

City of West Lafayette, Indiana
2015 Strategic Plan
Request for Qualifications

Statement of Intent

The City of West Lafayette, Indiana seeks professional planning services to update the City's Strategic Plan. Specific needs of this planning process include group facilitation, visioning, consensus building and problem solving. The ideal candidate must have significant experience in municipal strategic planning. Furthermore, the candidate will need to become well versed with the current Strategic Plan, Urban Design and various planning documents that have been generated by the City.

1. Introduction and Background

West Lafayette is an award-winning, knowledge based community with a strong relationship with Purdue University and the Purdue Research Park and driven by a highly educated and diverse citizenry. The city completed its first strategic plan in 1987 and has conducted updates in 1989, 1991, 1994, 1997, 2002, 2005 and 2010. The updates review the progress of the prior action plan and address new issues and opportunities that may have risen. The strategic plan reflects West Lafayette residents' vision and desires and their expectations that the growth, economic and recreational development of the City be of the highest quality.

The previous planning process included a steering committee that represented a cross section of the community and various stakeholder groups. The steering committee had oversight and management of the process that included the active participation of well over 100 citizens in a number of public meetings. The ascertainment of issues, ideas and desires has been obtained through a number of processes that included large public forums, small interest group meetings and surveys.

The latest strategic plan update is on the City's website at www.westlafayette.in.gov

2. Project Oversight

Steering Committee: It is anticipated that a steering committee will be used in this process and will act as the selection committee of the consultant.

The steering committee will work with the consultant to direct and facilitate the process, provide recommendations and oversee the preparation the plan. The committee will work with the consultant to determine the method of community ascertainment; the determination of the number of meetings and if subcommittees are needed; assist in the determination of issues and direct the action plan.

The City of West Lafayette Department of Development will provide support for the Steering Committee and Consultant and will be the main contact for the project.

3. Proposed Timeline:

Feb 20: RFQ Submissions Due

March 13: Short List Notification

Week of March 30: Possible presentations

Apr 8: Consultant Selection

May: Steering Committee/Consultant Preliminary Meeting (Tentative)

June: Planning Process Start (Tentative)

June-September: Ascertainment and Planning Meetings (Tentative)

October: Presentation of Strategic Plan (Tentative)

4. Anticipated Scope of Work:

The consultant shall:

A. Bring together residents, businesses and university representatives.

B. Determine the relevant issues, concerns and strategies for action through public forums and/or other means.

This may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Government Services
- Civic Buildings and Facilities (including Morton Community Center, the prior City Hall site and others)
- Cultural & Recreational Opportunities
- Growth & Economic Development
- Public Safety
- Environmental Initiatives
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Multimodal Transportation
- State Street Master Plan (available on the city's web site)

C. Develop innovative approaches and strategies to address issues through an Action Plan.

5. Proposals:

Proposals must include the following information (please submit five copies):

- A. Description of the envisioned project & process
- B. Description of anticipated work elements
- C. Experience and expertise in the area of Strategic Planning
- D. Sample work product with references
- E. Proposed staffing for work, including designation of project manager
- F. Proposed timeline
- G. Anticipated work to be subcontracted
- H. Statement of present work load

I. Estimate of project costs

The selection will be based on the planning firm's qualifications, not on competitive bidding. When the consultant is selected, negotiations and finalization of the contract will take place with the City.

Proposals should be received no later than 4:30 P.M. EST on February 20, 2015. Packages should be mailed to:

- Department of Development
- Attn: Chandler Poole
- 222 N. Chauncey Ave., Room 102
- West Lafayette, Indiana 47906.

6. Selection:

It is the City's intention to evaluate the qualifications and information submitted and to select a planning firm based upon the following criteria:

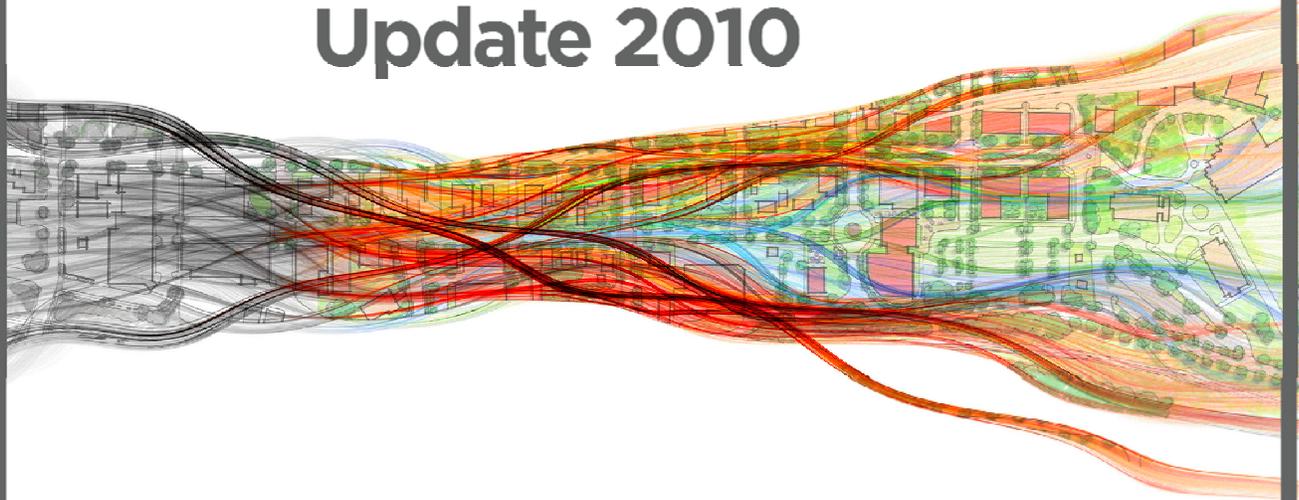
1. The firm's professional qualifications and history
2. The experience, expertise and availability of key personnel to be assigned to the endeavor.
3. Representative Projects: List projects that are most similar and relevant to this project. Include reference information on projects that have been implemented.
4. Special or unique expertise related to the planning endeavor, which includes:
 - a. Urban Planning, Architecture and Landscape Architecture, Parks & Recreation, and familiarity with university towns.
 - b. Commercial/retail/residential market development and economics.
 - c. The ability to work with diverse and sometime opposing groups and individuals to seek a shared, rational outcome.
5. Ability to complete the work in the time required.
6. Extent of the work which must be subcontracted.

