

City of Beech Grove
Marion County, Indiana

Final OCRA
**Comprehensive
Redevelopment
Plan**

**Beech Grove Integrated
Redevelopment Area**

April 15, 2008

Wabash Scientific, inc.

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PROPOSED CITY OF BEECH GROVE REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

ORIGINAL REDEVELOPMENT AREAS	ACRES AVAILABLE
AMTRAK (Amended to match legal description)	36.5
SOUTH EMERSON	47
TOTAL	412
PREVIOUS ATTACHMENT (EMERSON AVE. RIGHT OF WAY)	42
ALRO STEEL	20.9
JACKSON GROUP	20.3
MAIN STREET RIGHT OF WAY	12.3
SPORTS COMPLEX	26.5
4141 S. EMERSON (AMOCO GAS STATION)	0.30
HORNET AVE. & EMERSON AVE. (BURGER KING)	1.16
BOYAR PROPERTY	9.30
SAINT FRANCES	40
GREENWAY PROPERTIES	50
TOTAL	247.56



AMTRAK/CONRAIL/ BEECH GROVE REDEVELOPMENT AREA

SCALE: NOT TO SCALE



AMTRAK / CONRAIL/ BEECH GROVE REDEVELOPMENT AREA

THE CITY OF BEECH GROVE

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Introduction

The Beech Grove Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan represents the city's historic first attempt at integrating the entire body of its planning, development and redevelopment policies and projects into a single resource document. Until 2008, the City's development and redevelopment policies have been entirely incremental, due in large part to the overarching ambiguities resulting from Unigov laws that relegated "excluded cities" to some for of statutory limbo where municipal government was removed and relieved from controlling its own development patterns.

The central purpose of this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan is to bring these incremental actions and authorities into a single framework from which the City can begin to reassert control of its own future. We note that, if the various state statutes governing the development and implementation of comprehensive planning and redevelopment planning were not complicated by the ambiguities of Unigov, this process would be less complex and cumbersome. But the sum of the statutory constraints and ambiguities has left Marion County's "excluded cities" with less than optimal alternatives. As such, this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan is designed to serve as a policy document which the City can use as the basis for restoring its own economic growth, as well as reversing the conditions contributing to urban blight which have caused assessed values to decline in recent years.

This Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan is undertaken by the Beech Grove Redevelopment Commission (BGRC) for the purposes of developing an integrated, focused and specific set of goals, objectives and strategies for the City of Beech Grove as a subpart of the metropolitan area of Indianapolis, as provided in statute.

"Excluded cities" in Marion County represent something of a statutory anomaly in that they are governed largely by the statutes that are generally applicable to all part of Indiana, with additional requirements necessitated by the Unigov statute of 1969. The primary developmental factor of the Unigov statute which affects Beech Grove is that Unigov effectively freezes the city's boundaries, forcing Beech Grove to grow only through redevelopment, rather than allowing Beech Grove to expand its boundaries, as cities outside of Marion County can do. By effectively 'land-locking' Beech Grove, Unigov forces Beech Grove to be substantially more aggressive in developing finite projects and strategies to support the city's future.

This Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan is therefore undertaken with the intent of specifying and clarifying the developmental intents of the City of Beech Grove and its citizens with respect to future development and redevelopment in Beech Grove. It is the general intent of the BGRC that this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan conforms to the existing metropolitan planning as applied to the City of Beech Grove, with the addition of specific strategies and initiatives designed to address issues of development and redevelopment within Beech Grove.

Integrating the Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan

By virtue of the actions to be undertaken in the process of approving this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan, the document notes that the following incremental foundation documents are cited as providing a developmental policy foundation to be used as guidance by the Beech Grove Redevelopment Commission (BGRC) and City of Beech Grove:

- The Marion County Comprehensive Plan, as prepared by the Department of Metropolitan Development;
- The Marion County Thoroughfare Plan, as prepared by the Indianapolis Department of Transportation;
 - The Beech Grove Multi-Modal Special Area Study (adopted February, 2007) for the purpose of providing design guidelines for multi-modal corridor improvement designs as templates for every street in Beech Grove;
- The original South Emerson Redevelopment Plan, adopted in 2000;
- The original Amtrak/Conrail Redevelopment Plan, adopted in 2000 (the name of the RD Area amended to CSX/Amtrak Redevelopment Area, as a result of the purchase of Conrail by CSX);
- The 2005 Amendments to both the CSX/Amtrak & South Emerson Redevelopment Plans (& Areas), which served to amend the boundaries of the Redevelopment Areas (RD Areas) to include the Emerson Avenue right of way (thus physically connecting the two, formerly separate RD Areas), as well as integrating the two areas for purposes of city-wide redevelopment policy;
- The 2007 Amendment to the Integrated Redevelopment Plan, adding several industrial properties to the RD Area and amending the boundaries to reflect the additional industries;
- The 2008 Amendment to the Integrated Redevelopment Plan (in process as of April, 2008), adding the following areas for purposes of implementing proposed improvements projects:
 - Adding the Main Street right of way from Emerson eastward to the corporate limits for the purpose of implementing improvements to the Main Street corridor;
 - Adding the Greenway right of way from Main Street southward for the purpose of implementing the development of the Greenway Trail system;
 - Adding the Old Landfill area, immediately west of Emerson at Churchman for the purpose of implementing a future project to develop a Youth Sports Complex as reclamation of the landfill site; and
 - Adding the St. Francis area north from Main Street for the purpose of redeveloping the St. Francis campus as a result of closure of the hospital facility.

We note with regard to issues of public participation that each of the above-cited foundation documents was developed, considered and implemented with a full statutory compliment of

public hearings and opportunities for public comment. As such, at least nine official public hearings were held as part of the development and approval of the above-cited foundation documents. In many cases, such as the development of the Marion county Comprehensive Plan and the Thoroughfare Plan, there were multiple additional opportunities for public comments, in addition to the statutory public hearing. According to our research, the above-cited foundation documents have included more than two dozen opportunities for the public to provide input and ask questions.

The above-cited nine documents represent the previous increments of redevelopment policy which have been developed on behalf of Beech Grove. These nine documents, as well as supporting documents related thereto, form the foundations of the Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan. As the findings and recommendations of the Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan are implemented, questions related to context and interpretation for future projects are expected to be satisfied by virtue of research into these supporting documents, to the extent that such questions arise.

Existing Comprehensive Plan (part of the Marion County Comprehensive Plan)

The Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) has recently completed a county-wide comprehensive plan which includes comprehensive planning for Beech Grove. It is the intent of this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan to conform to the existing comprehensive plan, as well as expanding the existing comprehensive plan to cover projects and initiatives for the specific benefit of Beech Grove and its citizens.

As such, the BGRC initiated this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan using the existing comprehensive plan as the baseline document. The existing Comprehensive Plan can be viewed online at <http://www6.indygov.org/dmdplan/indianapolisinsight>. Major portions of the county-wide comprehensive plan are to be included directly in the Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan. The Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan will seek to amplify portions of the county-wide plan and provide additional detail and strategic information related directly to Beech Grove.

Public Input & Solicitation of Public Opinion

The three cooperating entities (BGRC, Mayor and City Council) all place a high priority on the importance of informing the public with regard to the redevelopment process and its supporting policies. As such, the BGCRP has endeavored to exceed the requirements of statute in soliciting public input as the BGCRP was developed. The following represents a summary of the Public Input efforts extended as the BGCRP was developed:

- Public Workshop on Urban Blight & Redevelopment in Beech Grove;
- Public Workshop on Neighborhood Redevelopment Issues in Beech Grove;

- Public Workshop on Commercial Redevelopment Issues in Beech Grove;
- Public Workshop on the Importance of Main Street & Emerson Avenue to redevelopment in Beech Grove;
- Public Workshop Explaining the Details of TIF Financing in the City of Beech Grove (complete with "TIF Raffle" event);
- Public Hearing by the BGRC to solicit public comments prior to presentation of the Final Draft of the BGCRP to the Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs (with an opportunity for OCRA to comment);
- Additional Public Workshop with the Beech Grove City Council on Leveraging TIF Financing and the economic impact & importance of redevelopment;
- Additional Public Workshop with the Beech Grove City Council on the importance of Emerson Avenue & Main Street to redevelopment in Beech Grove;
- Additional Public Workshop with the Beech Grove City Council on Zoning, Development Standards and Code Enforcement;
- Additional Public Workshop with the Beech Grove City Council on Implementation of Neighborhood Redevelopment using Leverage TIF Financing;
- Public Hearing by the BGRC with regard to the 2005 Integration of the CSX/Amtrak and South Emerson RD Areas & Plans;
- Public Hearing by the BGRC with regard to the 2007 Amendment to the Integrated ED Areas & Plans;
- Public Hearing by the BGRC with regard to 2008 Amendments to the Integrated ED Areas & Plans; and
- Final Public Hearing by the Beech Grove City Council addressing any changes and/or adjustments requested by OCRA as a result of their review of the BGCRP, and approving the Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan (BGCRP).

The list of public input opportunities presented above constitutes a total of eight (8) public workshops presenting various individual aspects of the Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan in substantial detail, as well as a total of five (5) formally advertised public hearings representing all or a portion of the content of the Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan and/or its foundation documents.

In all cases, public comments were respected and addressed, including public input opportunities offered during 2007 (the municipal election year) when there was an amplified temptation to use the public input opportunity as a political platform of one form or another.

Web-Based Public Information

Video from all of the Public Workshops and Public Hearings was posted on the Beech Grove website for broad-spectrum public information (in one case, technical difficulties with the video prevented proper audio broadcast). In addition, the various elements of the BGCRP were also posted on the City website as those documents were publicly presented.

Formal Note of Public Testimony Opposing TIF

In the interest of full disclosure, this BGCRP hereby notes that, on several occasions, individuals have presented public testimony in opposition to TIF financing. In all cases, this opposition testimony was professionally received and acknowledged. Over time, the TIF opposition has become increasingly conditional and has evolved toward, 'we aren't against the redevelopment activities that are being financed with TIF funds, but we allege adverse impact on the schools.' The public testimony further alleged that the schools were not adequately included in the BGRC's efforts. This opposition continues, despite the personal efforts of members of the BGRC, the Mayor and the City Council to meet directly and personally with school officials, as well as the fact that the schools were provided a direct, certified copy of professionally-prepared tax impact statements for every TIF-based action by the BGRC, and the schools have yet to publicly oppose any action taken by the BGRC.

This disclosure is not offered for the purpose of embarrassing any member of the public, but rather to conclusively demonstrate that the BGRC, the Mayor and the City Council heard and comprehended the public testimony and took direct action to appropriately address the allegations and issues raised.

