Carmel Consolidated Comprehensive Plan

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MANDATE

The State of Indiana, through Indiana Statutes, Title 36, Article 7, as amended, empowers communities to plan with the purpose of improving the health, safety, convenience, and welfare of the citizens and to plan for the future development of their communities to the end:

1. That highway systems [and street systems] be carefully planned;
2. That new communities grow only with adequate public way, utility, health, educational, and recreational facilities;
3. That the needs of agriculture, industry, and business be recognized in future growth;
4. That residential areas provide healthful surroundings for family life; and
5. That the growth of the community is commensurate with and promotive of the efficient and economical use of public funds (IC 36-7-4-201).

Indiana statutes state that communities may establish planning and zoning entities to fulfill this purpose (IC 36-7-4-201). A Plan Commission is the body responsible for maintaining the Comprehensive Plan, which is required by State law to be developed and maintained (IC 36-7-4-501).

Indiana Code 36-7-4-502 and 503 state the required and permissible contents of the Plan. The required Plan elements are listed below:

1. A statement of objectives for the future development of the jurisdiction.
2. A statement of policy for the land use development of the jurisdiction.
3. A statement of policy for the development of public ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities.

FULFILLMENT OF THE MANDATE

Throughout the planning process and within the *Carmel Consolidated Comprehensive Plan*, all of the State of Indiana minimum requirements have been met or exceeded. Some of the highlights include:

- The *Carmel Consolidated Comprehensive Plan* reflects analysis of the community, existing land uses, development trends, land use suitability, economic feasibility, and natural land features.
- Public involvement provided guidance for this update. The input exceeded the criteria required by the State by providing several opportunities for people to share their thoughts.
- *Part 2: Comprehensive Plan Essence* in the *Carmel Consolidated Comprehensive Plan* fulfills the requirement for establishing objectives for future development and a policy for the development of public places, public land, public structures and public utilities.
- *Part 3: Land Classification Plan* in the *Carmel Consolidated Comprehensive Plan* fulfills the requirement for a land use development policy.
- *Part 4: Transportation Plan* in the *Carmel Consolidated Comprehensive Plan* fulfills the requirement for developing a public ways policy.

PLAN OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Comprehensive Plan Update Objectives

The primary objectives for revising Carmel's 2020 Vision Plan are to:

- Remove outdated and irrelevant information;
- Remove objectives that have been achieved;
- Update information and demographics;
- Incorporate current policies and objectives;
- Consolidate studies and plans that have been prepared since the 2020 Vision Plan was adopted;
- Distill the existing binder of planning documents into a more succinct and simple document;
- Introduce language to address the trend towards redevelopment; and
- Freshen the content to more accurately reflect the City's planning vision for its planning jurisdiction.

The revised plan has been given the name *Carmel Consolidated Comprehensive Plan* (*C3 Plan*) because it assembles the essence from each of the existing, independent plans and studies relating to comprehensive planning. Specifically, the *C3 Plan* utilizes information and plan elements from the following documents:

- Carmel's 2020 Vision Plan
- Development Plan and Strategies, U.S. 31 Corridor
- 96th Street Corridor Study
- Old Meridian Task Force Report
- Integrated Economic Development Plan
- Amended Redevelopment Plan
- Interim Report for INDOT U.S. 31 Improvements
- ~~Civic Design, Guiding Design Principals~~

Because the City is interested in utilizing a form-based regulatory system in the future, this plan also establishes the foundation for such a tool. The *C3 Plan* identifies where form-based regulations, hybrid regulations (balanced traditional and form-based regulation), and traditional regulations are appropriate.

As the City develops, urbanizes, and redevelops, more and more detailed planning is expected to be necessary. This plan establishes a framework for subsequent, more focused planning efforts. Instead of incorporating those plans as addenda, the *C3 Plan* has a part for easily adding those plan's essence. Additionally, a standard format is established to dictate consistency as the *C3 Plan* evolves.

Methodology

Initial Public Input: The process for this update began in October of 2005 with multiple opportunities for public engagement. The planning team held meetings with the following groups:

- Carmel/Clay School Board;
- Neighborhood association presidents;
- Business leaders;
- East Carmel general public;
- Central Carmel general public;
- West Carmel general public (2 meetings);
- High school students; and
- Chamber of Commerce leadership.

Community Study: Once the first round of public input was complete, the consulting team focused on intensive study of the built environment and research into the existing planning documents. This step in the process included several meetings with Carmel's planning staff and leadership.

Document Drafting: Concurrent with studying the community, the planning team began drafting the *Carmel Consolidated Comprehensive Plan*. Immediately following the first full draft completion, the City scheduled a public open house for the public and interest groups to provide feedback about the plan.

Public Comment: **To be written**.

Implementation

The *Carmel Consolidated Comprehensive Plan* contains general policies intended to influence growth, development, and vitality of the City as it evolves. The *C3 Plan* will be implemented by subsequent specific ordinances, programs, zoning decisions, Redevelopment Commission actions, and Common Council actions.

~~THREE~~ FOUR CITY DISTRICTS

Planning for ~~Three~~ Four Unique Districts

Historically, the City of Carmel and Clay Township was a homogeneous area consisting of farms, rural residential, estate homes, small town residential and small town downtown commercial development. The construction of I-465 (1960's) and S.R. 431/Keystone (1960's), and significant upgrades to U.S. 31 (1970's) in Clay Township all led to the evolution to many types of development in the City and Township. Today the City has an urbanizing core, an employment corridor, significant redevelopment sites, many styles of residential development and multiple commercial ~~districts~~ areas. The evolution of the City has also resulted in distinguishable planning districts.

To facilitate more effective planning ~~For the purposes of planning~~, the City of Carmel ~~is~~ recognize~~sing~~ the uniqueness of ~~three~~ four districts; East Carmel, North Central Carmel, South Central Carmel and West Carmel (see illustration below). The district boundaries were determined by evaluating development form, physical boundaries, and public input ~~personal values~~.

Although there technically are boundaries drawn on the map between planning districts, it is not intended to be a "hard" division. Rather, the reader should view the divisions as conceptual. Therefore, an area on the edge of one district would be evaluated independently to determine which policies best fit that area.

East Carmel Characteristics

East Carmel is unique compared to the other three ~~two~~ districts because it typifies suburbia with curvilinear streets, dominantly single-family residential uses, and a small number of employment or commercial developments. More specifically, the district contains a large number of neighborhoods with custom-built homes and has very little integrated commercial development. Aside from the commercial corridor along East 96th Street (the south boundary), there are only two integrated commercial areas within this district: Brookshire Village Shoppes and Hazel Dell Corner. Two centers along 146th Street are just outside of Carmel, Bridgewater Shoppes and Noble West.

