



DeKalb County Action Plan

2015-2016



Prepared for: DeKalb County, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, and the Jobs for America's Graduates program at DeKalb Central High School

Prepared by: Amber Braun
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The ideas and recommendations outlined in this plan are the result of the cooperation between Ball State University, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), and the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Program at DeKalb Central High School (DHS) in the 2015-2016 My Community, My Vision program. The contents of this document are recommendations made by Ball State and DHS students. This document is intended for use only in DeKalb County, Indiana. All information presented is perceived correct at the final publishing date: April 12, 2016.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many Indiana cities, especially rural communities, are facing a problem often referred to as “brain drain.” Brain drain occurs when teenagers and young adults leave their hometown and move to a larger metropolitan area often associated with life, culture, job opportunities, and an ample amount of recreational activities. DeKalb County is currently seeing a decline of young adults who chose to move to a different community, assumed to be a more metropolitan region.

My Community, My Vision, a partnership between the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority and Ball State University Urban Planning Department, is a program which is supposed to combat brain drain by working with a community’s teenagers and creating an action plan that encourages them to stay in their hometown. Fall semester of 2015, Jobs for America’s Graduates students at DeKalb Central High School were chosen to participate in the My Community, My Vision program.

These students began a qualitative analysis of their community (the entirety of DeKalb County) and began looking at its strengths and weaknesses. One of the weaknesses that kept coming up was the lack of activities targeted for teens and young adults. It was noted that most activities and amenities in DeKalb County are centered towards tourism, specifically ACD events. Not only were these attractions rarely centered towards teens and young adults, but the students believed that amenities, such as parks, have the opportunity to be improved and held to a higher standard.

Another weakness that the students noticed was the lack of urban-style living. Many times young adults leave their hometowns for a metropolitan area because they offer apartments located in an accessible and urban environment. DeKalb Central High School students acknowledge this weakness and have expressed interest in reversing the problem so they have the opportunity to live in an urban environment when they get older.

After analyzing strengths and weaknesses of their community, students created six initiatives to help combat brain drain. If students saw these initiatives, and other similar projects, completed in DeKalb County, they would be more likely to stay in their hometown after graduating high school or returning home after graduating from college. The six initiatives the students thought would be most beneficial to the community are as follows: Auburn Bike Share Program, Reusing the Auburn Pool; Providing a Variety of Parks; Creating Indoor Recreation; Revitalizing the Power Plant; and Activating Downtown Auburn.

Bike share programs are quickly becoming a new trend, especially in urban areas. This trend promotes healthy lifestyles and environmental benefits, as well as providing an alternative transportation option for those who are interested. Not only do they thrive off of tourism, but they also are an efficient way to get around a city.

After learning the condition and fate of the Auburn Community Pool, JAG students decided to reuse the pool. They saw the opportunity of the pool and its location, and they did not want to see the pool sit empty. Knowing the importance of locally grown, fresh produce, the students decided to reuse the Auburn Community Pool as a garden pool.

DeKalb County offers many parks which mainly exist of two different types: community and neighborhood. There are few that fall under the special recreation category. While some of these community and neighborhood parks have recreational activities, such as playgrounds or sport fields, students yearn to see more variety, i.e. skate park, dog park, splash pads, etc. Aside from creating a variety of parks, students are interested in seeing all parks held to a higher level. They believe many parks could benefit from a quick “face lift,” by repainting existing equipment, or something simple as planting more trees and having more foliage.

Students are often discouraged during the winter season because there is a lack of teenage and young adult activities. By creating indoor recreation opportunities, teens are likely to be more involved with the community. Students would love to see more community events focused around them at community centers, such as the Eckhart Public Library. They would also be interested in an indoor recreational activity besides the YMCA, such as an indoor laser tag/paintball complex.

Auburn is tourist dependent and most of the tourist hot spots are located in southern Auburn creating a hub. Located near this hub is the old power plant that has fallen into dilapidation and disrepair. Crossroad's Motorcycle Museum plans to renovate the power plant in order to continue this tourist economy by putting in a motorcycle museum. This initiative encourages the project and gives it ideas to move forward.

Finally, high school and college graduates are interested in living in urban areas filled with culture, arts, and apartment-style living. DeKalb High School students quickly noticed the lack of urban apartments and would like to see upper floors of downtown Auburn buildings be renovated into apartments. With all of the activity in downtown Auburn, housing would attract many Millennials. Continuing the idea of an urban downtown, this initiative also encourages offices and business incubators to enhance the workforce in the downtown neighborhood.

This plan further explains these initiatives and gives recommendations, improvement actions, and funding sources to assist in the completion of these initiatives.

WHAT IS MCMV?

My Community, My Vision (MCMV) is a program sponsored by former Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann and current Lt. Governor Eric Holcomb in an effort to engage rural youth in community planning. It is implemented through a partnership between the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) and Ball State University (BSU). The initiative was created to encourage the next generation of civic and government leaders to take an active role in shaping the future of their hometowns. This program targeted small, rural Indiana communities, as many of these suffer from a collective “brain drain” of youth and talent moving to larger cities and more urbanized areas for jobs, entertainment, and cultural amenities.

Under the premise of students not having to leave their hometowns to fulfill their dreams, MCMV sought applications from around the state. These applications were to detail the youth perspective and what they might include in a community vision plan that BSU would assist in creating. Applicants were asked to answer a few questions and provide information about their hometowns such as:

- How their organization was active in their community
- The strengths and challenges of their community
- The applicant's vision for the community
- How the vision might impact their decision to return to their hometown
- The community demographics and other information that may support their described vision

For the second year, eight applications were received with a range of ideas that the students and applicants believed would make their hometowns a more attractive place to live. Six applications were chosen by IHCDA based on how well they answered the questions, how inclusive

their vision was in regards to the community as a whole, and the level of involvement of students in their plan.

Each group was assigned a BSU mentor, with two mentors actively participating in all groups for Economic and Environmental sections, for a total of eight mentors to assist in the creation of community vision plans. The mentors were tasked with introducing students to community planning, how projects go from an idea to a reality, and how their ideas could shape the future of their hometowns. From that point, students and BSU mentors held various meetings and brainstorming sessions to create this plan.

Each plan is unique, from the goals and needs of the community through the process that it took to get it to the final stage. The following pages are the DeKalb County Action Plan created by Amber Braun for the Jobs for America's Graduates students at DeKalb Central High School. This document was created based off of goals that these students had for their home community.

WHAT IS JAG?



Figure 1 shows JAG students and their teacher, Ms. Freeze, posing with former Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann at the kick-off event in September.

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) is a state-based national non-profit organization dedicated to preventing dropouts among young people who are most at-risk. Traditionally, JAG is targeted for disadvantaged students, but recently it has been opened to all students interested in their education.

The JAG students at DeKalb High School are very involved in the community around them. They volunteer their time to various events throughout the community including: running the prize booth at the Muscular Dystrophy Association carnival, raising money for Big Brother, Big Sisters, cleaning and landscaping at the American Legion, and organizing a veteran "thank you" breakfast. This group is very involved in their community and cares for it even more. When a park in Waterloo was burned down, the students were very concerned. They began brainstorming ways in which they could not only volunteer their time but

also change the mind of the community about teenagers. They determined the best way to change minds was to clean up and rebuild the park. They focused on activities specifically related for teenagers so younger children could play on the equipment without feeling out of place.

JAG students also explore after high school opportunities and they learn how to prepare themselves for the future. Students create resumes and cover letters as well as submit college applications after researching state-wide colleges and universities. Recently JAG students toured Ball State University's campus after a day of mock-presentations for My Community, My Vision.

Activities and volunteering better the students and gives them a positive experience of being active in their communities.

COUNTY PROFILE

DeKalb County is a rural county located in the northeast corner of Indiana. It was founded in 1837 and was named after General Johann de Kalb. De Kalb was a Continental Army officer who was fatally wounded at the Battle of Camden, South Carolina.

DeKalb County is made up of 15 townships and 9 towns and cities, as follows: Altona, Ashley, Auburn, Butler, Corunna, Garrett Hamilton, St. Joe, and Waterloo. Auburn is the county seat and is the most centrally located, the courthouse is shown in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2 is a photo that shows the current DeKalb County courthouse located in Auburn.

DeKalb County is most notably known for its history of automobile manufacturing. At the turn of the 20th century Charles Eckhart transformed the Eckhart Buggy Company into the Auburn Automobile Company. This transformation inspired a population and economic boom in Auburn and surrounding communities. Eventually the company was sold to E.L. Cord and he began manufacturing Cord and Duesenberg automobiles.

While these automobiles are no longer manufactured, their history and success is still heavily remembered in and around DeKalb County. The Auburn, Cord,

Duesenberg (ACD) Museum is just one way the community honors its history. Every Labor Day visitors come from all over the country to attend the ACD Festival. This festival not only remembers the Auburn, Cord, and Duesenberg vehicles but also other older vehicles that revolutionized the automotive industry. Attendees celebrate by attending parades, Cruise-Ins, and the world famous auction held at Auctions of America, located just south of Auburn. These tourist events have sparked more museums, such as the National Automotive and Truck Museum (NATMUS) and the World War II History Museum. DeKalb County, specifically Auburn, relies heavily on the tourism.



Figure 3 shows three classic cars with the ACD Museum in the background.