Executive Summary

Beech Grove Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan (BGRCP)

This Executive Summary was presented to the Beech Grove City Council on March 3, 2008, for purposes of bringing the new City Council into the comprehensive redevelopment planning process and initiating potential additional public workshops for the purpose of clarifying and coordinating the efforts of the City Council, the Beech Grove Redevelopment Commission (BGRC), and the city's staff toward productive redevelopment outcomes over the next 5-20 years.

The Difficulty of Urban Redevelopment

All readers of the BGRCP must understand one central factor that permeates the entirety of this document – *urban redevelopment is by far the most difficult form of economic development.*

Owners of blighted property are generally reluctant to invest the money necessary to correct the blighting conditions (which is why the property is blighted in the first place). At the same time, the presence of one blighted property in a neighborhood will have a negative impact on the market value of several properties nearby. Because of this consideration, urban blight has a multiplying effect which is seen in virtually every urban area in the nation. A single blighted house with \$10,000 worth of neglect could easily have 8-10 times that negative impact on the remainder of the neighborhood.

Even while the owners of blighted property are causing negative economic consequences for their neighbors, the Constitution protects the rights of those property owners in several ways, including making it extremely difficult and expensive to make urban redevelopment happen. Blighted property cannot simply be taken away from neglectful owners, and in the end, the cost of acquisition could be substantially higher than actual market value.

In short, urban redevelopment takes far longer and is far more expensive than virtually all other forms of economic development. However, when a city is landlocked and cannot expand its boundaries by improving adjacent farmland, urban redevelopment is the only viable alternative. In effect, Beech Grove has no other viable alternative than to use creative redevelopment strategies to create new assessed value within its existing corporate limits on existing urban properties, despite the fact that such progress will require a long time and a lot of money.

The alternative of taking no action has already been attempted. It has already resulted in protracted economic pain in the form of depressed property values and escalating taxes. Other landlocked communities have demonstrated these results. The central purpose of the BGRCP is to offer the community an opportunity to create a more successful future through consensus and careful action on detailed Redevelopment Strategies.

The Good News Regarding Beech Grove's Redevelopment Program

The BGCRP has been successful in creating a substantial list of "good news" items which can be used to help create a positive public image for the city. A brief summary of the major "good news" items is as follows (references to "the city" include the BGRC and other city authorities):

- ❑ The architectural enhancement of the Emerson Avenue corridor has substantially enhanced positive public recognition of Beech Grove. (Already completed.)
- ❑ The City applied for and received a grant of \$1 million to develop the Beech Grove Greenway trail system, which will connect every park in every public school in the city by pedestrian and bicycle pathways, while providing opportunities for healthy lifestyles, as well as enhanced property values in the community. (Construction to begin later in 2008.)
- ❑ The City also received a grant to develop a Multi-Modal Thoroughfare Plan which has recommended methods and offered corridor designs by which Beech Grove residents can have optimal access to pedestrian and bicycle pathways throughout the city, over time.
- ❑ The City also received a \$4.5 million INDOT grant to make major physical improvements to Main Street over the next 12-24 months.
- ❑ The City also developed TIF funding for important infrastructure improvements including street and alley reconstruction demonstration projects which are to serve as a model for future infrastructure projects, both downtown and in neighborhoods. (Already completed.)
 - The City has also incorporated a strategy for directing unobligated TIF revenues toward the redevelopment of neighborhood streets, curbs and sidewalks over time.
- ❑ The City has also developed initial public/private partnerships which will hopefully lead to the redevelopment of approximately 125 acres of industrial property on the city's far east side, which could generate 1.7-2 million square feet of new industrial development.
- ❑ The City has also developed plans to reclaim an old landfill as a site for a major youth sports complex to benefit Beech Grove residents.
- ❑ The City has also successfully acquired the "Rock Pile," which is a blighted tract of undeveloped residential lots which were purchased by a neglectful owner who proceeded to fill the site with construction debris to a height of 20 feet or more.
 - The redevelopment of the "Rock Pile" is one of the higher priority redevelopment sites in Beech Grove.

The list above is by no means exhaustive. Furthermore, it is possible to foresee a long list of additional successes for the City and BGRC as a result of the implementation of the strategies outlined in this BGCRP. While the City and BGRC recognize that urban redevelopment is a slow and expensive process, there is no viable alternative but to forge ahead with aggressive plans and strategies to achieve broad scale urban redevelopment, including the prevention and elimination of urban blight.

Beech Grove Faces Difficult & Complex Issues

Beech Grove suffers from several developmental disadvantages, with the largest and most onerous being that the City is landlocked and can no longer add assessed value by expanding into surrounding undeveloped areas. There are only a handful of municipalities in Indiana facing the same problem, and in most cases, those other landlocked cities have suffered a common fate of escalating property taxes accompanied by declining property values.

In addition, the current legislative initiatives which propose to cap property taxes are likely to have a dramatic impact on cities like Beech Grove. At this time, however, the precise amount of the impact of changes to Indiana's property tax policies is unclear. As such, the City, including the Mayor and City Council are taking an attitude that major budget cuts are likely to be required with regard to city operations, at least until the blighted assessed values in the City can be reversed through redevelopment.

The combination of being landlocked, along with the potential property tax caps being considered by the Legislature, presents Beech Grove with some very difficult fiscal problems, and the only apparent answer to these problems is for the City's leadership to initiate aggressive action to counter the effects of urban blight on the community at large. This BGCRP seeks to provide a basis for the development and implementation of these redevelopment strategies with the specific intent of preventing and eliminating urban blight.

Generating a Positive Impact on Personal Wealth

The BGRC has developed this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan using one, central, dominating goal: **to increase the personal wealth of Beech Grove residents by preserving, protecting, and potentially amplifying the value of their property.**

If the city of Beech Grove is successful in restoring growth in the market value of Beech Grove residential property, every citizen of Beech Grove will be directly and personally benefited. The Nation Association of Realtors notes that 60% of the personal wealth of the average American is rooted in the value of their homes. Further, property wealth is often used as the basis for providing higher education to children and families, as well as serving as the financial basis for the owners' retirement. Successful urban redevelopment will result in direct economic benefits to individual Beech Grove residents, with a direct and measurable impact on their personal wealth by improving the value of their property.

In recent years, data shows that property in Beech Grove has either not appreciated in value, or has appreciated in value at a slower rate than property in nearby communities. The BGCRP asserts that blighting influences have contributed to these disappointing results. Further, these disappointing results have been identified by the school corporation as the central financial problem faced by Beech Grove Schools.

As a result of these considerations, the BGCRP has attempted to develop its goals and strategies in a manner that will provide the best available opportunity for increasing the personal wealth of Beech Grove residents by reducing and eliminating urban blight, and simultaneously attempting

to stimulate industrial, commercial, and residential redevelopment throughout the city. The Redevelopment Strategies engaged by the BGCRP are intentionally ‘circular’ in that the strategies encourage investment which results in improved property values, which encourages secondary new investment.

Beech Grove has High-Quality Schools

Throughout the development of the BGCRP, the quality of Beech Grove schools has consistently been a positive factor in all public discussions. Furthermore, the National Association of Realtors notes that quality schools is one of the most prominent predictors of high local property values, yet Beech Grove’s Schools are excellent while property values are depressed. Therefore, the BGRC has sought to emphasize school quality as a central factor in the creation of redevelopment strategies for the city. Two specific notes are appropriate:

- ❑ Beech Grove schools have consistently been rated a “Best Buy” by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce (the only Marion County public school to receive such recognition).
- ❑ Beech Grove high school has also received a “4-Star” rating from the State (also the only Marion County public school to receive such recognition).

It is clear that families with school-aged children should be seeking homes in Beech Grove, yet this result does not appear to be happening on a sufficient scale. Beech Grove schools represent one of the highest-quality education alternatives in Marion County. Therefore, considering that school quality is a major determinant of residential market values, it is unusual to find that residential values in Beech Grove are not as high as one might expect. There are potentially several reasons for this reality, and among those reasons one must consider the depressing impact of urban blight and the need to eliminate it.

Regardless of the reasons for the state of the Beech Grove housing market, the BGCRP seeks to use this strong positive market incentive as part of the overall strategy for encouraging neighborhood and residential redevelopment throughout the city.

The Impact of Urban Redevelopment on the Schools

Substantial time and resources have been spent in attempting to dispel misinformation and misgivings regarding the impact of the proposed Redevelopment Strategies on the funding for the schools. The City is sensitive to these concerns, and the BGCRP specifically offers the following responses to those who continue to have questions regarding the impact of redevelopment strategies (especially strategies involving tax increment financing) on the Beech Grove school system (also noted in the Public Input section of the BGCRP).

- ❑ In every case where TIF has been used, the schools have been formally notified of every TIF-based action taken by the BGRC, as required by law.
 - This includes professional preparation and certified delivery of a detailed Tax Impact Analysis, not only to the schools, but to every other taxing unit affected by any TIF proposal.
- ❑ The BGCRP scope has included a public workshop designed to educate the public on how TIF functions, especially with regard to TIF impact on schools.

- The TIF workshop specifically addressed the technical issues related to TIF and demonstrated in detail how the school funding was affected by TIF.
 - The TIF workshop also explained how TIF funds could be used to generate new investment in redevelopment projects, which would not otherwise be available.
- In addition, the personal sensitivities of individual elected officials, including city council members, have caused various elected and appointed officials to speak personally and directly with members of the school board, or other school-related personnel, to discuss TIF and its impacts on schools.

Extensive public discussions regarding TIF are common. Tax increment financing presents a complicated tool which can be misunderstood. It is also common for tax increment financing to become politicized. While the BGCRP cannot eliminate the politics of such discussions, it attempts to address the most important issues honestly and in a straightforward manner.

In short, tax increment financing has been proven as an effective tool in generating new economic investment in communities throughout the State of Indiana. Therefore, the goal of the BGCRP will focus on judicious strategies for use of TIF which protect the fiscal integrity of the city of Beech Grove as well as the personal interests of its residents.

Worst-case Scenario for Schools is Continuing Depressed AV

It is important for the BGCRP to focus the public attention on the worst-case scenario for Beech Grove schools -- the continuation of urban blight (and resulting depression of local assessed values).