The committee will review and discuss the content of qualified submissions, create a short-list of three firms and then may request a presentation by the firms to determine the final selection.

City of West Lafayette Contact:

- Chandler Poole, Director
- Department of Development
- 222 N. Chauncey Ave., Rm 102
- West Lafayette, Indiana 47906
- (765) 775-5160
- cpoole@westlafayette.in.gov

City of West Lafayette **Strategic Plan Update 2010**



February 2010



CITY OF
WEST LAFAYETTE

Prepared for the
City of West Lafayette, Indiana

Prepared by

ARNETTMULDROW

Arnett Muldrow & Associates, Ltd.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Since 1986, the City of West Lafayette has operated from the guidance of a strategic plan built upon input from a cross section of civic leaders and community members at large. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to guide priorities for City Government and help civic leaders engage key partners to strengthen the quality of life and economic development success of this dynamic knowledge based community.

This report is an update to the 2005 Strategic Plan and is a variation from the traditional approach of the strategic plan document in two key ways. First, it is designed as an interim step to check progress, evaluate directions, and refine strategies for the next three to five years in the city prior to a more comprehensive plan update to occur within that time frame. Second, the recommendations within the report are designed to be implementable action items for the community during this time frame.

1.2 Plan Process

Like prior planning efforts, the 2010 Strategic Plan Update involved an intensive public process led by a steering committee of twenty-five community leaders representing a cross section of interests in West Lafayette. The project team conducted seven thematic roundtable meetings organized around such topics and university relations, neighborhood vitality, and economic development. These meetings were augmented by thirty individual interviews with key decision-makers including City Council members. Three public meetings provided another way for interested citizens to voice their thoughts on the future of West Lafayette.

Finally, the 2010 Strategic Plan Update provided the first opportunity for citizens to provide online input to a strategic plan through a web page at www.westlafayetteplan.com. This page was used to provide a forum for discussing issues related to the plan and conduct online discussions about the plan. Four online meetings were held in December 2009 and January 2010. The West Lafayette Public Library provided a live feed of several of these meetings for those without Internet access. In addition, the ninety-seven members of www.westlafayetteplan.com posted seventeen discussion topics, numerous responses, and eighty community photos to the site.

1.3 Acknowledgements

A special thanks goes to the members of the steering committee who provided valuable insight into the community and lively discussion about the plan's recommendations through lengthy committee meetings. These members are recognized at the end of the report. Thanks also goes to Mayor John Dennis who spearheaded this effort and the staff of the City of West Lafayette Development Department who organized all of the meetings, sent invitations, monitored the web site for "spam," and coordinated the process from start to finish. Finally, much thanks goes to the citizens of West Lafayette who took time out of their busy schedules to share their hopes, visions, and thoughts about the future of their community. This is truly the community's plan.

1.4 Report Format

The report is divided into two sections. The first section is a presentation of the strategic themes for West Lafayette. The themes are presented along with issues brought out during the input process and conclude with a vision for the next five years for each theme.

The second section presents the recommended action items to bring each theme's vision to fruition. The action items are divided into priority one projects that should be launched in 2010 and 2011 and priority two projects that might be explored over the subsequent three years 2012-2015. Where appropriate, web links showing examples from other communities, projects, and programs are included so those interested may pursue additional research into the recommended items.

The report concludes with a "strategy board" that arranges the recommendations into a one sheet matrix that shows the themes, the recommendations, the time frames, and the vision for each theme. This synopsis is a convenient way for the City of West Lafayette to check progress on items and report back to the community as the plan progresses.

2.0 Strategic Themes

2.1 Economic Development

As home to Purdue University, West Lafayette is fortunate to benefit from a stable economy relative to many other communities. Purdue University's student population at the West Lafayette Campus officially surpassed the 40,000 mark in 2008-2009 up from 38,650 in 2004-2005 (Source: Purdue University Data Digest). The University has also seen employment increase to 15,304 up from 14,636 in 2005 (Source: Purdue University Data Digest). This makes Purdue a powerhouse economic driver of the region and state.

The Purdue Research Foundation has added to West Lafayette's economic base through the Purdue Research Park, which is home to over 160 companies on its 725 acre campus. This park is widely regarded as one of America's most successful university affiliated research parks and has plans for continued expansion.

Despite this overall economic success, many citizens desire additional services and shops to serve their day-to-day needs. As part of a two-city region, many of the major retail amenities are across the Wabash River in Lafayette. Citizens cited specialty grocers such as Trader Joe's or a Whole Foods Market as the most desired store types along with fine dining, additional clothing retailers, and other specialty shops.

Augmenting this lack of retail, some citizens feel that West Lafayette lacks a true commercial and mixed use "center" of community. While some feel that the Village is the "center of town" others feel as if it is completely "student centered." Others believe downtown Lafayette fills that role in the region. A minority of citizens cited Sagamore Parkway as the "retail heart" of West Lafayette. Several participants in the process felt that additional mixed-use development could be the key to creating a more vibrant commercial/office/residential climate in West Lafayette.

In addition to retail, some citizens expressed a desire for additional economic development options such as additional office space, medical offices, and economic development options that are not affiliated with Purdue Research Park or the University in order to "round out" the economic picture of West Lafayette. Finally, some expressed a desire to see that economic development opportunities be reflective of the population diversity present in West Lafayette.

