A Comprehensive Experience in Comprehensive Planning

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By

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Abstract

In the year of 2005, I was able to participate in the production of two comprehensive plans for the cities of New Carlisle and Greenwood, Indiana. From these two experiences I was able to accumulate a broad knowledge in the field of comprehensive planning. This thesis is not only a compilation of my experiences, but a medium to further the knowledge and understanding of the planning process and comprehensive planning. By going through the multiple steps necessary in producing a comprehensive plan and giving examples from the two comprehensive plans I collaborated on, I hope to inform the public about comprehensive plans and how the field of urban planning can better a community.

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Introduction

I overheard a conversation between three people the other day in which the people were describing the changes to their hometown since they came to college. “We just got a Super Wal-Mart, yea that’s big for our town.” “People might finally realize where I live since we just got a new race track nearby.” “Our county is the only one surrounding Indianapolis that hasn’t developed that much. It is as though we don’t want any new development.” This conversation stood out to me because those taking part in the discussion had no idea it focused on the topic of urban planning. Since I am majoring in urban planning at Ball State University my ears have been trained to pick up on conversations focusing on such a topic.

While the theory and ideas of urban planning and the planning profession have come up in many more conversations in the past years between numerous people throughout the world, many are still unaware they are even discussing planning. Today it has become more important for people all over the world to have an understanding about urban planning and the planning profession, since an increasing amount of urban planning issues affects more and more people every day. Being a part of a community, whether it is your household, block, neighborhood, municipality, county, state, country, or the world the decisions being made in regard to planning affect everyone, causing a need for planning understanding.

Definition of Urban Planning

There is no one definition of the profession of urban planning because an urban planning degree allows one to enter the fields of government, development, real estate, consultation, economics, geography, and more. Yet, no matter what field a planner enters,
one constant is for sure: planners work with communities. In fact, my favorite
description of the planning profession is that planners are community builders, because
they help communities realize their potential, bring together the opinions of those
involved in a town’s decision making, and assess current issues to prepare for the future.

To obtain a degree in planning from Ball State University means not only
pursuing a multi-disciplinary education, but also to become well-rounded in the planning
field. In fact, many planners know a little about a lot of topics and rely on the expertise
of others for more specific information. Planners are also mediators. They bring together
the expertise and interests from multiple viewpoints allowing them to make informed
decisions for the betterment of the public. There are numerous areas in which a planner’s
input is beneficial such as helping restore or preserve the character of a town, directs
growth to areas that will benefit the most from it, help government officials formulate
decisions, give direction to those with vision, and helps build community, just to name a
few.

An increasing interest of many communities is to shape, preserve, and/or promote
their unique community identity which planners aide in achieving. For example, most
people visualize a typical
American town as having a “Main
Street” downtown, which runs the
length of the town as seen in the
photograph. Residential units are
usually located on either side of
the parcels in the downtown strip.
Everyone in the town can walk to the downtown, school, library, and park. It is a quaint community, and most residents in the town want to keep it that way. In fact, currently many Americans are willing to pay top dollar to live in or visit places exemplifying this model. Places like Main Street, USA in Disneyworld in Orlando, Florida, Norman Rockwell paintings, and other print of visual advertising and images, have provided Americans with the image of a “typical” downtown, and the belief that all towns across the United States should incorporate or maintain this same design. If in fact this particular design is important to the community to keep, it is a planner’s job to make sure new development is in keeping with this quaint community’s vision. The main goal for this type of plan is that the important assets of the community will not be lost with the growth of the residential, commercial and/or industrial sector. If the town is looking to change its image, a planner helps facilitate discussion to find a new image suitable and realistic for the community. The planner(s) then uses multiple “tools” to facilitate the town’s new identity.

The comprehensive plan is one of the many important tools in a planner’s toolbox. A comprehensive plan is an important document that all communities should have, no matter what size. While Indiana Law does not mandate that all communities have a comprehensive plan, other states, such as California and Oregon, a comprehensive plan is mandatory for every municipality. The comprehensive plan lays out the planning groundwork for ten to twenty years and gives focus and insight to a city or town’s past, present and future. A planner must remember that the community he/she is working for is ultimately the client. Just as in any business transaction, the final product, in this case
the comprehensive plan, must accomplish all of the goals established by the client, the city, throughout the process.

**Textbook definition of Comprehensive Planning**

So what is the comprehensive planning process? The process can take many forms, but most build from a typical form as described in *Guidelines for Preparing Urban Plans,*

"1. Identify issues and options. 2. State goals and objectives; identify priorities. 3. Collect and interpret data. 4. Prepare plans. 5. Draft programs for plan implementation. 6. Evaluate potential impacts of plans and implementing programs, and modify the plans accordingly. 7. Review and adopt plans. 8. Review and adopt implementation programs. 9. Administer plan-implementing programs, monitor their impacts and amend plans in response to feedback" (Anderson, 7).

Every comprehensive plan differs since they are produced for different cities and towns which have different strengths or needs. Every state depending on its regulations also mandates differing content in a comprehensive plan. However, using this thesis as a guideline can be helpful to understanding the comprehensive planning process.

