Introduction

While the northern half of the county remains relatively unaffected by urbanization, southern Madison County is currently under intense development pressure. Influenced by the expansion of the Indianapolis area, Madison County has reached a critical point in which growth management and the future mixture of land uses must be addressed. Given this context, the plan for future land use in Madison County must address the many competing demands for its utilization within the community.

This plan was developed in response to the series of issues, constraints, and opportunities identified through an extensive series of public input meetings and surveys. The most prominent issue in the public meetings was that growth should be more orderly and focused. Additionally, citizens expressed that growth should occur near urban centers that have public utilities, infrastructure, and amenities in place. Many public participants noted that the preservation of agriculture and sensitive, natural lands was a priority to maintain the way of life central to the county. These concerns set the tone for the development of the land use plan. In addition, they provided a framework for developing a larger regional perspective for cooperation between urban and rural interests.

The Land Use Development chapter integrates policies and issues addressed throughout the planning process that were previously addressed in Chapters A, B, C, and D in the Comprehensive Plan. This element of the Comprehensive Plan proposes to direct future development to cities and towns, while designating specific growth areas that will protect the agricultural industry and conserve our rural and natural environments. These directives will be met by using strategies that provide the means to support in-fill in urban areas, build-out of current sprawl, and reasonable urban growth centered around our municipalities and infrastructure.

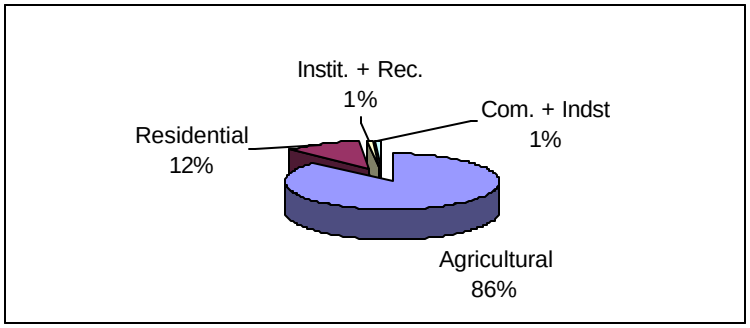
Existing Conditions and Trends

Current Land Use Composition

Madison County contains a total of 288,000 acres (450 square miles) of land, 252,295 acres of which are unincorporated. In June 1998, the Planning Team conducted a land use and housing condition inventory of all parcels on record for the unincorporated County. Each parcel was classified in regard to its principal use. Secondary uses such as crops on business properties, as well as businesses on agricultural and residential parcels, were also noted. The results of the inventory are summarized in the table on the following page. As shown by the graph "1998 Land Uses in Unincorporated Madison County," unincorporated Madison County is still primarily an agricultural area. The inventory noted that the county is approximately 86% agricultural in use. Incorporated areas made up the second largest use of land at 12.4%, or 35,705 acres. Low density housing was the third highest use of land and comprised 9.43%, or 2,431 acres of the county.

Current Land Use Classification	Total Acreage of Use	% of Total Overall Acreage
Agriculture/Farm House & Fields – Parcels used for the primary purpose of agriculture, which may, or may not, include a farm dwelling or accessory buildings.	68,336	23.73
Agriculture/Field, Pastures & Woodlands – Parcels exclusively used for agriculture which do not have dwelling units on them.	150,239	52.17
Low Density Single Family Residential – Dwelling units are on a parcel less than five acres and greater than ½ acre; or, parcels over five acres with dwellings if no cropland, agricultural structures, or husbandry was present.	27,162	9.43
Medium and High Density Residential – Parcels are less than ½ acre in size with dwellings present or parcels with multifamily structures.	2,431	0.84
Industrial – Parcels primarily used for industrial purposes.	918	0.32
Commercial – Parcels primarily used for commercial purposes.	890	0.31
Institutional –Parcels primarily used for institutional purposes.	1,300	0.45
Recreational –Parcels primarily used for Recreational purposes.	854	0.30
Incorporated –Parcels within cities and towns.	35,705	12.40
Source: 1998 Field Inventory.		

1998 Land Uses in Unincorporated Madison County



Agricultural = Fields and Farmsteads

Residential = Low to High Density

Instit+Rec. = Institutional and Recreational Uses

Com+Indst = Commercial and Industrial Uses

Current Regulation

Prior to this plan, the unincorporated county was regulated by a Comprehensive Plan completed in 1983. According to state requirements at that time, a comprehensive plan could consist of a simple compilation of ordinances that governed development. Therefore, the Comprehensive Plan of 1983 did not embody specific goals or land use proposals, nor was there any consultation of the public during the planning process. While zoning ordinances can be very detailed and technical in nature, they should be derived from some sense of purpose or intent, generally referred to as the *spirit of the ordinance*. Plans represent values in regard to how, why, when, and where to build, rebuild, or preserve. In essence, a comprehensive plan is developed to provide a vision and a guide to the future, while remaining flexible enough to provide functionality and not detract from it's original intent of vision.

Currently, planning and zoning functions for the unincorporated county and the county municipalities are separated under individual Advisory Planning Commissions and Boards of Zoning Appeals. Municipalities are not permitted to regulate outside their corporate limits, and no formal cooperative land use planning or regulatory arrangements exist. To enable cooperation between cities and towns and the unincorporated county, the Madison County Council of Governments has attempted to provide planning and support functions for the community. The new Comprehensive Plan seeks to reset policy, precedent, and regulation in order that new ordinances may be written.

General Development Influences

Analysis of land use requires an understanding of the factors that influence the effect, the location, and the distribution of land use. Once these factors are acknowledged, districts with an individual set of influences can be identified based on development trends and land use management issues. Many factors common to rural areas in central Indiana should be considered in the analysis, including:

Urban Centers, Growth and Sprawl. Urban areas generally contain amenities that attract more intense development. Filled with central services such as shopping facilities, medical facilities, schools, and work places, urban areas are convenient locations for residences and businesses to locate. Conversely, negative urban images sometimes have the effect of repelling development. These negative attributes, both real and perceived, include crime, urban blight, traffic congestion, environmental contamination, tax impacts, and lifestyles. A combination of these influences, along with transportation improvements, have caused development around lands surrounding county municipalities or urban areas. Of greater concern is the fact that development patterns have become more dispersed, taking to the countryside in the form of single family homes and clustered enclaves of small subdivisions. These developments often disrupt agricultural activities and stress the natural environment.

