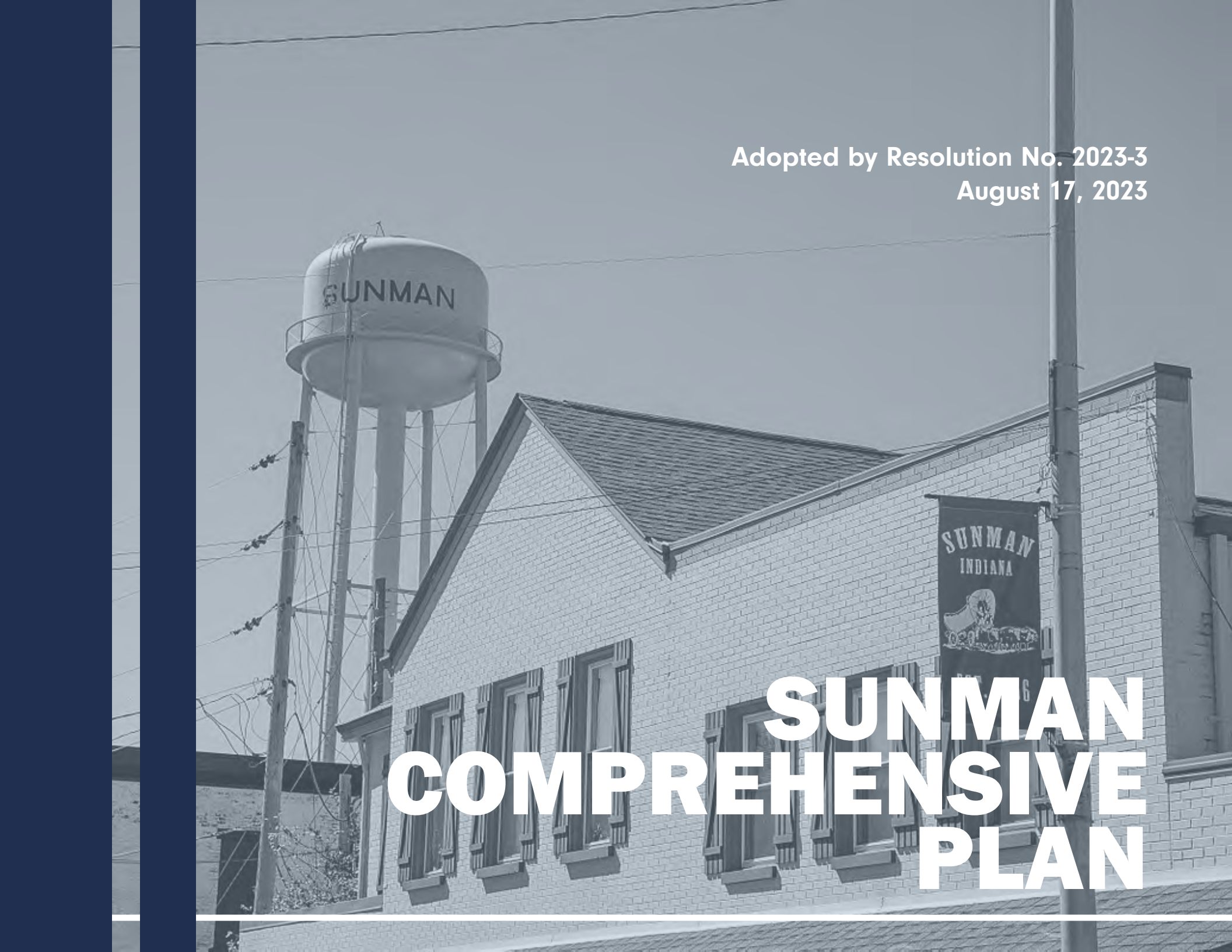


Adopted by Resolution No. 2023-3
August 17, 2023



SUNMAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

RESOLUTION NO. 2023 – 3

**A Resolution Approving and Adopting a Comprehensive Plan
for the Town of Sunman, Indiana**

WHEREAS, the Town of Sunman recognizes the importance of planning for future development and investment in Sunman and surrounding areas; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Sunman received federal Community Development Block Grant dollars from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs to fund the creation of a comprehensive plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Sunman retained the services of HWC Engineering to facilitate and develop the Town of Sunman Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the Office of Community and Rural Affairs technical specifications for a comprehensive plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Sunman solicited input from the community and other stakeholders to inform the vision, goals, and action items included in the plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Town Council did on August 17, 2023, hold a legally advertised public hearing to consider the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan; and,

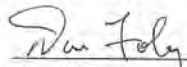
WHEREAS the Town Council found that the Comprehensive Plan attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit A meets the requirements of Indiana Code §36-7-4-500 et. seq., and this Comprehensive Plan is approved for the promotion of the public health, safety, morals, convenience, order, or the general welfare and for the sake of efficiency and economy in the process of development.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Town Council of Sunman, Indiana, having reviewed and considered the Comprehensive Plan, and having heard public comment, both written and verbal at a public hearing on August 17, 2023, at the Sunman Town Hall, 604 N Meridian St, Sunman, IN 47041, now hereby approves and adopts the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Sunman, Indiana.

This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and upon its adoption and recordation in accordance with the law. All prior adopted resolutions and exhibits or parts thereof in conflict herewith are superseded by this Resolution.

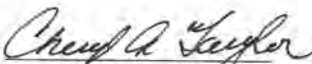
Adopted by the Sunman Town Council, Sunman, Indiana, this **17th day of August 2023**.

TOWN COUNCIL OF SUNMAN, INDIANA


Don Foley


Sharron Bennett


Carol Eckstein

ATTEST: 
Cheryl Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Sharron Bennett, Town Council

Julie Brock, Park Board

Perry Cassidy, Utilities Superintendent

Victor Cisneros, Community Leader

Carla Hacker, FCN Bank, Southeastern Indiana Development Corporation

Jessica Hackman, Community Leader

Mark Horstman, Ripley County Board of Commissioners

Wayne Jenner, St. John Lutheran Church, Former Town Council

Gary Norman, Ripley County Economic Development Corporation

Mike Norman, Sunman-Dearborn Community School Board

Kara Schott, Sunman Revitalization Initiative

Cheryl Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Don Foley, Town Council President

Sharron Bennett, Town Council

Carol Eckstein, Town Council

Cheryl Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer

CONSULTANT/PREPARED BY



HWC
ENGINEERING

All photos and images within the document are cited accordingly to their source. Unless otherwise noted, all mapping, charts, graphs, and other analysis-based imagery was created by HWC Engineering.

All demographic, housing, and economic data within this document was gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau, using the 2015-2020 American Community Survey summary datasets. Any data gathered using additional sources is cited accordingly within the text.

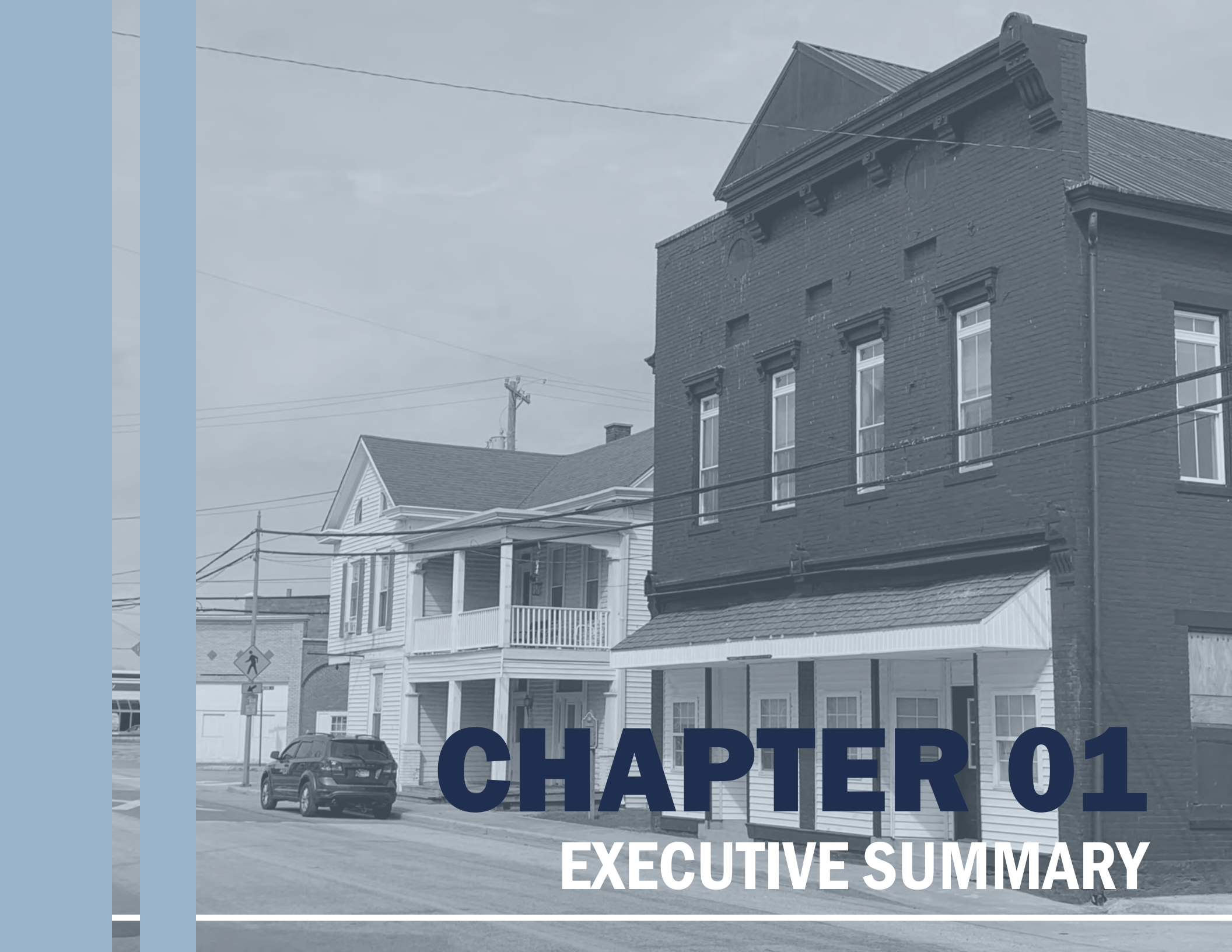
TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	06	08 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	60
Purpose of the Plan	07	Existing Conditions	62
Planning Process	08	Goals & Strategies	64
Key Goals & Strategies	10	Implementation	67
02 GENERAL BACKGROUND	12	09 HOUSING	68
Community Overview	13	Existing Conditions	70
Anchor Institutions	18	Goals & Strategies	72
03 COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE	20	Implementation	75
Planning Committee	21	10 TRANSPORTATION	76
Community Engagement Summary	22	Existing Conditions	78
04 LAND USE	24	Goals & Strategies	80
Existing Conditions	26	Implementation	83
Future Land Use Plan	28	11 AGRICULTURE	84
Goals & Strategies	30	Existing Conditions	86
Implementation	33	Goals & Strategies	87
05 GOVERNMENT & FISCAL CAPACITY	34	Implementation	88
Existing Conditions	36	12 NATURAL RESOURCES	90
Goals & Strategies	38	Existing Conditions	92
Implementation	41	Goals & Strategies	94
06 PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES	42	Implementation	96
Existing Conditions	44	13 PARKS & RECREATION	98
Goals & Strategies	46	Existing Conditions	90
Implementation	49	Goals & Strategies	92
07 PLACEMAKING.....	52	Implementation	104
Existing Conditions.....	54		
Goals & Strategies.....	56		
Implementation.....	59		

14 BROADBAND ACCESS	106
Existing Conditions	108
Goals & Strategies	110
Implementation	112
15 HISTORIC & ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES	114
Existing Conditions	116
Goals & Strategies	118
Implementation	120
16 HAZARD MITIGATION	122
Existing Conditions	124
Goals & Strategies	125
Implementation	126
17 APPENDIX	128
Public Workshop Boards	130
Public Open House Boards	132
Community Online Survey	134
Project Website	152



Town Hall's street signage and message board. Source: HWC Engineering

A black and white photograph of a street scene. On the right is a large, three-story brick building with a gabled roof and several tall, narrow windows. To its left is a two-story white house with a porch and a balcony. A dark SUV is parked on the street in front of the white house. A pedestrian crossing sign is visible on the left. The sky is overcast.

CHAPTER 01

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive plan helps define a vision for growth and development within a community. For Sunman, the comprehensive plan helps answer what the community wants to become in the future and how this can be accomplished. Although the Town of Sunman has been the cornerstone of northeast Ripley County for decades, the town has yet to develop a modern comprehensive plan unique to the needs of residents and businesses in the community. With shifting demographics and market conditions in the last decade, town officials determined it was time to develop a new comprehensive plan that identifies Sunman's key challenges and opportunities while guiding future land use and policy decisions.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

The Sunman Comprehensive Plan is a guiding document for local leaders and staff to reference when making decisions about land use, transportation, utilities, and more. The plan evaluates the existing conditions of the community, including demographic and socioeconomic makeup and an inventory of the built and natural environment, to craft a clear vision and goals for the future.

At a minimum, a comprehensive plan must include a statement of objectives for future development, a statement of policy for land use development, and a statement of policy for the development of public ways, public lands, and public utilities. While the Sunman Comprehensive Plan may lay the groundwork for future policy changes within the town, it is not a zoning ordinance and will not change the current zoning of any property after adoption. However, this document does contain a Future Land Use Map that will be used as a tool to inform decisions made by the Area Plan Commission and Sunman Town Council when property owners submit zoning change applications.

Planning Area

The Sunman Comprehensive Plan describes land use, policy, and programmatic recommendations for the incorporated limits of the Town of Sunman. Additional properties outside of current town boundaries are also included because should they be developed, they would likely be annexed into the town. While the town has been included in previous comprehensive planning efforts at a county-wide level, the planning grant from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) has provided funding to Sunman to create a town-specific comprehensive plan. Sunman's location within the region can be seen in Figure 1.1: Area Context Map.

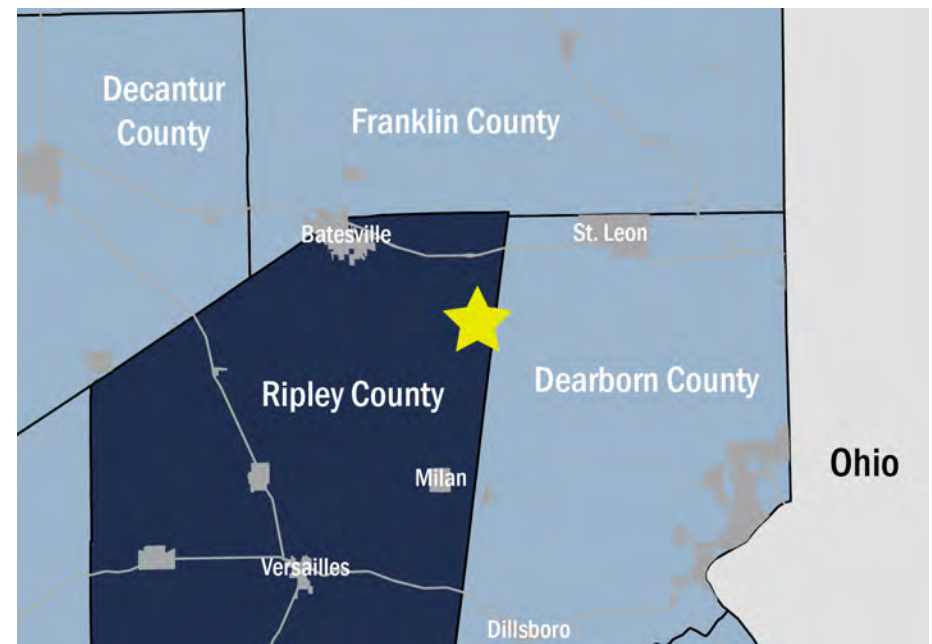


Figure 1.1: Area Context Map. Source: HWC Engineering



PLANNING PROCESS

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The Sunman Comprehensive Plan was developed over a 10-month period organized into four key phases:

Project Kick-Off and Visioning: The beginning phase of the process largely included data collection and analysis, as well as the preliminary visioning meetings with the Comprehensive Planning Committee and general public.

Consensus Building: The second phase of the process was built around gaining a consensus on the opportunities and challenges heard during the initial rounds of public engagement. Diving deeper into each topic helped develop the plan's overall goals and objectives.

Plan Development: The third phase largely focused on the creation of the document and identifying unique action strategies that would assist in the implementation and success of the plan's vision and goals.

Plan Review & Adoption: The final phase consisted of finalizing the document, presenting the finished product to the community, and working with the Area Plan Commission and Town Council to formally adopt the comprehensive plan.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement opportunities were included during all four phases of the planning process, whether through face-to-face meetings, online surveys, the project website, or communications with town stakeholders and decisions makers. The overall vision of the community was shaped through these interactions, with its language refined through public review and approval. The following text gives brief explanations of engagement opportunities during the planning process, complete findings can be found in [Chapter 3: Comprehensive Planning Committee](#) (page 20) and the [Appendix](#) (page 128).

Steering Committee Meetings: A Comprehensive Planning Committee comprised of multiple community leaders and stakeholders convened three times over the process to provide input, review created documents, and guide the overall development of the comprehensive plan.

Public Workshop & Open House: Two community events were held that asked Sunman residents and businesses to gather together and provide their ideas on what Sunman should be in the future.

Online Survey: For those unable to attend in-person events, or who wanted to provide additional comments, an online survey was provided during the initial stages of the planning process.

Focus Group Meetings: The town held multiple focus group meetings asking residents, local business owners, and town staff to provide higher levels of input on a variety of land use, utility, and programmatic subjects.

Adoption Meetings: Two adoption meetings marked the end of public input, holding a public hearing for the plan and fielding questions from the Area Plan Commission and Town Council before final adoption.

SUNMAN'S KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Working alongside town leaders, businesses owners, community stakeholders, and the general public helped identify specific opportunities for Sunman that support future growth and development. These key theme served as the starting point for the development of the plan's goals and strategies.

Strengthen Downtown

Sunman is a regional destination used by residents of Ripley County, Dearborn County, and Franklin county for retail shopping, convenience needs, entertainment, education, and employment needs. Sunman's downtown core has a variety of businesses and housing types, but there are some key uses missing that residents would like to see filled.

Capitalizing On Sewer Expansions

Sunman is preparing for a major sewer extension that would expand infrastructure to the State Road 101 and State Road 46 intersection in Penntown. This expansion presents an opportunity to attract multiple types of development along the corridor and capture potential revenue.

New Programming

Residents and businesses in Sunman strongly support the creation of new recreational, social, and business-focused programs in the community. New programming opportunities can help fill the needs of residents, attract visitors and tourists, and improve the town's overall quality of life.

State Road 101 / Meridian Street Enhancements

Street trees, landscaping, signage, and safety enhancements along State Road 101 / Meridian Street are vital improvements noted by both town staff and residents throughout the process. While they can be difficult to install along state highways, roadway enhancements are major impacts for quality of place.



Discussion tables at the Public Workshop. Source: HWC Engineering



KEY GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOALS & STRATEGIES

The key opportunities and challenges identified over the planning process were then used, alongside OCRA's technical requirements for comprehensive plans, to develop the goals and strategies for Sunman. The goals within this plan support the vision statements for each subject, such as land use, housing, or broadband access. These overarching statements are supported by specific projects and policies in the form strategies, which will guide decision making and help the community achieve their ultimate vision.

Land Use

- Goal 1:** Limit the ground floor of existing commercial buildings to commercial uses only along State Road 101 / Meridian Street
- Goal 2:** Direct new commercial and residential development and redevelopment to the downtown core and north towards Penntown along State Road 101 / Meridian Street.
- Goal 3:** Reference the Future Land Use Map when making zoning and development decisions.

Government & Fiscal Capacity

- Goal 1:** Continue to ensure future facility, infrastructure, and programmatic costs are integrated into annual budgets.
- Goal 2:** Address capacity concerns with Sunman's Police Department to meet community level-of-service expectations.
- Goal 3:** Continue to improve communication between the town government, county government, residents, and businesses.

Public Facilities & Services

- Goal 1:** Expand capacity at the wastewater treatment plant to support new development and the sewer extension along State Road 101.
- Goal 2:** Maintain and enhance Sunman's water plant and infrastructure to adequately serve current needs and future demands as growth occurs.
- Goal 3:** Address issues with stormwater management through infrastructure enhancements, disconnecting downspouts from the system, and creating a Drainage Master Plan.

Placemaking

- Goal 1:** Focus beautification efforts along State Road 101 / Meridian Street including street trees, signage, and other landscaping features.
- Goal 2:** Create unique branding for Sunman that can be used for signage, marketing efforts, and other town-related materials.
- Goal 3:** Design and construct new wayfinding signage and gateways that welcome visitors and direct drivers to destinations within Sunman.

Economic Development

- Goal 1:** Continue supporting existing businesses and entrepreneurs within Sunman.
- Goal 2:** Encourage the re-use of empty commercial structures along State Road 101 / Meridian Street for new retail and entertainment uses.
- Goal 3:** Continue working with county organizations to attract new employers and locally-owned commercial and industrial businesses to Sunman.



Housing

- Goal 1:** Address ordinance violations and vacant properties to ensure neighborhoods and corridors are attractive and inviting.
- Goal 2:** Encourage the development of various housing types including entry-level homes, duplexes, and senior living facilities.

Transportation

- Goal 1:** Increase available parking spaces in the downtown core, specifically south of the train tracks.
- Goal 2:** Fill in sidewalk gaps that link residents to key destinations within the community.
- Goal 3:** Work with INDOT and the Central Railroad Company of Indiana for street and intersection improvements at State Road 101 and Eastern Avenue.

Agriculture

- Goal 1:** Ensure there are appropriate transitions between Sunman's future development and Ripley County's surrounding agricultural uses.

Natural Resources

- Goal 1:** Protect wooded areas and wetlands within and surrounding Sunman.
- Goal 2:** Leverage the town's rural nature when marketing to visitors and attracting new residents.

Parks & Recreation

- Goal 1:** Develop year-round events and programming that provide activities for residents of all ages and backgrounds.
- Goal 2:** Improve accessibility and increase users at Sunman Park through physical enhancements and new amenities.

Broadband Access

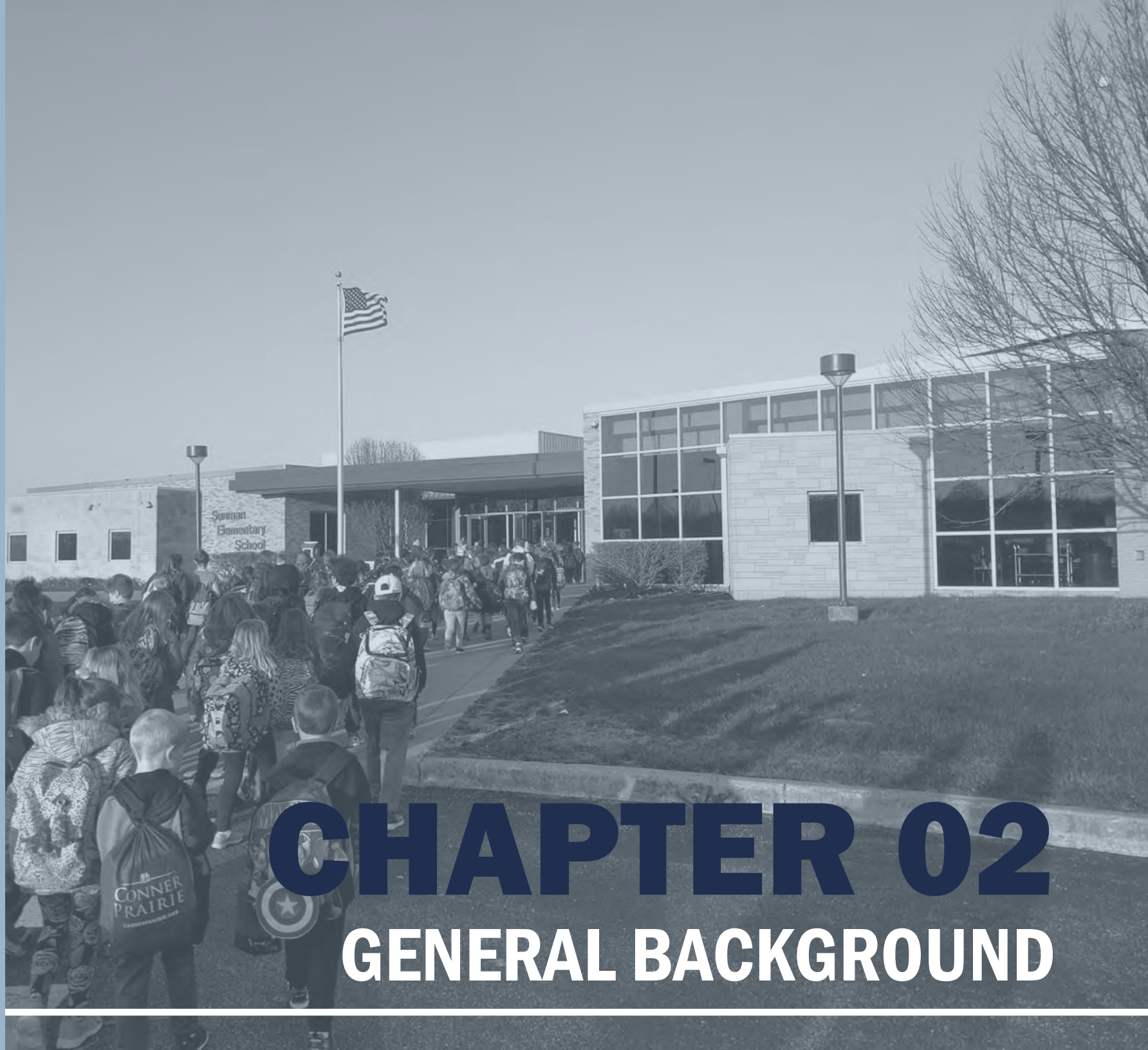
- Goal 1:** Create a space that offers free WIFI and equipment for public internet access.
- Goal 2:** Lay the groundwork for Sunman to become a broadband-ready community.

Historic & Archaeological Resources

- Goal 1:** Develop facade improvement guidelines that ensure building improvements match the surrounding neighborhood character.
- Goal 2:** Assist property owners with the rehabilitation of historic structures and façade improvements along State Road 101 / Meridian Street.

Hazard Mitigation

- Goal 1:** Work with Ripley County on emergency management and hazard mitigation efforts.



CHAPTER 02

GENERAL BACKGROUND



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Sunman, located in southeast Indiana, is one of the seven incorporated communities within Ripley County. Sunman was founded in the mid-19th century when the railroad, linking the town to Lawrenceburg and Cincinnati, was extended through the community. Today, Sunman still sits along major transportation corridors that allow residents to access major markets in the southern Indiana and Ohio region. Sunman has steadily grown in population since 1950, with the only declines occurring from 1980 to 1990 and 2010 to 2020. The largest jump in population occurred from 1960 to 1970, coinciding with the completion of I-74 and the ability of residents to travel more quickly from Sunman to nearby urban centers.

Sunman sits at the intersection of State Road 101 and a rail line linking Indianapolis and Cincinnati. Directly north of the community is an interchange with Interstate 74, which gives the community quick access to multiple regions along the interstate's corridor. Sunman's downtown core runs along Meridian Street (State Road 101) stretching roughly between Vine Street and Fitch Avenue and continuing few blocks along Eastern Avenue. Sunman's downtown core has a mix of commercial and retail businesses not typically seen in a community of its size. Multiple food options, convenience stores, office and service-oriented businesses, and a grocery store are all present within the core, not only filling the needs of current residents but also attracting those from outside the community.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

Sunman's population was 914 people according to the 2020 U.S. Census. The town has experienced a decrease of 135 people (-12.9%) since 2010 but has still shown growth over the last two decades (increase of 13.5% since 2000). Sunman's population decline is opposite of trends seen in Indiana (4.7% increase) and Ripley County (0.6% increase) since 2010, but is similar to other communities in the southern Indiana region, such as Morristown (1.1% decrease) and Taylorsville (5.7% decrease), who showed signs of population loss during the same time frame.

The median age of residents in Sunman is 36 years, lower than the state (37.8 years) and many neighboring communities. While Sunman's median age may be lower than other communities in the region, it has rapidly grown from a median of 29.4 years in 2010, an increase of 22.4%. Sunman's population is largely Caucasian (98.3%) with little to no residents identifying as other racial backgrounds. However, 12.8% of the population identified themselves as being of Hispanic or Latino origin, almost double the number than was reported in 2010 (5.9%).

Approximately 83.8% of Sunman residents over the age of 25 have achieved a high school diploma or higher. While the percentage of those with high school level and higher educational attainment in Sunman is lower than Ripley County (90.2%) and the state (89.3%), it is a similar level to neighboring communities such as Dillsboro (84.5%) and Versailles (84%). Sunman's population with a bachelor's degree and higher follows a similar trend. About 13.3% of Sunman residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, which again is less than Ripley County (19.6%) and Indiana (27.2%), but in line with similarly sized communities in the region.

Housing

Sunman currently has 555 total housing units, an increase of 55 units (10.8%) since 2010. Of the town's housing units, 56.9% are owner-occupied, 25% are renter-occupied, and 18% are vacant. The number of vacant housing units within Sunman increased by 40 units (66.7%) between 2010 and 2020, opposite of Ripley County and Indiana who saw decreases in the number of vacant housing units during the same time.

Family households make up 67.5% of occupied housing units within Sunman, while single-person households account for 20.4% of occupied units. Both types of households have seen slight decreases since 2010, showing a rise in households consisting of two or more unrelated people. The number of households with children under the age of 18 has also experienced a decline since 2010. Dropping from 44.7% of occupied housing units in 2010 to 23.5% of units in 2020.

According to American Community Survey data, the median home value within Sunman is \$141,400, only slightly lower than Ripley County (\$156,400) and Indiana (\$148,900) and higher than other communities such as Versailles (\$129,500), Dillsboro (\$113,200), and Morristown (\$103,800).

Although the median home value provided by census data is often a baseline for housing expenses within a community, the values can often differ from actual market values. According to Zillow Home Sale data, Sunman's median home sale value in 2020 was \$220,438, a 55.9% difference from values reported on the American Community Survey. The median rent within Sunman is \$667, an increase of 21.1% from \$550 in 2010.

Housing affordability within Sunman is determined by a variety of factors including wages, home value and rent increases, household incomes, and local economic pressures. One common rule when determining affordability is the total housing costs of an individual or household should not exceed 30% of their gross monthly income. In Sunman, 25.1% of households with a mortgage are spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs, which is slightly higher than Ripley County (20.9%) and Indiana (19%). On the other hand, only 8.3% of renters in Sunman are spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs, greatly contrasting Ripley County (43.3%) and the state (46.1%). These numbers indicate Sunman is generally an affordable place to live.



Residential and commercial downtown properties. Source: HWC Engineerings



Single-family home in the Whitetail Run subdivision. Source: HWC Engineerings

Economy

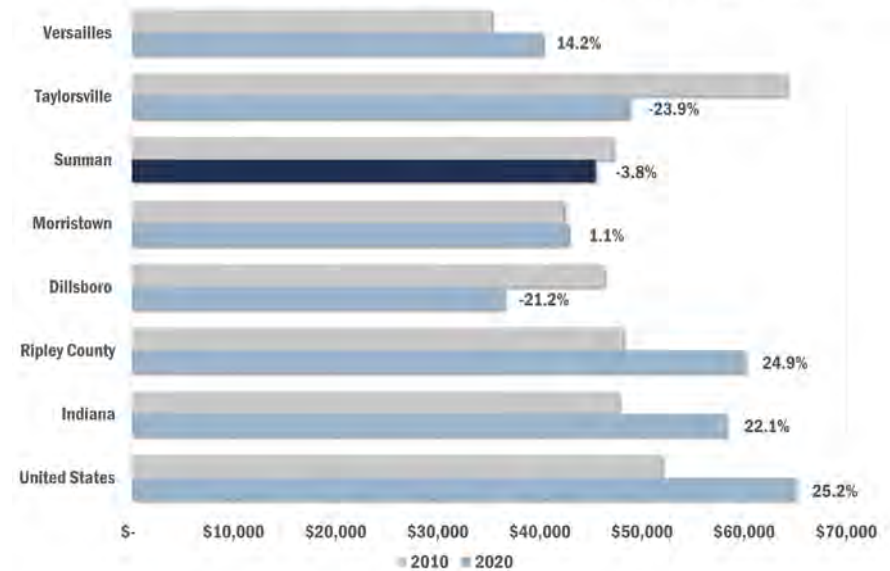
The median household income in Sunman is \$45,417. Although the town's income falls behind Ripley County (\$60,055) and Indiana (\$59,235), it is higher than neighboring communities such as Versailles (\$40,250), Dillsboro (\$36,442), and Morristown (\$42,788). However, Sunman's median household income decreased 3.8% between 2010 and 2020, opposite of the increasing trends seen in Ripley County (24.9%), Indiana (22.1%), and many surrounding communities.

Approximately 65.3% of Sunman's population over the age of 16 are in the workforce, with the majority of those employed working within manufacturing type industries. Manufacturing industries employ 33.6% of Sunman's workforce, with educational services, and health care and social assistance (17%) and retail trade (13.7%) standing as the second and third highest employing industries.

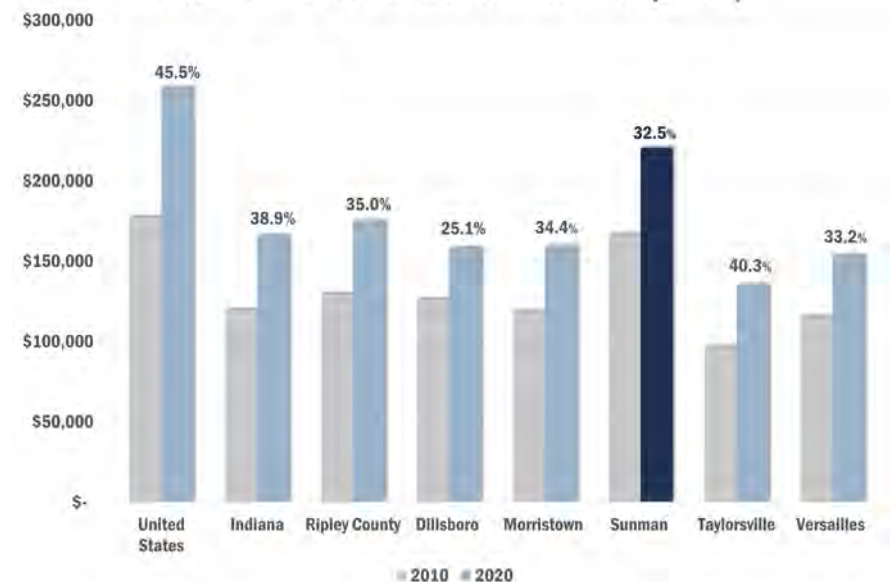
According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Ripley County's 2020 annual unemployment rate was 6.5%, lower than both Indiana (7.2%) and the United States (8.1%). Even though unemployment numbers were skewed for the 2020 year due to COVID-19, Ripley County still had a lower annual unemployment rate when compared to 2010 (10.9%). When looking at 2021 rates, Ripley County's unemployment rate dropped to 2.8% and is still lower than both the state (3.6%) and the national average (5.3%).