**My Personal Experience with Comprehensive Planning**

During my undergraduate education at Ball State University, I have been fortunate enough to have involvement with two comprehensive planning projects. The first project was for New Carlisle, Indiana. A graduate studio worked on the actual production of the plan; I worked as a student aide which allowed me to observe the process as best I could. My main job was to gather information when the graduate students needed help.
The second comprehensive plan was for the city of Greenwood, Indiana which my own undergraduate studio class worked on. My participation in this plan has given me more hands-on experience and a better understanding of comprehensive planning. These two experiences are examples of the comprehensive planning process.

**Community Descriptions**

The two communities are like night and day, but that does not mean that one needs a comprehensive plan any more than the other. New Carlisle is located in St. Joseph County about twenty miles west of South Bend, Indiana. It has a population of around 1,600 people, which is enough to support a small downtown with a few restaurants, bars, a bank, and a bowling alley. There is also a library, one elementary school, one middle school, and parks within the town limits.

The city of Greenwood is located in Johnson County, directly south of Indianapolis, Indiana. It has a population of just over 36,000 people who support multiple retail centers, one regional shopping mall, a downtown core, thirteen elementary schools, thirteen middle schools, three high schools and public facilities and services.

Besides the demographic difference, another major difference between New Carlisle and Greenwood is that New Carlisle does not have a planning department. The City of Greenwood does. This difference is important to distinguish. Having a planning
department as the main contact in a city/town makes obtaining information and answering questions easier for the outside consultant because that department is basically overseeing the process. Communities without a planning department are not disadvantaged in the comprehensive planning process; however obtaining information can be more difficult for those working on the project because multiple people might be needed to obtain a particular answer.

In addition, according to Indiana law it is the plan commission which must initiate the comprehensive planning process and decide who will prepare the comprehensive plan. A plan commission is not a planning department; in fact, many of the commissioners on the planning commission do not have any planning background. A planning department acts as advisors to the planning commission. So the consultants in the comprehensive planning process, i.e. Ball State students, if working with a planning department will have the ability to work with those versed in the planning field, as opposed to just working with the planning commission.

**Reasoning for a Comprehensive Plan**

Yet as different as the two community profiles seem, both cities/“clients”, have very similar reasons for needing a comprehensive plan. To begin with, New Carlisle currently has a subdivision proposed which could add 120 new homes. Along with other
residential construction this number can raise to almost 200 new homes possibly increasing the population by 25%.
Greenwood currently has multiple new housing developments which have added 286 homes in the past year including, Homecoming at University Park, which still in its construction phase, making a big impact on the Greenwood community.

This change in housing stock is a clear indicator of the importance of a comprehensive plan because of how strong an effect it can have on the two towns. If the communities were allowed to continually grow without restraint, the image and character that attracted residents, both permanent and transient, would not be the same. The addition of multiple housing units means that both communities will experience a major increase in their population and a decrease in farmland. These shifts cause strains on infrastructure, public services, and can cause the identity of the town to change. The finished plan will equip the town with a current community profile and then lay out objectives to help handle current and future housing trends. Also, the research contained in the plan can help the town and the local government make decisions on what new proposals for development to incorporate and where to locate them.
Also, both of the communities rely on the larger city that it is located nearby. Both are considered suburbs of a larger metropolitan area and many of the residents of both New Carlisle and Greenwood travel to the larger metropolitan area for work, shopping, and entertainment. Having a large metropolitan area so close allows the towns to become “bedroom communities” in which residents work and play in the larger metropolitan area, but reside in the smaller town. This adds a different dimension into the mix, because the community has to decide if it is happy with this set-up or if it would like more amenities located in their town. If the town would like to have more amenities, an important question to ask is, can the town attract new businesses when they are located so close to a center city? Also, will the addition of more commercial, industrial, and/or residential units alter the character of the community, and are residents willing or unwilling to have it altered?

Steps One and Two: Issues & Goals

The first two steps of the comprehensive planning process work hand in hand. The first step, identifying issues, means that current and emerging issues which are relevant to those who reside, work, and/or recreate in the community need to be found. Once issues are identified, each of these aforementioned groups can give input for their
goals for the plan (step two). These insights help planners identify what residents and others who are invested in the community would like to see happen in the town as a result of the plan, and how the issues they raised can be addressed.

The first two steps of the comprehensive planning process are public participation intensive. A planning department or planning consultants from outside the area do not determine the future of the community; it is the residents’ decision. In a democratic society it is everyone’s responsibility or duty to help decide the future of the community in which they live. Public participation is important because residents can inform those working on the plan with knowledge that comes with living in the community. This local knowledge is why planners need to keep the public informed and involved in the process and also why the public should want to participate in the process. Some ways of getting the public to participate in these first two steps of the comprehensive planning process are to hold public hearings, town meetings, hand out surveys to homeowners, community leaders, business owners, etc, to write articles for the local newspaper about the comprehensive plan, and do a charrette.

The town council of New Carlisle held a town meeting to help collect the information needed for the first two steps. The town meeting started with the professors working with the graduate studio presenting the planning process to the residents. The group then broke up into four smaller groups of ten residents and did a SWOT analysis of New Carlisle led by the Ball State graduate students. A SWOT analysis identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the community. The most important strengths of New Carlisle as described by the residents were: community character, small, historic town, low crime rate and open recreational space. Some of the issues brought up
in the SWOT analysis included growth management, higher quality utility service, and lack of entertainment venues. A second meeting was held two months later with a steering committee. The steering committee was a twelve citizen member group appointed to act as a liaison between the town and the Ball State group.