A sprawling pattern of growth has been depicted in Census demographic and development data from 1990-1998, which illustrate that a growing dispersion of population and travel patterns has occurred since 1980. This conclusion is supported in Section A by **Map A-4-6** (Population Change), **Map A-4-17** (Development Clusters), and **Map A-4-26** (Housing Starts), which depict population and development trends in the County between 1970 and 1998. Patterns of sprawl have continued in the 1990s and will likely increase over the next decade. The out-migration of persons in Madison County has been most significant in Adams, Fall Creek, Richland, and Union Townships; this fact is depicted in **Map A-4-5**, which shows development clustered in a pattern around Anderson.

Growth is also anticipated to increase within the next decade in Stony Creek and Green Townships, due to their proximity to the Indianapolis metropolitan area. As growth in eastern Hamilton County and northern Hancock County moves east and north, the net effect of that expansion will flow into western and southern Madison County.

Utility Availability. Development location decisions are greatly influenced by the availability of infrastructure intensive utilities. Many realtors and developers have sited a lack of adequate infrastructure in certain areas as one of the primary reasons that Madison County has experienced slower growth. Land development patterns in the county have been substantially impacted by the availabilty, or lack thereof, of sanitary sewers. In many areas, the lack of sanitary sewer service has caused large lot, single family detached homes to locate in unincorporated areas around county roads and small subdivisions. These large lots are necessary to fulfill state requirements for on-site sewage disposal. Because Central Indiana is characterized by areas that are not conducive to on-site sewage disposal for a single residence (due to a relatively high water table and poorly drained soils), this requirement often places economic and physical limitations on residential development.

The presence of sanitary sewer services is also necessary for large commercial, industrial, and medium density residential uses, and is of vital importance to developers. Commercial and industrial developments generally need a much higher level of service than residential development. Therefore, sewer service is a strong determinate in where intensive development can locate.

Sewer services are generally associated with municipalities, and are somewhat limited to locating near urban areas; however, regional and private systems in Madison County may have an increasing influence that expands well into unincorporated areas. This increasing influence can be attributed, in part, to the expansion of the Fall Creek Regional Waste District in southern Madison County. One example of current growth is located at the Exit 14 interchange at I-69, where the largest development in the last forty years in any area of Madison County has been proposed. The proposed development would include residential, commercial, and light industrial uses. Approximately 1,000 living units are proposed, the majority of which are planned to take the form of single family homes.

Other infrastructure intensive utilities such as water, gas, electricity, and communications have less physical constraints on their expansion. Although these utilities influence development patterns, they generally have less impact. Two general points should be addressed considering these other utilities.

First, the availability of water will become an increasing concern within central Indiana as population and development expand. The Indianapolis regional area is within the Upper White River Watershed Basin, and no large surface bodies of water abound in the area. Primary sources of water are produced from underground aquafiers with the exception of Indianapolis, who is currently moving away from this process. Water in Madison County is almost exclusively supplied through underground sources. As population growth and development continue to expand geographically, the area's ability to recharge underground aquafiers will diminish as more land is developed with impervious surfaces. The Upper White River Watershed Basin Alliance, a multi-county regional organization, has been formed to monitor both the quality and the quanitity of water in the region.

Secondly, the expansive growth in the telecommunications industry has dramatically changed the factors that influence development. The telecommunications industry, like transportation linkage, has become a primary and pivotal requirement for the present and future economy. Areas lacking the ability to take advantage of the "information age" or the "next industrial revolution" will lose opportunities as world, national, regional, and local economies become more interdependent. These opportunities include, but are not limited to, "e-commerce," mass availability of computers, fiber optic networks, software improvements, and exhange of ideas via electronic media such as video conferencing. In addition, steps should be taken to ensure that the proper infrastructure is in place to provide for these opportunities.

Transportation Network and Nodes. Transportation systems have always influenced development patterns. Perhaps no other element of the built environment has had as much of an influence on the location and shaping of development as the transportation network. Locating development near transportation corridors provides a fast, economic means of transporting goods and people. Additionally, transportation corridors and nodes generate development for the support of transportation itself. Some of the older development in the county is associated with river and rail transportation systems, but today's greatest influences are roads and highway systems. Interstate and state highways afford greater freedom for commuting workers and convenient commerce. The older pattern of concentric development rings around urban centers has now taken on a more dispersed pattern of development which follows transportation corridors, with a greater intensity at intersections. Air travel can also cause intense development patterns in the immediate vicinity of an airport, but its greatest influence is generally regional.

During the last forty years, development within the county and the greater regional area has been predicated on following transportation corridors as they are expanded or developed. This is particularly true of commercial, office, and industrial development. Volume count data from the Madison County Council of Governments, INDOT, and Census Journey To Work information indicates that travel through and within the county has increased (ranging from as little as 2%, to as high as 100% annually in some areas of the County). The net effect of increased travel demand on the greater regional area has been a growth in the regional area of influence that generates travel demand on the county and area roadway system. It is estimated from these same data sources and the Indianapolis MPO, that this expanded travel pattern will continue to increase along with a growing number of vehicle trips to the Indianapolis metropolitan area via the interstate and state and county roads. According to the 1990 Census, more than 20% of the county work-force commutes to the Indianapolis MSA, which now includes Madison County. This translates into between 34,000 and 40,000 vehicle trips daily. Growth from the Indianapolis and Geist Reservoir areas has continued to expand and has now entered into the northwestern areas of Hancock County and in the areas near the Hamilton-Madison County line around I-69 and State Roads 238 and 67.

Natural Features and Environmental Factors. The presence of geographic and environmental features often has significant positive and negative impacts upon the desirability and practicality of a particular land use. Several natural features of the land act in association with each other. Soil types, drainage, water bodies, wetlands, aquifers, minerals, fossil fuels, slopes, forest land, and visual aesthetics directly influence development plans and decisions. Areas with steeper slopes, less arable soil types, and water bodies in stream and river valleys have a reduced viability for row crop agriculture and, at the same time, have a greater desirability for residential development. To an extent, minerals and fossil fuels have had an influence on the county's past and present development. Examples of this influence are the historic gas boom and the past and current extraction of sand and gravel in the stream valleys. Factors such as aquifer variations, limestone carst geology, seismology, weather patterns, and hilly terrain have had very little influence on local development patterns. Three areas of extensive concern in the county are waterway and water resource contamination, stormwater and erosion control, and air quality.