STUDENT ANALYSIS

At the beginning of the program, JAG students performed a qualitative analysis of DeKalb County. This analysis focused on strengths and weaknesses which eventually turned into a brainstorming session for possible initiatives. All of the initiatives in this plan originated from this qualitative analysis and they aim to solve the problems they see facing DeKalb County.

Strengths

- Several tourist attractions which promote the county: ACD Museum/Festival, NATMUS, and the World War II Museum.
- Access to I-69 creates valuable connection to more urban areas.
- Quality education is readily available including project-based learning options and special education options. These options focus on every learning type.
- The regional hospital, DeKalb Health, provides quality, local healthcare options.
- Low crime rates promotes the safety of the communities in DeKalb County.
- Farmers' Markets provide local food options for all citizens.
- Parks and public open spaces are readily available to all residents.
- DeKalb County has several amenities which improve the quality of life such as, but not limited to, community pools, county fairs, shelters, restaurants, and community events.

Weaknesses

- Lack of teen and young adult attractions such as libraries, cultural amenities, and community events tailored towards this age group.
- Most attractions are located in or close to Auburn making it difficult for residents in other communities to attend.
- Vehicle dependency makes traveling for bicyclists and pedestrians difficult.
- Poor road, sidewalks, and housing conditions.
- Lack of higher education located within the county.
- There is an income gap between the communities. Auburn tends to have a higher income average than the other communities.
- Lack of diversity can discourage interested parties from relocating to DeKalb County.

PLANNING PROCESS

August-September 2015

IHCDA sent out the call for community applications for the MCMV program. After selecting the six winning communities, all parties convened for a kickoff meeting in late September. Here, the BSU mentors met with their high school students for the first time and began to discuss their goals for the plans moving forward.

October 2015

JAG students and their mentor met face-to-face and the students learned about urban planning. They also began a qualitative analysis of their community. From here they derived possible initiative ideas and began researching these ideas.

November 2015

JAG students narrowed down their initiatives after research. At this time, students had seven initiatives in which they were interested.

Three of the six communities convened for a second group meeting at the Ball State Indianapolis Center on November 18th, where the BSU economic development and environmental specialists presented on their respective topics. The groups then discussed the progress on each respective plan and provided advice to the others.

December 2015

JAG students finalized their initiatives and the BSU mentor began drafting the plan. At this time, there were four initiatives which consisted of: Beautifying the Auburn Pool, Providing a Variety of Parks, Creating Indoor Recreation, and Housing Downtown Auburn.

January 2016

The first rough draft was submitted. The BSU mentor learned the Auburn Community Pool was going to be shutdown in the next two seasons due to its condition. The information was relayed to the students and the students decided to alter the initiative to reuse the pool. JAG students also altered the downtown Auburn initiative to include office space and business incubators. Students added the Auburn Bike Share Program initiative as well as the Revitalizing the Power Plant initiative after learning about the project. The Indiana Bicentennial Commission designated MCMV as a Bicentennial Legacy Project in honor of Indiana's Bicentennial year.

February 2016

The students and their mentor intended to hold a meeting on February 24th to receive feedback from stakeholders and public officials on their ideas. The meeting was canceled due to weather.

March 2016

The meeting was rescheduled for March 10th. Revisions were then made to the final publication. The six communities convened at Ball State University on March 18th to discuss progress on each respective plan as well practice presentations before the final event in Indianapolis. The students also toured the College of Architecture and Planning facilities as well as other campus amenities during their visit.

April 2016

The final plans were published and presented at the 1899 event venue in Indianapolis on April 12th.

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AUBURN BIKE SHARE PROGRAM

Many cities are beginning to look at alternative transportation methods to promote individual well-being, a healthier environment, and to provide transportation for everyone. One of these more popular modes is a bike share program. Bike share programs thrive on active communities as well as tourism, both of which Auburn is familiar with. Currently, Auburn has been improving road and sidewalk conditions as well as implementing a trail. The Auburn-Waterloo Trail not only connects the two towns, but it also runs through key locations in Auburn: residential neighborhoods, downtown, and meets up with the ACD Museum.

Why it is Important

A bike share program not only enhances the tourism further, but it also provides a healthy alternative mode of transportation.

Approximately 1% of Auburn's residents 16 years and older (50 residents) do not have vehicle access. Residents younger than 16 years of age may not own a bike or other method of transportation. This bike share program would provide a transportation option for those who do not have vehicle access and would give residents who cannot drive other transportation opportunities.

While this program gives those without vehicle access an option for transportation, it also promotes recreational activity and tourism. The biking docks, where the bikes would be located, are strategically placed, as seen in Figure 4. Biking docks along the Auburn-Waterloo Trail will encourage residents to use the newly upgraded trail. Locating the biking docks in downtown Auburn and around the ACD, NATMUS, and the future Crossroads Museum will



Figure 4 depicts a map showing the location of recommended docking stations.

encourage tourists to explore Auburn.

Recommendation

Provide six bike docks located in key neighborhoods and along the Auburn-Waterloo Trail. They will also be located in places of high demand/tourism such as parks, downtown, museums, library, etc. There will be 1 bike per 200 residents which totals 62 bikes that can be borrowed. A total of 6 bike docks will be placed strategically throughout Auburn, as seen in Figure 4 and described below.

1. Downtown docking station will consist of 12 bikes with 15 available docks. Location could be on the courthouse lawn, Courtyard Park, or the new cultural plaza.
2. Eckhart Public Library docking station will consist of 10 bikes with 15 available docks. Utilizing land at any available location on the campus is highly encouraged.
3. ACD Museum, NATMUS, and Crossroad's Motorcycle Museum docking station will consist of 10 bikes with 15 available docks. Locating on the newly renovated parking lot is highly recommended.
4. North Street and Auburn-Waterloo Trail intersection docking station will consist of 10 bikes with 13 available docks. Using the trail right of way or purchasing a small easement right along the trail is recommended.
5. Walmart docking station will consist of 10 bikes with 13 available docks. Partner with Walmart to agree on a location.
6. DeKalb Health docking station will consist of 10 bikes with 13 available docks. Partner with DeKalb Health to agree on a location.

Each dock would have 13-15 slots available for the bikes themselves. This will allow bikes to be used and stored at multiple locations without having to return the bike to its original location.



Figure 5 is an example of a bike docking station with the payment kiosk and map located on the right-hand side of the picture.

Improvement Actions

Managing the bike share program is the most important aspect of this initiative. Without proper management, the program would be unsuccessful. Implementing a committee to overlook the program or having a city department oversee the program would encourage the most success.

Once management has been established, the program must require the recommended space per bike dock. Each docking station would be approximately 40 feet long and 12 feet wide. Working with the recommended location owners to acquire this room is encouraged. Most locations were selected due to the availability of land and the accessibility of the site.

After land has been acquired to successfully sustain the program, payment options become the next item to be determined. One-time users can use the traditional payment method of swiping a credit or debit card at the payment kiosk to obtain their bike. This payment option would allow the first 10 minutes to be free and then continue in 10 minute increments. Every 10 minutes past the first would charge \$1.50. Once the bike is returned to the dock the charges will stop.

Residents or tourists who plan on renting a bike several times in a given time frame can purchase a membership key. The membership key is similar to a credit or debit card but it has incentives and lower prices associated with it. Membership keys would be prepaid online. Membership time periods are as follows: 3-day membership, weekly membership, monthly membership, or yearly membership. It would be up to the committee or department to finalize the costs of these memberships. Table 2 below gives recommended costs for memberships. Just like the one-time users, members would get the first 10 minutes free. After that every hour would charge \$2.00 to their account.



Figure 6 is another example of a what a docking station could look like and where they could be placed.

Table 1 and 2 below describes one-time usage and membership fees. The committee or department managing the bike share program has the discretion of changing the fees and costs as they see fit.

Table 1: Fees per Ride Time		
Ride Time (Minutes)	One-Time User Fee	Membership Fee
0-9:59	Free	Free
10-19:59	\$1.50	\$0.75
20-29:59	\$3.00	\$1.00
30-39:59	\$4.50	\$1.25
40-49:59	\$6.00	\$1.50
50-59:59	\$7.50	\$1.75
60+	\$9.00	\$2.00
Hourly Fee	\$9.00	\$2.00

Table 2: Membership	
Membership Length	Membership Fee
3-Day	\$3.00
Weekly	\$6.00
Monthly	\$10.00
Yearly	\$80.00

Funding Sources

In order to get the bike share program started, the management can look at partnering with a non-for-profit partner to apply for NAP credits. Every year, this non-for-profit partner can continue applying for these credits to assist with maintenance and operating costs.

Aside from NAP credits, local businesses can purchase advertising rights and display their advertisements on the bike themselves or the payment kiosks. The advertisement rights would be a yearly fee from local businesses looking to take advantage of this opportunity. This yearly fee would be set based on the discretion of the management.

For more funding options, go to Appendix B: Funding Sources on page 32.

PROVIDING A VARIETY OF PARKS

DeKalb County offers many parks that provide outdoor recreation options and serve a multitude of residents. However, most of these parks, especially ones that have more to offer, are located in Auburn, limiting recreational access to residents of the other communities. This initiative is meant to encourage all of the communities to either invest in their existing parks or to build upon their existing park system.

