

1 Focus Growth

Promote development where and when it is:

Feasible - market supported, based on a sound financial plan

Suitable - located near transportation, public and environmental facilities and services

Advantageous - provides benefit to the surrounding areas

Consistent with the land use strategy - adheres to desired geographic placement

Supported by the community's values - meets the public's expectations, needs and desires



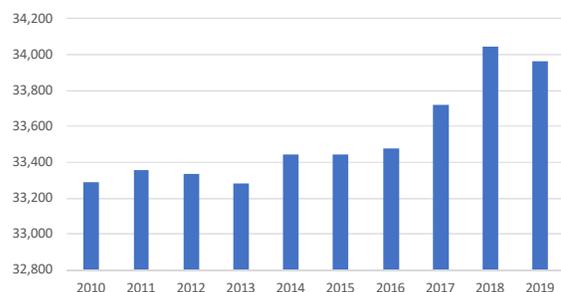
Why this is important

- Minimizes land use conflicts
- Reduces cost to provide public utilities and services
- Preserves intended rural character
- Supports the agricultural industry
- Provides residents with predictability
- Allows protection of environmentally sensitive areas
- Reduces costs to maintain roads
- Reduces energy consumption
- Improves water quality
- Keeps lake communities from becoming overbuilt

Some recent trends

Since the last comprehensive plan, the population of the County has grown (see figure below). New construction has been located near existing developed areas, but not entirely. In some areas, for example in the central north, the amount of residential development in rural areas has increased. Existing industrial parks are nearing full build out. Agricultural uses have diversified, with agricultural-tourism, more small agriculture-related business, and greater variety in types of operations.

Total Population



2%
County
Population
growth
since 2010

What do you think?

On your form, please rate the following with respect to how much you agree or disagree. 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Please share any other thoughts you have on this topic on your comment form.

1A. New development should generally be directed toward areas where there is already more development and existing utilities (cities, towns, corridors, etc.).

1B. When possible, the impact of more intensive land uses on residential areas should be lessened through physical separation and/or urban design improvements.

1C. Industrial and business park development should continue along US 30 in a similar way to how it has been occurring over the past 25 years.

1D. The County would benefit from clearer direction regarding the location of confined feeding operations (CFO).

1E. More homes that address the needs and desires of residents should be built in the County.

2 Foster Safe and Convenient Circulation

Improve the following for the road network:

Efficiency - maximizing value while minimizing construction and maintenance costs

Effectiveness - conveying vehicles utilizing arterials, collectors, and local roads

Safety - widths, alignments, intersections, and road signs support safe movement of vehicles and users

Quality - processes and materials result in longevity

Compatibility with the land use strategy - network supports existing density and intensity of land uses, desired development around the County; arterials to connect core commerce and employment districts



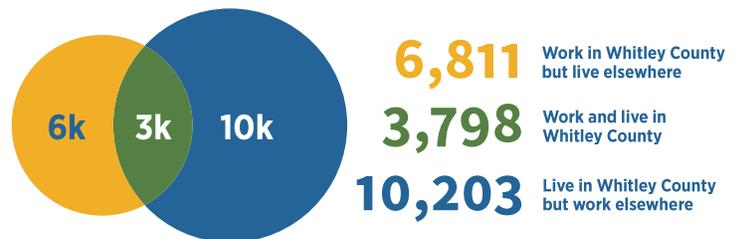
Why this is important

- Improves accessibility
- Enhances safety
- Improves road quality
- Lessens congestion
- Creates predictability
- Enhances quality of life
- Reduces energy consumption
- Educates the public

Some recent trends

With a significant portion of the population commuting in and out of the County and more development along US 30, many residents have expressed concern about the highway's safety. This has been a major focus for the County working with INDOT and a designated Planning Committee. Other road and bridge improvements have made vehicular circulation throughout the County safer and more efficient in the past decade. However, there has been an emerging interest in making improvements for people traveling by means other than car (pedestrians, cyclists, transit, etc.).

Inflow / Outflow Job Counts



What do you think?

On your form, please rate the following with respect to how much you agree or disagree. 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Please share any other thoughts you have on this topic on your comment form.