Water resources are threatened by both septic discharges and water runoff from developed impervious surfaces. Septic systems have been the predominant method of wastewater disposal within the rural areas of the county for over fifty years. Evidence of Ecoli bacteria has surfaced in local waterways, both in streams and county drains. This issue has been well-documented by both the County Health Board and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). This problem is further maginified by water runoff from streets, parking lots, and buildings, which carry additional contaminates.

Madison County has no ordinance at this time that deals with erosion control or stormwater runoff, although they do enforce applicable state and federal rules pertaining to these issues. The lack of a local ordinance inhibits the ability to control the quality of water in county waterways and drains. Due to the large number of septic issues and scattered site developments, the county is vulnerable to bacterial contamination of its water resources. As more land is converted from agricultural and natural states to developed uses impervious to water penetration (residential, commercial, industrial, parking lots, and streets), a dramatic increase in the volume and intensity of stormwater and snowmelt runoff will occur. This will result in the inability of current agricultural drains to handle the increased volumes and velocity of the water, thereby increasing the likelihood of flooding and further septic contamination and "standing blackwater." Flooding is specifically of concern in northern Madison County and in areas near waterways in the floodplain.

As part of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program which controls pollutants in wastewater and stormwater, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established federal regulations regarding the pollutant content of stormwater that flows off of industrial and commercial sites. Development activity that disrupts the existing land surface and creates an increased potential for erosion is affected by the regulations. As part of its compliance effort, IDEM has established "Rule 5" (327 IAC 15-5) which applies to any "land disturbing" activities on sites that are five or more acres in size. Rule 5 requires the entity/person responsible for the activity to do the following: 1) prepare an erosion and sediment control plan consistent with established statewide criteria and submit it to the Soil and Water Conservation District Office (SWCD) for review and approval; and, 2) submit a "Notice of Intent" letter to IDEM describing the activity which is subject to the rule. There has been considerable discussion of extending the rule to include sites smaller than five acres.

Recent changes in the Clean Air Act have expanded the requirements for Air Conformity throughout the Indianapolis Metropolitan Statistical Area (nine county region). New guidelines and regulations have now been promulgated that place the entire nine county SMSA into non-attainment for ozone. The new regulations now impact all areas designated in the Indianapolis metropolitan area becoming effective in late 2000 or early 2001. Current development and commuting patterns in the county and the surrounding region will now be required to conform to these guidelines for any transportation project that is considered to have regional or local significance on travel patterns, whether the project is funded locally or with federal funds. In effect, development projects (not just roadway projects) in adjacent counties, as well as in Madison County, may adversely impact development for the entire nine county area.

Socio-Cultural Reasons. Development location decisions have been significantly influenced by sociological and cultural factors such as school district preferences, work force availability, historic heritage, population characteristics, and community values. Although influential, the impact of these social and cultural components is not always apparent when viewing the physical landscape. While socio-cultural factors may influence development decisions in areas that are less homogeneous, they generally have a lesser impact in the communities of North Central Indiana, whose socio-cultural environments are fairly similar.

Regional Development Trends

Madison County is located on the northeast edge of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Region and is considered by the U.S. Census Bureau to be a part of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Statistical Area. The metropolitan area has experienced significant growth in population (a 5.4% increase) between 1980 and 1990. Estimates project that the metropolitan population will grow 8.3% from 1990 to the present, and will balloon to 1,971,623 by 2020; this translates into a 31% growth over the next 21 years. Presently, the fringe counties of Boone, Hendricks, Hamilton, Hancock, Morgan, Shelby, and Madison have experienced an increase in development. Central Indiana has mirrored much of the nation in terms of its development patterns over the last twenty years. It has been characterized by leapfrogginng patterns of land use that emphasize strip commercial retail, big box retail, horizontal industrial use, and single, large lot residential development. As the Indianapolis Metropolitan Area continues to expand up the I-69 Corridor, new housing will be actively pursued in the Madison County area. Clearly, the concern over dispersed, sprawling development is a growing problem within the nine county region.

According to a study conducted by Parsons Brinckerhoff for the Central Indiana Regional Citizens League (CIRCL), the Indianapolis metropolitan population is expected to increase over 31% between 1990-2020, while Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT) and Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT) are estimated to increase 69% and 75% respectively. A study conducted by the Texas Transportation Institute noted that

Central Indiana led the nation in increased traffic congestion between 1982 and 1996. Congestion increased over 700% during this span and is expected to grow even more over the next decade.

Madison County's gateway to the metropolitan region is Interstate 69, the most heavily congested corridor in the region. As infrastructure availability becomes less of an issue in the county, the likelihood of adding to the mobility and congestion problem becomes a central issue to the economic vitality of the county. Commuting patterns to the metropolitan area will increase substantially over the next twenty years.

Conditions and Trends By Townships

Map E-1-8 (Current Land Use) is a map developed as a result of the land use inventory. Based on the common development influences covered earlier in the chapter, a trend analysis of land uses is reflected on **Map E-1-9** (Current Land Use Development Patterns). Several development pattern influence groupings have been identified. Additionally **Map E-1-10** (Development Investment 1988-1998) and **Map E-1-11** (Dollars Invested 1988-1998) reflect the County's development trends in the past 8 to 10 years. When analyzed together, this information provides a situation assessment for planning across the county. The forthcoming plan analysis and land use proposals will be organized by townships that are similarin general development patterns and concerns.

South Townships. The South Townships consist of the three southernmost townships in Madison County—Green, Fall Creek, and Adams. Having received 37% of the development investment dollars in the unincorporated area of the County in the last ten years (based on data from the County Planning Department), this area has seen the most dramatic housing increase in the County. It has also seen the largest utilization of large-lot, single family homes. The expansion of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Region along the I-69 and State Road 67 corridors has greatly influenced this area, with secondary corridors provided by State Roads 9, 38, 36 and 109. The presence of the Fall Creek Regional Waste District and the extension of utilities south from the City of Anderson are also facilitating development. The Fall Creek and Lick Creek corridors have played a role in attracting and increasing residential development due to their natural aesthetics. The greatest intensity of residential development has been confined to the south side of I-69, where sewer systems are now provided by Fall Creek Regional Waste District.