Why it is Important

Providing a variety of parks allows students and families to enjoy the outdoors and presents residents with more activities. The importance of recreation has been emphasized to U.S. citizens for the past several years reminding citizens of the benefits that recreation can have on them. There are both health (physical and mental) and social (strengthens communities, promotes social bonds, and supports youth) benefits that are extremely important to the youth. JAG students accept these benefits and want to encourage communities to supply outdoor recreation opportunities to the citizens. These opportunities will then lead to higher health and social benefits which ultimately increase the quality of life and attract more residents to the county.



Figure 7 depicts the entrance gate to one of the most treasured parks in Auburn.

Recommendation

Below is a table for each city/town depicting all of the parks located in that city/town and the type of parks they are. Under each table are park recommendations which the students think the city/town could benefit from.

Auburn	
Park Name	Type of Park
Eckhart Park	Community
Memorial Park	Community
Rieke Park	Community
Smith Acres Park	Community
Thomas Park	Community
Auburn Gear Park	Future Community
Forrest Park	Neighborhood
Riley Park	Neighborhood
DeSoto Park	Neighborhood
Willennar Park	Neighborhood
Don Lash Park	Neighborhood
Hunters Glen Park	Future Neighborhood
Eagle Lake Park	Future Neighborhood
Courtyard Park	Special Recreation
Carr Fields	Special Recreation
Community Pool	Special Recreation

While Auburn has many parks and outdoor recreational activities, JAG students would like to see more Special Recreation parks. These type of parks could include, but are not limited to, skate park, BMX park, and a park including a splash pad. Students encourage both neighborhood and community parks, such as Thomas Park and DeSoto Park, to receive more attention and care.

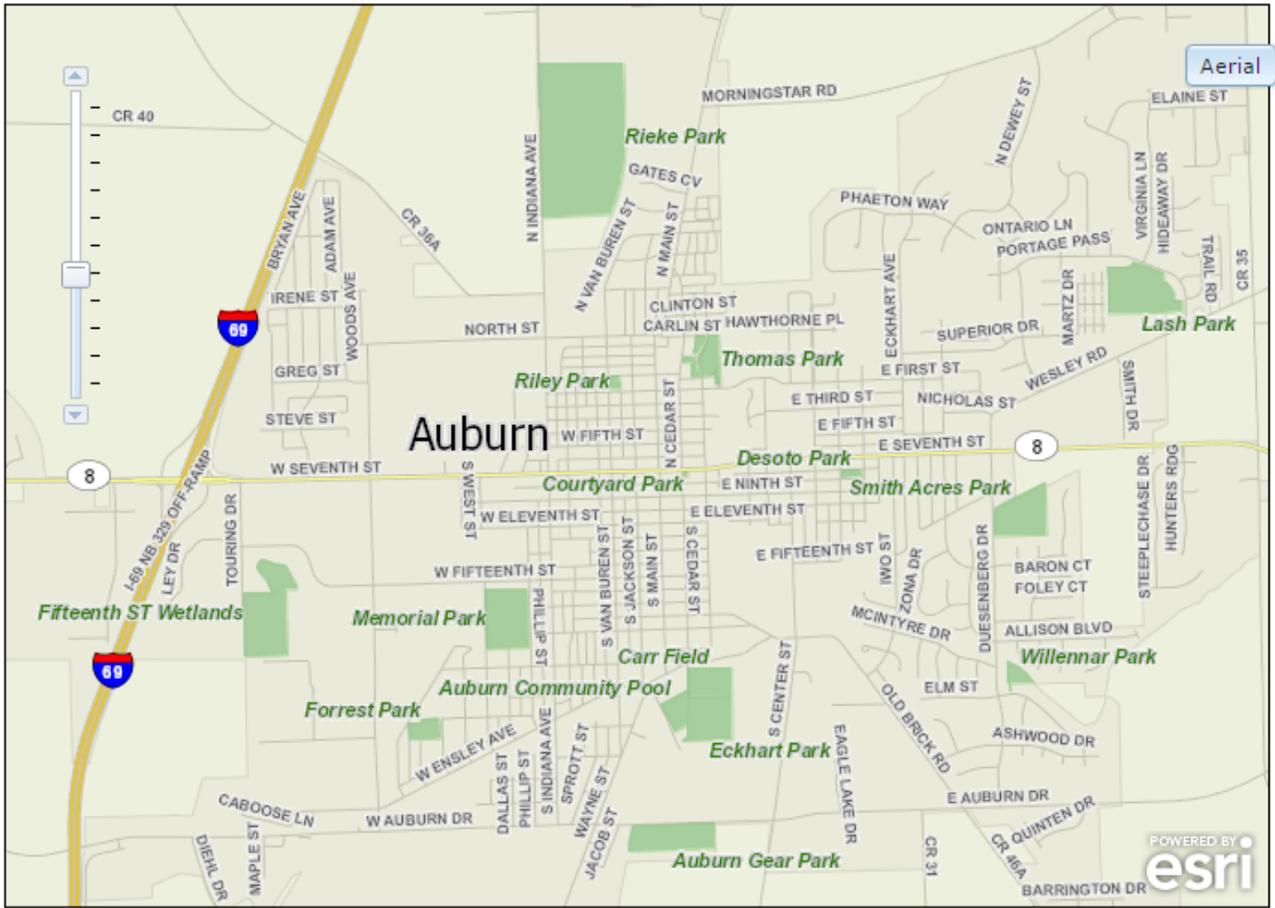


Figure 8 is a map of Auburn displaying all of its existing parks.

Waterloo	
Park Name	Type of Park
Francis Thomson Memorial Park	Community

Corunna	
Park Name	Type of Park
Earl Farrington Memorial Park	Community

Although the Francis Thomson Memorial Park has recently undergone major renovations, students would like to see more community and neighborhood parks in this town.

Considering that Earl Farrington Memorial Park is mainly used as a ball diamond, students are interested in seeing other community parks with less focus on sports but rather more focus on children and family activities.

Ashley	
Park Name	Type of Park
Ashley Memorial Park	Community
Sunset Park	Community
John Carpenter Field	Community
Community Center's children playground	Community

Many students are satisfied with the amount of parks that are provided within the limits of Ashley; however, they would like to see these parks receive more attention and care.

Butler	
Park Name	Type of Park
Maxton Park	Community
Mason Park	Community
Hathaway Park	Community
Southside Park	Community

Similar to Ashley and Garrett, students are content with the number of parks available but they would like to see these parks receive more attention and care.

Recommendation Con't

The parks in which the students would like to see more attention and care given to are very minor updates/changes. Most of these improvements consist of updated equipment (fresh paint, new mulch, necessary repairs) and more natural features. Students would like to see these parks populated with more trees, shrubbery, and flowers. Students have also expressed interest in making all of the parks ADA accessible by providing necessary curb cuts, ramps, and even sidewalks.

New Park Recommendations are: located in residential or downtown business district; appropriate lot size for type of park; easily

Garrett	
Park Name	Type of Park
Feick Park	Community
Ocker Park	Community
Heritage Park	Community
Eastside Park	Neighborhood
Westside Park	Neighborhood
Union Street Park	Neighborhood

Students are satisfied with the amount of parks offered in the City of Garrett. They believe that Garrett provides plenty of outdoor recreation opportunity for its residents; however, they would like to see these parks receive more attention.

St. Joe	
Park Name	Type of Park
Wild Cherry Park	Community
Saint Mark's Lutheran Church's Park	Community

Students would like to see the Town of St. Joe build off of the St. Joe River Greenway by improving the current parks or by creating a new community park that enhances the beauty of the St. Joe River.

accessible by bike, foot, or vehicle; and ample amount of activities for all ages.

Improvement Actions

The Park and Rec Departments (or the department in control of the parks) for each city will need to assess the current conditions of parks and make the appropriate changes. Whether these changes are small or large, it will be these departments' job to ensure that all of the necessary changes get made to make the parks safer and more user-friendly. If the park is not owned by the town or

city, then owners will be responsible for these changes. Many towns and cities will find that small changes can be accommodated for by the volunteering of local community organizations and residents. If equipment needs to be repainted or trees need to be planted, the town or city can organize a volunteer day and have local residents give their time and effort in making a park more attractive.

If a town or city is looking to provide a new park, first they must find a suitable lot. The lot will depend on size and availability. Because of these restraints, it may take a significant amount of time to complete the goal of a new park. Once the town or city thinks they have found a suitable site, they should perform an environmental impact study to make sure this site is environmentally suitable. Once the site has been approved, they must check the local zoning ordinance to see if the site is permitted to be a park. If it is, then they should apply for a permit; if it is not, then they should apply for a variance to allow a park at that location. Once the site plan has been approved, the construction of the new park may begin.

Appendix C: Environmental Analysis on page 36, supports this initiative and provides more options and ideas.

Funding Sources

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources has produced a guide for five year park plans, which can be found here: http://www.in.gov/ocra/files/Five_year_parks_master_plans.pdf. This will serve as a guide map for the committee and the Parks Department to help implement their projects.

Students would like to see the parks to be ADA accessible. A number of planning and construction grants are available to help with these projects. Specifically, consult Appendix B: Funding Sources on page 32.

Parks departments' budgets are oftentimes very limited in scope. But, a focused plan combined with leveraged funds and resources will likely help to garner support these updates. The committee should work with the parks department to develop a budget for the project. Those updates which cannot be made with public funding from the city and/or county could be sought after from grants, sponsorships, and in-kind donations.