For the Greenwood plan, the undergraduate studio produced four surveys: one for the general public, one for government officials, one business owners and finally one for community leaders [see appendix]. The studio produced the surveys and the city distributed 10,000 of them to the respective groups. The distribution of the surveys was through the water bill mailings, so residents received a survey with their bill. There was also a website that all the residents could access to take the survey, if they did not receive, lost, or preferred an electronic copy over a mailed copy. Ten percent of the surveys had to be filled out and returned to the city in order for the data collected through the surveys to be valid allowing the information to be used in the comprehensive plan analysis. At the end of the semester over 1,600 surveys were obtained, far exceeding the expectations of the students and the necessary ten percent.

Also, for the Greenwood plan a charrette was held for the residents of the community over the weekend of November 11th through the 13th of 2005. A charrette is a town meeting which usually takes place over two or three days.
The first meeting held with the government and civic leaders to explain the charrette process; what will take place, what the goals of the charrette are, and how it will benefit the plan. On the second day members of the community perform a SWOT analysis and give the planners information on issues they would like to see addressed in the plan. The second half of this day is then spent producing graphics and conceptual ideas depicting physical changes to the community to address the issues stated in the first session. The final day is the presentation from the planners to the community about what was revealed during the process. For example, photographs of current community areas are graphically altered by using trace paper overlays showing a before and after scene depicting how the community can change based on what was described during the SWOT analysis.

A charrette usually has a larger focus on the physical design of a community, because it is easier for residents to comprehend a visual depiction as opposed to a textual depiction. The public participation in the charrette process was far below the class expectations, with only six members of the community attending. The student to resident ratio was three to one allowing plenty of personal attention during SWOT analysis. I had a variety of roles during the charrette including, recording comments, interviewing residents, and rendering altered photographs. Through these types of participation those
working on producing the plan can understand what direction the community would like to take and what is the best way of getting them there.

**Step Three Part One: Collect Data**

The next step, "collect and interpret data," is the essence of the comprehensive plan. Before data can be collected one must to decide what type of information is needed for a comprehensive plan. Most plans have seven broad topics in which data is gathered: "natural environment, built environment, government, traffic and transportation, social and economic conditions, public services and facilities, and other" categories (Anderson, 19). Another category which is also usually added to a plan is a history section about the town and its surrounding area. The Indiana Code, the governing document of the State of Indiana, has laid out the minimal content which is required by law for a comprehensive plan. They are as follows:

*IC 36-7-4-502 Comprehensive plan; contents*

Sec. 502. A comprehensive plan must contain at least the following elements:

(1) A statement of objectives for the future development of the jurisdiction.

(2) A statement of policy for the land use development of the jurisdiction.

(3) A statement of policy for the development of public ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities.


The above citation is the minimum content needed in a comprehensive plan as required by Indiana law. The Indiana Code also lays out additional content which may be added to the municipality's comprehensive plan; however this content is merely suggestions not requirements. These include:

*IC 36-7-4-503 Comprehensive plan; additional contents*

Sec. 503. A comprehensive plan may, in addition to the elements required by section 502 of this chapter, include the following:

(1) Surveys and studies of current conditions and probable future growth
within the jurisdiction and adjoining jurisdictions.

(2) Maps, plats, charts, and descriptive material presenting basic information, locations, extent, and character of any of the following:
(A) History, population, and physical site conditions.
(B) Land use, including the height, area, bulk, location, and use of private and public structures and premises.
(C) Population densities.
(D) Community centers and neighborhood units.
(E) Areas needing redevelopment and conservation.
(F) Public ways, including bridges, viaducts, subways, parkways, and other public places.
(G) Sewers, sanitation, and drainage, including handling, treatment, and disposal of excess drainage waters, sewage, garbage, refuse, and other wastes.
(H) Air, land, and water pollution.
(I) Flood control and irrigation.
(J) Public and private utilities, such as water, light, heat, communication, and other services.
(K) Transportation, including rail, bus, truck, air and water transport, and their terminal facilities.
(L) Local mass transit, including taxicabs, buses, and street, elevated, or underground railways.
(M) Parks and recreation, including parks, playgrounds, reservations, forests, wildlife refuges, and other public places of a recreational nature.
(N) Public buildings and institutions, including governmental administration and service buildings, hospitals, infirmaries, clinics, penal and correctional institutions, and other civic and social service buildings.
(O) Education, including location and extent of schools, colleges, and universities.
(P) Land utilization, including agriculture, forests, and other uses.
(Q) Conservation of energy, water, soil, and agricultural and mineral resources.
(R) Any other factors that are a part of the physical, economic, or social situation within the jurisdiction.

(3) Reports, maps, charts, and recommendations setting forth plans and policies for the development, redevelopment, improvement, extension, and revision of the subjects and physical situations (set out in subdivision (2) of this section) of the jurisdiction so as to substantially accomplish the purposes of this chapter.

(4) A short and long range development program of public works projects for the purpose of stabilizing industry and employment and for the purpose of eliminating unplanned, unsightly, untimely, and extravagant projects.

