

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### The Madison County Comprehensive Plan Update

A Comprehensive Plan update for Madison County was undertaken to establish a new framework to guide land-based decision-making for the unincorporated areas of Madison County. The policies contained in this document are aimed at promoting public health, safety, morals, convenience, order, and the general welfare and efficiency of the economy during all stages of development. Ultimately, the Plan outlines the needs of the community, sets policies that address planning issues, and recommends appropriate actions to achieve the desired result.

The Madison County Planning Commission initiated the Comprehensive Plan update, with the support of the County Commissioners and County Council, to address two specific issues:

- **Increased development pressures had confronted the Madison County Planning Commission and County Commissioners within their planning jurisdiction, yet past plans and regulations provided little guidance or tools to resolve emerging issues.** Madison County's leadership realized that growth was and will be inevitable, but that those development pressures must be controlled before jeopardizing the County's rich natural resources and rural way of life. County leadership initiated the planning effort to establish a blueprint that would lead growth management and preservation initiatives over subsequent years. The planning process aimed at encouraging public participation by hosting community-wide debates and discussions on important issues that have resulted in a consensus on the direction of the County's future.
- **State of Indiana law requires that each planning jurisdiction adopt a Comprehensive Plan before zoning ordinances are drafted and implemented.** State law changed the criteria and components for an acceptable Comprehensive Plan since the last Madison County Plan (1983); therefore, an update was required for compliance. The Comprehensive Plan provides a legal foundation for the adoption of development regulations, and must be considered in the judgements of the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals when presiding over exceptions, variances, and rezoning decisions.

While the Comprehensive Plan Update is primarily a tool to be used by policy makers for decision guidance, it can also serve the private sector as a reference for making informed development choices. The following basic principles guide this Comprehensive Plan:

- Decision-making processes should recognize and integrate short-term and long-term land use, transportation, environmental, and economic development considerations.
- Planning efforts should be coordinated between various levels of government.
- Cost-effective solutions should have primary consideration.
- Citizen participation should remain an integral part of the implementation and amendment process.

## **Document Structure**

The Comprehensive Plan Update document is structured to take the reader through the planning process in chronological sequence. The entire document is divided into 5 distinct sections that can enable easy reference and access to pertinent information for various users.

### **Section A: Madison County Background Information and Community Profile**

This section contains a description of Madison County's development background, the 1998-1999 planning process, public involvement in the plan, and a community profile with a special focus on *Economic Development, Agriculture, Housing Development, Community Resources, Cultural Resources, Natural Resources, Utilities and Infrastructure, Land Use Development, and Transportation* issues. The Chapter 4 Community profile components are discussed using the following layout:

- **Summary** – A brief overview that details the focus issue.
- **Existing Conditions and Trends** – A presentation and general evaluation of the current situation in Madison County using information gathered in the field, through interviews, and documents.
- **Planning Issues** – A listing of the concerns and comments voiced by County residents that participated in the community needs survey, public workshops, and focus group meetings.

When combined, the chapters create a comprehensive picture of Madison County, both past and present. The information contained in these chapters formulates a platform upon which development policies can be created.

### **Section B: Madison County Development Policy**

This section outlines the policy statements, which contain the overall community development goal and the individual focus goals and objectives. These goals and objectives were formulated through a joint partnership between the Planning team, local officials, and the public. The individual policies focus on *Economic Development, Agriculture, Housing Development, Community Resources, Cultural Resources, Natural Resources, Utilities and Infrastructure, Land Use Development, and Transportation* issues.

### **Section C: Madison County Policy Implementation and Action Plan**

This section lists the recommended actions, programs, and parties responsible for initiation and implementation. Detailed development, protection, and implementation strategies are recommended in this section, and may be used to encourage other agencies to act.

### **Section D: Madison County Transportation Plan**

This section provides transportation issues in greater detail and analysis. The section outlines and builds upon the profile (Section A), policy (Section B), and implementation (Section C) work to include a proposal for transportation infrastructure and circulation improvements that should be undertaken as part of the larger land use and growth management plan.

### **Section E: Madison County Land Use and Growth Management Plan**

This section provides the land use and growth management issues in greater detail and analysis. The section outlines and builds upon the profile (Section A), policy (Section B), and implementation (Section C) work to include future land use districts and growth management areas (mapping and district descriptions) and details for recommended regulation revisions.

The adopted Comprehensive Plan shall subsequently guide the development and creation of other planning documents and policies, such as zoning ordinances and subdivision controls, which may then be published along with the compiled sections of the Comprehensive Plan Update.



### Locational Context

Located in the East Central Region of Indiana, Madison County finds itself near the edge of an expanding Indianapolis Metropolitan Area. The County is rectangular in shape, spanning 30 miles north to south and 15 miles east to west. Bordered by Grant County to the north, Delaware and Henry County to the east, Hancock County to the south, and Hamilton and Tipton Counties on the west, Madison County covers a total of 453 square miles or 289,920 acres. Of this land, 58 square miles (approximately 37,000 acres) are incorporated, while the remaining 395 miles (252,923 acres) are unincorporated. Major transportation routes include Interstate 69 running to the east and south, State Route 9/109 running north-south, and State Routes 28 and 32 running east-west. The existing roadways and rail line effectively connect the County with surrounding counties and metropolitan regions.

