contributing buildings. The architectural significance of the district lies in its cohesive array of 1800s commercial architecture. Similar districts can be found in Franklin and Greenwood, but these districts continued to develop well into the 1900s. Edinburgh, on the other hand, experienced little redevelopment in the 1900s, so its architecture reflects the appearance of a post-Civil War commercial center. Many of the buildings were constructed in the second half of the 17th century following two large fires in 1840 and 1850.

## Toner Historic District

Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2011, this 20-acre district preserves a residential area along both sides of Main Cross Street. The district historically, and still today, begins less than a block from the downtown commercial area of Edinburgh. The Toner Historic District features homes of nearly every popular domestic style constructed in the U.S. between 1850 and 1959, including Federal, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Craftsman style homes. The district contains 66 contributing buildings and 20 non-contributing buildings.



A historic marker and old turbine mark the location of the former Thompson Mill, established in 1826.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

## South Walnut Street Historic District

The South Walnut Street Historic District captures a 27-acre residential area along South Walnut Street and Campbell Street. The district, historically and today, is just two blocks from the downtown commercial area of Edinburgh and some of the properties on the east side of South Walnut are only a block away from industrial properties along the railroad. This district reveals how interconnected the lives of workers and employers were when the railroad accelerated growth in the community. Wealthy captains of industry and business owners lived across the street or next door to the town's working class.

The district was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2011. It contains 41 contributing buildings and 13 non-contributing buildings. Unlike the Toner Historic District, the South Walnut Street Historic District was completely developed by the 1920s. Architectural styles include Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Romanesque, Craftsman, and Tudor Revival.

## Community Feedback

The Town of Edinburgh has many historical assets to offer to its residents and visitors. According to community feedback from the public workshop, these assets include the town's beautiful churches and historic retail and residential buildings, many of which are nestled within the town's three National Register historic districts. Survey respondents indicated that preservation of the town's historic buildings should be prioritized, with 70.2% of respondents agreeing with this statement. However, respondents indicated that they were not satisfied with the town's current efforts to preserve its history or educate residents and visitors on this history. Similarly, over half of respondents (55.2%) are unaware of any resources available to property owners to rehabilitate their historic buildings. Increasing awareness of these resources could enhance efforts to preserve Edinburgh's historic character.



The Edinburgh Commercial Historic District is lined with charming commercial buildings dating back over a century.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### **Restore and reuse historic buildings in Edinburgh to give them new life.**

During a focus group meeting with downtown business owners, participants expressed interest in a more formalized historic preservation system for the Edinburgh Commercial Historic District. Business owners understand the importance of preserving historic character for tourism and economic development. At the same time, residents are in favor of historic preservation as a key facet of quality of place. After consulting with Edinburgh's Planning Department, the town may consider establishing a historic overlay district. A historic overlay district is a layer of local planning regulation which is applied in addition to the restrictions of the underlying zoning. Like any other zoning district, the overlay district would be managed by Edinburgh's Planning Commission. The main goal would be to promote historic preservation without requiring a separate Historic Preservation Commission.

To ensure that historic buildings are not only preserved, but actively reused, the town should connect business owners to incentives for the rehabilitation of commercial buildings in the downtown district. Although there are existing funds for façade improvements, the town should seek funding opportunities to support costly interior renovations.

## Action Items

- ✦ Consider establishing a historic overlay district to protect resources downtown.
- ✦ Connect business owners with incentives for the rehabilitation and re-use of commercial buildings in downtown Edinburgh, including interior renovations and façade improvements.

## Goal 2:

### Share Edinburgh's history and heritage with residents and visitors.

The Town of Edinburgh has a rich, compelling history, but much of that history is buried in National Register documents, books, and other records. The town only has one historic marker, which briefly summarizes Edinburgh's history from 1822 to 1845. To share Edinburgh's story with residents and visitors, the complete story must be more accessible. Other Indiana communities, including neighborhoods of Indianapolis, Bloomington, and Greenfield, have started to offer guided and self-guided walking tours of their historic districts. In-person tours, held a couple of times a year, can be led by enthusiastic volunteers. Self-guided tours, available anytime, may feature a map with narrative descriptions of key sites. Self-guided tours can easily be prepared by a volunteer, intern, or team of students. By partnering with the Johnson County Museum of History and Bartholomew County Historical Society, Edinburgh can leverage additional resources to preserve the community's history and share moments from decades past.

## Action Items

- ✦ Host semi-annual Historic District Walking Tours to share Edinburgh's legacy through visits to historic sites.
- ✦ Create a self-guided Historic District Walking Tour, available online or as a paper copy, featuring a map of historic sites with narrative descriptions.
- ✦ Partner with the Johnson County Museum of History and Bartholomew County Historical Society to preserve Edinburgh's history, and share interesting photos, artifacts, and stories with the public.

# Implementation

**Vision for Historic & Archaeological Resources:** Edinburgh will encourage the restoration and active reuse of downtown historic buildings, preserve the character of historic districts, and share the town’s story with residents and visitors.

**Goal 1:** Restore and reuse historic buildings in Edinburgh to give them new life.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Consider establishing a historic overlay district to protect resources downtown.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–
B. Connect business owners with incentives for the rehabilitation and re-use of commercial buildings in downtown Edinburgh, including interior renovations and façade improvements.	Town Manager, Town Council	Town Budget, Conover Community Impact Fund

**Goal 2:** Share Edinburgh’s history and heritage with residents and visitors.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Host semi-annual Historic District Walking Tours to share Edinburgh’s legacy through visits to historic sites.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	Town Budget
B. Create a self-guided Historic District Walking Tour, available online or as a paper copy, featuring a map of historic sites with narrative descriptions.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	Town Budget
C. Partner with the Johnson County Museum of History and Bartholomew County Historical Society to preserve Edinburgh’s history, and share interesting photos, artifacts, and stories with the public.	Town Manager, Community Center Director, Johnson County Museum of History, Bartholomew County Historical Society	–

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# **Chapter Sixteen:**

## Hazard Mitigation

# Vision for Hazard Mitigation

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**Edinburgh will mitigate the threat of natural and man-made disasters, and partner with county organizations to respond to and recover from disasters impacting the community.**

## Introduction

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Edinburgh is ordinarily a quiet, safe community nestled along the Big Blue River. To protect this peace and tranquility, the town must be prepared for both man-made and natural disasters. Fortunately, Edinburgh is served by talented staff in the Fire & Rescue Department, Police Department, and county emergency management agencies that have planned for, responded to, and recovered from disasters in the past. To boost confidence in Edinburgh's emergency preparedness, the town should share an overview of current response protocol and pursue opportunities to educate the public on personal and family emergency preparedness. To guide the community in times of need, staff members should be trained in basic safety protocol.

The Town of Edinburgh's unique features may also pose a potential risk. Heavy rainfall often causes flooding along the Big Blue River. To safeguard lives and property, the town should continue to limit development in this floodplain. The railroad passing through town is also a cause for concern. Trains move quickly along the tracks, posing a risk at crossings to both vehicles and pedestrians (especially children). These risks should be mitigated whenever possible.

# Key Findings

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- ✦ Edinburgh's Fire & Rescue Department and Police Department are equipped to provide immediate assistance in the event of a disaster.
- ✦ Edinburgh is served by the emergency management agencies for Bartholomew, Johnson, and Shelby County. These organizations prepare and administer Emergency Management Plans (EOPs) to safeguard lives and property within their jurisdiction.
- ✦ Edinburgh has faced floods and tornadoes in the past. Each time, Edinburgh has proven its resiliency with community members stepping up to help one another.
- ✦ Unique features in Edinburgh, including the Big Blue River and railroad, may pose safety risks.
- ✦ Some community members were dissatisfied with the town's communication of natural disaster response plans. More could be done to educate community members about emergency preparedness.

## Existing Conditions

The Town of Edinburgh is prepared to handle emergencies and has done so many times in the past. In June 2008, severe thunderstorms formed rapidly across Central Indiana, producing multiple tornadoes. These tornadoes traveled across southern Johnson County through Edinburgh. Several buildings, trees, and power lines were damaged as the tornado moved roughly parallel to State Road 252. A few days later, after several bouts of severe thunderstorm activity and heavy rainfall, the town experienced flooding. The Big Blue River and Sugar Creek overflowed their banks. Runoff quickly entered agricultural areas and neighborhoods. Many homes and all major thoroughfares flooded, temporarily cutting Edinburgh off from surrounding areas. In 2022, another tornado touched down, breaking and uprooting trees across Edinburgh.

In times like these, Edinburgh's Fire & Rescue and Police Department are equipped to provide immediate response. These local departments are supported by the town manager and the emergency management agencies for Bartholomew, Johnson, and Shelby County. The experienced staff at these agencies serve residents by planning, responding, mitigating, and recovering from disasters to save lives, property, and the environment.

## Community Feedback

Feedback from the public input survey indicated that the Town of Edinburgh is generally prepared for emergencies and is resilient against disasters, but there is room for improvement. According to survey responses, 32.5% of respondents were unsatisfied with the communication of Edinburgh's natural disaster response plans and were not connected to resources to assist in events such as tornadoes, flash floods, and severe winter storms. Almost a third of survey respondents were dissatisfied with flooding in Edinburgh. Additionally, 22.6% of respondents were dissatisfied with Edinburgh's emergency preparedness and response to these events. Sharing the town's emergency response plans through increased communication could enhance residents' perception of Edinburgh's overall preparedness.



In addition to natural disasters, the Town of Edinburgh must prepare for man-made disasters, such as train collisions and derailments.

*Image Source: HWC Engineering*

# Goals & Action Items

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## Goal 1:

### **Safeguard lives and property through proactive planning and intervention.**

Before disaster strikes, it is the duty of town staff and officials to consider potential threats to safety and well-being and to coordinate appropriate resolutions. During focus groups, community members were concerned about the hazards posed by railroad crossings and floods. Both staff and members of the public were unaware of existing plans to mitigate these specific risks, or even to respond to common emergency situations. To build confidence in Edinburgh's disaster preparedness and response, there is a need for staff training and community education in this area. Additionally, the Town of Edinburgh should continue to limit development in the floodplain and work with railroad companies to reduce speeds through town.

## Action Items

- ✦ Continue to use floodplain regulations in Edinburgh's zoning and subdivision control ordinance to limit hazardous floodplain development. Consider updating these regulations to strengthen them and protect areas adjacent to the Big Blue River.
- ✦ Work with Louisville & Indiana Railroad and CSX Railroad to reduce the speed of trains passing through Edinburgh's town limits to mitigate the risk of collisions at intersections and along the rail line.
- ✦ Educate the public on personal and family emergency preparedness through the Edinburgh website, social media, pop-up events, and reminders on utility bills.
- ✦ Partner with county emergency management agencies and local fire and police departments to provide a yearly training session for town employees to review basic safety protocol for common emergency situations, such as fires, tornadoes, floods, and active shooters.
- ✦ Routinely inspect municipal buildings and facilities to ensure safety equipment, such as smoke detectors and fire extinguishers, and in place and working correctly.

# Implementation

**Vision for Hazard Mitigation:** Edinburgh will mitigate the threat of natural and man-made disasters, and partner with county organizations to respond to and recover from disasters impacting the community.

**Goal 1:** Safeguard lives and property through proactive planning and intervention.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Continue to use floodplain regulations in Edinburgh’s zoning and subdivision control ordinance to limit hazardous floodplain development. Consider updating these regulations to strengthen them and protect areas adjacent to the Big Blue River.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–
B. Work with Louisville & Indiana Railroad and CSX Railroad to reduce the speed of trains passing through Edinburgh’s town limits to mitigate the risk of collisions at intersections and along the rail line.	Town Manager	–
C. Educate the public on personal and family emergency preparedness through the Edinburgh website, social media, pop-up events, and reminders on utility bills.	Town Manager	Town Budget
D. Partner with county emergency management agencies and local fire and police departments to provide a yearly training session for Town employees to review basic safety protocol for common emergency situations, such as fires, tornadoes, floods, and active shooters.	Town Manager, Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, Bartholomew County Emergency Management, Shelby County Emergency Management Agency	Town Budget
E. Routinely inspect municipal buildings and facilities to ensure safety equipment, such as smoke detectors and fire extinguishers, and in place and working correctly.	Town Manager, Fire and Rescue Department	Town Budget





# **Chapter Seventeen:**

Appendix

# Implementation Table

Land Use		
<p><b>Vision:</b> Edinburgh will balance residential, commercial, and industrial growth while maintaining its charming, historic character.</p>		
<p><b>Goal 1:</b> Refer to the Future Land Use Map as a guide for land use changes and ordinance updates.</p>		
Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Publish the Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map on the town’s website for easy access. Distribute copies to staff and town officials.	Planning Department	–
B. Host an annual workshop to educate the Town Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals on how to best utilize the Future Land Use Map and Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan in their official roles.	Planning Department, Town Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals	Town Budget
C. Update Edinburgh’s zoning map and ordinances in accordance with the recommendations of the Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	Town Budget



## Land Use (Continued)

**Goal 2:** Understand how development outside of town limits impacts Edinburgh and plan accordingly.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Develop an annexation plan to strategically identify areas Edinburgh has interest in acquiring. Annexations should forward the town's vision and contribute to a specific purpose, such as economic development, residential development, or quality of life.	Town Manager, Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Stay informed on decisions regarding nearby unincorporated land in Johnson, Bartholomew, and Shelby County.	Town Manager, Town Council	–
C. Coordinate with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and Indiana National Guard on land use decisions at the Driftwood State Fishing Area and Camp Atterbury.	Town Manager, Town Council	–

## Government & Fiscal Capacity

**Vision:** Foster an engaged citizenry through improved communication and expanded participation opportunities.

**Goal 1:** Foster an engaged citizenry through improved communication and expanded participation opportunities.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Continue to use social media, news outlets, and utility bills to share engagement opportunities, updates to local plans and ordinances, and recent investments.	Town Council	Town Budget
B. Stream Town Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings online to increase accessibility and boost attendance.	Town Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals	–
C. Create an online portal for the latest Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals meeting materials. Add a QR code to yard signs to allow community members to easily learn about the changes proposed in their neighborhood.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals	Town Budget
D. Launch a youth taskforce to provide a fresh perspective on local initiatives and develop the next generation of community leaders.	Town Manager, Town Council	Town Budget
E. Continue to keep the Document Center on the town’s website up to date with the latest plans and ordinances.	Town Manager	–

## Government & Fiscal Capacity (Continued)

**Goal 2:** Expand the capacity of town departments to continue to ensure adequate level of service as growth occurs.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Invest in the resources (staff, training, facilities, equipment, technology) needed to maintain an adequate level of service as growth occurs.	Town Council	Town Budget
B. Develop student internship opportunities to support local governmental capacity.	Town Manager, Town Council	Town Budget
C. Partner with community groups, including religious institutions, social clubs, and service organizations, to recruit volunteers to assist with the implementation of projects, programs, and events.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	–

## Public Facilities & Services

**Vision:** Edinburgh will continue to provide quality services and strive to upgrade infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses.