This area contains a nearly equal mixture of agricultural and residential land uses, fragmenting the remaining open space and leaving an average overall residential density of less than 20 acres per unit. North of I-69, the agricultural area remains intact but is being pressured by current and proposed large scale developments -- particurlarly among the three interstate interchanges within its boundary. Both Interchanges 19 and 22 have commercial/industrial parks in various stages of development, and these are expected to continue to grow over the next ten years. Just south of Lapel, Interchange 14 is the site of the largest proposed Planned Unit Development (PUD) in Madison County; the project includes commercial, light industrial, and residential development. The area south and west of Markleville has not received an intense amount of residential development due to limited expansion of public sewer and only recent improvements to State Road 109.

The following **physical planning issues** are noted:

Constraints:

- Limiting factors for development include septic constraints, soils, floodplains, waterways, slopes, drainage, wildlife, woodland and wetland resources.
- The majority of local roads in the area are not designed to accommodate large volumes of traffic; thus, developers of any new development, such as the proposed PUD at Interchange 14, should make appropriate improvements to the transportation infrastructure.
- State Roads 13, 38, 36, 67, and 9 are limited by the traffic volumes they presently may accommodate if development becomes extensive. Access cuts along both state and local roadways threaten their viability to carry traffic in the future as development intensifies.
- Adams Township, with the exception of the Town of Markleville, does not have sewer service.
- Negative environmental impacts from development pressures along Fall and Lick Creeks have occurred over the last twenty years.
- The aesthetics and rural character integrity of this area are threatened by expanding suburban and scattered lot development.

Opportunities:

- Areas north of Interstate 69 in Green Township are characterized by large agricultural use areas and remain viable for productive farming.
- Fall Creek Regional Waste District (FCRWD) has plans to extend service to the proposed PUD at Interchange 14.
- FCRWD has recently expanded its service to areas south and west of Ingalls and east and north of Pendleton providing the potential for greater density development within and near these communities.
- FCRWD is currently expanding its treatment facilities to accommodate planned future growth.
- INDOT has plans for expanding Interstate 69 from four lanes to six lanes within the next ten years (from its junction with I-465 to Interchange 14).
- Given the new proposed developments adjacent to Interchange 14 along I-69, the area should be planned for higher, more urban mixed use densities and not suburban development.
- Pendleton has extensive undeveloped land within its corporate limits for expansion and all services are available.
- Ingalls is in the process of upgrading and expanding its water system; thus, the potential of directing higher density growth to its surrounding fringe area is possible.
- Improved and focused development should be concentrated in and around the three business and industrial parks in the county located at interchanges along I-69 (Interchanges 19, 22, and 26).
- Corridor preservation both near I-69 and the CSX Indianapolis to Cleveland rail line should be a major priority that is protected to accommodate future plans for commuter rail and high speed rail to Indianapolis.
- Scenic landscapes and natural amenities provide several opportunities for quality conservation design developments.
- The Fall and Lick Creek corridors should be preserved where possible for linear greenways or conservation areas.
- Adams Township has the potential to limit development to areas north of County Road 500 South and the Town of Markleville due to limited sewer and water service.
- Adams Township has many scenic landscapes and farming areas in the southern half of the township that should be preserved.
- Madison County should participate in the development of the multi-jurisdictional Interurban Trail between Anderson and Indianapolis.

West Central Townships. The West Central Townships consist of the three townships to the west and to the immediate northwest of Anderson—Stony Creek, Jackson, and Lafayette Townships. Since 1988, the area has received 14.1% of the new development in the unicorporated sections of the county (Source: County Planning Department). This area is influenced by increased urban flight from the City of Anderson. Areas of fringe residential development one to two miles deep on the north and west edges of Anderson now exist, some of which may have been facilitated by the extension of Anderson City Utilities. The White River and Pipe Creek corridors have also influenced residential growth in the area. Bordering Lafayette Township to the east, State Road 9 has experienced both residential and commercial strip development coming north out of Anderson and south out of Alexandria. To a lesser extent, development has also appeared to the north and south of Lapel. Despite increasing development, there are two intact and relatively un-fragmented agricultural plains in this planning area where densities range from 40 to 320 acres per residential unit. These have been labeled the South West and West Central agricultural plains.

The following **physical planning issues** are noted:

Constraints:

- Limiting factors for development include septic constraints, soils, floodplains, waterways, slopes, drainage, wildlife, woodland and wetland resources.
- The majority of local roads in the area are not designed to accommodate large volumes of traffic; thus, any new development should be encouraged to make road improvements.
- State Roads 13 and 32 are limited by the traffic volumes they presently may accommodate if development becomes extensive.
- Development along State Road 9 North from Anderson should be restricted in terms of intensity and access cuts, specifically north of County Road 500 North.
- Access cuts along both state and local roadways threaten their viability to carry traffic in the future as development intensifies, specifically those heading south on State Road 13 from Lapel and west along State Road 32 from Anderson.
- Negative environmental impacts from development pressures along White River and Stoney Creek have already occurred.
- Lapel has a limited ability to provide extended sewer service at the present time.

Opportunities:

- Large areas in all three townships are characterized by agricultural use and remain very viable for productive farming.
- In-fill development potential exists near Anderson along the southern boundary of Lafayette Township and State Road 9 for both housing and commercial development.
- Conservation design subdivisions are possible adjacent to White River in Jackson Township and northeastern Stoney Creek Township, respectively.
- Lapel is a relatively compact community and may offer adjacent development opportunities when improvements to its sewer facilities are completed.
- Corridor preservation is a priority and should be maintained for both State Road 13 and State Road 32 to enable future facilities expansion.
- Preservation of the Central Indiana and Western Rail Corridor and the old Interurban line west of Lapel for the development of commuter rail to Indanapolis via Noblesville and its planned rail connection is a priority as well.

East Central Townships. The East Central Townships consist of the two townships to the east and to the immediate northeast of Anderson—Union and Richland. Union Township (the smallest of Madison County's townships) has received the greatest share of the total county development dollars in the last 10 years (over $55 million according to data from the County Planning Department). Union Township is under the combined influences of the I-69 transportation corridor, fringe development from Anderson and Chesterfield, and the White River corridor. Growth has centered near Interchange 34, which serves Chesterfield and Daleville in Delaware County. Anderson City Utilities service the urban areas in this planning area. Although there is still a substantial amount of agricultural land use, it is fragmented. Residential densities approach an average overall density of 1 unit per 10 acres. In Richland Township, residential development has been influenced by the City of Anderson and the Killbuck Creek corridor. Most residential development in this area has occurred from the creek corridor southward. Strip development on State Road 9 is also occurring on the western edge of Richland Township. The northern portions of this area contain agricultural land use areas that are relatively intact.