With these thoughts and input in mind, the Economic Development Vision for the West Lafayette Strategic Plan is:

West Lafayette will continue its strategic partnership with the Purdue Research Foundation and Purdue University, making the City a place where technology and the knowledge economy flourish, while developing innovative plans to support additional retail, office, and mixed-use development at key locations in the City. In doing so, the City will encourage creative development projects that bring jobs and economic opportunities to the City's residents.

2.2 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

Parks and trails were cited more often than any other amenity as one of the great assets of West Lafayette. The community benefits from 450 acres of parkland throughout the City and from an extensive trail network that includes five paved trails and four footpaths covering 17.5 miles. These facilities are constantly being improved and linked to neighborhoods, parks, and other community amenities.

With this asset in mind, many hope that the City of West Lafayette will continue to work on pedestrian connections and bike amenities, which demonstrates the community's commitment to multi-modal transportation. These topics relate closely to traffic management. Neighborhood pass-through traffic, traffic calming, and pedestrian/vehicle interfaces were frequently cited as concerns in the community.

In addition to the parks and trail system, the West Lafayette Public Library and Morton Community Center were frequently cited as great assets to the city. These facilities are well used and form a civic "heart" to the community. Some participants in the plan voiced a desire for a community center closer to the northern residents of West Lafayette along with additional promotion of the arts to round out the cultural appeal of the community.

Finally, the community's schools were also cited frequently as assets. West Lafayette is served by two school districts: the West Lafayette Community School Corporation and the Tippecanoe School Corporation. Recent budget changes and the economic recession challenge both districts to find creative ways to maintain academic excellence and programming.

The vision for this strategy is:

West Lafayette will continue to be a place where excellent schools, parks and trails, art, and community facilities will thrive in a pedestrian and bike friendly community.

2.3 Neighborhood Vitality

Neighborhoods form the backbone of West Lafayette's quality of life. Healthy neighborhoods are critical to the ongoing economic success of the community. Those who wish to work and invest in West Lafayette will be exploring the quality of life as a deciding factor in making their decision. West Lafayette offers a variety of neighborhoods ranging from historic to post war to more recent developments providing a wide-range of housing options.

Yet communities with a transient student population are bound to have residential challenges. The ongoing conversion of owner occupied housing to rental use is a topic that drove many discussions during the Strategic Plan update process. Traditionally this issue has been confined to the near-campus neighborhoods of West Lafayette but the issue is beginning to migrate to all neighborhoods in the community. In 1992 there were 297 single-family rentals in West Lafayette, by 2010 that number had increased to 598. Single-family rental housing competes with apartments and on campus housing as a product for student living while seldom contributing to the stability of neighborhoods. However, many property owners in West Lafayette are faced with the market reality that preserving their property as owner-occupied housing is a difficult option when the rental market commands a higher price.

These issues have come up in prior strategic plans and the City continues to explore ways to strike a balance that preserves neighborhood quality of life while accommodating the pressures of a large student presence.

The most recent success in this effort has been the implementation of the Neighborhood Resource Team. This team has received many accolades from community residents for their professionalism and attention to the issues that face neighborhoods. As it looks to the future, West Lafayette must not rest on this success but continue to explore ways to enhance the quality of its neighborhoods for owners, renters, and investors.

The vision for this strategy is:

West Lafayette will become a model for thriving neighborhoods in a university community offering a variety of stable single-family districts, safe, well maintained student housing, and innovative partnerships between residents, students, landlords, and the City to enhance neighborhood quality of life.

2.4 Community Relations

West Lafayette functions in many ways like both a small town and a big city. Neighbors know one another, the city government is responsive and proactive, and the university/city partnership occurs on many levels. At the same time, West Lafayette has a growing and diverse population. By its nature a large portion of the population is transient. This can make communicating city initiatives and projects a challenge.

Furthermore, Purdue University operates much like a city mandating ongoing coordination with West Lafayette for each to be successful in its planning. West Lafayette is clearly the center of a dynamic region with Lafayette and Tippecanoe County as other key partners.

This strategic plan explored new ways to communicate with the public, foster public discussion, and encourage civic participation. These efforts should continue. Technology is changing the way communities share information and as a knowledge-based community, West Lafayette should embrace technology as a tool to share plans and projects without sacrificing the ability to communicate with city leaders.

The goal of this strategy then becomes:

West Lafayette will maintain and strengthen its partnerships with citizens, Purdue and its regional partners and will serve as a major player in overall issues affecting the region through the use of innovative tools and technology

3.0 Strategic Actions

3.1 Economic Development

PRIORITY ONE PROJECTS

3.1.1 Create a Village/Levee Master Plan

The Village/Levee Master Plan should focus on the mixed-use development and redevelopment of the Village and Levee districts of West Lafayette. The plan should extend along State Street and adjacent streets from the Wabash River to the Purdue University Campus. The Library and Morton Community Center should be key components of this plan focusing on ways to ensure that these important institutions remain a vibrant part of the civic life of West Lafayette. The plan should look at economic development opportunities, parking, circulation, infrastructure improvements, residential infill development, and mixed-use developments. More than just a “pretty picture” this plan should have a complete set of implementation techniques including creative financial strategies and public-private partnership opportunities documented as part of the plan. The exhibits below show how such a plan might look.



These are examples of master plan drawings from another community illustrating the public infrastructure improvements, building renovations, infill development opportunities. The plans are shown both in plan view and in three-dimensional modeling formats.