**Goal 1:** Continue to provide high-quality public facilities and services to Edinburgh residents and businesses.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Establish a Utilities Master Plan to update and maintain municipally owned utilities to accommodate residential, commercial, and industrial growth in Edinburgh.	Town Council, Electric Department, Water Department, Wastewater Department	Utility Budgets
B. Continue to support emergency service providers, including Edinburgh's Fire and Rescue Department and Police Department.	Town Council, Fire and Rescue Department, Police Department	Town Budget
C. Pursue opportunities to upgrade the wastewater collection system and mitigate ongoing issues with combined sewer overflow.	Town Council, Wastewater Department, Stormwater Utility	Stormwater Utility Budget, OCRA Stormwater Improvements Program
D. Identify areas in Edinburgh where flooding issues occur most frequently and seek solutions to improve drainage.	Town Manager	Town Budget

# Placemaking

**Vision:** Edinburgh will foster strong quality of place and distinct community character through physical and programmatic improvements.

**Goal 1:** Promote Edinburgh as a unique destination in South Central Indiana.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Collaborate with Festival Country Indiana, the tourism and destination management organization for Johnson County, to leverage available expertise, capacity, and funding.	Town Manager	–
B. Create a flexible public greenspace in downtown Edinburgh to accommodate community events, including festivals, farmers markets, and live performances.	Town Manager, Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget, IDNR Land and Water Conservation Fund, Local Foundations
C. Continue to enhance downtown Edinburgh with public art, such as murals, sculptures, and memorials.	Town Manager, Community Center Director, Town Council	Town Budget
D. Experiment with tactical urbanism, an approach to community building that uses short-term, low-cost projects to catalyze long-term change. Discover creative ways to enhance the downtown by setting up temporary plazas, parklets, and alley activations.	Town Manager, Community Center Director, Town Council	Town Budget, IDOH Tactical Urbanism Demonstration Project Grant Program
E. Develop a ‘Visit Edinburgh’ page or website to promote community events, restaurants, shopping, and recreation opportunities in the community.	Town Manager, Community Center Director, Town Council	Town Budget
F. Partner with students from Franklin College or Edinburgh Community High School to create engaging social media content for Edinburgh.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	–

## Placemaking (Continued)

**Goal 2:** Invest in strategic capital improvements to create a welcoming, easily navigable community for residents and visitors.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Improve gateways into the community through attractive signage and landscaping that reflects the town's current branding.	Town Manager, Street Department, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Install wayfinding signage along main corridors in and around Edinburgh to direct visitors to key destinations, such as the downtown district, library, town hall, parks, and overflow parking lots.	Town Manager, Street Department, Town Council	Town Budget
C. Enhance streetscapes in the downtown district and along main corridors to include improved lighting, sidewalks, street furnishings, and landscaping.	Town Manager, Street Department, Town Council	Town Budget

# Economic Development

**Vision:** Edinburgh will support existing businesses and attract new businesses to the downtown and key corridors to provide job opportunities and desired amenities.

**Goal 1:** Revitalize Edinburgh’s downtown district as a vibrant, economically diverse destination with a desirable mix of uses.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Partner with Festival Country Indiana to develop a Downtown Revitalization Plan to assess existing conditions and outline recommendations for downtown Edinburgh.	Town Manager, Town Council	Town Budget, Festival Country Indiana Budget
B. Establish a Main Street Organization to organize community events, encourage the restoration and reuse of historic buildings, and promote downtown Edinburgh to residents and visitors.	Town Manager, Community Center Director, Town Council	–
C. Create a downtown business attraction program which identifies desirable downtown businesses for recruitment and connects those businesses to a toolkit of resources and incentives.	Town Manager, Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance, Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development	–
D. Amend the town’s zoning ordinance to limit residential uses to upper stories in traditionally commercial areas of downtown Edinburgh.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–
E. Acquire and repurpose vacant lots in the downtown district for desirable uses, such as infill development, flexible greenspace, and visitor parking.	Town Manager, Redevelopment Commission, Town Council	Town Budget

## Economic Development (Continued)

### Goal 2: Support existing businesses and entrepreneurs in Edinburgh.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Form an Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce or Merchants Association to build relationships and advocate for the interests of business owners in local decision-making.	Town Manager, Economic Development Board	–
B. Encourage local business owners to join the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce or Franklin Chamber of Commerce to expand their professional network.	Town Manager, Economic Development Board	–
C. Connect local business owners to programs and resources to start or grow their business, such as coaching and microlending.	Town Manager, Economic Development Board	–

### Goal 3: Collaborate with neighboring counties to attract new employers to designated areas in and around Edinburgh.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Partner with Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance, Franklin Chamber of Commerce, Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development, and Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce to leverage additional resources when attracting new businesses.	Town Manager, Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance, Franklin Chamber, Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development, Columbus Area Chamber	–
B. Expand the ‘Business’ page on the Town of Edinburgh’s website to serve as a one-stop shop for prospective employers with information on the town, available properties, supporting organizations, and recent investments.	Town Manager	–



# Housing

**Vision:** Edinburgh will encourage the development of new housing options while uplifting existing neighborhoods.

**Goal 1:** Support the development of new housing of various types and prices to accommodate a diversity of ages, incomes, and lifestyles.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Update Edinburgh’s zoning and subdivision control ordinance, leveraging the ordinance as a vital tool to encourage desirable development and guard against undesirable development in Edinburgh.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Ensure that Edinburgh’s zoning ordinance permits missing middle housing to appeal to the younger workforce and seniors.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–
C. Maintain relationships with regional builders to pursue mutually beneficial projects.	Town Manager, Planning Department	–
D. Identify possible incentives to attract residential development in Edinburgh such as Housing Tax Increment Financing (HoTIF).	Town Manager, Town Council	HoTIF Funds

## Housing (Continued)

**Goal 2:** Promote the beautification of existing neighborhoods through local enforcement and grassroots volunteerism.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Strengthen local ordinances to support ethical code enforcement. When issuing violations, staff should provide clear directions and deadlines to community members.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Create an action plan for enforcement in key areas, such as gateway corridors and historic districts.	Planning Department	Town Budget
C. Develop an online portal where residents can submit ordinance violations for town review.	Planning Department	Town Budget
D. Consider developing a Residential Rental Inspection Program (RRIP) to raise the quality of rental housing throughout the community.	Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget
E. Establish a rehabilitation program for residential properties, which may include a revolving loan fund and volunteer assistance to help homeowners make necessary improvements.	Town Manager, Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget, IHCD Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Program
F. Partner with local community organizations to host a celebration centered around beautifying Edinburgh. This celebration may feature trash removal, basic landscaping, and public art installations.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	Town Budget

# Transportation

**Vision:** Edinburgh will maintain and enhance the transportation network to ensure local and regional connectivity for all users.

**Goal 1:** Continue to provide an efficient, well-connected transportation network in Edinburgh through maintenance and strategic improvements.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Update Edinburgh’s street standards to follow best practices and include bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	Street Department, Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Complete an Asset Management Plan approved by the Indiana Local and Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) for local roadways in Edinburgh, leveraging the Indiana Department of Transportation’s Community Crossings Matching Grant Program and other funding sources.	Street Department, Town Council	Town Budget, INDOT Community Crossings Matching Grant
C. Evaluate options to convert Main Cross Street into a two-way to improve access to downtown businesses.	Town Manager, Street Department, Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget
D. Coordinate with business and property owners to develop an action plan for public parking in downtown Edinburgh. This may include the creation of designated overflow lots and signage to direct visitors to these lots during community events and peak times.	Town Manager, Street Department, Planning Department, Town Council	Town Budget

## Transportation (Continued)

**Goal 2:** Strengthen local and regional connectivity by enhancing the bicycle and pedestrian network.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to assess community needs and outline priority projects to connect key destinations in Edinburgh and the greater region. This plan should consider the feasibility of a multi-use trail system with potential routes.	Planning Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Street Department, Town Council	Town Budget, IDOH Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Program
B. Complete a Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Inventory to identify hazards and needed connections in Edinburgh's sidewalk network.	Street Department, Town Council	Town Budget
C. Partner with the Parks and Recreation Departments for Franklin and Columbus on opportunities to connect trails in the region.	Edinburgh Parks and Recreation Department, Franklin Parks and Recreation Department, Columbus Parks and Recreation Department	Town Budget, Indiana Trails Program

# Agriculture

**Vision:** Edinburgh will support the responsible transition of agricultural land within town limits to other appropriate uses over time.

**Goal 1:** Direct growth and development within town limits with appropriate transitions to agricultural areas in the unincorporated county.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Update Edinburgh’s zoning and subdivision control ordinance to require buffers between agricultural and nonagricultural uses.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Partner with Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance and Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development to attract agriculture-related businesses to Edinburgh.	Town Manager, Economic Development Board, Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance, Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development	–
C. Continue to expand the Edinburgh Farmers Market by attracting new food vendors.	Community Center Director	Town Budget

# Natural Resources

**Vision:** Edinburgh will preserve waterways and surrounding woodlands, and the underlying aquifer to promote ecological health, protect drinking water quality, and provide access points for recreation.

**Goal 1:** Activate the riverfront in Edinburgh as a destination for residents and visitors.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Develop a Riverfront Activation Plan to enliven the Big Blue River. This may include expanding the trail system, installing a modern playground, adding benches and picnic tables, and building shelters for public and private events.	Town Manager, Planning Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget
B. Partner with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to upgrade the boat launch at Irwin Park, enhancing access to the Big Blue River for boating and fishing.	Parks and Recreation Department, Indiana Department of Natural Resources	Indiana Department of Natural Resources Budget
C. Partner with community organizations to facilitate community events along the riverfront, from live performances to boat races.	Community Center Director, Parks and Recreation Department	Town Budget
D. Support improvements to the Irwin Park campsites to provide overnight accommodation for visitors and recreation opportunities for residents.	Parks and Recreation Department	Town Budget, IDNR Land and Water Conservation Fund
E. Showcase the river's history, including the story of the Thompson Mill and Dam, through historical markers, monuments, and public art.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	Town Budget
F. Repair and enhance the environment along the river by restoring the natural flow of water and pursuing streamline stabilization techniques to prevent erosion.	Town Manager, Parks and Recreation Department	Town Budget

## Natural Resources (Continued)

**Goal 2:** Foster a healthy, thriving environment in Edinburgh for the benefit of current and future generations.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Extend the hours at the recycling center.	Town Manager, Johnson County Recycling District	Trash and Recycling Budget
B. Consider expanding trash services to include curbside recycling.	Town Manager, Johnson County Recycling District	Trash and Recycling Budget
C. Continue to implement the Wellhead Protection (WHP) Plan to safeguard drinking water quality.	Water Department	Water Utility Budget
D. Launch a public education campaign about the importance of protecting groundwater. This may include posting tips for residents on utility bills, hosting pop-up events, or distributing information at community events and festivals.	Water Department	Water Utility Budget
E. Install a rain garden in downtown Edinburgh to reduce runoff, filter pollutants, and recharge groundwater.	Town Manager, Water Department, Stormwater Utility, Parks and Recreation Department	Stormwater Utility Budget
F. Promote the quality of local waterways by considering opportunities to reconfigure the wastewater system and reduce combined sewer overflow.	Town Council, Wastewater Department, Stormwater Utility	Stormwater Utility Budget, OCRA Stormwater Improvements Program
G. Establish an Urban Forestry Committee to oversee the development of a written plan for the care of trees and shrubs along streets and other public areas.	Town Council	Town Budget

## Parks & Recreation

**Vision:** Edinburgh will provide enriching indoor and outdoor recreation amenities that promote healthy lifestyles and social connections for residents of all ages and abilities.

**Goal 1:** Expand the capacity of Edinburgh’s Parks and Recreation Department.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Establish a Parks Board to oversee recreational needs in Edinburgh, including the maintenance and construction of park facilities, trails, community programming, and festivals.	Town Council	–
B. Develop a Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan that follows guidelines set forth by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and plans for future facilities, programming, and added staff capacity.	Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget
C. Identify appropriate revenue-generating opportunities within the Edinburgh’s parks and recreation system with insight from the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget
D. Encourage the formation of a “Friends of Edinburgh Parks” or similar volunteer group to support the Parks and Recreation Department.	Parks and Recreation Department	–



## Parks & Recreation (Continued)

**Goal 2:** Build upon existing recreation amenities in Edinburgh’s parks and recreation system to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Consider upgrades to existing amenities, including the Edinburgh Sports Complex, Edinburgh Aquatic Center, and Irwin Park, so that they may continue to serve as regional destinations.	Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget, IDNR Land and Water Conservation Fund
B. Explore opportunities to acquire vacant parcels in the downtown core for future park amenities, including a public plaza, flexible green-space, or pocket park.	Town Manager, Parks and Recreation Department, Town Council	Town Budget, IDNR Land and Water Conservation Fund
C. Update Edinburgh’s development standards to support the use of floodplains for public recreation and open space.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–
D. Update Edinburgh’s development standards to require new subdivisions to offer parks and recreation amenities or be located within walking distance of an existing park, recreational area, or open space.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–

## Broadband Access

**Vision:** Edinburgh will promote access to affordable, high-speed internet for residents and businesses.

**Goal 1:** Demonstrate to providers that Edinburgh is open to broadband development.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Adopt Indiana Broadband's Model Ordinance/ Resolution for Broadband Ready Communities (BBRC).	Town Council	–
B. Apply to be a certified Broadband Ready Community to signal to the telecommunication industry that Edinburgh has taken steps to reduce barriers to broadband infrastructure investment.	Town Manager	–
C. Partner with the Bartholomew County Broadband Initiative to share best practices and forge connections with potential providers.	Town Manager, Bartholomew County Broadband Initiative	–

## Historic & Archaeological Resources

**Vision:** Edinburgh will encourage the restoration and active reuse of downtown historic buildings, preserve the character of historic districts, and share the town’s story with residents and visitors.