Asking the local hardware store for several gallons of paint and accessories would be a reasonable request. Likewise, requesting landscaping materials like trees and shrubbery would be another good request. In turn, the committee should provide marketing and advertising materials for the sponsoring business. For example, after a park has been renovated, the committee could have a park re-opening day in which the newspaper covers the project, and notes that the hardware store sponsored the project. See the sponsorship form on the My Community, My Vision website, address can be found in Appendix B: Funding Sources on page 32.

The committee should work with the local parks department to prepare grant applications for the local community foundation and other private foundations and organizations. The committee needs to be able to clearly articulate to the granting agency which components of the park for which they are requesting support. Demonstrating that the committee has also gathered support from the city/county as well as secured in-kind donations will also help the application.

CREATING INDOOR RECREATION

DeKalb County is known for having harsh winters, making park visits and other outdoor recreation opportunities undesirable during the winter months. JAG students have stated there are insufficient activities to participate in during the winter season. The Creating Indoor Recreation initiative focuses on providing indoor recreation opportunities targeted towards high school students. This initiative can be achieved through community center events or creating a partnership between the public and private sector to create new indoor recreation opportunities.



Figure 9 shows high school students utilizing the activities that the Filling Station Center has to offer.

Why it is Important

Students acknowledge the current indoor recreation opportunities that DeKalb County has to offer (some seen below in Table 3), but they also see opportunity in creating a variety of new events and even a new facility. Students recognize the need for activities to keep kids their age occupied and well-rounded. Encouraging residents in their high school and college years to be involved and active in their community is a huge opportunity for both the communities and the residents. These activities create a sense of pride for their community, which in turn inspires them to stay in their hometown after their high school or college graduation. A survey result, which JAG students completed in the beginning of the program, indicates that these students believe that opportunities and amenities should play a very important role in their community. This initiative offers year-round activities to this group, encouraging them to be active in their community.

Table 3: Indoor Recreational Facilities offered in DeKalb County

Auburn
DeKalb County YMCA
Eckhart Public Library – Teen Library and Willennar Genealogy Center
Skatin' Station
Waterloo
Waterloo Grant Township Public Library
Classic City Center
Garrett
Garrett Public Library
Butler
Butler Public Library
Filling Station Youth Center (pictured above)
Ashley
Ashley Community Center

Recommendation

The students would like to see community centers (some mentioned in Table 3 above) offer more teen-related events in their communities. These events can include but are not limited to:

- Flea Market
- Holiday lighting party in downtown Auburn
- Summer community block party
- Music Festival for teens and young adults
- Auburn 5k race
- Walk-a-thon for local causes
- Movie in the Park
- Community Appreciation Day
- Board/Video Game Night
- Celebrate [insert community] monthly party
- Free Y Day
- Food Tasting Festival
- Open Mic/Karaoke Night
- Plant flowers at parks for Earth Day
- Masquerade Ball
- Flash Mob
- Sport Tournaments/Competition
- LARPing Events
- Renaissance Fair
- Teen Talent Show

Students are also very interested in creating a new indoor recreational activity that would draw attention to surrounding communities in and outside of DeKalb County since the county currently does not have a well-known indoor recreational facility. The students see a huge opportunity in turning the old Staples building in Auburn, located at 505 Touring Drive, into either an indoor laser tag or paintball arena with an arcade attached. This would attract residents from all over DeKalb County and even surrounding communities.

Improvement Actions

In order to encourage existing community centers to offer more teen-related activities, the community centers must be contacted and questioned about their availability and interest in offering these events. Once there is an agreement with these community centers, then comes the planning and paying for these events. These events could be sponsored by local businesses and residents, or community fundraising events could be held on an annual basis to earn a yearly budget for these events. Events would be under the control of the community center offering the event.

Reusing the abandoned Staples building requires an effort from the public sector to encourage private businesses with indoor recreation goals to locate in this certain location. This can be accomplished through tax incentives or business improvement districts.

For more funding options, go to Appendix B: Funding Sources on page 32.

REUSING THE AUBURN POOL

DeKalb County is full of many amenities that are thriving and bringing growth to the area including the ACD Festival, community involvement efforts, well-managed parks, and so much more. The Reusing the Auburn Community Pool Initiative is focused on reusing the pool so it may attract more users. There is discussion between the Y and the City of Auburn to provide an outdoor pool and splash pad at the Y. The discussion is being had due to the poor condition of the Auburn Community Pool. In order to renovate the pool making it efficient, the City of Auburn would have to put a large amount of money into the repair. The students have expressed interest in this initiative because they still see opportunity in the pool; they believe that reusing the pool as a garden pool instead of letting it sit empty is the most beneficial reuse for the community. A garden pool is an underground pool that has been transformed into a greenhouse ultimately creating a sustainable ecosystem.

Why it is Important

Reusing the Auburn Community Pool as a garden pool will continue to engage the community, provide activity to students, and encourage educational growth and responsibility in students. JAG students see an opportunity in the pool considering its location and proximity to Eckhart Park, perhaps the most recognized park in DeKalb County. Eckhart Park already hosts many community engaging and educational events; creating a community garden pool will build off of Eckhart Park's activities and further enhance them. This improvement will attract more users and create a kid-friendly destination in the southern part of Auburn. Students desire this reuse because they feel it is important to provide activity on the south side of Auburn as well as providing locally grown produce. Reusing the Auburn Community Pool as a garden pool would allow students and other interested community members to engage in an educational experience that provides a healthy, local food source.



Figure 10 shows what the inside of the garden pool could look like.

Recommendation

After researching and contemplating different uses for the Auburn Community Pool, JAG students decided that converting the pool into a garden pool would be the most beneficial and rewarding option. First and foremost, the Auburn Community Pool would have to be drained and prepared for the new use. Once it has been converted and produce has started to grow, management will begin to explore options to sell the produce to locals. They could either sell the produce at the farmers' market or sell it on site. Because the garden would be able to grow produce all year, it may be beneficial to sell the produce on site.

Improvement Actions

To begin implementing this initiative, first the pool must be drained and converted into a greenhouse by covering it with plastic or shade cloth. To keep the garden pool off of the grid, incorporating solar panels would provide a renewable energy source. Finally once the infrastructure has been prepared, vegetation and livestock can be placed and produce can begin to be grown. Utilizing all of these elements in the garden pool creates a sustainable ecosystem which begins to eliminate the needs of outside resources, therefore making it a self-sustaining environment.

The existing on-site facilities could be utilized as a storage unit and possible produce selling facility. Any necessary renovations would need to be made in order to bring the structure up to a standard that compliments its future use.

Finally, the garden needs to be maintained and managed. Either the parks and recreation department could facilitate the management, or local citizens and education groups can volunteer their time to organize maintenance and events.

Garden Pool, a non-profit organization, can and should be contacted for further questions and funding options. Visit gardenpool.org or call (480) 532-5821.

Funding Sources

One option for the pool is creating it into a community garden. If it is a public good, then some of the funding would be taken care of with the city budget. However, there are other funding options available.

Finding grants that can assist in some of the construction would help significantly with initial costs. Grants specifically relating to community gardens would also be a reliable source of funding.

Sponsorship from local businesses would be another way to not only receive funding, but to also help support the local economy. Businesses would give a certain amount of money or supplies and in return get publicity for themselves.

For more funding options, go to Appendix B: Funding Sources on page 32.

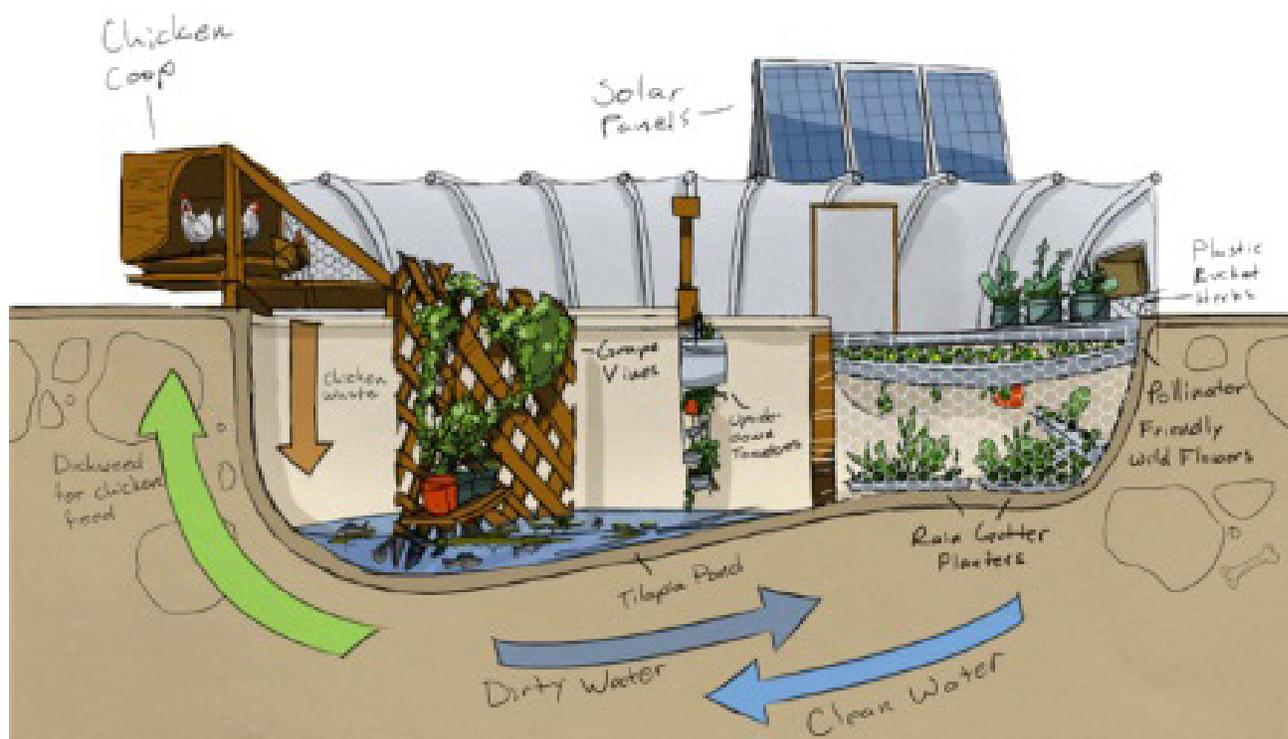


Figure 11 details the sustainable system of a garden pool in order to produce livestock and agriculture.