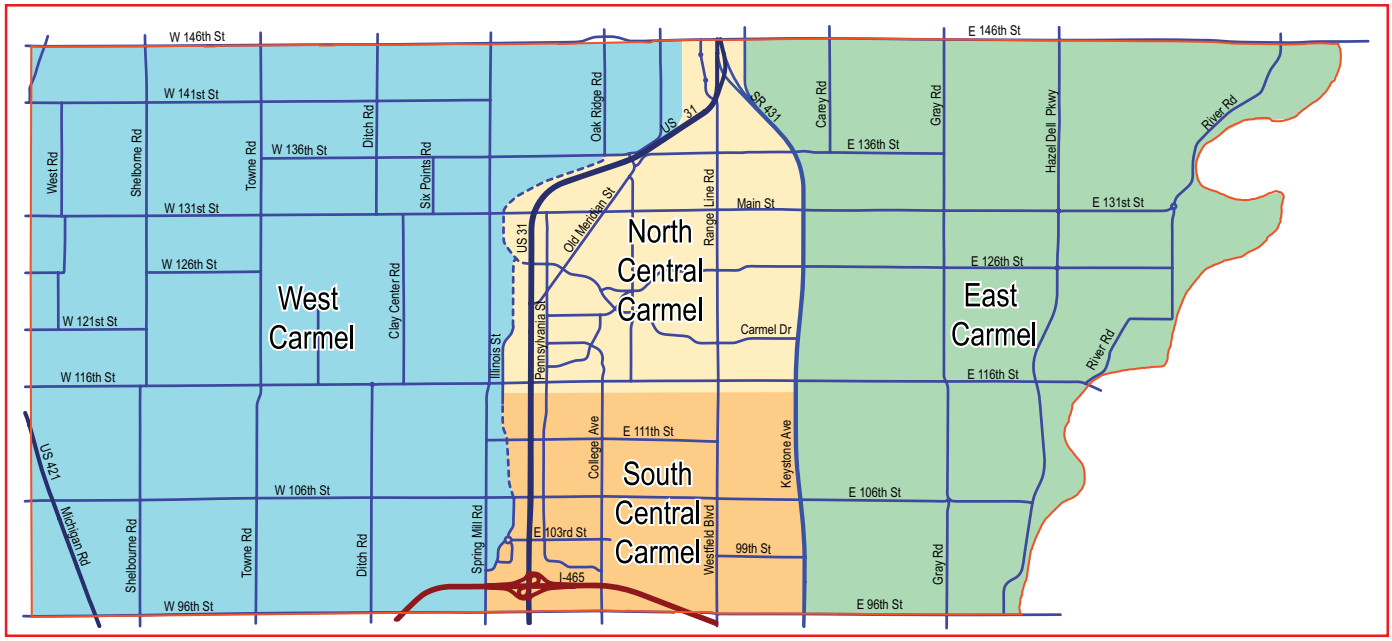
East Carmel has a variety of recreational amenities including ten parks and an evolving river greenway. It also has three golf courses. Again, the mix of amenities is very consistent with suburban development.

The presence of quarry and aggregate mining operations along the White River creates a tension between residential quality of life and material needs of the quarry.

North Central Carmel Characteristics

North Central Carmel is clearly unique in comparison to the other districts, in that it is an urbanizing core. Although there are areas of suburban development, the district has tilted toward an urban environment with significant mixed-use vitality.

No longer are the tallest structures two stories and suburban in character. Numerous four-story or higher buildings have been built or are in the process of being built in this district. Many new buildings are also being built to the front property line, further evolving the character of the area.



North Central Carmel has two ~~five~~ parks, the Monon Trail, and one ~~three~~ golf course~~s; albeit, two are under pressure to be developed~~ which is expected to be developed in the near future. It also has two dominant street corridors, U.S. 31 and Keystone Avenue, which contribute to and support the urbanizing environment.

The North Central Carmel district contains multiple commercial areas including: Old Town (Arts and Design District), City Center, Merchants' Square, and Old Meridian Street~~, Home Place, and the 96th Street Corridor~~. The district also includes a wide mix of residential developments including historic residential, suburban residential, estate residential, townhouses, flats, apartments, and condominiums.

The district is inclusive of significant employment areas. The U.S. 31 Corridor and the Carmel Science and Technology Park are the main focus of employment-type development, but many other small office buildings are distributed throughout North Central Carmel.

South Central Carmel Characteristics

South Central Carmel is unique in comparison to the other districts, in that it contains a significant number of 1950 through 1970's style residential development and Home Place village. The district also has inter-sprinkled areas of large-lot residential.

The north boundary and area surrounding Central Park serve as a transition from the urbanizing North Central Carmel district to residential character. Limited bicycle and pedestrian facilities exist in this area to connect people to the amenities in North Central Carmel.

The South boundary includes employment areas along the I-465 and 96th Street corridor.

South Central Carmel has three parks, the Monon Trail, and two golf courses; one that is under pressure to be developed. It also has two strong street corridors, Westfield Boulevard and College Avenue, which provide good north/south connectivity for vehicles. Regional north/south connectivity is also provided with U.S. 31 and Keystone Avenue. Convenient east/west connectivity is limited to 106th Street.

The South Central Carmel district has one commercial district, Home Place, and some additional pockets of commercial development along the 96th Street Corridor. The district includes a narrow mix of single family residential types, including first generation suburban residential, suburban residential, and estate residential. A very limited number of apartments and condominiums also exist.

West Carmel Characteristics

West Carmel remains unique even after the development of many suburban residential subdivisions ~~neighborhoods~~. Historically, West Carmel was dominantly horse farms, agricultural land, estate residential and open space. The district is still distinguished from the East Carmel district by significantly lower density residential and substantial estate homes that are preserving open space.

This area has a strong sense of place established from its origin as region for estate homes and horse farms. Independent and rural living characterize the values of many of the districts residents.

~~The~~ West Carmel ~~district~~ contains the most substantial number of undeveloped acres and has the least developed road network~~ resulting from the development of exclusive neighborhoods in the 1980's through today~~. Unlike East Carmel, where many subdivisions ~~neighborhoods~~ were built with connecting streets to adjacent developments or stubbed streets to undeveloped areas, West Carmel has many non-through streets (single-entry with long loops or cul-de-sacs or gated subdivisions with private streets) and relies heavily on the original county road network.

~~Although it is a larger geographic area, it only contains three public parks and two golf courses. It also is the home to one of the most well known traditional neighborhood developments in the Midwest, the Village of WestClay.~~

Although West Carmel is a larger geographic area than the other districts, it has a lower density per acre. The population in West Carmel is served by two public parks and two golf courses. It also is the home to one of the most well known traditional neighborhood developments in the Midwest, the Village of WestClay.