The impact of continuing urban blight on Beech Grove schools is, in our opinion, the absolute worst case financial scenario for the school system. We point to the following realities as evidence of this premise:

- Current (2008) legislative plans to cap property taxes have been alleged by school administrators on a statewide basis to have a significant negative effect on school funding, making schools more dependent upon increased property value to cover increases in operating cost.
- Beech Grove is already experiencing reductions in the assessed value of homes and businesses throughout the community, due in part to the national economic situation, but also due to a long-term pattern of declining AV in the community.
- In addition, urban blight also causes reductions in the assessed value of property within Beech Grove.
- When assessed values contract, the property tax system fails to produce adequate revenue to operate the schools.
- Throughout the State of Indiana, communities which are landlocked, and which simultaneously suffer from urban blight, experience moderate to severe school funding problems, as a result of the adverse interaction of declining AV on the property tax system.

- ❑ ***Based on these considerations, the worst-case situation for Beech Grove schools would occur when assessed values in the city are dropping (or when assessed values failed to keep up with inflationary increases in costs), and at the same time there is no new economic development or redevelopment to offset the loss of assessed value.***
- ❑ In addition, it is noted that communities experiencing high levels of urban blight also experience deterioration in their family demographic, which tends to have a negative impact on the quality/caliber of students in the system. This often leads to further deterioration in the school system.
- ❑ Finally, educators statewide also suggest a connection between urban blight, declining property values and a decline in the cultural importance that students (and their families) place on education, thus secondarily depressing school performance results.
 - This phenomenon would partially explain the connection between urban schools and low-educational performance.
 - By way of example, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's analysis of statewide school performance, notes that Gary (which is also landlocked and suffering from urban blight) spends more per student on schools and yet has one of the lowest performances of any community in Indiana.
 - The adverse combination of urban blight, declining AV and school performance appears to be especially onerous to local school systems.

The BGRC's Redevelopment Strategy to employ tax increment financing as a means of generating industrial, commercial, and neighborhood residential redevelopment is offered for the express purpose of stabilizing and increasing the assessed value of the school district as well as stabilizing the student population. As such, the BGCRP has identified redevelopment strategies that are intended to have the best opportunity for positive fiscal outcomes for the schools as well as for the community at large.

Types of Redevelopment Encouraged in the BGCRP

As previously stated publicly, the BGCRP seeks to encourage redevelopment of the following types:

- ❑ ***Industrial Redevelopment***
 - the CSX site (120 acres).
 - the Refined Metals/Exide site (22 acres).
 - the Rock Pile site (6-7 acres).
 - the Amtrak site (105 acres).
 - Total Industrial Redevelopment Acreage = 253 acres.
 - the potential impact on employment could be as high as 2,500 to 3,000 jobs.
 - the potential impact on assessed value could be as high as \$300 to \$400 million.

- the contribution of both jobs and assessed value to the Beech Grove economy is projected to enhance property value as well as enhancing funding to local government, including schools.
- The improved demographics resulting from new employment and increased assessed value are also projected to improve the demographic of Beech Grove students.
- *Commercial Redevelopment*
 - the BGRC will seek to encourage and stimulate commercial redevelopment with specific attention to the following locations:
 - Emerson Avenue corridor
 - Main Street corridor
 - St. Francis Hospital Campus
 - in order to achieve commercial redevelopment along Emerson Avenue and Main Street, the BGRC will seek to work cooperatively with city departments to develop and implement aggressive zoning compliance and code enforcement.
 - Unfortunately, many Beech Grove property owners have neglected to comply with zoning and development standards, and continue to neglect to comply.
 - In addition, the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development has often been lax in requiring property owners to comply with zoning standards.
 - As a result of this combination of events, commercial property along Emerson and Main have not succeeded in achieving appropriate levels of development.
 - This includes commercial development and occupancy of buildings which fail to meet standards and codes.
 - This also includes buildings which potentially pose threats to public health and the environment, such as underground storage tanks and buildings which are unfit for habitation.
 - in response to this situation, the City and the BGRC must develop strategies and processes for enforcement of public standards and codes in order to achieve commercial redevelopment goals.
 - These strategies and processes must be meticulously crafted to protect the public interest while simultaneously respecting the rights of individual property owners.
 - The activities undertaken as part of these strategies and processes must become a part of the day-to-day operation of the city of Beech Grove, in order to prevent and eliminate blighting conditions which depress the local economy and its assessed values.
- *Neighborhood/Residential Redevelopment*
 - Beech Grove neighborhoods are in serious need of new investment, especially with regard to public infrastructure.
 - At the same time, Beech Grove has far lower crime and public safety problems than surrounding areas, which should serve to improve property values.

- Lower crime rates, therefore, would be expected to support residential property values, especially in the presence of major investments in public infrastructure.
- At the same time, the fiscal impact of legislative proposals to cap property taxes have not been fully measured, and could have a direct impact on public safety budgets for cities like Beech Grove.
- Neighborhood infrastructure, including sewers, drainage, streets, curbs, sidewalks, and other infrastructure must be improved through a long-term plan of public investment.
 - The BGCRP recommends that unobligated TIF funds be leveraged to the maximum possible extent through the acquisition of state and federal grant funds wherever possible in order to improve neighborhood infrastructure.
 - (The BGCRP has already succeeded in leveraging TIF funds to obtain approximately \$5.5 million in state/federal grants for the Greenway Project and the Main Street Project.)
 - ***Additional grant funds should be sought from the Community Focus Fund administered by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), especially for low and moderate income neighborhoods, and neighborhoods with a high percentage of elderly residents.***
 - Neighborhood streets, curbs, sidewalks, and drainage will require major reconstruction in many areas of Beech Grove.
 - The BGRC will cooperate with the City Council to develop a viable set of neighborhood priorities for the purpose of seeking grant funds.
 - As a result of the long-term commitment to redevelop neighborhood infrastructure, the BGCRP seeks to stabilize and enhance neighborhood residential property values.
- Beech Grove residents have also expressed extreme concerns with regard to the conversion of single-family residences into rental property.
 - It is the opinion of the general public, as expressed at the public workshops, that rental conversions are occurring as a result of a lack of market interest in Beech Grove houses.
 - It is also the opinion of the public that poorly-maintained rental housing is having a blighting effect on neighborhoods, in general.
 - While the BGCRP does not make specific recommendations as to the most appropriate method for curtailing the conversion of single-family residences to rental units, the City Council and the BGRC should undertake cooperative, long-term efforts to develop a range of strategies to improve the marketability of Beech Grove houses and reduce the incidence of rental conversion.
- As note above, Beech Grove schools have been consistently rated as “Best Buys” by the Indiana State Chamber Of Commerce, and Beech Grove High School was recently awarded a 4-Star ranking (the only 4-star high school in Marion County).

- Furthermore, crime is low in Beech Grove, which also tends to be an indicator of high relative property values (assessed values), yet Beech Grove property values remain depressed.
 - The BGCRP notes that school quality is among the most important factors in determining residential property value, yet Beech Grove property values continue to struggle.
 - This BGCRP notes also that crime rates in Beech Grove are a fraction of those in Indianapolis, indicating that low crime should also contribute to high property values.
 - These market contradictions suggest that urban blight may be contributing to depressed property values, to the extent that even high quality schools cannot counteract the market conditions.
 - As such, the BGCRP will seek to develop long-term redevelopment strategies based on the quality of Beech Grove schools to enhance residential market values.
 - These long-term redevelopment strategies will require the cooperation of both the BGRC and the City Council in order to be effective.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Although this BGCRP recognizes that urban redevelopment is extremely difficult complex, time-consuming, and expensive, the Redevelopment Strategies which have been outlined for industrial, commercial, and residential redevelopment are realistic and economically viable.

Residential Redevelopment Strategies

REDEVELOPING NEIGHBORHOOD INFRASTRUCTURE: The entire Redevelopment Strategy begins with the top priority -- neighborhood/ residential redevelopment. People benefit directly from increases in the market value in their homes, even though Beech Grove property values have struggled in recent years. The recommendations of this BGCRP include the development of long-term strategies for the redevelopment of public infrastructure in individual neighborhoods, beginning with those neighborhoods which have a disproportionate share of low/moderate income and elderly households.

DISCOURAGING CONVERSION OF SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCES INTO RENTAL

UNITS: In addition, strategies for neighborhood infrastructure redevelopment are recommended to be coupled with the development of a community-wide consensus regarding viable methods for reducing the conversion of single-family homes to rental units. The public was very clear in its opinions regarding the increasing incidence of rental conversion, and the public has asked the City and BGRC to develop strategies which not only restrict these conversions, but also require landlords to maintain rental properties to high standards. The combination

of these primary residential redevelopment strategies are designed to begin to stabilize residential market values in Beech Grove.

Industrial Redevelopment Strategies

While it is impossible to predict when specific industrial redevelopment projects will occur, it is clear that progress has been made in addressing issues such as environmental pollution & remediation, infrastructure access, and potential clientele to re-occupy redeveloped industrial sites.

Reasonable estimates of the economic impact of industrial redevelopment over the next 20 years could easily add \$300-\$400 million in new assessed value to the city, as well as 3000-4000 jobs. The prospects of achieving even modest improvements resulting from industrial redevelopment represent a substantial change from recent industrial dis-investment in Beech Grove, such as the loss of 500 jobs at Amtrak over the last 5-10 years.

Industrial redevelopment could present the most promising strategy for improving the lives of Beech Grove citizens, and eliminating industrial blight. The BGCRP has identified approximately 250 acres of underdeveloped industrial property in Beech Grove. Using Indiana averages, this industrial acreage could generate 2,500-3,000 jobs and as much as \$400 million in assessed value at full redevelopment, which would obviously have a positive impact on the Beech Grove economy.

Commercial Redevelopment Strategies

The potential for industrial redevelopment is accompanied by substantial new potential for commercial redevelopment, especially in the form of investment in new commercial offices and retail facilities along Emerson Avenue and Main Street.

Furthermore, the traffic levels along Emerson Avenue are sufficient to support major commercial re-investment, as was proven with the Lowe's and Wal-Mart developments immediately south of I-465. Based on normal development parameters, Emerson Avenue should support major commercial redevelopment.

But commercial redevelopment will be an especially difficult task. Beech Grove citizens have expressed frustration with the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development over lax enforcement of zoning requirements and development standards. To further exacerbate this problem, neglectful owners have continued to request variances in order to avoid compliance with zoning standards.

The City and BGRC are working to develop a stronger partnership with DMD and the local Board of Zoning Appeals to require commercial property owners to comply with zoning requirements and other development standards.

Developing Corridor Overlay Zones with Higher Development Standards

The BGCRP has determined that the current zoning (generally C-7 along Emerson Avenue) allows a potentially troublesome mix of land uses to occur along important commercial corridors. For that reason, the BGCRP suggests the development of “corridor overlay zones” for Emerson Avenue and Main Street which would require new development to provide higher-quality land uses, as well as enhanced architectural standards.