3.1.2 Continue and enhance marketing campaign to recruit retail to West Lafayette

The City of West Lafayette Development Department is already participating in the International Council of Shopping Centers regional sessions, has engaged in active discussions with developers throughout the region, and has approached retailers to discuss locating in West Lafayette. These efforts should continue and be enhanced. West Lafayette should consider a retail market study as part of the master plan processes for both Sagamore West and Village/Levee Districts. The City should also consider a thorough property database and online presence to market the opportunities for additional retail investment.

3.1.3 Consider alternative grocery store models to Trader Joe's

Specialty grocers such as Trader Joe's were the most frequently cited "desired" store type for West Lafayette. Many citizens commented that they drive to Indianapolis to shop in specialty grocers. Despite the best efforts of the Development Department, it is unlikely that a Trader Joes or comparable specialty chain grocer will locate in West Lafayette. These grocers have strict formulas for their location strategies and locate in more densely populated urban areas.

However, there are alternative models to pursuing a chain style specialty grocer. West Lafayette should engage the Development Department to pursue these models. One might be to encourage an independent grocer such as Bloomingfoods in Bloomington to locate in West Lafayette. The other might be a modern version of a grocery co-op. Unlike the seventies style co-ops where members volunteered in the store and the food selection seldom strayed from bulk and health foods, many modern co-op stores have the look and feel of a typical high-end grocer and follow a modified membership co-op model. The following links provide insight into some of the alternative models for a specialty grocery store in West Lafayette: www.cgin.coop, www.bloomingfoods.coop, www.citymarket.coop.

3.1.4 Promote mixed-use office development that could accommodate medical uses as well.

Both the plan for Sagamore West and the Village/Levee Districts should include recommendations for key sites for mixed-use office development. Frequently, these projects are emerging as office space located above ground floor retail space. The goals for this mixed-use type office development is to create small offices for professionals and medical services that might locate in West Lafayette to serve the growing population base.

3.1.5 Consider retail incentive package

West Lafayette may need to consider a retail incentive package to encourage additional retail development. Some communities have pursued targeted rent grants for desired businesses, Tax Increment Financing funds to encourage retail development, marketing grants for retailers, and façade and building improvement grants for independent businesses. West Lafayette should evaluate whether such an incentive program would be beneficial in enhancing the retail offerings of the community while encouraging investment in vacant or underutilized properties.

PRIORITY TWO PROJECTS

3.1.6 Create an economic development focused Corridor Master Plan for Sagamore West

Several years ago, West Lafayette successfully implemented a plan for Sagamore West that created a more attractive landscaping plan, banners, and enhanced public infrastructure for the corridor. Despite these improvements, Sagamore West remains a mixture of vibrant retail, vacant parcels, and underutilized parcels that, if redeveloped, could significantly enhance the character of the corridor and the economic health of the City as a whole.

Currently, INDOT, the Area Plan Commission, and the City's Engineering Department are embarking on a new study of the traffic capacity of Sagamore West and its relation to future land use. The economic development objectives of the City should be a factor in this plan and the findings of the study should be a basis for an economic redevelopment plan for the corridor from the Wabash River to the city limit just west of Win Hentschel Boulevard. In the absence of a creative land use strategy for the corridor, Sagamore West will continue to evolve as a strip style commercial corridor with mixed results well into the future.

Instead of public infrastructure alone, the Corridor Master Plan will focus on the development and redevelopment of existing parcels working closely with property owners. This plan will afford the City the chance to explore creative land use policies to encourage mixed use redevelopment as well as economic incentives for additional retail, mixed use, and office developments along Sagamore West. The impact of these developments as they apply to the newly annexed area to the north should also be examined as part of this study.

3.1.7 Develop a multi-cultural retail incubator

Many communities have pursued retail incubators as a way to enhance retail development, encourage entrepreneurship, and develop catalyst projects that serve as attractions for residents and visitors. Unlike traditional retail incubators, West Lafayette should consider a retail development that fosters opportunities for the diverse cultures in West Lafayette to have a place where their cultures are celebrated while creating economic opportunities for entrepreneurs.

There are three main purposes that such a facility could serve. First, it would create a unique retail environment for West Lafayette that would be unlike others in the region or state. This would attract visitors to West Lafayette to shop and would create spinoff customer traffic for other retailers in the City. Second, the incubator would create economic opportunities for the many cultures of West Lafayette. As an incubator, the retailers, services, and restaurants in the facility might mature out of the incubator to other locations in the City. Finally, the facility would give a special place where the multicultural makeup of West Lafayette can be celebrated throughout the year and beyond the highly successful Global Fest that is held each year.

The facility could develop in several locations in West Lafayette. It might be part of the ongoing redevelopment of the Wabash Landing/Levee area of the City or it could locate along Sagamore West in an underutilized retail shopping center or as a more permanent component of the Sagamore West Farmers Market.

3.2 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

PRIORITY ONE PROJECTS

3.2.1 Develop an annual Capital Improvements Plan

Currently, the City does not have a unified capital improvement plan that combines the departmental budgets into an easy-to-use format. As a result, it is sometimes difficult for the City to communicate its initiatives to the public, the years when plans are to be implemented, and the coordination among departments. A Capital Improvements Plan would remedy this situation while providing a consolidated document to share with the public.

3.2.2 Continue to implement pedestrian and bike improvements throughout the City

West Lafayette should continue to pursue its goal of becoming a bike and pedestrian community offering options other than cars for citizens to navigate through the city. These improvements include additional trail links, bike lanes, crosswalks, and enhanced pedestrian areas at key locations in West Lafayette. The City does have a trails map that shows planned improvements at www.westlafayette.in.gov/egov/docs/1242305909_537292.pdf.

While this is a priority one project, all of these improvements will not take place within the first phase of the plan. The priority one project should be to study and prioritize the intersection improvements mentioned by the public during the plan process. Some of these projects will involve INDOT participation and significant coordination among several entities.