The West Carmel district has two commercial areas, Michigan Road corridor and the Village of WestClay. Additionally, the Town of Zionsville, 86th Street corridor and new commercial development along 146th Street are also recognized for providing commercial amenities to West Carmel.

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OBJECTIVE PROFILE

Environmental Conditions

The following environmental features exist in the City's planning jurisdiction ~~of Carmel~~.

River, Floodplains and Riparian Areas: The most significant environmental feature in the ~~City~~ planning jurisdiction is the White River and its associated floodplain and riparian areas. Situated on the eastern boundary of the ~~city~~ planning jurisdiction, the river provides an opportunity for people to connect to the environment ~~landscape relates significant natural and historical legacies of the city~~. The floodplain area of White River is fairly extensive along its western bank. In certain segments this floodplain reaches nearly one-half mile from the centerline of the river and provides for the most extensive expanse of undeveloped and natural landscape in the township.

Other streams and creeks traverse the ~~City~~ planning jurisdiction eventually draining into the White River. While Cool Creek has been predominantly urbanized, its most basic floodway has been preserved as a natural amenity. Williams Creek, west of Meridian Street, is another environmental corridor that has large segments still undeveloped.

Wetlands: Another environmental feature associated with waterways that exists in the ~~City~~ planning jurisdiction is wetlands. Several wetlands designated on the National Wetland Inventory Maps exist within the ~~City~~ planning jurisdiction.

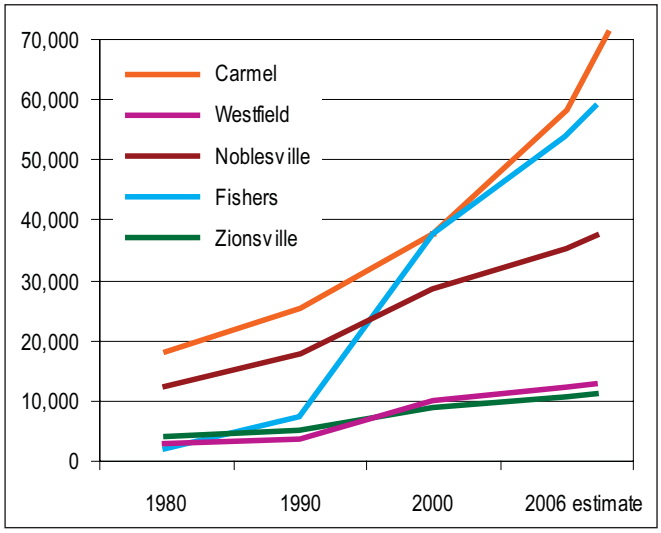
Woodlots: A study conducted by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) for U.S. 31 indicates that less than 10% of Hamilton County remains as woodlands. Very few original woodland areas have survived in Carmel. Most of these woodland concentrations occur along the White River or other streams and tributaries such as Cool Creek or Williams Creek.

Groundwater: Groundwater is a significantly important feature in Carmel as the water supply system for residents comes from this source. The groundwater sources are found in the sand and gravel aquifer system of the West Fork of the White River valley. Groundwater is available at depths of 50 - 400 feet in the glacial drift with wells yielding several hundred gallons per minute. The City of Carmel has designated areas around these wells as "wellhead protection areas" to help protect the quality of the available drinking water.

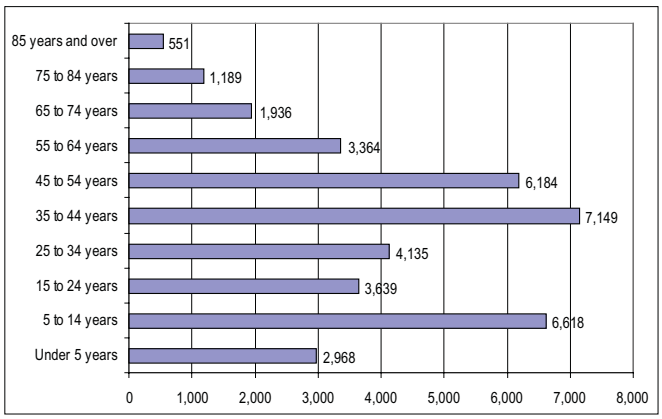
Demographic Information

The following demographic information relates to the City of Carmel and the surrounding communities and State. All census information was gathered by the Indiana State Library and all non-census information was prepared by the Department of Community Services.

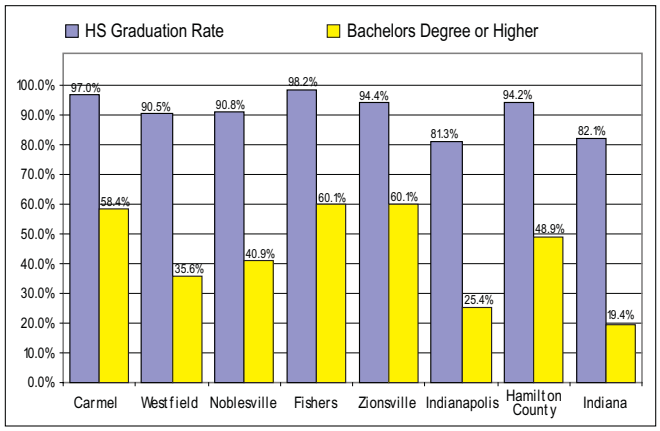
Population Growth: The City of Carmel has undergone tremendous growth in the last twenty-five-year period. The population has increased from 18,272 residents in 1980 to 37,733 in 2000. Recent population estimates for 2006 place the City at 72,339 residents. This estimate is inclusive of the additional population from new development and annexation. (See Table below)



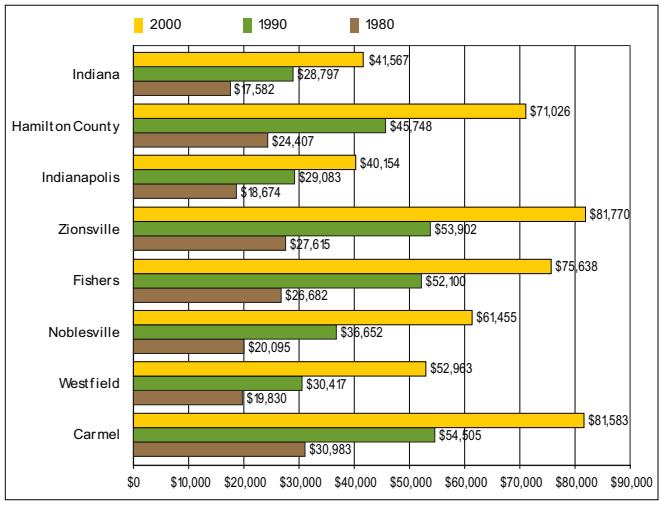
The population distribution for the City of Carmel for the year 2000 is shown below. The largest segment of the City's population is the 35 to 44 year old range. The 5 to 14 year old range (school age) ranks second with 45-54 year olds ranking third.