These two thoroughfares represent the most important gateways to Beech Grove, and the quality of development along these two thoroughfares has a significant impact on Beech Grove's public image. The long-term goal of the BGCRP is to see these two corridors redeveloped with major new office and retail commercial enterprises which are befitting a city of Beech Grove's high quality market attributes. (In addition, this sort of long-term commercial redevelopment could easily add as much as \$100 million in new commercial assessed value, along with subsequent increases in the market value of residential property resulting from the improved public image.)

Redevelopment of St. Francis Hospital: Opportunity & Fear

In addition to the commercial redevelopment strategies for Emerson Avenue and Main Street, the BGCRP notes the potential for redevelopment of the St. Francis Hospital Campus. This property is currently tax-exempt. Therefore, redevelopment of the hospital campus into a for-profit enterprise could generate substantial new assessed value to benefit the community at large.

At the same time, however, the BGCRP is concerned about the closure of St. Francis Hospital. If the hospital facility is closed and unoccupied, even for a short period of time, the lack of economic activity will have a negative impact on the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as having a negative impact on the personal wealth of those residents. Based on a preliminary house count, there are approximately 450 homes which will be directly, adversely affected by the closure of St. Francis. If the facility is allowed to “go dark” the immediate impact on the values of people's homes could be more than \$2 million. This is a dramatic impact on the value of neighborhoods which are not wealthy to begin with, and represents a major concern for the local schools.

At this time, it is unclear whether the owners of St. Francis Hospital are prepared to smoothly transition the hospital campus into new economic activity. Until those plans are clear, the BGCRP acknowledges the potential hope for high-quality redevelopment, while simultaneously expressing concern about the potential for St. Francis Hospital to become, itself, a blighting influence on the neighborhood. This fear was very clearly expressed at the public workshops for the BGCRP and must be honestly portrayed and presented.

Statutory Authority & Purpose

The authority to develop, consider and implement the goals, strategies and projects of the Beech Grove Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan (BGRP) is hereby asserted to emanate from the cooperation and coordination of the Beech Grove Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan (BGCRP) by the Beech Grove Redevelopment Commission (BGRC), the Beech Grove Mayor and the Beech Grove City Council.

The Beech Grove Redevelopment Commission (BGRC) is responsible for the development of redevelopment plans and strategies under Indiana law. The BGRC previously prepared and presented redevelopment plans for two redevelopment areas: South Emerson and CSX/Amtrak, as well as amending the boundaries of those redevelopment areas to include other redevelopment initiatives along Emerson Avenue. Those original Redevelopment Plans were developed with a specific focus on the problems and issues related specifically to those Redevelopment Areas. Those original Redevelopment Plans did not include strategies and projects designed to amplify redevelopment for the city, in general.

As a result of these previous actions, the BGRC has established a viable revenue stream from tax increment financing initiatives. This revenue stream has subsequently been rededicated toward a series of improvements to various areas, sectors and neighborhoods of Beech Grove in accordance with the Redevelopment Strategies set forth in the previously-approved Redevelopment Plans. This Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan is also prepared using these previous Redevelopment Plans as the basis for developing more comprehensive strategies for *redevelopment throughout the community*.

This Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan has been prepared in accordance with IC 36-7-4-201, which reads as follows:

IC 36-7-4-201 Purpose

Sec. 201. (a) For purposes of IC 36-1-3-6, a unit wanting to exercise planning and zoning powers in Indiana must do so in the manner provided by this chapter.

(b) The purpose of this chapter is to encourage units to improve the health, safety, convenience, and welfare of their citizens and to plan for the future development of their communities to the end:

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

(c) Furthermore, municipalities and counties may cooperatively establish single and unified planning and zoning entities to carry out the purpose of this chapter on a countywide basis.

(d) METRO. Expanding urbanization in each county having a consolidated city has created problems that have made the unification of planning and zoning functions a necessity to insure the health, safety,

morals, economic development, and general welfare of the county. To accomplish this unification, a single planning and zoning authority is established for the county. (emphasis added)
As added by Acts 1981, P.L.309, SEC.23. Amended by Acts 1981, P.L.310, SEC.5; P.L.192-1984, SEC.3; P.L.82-2005, SEC.7.

As such, it is the intent of the BGRC that this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan fulfill the purposes of IC 36-7-4-201, including and emphasizing section (d) METRO, which applies to cities within Marion County. The BGRC therefore acknowledges and hereby incorporates the comprehensive plan adopted by the Metropolitan Development Commission as the basis for this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan, with site- and context-specific amplification of issues and projects to be undertaken by Beech Grove, through the BGRC.

Statutory Contents of the Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan

The contents of the Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan will reflect the requirements of IC 36-7-4-502, which reads as follows:

IC 36-7-4-502: Comprehensive plan; contents

Sec. 502. A comprehensive plan must contain at least the following elements:

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

As added by Acts 1981, P.L.309, SEC.23. Amended by Acts 1981, P.L.310, SEC.27; P.L.335-1985, SEC.4.

The existing comprehensive plan has already been approved as meeting the requirements of IC 36-7-4-502 by the Metropolitan Development Commission, and those requirements are hereby included by reference in this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan.

In addition to the minimum statutory requirements fulfilled by the existing comprehensive plan, the BGRC will develop “Beech Grove specific” studies and other information in accordance with IC 36-7-4-503, which reads as follows:

IC 36-7-4-503

Comprehensive plan; additional contents

Sec. 503. A comprehensive plan may, in addition to the elements required by section 502 of this chapter, include the following:

- (1) Surveys and studies of current conditions and probable future growth within the jurisdiction and adjoining jurisdictions.
- (2) Maps, plats, charts, and descriptive material presenting basic information, locations, extent, and character of any of the following:
 - (A) History, population, and physical site conditions.
 - (B) Land use, including the height, area, bulk, location, and use of private and public structures and premises.
 - (C) Population densities.
 - (D) Community centers and neighborhood units.
 - (E) Areas needing redevelopment and conservation.
 - (F) Public ways, including bridges, viaducts, subways, parkways, and other public places.

- (G) Sewers, sanitation, and drainage, including handling, treatment, and disposal of excess drainage waters, sewage, garbage, refuse, and other wastes.
 - (H) Air, land, and water pollution.
 - (I) Flood control and irrigation.
 - (J) Public and private utilities, such as water, light, heat, communication, and other services.
 - (K) Transportation, including rail, bus, truck, air and water transport, and their terminal facilities.
 - (L) Local mass transit, including taxicabs, buses, and street, elevated, or underground railways.
 - (M) Parks and recreation, including parks, playgrounds, reservations, forests, wildlife refuges, and other public places of a recreational nature.
 - (N) Public buildings and institutions, including governmental administration and service buildings, hospitals, infirmaries, clinics, penal and correctional institutions, and other civic and social service buildings.
 - (O) Education, including location and extent of schools, colleges, and universities.
 - (P) Land utilization, including agriculture, forests, and other uses.
 - (Q) Conservation of energy, water, soil, and agricultural and mineral resources.
 - (R) Any other factors that are a part of the physical, economic, or social situation within the jurisdiction.
- (3) Reports, maps, charts, and recommendations setting forth plans and policies for the development, redevelopment, improvement, extension, and revision of the subjects and physical situations (set out in subdivision (2) of this section) of the jurisdiction so as to substantially accomplish the purposes of this chapter.
- (4) A short and long range development program of public works projects for the purpose of stabilizing industry and employment and for the purpose of eliminating unplanned, unsightly, untimely, and extravagant projects.
- (5) A short and long range capital improvements program of governmental expenditures so that the development policies established in the comprehensive plan can be carried out and kept up-to-date for all separate taxing districts within the jurisdiction to assure efficient and economic use of public funds.
- (6) A short and long range plan for the location, general design, and assignment of priority for construction of thoroughfares in the jurisdiction for the purpose of providing a system of major public ways that allows effective vehicular movement, encourages effective use of land, and makes economic use of public funds. *As added by Acts 1981, P.L.309, SEC.23. Amended by Acts 1981, P.L.310, SEC.28; P.L.335-1985, SEC.5; P.L.220-1986, SEC.9; P.L.185-2005, SEC.6.*

This Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan is designed by the BGRC to supplement the existing comprehensive plan with specific goals, objectives, initiatives and strategies for the purpose of facilitating urban redevelopment for the city of Beech Grove, recognizing the constraints imposed upon Beech Grove by Unigov, as well as Beech Grove's other developmental idiosyncrasies.

Statement of Objectives for the Future Development of the Jurisdiction

The BGRC notes that redevelopment commissions are not directly empowered by statute with direct authority over the administration of municipal agencies. As such, the BGRC will seek to develop and implement operative partnerships with municipal bodies, boards and agencies for the purposes of fulfilling the policies set forth herein.

As an excluded city under Unigov, Beech Grove is statutorily "landlocked" for purposes of future development. The process for changing the boundaries of Unigov excluded cities is not only cumbersome, but is essentially controlled by the city of Indianapolis. The same is true of the town of Speedway and the cities of Lawrence and Southport (also excluded cities).

When a municipality becomes landlocked, the dynamics of future development are confined solely to the redevelopment of real estate within the existing corporate limits. While the vast majority of Indiana municipalities can center their future development plans on expansion and the development of surrounding land, the excluded cities are statutorily barred from such strategies because the boundaries of excluded cities are frozen. Historically, when the boundaries of a municipality are frozen, that municipality must identify fiscal methods for coping with the increasing cost of municipal services despite being denied the common tool of municipal expansion.

The BGRC notes that redevelopment commissions are not directly empowered by statute with direct authority over the administration of municipal agencies. As such, the BGRC will seek to develop and implement operative partnerships with municipal bodies, boards and agencies for the purposes of fulfilling the policies and objectives set forth herein. With these caveats, the city of Beech Grove, acting through the Beech Grove Redevelopment Commission (BGRC) offers the following statement of objectives for the future development of Beech Grove:

OBJECTIVES RELATED TO REDUCTION & ELIMINATION OF URBAN BLIGHT

- The BGRC establishes the objective of reducing, removing and eliminating urban blight from existing development within its municipal boundaries.
- The BGRC establishes the objective of enhancing and stabilizing neighborhood property values by using local code enforcement to reduce and remove blighting influences in the neighborhoods, including the removal of junk vehicles; elimination of trash and debris in yards; and enforcing local ordinances regarding weeds and building maintenance.