Due to Sunman's centralized location between employment hubs and access to major transportation networks many residents work outside of Sunman. About 78.5% of resident's work in a community other than Sunman, while 20.8% work in a county other than Ripley, and 36% work outside of Indiana. This large amount of people commuting outside the community is reflected in Sunman's average commute time of 31.7 minutes, which is higher than Ripley County (28.8 minutes), Indiana (23.9 minutes), and other similar communities. Although many leave Sunman for work, the percentage of residents driving alone to work (82.9%) is lower than other communities of Sunman's size and has higher proportions of those carpooling (8.6%), walking to work (6.8%), and working from home (7.2%).

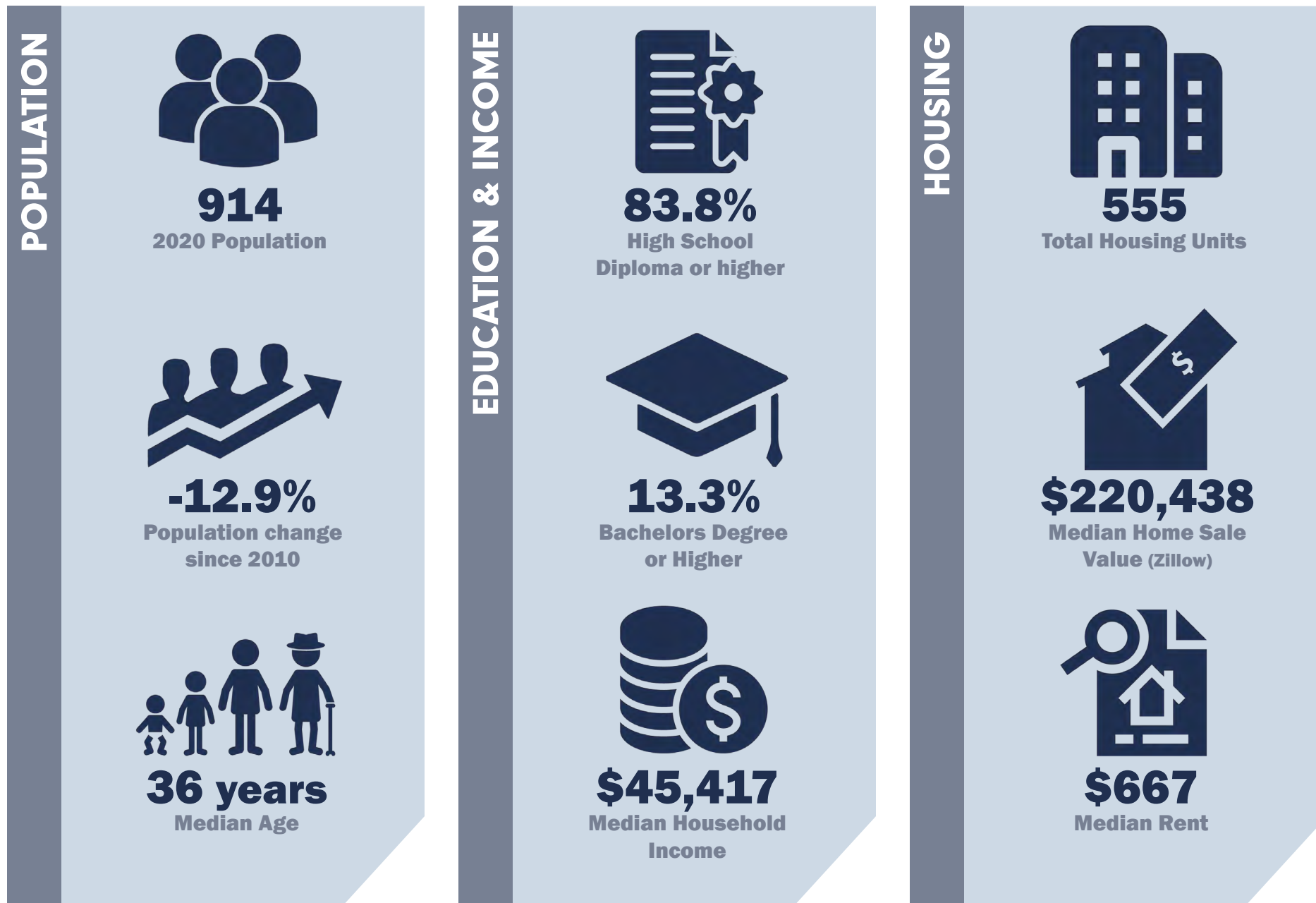
Median Household Income Growth 2010 to 2020 (Census)



Home Sale Value Growth 2010 to 2020 (Zillow)



DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT



HOUSING OCCUPANCY

**56.9%**Owner-Occupied
Housing Units**18%**Vacant Housing
Units**67.5%**

Family Households

EMPLOYMENT

**65.3%**Residents in the
Workforce**33.6%**Employed in
Manufacturing Jobs**2.8%**Ripley County
Unemployment
(BLS 2021)

Businesses in Sunman's downtown core.
Source: HWC Engineering



ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

Sunman Elementary School

Sunman Elementary School is part of the Sunman-Dearborn School Corporation which covers approximately 160 square miles in southeastern Indiana and is hailed as one of the top school systems in the Greater Cincinnati Area. The elementary school has gone through many renovations since the building was first opened in 1961 and has been targeted to receive over \$4 million worth of improvements over the next few years. Schools are often the central pillars of rural communities, acting as major employers, community gathering spaces, and cores of educational attainment. Sunman Elementary had an enrollment of 320 during the 2020-2021 school year, down from 403 students enrolled during the 2010-2011 school year.

Commercial Anchors

Commercial and retail businesses provide several benefits for a community including employment opportunities, entertainment options, and places for residents to fill their daily shopping needs. Sunman has a large number of commercial assets not typically seen in rural community of its size. Stores such as Sunman IGA, Family Dollar, FCN Bank, The Train Station, and several restaurants and bars all help diversify Sunman's offerings and stand as potential partners when developing community-wide programming and placemaking opportunities.



Sunman Elementary School. Source: HWC Engineering



Sunman IGA, the town local grocery store. Source: HWC Engineering



Industrial Anchors

Companies such as the Occasions Group, Enhanced Telecommunications Corporation, Concepts Industrial, Wire Tek, Laudick Trucking, and Weber's Green House serve as anchor industries within Sunman. This variety of companies provide employment opportunities for residents and helps diversify the town's tax base. While these types of businesses may not interact with the public as much as their retail counterparts, they can support their community in a variety of ways and assist local municipalities when implementing placemaking initiatives.

Religious Institutions

Religious institutions can act as major pillars of support within rural communities, often providing daycare and preschool facilities, operating food banks, or supporting local programs and events within their community. Sunman Community Church and First Southern Baptist Church are the largest religious institutions within town limits. Several other churches are located nearby in unincorporated Ripley County.



Industrial property near downtown. Source: Concepts Industrial Assets Disposal

County-wide Anchor Institutions

Ripley County Community Foundation

Community foundations are non-profit entities that support communities through unique programming and grant opportunities. The Ripley County Community Foundation has granted over \$15 million back into the community since its creation in 1997, supporting local businesses, organizations, and individuals. The foundation focuses on four key service areas: arts and culture; business and entrepreneurship; education, health and well-being; and environment and natural resources.

Ripley County EDC

Facilitating business expansion and new economic development activities are the primary mission of the Ripley County Economic Development Corporation. The EDC focuses on business recruitment and retention, targeted marketing and public relations, and supporting entrepreneurship within Ripley County. Part of marketing efforts include identifying available industrial sites and buildings, two of which are in or near Sunman.

Ripley County Chamber of Commerce

The Ripley County Chamber of Commerce is based in Versailles and supports a variety of programming within the community including business training, marketing and advertisement, referral services, and gift certificate programs. There are over 200 Ripley County businesses and organizations who are members of the chamber, with board members from the various Ripley County city's and towns. However, Sunman does not currently have any residents or businesses sitting on the chamber's board.



CHAPTER 03

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

VN OF SUNMAN
ENSIVE PLAN



PLANNING COMMITTEE

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Sharron Bennett, Town Council

Julie Brock, Park Board

Perry Cassidy, Utilities Superintendent

Victor Cisneros, Community Leader

Carla Hacker, FCN Bank, Southeastern Indiana Development Corporation

Jessica Hackman, Community Leader

Mark Horstman, Ripley County Board of Commissioners

Wayne Jenner, St. John Lutheran Church, Former Town Council

Gary Norman, Ripley County Economic Development Corporation

Mike Norman, Sunman-Dearborn Community School Board

Kara Schott, Sunman Revitalization Initiative

Cheryl Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer

ROLES OF THE COMMITTEE

A comprehensive planning committee was formed at the beginning of the planning process from key members of the community who represented the town's residents, businesses, government, and other unique stakeholders of Sunman. Committee members had several tasks during the process including identifying key strengths and challenges in Sunman, providing feedback on draft documents, attending the various public meetings during the process, and acting as champions of the plan. Three separate meetings were held exclusively with the comprehensive planning committee during the creation of the plan, with email correspondences occurring throughout the process.



Comprehensive Planning Committee discussing the goals and strategies of the draft plan. Source: HWC Engineering



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Meeting 1

The kick-off comprehensive planning committee meeting was held on October 6, 2020 at the Campbell Building from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm. This meeting introduced the consulting team and the overall planning process to the comprehensive planning committee, answering any questions committee members had about the process, community, engagement, or what the final product will include. The committee discussed what they would like the plan to accomplish, how they would define success, the current challenges facing Sunman, and their initial feedback after reviewing the demographic report.

Meeting 2

The second comprehensive planning committee meeting was held on January 18, 2023. The main goal of this meeting was to begin prioritizing the challenges and opportunities heard during public engagement into specific plan elements. These priorities began to shape Sunman's vision, goals, and strategies for the community to focus on over the next ten years. The comprehensive planning committee planned for a short follow-up meeting over Zoom to further discuss some of the major ideas and challenges for the town.

Meeting 3

The final comprehensive planning committee meeting took place on April 12, 2023 at the Campbell Building from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm. Discussion at the meeting primarily revolved around the draft plan sent to the committee ahead of time to review, specifically the goals, strategies, and implementation projects. The committee made a number of suggestions that would strengthen the plan's recommendations including placing a higher emphasis on water infrastructure repair, integrating text about the Sunman History Museum, and expanding hazard mitigation strategies for future disaster recovery.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public Workshop

The Public Workshop was held on November 29th from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm in the Campbell Building at Sunman Community Park. The workshop invited residents and business owners to attend and complete a variety of activities to help guide future growth and development strategies for the community. These activities asked participants to describe their big ideas for Sunman's future, as well as perceived community assets and potential challenges for future growth. The workshop also included a short presentation that summarized why Sunman needs a plan for future development and outlined the process to create a comprehensive plan. Approximately 40 people attended and provided input at the meeting.

Online Survey

An online survey was available for those living in and around Sunman to complete if they were unable to attend the Public Workshop or wished to provide additional input. The survey was available from November 2022 to January 2023 and received a total of 100 responses. The responses received from the survey supported the big ideas and community concerns heard during initial discussions with the comprehensive planning committee and at the Public Workshop.

Focus Group Meetings

The town held a series of focus group meetings to dive into how the community should manage future growth and investment. The meetings were meant to expand on the big ideas and challenges identified at the community workshop. There were several individuals specifically invited to the meetings, such as local business leaders and town utility staff, but the general public was encouraged to attend as well. Three hour-long meetings were held on January 11, 2023, between 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm and had limited attendance.

Public Open House

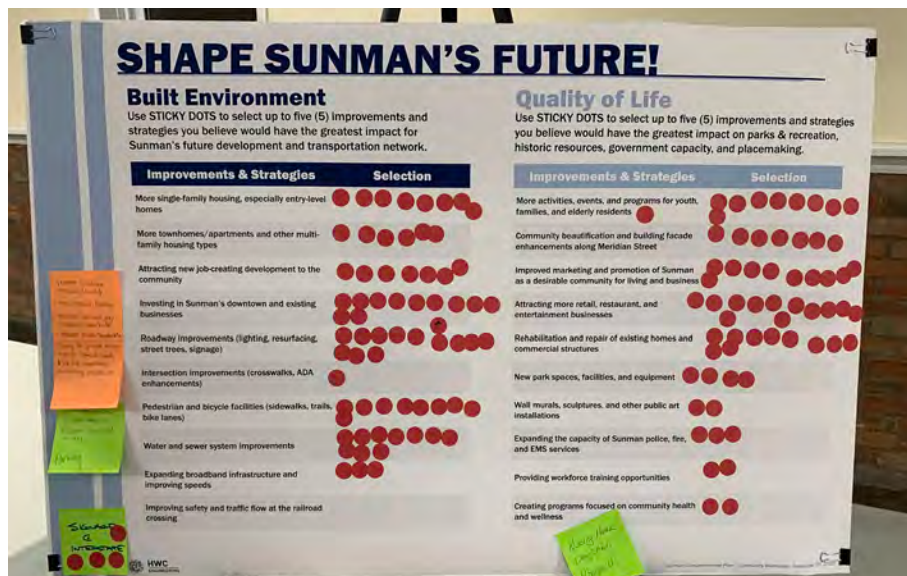
Sunman held a Public Open House on February 22nd from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm in the Campbell Building at Sunman Community Park. The open house helped facilitate discussions with community members on a set of draft goals and strategies for the Sunman Comprehensive Plan. The goals and strategies were based on information and feedback gained from prior community engagement events. Participants were asked to vote on what goal they felt was most important for Sunman for each of the 13 planning topics. Not only was the discussion meant to further refine the plan's material, but it also identified specific projects and policies town leaders should prioritize in the future. Approximately 35 people attended and provided input at the open house.

Adoption Meeting

The plan was presented to the Town Council at a public hearing on August 17, 2023.



Participants at the Public Workshop. Source: HWC Engineering



Input board on Quality of Place at the Public Workshop. Source: HWC Engineering



Plan recommendations were presented at the May 18, 2023 Town Council meeting. Source: HWC Engineering



CHAPTER 04

LAND USE



VISION FOR LAND USE

“Sunman will balance future residential, commercial, and industrial needs while maintaining a rural atmosphere.”

INTRODUCTION

Sunman has a variety of land uses not typically seen in rural communities of its size, ranging from large industrial sites to numerous retail and commercial options, and an assortment of single and multi-family residential offerings. Sunman’s land use pattern has been influenced by shifting transportation corridors over the years, first growing around the railroad and shifting as state roads and interstates expanded the network in and around the community. The shift in transportation corridors has led to industrial growth at the far ends of town limits and a commercial hub that serves both Ripley and Dearborn County residents.

While Sunman’s town council has a hand in land use decisions within the community, decisions are also overseen by the Ripley County Area Plan Commission (APC). The APC handles zoning and development related requests for all incorporated and unincorporated communities within Ripley County with the exception of Batesville. Property owners present land use related requests to the APC who then make a recommendation to the Sunman Town Council for the approval of changes in zoning or development plans.

KEY FINDINGS

- Sunman has a large amount of annexed land along major roadways currently being used for agricultural purposes.
- Commercial buildings in the downtown core are being converted to residential units, even along State Road 101 / Meridian Street.
- Sunman has the ability to capture growth north along State Road 101 towards Penntown through a planned sewer extension.
- The downtown core should remain the center of infill and development efforts targeting commercial and residential land uses.
- The community has properties they would like to annex but lack a concrete plan for completion.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sunman is located along State Road 101, just two and a half miles south of Interstate 74, and is a hub for employment and commercial activity in northeast Ripley County. South Meridian Street (SR 101) is the main transportation corridor throughout the town, intersected by Eastern Avenue and the railroad. This intersection holds the downtown core, which provides a majority of daily necessities and entertainment options for town residents and those living in the surrounding region. Amenities include multiple convenience stores, a grocery store, restaurants, office spaces, the post office, a community park, and a variety of other businesses unique to the community.

South of the main intersection lies Industrial Asset Disposal Incorporated one of town's industrial anchors that specializes in making specialized and discontinued machined parts. There are multiple residential uses within this area including single-family housing, an apartment building, and a mobile home park. Heading east from the downtown core along Eastern Avenue, there lies additional commercial and residential development, with a housing subdivision sitting within town limits along County Line Road.

The areas north of town hold two more of Sunman's anchor institutions, including Sunman Elementary School, and follows State Road 101 to Penntown and the interchange. Areas within town limits to the north are largely agricultural and undeveloped land which could be suitable for various types of development in the future.

The Existing Land Use Map on the following page shows how different land uses are organized across the community.

PUBLIC INPUT

- Public Workshop participants identified areas on the northern edge of the community and south near existing warehouses for new industrial development.
- Over 68% of survey respondents stated the downtown core should be the target for new development and investment.
- Although not in town limits, residents identified the I-74 interchange at the Public Workshop as a suitable location for new development that would positively impact Sunman.
- Participants commented at the Public Workshop that areas on the east of town should remain primarily residential.
- Responds to the online survey and Public Open House agreed there should be some form of policy in place that limits the conversion of first-floor commercial spaces to residential units.

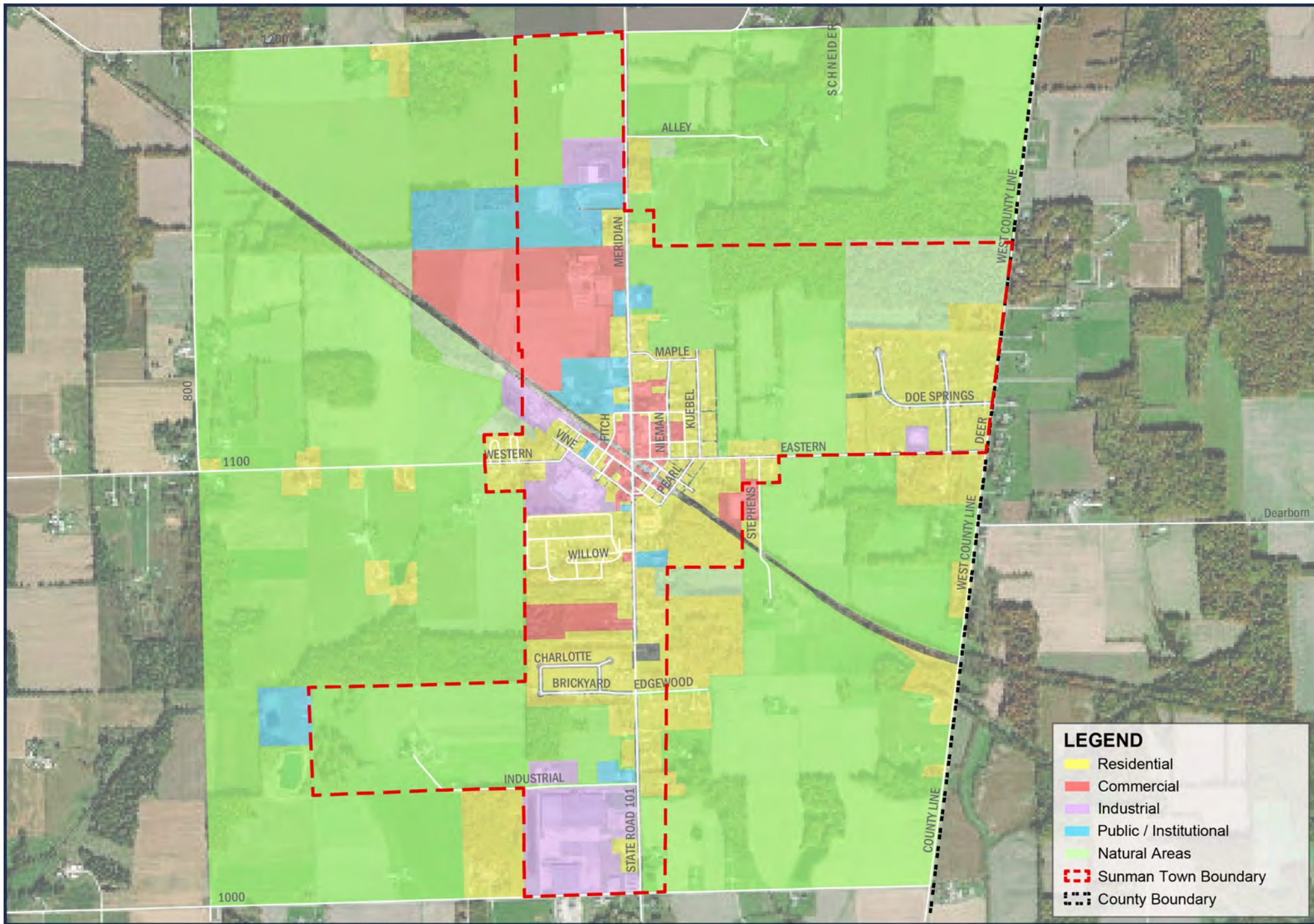


Figure 4.1: Existing Land Use

SCALE: 1" = 1,500'





FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Purpose

Land use plans are intended to provide guidance to community leaders and elected officials when determining the suitability of zoning changes and other requests for development. The future land use map was created through examination of existing land use patterns, current zoning districts, utility service areas, environmental features, and community input. In many instances, the existing land use is the desired future use. However, there are some areas where changes in land use are anticipated as farm properties are developed for the first time or vacant and under-utilized properties may be redeveloped. Good land use planning ensures a strong tax base, creates a mix of uses across the community, promotes responsible infrastructure investment, and increases the quality of life for citizens.

Future Land Use Classifications

The following describe the base characteristics of future land use classifications for Sunman's Future Land Use Map. The map identifies desired land uses that support the community's vision for future growth and development. This is not a zoning map, and does not legally bind a property to its identified land use. It is only a tool for elected and appointed officials to use when making future zoning and development decisions.

Single-Family Residential

The single-family residential classification consist of detached, single-family homes which can include estates, residential subdivisions of varying lot sizes, and residential uses surrounding the downtown core. Densities can range anywhere between one unit per acre to six units per acre, all with access to sewer and water services.

Multi-Family Residential

The multi-family residential classification consists of multi-family structures including duplexes, townhomes, apartments, and condominiums most typically seen within a downtown core or areas near community amenities and services. Densities can range anywhere from six to twelve units per acre, and must have access to sewer and water services.

General Commercial

The general commercial classification is comprised of developments that serve the surrounding neighborhoods and region such as professional offices, service-oriented retail, entertainment, restaurants, gas stations, and other similar business types. These uses may have higher daily vehicular traffic and sit adjacent to major roadways.

Downtown Mixed-Use

Mixed commercial, residential, and public uses located directly within Sunman's downtown core make up the downtown mixed-use classification. These uses often overlap and may include structures with separate uses on each floor. This area holds the densest development and promotes walkability between services and nearby residential neighborhoods.

Industrial

Light to heavy industrial uses that may hold any variety of warehousing, manufacturing, assembly, transportation, and related services are located in the industrial classification. Uses producing high amounts of noise, odor, runoff, or other impacts to neighboring properties are discouraged.

Public/Institutional

The public/institutional classification is any land designated for public services, government operations, and government facilities including Town Hall, fire and police stations, schools, churches, libraries, or cemeteries.

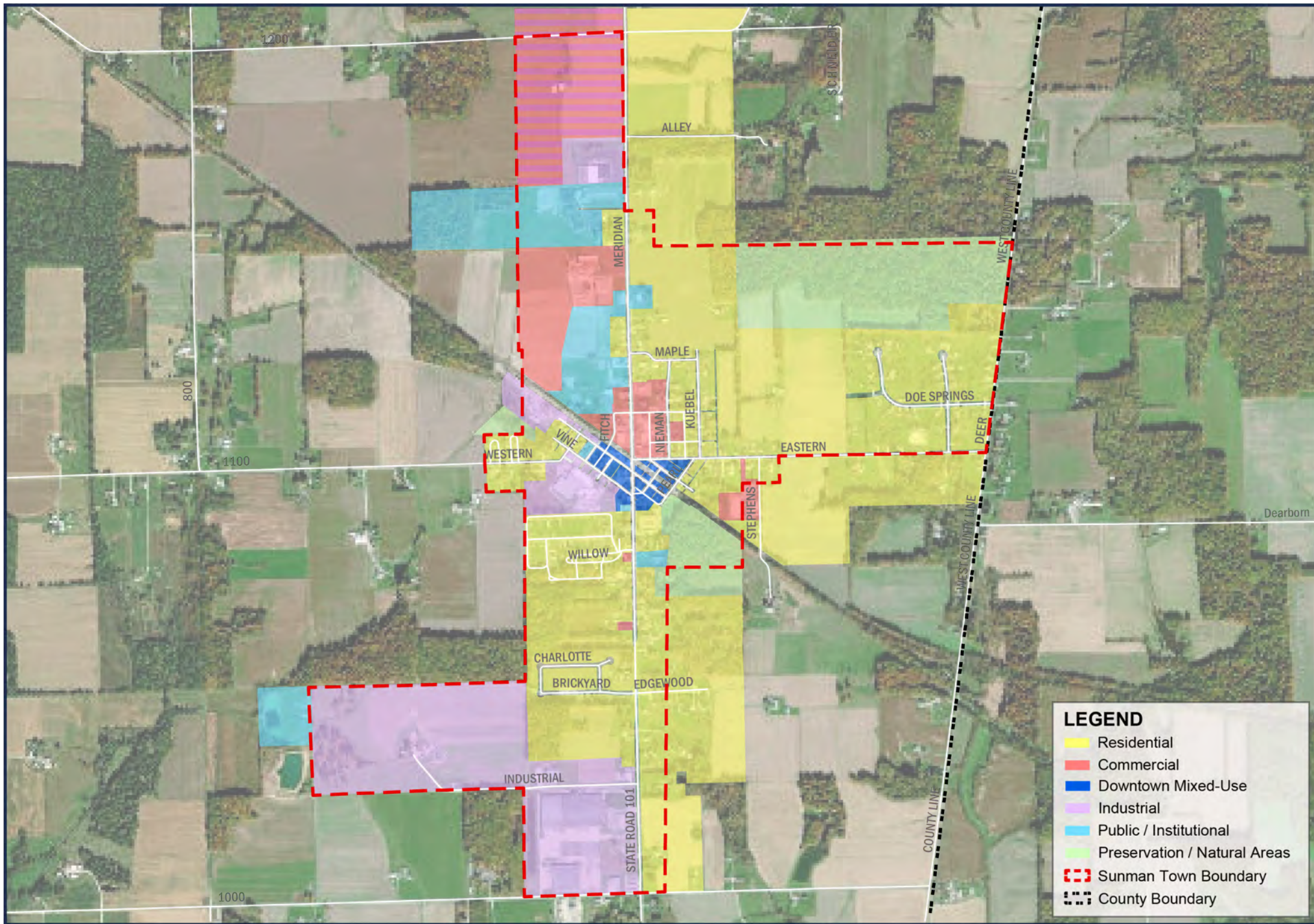


Figure 4.2: Future Land Use

SCALE: 1" = 1,500'



GOAL 1

Limit the ground floor of existing commercial buildings to commercial uses only along State Road 101 / Meridian Street.

Sunman's increase in housing units since 2010 is due to new, single-family housing construction but also the conversion of vacant downtown buildings to residential units. While new housing is necessary for Sunman's growth, residents are worried converting existing ground floor commercial spaces to residential uses will deter potential businesses looking to relocate or expand in the community. Additionally, residential units located on the ground floors of these buildings can potentially detract from the character of Sunman's commercial core and streetscape. Limiting uses on the certain floors of existing commercial structures is not a new trend for towns across the state and can be achieved through an amendment to the zoning ordinance.

Strategy 1: Work with the Area Plan Commission and advocate for changes to the county zoning ordinance or the creation of an overlay that limits residential uses to upper stories in commercial districts.

An amendment to existing zoning ordinances would be the simplest way for Sunman to manage uses in downtown structures. This could be integrated into existing commercial districts or could become a new zoning district specifically targeting the downtown cores of Ripley County. Sunman leadership should begin conversations with the Area Plan Commission to explain the current conflicts and discuss next steps, as well as begin researching how similar communities across the state have addressed the issue and what could be successful in Sunman.



Vacant storefronts along Meridian Street. Source: HWC Engineering.



GOAL 2

Direct new commercial and residential development and redevelopment to the downtown core and north towards Penntown along State Road 101 / Meridian Street.

Development tends to expand outward from the center of a community towards land that is more accessible with fewer limitations. In Sunman this can be seen with recent residential subdivisions on the edge of town limits and single-family homes being built along county roads. While any new development around the community is certainly positive, outward growth can sometimes mean limited new investments and redevelopment in existing neighborhoods and the downtown. As Sunman works to attract new businesses and residential development, efforts should be focused in the downtown core, which has existing infrastructure and amenities, and along State Road 101 where the upcoming sewer expansion can be leveraged to attract higher-intensity developments.

Strategy 1: Develop a joint land use plan with Ripley County to address future development needs along SR 101 as the sewer is extended.

Sunman should coordinate with Ripley County to create a development plan for the areas north of Sunman along State Road 101 that identifies preferred land uses and development types along the corridor. This plan should be used by both the Area Plan Commission and Sunman Town Council when considering future zoning requests and development plans.

Strategy 2: Use the planned sewer extension as an incentive to attract preferred development to the corridor.

Utility incentives will be a tool available for Sunman to utilize to attract developers to the State Road 101 corridor after the upcoming sewer extension. Installing sewer along the highway will allow for more dense and intensive construction, while giving Sunman the ability to better manage allowed development types.

GOAL 3

Reference the Future Land Use Map when making zoning and development decisions.

Sunman's Town Council and staff should be using the Future Land Use Map when making land use decisions within the community. The map identifies what land uses are desired throughout the community based on existing zoning and future development needs. However, it is not a rigid guide and can be diverted from if a type of development or land use conforms with existing neighborhood character and fits a need within Sunman. This map should also be used by Ripley County governmental bodies who make land use based decisions, as it gives decision-makers who live outside the community and idea of Sunman's vision for growth and development. It should also be used as a tool when identifying parcels to annex based on future growth patterns, such as locations to be served by utilities or those with commercial, industrial, or residential potential.

Strategy 1: Ensure the Area Plan Commission is referencing the updated Future Land Use Map when considering zoning changes and development plans.

County decision makers should be working towards the same goals as the Sunman Town Council in regards to future growth in and development around the community. With adoption of the Sunman Comprehensive Plan, the Ripley County Area Plan Commission should begin using Sunman's new Future Land Use Map for zoning and development requests within town limits or when considering adjacent developments that would impact Sunman.

Strategy 2: Educate town council and staff on how to best utilize the Future Land Use Map when approving development plans and zoning change requests.

Having a Future Land Use Map is ineffective if local leadership and staff do not know how it should be used. Education for the town council, staff, and property owners on how to best use the Future Land Use Map and Sunman Comprehensive Plan for land use decisions making should be an ongoing effort in Sunman. There are multiple free educational resources available to communities on how to use land use mapping and comprehensive plans effectively. Indiana-APA and the Citizens Planning Guide are two such resources.



Traveling south along State Road 101 through Penntown towards Sunman. Source: HWC Engineering.



IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: WORK WITH RIPLEY COUNTY STAFF AND THE AREA PLAN COMMISSION TO REVIEW AND AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE AND ZONING MAP TO BETTER SUPPORT THE GOALS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

Action Items

Present the comprehensive plan to County staff and leadership.

Identify differences between current zoning of property within town and desired future use, and ensure property owners are aware of these differences.

Evaluate opportunities to amend the zoning and subdivision control ordinance that will result in development and redevelopment projects that support the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Draft and adopt amendments in conjunction with Ripley County and the Area Plan Commission.

Ensure planning and zoning documents and maps are accessible on town and county websites and that digital documents are user-friendly and easy to navigate.

Conduct outreach and education with developers, realtors, and community members about zoning changes.

PROJECT 2: DEVELOP A JOINT LAND USE PLAN WITH RIPLEY COUNTY FOR THE SR 101 CORRIDOR.

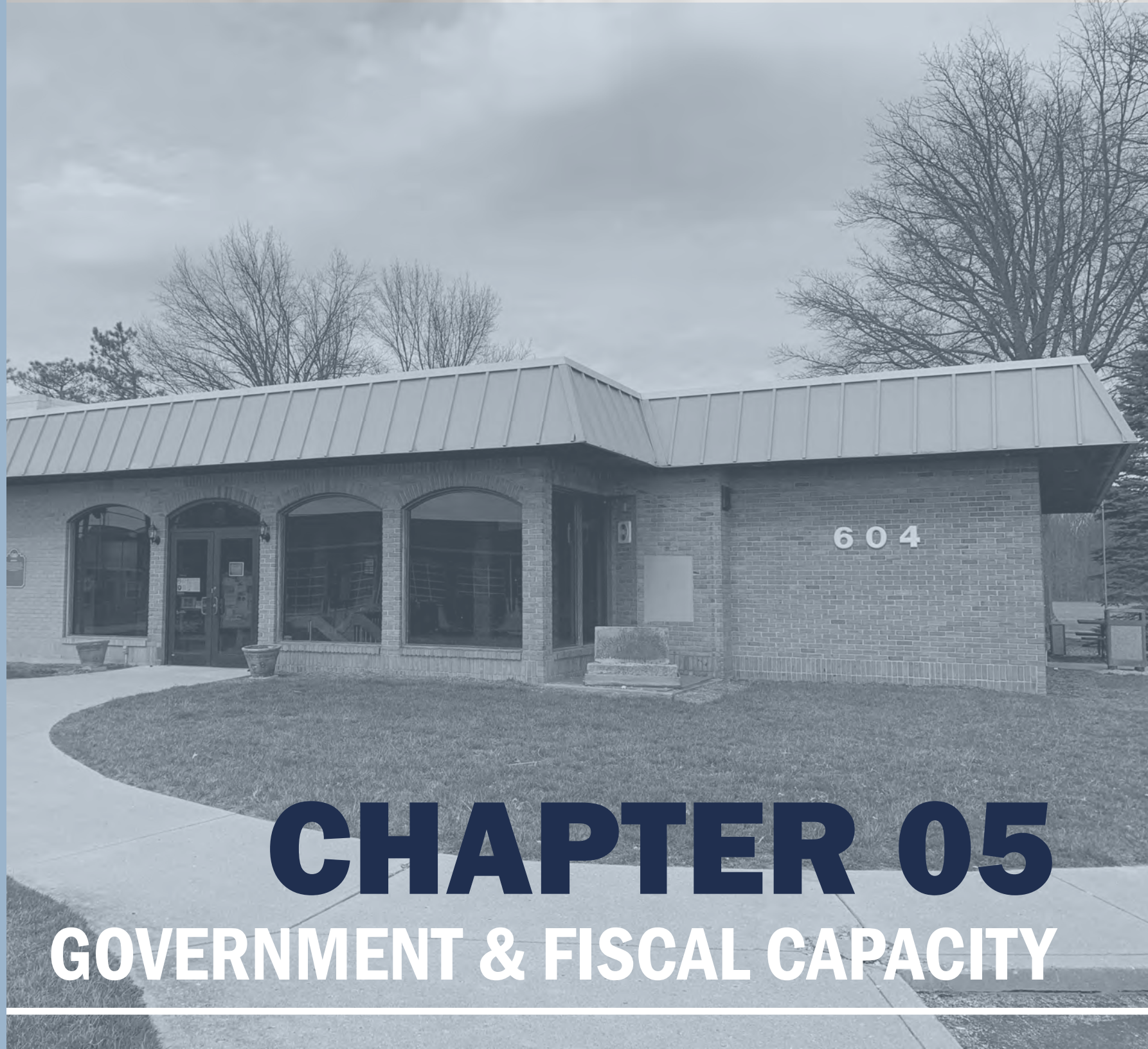
Action Items

Create a project steering committee that includes representatives from Ripley County, Penntown, Sunman, and Milan.

