



Downtown Porter Master Plan

Porter, IN

December 2012



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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and by the

Town of Porter.

We also appreciate all of the residents and business owners of Porter that responded to the survey and participated in the master planning process by attending public meetings.





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Introduction

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2011, the Town of Porter took an important step towards implementation of the Marquette Plan – A Vision for Lake-shore Reinvestment by developing the Gateway to the Indiana Dunes Sub-Area Plan. This document was grounded by extensive community and stakeholder input and included comprehensive analysis, recommendations and guidelines to enable the Town to leverage the growth, revenue and quality of life potential associated with the millions of local and regional visitors that travel to and through Porter. Guiding principles of this plan stressed the importance of a complementary development strategy that included a vibrant Downtown Porter and improved connectivity between Downtown and surrounding attractions and visitor draws via new and expanded regional trails as well as enhanced gateways and streetscapes. These principles and associated recommendations all stressed that Downtown was a key component of Porter’s strategy to attract, entertain and leverage visitors while balancing the needs of residents and visitors.

Downtown Porter contained a range of issues that were not within in the purview of the broader sub-area planning and, as a result, the Gateway to the Indiana Dunes Sub-Area Plan recommended that the Town develop a Downtown Master Plan to focus specifically on the opportunities and challenges facing Downtown. A key issue was potential streetscape and parking modifications on Lincoln Street to accommodate a potential Downtown trail connection between the proposed Dunes Kankakee Trail and existing Porter Brickyard Trail envisioned in the sub-area plan. In 2012 funding was generously provided by the Lake Michigan Coastal Program and the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority for the Town to complete the Downtown Master Plan and take the next important step

toward establishing a vital and connected downtown envisioned in the Gateway to the Indiana Dunes Sub-Area Plan.

This report summarizes the findings of a six-month, open and transparent planning process and includes sections on analysis, recommendations and implementation strategies to guide short and long term decision making. The study area for this plan included an area roughly bounded by U.S. 20 on the north, the Town’s municipal boundary on the south, Waverly Road on the east and the brickyard bounded by Beam Street and Sexton Avenue on the west. A core area bounded by Lincoln Street, Franklin Street, Wagner Road and Waverly Road received more detailed land-use and physical design study as outlined in this document. The following describes the planning process followed by the Town and their consultant, SEH of Indiana.

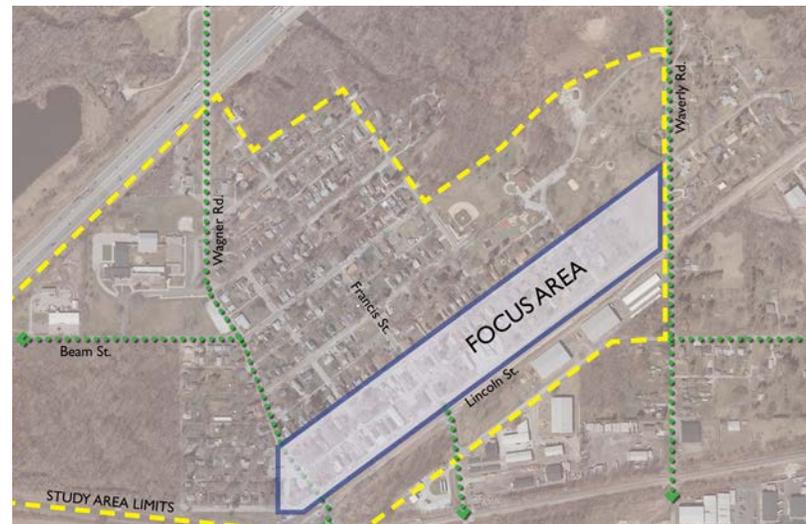


Figure 1. Downtown Porter & Focus Area

MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

The master planning process for this project was divided into three phases; 1) data gathering and visioning, 2) conceptual alternatives, and 3) master plan development.

PHASE 1: DATA GATHERING AND VISIONING

The first phase of the process took place over several months from July through October 2012. Data gathering commenced with an online survey hosted on the Town of Porter's web site. Over 120 individuals, including 100 Town residents, responded to the survey.

This phase of the project also included field assessments and data gathering. GIS data was collected from Porter County, base files for infrastructure were collected from the Town, and additional information was gathered from a review of previous plans, studies, and reports for the Town and the planned Amtrak rail improvements. Site visits were conducted throughout Phase 1 to confirm collected data and take photographs.

Phase 1 also included interviews with key Town staff and stakeholders and a workshop to solicit ideas from the general public regarding the preferred direction of downtown Porter.



PHASE 2: CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVES

During Phase 2, the consultant team presented a series of conceptual plan alternatives addressing land use, character, condition, access, circulation, and parking at the community open house in late October. The public that attended the meeting weighed in on their likes and dislikes about each of the options. In early November, the consultant team came back to present the preferred alternative concept to the public and take comments.

PHASE 3: MASTER PLAN

The master planning phase pulls together the research, alternatives exploration, and input from the public to refine a master plan for downtown Porter. The Master Plan, documented in this report, makes recommendations for renovation, reconfiguration, and redevelopment as well as for business development and recruitment. The master plan is accompanied by an Implementation Strategy to address potential project bundling, phasing, funding, partnering strategies and required actions for potential regulatory considerations.

Community Overview

ANALYSIS

The evaluation of physical characteristics, function and the business climate of the study area is a critical step in the planning process because it informs recommendations related to connectivity, land use, sense of place and economic development. This process included review of readily available reports and technical data augmented by field analysis and photographic documentation. Input from Porter residents and businesses was equally important. One-on-one interviews with local businesses, community meetings and an online survey were conducted. The findings from the analysis phase are highlighted on the following pages.

Population

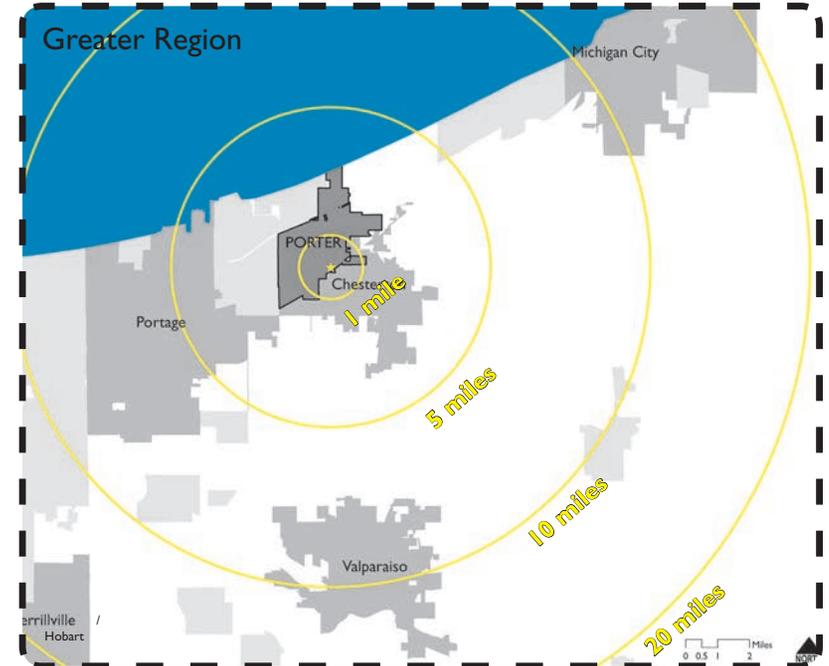
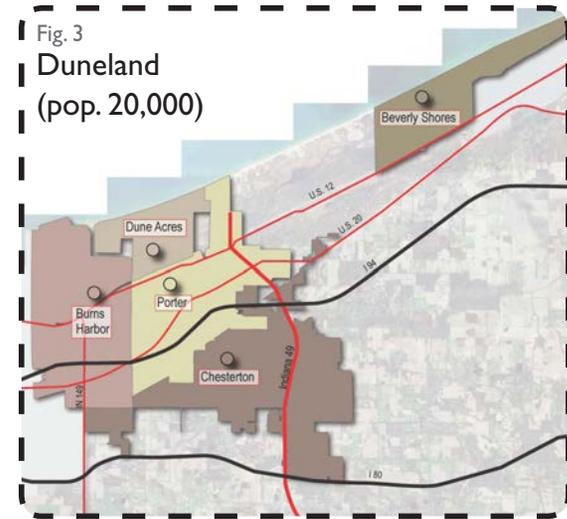
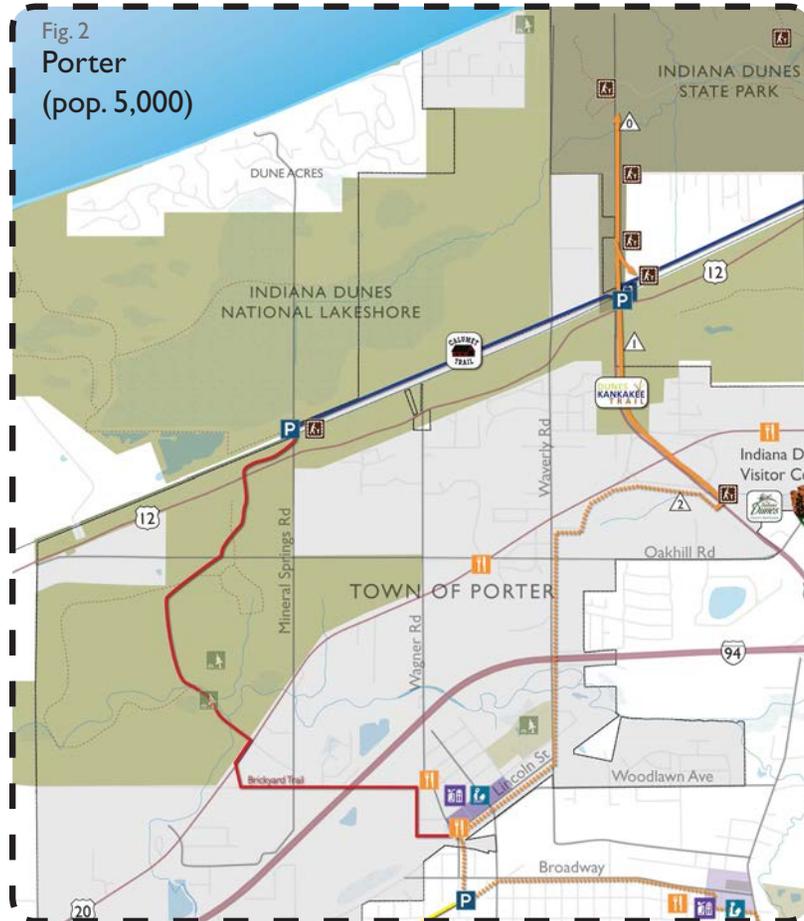
Year	Population
1990	3,118
2000	4,972
2010	4,858



Downtown Porter at Rail Line

Downtown Porter in Context

The survey results and analysis for downtown Porter must be understood within its physical context. With a population of nearly 5,000, Porter is a smaller community in the region. Survey respondents frequently seek goods and services in nearby communities and throughout the greater region. When deciding the direction for Porter's downtown, it is important to consider these factors.

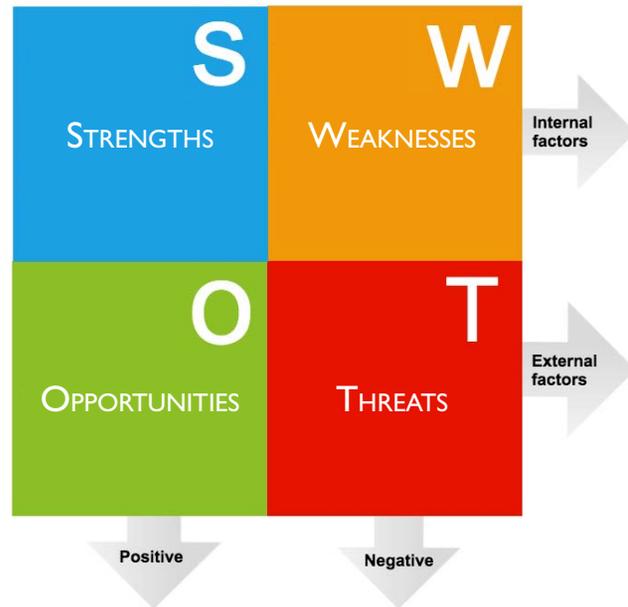


Figures 2 & 3 Above and above right, the corporate boundary of the Town of Porter and the communities in the Duneland region.

Figure 4. Porter within the context of the greater region, highlighting survey respondents' retail and dining destinations within a 20 mile radius.

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

Initial analysis began with an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in order to identify critical planning opportunities and challenges.



STRENGTHS

- Porter is a unique community in the region as one of the few that boasts both a lakefront and a downtown.
- With the construction of the Dunes Kankakee Trail, the proposed Orchard Pedestrian Trail and upgrades to the recently completed Brickyard Trail, Porter's non-motorized trail network is growing into an enviable resource in the region.
- Porter hosts popular and unique festivals and events.
- The National Lakeshore is a valuable resource within Porter's boundary.

WEAKNESSES

- There is a significant distance between the downtown and the lakefront and a lack of options to travel between the two.
- Public access to the lakefront is limited and sometimes difficult.
- Accessibility to downtown is limited by its "off the beaten path" location and the high number of rail lines.
- Although the trail network is growing, there are significant gaps in the system, especially downtown.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The downtown and lakefront would benefit from a stronger connection.
- Enhanced arrival corridors could help guide visitors into downtown and improve the daily travel experience of residents.
- Porter can capitalize on its unique characteristics to find a niche within Duneland and the greater region.

THREATS

- Like all downtowns, retailers in Porter face competition from other regional destinations, especially "big box" shopping areas.
- A tendency to maintain a "Porter-centric" mind-set will inhibit the downtown's ability to find its niche in the region and realize its full potential.

Survey & Analysis Summary

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The master planning included an online survey, hosted by the Town of Porter on the Town web site. The survey garnered over 120 responses, with the over 100 town residents participating. Respondents answered questions about what they considered to be downtown, their priorities for that area, and what would make them want to spend more time and money in downtown Porter.

Defining Downtown

A large majority of the respondents agreed that Lincoln Street was included in the downtown. In addition to Lincoln, the top choices included Franklin Street, Hawthorne Park, and Wagner Road.

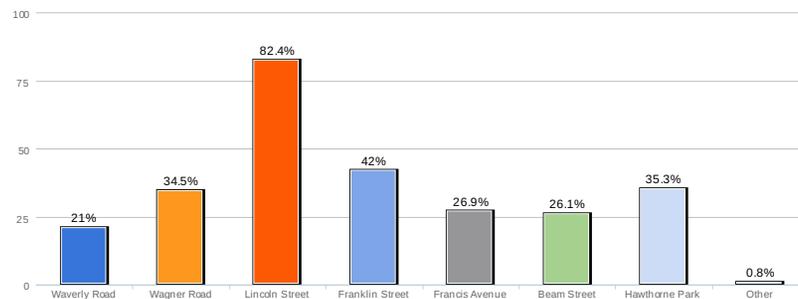


Table 1. Responses to the question, "What do you define as downtown Porter?"

Priorities for Downtown

Respondents replied that priorities for improving Downtown Porter include dining (65%), shopping (60%), entertainment (46%), public gathering spaces (36%) and improved bicycle access (35%). There were many write-in responses, including groceries, clean-up, parking, parks department improvements, and more family-oriented businesses and activities.

Reasons to come Downtown

Dining was the main reason most respondents come to downtown Porter (69%), followed by festival & events (36%), and City Hall (32%). Other reasons respondents come downtown include going to the library (22%), for entertainment (20%), for recreation (17%), and for banking (15%).

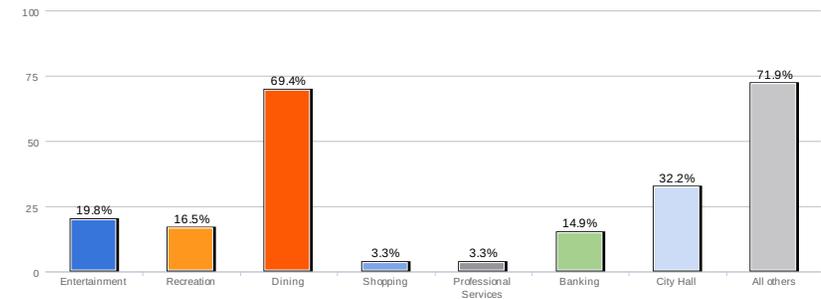


Table 2. Responses to the question, "What are the main reasons you come to downtown Porter?"

Satisfaction with Downtown

Respondents were asked to rate Downtown Porter on attractiveness, cleanliness, special events, parking convenience, traffic flow, general safety, bicycle access, and pedestrian safety. Few respondents replied to any of the above categories with strong positive or negative feelings. Most claimed to be generally satisfied or neutral.

Focus for Improvements

Respondents were asked to rate attractiveness, cleanliness, special events, parking convenience, traffic flow, general safety, bicycle access, and pedestrian safety in order of preferred focus areas for improvement. The leading focus improvement area in the study is *attractiveness*, which was found 'very important' to 49% of respondents.