Education: Carmel has a higher high school graduation rate than the State of Indiana (97.0% compared to 82.1%) and Hamilton County (94.2%) but a lower rate than Fishers, Indiana (98.2%). The number of adults with Bachelor's degrees or higher in Carmel is 58.4% compared to the State of Indiana's rate of 19.4%. The rate for both categories exceeds the rates for Indianapolis, Westfield, Noblesville, and Hamilton County.



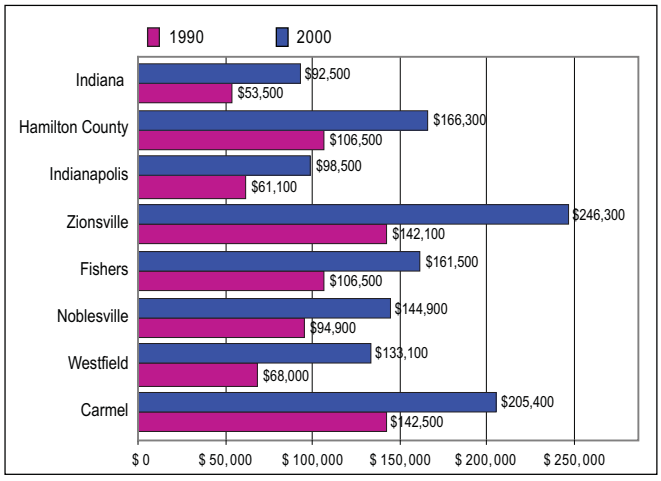
Income: The median income divides the income distribution into two equal groups, one having incomes above the median, and other having incomes below the median. Carmel's median household income has increased by 50% from 1990 to 2000, an increase of $27,078. The state's median household income increased by 44% during the same period, while Hamilton County's median household income increased by 55%.



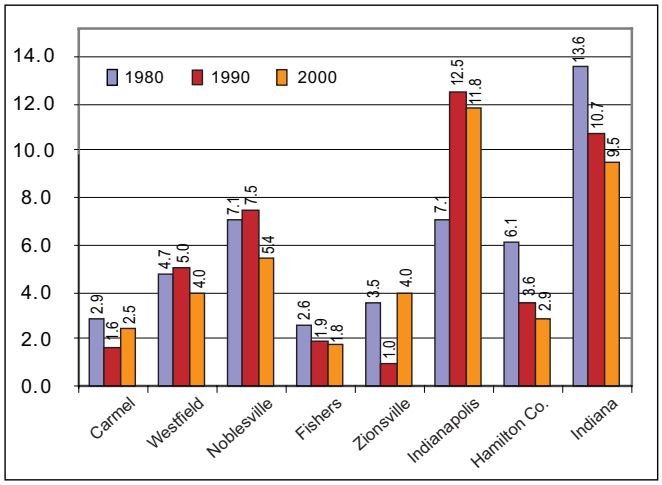
Median Home Value: The median home value divides the total data into two equal parts: one-half of the home values fall below the median and one-half of the values exceed the median.

Carmel's median home value was $205,400 for 2000. Zionsville was the only surrounding community with a higher value in 2000 ($246,300). Carmel's median home value exceeded the State's median value by $112,900.

When comparing the percent increase in median home values, the City of Carmel falls behind all of the surrounding areas. Carmel's median home value increase from 1990 to 2000 was 44.1%. During that same time period, Noblesville increased 52.7%, Fishers increased 51.6%, Westfield increased 95.7%, Zionsville increased 73.3%, Hamilton County increased 56.2% and the State of Indiana increased 72.9%.



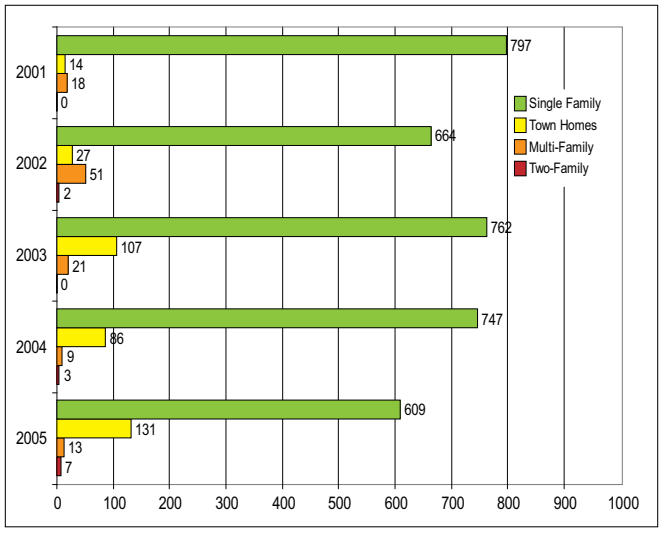
Poverty Rate: The poverty rate for Carmel in 2000 was 2.5% compared to 2.9% for Hamilton County and 9.5% for the State of Indiana. In comparison to the surrounding communities, Carmel has the second lowest poverty rate behind Fishers (1.8%).



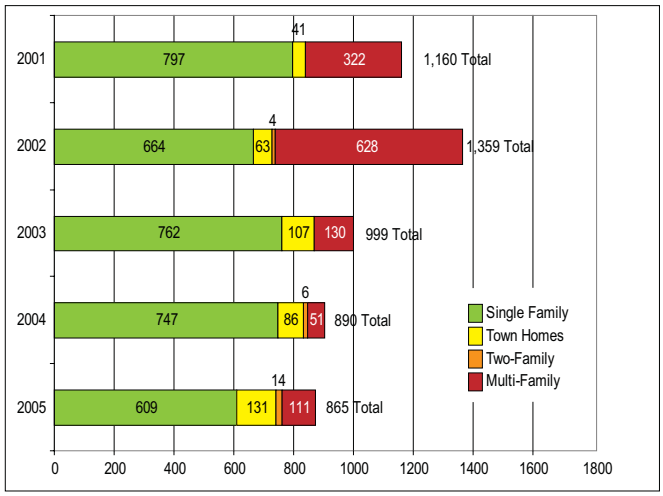
Development Trends

The following is a summary of the development trends experienced by the City of Carmel.

Building Permit Trend: The number of permits issued each year is dominated by single family residential with an average of 716 permits being issued each year. The peak for single family residential permits over the past five years was in 2001 with 797 permits issued. The notable upward trend is with town homes. This dwelling type has risen from 14 permits in 2001 to a peak of 131 permits in 2005. Note that the chart below represents the number of permits, not the number of units.



Dwelling Units Trend: The number of new dwelling units in Carmel's planning jurisdiction has been dropping every year since 2002. This trend likely reflects multiple factors including: a regional slow down in the economy, stricter regulations and review process, and a transition from greenfield development toward redevelopment.