Work with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) to understand plans for the existing SR 101 corridor as well as the Link 101 project and planned extension through Dearborn, Ohio, and Switzerland Counties.

Conduct community engagement to develop a plan vision and goals for land use, transportation, and annexation along the corridor.

Create the land use plan and have it adopted by each jurisdiction to demonstrate a unified vision for development, preservation, and safety along SR 101 through Ripley County.



CHAPTER 05

GOVERNMENT & FISCAL CAPACITY



VISION FOR GOVERNMENT & FISCAL CAPACITY

“Sunman will enhance communication with residents and expand functional capabilities in all town departments.”

INTRODUCTION

Sunman’s governmental capacity plays a direct role in the community’s potential for growth in the future and includes fiscal considerations, staffing, and relationships with residents. Government and fiscal capacity are two factors many shrinking rural communities across Indiana must address as declining populations can limit a municipality’s ability to provide needed services, whether it is due to loss in revenue or because no one is available to fill key roles as current staff retires or moves to other positions.

Identifying the challenges Sunman is facing from a capacity standpoint is not only important in insuring governmental activities and services can continue at adequate levels of service, but also to guarantee the goals and strategies within the Sunman Comprehensive Plan can be carried out effectively.

KEY FINDINGS

- Sunman leadership has introduced new ways they communicate with the public, but residents still feel as they are not receiving proper updates and information.
- Emergency services within Sunman are reliable, but may need expansions if the surrounding region experiences growth.
- Increased collaboration between Sunman’s staff and Ripley County government will be needed to tackle certain challenges within the community.
- Current staffing is able to adequately manage administrative and functional tasks on a day to day basis, but may need to consider new hires as town infrastructure is extended.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sunman has four full-time staff members and four elected officials that oversee the daily operations of the community. The town's staff consists of a marshal, utility supervisor, and utility laborer. The town council consists of three members who are elected on a four-year cycle and serve as the legislative and fiscal body of the community, with the responsibility of passing ordinances, land use decisions, and budget issues. The town's clerk-treasurer is also an elected position and supports both general town functions and the town council. Sunman is under the planning jurisdiction of the Ripley County Plan Commission, and has historically fallen under the Area Comprehensive Plan for the county in regards to land use and development guidance.

According to published cash and investment records on the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) Gateway, Sunman had a net positive cash balance during 2021. The town's receipts for the year totaled \$1,996,303 while total disbursements totaled \$1,857,602. Sunman's total cash balance increased from \$1,550,395 at the beginning of January to \$1,689,096 at the end of December.

There are four separate departments within Sunman including police, parks & recreation, utilities, and fire and EMS. The Sunman Park Board oversees maintenance and improvements of park space, as well as programming, events, and rentals within Sunman Community Park. Sunman Utilities manages water and sanitation services within the community, with some coverage extending past town limits. While the town has its own police department, both fire and EMS services are contracted through volunteer departments. Sunman Rural Fire Department and Sunman Area Life Squad serve the immediate area as well as nearby communities in Ripley, Dearborn, and Franklin County.

In addition to the town's departments, there are three local organizations that expand governmental capacity for Sunman. The Sunman Revitalizations Initiative is a group of citizens and business leaders working to enable community development and rehabilitation, Sunman's Beautification Committee is a group dedicated to maintaining all plants and decorative items within public spaces, and the Sunman Food Pantry services local families within the greater community.



Sunman Rural Fire Department. Source: HWC Engineering

PUBLIC INPUT

- Over 45% of respondents to the online survey stated they did not believe Sunman leadership affectively communicate information to the public or were transparent with decision making.
- The Public Open House identified the public's strong commitment for continued support of local emergency services such as police, fire, and EMS.
- Residents identified property maintenance and ordinance violations as concerns for residential properties near downtown and along State Road 101.
- Approximately 61% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that community services such as water, trash pick-up, and sewer adequately serve their needs.
- The online survey found that existing government buildings and facilities are generally in good conditions but may need updates in the near future.



Sunman Town Hall. Source: HWC Engineering



GOAL 1

Continue to ensure future facility, infrastructure, and programmatic costs are integrated into annual budgets.

The majority of physical improvements and programming costs within rural communities such as Sunman are dictated by their annual budgets. An annual budget dictates the number of staff in a community, what types of community services and facilities are available to residents, infrastructure maintenance, and all other services funded directly by the municipality. As Sunman focuses on future growth, town leadership needs to ensure future projects that expand community capacity to better serve new residents and businesses are integrated into the town's budget. Even if a project or program is not set to begin for several years, having them identified helps guide future decision making when new funds are gained or existing funds are re-appropriated.

Strategy 1: Create a capital projects list tied to the annual budget with potential funding sources and timelines that is annually reassessed and updated.

A capital projects list should be developed for Sunman that identifies all scheduled and potential capital projects and equipment needed by Sunman over the next five years. Each item can have a brief description, include total costs, a timeline for completion, funding sources, and who is responsible. This list should be used to influence the town's annual budget and when deciding how to allocate future grant funding. The project list should be assessed annually to add new projects and remove those which were completed.



GOAL 2

Address capacity concerns with Sunman's Police Department to meet community level-of-service expectations.

Sunman's current police force of a single town marshal and two reserve members serve over 1,000 people in town and the surrounding region. While rural communities can exhibit lower crime rates than urban areas, their departments are stretched over larger geographic areas with full-time members sometimes lacking support staff and equipment when compared to their city counterparts. If Sunman begins to take on new residents and businesses, the town's current police department will need additional staff, equipment, and facilities in order to continue providing safe and reliable service for the community.

Strategy 1: Dedicate funds to hire additional officers.

Town leadership should consider appropriating funding for a new, full-time deputy or officer. If the town's annual budget does not show room for an added payroll a municipal finance firm could be hired to evaluate the budget and re-appropriate funds if an officer is deemed necessary as soon as possible.

Strategy 2: Identify potential facility and equipment needs.

Sunman's police department should identify needed facility improvements and equipment purchases on an annual basis and report their findings to town leadership. These should be integrated into the town's capital projects list as appropriate, complete with potential outside funding sources and grants.



Sunman Police cruiser. Source: HWC Engineering

GOAL 3

Continue to improve communication between the town government, county government, residents, and businesses.

Sunman leadership and staff quickly moved to improve communications during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure residents could remain up to date on news and policy decisions. Although several online and print mediums are now available, residents still feel as though there could be a higher level of transparency, not only between the town and residents but between the town and Ripley County organizations as well. Improved communications between Sunman's government and residents can lead to higher levels of community involvement as well as greater support for new projects and programs the town wants to implement in the future.

Strategy 1: Ensure Sunman is represented on county-wide boards and commissions.

Multiple county-wide organizations set policy in Sunman or provide assistance to residents and businesses. However, Sunman is underrepresented on the boards in many of these organizations. Representation can help Sunman vocalize the needs of residents and their ideas for Ripley County as a whole.

Strategy 2: Use electronic message boards, social media, and sewer bills to spread community news and updates.

While social media and online outlets are quickly becoming the primary way for communities to reach their residents, physical options are also needed. Communicating through as many mediums as possible can help community leaders reach the maximum number of residents and businesses in the area.



Town monument electronic message board. Source: Electro-matic Visual

IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: CREATE A CAPITAL PROJECTS LIST THAT LOOKS FIVE YEARS INTO THE FUTURE.

Action Items

Develop a list of needed capital projects, equipment purchases, and major studies needed for the town in the next five years.

Determine cost estimates and timetables for each project, purchase, and study.

Prioritize the list of projects.

Identify potential funding options and develop a financing plan for each project.

Update the list on an annual basis, to remove completed projects, reflect changing priorities, and add new projects as needed.

PROJECT 2: SPREAD TOWN NEWS USING NEW PHYSICAL AND ELECTRONIC MEDIUMS.

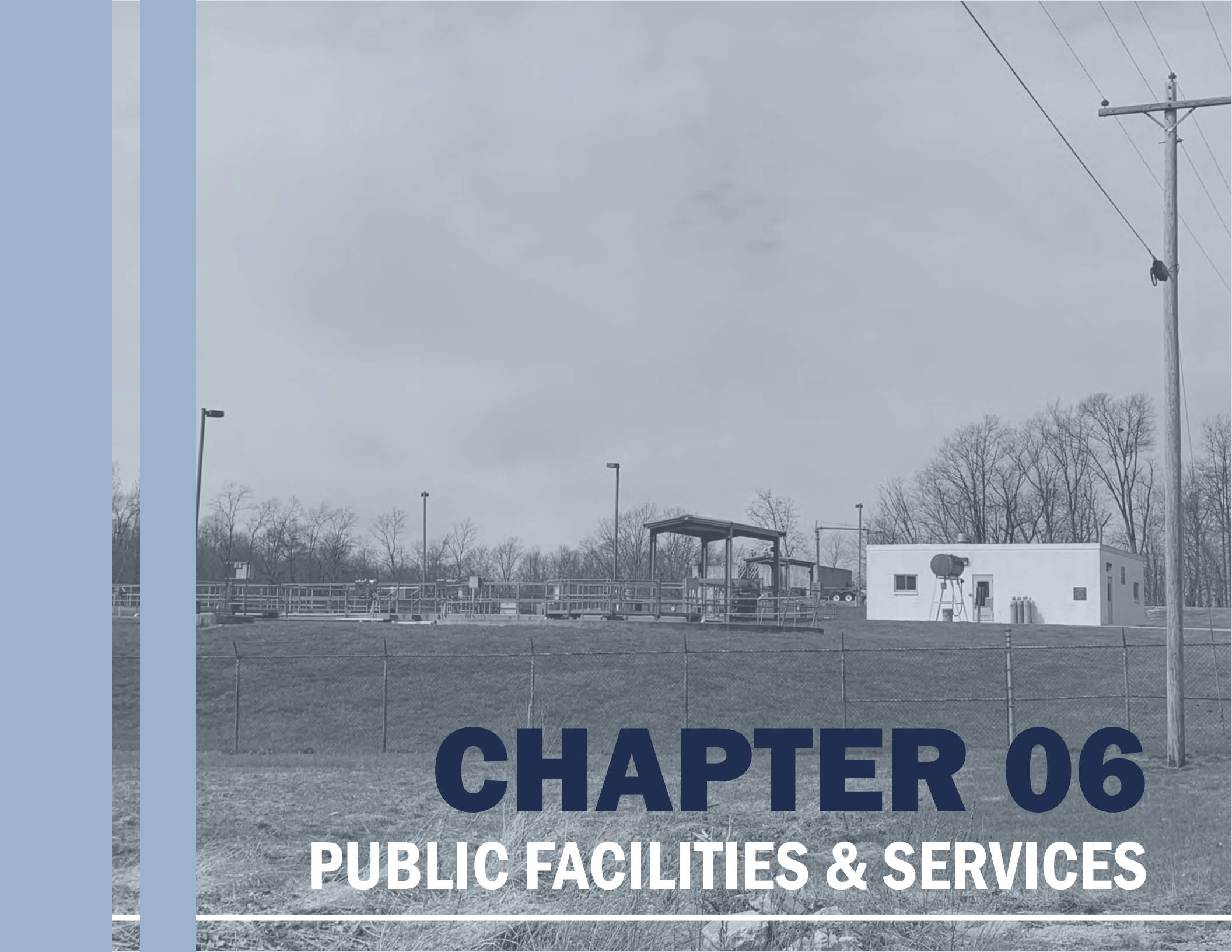
Action Items

Determine the communication mechanisms needed to reach a broad range of town residents and business owners.

Create a communications plan detailing how each communications mechanism will be used to share important news.

Use the town website, social media accounts, utility bills, other print media, and signage in implementing the communications plan.

Periodically evaluate what is and is not working, and if there are new technologies or opportunities to better share news.



CHAPTER 06

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES



VISION FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

“Sunman will continue to provide quality services and strive to enhance community facilities and amenities.”

INTRODUCTION

Public infrastructure and services are essential for Sunman’s ability to support future development and growth. The ability to adequately provide water, sewer, and emergency services is not only a point of attraction for new residents and businesses, but ensures the safety and prosperity of those already within the community as well. These services also include the community events and programming managed by the town and local organizations. While the town does an excellent job providing services and maintaining facilities in a fiscally responsible manner at present, planning for additional facility and service enhancements is paramount for Sunman’s future success.

KEY FINDINGS

- The town is planning to extend sewer along State Road 101 towards the State Road 46 intersection in Penntown.
- The wastewater treatment plant has capacity to handle new development, equal to the wastewater that would be generated by approximately 300 new homes. However, the sewer lift station and equipment at the treatment plant are in need of improvement or replacement.
- On-going efforts to reduce inflow and infiltration into the Town’s sewer system will also increase wastewater treatment capacity.
- The water plant and accompanying infrastructure will need improvements to handle new growth and development.
- Sunman identified projects related to water and wastewater improvements when it applied for funds through the State Water Infrastructure Fund (SWIF) program in 2021.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sunman is committed to providing high quality public services and amenities for its residents and businesses. The town continually strives to ensure the needs of all departments are properly met, with investments to sewer infrastructure being the next major project.

Police Department

The Sunman Police Department is located in the town hall building and currently has one marshal and two reserve officers. The town's police department responds to calls within and directly surrounding Sunman covering over 1,000 residents. While the department is not in drastic need of new equipment or staff, as Sunman continues to grow there will be a need for investments to ensure adequate service levels.

Sunman Rural Fire Department

The Sunman Rural Fire Department serves the town and surrounding communities within Ripley, Dearborn, and Franklin County. This is a all-volunteer fire department. The fire department has contracts with Sunman and the surrounding townships for emergency and fire protection services. The department has a fleet of eight vehicles and a staff of 25.

Sunman Area Life Squad (EMS)

The Sunman Area Life Squad is the EMS organization in Sunman, covering the needs of the town and large portions of the surrounding region.

Sunman Water and Sanitation

Sunman Water and Sanitation is run by a three member team that oversee water, wastewater, and trash pickup as well as the billing for each service. The wastewater treatment plant is southwest of town off County Road 1000N and the water plant is south of Eastern Avenue near County Line Road. Both plants are able to adequately address current needs but will need updates to safely handle higher levels of development.

Sunman Park Board

Parks and recreational amenities in Sunman are managed by a four-person board. The Sunman Park Board is dedicated to providing quality recreation and park experiences that are accessible, connect people with the outdoors, and provide an opportunity to play for all ages and abilities.

PUBLIC INPUT

- Over 65% of Public Open House participants believed replacing aging and outdated equipment at the wastewater treatment plant should be a high priority for the town moving forward.
- According to staff, the wastewater treatment plant has capacity to handle new development but will need major updates in the near future.
- Residents found current emergency services to be adequate and advocated for additional funding and support for the groups.
- Wastewater treatment plant capacity levels were discussed during focus group meetings, the plant averages 225,000 gallons per day (GPD) which increased during heavy rains to approximately 500,000 GPD.

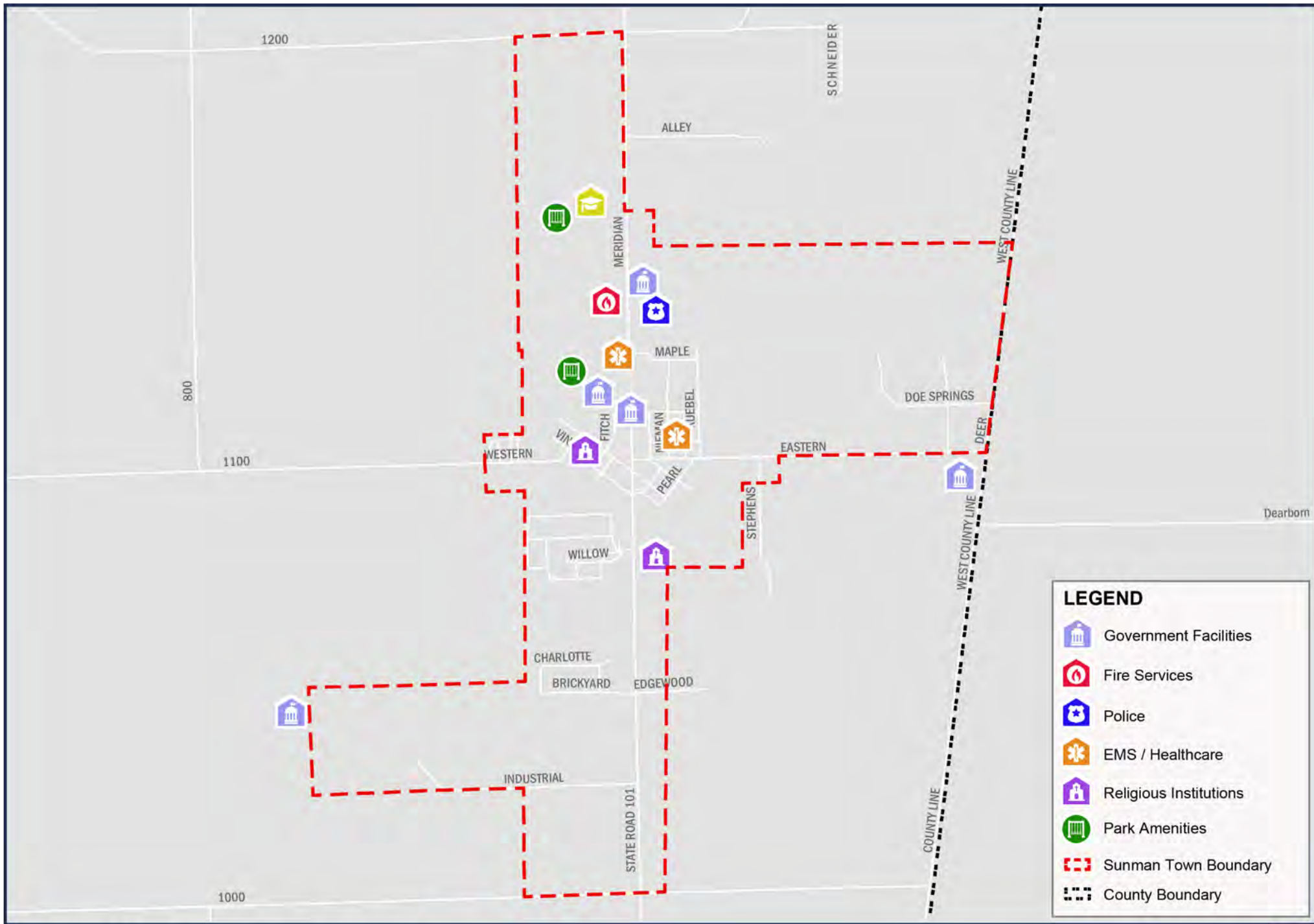


Figure 6.1: Community Facilities

SCALE: 1" = 1,500'



GOAL 1

Expand capacity at the wastewater treatment plant to support new development and the sewer extension along State Road 101.

Sunman’s wastewater treatment plant and sewer infrastructure have adequately served the needs of residents and businesses over the last decade, with the most recent investment being a sewer pipe lining project in 2010. Sewer capacity is a major factor in a town’s ability to handle growth, with facility enhancements needed when a town plans to attract large residential subdivisions, regional commercial sites, and intensive industrial uses. Identifying facility enhancements can also help prepare the plant for increased service levels once the sewer extension along State Road 101 is completed and be integrated into the town’s capital projects list or used for future grant opportunities. At present, the Town’s wastewater treatment plant has the capacity to serve approximately 300 new homes. Additional enhancements to reduce inflow and infiltration (I&I) into the sewer system can result in additional capacity. The Town should continue to monitor capacity and plan improvements as needed, so that a lack of sewer capacity does not act as a limit to desired development.

Strategy 1: Identify equipment and facility updates that will need to be addressed within the next five years.

Town leadership and staff should collaborate to identify major concerns and upcoming equipment, facility, and infrastructure costs that will need immediate attention. These identified projects, as well as any past projects which might have fallen through due to funding, should be integrated into the town’s capital projects list. One such need that should be addressed is acquiring new back up generators to be used in case of power outages at the treatment plant and well fields.



Wastewater treatment plant and settlement lagoon. Source: HWC Engineering

Strategy 2: Continue the process of extending sewer service north along State Road 101 to the intersection with SR 46 in Penntown.

Sunman has laid the groundwork for a major sewer expansion along State Road 101 with the potential to capture new revenue and attract development. As of the adoption of this plan the town was working with an engineering consultant to design and implement the project. The final design and implementation plan should be used to inform local infrastructure improvement projects and land use decision making.



Intersection of State Road 101 and State Road 64. Source: HWC Engineering



GOAL 2

Maintain and enhance Sunman's water plant and infrastructure to adequately serve current needs and future demands as growth occurs.

Sunman's water utility is owned by the town and includes a variety of facilities and infrastructure systems such as a pump station, well fields, two elevated water tanks, and miles of pipes extending south to the industrial park and north past Sunman Elementary. The town has made several updates to the system over the years but a few projects remain, such as painting elevated water tanks and replacing the main water pump filter. Focusing on previously identified projects and evaluating current infrastructure can help the town take a proactive approach to increasing capacity as growth occurs in and around the community.

Strategy 1: Evaluate current water infrastructure including wells, pumps, filters, elevated tanks, meters, and pipes to determine needed improvements to address in the next five years.

Town staff should coordinate with qualified consultants to identify and list the potential water infrastructure improvement projects that will be needed within the next five years that will help expand capacity and support growth in the short term. Potential improves identified during the planning process include filter unit rehabilitation, ACADA system updates, and new wells. Any facilities or infrastructure that are found to need immediate attention should be added to the town's capital projects list and used in future grant applications.

Strategy 2: Add the projects identified in the 2021 SWIF application to the town's capital projects list.

Sunman identified a number of projects when applying for SWIF funding in 2021 but did not receive the grants due to a lack of supporting documentation. These projects which include elevated tank rehabilitation, aerator treatment, well repair, and mobilization/demobilization, should be added to the towns capital projects list and be prioritized when future grant opportunities or READI funding become available.



Sunman's water pump station and well field. Source: HWC Engineering

GOAL 3

Address issues with stormwater management through infrastructure enhancements, disconnecting downspouts from the system, and creating a Drainage Master Plan.

Stormwater management and localized flooding were identified as issues by both town staff and Sunman residents, primarily near the downtown area. While Sunman has installed various forms of stormwater infrastructure over the years, many downspouts and sump pumps from older residential neighborhoods empty directly into the sewer system, causing especially high flows to the sewer plant after heavy rain events. At the time of this plan's adoption, the town was in the process of inspecting and mapping existing stormwater infrastructure. This analysis will be used to inform a Drainage Master Plan that covers all stormwater related infrastructure and challenges facing Sunman.

Strategy 1: Administer the Downspout and Sump Pump Disconnection Program that limits stormwater and sump pumps dumping directly into the sewer system.

During the final stages of the planning process, Sunman initiated the Downspout and Sump Pump Disconnection Program, making disconnections from the town's sewer mandatory for all residents. This program targets homes, businesses, and rental properties, and has roots in an adopted town ordinance from 1976 that made direct sewer connections from downspouts and sump pumps illegal. With plans to begin inspections in July 2023, town officials should begin the process of working with property owners on disconnections and provide direct assistance if a property owner is unable to disconnect their systems themselves.

Strategy 2: Evaluate infiltration and inflow issues and prioritize needed improvements through a Drainage Master Plan.

A Drainage Master Plan would assist Sunman in analyzing ongoing and future issues related to stormwater management within the community. A plan developed with a qualified consulting team would help prioritize infrastructure improvement strategies and new programming, as well as identify funding sources, timelines, and needed capital resources. A Drainage Master Plan can also be used when applying for future grants and other funding opportunities.



Stormwater drain on Eastern Avenue. Source: HWC Engineering



IMPLEMENTATION

During the planning process it became clear through conversations with town officials and community leaders that addressing issues with public facilities and infrastructure was a major priority for Sunman. Although all of the projects within this plan support future growth and development, the projects identified on the following pages were deemed critical for Sunman moving forward. Additionally, the table below lists projects previously identified through past planning efforts or items specifically mentioned by town staff and the comprehensive planning committee.

PROJECT LIST

Project	Estimated Costs
200,000 & 75,000 Gallon Water Tank Paint and Rehab	\$750,000
Water Tank Inspection	\$35,000
Water Treatment Plant - Replace/Rehab 275 Gallon Per Minute Aerator Treatment System	\$2,000,000
Well Rehabilitation/Repair	\$35,000 per well (\$140,000 total)
Water Treatment Plant Back-up Generator	\$100,000 ¹
Sewer Rehab (State Road 101 to Edgewood, Vine Street, Sunman Park)	\$300,000
Water Main Extension - Whitetail Subdivision Loop	\$350,000
Water Main Replacement - Maple/Kuebel	\$650,000
Water Main Extension - Western Avenue Loop	\$225,000
Wastewater Treatment Plant Back-up Generator	\$100,000 ¹

¹ Generator costs were highly variable during the planning process and this figure should be considered a very rough estimate.

IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: EXTEND TOWN SEWER SERVICE NORTH ALONG SR 101 TO PENNTOWN.

- Action Items**
-
- Continue working with an engineering professional to design the planned sewer extension north along SR 101 / Meridian Street.
 - Use secured funding commitments, local funds, and matching grant funds to pay for the construction of the designed extension.
 - Highlight the expanded sewer area when pursuing economic development efforts on the north side of town.
-

PROJECT 2: ENSURE STORMWATER FROM RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IS NOT DIRECTED INTO THE SEWER SYSTEM.

- Action Items**
-
- Inform property owners of the Disconnection Program, create a tool-kit for compliance, and provide a grace period for compliance.
 - Create an application for property owners to apply for disconnection assistance from the town.
 - Use code enforcement to pursue violations after the grace period ends based on the original 1976 ordinance.
-

PROJECT 3: COMPLETE A MASTER STORMWATER DRAINAGE PLAN TO REDUCE FLOODING.

Action Items

Use the results of the sewer televising and cleaning project to inform needed drainage improvements.

Continue working with an engineering professional to evaluate stormwater drainage basins within town and recommend needed infrastructure improvements or routing changes.

Implement stormwater drainage improvements as part of roadway or other utility projects to help lower costs and reduce disturbance times to town roads.

PROJECT 4: PAINT AND REHABILITATE THE TOWN'S TWO ELEVATED WATER TANKS.

Action Items

Identify needed improvements to each elevated tank including painting and updated Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) hardware and software.

Use local funds to meet matching requirements for grants that may help fund needed improvements.

Consult with a design professional for completion of design and construction documentation.

Bid and construct projects as funding is available.



CHAPTER 07

PLACEMAKING



VISION FOR PLACEMAKING

“Sunman will utilize its unique character to further advance the quality of life desired by residents and businesses.”

INTRODUCTION

Placemaking within Sunman includes a wide variety of developments, programs, and strategies that improve the quality of life and place in the community. While placemaking is often used as a term to describe physical improvements and enhancements of public spaces, it also includes the social and cultural aspects that define a community and make it a welcoming place to live and visit. Placemaking efforts within Sunman should not be limited to new structures or the town’s physical appearance; it must also be a community-driven effort to develop unique programming that is inclusive to residents and visitors of all ages and backgrounds.

KEY FINDINGS

- Beautification of the downtown and streetscapes has been an ongoing effort by the Sunman Beautification Committee, although they are not equipped to handle large-scale initiatives.
- The town has taken strides to improve its online presence with the addition of a website, but have not recently updated branding.
- Sunman’s small-town atmosphere is a draw for both potential residents and visitors.
- The community supports increased marketing and promotion of Sunman to attract new residents and businesses.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sunman’s rural nature has not impeded its ability to provide community-wide quality of place improvements for residents and visitors. The town’s strong downtown core give families and visitors the ability to walk to local restaurants, retail shops, and community amenities including Sunman Community Park and a full-service grocery store. Sunman’s diverse offerings help support the community’s goals of growth while retaining the small-town atmosphere.

The downtown’s centralized location, commercial variety, and existing amenities make it both the heart of the community and a prime location for future placemaking efforts. The downtown core is split by the railroad running through the town, with local restaurants and small offices found to the south and large commercial structures to the north. There are also several historic buildings in the southern portion that contribute to the downtown’s unique character.

Sunman has a number of local organizations that actively work to improve the quality of place within the town. The Sunman Revitalization Initiative is a non-profit dedicated to enabling community development through business attraction and building rehabilitation, while the Sunman Beautification Committee is responsible for all of the plants and decorative items throughout the town. These groups are comprised of dedicated residents who help enact change in the community and help expand the town’s capacity for placemaking efforts.

Sunman Elementary is another major factor in the community’s quality of place. Elementary schools are major draws for new residents and act as employment center in rural communities. Sunman Elementary provides a variety of programing opportunities for children during and outside of school hours including a variety of clubs, field trips, educational resources, and events within the community.



Entering Sunman’s downtown on State Road 101. Source: HWC Engineering



PUBLIC INPUT

- Only 10% of online survey respondents believe Sunman has the amenities needed for residents to live healthy lifestyles.
- Lighting, road resurfacing, street trees, and new signage were some of the physical improvements participants at the Public Workshop were most interested in seeing.
- The most common open-ended survey response for what people love about Sunman was the rural and small-town atmosphere.
- Sunman lacks unique branding and signage that can set it apart from other communities according to town staff and Public Open House respondents.
- Comments from the Public Workshop identified a desire for increased citizen participation and collaboration on community projects.



Sunman Elementary School. Source: HWC Engineering

GOAL 1

Focus beautification efforts along State Road 101 /Meridian Street including street trees, signage, and other landscaping features.

Sunman’s focus on beautification efforts can be seen in the overwhelming support from residents during community engagement and the town’s own volunteers. A major focus for the community is improving landscaping and visual appeal along Meridian Street, as it is the main route through town and the first impression for visitors and commuters. Street trees, directional signage, flowerbeds, and designed curbs and crosswalks are all enhancements which could have large impacts on visual aesthetics, roadway character, and pedestrian safety. While the town’s Beautification Committee works hard at maintaining landscaping and installing decorative items in the community, they are unable to address issues on Meridian Street due to it being a state highway and managed by INDOT.

Strategy 1: Continue to support the efforts of the town’s Beautification Committee.

The Beautification Committee is the volunteer community organization responsible for all plants and decorative items within public spaces throughout Sunman. The committee is actively involved in placemaking efforts and has the experience and knowledge to lead future initiatives if needed. Town staff should coordinate with the group to identify what staffing, financial, or capital support they may need in the future.

Strategy 2: Communicate with INDOT on the possibility of adding new landscaping and furnishings along the State Road 101 / Meridian Street corridor.

Although the town supports new landscaping change along the corridor all improvements must first be reviewed by INDOT. Sunman should begin identifying potential improvements along the highway and draft a simple concept plan that can be sent to INDOT and act as a starting point for discussions. This concept plan should include locations for improvements, types of improvements, the contractor or town department making the improvements, and the responsible party for maintenance and upkeep.

America In Bloom - Greendale, Indiana

America in Bloom (AIB) promotes nationwide beautification through education and community involvement by encouraging the use of flowers, plants, trees, and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements. Greendale, Indiana received an honor from the 2022 AIB National Awards Program, winning the Urban Forestry Outstanding Achievement Award after being evaluated against numerous communities across 43 states. Greendale won the award after recent placemaking efforts focused on street trees and expanding vegetation in the community.



Greendale City signage . Source: Eagle County 99.3

GOAL 2

Create unique branding for Sunman that can be used for signage, marketing efforts, and other town-related materials.

Sunman's unique character and charm can be represented with branding unique to the community. Town branding can be logos, tag lines, and unique color palates all based on the towns history and defining aspects. Once a brand has been established, signage, websites, online and print marketing materials, and other items can be updated with the new branding. Unique branding can impact Sunman's quality of place, creating imagery that can be used by residents to describe where they live and recognizable by those living outside the community.

Strategy 1: Hire a consulting firm to develop unique logos, tag lines, and color palettes for online and print uses.

To fully develop a unique brand that can be translated onto multiple digital and printed mediums the town should consider hiring an outside consulting firm. The firm should analyze the town's historic culture, current character, and what residents love about the community when developing the new brand.



Sunman Town Hall signage. Source: HWC Engineering

GOAL 3

Design and construct new wayfinding signage and gateways that welcome visitors and direct drivers to destinations within Sunman.

Well-designed and easy to read signage is a simple, yet extremely effective placemaking effort that can have immediate impacts for Sunman. Signage should be designed in a way that advertises the town's brand and establishes a sense of place through continuity of colors and fonts. Updating gateway and wayfinding signage in Sunman can provide clear and concise directions to local and regional destinations, convey the unique character of the community, and assist in marketing efforts. Although signage directly along State Road 101 may be artistically limited due to INDOT regulations, the town has freedom in determining what works best for its needs.

Strategy 1: Use updated branding on all new signage and gateways constructed within the community and at the I-74 interchange.

Once a formal brand has been established for Sunman the town can use it to influence the design of new signage. This should be used for directional signage, signs identifying public spaces or government facilities, and even welcoming signage near the I-74 interchange or SR 101 and SR 46 intersection in Penntown.



Gateway signage south along State Road 101 Source: HWC Engineering



Street signs in the downtown. Source: HWC Engineering



IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: ENHANCE THE STATE ROAD 101 / MERIDIAN STREET CORRIDOR WITH ADDITIONAL LANDSCAPING, LIGHTING, SIGNAGE, AND PEDESTRIAN FURNISHINGS.

Action Items

Form a local project committee of town staff, Sunman Revitalization Initiative members, Beautification Committee members, and business owners to determine project goals.

Refine the goals into specific project elements that may include additional streetscape amenities (i.e. benches, bike racks, lighting, etc.), landscaping, curb bump-outs, crosswalks, ADA curb ramps, and signs.

Coordinate with INDOT on local desires and State plans for the corridor.

Identify and procure funding including grants and available tax dollars.

Consult with a design professional for completion of design and construction documentation.

Bid and construct projects as funding is available.

PROJECT 2: INSTALL NEW GATEWAY AND DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE AROUND SUNMAN AND LEADING TO THE COMMUNITY FROM INTERSTATE 74.

Action Items

Use existing or updated town branding to be used in a gateway and wayfinding system for local destinations.

Determine appropriate sign locations within the public right-of-way where possible. If signs will be placed on private property, secure indefinite written approval.

Work with a design professional and develop the sign package, cost estimates, and a phasing schedule.

Acquire project funding through grants, available tax dollars, and donations.

Bid and construct the project(s).



CHAPTER 08

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



VISION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

“Sunman will continue to support local entrepreneurs and strive to be a business-friendly community.”

INTRODUCTION

Economic development within Sunman can take many shapes, from the attraction of new major employers and industries, to creating workforce education programs, or developing programs to help existing business owners make improvements to their buildings. Unique features such as a strong downtown core, elementary school, diverse business base, and quick access to a major transportation corridors all contribute to Sunman’s economic strengths and present opportunities for future economic strategies and programming. Accessibility and access to major transportation routes is one of Sunman’s greatest assets, not only for attracting new industries and employers, but also for marketing the town as a home for people wanting to live in a more rural atmosphere with the ability to commute to larger communities for work.