Appendix B has a list of the most often-mentioned trail and pedestrian crossing improvements, whether they are currently scheduled for implementation, and timeframe when known. In the future, the Capital Improvement Plan will serve as a way to easily communicate when future improvements are likely to occur.

3.2.3 Deploy procedure for neighborhoods requesting traffic calming

Many neighborhoods have expressed concerns for cut-through and speeding traffic on residential streets. The City's Traffic Committee has explored but not yet implemented a consistent and clear process for a neighborhood to request traffic calming. The City should implement this procedure while exploring a variety of techniques for traffic calming such as speed tables, small roundabouts, chicanes, and speed humps. The Federal Highway Administration has created a website that documents the many techniques available for traffic calming in communities which might provide guidance to citizens engaging in a dialogue about implementing some of these techniques in their neighborhoods www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/tcalm/.

3.2.4 Continue to implement the wayfinding sign program

West Lafayette is a city with a variety of attractions and amenities that along with Purdue create an exciting visitor experience. However, there is very little signage that directs visitors (and residents) to key attractions in the community.

Fortunately, the City is pursuing a wayfinding sign system for the Village/Levee area. A wayfinding sign system has a series of signs that help motorists and pedestrians reach key locations. These might include gateway/welcome signs, primary and secondary trailblazer signs that include three to four key locations, parking directional signage, kiosks that provide pedestrians maps and additional information, and site/building markers. West Lafayette should use the Village/Levee area signage as a pilot project to expand to other parts of the City (particularly along Sagamore Parkway, Northwestern, and River Road). The exhibit below shows that the initial sign system will look like.



Examples of Wayfinding Sign System from Rutland, Vermont

3.2.5 Feature the Morton Community Center and Library within the Village/Levee Master Plan

The Morton Community Center and the West Lafayette Public Library together form a key civic centerpiece for the community. The Village Fitness Trail, currently under construction is an example of the type of improvements that will continue to emphasize this area as an important location for the civic life of West Lafayette. The Village/Levee Master Plan should include a detailed development plan that explores this area's pedestrian connections, a long-term development strategy for the Morton Community Center, and ways to ensure that this district continues to evolve as a civic focal point for West Lafayette.

3.2.6 Prepare for the impacts of 231 with zoning, land use, and annexation studies.

The construction of 231 will have significant impacts to West Lafayette including changes to traffic patterns and shifting of land use values. West Lafayette should work closely with its partners at the

Area Plan Commission and Purdue University to explore a comprehensive look at zoning, land use, and future annexation along the planned route of 231.

3.2.7 Continue sustainable practices when planning and implementing city projects.

The City of West Lafayette has been an innovator in environmentally sensitive projects. In fact, West Lafayette's anaerobic digester turns grease and food waste into energy for the city and the City's complete streets initiative is designed to create multi-modes of transportation along Salisbury Street and Sycamore Lane. It has been nationally recognized as a model. More information about the waste to energy program is at the link: www.westlafayette.in.gov/egov/docs/126444545390.htm. In addition, West Lafayette has implemented a process where public infrastructure projects must engage in sustainable practices. These efforts should continue and be publicized.

3.2.8 Conduct a joint development effort to maximize land use options in the "island."

The "island" is the common term that refers to the portion of West Lafayette completely surrounded by Purdue's Campus. The "island" is bounded by Russell Street, University Street, Stadium Avenue, and State Street. Working in concert with the Purdue University Master Plan, the City of West Lafayette should partner with Purdue University and the Purdue Research Foundation to explore creative ways to redevelop the land within the "island" so that it can become a more dynamic part of both Purdue and the City.

3.2.9 Create an Art in Public Places site map and implementation strategy

The Department of Development should convene a partnership group that includes the Tippecanoe Arts Federation, representatives from Purdue University, City Parks and Recreation Department, and others to hold a two to three-day design process to develop an Art in Public Places plan. The purpose of the plan would be to create a succinct report that identifies locations throughout West Lafayette where public visual art installations could occur and considers a variety of techniques to implement a public art program in the community. As new projects are implemented, they can be incorporated into the Lafayette/West Lafayette Convention and Visitors Bureau's Guide to Outdoor Art, which shows locations of sculpture, fountains, and other public art throughout the community. The list can be viewed at www.homeofpurdue.com/outdoorart.html.

3.2.10 Continue to support the efforts of the City Parks Dept and Wabash River Enhancement Corporation to enhance the public amenities along the Wabash River.

The Wabash River is one of West Lafayette's most significant assets and one that is often underappreciated. The City has been very actively and progressively improving their urban riverfront for the past several years, with development, road, trails, parks, and recreation events improvements. The City has also been working as a partner in the Wabash River Enhancement Corporation to create plans for improvements along the river throughout Tippecanoe County. These efforts and plans should continue over the next five years.

3.2.11 Continue creative partnerships with the school systems.

The City of West Lafayette has long been a partner with both the West Lafayette Community Schools Corporation and the Tippecanoe Schools Corporation. These partnerships should continue and be strengthened. The City should implement regular meetings with school administrators to pursue creative ways to share resources, which might even include ongoing city support of park spaces in association with the schools and even joint use of facilities in the future.

PRIORITY TWO PROJECTS

3.2.12 Develop improvements to gateways to the community

As the wayfinding signs are completed, West Lafayette should work to create new and modify existing gateway signs to a consistent image with the wayfinding signs. These gateway improvements should particularly focus on Sagamore Parkway, State Street, and Fowler Avenue and eventually extend to 231 as it is completed. Such improvements may include landscaping, signage, and lighting.

3.2.13 Partner with West Lafayette Community Schools Corporation for creative redevelopment of the Burtsfield Site.

The Burtsfield Site is an important publicly owned property in West Lafayette. The City of West Lafayette and the West Lafayette Community Schools Corporation should engage in a process to explore how the site will be used in the future. The Burtsfield Site presents a significant opportunity to redevelop as a location for civic facilities, community meeting space, and educational programming.