Community Facility Inventory

The following is a summary of the community facilities within the City of Carmel.

Schools: Within the Carmel Clay school district, there are 15 public schools: Carmel High School, Clay Middle School, Carmel Middle School, Creekside Middle School, and eleven elementary schools. There are also two private schools in the City's jurisdiction: Our Lady of Mount Carmel Elementary School and University High School.

Parkland: Public parkland sites in the ~~City of Carmel~~ City's jurisdiction have increased significantly in recent years. The following parks are maintained by the Carmel/Clay Department of Parks and Recreation: Carey Grove Park, Flowing Well Park, Lenape Trace Park, Hazel Landing Park, Lawrence W. Inlow Park, Meadowlark Park, Monon Greenway, Pleasant Grove Park, Prairie Meadow Park, River Heritage Park, River Road Greenway, and West Park. Central Park, Cherry Tree Park, and Founders Park are in various stages of planning and construction and will soon be added to the list of available parks for residents to enjoy. In addition to the local parks, there are three parks maintained by the Hamilton County Department of Parks and Recreation: Coxhall Park and Gardens, River Road Park, and Carmel-Clay Park.

Golf Courses: There are numerous public and private golf courses within the ~~City of Carmel~~ City's jurisdiction. They include Plum Creek Golf Club, Prairie View Golf Club, Mohawk Hills Golf Club, Crooked Stick Golf Club, Brookshire Golf Club, Twin Lakes Golf Club, Sunrise Golf Club and Woodland Country Club.

Civic Facilities: The City of Carmel has several facilities including: ~~government is made up of~~ City Hall located in Carmel Civic Square, the Police Department, the Fire Department with six Fire Stations, the Carmel Water and Sewage Utilities Department, the Carmel Clay Communications Center, the Department of Engineering, the Department of Community Services, and the Carmel/Clay Parks and Recreation Department.

Athletic Fields: In addition to various school athletic facilities, the Carmel Dads' Club manages a youth sports program and several fields throughout Clay Township for sports including Baseball, Soccer, Football, Rugby and Lacrosse.

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ESSENCE INTRODUCTION

Part 2: Comprehensive Plan Essence establishes the City's planning policies and objectives categorized by geographic area. Although there are many similarities in each district there are also significant differences. This approach will clearly communicate and guide the public and its leaders in future decision making and share with the development community the City's policies and objectives. Further, the public can base their expectations on the content of this Part.

To address each geographic area, this Part is divided into the following ~~four~~ five sections:

1. *City-Wide Policies and Objectives .....pg 15*
2. *East Carmel Policies and Objectives .....pg 19*
3. *North Central Carmel Policies and Objectives.....pg 20*
4. *South Central Carmel Policies and Objectives.....pg 21*
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CITY-WIDE POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

Policy 1: Manage Community Form

Introduction: Managing community form is the art and science of influencing development in a manner that results in a~~n enviable~~ superior quality built and natural environment in which people reside, work and recreate; and creates the opportunity for businesses to thrive. Managing community form is the culmination of land use planning, transportation planning, urban design, influencing transitions, and place-making.

The tools used to manage community form take shape as development guidelines, zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, building codes, studies, small area plans, negotiations, commitments, conditions, covenants, redevelopment initiatives, policies, education and the like. No single tool can effectively manage community form.

Managing community form is a departure from purely land use based regulations that encourage segregation and challenge the community's ability to establish essential connectivity. This model is more permissive of mixed use nodes and requires greater sensitivity to transitions between differing land classifications.

Objective 1.1: Merge form-based regulatory tools into the traditional zoning and subdivision control ordinances based on *Part 3: Land Classification Plan*.

Objective 1.2: Recognize the uniqueness in each planning district and establish regulations, subarea plans, and/or pattern books to secure and encourage the desired features.

Objective 1.3: Utilize and follow the intent of the *C3 Plan* by applying the Plan's content to development proposals to leverage the desired outcomes and prevent deviations from the City's policies and objectives.

Objective 1.4: Be very sensitive to connectivity and transitions between adjacent areas. ~~Avoid Discourage~~ unplanned or harsh contrasts in height, building orientation, character, land use, and density. If there exists contrast, utilize multiple design principles to soften transitions.

Objective 1.5: Strongly promote mixed use in areas suitable for commercial development, and protect residential areas from unsuitable commercial development.

Objective 1.6: Continue to build the city park and trail system through targeted purchase of remaining undeveloped parcels.

Policy 2: Be a World Class City

Introduction: The expression "world class city" is applied to communities that have broad name recognition, notable culture, a positive image, diversity in housing, corporate vitality, strong architectural presence and character, sense of place, public transportation, and most importantly a desirable quality of life.

Objective 2.1: Commit to high architectural standards for all municipal buildings and facilities. The intent is to set a precedent for quality and to establish character goals. Developers will take cues from municipal improvements and be more likely to follow the City's lead. This commitment will also further build community pride.

Objective 2.2: Further enhance the amenities, development opportunities, office-supporting commerce and technology necessary to attract additional corporations to Carmel. Concurrently, enhance quality of life to provide a~~n enviable~~ superior quality place for people in all socioeconomic classes to live by encouraging high quality public spaces, interesting parks, plazas and public gardens. There is significant evidence that high quality of life is a major attractor for corporations, thus making this a primary component of this objective.

Objective 2.3: Encourage more diversity in housing types to appeal to a more diverse clientele of employees working in Carmel. As Carmel continues to attract regional and national headquarters ~~world class corporations~~, the housing desired by people relocating from other parts of the country and world is not always consistent with Indiana's traditional residential form of single-family detached homes. The City needs to commission a study on housing choices.

Objective 2.4: Support an intracity and commuter transit system as described in *Part 4: Transportation Plan*. Carmel's City Core is in the process of achieving the necessary commercial intensity and residential density to support such a system. The City will likely experience more peak-time congestion on major roadways as an inconvenient but positive indicator that a transit system would be successful. The City will need to ask for patience during the years leading up to an operable transit system.

Objective 2.5: Enhance a bicycle- and pedestrian-connected community through expanded installation of side paths, sidewalks, bike lanes, and off-street trails. It is well established that many of the moderate-sized world class cities in our nation are bicycle and pedestrian friendly communities. Carmel believes that the establishment of bicycle and pedestrian facilities will further enhance quality of life and be greatly appreciated by citizens.

Policy 3: Perpetuate Economic Vitality

Introduction: Vitality is defined in many ways, including job growth, quantity of jobs, quality of jobs, proliferation of commerce, entrepreneurship, investment in property, redevelopment, length of commitment, and degree of risk being taken. Carmel has strong economic vitality, and furthering that trend is of great interest and importance. This section addresses the objectives that Carmel will utilize to perpetuate economic vitality.