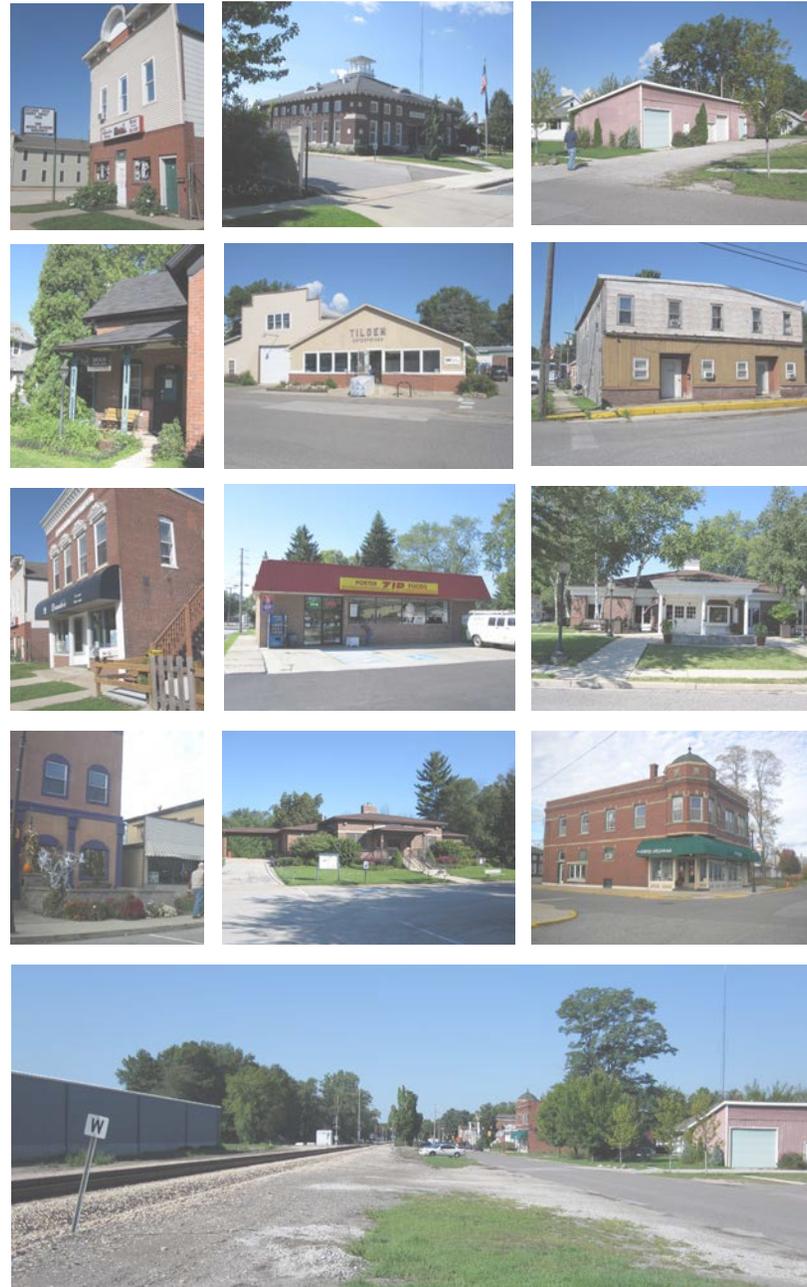
Sense of Place

Within the Town of Porter, both natural and built features help define the character and quality of the resources Porter has to offer its residents and visitors. Outside of the Downtown study area, the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, State Park and Visitor Center support Porter by providing large natural recreational areas for residents and visitors to enjoy. Built elements along US 20 and US 12 offer manufacturing and service industries, providing jobs and economic benefit to Porter.

Downtown Porter was built and developed along a major rail network directly south of Lincoln Street. While Porter no longer has a train station or depot to interface with the rail traffic, train traffic is prevalent in Downtown and themes of railroad have been embraced by local businesses such as the “Whistle Stop Bar & Grill”.

The Downtown is much more urbanized than the rest of Porter, and includes several restaurants/bars and a quaint residential neighborhood. The architectural style of residences and businesses in Downtown varies providing a unique character to the individual buildings. Civic buildings are all of a Colonial Style and include predominant elements such as brick, white columns and cupolas.

As Porter currently has (2) distinct regions, Downtown and the more rural, natural areas of Lake Michigan and National Lakeshore, focusing on cohesive connections will help promote both regions and create a more unified Porter. Porter will also benefit by identifying and developing its own unique a niche within Duneland and the greater region, in order to promote its own brand and support local business development.



Land Use

Current land use was compared with zoning districts of downtown Porter to reveal several scattered non-conforming land uses (Wagner’s Ribs, Flower Shop on West Franklin Street, residential on Lincoln Street, etc.). All commercial zoning is currently along Lincoln Street from Wagner Street to Porter Avenue. Industrial zoning is located south of the Lincoln Street and the railroad, and currently conforms with the land intended for that area. The remainder of Downtown Porter is primarily residential with the exception of Hawthorne Park being preserved as open space. The “Brickyard” site to the west of Downtown is zoned as a Planned Unit Development.

No recommendations are made within this report to conform existing land uses of occupied parcels. Land use and zoning should be considered as parcels may become available for purchase in the future. Current planning “best practices” recognize that in fact mixed use land use patterns often stimulate development more effectively than single use approaches.

The key finding from the land use analysis is that several different redevelopment opportunities for downtown exist through significant public ownership of land and properties for sale. Infill opportunities and strategies can be found in the Recommendations section of this report.

Utilities

Public utilities were inventoried through the analysis phase to identify any potential gaps. Analysis showed that the entire downtown is served with potable water, sewer, gas, electric and cable/internet. Overhead electrical utilities primarily run through the alleys of downtown Porter, providing more opportunities for streetscape enhancements, as detailed in the Recommendations section of this report.

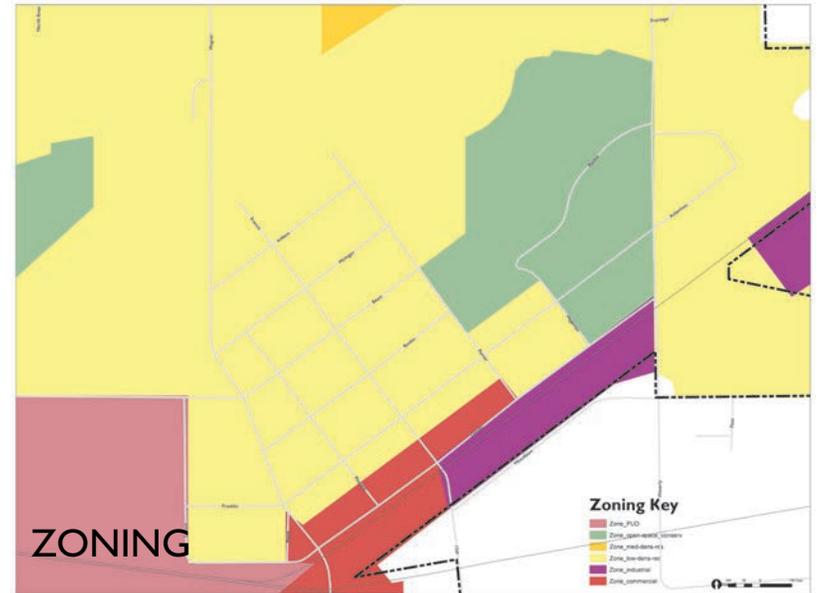


Figure 7. Porter Zoning Map

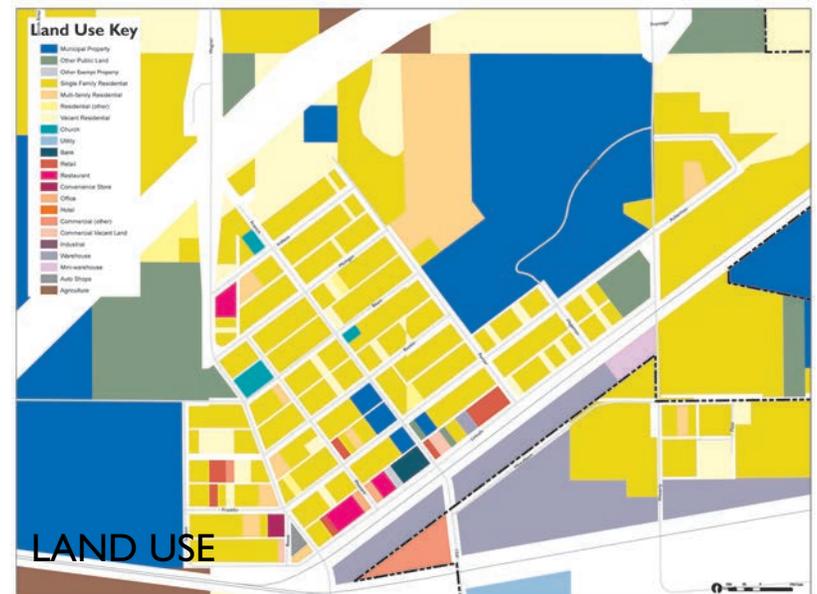


Figure 8. Porter Existing Land Use Map

Circulation

Vehicular and non-motorized circulation was assessed for the downtown study area, including an inventory of current parking. Vehicular circulation is complicated by a designated truck route that winds through downtown from Francis, along Lincoln, and along Wagner. During public meetings, there was much discussion about how the truck route affects downtown and the possibility of re-routing trucks to a parallel corridor. Generally, the truck route is seen as a detriment to downtown retail because the trucks, aside from making occasional deliveries, are not visiting downtown stores and their presence often makes the area feel uncomfortable for pedestrians and drivers alike. The quantity of trucks is at odds with the scale of downtown and during poor travel conditions, becomes a safety issue.

Anecdotally, trucks have been known to slide into sidewalks while negotiating the relatively tight 90-degree turns at Francis and Wagner. Cause for additional concern for pedestrians and patrons dining outdoors are trucks delayed by trains, whose idling contributes to temporary air quality deterioration and noise levels that make being outdoors on Lincoln unpleasant. Although no formal study of alternate truck routes has been conducted, the issue of moving the truck route to Wagner,

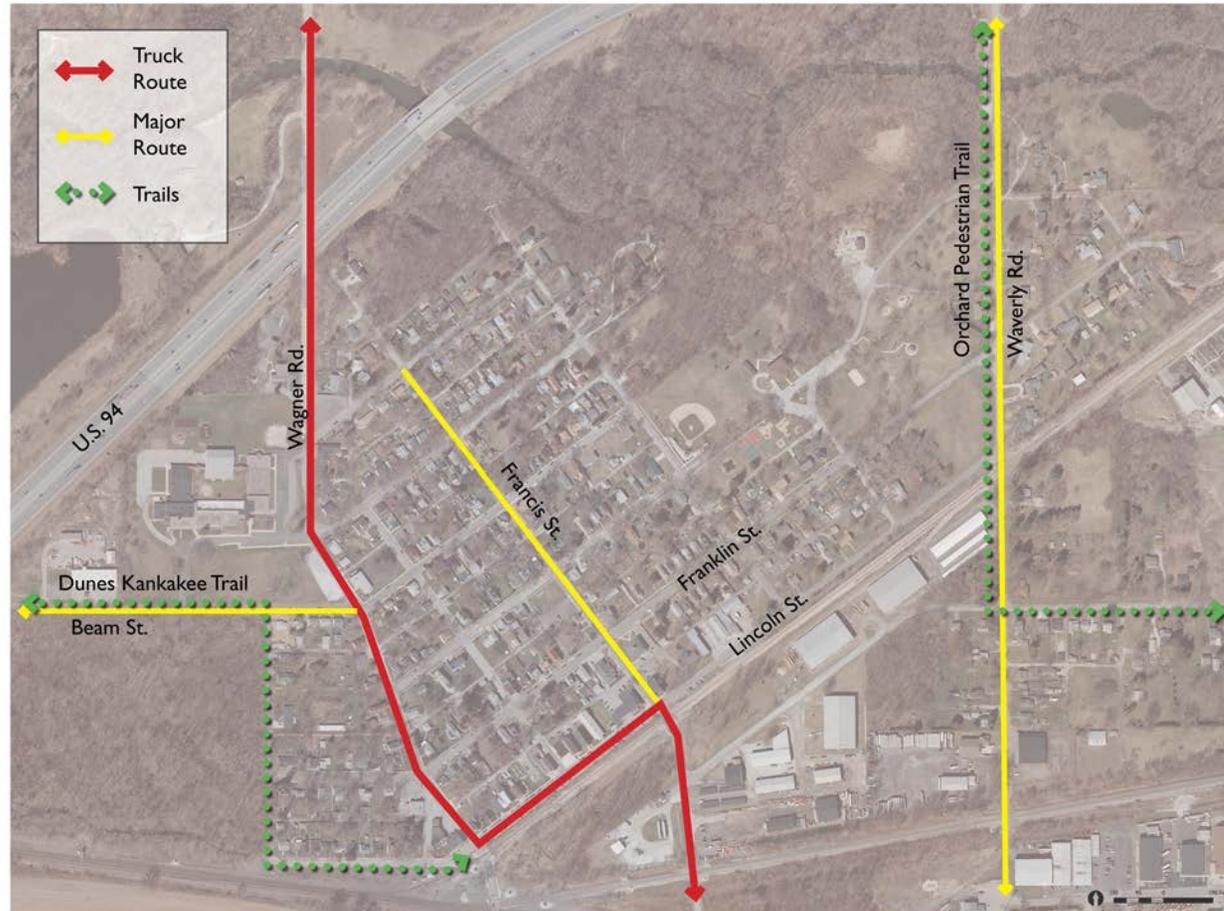


Figure 9: Circulation Map

Waverly, or Beam Street has been discussed at several Town Council meetings over the past ten years. Waverly seems to have been the preferred alternate route, however efforts to advance the truck re-route were repeatedly tabled amid unstudied concerns of structural integrity of the Waverly Bridge, road width north of I-94, pedestrian safety (especially children walking to and from the park and school), and concerns from Porter and Chesterton warehousing and

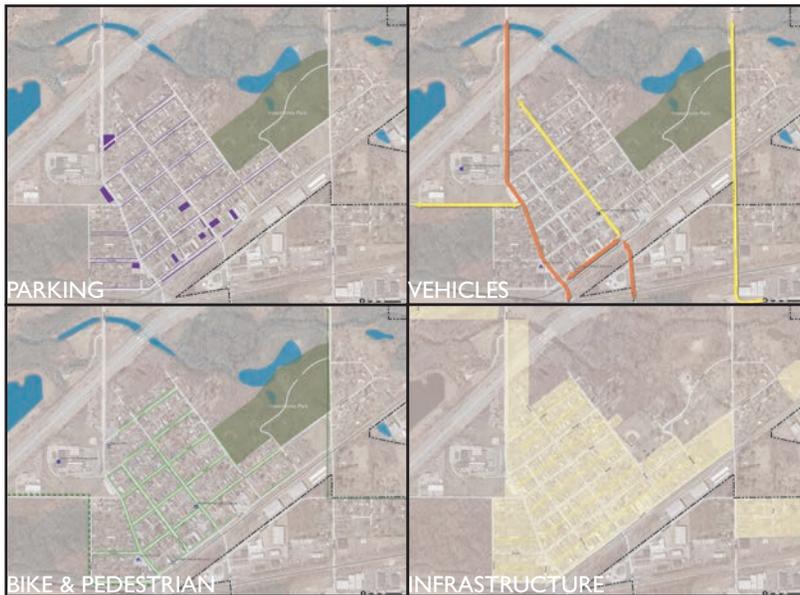


Figure 10. Site Analysis Maps



Truck Route

industrial businesses. A formal analysis of these issues will be necessary to coordinate a truck re-route, in cooperation with nearby towns (specifically Chesterton) and INDOT.

Parking throughout the downtown area is seen as adequate, but could benefit from a reconfiguration that brings on and off street parking closer to the existing businesses in the core of downtown. Of special concern is the potential loss of angled parking spaces along the southern edge of Lincoln due to the proposed Amtrak renovations. The existing angled parking encroaches approximately four feet into the rail right of way, which may need to be vacated.

Built and planned trails have great access to Downtown Porter from Lake Michigan and neighboring communities, theoretically making Downtown Porter more accessible to a wider array of visitors. The proposed Orchard Pedestrian Trail along Waverly Road will provide connections from Downtown to US 20 to the north, safely connecting many residents to Downtown through a non-motorized corridor. The Dunes Kankakee trail will directly connect the west end of Downtown to the National Lakeshore, State Park, Dunes South Shore station.

Additionally, several blocks of Downtown Porter are devoid of sidewalks and/or contain non-compliant ADA ramps, resulting in gaps in the pedestrian circulation through Downtown. A parallel project is currently being undertaken by the Town of Porter to inventory all non-compliance issues with ADA and prepare a Transition Plan.

Market Assessment

The Town of Porter has significant advantages compared with its more commercialized neighbors in Burns Harbor and Chesterton. It has a quiet downtown area, easy access from surrounding highways and a neighborhood fabric that is welcoming. Unlike other communities in the Duneland, Porter can provide an escape from the heavy commercial and truck stop environment prevalent along US 20 or Hwy 49. With the escape in mind this plan recommends the continued efforts to connect the lakefront, US 20 and Hwy 49 to Downtown Porter.

Currently Lincoln Street serves segments of the community well by providing professional services and dining options that many of the residents enjoy. However, the offerings in Downtown cater to an older crowd and do not offer many options for family dining. Other options are close by, including many national or regional retail chains that are located in Chesterton on Indian Boundary Road within a 5 minute drive. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity for the Town of Porter. The National Park Service indicates that over 1.8MM visitors visit the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore annually. This is in addition to the millions of visitors that visit the Indiana Dune State Park annually. That said, the focus on seasonal business should be a promoted by the Town of Porter as well as the Duneland Chamber of Commerce.

Targeted investment along Lincoln Street in cooperation with existing business would be the best course of action to expand and diversify the offerings to residents and visitors. There have been many active entrepreneurs that have determined that Lincoln is a good place to do business.

Key elements for additional and future marketing success were identified through the assessment, and further described within the Recommendations section of this report.