Madison County is divided into 14 townships that range considerably in size from Union with 19.5 square miles (12,480 acres) to Monroe with 51 square miles (32,640 acres). **Anderson**, the County seat and largest city, is located just southeast of the center of the County along I-69, about 39 miles northeast of Indianapolis and 83 miles southwest of Fort Wayne. The other cities in Madison County include **Alexandria** (north central), and **Elwood** (northwest border). The incorporated towns in the County include **Pendleton** (south central), **Summitville** (northeast), **Chesterfield** (east central border), **Markleville** (southeast), **Ingalls** (south central border), Edgewood (central), **Lapel** (west central border), **Frankton** (north central), and **Orestes** (north central). Additionally, there are several villages and informal residential clusters scattered throughout the County that fall under the jurisdiction of the County Government.

### Physical Landscape

Like most of Central Indiana, Madison County is located in the geological region known as the Tipton Till Plain. The Tipton Till Plain is, in turn, part of the central Lowland Province of the United States. The Tipton Till Plain area is characterized by nearly flat to gently rolling plains, moraines, eskers, roughs, and sub-parallel drainage patterns. Combined with their rich soil associations, these plains comprise the large agricultural tracts that still dominate Madison County's physical landscape.

The topography throughout the County is predominately flat, except near the major streams and other drainage courses. Major rivers and creeks that traverse the County are the **White River** (central), **Fall Creek** (southern), **Lick Creek** (southern), **Killbuck Creek** (central), and **Pipe Creek** (northern). Maximum elevations of over 1000 feet above sea level are found in the southeastern part of the County. The minimum elevation is less than 790 feet above sea level, and can be found where the White River leaves the County. Even with its level appearance, an elevation change of 200 feet exists between the highest and lowest points in the County. This low relief partially accounts for the poor drainage throughout the County.

### Historical Profile

In order to gain a better understanding of the historical landscape of Madison County, a timeline has been created, outlining the settlement decisions, the legacy of agriculture, the steps to increase productivity of land resources, and the shift from manufacturing to a service based economy. This illustration should provide readers with an opportunity to comprehend the context in which the current landscape was created and formed. After reviewing this historical profile, one can better visualize the strong foundation upon which Madison County's future will be built.

The following timeline presents brief descriptions of historical events related to land development and settlement in Madison County:

**Madison County Chronology of Development**

|                                     |                             |   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Indians Occupy Region               | <b>Pre-recorded history</b> | Mound builders were the first known inhabitants of Madison County.  |
|                                     | <b>Late 1700s</b>           | Delaware Indians occupied the three-county region and established a village called Anderson.  |
| First European Settlers             | <b>1801</b>                 | Two Moravian Missionaries (servicing the local Indians) were the first white settlers.  |
| State of Indiana                    | <b>1816</b>                 | The Territory of Indiana was formally organized as a state.   |
| Pioneers Settle in Madison County   | <b>Late 1810s</b>           | John Rogers, the first permanent white settler, settled in Fall Creek Township. More families came and settled near 'the falls' (Pendleton) due to the abundant water power generated.  |
|                                     |                             | Settlements also emerged in the vicinity of Perkinsville, Chesterfield, and other isolated spots. The primary economic activity was agriculture.  |
| Public Infrastructure Develops      | <b>Early 1820s</b>          | Systems of transportation emerged (primarily roadways) to facilitate travel. One of the first roadways through the County ran from Indianapolis to Fort Wayne (SR37). Most towns and villages were platted and developed.   |
|                                     | <b>Early 1850s</b>          | Railroad lines were completed from Pendleton to Anderson and were followed by other lines connecting the County to the larger region. Towns grew more intensely.  |
| Madison County chartered            | <b>1823</b>                 | Madison County was chartered on January 4 and the first seat was Pendleton. The seat was then moved to Anderson in 1827.  |
| Industrialization                   | <b>1865 to 1887</b>         | Period of industrial expansion (departure from agricultural practices) with the production of farming implements, crushed stone for paving, furniture, and carriages.   |
| Natural Gas Boom                    | <b>1887</b>                 | First natural gas wells were discovered and drilled. Many other communities drilled and established well sites. These discoveries drew manufacturing plants to the area to capitalize on the cheap fuel source.   |
| Second Generation Industrialization | <b>1920s</b>                | The gas economy declines and the auto industry surges, (with many spin-off manufacturing opportunities).  |
| Depression and De-industrialization | <b>1930s to late 1940s</b>  | Depression in the economy sweeps the nation and local factories closed their doors. Workers and their families move out of the area in search of employment. Agricultural villages were impacted -- many stagnated and some declined when they did not incorporate. |
| Third Generation Industrialization  | <b>1950s and 1960s</b>      | Post-war period brings prosperity: new transportation routes, intense residential and industrial growth on urban fringe, and new industries emerged/expanded.   |
| Recession                           | <b>1970s and 1980s</b>      | Shift from manufacturing base to service sector. Out-migration from Anderson and others communities to rural areas. 1980 had highest unemployment rate in the County at 22% with major layoffs. Service sector slow to grow.  |
| Growth of Indy Metro Region         | <b>1990s</b>                | The Indianapolis Metro area expands and draws residential and business development to the fringe. Residents of the County find new employment opportunities. The southern townships become attractive for residential development.                                  |