REVITALIZING THE POWER PLANT

As mentioned in the County Profile section of this plan, page 8, DeKalb County, specifically Auburn, relies heavily on tourism. The hub of tourism in the southern portion of Auburn includes the ACD Museum, NATMUS, and a new plaza with a community stage. JAG students believe that the surrounding buildings, specifically the old power plant, can contribute to the tourist economy instead of harming it. That is why the JAG students encourage the use of the old power plant to be revitalized into Crossroad's Motorcycle Museum.

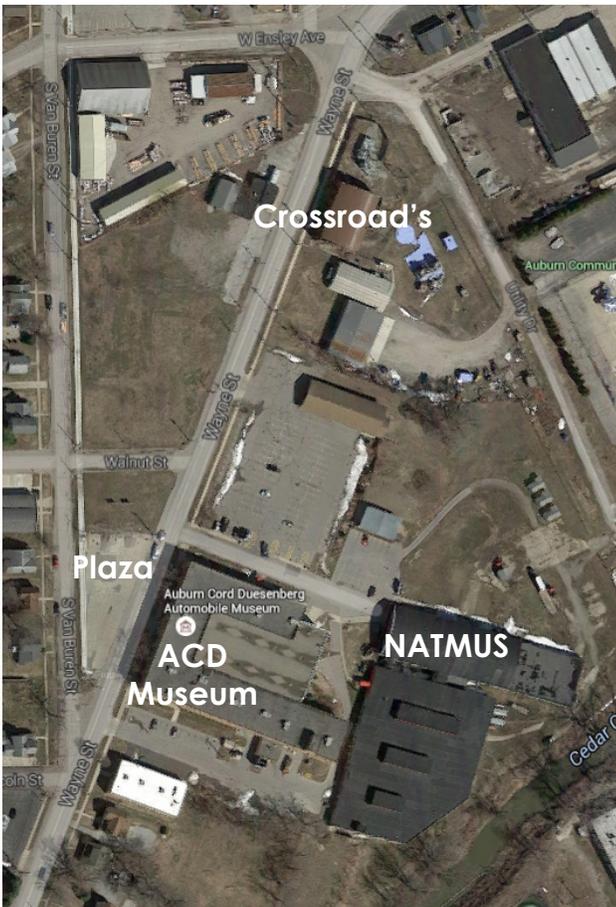


Figure 12 shows the location of the tourist hub on the southern side of Auburn.

Why it is Important

Blighted structures tend to discourage tourism and often leads to poor quality of life, which is why it is important for this initiative to be successful. Instead of harming DeKalb County's well-known tourist reputation with blighted structures, JAG students believe it is important to show pride in their history and their culture. They believe saving historical structures and promoting their community's culture will enhance the tourist-based economy and the quality of life. JAG students support Crossroad's Motorcycle Museum and encourage government officials and local residents to give their support for this project.

Improvement Actions

Because Crossroad's Motorcycle Museum has already purchased the property and have began renovations, there is not much for the public sector to do. However, it is encouraged that Crossroad's continues to educate local residents on this project and encourage residents to join them in renovating the building.

Another way to continue to support local businesses is to allow them to sponsor different areas of the museum, or put an advertisement on the building while it is being renovated. This will bring in some extra funds during the revitalization process. It also encourages economic and cultural growth.



Figure 13 shows the condition of the abandoned power plant before Crossroad's Motorcycle Museum began their renovations.

Funding Sources

As mentioned earlier, local business sponsorship is always an option for additional funding. Volunteers from the community can also assist in renovating the building. While this may not be a direct source of funding, it eliminates the need to spend more on construction.

Historic preservation projects tends to gather community support because it shows pride in the community's culture and history. One way residents may support this pride is through in-kind donations and crowdfunding. Holding auctions or tours at the site may also spark residents' interest and they may be willing to donate money in order to tour the building.

The Historic Preservation Fund is another possible source of funding for this project. In order to be eligible for this grant, Crossroad's must partner with either the local government or a not-for-profit to receive the funding. If awarded, this project could gain \$35,000 for renovations.

For more funding options, go to Appendix B: Funding Sources on page 32.



Figure 14 depicts a rendering of what Crossroad's Motorcycle Museum will look like after renovations.

ACTIVATING DOWNTOWN AUBURN

Downtown Auburn is a small but thriving downtown. It has the potential to house many residents and businesses. JAG students have expressed interest in living and working in a walkable, downtown environment. While this environment may be small for some students, many students are drawn to living in an urban setting. Creating livable spaces and workable offices in the second and third stories of the already prospering area would allow Downtown Auburn to thrive even more.



Figure 15 shows existing buildings in downtown Auburn that would be a perfect location for apartments and offices.

Why it is Important

In a meeting held November 17, 2011, the Planning and Design Team for the City of Auburn Downtown Revitalization Plan, asked participants to engage in a hand-held digital survey system. They received forty-five responses. Of these participants, 86% agree that “attract[ing] “high tech” businesses / younger folks” is a very important priority to downtown Auburn and 56% agree that “add[ing] upper floor residential” is a very important priority to downtown, as seen in Figure 16. In order to attract “younger folks,” upper floor residential is a must. Many young adults, particularly ones who have recently graduated from high school or college, are looking for urban apartments to reside

in. Forbes found that between 2000 and 2010, major cities’ downtowns saw a 26% growth of population between the ages of 25 and 34. Forbes continues to say that this age group wants to live in “tight-knit urban neighborhoods that are close to work and have lots of entertainment and shopping options within an easy walk.” Small towns may be a couple of years behind on this trend, but it is apparent that this age group is still demanding urban, apartment-like dwelling units.

Downtown Priorities

Response of “Very Important” or “Somewhat Important”

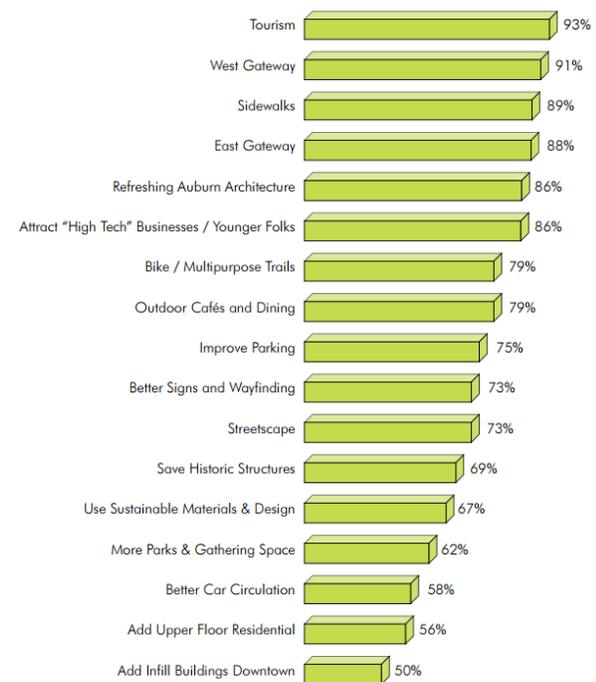


Figure 16 was taken out of the City of Auburn Downtown Revitalization Plan and shows the survey results that was conducted during a meeting.

One advantage of living in an urban area is the location to retail/commercial and work. While existing downtown businesses provide job offers, there is an opportunity to expand the workforce. In the City of Auburn Downtown Revitalization Plan, Objective E-1 (Build trust in investment community through retention and recruitment program) is listed as a priority objective. This objective promotes retention of existing

businesses and ideas to attract new businesses. It is imperative to build off of the City of Auburn Downtown Revitalization Plan and retain current businesses involved with Downtown Auburn Business Association (DABA) and Auburn Downtown Advisory Committee (ADAC), and to continue to grow the current workforce and expand it to different job opportunities, such as office and “high-tech” businesses.

Objective: P-3
Promote downtown with upper floor housing and professional office spaces



Strategy
 Promote Downtown Auburn as an exciting, convenient, place to live among target population groups including, young professionals and aging local residents. Downtown, with its historic architecture, and proximity to amenities, offers a tremendous opportunity to create a unique and appealing living and working environment.