2A. Dealing with increased traffic on US 30 should be a top priority.

2B. A long-term strategy for the design, upgrade, and maintenance of rural roads is needed.

2C. Improvements for people traveling other than car (foot, bicycle, transit, and other) should be made.

2D. High speed rail and mass transit should be considered as future transit options.

3 Nurture the Environment

Strive to improve:

- Environmental resources** - conserving, preserving, and/or minimizing impacts
- Energy consumption** - reducing energy consumption
- Public health and safety** - reducing risks from natural disasters
- Sustainability** - awareness and long-term preservation of valued built and natural features



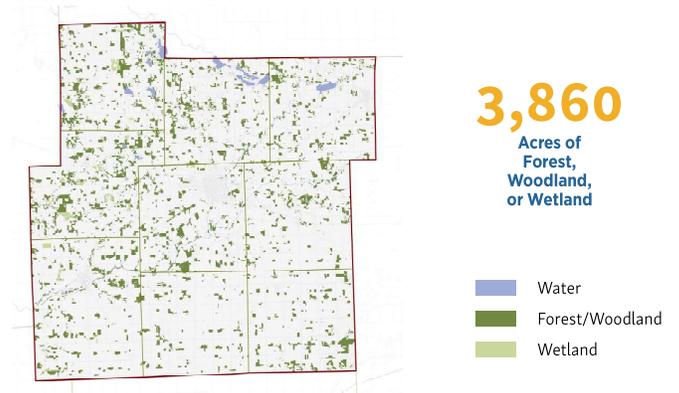
Why this is important

- Maintains resources for future generations
- Minimizes flooding and resultant property losses
- Reduces energy consumption
- Improves water quality
- Provides alternative energy sources
- Reduces waste
- Minimizes land use conflicts
- Provides opportunities for environmental education
- Creates recreational benefits

Some recent trends

The County's natural resources and scenic beauty are highly valued and contribute positively to residents' sense of attachment to where they live. However, water quality degradation due to stormwater runoff, failing septic systems, and negative impacts from development have eroded the quality of the environment in certain locations. This has been a concern for some residents.

Natural and Preserved Lands



What do you think?

On your form, please rate the following with respect to how much you agree or disagree. 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Please share any other thoughts you have on this topic on your comment form.

3A. Wetland protection policies should be pursued.

3B. New development within floodplains, along lakefronts and in other environmentally sensitive areas should be discouraged and existing development restrictions enforced.

3C. Low Impact Development (LID) strategies (swales, rain gardens, etc.) should be considered to reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality.

3D. The County should further regulate new septic field installations.

3E. Solar power is an important trend that should be encouraged.

4 Advance Economic Development

Economic development efforts to promote commerce, jobs, and overall vitality is:

Consistent with economic strategy - targets appropriate industrial sectors, promotes quality infrastructure, improves quality of life amenities, and supports a qualified workforce

Beneficial county-wide - creates employment opportunities, lifestyle sustaining incomes for workers, and tax revenues for Whitley County

Diverse and inspiring - advancements that broaden sectors of employment and promote new business investment and entrepreneurship

Consistent with the character and land use strategy - supports quality places, and helps shape desirable development and direct it to appropriate locations



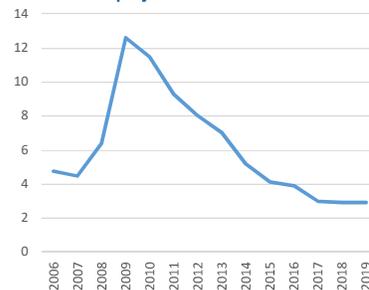
Why this is important

- Adds income to the local community
- Increases employment opportunities
- Becomes a source of community pride
- Creates predictability
- Provides clientele for local service-oriented businesses
- Increases local tax base

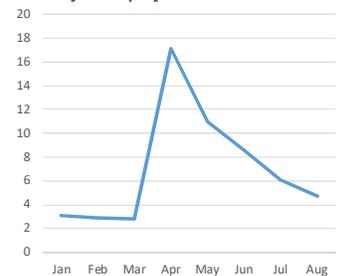
Some recent trends

Overall, Whitley County continues to “punch above its weight” in many ways with respect to the local economy. Many of the County’s core industries have thrived in the past ten years, although some businesses have been recently impacted by COVID-19. Changes to the agricultural industry reflect national trends and financial changes have created stresses on mid-sized farms. Overall, the County is well-positioned for continued industrial and business development.

