JULY

# Town of Merrillville

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Comprehensive Hlan

#### TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE

#### PREPARED FOR:

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

JULY 1999 PROJECT NO. E14934

#### PREPARED BY:

GOVE ASSOCIATES INC.

70 East 9 I ST STREET 160 I PORTAGE STREET INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46240 KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49008

#### MERRILLVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

#### TOWN COUNCIL

WARD # 1 ANDREW SYLWESTROWICZ

WARD #2 DAVID MIRICH

WARD #3 JOSEPH SHUDICK, PRESIDENT

WARD #4 DAVID UZELAC

WARD #5 RICK BELLA

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#### PLAN COMMISSION

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#### Introduction

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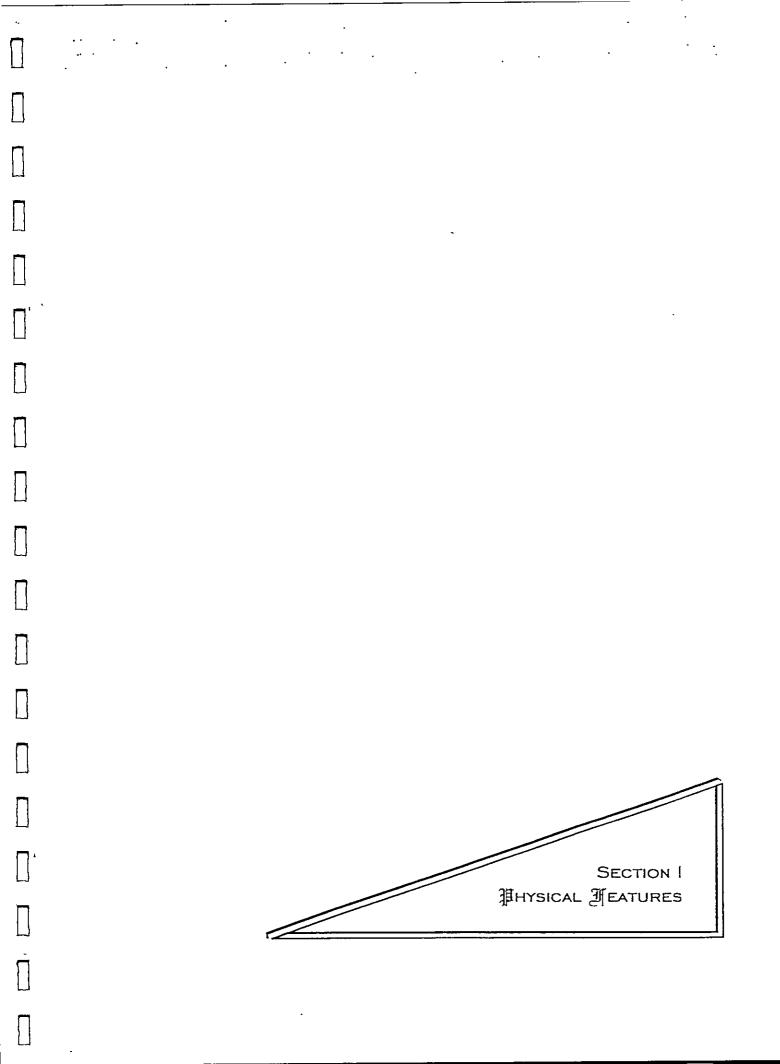
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SECTION 2 - SOCIAL FEATURES

SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY FACILITIES

SECTION 4 - EXISTING LAND USE

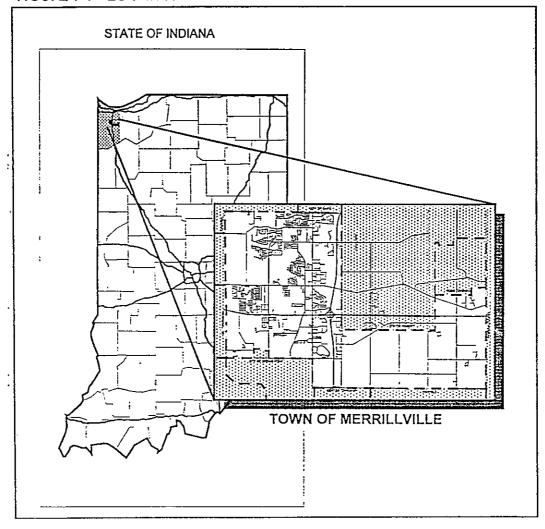


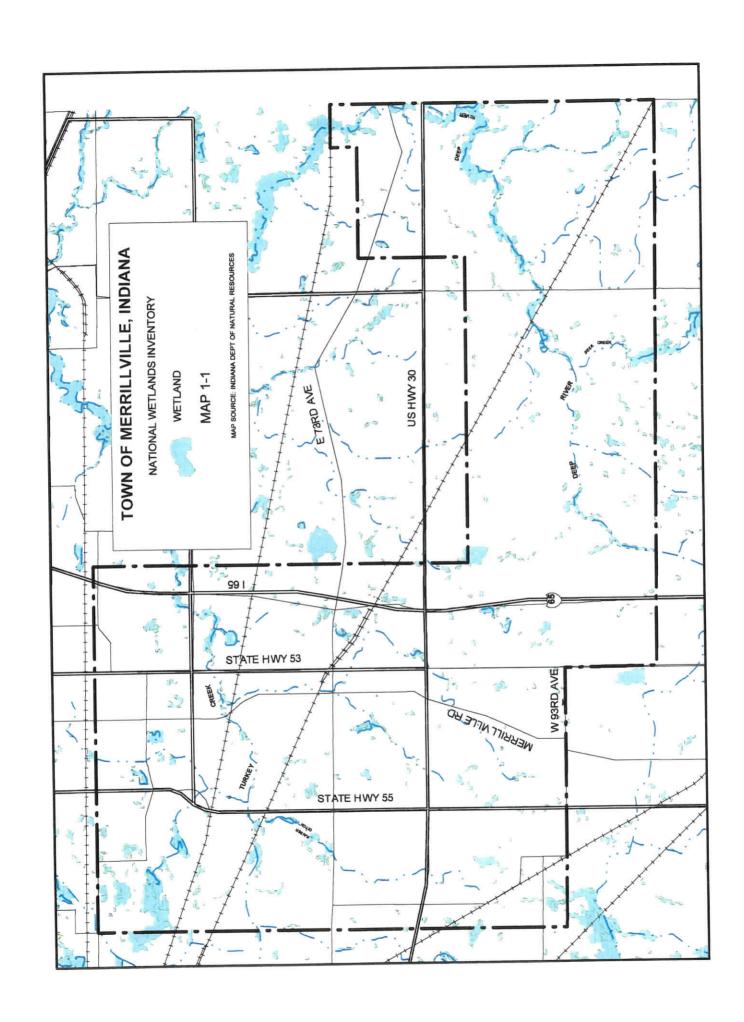
#### Location

The Town of Merrillville is located in the northwest corner of Indiana in Lake County (see Figure 1-1). The Town shares borders with several municipalities, including Gary, Griffith, Crown Point, Winfield, and Hobart. Merrillville lies 30 miles to the

southeast of Chicago and 130 miles northwest of Indianapolis. Interstate 65 traverses the Town in a north-south direction and connects Merrillville with Indianapolis and the I-80/94 corridor to the north. Merrillville's dose proximity to Lake Michigan gives it a modified continental climate, moderating the weather extremes of both winter and summer.

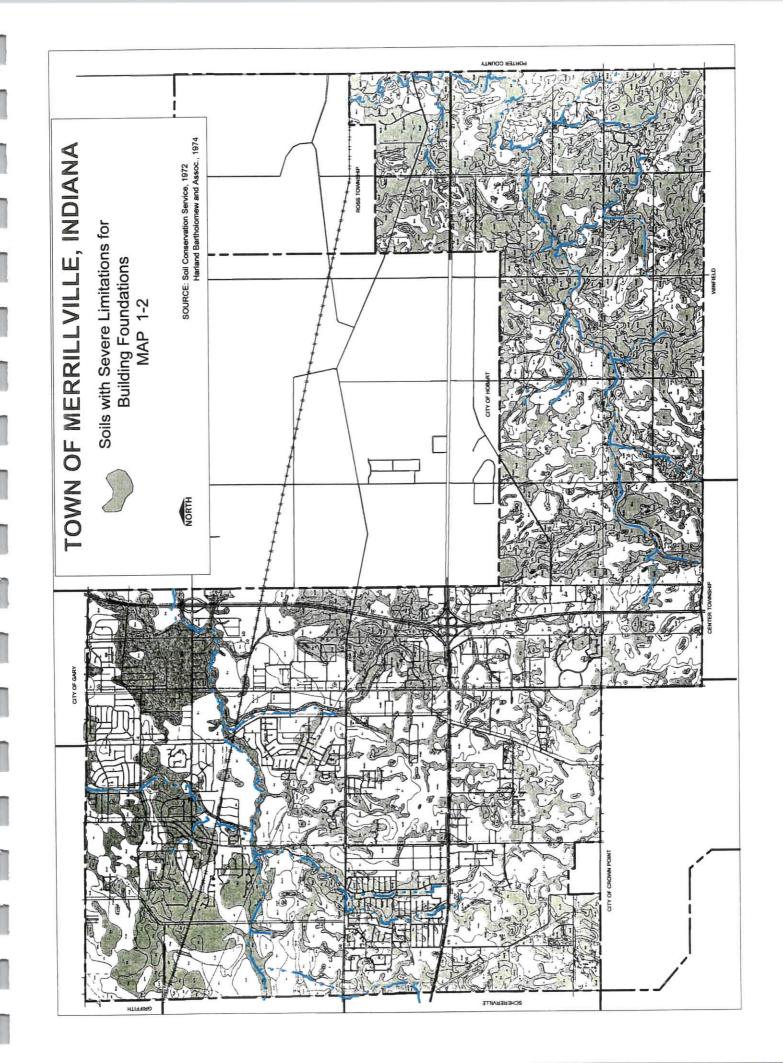
FIGURE 1-1 - LOCATION MAP

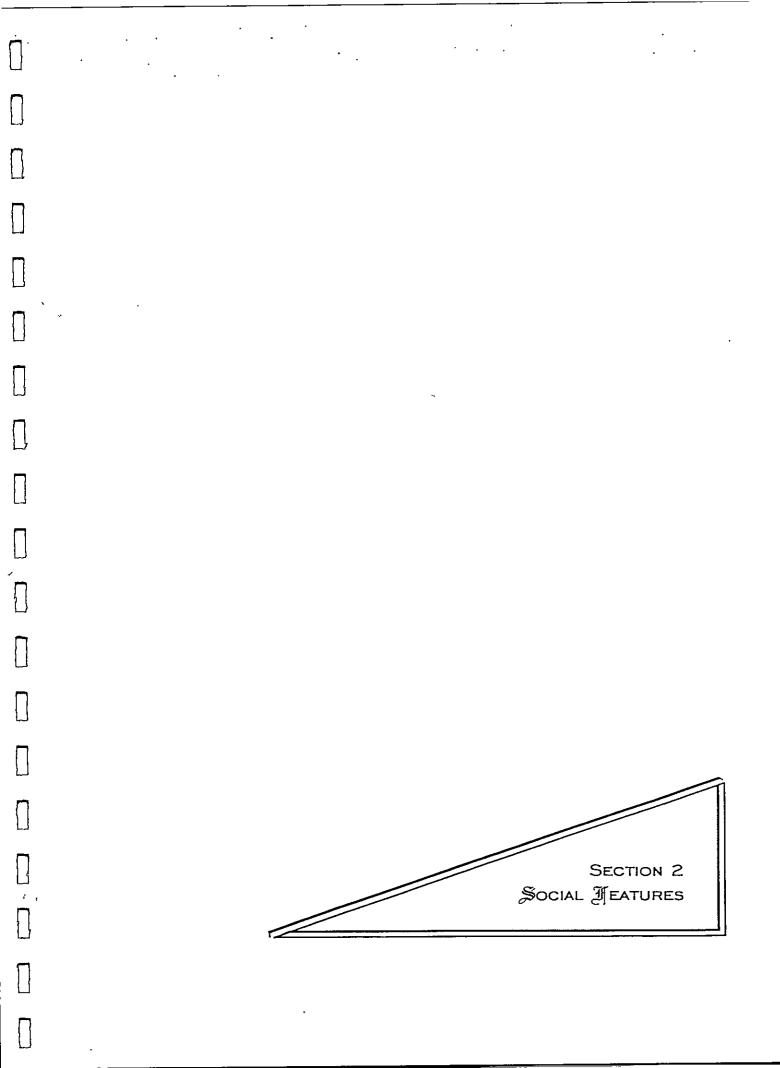




Soil classifications (made up of a mixture of basic soil types) have been identified and mapped by the Soil Conservation Service in the Soil Survey of Lake County, Indiana.

There are five different soil associations within the Town. Each of these associations has their own unique characteristics, including limitations for development, recreation and agriculture. Map 1-2 and 1-3 show areas in the Town where soil and topography may impact development. This impact comes from a variety of sources, such as the presence of wetlands, poor permeability of soils, and improper engineering properties for building development. These classifications are intended for general planning purposes only. Decisions on the uses of specific tracts of land should refer to the original source material: Soil Survey of Lake County, Indiana, Soil Conservation Service, 1972.





#### **Population**

When Merrillville was incorporated in 1971, the population was estimated to be 25,978. By the 1980 Census the population had increased to 27,677, a 6.5 percent increase. As seen in Figure 2-1, the population decreased by 1.5 percent by the 1990 Census following trends throughout the region. The 1996 population estimate, however, shows a large increase in

FIGURE 2-1 MERRILLVILLE POPULATION 1973 - 1996

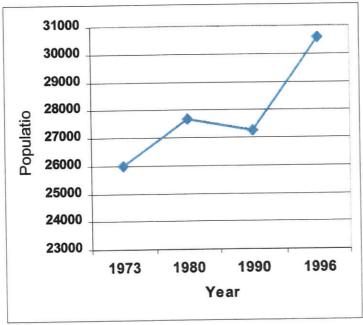


Figure 2-2 shows the changes in the distribution of population from 1990 to 1995. A shift of the population to the southern part of Merrillville has occurred. This increase in the population in the south is somewhat offset by a decrease in the northwest and in the central panhandle regions. These shifts in population will have significant impacts upon the services and infrastructure of the Town over the next 10 to 20 years.

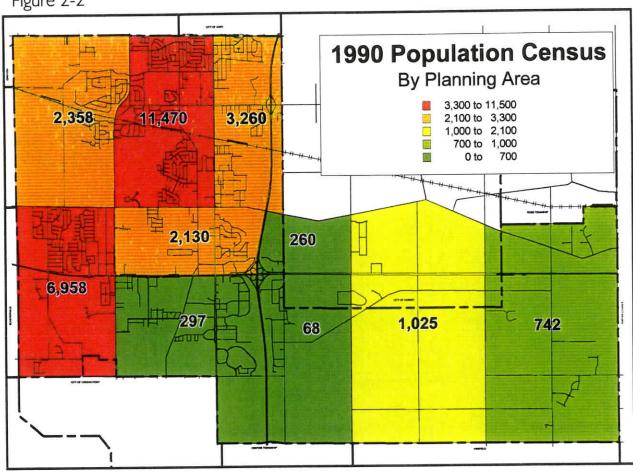
In addition to distribution changes, the Merrillville population has been aging. 1990, the Between 1980 and Merrillville population segment 65 years of age and older increased by 66 percent, while the population segment age 18 to 64 decreased by 3.8 percent, and the population segment under 18 decreased by 19.0 percent. median age in Merrillville increased during that same period from 31.8 to 36.3.

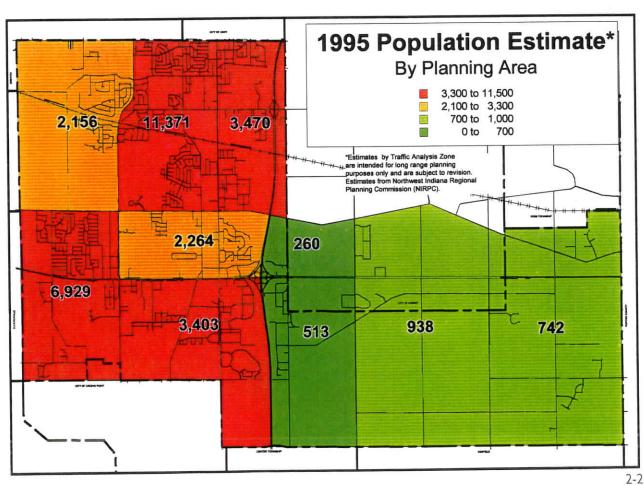
#### Households

population of 12.2 percent, exceeding the trend in the region. In Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties in Indiana, the combined population increased by 2.9 percent between 1990 and 1997.

The number and type of households within the Town of Merrillville influence the social and economic dynamics of the Town and consequently impact the quantity and character of land development. Households







are the standard unit of measurement for evaluating and projecting the number of housing units, retail sales and community facilities and services. Table 2-1 shows the growth trends in the number of households between 1980 and 1990.