(5) A short and long range capital improvements program of governmental expenditures so that the development policies established in the comprehensive plan can be carried out and kept up-to-date for all separate taxing districts within the jurisdiction to assure efficient and economic use of public funds.

(6) A short and long range plan for the location, general design, and assignment of priority for construction of thoroughfares in the jurisdiction for the purpose of providing a system of major public ways that allows effective vehicular movement, encourages effective use of land, and makes economic use of public funds.
By knowing the minimum requirements and suggested types of information to obtain understanding the comprehensive planning process becomes an easier task.

For data collection, it is not a question of how to collect the data, but what data to collect. This is the pivotal question in this step, because not knowing what is needed for a comprehensive plan and what the goals of the plan are inhibits the ability to collect the correct information. Students who have never produced a comprehensive plan, or have never studied comprehensive planning, should begin the research process by looking at finished comprehensive plans to see what type of data is typically gathered. The listing given in *Guidelines for Preparing Urban Plans* is just one of many interpretations of what is needed in a comprehensive plan, and under these broad topics are many specific types of information that are needed. It is also important to remember the client/city and business/planner relationship in deciding what to research and produce. Most cities will have specific data in mind for this step of the process. For example, the Greenwood Planning Department wanted my class to produce an up-to-date land use map and the Greenwood City Council wanted us to focus our attention on Greenwood’s old downtown core. After deciding what to collect and who will collect the data, the process begins.

For the Greenwood studio, the sixteen students were split into eight groups of two. These groups were responsible for collecting data in *Guidelines for Preparing Urban Plans*; history, recreation, transportation, environment, housing, land use, demographics, and economics which is an alteration of the listing given in the previous paragraph. The New Carlisle community profile had data in history, growth management, economic
development, community character, circulation, parks and recreation, housing and public services.

There are many ways of collecting data, for example, data can be collected through site visits, research on various websites such as the Census and Indiana Stats, and reading publications which center on comprehensive planning and the town. For the Greenwood plan, I collected data for the economic section, so I utilized the economic census, Chamber of Commerce publications, various websites, and comments from the residents given in the charrette or from the survey. One noticeable difference in the collection of data for the Greenwood plan over the New Carlisle is that for the onsite data collection, the Greenwood plan was easier since it was geographically closer to Ball State University than New Carlisle. It took three hours to drive to New Carlisle, while it takes just over an hour to get to Greenwood. This however does not mean that New Carlisle’s data was hard to obtain. Also as previously described, the Greenwood data not found online or through easily accessible publications was easier to come by because the city had a planning department. The city planners were able to personally answer the questions or took on the responsibility of finding the answer and reporting back the information. Since New Carlisle did not have a planner on staff from whom to get information, reaching the right person or even knowing the right person to get the information from usually took more time.

Both classes’ projects ran into difficulties finding up-to-date information, since the last census was in 2000, which is where much of the information was obtained. This information is five years old, and with both of the communities growing in their population and number of houses, this information was not indicative of the current
conditions. Retrieving up-to-date information usually means more in-depth searching on various websites or asking local professionals where to find the information. Those in the planning profession do not know all the answers making it important to ask those who are more knowledgeable about a subject. A local government usually has a most of the information, because much of it is documented through the local governments. For example, a list of residential building permits gives current information on how many homes have been added to an area since the last census. Every building that is placed within a town’s limits needs a permit for construction. This type of information can be easily obtained through asking the town’s planning or building department.

**Step Three Part Two: Interpret Data**

What usually happens in the data collection phase is after all the data is collected, or as more and more data is collected on a subject, one begins to wonder what the data says about the community. The second step is to interpret the data. Without the interpretation, the data is just a lot of numbers without any meaning assigned to them. In data collection and interpretation, one wants to find trends. For example, trends in population, what is the current growth trend (increase or decrease in population per year) and how can this number project into the next ten to twenty years (increase or decrease)? This is why having the most current data available is necessary to ensure that projections or assumptions made through the analysis of the data is as accurate as possible.

Trends are important because they allow a town to plan accordingly for today and the future. Using the example above, projecting the population figures into the future can tell what the housing demand will be, what recreation facilities will be needed, if new educational or health facilities are needed, etc. The analysis is then cross tabulated with
other information. For example, to analyze the economic trends of a town, who are the major employers; do residents commute out of the town for work; and what are the exporting and importing industries of the town; then cross tabulate with population projections, the comprehensive plan can show whether there is a need for jobs in the town, and if so, in what industrial or commercial sectors can growth be encouraged based on their exporting trends.

What separates a comprehensive plan from just an inventory of a town is the analysis. While a part of the comprehensive plan and research is to look at current community conditions the future is the main concern. How do the actions of today affect the conditions of tomorrow and what do the current trends indicate about what will happen ten or twenty years from now? These are the important questions to ask when analyzing the information that has been gathered.

**Step Four: Plan Preparation**

The plan preparation stage involves taking all the information that has been gathered and all of the analysis of this information (graphs, charts, and graphics) and to begin formalizing them into one document. Each of the teams collecting data prepares a chapter of the plan per their specific information. Each chapter describes what information was obtained, how it was obtained, why it was obtained and why the information is important. Along with the written portion are graphics, charts, graphs and maps which help the reader visualize the trend. So, the final document is actually the assimilation of multiple chapters prepared by the research teams.