Annual Unemployment Rate 2006-19



Monthly Unemployment Rate 2020



What do you think?

On your form, please rate the following with respect to how much you agree or disagree. 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Please share any other thoughts you have on this topic on your comment form.

4A. Workforce development initiatives should complement existing and future jobs in the County and the skill sets / training of residents.

4B. The County should continue to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts and other incentives to attract new businesses.

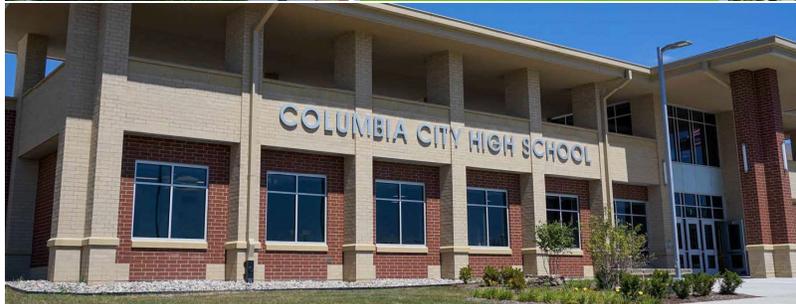
4C. New strategies to attract and retain workers should be pursued that consider changing preferences, commuting habits and lifestyle choices.

4D. The County should seek to increase the number of people who are able to both live and work in the County.

4E. The County should make increasing quality, affordable childcare / pre-school availability a priority.

Improve quality of life through:

- Opportunities** - meeting or exceeding needs in personal advancement, fitness, and social connection
- Quality service** - providing essential services, infrastructure, and leadership
- Sense of place** - supporting the community's values and increasing pride
- Communication** - keeping people involved and connected
- Predictability** - creating outcomes that are consistent and reliable



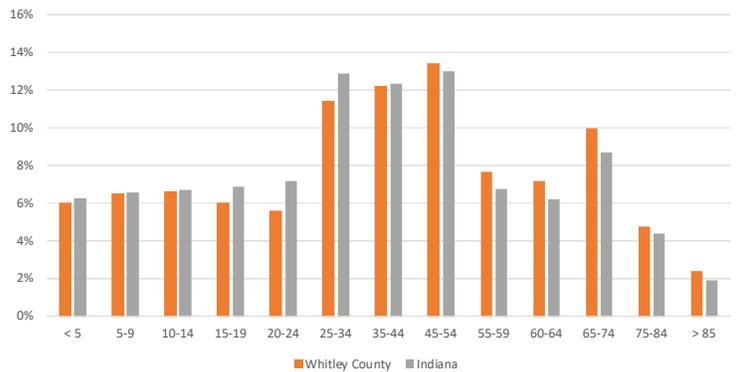
Why this is important

- Improves lives of residents
- Helps retain residents
- Encourages younger generations to stay or return
- Attracts new residents
- Attracts new desired businesses

Some recent trends

Whitley County benefits from many assets that make it a place where people want to live, including a rich agricultural heritage, “small town” feel, economic opportunities and pride of place. However, current housing stock and amenities may be insufficient to retain and attract younger people in the upcoming years. In addition, with a growing population over 65, housing and services for older adults may also be needed.

Population Distribution (2018)



What do you think?

On your form, please rate the following with respect to how much you agree or disagree. 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Please share any other thoughts you have on this topic on your comment form.

5A. A long-term plan and funding strategy should be created for County parks.

5B. Reliable high-speed internet is needed.

5C. Strategies to retain and attract young people to the County that addresses housing, employment, recreation and other quality of life considerations should be developed.

5D. Aging-in-place strategies that support older adults (focusing on quality independent living facilities, senior activities, mixed use neighborhoods, etc.) should be enhanced.

5E. Rivers and lakes and preservation areas should be used and promoted for recreational purposes.