While the Merrillville population decreased between 1980 and 1990, the number of households has increased by 9.5 percent. This has occurred due to falling household size from 3.0 people per household in 1980 to 2.7 people per household in 1990.

Household composition has also changed. Nonfamily households, female headed families, and other non-traditional families, have all increased in number, while married couple families have decreased over the ten Married couple families, year period. however, still make up approximately 64 percent of households in Merrillville.

TABLE 2-1 - HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

			%
	1980	1990	Change
Family Households	7,663	7,607	-0.7
Married Couple Families	6,743	6,388	-5.3
Female Headed Families	711	910	28.0
Other Family Households	209	309	47.8
Nonfamily Households	1,472	2,399	63.0
Total Households	9,135	10,006	9.5

SOURCE: U.S. Census

#### **Housing Trends**

The number of housing units in Merrillville has been increasing. From 1980 to 1990, the number of housing units increased by 11.2 percent from 9,282 units to 10,322. This overall increase in housing has occurred despite there being 49 fewer single family units in 1990 compared to 1980.

The trend in Merrillville has been a decreasing proportion of single family housing in the total housing stock. Between 1980 and 1990, single family housing as a proportion of the housing market decreased from 85.2 percent to 76.2 percent. The difference was made up by growth in multiple family units.

TABLE 2-2 - MERRILLVILLE HOUSING MIX

	1980		1990	
Housing Unit	# %		#	%
Single Units	7,911	85.2	7,862	76.2
Multiple Units	1,326	14.3	2,317	22.4
Mobile and Other Units	45	0.5	143	1.4
TOTAL	9,282	100.0	10,322	100.0

SOURCE: U.S. Census

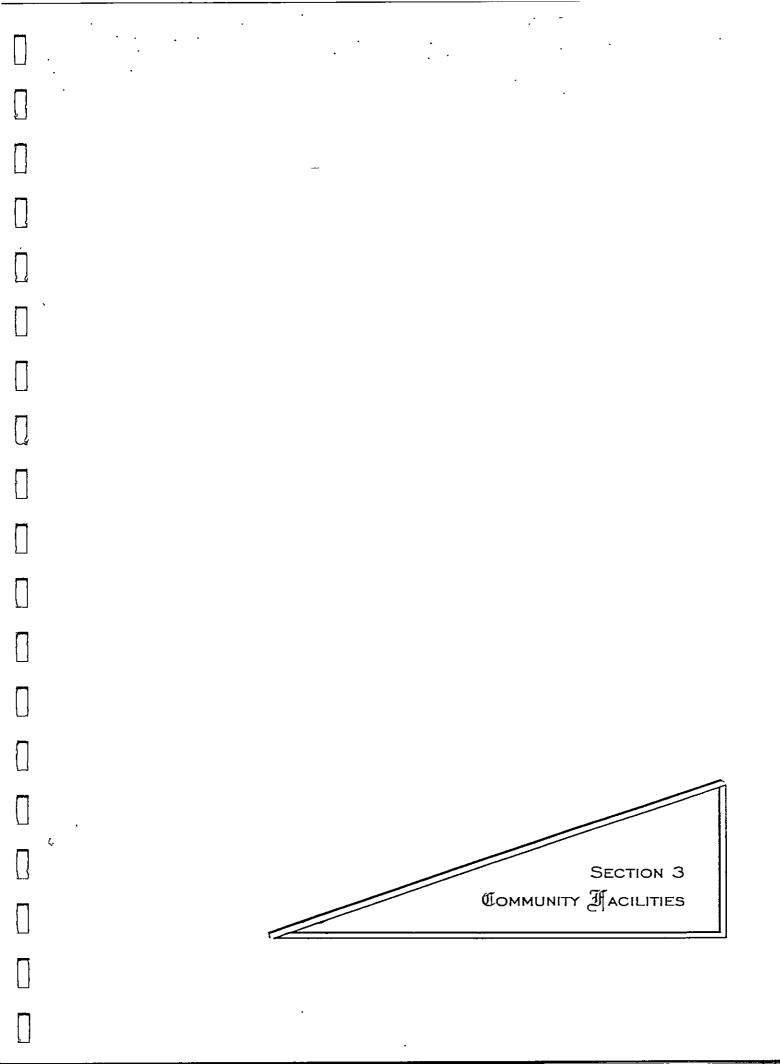
Merrillville rents and home values have been increasing. The median value of owner occupied homes increased by 18.2 percent between 1980 and 1990. That increase is less than the 64.1 percent inflation rate over

region. In Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties in Indiana, more than 52,000 manufacturing jobs were eliminated during the 1980s, and 5,000 more were eliminated between 1990 and 1998, while jobs were created in service, trade, and government.

TABLE 2-5 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

	1980	1990	Change in Percentage Points
Manufacturing	32.0%	23.6%	-8.4%
Education	8.4%	7.6%	-0.8%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	8.2%	7.6%	-0.6%
Transportation, Communication, Utilities	6.6%	6.3%	-0.3%
Health Service	6.2%	7.0%	0.8%
Construction	4.6%	5.7%	1.1%
Public Administration	2.4%	3.6%	1.2%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	23.9%	26.2%	2.3%
Service - Business and Personal	7.7%	12.4%	4.7%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%

SOURCE: 1980/1990 U.S. Census of Social and Economic Characteristics



### SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY FACILITIES

#### Introduction

The Town of Merrillville is governed by a Town Council form of government. The Town has seven councilmanic wards with one representative from each ward. The Town Hall and Council Chambers are located on 7820 Broadway. The Town relies primarily on property taxes, state taxes, user fees, and federal grants for sources of revenue. The 1999 total property tax rate was \$14.94 per \$100.00 of assessed valuation. The Town of Merrillville was \$2.22 per \$100 in 1999. Total assessed valuation for the Town in 1998 was over \$261 million.

#### Police. Fire Protection and Emergency Services

Police protection is provided by the Department head-Merrillville Police in the Town Building, 7820 guartered Broadway. The Department has a staff of 47 officers and 30 part-time and full-time civilians. The department responded to nearly thirty-five thousand calls in 1997, a 47 percent increase over 1990.

Ross Township Fire Department is responsible for fire protection in Merrillville. The Department has 130 volunteers and no fullstations employees. Four time

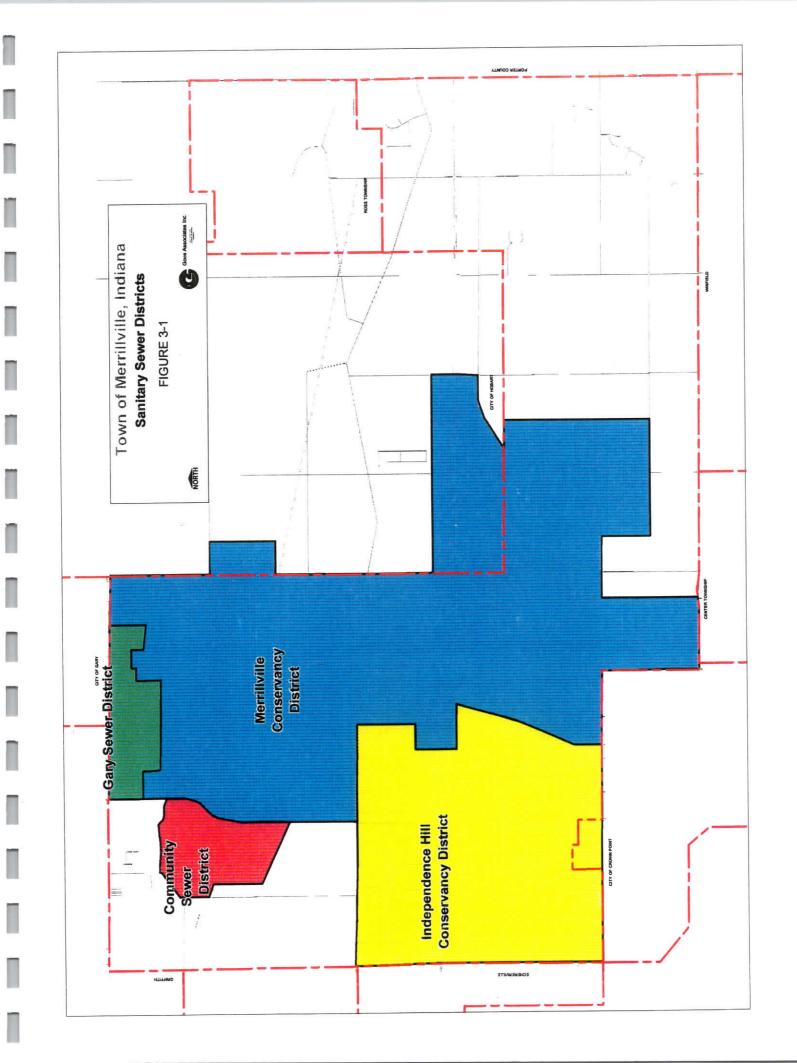
maintained at 7905 Taft, 850 W. 57th, 18 W. 73rd and 9200 E. Old Lincoln Highway.

Emergency services are provided by the Emergency Medical Service Department. The department had approximately 3,100 responses in 1997, which was an 11 percent increase over 1996.

#### Schools

The Town of Merrillville is served by the Merrillville Community School Corporation, which oversees one high school, two middle schools and five elementary schools. Current enrollment is 6,095 students, a 14 percent increase over 1990. The schools employ approximately 500 people, making it the fourth highest employer in the Town.

The following colleges and universities are located within the region: Indiana University Northwest, Purdue University Calumet, Calumet College, Valparaiso University and the Indiana Vocational Technical College.



### SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY HACILITIES

above-mentioned subdivisions by the conservancy districts.

The stormwater drainage system consists of a combination of separated storm sewers, open ditches, detention/retention ponds and combined sewers. Typically, subdivisions in Merrillville are drained by a stormwater sewer or ditch that drains into a lateral tributary of Turkey Creek. Platted subdivisions, streets, retail centers, churches and other developed lands have created a stormwater management problem for the community.

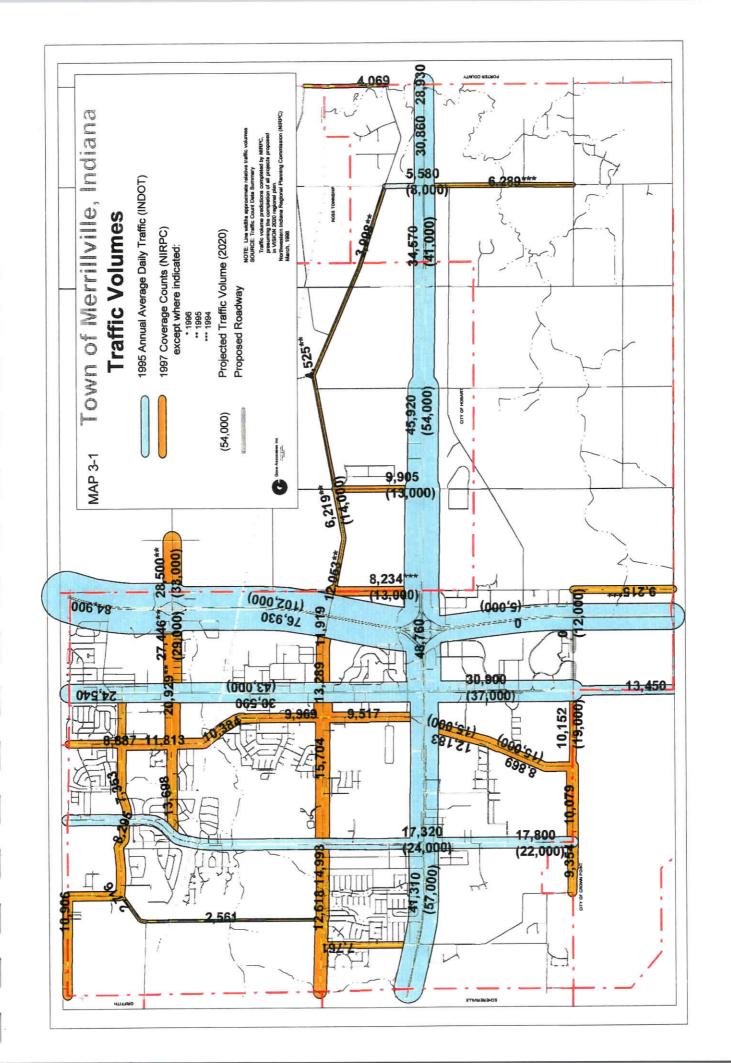
#### **Transportation**

Traffic Volume - Land use and transportation are closely linked. In order to understand fully the implications of land use decisions on transportation (and vice versa), the current traffic conditions must be understood. Map 3-1 shows the traffic volumes on the major thoroughfares in Merrillville. The highest volume roads are 1-65, U.S. 30 and Broadway. These roads serve areas that tend to have the highest density of commercial and office uses (Map 4-1, Existing Land Use, page 4-5). In general, commercial uses generate larger volumes of traffic.

Street Classification - Because of the prominence of certain roadways, their physical conditions, and the overall land-use pattern in American cities, automobile traffic tends to be concentrated on certain roadways. On average, 80 percent of travel is done on about 20 percent of the roads. In order to set priorities for funding certain roads with the highest volume. transportation planners established a road classification system.

Although there is some variation in the classification of roadways, they are typically divided into roadways that carry local traffic and those that carry through traffic. Through roadways are further divided according to their function. There are five basic types of roads in Merrillville (Map 3-2):

> Interstate - An interstate roadway is designed to handle large volumes of traffic moving at high speeds over long distances or between urban areas. The capacity of interstates is greatly enhanced by the elimination of all atgrade intersections and driveway cuts for frontage access. Points of entrance and exit are carefully controlled to maximize roadway capacity.



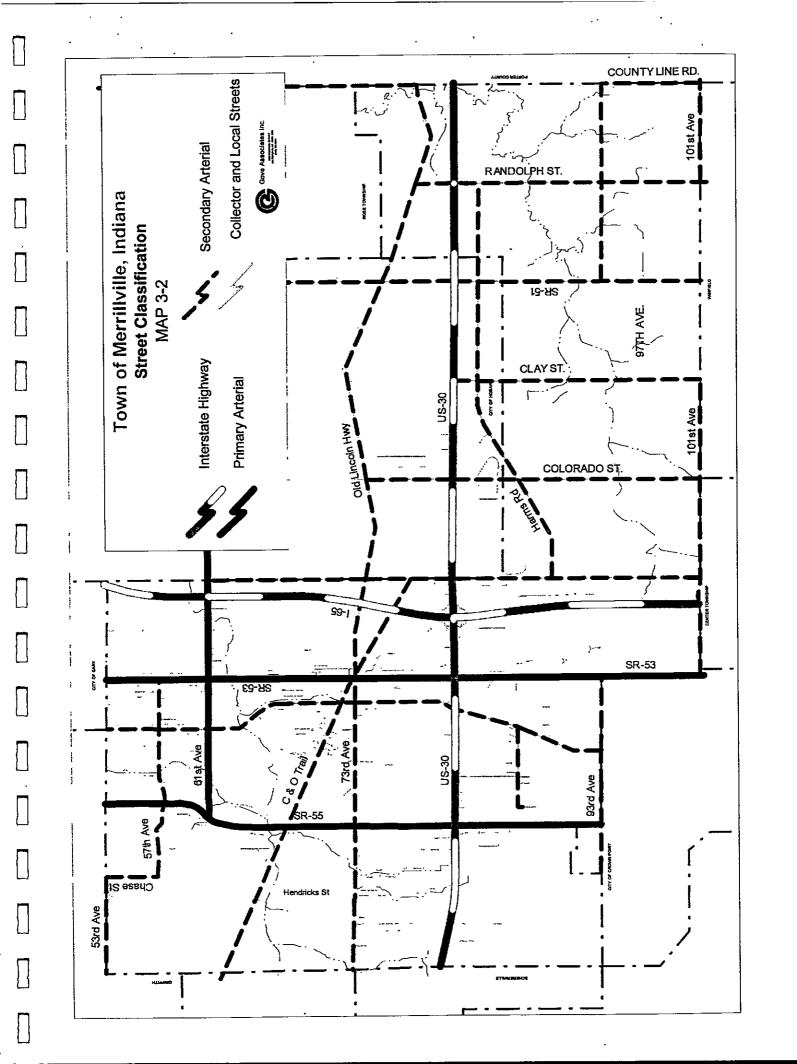
### SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Primary Arterial - Arterial roads are the backbone of the surface street system. They provide continuity from one city to another, and they can carry long trips when an expressway alternative is not provided. Primary arterials are intended to provide a high degree of mobility and serve longer trips. They also provide for higher operating speeds and high levels of service.

Secondary Arterial - The secondary arterial system augments the primary arterial system by providing for shorter length trips at generally slower speeds. The connections provided between activity centers are community-based, and delays are more likely to occur due to a higher level access from adjacent land uses and a slightly lower emphasis on through traffic function.

**Urban Collector** - The collector street system provides both land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas. The purpose of a collector street is to collect vehicles from the local subdivision streets and distribute them to either local destinations or to an arterial. Collector streets can also provide internal circulation and access to non-residential areas, such as industrial parks and major shopping centers.