KEY FINDINGS

- Sunman has multiple active industrial sites in town limits with the potential to expand to surrounding properties.
- The Occasions Group and Enhanced Telecommunications Corporation are major employers in Ripley County and draw in workers from outside the community. They are actively advertised on Ripley County Economic Development’s (RCED) website.
- Nearly 80% of Sunman residents commute outside the community daily for work.
- Sunman’s tools to attract new industries and businesses are limited but can be expanded with support of county-wide organizations.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Similar to other rural Indiana communities, manufacturing industries employ a large portion of Sunman residents at 33.6%. Manufacturing employment in Sunman has grown 32.1% from 2010 to 2020. While growth has been steady, it was outpaced by other industries such as education and healthcare (116%) and retail trade (85.1%). These employment statistics are supported by trends at the county level, as Ripley County has a higher concentration of employees in manufacturing industries compared to other counties across the nation. Average annual wages for manufacturing jobs is \$56,518 in Ripley County, only surpassed by professional business services (\$64,259) and information (\$64,324) industries. According to Hoosier Data, Sunman is also home to five of the county’s top 25 largest employers.

Ripley County Economic Development (RCED) is the leading driver of county-wide economic development and policy making. The RCED advertises existing industries within the county as well as sites for potential development. According to the groups website the majority of available industrial sites are within or surrounding Batesville. However, there are two advertised sites with a Sunman address, one just south of the I-74 interchange and one south of town on Industrial Drive. On top of marketing Ripley County to prospective developers and employees, RCED also assists small and emerging businesses, including administering a revolving loan fund.

Southeast Indiana’s READI proposal will also support economic development incentives within the community. The region has proposed a number of projects within Ripley County, from housing and infrastructure to placemaking and social services. Sunman is the location for one proposed project, a \$1.4 million sanitary sewer expansion extending Sunman’s current infrastructure along SR 101 to SR 46, which would open areas north of the town to new commercial and industrial uses, as well as the possibility for more diverse residential development.

In addition to county-wide organizations, there are local groups in Sunman that support economic development initiatives and community growth. Sunman’s Revitalization Initiative is a local non-profit made up of private citizens and businesses leaders working to instigate community development.

PUBLIC INPUT

- Only 4% of online survey respondents believe there is an adequate number of retail, restaurant, and entertainment options in Sunman.
- Residents believe there is some support for existing business owners and entrepreneurs in Sunman, but it could be expanded upon.
- Conversations with the steering committee discovered that warehousing and other large industrial uses can still be targeted on the southern end of town but might see more success northward as sewer expands.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN SUNMAN		
Employer	Industry Type (NAICS)	Number of Employees
Occasions Group	Printers	225
Krueger-Maddux Greenhouses	Greenhouses	100
Enhanced Telecommunications	Website Design Services	70
Sunman Elementary School	Schools	65
Laudick Trucking Inc	Trucking-dump	40

Source: Hoosierdata.in.gov



A local business in Sunman's downtown core. Source: HWC Engineering



Self-Storage business along CR 1000 West. Source: HWC Engineering

GOAL 1

Continue supporting existing businesses and entrepreneurs within Sunman.

Sunman has a variety of local businesses that provide services and entertainment options not typically seen in a rural community of its size. The businesses and entrepreneurs in Sunman do not only serve the needs of local residents but attract customers across Ripley County, Dearborn County, and Franklin County. The town has a grocery store, two dollar stores, a bank, restaurants and bars, and a variety of retail and service oriented shops. Sunman residents expressed major support for finding ways to better assist businesses already in the community. While the town strives to provide financial and technical support when possible, collaborative efforts between the town, county, and regional economic entities can ensure their needs are properly met.

Strategy 1: Form a Main Street Organization that manages community events, preserves historic resources, and promotes Sunman as a great place to live and work.

A Main Street Organization is dedicated to supporting business growth, town beautification, and the well-being of residents. This organization could support a variety of programs in Sunman and administer grant funding, that may be typically unavailable to individual persons, for business development, housing, beautification, and historic preservation. Sunman will need to work alongside the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs to create a Main Street Organization, as they handle the certification process and support programs at the state level.

The Sunman Revitalization Initiative is a community group that has performed many of the same functions as a Main Street Organization and supported Sunman's growth over the years. This group, while successful themselves, could be integrated into a Main Street Organization along with other community groups to focus efforts and align funding opportunities.

Strategy 2: Encourage local businesses to join the Chamber of Commerce and other supporting organizations.

There are multiple business-focused organizations within Ripley County, such as the Ripley County Chamber of Commerce, who are dedicated to supporting local businesses and drafting policies to make Ripley County a business-friendly community. Many of the organizations have boards with representation from different towns in Ripley County who advocate for their own interests while supporting the interests of the greater community. Sunman should secure its representation in each group and encourage local businesses to join and actively participate.



FCU Bank in downtown Sunman. Source: HWC Engineering

GOAL 2

Encourage the re-use of empty commercial structures along State Road 101 / Meridian Street for new retail and entertainment uses.

As commercial structures have remained vacant in Sunman over the last decade property owners and new buyers have begun converting many of the spaces into residential units. Although adaptive reuse has allowed many of the buildings to receive needed rehabilitation and investment, Sunman residents are worried there will be no commercial spaces available for prospective businesses looking to relocate. Community leadership and property owners need to work together and find a balance between converting empty buildings and leaving spaces available for commercial uses, either through financial incentives, increased marketing efforts, or local ordinances that protect first floor commercial spaces.

Strategy 1: Identify possible incentives for the rehabilitation and reuse of existing commercial structures.

Sunman should begin identifying major barriers facing downtown property owners and determine what incentives, if any, can help preserve commercial spaces and support their re-use. These incentives could include both financial and zoning benefits, but should ultimately help property owners regain use of underutilized structures.



Vacant commercial storefront on Meridian Street. Source: HWC Engineering

GOAL 3

Continue working with county organizations to attract new employers and locally-owned commercial and industrial businesses to Sunman.

Sunman's diverse industrial and commercial base are a major benefit to the community, not only providing a wide range of retail services and employment options for residents but drawing in visitors and commuters from across the region. During public engagement, Sunman residents identified commercial and industrial needs, including new entertainment and eating places, diverse employment options, and other business needs they currently travel outside the community to achieve. With an existing diverse industry base and future infrastructure improvement projects on the horizon, the town is in a prime position to begin attracting new development and filling any gaps in public demand.

Strategy 1: Partner with the Ripley County EDC and Chamber of Commerce to leverage additional resources when attracting new businesses.

The Ripley County EDC and Chamber of Commerce actively support the attraction, retention, and expansion of businesses in the county and can support specific efforts unique to Sunman that need addressed. These groups should be coordinated with when marketing the town to potential businesses and be a reference when creating new economic incentive packages. Targeted businesses for Sunman can include restaurants, professional services, boutiques, coffee shops or cafes, and entertainment focused businesses.

Strategy 2: Use the planned sewer extension to enhance the development potential of critical sites north of Sunman along State Road 101.

The upcoming sewer extension holds major development potential for Sunman, Penntown, and the areas in between. The extension will allow for larger, more dense, and higher intensive developments along the highway that would typically be impossible on a standard septic system. Sunman can use the sewer as an incentive for potential businesses and large industries looking to locate near the interchange. The sewer extension also provides future utility revenue and allows Sunman better control of development outside town limits.



Manufacturing business on the souther end of town. Source: HWC Engineering



IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: FINALIZE THE CREATION OF A MAIN STREET ORGANIZATION IN SUNMAN.

Action Items

Utilizing resources developed by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), create an action plan to transition the existing Sunman Revitalization Initiative into an official Main Street Organization.

Meet with leadership of the Sunman Revitalization Initiative and discuss potentially transitioning the group into a formal Main Street organization.

Have town officials and Sunman Revitalization officials meet with Sunman's OCRA Community Liaison to discuss eligibility and steps to becoming a Main Street organization.

If consensus is reached to transition the Sunman Revitalization Initiative into a formal Main Street organization, develop an action plan that outlines the steps needed to take to transition the group.

Create bylaws and work towards becoming a 501(c)(3).

Develop a vision, strategies, and achievable action steps for attracting investment, development, and redevelopment for Sunman's Main Street.

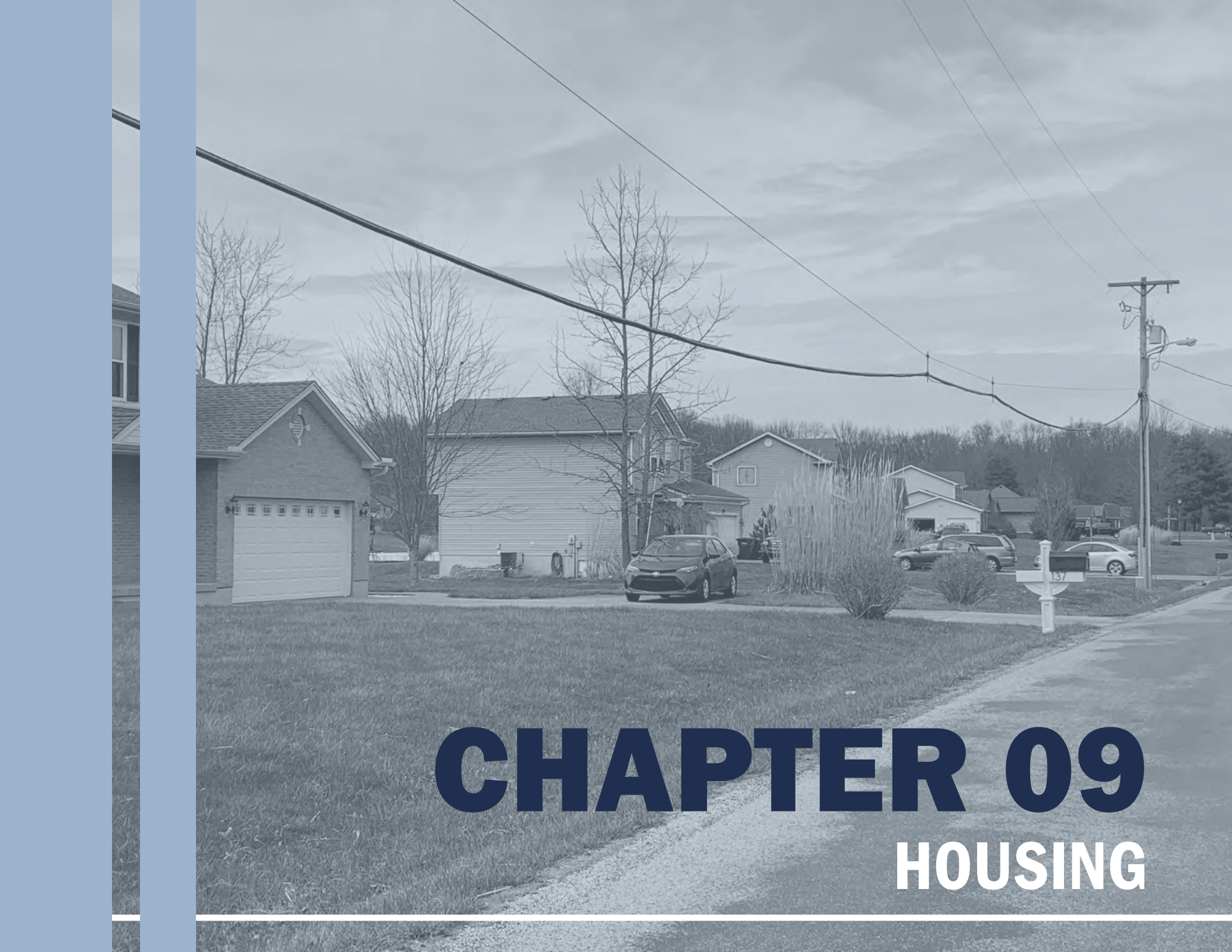
PROJECT 2: DEVELOP AN OCRA FUNDED DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN.

Action Items

If and when a Main Street organization is formed, work with this organization to apply for an OCRA downtown revitalization planning grant.

When grant funding is awarded, develop a downtown revitalization plan that meets OCRA's standards and addresses the needs of downtown Sunman. Action items should include policy, programming, and infrastructure related action items.

Adopt the downtown revitalization plan as a component of the Sunman Comprehensive Plan.



CHAPTER 09

HOUSING



VISION FOR HOUSING

“Sunman will provide quality housing options for residents of all ages and lifestyles.”

INTRODUCTION

Sunman’s rural lifestyle combined with its accessibility to major employment and retail hubs along the I-74 corridor makes the community a prime location for new residential development. While new construction has occurred in Sunman over the last 10 years, the conversion of downtown storefronts to residential units has also contributed to the town’s increase in housing units. Sunman has existing subdivisions with lots available for new construction as well as a large amount of annexed land that is suitable for new residential growth. Upcoming infrastructure and facility upgrades will set the stage for potential investments and attracting new residents to the community. Identifying incentives Sunman can use to encourage residential growth will be a key focus for town and county leadership moving forward.

KEY FINDINGS

- There has been slow, but consistent housing construction both in and adjacent to Sunman in the form of subdivisions and properties off county roads.
- The residential subdivision on the south edge of town, Winners Circle, has multiple lots available for new development.
- There has been an increase in vacant commercial structures being repurposed for residential uses in and around the downtown core.
- Sunman’s median home sale value in 2020 was \$220,438, a 32.5% increase from home values in 2010.
- Duplexes could be the most successful version of multi-family housing within Sunman.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Although Sunman experienced a decline in population from 2010 to 2020 there was a 10.8% increase in housing units over the same period, increasing from 501 to 555. This level of housing growth outpaces Ripley County (4.4% increase) and Indiana (4.5% increase) and is opposite from the housing trend in Versailles which experienced a 16.4% decrease in housing units.

Approximately 56.9% of housing units in Sunman are owner-occupied, 25.0% are rental units, and 18.0% are vacant. Sunman is the only town, when looking at state trends and local comparison communities, that experienced an increase in vacant units between 2010 and 2020, and was the only community besides Taylorsville that had a decrease in renter-occupied housing (33.5% of units in 2010). While a loss in population with an increase in total housing units is likely the cause for a rise in vacant units within Sunman, the decrease in rentals could be due to a number of influences impacting the community such as large rises in rent.

The majority of Sunman's housing is single-family units which make up 65.2% of housing stock. Mobile homes make up 17.7% of housing units while multi-family structures contribute the final 17.1%. These proportions are different from what is seen throughout Ripley County, specifically mobile home units which is over double what is seen throughout the region.

According to ACS data, Sunman's median home prices have increased 8.8% from \$130,000 in 2010 to \$141,400 in 2020. While this change aligns with Ripley County and other comparison communities, it falls short of state (21.1%) and national (22.0%) levels. However, when looking at Zillow's home sale data, Sunman homes have seen a 32.5% increase from \$166,406 in 2010 to \$220,438 in 2020. This increase is more closely related to actual market conditions in the community and aligns with trends seen across the state.

Sunman's housing stock is newer than many rural communities throughout Indiana with 22.0% of structures built after 2000, which is likely influenced by new subdivisions along Meridian Street south of the downtown and on Eastern Avenue towards County Line Road. On the opposite end of the spectrum, 35.3% of residential structures were built before 1950. Historic properties can greatly contribute to a community's culture and quality of life, but come with their own challenges. Sunman leadership will need to find ways to support property owners who may struggle with the high levels of maintenance these homes may need.

Upcoming investments in sewer infrastructure will begin opening up new areas north along State Road 101 for development, including new residential subdivisions. While areas north of Sunman may be ideal for development there is also farmland within corporate limits that could be developed in the future. Although some of this farmland may have no intimate intentions to be developed, long range planning efforts should mark these areas for future growth if market conditions were to change.

PUBLIC INPUT

- The majority of online survey respondents think new housing development should focus on affordable units for first-time home buyers, young professionals, and recent graduates.
- While new housing development may be needed, 58% of residents believe the town should focus on rehabilitating existing homes before building new.
- Ordinance violations and their enforcement were issues identified in all three major public engagement opportunities.
- Multiple open-ended responses to the online survey mentioned the need for additional senior housing options.
- The steering committee stated there has been interest from developers in available lots within existing residential subdivisions.



New home construction south of town. Source: HWC Engineering



Single-family homes along Eastern Avenue. Source: HWC Engineering



Whitetail Run subdivision. Source: HWC Engineering



GOAL 1

Address ordinance violations and vacant properties to ensure neighborhoods and corridors are attractive and inviting.

Zoning and local ordinances are in place to ensure a level of maintenance and attractiveness for a community's residential and commercial properties. In Sunman this may determine how high a yards grass can be or how many cars are allowed to park in a front yard, but are always intended to keep homes safe, livable, and visually pleasing. While Sunman has its own ordinances it may be difficult to search out and address every violation with current staffing, and in some cases the violation may be a county issue and not something the town can enforce itself. Coordination with Ripley County to determine the most efficient way in identifying and enforcing code and zoning violations and will be needed to address the concerns of property owners.

Strategy 1: Work with Ripley County to develop a process and budget for enforcing zoning and ordinance violations including warnings, ticketing, and litigation.

Even when ordinance violations and abandoned properties are identified, Sunman needs a concise and easy to follow system for enforcement. The town should coordinate with Ripley County and other communities to develop a county-wide enforcement system with detailed steps for violation warnings, ticketing, and potential litigation. The process should be straight forward for both enforcement officers and property owners, clearly defining timelines and fees for different violation types.

Strategy 2: Identify and create a working list of vacant lots and work with property owners to advertise the lot for redevelopment or public use.

Vacant and abandoned properties in Sunman were an issue identified through public engagement. While the process of claiming and clearing such properties is a long process for any municipality, creating a working list of such sites allows Sunman staff to keep track of property types, ownership, and potential uses for the sites in the future. A detailed list could also help the town decide if the best action would be to work with current property owners to market properties to developers or attempt to claim an abandoned property and use it for some form of public use.

Strategy 3: Create an online portal where residents can submit ordinance violations for both town and county review.

A simple and low-cost strategy to identify potential ordinance violations is through an online portal that allows residents to submit issue properties for review. This lessens the amount of in-person identification needed and allows the county and town to more effectively track individual properties.



Tall grass in violation of a local ordinance. Source: Town of Clarksville, IN

County Enforcement Office - St. Joseph County, Indiana

St. Joseph County created a code enforcement office in 2022 dedicated to serving unincorporated areas of the county. The office focused on enforcing three main ordinances more commonly experienced in rural settings. Staff rely on submitted violations and coordinate with the county's building and health departments to address violations outside their three main ordinances. The office reported it had opened 633 cases in its first year and would potentially expand the ordinances it enforces.



St. Joseph County's target for code enforcement. Source: South Bend Tribune

GOAL 2

Encourage the development of various housing types including entry-level homes, duplexes, and senior living facilities.

Sunman experienced a 10% increase in housing units from 2010 to 2020 with approximately 64% of units consisting of single-family homes, 18% mobile homes, and the rest a mix of multi-family structures with three units or more. If Sunman wishes to continue growing over the next decade it will be critical to expand the town's housing unit diversity. Shifting demographics and market trends has indicated the need for duplexes, market-rate apartments, and senior housing, while rising home costs has made entry-level single-family homes scarce. While Sunman has the land and utility capacity to support new residential growth, local zoning code and development incentives may be barriers in attracting the housing development demanded in the community.

Strategy 1: Review town development ordinances to ensure diverse housing options are possible within Sunman.

Sunman should coordinate with the Area Plan Commission and review the zoning ordinance to ensure duplexes, quadplexes, multi-family units, patio home developments, and other housing types are allowed. If not, updates to current zoning ordinance may be needed. The comprehensive planning committee specifically called out the potential for duplexes within Sunman, either as new builds or converting existing housing units. Duplexes could be a way to provide entry level, multi-family housing without impacting the character of existing neighborhoods.

Strategy 2: Identify possible incentives Sunman could utilize to attract residential development at the local and county level.

Sunman has limited incentives, such as waiving utility hookup fees, when attracting residential development to the community. To supplement town specific economic incentives, Sunman leadership should work with county-wide organizations and boards to determine what other incentive packages could be available to the community. This could include anything from tax abatements and creating Housing TIFs to marketing efforts and quality of place improvements. Identifying incentives is crucial for Sunman for future growth as they support growing the supply of various units in the community.



IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: DEVELOP A STANDARDIZED PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING ORDINANCE VIOLATIONS.

Action Items

Conduct an information campaign about town ordinances and common violations such as unsafe buildings, tall grass and weeds, and inoperable vehicles.

Consider the use of a ticketing system instead of court orders for code enforcement violations.

Consult with peer communities about successful efforts and explore recommendations of the American Association of Code Enforcement.

Target one specific issue within the town for a 4-month time frame to maximize resource efficiency and yield direct results.

Evaluate the success of the targeted strategy, make refinements to the process, and then move on to address a different recurring issue.

PROJECT 2: CREATE A WORKING LIST OF VACANT AND INFILL-READY PARCELS.

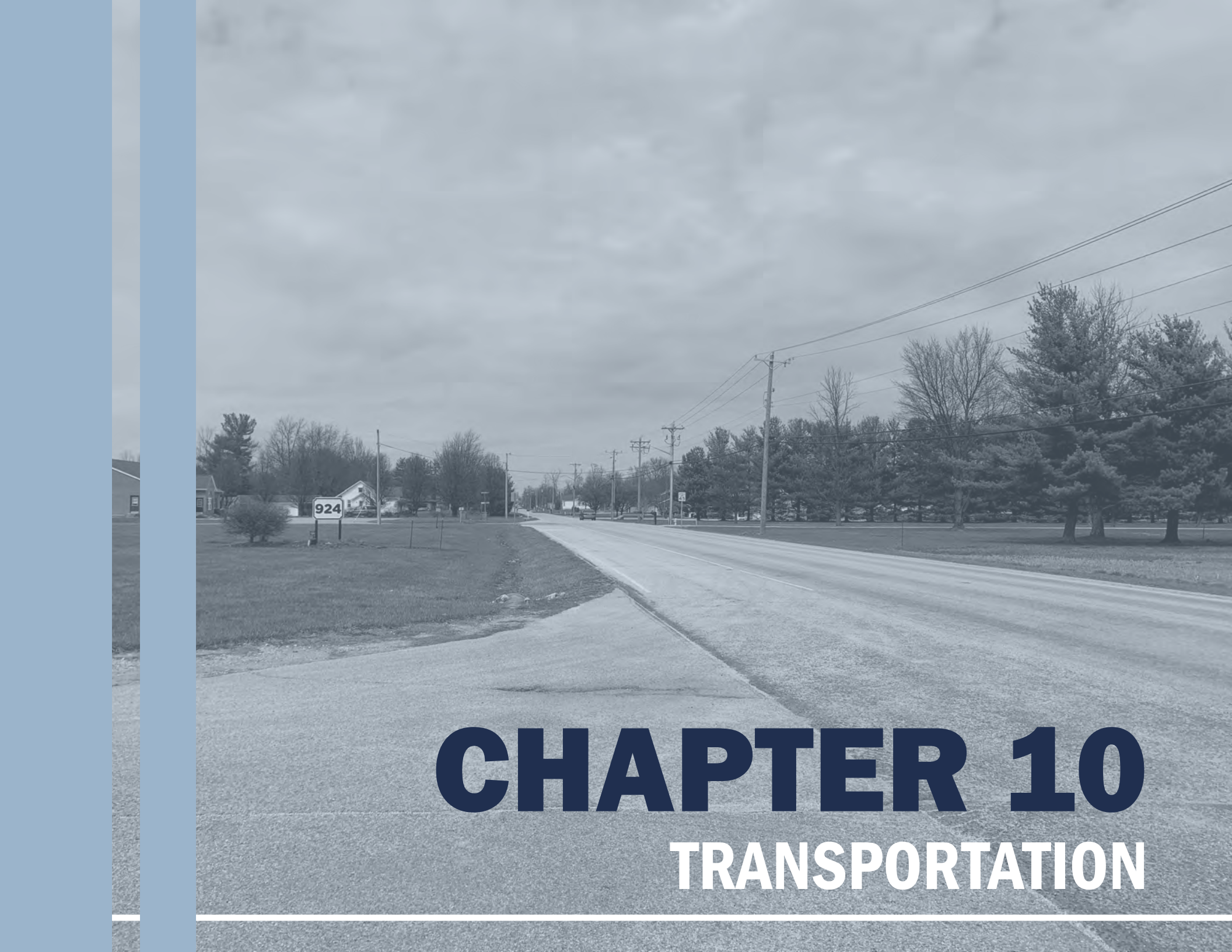
Action Items

Use aerial maps and site verification to identify vacant lots and vacant structures.

Determine property ownership through county-records or GIS mapping.

Work with property owners to understand their goals for subject properties.

Connect interested owners and developers to existing property owners that may be interested in selling vacant and underutilized properties.



CHAPTER 10

TRANSPORTATION



VISION FOR TRANSPORTATION

“Sunman will maintain a well-connected and safe network for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.”

INTRODUCTION

Rural towns that experience growth and investment can often attribute a well connected transportation system to their success. Highway corridors that quickly and safely connect residents to outside destinations are critical for those who work or shop away from their home community. Sunman’s location along State Road 101 and its proximity to I-74 and State Road 46 are major assets for the community and have allowed the town to attract new residents and businesses. The town’s accessible nature also benefits people living in unincorporated Ripley County and Dearborn County, as Sunman has convenience retail and restaurants uncommon in a community its size.

While the I-74 interchange north of Sunman is too far for the town to capture travelers, the town is able to capitalize on commuters traveling along State Road 101. The number of commuters is likely to grow in the future as the state has begun a project to extend the highway further south into Dearborn, Ohio, and Switzerland counties. The initial study, Link 101, is expected to identify alternative routes for the highway extension by 2026 with construction beginning soon after.

KEY FINDINGS

- State Road 101 is a major thoroughfare on the eastern edge of Ripley County, serving as the main connection to I-74 and regional employment destinations.
- State Road 101 / Meridian Street and Eastern Avenue are the only two roadways in Sunman with sidewalk infrastructure.
- INDOT has begun the early stages of an expansion project targeting State Road 101, continuing the highway south towards Ohio County and Switzerland County.
- There is both the space and demand for multi-use trails in and outside of existing recreational facilities.
- Sunman’s major intersection, State Road 101 and Eastern Avenue, has been identified as a safety concern due to the railroad crossing and lack of signalization.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sunman's transportation network is built from various roadways and pedestrian facilities that allow for safe and efficient travel for residents, workers, and visitors. State Road 101 (locally known as Meridian Street) forms the main spine of the community, holding the majority of the town's commercial land uses and linking Sunman to I-74 to the north and other Ripley County communities to the south. Eastern Avenue is the town's second major roadway that intersects with Meridian Street and travels east to the county line. This road forms a route between Sunman and Dearborn County communities such as Hubbells Corner and Dover. State Road 46 is north of Sunman, shadowing I-74, and links the community to Batesville, St. Leon, and other unincorporated areas in Ripley County and Dearborn County.

The majority of Sunman's local roads are located directly within the downtown core or in the residential subdivisions along State Road 101 and Eastern Avenue. While some areas have been identified as needing general repair, the network as a whole is well-maintained and in good condition. One issue identified by the public for Sunman's downtown road network is a lack of, or inefficient, street parking. With the exception of parking lots surrounding larger commercial structures, the majority of businesses in the downtown core rely on street parking or small private lots. While there may be adequate street parking surrounding a business that fills its needs, a lack of marked street spaces may contribute to the perception that the town needs more parking availability, specifically south of the train tracks.

Although residents agreed that it is easy to walk to destinations within Sunman, there is a lack of sidewalk infrastructure that could further improve safety and connectivity throughout the community. Current pedestrian infrastructure is primarily located along Meridian Street, stretching from Sunman Elementary to B&G Dairy Bar and Grill, and on Eastern Avenue from downtown to the Whitetail Run subdivision. There are no recreational trail systems within town limits.

Sunman has a single railway crossing through the center of town from east to west with a small spur line at the northern end of Washington Street. This rail line is owned by the Central Railroad Company of Indiana (CIND) and stretches from Indianapolis to Cincinnati, primarily transporting grain, steel, automobiles, and chemical products. While the railroad may have been a major economic benefit for the community at one point in time, it is now a safety concern for motorists and pedestrians. The line crosses through the center of Sunman's busiest intersection, Meridian Street and Eastern Avenue, and effectively splits the downtown core in two. This intersection is a major issue for Sunman leadership as they not only have to coordinate with the CIND for infrastructure repairs and enhancements, but also need to work with INDOT as it crosses a state highway.

During the development of this plan INDOT launched the State Road 101 Corridor Study, a preliminary analysis with the goal to eventually extend the highway further south toward Ohio County and Ripley County. The beginning phases included an environmental impact study and preliminary route identification.

PUBLIC INPUT

- Roadway improvements including lighting, landscaping, and signage, was one of the highest voted strategies at the Public Workshop.
- Over 73% of online survey respondents agreed that it is safe for residents to walk to destinations within Sunman.
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities were identified as needs on both the online survey and at the Public Workshop.
- Residents and business owners place a high priority on increasing parking availability downtown, specifically south of the train tracks.

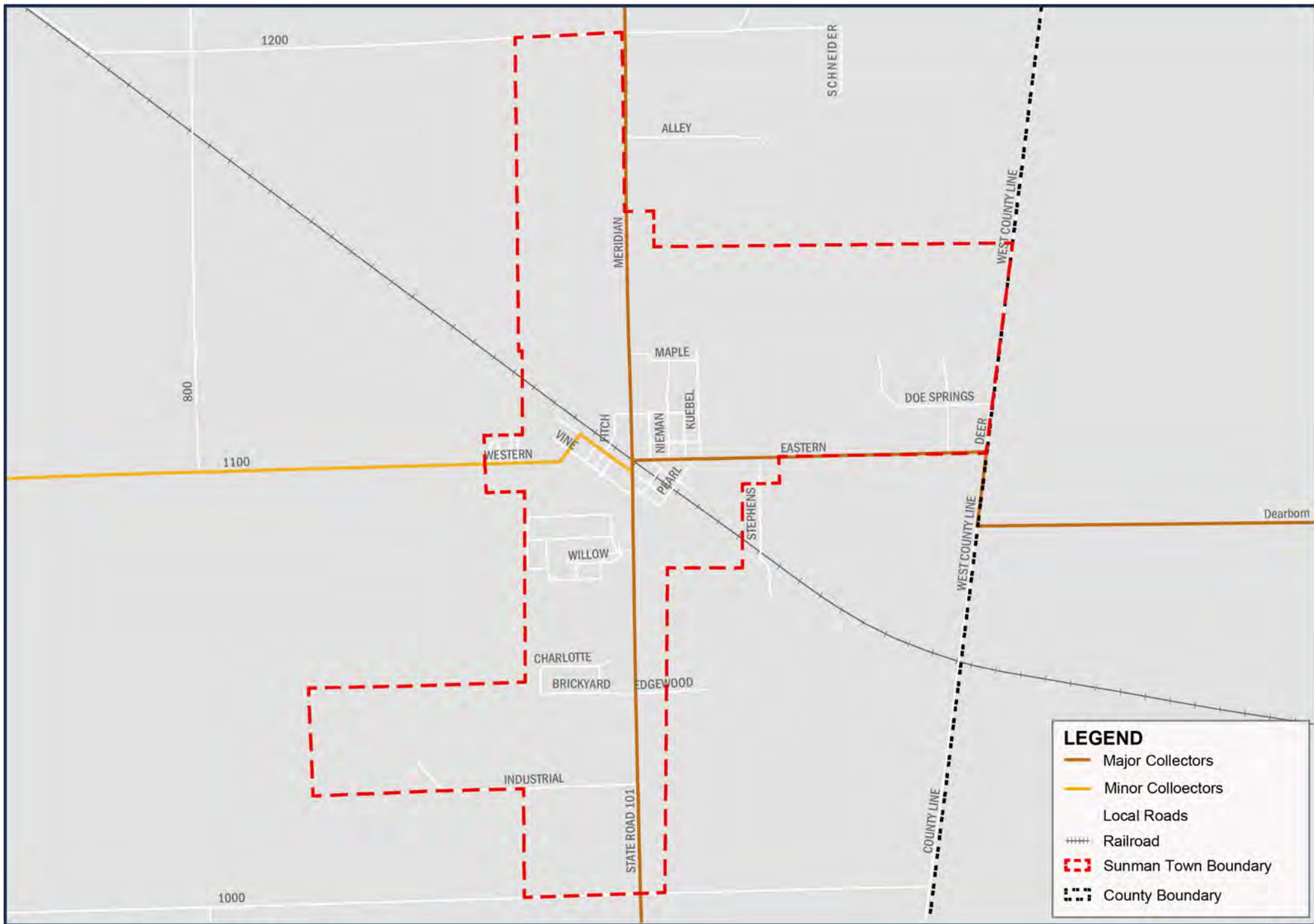


Figure 10.1: Functional Class

SCALE: 1" = 1,500'

 NORTH

GOAL 1

Increase available parking spaces in the downtown core, specifically south of the train tracks.

Businesses in Sunman expressed their concern with parking availability in the downtown core, specifically south of the train tracks near Washington Street and Vine Street. Not all businesses are able to have full-sized parking lots such as Sunman IGA or Dollar General, either due to cost or their building location, and rely on street parking for the majority of their needs. While most streets in Sunman allow street parking, it may be difficult for customers visiting during peak traffic times to find parking spots near their destinations due to little to no markings and signage or the congestion that build along Meridian Street. Even if the lack of parking availability is a perceived issue, steps can be taken to address the needs of both businesses owners and customers.

Strategy 1: Work with business and property owners to understand parking needs and peak times.

Before developing measures to address parking concerns Sunman should survey business owners to their parking needs including, number of customers per hour, total customers in a day, where customers typically park, peak congestion times, and what fixes they have already tried. The businesses could also perform individual parking counts over the course of a week to see how many people use street parking or lots at different times of the day.

Strategy 2: Explore cost-efficient strategies to increase parking availability such as striping on-street spaces, formalizing public use agreements for off-street lots, and creating signage for dedicated public parking areas.

After determining the actual needs of local businesses the town should begin exploring cost-efficient strategies aimed to increase parking availability. Any strategies to expand parking should be coordinated with businesses but formally implemented by the town. This not only ensures street striping or parking agreements are properly and legally completed, but takes the full burden of upkeep and installation off the business.



Downtown street with limited street parking allowed. Source: HWC Engineering

GOAL 2

Fill in sidewalk gaps that link residents to key destinations within the community.

Sunman has two major sidewalks running along State Road 101, stretching from Sunman Elementary to B&G Dairy Bar and Grill, and Eastern Avenue, extending from downtown to the Whitetail Run subdivision. While the majority of public input supported the town being walkable and safe for pedestrians, there are areas that could benefit from dedicated pedestrian infrastructure. New sidewalks, and multi-use trails, should connect residents to destinations within the town such as Sunman Community Park, grocery and convenience stores, entertainment venues and restaurants, and town government offices. If Sunman wishes to analyze and form a plan that covers all forms of pedestrian and bicycle travel in and outside town limits, a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master plan would explore the town's options and pave the way for future funding opportunities.

Strategy 1: Map needed sidewalk improvements, prioritize their completion based on use and safety, and add them to the town's capital projects list.