Objective 3.1: ~~Carmel~~ The City will strive to further the "Carmel" brand as the best place to live, work and raise a family ~~the community~~. The City has already established a notable degree of branding; branding being positive name recognition and impression. Branding of a community is important when trying to attract quality employers and businesses. For instance, well-respected retail businesses want to be located in well-known communities.

Objective 3.2: Encourage mixed-use developments. Single-use developments tend to lack vitality during off-peak times. Mixed-use developments often combine commercial and residential uses into a single node. This type of development encourages daytime vitality from employment and commerce activity and nighttime vitality when people come home from work. Also, this development pattern better utilizes land by allowing compact urban form.

Objective 3.3: Retrofit existing single-use centers into mixed-use centers. This encourages both daytime and nighttime vitality and creates a compact urban form.

Objective 3.4: Utilize technology to efficiently communicate City projects and initiatives. Expand existing lines of communication to reach more households and gain more public input. Modernize the City's website to accomodate this objective.

Objective 3.5: Clarify and streamline development procedures and processes. Simplify the development process without lessoning standards or expectations.

Objective 3.6: Plan for transit by encouraging transit opportunities in new developments where it would benefit the community. Analyze how the City would form with improved transit options.

Objective 3.7: Promote the advancement of technology to support commerce and the ever-evolving workplace and home enterprise.

Policy 4: Be a City of Neighborhoods

Introduction: Neighborhoods are an essential component in a community. They create the fabric of a city. Traditionally, neighborhoods were not recognized by each individual development's name as they are now. Rather, they were determined by physical boundaries and included a mix of housing, neighborhood-serving commercial, schools, and parks within walking distance of each other.

Objective 4.1: Carmel is desirous of achieving the quality of life benefits of traditional neighborhoods within the context of exurb, suburban, and urban development.

Objective 4.2: The City believes it necessary to conduct planning at a finer detail in critical subareas and corridors. For this reason *Part 5: Critical Corridors and Subareas* was created to house those planning exercises within the *C3 Plan*. These small area plans are important in communities with redevelopment pressures and in rapidly growing areas. Oftentimes, critical corridor and subarea plans can better address transitions, connectivity, and development form. They can also address character goals and emphasize to developers a more exact idea of what the City expects.

Objective 4.3: Establish neighborhood identity based on physical boundaries rather than by each development's name. ~~As mentioned in *Civic Design*, n~~Neighborhoods are more than each development project. A concerted effort should be established to determine neighborhood boundaries throughout the City and then promote their identity and boundaries.

Objective 4.4: Consider and encourage "third places" and neighborhood-serving commercial. Every trip to the store should not be a major expedition. Residents and employees should be able to access nearby shopping by car or walking.

Policy 5: Be an Adaptable City

Introduction: Being an adaptable city is critical in the evolution of a community. Too many communities do not adapt to local, regional, and national influences and suffer from the lack of flexibility. For instance, many communities are still trying to revitalize their downtowns based on the models that were successful 50 or more years ago. They have not recognized the evidence that downtowns can still be vital places, but have not adjusted to current influences and circumstances.

Objective 5.1: Carmel will regularly reevaluate the local, regional, and national influences that affect development success and vitality. The City will also strive to predict the next evolutions in development to better recognize whether they would have a positive or negative effect on the City.

Objective 5.2: Periodically review and revise the Land Classification Plan Map to adapt to changes in the built environment, evolutions in community values, and changes in community policies.

Objective 5.3: Continue to recognize, plan and update critical corridors and subareas.

Objective 5.4: Enhance the Monon Trail to support and further encourage its use as a non-motorized commuter route. Also, construct feeder/branch trails and paths to allow more convenient and safe connection to nearby residential and employment areas.

Objective 5.5: Target undeveloped parcels adjacent to the Monon Trail for future park sites.

Policy 6: Inspire Community Character

Introduction: Community character is the aesthetic of a neighborhood, district, or the entire community. Positive community character is desired and often helps build local pride, encourages investment, and improves quality of life.

Objective 6.1: Reject homogeneous development and corporate branding architecture. In residential areas, architectural guidelines should be instituted to prevent monotonous development. Commercial and residential areas should be subjected to architectural standards that inspire unique and appropriate designs fitting Carmel's character goals.

Objective 6.2: Promote a unique community with unique neighborhoods and subareas. Already the City is investing in the Old Town Arts and Design District, which is a fantastic example of establishing a unique subdistrict. The community will identify appropriate character goals for the East, Central, and West Carmel Districts and critical subareas.

Objective 6.3: Encourage high quality and well designed ~~significant~~ landscaping to help beautify the City and promote healthful environments.

Objective 6.4: Promote the planting and care of canopy trees throughout Carmel. Canopy trees are desired because they add a great deal of character and comfort to the built environment. They also provide relief from heat, soften noise and light, and help purify the air we breathe. This is a particularly important objective because so many mature trees are lost through development.

Objective 6.5: Promote the use of public art in both public spaces and within private developments. Also, encourage designers to include public art in their buildings and surrounds.

Objective 6.6: Promote healthy life styles through the use of innovative design and planning.

Policy 7: Be Environmentally Sensitive

Introduction: Being environmentally sensitive is the act of protecting natural areas, introducing native plant material into the urban environment, reducing energy consumption, encouraging energy and natural resource conservation, and utilizing "green" building materials.

Objective 7.1: Encourage the use of durable materials and construction methods that prolong the life of buildings. A paradigm shift is necessary to change the current 30-year life expectancy of commercial buildings and some production homes to a more substantial life expectancy. Carmel has already had some success in encouraging 100-year buildings. For instance, ~~Pedcor~~ that standard is currently being ~~applying that standard~~ applied to several buildings in the City Center and the Old Town Arts and Design District.

Objective 7.2: Replace the fleet of City vehicles with energy efficient and low emission cars and trucks. With the introduction of hybrid vehicles, the City now has viable means for improving the environment through energy conservation.

Objective 7.3: Develop a network to allow non-vehicular trips to be made by encouraging small-scale and requiring large-scale employment nodes to install covered and secure bicycle parking, and shower and changing facilities for cycling commuters. Concurrently, ensure that adequate bicycling facilities exist to allow safe and efficient bicycle commuting.

Objective 7.4: The City should encourage use of water-saving devices, and ~~implore~~ request that citizens ~~to~~ reduce water consumption by minimizing lawn sprinkling and exploring alternative landscaping ideas.

Objective 7.5: Strongly encourage developers to build environmentally sensitive buildings, following guidelines similar to those in the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) program. These "green" buildings conserve energy resources, provide more healthful inside environments, last longer, utilize products made from recycled material, and use products that can be safely disposed of or recycled when the building is eventually dismantled. Green buildings also strive to use local material to reduce the transportation impact. For instance, importing marble from overseas has an enormous environmental impact compared to delivering Indiana limestone from southern counties.