OBJECTIVES REGARDING COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL REDEVELOPMENT

- The BGRC will seek to encourage and implement redevelopment of commercial and industrial areas to their highest and best use, including enforcement of local codes and laws, as well as demolition of deteriorated or un-maintained buildings, and redevelopment of key commercial and industrial real estate to provide jobs, as well as retail opportunities for residents of the south side of Indianapolis.
- The BGRC establishes the objective of developing and implementing a specific strategy for the commercial redevelopment of the Emerson Avenue corridor as the showcase corridor for the city.
- The BGRC establishes the objective of developing and implementing a specific strategy for the commercial redevelopment of the Main Street corridor as the historic central business district of the city.
- The BGRC establishes the objective of developing and implementing a specific strategy for the industrial redevelopment of the designated industrial areas east of Emerson and along Churchman and Big Four Roads.
- The BGRC will seek partnerships with state and local environmental agencies to eliminate local environmental pollution, especially with regard to polluted industrial sites for the direct and explicit purpose of encouraging industrial redevelopment and placing those properties back onto the property tax rolls of the city.

- The BGRC establishes the objective of encouraging commercial and industrial redevelopment and to use tax increment financing (TIF) to generate revenues which can be committed to the prevention and elimination of blight in Beech Grove's neighborhoods, as well as dedicating TIF revenues to addressing other issues of redevelopment throughout the city.

OBJECTIVES REGARDING NEIGHBORHOOD REDEVELOPMENT

- The BGRC embraces the urban redevelopment concepts of "fixing broken windows" which advocates that the presence of such minor eyesores as broken windows, graffiti, abandoned vehicles, weeds and trash are visible evidence of blight and urban decline.
- The BGRC establishes the objective of addressing blighting influences in Beech Grove neighborhoods by enforcing local codes to combat "broken windows" forms of blight and to encourage neighbors to properly maintain their property.
- The BGRC establishes the objective of preparing a strategy for redeveloping neighborhood streets to correct historic problems and issues related to street/pavement condition, as well as related issues such as drainage, sidewalks and "walkability."
- The BGRC establishes the objective of preparing a strategy for redeveloping Beech Grove's system of alleys to restore full functionality to the alley system as secondary access to neighborhood property.
- The BGRC establishes the objective of developing strategies for encouraging investment in the city's housing stock, either through major renovation/improvement or through demolition and reconstruction of new homes.
- The BGRC establishes the objective of developing and initiating strategies for attracting new residents to the city, with an emphasis on attracting young professional couples and families, using the strengths and attributes of Beech Grove as the core of this strategy.
- The BGRC establishes the long term objective of reinforcing and sustaining Beech Grove as a "family-centric" community with strong schools, low crime and good neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVES REGARDING PARKS, RECREATION & PUBLIC HEALTH

- The BGRC establishes the objective of developing an integrated multi-modal plan for the entire City to encourage pedestrian traffic and reduce pollution.
- The BGRC establishes the objective of developing and implementing a plan and strategy for the creation of a major Greenway trail system for the specific benefit of Beech Grove residents in order to encourage public health and develop a sense of community identity.
- The BGRC establishes the objective of coordinating the Greenway trail system with the multi-modal transportation plan to provide a blueprint for future redevelopment of every street in Beech Grove such that pedestrian travel is enhanced and encouraged.
- The BGRC established the objective of enhancing the development of public parks and recreation facilities targeted at Beech Grove youth, in order to provide and encourage participation in a broad range of youth and adult sports and exercise, including the reclamation and redevelopment of abandoned land for recreational purposes.

OBJECTIVES REGARDING REDEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC STREETS & THOROUGHFARES

- The BGRC establishes the objective of developing a long-term thoroughfare redevelopment strategy which includes ideals for the redevelopment of every street in Beech Grove.
- It is the BGRC's intent that the Thoroughfare Plan to be included in this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan will conform to the specific provisions of the county-wide thoroughfare plan, with respect to Beech Grove thoroughfares.
- Further, it is the BGRC's intent that the long-term Thoroughfare Plan to be included in this Comprehensive Redevelopment plan will include the recommendations and provisions related to multi-modal transportation as provided in the "Multi-Modal Special Area Study."
- The BGRC establishes the long-term objective of reconstructing any and all local or neighborhood streets to restore such thoroughfare amenities as curbs, sidewalks and proper drainage in every neighborhood where such amenities were included in the original development standards.

OBJECTIVES REGARDING SEWERS & COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOWS

- The BGRC establishes the objective of reducing the environmental impact of combined sewer overflows by pursuing a long-term strategy for eliminating stormwater cross-connections and combined sewers in all parts of the city.

Statement of Policy for the Land Use Development of the Jurisdiction

The BGRC notes that redevelopment commissions are not directly empowered by statute with direct authority over the administration of municipal agencies. As such, the BGRC will seek to develop and implement operative partnerships with municipal bodies, boards and agencies for the purposes of fulfilling the policies set forth herein. In the case of land use and zoning, the BGRC will seek to establish fundamental policy values which are consistent with the publicly-stated policies and directives of the Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD), which is the designed planning agency under Unigov. The BGRC hereby states that it proceeds with the development of this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan using the county-wide comprehensive plan developed and approved by the DMD and the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC) as the basis for the Beech Grove Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan.

As noted previously, the land use development of Beech Grove is essentially defined by the current land use patterns of the city, due to the fact that Beech Grove is a landlocked excluded city under Indiana's Unigov statute. Given this constraint, the effort invested in development of this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan has noted the recommendations of the county-wide plan with regard to zoning and land uses in certain key areas of Beech Grove.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE POLICIES

The BGRC hereby states that its overall policy with regard to residential land use is to seek the development of strategies and plans toward the following purposes:

- the prevention and elimination of blighting influences in the neighborhoods through vigilant code enforcement;
- the encouragement of residential reinvestment in the form of major home improvements, as well as investment in maintenance of structures and grounds;

- the redevelopment of neighborhood streets, sidewalks and drainage to support and enhance neighborhood property values;
- to reduce and eliminate the market tendency to allow conversion of owned homes to rentals; and
- to provide adequate public safety through improvements to police and fire resources as a means of discouraging blighting influences and sustain property values.

The BGRC recognizes that home ownership comprises the largest source of personal wealth for many Americans. As the largest source of personal wealth, the equity vested in a single family home also often serves as the basis of financing such important things as college education for its children, as well as a financial resource during retirement. For these reasons, the BGRC places an extremely high priority on residential land use policies in order to protect and promote the personal wealth of Beech Grove families.

COMMERCIAL LAND USE POLICIES

The BGRC hereby states the following general land use policies with regard to commercial land uses within the city:

- The BGRC will promote and encourage commercial redevelopment with emphasis on Emerson Avenue and Main Street as key redevelopment corridors.
- For purposes of this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan, commercial redevelopment will be explicitly interpreted to mean both retail and office redevelopment, especially along the two key redevelopment corridors.
- All commercial redevelopment along these corridors will be encouraged and/or required to meet modern zoning and development standards, including parking requirements, wherever practical.
- All commercial redevelopment will be encouraged to meet the zoning and performance standards spelled out in the county-wide plan.
- The BGRC will seek to establish and enforce minimum standards of development for all commercial property in Beech Grove, including such requirements as:
 - requiring/enforcing the acquisition of building permits for any proposed improvement;
 - requiring all commercial buildings to be constructed on permanent foundations;
 - requiring all commercial buildings to have modern plumbing and infrastructure which meets state building codes;
 - requiring all commercial buildings to meet current standards for public safety, possibly including the demolition of uninhabitable buildings.
- The BGRC will seek to discourage certain forms of commercial redevelopment which has plagued other areas of Marion County, such as: topless bars; shooting galleries; adult/sex shops; night clubs; and other such operations.
 - The BGRC will seek to anchor this policy by identifying undesirable types of operations through opportunities for public input and public consensus.

- The BGRC will also seek to negotiate with property owners to limit or eliminate the opportunity for installation of undesirable activities.

The BGRC notes that virtually 100% of Beech Grove's commercial property is already developed. Therefore, in order to improve Beech Grove's property tax base and reduce the property tax burden on Beech Grove residents, it will be necessary for the BGRC to develop strategies and processes for specific implementation of the above-specified policies.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USE POLICIES

The BGRC hereby establishes the following general policies with regard to industrial land uses within the city of Beech Grove:

- The primary industrial areas of Beech Grove are generally located east of Emerson Avenue and centered on Churchman Avenue and Big Four Road.
- The industrial areas of Beech Grove include two major land owners: Amtrak and CSX, which own a combined total of approximately 230 acres of industrial land.
- While the BGRC fully understands that Amtrak is a federally-owned and operated facility, the BGRC also notes that business activity (as measured by employment on site) is down by ~50% over the last decade.
 - As such, the BGRC recognizes the potential future need for a site-specific redevelopment plan if and when the Amtrak site is abandoned.
- The CSX site represents Beech Grove's primary opportunity for industrial redevelopment.
 - CSX has advanced a preliminary plan to develop a "plastics port" where materials supplying Indiana's 5,000 plastics manufacturers can obtain raw materials on a "just in time" basis.
 - CSX also seeks occupants for the "plastics port" which are also major users of rail shipping, as a means of enhancing the CSX business model.
 - CSX is seeking to negotiate with IDEM to establish a mutually-agreeable plan for removing environmental hazards from the site (not caused by CSX).
- The BGRC recognizes the potential for redevelopment of the Refined Metals site, which is now owned by the Exide corporation.
 - The Refined Metals site is under a clean-up agreement with the USEPA to eliminate environmental hazards resulting from previous lead-processing operations on the site.
 - The site is approximately 22 acres in size and represents a redevelopment opportunity for the BGRC.
 - Redevelopment of the Refined Metals site would appear to be suitable for the attraction of multiple small manufacturing operations.
- The BGRC also recognizes the potential redevelopment opportunity presented by the "Rock Pile," which was previously platted as a residential subdivision in an area zoned for industrial development.
 - According to Marion County authorities, the "Rock Pile" was apparently purchased in tax sale for delinquent taxes.
 - The owner then contracts to create an unlicensed landfill, accepting construction waste from nearby highway projects, and piling the waste onto the property without a permit.
 - The owner is now in bankruptcy court and is delinquent in taxes on the property.

- While in bankruptcy court, the owner apparently made a second deal to allow additional dumping of waste products on the site. (This second dumper was asked to remove their waste from the site, but has not yet complied.)
 - The BGRC has acted to intervene in the bankruptcy court and has made an offer to purchase in an attempt to control the land.
 - The BGRC seeks to control the “Rock Pile” site with the potential for developing partnerships necessary to redevelop the site to the best interests of the community.
- The BGRC hereby states its preference that Industrial redevelopment in this area be accompanied by the development/enhancement of industrial thoroughfares linking these industries to the interstate highway system by routes other than Emerson Avenue (which the BGRC seeks to identify as a commercial corridor, rather than an industrial corridor).
 - The policy cornerstone of the BGRC with regard to industrial redevelopment is to create the opportunity for TIF revenues resulting from such redevelopment to be committed to other redevelopment opportunities in Beech Grove, such as the redevelopment of neighborhood streets, sidewalks and drainage.