**Goal 1:** Restore and reuse historic buildings in Edinburgh to give them new life.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Consider establishing a historic overlay district to protect resources downtown.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–
B. Connect business owners with incentives for the rehabilitation and re-use of commercial buildings in downtown Edinburgh, including interior renovations and façade improvements.	Town Manager, Town Council	Town Budget, Conover Community Impact Fund

**Goal 2:** Share Edinburgh’s history and heritage with residents and visitors.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Host semi-annual Historic District Walking Tours to share Edinburgh’s legacy through visits to historic sites.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	Town Budget
B. Create a self-guided Historic District Walking Tour, available online or as a paper copy, featuring a map of historic sites with narrative descriptions.	Town Manager, Community Center Director	Town Budget
C. Partner with the Johnson County Museum of History and Bartholomew County Historical Society to preserve Edinburgh’s history, and share interesting photos, artifacts, and stories with the public.	Town Manager, Community Center Director, Johnson County Museum of History, Bartholomew County Historical Society	–

# Hazard Mitigation

**Vision:** Edinburgh will mitigate the threat of natural and man-made disasters, and partner with county organizations to respond to and recover from disasters impacting the community.

**Goal 1:** Safeguard lives and property through proactive planning and intervention.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Funding Source
A. Continue to use floodplain regulations in Edinburgh’s zoning and subdivision control ordinance to limit hazardous floodplain development. Consider updating these regulations to strengthen them and protect areas adjacent to the Big Blue River.	Planning Department, Planning Commission, Town Council	–
B. Work with Louisville & Indiana Railroad and CSX Railroad to reduce the speed of trains passing through Edinburgh’s town limits to mitigate the risk of collisions at intersections and along the rail line.	Town Manager	–
C. Educate the public on personal and family emergency preparedness through the Edinburgh website, social media, pop-up events, and reminders on utility bills.	Town Manager	Town Budget
D. Partner with county emergency management agencies and local fire and police departments to provide a yearly training session for Town employees to review basic safety protocol for common emergency situations, such as fires, tornadoes, floods, and active shooters.	Town Manager, Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, Bartholomew County Emergency Management, Shelby County Emergency Management Agency	Town Budget
E. Routinely inspect municipal buildings and facilities to ensure safety equipment, such as smoke detectors and fire extinguishers, and in place and working correctly.	Town Manager, Fire and Rescue Department	Town Budget

# Public Participation Report



## Public Participation Report

2024 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan

April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The 2024 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan was built on a foundation of community support and insight. The project team gathered feedback from community leaders, residents, business owners, visitors, and other interested parties through online and in-person engagement opportunities. In total, over 430 voices were heard through focus group meetings with stakeholders, a public workshop, and a public input survey.

Engagement activities were facilitated by the following staff:

### HWC Staff

- Rachel Christenson – Project Manager
- Genevieve Zircher – Planner
- Craig Luedeman – Business Development

### Town of Edinburgh Staff

- Kevin McGinnis – Town Manager
- Julie Young – Planning Director

## 1. Focus Groups with Stakeholders (25 participants)

On March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the project team facilitated five in-person discussions with stakeholders that lived in, worked in, or were otherwise invested in the future of Edinburgh. The groups, which ranged from quality of life to housing, were formed based on key topics that were identified by the Comprehensive Planning Committee. In these discussions, 25 participating stakeholders used their local expertise to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the Town of Edinburgh.

The meeting topics and their participants are organized in the following table:

Meeting Topic	Participating Stakeholders
Quality of Life	David Bauman, Tanya Crider, Cathy Hamm, Barb Piere, Stephanie Taylor, Bonnie Wilcoxsen
Marketing and Tourism	SaraBeth Drybread, Laura Burton, Mike Burton, Ken Kosky, Elliott Parmer, Crissy Riley, Bob Straugh, Stephanie Taylor, Daniel Teter
Downtown	SaraBeth Drybread, Jason Lawson, Cody Martin, Lynn Patton, Michael Patton, Hayley Roberts, Warren Scheidt, Daniel Teter, Becky Wilhelm
Local Business	Michael Chiado, SaraBeth Drybread, Amber Foster, Hayley Roberts, Daniel Teter
Housing	Morgan Carlton, SaraBeth Drybread, Hayley Roberts, Sheila Simpson, Daniel Teter

**Key Findings:**

- Edinburgh is a charming, historic small town. The community also has great amenities (Irwin Park, Sports Complex, Aquatic Center, Indiana Premium Outlets), events and festivals, and reliable utilities and emergency services.
- Edinburgh is a tight-knit community. Residents are proud of how welcoming the community is, and how community members are willing to support one another.
- A vibrant downtown district with restaurants, shops, public gathering spaces, and enriching programming is desired.
- Stakeholders report that many of the downtown buildings are underutilized and neglected. There is a problem with ground-floor units sitting vacant, or being used for storage or residential purposes.
- There is an opportunity to collaborate with Festival Country Indiana, Johnson County’s tourism association, to develop and implement a tourism and destination development plan for downtown Edinburgh.
- There is interest in a merchants association or chamber of commerce to strengthen connections between business owners, and advocate for the needs of local businesses in Edinburgh.
- There is concern about first impressions and the overall appearance of the town. Stakeholders called for the reevaluation and enforcement of property maintenance ordinances to remove trash and mitigate blight in the community.
- There is a need for placemaking efforts in Edinburgh. Stakeholders called for wayfinding signage, streetscape improvements, and a public greenspace or plaza.
- Enhanced recreation opportunities are desired. Stakeholders suggested establishing a gym, activating the riverfront at Irwin Park, and developing a multi-use trail system to connect community assets.
- There is a need for a variety of housing options at different price points to appeal to working families, professionals and managers, recent graduates, and seniors.

**2. Public Workshop (13 participants)**

The project team hosted a public workshop at the Edinburgh Town Hall on the evening of March 27<sup>th</sup> to gather insight from community members. Following a brief presentation about the comprehensive planning process, participants were encouraged to complete activities at boards stationed around the room. Each activity was carefully designed to allow participants to highlight assets, identify challenges, and envision the future of Edinburgh. The feedback gathered during the workshop was used by the project team to develop a shared vision for the town, and to outline goals and objectives.

**Key Findings:**

- Edinburgh’s greatest assets include its parks and recreation facilities (Irwin Park, Sports Complex, Aquatic Center), schools, municipally owned utilities, and historic downtown.
- Residents are proud of Edinburgh’s small-town feel, community connections, festivals, and amenities.
- Gateway improvements are desired.
- Downtown revitalization and business development are desired.
- There is interest in updating and expanding parks and recreation facilities, including adding a gym/fitness center to the community.

- Participants called for improved maintenance of residential and commercial properties through revised ordinances.
- Participants dream of a vibrant downtown with active storefronts and enriching events and programming.
- More housing options are desired, but participants want to balance growth with the preservation of small-town character and community connections.

### 3. Public Input Survey (400 participants)

From February 29<sup>th</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>, the public input survey collected feedback from 400 participants (approximately 10% of the town’s population). The survey, available online or in-person at the John R. Drybread Community Center, gathered insight into existing conditions, while exploring potential opportunities for the town. By assessing participant satisfaction on a range of topics, from housing to hazard mitigation, the survey results helped identify community strengths and weaknesses. Combined with feedback collected through the public workshop and focus groups, the public input survey helped inform the shared vision, goals, and objectives for the comprehensive plan.

#### Key Findings:

- The typical respondent was a current Edinburgh resident between the ages of 31 and 65. Approximately 64% of respondents had lived in Edinburgh for more than 15 years.
- Respondents remarked on the small-town feel, historic charm, sense of community, safety, and proximity to amenities in Edinburgh.
- Approximately 73% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Edinburgh has a strong sense of identity and community pride.
- Respondents would like to see a focus on economic development and downtown revitalization. This pairs well with a widespread interest in placemaking.
- More affordable housing options are desired.
- Respondents expressed concern about property maintenance and substance abuse (i.e., drug use) in the town.
- The most needed types of development are restaurants and entertainment. Approximately 90.5% of respondents said these were ‘needed’ or ‘very much needed.’ Other desired types of development include parks/open space, single-family homes, and retail/shopping.
- New development should occur near the I-65 interchange, along the US-31 corridor, and in the downtown core.
- There is a need for more recreation opportunities with a focus on engaging youth. If money wasn’t a concern, many respondents called for facility improvements at Irwin Park and the Aquatic Center.
- There were several comments about the dam, including suggestions to memorialize the dam and activate the riverfront.
- Community members were most satisfied with public facilities and services, transportation, and parks and recreation. Over 76% were satisfied or very satisfied with emergency services (fire, police, EMS).
- Community members were most dissatisfied with placemaking and economic development. Over 69% of respondents were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the retail, restaurant, and entertainment options in the community.

# Summary of Public Input Survey



**HWC**  
ENGINEERING

## Summary of Public Input Survey

2024 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan  
April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024

From February 29<sup>th</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>, the public input survey collected feedback from 400 participants (approximately 10% of the town's population). These participants included Edinburgh residents, business owners, visitors, and other interested parties. The survey, available online and on paper at the John R. Drybread Community Center, gathered information on existing conditions and potential opportunities in the community. By assessing participant satisfaction on a range of topics, from housing to hazard mitigation, the survey provided insight into community strengths and weaknesses. Combined with feedback collected through the public workshop and focus groups, the public input survey helped inform the shared vision, goals, and objectives for the comprehensive plan.

### Key Takeaways

- The typical respondent was a current resident between the ages of 31 to 65 years old. Approximately 64% of respondents had lived in Edinburgh for more than 15 years.
- Respondents remarked on the small-town feel, historic charm, sense of community, safety, and proximity to amenities in the Town of Edinburgh.
- Respondents would like to see more economic development and downtown revitalization. They called for more youth engagement and community activities to enrich the lives of current residents and future residents. Respondents were concerned about the availability of affordable housing, property maintenance, and substance abuse issues in the community.
- The most needed types of development are restaurants and entertainment. Approximately 90.5% of respondents said these were 'needed' or 'very much needed.' Other desired types of development include parks/open space, single-family homes, and retail/shopping.
- New development should occur near the I-65 interchange, along the US-31 corridor, and in the downtown core.
- If money wasn't an issue, community members would want to see more housing. There is also a widespread interest in placemaking, which pairs well with a desire for economic development and historic preservation in downtown Edinburgh. Community members want more parks and recreation opportunities. There were several comments about the dam, including suggestions to memorialize the dam and activate the riverfront.
- Community members were most satisfied with public facilities and services, transportation, and parks and recreation. Over 76% were satisfied or very satisfied with emergency services (fire, police, EMS).



Community members were most satisfied with public facilities and services, transportation, and parks and recreation. Over 76% were satisfied or very satisfied with emergency services (fire, police, EMS). Approximately 73% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Edinburgh has a strong sense of identity and community pride.

SATISFIED	
<b>Housing</b>	<b>Historic Preservation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on rehabilitation before new development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritization of historic preservation</li> </ul>
<b>Public Facilities &amp; Services</b>	<b>Placemaking</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Condition of government facilities</li> <li>Reliability of municipal utilities</li> <li>Adequacy of community services</li> <li>Reliability of emergency services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong identity and community pride</li> <li>Unique branding and signage</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Condition of roads and sidewalks</li> <li>Walkability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance of parks</li> <li>Accessibility of parks</li> <li>Park equipment/facilities</li> </ul>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Natural Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability of land and utilities for new commercial and industrial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Woodlands and natural areas to protect</li> </ul>

Community members were most dissatisfied with placemaking and economic development. Over 69% of respondents were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the retail, restaurant, and entertainment options in the community.

DISSATISFIED	
<b>Housing</b>	<b>Local Government</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity of housing options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication and transparent decision-making</li> </ul>
<b>Public Facilities &amp; Utilities</b>	<b>Placemaking</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordability of utility rates</li> <li>Affordability of high-speed internet options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programs/events for all ages</li> <li>Amenities for healthy lifestyles</li> <li>Appearance and impression</li> </ul>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Natural Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employment opportunities</li> <li>Workforce education and training</li> <li>Variety of retail, restaurant, and entertainment options</li> </ul>	N/A

## NO CONSENSUS

<b>Housing</b>	<b>Local Government</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Space for new housing</li><li>• Personal property maintenance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaboration</li><li>• Citizen engagement and participation</li></ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>
N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Programming opportunities at parks</li><li>• Pedestrian connectivity of parks</li></ul>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Natural Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for small business</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public access points to Big Blue River</li></ul>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>Historic Preservation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of agricultural land in town limits as alternative use</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ordinances for historic preservation</li><li>• Resources for historic preservation</li><li>• Ease of learning about town's history</li></ul>

### Results by Question

#### What is your relationship to Edinburgh?

- Current Edinburgh resident or business owner (82.0% of responses)
- Nearby county resident or business owner (8.5% of responses)

#### If you currently reside in Edinburgh, how long have you lived here?

- More than 15 years (63.8% of responses)
- 6-15 years (14.2% of responses)
- I don't live in Edinburgh (13.4% of responses)

#### What is your age range?

- Most engaged age groups
  - 46 to 65 years old (40.4% of responses)
  - 31 to 45 years old (33.8% of responses)
- Least engaged age groups
  - Under 18 years old (0.8% of responses)
  - 19 to 30 years old (8.5% of responses)
- Respondent demographics skew older
  - More engagement from residents aged 65+ than residents 30 and under

#### What do you love about Edinburgh?

- Small Town Feel
  - Respondents highlighted the small-town charm, community spirit, and sense of belonging that they associate with Edinburgh.
    - “[I] love living in a small town.”
    - “[I enjoy] the small-town Hallmark movie vibe it gives.”
    - “It’s the perfect small town.”
- Community Connections

- Respondents emphasized the friendliness of the people and strong sense of community in Edinburgh. They value connections with their neighbors and the willingness to help one another.
  - “We come together as a community when there is anything going on, sad or happy.”
  - “[I] love knowing all of my neighbors.”
  - “I love the sense of community and acceptance of all people.”
  - “It’s a kind-hearted and generous community.”
  - “A tight-knit community where people know each other that fosters a strong sense of belonging and support.”
- Safety
  - Safety and security were frequently mentioned as positive aspects of living in Edinburgh. Residents feel safe walking around the town at any time, which contributes to their overall satisfaction with the community.
    - “Safer and lower crime than surrounding cities.”
    - “I feel safe walking around town.”
    - “Small safe town!”
- Proximity to Amenities
  - The convenience and accessibility of amenities such as parks, schools, local businesses, and recreational facilities was highlighted by numerous participants. They appreciate having essential services within close reach.
    - “I love the amenities that are offered for a town of our size, like the aquatic center, sports complex, and events.”
    - “I can walk to the library, church, grocery, and park.”
    - “The walkability, the small town, the amazing local schools, the golf course and sporting complex, the local businesses, [and] the kind people.”
- Historical Connection/Heritage
  - Several respondents mentioned Edinburgh’s historical heritage and their personal or familial connections to the town. They value the historical buildings, traditions, and sense of pride associated with Edinburgh’s past.
    - “We love the history and small town feel.”
    - “[I] love the history of buildings and our river!”
    - “My family has been there since the 1850’s so I appreciate the historic connection with the town.”