In order to link these separate chapters together an overall theme of the project might be used. This theme is discussed in every chapter to make the plan a cohesive unit.
A theme was used in the Greenwood working comprehensive plan and will be discussed later. For the New Carlisle project the graduate studio was able to produce a community profile and did not utilize a theme. A community profile contains the inventory and the beginning analysis. However the profile did not project future trends or thoroughly discuss the goals and objectives of the community. These latter two steps are what transform a community profile into a plan.

There are many bumps in the road on the way to plan finalization. Additionally, for any studio class there is the time limit of a semester. It is quite difficult for a professional planner to finish a comprehensive plan in sixteen weeks let alone a group of students. There are also many conflicts which can hold up the production of a plan such as scheduling conflicts and researching difficulties, for example the surveys produced for the Greenwood project which helped the studio obtain information on the wants and needs of the community. The class needed ten percent of the surveys to be returned in order to obtain valid statistical information, however it was only at the end of the semester that the ten percent was obtained. In order to utilize this information, the class had to wait until the ten percent was obtained. After this number was returned that began the process of analyzing the answers that were given in the surveys. Since ten percent of the surveys was not obtained until late in the semester many of the results were not used in the analysis done by the students. So, because of the time limit many studio classes do not get to see the final stages of the comprehensive planning process which involves the plan implementation.

Normally after a semester of work is completed, the supervising professor takes on the finalization of the project or the information is turned over to a professional
consulting agency to finish. As a student, it is upsetting that students do not get this vital first hand knowledge of implementation. Students get plenty of research practice, but never enough of the finalization steps. The Department of Urban Planning at Ball State University might look into offering a follow-up course which can take a project in which the initial steps have been completed through the implementation stage.

**Step Six: Implications from the Analysis**

So what does all the gathered information mean? What does all the analysis imply? These answers are found in the implication stage of the planning process. For example, in New Carlisle, there was a sharp increase in housing units during the past year. While many can observe the obvious implications from the increase in housing such as an increase in the population and more demand on the public services this does not tell the whole story. One also needs to look at where the housing is going to be located and how it will affect the land use, if there are sufficient recreational spaces, and how the housing development will affect the roadways and utilities.

Also, the type of residents moving into the new housing units will affect the town. If most of the new residents will be younger adults with children they will place a larger demand on schools and libraries temporarily. Also, younger educated adults might help attract industries that are in need of professional skilled workers, which increases the economic base of the community. Younger adults typically desire a certain type of entertainment opportunities which also can expand the economic base. However, if the newer residents are older and established they might want to see necessities such as a grocery store or convenience store closer to home. They might also be looking for more
entertainment opportunities, but their wants in entertainment can be totally different than those for a younger generation.

So, while each of the specific chapters is produced by separate members of the studio class, each chapter ties together in the implication stage. This makes working with your classmates and keeping a running dialogue between everyone an extremely important part of plan production. A comprehensive plan is so dynamic because of the common threads between all the different chapters, and how these threads can affect so many dimensions of a town.

**A Comprehensive Theme**

Each of the goals and objectives that are provided in one section must also link together in all the other sections. If a new idea was proposed in one section without being discussed in any other, it would be hard to foresee how the idea would help the community. For example, in the Greenwood plan there have been discussions of providing a new east to west thoroughfare. However if the new thoroughfare was to be provided then one of two outcomes will happen. It can either provide an easier access to the highway taking people away from Greenwood, or it can provide another area to build a destination of entertainment, retail and/or industry.

Since Greenwood is so close to Indianapolis and has been identified as a "bedroom community," it has become increasingly important to keep residents within the city for work, entertainment and shopping needs. This was one of the client goals that was given to my class at the beginning of the project by the Greenwood planning department. This is why it is important that all of the chapters reference the new thoroughfare and how it affects their section of the comprehensive plan, and how their
section can help the goal of keeping residents inside of Greenwood for their entertainment, shopping, and/or working needs.

To make the synthesis of the chapters easier, a theme can be used to help each research and analysis team tie their analysis in with the other sections. The Greenwood comprehensive plan used the theme of “Destination Greenwood.” Each group tried to incorporate goals which would make Greenwood a destination instead of a bedroom community, in which residents reside in the community, but work and recreate in other areas.

From this theme came linkages between multiple sections, such as economics, housing, recreation, and demographics. For example, companies are attracted to areas with amenities such as parks, differing housing styles, shopping opportunities, and quality school districts. The amenities attract workers to locate there making employees easier to find for the company. So, if new businesses are locating in the city this then brings new residents who want to take advantage of the new jobs and the amenities of the location. More businesses and more residents means there will be a bigger strain placed on the transportation systems. Roads might need to be widened, repaired, or other means of transit may be needed if Greenwood is a destination. One must have a safe and viable way to travel around and to the city. Each step to carry out a specific goal, such as adding new business, also creates a domino affect within other areas of the plan. No one area is independent of another.

Greenwood as a destination means that the city must promote its existing amenities and add new amenities to attract new residents, new businesses, and tourists. Certain amenities such as large homes on large lots, quality recreational services, quality
school systems, and proximity to major cities will bring in new residents. These new residents can be an asset to help entice businesses to locate there. The added businesses will help the economic base and provide the monetary necessities for the upkeep on these new amenities. Without these amenities, people and businesses will not have as much encouragement to locate within the city of Greenwood. The theme ties together the cyclical process of how all the implications relate to one another.