Local Streets - The sole function of local streets is to provide access to adjacent land. These streets make up a large percentage of total street mileage of the Town, but carry a small portion of the vehicle mile of travel. Local neighborhood streets and industrial district service drives should provide access to collector streets or to longer distance through routes, but in such a manner that through traffic is not encouraged to use the local streets as a shortcut route.



SECTION 4 TAND USE

### SECTION 4 - TXISTING TIAND HISE

#### Introduction

An existing land use inventory is a necessary first step in planning for the future of a community. The inventory depicts the 1998 distribution and location of land uses within Merrillville. The existing land use map (Map 4-1) is based upon the interpretation of aerial photographs taken in April, 1993 and field checks done by Town staff and the Consultant. Below are the classifications used in the land use inventory.

#### Land Use Classifications

Residential - The area in which dwellings with their accessory buildings occupy the major portion of the land. This includes the following subcategories:

> Single-Family Residential detached or attached (duplex) dwelling unit on a single parcel. All units in this subcategory are built on foundations or basements using traditional building methods.

> Multiple-Family Residential - One or more buildings containing three or more dwelling units each. All units in this subcategory are built on founda

tions or basements using traditional building methods.

Mobile Home Park - A designated area for the placement of mobile homes for occupancy that meet minimum design requirements.

Public - An area or facility used by a Township, Town, County, School District, State agency, or Federal facilities to meet the needs of the community. This includes town and township offices, schools, public meeting spaces, public parking lots and other public uses.

Quasi-Public - An area or facility used by a limited number of persons with particular interests and nonprofit organizations, such as churches, day care centers, private schools, private clubs and related activities, public utilities and cemeteries.

Commercial/Office - An area or facility used for the sale of retail or wholesale goods or the provision of personal, business, or professional services. The structures, includes subcategory adjacent land and parking areas dedicated for the use of employees and customers.

### SECTION 4 - EXISTING HAND HSE

percent, while the majority of other land uses have risen dramatically. Of particular note is the six percent increase in singlefamily housing and the doubling of commercial/office land use. Quasi-public land uses were under-represented in the 1974 survey, so are not comparable.

The table also shows that the amount of undeveloped land (both forested and vacant)

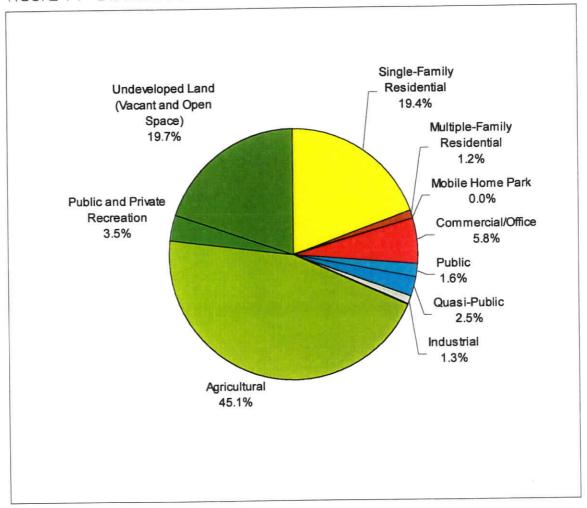
has remained consistent as a percentage of the total land area, while actually increasing in acreage. This increase in acreage is due, in part, to the additional land annexed on the eastern side of Town and the retirement of agricultural land over this period. Even though some of this undeveloped land is unsuitable for development, there still exists adequate areas to accommodate future growth.

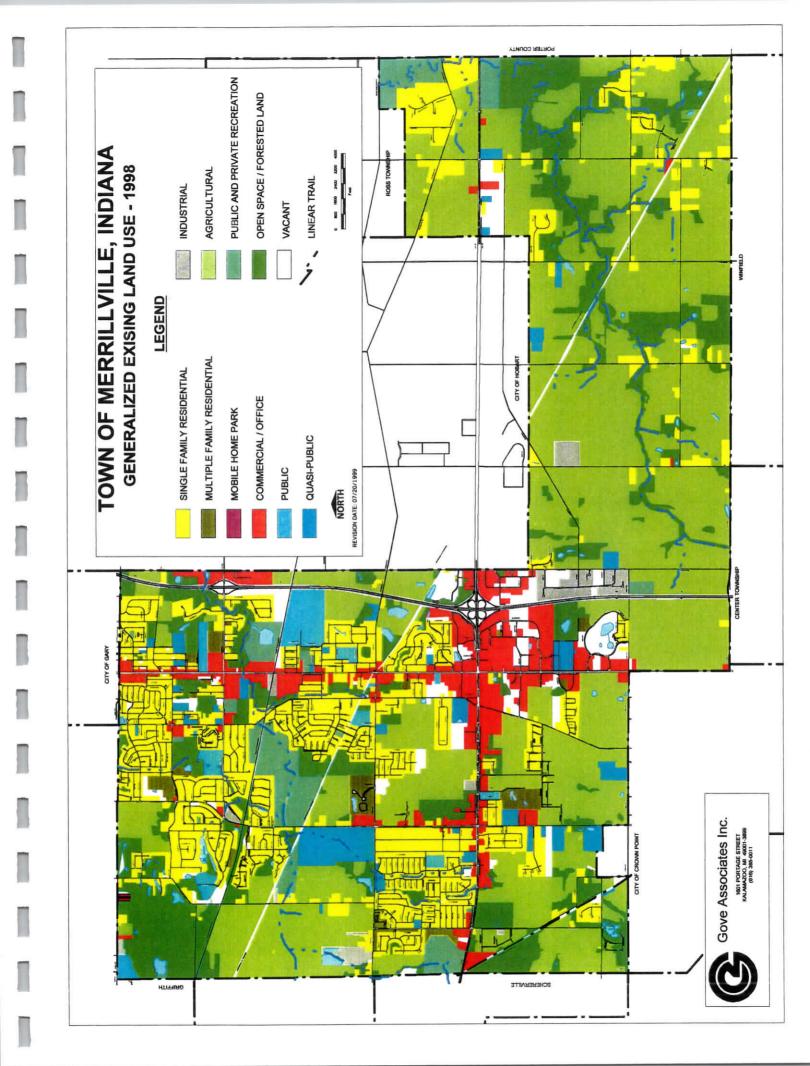
TABLE 4-1 - LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

Land Use	1974 Area (Acres)	1974 % of Land Use	1998 Area (Acres)	1998 % of Land Use
Single-Family Residential	2,417.4	13.4%	3,831.8	19.4%
Multiple-Family Residential	55.7	0.3%	231.3	1.2%
Mobile Home Park	3.3	0.02%	3.7	0.02%
Commercial/Office	502.3	2.8%	1,133.9	5.8%
Public	167.3	0.9%	317.8	1.6%
Quasi-Public	3.7	0.02%	490.0	2.5%
Industrial	44.6	0.2%	252.8	1.3%
Agricultural	10,859.1	60.2%	8,884.5	45.1%
Public and Private Recreation	454.5	2.5%	688.2	3.5%
Undeveloped Land (Vacant and Open Space)	3,522.0	19.5%	3,880.4	19.7%
TOTAL	18,029.9	100.0%	19,714.4	100.0%

SOURCE: 1974 Land Use: Harland Bartholomew & Associates; 1998 Land Use: Gove Associates Inc.

FIGURE 4-1 - DISTRIBUTION OF LAND USES





## HARTII - HLAN AND JMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 5 - GOALS AND ACTIONS

SECTION 6 - FUTURE LAND USE

SECTION 7 - IMPLEMENTATION

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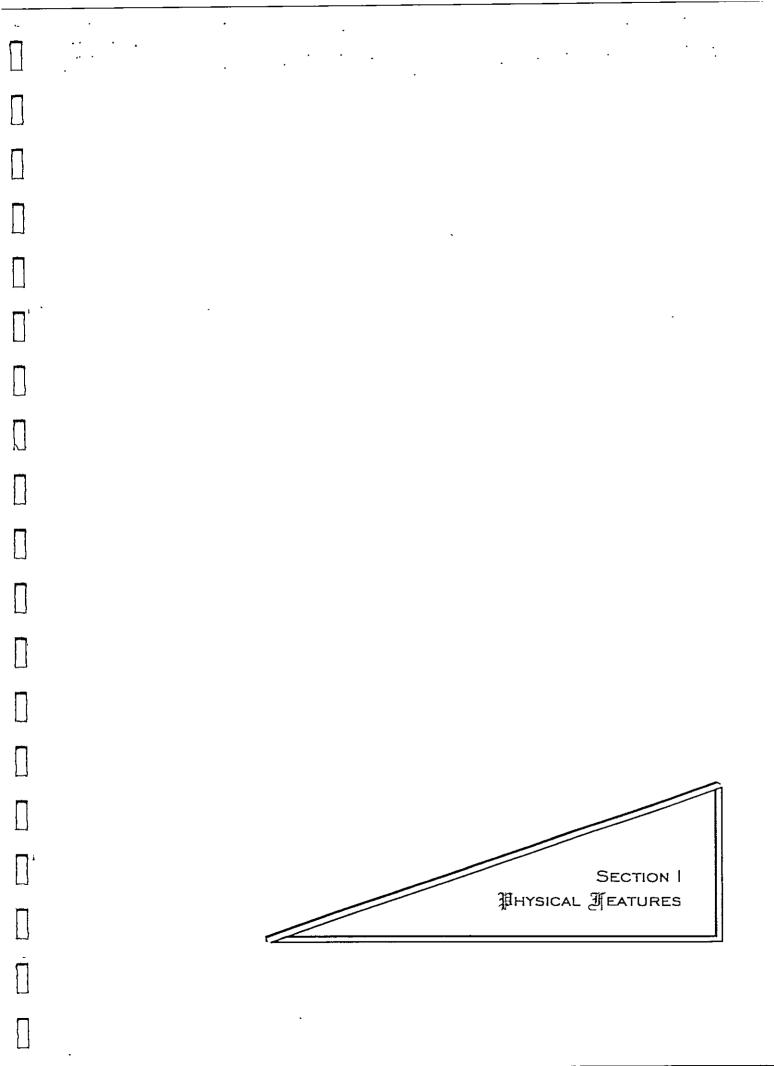
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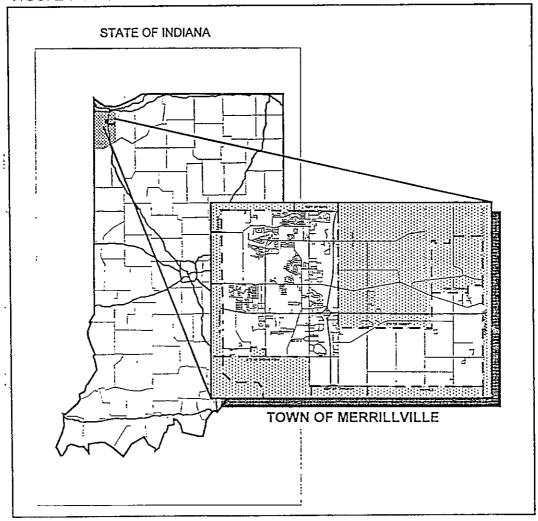


#### Location

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FIGURE I-I - LOCATION MAP



## SECTION 1 - HHYSICAL HEATURES

#### Natural Features

The air, land and water resources within the Town define the base upon which all manmade activities occur. The general climate of the area, the composition of local soils, the predominant vegetation, and the quality and expanse of both surface and groundwater all determine the ability of the Town development. These factors also impact the type and location of development. The following sections describe these natural elements in more detail.

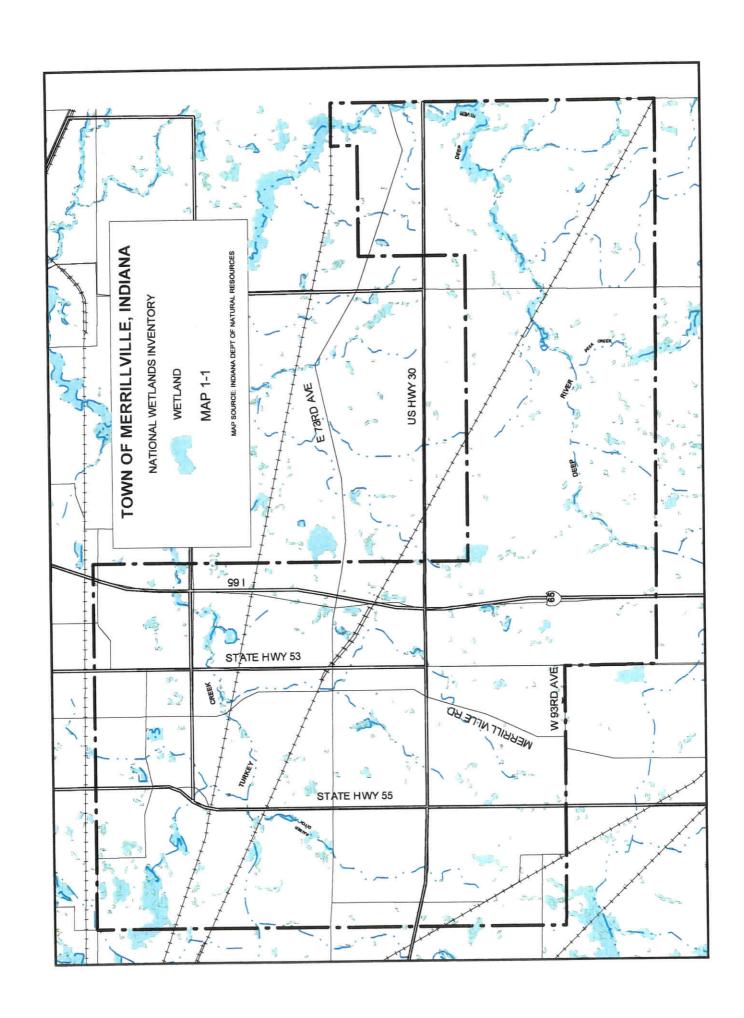
**Vegetation** - The Town of Merrillville is located where upland and lowland areas meet. These areas are typified by prairieand forest in the uplands and extensive wetlands in the lowlands. Various species of hardwoods exist throughout the area such as several species of oak, butternut, and maple.

Wetlands/Water Resources - Merrillville is in the Little Calumet River Watershed. Two major streams are found within the Town: Turkey Creek and Deep River (See Map 1-1). Turkey Creek is approximately 11 miles long and flows generally eastward, emptying into Deep River. Deep River is a tributary of the Little Calumet River. It begins to the west

of Crown **Point** travels northeastward through Merrillville. Northeast of the Town, Deep River has been dammed to form Lake George.

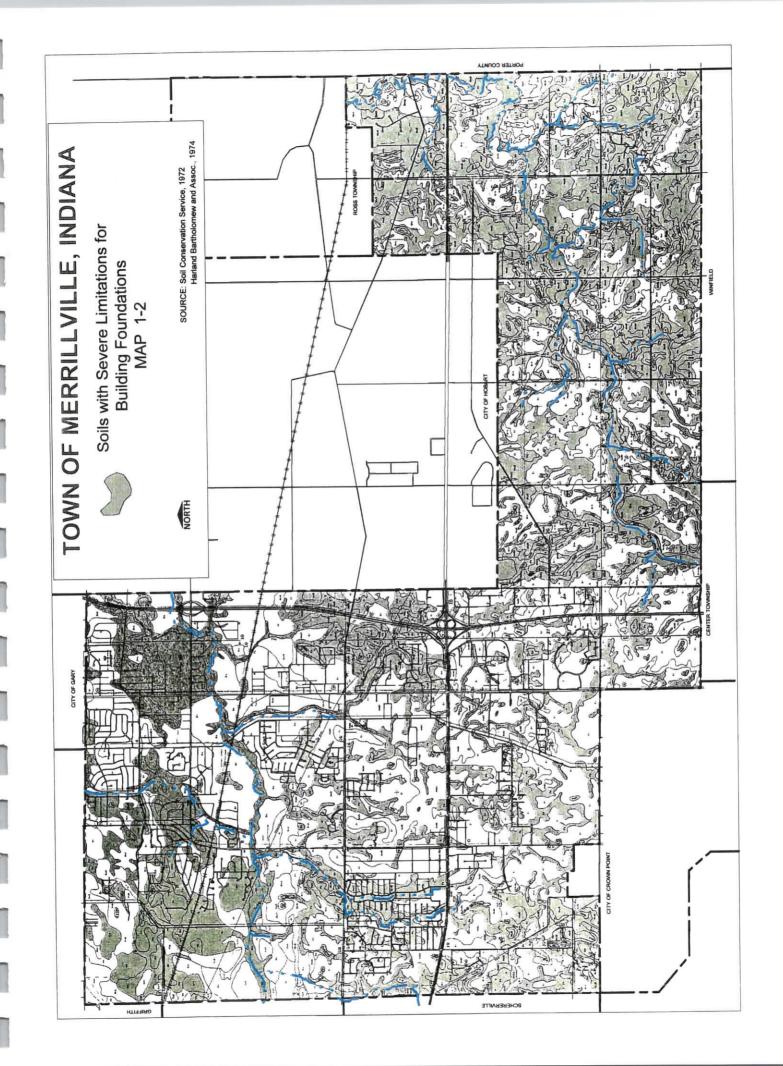
Wetlands, as defined by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's National Wetlands Inventory, are found throughout the Town but are particularly concentrated around the area's rivers and streams (see Map 1-1). The largest wetland complex occurs in the lowland region in the northwest corner of the Town. The eastern "panhandle" region also has significant wetland areas. These regions support a variety of flora and fauna and contribute significantly to the preservation of water quality-and the reduction of floods. Efforts should be made to reduce development impacts in and immediately around these areas to preserve the benefits the wetlands provide to the community.