3.2.14 Continue pursuit of fiber to the home/fiber to the premise throughout West Lafayette.

Technology plays a key role in fostering the continued goal of West Lafayette as a knowledge-based community. Research has shown that fiber optics connections to the home enhance property values. West Lafayette should continue to aggressively pursue technological enhancements such as fiber to the home and fiber to the premise as a key component of its economic development and community enhancement mission.

3.3 Neighborhood Vitality

PRIORITY ONE PROJECTS

3.3.1 Create a Council of Neighborhood Presidents

The Council of Neighborhood Presidents would replace the Neighborhood Coalition with a more formally organized group. The Council of Neighborhood Presidents would accomplish several things. First, it would recognize neighborhoods that have formally organized and elected neighborhood leaders. Second, it would provide a way for neighborhoods and the City to have ongoing dialogue through designated representatives. Third, it would give a “structure” through which the City can implement programs such as neighborhood grants, volunteer recognition, and other neighborhood improvements.

The Council of Neighborhood Presidents would meet at a minimum of twice a year to hear reports from the City and share concerns, suggestions, and input gathered from neighborhood meetings. This would allow for more direct dialogue on issues and would maintain “equal footing” for each neighborhood in West Lafayette as the neighborhood president or their designee will be the representative of each neighborhood.

3.3.2 Implement an incentive program for landlords

The incentive program for landlords would deploy a recommendation made in the most recent update to the rental inspection ordinance. Examples of incentives for landlords might include the following:

- An enhanced reduction of fees for landlords that consistently meet criteria established in the rental inspection ordinance. Administrative benefits for landlords including a reduction in the frequency of inspections.
- A landlord “rating” program that recognizes landlords who consistently perform well with inspections. This can easily be implemented by creating a tiered system where landlords are rated based on their number of violations. This would serve as a reward for landlords and an incentive for those who might not be performing as well. This information would be shared with Purdue University’s Office of Off-Campus Housing.

3.3.3 Create a short term task force between Purdue/Students/City to evaluate off-campus housing information and procedures

Throughout the strategic plan process, citizens and students expressed a desire to see the University and the City become more proactive with regard to working with students on off- campus housing issues. This topic has been a part of the Strategic Plan through several iterations and prior initiatives have resulted in an off-campus housing brochure and ongoing dialogue between the City and the University. Because of the transient nature of the student population, off-campus issues become an ongoing discussion topic throughout the community. The City’s Development Department, the Purdue University Housing Office, and Purdue Student Government should comprise a task force to explore easy to deploy ways to improve communications about off-campus housing issues to students at Purdue.

3.3.4 Develop a neighborhood micro-grant program

The neighborhood micro-grant program is designed to encourage neighborhood capacity building, create positive public relations for neighborhood initiatives, and implement small improvement projects in the neighborhoods throughout West Lafayette. The grant program could start out with three competitive \$1000 grants awarded each year to neighborhoods who might use them for beautification projects, enhanced communication efforts, gateway signs, or other amenities. The Council of Neighborhood Presidents could play a key role in these grants and the projects could be recognized at a City of West Lafayette community meeting each year.

3.3.5 *Explore incentives for converting rental housing to owner occupancy*

The City of West Lafayette should explore several options used in other communities to encourage single-family investment and foster stability in the city's neighborhoods. It is important to note that the solutions presented below are options to consider and that each comes with both opportunities and challenges.

- Explore a Community Land Trust. According to the National Community Land Trust Network www.cltnetwork.org, the community land trust model was developed in the early 1970's as a tool to "provide access to land and housing to people who are otherwise denied access; to increase long-term community control of neighborhood resources; to empower residents through involvement and participation in the organization; and to preserve the affordability of housing permanently. Though the program specifics vary among different CLTs, the basic model is the same. CLTs offer a balanced approach to ownership: the nonprofit trust owns the land and leases it for a nominal fee to individuals who own the buildings on the land. As the home is truly their own, it provides the homeowners with the same permanence and security as a conventional buyer, and they can use the land in the same way as any other homeowner."

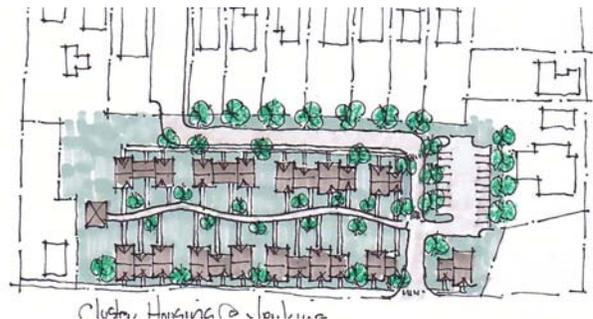
This model has been used across the country to stabilize neighborhoods while preserving affordability.

- Consider a Residential Neighborhood Conservation District. Bryan, Texas, home of Texas Christian University, created a program where neighborhoods could petition the City to modify the unrelated residents clause from three to two. Such a petition takes a supermajority of property owners in a neighborhood (66%). The city would then designate the area as an RNC with new occupancy rules. For West Lafayette, such a program does raise questions about how to determine and enforce the two unrelated clause and whether such a program would infringe on the rights of property owners. The program is worth considering however, and West Lafayette may consider alternate provisions for a Residential Neighborhood Conservation District. More information on the Bryan, Texas concept can be found at this link: http://www.bryantx.gov/departments/?name=plan_rncd.
- Consider incentives to convert rental units back to single-family housing. Such a program might use the conversion fee from single family to rental as a grant program to create the reverse conversion.