Action Tasks

- Vacant upper floors should be inspected by authorized personnel for compliance with applicable code including Alternative Building Code (refer Objective O-5) and accordingly maintained by the property owner.
- Example pro-formas should be developed (ADAC Committee representatives in collaboration with owners and appropriate City staff) to evaluate the benefits of applying several incentives, such as historic tax credits and other incentives, for rehabilitation of a building to make way for loft style apartments with retail on first floor space. The cost of improvements should be tallied with expected rent rates to evaluate the investment potential of upper floor housing.
- ADAC should enter into discussions with property owners to pass along benefits (financial and otherwise) for renovation of the upper stories.

Figure 17 shows Objective P3 from the City of Auburn Downtown Revitalization Plan.

Recommendation

JAG students recommend occupying second and third floors of downtown buildings with apartments. These apartments should be targeted towards young adults and other interested residents. Most of the apartments should consist of one-bedroom apartments with some consisting of two-bedroom apartments. This plan acknowledges the P3 Strategy (Promote downtown with upper floor housing and professional office spaces) in the City of Auburn Downtown Revitalization Plan and recommends that this task is followed. While market rate housing is definitely recommended for the majority of the downtown housing, JAG students would also like to see affordable housing options.

Retaining businesses is very important to any community and is something at which Downtown Auburn has always been fairly successful. Some ways to retain these businesses are to:

1. Provide close-proximity housing options as listed above, and
2. Include a variety of business types including office-use businesses and a business incubator

Improvement Actions

While easily the most lofty goal of the DeKalb initiatives, this could also offer some of the most lasting and beneficial effects for the City of Auburn. This initiative is synchronous with the City of Auburn Downtown Revitalization Plan, which means that the initiative already has some traction with being implemented.

Once the tasks instructed by the P3 Strategy in the City of Auburn Downtown Revitalization Plan have been completed, the issue of zoning and permits must be addressed. Each building owner may apply for a variance to allow for residential dwelling units in the upper floors; or the

city can rezone the downtown boundary into its own zoning district. This would allow building owners to easily make the transition and approve residents to move into the upper floors of the downtown buildings.

A redevelopment commission should review the area to see if implementing a Housing Tax Increment Financing (HoTIF) District would be successful in the downtown area. If it would be beneficial, then the redevelopment commission should enforce a HoTIF in order to start redeveloping the upper floors. Once the upper floors have been redeveloped they should be occupied by residents.

Similarly, upper floor units that are planned to be used as office or commercial spaces should take advantage of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. The revenue of the TIF can be used directly to replenish the building to a usable standard. Once the building is ready to be occupied, the City of Auburn should utilize tax incentives to attract office-use/"high-tech" businesses.

Business incubators offer an office space for start-up businesses who do not have space or money to create their business. They often are office based businesses who do not require much room. A start-up business owner would rent limited space in an office and would be required to pay a low, reasonable rent. This allows the start-up business the opportunity of an office without having to pay a large amount of money. Once the business is well established, they can rent out their own office and expand their services.

Funding Sources

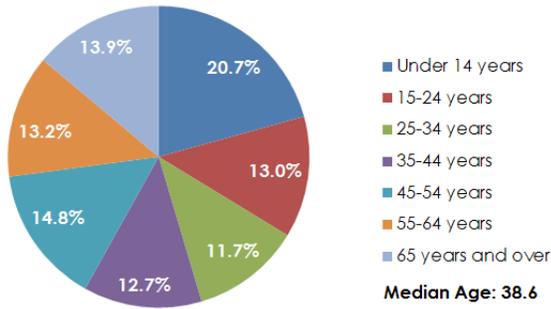
As mentioned before, HoTIF and TIF districts are a great source of revenue for upkeep and revitalization among the buildings in downtown Auburn.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME), and Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (RHTC) are all great opportunities to take advantage of in order to revitalize the buildings in downtown Auburn. The Indiana Main Street program is also another tool to utilize in order to restore and revitalize current infrastructure in downtown.

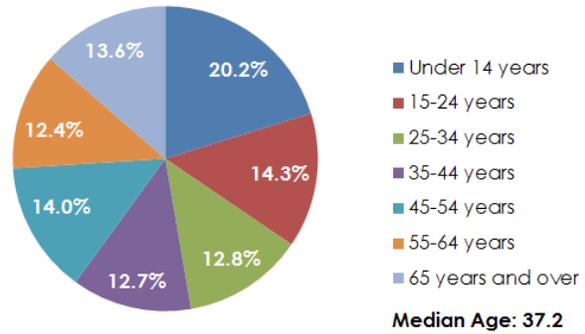
For more funding options, go to Appendix B: Funding Sources on page 32.

APPENDIX A: Demographic Data Analysis

DeKalb County Age of Population



Indiana Age of Population



Income by Age 25-44 years - DeKalb County



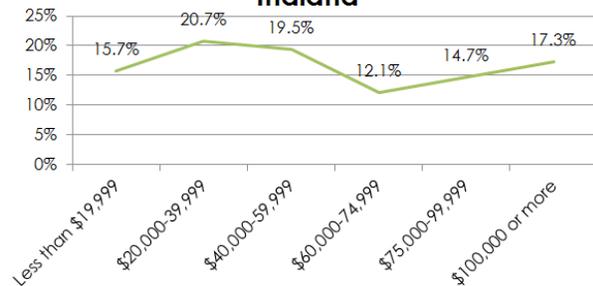
Income by Age under 25 - Indiana



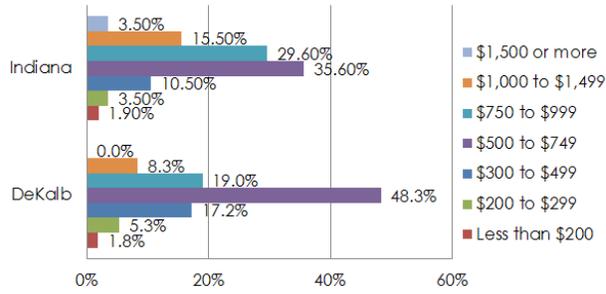
Income by Age under 25 - DeKalb County



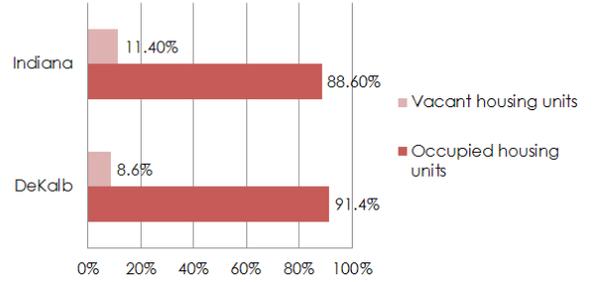
Income by Age 25-44 years - Indiana



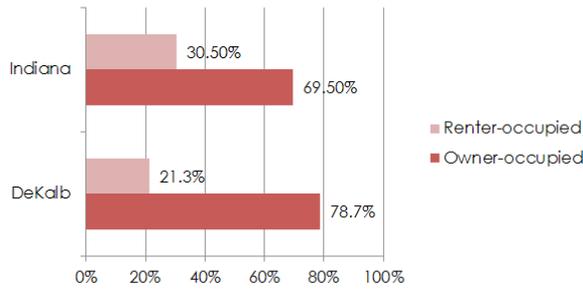
Gross Rent



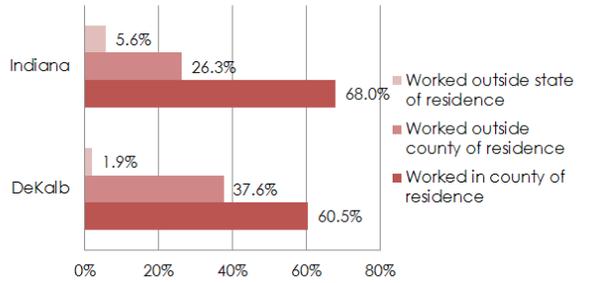
Total Housing Units



Housing Tenure



Place of Work



APPENDIX B:

Funding Sources

as prepared by Lindi Conover

While each community has their specific goals and initiatives, there are several factors that each plan has in common. A list of economic improvement strategies was developed at a meeting of MCMV Year One community members in November 2014 in Columbus, IN. The list was compiled and organized by India Ballard-Bonfito. This portion of the plan is intended to share resources which empower each community to achieve their goals. Online resources on the My Community, My Vision website supplement this information. It is highly recommended that each community review these resources. The website is:

sites.google.com/site/mycommunitymyvision/home

1. Business Improvement Districts
2. Crowdfunding
3. Heritage Tourism
4. Makers Districts
5. Revolving Loan Funds
6. Downtown Living Opportunities
7. Student Led Restaurants
8. Community Gathering Events
9. Food Security
10. Resource Recovery

The list above includes the overall strategies for community development. Viewed alone, these strategies can be rather overwhelming. "How does one actually implement heritage tourism?" for example, is a question you might ask yourself. If broken down into smaller tasks in the form of individual projects and programs, coupled with community dedication and provided the resources to do so, the goals can become ever-achievable!

Overall Strategies

Smaller Projects/ programs (1-5 years)	Long-term goals (5-15 years)
Crowdfunding	Business Improvement Districts
Revolving Loan Funds	Heritage Tourism
Student-lead Restaurants	Makers Districts
Community Gathering Events	Downtown Living Opportunity
Community Gardens	Resource Recovery
Farmers' Markets	Food Security

Oftentimes, larger goals must be broken down into smaller projects, pilot projects and use project-specific funding sources to be achieved. Once a history of success is established, then higher-dollar funders will be more likely to give, as is the case for federal funding resources.