**Soils** - Soils are the building blocks that define the types of activities that can be sustained on the land. Soils determine the types of vegetation and drainage that occur naturally. They also delineate the types of crops that can be planted and the location and density of buildings, roads and other man-made structures.



Soil classifications (made up of a mixture of basic soil types) have been identified and mapped by the Soil Conservation Service in the Soil Survey of Lake County, Indiana.

There are five different soil associations within the Town. Each of these associations has their own unique characteristics, including limitations for development, recreation and agriculture. Map 1-2 and 1-3 show areas in the Town where soil and topography may impact development. This impact comes from a variety of sources, such as the presence of wetlands, poor permeability of soils, and improper engineering properties for building development. These classifications are intended for general planning purposes only. Decisions on the uses of specific tracts of land should refer to the original source material: Soil Survey of Lake County. Indiana, Soil Conservation Service, 1972.



SECTION 2 SOCIAL HEATURES

#### **Population**

When Merrillville was incorporated in 1971, the population was estimated to be 25,978. By the 1980 Census the population had increased to 27,677, a 6.5 percent increase. As seen in Figure 2-1, the population decreased by 1.5 percent by the 1990 Census following trends throughout the region. The 1996 population estimate, however, shows a large increase in

FIGURE 2-1 MERRILLVILLE POPULATION 1973 - 1996

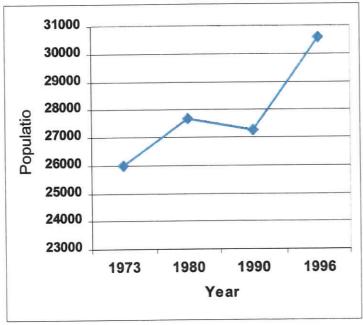


Figure 2-2 shows the changes in the distribution of population from 1990 to 1995. A shift of the population to the southern part of Merrillville has occurred. This increase in the population in the south is somewhat offset by a decrease in the northwest and in the central panhandle regions. These shifts in population will have significant impacts upon the services and infrastructure of the Town over the next 10 to 20 years.

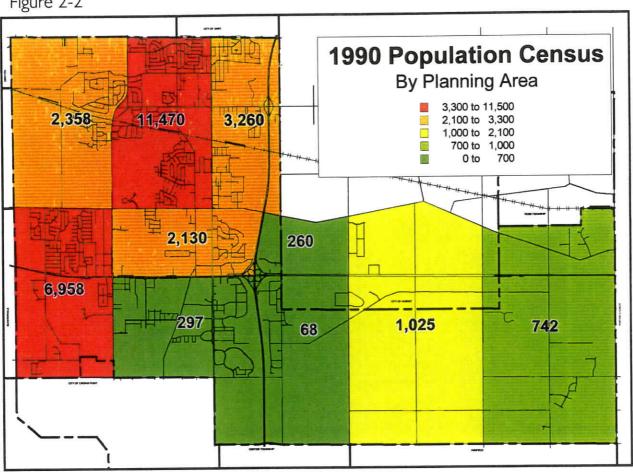
In addition to distribution changes, the Merrillville population has been aging. Between 1980 and 1990, the Merrillville population segment 65 years of age and older increased by 66 percent, while the population segment age 18 to 64 decreased by 3.8 percent, and the population segment under 18 decreased by 19.0 percent. median age in Merrillville increased during that same period from 31.8 to 36.3.

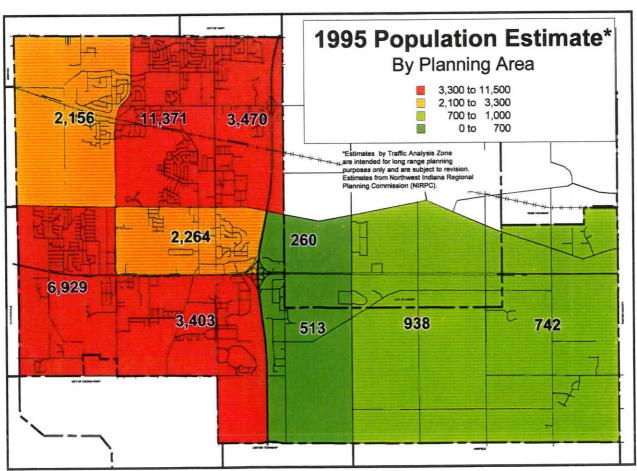
#### Households

population of 12.2 percent, exceeding the trend in the region. In Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties in Indiana, the combined population increased by 2.9 percent between 1990 and 1997.

The number and type of households within the Town of Merrillville influence the social and economic dynamics of the Town and consequently impact the quantity and character of land development. Households







are the standard unit of measurement for evaluating and projecting the number of housing units, retail sales and community facilities and services. Table 2-1 shows the growth trends in the number of households between 1980 and 1990.

While the Merrillville population decreased between 1980 and 1990, the number of households has increased by 9.5 percent. This has occurred due to falling household size from 3.0 people per household in 1980 to 2.7 people per household in 1990.

Household composition has also changed. Nonfamily households, female headed families, and other non-traditional families, have all increased in number, while married couple families have decreased over the ten Married couple families, year period. however, still make up approximately 64 percent of households in Merrillville.

TABLE 2-1 - HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

			%
	1980	1990	Change
Family Households	7,663	7,607	-0.7
Married Couple Families	6,743	6,388	-5.3
Female Headed Families	711	910	28.0
Other Family Households	209	309	47.8
Nonfamily Households	1,472	2,399	63.0
Total Households	9,135	10,006	9.5

SOURCE: U.S. Census

#### **Housing Trends**

The number of housing units in Merrillville has been increasing. From 1980 to 1990, the number of housing units increased by 11.2 percent from 9,282 units to 10,322. This overall increase in housing has occurred despite there being 49 fewer single family units in 1990 compared to 1980.

The trend in Merrillville has been a decreasing proportion of single family housing in the total housing stock. Between 1980 and 1990, single family housing as a proportion of the housing market decreased from 85.2 percent to 76.2 percent. The difference was made up by growth in multiple family units.

TABLE 2-2 - MERRILLVILLE HOUSING MIX

	198	30	1990		
Housing Unit	#	%	#	%	
Single Units	7,911	85.2	7,862	76.2	
Multiple Units	1,326	14.3	2,317	22.4	
Mobile and Other Units	45	0.5	143	1.4	
TOTAL	9,282	100.0	10,322	100.0	

SOURCE: U.S. Census

Merrillville rents and home values have been increasing. The median value of owner occupied homes increased by 18.2 percent between 1980 and 1990. That increase is less than the 64.1 percent inflation rate over that same period. Median contract rent, by contrast has increased faster than inflation, at a rate of 78.6 percent over the decade. Housing costs have continued to grow throughout the 1990s with the average house sale in 1997 of \$95,000.

TABLE 2-3 - MERRILL VILLE HOLISING COSTS

TABLE 2-3 - I ILIMALLAILELT TOJOSH AG COSTS					
: ::::	1980	1990	1997		
Median Value	\$52,700	\$62,300	\$95,146*		
Median Contract Rent	\$257	\$459	N.A.		
*Source: Merrillville Chamber of Commerce					

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census, STF3

The vacancy rate for Merrillville housing has been increasing. The vacancy rate increased from 1.6 percent in 1,980 to 3.1 percent in 1990. This softening of the housing market is an improvement. Vacant units are necessary in any housing market to allow entry and relocation in the housing market, and to prevent excessive rents. Ideally, the vacancy rate should be approximately four percent.

#### Income and Employment

The median family income increased by almost 50 percent between 1979 and 1989, and median household income increased by almost 42 percent. Those more current median incomes had less purchasing power, however, because inflation increased by 67.6 percent during that time period.

TABLE 2-4 - MERRILLVILLE INCOME: 1979 AND 1989

	197 <del>9</del>	1989		Inflation 1979-89
Median Household Income	\$25,525	\$36,221	41.9	67.6%
Median Family Income	\$27,653	\$41,423	49.8	

SOURCE: 1989-1990 U.S. Census, STF3

The poverty rate in 1990 increased in Merrillville. The percentage of the population living below the poverty line increased from 3.2 percent in 1980 to 3.5 percent in 1990. The 106 female headed families living below poverty in 1990 represent 1.4 percent of Merrillville households.

The 1980 unemployment rate of 5.9 percent had decreased to 4.2 percent in 1990. Moderate changes have taken place in the types of jobs in which the Merrillville work force is employed. Manufacturing sector jobs as a proportion of all jobs in Merrillville decreased by 8.4 percentage points between 1980 and 1990. The percentage of the Merrillville labor force employed in retail/wholesale trade and service sector jobs increased during that same period. However, both the manufacturing and trade sectors have still been the largest blocks of employment. Together, manufacturing and retail/wholesale trade employed approximately half of Merrillville workers in 1990. The shift in employment toward trade and service and away from manufacturing mirrors the trend in the

region. In Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties in Indiana, more than 52,000 manufacturing jobs were eliminated during the 1980s, and 5,000 more were eliminated between 1990 and 1998, while jobs were created in service, trade, and government.

TABLE 2-5 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

	1980	1990	Change in Percentage Points
Manufacturing	32.0%	23.6%	-8.4%
Education	8.4%	7.6%	-0.8%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	8.2%	7.6%	-0.6%
Transportation, Communication, Utilities	6.6%	6.3%	-0.3%
Health Service	6.2%	7.0%	0.8%
Construction	4.6%	5.7%	1.1%
Public Administration	2.4%	3.6%	1.2%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	23.9%	26.2%	2.3%
Service - Business and Personal	7.7%	12.4%	4.7%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%

SOURCE: 1980/1990 U.S. Census of Social and Economic Characteristics

SECTION 3 COMMUNITY HACILITIES

## SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY HACILITIES

#### Introduction

The Town of Merrillville is governed by a Town Council form of government. The Town has seven councilmanic wards with one representative from each ward. The Town Hall and Council Chambers are located on 7820 Broadway. The Town relies primarily on property taxes, state taxes, user fees, and federal grants for sources of revenue. The 1999 total property tax rate was \$14.94 per \$100.00 of assessed valuation. The Town of Merrillville was \$2,22 per \$100 in 1999. Total assessed valuation for the Town in 1998 was over \$261 million.

#### Police, Fire Protection and Emergency Services

Police protection is provided by the Police Department head-Merrillville in the Town Building, 7820 guartered Broadway. The Department has a staff of 47 officers and 30 part-time and full-time civilians. The department responded to nearly thirty-five thousand calls in 1997, a 47 percent increase over 1990.

Ross Township Fire Department is responsible for fire protection in Merrillville. The Department has 130 volunteers and no fulltime employees. Four stations

maintained at 7905 Taft, 850 W. 57th, 18 W. 73rd and 9200 E. Old Lincoln Highway.

Emergency services are provided by the Emergency Medical Service Department. The department had approximately 3,100 responses in 1997, which was an 11 percent increase over 1996.

#### Schools

The Town of Merrillville is served by the Merrillville Community School Corporation, which oversees one high school, two middle schools and five elementary schools. Current enrollment is 6,095 students, a 14 percent increase over 1990. The schools employ approximately 500 people, making it the fourth highest employer in the Town.

The following colleges and universities are located within the region: Indiana University Northwest, Purdue University Calumet, Calumet College, Valparaiso University and the Indiana Vocational Technical College.

## SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY HACILITIES

#### Parks and Recreation

The Merrillyille Parks and Recreation department is responsible for administration and programming of all parks and recreation activities within the Town. Currently, the Town has over 44 acres of park land, of which 20 acres are wetlands.

Parks and Recreation Plans have been adopted in 1987, 1993 and 1998. Recreation programs have been stressed in the past, with the Park Authority now also determined to improve the development of existing and new parks.

Other recreation opportunities are also available to Town residents. Ross Township has three facilities: Hidden Lake Park, Ross Swimming Pool, and Independence Park. Lake County oversees Turkey Creek Golf Course and Deep River Park and Deep River Water Park, In addition, numerous private facilities exist within Merrillville.

#### Library

The Lake County Public Library is located on the south side of U.S. 30 east of Taft Road. The library system holds over 950 thousand books, 19,000 videos, 93,000 audio recordings and over 2,000 periodical and newspapers. Nearly 2 million items were circulated to adults and children during 1998. Internet workstations provide internet access to patrons.

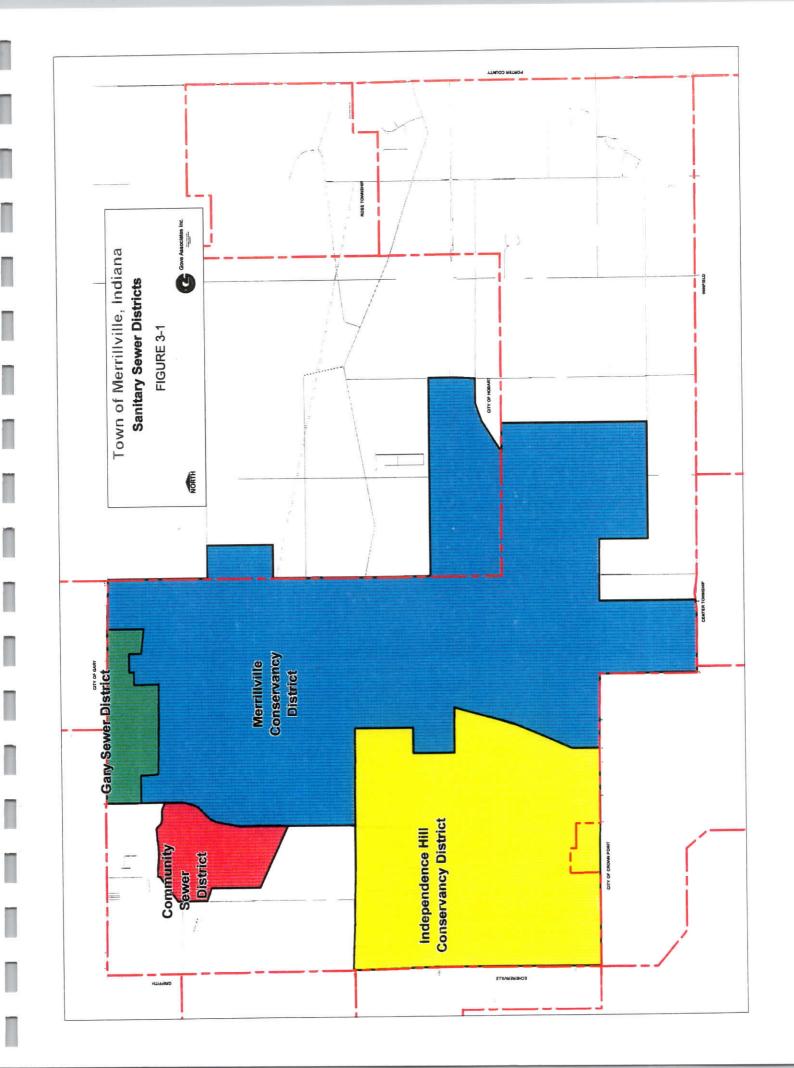
#### Medical Services

The Methodist Hospitals' Southlake Campus is located at 8701 Broadway. Along with St. Mary's Medical Center in Hobart, over 1,200 beds are available for area residents. Merrillville-Hobart region also have access to over 600 doctors.

#### **Utilities**

Sanitary sewer collection and conveyance is provided by independent utilities and conservancy districts. The districts, shown on Figure 3-1, are regulated by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and are not subject to operations or oversight by the Town of Merrillville. Nonetheless, these utilities are instrumental in the growth of the community. Wastewater treatment is the responsibility of the Gary Sanitary District.

Potable water is provided to Merrillville primarily by the Northwest Indiana Water Company. A modest amount of drinking water is derived from residential wells, with additional water supplied to certain



## SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY HACILITIES

subdivisions by the above-mentioned conservancy districts.

The stormwater drainage system consists of a combination of separated storm sewers, open ditches, detention/retention ponds and combined sewers. Typically, subdivisions in Merrillville are drained by a stormwater sewer or ditch that drains into a lateral tributary of Turkey Creek. Platted subdivisions, streets, retail centers, churches and other developed lands have created a stormwater management problem for the community.