Statement of Policy for the Development of Public Ways, Public Places, Public Lands, Public Structures, and Public Utilities

The BGRC notes that redevelopment commissions are not directly empowered by statute with direct authority over the administration of municipal agencies. As such, the BGRC will seek to develop and implement operative partnerships with municipal bodies, boards and agencies for the purposes of fulfilling the policies set forth herein. The BGRC hereby offers the following statements with regard to policies for the development of public ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities:

POLICY FOR PUBLIC WAYS:

The BGRC interprets the term “public ways” to include both the public street/thoroughfare system of the city, as well as the currently-planned Greenway project, which is being considered for TE grant funds in 2007.

The BGRC policy for development of public ways is generally stated as follows:

- The BGRC shall seek to develop and implement a long-term strategy for financing improvements to all Beech Grove thoroughfares in accordance with the recommendations and provisions of the “Multi-Modal special Area Study,” which was previously approved.
- The BGRC shall seek to redevelop all local streets and thoroughfare to their original condition and original amenities, including provision of curbs, gutters, sidewalks and proper drainage.
- The BGRC will seek to identify and pursue potential auxiliary funding to supplement local funds accessible to the BGRC and the City for purposes of optimizing fiscal resources for thoroughfare improvements.

- The BGRC has developed, and seeks grant funding to implement, a detailed plan for the construction of the Greenway project, which would provide 4 miles of bicycle and jogging trails for residents of the city.
- Also, see “Thoroughfare Plan,” “Multi-Modal Plan” and “Greenway” provisions, below.

POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC PLACES & LANDS

The BGRC interprets the term “public places,” “public lands” and “public structures” to include government buildings as well as parks property.

The BGRC policy for development of public places, public lands and public structures is generally stated as follows:

- The BGRC shall seek to assist the city in the maintenance and redevelopment of public parks to support the recreational and health activities of Beech Grove residents and youth.
- The BGRC shall seek to identify potential funding for the development of additional places for public recreation, including such initiatives as reclamation of the old landfill for field sports, such as baseball, softball, soccer, etc..
- The BGRC shall provide appropriate assistance to the city with regard to the redevelopment of government buildings in order to enable municipal agencies to continue to provide high-quality municipal services to the citizens of Beech Grove, however, an appropriate role for such activities by the BGRC has not yet been identified.

POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

The BGRC notes that redevelopment commissions are not directly empowered by statute with direct authority over the administration of municipal agencies, especially including municipal utilities, which has the power and authority to generate its own revenue streams. As such, the BGRC will seek to develop and implement operative partnerships with municipal bodies, boards and agencies for the purposes of fulfilling the policies set forth herein.

The following represents a general statement of policy with regard to the development of public utilities:

- The BGRC has no resident expertise with regard to the ownership or operation of sewage works or water works, and while it extends the offer of viable partnership with Beech Grove sewer utility agencies, the BGRC makes no assertion as to appropriate administrative direction for those utilities.
 - Therefore, the BGRC will rely on the judgment of Beech Grove utility authorities to identify appropriate partnership roles for the BGRC in this regard.
- The BGRC, however, recognizes that municipally-owned broadband telecommunications infrastructure is currently provided by an assortment of private sector suppliers, whose business interests might not match the service needs of the community at large.

- Specifically, the BGRC has fully investigated a potential role for the design, implementation and deployment of wireless broadband technology which can serve to enhance public safety, while simultaneously providing broadband access to Beech Grove residents and businesses at an affordable price.
- Therefore, the BGRC will consider those actions that it deems appropriate, given opportunities for public input, to consider the economic viability of deploying wireless broadband within the city.
- The BGRC also acknowledges the potential need for partnerships to identify, quantify and resolve problems with regard to combined sewer overflows and other discharges of polluted water into the surface waters of the community, and the BGRC hereby states its interest in developing partnerships appropriate thereto.
- The BGRC hereby states that the city of Beech Grove does not operate municipal gas, water or electric utilities, and thus, the BGRC expects no role in these utilities.

Beech Grove Thoroughfare Plan

This Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan hereby incorporates by reference those portions of the Marion County Thoroughfare Plan which are relevant to the thoroughfares and corridors of the city of Beech Grove, and was approved by the Metropolitan Development Commission as fulfilling the requirements of IC 36-7-4-502 (3), as well as sections 503 (2)(f), (2)(k), and (2)(l), among others.

In addition to meeting these statutory requirements, the BGRC further notes that IC 36-7-4-506 provides the authority for the BGRC to expand and specify the specific types of thoroughfare improvements which are proposed for the benefit of the city, as follows:

IC 36-7-4-506: Thoroughfare plans included in comprehensive plans; location, change, vacation, or improvement of thoroughfares

Sec. 506. (a) A thoroughfare plan that is included in the comprehensive plan may determine lines for new, extended, widened, or narrowed public ways in any part of the territory in the jurisdiction.

(b) The determination of lines for public ways, as provided in subsection (a), does not constitute the opening, establishment, or acceptance of land for public way purposes.

(c) After a thoroughfare plan has been included in the comprehensive plan, thoroughfares may be located, changed, widened, straightened, or vacated only in the manner indicated by the comprehensive plan.

(d) After a thoroughfare plan has been included in the comprehensive plan, the plan commission may recommend to the agency responsible for constructing thoroughfares in the jurisdiction the order in which thoroughfare improvements should be made.

As added by Acts 1981, P.L.309, SEC.23. Amended by Acts 1981, P.L.310, SEC.30; P.L.335-1985, SEC.8; P.L.220-1986, SEC.11.

The Importance of Emerson Avenue Enhancements

The Emerson Avenue Enhancements are extremely important to the broader community of Beech Grove, especially with regard to community identity and overall economic development. The best way to illustrate the importance of the Emerson Avenue enhancements is to direct people's attention to similar examples in the private and public sectors, where people spend their money in order to enhance their businesses.

BRAND IDENTITY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Creating “brand identity” is a critical issue in marketing. In order for a product to have value in the marketplace, the public must be aware of that product and its benefits. Brand identity is a primary motivator behind companies like Lucas Oil who justified spending \$6 million per year (\$120 million over 20 years) to have the Lucas Oil name atop the Colts stadium. Similarly, Federal Express pays \$4.5 million per year to have their name on the Memphis Grizzlies stadium, and PepsiCo pays \$3.4 million per year to have the PepsiCo name on the Denver Nuggets stadium.

The business rationale behind these huge expenditures by some of America’s largest corporations is that people hear the name of their company so often that public awareness increases. Clearly, the leaders of these corporations are not foolish. They are spending these huge amounts with the expectation that those funds will be fully returned in the form of new business.

BRAND IDENTITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

There are also brand identity analogies in the public sector. The City of Carmel created architectural gateways especially for their downtown “arts district” (also using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds). These gateways make it clear to every traveler that they are entering a “special place.” The intent is to get people to notice where they are, and to think about the opportunities it presents.

The City of Columbus felt so strongly about brand identity that they developed an architectural ‘bridge-like’ structure to let travelers on I-65 know where Columbus was located. Columbus’ architectural enhancement is now considered a landmark along the I-65 corridor.

The Town of Speedway and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway felt so strongly about brand identity along the Crawfordsville Road corridor that they created “Hulman Memorial Way” with extensive architectural enhancements and landscaping to greet everyday travelers, as well as visitors to IMS.

Similarly, the architectural enhancements to Emerson Avenue create a brand identity for the City of Beech Grove, as part of a long-term marketing strategy. All of these examples demonstrate that the public sector is also aware of the importance of brand identity to the economic success of communities.

WHY IS BRAND IDENTITY IMPORTANT TO BEECH GROVE?

Between 30,000 and 40,000 vehicles per day travel along Emerson Avenue. Ever since “the wall” was built, Beech Grove has struggled to retain its identity as a community. In 2007, for the first time, people traveling along Emerson Avenue know *exactly* where Beech Grove is located. If Beech Grove is to achieve its long-term redevelopment goals, more people need to know where Beech Grove is and what opportunities are located

there. The Emerson Avenue enhancements help to achieve that end.

The impact of 30,000-40,000 vehicles per day means that 11 – 15 million drivers see the architectural towers and read the words “Beech Grove” every year. Since some of those vehicles have passengers, this visibility impact could stretch to 20 – 30 million people. In addition, as they travel long Emerson Avenue, they read the words “Beech Grove” at least three times, which means that within the next year, the total visibility impact of the Emerson Avenue Enhancements totals 60 to 90 million sightings. In short, the Emerson Avenue Enhancements are likely to increase the visibility of the city of Beech Grove by as much as 300%.

By contrast, until “the wall” was removed in 2006, people were actually *restricted* from entering Beech Grove, if they were driving along Emerson. Many people have told us that “the wall” killed many home grown businesses along Main Street and changed Beech Grove from being an independent city to being some sort of unimportant appendage to Indianapolis. The Emerson Avenue Enhancements now clearly communicate to people traveling along Emerson that Beech Grove is alive and well, and they should stop in and take a look.

DO THE EMERSON AVENUE ENHANCEMENTS HELP BEECH GROVE BUSINESSES?

As anyone can see, Beech Grove businesses along Emerson Avenue were struggling for several years. The Kroger store at Churchman Hill Plaza has closed. Various business buildings are vacant or un-repaired. There have been a few strip centers constructed along Emerson, but no economic redevelopment to bring new retail anchors back to Beech Grove.

This “lack of interest” is *not* common along corridors that have direct exposure to 20 – 30 million potential shoppers every year. These travelers all eat and drink. They buy clothes and school supplies along with an assortment of other things. Yet, less than one percent of those drivers are stopping and shopping along Main Street, for example.

The ultimate goal of the Emerson Avenue enhancements is to entice as little as two percent of the vehicles traveling along Emerson to stop and do business in Beech Grove. If Beech Grove’s Main Street, for example, could capture the attention of just two percent of the drivers who travel along Emerson Avenue, the resulting economic impact on Main Street businesses would be an additional \$4 - \$6 million per year in new business. This level of business alone, is enough to support 50,000 square feet of retail business along Main Street.

Each business along Main Street will compete to attract the Emerson Avenue travelers and each business will succeed at different levels. For example, the Mug Rack will seek travelers wanting a sandwich and a soft drink; Napoli Villa will seek folks wanting a seated dinner at a great price; B&B will offer them a fine breakfast or lunch; the Meat Market will attract people who want high quality steaks and chops to feed their families

that week. At the same time, the medical and dental offices, which tend to operate by appointment only, will have to compete differently, but they should benefit, as well.