Assessed Valuation

Year	Town of Porter
2012	\$215,740,313
2011	228,103,241
2010	222,829,473
2009	220,461,383
2008	272,609,012

Total Tax Rate
(Per \$100 Assessed Valuation)

Total Town of Porter Tax Rates (by payable year)

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
State	\$ -	-	-	-	-
County	.0423	.4169	.4122	.3970	.3997
Township	.0046	.0044	.0044	.0042	.0035
Airport	.0078	.0074	.0073	.0071	.0062
Schools	.8632	.8552	.8471	.8432	1.4747
Library	.1628	.1498	.1553	.1449	.1218
Corporation	<u>1.0377</u>	<u>.9560</u>	<u>.9291</u>	<u>.9064</u>	<u>.6963</u>
Total Tax Due	<u>\$2.4991</u>	<u>\$2.3897</u>	<u>\$2.3534</u>	<u>\$2.3028</u>	<u>\$2.7046</u>
Corporation	.6433	.5511	.5198	.5919	.4594
MVH	.1919	.1886	.1928	.1737	.1188
Fire Fighting	.0715	.0926	.0926	.0506	.0483
Cumulative Capitol Development	.0481	.0481	.0481	.0232	.0159
Park and Recreation	.0474	.0467	.0423	.0336	.0341
Lease Rental Payment	<u>.0355</u>	<u>.0337</u>	<u>.0335</u>	<u>.0334</u>	<u>.0198</u>
Total Corporation	<u>\$1.0377</u>	<u>\$.9560</u>	<u>\$.9291</u>	<u>\$.9064</u>	<u>\$.6923</u>

Town of Porter Largest Taxpayers

<u>Taxpayer</u>	<u>Business Type</u>	<u>Assessed Valuation</u>
Worthington Steel	Steel Fabricator	\$12,781,170
Arnell Inc.	Auto Mart	7,331,700
NIPSCO	Gas/Electric Utility	3,279,810
Hugo Eugene Brandsletter Trust	Real Estate Holding Co.	2,061,800
Cameron General Corp	Insurance	1,819,900
Indiana-American Water	Water Utility	1,722,810
Mary Y. Klein Trust	Real Estate Holding Co.	1,390,300
William and Rita Bennett	Real Estate Holding co.	1,185,960
Transmarket Group	Global Trading	1,077,400
Pinkerton Oil LLC	Fuel Supplier	891,170

PORTER IS DUNELAND COMMUNITY WITH ACCESS TO LAKE MICHIGAN



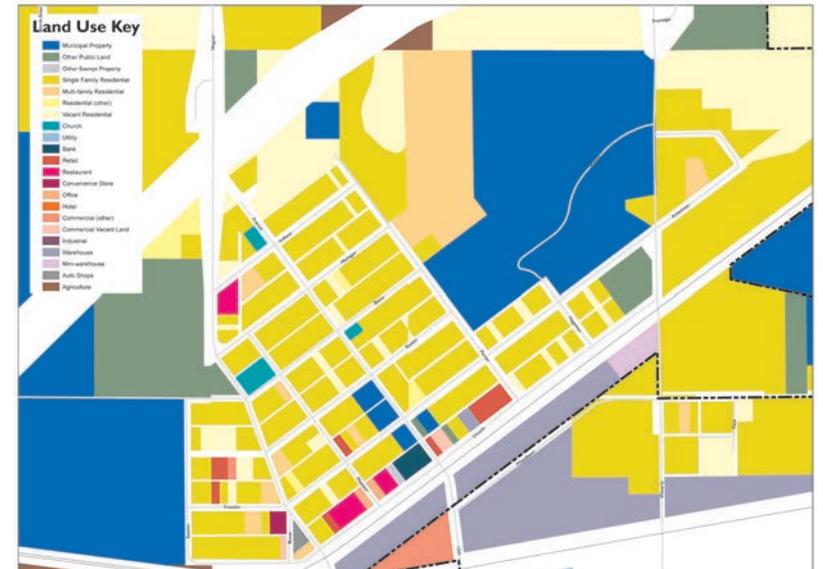
REQUIRES SERVING THE RESIDENT AND MANAGING THE VISITOR



COORDINATION WITH CHESTERTON IS KEY TO ADDITIONAL SUCCESS



ALIGN APPROPRIATE LAND USES



TRUCKS ROUTE ON LINCOLN HINDERS GROWTH AND INVESTMENT



Vision & Goals

OVERVIEW

The vision, goals and principles outlined below serve as a guide for the more detailed recommendations and strategies that are included in the study. They are intended to be broad yet address the key issues facing Downtown Porter.

Vision

Downtown will be Porter's day, night and year-round center that attracts, serves, entertains and leverages a diversity of visitors, including Porter residents and visitors from the Duneland and beyond.

The vision statement above is supported by five simple goals for Downtown that are further explained with specific action items for each later in this section.

1. **Entertain** - Provide safe, attractive and vibrant places, amenities and activities that encourage visitors to stay longer, come more often and spend more money in Downtown Porter.
2. **Connect** - Safely connect everyone and everything to Downtown Porter to the greatest extent possible and practical.
3. **Beautify** – Enhance the visual quality of Downtown Porter, including key arrival corridors and gateways.



4. **Sustain** - Implement physical enhancements and procedures that elevate Porter's level of environmental, economic and social sustainability to the highest level in the Duneland.

5. **Sell** - Establish and sell Downtown Porter's unique niche within the Duneland.

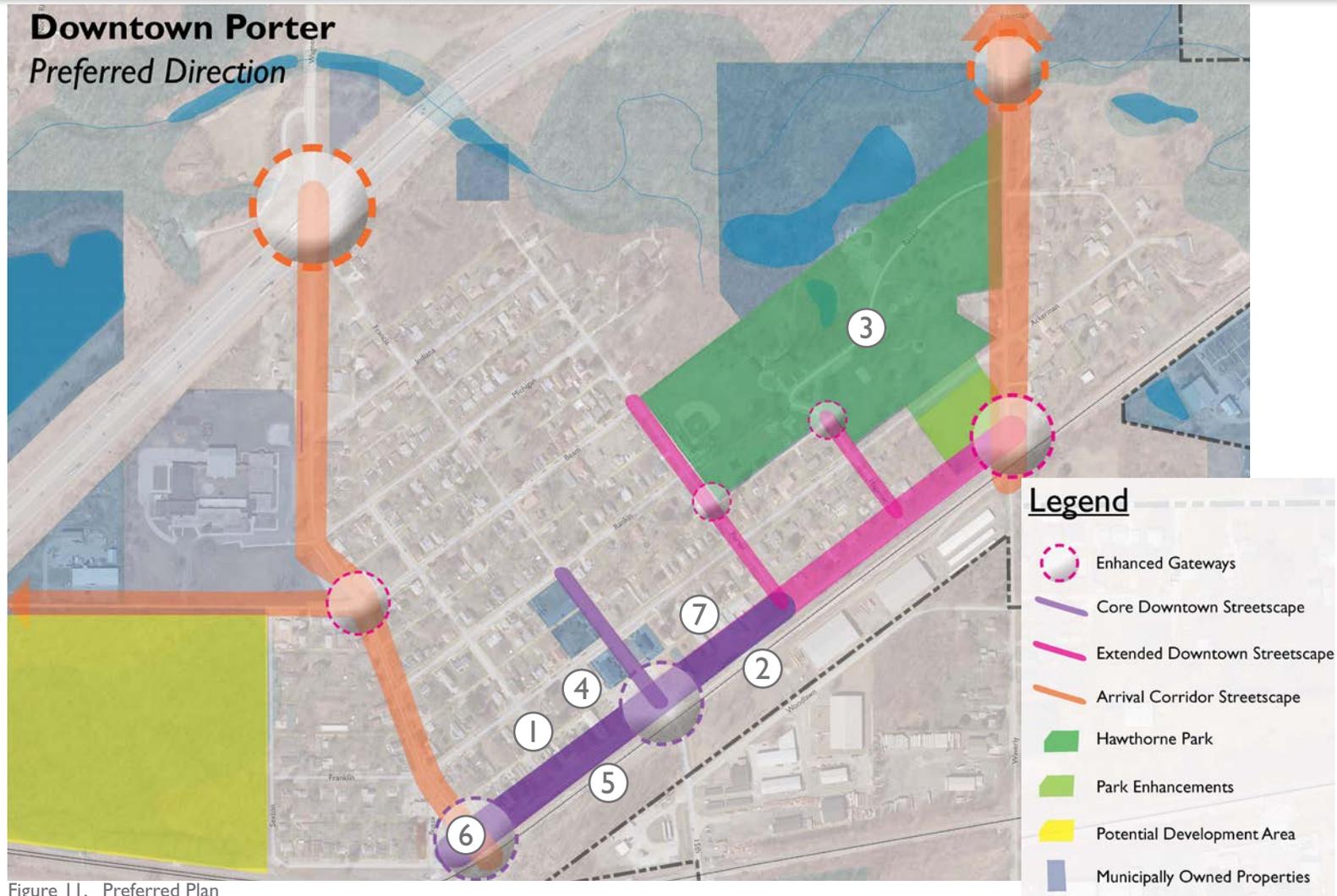
The Downtown Master Plan also reflects the guiding principles developed as part of the Gateway to the Indiana Dunes Sub-Area Plan. These were:

- **Embrace the Resources** – The Downtown Plan specifically focuses on leveraging Porter's location at the confluence of the region's green infrastructure as a source of potential visitors to Downtown.
- **Complementary Development** – The Downtown Plan focuses equally on balancing resident and visitor needs, expanding economic activity and promoting family-oriented uses as ways to strengthen Downtown as Porter's primary service provider.
- **Extend the Stay** – The Downtown Plan aims to capitalize on existing tourist destinations (natural and built), promote diverse types of activities for all that encourage multiple day stays and create a place to live, work, play and stay.
- **Transform the Corridors** – The Downtown Plan attempts to leverage existing transportation assets, implement complete and green streets and enhance the arrival sequence as outlined in the Gateway to the Indiana Dunes Sub-Area Plan.



Goal #1 - Entertain

Objective: Provide safe, attractive and vibrant places, amenities and activities that encourage visitors to stay longer, come more often and spend more money in Downtown Porter.



ACTIONS

- ① Expand and strengthen the core business district with a focus on Lincoln Street from Busse Avenue to Porter Avenue.
- ② Reconfigure Lincoln Avenue as Porter's Main Street with aesthetic and functional streetscape improvements that accommodate daily business needs as well as special events.
- ③ Enhance the quality and connectivity of Hawthorn Park for both community recreation and a range of year-round special events.
- ④ Diversify the offerings to residents and visitors, including family dining and improved convenience and specialty retail.
- ⑤ Reconfigure parking to maximize the quantity and convenience for Lincoln Street businesses and residents.
- ⑥ Explore redevelopment of strategic parcels in the core area that may be for sale and/or not meeting their highest and best use.
- ⑦ Attract new and/or relocated existing businesses to the core area that would diversify and improve the business climate of Downtown.

Strengthen the Core

A consistent theme supported during public input meetings was to strengthen the core business area of Downtown, focused primarily on Lincoln Street. This should occur through the retention of and re-investment in existing businesses and the attraction of new and complementary ones that will diversify offerings to Downtown visitors. High-visibility, under-achieving corners such as the Lincoln-Wagner-Busse triangle and north-west corner of Lincoln and Francis, could serve as a gateways from the south, complementing the municipal facilities to the north and anchoring the core. This strategy should be coupled with Lincoln Street beautification, streetscape, connectivity enhancements and strategic redevelopment that will strengthen the existing core and potentially expand it eastward to Porter Avenue and improve linkages between businesses and Hawthorn Park.

Concepts that illustrate this approach are included on the following pages as well as strategies to leverage future Amtrak/ high-speed rail improvements to achieve these and other related benefits for the Downtown.

BUSINESS DISTRICT

Lincoln Streetscapes

This study focused heavily on finding a balanced approach for the reconfiguration of Lincoln Street to address potential Amtrak/high-speed rail impacts on existing angled parking while better serving the existing business district with a more convenient and attractive streetscape. The preferred alternative for Lincoln Street is illustrated on the following pages.

Lincoln Street Parking Counts (Wagner to Porter)							
	Length (ft)	Existing			Parallel Parking	90° Parking	Net Change Per Block
		Parallel	Angled / 90	Total	Create parallel parking and paint sharrow on travel lanes	Widen Sidewalk, move angled parking and convert parallel to 90° parking	
					Total	Total	
Wagner to Pleasant	396	18	31	49	0	38	-11
Pleasant to Francis	396	13	30	43	0	39	-4
Francis to Porter	560	0	18	18	0	57	39
Porter to Hageman	480	0	0	0	21	0	21
Hageman to Waverly	440	0	0	0	16	0	16
Total				110	37	134	
Net Gain/Loss							61

Table 3. Parking comparison from existing to proposed.

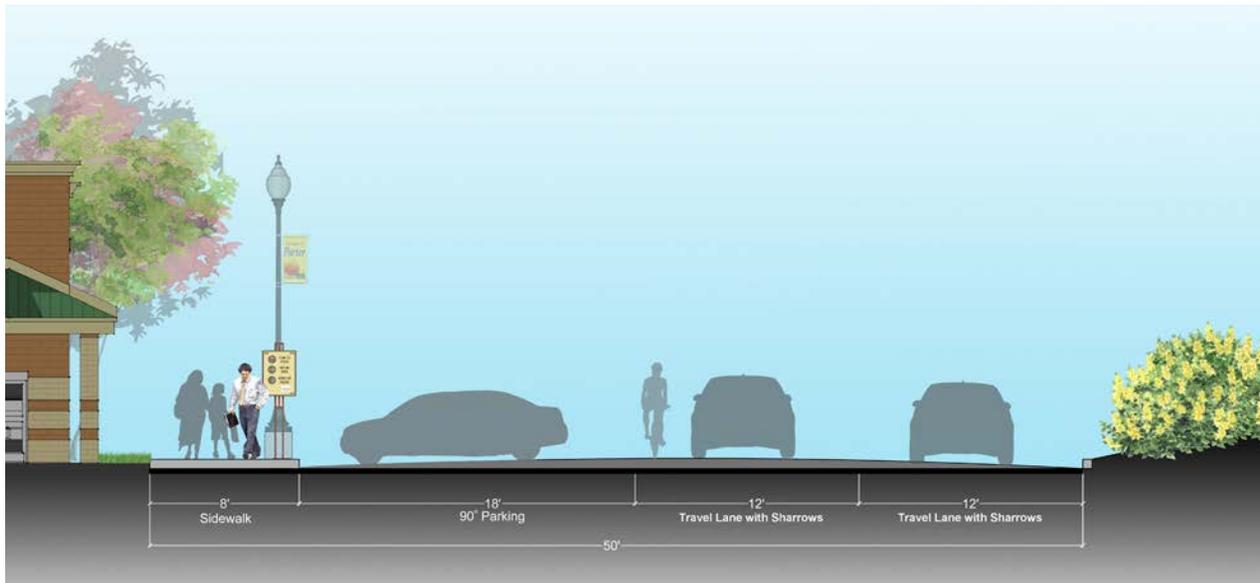


Figure 12. Lincoln Street with 90° parking - From Wagner Road to Porter Avenue.



Figure 14. Typical angled parking.

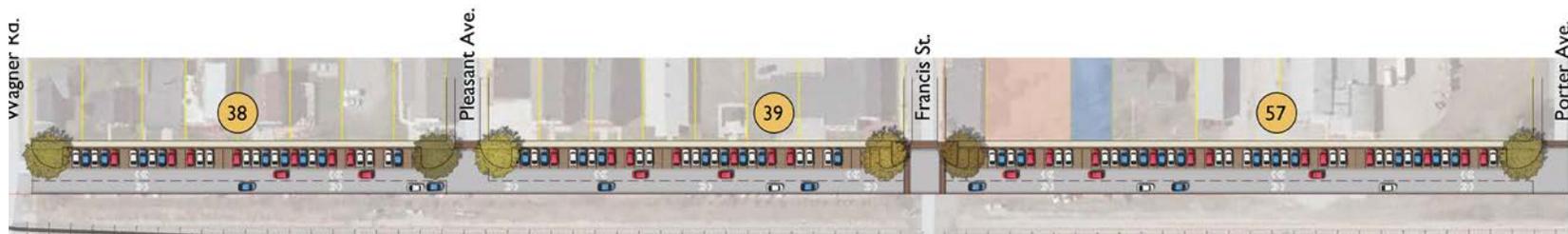


Figure 13. Site Plan of Lincoln streetscape, Business District.



Figure 15. Illustration of typical streetscape elements in the Business District.

There are two typical treatments, each with consistent aesthetic elements:

1. The business district between Wagner Road and Porter Avenue will have the following elements:

- Angled parking is relocated to the north side of the street adjacent to businesses, reconfigured and expanded one block east to increase the total parking on Lincoln Street.
- Bump outs, along with improved, textured crosswalks.
- Sidewalks on the north side of Lincoln Avenue are widened to better accommodate pedestrian traffic, outdoor dining bumper and overhang from adjacent parked cars.
- Painted on-street bike routes or “sharrows” are included in each direction using vehicular travel lanes, creating a connection between the Orchard Pedestrian Trail and Brickyard/Dunes Kankakee Trail that connects directly to Downtown businesses.
- Enhanced wayfinding, lighting, landscaping, site furnishings and associated urban design elements.
- Green infrastructure elements including permeable pavement parking bays, tree pits and stormwater planters.
- Enhanced visual and noise buffer to address adjacent rail road impacts.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

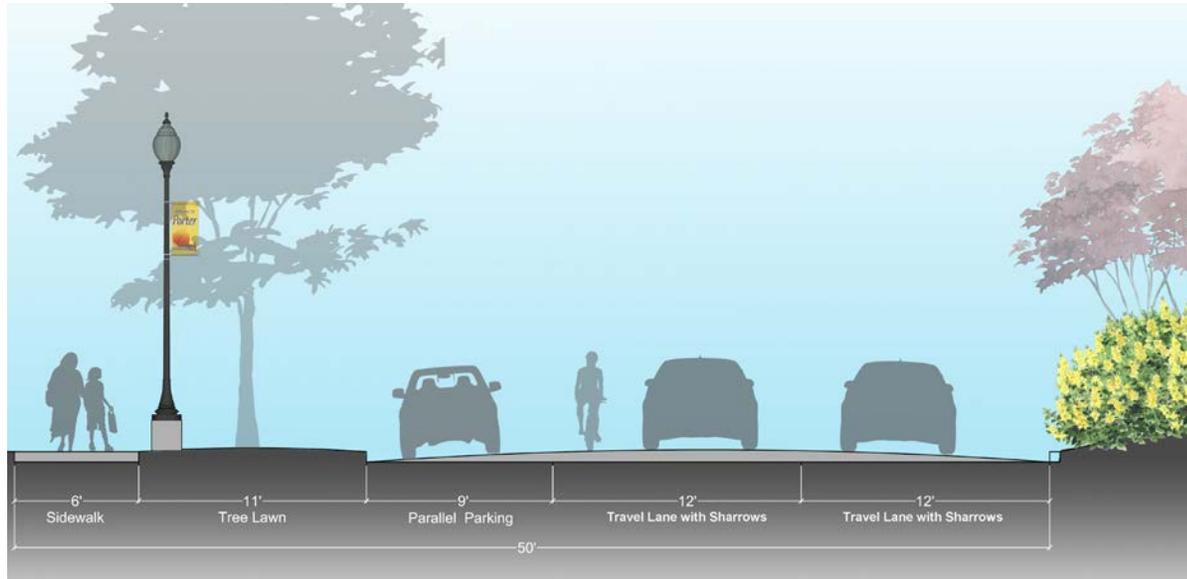


Figure 16. Lincoln Street with tree lawn.

2. The residential district between Porter Avenue and Waverly Road will have the same aesthetic elements included in the business district but will also include parallel parking and a tree lawn rather than angled parking on the north side of the street.



Figure 18. Typical parallel parking and tree lawn.