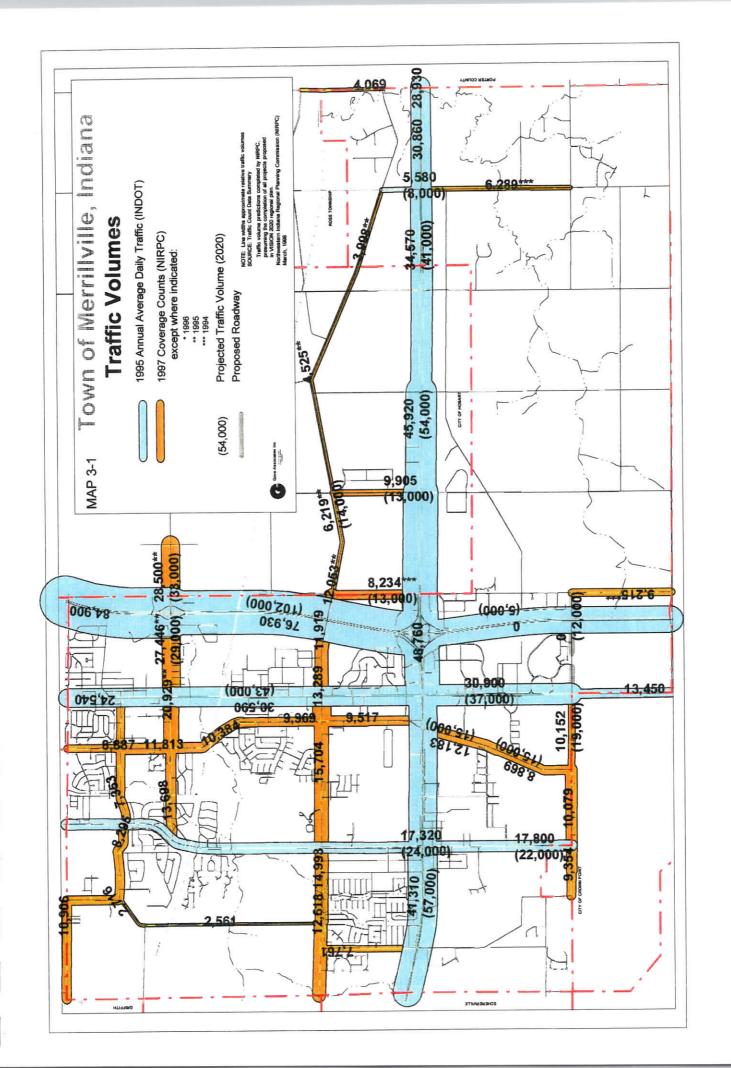
#### **Transportation**

**Traffic Volume** - Land use and transportation are closely linked. In order to understand fully the implications of land use decisions on transportation (and vice versa), the current traffic conditions must be understood. Map 3-1 shows the traffic volumes on the major thoroughfares in Merrillville. The highest volume roads are I-65, U.S. 30 and Broadway. These roads serve areas that tend to have the highest density of commercial and office uses (Map 4-1, Existing Land Use, page 4-5). In general, commercial uses generate larger volumes of traffic.

Street Classification - Because of the prominence of certain roadways, their physical conditions, and the overall land-use pattern in American cities, automobile traffic tends to be concentrated on certain roadways. On average, 80 percent of travel is done on about 20 percent of the roads. In order to set priorities for funding certain roads with the highest volume. transportation planners established a road classification system.

Although there is some variation in the classification of roadways, they are typically divided into roadways that carry local traffic and those that carry through traffic. Through roadways are further divided according to their function. There are five basic types of roads in Merrillville (Map 3-2):

> Interstate - An interstate roadway is designed to handle large volumes of traffic moving at high speeds over long distances or between urban areas. The capacity of interstates is greatly enhanced by the elimination of all atgrade intersections and driveway cuts for frontage access. Points of entrance and exit are carefully controlled to maximize roadway capacity.



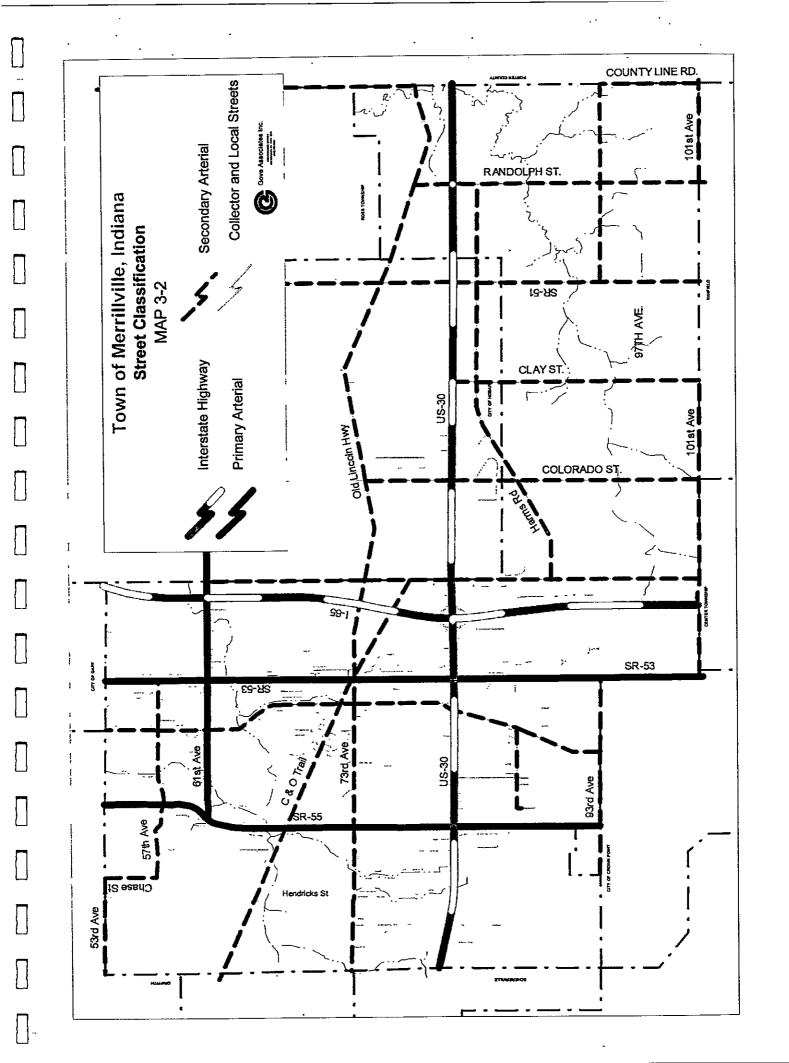
## SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Primary Arterial - Arterial roads are the backbone of the surface street system. They provide continuity from one city to another, and they can carry long trips when an expressway alternative is not provided. Primary arterials are intended to provide a high degree of mobility and serve longer trips. They also provide for higher operating speeds and high levels of service.

Secondary Arterial - The secondary arterial system augments the primary arterial system by providing for shorter length trips at generally slower speeds. The connections provided between activity centers are community-based, and delays are more likely to occur due to a higher level access from adjacent land uses and a slightly lower emphasis on through traffic function.

Urban Collector - The collector street system provides both land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas. The purpose of a collector street is to collect vehicles from the local subdivision streets and distribute them to either local destinations or to an arterial. Collector streets can also provide internal circulation and access to non-residential areas, such as industrial parks and major shopping centers.

Local Streets - The sole function of local streets is to provide access to adjacent land. These streets make up a large percentage of total street mileage of the Town, but carry a small portion of the vehicle mile of travel. Local neighborhood streets and industrial district service drives should provide access to collector streets or to longer distance through routes, but in such a manner that through traffic is not encouraged to use the local streets as a shortcut route.



SECTION 4 EXISTING TIAND USE

## SECTION 4 - EXISTING HAND HISE

#### Introduction

An existing land use inventory is a necessary first step in planning for the future of a community. The inventory depicts the 1998 distribution and location of land uses within Merrillville. The existing land use map (Map 4-1) is based upon the interpretation of aerial photographs taken in April, 1993 and field checks done by Town staff and the Consultant. Below are the classifications used in the land use inventory.

#### Land Use Classifications

**Residential** - The area in which dwellings with their accessory buildings occupy the major portion of the land. This includes the following subcategories:

**Single-Family Residential** - One detached or attached (duplex) dwelling unit on a single parcel. All units in this subcategory are built on foundations or basements using traditional building methods.

Multiple-Family Residential - One or more buildings containing three or more dwelling units each. All units in this subcategory are built on foundations or basements using traditional building methods.

**Mobile Home Park** - A designated area for the placement of mobile homes for occupancy that meet minimum design requirements.

Public - An area or facility used by a Township, Town, County, School District, State agency, or Federal facilities to meet the needs of the community. This includes town and township offices, schools, public meeting spaces, public parking lots and other public uses.

Quasi-Public - An area or facility used by a limited number of persons with particular interests and nonprofit organizations, such as churches, day care centers, private schools, private clubs and related activities, public utilities and cemeteries.

for the sale of retail or wholesale goods or the provision of personal, business, or professional services. The subcategory includes structures, adjacent land and parking areas dedicated for the use of employees and customers.

## SECTION 4 - Existing Hand Hise

Public and Private Recreation - An area or facility used for recreational activities. including public parks, water parks, golf courses and nature areas. The subcategory includes structures, adjacent land and parking areas dedicated for the use of employees and customers.

Industrial - An area where raw or unfinished materials or commodities are used to produce a product or service. This can also include wholesale business activities.

Agricultural - This category may consist of croplands, permanent pasture or orchards. Agricultural lands include the farmstead and other structures occupying the land.

Open Space/Forested Land - Areas that are covered with deciduous and coniferous species of trees or shrubs. This category includes abandoned agricultural fields and flood plains. Lands in this category consist of both suitable and unsuitable areas for development.

**Vacant** - Areas that cannot be placed in the above categories, that may or may not be suitable for development.

#### Trends and Analysis

Merrillville has an area of approximately 20,980 acres. The Town is made up primarily of agricultural lands, single-family residential homes, open space areas, commercial and office uses. Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1 show the 1998 distribution of major land uses by acreage and percentage. and compare these values to the land uses inventory taken in 1974.

Agriculture is still a dominant land use in Merrillville, making up over 45 percent of the total land area. Agricultural uses are focused primarily in the panhandle region. with other agricultural operations located in the northwest and southwest parts of Town. Another dominate land use is single-family residential at nearly 20 percent of the total land area. The majority of the single-family homes in Merrillville are located in the north and central regions, with less dense, rural residential development in the panhandle.

The 1974 land use inventory was developed as part of the first comprehensive plan, which was enacted when the Town had just been incorporated. As can be seen in the table, significant changes in land use have taken place over the past 24 years. Agricultural uses have declined by 15

## SECTION 4 - EXISTING HAND USE

percent, while the majority of other land uses have risen dramatically. Of particular note is the six percent increase in singlefamily housing and the doubling of commercial/office land use. Quasi-public land uses were under-represented in the 1974 survey, so are not comparable.

The table also shows that the amount of undeveloped land (both forested and vacant)

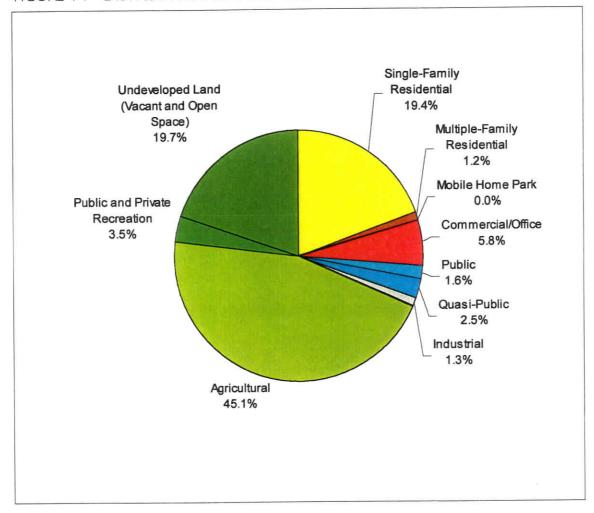
has remained consistent as a percentage of the total land area, while actually increasing in acreage. This increase in acreage is due, in part, to the additional land annexed on the eastern side of Town and the retirement of agricultural land over this period. Even though some of this undeveloped land is unsuitable for development, there still exists adequate areas to accommodate future growth.

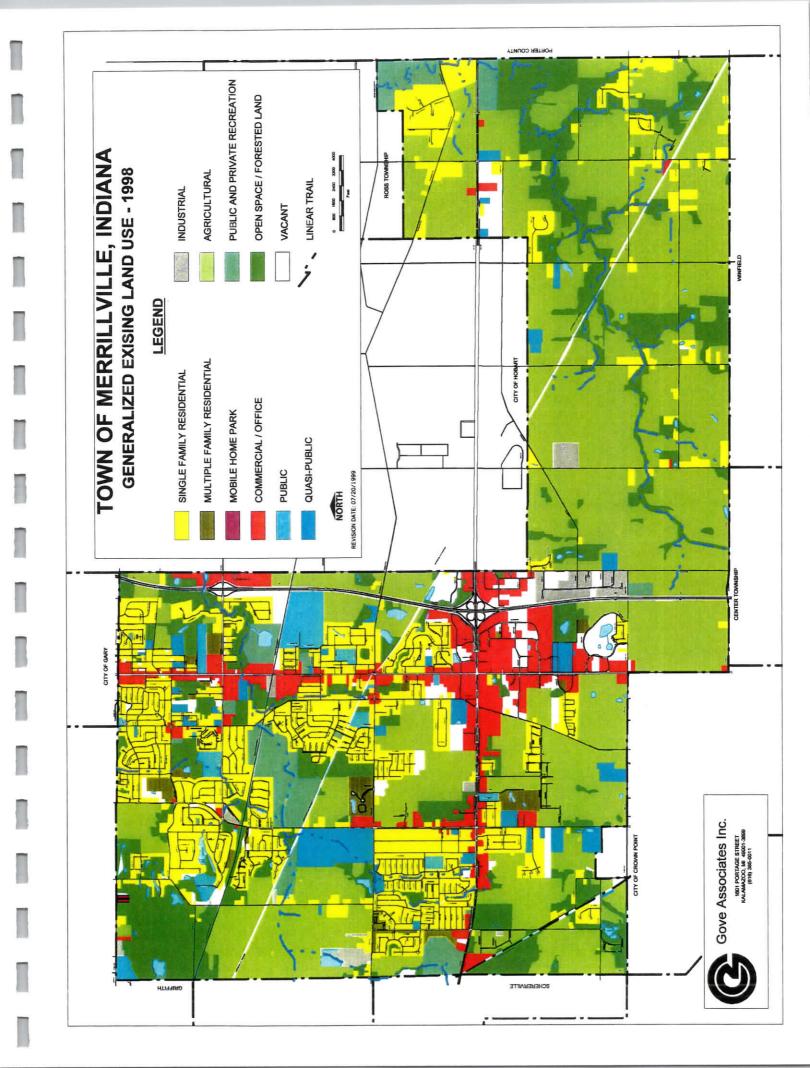
TABLE 4-I - LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

Land Use	1974 Area (Acres)	1974 % of Land Use	1998 Area (Acres)	1998 % of Land Use
Single-Family Residential	2,417.4	13.4%	3,831.8	19.4%
Multiple-Family Residential	55.7	0.3%	231.3	1.2%
Mobile Home Park	3.3	0.02%	3.7	0.02%
Commercial/Office	502.3	2.8%	1,133.9	5.8%
Public	167.3	0.9%	317.8	1.6%
Quasi-Public	3.7	0.02%	490.0	2.5%
Industrial	44.6	0.2%	252.8	1.3%
Agricultural	10,859.1	60.2%	8,884.5	45.1%
Public and Private Recreation	454.5	2.5%	688.2	3.5%
Undeveloped Land (Vacant and Open Space)	3,522.0	19.5%	3,880.4	19.7%
TOTAL	18,029.9	100.0%	19,714.4	100.0%

SOURCE: 1974 Land Use: Harland Bartholomew & Associates; 1998 Land Use: Gove Associates Inc.

FIGURE 4-1 - DISTRIBUTION OF LAND USES





# HARTII - HLAN AND JMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 5 - GOALS AND ACTIONS

SECTION 6 - FUTURE LAND USE

SECTION 7 - IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 5 Goals and Actions

### SECTION 5 - BOALS AND ACTIONS

#### Introduction

The goals and actions of this Plan establish the overall guidelines for future public and private decisions relating to the development of Memillville. Issues were identified through analysis of existing and recently gathered information, communications with local leaders, public workshops and a community survey conducted in the Fall of 1998.

#### Goals and Actions

From the results of the 1998 survey (see Appendix) it is clear that respondents want natural areas and farmland preserved. They also want to promote single-family housing and housing for senior citizens. Some 63 percent of the respondents wanted to discourage new apartment housing in Merrillville.

In response to one set of questions about issues and conditions, traffic congestion was felt to be a major problem. People also want action taken to improve the appearance and safety of major streets in the Town. Over half of the respondents think sidewalks and storm drainage facilities need improvement.

There is a lack of a sense of community in the Town of Merrillville. This is the result of the historical development pattern during the

post world War II period. Subdivisions were built and then commercial and industrial development was constructed along major streets. Residents of the Town would like to have an identifiable Town Center that would become a gathering place and a place to inspire pride in the community.

Neighborhoods do help people become connected. The improvement of neighborhood parks and the expansion of trails and open spaces will also help residents feel a part of a community. Improving the appearance of the major corridors in the Town will also instill pride in the residents of the Town.