The news gets better. Once those people actually stop on Main Street and get out of their cars, they are much more likely to visit three to four additional businesses before they leave Main Street. Until the wall was torn down, however, these same motorists were not enticed into Beech Grove. Rather, they were encouraged by the very design of the thoroughfare to “move on.”

Before the Emerson Avenue enhancements were constructed, those same people who are now drawn to Main Street probably thought they had to go south of I-465 to get what they needed. The revitalization of Emerson Avenue has changed all of that.

THE ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE EMERSON AVENUE ENHANCEMENTS

Lucas Oil has to pay \$6 million *every year* for their brand identification at the new Colts stadium. Forrest Lucas thinks he got a good deal. By comparison, the City of Beech Grove used public funds to create a brand identity that can benefit every business in Beech Grove – and especially those on Main Street – for 10-20 years by making a one-time investment of \$2 million.

The brand identification that is provided by the Emerson Avenue Enhancements will improve the public visibility of Beech Grove for 10-20 years, and will clearly show the public that Beech Grove is a good place to do business.

Multi-Modal Corridor Study

The BGRC has addressed the issue of future thoroughfare development within the city of Beech Grove by virtue of developing, completing and approving the *Beech Grove Multi-Modal Special Area Study*, (prepared by Storrow Kinsella Associates, Inc.) which was undertaken jointly with the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development and funded through DMD/MPO.

The *Beech Grove Multi-Modal Special Area Study* is incorporated by reference into this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan by reference as the primary policy document governing future improvements to the thoroughfare system of Beech Grove.

The *Beech Grove Multi-Modal Special Area Study* was developed for the purpose of providing a long-term strategy for improving access to multi-modal transportation – including mass transit and alternative transportation – for Beech Grove citizens. The long-term goal for this effort was to develop specific recommendations for every street corridor in Beech Grove for the specific purpose of improving access to bicycle and pedestrian facilities for *all neighborhoods* in Beech Grove.

The contents of the *Beech Grove Multi-Modal Special Area Study* are summarized below, however, specific research should always be directed to the source document.

SUMMARY OF THE MULTI-MODAL STUDY

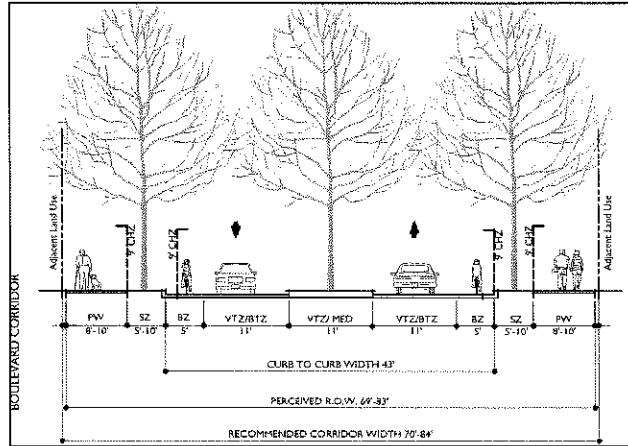
The *Beech Grove Multi-Modal Special Area Study* developed design recommendations for 9 corridor types, and then assigned each street corridor in Beech Grove to 1 of the 9 corridor types. The summary below presents a schematic drawing of each corridor type, as well as the Beech Grove street corridors which are designated for that type of corridor design.

Final improvements to each street are to be designed to fit within the existing right of way when funds and other resources are available for those street improvements.

Beech Grove Multi-Modal
Boulevard Corridor

Primary	Segment
	Focus Area
9th Ave	Churchman Ave to Byland Dr Byland Dr to Ash Ct
City Limits Corridor Application (Outside Focus Area)	
9th Ave	Thompson Rd to focus area boundary

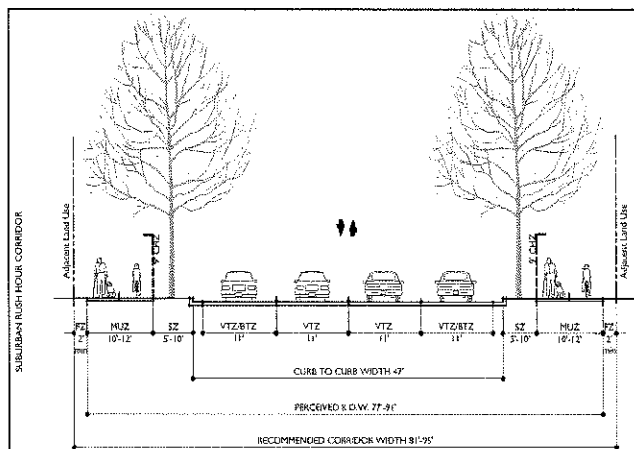
Recommended corridor width subject
to available existing right-of-way.



Beech Grove Multi-Modal
Suburban Rush Hour Corridor

Primary	Segment
	Focus Area
Emerson Ave	North of Albany St to focus boundary
City Limits Corridor Application (Outside Focus Area)	
Arlington Ave	CSX Rail Line to south I465
Thompson Rd	Emerson Ave to Sherman Dr
Emerson Ave	north CSX Rail Line to focus boundary

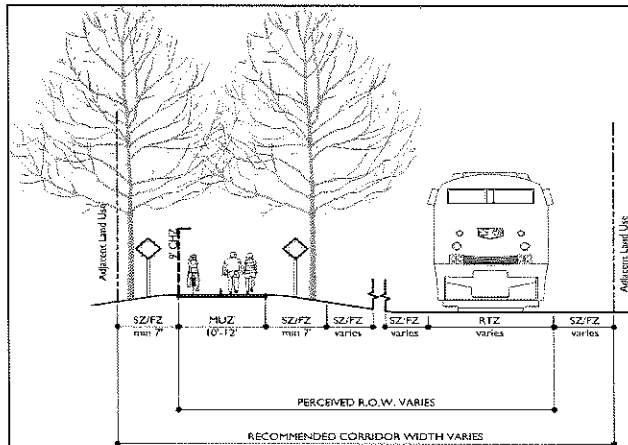
Recommended corridor width subject
to available existing right-of-way.



Beech Grove Multi-Modal
Greenway & Transit Corridor

Primary	Segment
	Focus Area
none	
City Limits Corridor Application (Outside Focus Area)	
CSX Rail Line	E. Hanna Ave to vicinity S. Sloan Ave

Recommended corridor width subject
to available existing right-of-way.



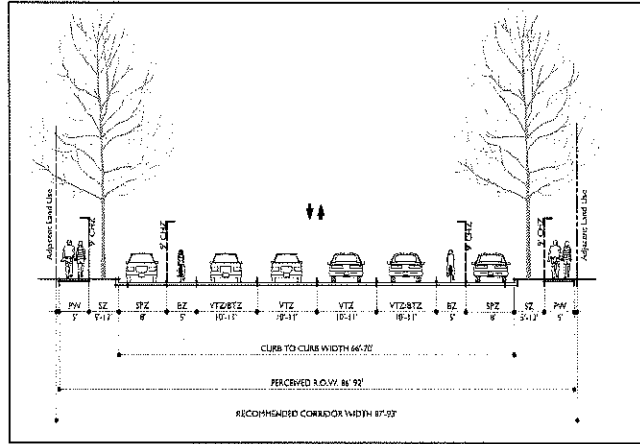
Beech Grove Multi-Modal
Urban Link Corridor

Primary	Segment
Focus Area	
Albany St	17th Ave to 13th Ave
	13th Ave to Emerson Ave
Churchman Ave	13th Ave to Emerson Ave
Main St	18th Ave to 17th Ave
	17th Ave to 13th Ave
5th Ave	Buffalo St to Albany St
	Albany St to Churchman Ave
13th Ave	Main St to Alton St
	Alton St to Churchman Ave
15th Ave	Albany St to Main Street
17th Ave	Main St to Sarah Bolton Park entrance

City Limits Corridor Application (Outside Focus Area)

Groveswood Ave	9th Ave to Emerson Ave
17th Ave	Southern Ave to focus area boundary
5th Ave	Bethel Ave to focus area boundary

Recommended corridor width subject
to available existing right-of-way.



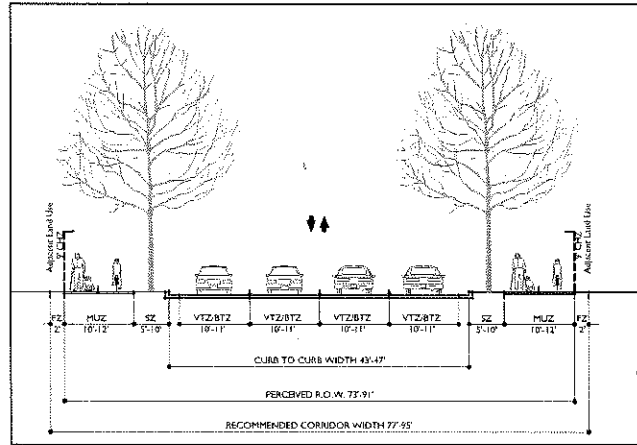
Beech Grove Multi-Modal
Suburban Link Corridor

Primary	Segment
Focus Area	
Albany St	Focus Area Boundary to Albany Way
Churchman Ave	20th Ave to 19th Ave
17 Ave	Sarah Bolton Park entrance to City Limits

City Limits Corridor Application (Outside Focus Area)

Redfern Dr	9th Ave to Sherman Dr
Sherman Dr	Sumner Ave to Thompson Rd
Sumner Ave	17th Ave to Perkins Ave
Perkins Ave	Sumner Ave to Southern Ave
Albany St	Centre Pky to focus area boundary
Southern Ave	Perkins Ave to Bethel Ave
17th Ave	Southern Ave to Woodcliff Dr
Churchman Ave	Southern Ave to focus area boundary
	Emerson Ave to Hanna Ave
Subway St	Bethel Ave to Emerson Ave
Garstang Ave	Emerson Ave to Cincinnati Ave
Cincinnati Ave	Garstang Ave to Big Four Rd
Big Four Rd	Cincinnati Ave to Arlington Ave
Elmwood Ave	Emerson Ave to I465

Recommended corridor width subject
to available existing right-of-way.