Town staff should begin identifying and prioritizing potential sidewalk expansions and connections, adding them to the town's capital projects list. Areas to consider should include stretches of road that are unsafe to travel, used heavily by pedestrians and children, and link residents to points of interest.

Strategy 2: Work with a consultant to develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Creating a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan can help Sunman plan for community-wide pedestrian infrastructure by identifying multiple scenarios and strategies for facility expansion and laying out detailed steps for implementation. This plan not only provides a guide for future town investments but can be used to leverage additional grant funding from the Indiana State Department of Health.



Sidewalks down Eastern Avenue. Source: HWC Engineering



Sidewalk along State Road 101 north of town. Source: HWC Engineering

GOAL 3

Work with INDOT and the Central Railroad Company of Indiana for street and intersection improvements at State Road 101 and Eastern Avenue.

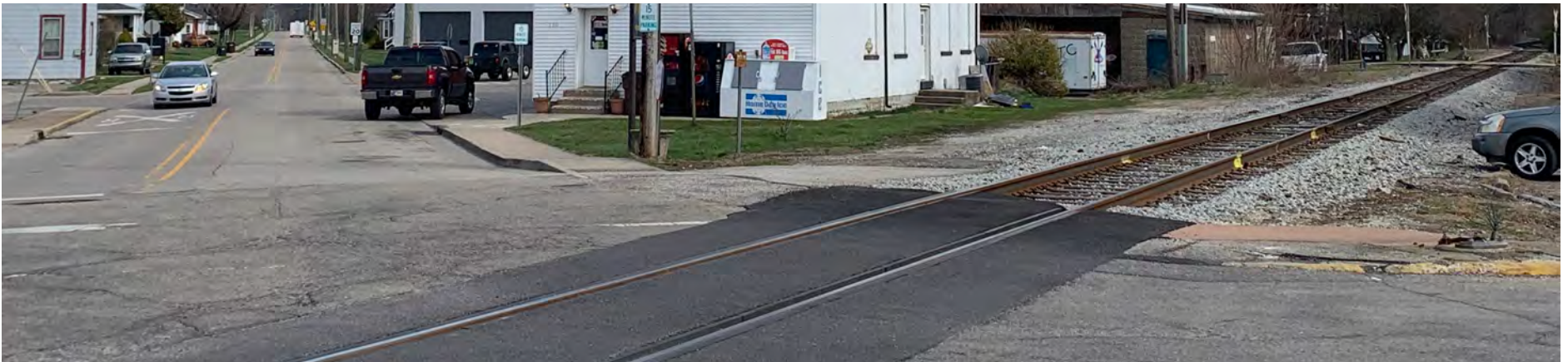
The intersection of Meridian Street and Eastern Avenue is a major safety concern in Sunman, not only due to a lack of signalization but because a railroad cuts directly through its center. Safety improvements should be a priority for this intersection, however, since multiple jurisdictions and private ownership overlap at the intersection it can be difficult for Sunman's concerns to be addressed. Coordination with not only INDOT, but the Central Railroad Company of Indiana is necessary for any infrastructure enhancements to occur surrounding the intersection. While making a case for future roadway and rail enhancement projects can be difficult, there are preliminary steps Sunman can take to strengthen its case.

Strategy 1: Perform a safety and improvement feasibility study with a qualified consultant to determine the need and cost of potential improvements to the intersection.

Sunman should perform a safety and improvement feasibility study that analyses major safety concerns at the intersection, identifies potential fixes, and lists implementation strategies the town can show to outside parties.

Strategy 2: Use the study's findings to support the town's case when asking state agencies to include the intersection in future planning efforts.

After a feasibility study has been completed, Sunman should use the finding when making a case to add the intersection project to future planning agendas for state agencies and when applying for grant funding.



Railroad cutting directly though the intersection of State Road 101 and Eastern Avenue. Source: HWC Engineering



IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO EXPAND PARKING AVAILABILITY DOWNTOWN.

Action Items

Formally paint/stripe on-street parking spaces in the downtown area to make sure spaces are used efficiently.

Consult with area business owners on peak activity times and current parking facilities.

Explore opportunities for shared parking on private lots for businesses with different peak parking times.

Evaluate the feasibility of town-led construction of a shared parking lot to serve businesses across the downtown area.

PROJECT 2: PERFORM NEW STUDIES FOCUSED ON VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY.

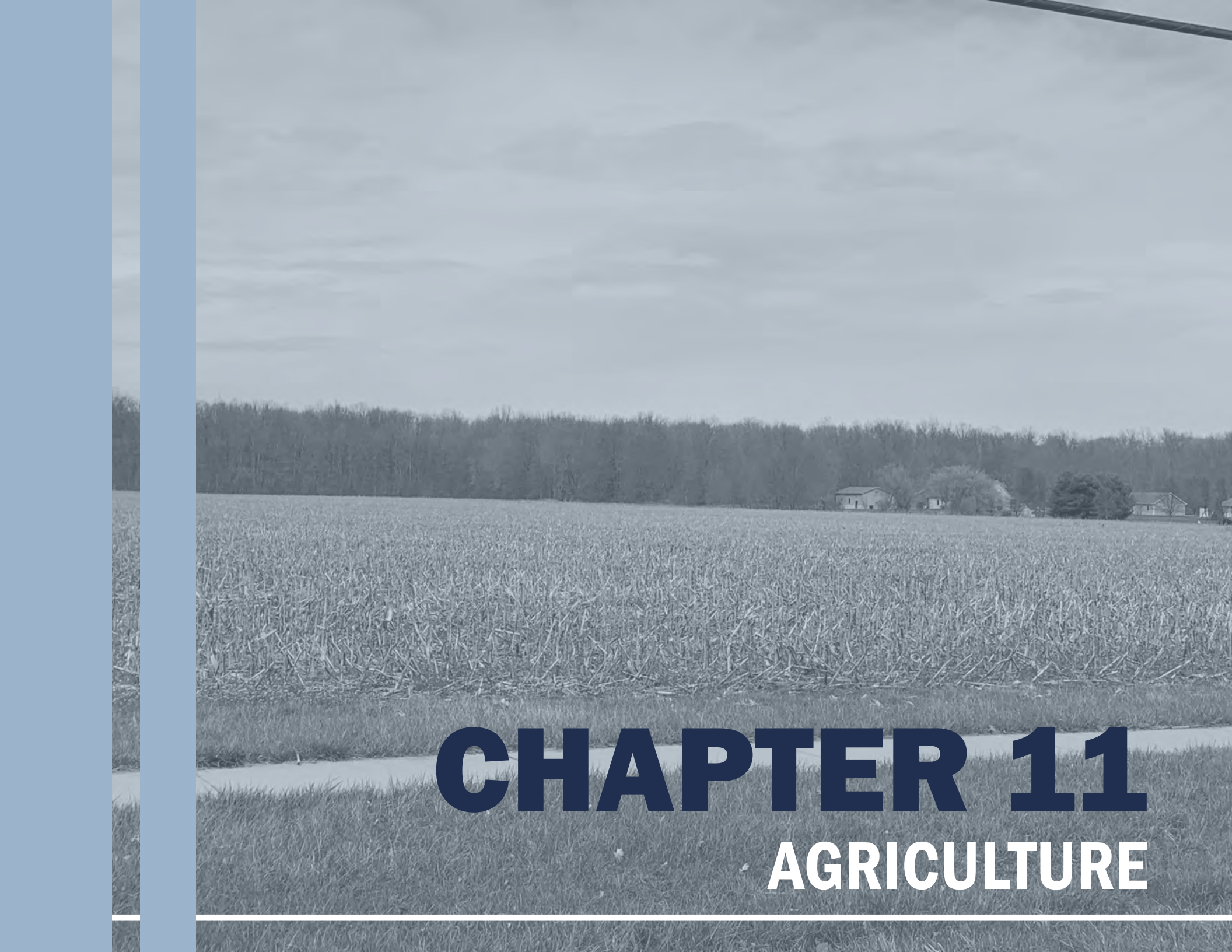
Action Items

Research and apply for an Indiana State Department of Health Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity (DNPA) Planning Grant for Community-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements.

Conduct a qualifications-based selection process to identify a consultant to facilitate the planning process and help prepare the master plan.

Use the planning process to identify and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian enhancements across Sunman.

Adopt the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.



CHAPTER 11

AGRICULTURE



VISION FOR AGRICULTURE

“Sunman will preserve the agricultural character that contributes to the community’s valued rural atmosphere.”

INTRODUCTION

Sunman’s culture and small-town charm were shaped by the regions deep agricultural roots. The town sits just outside the areas with steep changes in topography commonly seen in southern Indiana, with minimal floodplains and major wetlands that may constrict agricultural related activities. Preserving prime farm land is important for residents, as it is the livelihood of many and contributes to the natural landscapes desired by those living in rural parts of the state. Finding a balance between growth and preservation will be a key task for community leaders in the future as development pressures begin capturing lands adjacent to town.

KEY FINDINGS

- Over a third of Sunman’s annexed land is currently used for agricultural purposes, the majority being field crop production.
- Much of the agricultural land in town limits has access to public utilities and is suitable for development.
- Residents prioritize the protection of existing agricultural lands.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sunman has large tracts of annexed farmland north of Eastern Avenue towards the county line, west of Meridian Street and north of Sunman Elementary, and on the southern edge of the town adjacent to Industrial Drive. This farmland, which makes up approximately 38% of the land within town limits, is primarily used for row crop production. While a large portion of parcels within town limits are used for agricultural purposes, none of them are zoned as such. The majority of agricultural lands on the in Sunman are zoned as residential with some areas designated as industrial. This zoning pattern could be contributed to community leadership aligning zoning with the county's future land use plan.

Due to Ripley County's topographical challenges, the county has lower total agricultural product sales when compared elsewhere across the state. Even so, Ripley County had \$86 million in total sales in 2017 (USDA 2017 Agricultural Census) with over 80% directly contributed to crop production. Sunman and the surrounding region is primary family farms with limited large-scale agriculture industrial sites, the closest grain elevator located in Aurora and east of Brookville.

PUBLIC INPUT

- Sunman residents consider the areas agricultural roots to be one of the more defining aspects of the community's character and charm.
- Online survey respondents were split on the idea of using existing agricultural land within town boundaries for new development with just over 50% disagreeing with converting the land.



Fields used for crop production on Eastern Avenue. Source: HWC Engineering

GOAL 1

Ensure there are appropriate transitions between Sunman's future development and Ripley County's surrounding agricultural uses.

Agriculture has been a major contributor in Sunman's past and has deep roots within the region as a whole. Although topography in Ripley County and Dearborn County limits prime farmland compared to more flat areas across the state, there is still a wide range of commercially-scaled farms and hobby farms in and around the community. There are even agricultural uses directly to the town's downtown core, which can cause a conflict of interests when looking to grow outwards and attract new development. Finding ways to blend existing agricultural uses with new residential, commercial, and industrial development will be an important task for the town moving into the future, and protecting the town's agricultural heritage is just as important as attracting residents and growing the community.

Strategy 1: Work with Ripley County to establish guidelines to limit negative impacts from development on surrounding farmland.

Guidelines to reduce development impacts on surrounding agricultural lands doesn't strictly mean limiting development, but identifying best practices in construction techniques and allowed densities. Working with the Ripley County government to discover these best practices can not only benefit Sunman, but will also have an impact on other communities across the county.

Strategy 2: Partner with the Purdue Extension to educate residents on how farmland can be impacted by run-off from residential land uses.

What people do on their private property can unintentionally impact surrounding farm land. While it is not feasible for Sunman to ensure every property owner is properly reducing their impact, educating residents can go a long way in minimizing residential, commercial, and industrial by-products impacting farm land. The Ripley County Purdue Extension Office has the resources and knowledge to assist in needed educational outreach and programming.



Field day held by a local Purdue Extension office. Source: Purdue Extension

IMPLEMENTATION

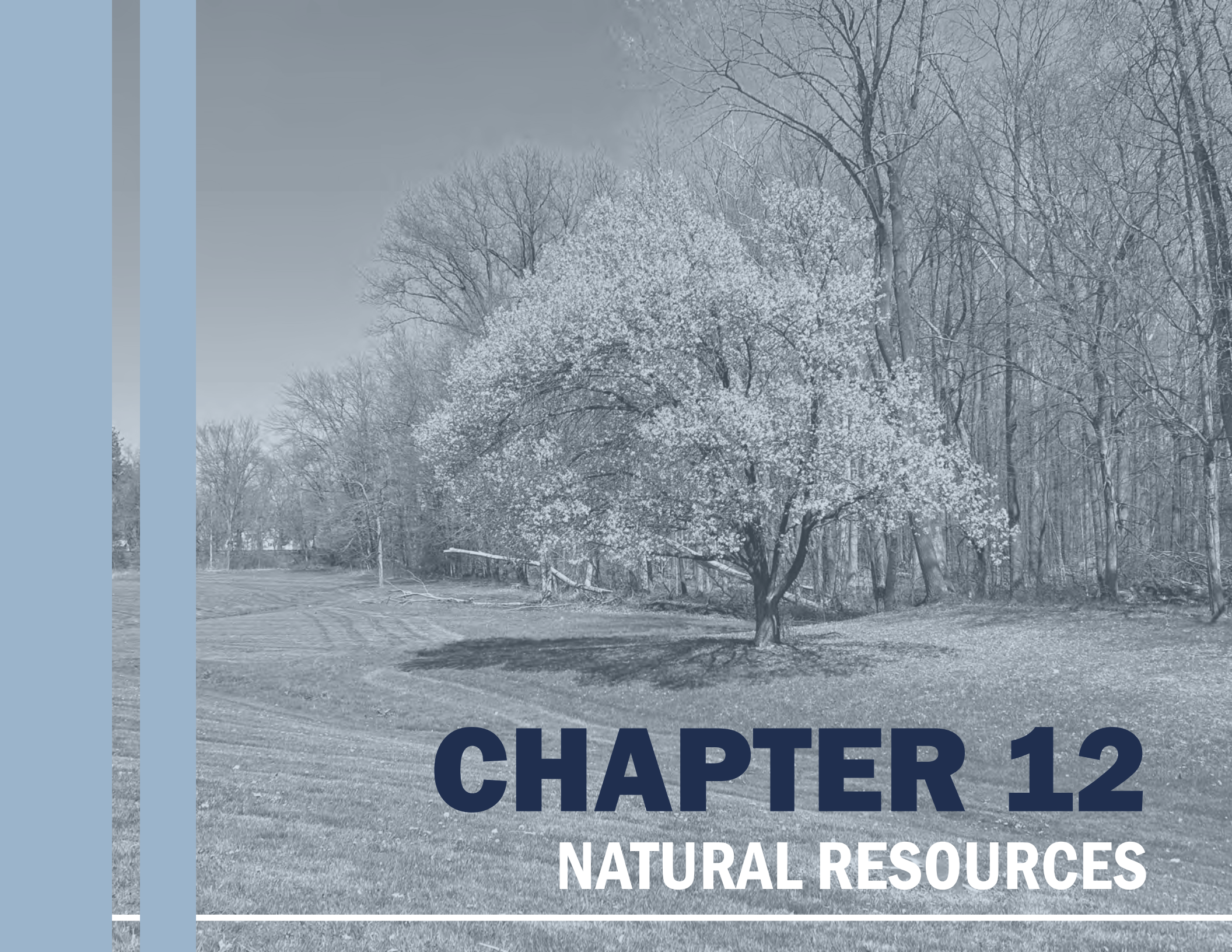
PROJECT 1: RECOGNIZE THE VALUE AGRICULTURE PROVIDES TO THE REGION AND HOW IT CONTRIBUTES TO SUNMAN’S ESTABLISHED CHARACTER.

Action Items

- Direct development to properties served by municipal utilities while protecting other farmland from construction.
- Work with Ripley County Economic Development to promote and grow agribusinesses around Sunman.
- Incorporate rural themes into town branding and signage.



This page is intentionally left blank



CHAPTER 12

NATURAL RESOURCES



VISION FOR NATURAL RESOURCES

“Sunman will protect its woodlands, waterways, and natural lands for the enjoyment of future generations .”

INTRODUCTION

Sunman’s rural atmosphere is heavily influenced by the wooded areas, creeks, wetlands, and open spaces in and around the community. These areas provide recreational opportunities for residents, function as scenic views for visitors, and serve as ecological safe havens for wildlife. Although there are a number of large wooded areas and wetlands within town limits, the only formally protected space is Sunman Park. As development expands outward along State Road 101 and Eastern Avenue it will be important for community leaders to project these natural assets and preserve them for future use and enjoyment, without limiting Sunman’s ability to grow.

KEY FINDINGS

- There are no floodplains or other major environmental barriers that limit potential development in Sunman.
- The town’s rural nature is one of the primary reasons people enjoy living in the area.
- There are multiple open spaces and wooded areas that could potentially be utilized for future recreational opportunities.
- There are two streams/ditches in town that are the primary locations for displaced stormwater.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The main natural resources within Sunman are woodlands and fields used for agricultural purposes. Outside of town limits there are various wetlands and small water bodies, both natural and man-made, as well as a small tributary that feeds into Laughery Creek. Laughery Creek flows through Ripley County, Dearborn County, and Ohio County before joining the Ohio River south of Aurora. This creek system is part of the Middle Ohio-Laughery watershed which covers much of the county and all areas south towards the Ohio River. Sunman also sits at the southern most point of the Whitewater watershed, which extends northeast towards the Whitewater River and Franklin County.

The wooded area south of Sunman's downtown between Raintree Terrace apartments and the American Legion building is a major opportunity for the community. The land not only provides a natural background for residents living adjacent, but holds the potential to be used for recreational activities in the future. The woods are currently owned by organization who manages the senior apartments, although no plans for the area have been identified as of the adoption of this plan.

PUBLIC INPUT

- A large portion of Community Open House participants believe protecting wooded areas and wetlands in and around Sunman should be a high priority.
- Participants at the Public Workshop identified multiple areas where open and natural spaces should be preserved including areas surrounding Sunman Park and east of State Road 101 / Meridian Street south of the railroad.



Sunman's open fields and natural woodlands. Source: HWC Engineering

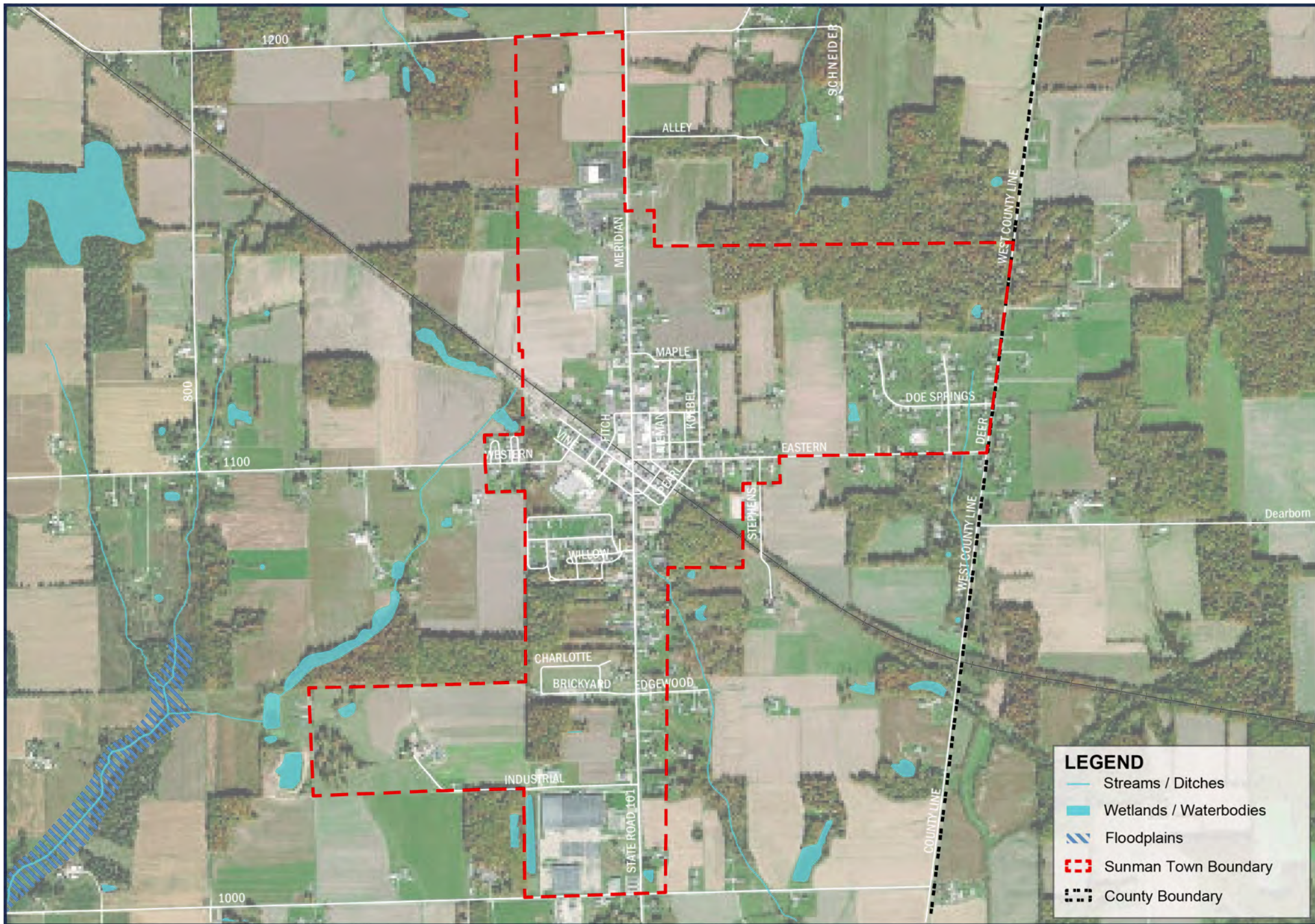


Figure 12.1: Natural Resources

SCALE: 1" = 1,500'

NORTH



GOAL 1

Protect wooded areas and wetlands within and surrounding Sunman.

Sunman is surrounded by multiple natural resources and has wooded areas, various ponds and streams, and large open fields adjacent to and within town limits. Protecting Sunman's wooded areas and wetlands will help preserve natural landscapes and ecological safe-havens for future generations and surrounding wildlife. Preservation should include both limiting development and educating residents on how they can lessen impacts to their surroundings. Preserving the town's rural character can also be achieved through this process, and is something the town has been proactive on over the past decades.

Strategy 1: Identify natural areas that should be preserved for future recreation and open space.

There are various areas both in and directly adjacent to Sunman's town limits that should be preserved for future recreational purposes or open space. Community leaders should work with property owners to identify these areas and determine their best future use. Two key locations for these efforts should include the fields surrounding Sunman Park and the woods directly behind the senior apartments south of the rail road.

Strategy 2: Work with Ripley County to update zoning ordinances to protect natural areas.

If there are areas where preservation should take the utmost priority, Sunman leadership should coordinate with the Area Plan Commission to update zoning on identified properties and ensure their future uses do not negatively impact their natural assets. This could be done with an existing zoning district, through an overlay, or with the creation of a new district specifically designed for preservation.

GOAL 2

Leverage the town's rural nature when marketing to visitors and attracting new residents.

People move to rural towns to escape urban areas and be closer to nature, protecting Sunman's natural resources can help achieve that atmosphere and draw in new residents and visitors. The area's natural assets can also be used in future tourism efforts, potentially leading to agri-tourism opportunities and coordination with regional attractions on marketing efforts. Sunman has multiple assets that make it unique and a potential destination, these should always be leveraged to their fullest extent.

Strategy 1: Use images of surrounding scenery and Sunman's rural lifestyle as a focus in future marketing materials.

When marketing Sunman and advertising future businesses, events, and housing opportunities the town should select imagery that shows the area's rural nature. People exploring the woods, local creeks and ponds, and access to passive recreational amenities are all photo opportunities that can be capitalized on and used for online and print materials.



Entrance to Sunman Fish and Game. Source: HWC Engineering

IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: PROTECT FORESTED AREAS, WETLANDS, AND OPEN SPACES WITH RECREATIONAL POTENTIAL AND NATURAL AESTHETIC VALUE.

Action Items

- Use the future land use plan and additional investigation to inventory woodlands and environmentally sensitive lands currently in town or that may be annexed with future development.
- Work with Ripley County to review the zoning and subdivision control ordinances to ensure that environmentally sensitive lands, forest areas, waterways, and waterbodies are sufficiently protected.
- Incorporate green infrastructure and stormwater best management practices into zoning and subdivision control ordinances.
- Use the development review process to further encourage thoughtful site design and protection of sensitive open space areas.



This page is intentionally left blank

POST  337

SUNMAN
AMERICAN LEGION

TREASURE HUNT

\$19 K 270

HALL RENTAL 623 4040

KENNETH L. DIVER

CHAPTER 13

PARKS & RECREATION



VISION FOR PARKS & RECREATION

“Sunman will expand recreational opportunities for all residents to promote physical and social well-being.”

INTRODUCTION

Parks, trails, and other related facilities can provide recreational and social opportunities for Sunman residents. These spaces allow for community-wide festivals, youth and adult sports leagues, private events, and general exercise and play. While the community has historically relied on Sunman Park for its needs, as the town grows so will the demand for updated or new parks and recreation facilities. The identification of new amenities and programs within Sunman’s park spaces will be key for supporting new growth and improving the well-being of all residents.

KEY FINDINGS

- Sunman Community Park holds the entirety of recreational amenities owned and operated by the town.
- Community-wide events have been successful in the past but need a single organization to take on full administrative function.
- While playgrounds behind Sunman Elementary are used primarily by students during class hours, there are multiple sporting fields behind the school used for both classes and youth sporting events.
- Sunman Community Park has the potential to expand both physical amenities and programming depending on resident needs.
- The park saw \$10,000 work of improvements in July 2022 which included new equipment and benches.
- Sunman’s Parks Board has an approved Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan, although it likely needs updating.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sunman Park is the only town-owned park space in Sunman, with the only other recreational facility located at Sunman Elementary. Sunman's 1.6 miles of sidewalks also allow residents an option for active recreation, giving safe access to the northern, southern, and eastern edges of town. While the town does not have other formal facilities, there are multiple locations for future active and passive recreation amenities.

Sunman Community Park

The park is located on the west side of Meridian Street north of the railway and is approximately 7.5 acres. Features of the park include a basketball court, baseball/softball fields, a playground, three open shelters, and a community center. The community center has large event space that can be rented out by private parties as well as a full kitchen. The park has the potential to expand amenities and programming, which was a common theme seen in public input.

Sunman Elementary

The elementary is on the northern end of Sunman on the west side of Meridian Street. The site has playground facilities typical for school functions and a large amount of space dedicated to youth sports. While the playground is primary used by children attending the elementary, the sport fields allow for regional clubs and sporting events.

Outside Facilities

Batesville KOA Journey is a full service campground less a ten minutes north of Sunman. The campground has multiple areas for camper hook ups, cabins, playground facilities, pools, and boat access to Tall Oaks Lake. The campground is not only a recreational and entertainment option for Sunman residents, but is a tourist destination with the potential of bringing visitors to the community.

PUBLIC INPUT

- Only 16% of people who took the online public survey felt that there were a variety of year-round programming opportunities within park spaces that catered to all community members.
- Community-wide events have been successful in the past but need a single organization to take on full administrative functions.
- New events should cater to the various age ranges and demographics of Sunman, just one a single group.
- In general, residents believe recreational amenities are in good conditions with roughly 55% agreeing.



Community building at Sunman Park. Source: HWC Engineering



Baseball/softball fields at Sunman Park. Source: HWC Engineering



Playground equipment with new rubber mulch. Source: HWC Engineering



GOAL 1

Develop year-round events and programming that provide activities for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Sunman residents strongly expressed their desire for community-wide events and year-round activities for both recreational and social purposes. Such programming could take place in various areas in Sunman and be open to all residents or cater to specific ages and backgrounds. Sunman has seen success in previous events and festivals, getting residents and businesses involved and attracting people from outside the community. These have not only given residents things to do but provided economic benefits and marked Sunman to potential residents. While there has been success in the past, Sunman, and many other rural communities, often experience administrative troubles when holding large events. As the town identifies new programming desired by the community a single, impartial, group should be selected to develop and manage events and activities.

Strategy 1: Encourage and support a future Main Street Organization and/or other groups to lead programming efforts.

Main Street organizations are excellent for administering new community programs and events. They are able to take a neutral stance and fairly assess issues as they arise, which may be common when a single business or person is in charge and potentially profiting.

Strategy 2: Use surveys to determine activities desired by residents and integrate them into future events.

While it was discovered that new activities and festivals are needed in Sunman, there was not a strong consensus on what those should entail. Sunman should canvas residents to identify the types of events they wish to see to help predict what types of space, staff, and investments may be needed in the future.

Strategy 3: Work with local businesses to identify community events that would help promote their business and increase sales.

Businesses stand to benefit from events that attract crowds and bring visitors to the community. Large-scale festivals and programming in the future should be able to benefit all local businesses in Sunman, not just those selling food and drinks.



GOAL 2

Improve accessibility and increase users at Sunman Park through physical enhancements and new amenities.

Expanding park amenities can provide a reason for residents to visit and use the recreational facilities in Sunman. Improving accessibility and installing new features is a way to ensure park spaces can be used by all residents and not just those who can use playground equipment or a baseball field. Physical enhancements at Sunman Park can take a variety of shapes including walking trails, pickle ball courts, new sport facilities, and improvements to the community building that expands its capacity for events. The goal of Sunman leadership is to ensure the park is accessible to all members of the community with no age group or demographic feeling excluded and unable to get out and stay active.

Strategy 1: Canvas residents to discover new uses and activities they would like to see in Sunman Park.

Before any decisions are made on potential improvements to Sunman Park, the Park Board should reach out to residents and reach a consensus on what is actually needed and would be useful for the community.

Strategy 2: Add identified projects to the town's capital projects list with timelines and costs.

Once the Park Board identifies the highly demanded projects from discussions with residents they should add those projects to the town's capital projects list with timelines and costs. This will keep projects at the forefront of the town's future expenditures and help when reallocating funding or applying for grant money.



Shelters and picnic tables at Sunman Community Park. Source: HWC Engineering

IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: SURVEY RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES ON ADDITIONAL PARKS FACILITY AND PROGRAMMING DESIRES.

Action Items

In preparation for creating the Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan, conduct a community survey to understand amenities desired in Sunman Community Park, as well as potential programs in the park, downtown, or elsewhere in the community. This survey should be available both online and in paper form.

Work with business owners to identify interest in participating in a variety of community-wide events and festivals.

Use the existing Sunman Revitalization Initiative or other community group to lead downtown programming efforts.

Incorporate park facility needs into a capital projects list.

PROJECT 2: UPDATE THE TOWN'S FIVE-YEAR PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR POTENTIAL GRANT PROGRAMS.

Action Items

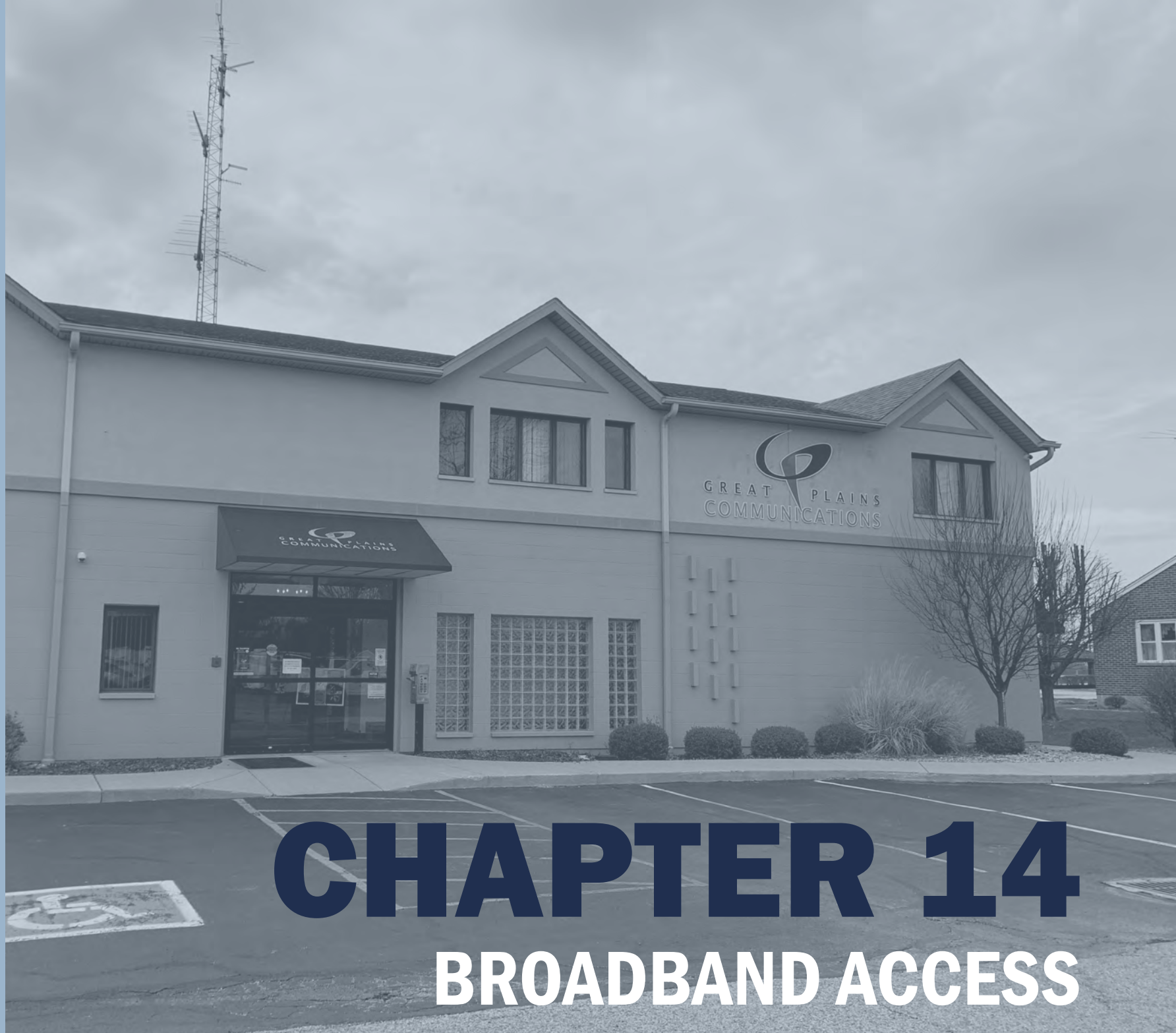
Research any updated master plan requirements and helpful resources on the IDNR website.

Hold community meetings and garner public support of new plan recommendations.

Create the master plan using IDNR's Small Town Fill-In-The-Blank (FITB) Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the help of the Park Board and town staff.

Coordinate accessibility needs of the parks system with on-going town Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements.

Long-term, maintain and update the Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan to ensure continued eligibility.



CHAPTER 14

BROADBAND ACCESS



VISION FOR BROADBAND

“Sunman will work with community organizations and local providers to improve broadband quality and affordability.”

INTRODUCTION

Quality internet service is crucial for rural communities such as Sunman. Broadband is a way for residents and businesses to connect with others outside the community and quickly perform daily activities online that may be impossible otherwise due to distance or access information. High-speed broadband options in Sunman are vital for the continued success of local industries and businesses, who rely on websites for communicating with clients and sales, as well as Sunman Elementary, that relies on quality services in classrooms and for e-learning. Expanding broadband infrastructure, improving internet speeds, and lowering costs should be a focus for the community as Sunman continues to grow.