PRIORITY TWO PROJECTS

3.3.6 *Develop infill housing concept plans on key sites in the City*

One of the objectives of the 2005 Strategic Plan update was to implement infill housing development in West Lafayette. This goal is still valid in 2010. In order to facilitate the effort, West Lafayette should evaluate key properties where infill housing might occur throughout the city and determine the type of infill development that might occur on each. The Department of Development would commission small design



Example of housing infill vignette.

plans illustrating the development potential of each parcel and use that to promote infill development on the site.

3.4 Community Relations

PRIORITY ONE PROJECTS

3.4.1 Join the International Town and Gown Association

The International Town and Gown Association was specifically organized to address issues facing communities with university neighbors. The young organization has members from across the United States and is hosting its 2010 conference in Ames, Iowa. The organization supports issues of communities that are home to universities and promotes best practices in land use, economic development, planning, and students in the community. The organization's website is <http://town-gown.net>. West Lafayette and Purdue should join the organization and attend the 2010 Best Practices Conference.

3.4.2 Host State of the City Summit every year

By tradition, the Mayor provides reports to City Council each year at a regularly scheduled meeting. The State of the City Summit would be a more publicized public meeting, perhaps with more fanfare than the typical report to City Council. The summit would provide a forum where a progress report on this strategic plan is given along with plans for the coming year to implement steps in the plan. The summit meeting would include the members of the Council of Neighborhood Presidents mentioned above.

3.4.3 Create a city Facebook and Twitter account

Facebook and other social media outlets have become a key way for communities to communicate with citizens. West Lafayette should consider Facebook, Twitter, and even iPhone applications as new ways to communicate with the community.

3.4.4 Consider ongoing online meetings in the future

The four online chat meetings that were part of the development of the Strategic Plan Update were both interesting and substantive. The City of West Lafayette should explore ongoing online opportunities for citizens to participate in civic life including online meetings, forums, and chats.

3.4.5 Develop a volunteer recognition program

The Council of Neighborhood Presidents and the City of West Lafayette should implement a recognition program for volunteers that contribute time and effort to make the city a better place to live. This recognition program could occur at the State of the City Summit each year.

4.0 Strategy Board

The attached “Strategy Board” summarizes all of the projects and recommendations included in the 2010 Strategic Plan Update. The board is designed as a working document for benchmarking and ongoing evaluation of the implementation process. Each recommendation that is presented in brief on the strategy board is supported in the report above.

The projects are divided into two time frames. The first series of projects are priority one projects that should begin immediately and occur over 2010 and 2011. For the most part, these are projects that will be highly visible, have significant impact and should be completed within the first two years after the plan is adopted. The second tier contains priority two projects. Some of these are more advanced projects while others are projects that can begin later in the process.

The strategy board and its recommendations represent a “living document.” As time goes by and implementation proceeds, some priorities will shift while other ones will arise. The implementation strategy board should be evaluated periodically, no less than annually. This evaluation process will allow for finished tasks to be indicated on the board, for responsibilities to be shifted between parties, and for time frames to be adjusted for individual projects.

Each of the strategic plan strategies and visions are outlined in the strategy board. Of course, each of these strategies is linked with one another, but failure to achieve any one goal does not negate the ability to achieve others.

Strategy Board for the West Lafayette Strategic Plan 2010

Strategies	Priority One 2010-2011	Priority Two 2012-2014	Visions
<p>Economic Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a Village/Levee Master Plan ▪ Continue and enhance marketing campaign to recruit retail ▪ Consider alternative grocery store models to Trader Joe's ▪ Promote mixed-use office development that also could accommodate medical uses ▪ Consider retail incentive package 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create an economic development focused Corridor Master Plan for Sagamore West. ▪ Develop a multi-cultural retail incubator. 	<p><i>West Lafayette will continue its strategic partnership with the PRF and Purdue University, making the City a place where technology and the knowledge economy flourish, while developing innovative plans to support additional retail, office, and mixed-use development at key locations in the City. In doing so, the City will encourage creative development projects that bring jobs and economic opportunities to the City's residents.</i></p>
<p>Community Facilities and Infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop an annual Capital Improvements Plan ▪ Continue to implement pedestrian/bike improvements ▪ Deploy procedure for neighborhoods wanting traffic calming ▪ Continue to implement the wayfinding sign program ▪ Feature Morton Center/Library in Village/Levee Plan ▪ Prepare for 231 impacts with zoning, land use, annexation ▪ Continue sustainable practices when planning and implementing city projects ▪ Continue efforts of Parks Dept./WREC for Wabash River ▪ Continue creative partnerships with school systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to implement pedestrian/bike improvements throughout city (cont'd from priority one) ▪ Develop improvements to gateways to the community. ▪ Partner with WLCSC for creative redevelopment of the Burtfield site ▪ Continue pursuit of fiber to the home/fiber to the premise throughout West Lafayette 	<p><i>West Lafayette will continue to be a place where excellent schools, parks and trails, art, and community facilities will thrive in a pedestrian and bike friendly community.</i></p>
<p>Neighborhood Vitality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a Council of Neighborhood Presidents ▪ Implement an incentive program for landlords ▪ Create a short term task force between Purdue/Students/City to evaluate off-campus housing information and procedures ▪ Develop a neighborhood micro-grant program ▪ Explore incentives for converting rental housing to owner occupancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to pursue incentives for converting rental housing to owner occupancy ▪ Develop infill housing concept plans on key sites in the City 	<p><i>West Lafayette will become a model for thriving neighborhoods in a university community offering a variety of stable single-family districts, safe, well maintained student housing, and innovative partnerships between residents, students, landlords, and the City to enhance neighborhood quality of life.</i></p>
<p>Community Relations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Join the International Town and Gown Association ▪ Host State of the City Summit every year ▪ Create a city Facebook and Twitter account ▪ Consider ongoing online meetings in the future ▪ Develop a volunteer recognition program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue State of the City Summits each year 	<p><i>West Lafayette will maintain and strengthen its partnerships with citizens, Purdue and its regional partners and will serve as a major player in overall issues affecting the region through the use of innovative tools and technology.</i></p>

Appendix A: Plan Participants

The following people participated in the creation of the West Lafayette Strategic Plan Update 2010.