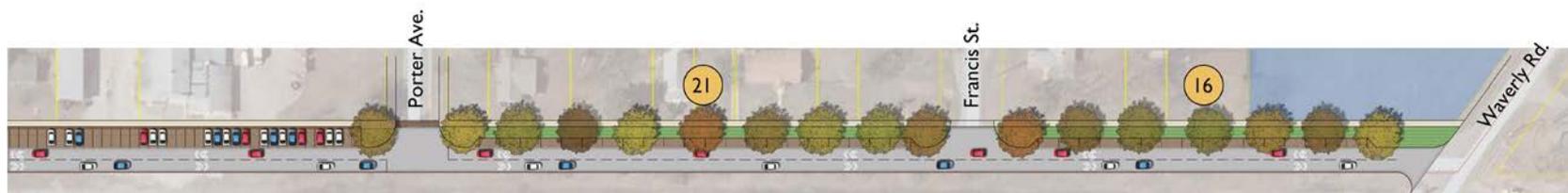


Figure 17. Site Plan of Lincoln streetscape, Business District.

HAWTHORNE PARK

Hawthorn Park is a cherished gathering place for all of Porter and, as a community park, serves as the home for the majority of Porter's larger-scale special events that draw both local residents and visitors from the Duneland and beyond. Public Meeting participants and on-line survey stressed the park's importance to Downtown, which serves daily resident needs for recreation and quiet, passive use. The park's location at the corner of a primary arrival corridor on Waverly Road and the Town's main street on Lincoln Avenue also makes it a key gateway element for Downtown. The connection to the planned Orchard Pedestrian Trail will only enhance this asset.

The consultant team assessed the park from a functional and aesthetic perspective, considering the range of uses it hosts and concluded that there were opportunities to upgrade a number of areas to make a good park into a great one that fully contributes to the success of Downtown. These included the following issues and opportunities:

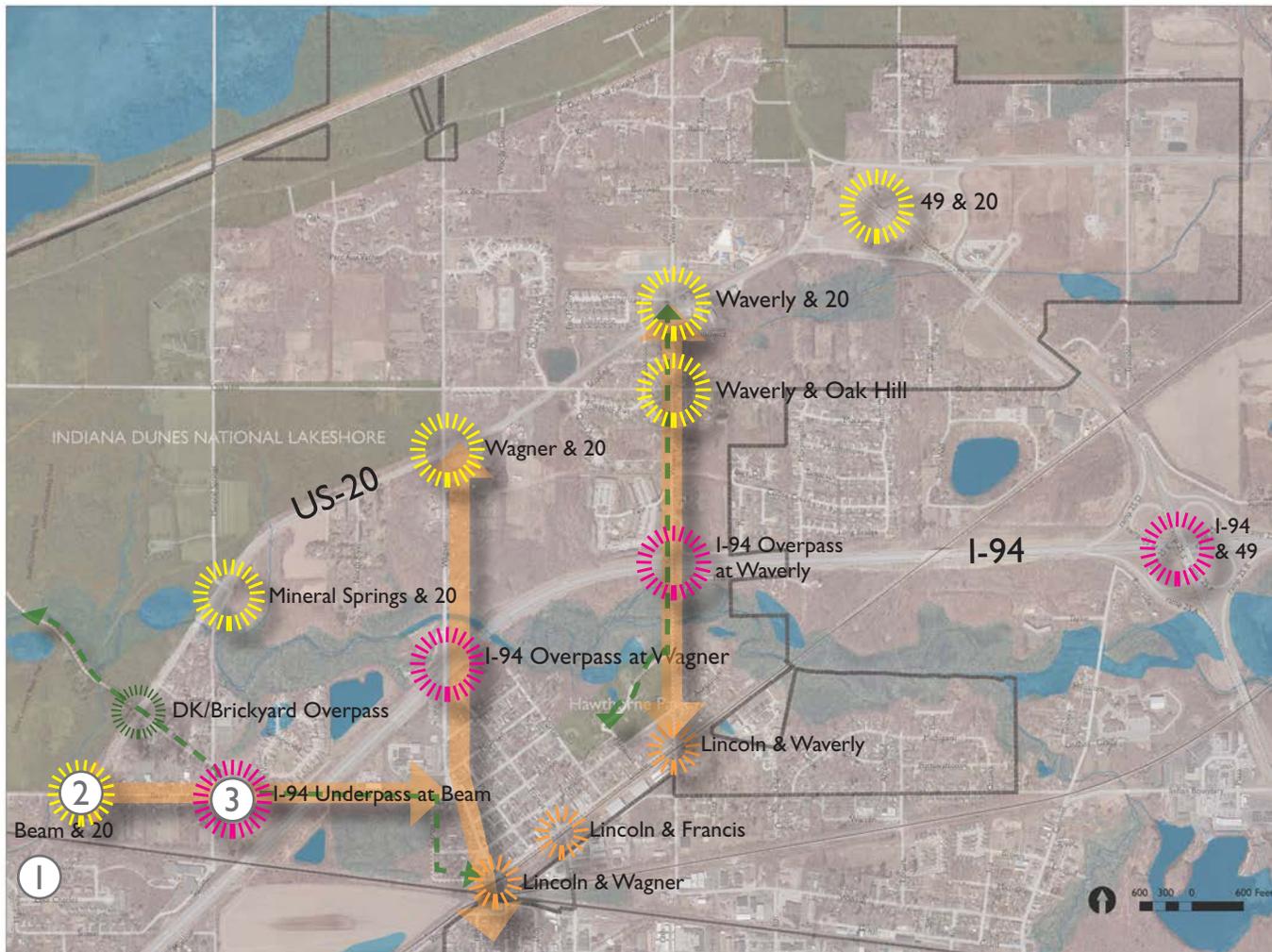
- (A) Integrate natural areas with active park areas for a more cohesive aesthetic appearance.
- (B) Add event support amenities.
- (C) Buffer adjacent residential.
- (D) Improve internal circulation.
- (E) Fully integrate the undeveloped the southeast parcel at the corner of Waverly and Lincoln.
- (F) Upgrade outdated playground and athletic equipment to meet contemporary standards for accessibility and safety.
- (G) Improve pedestrian connections to the core business district.
- (H) Assess the overall landscape value and ecosystem health to guide future landscape, invasive management and reforestation efforts.

The diagram on this page illustrates findings that will enhance the park for both community recreation and a range of year-round special events. The consultant team recommends that the Town develop an updated master plan for Hawthorn Park to address these issues and opportunities and also consider funding an events coordinator for the park.



Goal #2 - Connect

Objective: Safely connect everyone and everything to Downtown Porter.



-  Opportunities for signage and design elements to guide visitors into downtown Porter are recommended at intersections with key streets.
-  Overpasses and Underpasses along I-94 provide opportunities for signage and design elements to make visitors aware of downtown Porter.
-  Gateway enhancements for non-motorized corridors
-  Downtown gateways

Figure 20. Gateways and Corridors.



US-20 underneath rail overpass



Beam St at the I-94 underpass



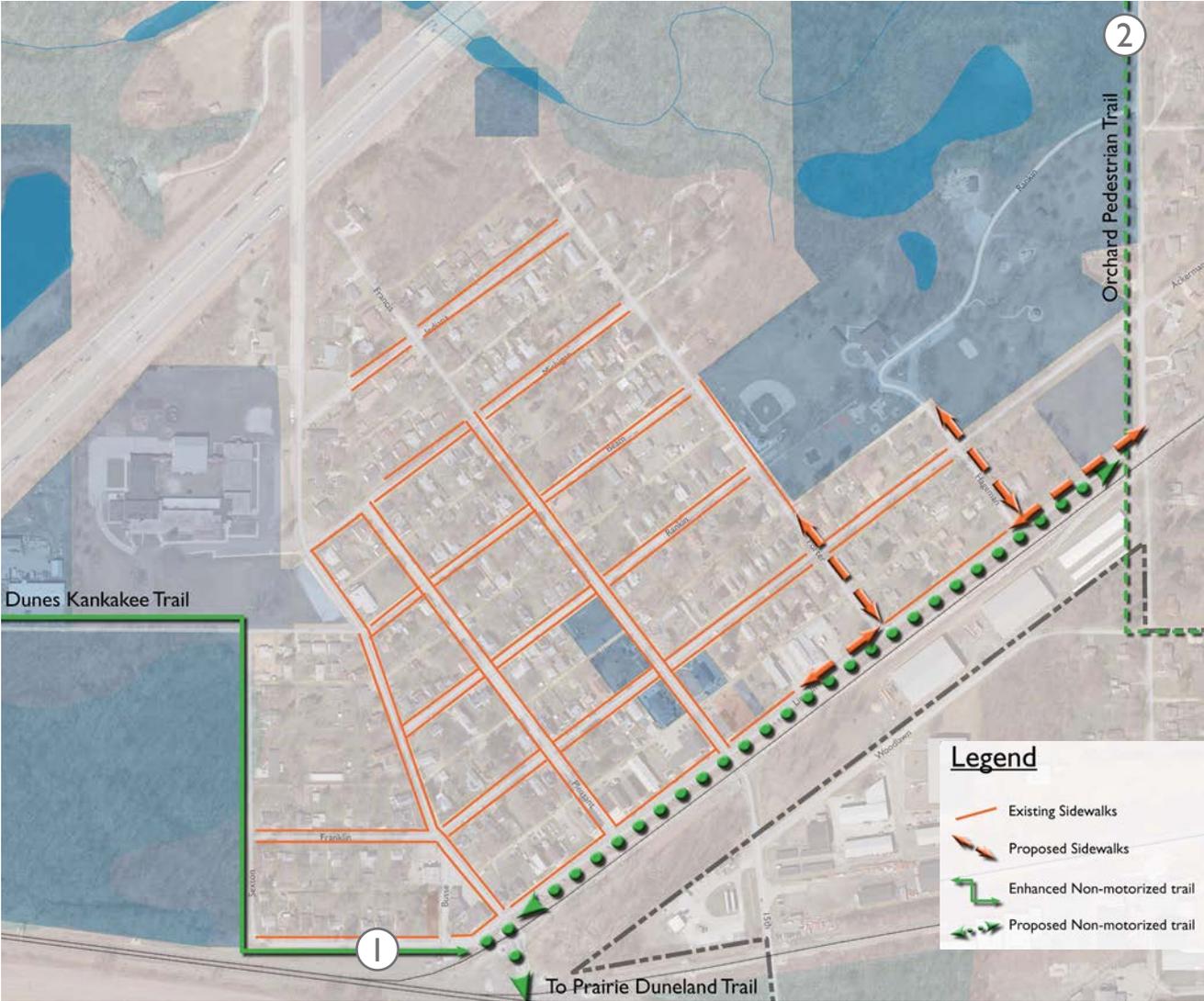
US-20 at Beam St

Connect

One of the greatest challenges facing Downtown Porter is its lack of visibility and connectivity beyond the core business district. It is virtually invisible and completely disconnected from the millions of visitors that travel along major thoroughfares including U.S. 20, U.S 12, IN 49 as well as mass transit users on the South Shore line. It was for this reason that the Gateway to the Indiana Dunes Sub-Area Plan established the guiding principle of *Transform the Corridors* that intended to maximize the quality and quantity of connections funneling potential spending power to Porter businesses along the IN 49 and U.S. 20 corridors as well as Downtown. This plan builds upon this principle and illustrates enhancements to key arrival corridors and gateways to increase the visibility and connectivity of Downtown.

- Complete key local and regional trail linkages that serve Downtown, including the Orchard Pedestrian Trail and the re-branded Brickyard Trail as the Dunes Kankakee Trail that links Downtown to the lakefront.
- Re-route the existing truck route away from Lincoln Street to enhance safety and facilitate additional business development and community use.
- Develop community gateways and enhanced arrival corridors from U.S. 20 and IN 49 to visually connect Downtown Porter to high-visibility thoroughfares.
- Leverage potential Amtrak/high-speed rail projects for local benefit, including streetscape improvements, improved crossings, quiet zones and a potential new station that could attract additional Downtown visitors.

NON-MOTORIZED CORRIDORS



Porter is fortunate to be the location where numerous regional trails, both existing and proposed, converge. Downtown Porter represents a rare case where multiple trails connect directly to a central business district which connects it to major tourism attractions visited by millions. This section illustrates a series of additional steps to leverage and improve these trails, including shared bike routes that are integrated into a renovated “complete” Lincoln Avenue. This strategy is coupled with measures to increase local connectivity within the Downtown area via an expanded sidewalk system.

Figure 21. Non-Motorized Circulation Plan

BEFORE



Existing Brickyard Trail at southwest area of Lincoln St

AFTER



Conversion to Dunes Kankakee Regional Trail



Waverly St at Orchard Pedestrian Bridge



Waverly St at Orchard Pedestrian Bridge

LEVERAGE RAIL IMPROVEMENTS

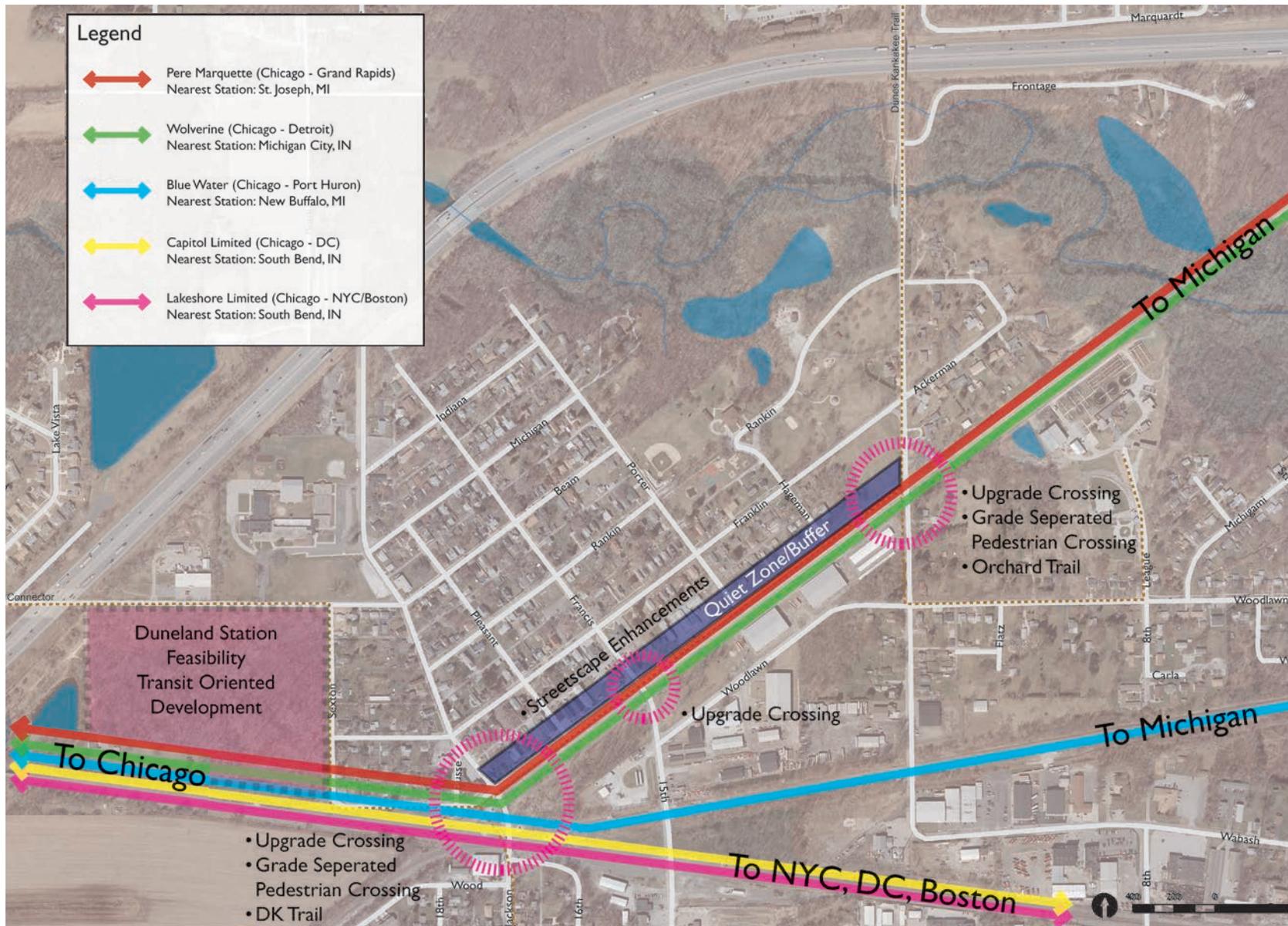


Figure 22. Amtrak Rail Analysis.

Porter's development and character is directly influenced by the network of railroads that travel through Town, in particular the Downtown. Noise, visual impacts and multi-track crossings have been consistently identified as negatives, however potential Amtrak high-speed rail improvements through the Downtown provides an opportunity to address these issues as highlighted on the adjacent diagram. In addition, multiple regional and national Amtrak lines converge in Porter, just west of the core business district. This plan recommends that Porter explore the potential of a Duneland station in this area to serve both area residents and the masses that travel to the Indiana Dunes and other tourism attractions but lack an Amtrak stop between Michigan City and Hammond. An influx of additional rail travelers would have a positive impact on area business, bringing additional jobs and investment into the Downtown.

Station Feasibility

Below are key initial steps necessary for investigating the feasibility of an Amtrak Station

- Investigate freight train traffic and operations
- Coordination with Amtrak, State and Federal Agencies
- Ridership forecasts
- Relation to adjacent stations
- National Lakeshore coordination
- Financing opportunities
- Interstate communication and coordination



Figure 23. Regional Amtrak Stations with 20 mile radius.



Typical Amtrak Station.

Goal #3 - Beautify

Objective: Enhance the visual quality of Downtown Porter, including key arrival corridors and gateways

BEFORE



AFTER



Beautify

- Upgrade landscape, site furnishings, signage, facades and other urban design elements, in particular at high visibility locations and corridors.
- Create high quality, coordinated material palettes for the core area, arrival corridors and gateways to visually unify and elevate the appearance of the district.
- Work with the railroads to improve the visual character on the south side of Lincoln Street, along the railroad right-of-way, including landscape enhancements and buffering.
- Expand, fund and market existing façade enhancement programs with a focus on the core area, arrival corridors and gateways.
- Enforce current appearance standards for public and privately owned parcels and structures and update to include unified Downtown-specific standards for sites and structures.