**Step Seven and Eight: Plan Adoption and Implementation**

Each chapter of the plan is placed together in a similar format. The plans are proofread and edited and then finally presented to the client. As with every step of the process, the client must be kept in mind when finalizing the plan. When writing and editing the plan one must understand what type of document the client would like to see and who will be reading the plan. Ultimately every planner would hope that all residents of the community would want to read the plan so it is a necessity to fully explain each detail. This can be difficult when one is working with the information every day, and while it makes sense to the planner, it might be extremely confusing to some without a planning background if it was not explained properly.

After plan finalization, the city begins the process of voting the plan into adoption. Public hearings or town meetings must be held prior to the adoption of the comprehensive plan into law. The public meetings allow a
dialogue to be held between the local government and the public about the plan. The minimum standards for public input are also outlined in the Indiana Code, which states,

"**Comprehensive plan; notice and hearings before adoption**
Sec. 507. Before the approval of a comprehensive plan, the plan commission must:

(1) give notice and hold one (1) or more public hearings on the plan;
(2) publish, in accordance with IC 5-3-1, a schedule stating the times and places of the hearing or hearings. The schedule must state the time and place of each hearing, and state where the entire plan is on file and may be examined in its entirety for at least ten (10) days before the hearing.


If the comprehensive plan is adopted into law, then starts the task of implementing the plans or goals into the city. As stated before, while the planners can make the plans it is up to the city to implement them. There is no mandate in Indiana law which states that the goals or implementation strategies must be used, only that the comprehensive plan is to be referenced at certain times, such as when adopting or amending a zoning ordinance. The local legislature must take a proactive role in order to apply the goals set forth in the comprehensive plan.

**Conclusion**

The comprehensive planning process is important because through public participation residents become empowered with the knowledge that they have an effect on the future of their town. Many residents feel that they are far removed from any decision making which influences how their town will evolve, but the public involvement central to planning and a comprehensive plan gives the residents a chance to speak out on how they want their town to be. The comprehensive planning process relies on residents of the town to participate and it is the information which comes from their participation
which planners focus on when producing the plan. The city and its residents are the
clients for which the planners are working so their participation is integral to the plan.

While participating in the process is one thing, it is the actual plan implementation
and usage which helps residents realize they have made a difference in their community.
It is the implementation of the goals and objectives that empowers each individual to
realize that their community has potential to be what the residents want it to be.
Comprehensive planning enables residents and government officials to look into the
future of the town, and realize the town’s current decisions and actions will affect the
next generation of community members. It is the responsibility of the local governing
body to implement these goals and the residents must hold them accountable for doing so.

A comprehensive plan helps those on different local boards whether for the local
government, parks and recreation, or schools to understand the overall vision for the
community and how their specific roles will contribute to these goals. Bringing
comprehensive planning to all towns allows everyone to see this potential for their
community. As communities evolve over time, the planning profession increases its
presence in today’s society, and with this having a comprehensive plan for each town
becomes equally important. Since it involves a lot of public participation the
comprehensive planning process allows society as a whole to better understand the
planning profession and the planning process. Formulating relationships between
government officials, residents, and planners through the mutual acceptance and
participation in the planning process makes the implementation of the comprehensive
plan more realistic. While it is extremely important to have a comprehensive plan, it is
even more important for residents and officials to implement the goals and objectives outlined in the plan.

In my opinion the main goal and main function of an urban planner is to be a community builder. The comprehensive plan is one of the most useful tools in a planner’s toolbox to help build communities. Planners have the responsibility to take multiple opinions and goals of a community and mold them into a cohesive unit in order to accomplish something that each resident can appreciate. Perhaps soon, conversations between those usually unaware of the planning topics in their conversation can start with, “at the plan commission meeting the other day ...” or with “our community can become...”
Appendix

City of Greenwood Community Survey

We hope that you will join us in updating our comprehensive plan and provide information to help guide the community. Your participation will assist in the creation of the goals for our comprehensive plan. If you have questions, or need assistance in filling out the questionnaire feel free to contact the City Planning Department as soon as possible. If you wish, you may also fill out this form online by visiting http://dschoen.iweb.bsu.edu/survey.htm. Your use of this website, to fill out the survey, will reduce mailing costs and ensure a more accurate assessment of your responses. Thank you.

1. Do you live in Greenwood?  □ Yes  □ No

2. What is satisfaction level of these services and public issues?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Extremely Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Extremely Unsatisfied</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Water Quality &amp; Services</td>
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<td>Enforcement of Zoning Regs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elementary/Secondary Schools</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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</table>

3. Where do your children go to school?
   □ Whiteland  □ Center Grove  □ Greenwood  □ Private School  □ No School-Age Children

4. How many times in a given month do you visit the library? _________________

5. Do you feel that there are adequate medical facilities in and around Greenwood?
   □ Yes  □ No

6. Do you recycle paper, plastic, and aluminum at the centers located around town?
   □ Yes  □ No

7. How many times per month do you visit a local city park? _________________
8. Ordinarily, would you stay in Greenwood or go elsewhere for these services?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Greenwood</th>
<th>Out of Greenwood</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant/Dining</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks &amp; Open Space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation Facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movie Theatre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