The following **physical planning issues** are noted:

Constraints:

- Limiting factors for development include septic constraints, soils, floodplains, waterways, slopes, drainage, wildlife, woodland and wetland resources.
- The majority of local roads in the area are not designed to accommodate large volumes of traffic; thus, any new development should be encouraged to make road improvements.
- Access cuts along both state and local roadways threaten their viability to carry traffic in the future as development intensifies, specifically those heading east on State Road 32 and Old State Road 67 from Anderson.
- Negative environmental impacts from development pressures along White River and Killbuck Creek have occurred.
- Chesterfield has a limited ability to provide extended sewer service at the present time.

Opportunities:

- Large areas in northern Richland Township are still characterized by agricultural use and remain viable for productive farming.
- In-fill development potential exists near Anderson along the southwestern boundary of Richland Township and State Road 9 for both housing and commercial development.
- Conservation design subdivisions are possible adjacent to White River and Killbuck Creek in Union and Richland Townships, respectively.
- Development should be restricted and buffered near and adjacent to both Killbuck and Mounds State Parks. Consideration should be given to developing conservation easements in areas adjacent to the parks. Corridor preservation is a priority and should be maintained for both State Road 13 and State Road 32.
- Preservation of the Central Indiana and Western Rail Corridor and the old Interurban line west of Lapel for the development of commuter rail to Indanapolis via Noblesville and its planned rail connection is a priority.

North Central Townships. The North Central Townships consist of Pipe Creek and Monroe townships. This area has received 15.6% of the new development since 1988 (Source: County Planning Department). Development in this area has been influenced by sprawl along State Roads 9, 28, 37, and 13. Fringe development surrounding Elwood, Frankton, Orestes, and Alexandria has been either adjacent to these communities or the highway corridors. The natural aesthetics of the Pipe Creek Corridor has also attracted residential development. Development in this area has been slower than areas further south for the

following reasons: their distance from Interstate 69 and Indianapolis; the lack of utilities with the ability to expand quickly beyond their service boundaries; and the large working agricultural areas within the area.

The following **physical planning issues** are noted:

Constraints:

- Limiting factors for development include septic constraints, soils, floodplains, waterways, slopes, drainage and flooding, wildlife, woodland and wetland resources.
- The majority of local roads in the area are not designed to accommodate large volumes of traffic; thus, any new development should be encouraged to make road improvements.
- Access cuts along both state and local roadways threaten their viability to carry traffic in the future as development intensifies, specifically those heading west on State Road 28 from Alexandria and those along State Road 37 east of Elwood.
- Negative environmental impacts from development pressures along Pipe, Big Duck, Little Duck, Lilly, and Mud Creeks have occurred.
- Flooding has occurred regularly during heavy rain events in the communities of Alexandria, Elwood, and Frankton.

Opportunities:

- Large areas in both townships are still characterized by agricultural use and remain very viable for productive farming.
- In-fill development potential exists in the communities of Alexandria, Elwood, Frankton, and Orestes as well as along the adjacent highways near these urban areas where suburban development has occured.
- Communities in these two townships have compact development forms, and directing development to their urban fringes should be encouraged.
- State Road 28 should become a commerce corridor within the county at its urban node connections.
- The expansion of State Road 37 to a four lane divided highway from just north of Noblesville in Hamilton County to Marion in Grant County should be encouraged.
- Corridor preservation should be a priority along State Road 37 except near Elwood. Direct access cuts should be denied.
- Orestes is developing a sewer system in partnership with Alexandria which opens up opportunities for both communities for growth.
- Conservation design subdivisions are possible adjacent to waterways provided the floodplain areas are conserved.
- Long-term consideration should be given to a commuter rail connection from Elwood to Tipton for future connection to Noblesville.

North Townships. The North Townships consist of the northern three townships in Madison County—Duck Creek, Boone, and Van Buren. The percentages of housing starts for these townships have been skewed as a result of very low housing numbers in the area and a low total in investment dollars in the county. Lack of development in this area is influenced by its remoteness from the interstate system, its distance from Anderson and Indianapolis, and the value of its land for agriculture. This area has the great majority of the county's unfragmented agricultural land use, with average overall residential densities between 80 and 320 acres /unit.

The following **physical planning issues** are noted:

Constraints:

- Limiting factors for development include septic constraints, soils, floodplains, waterways, slopes, drainage, wildlife, woodland and wetland resources.
- The majority of local roads in the area are not designed to accommodate large volumes of traffic; thus, any new development should be encouraged to make road improvements or protect the existing roadway.
- Access cuts along both state and local roadways should be limited.
- Negative environmental impacts along Mud Creek near Summitville have occurred.

Opportunities:

- The majority of land in these three townships is characterized by agricultural use and remains extremely viable for productive farming.
- In-fill development potential exists near Summitville as well as opportunities for modest expansion adjacent to the corporate limits
- Housing development in the area should generally be discouraged except near Summitville.
- Corridor preservation of both State Roads 37 and 28 should be a priortiy and access cuts should generally be denied.

Overall, the County has been, and will continue to be, the target of sprawl development in its rural unincorporated areas unless better planning practices for growth management are adopted. A ring of development has slowly encompassed the city of Anderson. The growth of the Indianapolis Region as well as out-migration has greatly influenced the southern end of the county, fragmenting agricultural land and reducing overall residential density to less than 20 acres per unit. The east side of this ring is also receiving growth, along with the area around the east part of State Road 28. Strip development is occurring along State Road 9 to such a degree that development will soon be continuous between Pendleton, Anderson, and Alexandria unless corridor presevation plans are put into place. Some limited new growth associated with the smaller cities and towns also exists. Due to their soils/slope associations, the corridors along the rivers and major creeks are becoming less desirable for agricultural use and are under increasing demand for residential development. These corridors should be maintained and protected whenever possible. Although intense development pressure in rural areas has resulted in urban sprawl, several agricultural plains are reasonably intact with only scattered residential development (average residential density 40 to 320 acres/unit).