Downtown Porter contains a mix of architectural styles, streetscape treatments, landscapes and urban design elements that establish its aesthetic character. This mix establishes an eclectic charm in some areas while appearing unkempt and managed in others. This plan advocates an approach that maintains the existing eclectic charm and architectural diversity, upgrading both and weaving them together with a cohesive palette of high-quality landscape and urban design elements in order to unify and define the Downtown District.

Based on a review of the Town's Code of Ordinances, the tools appear to be in place within the Zoning Ordinance to enforce more stringent aesthetic standards. However, these may need to be augmented with specific standards for the core area. The images on the preceding page illustrate a range of aesthetic treatments that would establish the desired level of beautification.

These generally fall into the following categories:

- Façade and building enhancements
- Landscape
- Hardscape
- Site furnishings
- Signage
- Gateways
- Streetscapes
- Lighting

Goal #4 - Sustain

Objective: Implement physical enhancements and procedures that elevate Porter's level of environmental, economic and social sustainability to the highest level in Duneland.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

There has been interest nationally and in Great Lakes communities in understanding and developing plans for sustainable development. Sustainable development, which is generally defined as development that meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, it is widely understood to encompass three E's: Economics, Environment and Equity. In the context of the environment, sustainability refers to more efficient use of scarce natural resources (water, energy, minerals). Sustainability entails facilitating human activities that simultaneously promote economic development, environmental protection, and social equity.

Recent concerns about the effects of Climate Change on the Indiana Dunes, one of Porter's greatest natural assets, have brought long held Duneland values of equity, environmental conservation and economic development to the forefront. Understanding the steps that can be taken at a municipal level and encouraged on an individual level become key to Porter's role in protecting and enhancing the rich biodiversity and natural

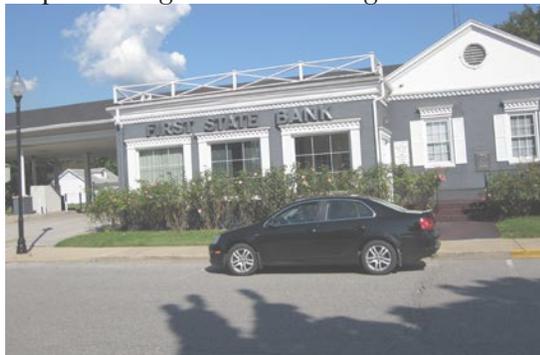
landscapes, strengthen and improve community health, and encourage continued community investment.

Looking toward a future with increased cost and reduced availability of fossil fuels, Porter may embark on the following sustainable development opportunities to save money through energy/resource conservation, generate jobs in a new energy economy focused on energy efficiency and renewable energy, and promote community-wide economic development:

Sustainable Infrastructure Opportunities:

I. MUNICIPAL FACILITY & FLEET EFFICIENCY UPGRADES

Municipal Fleet Efficiency Upgrades can range from maintenance programs and fleet upgrades to increase fuel efficiency of municipal vehicles to replacement of aging fleet vehicles with more efficient vehicles or alternative fuel vehicles. Targeted investment and upgrades to fleets have opportunity to realize long term cost savings. Facility upgrades and policies such as water conservation measures; building efficiency /conservation



audits and upgrades; or a green building policy for new municipal buildings offer opportunities for both resource conservation and financial savings. Additionally, the Town has the opportunity through NIPSCO's Feed-in Tariff program to develop solar or wind resources to offset energy costs or to reduce purchased power.

2. FAÇADE & EFFICIENCY GRANT PROGRAM

As described in this plan, the Town in partnership with the Duneland Chamber of Commerce currently offers a Façade Grant Program. Expansion and marketing of this program offers an opportunity to increase building energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption. Additional benefit could be realized if the current façade grant program was expanded to residential properties and building energy efficiency/conservation upgrades where included as a requirement for grants. Additional grants or cost sharing opportunities could be provided for commercial lighting upgrades. By actively combining Town and Duneland Chamber of Commerce Façade grants, a variety of currently offered NIPSCO rebate programs and implementing new commercial lighting or residential grants, Porter is well positioned promote communitywide energy conservation.

3. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

In addition to meeting State, Porter County and Town of Porter stormwater best management practice requirements, opportunities to reduce impervious areas and increase stormwater quality exist throughout downtown Porter. These opportunities include greening parking areas, walkways, patios, plazas, and driveways through the use of permeable paver; introducing rain gardens into streetscape elements, and potentially day lighting stormwater discharge to increase quality prior to reaching receiving waters.

4. LOCAL FOOD OPPORTUNITIES

According the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission's "Northwest Indiana Local Food Study", local food has many benefits, such as fresher, more flavorful produce,

decreased transportation costs and emissions, building community, and keeping money in the local economy. Porter can take advantage of numerous local food opportunities through the implementation of a weekday downtown farmers market, currently there is not a weekday farmers market offered in the Duneland communities. Additional opportunities in local food and education include potential community gardens at either Hawthorne Park or Yost Elementary School.

5. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE & BUILDING POLICY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

The Town of Porter has the opportunity to address energy and conservation through mandatory or voluntary green infrastructure and building policies for new development. These may include energy efficiency/green building standards for new construction and major renovations, a green concrete policy, or a complete streets policy. Such programs offer guidance and standards to reduce energy and resource consumption while reducing operation costs.

Additional Infrastructure/Policy interventions to promote a sustainable community:

- Pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) Trash Collection
- Promote NIPSCO's Green Power Rate Program
- Individualized Travel Marketing Program (to reduce VMT)



Goal #5 - Sell

Objective: Establish and sell Downtown Porter's niche within the Duneland.

- Embrace and build upon Downtown Porter's niche as the place for residents and Duneland visitors to celebrate and visit special events. Develop a regular slate of weekend and evening special events with appropriate space, amenities and connectivity to make them safe and enjoyable and conducive to repeat visitation.
- Actively market Downtown Porter as a destination for year-round visitors at area attractions, including the lakefront, state and national parks and regional trails.
- Implement more aggressive external marketing and sales strategies with local CVB's and Chambers to broadcast the amenities and activities offered in Porter, including the Downtown.

Peer Communities Review

As part of this planning process, the consultant team researched a series of "peer communities" that had similar characteristics as Porter in terms of population size and other key demographics and had successful downtown districts in terms of vitality, function and attractiveness.

These communities included:

- Lowell, IN
- Whiting, IN
- New Carlisle, IN
- New Buffalo, MI
- South Haven, MI

	Bar & Grill	Family Restaurant	Coffee Shop	Convenience Retail	Specialty Retail	Professional Services	Festival/Park Venue	Access to Lodging	Trails & Open Space	Legend
Existing Porter Buisnesses										Well Served
Customer Benefits (if services are provided)										
Residents										Moderately Served
Duneland Visitors										Minimally Served
Regional/National Visitors										

Table 4. Business Matrix

Observations were made about contributing elements that were seen in almost every case study, including a mixture of offerings that cater to both local residents and visitors and contribute to a positive level of economic activity. The matrix on the previous page highlights these elements and illustrates the level that they are currently offered in Downtown Porter and the anticipated customers that they would serve and attract.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Façade Program

The Town in partnership with the Duneland Chamber of Commerce provided matching funds to local business that this report identified by the Chamber of Commerce for façade grants. The program provided an 80/20 matching grant and the Town matches the Chambers' financial commitment with the property owner by providing the 20%. The consultant team recommends expanding on this program by increasing the amount of funding available and focusing on two projects on an annual basis. The Town should consider promoting its own program in the downtown area. Funding for this program can be directed through tax increment funds and/or CEDIT funding.

The funding should not be limited to façade issues, but should allow for material rehabilitation both inside and outside of the facilities within the designated Downtown Area. In order to protect the interest of the Town, it is also recommended that the Town have a lien and/or other surety related to the investment where substantial rehabilitation is occurring.

Eligible projects should expand beyond the traditional exterior and/or parking improvements to include the following:

- Roofing
- Interior electrical and plumbing
- Commercial kitchens
- Relocation/Expansion

Downtown Area Designation

Based on IC 6-1.1-12.1-16, a property owner in a designated downtown district can receive up to three years of 100% relief of real property taxes based on gross assessed value of the structures. This incentive is very significant because it assists existing businesses as well as new investors that are contemplating locating in the area.

In the designated downtown, the Town should enact the “downtown area designation”. Procedurally, the Town should approve the area as an economic revitalization area as indicated in the statute. Because many of the activities would involve retail and other commercial this plan also recommends that the Town approve the area to be designated as an Economic Development Target Area. This action will be required to allow for retail or commercial property tax abatement.

Implementation Strategy

FUNDING

This Plan identifies many potential projects to support the five goals of: Entertain, Connect, Beautify, Sustain, and Sell. Key to implementation of these potential projects is funding; opportunities for funding arise when project goals and funding goals coincide. As such understanding types of projects that will be attractive to funding sources is vital. Funding sources may evaluate projects based on a number of elements, such as: improved access; landscaping and beautification; economic development; safety; environmental, air and water quality; or improved mobility.

The overall estimated cost of the recommended projects total approximately \$4.6M. Funding for implementation of these projects can come from several sources. Those sources may include:

A *Federal Funding Opportunities*

The elements listed of this plan may meet specific to the goals of several federal funding programs, such as Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and Surface Transportation Program (STP). Ensuring that the planned projects incorporate these elements will increase non-local funding opportunities for implementation.

Awards per funding cycle for these programs are limited, but may be obtained repeatedly over multiple funding cycles. CMAQ, TAP, and STP programs typically require a twenty percent local match.



CMAQ

The CMAQ program supports two goals – improving air quality and relieving congestion. Projects that provide alternative transportation opportunities, incorporate complete streets, improve mobility and connectivity and encourage development around existing infrastructure are favored by this program. CMAQ is typically a bi-annual program.

TAP

The Transportation Alternatives Program (formerly TE, or Transportation Enhancement) offers funding opportunities to expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience. Funded activities include those related to surface transportation like pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety programs, scenic and historic highway programs, landscaping and scenic beautification, historic preservation, and environmental mitigation. TA is typically an annual program.

STP

STP funding focuses on relieving traffic congestion; improving roadway safety, efficiency and mobility; and protecting the environment. Individual projects are scored based upon pre-determined scoring criteria. Those projects that receive the highest scores and are found eligible by INDOT and FHWA can receive funding. Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding is part of the STP and can benefit a community in that it focuses on improving safety for the most dangerous roads and intersections and generally requires a relatively low local match. STP is typically distributed bi-annually.

B *Utilities as Leverage for Local Match*

Matching funds can be obtained with the help of the local Utility. By timing streetscape and corridor improvements to coincide with needed stormwater and sanitary improvements

on key master plan elements, utility improvements funds can provide local matching funds.

Streetscape elements along Lincoln, Francis, Porter and Hageman have potential to combine utility upgrades with recommendations per this plan.

C *Leverage of Anticipated Rail Improvements*

As discussed in this plan, future improvements within the railroad right-of-way along Lincoln are anticipated. The scope of these improvements are not yet defined, but with coordination there may be opportunities to leverage rail improvements to support streetscape elements on Lincoln Street.

There is some potential gateway enhancements that include railroad crossing (at Wagner, Francis and Waverly) may qualify for INDOT Rail-Highway Crossing Program funds (Section 130). These funds typically fund warning lights, bells and gates. These funds can be difficult to obtain; INDOT typically only funds 20-25 rail crossing improvement projects per year and there are over 6,000 rail crossings in the state. However, even if INDOT does not select a particular project, many times local agencies have obtained funds directly from the railroad owner for safety improvements at trail crossings.

D *Strategic Partnerships*

There are many benefits to being identified as a Duneland Community; one of these benefits is a loose association with neighboring communities with common goals and vision. In regards to implementing this plan Porter has the opportunity to work with and leverage partnerships with Chesterton, this may come in the form of sharing and coordination of resources in pursuing grants or potential cost sharing arrangements for project that cross municipal borders. Other partners may include Porter County or the Duneland Chamber of Commerce.

E *Funding Park Improvements*

Park improvements have additional potential funding sources including Park User Fees, implementing a Park Impact Fee for future development and Private donations. As discussed in this plan, it is recommended that an updated Hawthorne Park Master Plan be developed to further prioritize and direct improvements to Hawthorne Park.

F *Other Non-Local Funding Sources*

The Regional Development Authority (RDA) is currently assisting Porter with infrastructure projects that produce economic development opportunities. Several of these RDA Grant funded projects have elements identified in this plan, including the corridors and gateways supporting the Dunes-Kankakee Trail and Dunes-Kankakee Trail Links.

The Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program (LMCP) offers grants for projects to protect and restore natural, cultural and historic resources in Indiana's Lake Michigan coastal region. LMCP grants are typically an annual program.

Other types of funding sources intermittently become available. For instance, in 2010 NIPSCO partnered with the DNR to make maple trees available through a tree grant. A grant like this can offset costs of replacing trees along targeted corridors and at gateways. Additionally, as individuals and businesses may sponsor amenities like benches, pavers, or trash cans. Furthermore, grants from the US Department of Energy have been available to replace light fixtures with new energy efficient models.

H *Leverage of ADA Transition Plan Improvements*

By timing streetscape, corridor, and gateway elements with the implementation of recommendation from the Town of Porter ADA Transition Plan, the Town may be able to combine Master Plan and ADA projects for a cost savings.

H *Local Funding*

Porter Town Code establishes several funds that may be used in whole or in part for capital improvements included where allowed by law; these include Cumulative Capital Improvement Fund, Motor vehicle highway fund (MVHF), Rainy day fund, Redevelopment fund, and Major moves construction fund. Many of these Town funding sources can be leveraged as matching funds to several of the funding sources discussed above.

ESTIMATES AND PHASING

A sound phasing strategy will help break Master Plan elements into smaller achievable phases and will help identify opportunities to leverage existing projects and funding. The following outlines a multi-phase strategy for completing the proposed full build-out of the Downtown Master Plan:

Phase A includes Master Plan elements associated with existing projects including additional amenities on the Dunes-Kankakee Trail, arrival corridor streetscapes on Beam Street and Waverly Road; gateway improvements at the intersections of Wagner and Beam and Wagner and Lincoln; and bridge modifications and gateway enhancements at Waverly Road and I-94. Estimated costs for this phase are approximately \$850K.

Phase B focuses on better connecting Hawthorne Park to Lincoln Street by adding sidewalks and limited street lighting. At a cost of approximately \$165K this project may be implemented as a stand-alone project, in conjunction with ADA Transition Plan recommendations, or with other streetscape projects.

Phase C includes Master Plan elements relating to the Downtown Core including the Lincoln street streetscape with 90^o parking from Wagner Road to Porter Avenue; creation of two downtown parking lots; and enhancements to Francis Avenue and gateway enhancements at the Francis and Lincoln intersection. Costs for this phase are approximately \$1.6 million.

Phase D extends the Downtown along Lincoln Street by adding parallel parking, sidewalks and a tree lawn between Porter Avenue and Waverly Road and gateway enhancements to the Waverly and Lincoln intersection. This project could be concurrent or separate from the proposed streetscape between Wagner Road and Porter Avenue. The approximate cost of this phase is just under \$1.6 million.

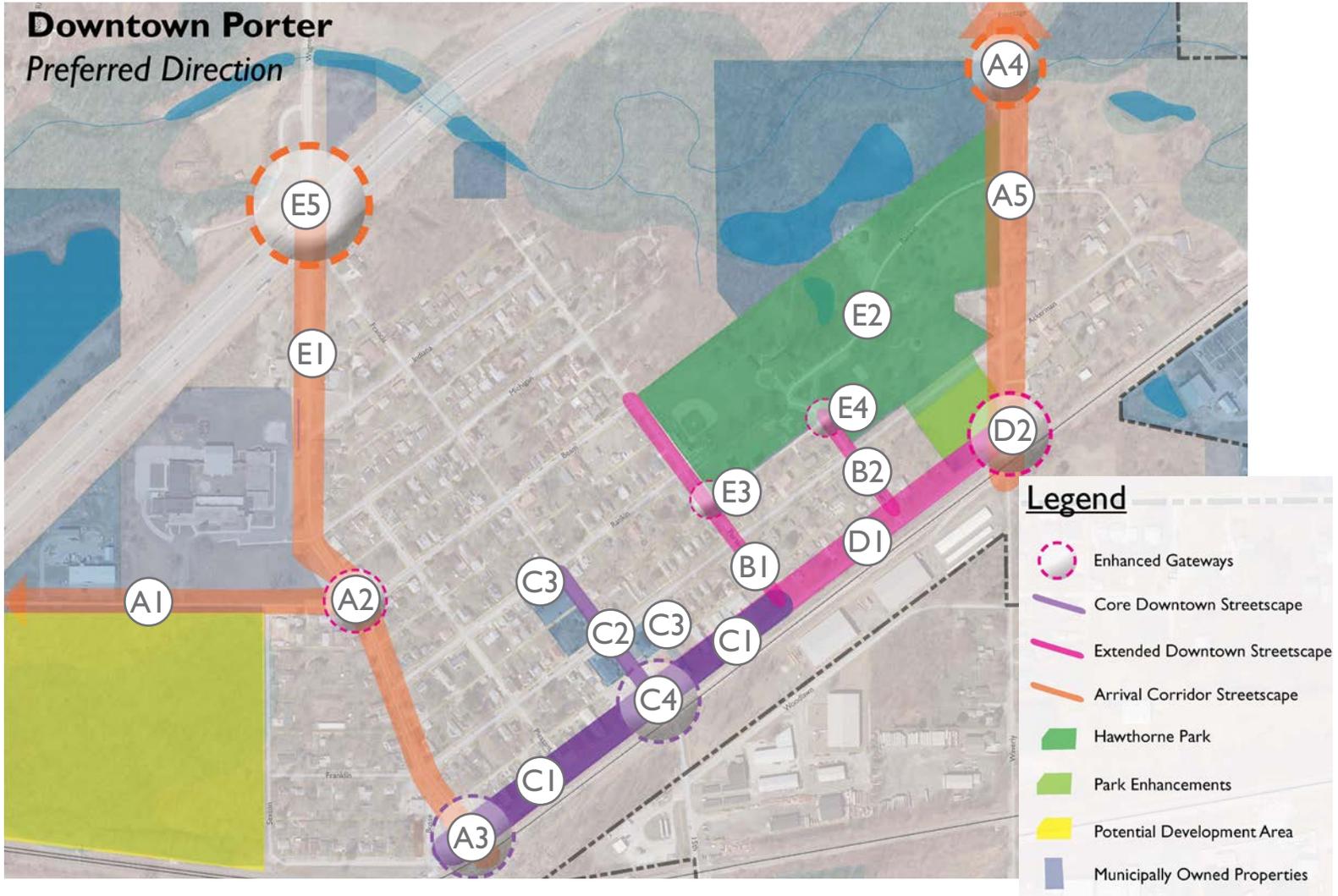
Phase E includes Master Plan elements to enhance the Wagner Road arrival corridor and gateway improvements at Wagner and I-94; improve Hawthorne Park Gateways at Porter Avenue and Hageman Avenue; and enhance and expand Hawthorne Park. Costs for this phase are approximately \$350K; however, the cost of Hawthorne Park enhancements should be directed by a park master plan.