Objective 7.6: Set the precedent for environmental protection or revegetation when developing municipal facilities like parks, fire stations, and maintenance facilities.

Objective 7.7: ~~Protect the City's drinking water supply and other surface water that becomes drinking water for others.~~ Continue to protect regional surface and ground water sources to ensure safe drinking water for Carmel and adjacent municipalities. Institute regulations that further protect the delineated wellhead protection areas from contaminants and land uses that have a higher risk of contaminating water resources.

EAST CARMEL POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The following sections convey the policies and objectives for the East Carmel District. It is important to note that these sections share some of the same policy headings as the City-Wide section, but the content is specific to East Carmel.

Policy 1: Manage Community Form

Objective 1.1: Protect the integrity of the suburban form and land uses. East Carmel is an area where redevelopment of residential districts is discouraged, and where investment in single-family homes is strongly encouraged. The City will identify projects, policies, and programs that will maintain the existing stability and encourage investment by homeowners.

Objective 1.2: Allow neighborhood service nodes in context appropriate areas. The objective of these nodes is to allow limited neighborhood-serving commercial, mixed-use, and public amenities within walking distance to residents living in surrounding suburban neighborhoods. Lighting, parking, architecture, landscaping, size of buildings, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be strictly regulated to ensure compatibility with existing residential uses.

Policy 2: Be a World Class City

Objective 2.1: Embrace the White River greenway and off-street trail to provide another notable linear park and non-motorized transportation corridor which connects parks as well as acting as the foundation for a larger, regional greenway. More off-street trails are expected to contribute, especially in the riparian corridor of the White River.

Objective 2.2: Promote a world class development on the Earlham College property, achieving the same recognition as the Village of WestClay. Unique uses or combination of uses would be welcome if designed into the context of the natural environment and surrounding suburban development.

Policy 3: Inspire Community Character

Objective 3.1: Reinforce suburban character including tree-lined curvilinear streets, sidewalks separated by tree lawns, and neighborhood parks. Also, maintain the dominant presence of high quality single-family residential form.

Objective 3.2: Allow density transitions from single-family residential form along East 96th Street and 146th Street , but encourage context sensitive buffer development along these corridors to help soften the visual impact to lower density residential neighborhoods.

Objective 3.3: Consider expanding the neighborhood commercial node at East 131st Street and Hazel Dell Parkway to the southwest corner by encouraging the church to develop a portion of the property with mixed use and a variety of housing types. The area would act as an east side Secondary Core, with the potential for a community transit stop.

Policy 4: Be Environmentally Sensitive

Objective 4.1: Aggressively protect the riparian corridor and floodplain along the White River from encroachment.

Objective 4.2: Continually monitor mining practices to ensure they do not devalue property or negatively affect quality of life. Also, encourage reclamation planning for quarry sites to better coordinate public facilities and infrastructure improvements, and public recreation or residential opportunities.

Objective 4.3: Expand East Carmel bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, especially in areas adjacent to institutional nodes such as schools and churches, and neighborhood-serving commercial.

Objective 4.4: Establish an East Carmel recycling and hazardous materials drop-off station in conjunction with the City's sewage treatment facility.

Objective 4.5: Locate an East Carmel satellite facility for Carmel Street Maintenance and other public services. This will help conserve fuel and distribute manpower more equally over the community.

NORTH CENTRAL CARMEL POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The following sections convey the policies and objectives for the North Central Carmel District. It is important to note that these sections share some of the same policy headings as the City-Wide section, but the content is specific to North Central Carmel.

Policy 1: Manage Community Form

Objective 1.1: Encourage compact urban form and mixed-use development throughout North Central Carmel.

Objective 1.2: Allow the tallest structures in Carmel to be in the City Center, Old Town district, and along U.S. 31. The building height will be limited to 10 stories in these subdistricts.

Objective 1.3: Strongly encourage neighborhood and community-serving commercial nodes in strategic locations to allow people to walk or bike from their jobs and homes to those amenities. The objective is to ensure the entire North Central Carmel district has neighborhood-serving or community-serving commercial development within a short walking or biking distance of all employment and residential development.

~~**Objective 1.4:** Protect single-family residential neighborhoods in North Central Carmel as much as possible through strong code enforcement, targeted infrastructure investments, and landscaping beautification projects.~~

Objective 1.4: Strive for additional street connectivity in North Central Carmel. The City should strive to connect streets when new development or redevelopment occurs, especially those linkages shown on the Thoroughfare Plan Map.

Objective 1.5: Encourage connectivity to and through North Central Carmel by establishing bicycle and pedestrian facilities across Meridian Street and Keystone Avenue.

Policy 2: Be a World Class City

Objective 2.1: Establish a well-designed, pedestrian-friendly (including bicycle-friendly) and vital downtown. To ensure vitality, significant incorporation of residential and office uses should be required in upper floors. All ground floors should be designed for pedestrian comfort and interaction.

Objective 2.2: Promote a world class employment corridor and technology park along U.S. 31 by discretely integrating employment-serving commercial uses to allow workers to walk to restaurants and other businesses suitable for such a subdistrict. Also allow for a broader mix of uses, including additional residential and service retail.

Objective 2.3: Encourage new buildings along Carmel Drive and City Center Drive to be a minimum of two stories in height.

Objective 2.4: Promote the Arts and Design District and the Carmel Performing Arts Center by hosting world class musical artists and visual artists.

Objective 2.5: Plan for the integration of a transit stops near City Center, Merchants Square, and the U.S. 31 corridor.

Objective 2.6: Explore opportunities to introduce higher education into Carmel, if only a single building or satellite classes.

Objective 2.7: Promote and enhance the Monon Trail as a non-motorized transportation corridor. Widen the trail in high used areas to accommodate separated bicycle and pedestrian lanes.

Policy 3: Be a City of Neighborhoods

Objective 3.1: ~~As outlined in *Civic Design*,~~ North Central Carmel should be planned as a collection of neighborhoods applying traditional neighborhood design principles to connectivity, transitions, location of neighborhood-serving commercial, bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly features and the like.

Objective 3.2: Endeavor to plan neighborhoods, gateways, boundaries, and service areas through more detailed subarea plans.

Policy 4: Inspire Community Character

Objective 4.1: When possible, reinforce urban character in North Central Carmel~~, especially north of East 116th Street~~. Commission the study of the district to determine the ideal boundaries, urban patterns and transitions.

Objective 4.2: Encourage signature buildings on prominent sites to enhance the district's character. Signature buildings can be private or public buildings, but must have architectural flair and be built from durable materials.

Objective 4.3: Establish a Public Art Master Plan. Include artists in the design process of public spaces.

