



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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FUNDING FOR COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GETS APPROVAL

The Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs Recently Approved Funding the County's Comprehensive Plan Process

Crawfordsville, IN – Wednesday, March 28, 2018 – County Commissioners' President, Jim Fulwider announced today Montgomery County received approval from the Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs (OCRA) to fund the county's first-ever Comprehensive Plan process. The plan will be funded by a \$50,000 OCRA grant and \$38,000 from Indiana West Advantage. When completed, the document will establish a long-term vision and serve as a policy guide to the physical development of unincorporated parts of the county over the next 10-20 years. HWC Engineering has been engaged to lead the process and brings years of experience working with communities to help facilitate the development of their respective comprehensive plans.

As part of the comprehensive planning process, a steering committee was established to help educate and empower citizens and property owners on the civic responsibility to provide direction and vision to help guide the development of a comprehensive plan. The steering committee is a diverse group of stakeholders who were selected to maximize representation from around the county. Members are: Mike Schueren, Phil Emmert, Ron Dickerson, Todd Douglas, Brandy Allen, Greg Morrison, Jarrod Zachary, Cheryl Morphew, Steve Loy, Debbie Schavietello, Gary Booth, Colleen Moran, Brad Monts, Tom Mellish, Monte Thompson, Marc Bonwell, Mark Casteel, Rusty Carter, Don Mills, Bob Hoffman, Katheryn Eads, Kitty Haffner, Sara Schenck, and John Frey. An organizational meeting of the steering committee took place earlier in the month to explain the role and responsibilities of the committee, as well as walk through a preliminary timeline for the full comprehensive planning process. "We are just getting started," said John Frey, county commissioner and steering committee member. "The actual process will take us to the end of the year to complete and includes many public meetings to gain input from residents, land owners, and business owners before a draft of the plan will be done and submitted to the Plan Commission for review."

An effective comprehensive plan is one based on public participation to collect thoughts and ideas from residents about *their* vision for the future of the community, rather than a select few making decisions about how to guide investment, protect property values, and make a community healthier. Components of the plan are diverse and can vary by community, but in general include:

- A statement of objectives for future development
- A statement of policy for land use development
- A statement of policy for the development of public places, public infrastructure, and public utilities
- The history and existing conditions of the community
- Goals and objectives for:
 - Economic development and community development such as workforce development and redevelopment of blighted areas
 - Historic preservation
 - Housing needs including diversity of the inventory
 - Quality of life, parks & recreation
 - Infrastructure and transportation needs

The old adage that “*failing to plan is planning to fail*” rings true for communities with a lack of vision or a practical plan for handling future growth. “We have been without a formalized plan for too long,” said Fulwider. “Now is the right time to create that vision for our county’s future.”

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