Next Steps

As discussed earlier, funding for Master Plan elements should be timed to coincide with existing and proposed projects to leverage limited financial resources. Master Plan elements should be evaluated for compatibility with the various funding sources listed above. A timeline for implementation should be established not only to take into account grant cycles and funding availability, but also as prioritized by the Town. Although the implementation of the Master Plan has been divided into several phases, if possible the engineering design of all phases should be complete before construction begins. Other communities have found this sequence to ensure continuity of design and avoid duplicating construction costs.

	Project	Phase A	Phase B	Phase C	Phase D	Phase E	Potenital Funding Opportunity
A1	Beam Street/D-K Trail Arrival Corridor Streetscape	\$370,000					A,F,H
A2	Wagner Road/Beam Street Gateway	\$100,000					A,F,H
A3	Wagner Road/Lincoln Street Gateway	\$100,000					A,C,D,F,H
A4	Waverly Road/I-94 Gateway & Bridge Modifications	\$225,000					A,F,H
A5	Waverly Arrival Corridor Streetscape	\$50,000					A,F,H
B1	Extended Downtown Streetscape - Porter Avenue		\$95,000				F,G,H
B2	Extended Downtown Streetscape - Hageman Avenue		\$70,000				F,G,H
C1	Core Downtown Streetscape - Lincoln Street			\$1,350,000			A,B,C,G,H
C2	Core Downtown Streetscape Francis Avenue			\$20,000			A,B,C,G,H
C3	Downtown Parking Lot Expansion			\$150,000			B,D,H
C4	Lincoln Street/Francis Avenue Gateway			\$100,000			A,B,C,G,H
D1	Extended Downtown Streetscape - Lincoln Street				\$1,325,000		A,B,C,G,H
D2	Lincoln Street/Waverly Road Gateway				\$250,000		A,B,C,D,G,H
E1	Wagner Road Arrival Corridor Streetscape					\$50,000	B,H
E2	Hawthorne Park Enhancements					\$100,000	D,E,F,H
E3	Hawthorne Park/Porter Avenue Gateway					\$50,000	D,E,H
E4	Hawthorne Park/Hageman Avenue Gateway					\$50,000	D,E,H
E5	Wagner Road/I-94 Gateway					\$100,000	A,F,H
		\$845,000	\$165,000	\$1,620,000	\$1,575,000	\$350,000	
						\$4,555,000	

Table 5. Project Cost Estimate Overview.



CATALYTIC ACTIONS

First Moves

1. **Move the Trucks** - Work with neighboring communities served and impacted by the current designated truck route to establish an agreeable alternative that would relocate the truck route away from the Downtown business district to improve the safety and character of Lincoln Street for local businesses and their visitors. See Fig. 24.

2. **Announce Downtown**- Implement physical improvements that “announce” Downtown externally and draw in visitors, including gateways at highly visible intersections, enhanced and intuitive arrival corridors and clean-up/beautification of strategic, highly visible properties. See Fig. 25.

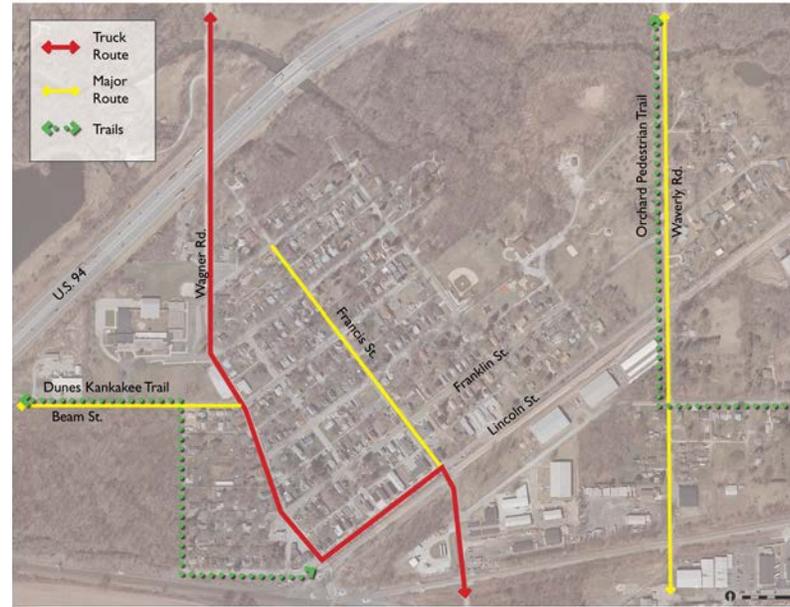
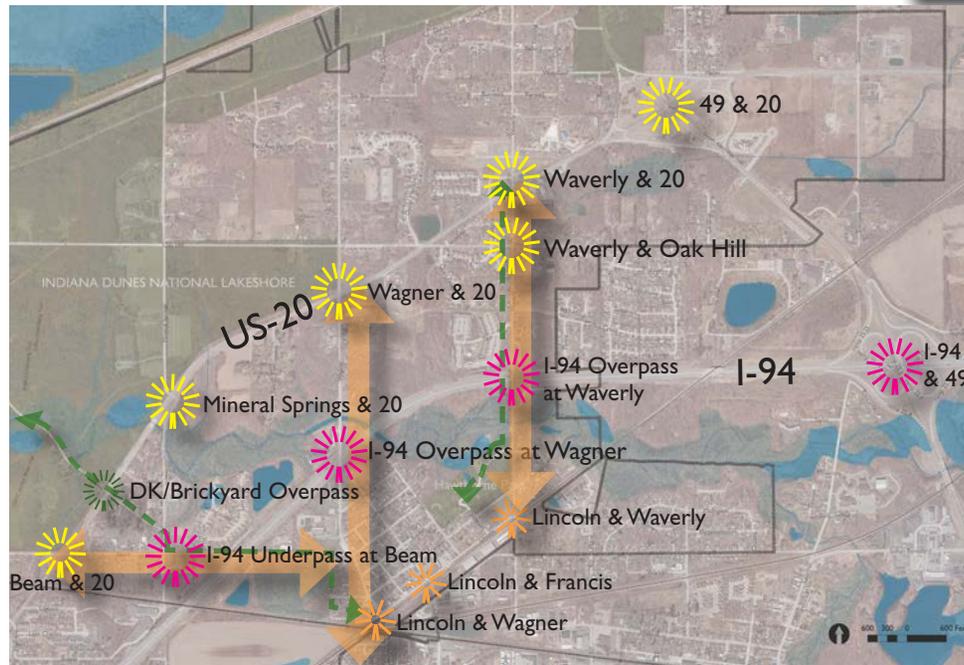


Figure 24. Map showing Truck Route through Downtown Porter.



-  Opportunities for signage & design elements to guide visitors into downtown Porter are recommended at intersections with key streets.
-  Overpasses & Underpasses along I-94 provide opportunities for signage & design elements to make visitors aware of downtown Porter.
-  Gateway enhancements for non-motorized corridors
-  Downtown gateways

3. **Sell Porter** - Improve the effectiveness of Town and Downtown marketing by implementing more aggressive external marketing and sales strategies with local CVB's and Chambers to broadcast the amenities and activities offered in Porter, including Downtown.

4. **Leverage the Trains** - Develop a comprehensive list of requests for Amtrak/high speed rail to leverage potential investment in Porter including:

- Improved at grade crossings, including construction of trail crossings for the Dunes Kankakee and Orchard Pedestrian Trails.
- Improved landscaping, visual and noise buffers along streets adjacent to the railroad right of way.
- A Downtown Porter quiet zone.
- Cost-share agreement for Lincoln streetscape improvements, including the relocation of existing angle parking.
- Explore the feasibility of a Duneland Amtrak station in Porter at the confluence of multiple Amtrak corridors.
- Sound and vibration mitigation measures for homes and businesses abutting the rail corridor.



Amtrak on the tracks near Porter, IN.

5. **Commit** - Ensure staff commitment, capacity and accountability to Town leaders in order to implement these catalytic actions in the first year and the remainder of the Downtown Plan as funding becomes available.

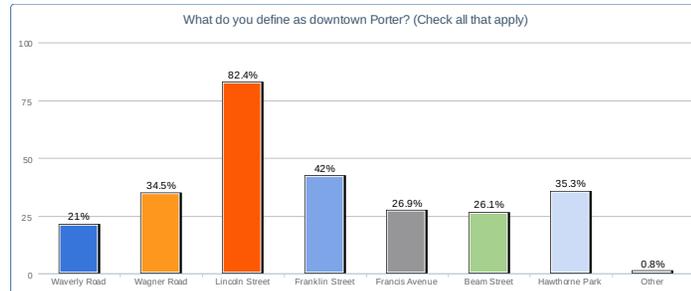


Full Survey Results



Online Surveys, Data Collection and Integration
www.SurveyGizmo.com

Summary Report - Oct 1, 2012
Survey: Downtown Porter Survey

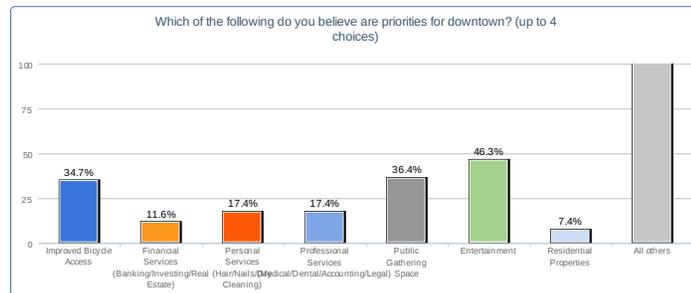


1. What do you define as downtown Porter? (Check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent %
Waverly Road	25	21.0%
Wagner Road	41	34.5%
Lincoln Street	98	82.4%
Franklin Street	50	42.0%
Francis Avenue	32	26.9%
Beam Street	31	26.1%
Hawthorne Park	42	35.3%
Other	1	0.8%

Statistics	
Total Responses	119

Open-Text Response Breakdown for "Other"	
t-94 under Wagner	1

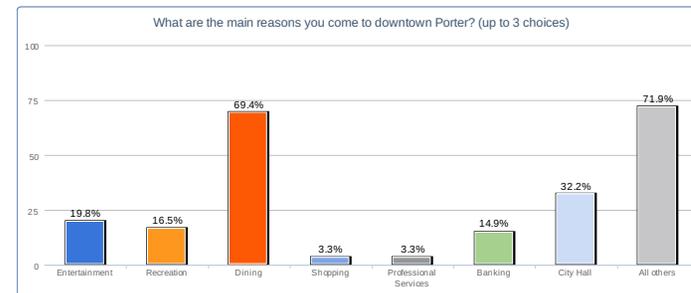


2. Which of the following do you believe are priorities for downtown? (up to 4 choices)

Value	Count	Percent %
Improved Bicycle Access	42	34.7%
Financial Services (Banking/Investing/Real Estate)	14	11.6%
Personal Services (Hair/Nails/Dry Cleaning)	21	17.4%
Professional Services (Medical/Dental/Accounting/Legal)	21	17.4%
Public Gathering Space	44	36.4%
Entertainment	56	46.3%
Residential Properties	9	7.4%
Shopping	73	60.3%
Dinning	79	65.3%
Improved Pedestrian Access	30	24.8%
Other	18	14.9%

Statistics	
Total Responses	121

Open-Text Response Breakdown for "Other"	
Activities or kids	1
Dining	1
Dining (note the typographical error above)	1
Family oriented businesses	1
Groceries	1
Improved parks department programs	1
None	1
Parking	1
aNTIQUE SHOP	1
better parking	1
clean up unsightly homes	1
cleaned up	1
grocery store	1
grocery store.personal services.residential properties too bicycle and pedestrian access	1
kid/family friendly envionment,	1
sidewalk on Oak Hill	1
widen the Lincoln	1
Less bars more child friendly we live in porter but go to chesterton due to the bars and nothing being child friendly.	1



3. What are the main reasons you come to downtown Porter? (up to 3 choices)

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
Entertainment	24	19.8%	Total Responses	121
Recreation	20	16.5%		
Dining	84	69.4%		
Shopping	4	3.3%		
Professional Services	4	3.3%		
Banking	18	14.9%		
City Hall	39	32.2%		
Festivals/Events	43	35.5%		
Work	7	5.8%		
Library	26	21.5%		
I Never Go	11	9.1%		

4. When dining out, where do you normally go? (rank in order)

Item	Total Score ¹	Overall Rank
Chesterton—Indian Boundary	956	1
Valparaiso	927	2
Chesterton—Downtown	874	3
Downtown Porter	767	4
Michigan City	734	5
Merrillville	489	6
Portage	451	7
Other	354	8

Total Respondents: 118

¹ Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks, the score is the sum of all weighted rank counts.

5. When shopping, where do you normally go? (rank in order)

Item	Total Score ¹	Overall Rank
Valparaiso	739	1
Michigan City	649	2
Merrillville	447	3
Chesterton—Indian Boundary	431	4
Portage	395	5
Chesterton—Downtown	323	6
Other	224	7
Downtown Porter	121	8

Total Respondents: 117

¹ Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks, the score is the sum of all weighted rank counts.

6. What types of restaurants would increase the amount of money you spend in Downtown Porter? (List three choices):1.

Count	Response
1	Adult - 21 and over
1	American (Burgers, etc.)
1	An Octave "like" restaurant
1	BBQ
1	BW3's with outdoor patio
1	Breakfast Diner
1	Burger/Brewpub
2	Cafe type

2	Cafe type
1	Casual dining
1	Chinese
1	Coffee shop
2	Diner
1	FAMILY
2	Family
1	Family Dining
1	Family Friendly
1	Family dining environment
1	Family dining
1	Family style
1	Fast Food
1	Fast Food- hamburgers,hotdog stand
1	Fast casual (ie Chipolte, Panera)
1	Fast food
1	Fast food chain
1	Fine Dining
2	Fine dining
2	Golden Corral
1	Good Breakfast fare
1	Good Italian
1	Good burger joint
1	Hamburger Joint
1	High end steak
1	Ice cream parlor
5	Italian
2	Italian
1	Italian Style
1	Italian/Pizza
1	Mexican
1	Mom and Pop Diner
1	More specialty restaurants-ie. specific styles of cuisine like Mediterranean
1	NO n smoking sit down breakfast
3	Pizza
1	Pizza, delivery
1	Places like Bistro, Bartletts, Octave Grill, a Great Pizza Dine-in Restaurant
1	Steak House
1	Steakhouse
1	Sushi
3	Thai
1	The Spa
1	Upgrade
1	Wings
1	any
1	breakfast
1	breakfast/diner
1	buffet
1	coffe shop
1	coffee house
1	family
1	family atmosphere
1	family restaurants
1	family style
2	fast food
1	good italian

4	italian
1	italian food
1	mexican
1	more sit down restaurants not bars
1	nice dining
1	ones that are not bars
1	orange leaf (yogert)
1	sandwich/sub shop
1	sandwiches
1	starbucks
2	steak house
1	steak/seafood
1	sushi
1	the more choices, the better
1	wings etc

6. What types of restaurants would increase the amount of money you spend in Downtown Porter? (List three choices):2.

Count	Response
1	Breakfast food
2	Brewery
1	Burgers
1	Burgers n fries
1	Cafe
1	Cajun
1	Casual American
1	Chain type; ie Red Lobster, Red Robin, Chili's
1	Child friendly
1	Chilis(type)
1	Chinese
1	Chinese Take-out
1	Coffe shop
1	Coffee House
1	Coffee shop
1	Coffees & teas / unique sandwiches
1	Deli
1	Ethnic
1	Family
1	Family Diner
1	Family focused
1	Family restaurant / buffet
1	Family restaurant like Applebee's
1	Family run casual dining
1	Fast Food
1	Fast food
1	Fine (but casual) dining
1	Fine Dining
1	Fine yet casual
1	Fish/Seafood
1	Formal dining
1	Healthy
1	Irish
1	Irish pub

4	Italian
1	Italian (not a national chain)
1	LUNCH
1	Mexican
1	Other ethnic food
1	Pizza
1	Pubs
1	Seafood
1	Something other than bar food
1	Steak & Seafood
1	Steak house
1	Thai
1	Vegetarian
1	Wood Fired Pizza/Italian
1	a place to get specialty beers and cocktails with expereinced waitstaff
1	american
1	arbys
1	cafe, serving breakfast & lunch
1	child friendly atmosphere
1	chilies
1	chinese
1	coffee shop
1	coffee/donut shop
1	deli
1	family friendly american food
1	family restaurant
1	family style dining
1	farm to fork
1	health food
1	health food shop
1	ice cream parlor
2	italian
1	italian - not pizza
1	non smoking pastry/sweets/coffee
1	olive garden
1	sandwich shop
1	steakhouse
1	steaks

6. What types of restaurants would increase the amount of money you spend in Downtown Porter? (List three choices):3.

Count	Response
1	BREAKFAST
1	Bar & Grill
1	Bistro
1	Brew Pub with Bar Food
1	Chinese
3	Chinese
1	Chinese, buffet
1	D Q
2	Deli
1	Drive thru
1	Fast food carry-out



1	Fast food carry-out
2	Fine Dining
1	French
1	Frozen Yogurt, Ice Cream, Bakery - everything no smoking.
1	Gourmet Hot Dogs & Ice Cream Parlor
1	Grill
1	Homestyle
1	Ice cream parlor
1	Italian
1	Italian
1	Italian / pizza
1	Kid Friendly
1	Microbrewery
1	Old Fashioned Diner
1	Other unique type eatery not found in area
4	Pizza
1	Pizza Parlor (not a franchise)
1	Pizza/Italian
1	Seafood
1	Specialty cuisine (Mexican, Italian)
1	Thai
1	a better mexican restaurant
1	american
1	bakery
1	casual dining - sit down
1	dinner
1	family style restaurant-
1	fast food(not located inside a truck stop)
1	greek
1	hooters
1	ice cream or cake shop
2	italian
1	little hot dog-candy store
1	local/organic
1	non smoking deli
1	outdoor dining near the park
1	pasta
1	romantic ambiance restaurant
1	sea food
1	second hand
1	something like george's gyros spot
1	wendys