The goals contained in this Plan are a set of policies developed by the Merrillville Plan Commission to reflect the community desires for the future. Following the goal statements are a number of specific recommendations for action. These actions are selected to help the community achieve the stated goals.

**GOAL I**: Improve transportation corridors to reduce congestion and increase public safety

Action A: Work with the Indiana Department of Transportation to identify the impacts of proposed new developments on Statemaintained facilities.



## SECTION 5 - BOALS AND ACTIONS

Action B: Work with the Indiana Department of Transportation to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate existing and forecasted travel demand.

**Action C:** During the land use planning and site review process, require that traffic safety and impacts are considered.

**Action D**: Provide transportation alternatives in the form of transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and services for persons who cannot or choose not to use automobiles.

**GOAL 2:** Encourage the preservation of natural areas and open space

**Action A:** Identify and prioritize the value of existing open space and natural areas.

Action B: Identify areas suitable for development and the limitations of these sites (wetlands, woodlots and floodplains).

**Action C:** Promote the use of suitable natural open space areas as a recreational option for area residents.

**Action D**: Prevent private development of wetlands, floodplains and proposed storm water detention areas.

**Action E**: Encourage cluster development for sites containing wetlands, forest, wildlife habitats or proposed stormwater facilities.

**GOAL 3:** Improve\_the\_appearance\_of the major transportation corridors

Action A: Inventory appearance problems along major corridors (Broadway, Taft, U.S. 30, etc.) and develop an improvement plan to upgrade appearance.

**Action B:** Develop a set of development guidelines to improve the appearance of corridors.

**Action C:** Develop signage requirements that will improve the appearance of the major transportation corridors.

**Action D**: Develop landscaping guidelines for major corridors.

**Action E:** Encourage public and private investment in corridor appearance improvement projects, such as tree planting.

**GOAL 4:** Improve existing and purchase new park and recreation areas for active and passive use

**Action A:** Follow the goals and actions outlined in the Town's Recreation Plan.

**Action B**: Explore all possible funding opportunities to support the development, maintenance and expansion of the Town Park system.

## SECTION 5 - BOALS AND ACTIONS

**Action C**: Coordinate the development of facilities and the programming of activities with the School District.

**Action D:** Require that new residential developments provide needed recreation areas and facilities.

**Action E:** Improve and expand pedestrian and bike trail systems.

**GOAL 5**: Beautify the Town in ways that distinguish it as a quality place to live, work, play, or visit

Action A: Civic groups should develop programs to assist needy and elderly homeowners with painting and cleanup of their properties.

Action B: The Town should enforce existing and/or adopt new property maintenance codes.

Action **C**: Inventory appearance problems along the major transportation corridors and develop an improvement plan to upgrade appearance.

Action D: Plant and maintain more trees along public streets and in public parks.

**Action E:** Design and improve the appearance of the major Town entry points.

**GOAL 6:** Encourage new single-family housing and housing for senior citizens

**Action A:** Complete a housing market assessment to identify the type and price range of housing needed.

**Action B:** Review existing zoning ordinance and propose amendments that will remove procedures not needed and add provisions to encourage new housing developments.

**Action C:** Create an incentive program for developers to encourage the development of open space or cluster residential developments to maintain the rural/small town atmosphere of the community.

**Action D:** Advise developers of the housing needed and areas of the Town development can occur.

**GOAL 7**: Encourage new, clean industrial and commercial development in appropriate locations

**Action A:** Work with the Chamber of Commerce and other economic development professionals to promote Merrillville as a prime industrial/commercial location.

**Action B**: Work with existing employers to maintain and expand the existing job base of the community.



## SECTION 5 - GOALS AND ACTIONS

Action C: Identify assistance and funding to finance improvements and programs that will encourage expansion of the community industrial employment base.

**Action D:** Coordinate and promote the provision of adequate utilities and streets to serve areas proposed for future industrial and commercial development.

**GOAL 8:** Improve development regulations regarding stormwater drainage and soil erosion

**Action A:** Inventory existing drainage problem areas and design improvements to handle problems.

**Action B:** Develop mitigation strategies for the drainage problems and identify assistance and funding to finance improvement projects.

**Action C**: Modify site design requirements to reduce offsite drainage and minimize impervious cover.

Action D: Require that new developments handle their stormwater runoff in ways that do not damage other property.

**GOAL 9:** Maintain cooperative relationship with surrounding jurisdictions and the County

Action A: Meet regularly with representatives of the surrounding jurisdictions and the County to identify areas of common concern.

**Action B**: Develop strategies and funding options to address cooperative concerns.

GOAL 10: Develop a central focus for the Town of Merrillville to establish town identity

Action A: Develop a "Town Center" to serve as a community gathering place and give a visual focus.

**Action B**: Encourage commercial areas to provide for better pedestrian circulation and gathering places.

**Action C**: Promote and celebrate the historic, architectural and cultural resources of the community.

SECTION 6 JUTURE HAND HSE

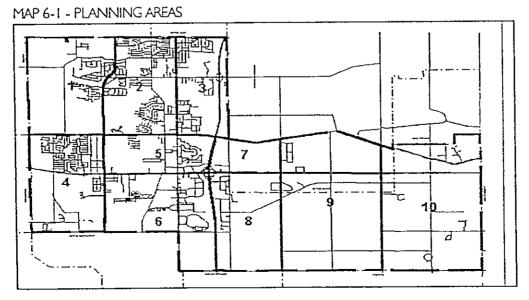
#### Introduction

The residents of Merrillville have expressed their hopes for the future through both the community survey and the town meetings (see Section 5 - Goals and Actions and Appendix A). Concerns were varied, but of particular note were issues related to traffic congestion, preservation of farmland and areas, construction of new natural apartments and the lack of a town center. In other words, the residents of Merrillville are preserving with existing concerned community character, while still embracing future opportunities.

The Plan so far has documented the physical and social aspects of Merrillville and has outlined goals for the next 20 years. A Plan must go much further than this, however, if it is to guide future Town decisions. This

section will focus on future population and land use patterns for Merrillville. It will present population and housing projections to the year 2020, which will help decisionmakers anticipate future land use needs. A future land use map will also be presented. This map shows potential patterns of development over the next twenty years and beyond. Finally, the effect of development on transportation will be evaluated through the means of a trip generation model.

In order to evaluate future land uses in Merrillville, the Town has been divided into 10 Planning Areas. These planning areas are outlined in Map 6-1, and were used to evaluate population distribution in Section 2. Planning areas have been used so that the "pattern of change" can be more easily seen for smaller areas. These areas will be particularly useful when considering future population and transportation trends.



### Population and Housing Projection

In order to prepare for the next 20 years, it is necessary to project the number of people that may be living in the Town by the year 2020. Population, projections are, in essence, educated guesses based on past trends. By their very nature, therefore, population projections are not always accurate, but they do give some guidance on the potential future needs of the Town.

Table 6-I shows projected population for Merrillville, surrounding communities and the County to the year 2020. These projections by the Northwest Indiana

Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) show that Merrillville is expected to grow by nearly 6,000 people, or over 18 percent, over the next 20 years. During this same period, approximately 2,200 households are predicted to be created, a rate of nearly 100 new homes per year.

Table 6-2, however, shows that Merrillville grew by over 2,026 dwelling units from 1990 to 1998, a rate of over 250 new housing units per year. This far exceeds the NIRPC predicted increase. If one assumes 2.5 persons per dwelling unit, this rate of growth would add over 13,000 residents to Merrillville's population, more than double the increase predicted for 2020 by NIRPC.

TABLE 6-1 - POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR MERRILLVILLE AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES. (HOUSING UNITS IN PARENTHESIS)

	1990	1995	2020	% Difference 1990 - 1995	% Difference 1995 - 2020
Merrillville	28,568 (10,515)	32,046 (12,432)	38,027* (14,626)	12.2	18.7
Hobart	40,365	41,551	44,950	2.9	8.2
Crown Point	27,799	29,232	37,046	5.2	26.7
Lake County	475,594	480,555	509;229	1.0	6.0

Source: Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

Table 6-2 - New Dwelling Units 1990 - 1998

Year	Single Family	2-4 Family	Multi Family	Total
1990	37	61	0	98
1991	39	15	687 <sup>(i)</sup>	741
1992	44	30	50™	124
1993	94	43	47	184
1994	86	78	102 <sup>ca</sup>	266
1995	76	56	0	132
1996	59	12	74 <sup>r9</sup>	145
1997	49	22	120	191
1998	61	14	70	145
'90-'98 Total	545	331	1,150	2026
	987 approved, only 68	37 built		•

"Includes 50 unit building for Elderly (Ahapa Apartments)

SOURCE: Merrillville Planning and Building Department.

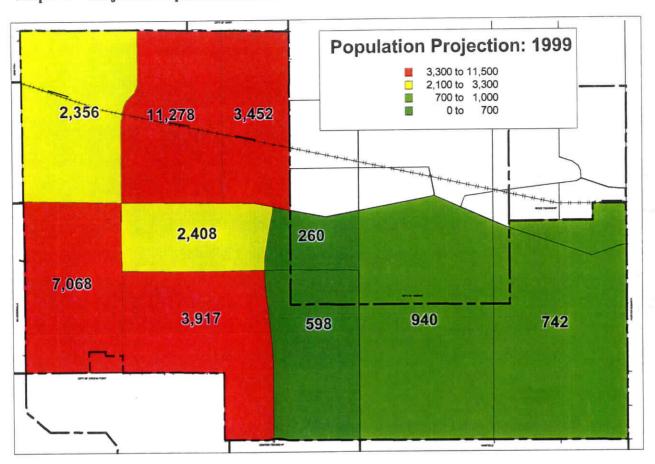
The result would be a population of 45,000 people living in 18,500 housing units in the year 2020. The more realistic projection would be a

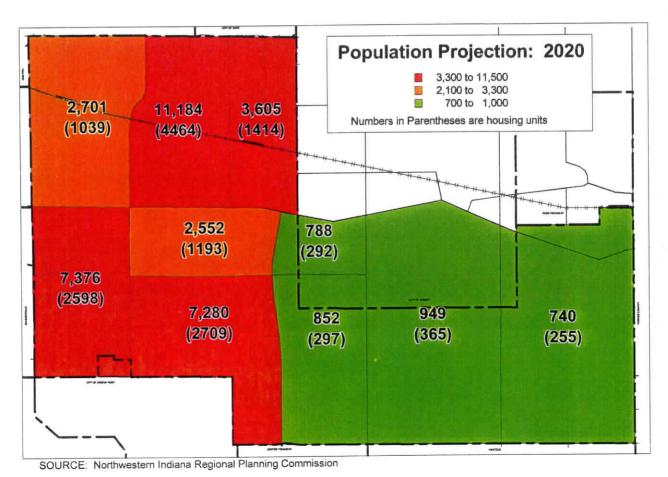
population of about 41,500.

The new homes will not be equally distributed throughout the Town. Some parts of town have more vacant or open land that can accommodate new development. Map 6-2 shows the projected population distribution in 1999 and 2020.

Map 6-2 shows that Planning Area 6 will nearly double in population over the next twenty years. Other regions will experience less change over this period, such as the panhandle (Planning Areas 8, 9, and 10) and North Merrillville (Plan Areas 2 and 3).

Map 6-2 - Projected Population Distribution: 1999 and 2020





# SECTION 6 - HUTURE HAND HSE

#### Future Land Use Plan

The overall concept of the future land use plan is embodied in the Future Land Use Plan Map (page 6-27). This map shows the preferred future distribution of land use for Merrillville. High intensity land uses are, for the most part, confined to the central Merrillville region, with lower intensity development and open space reserved for the panhandle region.

Commercial and industrial uses are limited to major transportation corridors such as U.S. 30 and I-65. Other commercial corridors included Broadway, Mississippi and Taft Streets. Open space is preserved in numerous parks and drainage corridors throughout the town. Two pedestrian/ bicycle pathways will also serve to connect schools and neighborhood commercial centers, helping to develop a sense of community for both old time residents and newcomers. Additional land could be purchased west of the existing Town Hall site for a central park and natural area. This land could be developed as a central town gathering place.

Table 6-3 shows the number of acres devoted to each land use and compares it to an average land use distribution found in other municipalities. Residential uses will make up nearly 70 percent of the total land area. These residential uses included a wide range of housing densities. Agriculture/Rural Residential with a maximum density of one dwelling unit per acre to Medium Density Residential with over five dwelling units per acre. Parks and Open Space will make up another 15 percent of the land area. The remaining land area will be made up of Commercial and Office, Industrial, and Public uses.

What is the proper allocation of land uses in a municipality? In many ways that depends upon the character of the town and its Certain community design residents. standards can be used, however, to compare weaknesses and strengths of a community. Table 6-3 shows Urban Area Standards for different land uses. This table shows that the Town has higher percentages in residential and commercial land uses and a low percentage of land dedicated to industrial uses. The allocation of land to open space meets typical urban land use standards.

TABLE 6-3 - FUTURE LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

Land Use Type	Acreage % of Tota		Urban, Standard* (%)
Agriculture/Rural Residential	1,925	9.7	NA
Low Density Residential	9,888	49.9	35 - 39
Medium Density Residential	982	5.0	NA
Commercial/Office	2,614	13.2	4.8 - 5.0
Public	318	1.6	NA
Industrial	1,170	5.9	10 - 11
Parks/Open Space/Floodplain	2,915	14.7	10 - 18
Total	19,812	100.0	

\*Gallion and Eisner - "A Matter of Standards", by Ann Benson, Urban Land Magazine, November 1987.

SOURCE: Gove Associates Inc.

#### Agriculture

The history and character of the area was originally defined by agriculture. These uses, however, are becoming increasingly untenable, as continued residential and commercial growth move into the area. This Plan restricts agricultural uses to the panhandle region. This region will experience less development pressure and will remain more rural in character.

The proposed agricultural areas were chosen based upon the presence of existing large lot agricultural parcels. While some of these areas are in active agriculture, there is no guarantee they will remain so. Individual

property owners may intend to ultimately sell or develop these lands for an urban use. Beyond the outright purchase of the development rights of these parcels for the purposes of preserving them as agriculture or open space, the only options for controlling the location and pace of development (and preservation) is through public or nonprofit land use controls.

Within the set of land use controls currently available, the most widely used is zoning. There are several zoning concepts that are applicable to the preservation of agricultural or natural areas. Those options include the following:

# SECTION 6 - HUTURE HAND HISE

Exclusive farmland zoning, in which nonfarm residents are not allowed and properties may be split into parcels of at least 40 acres or more;

Ouarter-quarter zoning, which allows for one nonfarm residential dwelling for each 40 acres of land;

Sliding scale zoning, whereby the number of allowable nonfarm residences increases as the size of the parent parcel increases; however, proportionally fewer dwellings are allowed the larger the parent parcel. For example, one dwelling may be allowed for the first 10 acres, another dwelling for the next 20 acres, a third for the next 30 acres, a forth for the next 40 acres, etc.

Point/numerical zoning, which requires a proposed lot to meet objective standards for approval; such standards are defined on a point system and the proposed lot must accumulate a minimum number of points. Standards may consist of variables such as distance from a public road, availability of public utilities, fire protection, existing density development, etc.

Agricultural buffer zone, an agricultural/residential zone is created between higher density residential development and large tracts of agricultural land. This buffer, or transition, zone allows for a rural residential lifestyle while protecting farming operations from the problems associated with residential development.

Rural cluster zoning, is a technique that encourages new residential development to cluster in a few selected areas on a parent parcel, rather than being spread across the entire site. This permits large portions of the parent parcel to remain open. The dwelling units are clustered in areas that are screened from roadway views, out of sensitive environmental areas, avoiding prime farmland (unless there is no other location), and in locations where they can be effectively provided with services. Open spaces remaining after dustering are protected in perpetuity through a range of legal mechanisms (such as conservation easements).

When a local municipality adopts a specific set of land use controls to protect farmland and open space, it may involve combinations of the above concepts in order to address local needs and concerns. For example,

# SECTION 6 - HUTURE HAND HSE

### Planning Area #2

Planning Area #2, also in north Merrillville, is delimited by the Town boundary with the City of Gary on the north, by Taft/Cleveland Streets (S.R. 55) on the west, and 73rd Avenue on the south and Broadway/SR51 on the east. The major traffic thoroughfares in the area are Taft Street, Broadway Street, 57th Avenue, 61st Avenue, and Harrison/Madison Street.

This planning area is currently well settled, representing some of the original subdivisions and neighborhoods of the Town. Future development will increase low density residential and slightly increase medium density residential and commercial/ office. These increases generate a moderate number of trips. This increase in trip generation should put only slight pressure on existing roadways. The increase commercial/office trips, however, tend to generate more traffic during peak hours.