KEY FINDINGS

- Sunman’s has higher download and upload speeds on average than many other rural communities across the state.
- The town’s previous fiber provider supplied free WIFI for public spaces, something the community would like to have again.
- Fiber availability can be used to attract new businesses who rely on internet for sales and marketing and residents who work from home.
- Sunman’s digital literacy is higher than many other rural communities of its size.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Purdue University's Center for Regional Development maintains the Rural Indiana Stats online database, a collaboration with the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA). This database collects and presents information on a variety of topics related to broadband and a county's digital inclusion, which consists of multiple factors such as internet speeds, population with no access to internet or computing devices, poverty rates, and others.

Ripley County has a digital divide score of 25.7, showing there are some gaps in broadband availability and digital literacy within the county. The score ranges in value from 0 to 100, with 100 indicating the most severe digital divide. Stanford University defines the digital divide as the "gap between the underprivileged members of society, especially the poor, rural, elderly, and handicapped portion of the population who do not have access to computers or the internet; and the wealthy, middle class, and young Americans living in urban and suburban areas who have access." Figure 14.1 on the following page shows the region surrounding Sunman and the digital divide scores based on Purdue University's analysis and mapping. Sunman's census tract has a score of 34.8.

According to 2020 data statistics the county has an average download speed of 70 Mbps with 85.2% of Ripley County residents not having access to internet with at least 100/20 Mbps speeds (download/upload). While a large portion of the county may not exceed speeds of 100/20 Mbps, the average download speed is high for primarily rural communities. Additionally, 13.1% of Ripley County residents do not have a computing device (smart phone, tablet, laptop, etc.) and 14.4% do not subscribe to any type of internet access.

When looking at Sunman's census tract specifically, the community has a higher digital divide score (34.8) when compared to Ripley County, but outperforms the county in average download speeds (100.6 Mbps) and the percentage of people who lack access to 100/20 Mbps speeds (56.6%). Although Sunman appears to have higher speeds than other communities in Ripley County, the higher digital divide score could be due to more people lacking access to computing devices, not subscribing to broadband services, lower levels of educational attainment, or income differences. While Sunman's digital divide score indicates it has a "high" vulnerability according to the database, the score is still lower than a large number of comparable communities in the state.

According to broadbandnow.com there are 12 internet providers in Sunman, seven of which provide residential services, that provide an average download speed of 60.5 Mbps. The service providers advertising fiber, cable, or DSL connections include Great Plains, Frontier, CenturyLink, and Xfinity. Great Plains recently bought out the existing fiber provider in the region, the original provider worked with Sunman to supply WIFI in public places but this deal was ended after the acquisition.



PUBLIC INPUT

- Almost half of respondents on the online survey do not believe there are affordable, high-speed internet options in Sunman for residents and businesses.
- Participants at both in-person engagement events agreed that expanding broadband infrastructure in Sunman was less of a priority when compared to creating a public space that offers free WIFI.
- Sunman has multiple internet providers that offer advertised speeds higher than many other rural communities across the state.
- The town already owns equipment that could be used to introduce public internet access.

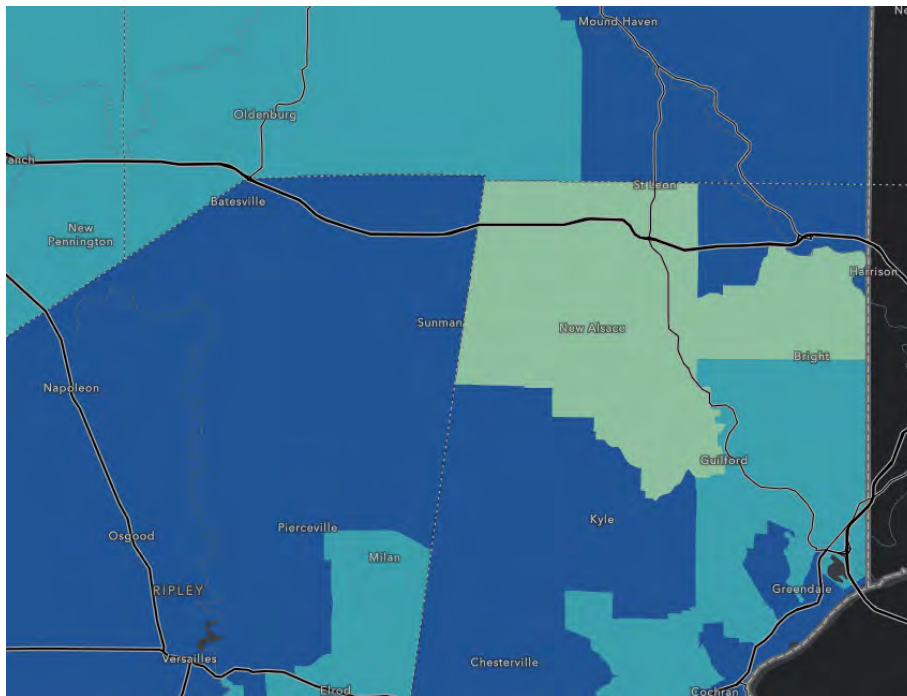


Figure 14.1: Digital Divide Map. Source: Purdue University, Rural Stats Indiana



GOAL 1

Create a space that offers free WIFI and equipment for public internet access.

Access to the internet is critical for rural communities in today's age, allowing residents to access information, businesses to communicate with clients, and students to access educational resources. Quality internet connections help shrink the gap between rural and urban towns by leveling the playing field and providing equal opportunities for all users. While the importance of staying connected cannot be understated, there may be people unable to access the internet due to rising costs or lack of computing devices in their homes. Creating a space with free internet connectivity and providing devices to access the internet can vastly improve the quality of life for residents in a rural setting, Sunman Community Park is a prime location for this.

Strategy 1: Identify a public location that would be suitable for providing internet access.

At one time Sunman provided free public WIFI for residents in partnership with a previous broadband provider, however the agreement was ended after the provider was acquired by another firm. Town leadership and residents heavily support starting the program again and should begin identifying potential locations and communicating with local providers on the feasibility of free WIFI in the town's public spaces.

Towards the end of the planning process, the town identified Sunman Community Park as one of the best locations for public WIFI. The town was able to begin service with a public/private partnership with a local business willing to support the initiative. Moving forward, the town should work with other local businesses who may be willing to financially back WIFI at the park.

Strategy 2: Utilize existing equipment owned by the town and determine if additional equipment is also needed.

Sunman has computing equipment that was once planned for use in a public computer lab, which would have provided an opportunity for residents to access the internet if they didn't have a device of their own. Identifying a space for the equipment and determining what else would be needed should be the town's first step in expanding access for residents.



Town hall could be a location for free internet access. Source: HWC Engineering



GOAL 2

Lay the groundwork for Sunman to become a broadband-ready community.

The Broadband Ready Communities Program was created as a tool to encourage broadband development throughout Indiana by serving as an information resources and certifying local communities as being broadband ready. This certification helped notify telecommunications businesses that a community has taken steps to reduce barriers to infrastructure installation and investment. Ripley County, and its consolidated communities, have not yet taken the steps to become broadband ready. While becoming certified does not guarantee new investments, it significantly reduces the regulatory hurdles in the future, something Sunman can individually achieve and benefit from as well. Becoming broadband-ready could help support Ripley County's local electric co-op with expanding infrastructure to undeserved areas in the county.

Strategy 1: Coordinate with Ripley County organizations and OCRA to create a broadband readiness study and become a certified community.

Becoming broadband ready isn't a task Sunman needs to focus on alone, it can be a collaborative effort throughout the entire county. Working alongside Ripley County government and other consolidated communities to develop a broadband study can help identify ways to share resources, lower overall costs, and more quickly expand infrastructure.

Strategy 2: Promote certification to providers who can receive grants to expand services in Sunman.

While a broadband study can help Sunman become more competitive for future grant opportunities, it can also be used to advertise the town to providers looking to expand services. Receive grant funding can be used to leverage private dollars and incentivize providers to invest in Sunman and Ripley County over other communities.

IMPLEMENTATION

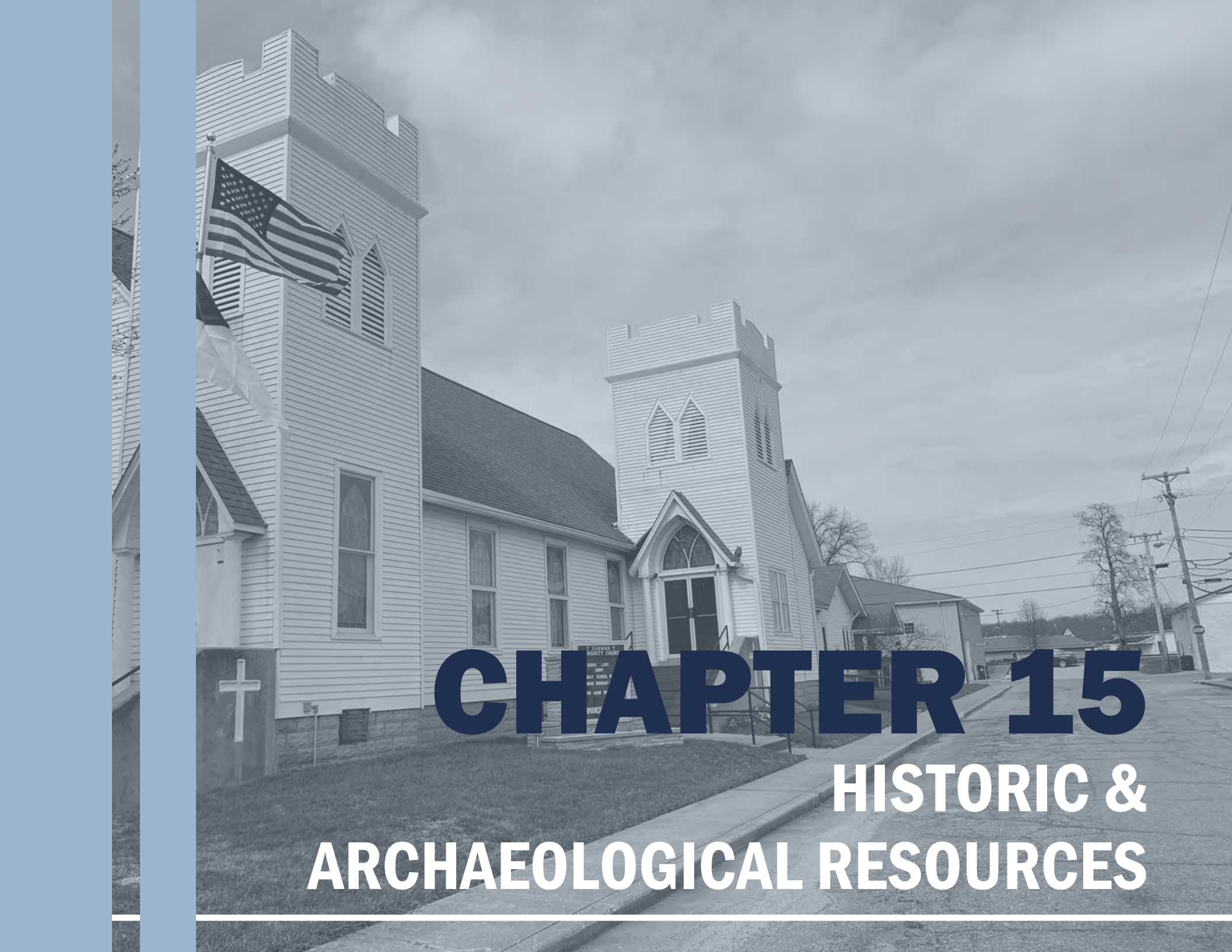
PROJECT 1: CREATE A PUBLIC SPACE THAT OFFERS FREE WIFI AND SHARED COMPUTER ACCESS FOR THOSE WITHOUT A MEANS TO CONNECT TO THE INTERNET AT HOME.

Action Items

- Evaluate town facilities that could be used to house such a space, including Town Hall or the Campbell Building in Sunman Community Park.
- Create an operations plan that would include 'open' times, operating costs, and potential staff or resources to assist and troubleshoot IT problems.
- Utilize existing technology, and purchase additional hardware as necessary, to outfit the computer station(s).
- Promote the resource to town residents through social media and other communications.
- Partner with local businesses who may be willing to financial support public WIFI on a yearly basis.



This page is intentionally left blank



CHAPTER 15

HISTORIC & ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES



VISION FOR HISTORIC & ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

“Sunman will protect its historic resources and support their preservation.”

INTRODUCTION

Sunman’s history is defined by the people and businesses which have called the community home over the past 200 years. The town was originally named by an early postmaster of the regional post office, which began operation in 1833. The town was created after the railroad was extended to the area, working to create a link between Indianapolis and Cincinnati. This helped to connect rural Ripley County to more urban areas across the Midwest. This link helped solidify Sunman as a destination for those living in the surrounding region, which still holds true to this day. The town’s early history can be seen in the large number of historic structures and sites that tell stories of the past and contribute to the community’s unique character. Protecting these historic resources is a key focus for both town leadership and residents.

KEY FINDINGS

- Sunman has over a dozen properties with local historic designation ranging from farm houses to commercial structures.
- There are no formal building design guidelines specific to Sunman for downtown commercial structures or historic properties.
- Many buildings have seen reinvestment and rehabilitation over the last ten years, specifically commercial structures in the downtown core.
- The Sunman Historical Museum is a potential tourism and cultural asset that needs preservation.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sunman holds a variety of historically significant properties, not typically seen in a community of its size, that showcase the town's unique character. In total there are 17 properties within town limits which have been identified as notable or contributing by statewide surveys, over 20 more identified sites located in Penntown or withing a three-mile radius of Sunman in Ripley County, and dozens to the east in Dearborn County. The majority of designated properties in Sunman are residential with four sites actively used for commercial uses. Some of the named sites in Sunman include:

- Bruns House
- John Hashgen House
- Doctor Freeland House
- Herbel House
- Louis Sieg Building
- J.W. Wippel Building
- John Meyer Building
- Farmers State Bank

The majority of these sites are located downtown along Washington Street and Vine Street south of the train tracks, near the early platted areas of the town.

The Sunman Revitalization Initiative is a registered non-profit organization that works on behalf of citizens to make key investments in the community. The organization's main purpose is to enable community development, but also focuses on enabling rehabilitation and restoration of structures to protect historic resources, attracting new businesses to Sunman, and procuring funding for blighted or abandoned building removal.

The Sunman Historical Museum is located within Town Hall and provides a unique destination for residents and tourists interested in local history. The museum features the original 1856 plat of Sunman, pieces from the 1930's jail, artifacts of early pioneer families including the Sunmans, a map showing the route taken by Indiana's 83rd Infantry from Vicksburg to Savannah, and displays showing how local communities were formed from early immigrants.

PUBLIC INPUT

- Residents described the need for stricter aesthetic guidelines for building facades within the downtown core to protect the historic integrity of surrounding structures.
- Only 19% of online survey takers believed Sunman's overall appearance is satisfactory and leave a good impression for visitors.
- The comprehensive planning committee commented that Sunman lacks types of local rehabilitation programming seen in larger communities, such as facade improvement grants.



The majority of historic structures in Sunman are south of the railroad on or adjacent to Meridian Street and Washington Street. Source: HWC Engineering



Louis Sieg Building. Source: HWC Engineering



Rehabilitated building on Meridian Street. Source: HWC Engineering



GOAL 1

Develop facade improvement guidelines that ensure building improvements match the surrounding neighborhood character.

Sunman's historic structures, commercial buildings, and downtown neighborhoods contribute to the community's unique character. Although rehabilitation efforts should always be encouraged, improvements and updates to their exteriors should be consistent with their original construction and match the surrounding neighborhood. These guidelines can ensure continuity within Sunman and contribute to other placemaking efforts occurring within the community. Guidelines also help direct people who may want to update their buildings but are not sure how to best approach the project, giving them a starting point and consolidating information and resources they may find useful.

Strategy 1: Coordinate with the Area Plan Commission and other Ripley County communities to develop aesthetic design standards for downtown or highly visible structures.

One of the ways to best enforce aesthetic design standards is through a zoning ordinance or overlay districts. Both of these would need coordination with the Area Plan Commission to ensure their legality and enforcement. These standards would highlight best practices, acceptable materials, and proper design during rehabilitation efforts.

Strategy 2: Create a "best practices" tool kit for property owners looking to update or rehabilitate their downtown or highly visible buildings.

A document explaining best practices for building rehabilitation as well as suitable material choices, local contractors, funding sources, and online resources can be a huge benefit to property owners in Sunman. This information can serve as a starting point and guide for those looking to make building improvements and updates.

Facade Improvement Program - Delphi, Indiana

Delphi's Main Street organization administers funding for facade improvements on commercial buildings in their downtown. The program covers things such as masonry repair, exterior painting, sign removal and replacement, cleaning, and other repairs that improve the aesthetic quality of the building. While the program is available to both tenants and owners of any commercial building, there are additional requirements when making improvements to historic structures. Best practices and materials are also identified within the programs information packet, available online for all residents to view.



Delphi's downtown core. Source: Town of Delphi



GOAL 2

Assist property owners with the rehabilitation of historic structures and façade improvements along State Road 101 / Meridian Street.

Buildings along State Road 101 / Meridian Street are the most visible properties for visitors and commuters passing through Sunman. Due to the highly visible nature of the area, building facades and landscaping should be held to a higher degree than other streets and neighborhoods within the community. Sunman's Revitalization Initiative has historically led the charge in assisting people with rehabilitations, at a minimum pointing property owners to outside resources and helping raise funds in extreme case. Expanding the town's capacity to directly provide technical assistance and financial support can help speed rehabilitation efforts and directs them in a way that preserves the town's unique character.

Strategy 1: Use the Main Street organization to leverage state funding sources for enhancing commercial building facades.

Main Street organizations are able to apply for and administer regional and statewide grants funds that can assist property owners in building facade renovations. A Main Street organization in Sunman could not only administer and guide rehabilitation efforts, but consolidate ongoing efforts of other local organizations and non-profits.

Strategy 2: Direct owners of historic structures to state and federal resources that assist with rehabilitation.

There are outside resources available to property owners in Sunman wanting to renovate their commercial or historic structures. Identifying these resources and consolidating them in an online database would allow residents to more easily utilize these funding and technical assistance resources.



IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: CREATE A “BEST PRACTICES” TOOL KIT AND DESIGN GUIDELINES TO HELP PROPERTY OWNERS IN MAKING APPROPRIATE RESTORATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO HISTORIC STRUCTURES.

Action Items

- Utilize existing preservation resources from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Indiana Landmarks.
- Consult with a design professional such as a preservation architect to tailor appropriate guidelines for Sunman.
- Educate property and business owners about the tool kit.
- Consider additional future protections such as creating a preservation district or adding architectural design standards to the zoning ordinance.

PROJECT 2: PRESERVE THE SUNMAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND USE IT TO LEVERAGE ADDITIONAL FUNDING RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS.

Action Items

Utilize existing funding resources for local museums through the Indiana Historical Society, FEMA, and local community foundations.

Add information on the museum to the town's website and development promotional materials catering towards visitors and tourists.

Expand the museum to include historic artifacts that tell the history of Ripley County and the region as a whole.



CHAPTER 16

HAZARD MITIGATION



VISION FOR HAZARD MITIGATION

“Sunman will continue to plan for future natural, environmental, and man-made disasters impacting the community.”

INTRODUCTION

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Indiana has declared 51 emergencies since 1954 with the majority related to severe weather and flooding. Sunman’s rural nature can make the community susceptible to the impacts of natural disasters as limited infrastructure and emergency services can hinder outside aid and prolong response times. While it may not be possible to prevent tornadoes, ice storms, and other naturally occurring disasters from impacting Sunman, steps can be taken to help mitigate damages and direct emergency response efforts. It will be critical for Sunman to partner with state and county-wide organizations to ensure the safety of those living and working in the community in times of crisis.

KEY FINDINGS

- Sunman leadership and staff are active participants in county-wide hazard mitigation planning efforts.
- The Ripley County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) handles the majority of hazard mitigation efforts, but may not be equipped to handle non-weather related scenarios such as train derailments.
- Since the town houses police, fire protection, and EMS departments, the response time for potential disasters would be extremely quick.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sunman falls under the Ripley County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) for assistance in planning for potential disasters within the county and coordinating their recovery efforts. The agency has three part-time staff members and three volunteer leadership positions who all coordinate with local incorporated and unincorporated communities to ensure their needs are met. In addition to staff, the Ripley County EMA also owns and operates an emergency operations trailer and UTV (utility task vehicle) that can assist in serving impacted areas throughout the county.

The agency recently completed its renewal to be StormReady, a designation through the National Weather Service that promotes advanced planning, education, and awareness to help mitigate loss of property and life in the event of major storms. They also helped lead an update of the county's comprehensive emergency management plans (CEMPs) through various workshops with towns and unincorporated communities across Ripley County. Sunman also participated in these meetings.

In addition to the disasters and hazards addressed in county-wide plans, Sunman has specific hazards that should be addressed locally or in tandem with county and state agencies. Flooding after heavy rain events in the downtown was a concern mentioned by both Sunman staff and residents. The town is currently working on exploration of the storm sewer system to identify concerns and potential solutions.

Another major potential hazard to Sunman is the railway that runs directly through the center of the community. While there is less than a mile of track directly adjacent to residential properties within town limits, with some structures less than 20 feet away from the rail, any type of derailment in town would be catastrophic.



Areas downtown experience flooding during storms. Source: HWC Engineering

PUBLIC INPUT

- Flooding downtown and on major roadways is a safety concern for residents and commuters during heavy rains, this was discussed during focus group meetings, the Public Workshop, and the Public Survey.
- The Comprehensive Planning Committee identified that stormwater infiltration and inflow into sewer infrastructure forces the plant to double its treatment efforts during major rain events.
- The train track through the center of town was a hazard identified by participants at the Public Workshop.



GOAL 1

Work with Ripley County on emergency management and hazard mitigation efforts.

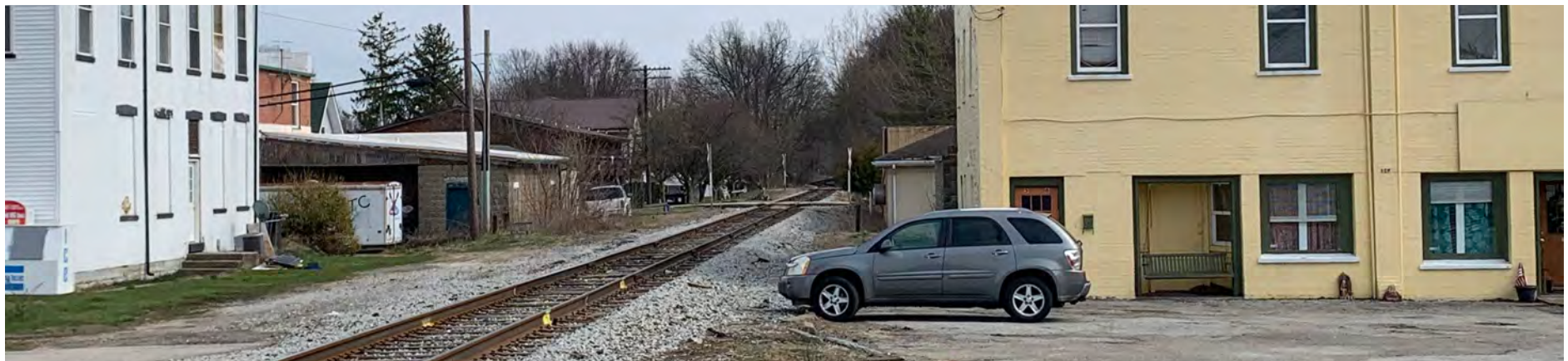
Preparing for both man-made and natural disasters in Sunman can be difficult for town leadership, as there is no easy way to predict when these events may occur. While flooding and extreme weather can be expected over the course of a year, and have been a focus of local and county-wide initiatives, extreme outliers such as tornadoes, earthquakes, chemical spills, or train derailments are much harder to predict. Ripley County Emergency Management Agency is the group who largely handles emergency management and hazard mitigation efforts for towns across Ripley County, and encourages community leaders to actively participate in planning efforts. However, it will be up to Sunman staff to bring the town's local issues to the table and make sure they are accounted for in county-wide plans.

Strategy 1: Continue to actively participate in scheduled meetings related to the county's hazard mitigation efforts.

Sunman leadership and staff are active in county-wide hazard mitigation planning, attending meetings and educating themselves on procedures during disasters. The town should continue these efforts and use what they learn to educate residents and business owners on how they can play a role in mitigation efforts as well.

Strategy 2: Identify major hazards within Sunman that should be addressed in future mitigation efforts through discussions with Ripley County government and local community services.

Sunman has potential threats and hazards unique to the community which may not be relevant elsewhere in the county. Town leadership should identify and list these hazards and use the list to influence future local and county-wide planning efforts. This should also include identification of local resources and infrastructure that could mitigate these potential hazards such as FEMA approved shelters and back up generators.



Train tracks running through the center of town. Source: HWC Engineering

IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT 1: WORK WITH THE RIPLEY COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (EMA) TO CREATE A CRITICAL FACILITIES PLAN TO ENSURE THESE FACILITIES MAINTAIN OR QUICKLY RESUME KEY SERVICE FUNCTIONS IN THE CASE OF A HAZARD EVENT.

Action Items

Identify Sunman’s critical facilities that are at risk of damage from natural hazards.

Educate the community regarding potential hazards, where they may occur, and recommended responses as it relates to key facilities.

Retrofit existing critical facilities and ensure new facilities are constructed and maintained in ways that will prevent or minimize hazard caused damage.



PROJECT 2: IDENTIFY THE STEPS NEEDED TO CONSTRUCT FEMA APPROVED SAFETY SHELTERS IN CASE OF EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS (TORNADOES, BLIZZARDS, HEAT WAVES, ETC.).

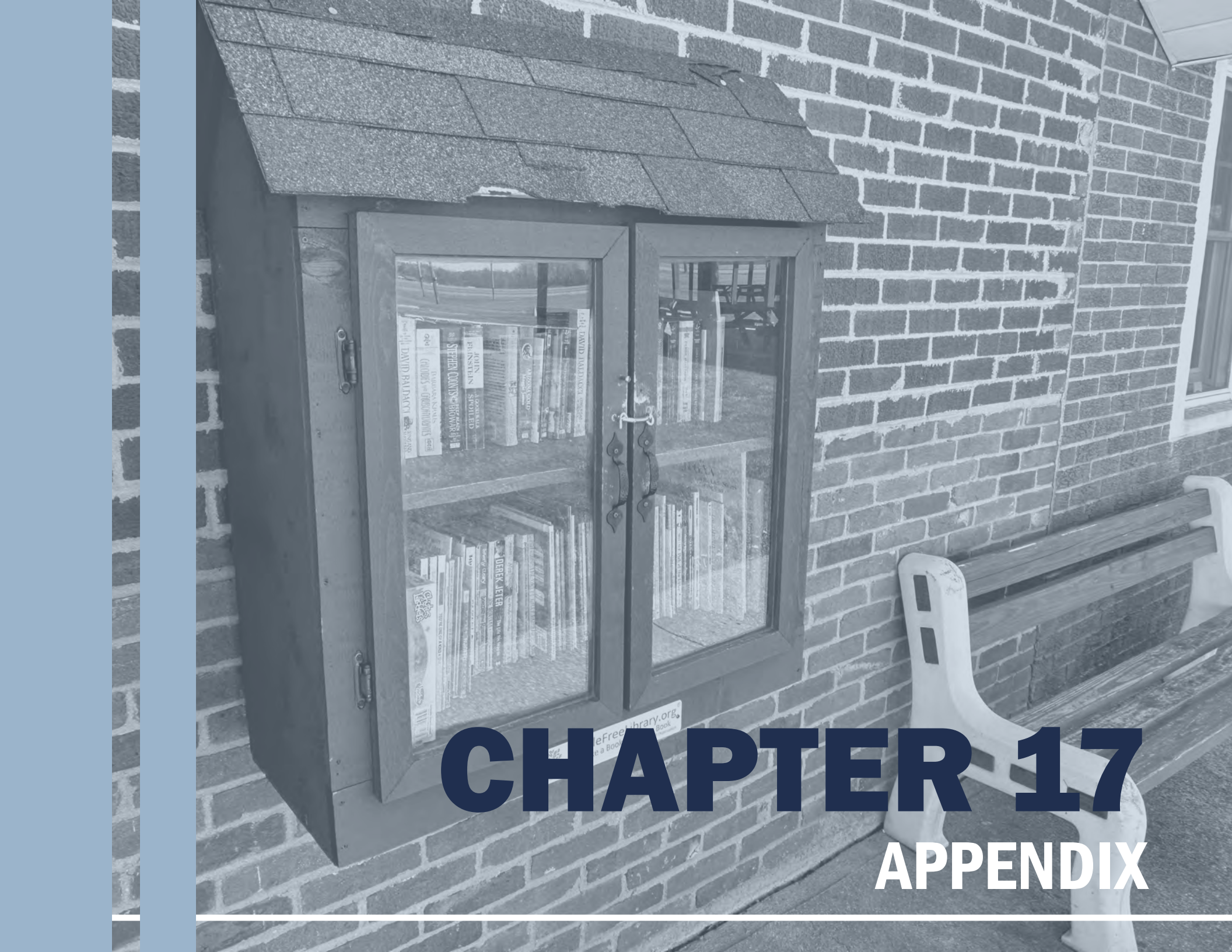
Action Items

Determine what existing structures within Sunman could be used or purposed as FEMA approved community safe rooms.

Identify potential locations for new support structures at both ends of the community.

Reference FEMA's "Safe Rooms for Tornadoes and Hurricanes" guidebook when assessing structures and determining potential funding sources.

Contact the Indiana Department of Homeland Security about the Community Safe Room Program for assistance in applying for FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program.



CHAPTER 17

APPENDIX



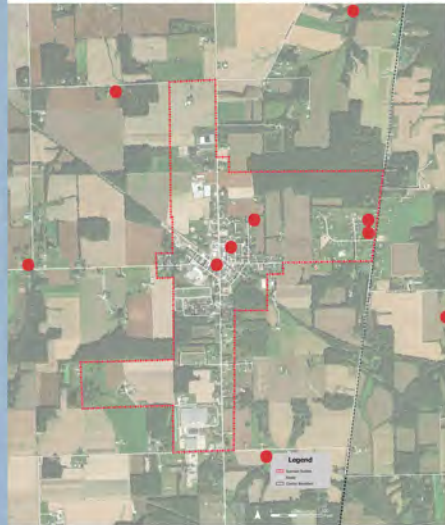
WHAT IS IN THE APPENDIX?

The plan's appendix holds the full response data from the three major public engagement events held throughout the project; the Public Workshop, Community Online Survey, and Public Open House. Although this data has been summarized in Chapter 3: Comprehensive Planning Committee and throughout the subject chapters, it can be useful to see the base data originally gathered through in-person and online channels. The following pages shows responses on public meeting boards, the full response data for the community online survey, and how the project website was used to advertise meetings and present findings.

This appendix is meant to be used by readers as a reference point when reading the plan's key findings and public input bullets.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP BOARDS

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!



Where do you live?

Use a STICKY DOT and place it on the map in the general area of your home. If you live off of the map area, place the dot on the map edge. Tell us your **ONE WISH** for the future of Sunman and place it on a post-it note here!

- Library
- More family activities
- Help the stray cats
- Meet the needs of all ages
- Computer lab for everyone
- Retail development on the southside of the tracks
- Get citizens to participate
- Everyone working together
- More retail and activities to draw people
- get town people involved
- More business (restaurants, retail, etc.) while preserving the agriculture part of the town. Also, beautification of the town and a draw to bring folds into our community.

Legend

• Sunman Town Limits

• Sunman Town Limits

• Sunman Town Limits



Sunman Comprehensive Plan: Community Workshop - November 29, 2022

TELL US ABOUT SUNMAN!



What are Sunman's ASSETS?

Use a STICKY DOT and place it on the map to note the location of a community asset. Tell us about it here on a post-it note! (Place as many dots and post-its as you would like)

- Community park
- Highway
- SRFD - highly trained
- Room/acreage for expansion
- Agricultural community
- Hometown community
- The willingness of restaurants/bars ready to help the community
- SR 11 expansion

Legend

• Sunman Town Limits

• Sunman Town Limits

• Sunman Town Limits



Sunman Comprehensive Plan: Community Workshop - November 29, 2022

TELL US ABOUT SUNMAN!



What would you CHANGE?

Use a STICKY DOT and place it on the map to note the location of an issue or something you would like to change in Sunman. Tell us about it here on a post-it note! (Place as many dots and post-its as you would like)

- Annex all utility customers outside town limits
- Affordable, quality housing for lower income families
- Ordinance compliance
- Updated water and wastewater infrastructure
- More retail and restaurants and businesses in general, need for bringing people into town
- More beautification of the town, quaintness
- MGPI barrel storage lowering property values due to mold from aging process
- New senior living/housing
- Signage for local businesses (both inside and outside town limits)
- Animal-friendly park and trails
- Preserve commercial spaces for business, no apartment conversion
- Need a community draw/destination
- Parking south of railroad
- Train speeds and truck speeds through downtown are too fast
- Establish a Housing Board to enforce existing ordinances on multi-family dwelling and other homes that have become dilapidated and need to be brought up to code

Legend

• Sunman Town Limits

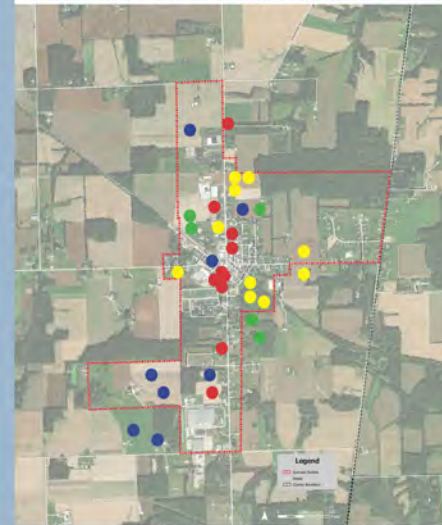
• Sunman Town Limits

• Sunman Town Limits



Sunman Comprehensive Plan: Community Workshop - November 29, 2022

SHAPE SUNMAN'S FUTURE!



Where should DEVELOPMENT occur in Sunman?

Place a **YELLOW** dot on the map where you want to see **Residential** development.

Place a **RED** dot on the map where you want to see **Commercial/Retail** businesses.

Place a **GREEN** dot on the map where you want to see **Parks/Open Space**.

Place a **BLUE** dot on the map where you want to see **Industrial/Manufacturing** growth.