What do you wish you could change about Edinburgh?

- Economic Development and Downtown Revitalization
  - There were numerous mentions of the desire for more businesses, restaurants, and amenities downtown, as well as the need for economic growth and revitalization efforts.
    - “More support for downtown business owners.”
    - “More businesses downtown. Less residences on first floor of businesses. If business closes, the names [and other signage] should be removed along with the items. One closed [and the building] still has a Christmas tree in the window.”
    - “I wish we had more local businesses.”
    - “Bring more restaurants, coffee shops, and other ‘go to’ places.”
    - “Continued growth of available businesses/store & medical services.”
    - “Less core businesses near downtown.”

- Note: A core is a used original manufactured automotive part that can have a 'second life' after being remanufactured. For example, catalytic converter recycling businesses.
- Youth Engagement and Community Activities
  - Several respondents emphasized the need for more activities and facilities for children, teenagers, and families, including recreational options, after-school programs, and events.
    - “More things for youth.”
    - “I wish there were more to do, especially for the youth, families, and elderly people — I guess that’s all of us!”
    - “A youth center or events each weekend for the youth.”
    - “More activities, events, or places for adults to have fun that isn’t a bar.”
- Housing and Property Maintenance
  - Respondents expressed a need for more affordable housing in the community. Respondents also highlighted the importance of property maintenance and neighborhood cleanliness.
    - “We need to grow and add some affordable housing.”
    - “More choices in housing.”
    - “More affordable senior housing like Newbury.”
    - “I wish we had better housing developments. I know many that have moved out of town due to wanting a new house or a better neighborhood.”
    - “I wish people would keep their homes more well-kept.”
    - “The amount of junk cars in yards and trash.”
    - “Cleaning it up. A lot of the houses are in bad shape, their yard is a mess, or they have a lot of stuff piled up around the house or on the porch.”
- Infrastructure and Public Services
  - There were multiple mentions of concerns about the condition of infrastructure, including streets, sidewalks, and utility services. Respondents highlighted the importance of infrastructure improvements to accommodate future growth, but were wary of high utility costs.
    - “Better sidewalks, especially in historic district.”
    - “Better infrastructure (roads, sewer, water). [It] seems they are all failing.”
    - “Better utility infrastructure (most frequent power outages vs. any other location I’ve seen). Better internet service options.”
    - “Utility bills are way too high.”
- Government and Leadership
  - Many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with local government and leadership, mentioning issues such as transparency, fiscal responsibility, and the need for a better decision-making process.
    - “There’s little transparency from the town leadership. The town has a webpage that’s not very informative.”
    - “I wish Edinburgh government would concentrate more on the downtown area. Build it up, restore more buildings, attract more businesses and interest in the town.”
- Substance Abuse
  - Many respondents expressed concerns about the prevalence of drugs and drug-related issues in the community, including drug use, overdoses, and drug-related crimes.
    - “Just like anywhere else these days, I wish drugs weren’t so prominent in our town.”

- “Edinburgh Police Department needs to do something about the drug problems and theft.”
- “People overdosing, selling drugs, the homelessness”
- “Clean-up [and] get rid of core businesses. They are all just fronts for dealing and transporting drugs.”
- “Have something to do for young adults and kids to stay off the streets and keep them off drugs.”

What do you think are the most needed types of development within Edinburgh?

- Most needed types of development
  - Restaurants/entertainment
    - 90.5% selected ‘very much needed’ or ‘somewhat needed’
    - 55.8% selected ‘very much needed’
  - Public parks/open space
    - 84.5% selected ‘very much needed’ or ‘somewhat needed’
    - 54.5% selected ‘very much needed’
  - Single-family housing
    - 80.4% selected ‘very much needed’ or ‘somewhat needed’
  - Retail/shopping
    - 77.3% selected ‘very much needed’ or ‘somewhat needed’
- Least needed types of development
  - Industrial/warehousing
    - 49.4% selected ‘little to no need’ or ‘not needed’
    - 26.4% selected ‘not needed’
    - Only 39.0% selected ‘very much needed’ or ‘somewhat needed’
  - Office space
    - 46.0% selected ‘little to no need’ or ‘not needed’
    - 16.9% selected ‘not needed’
    - Only 40.5% selected ‘very much needed’ or ‘somewhat needed’
- Other: Open-Ended Response
  - Affordable grocery stores (e.g., Aldi)
  - Updated parks and recreation facilities (Irwin Park)
  - Multi-use trail system
  - Industrial is acceptable, but not warehousing
  - Young spaces and programming (e.g., splash pad, club)
  - Flexible greenspace with amphitheater/stage
  - Community fitness center

Where do you think new development should occur?

- Near the I-65 interchange with SR 252 (51.5% of respondents)
- Along the US-31 corridor
  - Areas along US-31 north of town (50.8% of respondents)
  - Areas along US-31 south of town (40.2% of respondents)
- In the downtown core (50% of respondents)
- Areas along State Road 252 (39.2% of respondents)
- No new development should occur (4% of respondents)

Local Government

- Positive (0/3)
- Negative (1/3)

- Edinburgh leadership effectively communicates information to the public and is transparent with decision making.
  - 50.3% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with local government communication
  - 17.6% were ‘very unsatisfied’
- Split (2/3)
  - There is strong collaboration between Edinburgh’s government, county government, and local organizations.
    - 36.3% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’
    - 34.5% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’
    - 29.2% of respondents selected ‘don’t know/unsure’
  - There is strong citizen engagement and participation in Edinburgh.
    - 40.8% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’
    - 47.9% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’

#### Public Facilities and Services

- Positive (4/6)
  - Emergency services (fire, police, EMS) within Edinburgh are reliable.
    - 76.1% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the reliability of emergency services in Edinburgh
    - 27.4% were ‘very satisfied’
  - Existing government buildings (town hall, park facilities, emergency services) are in good condition.
    - 70.3% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the condition of government buildings
  - Municipal utilities such as water, wastewater, and electricity are adequate and reliable.
    - 68.5% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the adequacy and reliability of municipal utilities
    - 17.3% were ‘very satisfied’
  - Community services such as trash pick-up and recycling adequately serve residents’ needs.
    - 63.7% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with community services, including trash pick-up and recycling
- Negative (2/6)
  - There are affordable high-speed internet options in Edinburgh for residents and businesses.
    - 55.3% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with high-speed internet options in Edinburgh
    - 28.6% were ‘very unsatisfied’
  - Utility rates are affordable.
    - 54.1% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with the affordability of municipal utilities
    - 27.8% of respondents were ‘very unsatisfied’

#### Placemaking

- Positive (2/5)
  - Edinburgh has a strong sense of identity and community pride.
    - 73.4% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with Edinburgh’s sense of identity and community pride
    - 20.3% were ‘very satisfied’

- Edinburgh has unique branding and signage that sets it apart from other communities.
  - 52.3% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with Edinburgh’s branding and signage
  - 8.3% of respondents were ‘very satisfied’
  - 8.3% of respondents were ‘very unsatisfied’
- Negative (3/5)
  - Edinburgh has the amenities needed for residents to live healthy lifestyles such as healthcare options, healthy food options, and recreational programming.
    - 69.9% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with the availability of health-related amenities
    - 24.6% were ‘very unsatisfied’
  - Edinburgh’s overall appearance is satisfactory and leaves a good impression on visitors.
    - 56.8% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with the overall appearance and impression of Edinburgh on visitors
    - 20% were ‘very unsatisfied’
  - There are a variety of programs, resources, and events for Edinburgh residents, including those catered towards children and seniors.
    - 56% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with the programming available for youth and seniors
    - 19.8% were ‘very unsatisfied’

#### Economic Development

- Positive (1/5)
  - There is available land and adequate utilities for new commercial and industrial investments within or adjacent to Edinburgh.
    - 51.1% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the land and utilities available for new commercial and industrial investments
- Negative (3/5)
  - Edinburgh has a wide range of retail, restaurant, and entertainment options that serve the needs of residents.
    - 69.6% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with the retail, restaurant, and entertainment options in Edinburgh
    - 24.1% were ‘very unsatisfied’
  - Edinburgh has enough employment opportunities for residents of all skill levels who wish to live and work within the community.
    - 55.5% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with employment opportunities
    - 17.6% were ‘very unsatisfied’
  - There are educational resources within the community for adult education and those wanting to learn new skills.
    - 51.4% were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with educational opportunities
    - 16% were ‘very unsatisfied’
    - 27.3% selected ‘don’t know/unsure’
- Split (1/5)
  - Business owners and entrepreneurs in Edinburgh are well-supported by the town and county-wide organizations.
    - 34.4% of respondents were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with support for business owners and entrepreneurs

- 39.0% of respondents were 'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with support for business owners and entrepreneurs
- 26.6% of respondents selected 'don't know/unsure'

## Housing

- Positive (2/5)
  - New housing developments should focus on affordable units for first-time home buyers, young professionals, and recent graduates.\*
    - 60.0% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' (i.e., agreed) with a focus on affordable units in new home construction
    - 22.4% were 'very satisfied'
  - Edinburgh should focus on rehabilitating homes before building new.\*
    - 56.8% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' (i.e., agreed) with a focus on rehabilitating existing homes, rather than building new
    - 18.1% were 'very satisfied'
    - 18.1% of respondents selected 'don't know/unsure'
- Negative (1/5)
  - There are diverse housing options for people of all ages and lifestyles within Edinburgh.\*
    - 62.8% of respondents were 'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with the diversity of housing options in Edinburgh
    - 18.6% were 'very unsatisfied'
- Split (2/5)
  - There is adequate space for new housing developments within town limits.\*
    - 36.3% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the space available for new residential development
    - 37.5% of respondents were 'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with the space available for new residential development
    - 26.2% of respondents selected 'don't know/unsure'
  - Personal property maintenance within Edinburgh is an issue.\*
    - 38.3% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with personal property maintenance
    - 46.4% of respondents were 'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with personal property maintenance
    - 22.2% were 'very unsatisfied'
    - 15.4% of respondents selected 'don't know/unsure'

\*Indicates a statement that would have been clearer if the question had assessed agreement/disagreement, rather than satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

## Transportation

- Positive (2/2)
  - It is safe for residents to walk to destinations (parks, post office, shopping) within Edinburgh.
    - 76.3% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with pedestrian safety within Edinburgh
    - 25.4% were 'very satisfied'
  - Roads and sidewalks are well-maintained and generally in good condition.
    - 62.1% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the condition of roads and sidewalks
    - 50.0% were 'satisfied,' compared to 22.9% 'unsatisfied'



Agriculture

- Split (1/1)
  - Existing agricultural land within Edinburgh’s town limits should be developed as residential, commercial, industrial, or public uses in the future.\*
    - 43.9% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ (i.e., agreed) with the idea of developing agricultural land in Edinburgh
    - 35.6% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ (i.e., disagreed) with the idea of developing agricultural land in Edinburgh
    - 20.5% of respondents selected ‘don’t know/unsure’

\*Indicates a statement that would have been clearer if the question had assessed agreement/disagreement, rather than satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

Natural Resources

- Positive (1/2)
  - Edinburgh has woodlands and natural areas that should be protected from future development.\*
    - 66.2% of respondents reacted positively (i.e., selected ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’) to the idea of protecting woodlands and natural areas in Edinburgh from future development
    - 29.0% were ‘very satisfied’
- Split (1/2)
  - There are sufficient public access points to the Big Blue River for fishing, kayaking, and wildlife viewing.
    - 49.0% were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with public access points
    - 32.6% were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with public access points

\*Indicates a statement that would have been clearer if the question had assessed agreement/disagreement, rather than satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

Parks and Recreation

- Positive (3/5)
  - Edinburgh’s parks are well-maintained.
    - 67.3% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the maintenance of Edinburgh’s parks
    - 19.5% were ‘very satisfied’
  - People of all ages and physical abilities can safely access parks and recreational amenities within the community.
    - 63.0% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the accessibility of Edinburgh’s parks and recreational facilities
    - 16.1% were ‘very satisfied’
  - The current park spaces fill the equipment/facility needs of residents (playgrounds, ball fields, sport courts, etc.).
    - 52.9% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with parks and recreation equipment and facilities
    - 11.3% were ‘very satisfied’ and 12.1% were ‘very unsatisfied’
- Split (2/5)
  - There are a variety of programming opportunities within park spaces throughout the year catered towards all members of the community.

- 39.8% were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with programming opportunities in park spaces
    - 41.3% were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with programming opportunities in park spaces
    - 18.9% selected ‘don’t know/unsure’
  - Edinburgh’s parks are well-connected to destinations within and outside the community via sidewalks and trails.
    - 37.5% were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the pedestrian/cyclist connectivity of parks to other destinations
    - 48.9% were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with the pedestrian/cyclist connectivity of parks to other destinations

### Historic Preservation

- Positive (1/4)
  - Edinburgh should prioritize the preservation of historic buildings, especially downtown.\*
    - 70.2% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ (i.e., agreed) with the idea of prioritizing the preservation of historic buildings
    - 34.6% selected ‘very satisfied’ (i.e., “strongly agree”)
- Split (2/4)
  - Edinburgh has policies that help protect its long-standing and historic buildings.
    - 30.6% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with policies to protect historic buildings
    - 26.6% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with policies to protect historic buildings
    - 42.8% selected ‘don’t know/unsure’
  - Residents and visitors can easily learn about the town's history.
    - 48.1% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with access to information about the town’s history
    - 27.8% of respondents were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’ with access to information about the town’s history
    - 24.6% selected ‘don’t know/unsure’
- Neutral (1/4)
  - There are resources available for property owners wanting to rehabilitate their historic buildings.
    - 55.2% selected ‘don’t know/unsure’

\*Indicates a statement that would have been clearer if the question had assessed agreement/disagreement, rather than satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

### Hazard Mitigation

- Split (3/3)
  - Edinburgh is prepared to prevent, respond to, and rapidly recover from an emergency.\*
    - 41.6% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with Edinburgh’s emergency prevention, preparedness, and response
    - 22.6% were ‘unsatisfied’ or ‘very unsatisfied’
    - 35.8% selected ‘don’t know/unsure’
  - Natural disaster response plans (tornado, flash flood, severe winter storm) have been clearly communicated and resources are available to help residents in need.\*

- 36.0% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the communication of natural disaster response plans and resources
  - 32.5% were 'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied'
  - 31.5% selected 'don't know/unsure'
- There are little to no flooding issues within Edinburgh's town limits.\*
  - 41.7% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the frequency of flooding in town limits (i.e., there are few flood issues)
  - 32.3% were 'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with the prevalence of flooding issues (i.e., there are too many floods)
  - 26.0% selected 'don't know/unsure'

\*Indicates a statement that would have been clearer if the question had assessed agreement/disagreement, rather than satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

If money wasn't an issue, what is one project/development/program you would like to see in Edinburgh?