1	Boutiques/Specialty Stores
1	Childrens
1	Childrens Clothing & Toys
1	Cleaners
7	Clothing
1	Clothing stores
1	Deli
1	Department Stores
2	Dollar Store
1	Electronic
1	Fruit & Vegetables
2	GENERAL MERCHANDISE
1	GREEK
1	Gas Station
1	Gift Shops
1	Good Grocery
1	Good grocery
2	Grocery
1	Grocery Store
1	Grocery on that end of town
1	Gym
1	Hair salon
2	Hardware
1	Home store
1	Ice cream parlor
1	Imported wine, cheese, pasta, meats etc.
1	K-Mart
1	Local specialties, family run
1	Not sure
1	Organic Foods
1	Party/Card Store
1	Pet Store
1	Restaurants
1	Retail, walmart etc...
1	See naperville's downtown
1	Sporting goods store
1	Stores like in the Merrville mall
1	Target
1	Target...only Target!
1	Trader Joes
1	WalMart
1	antique
1	bakery
1	big box chain _Target
1	big box stores
1	cheaper groceries stores
1	clothing
1	deli
1	drug
1	food shopping
1	gaming
1	gas station
1	gifts
1	gourmet groceries
2	grocery
1	grocery like store with produce

7. What types of stores would increase the amount of money you spend in Downtown Porter? (List three choices):1.

Count	Response
1	Bait and tackle
1	Bakery
1	Book store
1	Bookstore

2	grocery store
1	hair and nail / tanning
2	hardware
1	jc penney
1	kids stores
1	market
1	office supply
1	organic market
1	retail outlet stores
1	second hand
1	second hans shop
1	specialty grocery store
1	sports
1	travel agent
1	walmart

7. What types of stores would increase the amount of money you spend in Downtown Porter? (List three choices):2.

Count	Response
1	Antiques
1	Baby/Kids (diapers, clothing, food, etc.)
1	Bakery
1	Best Buy
1	Candy
1	Coffee
2	DRUG STORE
1	Deli
1	Disc. store, ie walmart, etc.
1	Dollar Store
1	Drug store
1	Dry Cleaning - quality and value
1	General
1	Gift Shop
2	Grocery
1	Grocery Stores
1	Grocery, Aldi?
1	Hair, Nails, Insurance
1	Hardware
1	Home Goods
1	Home Improvement
1	ITALIAN
1	Jewelry
1	Kroger
1	Locally made items
1	Marshalls
2	Meat Market
1	Meijer
1	Meijer/Trader Joes better grocery stores
1	Meijers...lower end grocery
1	Mens & Womens Fashion
1	Music shop
1	Nail Salon
1	Nail salon

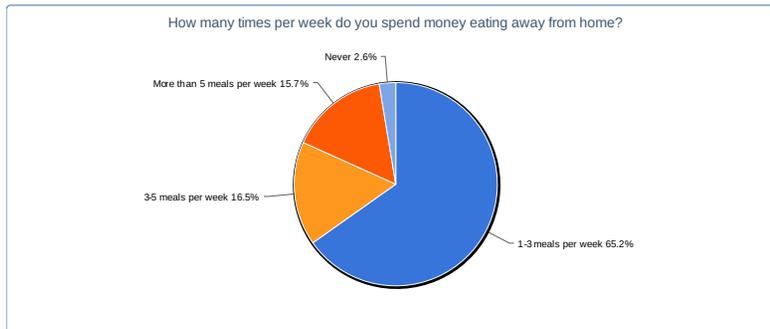
2	Office Supply
1	Pet supply
1	Sams Club
1	See The Green in beavercreek, oh
1	Shoe
1	Toys & gifts
1	Value stores
1	Whole Foods
1	affordable home decor
1	beauty shop
1	boating/swimming
1	book store
1	bookstore
1	clothing
1	dollar shop
1	dollar store
1	groceries
3	grocery
1	grocery store
3	hardware
1	hardwhare
1	higher end- hard to find shops
1	more restaurants
1	ones that offer that one stop shop
1	restaurant
1	restaurants
1	seamstress/drycleaning
1	something at porter beach
1	specialty food shop
1	sports store
1	target

7. What types of stores would increase the amount of money you spend in Downtown Porter? (List three choices):3.

Count	Response
1	Art/Antiques
1	Bakery
1	Bike shop
1	CLOTHING
1	Clothing
1	Clothing store
1	Cost effective Dollar stores, family dollar, dollar tree
1	Dollar Store
1	Drug Store
1	Dry Cleaners
1	Fresh Groceries (Vegetables, Fruit, Flowers, etc)
1	Grocery Store
1	Hardware
1	Hobby/Book
1	Home Decor
1	Home Improvement
1	Home goods
1	Home/Kithcen

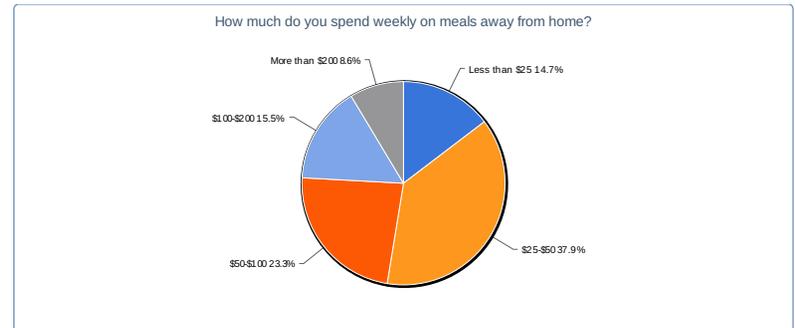


1	Home/Kitchen
1	Household needs
1	Import Store (like Teds in M'ville)
1	Kohl's...medium price clothing
1	Liquour
1	Maurices
1	Meat Market
1	More updated Laundry/Dry cleaner
1	Office supplies
1	Pet supply or hardware
1	Small grocery store
1	Sporting goods store
2	Target
1	Target store
1	Toys
1	aeropostale
1	book
1	clothing store
1	coffee house
1	dollar store
1	electronics
1	garden
1	grocery store
1	hardware
1	hardware/lumber
1	healthy fast food
1	home improvement
1	men's ware
1	pharmacy
1	small grocery
1	something catered to bike traffic



8. How many times per week do you spend money eating away from home?

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
1-3 meals per week	75	65.2%	Total Responses	115
3-5 meals per week	19	16.5%	Sum	132.0
More than 5 meals per week	18	15.7%	Avg.	1.4
Never	3	2.6%	StdDev	0.8
			Max	3.0



9. How much do you spend weekly on meals away from home?

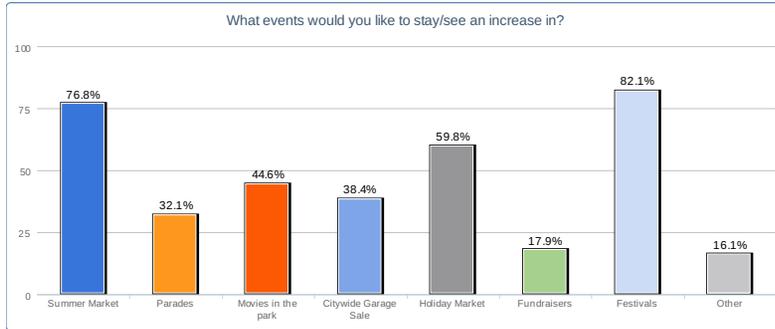
Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
Less than \$25	17	14.7%	Total Responses	116
\$25-\$50	44	37.9%		
\$50-\$100	27	23.3%		
\$100-\$200	18	15.5%		
More than \$200	10	8.6%		

10. Rate your overall satisfaction with these factors as they apply to downtown.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Responses
Attractiveness	10.6% 12	30.1% 34	30.1% 34	24.8% 28	4.4% 5	113
Cleanliness	16.8% 19	46.9% 53	23.9% 27	12.4% 14	0.0% 0	113
Special Events	14.2% 16	29.2% 33	41.6% 47	12.4% 14	2.7% 3	113
Parking convenience	12.3% 14	36.0% 41	31.6% 36	13.2% 15	7.0% 8	114
Traffic Flow	13.2% 15	36.0% 41	28.1% 32	17.5% 20	5.3% 6	114
General Safety	30.1% 34	35.4% 40	26.5% 30	5.3% 6	2.7% 3	113
Bicycle access	12.4% 14	21.2% 24	40.7% 46	19.5% 22	6.2% 7	113
Pedestrian Safety	19.5% 22	31.9% 36	37.2% 42	6.2% 7	5.3% 6	113

11. Which areas of the downtown do you think are most important for improvements focused on?

	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Responses
Attractiveness	49.1% 53	37.0% 40	12.0% 13	0.9% 1	0.9% 1	108
Cleanliness	43.0% 46	40.2% 43	15.0% 16	1.9% 2	0.0% 0	107
Special Events	23.4% 25	44.9% 48	26.2% 28	3.7% 4	1.9% 2	107
Parking convenience	30.2% 32	40.6% 43	26.4% 28	2.8% 3	0.0% 0	106
Traffic Flow	23.1% 24	41.3% 43	32.7% 34	1.9% 2	1.0% 1	104
General Safety	38.2% 39	34.3% 35	26.5% 27	1.0% 1	0.0% 0	102
Bicycle access	23.1% 24	32.7% 34	35.6% 37	3.8% 4	4.8% 5	104
Pedestrian Safety	35.0% 36	38.8% 40	22.3% 23	3.9% 4	0.0% 0	103

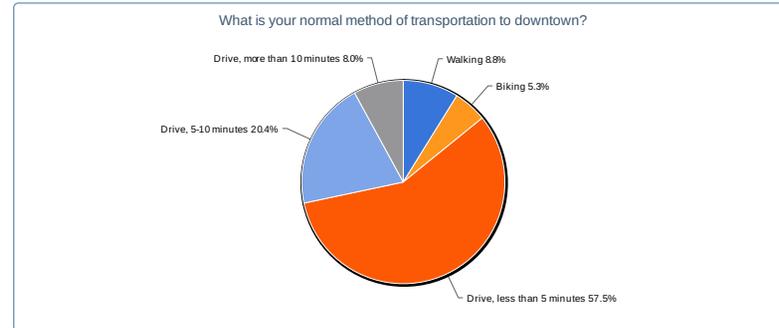


12. What events would you like to stay/see an increase in?

Value	Count	Percent %
Summer Market	86	76.8%
Parades	36	32.1%
Movies in the park	50	44.6%
Citywide Garage Sale	43	38.4%
Holiday Market	67	59.8%
Fundraisers	20	17.9%
Festivals	92	82.1%
Other	18	16.1%

Statistics	
Total Responses	112
Sum	5.0
Avg.	5.0
Max	5.0

Open-Text Response Breakdown for "Other"	Count
Left Blank	2
5k Race	1
Arts events - see below	1
Farmer's Market	1
It would be nice if Porter had a town square, like Centennial Park in Chesterton	1
Kids-centered events and programs	1
Oz Fest	1
Stuff for families	1
anything to promote our community as fun, friendly, and family oriented- and a fun beach town!!!!	1
auto event	1
ice rink	1
new playground at Hawthorne	1
none	1
road race	1
sporting events	1
wine tastings, Oktober fest and other seasonal events	1
community events to bring porter residents together, child themed events they are the future residents and will move away if they do not have a grand experience.	1



13. What is your normal method of transportation to downtown?

Value	Count	Percent %
Walking	10	8.9%
Biking	6	5.3%
Drive, less than 5 minutes	65	57.5%
Drive, 5-10 minutes	23	20.4%
Drive, more than 10 minutes	9	8.0%

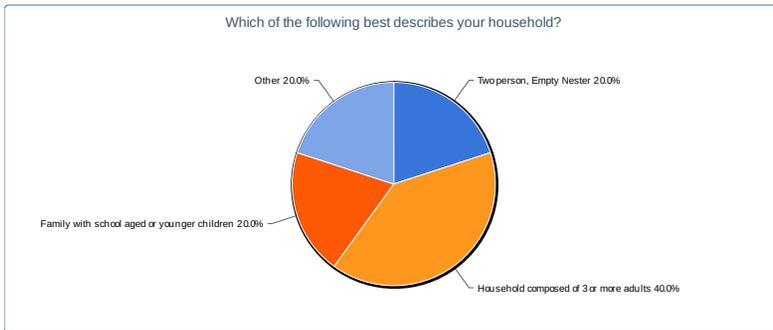
Statistics	
Total Responses	113

14. How many adults live in your household?

Count	Response
15	1
73	2
10	3
2	4
1	Two
1	one
3	two

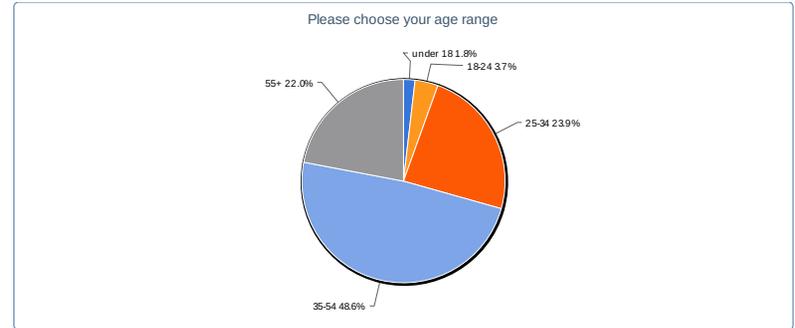
15. How many children live in your household (18 and younger)?

Count	Response
50	0
1	0 (but my niece is just two doors from me)
1	0q
17	1
16	2
11	3
1	4
1	5
1	Zero
2	none
1	two



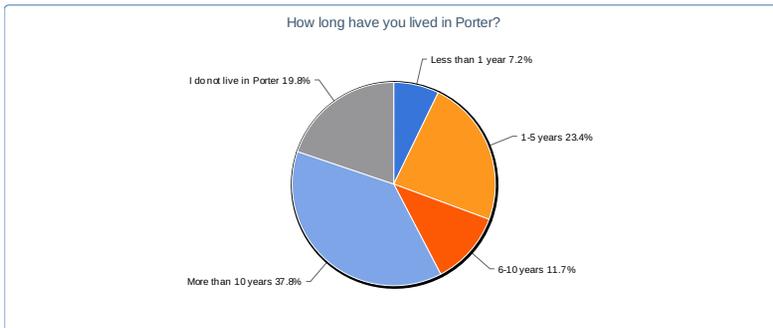
16. Which of the following best describes your household?

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
Live alone	0	0.0%	Total Responses	5
Two person, Empty Nester	1	20.0%		
Double-income family without children	0	0.0%		
Household composed of 3 or more adults	2	40.0%		
Family with school aged or younger children	1	20.0%		
Other	1	20.0%		



18. Please choose your age range

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
under 18	2	1.8%	Total Responses	109
18-24	4	3.7%	Sum	3,897.0
25-34	26	23.9%	Avg.	36.4
35-54	53	48.6%	StdDev	11.1
55+	24	22.0%	Max	55.0



17. How long have you lived in Porter?

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics	
Less than 1 year	8	7.2%	Total Responses	111
1-5 years	26	23.4%	Sum	104.0
6-10 years	13	11.7%	Avg.	2.7
More than 10 years	42	37.8%	StdDev	2.4
I do not live in Porter	22	19.8%	Max	6.0