Legend:

• YELLOW = Residential

• RED = Commercial/Retail

• GREEN = Parks/Open Space

• BLUE = Industrial/Manufacturing

- Keep agricultural areas as is, redevelop buildings/spaces that are no longer up to code
- Restrictive covenant against development

Legend

• Sunman Town Limits

• Sunman Town Limits

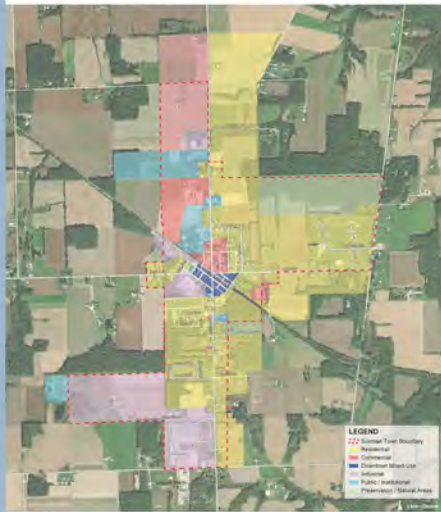
• Sunman Town Limits



Sunman Comprehensive Plan: Community Workshop - November 29, 2022

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE BOARDS

SUNMAN'S FUTURE LAND USE



Future Land Use Map

Sunman's Future Land Use Map identifies potential locations for development and redevelopment within and adjacent to town limits. In many instances, the existing land use is also the desired future use. The land use map is intended to guide decisions made by the Area Plan Commission and Town Council as rezoning and development petitions are submitted. It is NOT a zoning map, and does not impact how a property is currently used. The land use categories are described below.

Residential: Areas currently developed with, or appropriate for, residential uses including single-family detached homes, duplexes, multi-family apartments, and senior living facilities. These areas may also include limited institutional uses and open space.

Commercial: These areas can accommodate a broad range of commercial and business activities including retail, restaurant, entertainment, automobile-related, office, and service uses. These areas require sufficient transportation access and should include buffers when adjacent to residential development.

Downtown Mixed Use: Mixed commercial, residential, and public uses located directly within Sunman's downtown core. These uses often overlap and may include structures with separate uses on each floor. This area holds dense development and promotes walkability between services and nearby residential properties.

Industrial: Light to heavy industrial uses that may hold any variety of warehousing, manufacturing, assembly, transportation, and related services. Uses producing high amounts of noise, odor, runoff, or other impacts should be separated from nearby residential areas.

Public/Institutional: Any land designated for public services, government operations, and government facilities including Town Hall, fire and police stations, schools, churches, libraries, parks, and cemeteries.

Natural Areas: Areas where development should be limited and woodlands or open space preserved.

Fix town boundaries around the Legion (not annexed)

Don't agree with something on this map?
Use a sticky note to write your comments here!

Sunman Comprehensive Plan, Sunman's Open House - November 23, 2022

SUNMAN'S GOALS & PRIORITIES

Government Capacity

Sunman will focus on improving communication with residents and expanding functional capabilities in all town departments.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Government Capacity strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Continue to improve communication between town government, county government, residents, and businesses.	2
• Ensure Sunman is represented on county wide boards and commissions.	
• Use electronic message boards, social media, and sever bills to spread community news and updates.	
Continue to ensure future facility, infrastructure, and programmatic costs are integrated into annual budgets.	10
• Create a capital projects list with potential funding sources and anticipated timelines.	
• Hold quarterly meetings with departments to identify immediate and future facility and equipment needs.	
Address capacity concerns with Sunman's Police Department to meet community level-of-service expectations.	5
• Dedicate funds to hire additional officers.	
• Identify potential facility and equipment needs.	

Public Facilities

Sunman will continue to provide quality services and strive to enhance community facilities and amenities.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Public Facilities strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Expand sewer service north along SR 101 to the intersection at SR 46 in Penitontown.	7
• Select an engineering consultant to design the extension.	
• Bid and construct the extension with the help of grant funds.	
Address sewer treatment capacity issues through stormwater infrastructure enhancements, disconnecting downspouts, and other inflow and infiltration reductions.	3
• Adopt a community-wide policy and work with residents to ensure downspouts and sump pumps are not connected to the sewer system.	
• Evaluate the sewer system for utilization and inflow issues and prioritize needed improvements.	
Replace aging and outdated equipment at the water and wastewater treatment plants.	19
• Identify equipment and facility updates that will need to be addressed in the next five years.	

SUNMAN'S GOALS & PRIORITIES

Placemaking

Sunman will utilize its unique character to further advance quality of life and quality of place initiatives.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Placemaking strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Create unique branding for Sunman that can be used for signage, marketing efforts, and other town related materials.	2
• Hire a consulting firm to develop unique logos, tag lines, color palettes for signage and print uses.	
Design and construct new wayfinding signage that welcomes visitors and directs drivers to destinations within town.	8
• Use isolated branding on all new signage constructed within the community and at the I-74 interchange.	
Focus beautification efforts along SR 101 / Meridian Street including street trees, signage, and other landscaping features.	16
• Continue to support efforts of the town's Beautification Committee.	
• Communicate with INDOT on the possibility of adding new landscaping and furnishings along the SR 101 / Meridian Street corridor.	

Economic Development

Sunman will continue to support local entrepreneurs and strive to be a business friendly community.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Economic Development strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Encourage the re-use of empty commercial structures along SR 101 / Meridian Street to new retail and entertainment uses.	7
• Form a Main Street Organization to create incentives and promote available resources for the rehabilitation of commercial structures.	
Continue working with county organizations to attract new commercial and industrial businesses to Sunman.	3
• Partner with the Riley County EDC and Chamber of Commerce to leverage additional resources when attracting new businesses.	
Continue supporting existing businesses and entrepreneurs within Sunman.	21
• Finalize the creation of a Sunman Main Street Organization within Sunman.	
• Encourage local businesses to join the Chamber of Commerce and other supporting organizations.	

SUNMAN'S GOALS & PRIORITIES

Housing

Sunman will provide quality housing options for residents of all ages and lifestyles.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Housing strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Encourage the development of various housing types including entry-level single-family, multi-family, and senior living facilities.	8
• Review town zoning to ensure diverse housing options are possible within Sunman.	
• Identify possible incentives Sunman could utilize to attract residential development.	
Address ordinance violations on residential properties through code enforcement.	3
• Create an online portal where residents can submit ordinance violations for both town and county review.	
Work with residents and community organizations to facilitate restoration or removal of abandoned residential properties.	18
• Identify issue properties and create a working list that can be referenced for future initiatives.	
• Partner with Habitat for Humanity and state agencies who focus on housing rehabilitation.	

Transportation

Sunman will maintain a well-connected and safe transportation network for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Transportation strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Work with INDOT and the Central Railroad Company of Indiana for street and intersection improvements along SR 101.	3
• Lobby state agencies to ensure intersection needs on SR 101 are addressed in the State's future planning efforts.	
Fill in sidewalk gaps that link residents to destinations within the community.	3
• Map needed sidewalk improvements and prioritize gaps based on use and safety.	
• Add future sidewalk improvement projects into the town's capital projects list.	
Increase available parking spaces in the downtown core, specifically south of the train tracks.	21
• Work with business and property owners to understand parking needs and peak times.	
• Explore cost efficient strategies to increase parking availability such as string-on-street spaces and formalizing gravel lots.	

SUNMAN'S GOALS & PRIORITIES

Agriculture

Sunman will preserve the farmland agricultural character that contributes to the community's valued rural atmosphere.

Use a sticky dot to mark if you believe this Agriculture strategy should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Protect prime farmlands surrounding Sunman from existing and future development. - Limit development on farmland outside current town limits. - Partner with the Purdue Extension to educate residents on how farmland can be impacted by residential and uses.	17

Natural Resources

Sunman will protect the woodlands, waterways, and natural lands within and surrounding the community for future enjoyment.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Natural Resources strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Protect wooded areas and wetlands within and surrounding Sunman. Identify natural areas that should be preserved for future recreation and open space purposes.	15
Leverage the town's rural nature when marketing to visitors and attracting new residents. Use images of surrounding scenery and Sunman's rural lifestyle as a focus in future marketing materials.	4

Hazard Mitigation

Sunman will continue to plan for future natural disasters and environmental concerns that may impact the community.

Use a sticky dot to mark if you believe this Hazard Mitigation strategy should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Continue working with Ripley County on emergency management and hazard mitigation efforts. Actively participate in scheduled meetings related to the county's hazard mitigation efforts.	11



SUNMAN'S GOALS & PRIORITIES

Parks & Recreation

Sunman will enhance recreational opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities in order to promote physical and social wellbeing.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Parks & Recreation strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Improve accessibility and increase usership at Sunman Park through physical enhancements and new amenities. - Carrot residents to discover new uses and activities they would like to see in Sunman Park. - Add identified projects into the town's capital projects list with timelines and costs.	8
Develop year-round events and programming that provide activities for residents of all ages and backgrounds. - Work with local businesses to identify what events would be best for promotion and increasing sales. - Use surveys to determine activities that would be enjoyed by all residents and integrate them into future events.	21

Both are important!

Include non profits that serve Sunman in the conversations as well.

Broadband Access

Sunman will work with community organizations and local providers to enhance quality and affordable broadband access.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Broadband Access strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Lay the groundwork for Sunman to become a broadband ready community. - Coordinate with Ripley County organizations and OCFA to create a broadband readiness study and become a certified community. - Provide certification to providers who can receive grants to expand services in Sunman.	1
Create a space that offers free WiFi and equipment for public internet access. - Identify a public location that would be suitable for providing internet access. - Utility existing equipment owned by the town and determine if additional equipment is also needed.	17

Think we need both of these and honestly providing a free wifi station should be the standard every community. Do that first and then we should focus on on becoming a broadband community.



SUNMAN'S GOALS & PRIORITIES

Historic Resources

Sunman will protect its historic resources and support their preservation.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Historic Resources strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Assist property owners in historic building rehabilitation and facade improvements along SR 101 / Meridian Street. - Use the Main Street Organization to leverage state funding sources for enhancing commercial building facades. - Direct owners of historic structures to state and federal resources that assist with rehabilitation.	6
Develop facade improvement guidelines that ensure building improvements match surrounding neighborhood character. Coordinate with the Area Plan Commission to develop an overlay that includes guidelines for building aesthetics in Sunman's downtown.	16

Land Use

Sunman will balance future residential, commercial, and industry needs while maintaining a rural atmosphere.

Use a sticky dot to mark the ONE Land Use strategy you believe should be a top priority for the future.

Community Strategies	Selection
Limit conversion of existing commercial buildings to residential use along SR 101 / Meridian Street. Work with the Area Plan Commission to advocate for changes to the county zoning ordinance that limits first floor residential uses in business districts to the.	12
Direct new development and redevelopment to the downtown core and north towards Pentdown along SR 101 / Meridian Street. - Consider zoning changes along the corridor to allow more diverse and dense development. - Use the power of Sunman as an incentive to attract development to the corridor.	3
Reference the Future Land Use Map when making land use decisions. - Ensure the Area Plan Commission is referencing the updated map when considering zoning changes and development plans. - Educate town council members and staff on how to best utilize the map when approving development plans and zoning requests.	5





COMMUNITY ONLINE SURVEY

Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q1 What do you LOVE about Sunman?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 18

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Sunman is very welcoming.	12/1/2022 11:41 AM
2	Very quiet and safe. Good value for the cost.	11/30/2022 8:32 PM
3	Quaintness	11/29/2022 10:21 PM
4	Small town with small town values	11/29/2022 7:37 PM
5	Close proximity to Interstate while still maintaining small town appeal with low population density.	11/29/2022 3:47 PM
6	Small town atmosphere with easy access to I 74	11/29/2022 2:46 PM
7	The small town feel and the people are friendly. It's a nice place to settle down.	11/29/2022 9:50 AM
8	Small town feel but close to 74, central between batesville and lawrenceburg.	11/27/2022 6:54 PM
9	The Fire Department and rescue 20	11/27/2022 2:55 PM
10	I don't know enough about the town itself but it seems to be a quiet family friendly country community.	11/25/2022 2:39 PM
11	Small town community	11/24/2022 11:58 AM
12	Small town living while being an hour away from big cities	11/24/2022 4:48 AM
13	The small town feel.	11/23/2022 3:34 PM
14	Small town that has potential to grow.	11/23/2022 1:07 PM
15	Walking distance to stores and restaurants is short.	11/23/2022 12:44 PM
16	Small town family feel	11/23/2022 11:25 AM
17	It's a small town with a small town feel.	11/23/2022 10:59 AM
18	That it is a small town and has a grocery store and general store.	11/21/2022 1:49 PM
19	Quiet living	11/21/2022 5:22 AM
20	Very little, close to the interstate	11/20/2022 5:52 PM
21	Peaceful	11/20/2022 9:30 AM
22	Small-town (farming) community.	11/18/2022 7:45 AM
23	It's quiet.	11/17/2022 3:21 PM
24	Small town	11/17/2022 2:02 PM
25	The little small businesses	11/17/2022 8:37 AM
26	I have lived in Sunman all my life. The current town board and a hand full of people are trying to improve Sunman and to make a difference. That is what I currently love about Sunman.	11/16/2022 11:55 PM
27	The residents	11/16/2022 8:33 PM
28	Small town	11/16/2022 7:36 PM
29	The people and small town feel	11/16/2022 6:31 PM
30	I moved to sunman 19 years ago thinking the town will only improve. Nothing has changed!	11/16/2022 10:19 AM
31	I love the small town environment with the agricultural backbone embedded in the community.	11/16/2022 8:19 AM

1 / 32

Sunman Community Workshop Survey

32	It is a quiet town where I feel I can walk around town safely.	11/16/2022 5:36 AM
33	Small town atmosphere, yet convenient access to larger towns and services.	11/16/2022 12:00 AM
34	No stop lights	11/15/2022 8:34 PM
35	Many of the people.	11/15/2022 6:41 PM
36	Sunman still feels like a small town, low crime, local restaurants, etc. Downtown is clean and well maintained. IGA is a well run and stocked business.	11/15/2022 6:15 PM
37	The wonderful small town closeness of the community.	11/15/2022 12:56 PM
38	Small town big smiles. People are friendly	11/15/2022 12:16 PM
39	Small town shops, local stores	11/15/2022 12:01 PM
40	I like the rural small town feel. I like that feeling where everybody knows everyone. I like going in IGA it's got the basic stuff you need. I take my car to get worked on by Jeff at Shell and they are so friendly and can usually fit you in and get the work done fast. I go to B&G to get ice cream in summer. I go to the Family Dollar and the General Dollar often. I go to the Dive restaurant to eat. My son went to school at Sunman Elementary School and I thought it was a great school. I drive a good distance to where I work which is the city and it feels like everything around is so fast paced. I love when I hit past the New Haven exit on 74 heading home and everything feels like it slows down and is more relaxed. I grew up in a small city where there were small quiet neighborhoods with woods & fields close by. I would go hiking & play in the woods. I always loved nature and the country. The small laid back city I grew up in started growing and growing and lost sense of community. The woods and fields are gone now have huge neighborhoods. You think it would take time to build up but once they put their minds to developing and growing. It happened quickly and boom your small community feel.. woods and fields are gone and there's no going back. You started feeling like one in million. Who needs a 10 different restaurants, 10 gas stations, huge grocery stores. I don't mind driving a little if I need something that comes with living in a rural area. I'll run to Harrison to go grocery shopping and I'll usually go to Remke grocery store instead of Kroger, I just like the smallness of the Remke store. One thing to about living in rural area it is so much more family oriented. People and family's tend to sit down and eat meals. cook at home more, they don't go to different restaurant every night to eat, and they work around the house together more. I think living in the country gives people a better work ethic. One thing you have to think of inconvenience keeps things country.	11/15/2022 10:56 AM
41	small town	11/15/2022 10:34 AM
42	How friendly everyone is!	11/15/2022 9:19 AM
43	Small town, small population, no "big government" or big corporations, no HOA's	11/15/2022 8:56 AM
44	Small town	11/15/2022 7:57 AM
45	I 74 access nearby. Outstanding Public School System. Fire department, life squad. Safe to walk the streets.	11/14/2022 10:12 PM
46	I grew up in this town, so small town feel.	11/14/2022 7:00 PM
47	That it's a quiet small town	11/14/2022 3:57 PM
48	at present time not a lot lol since 2020 election	11/14/2022 3:13 PM
49	Small town feel, everyone knows everyone.	11/14/2022 2:12 PM
50	Small town	11/14/2022 11:42 AM
51	Small town	11/14/2022 10:43 AM
52	Small town living and the people	11/14/2022 7:59 AM
53	Small town	11/14/2022 7:51 AM
54	The people of Sunman.	11/14/2022 7:44 AM
55	Small town	11/14/2022 7:36 AM
56	Softball league	11/13/2022 11:00 PM

2 / 32



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

57	Uummm...	11/13/2022 10:40 PM
58	Love the small town feel	11/13/2022 10:29 PM
59	Small town feel	11/13/2022 9:47 PM
60	Small, people are genuine, most of my family lives here.	11/13/2022 8:55 PM
61	I don't love Sunman	11/13/2022 7:52 PM
62	Some of the pretty trees and older homes in Sunman.	11/13/2022 7:45 PM
63	That it is a small town with agricultural all around it.	11/13/2022 7:24 PM
64	Small town, family life, no big stores, only small stores that give a small town feeling. Historical.	11/13/2022 7:06 PM
65	The small town	11/13/2022 6:51 PM
66	Friendly place to shop, bank etc. No waiting at most places. No trouble finding a parking space.	11/13/2022 6:24 PM
67	Small town.	11/13/2022 6:09 PM
68	It's quiet not much goes on	11/13/2022 4:55 PM
69	Everyone knows/is related to everyone.	11/13/2022 4:49 PM
70	small town feel	11/13/2022 4:49 PM
71	IGA (quick groceries close to home), the dive (nice sit down close to home)	11/13/2022 4:48 PM
72	The people	11/13/2022 4:36 PM
73	Small community, Bedroom community.	11/13/2022 4:35 PM
74	Small community	11/13/2022 3:26 PM
75	The small town feel. Everyone knows everyone. People come together to help those in need.	11/13/2022 3:09 PM
76	Small Town	11/13/2022 3:02 PM
77	The small town feel where everyone knows everyone.	11/13/2022 3:00 PM
78	Small town, convenient to post office and bank.	11/13/2022 2:58 PM
79	The Dive, small town feel, easy to navigate.	11/13/2022 2:22 PM
80	That the businesses still thrive without support from this town example railyard and family dollar	11/13/2022 2:02 PM
81	Location, small	11/13/2022 1:58 PM
82	Small town atmosphere, close to I74 too	11/13/2022 1:10 PM



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q2 What do you wish you could CHANGE in Sunman?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 18

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The park needs updating, but I know it's getting worked on. I wish the sidewalk went all the way to the school. I know there's a way to get to the school, but it may involve cutting through someone's driveway. As much as I like burgers and fries and pub food we need a different genre of food. Pizzeria or a Chinese place. I'd love an Indian restaurant, but I think that might be pushing it.	12/1/2022 11:41 AM
2	More activities at the park. A small library (even a room) would be nice. Definitely could use a Chinese restaurant.	11/30/2022 8:32 PM
3	Lack of eateries	11/29/2022 10:21 PM
4	Within the area, Sunman has a reputation of being a Mecca for low rent housing. I know people and businesses that do not wish to come to Sunman for this reason. Speaking bluntly, many renters, especially those in the low rent category, have very little pride in the community. They generally do not participate in civic activities nor do they do anything for the betterment of the town. The people who own the housing where these particular renters live, do not generally do a good job at maintaining these properties. There are provisions within the local ordinances to establish a "for lack of a better term" housing board. This board would be able to hold the property owners feet to the fire to maintain their properties and make them pass the ordinances that are already in place, and cater to a different class of renters than the ones we are currently experiencing in certain areas.	11/29/2022 7:37 PM
5	Increased availability of public services including library-internet access, continuing education opportunities, low cost public transportation, and quality affordable housing.	11/29/2022 3:47 PM
6	More job opportunities for those entering the job market.	11/29/2022 2:46 PM
7	Nothing	11/29/2022 9:50 AM
8	Less outdoor dogs barking all the time.	11/27/2022 6:54 PM
9	Pay the First responders	11/27/2022 2:55 PM
10	More shopping options, upgraded office/retail buildings.	11/25/2022 2:39 PM
11	Counsel	11/24/2022 11:58 AM
12	The flooding/rainwater issues. the dilapidated buildings on Meridian near the train tracks, and have more police presence	11/24/2022 4:48 AM
13	Some of the people. There's a few bad apples that are spread out in several areas across our small town and they're making the whole town look bad.	11/23/2022 3:34 PM
14	More businesses less street front apartments. We need businesses to draw people to our area.	11/23/2022 1:07 PM
15	Sidewalks on some side streets, ditches cleaned out and redone so flooding water can go somewhere, the park be made toddler friendly, small holiday events start back up such as Christmas walks or thanksgiving craft shows or summer festivals.	11/23/2022 12:44 PM
16	More restaurants and a place for kids to do thing	11/23/2022 12:00 PM
17	More things to do	11/23/2022 11:25 AM
18	I wish to see more police involvement within the community. More patrols thru town.	11/23/2022 10:59 AM
19	I wish we had more family style restaurants and maybe a Subway.	11/21/2022 1:49 PM
20	The downtown area	11/21/2022 5:22 AM
21	Bring in more opportunities	11/20/2022 5:52 PM

4 / 32

Sunman Community Workshop Survey

22	Better roads and better drainage for our yards	11/20/2022 9:30 AM
23	A few more trees in the downtown area instead of all concrete and asphalt.	11/18/2022 7:45 AM
24	More business opportunities that end with success. Far too often business flame out.	11/17/2022 3:21 PM
25	Breakfast restaurant	11/17/2022 2:02 PM
26	I would make a walking trail at the park and plant some trees	11/17/2022 8:37 AM
27	Clean up the old buildings. Get businesses in them. Clean up and improve houses and buildings. I wish all the citizens of Sunman cared about how our town looked.	11/16/2022 11:55 PM
28	Town council and clerk	11/16/2022 8:33 PM
29	More places to shop and eat	11/16/2022 7:36 PM
30	I wish downtown could be saved... the old historic buildings as shops would be so neat. Many people pass through on 101 and I wish the downtown was more welcoming and less abandoned looking.	11/16/2022 6:31 PM
31	Clean up the town. It looks like a dump.	11/16/2022 10:19 AM
32	Remove half of the trailer parks and low class housing options. We can build some newer upscale apartment complexes that bring a different class of people as well as visual aesthetics to our town. The apartments and multifamily units in our town are not maintained and are an eyesore for our community.	11/16/2022 8:19 AM
33	I wish there was just one, yes I said just one, restaurant open on Mondays year round.	11/16/2022 5:36 AM
34	Lack of career opportunities in town.	11/16/2022 12:00 AM
35	Nothing	11/15/2022 8:34 PM
36	Community involvement.	11/15/2022 6:41 PM
37	Senior housing. Upgrades to Raintree Terrace. Dedicated law enforcement within town.	11/15/2022 6:15 PM
38	Have a visible and distinctive "Main Street" feel on Meridian Street.	11/15/2022 12:56 PM
39	Get rid of the trailer parks and run down apartment buildings	11/15/2022 12:48 PM
40	Better grocery store more varieties to choose from.	11/15/2022 12:16 PM
41	Dilapidated look if downtown, too many convicted sex offenders in the area.	11/15/2022 12:01 PM
42	I love Sunman the way it is but if things had to change I would say maybe updating existing buildings especially the ones behind the liquor store. Maybe cleaning updating the IGA a little. The Dive restaurant needs to have advertisement along the main stretch so people know it's back there. Maybe some more events (bands) at the legion hall for older kids and adults. It's a shame that George's Pharmacy is closing because that's the pharmacy I go to. I wouldn't mind a fried chicken restaurant like the Old Brick (but a little cleaner but small like the St. Leon Tavern). We all love fried chicken. We use to love going there to get some fried chicken and listening to the lady that played the organ. No other restaurants or stores. I'm fine with the way things are.	11/15/2022 10:56 AM
43	a drug store is needed	11/15/2022 10:34 AM
44	We need a better playground for our kids to play with swings, handicap assessable, and infant.	11/15/2022 9:19 AM
45	More transparency....tired of not knowing the whole story (such as the firing of the town marshal)	11/15/2022 8:56 AM
46	Appearance, invite more shops for local shopping. Love the red rooster.	11/15/2022 7:57 AM
47	Schedule use for the park like coed softball league, select team home field for youth baseball, etc. I wish we had our drugstore back.	11/14/2022 10:12 PM
48	More things for the kids to do all year. A youth center would be nice and a splash pad at the park. Make the landlords responsible for thier properties. Let other internet companies provide service in town. GP internet is a joke. Even with the "upgrades". Put speed bumps in through town. Tired is seeing 101 used as a drag strip.	11/14/2022 7:00 PM

5 / 32



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

49	I wish there wasn't so many apartments and more stores	11/14/2022 3:57 PM
50	I wish that the town board and clerk would take more public opinion before making decisions police force and utility work and maintenance has declined greatly also wish they would treat property managers that have 1/5 the people in town live	11/14/2022 3:13 PM
51	More retail and dining options. Zoning for meridian street building that prevent the retail space from being transformed into unsightly residential apartments. Incentives for new retail and food establishments, more community events, rather than almost none happening now	11/14/2022 2:12 PM
52	The trailer park on the west side of town is an eyesore. Many of the old buildings could use some work. Which I have seen some changes lately.	11/14/2022 11:42 AM
53	The town council	11/14/2022 7:59 AM
54	Nothing. I like it the way it is.	11/14/2022 7:51 AM
55	There is far too much paved surface in town and far too few trees. People need proximity to nature and the absence of trees is detrimental to overall well-being.	11/14/2022 7:44 AM
56	The park, something more for the kids to do	11/14/2022 7:36 AM
57	More festivals	11/13/2022 11:00 PM
58	More restaurants.	11/13/2022 10:40 PM
59	We live outside of town (Sunman mailing address) and when we are in town I wish it were more visually appealing. Run down buildings around the railroad tracks and unkempt residences.	11/13/2022 10:29 PM
60	More food options.	11/13/2022 9:47 PM
61	More events, businesses stay, support of those two	11/13/2022 8:55 PM
62	Everything	11/13/2022 7:52 PM
63	More opportunities for the economically challenged to work nearby and to have access to a wider range of grocery store food.	11/13/2022 7:45 PM
64	I do not feel as safe as I used to. I use to see the police drive by several times a day now I never see one. People are speeding again, I worry about my children playing outside and the possibility of some breaking into my house now when I never did before.	11/13/2022 7:24 PM
65	Crime seems to be starting up a more, watch that. Bring back our pharmacy. Very sad that George's closed. They said there used to be a balloon festival, bring back some more of our festivals that bring money and communities time. No more trailers. We need to build our town's worth. If you're going to have housing, consider duplexes or apartments that have the old German style ?like we already have. Do not allow any new trailers to be put Up once old ones demolish. Have a nice pizza sit down place.	11/13/2022 7:06 PM
66	I wish it was like it used to be and stuff got done. The flags weren't even hung for veterans day	11/13/2022 6:51 PM
67	I wish for a more vibrant downtown area. Needs restaurants, shops.	11/13/2022 6:24 PM
68	More to do.	11/13/2022 6:09 PM
69	I wish there was more to do here	11/13/2022 4:55 PM
70	Bring my pharmacy back!	11/13/2022 4:49 PM
71	Something entertaining! Like, outdoor corn hole night at the dive...	11/13/2022 4:48 PM
72	The stigma that Sunman is the red headed step child is Ripley County	11/13/2022 4:36 PM
73	Wish it could get rid of the trailer courts on Western Avenue and eliminate store front apartments.	11/13/2022 4:35 PM
74	More small business, business support	11/13/2022 3:26 PM
75	Get rid of the dirty looking buildings along 101/Meridian St. Clean up or totally eliminate the trailers on Western Avenue.	11/13/2022 3:09 PM
76	Leadership!!!!	11/13/2022 3:02 PM

6 / 32

Sunman Community Workshop Survey

77	The telecommunications having a monopoly on internet and tv.	11/13/2022 3:00 PM
78	Improve roadways, a return of businesses such as laundry mat, pharmacy and car wash.	11/13/2022 2:58 PM
79	More restaurants, businesses	11/13/2022 2:22 PM
80	Town council they only want what they want and don't care about the people who live here.	11/13/2022 2:02 PM
81	Community involvement.	11/13/2022 1:58 PM
82	Getting more businesses and the town/people supporting the businesses	11/13/2022 1:10 PM

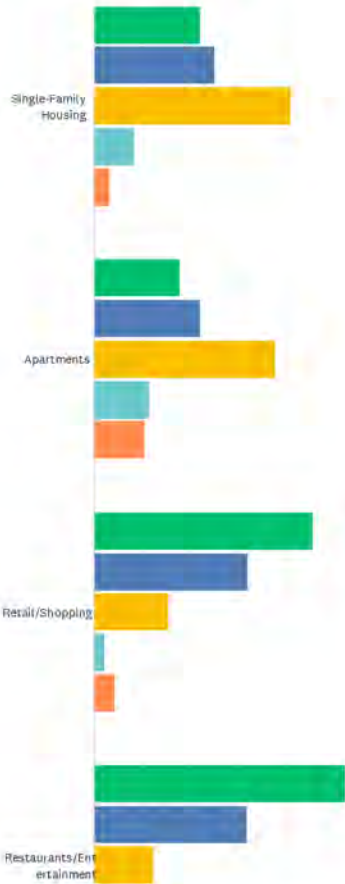
7 / 32



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

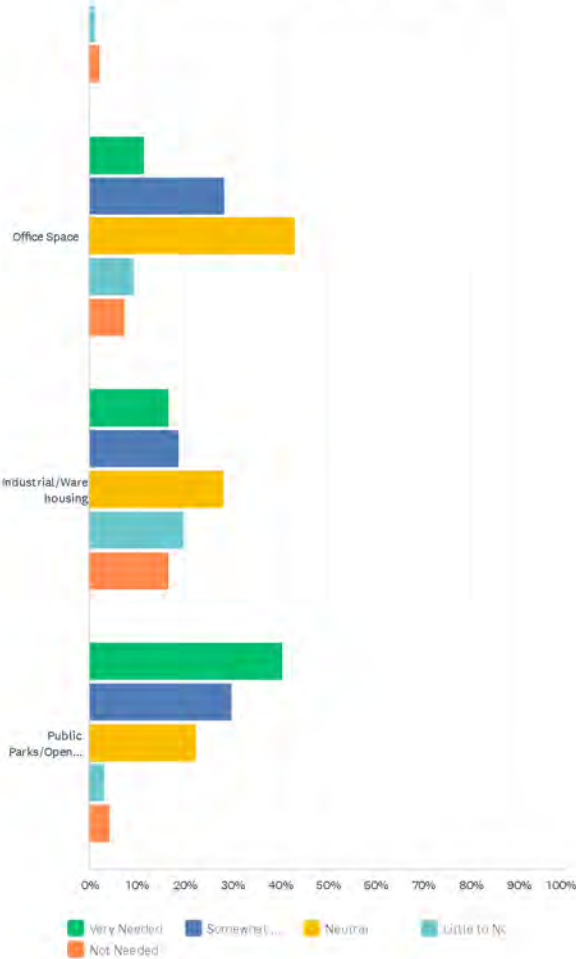
Q3 What types of development are needed in Sunman? (Very Needed to Not Needed)

Answered: 29 Skipped: 1



8 / 32

Sunman Community Workshop Survey



9 / 32



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

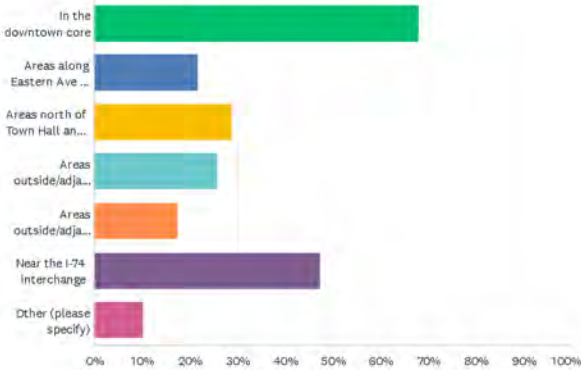
	VERY NEEDED	SOMEWHAT NEEDED	NEUTRAL	LITTLE TO NO NEED	NOT NEEDED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Single-Family Housing	22.11% 21	25.26% 24	41.05% 39	8.42% 8	3.16% 3	95	3.55
Apartments	17.89% 17	22.11% 21	37.89% 36	11.58% 11	10.53% 10	95	3.25
Retail/Shopping	45.83% 44	32.29% 31	15.63% 15	2.08% 2	4.17% 4	96	4.14
Restaurants/Entertainment	52.58% 51	31.96% 31	12.37% 12	1.03% 1	2.06% 2	97	4.32
Office Space	11.58% 11	28.42% 27	43.16% 41	9.47% 9	7.37% 7	95	3.27
Industrial/Warehousing	16.67% 16	18.75% 18	28.13% 27	19.79% 19	16.67% 16	96	2.99
Public Parks/Open Space	40.43% 38	29.79% 28	22.34% 21	3.19% 3	4.26% 4	94	3.99
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)					DATE	
1	Expanded senior housing					11/29/2022 3:47 PM	
2	Sunman has nothing to draw out of towners to our area. Our business draws people from the whole tri state area and they ask what is there to do in our area.					11/23/2022 1:07 PM	
3	We have a park. just needs upgrades					11/23/2022 11:25 AM	
4	Most of Sunman in town limits is already developed or owned by individual property owners					11/18/2022 7:45 AM	
5	The park needs more improvements. Kids are not the only ones who use parks. Our community needs to support health by putting in walking spaces and trails.					11/17/2022 8:37 AM	
6	Library,					11/16/2022 11:55 PM	
7	Need a laundry mat					11/16/2022 9:15 AM	
8	Public parking.					11/15/2022 6:41 PM	
9	Need to get small local business in the area and retain them. Bring in good workers. Fix up/tear down blighted areas. Improve look of trailer parks and not allow new ones to go in or existing ones to expand.					11/15/2022 12:01 PM	
10	senior apartments					11/15/2022 10:34 AM	
11	Walking Trail					11/14/2022 10:12 PM	
12	Retail zoning to keep apartments out of former retail space					11/14/2022 2:12 PM	
13	Revamp the park					11/13/2022 11:00 PM	
14	Pharmacy since George's closed					11/13/2022 8:55 PM	
15	bike/walking trail connecting us to other communities					11/13/2022 6:24 PM	
16	Childcare, more parking, laundromat, community center					11/13/2022 3:09 PM	
17	Industry Not warehouse. We need people working in Sunman					11/13/2022 3:02 PM	



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q4 Where do you think new development or redevelopment should occur?
(click all that apply)

Answered: 97 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES
In the downtown core		68.04% 66
Areas along Eastern Ave to the east		21.65% 21
Areas north of Town Hall and Sunman Elementary School		28.87% 28
Areas outside/adjacent to town limits to the south		25.77% 25
Areas outside/adjacent to town limits to the west		17.53% 17
Near the I-74 interchange		47.42% 46
Other (please specify)		10.31% 10
Total Respondents: 97		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	literally anywhere in or around sunman	11/23/2022 3:34 PM
2	Between 74 and town	11/23/2022 11:25 AM
3	Anywhere else besides Sunman	11/15/2022 8:34 PM
4	Keep development out of farming areas. Do not allow sprawl for the sake of development or we lose what makes Sunman great.	11/15/2022 12:01 PM
5	no where	11/15/2022 10:56 AM