Planning Issues

In 1998 and 1999, a series of surveys, focus groups, and public workshops were conducted in order to identify a series of public needs, desired goals, and objectives for Madison County (*see Chapters 3 and 4, Section A)*. During the survey and public meeting process, county citizens and community leaders identified major issues and deficiencies that should be addressed in the Land Use Policy and Plan.

Every form of input suggested that the community is concerned about current growth trends and their impact on Madison County. At every opportunity, participants voiced their concerns about development being wasteful of the county's limited open space. In both the workshops and in the community needs survey, desires for land use strongly favored conservation of open space. A central issue of growth management was to determine where, if at all, development should be allowed to happen. The community needs survey results favored focusing growth towards the county's municipalities.

Discussions in workshops produced development priorities that favored in-filling municipalities and sprawl areas around municipalities while giving a high priority to the protection of farmland and natural resource areas. Citizens and leaders felt that growth could be accommodated if the community is encouraged to use the land wisely.

Several strategies that would emphasize conservation development practices, maintaining fair access to development rights, and the protection of farmland and wetlands were discussed. The following conclusions and considerations summarize the general planning issues that became a basis for development of the goals, objectives, and strategies found in Sections B and C of the Comprehensive Plan and were used in the development of a Land Use Plan of this Section**.**

- We are still in a position where growth is manageable.
- We want to develop our lands more responsibly.
- We want to conserve our natural and agricultural lands.
- We need to protect farmland.
- We need better subdivision controls and design regulations to guide growth.
- We need to encourage a greater mix of uses and denser development.
- We need to develop around cities and towns before rural areas.
- We need lands to be set aside for green space and buffering.
- We need to develop where infrastructure can support it.
- We need to restrict development in woodlands and wetlands.
- We need to consider drainage and erosion when developing.
- We need to encourage development that protects transportation corridors.
- We need to encourage growth patterns that offer transportation alternatives to the automobile.
- We need to protect and enhance our rural character and cultural resources.
- We must involve residents and other stakeholders in a development review process by holding informal meetings prior to formal hearings with the developer, planning staff, commission members, and elected officials.

Land Use Development Policy

Policies form the basis of the Comprehensive Plan. This section presents the Land Use goal along with four objectives and related strategies that were derived from public input and Section C of the Plan. Together, these policy statements are the driving force behind the land use element of this plan (note that strategies depicted below may summarize those in Section C under the goal statements). The recommendations section that follows presents specific actions that can be undertaken to achieve the statements made in the policy.

GOAL **To ensure that development is well-planned, well-designed, compatably mixed, and appropriately located to efficiently maximize our land resource.**

Objective 1: Ensure a compatible and diverse mixture of land uses that will provide the greatest efficiency and opportunity from developed lands.

Strategies

1.1 Regulate land use development by creating unique areas based on specific geographic areas.

1.2 Revise the current standardized zones that exist in Madison County.

1.3 Ensure that these geographic areas reflect and address the integrity of the landscape – geography, natural resources, present activities, the built environment, and local history.
1.4 Balance the existing land uses in the area with potential land development patterns.
1.5 Address the needs of citizens living and working in the area.
1.6 Support a more compatible and desirable mix of residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, and agricultural uses in designated growth areas.
1.7 Encourage and promote mixed use and higher density developments where designated and where appropriate infrastructure exists (Planned Unit Developments).
1.8 Encourage natural buffering between non-compatible uses.
1.9 Protect natural and environmentally sensitive lands.
1.10 Prevent spot zoning.
1.11 Establish overall development densities based on developed versus open space area ratios, maximum lot sizes, maximum allowable setbacks, build to lines, and floor area ratios of structures.
1.12 Minimize infrastructure development and costs by locating near urban areas and/or maintaining a density that can be effectively serviced.
1.13 Create and implement a Planned Unit Development Ordinance that supports the plan.
1.14 Create development patterns that promote whole communities (living, working, shopping, learning, housing, housing, and circulating).
1.15 Create development that connects all land uses to others within and outside the site, as well as offering multi-modal options for travel with multi-routes.

Objective 2: Ensure that all development practices and decisions are based on high quality standards to promote health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Madison County.

Strategies

2.1 Institute a development review process that considers impacts of development on services, facilities, and amenities, both on and off-site.
2.2 Institute a fee process, paid by developers, for impact studies to be conducted by the county as necessary.
2.3 Institute a development review process that involves service providers, regulatory agencies, and impacted municipalities.
2.4 Reserve sites for schools, parks, and other amenities in larger residential and mixed-use developments.
2.5 Encourage pedestrian ways, streetlights, and trees in subdivisions.
2.6 Research and adopt a system of implementing development impact fees.
2.7 Recommend a program for contractor registration, licensing, insurance, and bonding requirements.
2.8 Develop a program to efficiently prosecute violations of land use regulations.
2.9 Eliminate variances where character of use has changed and require rezoning.
2.10 Encourage bonds for variances that require property reclamation.
2.11 Consider increasing the minimum lot size for non-sewered lots.
2.12 Promote agricultural preservation through larger-lot development and greater lot frontage.
2.13 Eliminate mini-plats and promote the same development process for all petitioners.
2.14 Encourage subdivisions over fifteen homes to be on lots with sewer and water service.
2.15 Minimize, or eliminate, access cuts along roadways by requiring frontage roads, rear-loaded frontage roads, or private lanes.
2.16 Promote right-of-way dedication along county and state roads, and wherever else necessary.
2.17 Encourage rear-loaded, alley entrances, in larger, denser developments.
2.18 Promote cross-easements between commercial, industrial, and business uses.
2.19 Encourage natural buffering and easements to protect transportation corridors and adjacent uses on major roadways.

2.20 Develop corridor overlay standards to protect roadway and natural corridors.
2.21 Promote build-to lines on noted travel corridors.
2.22 Encourage set back lines on noted travel or natural corridors.
2.23 Develop a sign ordinance.
2.24 Develop incentives for development where appropriate.

Objective 3: Ensure that agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands are protected from adverse development activities.