9. In your opinion, in the last 10 years the quality of life in Greenwood has……
   - □ Decreased
   - □ Stayed the same
   - □ Improved
   - Please
   
   Comment _______________________________________________________

10. Where do you shop for groceries?
    - □ Greenwood
    - □ Out of Greenwood
    a. If you shop out of Greenwood, why do you travel to buy groceries?
       - □ Cheaper
       - □ Prices
       - □ Personal Preferences
       - □ Convenience
       - □ Other ______________________

11. What is the biggest safety issue in Greenwood?
    - □ Crime
    - □ Fire Hazards
    - □ Lack of Health Care
    - □ Other

12. Why did you choose to reside in Greenwood? (Choose all that apply)
    - □ Location
    - □ Jobs
    - □ Schools
    - □ Family
    - □ Other ____________

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Issues:</th>
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<th>Very Important</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
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<td>Recreational opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts and cultural opportunities</td>
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<td>Educational Opportunities</td>
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<td>Sense of community</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth Management Issues:</th>
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<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
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<tr>
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<td>More parks and green spaces</td>
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<td>Road improvements</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overcrowding in public schools</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Do you identify yourself with a particular neighborhood or subdivision?
   □ Yes   □ No
   a. If yes, which one? __________________
   b. How many years have you lived in that neighborhood? _____________

14. How important are the following issues to you?

15. What types of new development would you like to see in Greenwood?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Residential</td>
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<td>Commercial</td>
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<td>Industrial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreational</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big box shopping</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

16. Indicate your level of support for the following options for future residential development in Greenwood?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smaller Lots/Higher Density</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger Lots/ Lower Density</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix of high and low density</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Use (residential/commercial)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. What is the main reason you visit Old Towne Greenwood?
   □ Shopping   □ Restaurants   □ Entertainment   □ Banking   □ Residency
   □ Other

18. If you do not currently visit the Old Towne Greenwood, what would attract you there?
   (Choose all that apply)
   □ Shopping   □ Restaurants   □ Entertainment   □ Banking   □ Residency
   □ Other

19. Do you think Greenwood needs more job opportunities?
   □ Yes   □ No
   a. If yes, what types of jobs would you like to see in Greenwood?
      □ Industrial   □ Blue Collar   □ Services   □ White Collar
      □ Medical   □ Other _____________

20. What is your primary occupation? ________________

21. What is your range of family income?
   □ Under $20,000   □ $20,001-$30,000   □ $30,001-$40,000
   □ $40,001-$50,000   □ $50,001-$60,000   □ $60,001-$75,000
   □ $75,001-$100,000   □ $100,000+

22. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
   □ Elementary   □ High School   □ Junior College & Vocational
   □ College   □ Some College   □ Post Graduate

23. What is your gender?
   □ Male   □ Female

24. What is your age?
   □ Under 18   □ 18-24   □ 25-34   □ 35-44   □ 45-54
   □ 55-64   □ 65 & Older
25. Indicate the number of people currently living in your household that are:
   □ 18 and Older _______________  □ under 18 _______________

26. How long have you been a resident of Greenwood?
   □ Less than 1 year  □ 1-5 years  □ 6-10 years  □ 11-20 years  □ over 20 years

27. What city do you work in?
   □ Greenwood  □ Indianapolis  □ Whiteland  □ Franklin
   □ Other _______________

28. What is your average commute time to work?
   □ 1-9 Minutes  □ 10-19 Minutes  □ 20-29 Minutes
   □ 30-44 Minutes  □ 45 Minutes or More
Please mark, on the above map, the square where you live.

Please mark, on the above map, the square where you work.
City of Greenwood Community Survey
Business Professionals

1. In what area of Greenwood is your business located?
   □ U.S. 31 □ State Road 135 □ Old Towne □ County Line Road
   □ Madison Avenue □ Other __________________________

2. What type of building is your business located in?
   □ Mall □ Strip Mall □ Free Standing Building □ Renovated House
   □ Other __________________________

3. What type of business do you operate?
   □ Service □ Retail □ Industrial □ Professional
   □ Other __________________________

4. Is your business? (Check all that apply)
   □ Locally Owned □ a Regional Chain □ a National Franchise
   □ Internationally Owned

5. How many years has your business been open in Greenwood?
   □ Less than 1 □ 1-5 □ 6-10 □ 11 or more

6. Do you live in Greenwood?
   □ Yes □ No

7. Are you originally from Greenwood?
   □ Yes □ No

8. Why did you choose to locate your business in Greenwood?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

9. What is primarily your market area?
   □ Greenwood □ Indianapolis Metropolitan Region □ Statewide
   □ Midwest □ National □ International

10. What employee skills are most needed by local businesses?
    □ High Tech./Technical □ Skilled/Professional □ Semi/Un-Skilled
    □ Computer □ Basic Skills (Reading, Writing, Basic Mathematics)

11. Are these skills easily found in Greenwood?
    □ Yes □ No

12. Do you lease or own the building(s) in which your business is located?
    □ Lease □ Own □ Other __________ _________

13. Are you satisfied with the exterior appearance of your building(s)?
    □ Yes □ No
14. Are you satisfied with the exterior appearance of the buildings surrounding yours?
   □ Yes       □ No