TABLE 6-5 - PLANNING AREA #2 - LAND USE AND TRIP GENERATION COMPARISON

*			Medium				
r#s	AG/Rural	Low Density	Density	Commercial			Parks/
	Residential	Residential	Residential	Office	Public	Industrial	Open Space
2020 Land Use	0.0	1,236.3	139.8	172.6	52.5	12.2	454.9
(acres)				}			,5 ,.,
1998 Land Usé	89.7	990.2	101.5	164.4	94.8	21.9	601.3
(acres)						2,,,,	001.5
Net Change	(89.7)	246.2	38.3	8.2	(42.3)	(9.7)	(146.4)
Change in Trip	Ŧ	( 077	2 444		( )	(* . , )	
, ,		6,877	2,444	4,609			(585)
Generation	(716)			}	(235)	(178)	
Total Change in Trip Generation =		12,216					

SOURCE: Gove Associates Inc.

### Planning Area #3

Planning Area #3, the north east corner of Merrillville, is bounded by the Town boundary with the City of Gary on the north, by the City of Hobart on the east, and 73rd Avenue on the south and Broadway/ SR51 on the west. The major traffic thoroughfares in the area are Broadway Street, 61st Avenue, and 73rd Avenue. The Area is dominated by the two key northsouth thoroughfares of Broadway and I-65.

Similar to Planning Area #2, this area also represents some of the original subdivisions and neighborhoods of the Town. Future development will increase low density residential and slightly increase medium density residential and commercial/office. The increase in residential and commercial traffic will generate a significant increase in the number of trips. The major corridors in this region can expect a further increase in demand, particularly during peak hours. Traffic modeling done by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) show significant traffic increases (25 percent) along Broadway from 73rd Ave to 61st Ave. In addition, the NIRPC traffic model shows a large impact on 1-65 from U.S. 30 in Planning Area 5 to the northern Merrillville boundary, with traffic increasing by 25,000 trips per day.

TABLE 6-6 - PLANNING AREA #3 - LAND USE AND TRIP GENERATION COMPARISON

			Medium				
	AG/Rural	Low Density	Density	Commercial			Parks/
	Residential	Residential	Residential	Office	Public	Industrial	Open Space
2020 Land Use	0.0	759.7	22.8	257.1	170.4	0.0	227.2
(acres)							
1998 Land Use	244.8	434.8	29.5	140.1	221.0	0.0	364.4
(acres)							
Net Change	(244.8)	324.9	(6.7)	117.0	(50.6)	0.0	(137.2)
Change in Trip	(1,953)	9,078	(425)	65,542	(281)	0	(549)
Generation							
Total Change in Trip Generation =		71,412					

SOURCE: Gove Associates Inc.

# SECTION 6 - HUTURE HAND HSE

#### Street Improvement Projects

As a part of the Land Use Plan future street extensions have been shown. These include 93rd Avenue between Broadway and Grand Boulevard, 86th Avenue between Broadway and Taft street, 78th Avenue between Broadway and Taft Street, realignment of Merrillville Road north of 93rd Avenue and a future interchange at 101st Avenue and I-65. When these projects are added to the street network, vehicular circulation will be greatly improved. The listing of major street

improvement projects below has been scheduled for construction or are planned by local and state officials to be undertaken within the next 10 years.

Within the Subdivision Regulations of the Town, streets are listed by classification, right-of-way width and setbacks. The Town Staff, Plan Commission and Council should require the dedication of the required rightsof-way when new developments are proposed. These regulations need to be updated when new streets are added to the network.

Major Street Improvement Projects

	Improvement	Year
State Projects		
US-30	Resurface SR-55 to County Line Road	1999
SR-55	(Taft) from 93rd to US-30 widen to 4 lanes and intersection improvements	1999-2000
SR-55	Intersection and signal improvements at 57th, 61st and 93rd	2000-2001
SR-53	(Broadway) intersection and signal improvements at 68th Place	2000
US-30	Improvements at 1-65 interchange area	2000-2001
1-65	Interchange improvements at 61st	2000-2001
1-65	Interchange improvements at US-30	2002-2003
SR-53	Add center left turn lane between 73rd and 61st	2002
SR-55	Resurface between US-30 and 73rd	2003-2005
SR-53	Add center turn lane between 93rd and 101st	2005
1-65	Interchange at 101st Avenue	Long-Range
Local Projects		
Merrillville Road	US-30 south to the south Town boundary widen to 3 lanes	1999
Mississippi	US-30 north to 61st widen to 4 lanes and bridge over railroad	1999-2001
Randolph Street	Resurface between 93rd and 101st	2000-2001
93rd Avenue	SR-55 to Mississippi widen to 4 lanes and bridge over 1-65	2000-2003
Merrillville Road	Realignment and intersection improvements at 93rd	2000-2003
Colorado	93rd Avenue to north Town boundary improve to 3 or 4 lanes	2003-2005
Mississippi Avenue	Between 93rd Avenue and US-30 improve to 4 lanes	2005-2010
101st	Broadway to Clay resurface with new I-65 interchange construction	Long-Range

SECTION 7 JMPLEMENTATION

## SECTION 7 - Implementation

#### Introduction

This section of the Plan presents the tools and processes that are currently available to help make this Plan a reality. It also contains a schedule that depicts the activities that should be undertaken along with the recommended participants, timing, funding sources to secure success.

Public Investment Strategies represent the most pro-active method to develop the Town in accordance with this Plan. Both public and private sector investments in infrastructure are required for new developments. The location and timing of such development is dependent upon capacity to pay for the necessary infrastructure. In the case of private sector (developer) improvements, the required Town approvals must be obtained.

> Cooperation between the Town and other public and quasi-public entities is also critical to the success of the Plan. These entities play a key role in the use of land and communication needs to continue to be maintained to enable the Town to properly plan for the future. The School District, County and Regional Agencies and the Indiana Department of Transportation all have

legal authority and responsibilities for programs and projects that occur in, and impact upon, the development of the Town. Coordination with these bodies is important for planning and programming needs to be maintained, and to accomplish the goals set forth in this Plan.

Finally, the activities occurring within surrounding communities, particularly those related to land use planning, zoning, and other development controls can have a direct impact upon planning within the Town. Coordination and communication should be ongoing among these jurisdictions.

Information and education are fundamental to the implementation of this Plan. Without the concurrence of residents, businesses. major employers. developers, County officials and school officials, the Plan will not be successful.

> To help garner that concurrence and contribute to the success of the Plan, the Town needs to institute information and education programs. That can include sending a small flyer, or tri-fold, that briefly describes the main components of the Plan and possibly include a small copy of the future land use map.

The Town might also consider conducting an annual community survey informing residents of recent developments and asking for impressions. attitudes, and opinions about specific issues related to current or proposed developments. This will help keep residents abreast of activities in the Town while providing information that will help officials better understand the opinions of residents.

The Town <u>Capital Improvements</u> Program (CIP) and Budget is a vehicle to tie the Plan to the Town's budgeting process. A CIP identifies the capital projects that the Town proposes to undertake, along with the sources of funding for each improvement. The CIP should generally follow the development recommendations of this Plan and phase those improvements accordingly. The Town's one year Capital Improvements Budget is intended to address those projects that are of the highest priority.

#### Implementation Schedule

This Section complements the Plan's Goals and Actions (Section 5). The Implementation Schedule groups the actions under 10 Goal Statements and identifies participants, the timing and potential funding sources for each action. The Implementation Schedule quickly identifies time frames and permits comparisons between the many actions identified in the Plan.

This list is not a comprehensive list of all actions needed over the next 10 to 20 years, but it is a list of the primary actions needed to accomplish the Plan's goals. Funding sources often change as time passes, as do organizations and priorities. The Town Plan Commission should annually review the schedule to ensure actions are accomplished and goals are met. A new set of goals should then be targeted for the next year.

The Implementation Schedule lists participants that include local and state agencies or groups. Quite often an action has several participants due to the team effort required to accomplish the action. The Schedule identifies primary and secondary participants. The Schedule's timing section identifies actions as short-range/ongoing actions (one to five years), or long-range actions (six or more).

KEY TO IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM								
IMPLEMI	IMPLEMENTING BODIES AND PARTICIPANTS							
A - Town Council B - Town Plan Commission C - Town Staff D - Parks and Recreation Committee E - Neighboring Communities F - Merchants Association G - Chamber of Commerce H - County and Regional Agencies I - Indiana Department of Transportation (DOT) J - Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) K - Historical Society L - Library Board M - School District N - Service Clubs and Other Volunteers O - Professional Consultant P - Community Organizations and Churches								
SCHEDULE	FUNDING SOURCES							
Timing (Years)  • 1-5 (Short-Range, Ongoing)  • 6+ Years (Long-Range)	<ul> <li>I - General Revenues/User Fees</li> <li>2 - Tax Increment Financing</li> <li>3 - Special Assessment District</li> <li>4 - Special Voted Millage or Bond</li> <li>5 - Revenue Bonds</li> <li>6 - IDOT (TEA 21 and Other)</li> <li>7 - Federal or State Grants and Loans</li> <li>8 - Foundations, Grants, Contributions</li> <li>9 - Private and Business</li> </ul>							

# IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Goals and Actions	Lead Participants	Other Participants	Short-Range (I-5 Years)	Long-Range (6+ Years)					
GOAL I: Improve transportation corridors to reduce congestion and increase public safety.									
Action A: Work with the Indiana Department of Transportation to identify the impacts of proposed new developments on State- maintained facilities.	в,с	<b>ДН,О</b>	×	×	1,7				
Action B: Work with the Indiana Department of Transportation to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate existing and forecasted travel demand.	A,C	B,F,G,H	X	X	1,2,3,6,7,9				
Action C: During the land use planning and site review process, require that traffic safety and impacts are considered.	B,C,	A,O	X	×					
Action D: Provide transportation alternatives in the form of transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and services for persons who cannot or choose not to use automobiles.	В,С,Н	A,E,I,O	×	×	1,2,4,6,7,8				

Goals and Actions	Lead Participants	Other Participants	Short-Range (I-5 Years)	Long-Range (6+ Years)	Funding Sources			
GOAL 2: Encourage the preservation of natural areas and open space.								
Action A: Identify and prioritize the value of existing open space and natural areas.	C,D,N,P	H,J	×		1,7,8			
Action B: Identify areas suitable for certain types of land uses and the development limitations of these sites.	C,D,N,P	H.J	×		1,7,8			
Action C: Promote the use of suitable open space areas as a recreational option for area residents.	B,C,D	N,P	×		1,7,8			
Action D: Prevent private development of wetlands, floodplains and proposed storm water detention areas.	в,с	A,H,J	×		1,7			
Action E: Encourage cluster development for sites containing wetlands, forest, wildlife habitats or proposed storm water facilities.	A,B,C	G,O	×		1,7			

SECTION 7 - Implementation

Goals and Actions	Lead Participants	Other Participants	Short-Range (I-5 Years)	Long-Range (6+ Years)	Funding Sources				
GOAL 5: Beautify the Town in ways that distinguish it as a quality place to live, work, play, or visit.									
Action A: Civic groups should develop programs to assist needy and elderly homeowners with painting and cleanup of their properties.	N,P	C,G	×	×	7,8,9				
Action B: The Town should enforce existing and/or adopt new property maintenance codes.	A,C,	0	X						
Action C: Inventory appearance problems along the major transportation corridors and develop an improvement plan to upgrade appearance.	B,C,F,G	A,O	X		1,6,7,8,9				
Action D: Plant and maintain more trees along public streets and in public parks.	C,F,G	A,B,N,P	X	×	1,6,7,8,9				
Action E: Design and improve the appearance of the major Townentry points.	B,C,F,G	A,O	×		1,6,7,8,9				

Goals and Actions	Lead Participants	Other Participants	Short-Range (I-5 Years)	Long-Range (6+ Years)	Funding Sources			
GOAL 6: Encourage new single-family housing and housing for senior citizens.								
Action A: Complete a housing market assessment to identify the type and price range of housing needed.	B,C,G	A,H,O	×		1,7,8,9			
Action B: Review existing zoning ordinance and propose amendments that will remove procedures not needed and add provisions to encourage new housing developments.	B,C,G	A,H,O	×		1,7,8,9			
Action C: Create an incentive program for developers to encourage the development of open space or cluster residential developments to maintain the rural/small town atmosphere of the community.	в,С	A,O	×		1,7,8,9			
Action D: Advise developers of the housing needed and areas of the Town development can occur.	B,C,G	A,O	×		1,7,8,9			

SECTION 7-- Implementation

Goals and Actions	Lead Participants	Other Participants	Short-Range (1-5 Years)	Long-Range (6 ± Years);					
GOAL 7: Encourage new, clean industrial and commercial development in appropriate locations.									
Action A: Work with the Chamber of Commerce and other economic development professionals to promote Merrillville as a prime industrial/commercial location.	C,G	A,H	X	*t.	1,7,8,9				
Action B: Work with existing employers to maintain and expand the existing job base of the community.	C,G	A,H	×	×	1,7,8,9				
Action C: Identify assistance and funding to finance improvements and programs that will encourage expansion of the community industrial employment base.	C,G	A,H	X	×	1,7,8,9				
Action D: Coordinate and promote the provision of adequate utilities and streets to serve areas proposed for future industrial and commercial development.	A,B,C,G	H	X		1,7,8,9				

Goals and Actions	Lead Participants	Other Participants	Short-Range (1-5 Years)	Long-Range (6+ Years)	Funding Sources				
GOAL 8: Improve development regulations regarding storm water drainage and soil erosion.									
Action A: Inventory existing drainage problem areas and design improvements to handle problems.	C,H,J	ĄO	×		1,7				
Action B: Develop mitigation strategies for the drainage problems and identify assistance and funding to finance improvement projects.	C,H,J	A,O	×		1,7,8,9				
Action C: Modify site design requirements to reduce offsite drainage and minimize impervious cover.	в,С	A,O	×		1,7				
Action D: Require that new developments handle their storm water runoff in ways that do not damage other property.	B,C	A,O	×		1,7				

SECTION 7 - Implementation

Goals and Actions	Lead Participants	Other Participants	Short-Range (I-5 Years)	Long-Range (6+ Years)	Funding Sources				
GOAL 9: Maintain cooperative relationship with surrounding jurisdictions and the County.									
Action A: Meet regularly with representatives of the surrounding jurisdictions and the County to identify areas of common concern.	A,B	E,G,H,I,J,M	X	~	1,7				
Action B: Develop strategies and funding options to address cooperative concerns.	ΑВ	E,G,H,I,J,M	×		1,7 -				

GOAL 10: Develop a central focus for the Town of Merrillville to establish town identity.								
Action A: Develop a "Town Center" to serve as a community gathering place and give a visual focus.	A,B,C,D	G,L,M,O	×		1,7,8,9			
Action B: Encourage commercial areas to provide for better pedestrian circulation and gathering places.	C,F,G	A,B	×	×	1,7			
Action C: Promote and celebrate the historic, architectural and cultural resources of the community.	C,K	G,L,N,P	X	×	1,7,8,9			

APPENDIX A SURVEYS AND RESULTS

C	RESULTS
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JURYEL	1120113

#### Introduction

Ten thousand copies of the Merrillville Community Survey were mailed to Merrillville households, of which 537 were returned. The similar Merrillville Business Survey was filled out and returned by 49 businesses. The surveys were tabulated and analyzed to show the opinions of residents and businesses on the issues of community facilities and services, and future growth.

#### **COMMUNITY SURVEY**

#### **Demographics**

More than half of the Community Survey respondents have annual household incomes of at least \$35,000, and more than half have lived in Merrillville for more than 20 years. The ages of household members cover all age groups.

Ninety-six percent of respondents gave the location of their residence as Merrillville. Of that group, 45 percent live in north Merrillville, 49 percent live in south Merrillville, and six percent live in the panhandle (see Figure A-1). Using population estimates (1995 Northern Indiana Regional Planning Commission) 54 percent of Merrillville residents live in north Merrillville, 41 percent live in south Merrillville, and five percent live in the panhandle. These estimates suggest that the rate of survey response per capita was stronger in south Merrillville than in other parts of the Town.

In each of the three areas listed above, more than half of the respondents live in a house that they own. The average respondent household in each area has approximately one member working full time, and no members working part time. Between 40 and 50 percent of respondents in each area live in two-person households.

The demographics from both north and south Merrillville closely resemble those of the respondents overall. One exception is that 43 percent of respondents' households in north Merrillville have at least one member-over 65 years of age, compared to 36 percent over all. The overall household demographics of respondents from the panhandle are moderately different from those of Merrillville respondents overall. While more than half of the respondents overall have annual household incomes of at least \$35,000, more than half of respondents from the panhandle have household incomes of at least \$50,000. Most panhandle respondents did not live in Merrillville 20 years ago, while most of the total group did. The percentage of



panhandle respondent households with one or more members age 65 or older was lower than the overall average, while it was higher for most of the other age groups.

#### **Existing Conditions and Needs**

Respondents were asked to rate 10 issues related to land use, transportation, housing, and economic development in Merrillville from "Strongly Encourage" to "Strongly Discourage." More than half of the respondents felt that the preservation of natural areas in Merrillville should be strongly encouraged. The other issues they would encourage were, in order, preservation of farmland, additional parks and recreation facilities/activities, new single family housing, and new housing for seniors. By contrast, more than half of the respondents would discourage or strongly discourage new apartment housing in Merrillville.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their opinions on each of nine statements about community issues and conditions. The five statements with the strongest show of support were, in order, that traffic in Merrillville is too congested, farmland and natural areas should be protected from further development, action is needed to improve the appearance and/or safety of major streets, more public involvement in community decisions, and the appearance of existing stores, restaurants, and other commercial buildings is satisfactory.