Strategies

3.1 Support residential developments that follow conservation subdivision or cluster patterns that reduce environmental impacts by setting aside sensitive areas first.
3.2 Readdress the manner in which development may occur in agricultural areas by studying the density requirements of dwelling units allowable per acre.
3.3 Consider increasing lot frontage requirements on parcels.
3.4 Provide for regulatory setbacks and vegetative buffer strips on identified waterways and drains to protect runoff water quality and wildlife habitat and, if possible, provide an amenity for public recreational use.
3.5 Ensure the protection of rural character, natural environment and resources, and scenic value of vistas from development impacts by preserving open space for active and passive uses.
3.6 Develop local wetlands and drainage regulations that limit development impact on wetlands and water bodies, which have significant functions and values, related to flood protection, erosion control, water quality, groundwater recharge and discharge, education, vegetation, and wildlife habitats.
3.7 Develop and promote a countywide system of open space corridors and urban greenbelts as a framework to protect our natural environment, scenic values, recreational opportunities, and separate communities where still possible.
3.8 Conserve natural and scenic resource sites through a combination of programs that involve zoning, land use programs such as conservation, easements, and mitigation, as well as programs that purchase and preserve, through intergovernmental coordination and creative use.
3.9 Protect natural areas, such as woodlands, wetlands, and slopes with new ordinance.
3.10 Develop ordinances for drainage, landscaping, erosion, and other environmental concerns such as air, noise, wells, and water.
3.11 Encourage utilization of natural drainage features or technologies whenever possible, especially in area outside of urban centers and their fringes.
3.12 Study and institute a communications tower plan and regulations.
3.13 Study and identify opportunities for open space corridors and parks.
3.14 Research and implement a nuisance abatement program.

Objective 4: Ensure the creation of compact communities by encouraging development to locate in designated growth areas that immediately surround and are serviced by existing cities and towns or by creating new urban areas where the necessary urban services are provided.

Strategies

4.1 Promote development patterns that emphasize community while discouraging isolated, fragmented utilization of land.
4.2 Locate higher density residential uses near commercial centers, transit services, and parks.
4.3 Promote and ensure that shopping areas in business parks become all-purpose nodes of activity near urban areas
4.4 Ensure the concentration of commercial development in compact or cluster areas, not sprawled patterns.
4.5 Strongly encourage major subdivisions to have public sewer service.

Objective 5: Encourage the efficient use of existing community resources, safety services, utilities and infrastructure before expanding these services and facilities to accommodate growth.

Strategies

5.1 Support a more compatible and desirable mix of residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, and agricultural uses in designated growth areas.

5.2 Encourage and promote mixed use and higher density developments where designated and where appropriate infrastructure exist (Planned Unit Developments).

5.3 Minimize infrastructure development and costs by locating near urban areas and/or maintaining a density that can be effectively serviced.

5.4 Create development patterns that promote whole communities (living, working, shopping, learning, housing, housing, and circulating).

5.5 Create development that connects all land uses to others within and outside the site, as well as offering multi-modal options for travel with multi-routes.

5.6 Institute a development review process that considers impacts of development on services, facilities, and amenities, both on and off-site.

5.7 Require annexation of developments near cities and towns as part of approval process.

Concept Land Use Development Plan

Philosophy

The Land Use Plan must compatibly and efficiently maximize our limited land resources by ensuring that growth is compact, focusing around the County's cities and towns. At the same time, this plan must protect agricultural lands and other open lands from development pressures, protect and enhance environmentally sensitive areas, and allow and encourage appropriately mixed land uses. Accomplishment of this philosophy requires a cooperative effort between county and municipal government in the management of development. Policies and actions must work together to direct development in the right locations. The concept of the Land Use Plan is defined by a series of Growth Management Areas**,** each of which have unique functional characteristics and development trends. The conceptual Growth Management Areas are defined and explained below, in order of development priority.

1. **Growth & In-Fill Areas**. Growth and In-Fill Areas are cities and towns where future urban development should be directed within current municipal boundaries within the planning horizon year of 2010. Although not within the jurisdiction of this plan, development should be pushed to these areas by default. This plan works particularly well when the municipality desires the proposed type of development and there is some level of planning cooperation between the County and the municipality. Municipal incentive programs and brown field initiatives (pulling effect) would enhance this concept. Future development should be focused at higher densities to focus growth and reduce public infrastructure costs. All types of development should be encouraged – residential, commercial, business, and industrial.

2**. Build-out Areas**. Build-out Areas consist of locations in the unincorporated County that have already received sprawl development, and where compatible build-out is expected by year 2010 and should be encouraged. Development would be pushed to these areas by initially limiting development rights by zoning in the other Growth Management Areas. Rather than speculative zoning or rezoning elsewhere, encouraged commercial build-out should be done through zoning. Residential build-out may be encouraged by allowing these areas to receive incentives or density bonuses by making these areas the first priority for utilities.

3. **Future Expansion Areas.** Future Expansion Areas are areas associated and centered on current urban development patterns and availability of utilities outside the Build-out Areas. Within these areas, the availability of sanitary sewer service will enable long-term residential development. Development in these areas would be permitted when municipal utilities are extended, or by interim methods such as pump and haul. Development control ordinances should only be delineated in detail after consulting municipalities about their utility capabilities and growth needs and/or plans. Development in these areas should conform to municipal and urban development standards. Municipalities should be included in the review process for petitions before the County Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals.

4. **Transitional Areas.** Transitional Areas serve to create a transition or buffer between growth and expansion areas and conservation areas. These areas should be predominately low-density residential in nature, and should adjoin higher density (urban patterns) with conservation areas (rural or agricultural patterns). All utilities should be provided on site. Expansion of water and sanitary sewer services should not be encouraged beyond these areas unless a denser pattern of development is expected and planned. Alternative technologies for handling wastewater should be considered if possibilities exist to encourage open-space subdivisions. Open-space development provides a better opportunity for buffering the adjoining areas. Commercial development in these areas should be kept to a minimum with neighborhood level retail supporting the existing and nearby residential concentrations.

5. **Conservation Residential Areas**. Conservation Residential Areas consist of a mixture of rural residential and agricultural uses; they also serve as transitional areas between urban centers and agricultural areas. The compatible coexistence of this mixture is assured by allowing residential development to occur only when sanitary sewer is available using conservation subdivision practices. Residential development would be permitted in this area, provided standards are in place to protect the continuation of agricultural activities. Residential development would not be allowed to sprawl across a site; rather, it would be kept compact and buffered from agricultural operations and environmentally sensitive areas. Agricultural sub-areas could be kept intact by using methods that prevent the scattering of residential developments. Some methods include limiting the progress of sewer expansion, refusing to permit strip or "mini" divisions, and requiring subdivisions to be contiguous to one another. Covenants for new subdivisions would be required to have "right to farm provisions" and livestock would be permitted throughout the area.