Action

All programs, whether they are small projects with a short timeline, or larger projects that will take five years or more, require collaboration with various local, state and federal partnerships. Such partnership is essential for success, but also demonstrates strong, grassroots commitment to community improvement.

An online video guide on the "My Community, My Vision" website accompanies the following action items and the economic tools and fundraising resources listed below. In this guide, Lindi Conover takes you through the following components with an example to explain the particular organizing goals and strategies, along with the fundraising and

economic implementation tools.

Keys to success include the following:

A core group of dedicated individuals who will begin the planning

The good news is that you already have this in place by being a part of the My Community, My Vision program! But you may need more people on board, which involves “selling” or lobbying for your project(s). Before you can really begin to inform and educate, you have to identify and plan out the smaller tasks of your specific projects/plan. Again, because of your involvement in the My Community, My Vision program, you already have a really strong start!

Identifying local stakeholders

Include local county and city government (mayor, city & county council, commissioners), school boards, libraries, parks departments, community leaders, businesses and business owners, political parties, banks, chambers of commerce, tourist and visitors centers. This step usually involves the core group of organizers to brainstorm and systematically write down what headway has been made. Time will be spent looking up phone numbers, asking questions, being re-directed to the right people and generally learning the “lay of the land” in your local community.

Educate & Advocate

Now your job is to get the stakeholders on board with your project, to bring them into the fold and get them excited for your plan. This is the step in which partnerships really begin to emerge and blossom. You will discover aspects of your community which you didn't already know and begin to work together with others who are passionate about your town(s). Delegate out to your core group of people specific tasks required to get the job done. Don't be afraid to ask for help and guidance. This is your chance to show stakeholders what the plan is and why you need them.

Assign Tasks to Achieve the Plan

You have committed individuals, agencies, organizations, and all sorts of local institutions ready to see your plan take shape and begin to make a difference in the experiences of people within the community. Identify which institutions are best suited to take part in various aspects of the process and ask them to do so.

Funding

Funding sources for community projects can be broken down into several basic category types. Each type of funding source has its benefits and particular use, which are described below.

1. Grants
2. Private Corporate/Business Sponsorship
3. Individual Sponsorship
4. In-kind Sponsorship
5. Crowdfunding
6. Tax Incentives
7. Loans

Grants

Grants are monies which are applied for by organizations from foundations. These are monies that do not need to be repaid, but often have certain requirements, including public acknowledgement and reporting. Foundations which grant money usually have one or more application rounds each year and give priority to particular program areas or project types. Check with each foundation for details.

One great thing to keep in mind is that each county in Indiana has an established community foundation. This good fortune was made possible by the Eli Lilly Foundation. These local community foundations grant funds in each county, and their giving levels can vary based on available funds. This is always a great place to start with funding and grants because these foundations are plugged in to what is happening on the local level and are very accessible.

Private corporate or business sponsorship

Oftentimes, corporations or local businesses are interested in working with local communities to support projects, especially if those projects have some connection to the business's mission or commercial matter. Like grants, sponsorship dollars do

not need to be repaid but may require significant public acknowledgement and reporting. Business sponsorship committees may also have application deadlines, or rolling deadlines. Be sure to check with each business prior to requesting funding.

One great way to encourage sponsorship is to frame it as an advertising opportunity for the local business by giving them naming rights and/or allowing the entity to place their logo on publicly displayed objects like signs, etc.

Individual sponsorship

Individual sponsorship generally occurs for a particular event and is funded by an individual, family, or small group of individuals who have donated money to the same thing. Typically, this type of sponsorship involves direct solicitation and request, and does not include an application. These types of sponsorships might be given as memorials for a loved one, because the individual(s) cares about the program/project, and can include naming rights.

In-kind sponsorship

In-kind donations or sponsorships occur when an entity provides goods or services free-of-charge as a donation and does not include direct monetary donations. In-kind sponsorship is often appropriate for projects that might require supplies that can be donated by a local business, but can occur at any scale. It might also be appropriate for overhead costs that an organization might not have in their budget as they start up, like marketing services.

Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is an emerging field of fundraising in which funds are requested from a large group of people, usually for a singular project, and typically

occurring through intense social media campaigns. There are 3 participants in the crowdfunding model: the project initiator who proposes the project, individuals/groups who support and fund the project; and a moderator to bring the groups together. The project initiator creates a business plan and marketing strategy for their idea. After deciding on an appropriate crowdfunding platform, they connect with a moderator. The moderator assists them in finding local supporters appropriate for the project. An organization typically sets up a website which accepts pledges; if a particular amount is met, then those pledges are turned into donors and the project is funded. See this resource for rules about crowdfunding projects in Indiana:
www.in.gov/sos/securities/4114.htm.

Tax Incentives

This type of economic development tool requires detailed coordination with governing bodies like state and local councils and government agencies. Tax incentive tools are designed to bring a certain type of business or resident to an area and offer certain tax credits or benefits for those people/businesses.

Business Improvement Districts

A business improvement district is an economic development tool with a purpose to improve the livelihood of a downtown area. Through a BID, all owners within the proposed district are required to contribute to the communal fund through an assessment fee. Additional funds can be raised (through efforts like those described above). These communal funds are then used for services that benefit the downtown; this in turn makes the area more attractive to visitors, tourists, residents, which spurs businesses, and propels from there. This requires intensive local organizing and

buy-in from policy makers who will approve the plans and assessments, owners within the district, and intense management once implemented.

Revolving Loans

Revolving loan funds provide a source of capital within the community that can be used to fill in gaps for funding. They provide low interest loans to community members. When the loans are repaid, the loan amount is returned to the fund and is available to other borrowers. This type of funding is most useful for projects that will eventually make money and be self-sustaining. RLFs are typically administered by planning and development commissions or economic development organizations. Initial funding can come from federal grant programs and other sources, listed above.

Business Loans

Business loans are available through banks. Loans must be repaid with varying levels of interest. The best resources are usually those in one's own community, including local credit unions and banks.

APPENDIX C:

Environmental as prepared by Spencer Starke

This document is a list of the environmental hazards and environmental resources in the DeKalb County area. The hazards are mainly chemical in nature; they include active and archived sights. The resources are areas and features that DeKalb has available to it, these areas are opportunities for development.

Hazards

Archived Superfund Sites

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has listed no active superfund sites. These sights are potentially harmful to human health and are on schedule to be cleaned up. There is however 18 superfunds sites that have already been cleaned up and are listed as archived. These sights may be redeveloped potential depending on the specification of the site. More information found at the Superfund Redevelopment Basics on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) website.

Brownfields

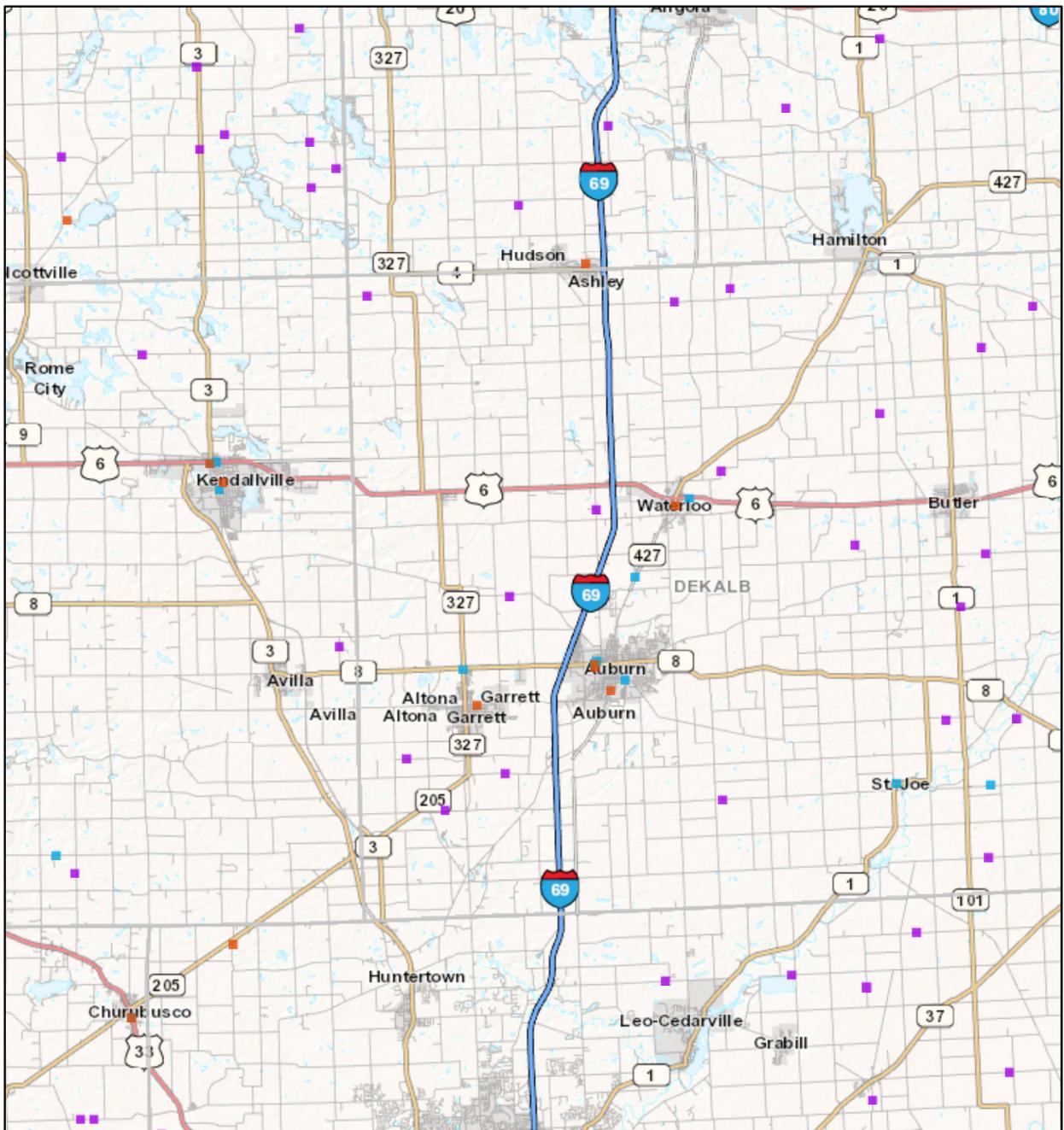
Brownfields are areas that previously were used for industrial or commercial uses. The land is considered contaminated but not to the level of a NPL. These areas can be used for business developments and retail parks once they have been cleaned. There are currently 2 identified brownfields in DeKalb; there are probably more that have not yet been identified.