- Housing:
  - Suggestions for affordable housing development, including apartments and homes suitable for families.
  - Support for senior housing and community centers.
- Historical and Cultural Preservation:
  - Preservation of the town's history and character, including restoring downtown buildings and creating historical museums.
- Placemaking:
  - Revitalization and preservation of downtown areas.
  - Development of community gathering spaces, including public space for events and activities like live music, food trucks, or concessions.
  - Cleanup of town areas, including removal of junk cars, trash, and eyesores.
  - Creation of new parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities.
  - Creation of entertainment options like movie theaters, bowling alleys, and arcades.
- Economic Development:
  - Attraction of new businesses, including grocery stores, restaurants, and entertainment venues.
  - Support for local businesses through lower rates and incentives.
  - Enhancement of the industrial park and creation of more job opportunities.
- Social Services and Health:
  - Provision of affordable healthcare services, including medical, dental, and mental health facilities.
  - Combatting drug issues and crime through enforcement and community programs.
- Parks and Recreation:
  - Establishment (or improvement) of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities for all ages, including gyms, sports complexes (with basketball courts and soccer fields), and aquatic centers (with swimming pools and splash pads).
  - Development of youth centers and programs to keep children and teens engaged.
- Natural Resources:
  - Replace the Thompson Mill Dam on the Blue River, or reactivate the river area with a riverwalk, trails, and boating.
  - Expand trash services to include curbside recycling.

- Transportation and Accessibility:
  - Improvement of transportation infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and sidewalks.
  - Development of walking and biking trails, and better access to existing sports complexes.
  - Access to high-speed internet for the entire community.
- Civic Engagement and Governance:
  - Transparency in town governance, including open communication about town decisions and expenditures.
  - Enforcement of town regulations, including code enforcement and zoning laws.

# Comprehensive Planning Committee Sign-In Sheets



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 Indianapolis, IN 46204  
[hwcengineering.com](http://hwcengineering.com)

**Confidence in the built environment.**

**Please Sign In!**

**Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan - Steering Committee Meeting #1**  
 Edinburgh Town Hall  
 February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Name	Present?
Michael Chiado	✓
Sarabeth Drybread	✓
Kami Ervin	✓
Jason Hyer	✓
Justin Lollar	
Ryan Piercefield	
Hayley Roberts	✓
Miriam Rooks	
Ron Ross	✓
Stephanie Taylor	
Daniel Teter	✓
Debbie Vaughan	
Kevin McGinnis	
Julie Young	✓





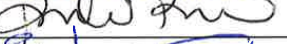






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**Please Sign In!**

**Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan - Steering Committee Meeting #2**  
Edinburgh Town Hall  
April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Name	Present?
Michael Chiado	
Sarabeth Drybread	
Kami Ervin	
Jason Hyer	
Justin Lollar	
Ryan Piercefield	
Hayley Roberts	
Miriam Rooks	
Ron Ross	
Stephanie Taylor	
Daniel Teter	
Debbie Vaughan	
Kevin McGinnis	
Julie Young	





Confidence in the built environment.

**Please Sign In!**

**Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan - Steering Committee Meeting #3**  
Edinburgh Town Hall  
May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024

Name	Present?
Michael Chiado	
Sarabeth Drybread	<i>SB Drybread</i>
Kami Ervin	
Kristen Goecker	<i>Kristen Goecker</i>
Jason Hyer	
Justin Lollar	<i>Justin Lollar</i>
Ryan Piercefield	
Hayley Roberts	
Miriam Rooks	
Ron Ross	<i>Ron Ross</i>
Stephanie Taylor	<i>Stephanie Taylor</i>
Daniel Teter	
Debbie Vaughan	
Julie Young	





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### Please Sign In!

#### Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan - Steering Committee Meeting #4

Edinburgh Town Hall

June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Name	Present?
Michael Chiado	✓
Sarabeth Drybread	✓
Kami Ervin	
Kristen Goecker	✓
Jason Hyer	
Justin Lollar	
Ryan Piercefield	
Hayley Roberts	
Miriam Rooks	
Ron Ross	
Stephanie Taylor	
Daniel Teter	✓
Debbie Vaughan	
Julie Young	✓





# Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting Notes

## Meeting #1 - February 28th, 2024



135 N. Pennsylvania Street, Suite 2800  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
hwcengineering.com

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### Steering Committee Meeting #1 Summary

Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan  
February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6:00pm

#### 1. Introductions

##### Project Team

- Rachel Christenson, AICP – HWC, Project Manager/Planner
- Genevieve Zircher – HWC, Planner
- Craig Luedeman – HWC, Business Development
- Cory Whitesell – HWC, Director of Landscape Architecture and Planning (not present)

##### Steering Committee – Members in Attendance

- Michael Chiado
- Sarabeth Drybread
- Kami Ervin
- Jason Hyer
- Hayley Roberts
- Ron Ross
- Daniel Teter
- Julie Young

#### 2. Project Overview

Rachel Christenson provided an overview of the comprehensive planning progress. She answered frequently asked questions about comprehensive plans and outlined OCRA technical requirements, the timeline for the planning process, the community engagement plan, and the role of the Steering Committee.

- Comprehensive Planning FAQ's
  - What is a comprehensive plan?
    - A comprehensive plan is a guidance document for local leaders and staff to reference when making decisions about land use, transportation, utilities, and more.
    - Residents, business owners, and developers may reference the document when making decisions about their home, business, or property.
  - What are the state's requirements for the comprehensive plan?
    - Per Indiana law, must include at minimum:
      - Statement of objectives for future development
      - Statement of policy for land use development



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- Statement of policy for the development of public ways, public lands, and public utilities
- What are some of the benefits of having a comprehensive plan?
  - Communities can't have zoning without a comprehensive plan.
  - A comprehensive plan can be used as a foundation when applying for additional state funding and grants.
- The Plan's Purpose
  - Evaluate the existing conditions of your community including demographic and socioeconomic makeup and an inventory of the built and natural environment.
  - Establish a clear vision and goals for the future.
  - Identify recommendations that translate the vision and goals into actionable projects and initiatives.
- OCRA Technical Requirements
  - Executive Summary
  - General Background
  - Comprehensive Planning Committee
  - Analysis by Subject Matter
    - Land Use
    - Government and Fiscal Capacity
    - Public Facilities and Services
    - Placemaking
    - Economic Development
    - Housing
    - Transportation
    - Agriculture
    - Natural Resources
    - Parks and Recreation
    - Broadband Access
    - Historic and Archaeological Resources
    - Hazard Mitigation
  - Appendices
- Planning Process & Timeline
  - January
    - Kick-Off Meeting
    - Steering Committee Set-Up
    - Data Collection & Analysis
    - Project Website
  - February
    - Steering Committee Meeting #1
    - Website Released
  - March
    - Public Input Survey Released
    - Focus Groups
    - Public Workshop



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- April
  - Public Participation Report
  - Steering Committee Meeting #2
- May
  - Steering Committee Meeting #3
  - Big Ideas Open House
  - Ordinance Analysis
  - First Draft of the Plan
- June
  - Steering Committee Meeting #4
  - Public/OCRA Draft of the Plan
- July
  - Public Presentation of Plan
- August
  - Final Draft of the Plan
  - Plan Commission Adoption Presentation and Public Hearing
- September
  - Town Council Adoption Presentation
  - Post-Adoption Revisions and Final Deliverables
- Community Engagement Plan
  - Community engagement isn't a phase in the project – it's critical throughout the planning process.
  - Community engagement opportunities will include the following:
    - Project Website
    - Focus Groups with Stakeholders
    - Online Survey
    - In-Person Workshop
    - Big Ideas Open House
    - Plan Presentation
    - Adoption Hearing
- Role of the Steering Committee
  - Confirm stakeholder participants
  - Participate in committee & community meetings
  - Provide direction on plan vision, goals and objectives
  - Ask lots of questions
  - Give feedback on drafted materials
  - Let us know if we are on the wrong track
  - Be advocates of the plan and process
  - **Tell people about what we are doing and how to get involved!**





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### 3. Vision & Needs Discussion

Genevieve Zircher shared initial findings from the pre-meeting survey and the U.S. Census Bureau. Data was gathered from 2012 and 2022 to demonstrate changes over the last decade since the adoption of the 2011 Comprehensive Plan. The most recent data available from the U.S. Census Bureau is from 2022.

- Demographic Snapshot
  - Population Growth: 0.5% since 2012
    - According to the 2022 American Community Survey, Edinburgh has a population of 4,144.
    - The town has seen an increase of about 20 people since 2012.
  - Median Age: 40 years
    - Edinburgh experienced a significant jump in median age since 2012 (37.9 years), outpacing county and state trends.
  - Educational Attainment: 87.5% with a High School Diploma or Higher
    - About 9.2% of Edinburgh's population has a bachelor's degree or higher.
    - The number of residents with college degrees has grown since 2012.
- Housing Snapshot
  - 54.7% Owner-Occupied and 45.3% Renter-Occupied
    - The number of Owner-Occupied and Renter-Occupied housing units within Edinburgh have both risen since 2012.
  - 12.3% Vacant
    - According to ACS data, the number of vacant units increased by 37 since 2012.
  - \$131,100 Median Home Value (Appraised)
    - According to Zillow, the average home sale price in Edinburgh's is \$181,360, an increase of 113.5% since 2012.
  - \$760 Median Rent
- Economic Snapshot
  - Median Household Income: \$51,496
    - Edinburgh's household income has increased since 2012 (\$37,179).
    - Household income increased at a similar rate to the State of Indiana.
  - 70.8% of Population in the Workforce
    - About 22.3% of residents work in manufacturing industries.
    - Approximately 71% of residents work outside Edinburgh with an average commute of 22.4 minutes.
  - 8.1% Unemployment Rate
    - Edinburgh's unemployment rate in 2022 was 8.1%, higher than the state rate of 4.5%.
    - Unemployment has decreased since 2012 (12.1%).
- What should this plan achieve?
  - Develop a shared vision for Edinburgh.
  - Unify town entities and encourage collaboration.
  - Foster growth and development.





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- Promote progress in Edinburgh.
  - Establish clear accountability for local leaders.
- How would you describe Edinburgh today?
  - (See PPT for word cloud.)
- How would you envision Edinburgh in the future?
  - (See PPT for word cloud.)
- How is Edinburgh’s quality of life?
  - 3.3 Average Rating
  - Characteristics or amenities that contribute most to quality of life include welcoming/friendly people, safety, community events/public activities, education system, employment opportunities, and nearby shopping/retail options.
- Opportunities and Challenges
  - Satisfied – Public Facilities & Utilities, Transportation, Parks & Recreation
  - Unsatisfied – Downtown, Economic Development
  - (See PPT for detailed breakdown.)
- Assets & Anchors
  - Self-sustaining town
    - Own and operate utilities, parks, police, fire
  - Tight-knit community
    - Residents support one another
  - Location
    - Between I-65 and US 31
    - 3 counties of resources
  - Community organizations
    - Edinburgh Community School Corporation
    - John R. Drybread Community Center
    - Edinburgh Wright-Hageman Public Library
    - Parks and Recreation Department
    - Police Department
    - Edinburgh Fire & Rescue
- Key Priorities to Address
  - Downtown development and revitalization
    - Vision, business attraction, marketing, building restoration, ordinances
  - Housing development
    - Housing options for middle- and upper middle-class residents
  - Infrastructure to support growth and development
  - Quality of life
    - Trails, recreation, programs for all ages, public space adjacent to downtown
  - Economic development
    - Attract industry and large employers to expand job opportunities



#### 4. Next Steps

- Project Website - [www.edinburghcompplan.com](http://www.edinburghcompplan.com)
- Public Input Survey
  - Closes at End of Day on March 31st, 2024
- Public Workshop
  - March 27th @ 6pm – Edinburgh Town Hall
- Focus Groups with Stakeholders
  - 6 Total – Week of March 25th
  - Need List of Names
- Steering Committee Meeting #2
  - April 17th at 6pm – Town Hall

#### 5. Comments from Steering Committee

- Demographic Snapshot
  - Steering Committee members were surprised that growth wasn't higher given that many Hispanic/Latino individuals have moved to town in recent years. Most individuals are renting and may be avoiding the Census.
  - Edinburgh schools usually gain kids, but they do lose kids to Franklin or online programs.
- Housing Snapshot
  - Rent seemed a little low - \$850 may be more typical.
  - Vacant housing seemed high, but blighted, uninhabitable buildings may be included in this figure.
  - Owner-occupied ratio seemed high to some. No one can buy a house because "people don't leave Edinburgh."
    - There are many streets where a family will own most of the houses along the street.
  - Affordable housing is needed to support young professionals.
- Economic Snapshot
  - Most residents drive to Columbus and Franklin for work.
  - Steering Committee members would have anticipated unemployment to be higher.
- What should this plan achieve?
  - The comprehensive plan should be used day-to-day by local leaders. More needs to be done to train council members and commissioners on how to use the plan.
- Opportunities and Challenges
  - Sanitary sewer and stormwater need improvement.
    - Steering Committee members joked about "Lake Ross" (i.e., flooding on Ross Street after a storm.)



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- There is a lot of low-income housing, but not necessarily “affordable” housing. Teachers don’t live in the community because there aren’t enough homes here to meet their needs. More workforce housing is needed.
- Edinburgh can’t attract the professional class because it doesn’t have housing for middle- to upper-class families. Managers live in Columbus.
- Housing stock is aging, and Edinburgh doesn’t have the amenities that people are looking for today.
- Assets & Anchors
  - There are other philanthropic organizations in the community that do great work, including Lions Club, American Legion, Beta Sigma, and the Conover Foundation.
  - Local churches (united under the Ministerial Association) do a lot of important community development work in Edinburgh.
- Public Input Survey
  - No questions about education, but it may be beyond the scope of the plan.
  - What would HWC consider a successful survey?
    - Edinburgh struggles with low voter turnout and community engagement.
    - We should aim for 300 responses, or possibly 500 if we are ambitious.
  - How will we reach people with the survey?
    - Both an online and paper version of the survey will be available.
    - If there is local capacity to do so, it would be great to translate the survey into Spanish and make a paper version available.
- Focus Groups with Stakeholders
  - We have six focus groups. Send us your ideas for topics and local experts.
  - We could have a focus group on the downtown, utilities, and quality of life.
  - The basement exercise ladies are a knowledgeable group.
- Additional Ideas and Concerns
  - A Steering Committee member requested a ‘lessons learned’ from other communities. The survey will capture opinions from people who haven’t left Edinburgh and lived elsewhere. They may be satisfied with the current level of service. How do we ensure that we’re keeping up with other communities?
  - How do we ensure that residents living in the new housing development visit and patronize businesses downtown?
    - Steering Committee members are concerned that they won’t become part of the community, but rather will shop where they work.
    - We need to ensure that they choose Edinburgh schools for their kids.