15. Have you had any security issues at your business?
   □ Yes       □ No

16. What is your satisfaction level with the internal and external transit of Greenwood?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Extremely Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Extremely Unsatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal Transit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Transit</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. What are the positive aspects of locating a business in Greenwood?
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

18. What are the negative aspects of locating a business in Greenwood?
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

19. Would there be any improvements to the city that could benefit your business?
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

20. Are there specific services available outside of Greenwood that you would like to see available in Greenwood?
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

21. How often does your business contribute to the community at large, financially or through voluntary service?
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

22. Do you feel that your business is perceived as being successful in the community?
   □ Yes       □ No

23. Would you support additional taxes for further economic development (to attract new businesses to) in Greenwood?
   □ Yes       □ No

24. Where should new businesses be located in Greenwood?
   □ U.S. 31       □ State Road 135       □ Old Towne       □ County Line Road
   □ Madison Avenue       □ Other ________________________
25. What is your current opinion of Old Towne?
   □ Excellent □ Good □ Fair □ Poor

26. What amenities would attract you to locate/relocate in Old Towne?

27. If given incentives to relocate to Old Towne, would you choose to relocate?
   □ Yes □ No

28. Do you have any additional comments about the location of your business or the building you are located in?

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________
City of Greenwood Community Survey
Civic Leaders

1. What Greenwood organization(s) are you affiliated with? 

2. How does your organization affect Greenwood? 

3. What cultural aspects does Greenwood have? 

4. Are you satisfied with the quality of life in Greenwood?
   - Extremely Satisfied
   - Satisfied
   - No opinion
   - Unsatisfied
   - Extremely Unsatisfied

5. How strong is the sense of community in Greenwood (friendliness, cooperation, neighborliness, etc.)?
   - Very strong
   - Somewhat strong
   - Somewhat weak
   - Weak

6. During the next 10 years do you expect that the quality of life in Greenwood to improve, stay the same, or worsen?
   - Improve
   - Stay the same
   - Worsen

7. What would you say is the most important issue currently facing Greenwood? 

8. What do you feel the city could do to improve the identity of Greenwood? 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Biking or hiking trails</td>
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<td>Public transportation</td>
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<td>New streets and highways</td>
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</table>

9. Indicate your opinion of the importance for improvement of the following items.

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<tr>
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<th>No Opinion</th>
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</table>

10. Would you say you are satisfied or dissatisfied with Greenwood’s current programs?

11. Are you pleased with Greenwood’s...?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
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<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If unsatisfied, what improvements would you like to see made to...

Facades
Street Appearance
Public Furniture
Trees
Flowers

12. Do you think that Greenwood citizens are actively involved in the community?

☐ Yes    ☐ Somewhat    ☐ No    ☐ No Opinion
13. How could Greenwood increase participation in local groups and organizations?

14. What community facilities are most important to your organization?

15. Other comments and suggestions:
City of Greenwood Community Survey
Community Professional

1. What office of local government do you work for?

2. What role does your office play in the future of Greenwood?

3. Overall, how would you rate the current quality of life in Greenwood (quality of life meaning economic, social, and environmental health, well-being, and vitality of the community)?
   - [ ] Excellent
   - [ ] Average
   - [ ] Poor
   Please Explain:

4. What do you think are the top three issues facing Greenwood today and in the next 10 years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Today</th>
<th>Ten Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>c.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What obstacles would need to be overcome to defeat these issues?

6. Overall, how has planning influenced Greenwood in the last ten years?
   - [ ] Positively
   - [ ] Negatively
   - [ ] No Change

7. Which of the following words best describes your perception of traffic in and around Greenwood?
   - [ ] Light
   - [ ] Moderate
   - [ ] Heavy
   - [ ] Very Heavy
   - [ ] No Opinion

8. Indicate your opinion of the importance of the following issues and how they apply to the livability of the City of Greenwood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Highly Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreational trails</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New streets and highways</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transportation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement to existing streets and highways</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and green space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Indicate your opinion of the following issues on their importance to the City of Greenwood’s Comprehensive Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Highly Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location of new growth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation and expansion of the historic downtown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixture of land uses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixture of housing densities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality and appearance of residential site development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality and appearance of commercial site development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. In your opinion, how necessary are the following types of housing in Greenwood?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Housing</th>
<th>Very Necessary</th>
<th>Necessary</th>
<th>Unnecessary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town homes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condominiums</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Income/Large Lot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. In your opinion, where is the best location for growth and development?

________________________________________________________________________________________

12. Do you believe Greenwood should annex land outside of the city limits?

   ✔ Yes          ☐ No              ☐ No Opinion

13. In your opinion, is Greenwood’s recycling program effective?

   ✔ Yes          ☐ No

14. In your opinion, could Greenwood benefit from increased mass transit?

   ✔ Yes          ☐ No

15. What do you feel the city could do from a cultural perspective to improve the identity of Greenwood?

________________________________________________________________________________________
16. In your opinion, what would contribute to an increase in the vitality of Old Towne?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Non Effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased residential</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New retail, restaurants, &amp; shops</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community events</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and advertisement</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Please share any additional comments:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Works Cited


*Indiana Constitution*

**IC 36-7-4-502**  

**IC 36-7-4-503**  

**IC 36-7-4-507**  

*New Carlisle, Indiana Community Profile* (2005)