Polluters

There are currently 29 active sources of pollution within and immediately surrounding DeKalb. These sources affect the air, soil, and water quality throughout DeKalb. The listed polluters have varying degrees of output, from negligible to severe.

1. Therma Tru Corp
108 Mutzfield Rd - Butler
2. Steel Dynamics Inc.
4500 CR 59 - Butler
3. Shiloh Industries, LLC
1200 Power Dr - Auburn
4. Rieke Packaging System
500 W 7th St - Auburn
5. Parker Hannifin Corp Cylinder
201 Parker Dr - Ashley
6. Nucor Vulcraft Group
6610 CR 60 - St. Joe
7. Nucor Building Systems
305 Industrial Pkwy - Waterloo
8. Noble Metals Processing
201 Re Jones Rd - Butler
9. New Millennium Building Systems, LLC
6115 CR 42 - Butler
10. Multimatic Inc.
201 Re Jones Rd - Butler
11. Metal Technologies
1537 W Auburn Dr - Auburn
12. Lippert Components Inc. Plant 24
1202 Fuller Dr - Garrett
13. Kimball Electronics
1015 W 15th St - Auburn
14. Hudson Industries Inc.
105 W SR 4 - Hudson
15. Guardian Automotive Products Inc.
1900 S Center St - Auburn
16. Group Dekko Inc.
1605 Dekko Dr - Garrett
17. FXI Inc.
2211 S Wayne St - Auburn
18. Foamex Innovations Operating Co.
2211 S Wayne St - Auburn
19. DeKalb Molded Plastics Co.
550 W Main St - Auburn
20. Cooper Standard Automotive Inc.
725 W 11th St - Auburn
21. Contech Castings, LLC
1200 Power Dr - Auburn
22. Citation Corp.
600 W Main St - Butler
23. Butler Mill Service Co.
4506 CR 59 - Butler
24. Biolab Inc.
101 S Parker Dr - Ashley
25. Ball Brass and Aluminum Foundry
520 Hazel St - Auburn
26. Azz Galvanizing Hamilton
7825 S Homestead Dr - Hamilton
27. Ashley Industrial Molding Inc.
310 S Wabash St - Ashley
28. Alpha III Composites LLC
301 N Taylor Rd - Garrett
29. Alcoa Automotive Indiana Assembly and Fabricating Center
1101 Oren Dr - Auburn

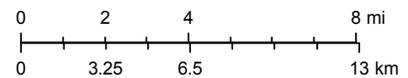
DeKalb Hazards



February 22, 2016

1:250,000

- Confined Feeding Operations
- Brownfields
- Cleanup Sites 2015
- Landsurvey - Counties



Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Office of Land Quality
 U.S. Geological Survey
 Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), U.S. Census Bureau (USCB), Indiana Geographic Information Council (IGIC), UITS, Indiana Spatial Data Portal

Figure 18 is a map showing environmental hazards located in DeKalb County.

Agricultural Land

DeKalb County is home to an abundance of agricultural lands. This agriculture is the primary resource of the county. Increasing crop diversity in DeKalb County would help to alleviate food deserts, introduce ecotourism potentials and improve the local environment. There are quiet a few examples of counties throughout the United States known for their heirloom deciduous fruit farms. Northern Indian historically has been a prime location for perennial fruit crops. Adding in a more diversified crop could help to bolsters DeKalb's appeal and economy.

Recommendations:

- Increase Crop diversity:
- Encourage local farmer to grow alternative crops (e.g. vineyards and orchards)
- An increase in diversity could draw people from outside the county to experience an aesthetic rural experience
- Provides an experience with a good/ product

Empty lots and Brownfields

Empty lots are great opportunity for establishing local green space. DeKalb County has a few empty lots that could be developed in such a way that it would beneficial to the areas around them. These areas have tremendous potential. The recommendations below are just few uses out of a myriad that may be implemented.

Recommendations:

- Urban Gardens
- Butterfly Gardens
- Song Bird Gardens
- Neighborhood parks
- Art parks
- Outdoor theatre space
- Local markets

DeKalb County Proposal

While DeKalb has been making headway in some areas, most notably DeKalb Central's propane school buses, the county does not necessarily have the monetary resources to move towards environmental development. However, DeKalb County does have the land available to develop green space. Currently there is a significant lack of public green space throughout the county. No large park exists within the county for its citizens to enjoy.

What: Large Park Initiative

Large parks can be considered a group of singular, distinct parks that take up more than the typical land allotment for a regular park. Parks such as State Parks, and State Forests are examples of the typical large park. A large park's function stems from its size. Since these parks take up significantly more space than other parks, their effects can also be considered to be larger. The space that large parks provide helps to establish a sizable area for wildlife to safely go about their lives, as well as the space for natural cycles to occur without too much interference by society, via pollution through water or air.

Why

While some interference is inevitable, it can be said that it is reduced in a large park setting. This limited interference helps to establish a unique natural area for citizens to enjoy. The allowance of large natural space can also help to improve the health of the surrounding areas by providing a "cleaning service" for both water and air using biological filtration through trees and other plants. Without an area like a state park or forest, the water run off in the county flows directly into streams, carrying with it sediment and petrochemicals. The sediment that is washed into streams is often sourced from stream banks, causing a loss of precious soil, which can severely

detract from property quality and increase the need for chemical inputs. Another issue in areas without large ecological space is that very little carbon sequestration occurs. Having trees to help balance out the production of emissions from vehicles and energy production is vital for air quality.

Including large ecological areas within DeKalb County would help to preserve some of the natural heritage of the area. Without large natural area, species that used to be plentiful in the area begin to disappear and species that benefit from living on the edges of farm fields begin to proliferate the area. A state park would allow for the traditional Indiana wildlife to have a place in which they could be conserved. The rural layout of the county makes it a prime location for a large park. This park could be used for activities such as fishing, hunting, hiking, and camping.

Public areas where citizens can interact with the natural world and enjoy various recreational activities are a huge attracting feature when people decide where to live or where to continue living. Areas deprived of such features deprive their citizens of such recreation. Without large natural areas, people will often move to other areas in order to be close to recreational opportunities. Historically rural areas have a rich outdoor culture that includes participating in these activities, but as family farms become scarcer, people do not have the space to enjoy such recreation. Providing a local large park would make available those outdoor pastimes once again.

The economic benefits of large parks are palpable. Large parks attract people who are spend their day or weekend to relax and recreate. These people are looking for an experience. Industry centered on providing experience is a great way for areas around large parks to make income.



Figure 19 is an info-graphic discussing benefits of parks.

Gear rental, restaurants shops and tours are just a few ways large parks can provide additional sources of revenue for an area. In 2013 Indiana State Parks generated just under 500 million dollars in labor wages and provides more than 10,000 jobs directly, the indirect income generation through associated is not accounted for.

How

Creating a State Park, or some other form of larger recreation and conservation space, is no small undertaking. The benefits of embracing such an undertaking would be enormous. The first step in creating a large park would be to gain public interest, if the DeKalb community is not interested in a park or perhaps opposed to a park, then creating one will be quite difficult. Using the reasoning above would help to secure the interest of the public.

The next step would be to identify areas that would be benefited by a large park. This area should be within a reasonable distance of the most populated areas within DeKalb County, this way the ease of utility is maximized. Sensitive areas or areas that include water features such as lakes and creeks are essential locations. Probe the community for land owners around these areas.

After a sight is selected acquire the funds to acquire the land and begin the process of creating a suitable area. In DeKalb County this would include reforesting the area. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources would be in charge of maintaining and staffing the park. The funding for the maintenance and operation of the park should be considered. This could be in the form of taxes, donations or entrance fees.

It should be mentioned that this process would be a long one. The processing for land acquisition and legislative requirement have been lengthy for other Indiana Parks. Prophetstown state park, Indiana most recent State park, took 15 years to establish.