# Meeting #2 - April 17th, 2024



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## Steering Committee Meeting #2 Summary

Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan

April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6:00pm

### 1. Introductions

#### Project Team

- Rachel Christenson, AICP – HWC, Project Manager/Planner
- Genevieve Zircher – HWC, Planner
- Craig Luedeman – HWC, Business Development
- Cory Whitesell – HWC, Director of Landscape Architecture and Planning (not present)

#### Steering Committee – Members in Attendance

- Michael Chiado
- Sarabeth Drybread
- Justin Lollar
- Miriam Rooks
- Ron Ross
- Stephanie Taylor
- Julie Young

### 2. Progress Update

Rachel Christenson provided a progress update for the Comprehensive Plan. In May, the project team will host Steering Committee Meeting #3, facilitate a Big Ideas Open House, begin the ordinance analysis process, and develop the first draft of the plan.

- May
  - Steering Committee Meeting #3
  - Big Ideas Open House
  - Ordinance Analysis
  - First Draft of the Plan
- June
  - Steering Committee Meeting #4
  - Public/OCRA Draft of the Plan
- July
  - Public Presentation of Plan
- August
  - Final Draft of the Plan
  - Plan Commission Adoption Presentation and Public Hearing
- September
  - Town Council Adoption Presentation
  - Post-Adoption Revisions and Final Deliverables



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### 3. Public Participation Results

Genevieve Zircher shared results from the following three public engagement opportunities: focus groups with stakeholders, the public workshop, and the public input survey. In total, over 430 voices were heard from across the Town of Edinburgh. Public feedback will be used to craft vision statements, goals, and action items for each section of the plan.

- **Focus Groups with Stakeholders**
  - Participation
    - Number of Meetings: 5
    - Total Participants: 25
  - Strengths
    - Charming, historic small town
    - Great amenities
    - Utilities and emergency services
    - Community connections
  - Weaknesses
    - Underutilized downtown buildings
    - First impressions
    - Cars and trash in yards
  - Opportunities
    - Foster a vibrant downtown with restaurants, shops, public spaces, events
    - Collaborate with Festival County Indiana, Johnson County's tourism association
    - Start a downtown merchants association
    - Encourage housing development of varying types and prices
    - Reevaluate and enforce property maintenance ordinances
    - Enhance recreation opportunities, such as a gym/fitness center
- **Public Workshop**
  - Participation
    - Total Participants: 13
  - "What are Edinburgh's greatest assets?"
    - Parks and recreation facilities
    - Edinburgh Community Schools
    - Municipally owned utilities
    - Timbergate neighborhood
    - Historic downtown
  - "What are you proud of?"
    - Small-town feel
    - Community connections
    - Festivals and events
    - Amenities (Sports Complex, Aquatic Center, mall, golf course)
  - "Where would you like to see change in Edinburgh?"
    - Gateway improvements
    - Downtown revitalization and business development



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- Improved maintenance of residential and commercial properties
  - “What are your dreams for Edinburgh?”
    - Busy, vibrant downtown with active storefronts
    - Housing opportunities to support population growth
    - Maintain small town character and connections
    - Updated parks and recreation facilities, including gym/fitness center
- **Public Input Survey**
  - Participation
    - Number of Responses: 400
  - Respondent Demographics
    - Relationship to Edinburgh
      - Current Edinburgh resident or business owner: 82%
      - Nearby county resident or business owner: 8.5%
    - Length of Residency
      - More than 15 years: 64%
      - 6-15 years: 14%
    - Age of Respondent
      - 46 to 65 years old: 40%
      - 31 to 45 years old: 34%
  - “What do you love about Edinburgh?”
    - Small-town feel
    - Community connections
    - Safety
    - Proximity to amenities
    - Historical connection/heritage
  - “What do you wish you could change?”
    - Downtown revitalization
    - Youth engagement
    - Community activities
    - Housing and property maintenance
    - Infrastructure and public services
    - Government and leadership
    - Substance abuse
  - “What are the most needed types of development?”
    - Restaurants and entertainment (90.5%)
    - Public parks/open space (84.5%)
    - Single-family housing (80.4%)
  - “Where should new development occur?”
    - Near the I-65 Interchange
    - Along the US-31 corridor
    - In the downtown core
  - Areas of Satisfaction
    - Public facilities and services
      - Emergency services (76%)



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- Existing government buildings (70%)
    - Municipal utilities (69%)
  - Transportation
    - Pedestrian safety to local destinations (76%)
    - Condition of roads and sidewalks (62%)
  - Parks and recreation
    - Park maintenance (67%)
    - Park accessibility (63%)
- Areas of Dissatisfaction
  - Placemaking
    - Healthy lifestyle amenities (food, healthcare, recreational programming) (70%)
    - Overall appearance and impressions (57%)
  - Economic Development
    - Retail, restaurant, and entertainment options (70%)
    - Employment opportunities (56%)
- **Emerging Themes**
  - Community Pride and Identity
    - There's a strong sense of pride in Edinburgh's small-town feel, historic charm, and sense of community.
  - Desire for Downtown Revitalization
    - There's a desire for a vibrant downtown district with active storefronts, restaurants, shops, and enriching programming.
  - Housing Affordability and Variety
    - There's a need for a variety of housing options at different price points to accommodate various demographics.
  - Placemaking and Infrastructure
    - There's a desire for placemaking efforts, including gateway improvements, wayfinding signage, streetscape improvements, public greenspaces, and property maintenance to enhance the town's appearance and create welcoming spaces for residents and visitors.
  - Recreation and Youth Engagement
    - Enhanced recreation opportunities are desired, with a focus on engaging youth. Suggestions include establishing a gym, activating the riverfront, improving facilities at Irwin Park and the Aquatic Center, and developing a trail system.





#### 4. Vision for Focus Areas

Building off feedback from community members, the project team drafted a vision for each of the OCRA-required sections of the comprehensive plan. This vision is the umbrella under which goals and action items will eventually fall.

- Key Focus Areas
  - Land Use: Edinburgh will balance residential, commercial, and industrial growth while maintaining its charming, historic character.
  - Housing: Edinburgh will encourage the development of new housing options while uplifting existing neighborhoods.
  - Economic Development: Edinburgh will support existing businesses and attract new businesses to the downtown and key corridors to provide job opportunities and desired amenities.
  - Placemaking: Edinburgh will foster strong quality of place and distinct community character through physical and programmatic improvements.
  - Public Facilities & Services: Edinburgh will continue to provide quality services and strive to upgrade infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses.
  - Government & Fiscal Capacity: Edinburgh will enhance communication, promote civic engagement, and expand the functional capacity of town departments.
  - Parks & Recreation: Edinburgh will provide enriching indoor and outdoor recreation amenities that promote healthy lifestyles and social connections for residents of all ages and abilities.
- Additional Focus Areas
  - Transportation: Edinburgh will maintain and enhance the transportation network to ensure local and regional connectivity for all users.
  - Agriculture: Edinburgh will support the steady transition of agricultural land within town limits to other appropriate uses over time.
  - Natural Resources: Edinburgh will preserve the Big Blue River, surrounding woodlands, and the underlying aquifer to promote ecological health, protect drinking water quality, and provide access points for recreation.
  - Broadband Access: Edinburgh will ensure that residents and businesses have access to affordable, high-speed internet.
  - Historic & Archaeological Resources: Edinburgh will protect downtown historic buildings, preserve the character of historic districts, and share the town's story with residents and visitors.
  - Hazard Mitigation: Edinburgh will prepare and clearly communicate plans to safeguard against the threat of natural and man-made disasters.





## 5. Next Steps

- Project Website - [www.edinburghcompplan.com](http://www.edinburghcompplan.com)
- Steering Committee Meeting #3
  - May 2<sup>nd</sup> from 6pm – 7pm
  - Franklin College students will present their findings from the public input survey to the Steering Committee.
- Big Ideas Open House
  - May 15<sup>th</sup> from 5pm – 6pm
  - In the cafeteria across from the Art Show
  - Edinburgh Community High School

## 6. Comments from Steering Committee

- Local Government – Transparency & Communication
  - The local newspaper used to report on each council meeting, but that doesn't happen anymore. Live streaming was viewed as important for transparency. Need to communicate 10 times more than you should. Cannot communicate enough. Controlling the message is so important.
    - Yellow signs that go out for public hearings are hard for people to understand how to get information about public hearings. Are there other ways that information can be put out there (like a website they can go to find their own information)?
    - Also talked about how multiple platforms to reach lots of generations/demographics.
    - Also need a FAQ and explain the why behind public decisions.
- Future Development
  - Where should new development occur?
    - Brief discussion about why there wasn't more development near interchange at 65. There are no utilities on the east side of the interstate (there may be an opportunity to expand to support development on the east side).
- Emerging Themes
  - Affordable housing term was disliked, because all housing should be affordable.
- Vision for Focus Areas
  - First half the vision topics, the Steering Committee didn't see any red flags.
  - Agriculture Discussion
    - Asked if there was negative responses on agriculture transitioning. Genevieve said yes, there was some negativity, but it was very low. When schools had a referendum, they talked about growth along US-31, which meant converting ag. There was some negative there.
    - Consider changing "steady transition" to "responsible transition."
    - Chickens are generally not a favorable topic by the current council.
    - There is a community garden that is used within Edinburgh.





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- We are steering away from urban ag.
- Natural Resources Discussion
  - Preserve the Big Blue River might not be the best. Let's think about the word "preserve." Might need to be "enhance" or something else. There are concerns about outcry about the dam. We need to soften this vision statement (specifically take out Big Blue River).
- Broadband Discussion
  - How do we accomplish this was the main question. Genevieve explained Broadband Ready Communities program.
  - Soften the word 'ensure'....maybe it's 'work towards' or 'promotes.'
- Historic & Archaeological Resources Discussion
  - No local preservation district or Historic Preservation Commission.
  - The landlords/building owners seem to want guidelines.
  - Promote or enhance might be missing in the vision. The current wording focuses on keeping the downtown steady, rather than actively making it better. Incorporate an active focus moving forward.
- Hazard Mitigation
  - Who provides their Edinburgh's Emergency Management services? Primarily work with Johnson County, but Shelby County is adopting a new Emergency Management plan.
  - What are other threats? Train passing through town.



# Meeting #3 - May 2nd, 2024



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hwcengineering.com

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## Steering Committee Meeting #3 Summary

Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan  
May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 at 6:00pm

### 1. Introductions

#### Project Team

- Rachel Christenson, AICP – HWC, Project Manager/Planner
- Genevieve Zircher – HWC, Planner
- Craig Luedeman – HWC, Business Development (not present)
- Cory Whitesell – HWC, Director of Landscape Architecture and Planning (not present)

#### Steering Committee – Members in Attendance

- Sarabeth Drybread
- Kristen Goecker
- Justin Lollar
- Ron Ross
- Stephanie Taylor
- Julie Young

### 2. Progress Update

Genevieve provided a brief progress update. To date, the project team has facilitated a range of engagement opportunities and has heard from over 430 voices. In May, the project team will host a Big Ideas Open House and develop the first draft of the plan. An ordinance analysis is already underway by Civic Blueprint to identify any issues with the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance.

- May
  - Big Ideas Open House
  - Ordinance Analysis
  - First Draft of the Plan
- June
  - Steering Committee Meeting #4
  - Public/OCRA Draft of the Plan
- July
  - Public Presentation of Plan
- August
  - Final Draft of the Plan
  - Plan Commission Adoption Presentation and Public Hearing
- September
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### 3. Goals and Action Items

The Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) requires that comprehensive plans feature thirteen pre-determined subject areas, from housing to hazard mitigation. Based on feedback from the Steering Committee, the project team refined the vision for each of these subject areas. The project team also drafted goals and action items for each subject area. Genevieve facilitated a discussion on the key focus areas during the meeting. For the sake of time, participants were encouraged to review the additional focus areas on their own, sending any comments or questions to the project team.

#### Key Focus Areas

- Land Use: Edinburgh will balance residential, commercial, and industrial growth while maintaining its charming, historic character.
  - Refer to the Future Land Use Map as a guide for land use changes and ordinance updates.
    - Publish the Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map on the Town's website for easy access. Distribute copies to staff and town officials.
    - Host an annual workshop to educate the Town Council, Plan Commission, and Board of Zoning Appeals on how to best utilize the Future Land Use Map and Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan in their official roles.
    - Update Edinburgh's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning Map in accordance with the recommendations of the Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map.
  - Understand how development outside of town limits impacts Edinburgh and plan accordingly.
    - Develop an annexation plan to strategically identify areas Edinburgh has interest in acquiring. Annexations should forward the Town's vision and contribute to a specific purpose, such as economic development, residential development, or quality of life.
    - Stay informed on decisions regarding nearby unincorporated land in Johnson, Bartholomew, and Shelby County.
    - Coordinate with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and Indiana National Guard on land use decisions at the Driftwood State Fishing Area and Camp Atterbury.
- Housing: Edinburgh will encourage the development of new housing options while uplifting existing neighborhoods.
  - Support the development of new housing of various types and prices to accommodate a diversity of ages, incomes, and lifestyles.
    - Update the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance, leveraging the ordinance as a vital tool to encourage desirable development and guard against undesirable development in Edinburgh.





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- Ensure that Town’s Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance permits missing middle housing to appeal to the younger workforce and seniors.
    - Maintain relationships with regional builders to pursue mutually beneficial projects.
    - Identify possible incentives to attract residential development in Edinburgh, such as Housing Tax Increment Financing (HoTIF).
  - Promote the beautification of existing neighborhoods through local enforcement and grassroots volunteerism.
    - Strengthen the Town’s Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to support ethical code enforcement. When issuing violations, staff should provide clear directions and deadlines to community members.
    - Create an action plan for enforcement in key areas, such as gateway corridors and historic districts.
    - Develop an online portal where residents can submit ordinance violations for town review.
    - Consider developing a Residential Rental Inspection Program (RRIP) to raise the quality of rental housing throughout the community.
    - Establish a rehabilitation program for residential properties, which may include a revolving loan fund and volunteer assistance to help homeowners make necessary improvements.
    - Partner with local community organizations to host a celebration centered around beautifying Edinburgh. This celebration may feature trash removal, basic landscaping, and public art installations.
- Economic Development: Edinburgh will support existing businesses and attract new businesses to the downtown and key corridors to provide job opportunities and desired amenities.
  - Revitalize Edinburgh’s downtown district as a vibrant, economically diverse destination with a desirable mix of uses.
    - Partner with Festival Country Indiana to develop a Downtown Revitalization Plan to assess existing conditions and outline recommendations for downtown Edinburgh.
    - Establish a Main Street Organization to organize community events, encourage the restoration and reuse of historic buildings, and promote downtown Edinburgh to residents and visitors.
    - Create a downtown business attraction program which identifies desirable downtown businesses for recruitment and connects those businesses to a toolkit of resources and incentives.
    - Amend the Town’s Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to limit residential uses to upper stories in traditionally commercial areas of downtown Edinburgh.