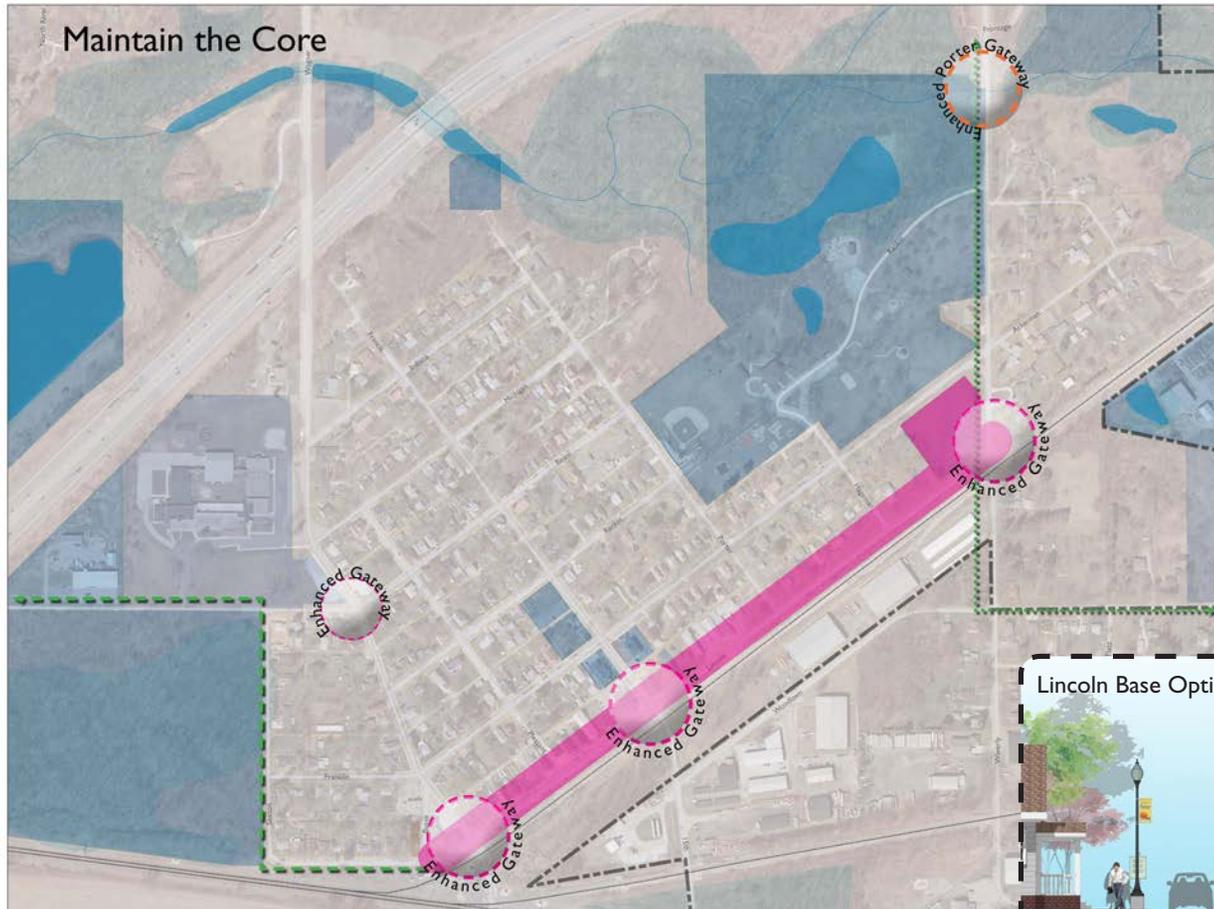
19. Other Coments

Count	Response
1	Garbage price seems excessive for such a high population density.
1	I like that they started up the Senior Citizens lunches and activities.
1	I live in Chesterton.
1	I live in Porter all my childhood days and into my teens.
1	Keep up the good work!
1	Need to improve bike lanes. Need good restaurants.
1	Needs things for families, too many bars and night life
1	Not all of my suggestions pertain to just downtown Porter, but the whole town.
1	Overall downtown general asthetics need improving. The park is awesome.
1	The train situation makes it difficult, at times.
1	trim and clean up the hedges on south side of lincoln st.
1	I live in proter cove. I know we would spend more time, ie money, in proter if we could ride bikes or walk there. Not safe to get there with a 4 year old. Improved sidewalks and traffic safety. I know it's hard to get anything done by the tracks, but not safe=not going.
1	Old town with charm,that needs changes. Redevelopment Comm. to buy up lot of areas to have stores from Wagner to Tilden supply store.Area west of Wagner,the small triangle,leveled used for parking & rest area trail & downtown.
1	The Porter Beer Fest was probably the best event; too bad you cannot capture that young, hip crowd with the type of offerings they like (brewpubs, outdoor beer gardens, quality restaurants, cool stores). Hawthorne Park is a great asset; why call the art fair the Chesterton Art Fair, perhaps it should be Duneland Art Fair? At the end of the day, Porter is not going to be able to compete with Chesterton on visibility and charm. Why not link the towns the way you did the school districts, etc.?
1	I thought the town switched to a new logo that had a beach chair. Why are you showing the old, ugly one?
1	suggest that number one task is to define "downtown" and build identity otherwise with emphasis on building the 20 corridor, you may, I'm afraid, end up like Merrillville...nothing wrong with that if you plan it that way, but defining "who" you are is very important.
1	I really think that the focus should be on what the residents of Porter want ahead of what others want for the town. As in the branding with the chairs, anyone could vote, but it is the residents who will live with the symbol. I answered that I thought downtown was bordered on Lincoln, only because that was the last road listed. The downtown area really ends at Wood Street. What is listed as a priority does NOT mean we need more of it. I do not feel that the Town of Porter

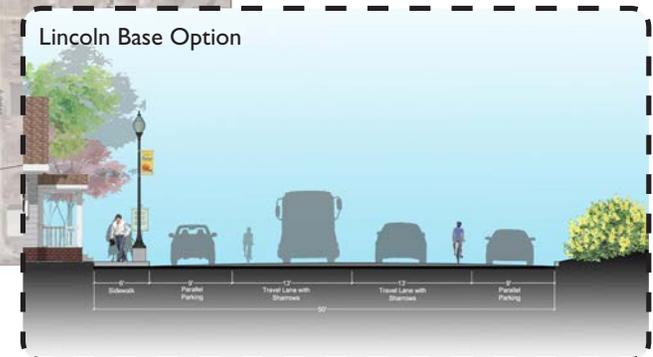
	property, not public. Some of the empty properties need attention too.
1	Instead of worrying about beautifying downtown Porter, I'd rather see that money funneled into a more expanded and dedicated parks department. In Illinois, the parks and rec departments have hundreds of programs, ranging from ice skating lessons to dance or photography or cooking classes, as well as unique and fun trips and day camps during the summers. I'd love to see some park department begin programming that can really benefit the community instead of wasting money on signage and other unimportant crap like Chesterton and Valpo did.
1	We would like to spend more time in downtown Porter but the bar scene does not work for us and I don't want to think that that is all Porter is. Restaurants that are family oriented and just more things for families to do that are healthy and fun. Santiagos is fine but really do we need 4/5 bars in 2 blocks? That makes me not want to go downtown.
1	I love living in porter but I just about never go into porter, there are way too many bars and when there are events they are either by the bars or have alcohol which brings alot of adults and people who smoke. Their are definately alot more families who live in porter than their are single people and if things were not geared towards adults but towards Families instead porter would be a great town. Adults already have bars etc... to go to on a daily basis but children and families have nowhere to go in porter except to the park which mostly has teens and is outdated. The one restaurant that is family oriented and has great food santiago's we like to go to, but you must walk past bars where adults are standing outside smoking and cursing or fighting to be able to get to the restaurant so we only order out from their if at all. I am positive our children have never had any dinning or shopping experience in the town of Porter.
1	Pave and modernize Calumet trail City water /sewer to all homes Wifi Discourage semis on 20 and 12 Sidewalks everywhere Bike lanes everywhere Run the numbers for those initiatives and I'll pay my share of the tax levy
1	The new bike trail access is a great idea and the town has potential. When i ride my bike on the Prairie Duneland, i'm very likely to stop at nearby restaurants. I would suggest taking advantage of new bike traffic.
1	It would be nice to encourage a medium sized grocery store like Aldi's to locate to the downtown. Right now we really haave to drive to the South side of Chesterton to reach a moderately priced store. In the next 5-20yrs. it would be nice to have a bus service connected from Porter,Chest., Valpo and possibly Portage, M.City. Those are the cities where jobs, shopping, and medical offices typically are that serve this region. Many people for various reasons would probably be very happy to limit the number of trips they need to make in a private car.
1	I think the 4th of july festival is a wonderful time and it is great that Porter has wonderful volunteers.
1	we need a major road running race 1500 plus running thru downtown we will need many helpers to do this
1	Oak Hill Rd is very unsafe with speeding drivers. It is extremey dangerous to run, walk and enjoy the town for adults and kids. Please, please stop fighting with Chesterton and place sidewalks on your part. Please.
1	It would be nice to have some restaurants with outdoor seating and quality food. Festivals and farmers markets are good things to attract people to the area, there needs to be restaurants or shops to keep people coming back.
1	We cannot do this on our own. We need to attract people from outside the community, including tourists. To bring people in, I think that we need some kind of theme -- arts, antiques, gateway to the Dunes, etc. Once the theme is decided upon, we need to build on that theme. "Gateway to the Dunes," for example, would have businesses focused on biking, surfing, beach activities, etc. An arts district could have galleries and Second Friday events. Also, the situation on the beach is pretty unpleasant. Beachfront homeowners are really, really rude, and this definately deters tourists.
1	hawthorn park has the right idea. lots of different events happen here throughout the year. good use of land, now if you could get some amenitties @ porter beach
1	Would love to see more fun events / festivals in Hawthorne Park - expanding to additional downtown businesses. Holiday events sound great!
1	Consider taking collections prior to and the night of Fireworks on the lake and at Hawthorne. It's a great amenity, but folks can chip in too. Loved the Beer Tasting event last year. Wish we had a residents town pool. If/when they reopen that forever low-end water park, hope it has a major face lift and ride/equipment replacement. We used to make fun of that place when we were kids of how nasty it is. I believe that stigma is still alive and well.
1	More shopping opportunities and dining establishments would be very beneficial to the town of Porter.
1	many home are negleted looking...don't the twon trustees drive through the neighborhoods...you wouldn't see this in Munster or Chesterton.....I wonder why
1	porter should be quaint and full of charm keeping the same type of design theme it now holds..and the stores coming in should be mom & pop type and full of charm like custom imports in new buffalo . one big name restaurant to bring in the people that stay with what they know and 2 more geared like cafe type.. the old buildings add so much charm & the town should get a reputation of outdoor fun,festivals and events including a Christmas tree forest. carrying on a theme for every holiday and season.. It would add to the tourism that the dunes brings in and the town of Chesterton has a beach theme. and then splash down is opening up.. lets think of porter being a macanacik island
1	I would not be in favor of plans to attract large amounts of tourists into town. It is troublesome enough to get around chesterton/indian boundary on weekends in the summer. this would definitely decrease our standard of living in town. we are a small town and i like the Town of Porter that I live in very much just the way it is.
1	I have lived here for almost 2 years. I love the potential of Porter as a destination! We love going to Michigan for a weekend getaway to the beach, and for good food and shopping. There is no reason why Porter cannot strive for that as well. I believe that if start good restaurants come into the area, other shopping and gathering spaces will follow. I am excited as a Porter resident how the bike paths and trails are coming along. I like the idea of being able to ride my bike with my family into the downtown area!! (for dinner, shopping, festivals, etc.) I hope, as a community, we can put these pieces together for a great future!!! :)
1	We need to bring downtown into ADA compliance and make local restaraunts and businesses accessible!



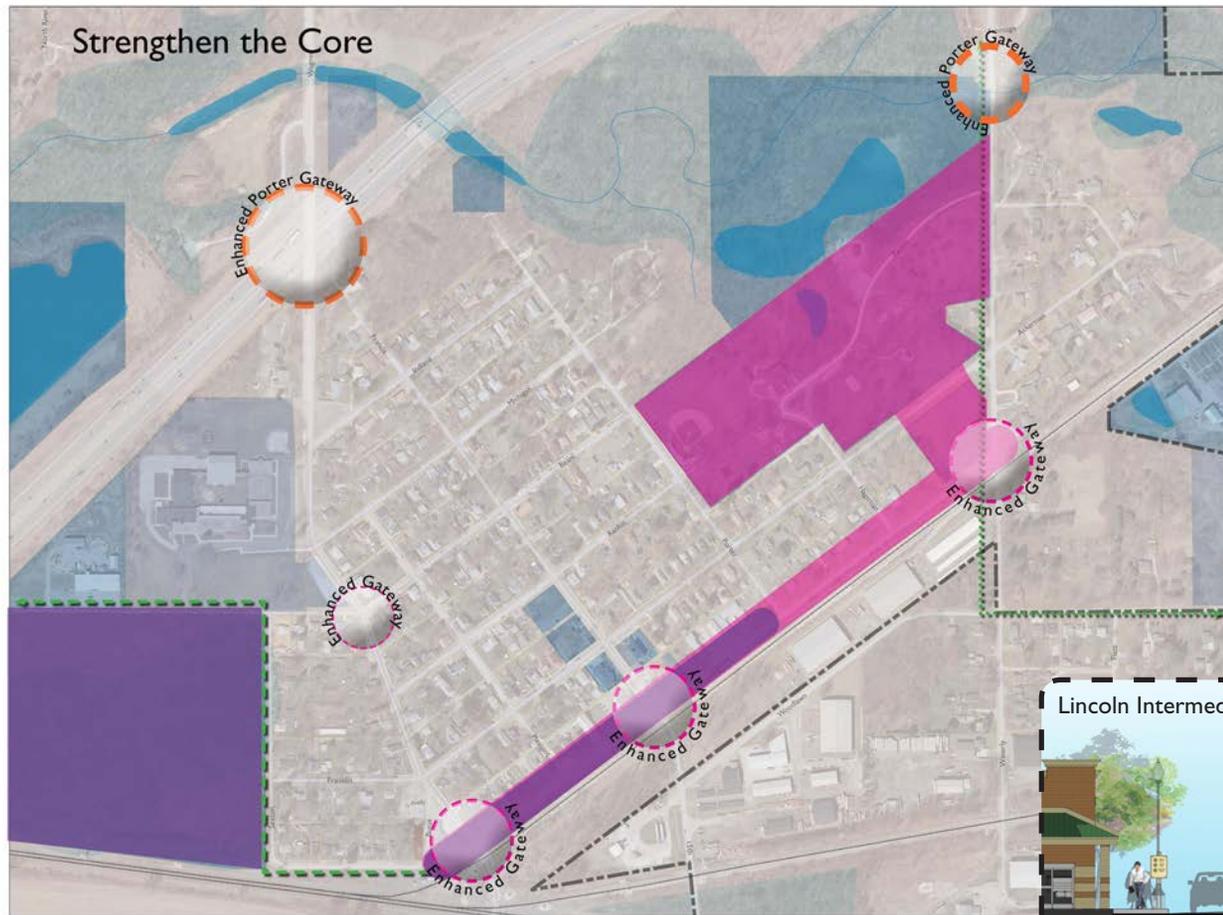
DRAFT CONCEPT A



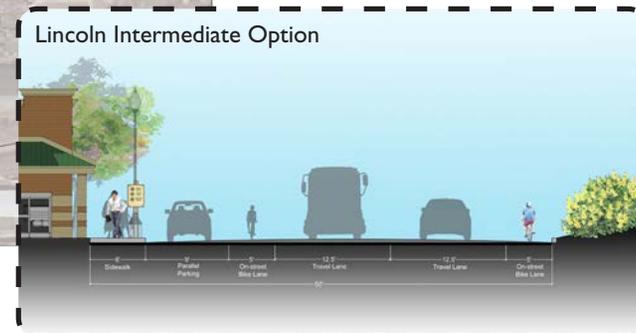
- Beautify & Maintain
- Implement design guidelines
- Facade enhancements
- Clean it up
- Convert angled parking on Lincoln to parallel through Porter (net gain 7 spaces)



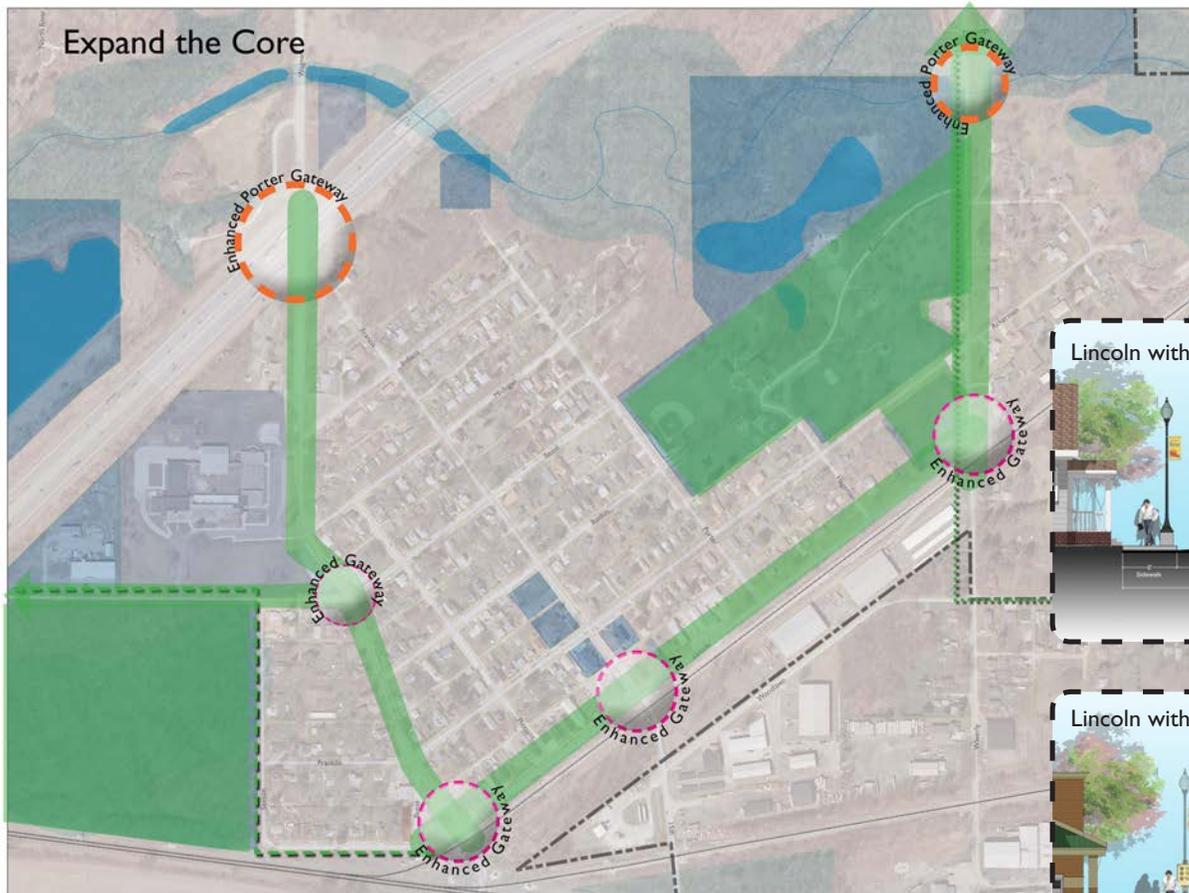
DRAFT CONCEPT B



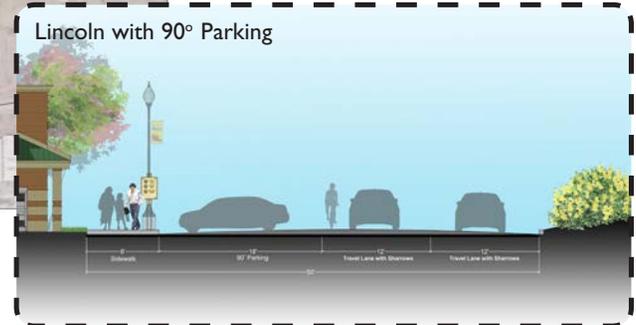
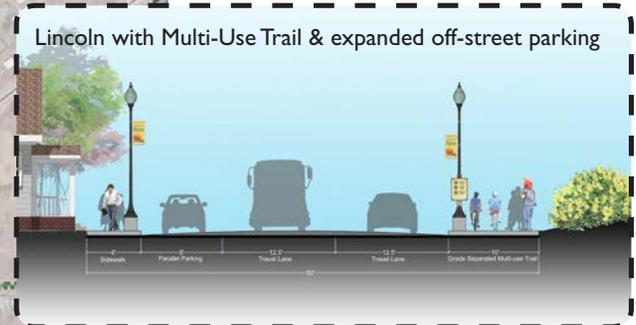
- Grow & Leverage
- Tighten Downtown Core by recruiting desirable businesses
- Develop off-street parking
- Paint bike lanes on Lincoln



DRAFT CONCEPT C



- Expand & Transform
- Focus Corridor Development on Wagner and Beam
- Streetscape Lincoln





Porter
Indiana
Front Porch to the Dunes



SEH of Indiana