Policy 5: Be Environmentally Sensitive

Objective 5.1: ~~Aggressively protect the Monon Trail's tree-lined corridor and environmental features on the Central Park site.~~ Where possible, locate new public parks on land adjacent to or within a short walk from the Monon Trail.

Objective 5.2: Tree areas should be conserved and should be evaluated as part of an overall network of small parks and squares.

Objective 5.3: Promote compact urban form with densities that support mass transit.

SOUTH CENTRAL CARMEL POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The following sections convey the policies and objectives for South Central Carmel. It is important to note that these sections share some of the same policy headings as the City-Wide section, but the content is specific to South Central Carmel.

Policy 1: Manage Community Form

Objective 1.1: Allow the careful integration of neighborhood service nodes and the advancement of Home Place's commercial area to better serve the South Central neighborhoods and the employment corridor along I-465.

Objective 1.2: Protect and enhance single-family residential neighborhoods in South Central Carmel through strong code enforcement, targeted infrastructure investments, and beautification projects.

Objective 1.3: Strive for additional street, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity in South Central Carmel.

Objective 1.4: Allow greater development intensity on the north, west, and south boundary of the district, to better transition between single-family neighborhoods and the existing adjacent commercial and employment districts.

Policy 2: Be a World Class City

Objective 2.1: Encourage reinvestment and maintenance of strong residential areas, such to discourage redevelopment.

Objective 2.2: Promote a world class employment corridor along U.S. 31 and I-465 and utilize zoning overlays, parks and parkways to help buffer strong residential areas.

Objective 2.3: Strive for bicycle and pedestrian facilities to be sensitively installed throughout the South Carmel district, especially on the north, south and east edges of the district that abut more intensely developed areas.

Objective 2.4: Plan for the integration of a transit stop near the intersection of 96th Street and Keystone Avenue.

Policy 3: Be a City of Neighborhoods

Objective 3.1: South Central Carmel should be planned as a collection of neighborhoods applying select traditional neighborhood design principles to the historic suburban form. Particularly, the principles of connectivity, transitions, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities would benefit this district.

Objective 3.2: Endeavor to plan neighborhoods, gateways, boundaries, and service areas through more detailed subarea plans.

Policy 4: Inspire Community Character

Objective 4.1: Protect the existing character of the strong single family neighborhoods in South Central Carmel.

Objective 4.2: Protect the residential character along Keystone Avenue and maintain the corridor's existing tree canopy.

Objective 4.3: Require significant numbers of canopy trees to be planted after development to maintain the substantial tree canopy that gives character to the South Central Carmel district.

Policy 5: Be Environmentally Sensitive

Objective 5.1: Aggressively protect the Monon Trail's tree-lined corridor and environmental features on the Central Park site.

Objective 5.2: Strongly encourage existing mature trees in the district to be conserved during development and redevelopment.

WEST CARMEL POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The following sections convey the policies and objectives for West Carmel. It is important to note that these sections share some of the same policy headings as the City-Wide section, but the content under each heading is specific to West Carmel and adds to other city-wide objectives.

Policy 1: Manage Community Form

Objective 1.1: Conserve the ~~rural~~ estate character of West Carmel by protecting estate residential areas and by requiring new subdivisions to have large setbacks from and quality landscaping along perimeter roads. Further, require extensive revegetation along perimeter roads and within each new development. A larger open space requirement should also be considered.

Objective 1.2: Allow limited neighborhood service nodes in context with or adjacent to appropriate areas. The objective of neighborhood service nodes is to allow limited neighborhood-serving commercial, mixed-use, and public amenities within a short distance to residents living in surrounding suburban neighborhoods, not adjacent ~~in proximity~~ to Conservation Residential. Lighting, parking, architecture, landscaping, size of buildings, orientation of buildings, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be strictly regulated to assure compatibility.

Objective 1.3: Conservation subdivisions and innovative residential community designs that protect vegetation, slopes and are non-monotonous are preferred.

Objective 1.4: Subdivision connectivity and transitions between proposed developments and existing subdivisions should be scrutinized to a greater degree in West Carmel.

Policy 2: Be a World Class City

Objective 2.1: Maintain and protect areas for estate housing and other housing styles that cater to the wealthiest families living in the City. These areas are essential to attracting world class corporations, providing the desired quality-of-life for CEOs and other senior employees.

Objective 2.2: Encourage more custom-home developments to provide housing opportunities for upper income families. Custom home neighborhoods will also add character to West Carmel by reducing monotony. Concurrently allow "granny flats", carriage houses and other compatible forms of affordable housing.

Objective 2.3: Adopt residential architecture standards to ensure compatibility, a high quality aesthetic and durability.

Policy 3: Inspire Community Character

Objective 3.1: Reinforce rural character including tree lines, fence rows, barns, pockets of open space, and preservation of wood lots. Residential intensity can exist, but generally should not be obviously portrayed from perimeter roads.

Objective 3.2: Protect single-family residential character along West 96th Street between Spring Mill Road and Shelbourne Road.

Objective 3.3: Require commercial buildings along Michigan Road to be constructed of durable materials and designed to reflect "village" character. Utilize a zoning ordinance overlay to implement.

Objective 3.4: Require large setbacks and lot sizes, and only residential uses along 116th Street from Spring Mill Road west to the Boone County Line. Utilize a zoning ordinance overlay to implement.

Policy 4: Be Environmentally Sensitive

Objective 4.1: Strive to protect wood lots, wetlands, and other valuable natural features in West Carmel. These features contribute to the district's rural character, but they also provide habitat for plants, birds, and other animals.

Objective 4.2: Establish neighborhood-serving commercial nodes to conserve fuel, reduce emissions, and promote healthy life styles.

Policy 5: Stimulate Connectivity

Objective 5.1: West Carmel has many non-connecting subdivisions. The proliferation of this pattern of development is more tolerable in this district; however, critical connections shown on the Thoroughfare Plan will be adamantly required. Although there is less emphasis on vehicular connectivity, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity will be strictly required. For instance, where road connectivity between a proposed development and an existing development is not required, a bicycle/pedestrian path will be required.

Objective 5.2: With the success of the Monon Trail, other off-street facilities are in demand. West Carmel has an opportunity to utilize portions of several pipeline corridors for such a trail. These corridors are shown as off-street trails in the *2020 Vision Plan* and in the Alternative Transportation Plan initially adopted in 2001, and are being supported in the *C3 Plan* as well. Integrating this type of facility in some areas will be relatively easy, but in built environments may prove to be more difficult.

Objective 5.3: Carmel should partner with neighboring communities to plan and implement a significant greenway along Little Eagle Creek.

Objective 5.4: Continue expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to connect neighborhoods with schools, parks, West Clay Secondary Core, and other destinations.