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- Acquire and repurpose vacant lots in the downtown district for desirable uses, such as infill development, flexible greenspace, and visitor parking.
- Support existing businesses and entrepreneurs in Edinburgh.
  - Form an Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce or Merchants Association to build relationships and advocate for the interests of business owners in local decision-making.
  - Encourage local business owners to join the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce or Franklin Chamber of Commerce to expand their professional network.
  - Connect local business owners to programs and resources to start or grow their business, such as coaching and microlending.
- Collaborate with neighboring counties to attract new employers to designated areas in and around Edinburgh.
  - Partner with Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance, Franklin Chamber of Commerce, Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development, and Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce to leverage additional resources when attracting new businesses.
  - Expand the 'Business' page on the Town of Edinburgh's website to serve as a one-stop shop for prospective employers with information on the town, available properties, supporting organizations, and recent investments.
- Placemaking: Edinburgh will foster strong quality of place and distinct community character through physical and programmatic improvements.
  - Promote Edinburgh as a unique destination in South Central Indiana.
    - Collaborate with Festival Country Indiana, the tourism and destination management organization for Johnson County, to leverage available expertise, capacity, and funding.
    - Create a flexible public greenspace in downtown Edinburgh to accommodate community events, including festivals, farmers markets, and live performances.
    - Continue to enhance downtown Edinburgh with public art, such as murals, sculptures, and memorials.
    - Experiment with tactical urbanism, an approach to community building that uses short-term, low-cost projects to catalyze long-term change. Discover creative ways to enhance the downtown by setting up temporary plazas, parklets, and alley activations.
    - Develop a 'Visit Edinburgh' page or website to promote community events, restaurants, shopping, and recreation opportunities in the community.
    - Partner with students from Franklin College or Edinburgh Community High School to create engaging social media content for Edinburgh.



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- Invest in strategic capital improvements to create a welcoming, easily navigable community for residents and visitors.
  - Improve gateways into the community through attractive signage and landscaping that reflects the town’s current branding.
  - Install wayfinding signage along main corridors in and around Edinburgh to direct visitors to key destinations, such as the downtown district, library, town hall, parks, and overflow parking lots.
  - Enhance streetscapes in the downtown district and along main corridors to include improved lighting, sidewalks, street furnishings, and landscaping.
- Public Facilities & Services: Edinburgh will continue to provide quality services and strive to upgrade infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses.
  - Continue to provide high-quality public facilities and services to Edinburgh residents and businesses.
    - Establish a Utilities Master Plan to update and maintain municipally owned utilities to accommodate residential, commercial, and industrial growth in Edinburgh.
    - Continue to support emergency service providers, including Edinburgh Fire and Rescue and the Edinburgh Police Department.
    - Pursue opportunities to upgrade the wastewater collection system and mitigate ongoing issues with combined sewer overflow.
    - Identify areas in Edinburgh where flooding issues occur most frequently and seek solutions to improve drainage.
- Government & Fiscal Capacity: Edinburgh will enhance communication, promote civic engagement, and expand the functional capacity of town departments.
  - Foster an engaged citizenry through improved communication and expanded participation opportunities.
    - Continue to use social media, news outlets, and utility bills to share engagement opportunities, updates to local plans and ordinances, and recent investments.
    - Stream Town Council, Plan Commission, and Board of Zoning Appeals meetings online to increase accessibility and boost attendance.
    - Create an online portal for the latest Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting Materials. Add a QR code to yard signs to allow community members to easily learn about the changes proposed in their neighborhood.
    - Launch a youth taskforce to provide a fresh perspective on local initiatives and develop the next generation of community leaders.
    - Continue to keep the Document Center on the Town of Edinburgh’s website up to date with the latest plans and ordinances.



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- Expand the capacity of town departments to continue to ensure adequate level of service as growth occurs.
  - Dedicate funds to hire additional staff in key departments, such as the Planning Department and Parks and Recreation Department, as growth occurs.
  - Develop student internship opportunities to support local governmental capacity.
  - Partner with community groups, including religious institutions, social clubs, and service organizations, to recruit volunteers to assist with the implementation of projects, programs, and events.
- Parks & Recreation: Edinburgh will provide enriching indoor and outdoor recreation amenities that promote healthy lifestyles and social connections for residents of all ages and abilities.
  - Expand the capacity of Edinburgh's Parks and Recreation Department.
    - Establish a Parks Board to oversee recreational needs in Edinburgh, including the maintenance and construction of park facilities, trails, community programming, and festivals.
    - Develop a Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan that follows guidelines set forth by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and plans for future facilities, programming, and added staff capacity.
    - Identify appropriate revenue-generating opportunities within the Edinburgh's Parks and Recreation System with insight from the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
    - Encourage the formation of a "Friends of Edinburgh Parks" or similar volunteer group to support the Parks and Recreation Department.
  - Build upon existing recreation amenities in Edinburgh's Parks and Recreation System to meet the needs of residents and visitors.
    - Consider upgrades to existing amenities, including the Sports Complex, Irwin Park, and the Aquatic Center so that they may continue to serve as regional destinations.
    - Explore opportunities to acquire vacant parcels in the downtown core for future park amenities, including a public plaza, flexible greenspace, or pocket park.
    - Update Edinburgh's development standards to support the use of floodplains for public recreation and open space.
    - Update Edinburgh's development standards to require new subdivisions to offer parks and recreation amenities or be located within walking distance of an existing park, recreational area, or open space.



### Additional Focus Areas

- Transportation: Edinburgh will maintain and enhance the transportation network to ensure local and regional connectivity for all users.
  - Continue to provide an efficient, well-connected transportation network in Edinburgh through maintenance and strategic improvements.
    - Update Edinburgh’s Street Standards to follow best practices and include bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
    - Complete a PASER roadway rating assessment and use this assessment to develop a maintenance plan for local roadways in Edinburgh, leveraging the Indiana Department of Transportation’s Community Crossings Matching Grant Program as a funding source.
    - Evaluate options to convert Main Cross Street into a two-way to improve access to downtown businesses.
    - Coordinate with business and property owners to develop an action plan for public parking in downtown Edinburgh. This may include the creation of designated overflow lots and signage to direct visitors to these lots during community events and peak times.
  - Strengthen local and regional connectivity by enhancing the bicycle and pedestrian network.
    - Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to assess community needs and outline priority projects to connect key destinations in Edinburgh and the greater region. This plan should consider the feasibility of a multi-use trail system with potential routes.
    - Complete a Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Inventory to identify hazards and needed connections in Edinburgh’s sidewalk network.
    - Partner with the Parks and Recreation Departments for Franklin and Columbus on opportunities to connect trails in the region.
- Agriculture: Edinburgh will support the responsible transition of agricultural land within town limits to other appropriate uses over time.
  - Direct growth and development within town limits with appropriate transitions to agricultural areas in the unincorporated county.
    - Update Edinburgh’s Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to require buffer areas between land uses.
    - Partner with Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance and Greater Columbus Indiana Economic Development to attract agriculture-related businesses to Edinburgh.
    - Continue to expand the Edinburgh Farmers Market by attracting new food vendors.
- Natural Resources: Edinburgh will preserve waterways and surrounding woodlands, and the underlying aquifer to promote ecological health, protect drinking water quality, and provide access points for recreation.
  - Activate the riverfront in Edinburgh as a destination for residents and visitors.
    - Develop a Riverfront Activation Plan to enliven the Big Blue River. This may include expanding the trail system, installing a modern





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- **Historic & Archaeological Resources:** Edinburgh will encourage the restoration and active reuse of downtown historic buildings, preserve the character of historic districts, and share the town's story with residents and visitors.
  - Restore and reuse historic buildings in Edinburgh to give them new life.
    - Consider establishing a historic preservation overlay district to protect resources downtown.
    - Consider establishing a Historic Preservation Commission with a local preservation district and historic preservation standards.
    - Connect business owners with incentives for the rehabilitation and reuse of commercial buildings in downtown Edinburgh, including interior renovations and façade improvements.
  - Share Edinburgh's history and heritage with residents and visitors.
    - Host semi-annual Historic District Walking Tours to share Edinburgh's legacy through visits to historic sites.
    - Create a self-guided Historic District Walking Tour, available online or as a paper copy, featuring a map of historic sites with narrative descriptions.
    - Partner with the Johnson County Museum of History and Bartholomew County Historical Society to preserve Edinburgh's history, and share interesting photos, artifacts, and stories with the public.
- **Hazard Mitigation:** Edinburgh will mitigate the threat of natural and man-made disasters, and partner with county organizations to respond to and recover from disasters impacting the community.
  - Safeguard lives and property through proactive planning and intervention.
    - Continue to use the Flood Plain Management District Regulations in the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to limit development in Edinburgh's floodplains. Consider updating these regulations to strengthen them and protect areas adjacent to the Big Blue River.
    - Work with Louisville & Indiana Railroad and CSX Railroad to reduce the speed of trains passing through Edinburgh's town limits to mitigate the risk of collisions at intersections and along the rail line.
    - Educate the public on personal and family emergency preparedness through the Edinburgh website, social media, pop-up events, and reminders on utility bills.
    - Partner with county emergency management agencies and local fire and police departments to provide a yearly training session for Town employees to review basic safety protocol for common emergency situations, such as fires, tornadoes, floods, and active shooters.
    - Routinely inspect municipal buildings and facilities to ensure safety equipment, such as smoke detectors and fire extinguishers, and in place and working correctly.





#### 4. Next Steps

- Project Website - [www.edinburghcompplan.com](http://www.edinburghcompplan.com)
- Big Ideas Open House
  - May 15<sup>th</sup> from 5pm – 6pm
  - In the cafeteria across from the Art Show
  - Edinburgh Community High School
- Steering Committee Meeting #4
  - June 12<sup>th</sup> from 6pm – 7pm
  - Edinburgh Town Hall

#### 5. Comments from Steering Committee

- Goals and Action Items
  - Land Use
    - School corporation needs to be considered when developing future land uses. School needs more rooftops for students + tax growth in the parts of the town that are in the school district.
    - Make sure we're balancing amenities/parks with residential/commercial uses.
  - Housing
    - There is a "Report Issue" option online already (but it's buried); not sure if they want the online portal for submitting complaints.
    - Will this fix the property management issues? Our current ordinances are not written in a way that is conducive to enforcement. This piece is in the Town's Code of Ordinances. That is the issue and needs to be updated. Bullet point #1 on "Promote the beautification" goal needs to be updated.
  - Economic Development
    - Main Street Organization – started work on developing one pre-pandemic and it fell off; they are picking this back up again.
    - The Town submitted a grant application today for \$40,000 through IEDC entrepreneur grant for an entrepreneur support organization.
  - Placemaking
    - The Steering Committee used Franklin as a great example of a community with great placemaking and gateway improvements.
  - Public Facilities and Services
    - Separate out the Utilities Master Plan into water, electric, and wastewater master plans.
    - Need to wordsmith the CSO section (Julie will give us feedback).
  - Government & Fiscal Capacity
    - Invest in permitting software for the planning department.
  - Parks and Recreation
    - The Steering Committee identified Shelbyville as a great example for sidewalk connectivity and wellness initiatives.





# Meeting #4 - June 12th, 2024



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Indianapolis, IN 46204  
hwcengineering.com

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## Steering Committee Meeting #4 Summary

Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan  
June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6:00pm

### 1. Introductions

#### Project Team

- Rachel Christenson, AICP – HWC, Project Manager/Planner
- Genevieve Zircher – HWC, Planner
- Craig Luedeman – HWC, Business Development (not present)
- Cory Whitesell – HWC, Director of Landscape Architecture and Planning (not present)

#### Steering Committee – Members in Attendance

- Michael Chiado
- Sarabeth Drybread
- Kristen Goecker
- Daniel Teter
- Julie Young

### 2. Progress Update

Genevieve shared a quick progress update. Over the last half year, the project team has collected input on community assets and challenges from over 460 different voices, including local leaders, residents, business owners, and other interested parties. Most recently, the project team successfully facilitated a Big Ideas Open House at Edinburgh High School. Next week, the project team will release a complete draft of the plan for review by the Steering Committee and the Office of Community and Rural Affairs. The project team will then make edits based on feedback received. In July, the public draft of the plan will be released and presented to community members. This will kick off the final adjustment and adoption phase of the process.

- Plan Process & Timeline
  - June
    - Steering Committee Meeting #4
    - OCRA Draft of the Plan
  - July
    - Public Draft of the Plan
    - Public Presentation of the Plan
  - August
    - Final Draft of the Plan
    - Plan Commission Adoption Presentation and Public Hearing
  - September
    - Town Council Adoption Presentation
    - Post-Adoption Revisions and Final Deliverables



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- Big Ideas Open House
  - Highly positive feedback
    - Majority 'agree' for all goals presented
  - Comments and Concerns
    - Housing
      - 2 respondents concerned about redeveloping farmland for housing
    - Parks and Recreation
      - 1 respondent unsure about expanding capacity of parks department (Parks Board, Parks Master Plan)
    - Natural Resources
      - 1 respondent unsure about riverfront activation (Riverfront Activation Plan, events, Irwin Park improvements)
    - Transportation
      - 1 respondent concerned about historic buildings being torn down for parking
      - 1 respondent concerned about street expansions impacting downtown character
      - 1 respondent unsure about investing in bike lanes

**3. Draft Plan Discussion**

Originally, the project team planned to share the complete first draft by Steering Committee Meeting #4. Due to a delay, the project team instead opted to send out the first half of the draft plan to the Steering Committee while the second half is finalized. Genevieve reviewed the schedule for the draft with deadlines for feedback.

- First half of the draft plan emailed to Steering Committee on 6/12.
- This draft focuses on text. Graphics and maps will be added to the next draft.
- Full draft will be available to Steering Committee and OCRA on 6/20.
- Steering Committee feedback on text is needed by 7/8.
- A public draft will be available by 7/15.