Steering Committee

Abe Honegger	Art Remnet	Charlie Shook	David Kucik
Larry Oates	Linda Sorensen	Lynn Layden	Rachel Witt
Shelley Lowenberg-DeBoer	Sinha Kumares	Steve Belter	Tom Gall
Tom Robinson	Vinod Sagi	William Shen	

Interviews

Abe Honnegger	Ann Hunt	Anne Brandyberry	Brad Marley
Cristi Erb	David Mills	David Tate	Diane Damico
Garnett Peck	Gerald Thomas	Greg Foerg	Greg Deason
Jo Wade	John Basham	Josh Burgett	Judy Rechberger
Kathleen Mills	Katy Bunder	Kevin Bol	Larry Oates
Leroy Keyes	Liesl Shen	Marty Sennett	Nick Schenkel
Patsy Hoyer	Patti Weida	Paul Roales	Peter Bunder
Rocky Killion	Ryan O’Gara	Sallie Fahey	Shane O’Malley
Sharon Burgett	Stan Lambert	Stephen Shook	Steve Belter
Terry Wilson	Tetia Lee	Tom Gall	Vicki Burch
Will Baldwin	William Shen		

West Lafayette and Purdue Partnership Teams

New Chauncey Neighborhood Association Leadership Committee

City Officials

Mayor John Dennis

Judy Rhodes

Ann Hunt

Gerald Thomas

Paul Roales

Peter Bunder

Vicki Burch

City Staff

Betty May	Beverly Shaw	Chandler Poole	Dale Dixon
Dave Buck	Dave Henderson	David Downey	Diane Foster
Eric Burns	Jason Dombkowski	Joe Payne	Phil Drew
Rick Walker	Vikki Watkins		

Public Attendees and Forum Participants

Amanda Gordon	Ann Hunt	Art Remnet	Betina Cochran
Beverly Shaw	Bob Shauer	Brandon Fulk	Brenda Lorenz
Carl Griffin	Carol Czaja	Chandler Poole	Charlie Shook
Charlie Tristschke	Dale Dixon	Dan Noland	Dan Schuster
Danny Weiss	Dave Buck	David Downey	David Henderson
David Tate	Debbie Kervin	Delores Delleur	Diane Damico
Don Franzmeier	Don Staley	Donna VanMeter	Earle Nay
Elwyn Weiss	Gerald Thomas	Guthrie Carr	Heather Gall
Jack Delleur	Jason Tennenhouse	Jean Sullivan	Jennie Kirby
Jessica Hinman	Jim Everette	Jim Knapp	Jo Wade
Joan Goldstein	John Burgett	John Thomas	Jonathon O.
Joyce Field	Justin Mack	Kate Walker	Kenneth Rayman
Kib Brady	Larry Swanson	Laszlo Kovacs	Linda Cohen
Linda Eales	Linda Lappin	Linda Sorensen	Lynn Layden
Marcia Gaunt	Margy Deverall	Marty Sennett	Mary Beth Foster
Mary Nauman	Michael Keefer	Mike Piggott	Nancy Shauer
Nick Schenkel	Patsy Hoyer	Rachel Witt	Rick Walker
Ron Clark	Ryan Kennedy	Sam Haynes	Sarah Cooke
Sheila Klinker	Shelly Lowenberg-DeBoer	Stan Lambert	Steve Belter
Steve Shook	Ted Wachs	Terry Phillips	Thomas Kesler
Tom Gall	Tom Jenkins	Vicki Burch	Vicki Leavitt
Vicki Watkins	William Shen	Bill Hiller	Elizabeth Hayes
Linda Prokopy	Richard Mitchell	Steven Knecht	Joshua Pope
Steve Hardesty	Mark Davis	Robert Oglesbee	Brian Lancaster
Tammy Loew	Chris Campbell	John Fry	Abe Honegger

Beth Carroll	Holly Thomas	Kevin Bol	Jeff Berglund
Bob Dearing	Adrian Oprescu	Joseph Bumbleburg	Quinn Thomson
John Fisher	Eric Stach	Joyce Field	Katie Bunder
Molly Bunder	Richard Grace	Katie Kleinschitz	Steve Dietrich
Mary Deitrich	Mia Lewis		

Appendix B: Most often cited trail, pedestrian, and road improvements for West Lafayette

The following are the most often-mentioned trail connection improvements desired in the City. The timeline for each of these improvements is indicated in italic.

- Wabash Heritage Trail extension along River Road to the Trolley Line Trail in Happy Hollow Park, with a trail spur to Rose and Kingston and Happy Hollow School.
Funded for construction in 2010-2011.
- Western Interceptor bike/pedestrian trail to River Road.
To be constructed in coordination with the US 231 project – timeline to be determined.
- Trail connection along Northwestern Avenue from Lindberg Road to Cumberland Avenue at Wal-Mart
Funded for construction to begin in 2013-2014
- Trail extension from Kalberer Road to 500 North
Timeline to be determined.

The following is a list of the most often-mentioned pedestrian crossing improvements in the City. The timeline for each of these improvements is to be determined.

- Salisbury Street and Sagamore Parkway
- Northwestern Avenue and Lindberg Road
- Northwestern Avenue and North Street
- North River Road and Howard Avenue
- Salisbury Street and Lindberg Road
- River Road various locations (this location could be addressed with pedestrian refuge islands along urban section of the corridor once River Road is relinquished to the City)
- Improvements at Vine, Wiggins, and Fowler
- US 52 and Cumberland Avenue
- Salisbury Street and Cumberland Avenue