Only minor differences are found between the three areas and the community as a whole on the above issues. The six percent of respondents who live in the panhandle of Merrillville are comparatively more disapproving of affordable housing, new industrial development, and development of land for new parks and recreation. They also would discourage the use of public funds to attract new businesses, and are comparatively less willing to suggest that added municipal services justify added taxes. South Merrillville respondents are moderately more pleased with leadership by local officials, and are moderately less pleased with the appearance of existing stores, restaurants, and other commercial buildings.

### **Community Services Results**

The level of satisfaction on a series of existing community services are rated in the survey, and evaluation varies between the three areas. North Merrillville respondents are the most satisfied with existing services, with over half of them rating each existing service as either excellent or adequate, with the exception of sidewalk repair. More than half of the south Merrillville respondents found sidewalks, stormwater drainage, and streets to need improvement. Among



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the panhandle respondents, stormwater drainage, drinking water, and sewers were each cited as needing improvement more than 50 percent of the time. Overall, more than half of all the respondents felt that sidewalks and storm drainage need improvement in Merrillville.

#### Written Responses

Three questions on the survey were open-ended to elicit written responses about the likes and dislikes of residents. Many of the written comments covered similar subjects as were covered on the quantitative portion of the survey. As such, those comments only supplement the findings of the quantitative analysis. The most robust of those was that 238 respondents wrote that traffic congestion and insufficient traffic management are problems in Merrillville. This opinion is confirmed elsewhere in the survey. Among those complaints are calls to widen roads, create turn lanes, install stop lights, build more roads, and so forth.

Thirty-four respondents wrote that more and improved sidewalks are needed in Merrillville. Twenty-nine respondents wrote that expanded water and sewer service is needed. Twenty-three wrote about the need for improved drainage. Twenty-two wrote that more street lights are needed, while three felt that there are already too many street lights. Fifteen respondents wrote that either municipal garbage service or fewer garbage haulers are needed, and only one respondent wrote in defense of the existing garbage pickup system. Nine wrote in praise of the fire department as it is, while three favor a full time professional fire department. Three respondents wrote about the need for more ambulance service.

Police and crime related issues generated some interest. Thirty-eight respondents expressed their pride in the existing police force. Twenty-three wrote of the need for additional police patrols. Seven respondents, however, described the police as petty and disrespectful. Twenty-four respondents worry about the increase in crime, though most do not feel it is a problem at the present time.

Respondents often wrote about land use and growth issues. Many of those wrote about the need to stop certain types of growth. Fifty-one respondents wrote that residential growth, especially rentals, needs to be stopped. Thirty-six respondents wrote that commercial growth needs to stop. Twenty-three supported a general no-growth policy. Forty-one respondents also want to preserve the existing commercial uses, especially the restaurants. Only a few wrote that Merrillville should continue growth at the current rate. Nineteen respondents wrote that existing



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vacant buildings, mostly on the north side, need to be filled. Thirteen wrote that a downtown or town center is needed.

Thirty-six respondents wrote that a certain small town atmosphere needs preservation. Twenty-two wrote on the need to preserve the existing parks and green space. Eighteen value the surrounding farmland and open spaces, and others prize the relatively quiet atmosphere in Merrillville. Fourteen wrote on the need for more parks, and the need to clean the existing ones. Seven respondents wrote of the need to produce a more rural atmosphere and create more farmland.

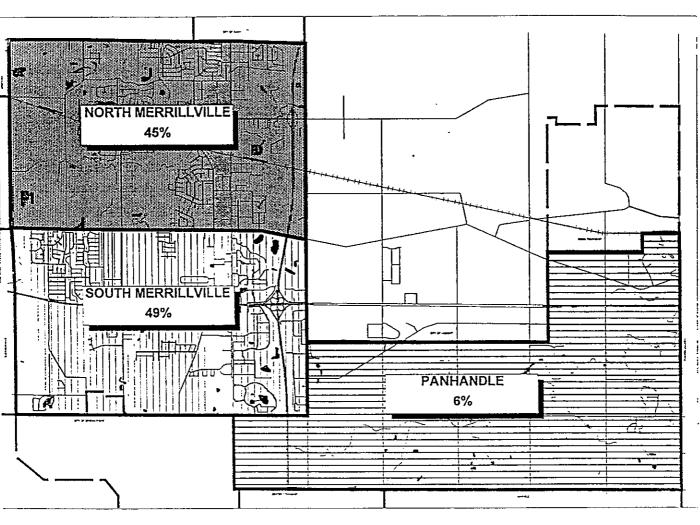
Beyond land use issues, and issues covered elsewhere in the survey, the most significant issue from the written responses is whether Merrillville should be a Town or a City. Forty-five respondents wrote that Merrillville should continue to be a Town, while 14 wrote that it needs to be a City and have a mayor. Thirty one wrote that zoning codes need stricter enforcement, especially in terms of the need for improved appearance and upkeep of properties. Thirty wrote that the low taxes in Merrillville are an asset to preserve. Nineteen wrote that noise pollution in Merrillville, especially from barking dogs, needs better control. Eighteen respondents wrote that Merrillville needs yard waste pick-up service. Thirteen wrote about the need for more activities for young people and teens. Twelve discussed the need for more mass transportation, while two wanted to eliminate the existing mass transit. Eleven mentioned snow removal service, five of whom want improved service and six of whom list existing snow removal as a major community asset.

The remaining issues were cited by at least three respondents but less than nine. They include delinquency among the young, expression of pride in the community parades, the problem of loose dogs, and the problem of cluttered signage. The issues of power outages, the need for a Town Post Office, the problem of yard sales, and concerns over gambling and gaming were each cited by three different respondents.



SURVEY RESULTS

### FIGURE A-I



SURVEY	RESULTS
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#### **BUSINESS SURVEY**

Concurrent with the Community Survey, a survey of Merrillville businesses was conducted. The opinions given in the Business Survey differ in some respects from those from the Community Survey. The business respondents as a group are somewhat more pleased with ambulance service and the schools than were the household respondents, and were somewhat less pleased with the library. While more than half of household respondents felt that stormwater sewers need improvement, only 39 percent of business respondents agreed. Compared to the household respondents, the businesses as a group are more likely to favor new commercial and industrial development, are unconcerned with growth in apartment housing, and are less eager to preserve farmland and natural areas. They are less impressed with the improvement in local appearances over the last ten years, and are less eager to call for more traffic lights and stop signs.

The written responses from the business survey generally mirrored those of the community survey, with concerns over traffic congestion and insufficient traffic management leading the list of issues. They were unconcerned, however, with noise pollution, leaf-pickup service, and potential growth of the rental housing market. Four businesses wrote to support more or improved planning, including the need to implement plans, and the need for unified planning with neighboring communities.

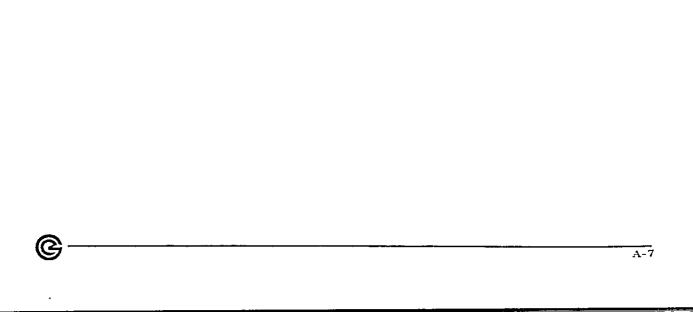
The types of businesses which have responded were varied. They are mostly service sector, professional firms, retailers, and restaurants. More than half have been in Merrillville for more than ten years, have 4 to 7 full-time employees, and 8 to 11 workers total. Eighty-two percent are located in south Merrillville, and 63 percent rent their building.



Survey Re	SULTS
andents believe traffic congestion is a serious problem, and a	action is
spearance and/or safety of the major streets. Preservation o	of green
uraged, growth in rental housing is discouraged, and growth i	in single
ed. Existing stores and restaurants are seen as an asset. The q	question

Analysis reveals that respondents believe traffic congestion is a serious problem, and action is needed to improve the appearance and/or safety of the major streets. Preservation of green space of all types is encouraged, growth in rental housing is discouraged, and growth in single family housing is encouraged. Existing stores and restaurants are seen as an asset. The question of whether Merrillville should be a Town or a City is an issue. Infrastructure needing improvement includes sidewalks in north and south Merrillville, and stormwater drainage and streets in south Merrillville. Infrastructure needing improvement in the panhandle includes stormwater drainage, drinking water, and sewers.

**SUMMARY** 



П	•				ÿ	•			
		MEF	RRILL	VILLE CO	MMUNIT	TY SURV	/EY .		
							•		
Plea	se check only or	ne hox unl	ess othe	erwise speci	fied All res	snonses wi	ill remain :	anonvmous	lliw bne a
	Y be used for pl								
	•	٠.	•			•			<b>3</b>
∐ <sub>1 P</sub>	lease indicate ho	w vou fee	l about	each of the	followina is	sues relate	ed to land	use trans	nortation
_ hous	sing, and econor	nic develo	pment i	n Merrillville.		oudo roian	ou to laria	acc, trails	portation,
					Strongly Encourage	Encourage	Neutral	Discourage	Strongly Discourage
<b>.</b>	a. New single	e family hou	sina		32.2%	31.1%	18.6%	7.3%	6.1%
	b. New apart	•	-		2.6%	8.2%	21.4%	29.1%	34.1%
	c. New hous		•		22.5%	41.3%	24.6%	4.3%	3.9%
_	d. New retail	•		icinaccae	10.6%	24.4%	25.5%	17.3%	18.1%
$\prod$	e. New indus			131163363	15.6%	29.1%	21.4%	14.7%	14.3%
$\sqcup$	f. Affordable		pinent		16.8%	21.4%	21.4%	14.7%	21.8%
т	g. Use public	•	tract neur	hueineeses	4.3%	14.5%	29.6%	23.3%	23.6%
	h. Preservati			Dualifeases	44.9%	29.6%	18.1%	3.4%	1.7%
		on of natura			57.4%	30.9%	7.8%	0.9%	0.6%
$\Pi$	j. Additional			facilities/					
	activities	F			42.1%	30.5%	18.4%	4.3%	2.2%
{2. P	lease indicate ho	ow you fee	el about	each of the	following s	tatements.			
_	a. The appe				Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strong Disagree
П	restaurants, satisfactory	and other c	ommercia	l buildings, is	6.3%	57.0%	17.3%	13.4%	3.2%
	b. Leadershi	ip by local o	fficials has	s been good	5.2%	43.6%	28.7%	13.4%	6.1%
_		e to be more	e involved	in community	13.8%	38.9%	37.6%	2.8%	0.4%
	decisions				5.8%	25.7%	30.2%	2.6%	12.1%
ليا		•	•	y added taxes e appearance	3.078	23.1 70	30.270	22,170	12.170
$\Box$	and/or safet			appearance	37.8%	41.2%	12.3%	4.3%	0.6%
			errillville h	as improved	15.3%	41.2%	18.2%	16.2%	6.5%
	in the last te g. Farmland	•	areas sho	ould be					0.073
Π	protected fro				48.0%	33.3%	11.0%	4.1%	1.5%
	h. Traffic in I		_		73.4%	20.1%	3.5%	1.1%	0.4%
П	i, Merrillville signs in cert		e traffic lig	thts or stop	30.5%	23.1%	18.2%	17.9%	8.4%
	Signs in cert	am places							
3 ⊦	low would you ra	ita tha foll	owing co	ommunity se	mices?				
П	iow would you re		Owning Co	Needs	A VIOC3 :				Needs
		Excellent 50.7%	Adequate 37.6%	Improvement 9.9%		scaping of Pu	ıblic Excelle	•	Improvement
_	olice Service	50.7 % 52.7%	39.7%	5.6%	Areas		7.6%		33.7%
11	ire Service	46.6%		4.1%	k. Sidev		3.9%		54.0%
	mbulance Service		45.4%		l. Librar	•	50.59		3.9%
:	rinking Water	37.2%	41.9%	16.8%	m. Scho		48.29	% 40.6%	5.0%
4	ewers	19.2%	46.9%	28.9%	n. Zonin Enforce		9.19	6 57.2%	24.0%
*4	torm Drainage	9.7%	33.7%	53.4%	o. Buildi	ing Code	0.40	/ 50.00/	22.9%
11	treet Maintenance	12.1%	42.1%	43.6%	Enforce		9.19		22.9% 20.5%
	treet Lighting	9.3%	41.7%	47.5%	•	cling Prograr			
i. S	treet Trees	7.1%	50.1%	38.2%	a. Trast	n Removal	22.09	% 49.9%	23.3%

i. Street Trees

q. Trash Removal

Please check only one box unless otherwise specified. All responses will remain anonymous and will ONLY be used for planning purposes. Additional Comments may be made on Questions 4 through 6.

1. Please indicate how you feel about each of the following issues related to land use, transportation, housing, and economic development in Merrillville.

a. New single family housing	Strongly Encourage 36.7%	Encourage 34.7%	Neutral 18.4%	Discourage 4.1%	Strongly Discourage 4.1%
р. New apartment housing	6.1%	34.7%	22.4%	20.4%	12.2%
c. New housing for seniors	28.6%	32.7%	28.6%	2.0%	2.0%
d. New retail stores and service businesses	12.2%	40.8%	22.4%	16.3%	8.2%
e. New industrial development	28.6%	40.8%	22.4%	2.0%	6.1%
f. Affordable housing	20.4%	20.4%	28.6%	14.3%	14.3%
g. Use public funds to attract new businesses	14.3%	34.7%	26.5%	12.2%	12.2%
h. Preservation of farmland	28.6%	18.4%	40.8%	10.2%	0.0%
i. Preservation of natural areas	42.9%	38.8%	16.3%	0.0%	0.0%
<ul><li>j. Additional parks and recreation facilities/ activities</li></ul>	44.9%	32.7%	22.4%	0.0%	0.0%

2. Please indicate how you feel about each of the following statements.

manage tion log tool appar cacit of file	TOHOWING SE	atements			
a. The appearance of existing stores, restaurants, and other commercial buildings, is satisfactory	Strongly Agree 6.1%	Agree 61.2%	Neutral 18.4%	Disagree 12.2%	Strong Disagree 0.0%
<ul> <li>b. Leadership by local officials has been good</li> <li>c. I would like to be more involved in community</li> </ul>	6.1%	30.6%	42.9%	12.2%	6.1%
decisions	14.3%	38.8%	46.9%	0.0%	0.0%
d. Added municipal services justify added taxes	0.0%	36.7%	24.5%	22.4%	12.2%
e. Action is needed to improve the appearance and/or safety of major streets	40.8%	40.8%	8.2%	6.1%	2.0%
f. The appearance of Merrillville has improved in the last ten years	12.2%	36.7%	28.6%	10.2%	10.2%
g. Farmland and natural areas should be protected from further development	20.4%	34.7%	28.6%	14.3%	2.0%
h. Traffic in Merrillville is too congested	81.6%	10.2%	8.2%	0.0%	0.0%
i. Merrillville needs more traffic lights or stop signs in certain places	28.6%	14.3%	20.4%	24.5%	8.2%

3. How would you rate the following community services?

a. Police Service	Excellent 53.1%	Adequate 38.8%	Needs Improvement 8.2%	j. Landscaping of Public Areas	Excellent 10.2%	Adequate 38.8%	Needs Improvement 46.9%
b. Fire Service	51.0%	49.0%	0.0%	k. Sidewalks	8.2%	32.7%	55.1%
c. Ambulance Service	49.0%	46.9%	2.0%	I. Library	40.8%	46.9%	4.1%
d. Drinking Water	44.9%	44.9%	10.2%	m. Schools	49.0%	40.8%	4.1%
e. Sewers	24.5%	53.1%	22.4%	n. Zoning Code	40.007		
f. Storm Drainage	14.3%	46.9%	38.8%	Enforcement	10.2%	61.2%	24.5%
g. Street Maintenance	10.2%	42.9%	42.9%	<ul><li>o. Building Code Enforcement</li></ul>	10.2%	67.3%	16.3%
h. Street Lighting	18.4%	55.1%	26.5%	p. Recycling Program	4.1%	53.1%	36.7%
i. Street Trees	12.2%	42.9%	42.9%	q. Trash Removal	10.2%	55.1%	26.5%

	Which of the following best desc			
	Amusement & Entertainment2.0%  Apartments & Mobile Home	Construction0.0%  Diversified0.0%  Hotels & Motels2.0%	Manufacturing & Processing 2.0% Professional 16.3%	Restaurants, Cafes, & Taverns.8.2% Retailers10.2%
	Parks 0.0% Automotive	Insurance8.2% Investment & Finance	Public Utilities0.0% Publishers & 2.0%	Services
	Banks/ Savings and Loan6.1%	Companies2.0%	Radio & Televisiofi.0% Real Estate2.0%	Distributors 2.0%
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