**4. Implementation Plan**

Genevieve explained how each section of the plan is organized, from an overarching vision to specific, implementable action steps. The vision, goals, and action items are outlined in each chapter. The completed plan will compile the vision, goals, and action items in an implementation chart in the Appendix. Each action item will be accompanied by responsible parties and potential funding sources.

- From Vision to Implementation
  - Vision for Each Focus Area
    - Goal #1
      - Action Item 1
      - Action Item 2



## 5. Future Land Use Map Discussion

Genevieve and Rachel facilitated a discussion on the proposed future land use map for Edinburgh. Steering Committee members offered their feedback on the proposed map, confirming future land use decisions they agreed with and requesting adjustments where needed. The map is organized around seven future land use classifications: single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, parks and open space, and downtown. These classifications are similar to those described in the 2011 Edinburgh Comprehensive Plan, but some classifications were combined for simplicity.

- Proposed Future Land Use Classifications
  - Single-Family Residential
    - Parcels designated as single-family residential are reserved primarily for **single-family detached residential** structures. These areas may range in densities and may contain **small amounts of duplexes or single-family attached dwellings** but are characterized by a predominance of single-family detached residential structures.
  - Multi-Family Residential
    - Parcels designated as multi-family residential consist primarily of **multi-unit residential buildings** which may be renter- or owner-occupied. Multi-family residential areas in the future land use plan reflect existing developments and infill opportunity sites in and near the existing Town limits. Areas designated for multi-family residential development can accommodate a variety of dwelling types, from senior housing to affordable housing. **Manufactured home communities** are also included in this classification.
  - Commercial
    - The commercial land use designation indicates **areas appropriate for the sale of goods and services**, as well as **offices for professional services**, such as dental, legal, and accounting. These uses range in intensity, height, and size depending on the intended customer base.
  - Industrial
    - Parcels designated as industrial include those involved in the **production, manufacturing, distribution or fabrication of goods**. These areas depend on proximity to regional transportation networks including the interstate and railroad.
  - Institutional
    - Parcels designated as institutional include those **owned and operated by a governmental or other public agency** and established primarily for the benefit of the community. This includes **schools, utilities, and government buildings** and structures.
  - Parks and Open Space
    - Parcels designated as parks and open space include any **public or private land available for recreational, educational, cultural, or aesthetic purposes**.
  - Downtown



- Parcels designated as downtown are areas where a **compatible mix of uses**, often on the same lot or within one building, either currently exist or are desired in the future. Residential and office uses in these areas should be generally located on the upper floors of buildings above **ground floor commercial uses**, including restaurants, retail, and entertainment venues.
- Discussion with Steering Committee
  - Riverfront area (between bridge over Big Blue River and Pleasant Street)
    - Currently – mix of uses in this area; not cohesive; no plan
    - Vision = commercial with a trail along the river
    - Desire for small businesses with amenities that complement recreational use
  - Northwest side of town along US-31
    - More residential proposed; another future subdivision
  - I-65 and SR-252 interchange
    - Agree with the mix of residential and commercial by the interstate
    - Opportunity for multi-family housing
  - SR-252 corridor
    - Encourage property maintenance where SR-252 passes through residential neighborhoods
    - Redevelopment desired in mixed commercial and residential spaces near the downtown
    - Acquire and redevelop the old grain elevator at the intersection of Center Cross Street and SR-252
  - Timbergate neighborhood
    - Distribution of residential and commercial should mirror existing land use; adjust the Future Land Use Map accordingly
  - Defining the downtown
    - East-West Bounds: Pleasant Street to Kyle Street
    - North-South Bounds: SR-252 to Thompson Street
  - Parks and open space revisions
    - Add Prosser Park
    - Add Bryan Park
    - Add Sports Complex
    - Add Rest Haven Cemetery
  - Future grown and annexation
    - Talk about being pro-annexation, but without targeting specific areas

## 6. Next Steps

- Project Website - [www.edinburghcompplan.com](http://www.edinburghcompplan.com)
- OCRA Draft Plan – Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>
- Public Presentation of the Plan
  - Tuesday, July 16<sup>th</sup> at 6pm – Edinburgh Town Hall
  - A video overview will be posted on the project website.



# Ordinance Analysis



## CIVIC BLUEPRINT

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Civic Blueprint reviewed the Town of Edinburgh’s Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Control Ordinance (referred to as the Ordinances in this analysis) to identify changes to improve the Town’s development codes. Having clear, concise, and legal ordinances will position Edinburgh to reach its goals for the future. The following recommendations are intended to identify the nature and direction of changes to be made and are not intended as specific text changes to the ordinances.

## Introduction

The Town of Edinburgh is updating its Comprehensive Plan to guide decisions about future land use. The Comprehensive Plan describes a vision for the community. A logical and necessary outgrowth of the Comprehensive Plan process is an update of land development codes. This is necessary to modernize regulations, implement recommendations from the Town’s recent planning efforts, make the ordinance more user-friendly, and ensure all regulations are compliant with applicable state and federal laws.

This analysis will identify key areas for updating the Town of Edinburgh’s Zoning and Subdivision Control Ordinances. By conducting a comprehensive review of current regulations, we will pinpoint issues, recommend solutions, and propose best practices to enhance the ordinances' effectiveness and alignment with contemporary planning principles.

We begin by detailing the primary update themes while addressing how the Town’s zoning districts can be improved. We then summarize best practices research regarding specific topic areas to show how to address specific land use and zoning issues. The recommendations detailed below are preliminary and subject to change throughout the UDO update process.

## Improve Ease of Use

The existing Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Control Ordinance would benefit from being combined into a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). A UDO simplifies the development process by having all the regulations in one place. This reduces confusion, duplication, and inconsistencies. By combining the ordinances, land use and subdivision plans can be considered together. This encourages a more holistic approach to development, ensuring new projects fit well with the surrounding area.

The UDO should be revised to be more user-friendly. Primary areas of concern include inconsistency in terminology, redundancy between Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Control Ordinance standards, lack of diagrams, and the lack of colocation of standards regarding the same topic. To address these concerns and better align the UDO with best practices, the Town should consider:

1. Creating UDO in plain language to be clear, readable, and inclusive;
2. Revising the UDO for consistency, including establishing preferred terms;
3. Establishing clear “Purpose and Intent” and “Applicability” sections for each chapter, especially to guide greenfield development;
4. Incorporating other Town documents and standards by reference;
5. Including flow charts for processes;
6. Adding definitions as needed;
7. Evaluating the existing overlay districts, and considering including additional overlays;
8. Listing lot standards, building heights, setbacks, and other similar intensity standards by type of district;
9. Utilizing graphics, tables, charts, and lists where appropriate; and
10. Restructuring the UDO as recommended in the Proposed UDO Structure section of this document.

## Modernize Standards

There is a need to modernize standards in the existing land use regulations in the areas of allowed uses, fences and walls, signs, parking, landscaping and buffering, building materials, and building design. There is a lack of current uses, a lack of sign standards, an overabundance of off-street parking, and a lack of distinction between building types in design and materials standards. To address these concerns and better align the UDO with best practices, the Town should consider:

1. Updating use and dimensional standards to reflect the needs and desired character of the Town;
2. Updating the use table and supplemental use provisions to address modern principal and temporary uses such as but not limited to food trucks/mobile vending, and short-term rentals;
3. Ensuring that each use is clearly defined;
4. Rezoning areas where development is encouraged with the appropriate zoning district and control the character of the development through design review;
5. Evaluating the appropriateness of all uses permitted in each district to align district uses with the Comprehensive Plan;
6. Providing architectural standards to encourage quality, aesthetically pleasing developments;
7. Allowing a mix of uses in certain districts;
8. Enhancing infill development standards to better address transitions and distinguish between residential and nonresidential uses;
9. Updating sign regulations to comply with changing legal standards;
10. Evaluating and recalibrating parking minimums for uses as appropriate;
11. Updating stacking requirements for drive-throughs and other uses;
12. Expanding administrative approvals (e.g. secondary plats, certain types of site plans);
13. Focus on clear approval processes;
14. Expand the enforcement tools available to the Town;
15. Improving landscape and buffering standards; and
16. Establishing standards for new building types such as mixed-use buildings and various types of residential buildings.

## Enhance Environmental Stewardship

A new UDO is an opportunity for Edinburgh to enhance its environmental stewardship efforts. The Town should consider:

1. Establishing design standards that incentivize the preservation of environmental features such as but not limited to wooded areas and natural topography;
2. Enhancing outdoor lighting standards to require energy-efficient fixtures that minimize light trespass and pollution;
3. Updating the floodplain regulations to align with changes in state law;
4. Establishing standards for solar and wind energy collection systems;
5. Incentivizing the use of rain gardens, bioretention cells, and other green landscape infrastructure in required landscape areas;
6. Encouraging species diversity in all required landscape areas, including the use of native species; and
7. Including a Wellhead Protection Overlay to protect water sources from activities that might compromise its quality.

## Address Housing Affordability and Diversity

To address the housing shortage while attracting quality, attractive development at affordable prices, the Town should consider:

1. Providing a wide range of housing types (from large single-family homes to triplexes, to apartment buildings) on a variety of lot sizes;
2. Encouraging home ownership by allowing the property line in small multi-family structures (duplexes, triplexes, etc.) to run through the party wall so each unit may be individually owned;
3. Encouraging a mix of multi-unit housing types that resemble the character and form of traditional single-family neighborhoods; and
4. Allow accessory dwelling units where appropriate while maintaining acceptable architectural character.



## Ensure Compliance with Recent State and Federal Legislation and Case Law

Since the Town of Edinburgh adopted its Ordinances, there have been several changes in state and federal legislation, as well as in case law. The updated UDO should ensure compliance with these changes, including those detailed below.

1. **Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.** In 2018, the Federal Communications Commission released the Wireless Infrastructure Third Report and Order and Declaratory Ruling, which further limits state and local government authority over certain wireless facilities. The Town’s wireless telecommunications facilities standards should be updated to comply.
2. **Signs.** In 2016, the Supreme Court of the United States heard the Reed vs. the Town of Gilbert, AZ case, and in its decision clarified that commercial and noncommercial sign copy is protected speech under the first amendment. Based on this decision, municipalities are no longer able to regulate signs based on the content of the sign copy. Since this decision, there have been several follow up cases that further clarify the Supreme Court’s 2016 decision in Reed vs. the Town of Gilbert including, but not limited to City of Austin, TX vs. Reagan National Advertising (2022), which clarified that municipalities are able to differentiate between on-site and off-site signs. The Town’s sign standards should be updated to comply.
3. **Religious Land Uses.** In 2000, the federal government passed the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act which mandates that land use regulations must grant “equal treatment” to a religious assembly or institution as compared with a nonreligious assembly or institution; not discriminate based on religion or religious denomination; not totally exclude religious assemblies or institutions; and not unreasonably limit religious assemblies or institutions within a jurisdiction. Since the act was passed, it has been challenged in federal court several times, resulting in the clarification of the intent and scope of the act. The Town’s allowed uses by district, definitions, and district purpose and intent statements should be assessed and updated as needed to comply.

## Zoning Best Practices

### Zoning Districts

In areas where protection of agricultural areas and natural areas is desired, consider reducing the residential density permitted, require special exception approval, or prohibit the subdivision of land in certain districts. Restrict the permitted uses within highly visible highway corridors to keep undesirable uses out of the corridor and locate the uses to a more appropriate location within the town. Tailor the Industrial and Commercial districts to the context, scale, and nature of the desired uses. Use the PUD process to regulate new mobile home parks. Consider creating a Corridor Overlay to achieve the Town's placemaking goals.

### Permitted Uses

Identify conditions for certain uses. This better addresses how a use interacts with the surrounding uses. Consider adding Solar Energy Conversion, Wind Energy Conversion, short-term rentals, Small Cell Facility, and Telecommunication Facility language that is consistent with state law. Ensure every use is adequately defined with any additional standards required.

### Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)

Add an introductory meeting with the Town Council prior to the petition being heard by the Plan Commission. This is a non-binding opportunity for the Council to provide feedback on the project. Create a strong base Ordinance with appropriate districts and development standards so PUDs are only sought for large, mixed-use projects or sites with peculiar challenges.

### Processes

Separate the process of subdividing property from the design standards required in developing property. Include performance and maintenance surety standards to align with state law. Include guidelines on Conditions of Approval and Written Commitments. Allow the Plan Commission to delegate site plan approval to staff. Allow the Plan Commission to approve waivers to development standards when they are approving primary plats. Currently, a development standards variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals is required. Consider creating a Residential Rental Inspection program to improve the quality of rentals in the Town.

## Proposed UDO Structure

The Edinburgh Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Control Ordinance currently includes 137 sections across 15 chapters. There are several opportunities to streamline the Ordinances by relocating and consolidating sections. The following recommended structure is a preliminary recommendation and is subject to change as the UDO sections are drafted.

### Chapter 1

#### Ordinance Foundation

Describes the state statutes that authorize the UDO, defines generally where and how the Ordinance applies, the legal framework for the Ordinance, who is involved in administering the Ordinance, and how to handle existing legal uses and structures that may no longer meet the requirements of the Ordinance.

### Chapter 2

#### Zoning Districts

Establishes the various zoning districts explaining the intent of each district and the development standards to follow when building in each district.

### Chapter 3

#### Permitted Uses

Identifies what land uses are permitted in each district and the type of approval necessary. Each use is defined, and special requirements are noted (for example, some uses require a larger separation from residential uses). This chapter also covers temporary uses and events.

### Chapter 4

#### General Standards

Covers standards that apply to all properties and property maintenance standards.

### Chapter 5

#### Design Standards

Identifies items that need to be incorporated into documents submitted for approval. Standards are provided for architectural design, site layout, streets, open space, and easements.

### Chapter 6

#### Improvement Standards

Provides standards for the elements installed on a site including landscaping, lighting, parking, and signage.

**Chapter 7**  
**Subdivisions**

Establishes the types of subdivisions and details the approval process for each type.

**Chapter 8**  
**Process and Permits**

There are separate submittal forms and checklists for different types of requests, such as approvals for a rezoning, site plan, or variance. An applicant needs to obtain the appropriate application, fill out the forms, and provide the information listed as required for that type of approval. This chapter also outlines the review and approval process of each application.

**Chapter 9**  
**Enforcement**

This chapter outlines the procedures for notification and action that can be taken if there is a violation of this Ordinance, i.e., someone knowingly or unknowingly does not comply with the regulations outlined in the UDO.

**Chapter 10**  
**Definitions**

Zoning, subdivision, and building code terminology often differs from common usage. This chapter defines the meaning of terms used in the UDO that have specific meanings. For example, what is a “mew lot?”