6. **Agricultural Industry Areas**. Agricultural Industry Areas would consist of a majority of the County in which the agricultural industry is protected; and, residential or commercial development is limited to that which is in accordance to the conduct of agriculture. These areas are best kept intact through exclusive agricultural zoning (similar to traditional industrial zoning). Properties critical for protecting the integrity of these areas (e.g.. on the growth fringes) could be targeted for purchase of their development rights by a privately or publicly funded program; or, by creating buffer zones for conservation easements.

7**. River Corridors & Natural Areas**. River Corridor and Natural Areas would consist of land along our major streams, wetlands, and woodlands, which may, or may not, pass through the other Growth Management Areas. Although these areas have fewer agricultural uses to protect, they require development restrictions to protect wetlands, woodlands, wild life habitat, water quality, erosion control, and the prevention of flood damage. In these areas, an overall density objective should be imposed. Heavy, urbanization, would be restricted; however, restrictions would be less stringent in areas not conserved for agriculture. Conservation subdivision practices would, as in all areas, set aside flood plain, stream buffers, wetlands, woodlands, and meadows as open space that would not be platted into lots. Open space set asides should amount to approximately 50% of the land.

[The adjoining **Proposed Land Use Concept Map E-1-22 (insert)** illustrates the general location of these Growth Management Areas.]

Business and Industrial Uses

Conceptually, business and industrial land uses are associated with urban areas that can provide the required infrastructure and services. One exception to this pattern would be transportation and travel-related business and industry located at transportation nodes. Another exception would be local businesses that serve agricultural or residential areas. The proposed land use development concept sets no new business and industrial districts in the unincorporated County. Instead, this Plan directs commercial development to occur within the corporate bounds of the County's municipalities. Build-out areas and existing business clusters that have received commercial sprawl should be in-filled. Additionally, residential and agricultural areas should include the compatible conveniences (e.g. Convenience stores, video rental, barbers, storage units) and agribusiness that would serve them. Compatible and small-scale home and farmstead businesses should be permitted.

Residential Density

Agricultural areas should have only widely scattered residences generally associated with fields and pastures, since dense residential development begins to erode the desirability and economic value of this land for agriculture. Residential development in these areas should be confined to the principal farm dwelling, tenant residences, and minor subdivisions of land that would allow descendants to remain on the land of their heritage as long as a maximum overall density is kept.

Homes in rural residential areas should occur on parcels that meet standards for healthy living, and lot size should be dependant on utilities and carrying capacity of the land. Minimum lot sizes should not be inflated in an effort to preserve open space; rather, an overall site density objective should be established and reached using conservation subdivision practices. Conservation subdivision practices would promote setting aside environmentally sensitive areas and providing consolidated open space that would be useable as agricultural lands and provide buffering. Possible site density objectives could require up to 50% of the land to be devoted to nonresidential lot open space in rural subdivisions.

Subdivisions or homes in conservation areas such as the Conservation Residential and River Corridor Growth Management Areas should be strongly encouraged to meet site density objectives. In addition, they should meet overall density guidelines that would assure low density at the district level by securing off site agricultural easements.

Proposed Land Use Plans

The text found within **Conditions and Trends By Township** (E-1-7) serves as a primary reference for the Proposed Land Use Plans; however, the Proposed Land Use Plans are also a synthesis of planning issues, public input, collected data, and statistical analysis that have been addressed *throughout* the Comprehensive Plan. These proposed plans are intended to further refine concepts, to recommend detailed growth and land use guidance, and to recommend development standards. The following list details the townships that are included in each Proposed Land Use Plan, and the page on which each map can be found:

South Townships: Green, Fall Creek, and Adams Townships (**Map E-1-25**)
West Central Townships: Stony Creek, Jackson, and Lafayette Townships (**Map E-1-26**)
East Central Townships: Union and Richland Townships (**Map E-1-27**)
North Central Townships: Pipe Creek and Monroe Townships (**Map E-1-28**)
North Townships: Duck Creek, Boone, and Van Buren Townships (**Map E-1-29**)

Conclusion

Changing land use patterns were the primary reason for developing a new Comprehensive Plan. While land use has been the main focus, it should again be noted that a relationship exists between land use and transportation. An understanding of this relationship is paramount to managing future land use development. During the public participation process, the public expressed concerns that related to preserving the rural character of the county and promoting orderly development of land. In response to this input, the resultant plan has attempted to balance competing concerns while providing options and alternatives for different types of development. These alternatives include pushing more intense development toward urban centers while encouraging less intense development to take place in a more environmentally sensitive manner, conserving land and natural resources. The objectives of this section seek to change current patterns of sprawl into patterns of mixed land use. Mixed land uses, in turn, offer clusters of development and activities that provide citizens with opportunities for accessibility, mode of travel choice, housing, and working. Through alternatives such as these, the Comprehensive Plan attempts to provide a greater variety of choices for land use development, and attempts to successfully balance competing ideas of preserving rural character while encouraging improved, organized patterns for future development.

Comprehensive Plan Summary

The Comprehensive Plan Update is an official public document adopted by Madison County to serve as policy to guide decisions about the development of the County. As a policy, this Plan has attempted to recognize the interdependence of land use decisions, resource management, the process of governing, and the physical infrastructure of the built environment. Representing the voices of a wide range of citizens who have been active participants in the planning process, this Plan has attempted to identify the interests of Madison County's current and future citizens. In addition, it is hoped that the document will serve the private sector as a valuable reference for making informed development choices.

Changing land use patterns were the primary reason for developing a new Comprehensive Plan. While land use has been a major focus of the document, recommendations for this plan have been based upon multiple considerations. These factors include, but are not limited to, Agriculture, Economic Development, Housing Development, Community Resources, Cultural Resources, Natural Resources, Utilities and Infrastructure, Transportation, and Land Use and Growth Management.

Ultimately, the Comprehensive Plan Update seeks to promote and protect the rural character and quality of life in Madison County by ensuring the viability and integrity of agriculture and the natural environment, and encouraging responsible land use development. In order to meet this objective, the Comprehensive Plan encourages growth in and around urban areas while retaining the balance of Madison County for agricultural use, open space, and high-quality planned developments. By providing options and alternatives for different types of development, the Comprehensive Plan attempts to successfully balance competing ideas of preserving rural character while encouraging improved, organized patterns for future development.