Sunman Community Workshop Survey

6	Eastern Ave should stay residential; industrial could go in where vacant industrial already is; downtown core for office and retail	11/15/2022 6:02 AM
7	All areas	11/14/2022 7:00 PM
8	Placement close enough to town but not over crowding central town.	11/13/2022 11:00 PM
9	Look at the buildings we have and see if you can salvage our history. Do not put any large industries that will mess with us small town field. We have enough buildings already. Try to utilize what we have	11/13/2022 7:06 PM
10	What is here just needs to be used	11/13/2022 6:51 PM

Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q5 If money wasn't an issue, what is the one project/development/program you would like to see in Sunman?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 24

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	a good restaurant or 2. Fast food maybe. Something more affordable than the dive	12/3/2022 3:17 AM
2	Library. I know there's one in Baitsville and it's very nice, but a library in town would be great. Small public access TV studio. I know from experience that they are hard to maintain, but if money is no object.	12/1/2022 11:41 AM
3	The basketball courts are useless. I would like to see half of the existing courts updated to a useable court and the other half turned into a multi-purpose court for volleyball, tennis, hockey, etc.	11/30/2022 8:32 PM
4	Strip of businesses that contact a salon, retail, eatery, and store front office space.	11/29/2022 10:21 PM
5	Annex the property south of the interstate. Provide utilities in that area and zone it commercial. Move MGP to that area. The commercial properties, i.e. shopping, warehousing, manufacturing, could be up there. This would cut down on truck traffic through the town and reduce road maintenance. It would also mitigate the problem from MGP whose location is damaging property to the east of them which was clandestinely allowed to happen by the previous town council	11/29/2022 7:37 PM
6	Library with all the free/low cost public services that go along with it:	11/29/2022 3:47 PM
7	Attract industry near by	11/29/2022 2:46 PM
8	I'm not sure	11/29/2022 9:50 AM
9	Larger park with walking paths and maybe a water feature, family friendly to encourage more outdoor activities.	11/27/2022 6:54 PM
10	Paid first responders	11/27/2022 2:55 PM
11	Retail, restaurant, entertainment if I had to pick what happened first.	11/25/2022 2:39 PM
12	Better community facilities	11/24/2022 11:58 AM
13	Infrastructure all being updated and completely repaired. Roads all paved and graded in town and storm water issues all addressed	11/24/2022 4:48 AM
14	Development of businesses and store fronts in the down town area. Parking lots!	11/23/2022 3:34 PM
15	More parking for businesses and more events to draw people to our town.	11/23/2022 1:07 PM
16	New large playground equipment or sidewalks	11/23/2022 12:44 PM
17	Low income housing	11/23/2022 12:00 PM
18	More places to eat and things to do off of 74 to invite people get off the exit	11/23/2022 11:25 AM
19	We could use a community center. Our park is beautiful and a perfect place for kids to go, but only during warmer weather. A community center would give people a place to go during the colder months.	11/23/2022 10:59 AM
20	Walking track at the park, tennis and basketball courts for kids.	11/22/2022 7:58 PM
21	Fix up the park, sidewalks are in great need south of town and proper lighting, lighting on main streets north and south are very poor. Fix outdated water and sewage infrastructure and especially storm water.	11/21/2022 11:51 PM
22	Nursing home and medical services	11/21/2022 5:22 AM
23	Retail	11/20/2022 5:52 PM

13 / 32

Sunman Community Workshop Survey

24	Yard drainage	11/20/2022 9:30 AM
25	none	11/18/2022 7:45 AM
26	Build and maintain a park that people actually want to visit. The park has been below average ever since I was in grade school.	11/17/2022 3:21 PM
27	Walmart	11/17/2022 2:02 PM
28	I'd love to see more small business. Coffee shops, bakeries, thrift stores, gift shops, and community center with indoor playground similar to the commons in Harrison.	11/17/2022 8:37 AM
29	Fix the flooding on main street and on the south side of town during heavy rain storms.	11/16/2022 11:55 PM
30	A nice place to eat and shop	11/16/2022 7:36 PM
31	Save the historic buildings, put in a new restaurant or two.	11/16/2022 6:31 PM
32	Rid of one of the trailer parks.	11/16/2022 10:19 AM
33	I'm going to reference again what I feel like is the biggest issue in our town. Remove half of the trailer parks and low class housing options. We can build some newer upscale apartment complexes that bring a different class of people as well as visual aesthetics to our town. The apartments and multifamily units in our town are not maintained and are an eyesore for our community.	11/16/2022 8:19 AM
34	a library	11/16/2022 5:36 AM
35	Redevelopment of Western Avenue area.	11/16/2022 12:00 AM
36	Removal of buildings that are not inhabitable.	11/15/2022 6:41 PM
37	Senior living, assisted living.	11/15/2022 6:15 PM
38	Placing utility lines below ground on Meridian Street and refinishing it with more of a small town feel, rather than feeling like its just a highway that cuts the town in two.	11/15/2022 12:56 PM
39	Restore or rebuild the main street buildings and general downtown area	11/15/2022 12:48 PM
40	Better grocery store. Big company that would bring in jobs.	11/15/2022 12:16 PM
41	Renovate historic buildings downtown. Do this via tax breaks for small business and the like rather than having tax payers directly foot the bill.	11/15/2022 12:01 PM
42	It shouldn't say if money wasn't an issue. It should say if a family oriented and living in a quiet community wasn't an issue.	11/15/2022 10:56 AM
43	sewer line expansion no growth without it	11/15/2022 10:34 AM
44	Upgrade to our park so kids can actually get outside and play. We need our festivals back to bring the community together more, with the softball tournament etc. Some of the sidewalks need attention due to chunks being out of them or they are uneven.	11/15/2022 9:19 AM
45	Tap into the warehouse, distribution industry. Lots of land if could be purchased near I-74 that could bring good jobs to the area.	11/15/2022 8:59 AM
46	Get rid of the decrepit buildings along Main St and replace them with modern, up-to-code apartments and parking	11/15/2022 8:56 AM
47	Park walking paths, farmers market	11/15/2022 7:57 AM
48	Continue to cleanup/develop the main corridor thru town and consider parking for all businesses. Continue the park development for year round use.	11/14/2022 10:12 PM
49	Youth program. Get the kids involved in cleaning up the town. Can reward with a small carnival.	11/14/2022 7:00 PM
50	A little coffee shop	11/14/2022 3:57 PM
51	Improved storm drainage and update the pumping station at the gas station always stinks in mornings and overflows occasionally	11/14/2022 3:13 PM
52	Free WiFi initiative. Many family's are blocked from getting internet from the sole provider in	11/14/2022 2:12 PM

14 / 32



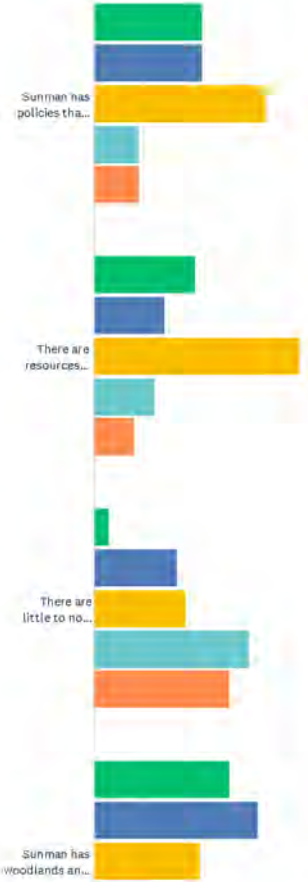
Sunman Community Workshop Survey

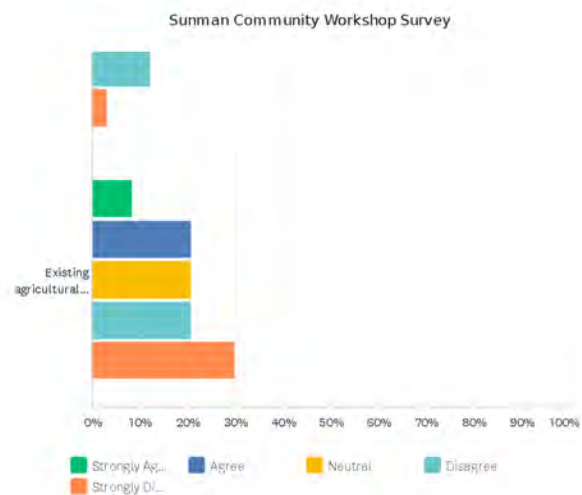
	town, and their kids can't do homework etc. launch a community (town) wide free WiFi network for those in need.	
53	The trailer park removed.	11/14/2022 11:42 AM
54	Free healthcare for all residents.	11/14/2022 7:51 AM
55	A well-designed and inviting public space.	11/14/2022 7:44 AM
56	Better community park for the children	11/14/2022 7:36 AM
57	More mom and pop dining style restaurants, parking for those restaurants. Keeping the small town vibe, but adding things to do places to go.	11/13/2022 11:00 PM
58	A senior center with housing, gathering and adult daycare options..	11/13/2022 10:40 PM
59	More food options	11/13/2022 9:47 PM
60	Businesses	11/13/2022 8:55 PM
61	Work skills oriented education.	11/13/2022 7:45 PM
62	We need a new laundry mat.	11/13/2022 7:24 PM
63	I would get rid of the trailer section on 1100 and make apartments or duplexes with an old German feel like the other apartments looks. This would increase our value of Sunman and at the same time get away from the trailer park look. Everyone deserves a place to live but wouldn't it be nice to have a little grassy area and their own swingset park and an apartment instead of trailers beaten down and moldy.	11/13/2022 7:06 PM
64	a venue offering food, entertainment, meeting space, area for local craftsmen to sell their wares	11/13/2022 6:24 PM
65	Bigger park.	11/13/2022 6:09 PM
66	More restaurants	11/13/2022 4:55 PM
67	Entertainment	11/13/2022 4:48 PM
68	A medical building to house several different specialty docs and maybe a dentist	11/13/2022 4:36 PM
69	Get business owners to jazz up their property and make it more attractive. After all, you are on a state highway. Look at how appealing Madison, Harrison, Oldenburg and Batesville are.	11/13/2022 4:35 PM
70	A lot more playground features, maybe even a stage and a food vending building at the park.	11/13/2022 3:09 PM
71	Industrial park and Educated people planning it.	11/13/2022 3:02 PM
72	Remodeling of the buildings in town. Repurpose the old mill. Improve the soccer fields or create new.	11/13/2022 3:00 PM
73	Dog park, retail and nice restaurants	11/13/2022 2:22 PM
74	Library	11/13/2022 2:02 PM
75	Sewer/water upgrade	11/13/2022 1:58 PM
76	to redo the sewer/drainage areas esp Whitetail Subdivision/resurface subdivision roads.	11/13/2022 1:47 PM

Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q6 State how you feel about the following LAND USE statements.
(Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)

Answered: 100 Skipped: 0





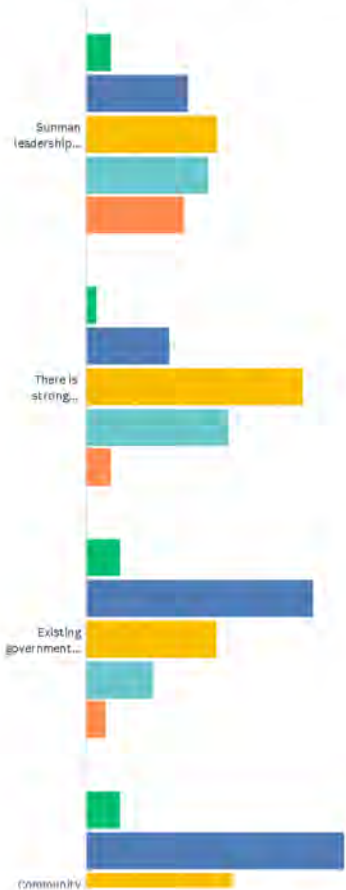
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Sunman has policies that help protect its long-standing and historic buildings.	22.68% 22	22.68% 22	36.08% 35	9.28% 9	9.28% 9	97	3.40
There are resources available for property owners wanting to rehabilitate their historic buildings.	21.05% 20	14.74% 14	43.16% 41	12.63% 12	8.42% 8	95	3.27
There are little to no flooding issues within Sunman's town limits.	3.03% 3	17.17% 17	19.19% 19	32.32% 32	28.28% 28	99	2.34
Sunman has woodlands and natural areas that should be protected from future development.	28.25% 28	34.34% 34	22.22% 22	12.12% 12	3.03% 3	99	3.73
Existing agricultural land within Sunman's town limits should be developed as residential, commercial, industrial, or public uses in the future.	8.25% 8	20.62% 20	20.62% 20	20.62% 20	29.90% 29	97	2.57



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

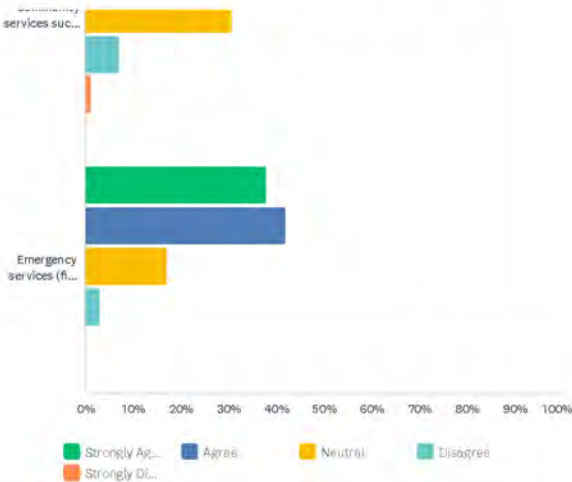
Q7 State how you feel about the following GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES statements. (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)

Answered: 100 Skipped: 0



18 / 32

Sunman Community Workshop Survey



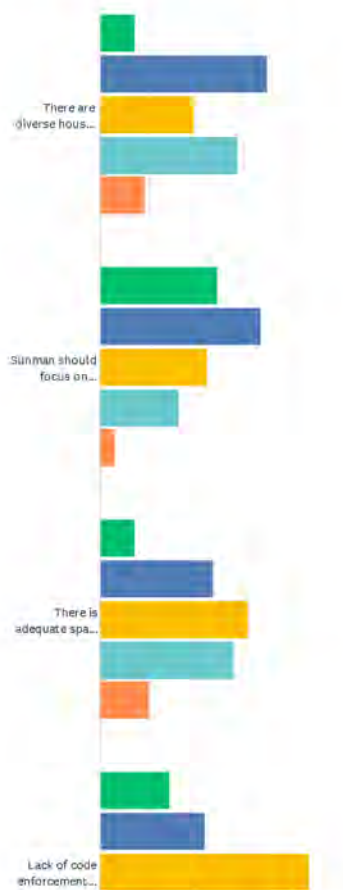
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Sunman leadership effectively communicates information to the public and are transparent with decision making.	5.10% 5	21.43% 21	27.55% 27	25.51% 25	20.41% 20	98	2.65
There is strong collaboration between Sunman's government, Ripley County, and local organizations.	2.06% 2	17.53% 17	45.36% 44	29.90% 29	5.15% 5	97	2.81
Existing government buildings (town hall, park facilities, emergency services) are in good condition.	7.07% 7	47.47% 47	27.27% 27	14.14% 14	4.04% 4	99	3.39
Community services such as water, trash pick-up, and recycling adequately serve resident's needs.	7.14% 7	54.08% 53	30.61% 30	7.14% 7	1.02% 1	98	3.59
Emergency services (fire, police, EMS) within Sunman are reliable.	38.00% 38	42.00% 42	17.00% 17	3.00% 3	0.00% 0	100	4.15

19 / 32

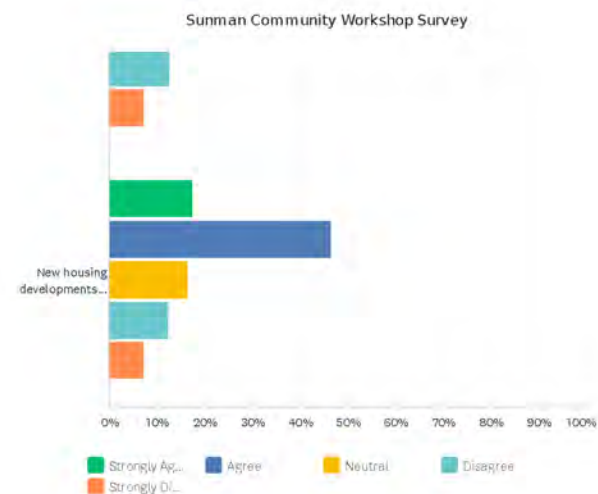
Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q8 State how you feel about the following HOUSING statements.
(Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)

Answered: 88 Skipped: 0



20 / 32



	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
There are diverse housing options for people of all ages and lifestyles within Sunman.	7.22% 7	35.05% 34	19.59% 19	28.87% 28	9.28% 9	97	3.02
Sunman should focus on rehabilitating homes before building new	24.49% 24	33.67% 33	22.45% 22	16.33% 16	3.06% 3	96	3.60
There is adequate space for new housing developments within town limits.	7.22% 7	23.71% 23	30.93% 30	27.84% 27	10.31% 10	97	2.90
Lack of code enforcement within Sunman is an issue.	14.58% 14	21.88% 21	43.75% 42	12.50% 12	7.29% 7	96	3.24
New housing developments should focus on affordable units for first-time home buyers, young professionals, and recent graduates.	17.53% 17	46.39% 45	16.49% 16	12.37% 12	7.22% 7	97	3.55

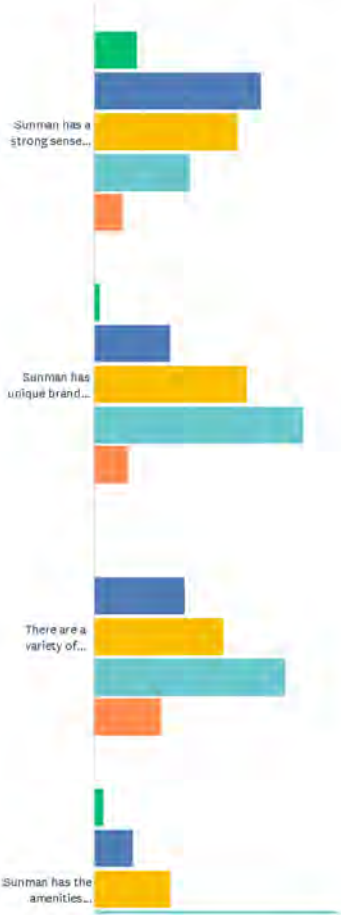
21 / 32



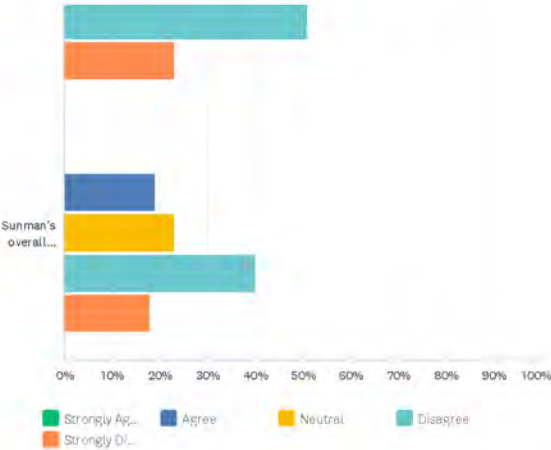
Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q9 State how you feel about the following PLACEMAKING statements.
(Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)

Answered: 100 Skipped: 0



Sunman Community Workshop Survey



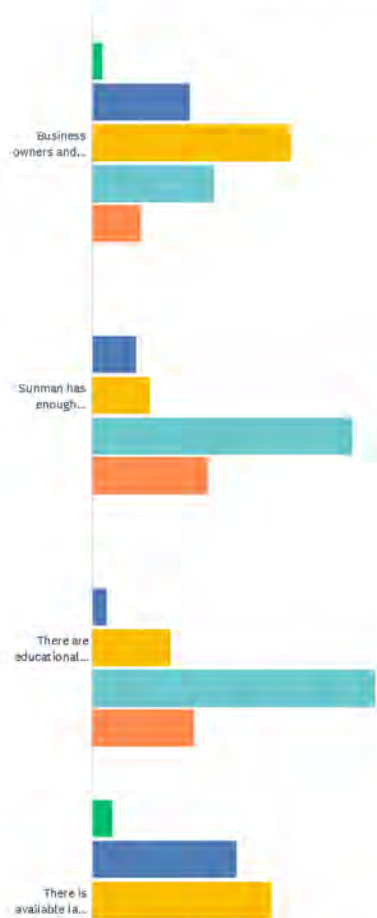
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Sunman has a strong sense of identity and community pride.	9.00% 9	35.00% 35	30.00% 30	20.00% 20	6.00% 6	100	3.21
Sunman has unique branding and signage that sets it apart from other communities.	1.00% 1	16.00% 16	32.00% 32	44.00% 44	7.00% 7	100	2.60
There are a variety of programs, resources, and events for Sunman residents, including those catered towards children and seniors.	0.00% 0	19.00% 19	27.00% 27	40.00% 40	14.00% 14	100	2.51
Sunman has the amenities needed for residents to live healthy lifestyles such as healthcare options, healthy food options, and recreational programming.	2.00% 2	8.00% 8	16.00% 16	51.00% 51	23.00% 23	100	2.15
Sunman's overall appearance is satisfactory and leaves a good impression for visitors.	0.00% 0	19.00% 19	23.00% 23	40.00% 40	18.00% 18	100	2.43



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

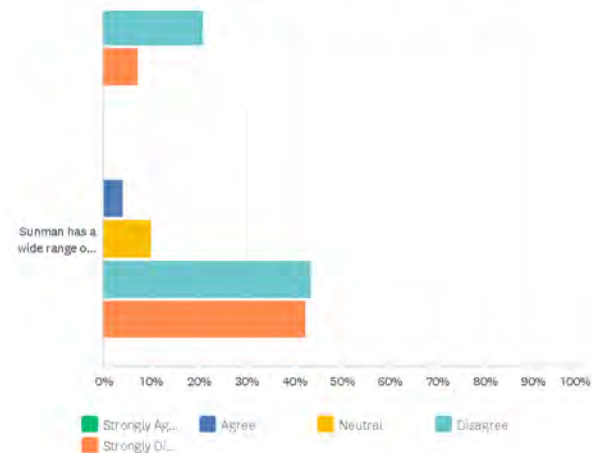
Q10 State how you feel about the following ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT statements. (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)

Answered: 100 Skipped: 0



24 / 32

Sunman Community Workshop Survey



25 / 32

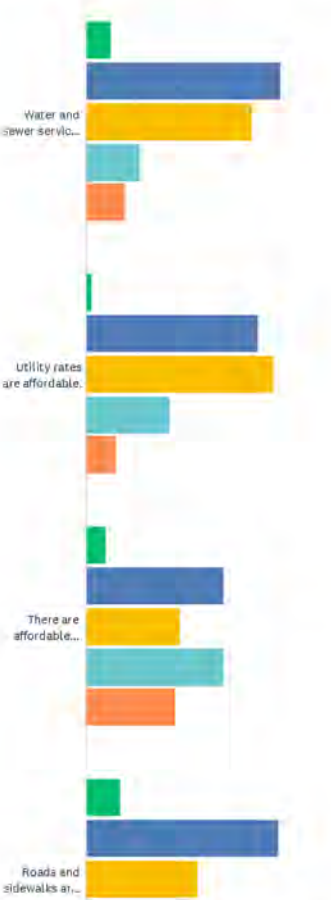
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Business owners and entrepreneurs in Sunman are well-supported by the town and county-wide organizations.	2.04% 2	20.41% 20	41.84% 41	25.51% 25	10.20% 10	98	2.79
Sunman has enough employment opportunities for residents of all skill levels who wish to live and work within the community.	0.00% 0	9.09% 9	12.12% 12	54.55% 54	24.24% 24	99	2.06
There are educational resources within the community for adult education and those wanting to learn new skills.	0.00% 0	3.06% 3	16.33% 16	59.18% 58	21.43% 21	98	2.01
There is available land and adequate utilities for new commercial and industrial investments within or adjacent to Sunman.	4.17% 4	30.21% 29	37.50% 36	20.83% 20	7.29% 7	96	3.03
Sunman has a wide range of retail, restaurant, and entertainment options that serve the needs of residents.	0.00% 0	4.04% 4	10.10% 10	43.43% 43	42.42% 42	99	1.76



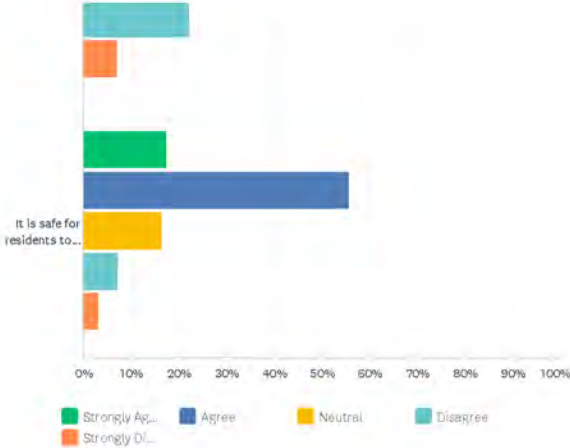
Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q11 State how you feel about the following TRANSPORTATION & UTILITIES statements. (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)

Answered: 98 Skipped: 1



Sunman Community Workshop Survey



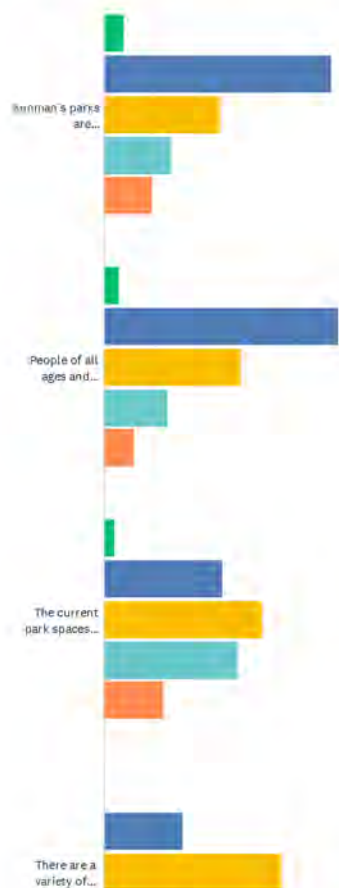
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Water and sewer services are generally adequate and dependable.	5.10% 5	40.82% 40	34.69% 34	11.22% 11	8.16% 8	98	3.23
Utility rates are affordable.	1.03% 1	36.08% 35	39.18% 38	17.53% 17	6.19% 6	97	3.08
There are affordable high-speed internet options in Sunman for residents and businesses.	4.12% 4	28.87% 28	19.59% 19	28.87% 28	18.56% 18	97	2.71
Roads and sidewalks are maintained and generally in good condition.	7.07% 7	40.40% 40	23.23% 23	22.22% 22	7.07% 7	99	3.18
It is safe for residents to walk to destinations (parks, post office, shopping) within Sunman.	17.53% 17	55.67% 54	16.49% 16	7.22% 7	3.09% 3	97	3.77



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

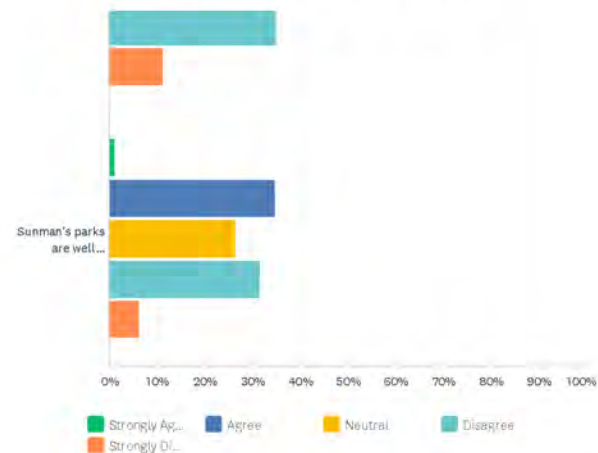
Q12 State how you feel about the following PARKS & RECREATION statements. (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)

Answered: 28 Skipped: 1



28 / 32

Sunman Community Workshop Survey



29 / 32

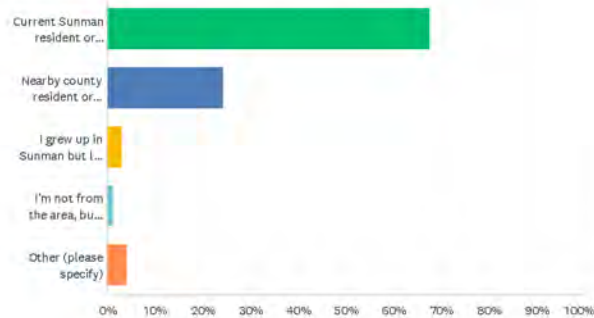
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Sunman's parks are well-maintained.	4.04% 4	47.47% 47	24.24% 24	14.14% 14	10.10% 10	99	3.21
People of all ages and physical abilities can safely access parks and recreational amenities within the community.	3.06% 3	48.96% 48	28.57% 28	13.27% 13	6.12% 6	98	3.30
The current park spaces fill the equipment/facility needs of residents (playgrounds, ball fields, sports courts, etc.).	2.06% 2	24.74% 24	32.99% 32	27.84% 27	12.37% 12	97	2.76
There are a variety of programming opportunities within park spaces throughout the year catered towards all members of the community.	0.00% 0	16.49% 16	37.11% 36	35.05% 34	11.34% 11	97	2.59
Sunman's parks are well connected to destinations within and outside the community via sidewalks and trails.	1.02% 1	34.69% 34	26.53% 26	31.63% 31	6.12% 6	98	2.93



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q13 What is your relationship to Sunman?

Answered: 99 Skipped: 1



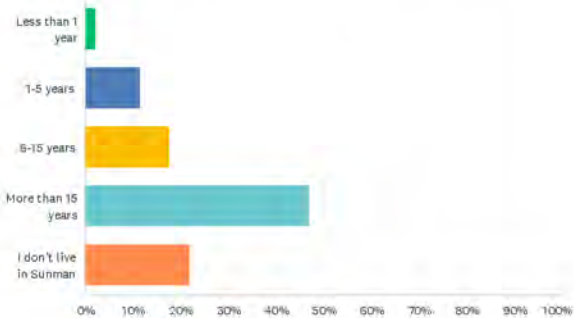
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Current Sunman resident or business owner.		67.68%	67
Nearby county resident or business owner.		24.24%	24
I grew up in Sunman but live somewhere else now		3.03%	3
I'm not from the area, but I'm interested in the future of Sunman.		1.01%	1
Other (please specify)		4.04%	4
TOTAL			99

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Rural Sunman zip code, interested business owner	11/25/2022 2:39 PM
2	Moved here from out west	11/17/2022 2:02 PM
3	Nearby Dearborn County resident with a Sunman address	11/13/2022 7:45 PM
4	Live outside of Sunman, work in Sunman	11/13/2022 3:09 PM

Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q14 If you currently reside in Sunman, how long have you lived here?

Answered: 96 Skipped: 4



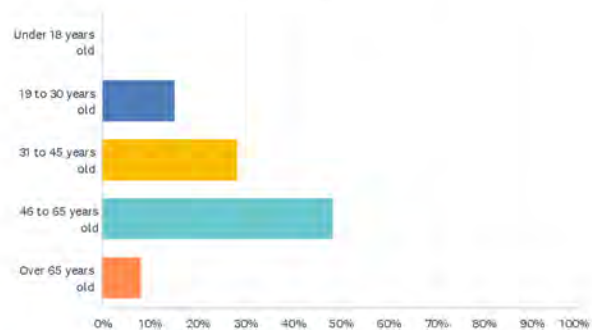
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Less than 1 year		2.08%	2
1-5 years		11.46%	11
6-15 years		17.71%	17
More than 15 years		46.88%	45
I don't live in Sunman		21.88%	21
TOTAL			96



Sunman Community Workshop Survey

Q15 What is your age?

Answered: 99 Skipped: 1

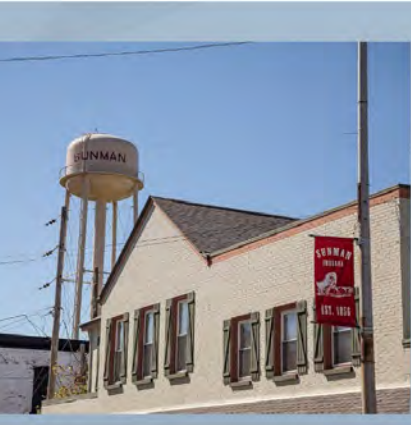


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18 years old	0.00%	0
19 to 30 years old	15.15%	15
31 to 45 years old	28.28%	28
46 to 65 years old	48.48%	48
Over 65 years old	8.08%	8
TOTAL		99

PROJECT WEBSITE

hensive Plan

About Engagement Events Discu



Shaping Sunman's future begins with you.

Sunman has partnered with HWC Engineering to update the town's current Comprehensive Plan, a document which will help guide growth and development within the community over the next 20 years.

The town needs your help in providing input and feedback to shape vision and strategies for Sunman's future. Check back during the next few months to see what's new and how to get involved!

Documents & Resources



on House



1/24/23
Steering Committee #2 Summary

JOIN US AT THE SUNMAN COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE!

What? Come provide feedback at the Sunman Comprehensive Plan's Community Open House. The plan's future mapping, goals, and strategies will be available for your review.

When? February 22, 2023
Come at any time between 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm

Where? Campbell Building, Sunman Community Park
225 Fifth Avenue, Sunman, IN 47541

Sunman Community Open House

4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Join us at the Sunman Community Open House! Come give your feedback on the Sunman Comprehensive Plan's draft goals, strategies, mapping.

[View Event ->](#)

JOIN THE CONVERSATION FOR SUNMAN'S FUTURE

Sunman is holding a series of small group meetings to dig into how the community can manage future growth and development. These meetings are designed to help identify and address the community's most significant challenges and opportunities. Residents are encouraged to attend any of the individual sessions.

When? January 11, 2023
9:00 am - 1:00 pm
4:30 pm - 6:30 pm
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Where? Campbell Building, Sunman Community Park
225 Fifth Avenue, Sunman, IN 47541

Sunman Focus Group Meetings

3:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Join us to discuss community goals at the upcoming focus group meetings.

[View Event ->](#)

PARTICIPATE IN SHAPING SUNMAN'S FUTURE!

What? We need your help to guide the create of the Sunman

Community Workshop

4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Sunman is holding a community workshop at the Campbell Building in Sunman Community Park to gather input for the Sunman Comprehensive Plan. The workshop is open to all members of the community and will help identify the town's current assets, strengths, and challenges.

Planning Process

The planning process for developing the Sunman Comprehensive Plan consists of a four distinct phases. These phases focus on separate aspects of plan development and hold unique community engagement opportunities best suited to gathering feedback relevant to each phase. The graphic below shows the plan's current timeline.



Steering Committee

On top of town leaders assisting in the development of the plan, a project Steering Committee has been organized and charged with guiding the development of the document. The committee members represent a number of diverse groups and interests across the community. The committee will be tasked with providing input on Sunman's key challenges and strengths, providing feedback on draft goals and objectives for the plan, attending public engagement opportunities, acting as champions of the plan, and promoting the project to the general public.

Project Team

The Town of Sunman has chosen to retain the services of HWC Engineering to provide facilitation and technical guidance throughout the comprehensive planning process. Key team members include: