

Vision, Goals & Strategies

3

Morgan County Vision Statement

The irreplaceable natural beauty of Morgan County is a haven from big city life. As honorable stewards of the land, we will balance residential and commercial development with agricultural uses, and provide quality of life amenities and opportunities for all Morgan County residents. To fulfill our responsibility to future generations, we will support sustainable development, promote a strong and diverse economic base, and deliver effective and efficient county-wide services.

Morgan County Development Policies

Development principles are intended to guide decision makers as they interpret the comprehensive plan. They are overarching statements that can be applied to many different decisions. The Steering Committee created these principles to address their biggest concerns.

Agricultural Protection

We believe in the use of planning and zoning to direct growth away from prime agricultural land while at the same allowing for flexibility in decision making.

Greenspace

Greenspace is vital for Morgan County's quality of life, and cannot be taken for granted. Greenspace must be promoted, preserved and planned for.

Housing

Morgan County needs a continuum of housing choices. However, the focus should be on more quality, mid-level and upper-level homes while directing multi-unit housing toward existing urban areas with infrastructure.

Manufacturing and Industrial Development

Manufacturing and industrial development should be confined to along the SR 37 Corridor, SR 144 Corridor, SR 67 Corridor and Interstate 70 Corridor or – with infrastructure improvements – within easy access to those major roads.

Commercial Development

Large-scale commercial and retail development should be confined along the SR 37 Corridor and only minor commercial nodes be permitted in the outlying areas.

Community Image

National retail chains and housing developers – as well as local businesses and homeowners - should raise the aesthetic qualities of their projects.

Morgan County Goals & Objectives

None of the goals from Phase 1 were altered during the second phase, but the Steering Committee revised some of the objectives.

The revisions make the objective more specific, and make a clearer link between the goal and an eventual change to regulations that might take place. Also, one new goal was added, number 9, concerning sustainable development.

Goal 1: Maintain the community's rural way of life.

OBJECTIVES

Use zoning to discourage residential development on prime agricultural land.

Use subdivision controls to encourage cluster development.

Require the incorporation of open space in new large-scale development and appropriate redevelopment sites.

Using GIS, determine the effectiveness of the codes by annually tracking data on the rate of urbanization and the conversion of agricultural land.

Goal 2: Promote growth and redevelopment in areas with existing infrastructure.

OBJECTIVES

Use financial incentives and utility availability to direct growth so it is contiguous to developed areas as indicated on the Future Land Use Map. Outside the designated growth areas, require additional information from developers such as transportation studies and financial impact statements.

Use TIF's and zoning tools to promote infill, redevelopment and other revitalization projects.

Protect businesses that have made an investment in the community by surrounding them with appropriate land uses or buffering them from different uses.

Goal 3: Capitalize on economic development opportunities.

OBJECTIVES

Provide the necessary infrastructure (e.g. transportation and utilities) to support creation of new industries.

Support construction of new business parks along the SR 37 corridor or other major thoroughfares with adequate infrastructure.

In conjunction with surrounding communities and the Morgan County Economic Development Corp., update and support a countywide Economic Development Strategy.

Partner with private enterprise projects to expand broadband network opportunities.

Goal 4: Promote the development of attractive, affordable and livable neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVES

Promote “Quality of Life” amenities through adoption of such tools as the Greenways Plan and creation of a Trails Master Plan.

Amend the zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance to include street connectivity.

Employ basic design standards to improve the appearance of new residential development.

Working with incorporated communities, conduct a Housing Needs Assessment to determine gaps in Morgan County’s housing stock.

Goal 5: Provide improved access to housing, employment and commerce in Morgan County.

OBJECTIVES

Adopt and periodically update the Thoroughfare Plan to maintain regional access for Morgan County, especially to and from Marion, Hendricks and Johnson Counties.

Promote alternative forms of transportation such as pedestrian paths, bike lanes, express bus service, carpooling and the Interurban.

Design for the safe movement of commercial goods through appropriate roads by use of truck routes and other methods.

Goal 6: Provide safe and efficient transportation networks for Morgan County.

OBJECTIVES

Use the Comprehensive Plan, Thoroughfare Plan and Capital Improvement Plan to guide maintenance and improvements of the transportation network.

Require connectivity to the existing road network for new residential, commercial and industrial developments. Also promote connectivity within new developments.

Provide an interconnected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Minimize the negative impacts of transportation networks to property and the natural environment through tools such as new trees or tree replacement and drainage management.

Adopt the SR 37/SR 144 Corridor Plan to address the impact of I-69.

Goal 7: Provide for county-wide park and recreation opportunities, including both facilities and services/programs.

OBJECTIVES

Adopt the Morgan County Greenways Plan for a trail along the White River.

Use and keep updated the County Master Parks Plan.

Develop a network of interconnected parks.

Encourage privately provided parks and recreation areas.

Goal 8: Improve and enhance intergovernmental cooperation throughout the County.

OBJECTIVES

Encourage a county-wide approach to coordinated fire and emergency services and infrastructure expansion and improvements.

Ensure properly funded (local, state and federal) emergency services.

Assist in the creation of a Roundtable of Governments for all Morgan County entities.

Adopt the SR 37/SR 144 Corridor Plan.

Goal 9: Ensure the county becomes more sustainable by meeting the needs of its residents while protecting environmental resources for future generations.

OBJECTIVES

Integrate environmental concerns into decision making at all levels.

Encourage the use of green building materials and techniques in new construction, perhaps by offering incentives.

Explore the recommendations of the National Association of Counties' Green County Initiative for assistance in creating sustainable local programs.