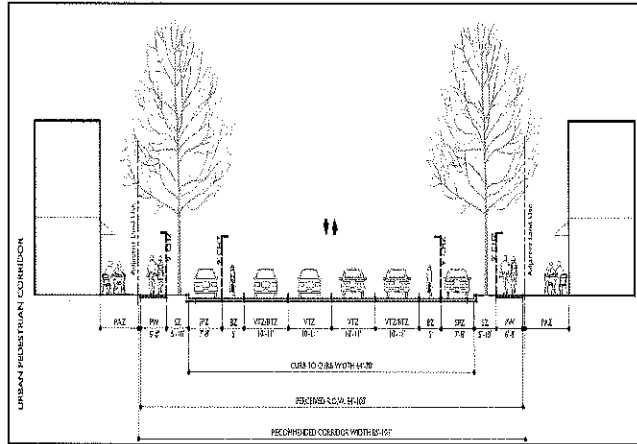
**Beech Grove Multi-Modal
Urban Pedestrian Corridor**

<u>Primary</u>	<u>Segment</u>
	<u>Focus Area</u>
Albany St	Albany Way to 18th Ave 18th Ave to 17th Ave
Churchman Ave	19th Ave to 17th Ave
Emerson Ave	Albany St to Churchman Ave
Main St	13th Ave to 11th Ave 11th Ave to 8th Ave
17th Ave	8th Ave to Emerson Ave Buffalo St to Albany St
18th Ave	Albany St to Main St Churchman Ave to Albany St Albany St to Main St

City Limits Corridor Application (Outside Focus Area)

none

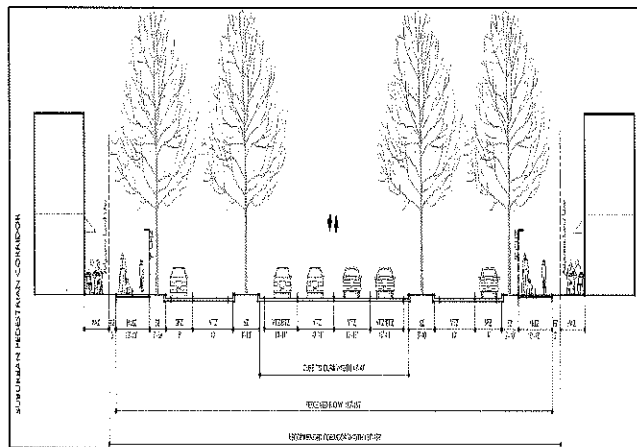
Recommended corridor width subject
to available existing right-of-way.



**Beech Grove Multi-Modal
Suburban Pedestrian Corridor**

<u>Primary</u>	<u>Segment</u>
	<u>Focus Area</u>
Emerson Ave	Churchman Ave to focus area boundary
City Limits Corridor Application (Outside Focus Area)	
Emerson Ave	Thompson Rd to focus area boundary

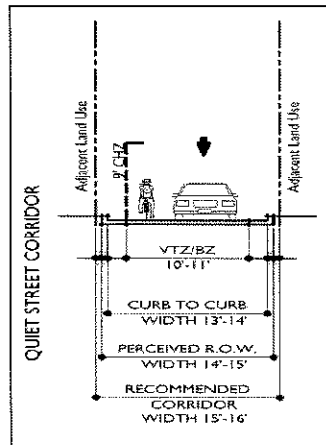
Recommended corridor width subject
to available existing right-of-way.



**Beech Grove Multi-Modal
Quiet Street Corridor**

<u>Primary</u>	<u>Segment</u>
	<u>Focus Area</u>
Southeast Pkwy	13th Ave to 11th Ave
City Limits Corridor Application (Outside Focus Area)	
	none

Recommended corridor width subject
to available existing right-of-way.

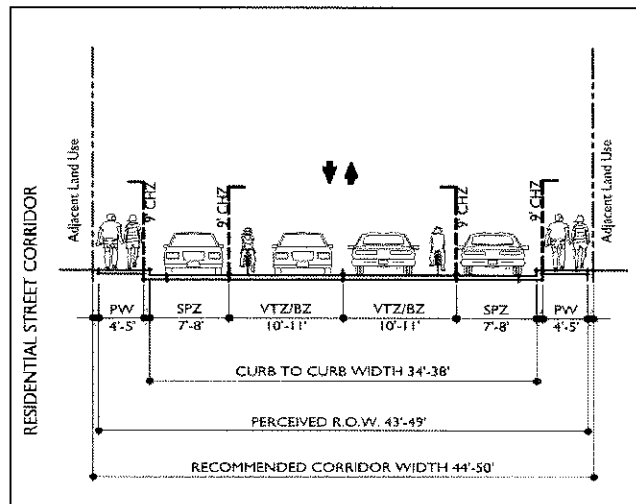


**Beech Grove Multi-Modal
Residential Street Corridor**

<u>Primary</u>	<u>Segment</u>
Focus Area	
Alton St	Gilbert Ave to 17th Ave 13th Ave to Emerson Ave
Bellevue St	9th Ave to Emerson Ave
Bethel Ave	3rd Ave to dead end/Emerson Ave
Briar Ln	Main St to Alton St
Buffalo St	19th Ave to 13th Ave 9th Ave to 3rd Ave 8th Ave to 4th Ave
Fletcher Ln	Alton St to dead end
Gilbert Ave	South of Main St
Gilbert St	Main St to Alton St
Glengyle Ave	Glengyle Ave to 18th Ave
Main St	entire
Park Meadow Ct	entire
Park Meadow Dr	entire
Park Meadow Way	entire
Ticen Ct	Focus area boundary to cul-de-sac
Timber Grove Pl	9th Ave to cul-de-sac
2nd Ave	Bethel Ave to Albany St Albany St to Churchman Ave
3rd Ave	Buffalo St to Churchman Ave
4th Ave	Buffalo St to Albany St Albany St to Churchman Ave
6th Ave	Churchman Ave to Fletcher Ln
7th Ave	Buffalo St to Albany St Albany St to Churchman Ave
8th Ave	Buffalo St to Albany St Albany St to Churchman Ave Churchman St to Fletcher Ln
9th Ave	Buffalo St to Main St Main St to Churchman Ave
10th Ave	Main St to Churchman Ave Churchman Ave to Byland Dr
11th Ave	Main St to Churchman Ave Churchman Ave to Byland Dr
12th Ave	Southeast Pkwy to Churchman Ave Churchman Ave to Byland Dr
13th Ave	Buffalo St to Albany St Albany St to Main St
14th Ave	Albany St to Main St
15th Ave	Main St to Sarah Bolton Park entrance
16th Ave	Albany St to Main St Main St to dead end
18th Ave	Buffalo St to Churchman Ave
19th Ave	Buffalo St to Churchman Ave

City Limits Corridor Application (Outside Focus Area)	
Main St	Perkins Ave to focus area boundary
9th Ave	Bethel Ave to focus area boundary

Recommended corridor width subject
to available existing right-of-way.



The Beech Grove Greenway Project

The *Beech Grove Multi-Modal Special Area Study* was undertaken as a parallel project with the development and implementation of a separate project to provide Beech Grove citizens with a developed network of pedestrian trails, similar in concept to the Monon Trail which serves the northern sections of Washington Township (Marion County) and the city of Carmel. The Monon Trail has been an immensely successful facility which has promoted community health and recreation, as well as multi-modal transportation.

The BGRC has laid out a Greenway route and has developed a preliminary design which successfully connects all of Beech Grove's parks, as well as all of Beech Grove's public schools.

The BGRC is seeking Transportation Enhancement funding of \$1M – to be coupled with more than \$1M in local funding from the BGRC – to construct the Greenway. The 2007 TE applications are to be scored and grants awarded in August, 2007. If the BGRC is successful in obtaining TE funding in 2007, construction of the Greenway is projected to commence in September/October, 2007.

THE GREENWAY AS A COMBINED PARKS & MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECT

The proposed Greenway project is presented below in essentially the same format as it was proposed to the State of Indiana for TE funding. All plans and documents related to the project were presented to and approved by the BGRC and are incorporated into this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan by reference, along with the 2007 TE application document which is attached as an exhibit, hereto.

The Greenway project is presented as a hybrid/combined project which addresses multi-modal transportation needs, as well as a ‘parks’ project which provides the public with opportunities for exercise and recreation. The project will be maintained as part of the Beech Grove parks system. A detailed project description is contained in the TE Application, along with a full explanation of virtually all aspects of the project.

BENEFITS OF THE GREENWAY PROJECT

The Greenway project benefits the city of Beech Grove and its residents in several ways, briefly outlined as follows:

- Improves and enhances recreational opportunities for Beech Grove residents;
- Improves opportunities for healthy lifestyles by youth and adults;
- Improves property values in Beech Grove by providing lifestyle amenities which are not otherwise present in southern Marion County;
- Affords parents and school children an alternative transportation method for commuting to school;
- Affords the community an opportunity for social interaction and improved community dynamics;

Beech Grove is a close-knit community located on the south side of a major metropolitan area. Although the area has suffered in recent years from blighting conditions, Beech Grove has not suffered from overall urban decline and disorder. It is believed that projects like the Greenway which afford and renew the opportunities of residents to interact socially will help to strengthen and reinforce the sense of community identity and common purpose.

Statement of Policy & Strategy for Organizational Implementation

The resources of the BGRC and the City have not traditionally been configured to carry out the implementation of long-term redevelopment projects and strategies. The BGRC, which generates a substantial portion of the financial resources for ongoing Redevelopment Projects through Tax Increment Revenues (TIR) does not possess the human or organizational resources to efficiently perform the tasks related to the Redevelopment Projects. As such, in order for the City and BGRC to implement the proposed Redevelopment Projects the most effectively and efficiently on behalf of the public, the BGRC and the City must configure the available human, financial and organizational resources in a manner that provides public accountability, as well as effective project management.

The BGCRP hereby recommends that the BGRC employ the following organizational strategy in order to optimize cost-efficiencies, transparency and accountability:

- Placement of ongoing Redevelopment Project activities under the administrative umbrella of the Department of Public Works (BGDPW);
 - Includes identification and implementation of project activities;
 - Includes fiscal and administrative accountability per state requirements;
 - Includes project coordination with ongoing BGDPW activities;
 - Includes avoidance of duplication of BGDPW administrative and personnel resources.
- Commitment to multi-faceted public information efforts;
 - Includes web-based distribution of information;
 - Includes information provided to media sources;
 - Includes community-based networks & other information distribution;
 - Includes accountability/presentations to elected/appointed boards.
- Establishment of the goals/strategies of pursuit and capture of grant funds to leverage uncommitted TIF revenues;
 - Includes identification of potential grant funding sources and appropriate application process and timing;
 - Includes pursuit of funding for soft- and hard-costs related to redevelopment projects;
 - Includes pursuit and supervision of bureaucratic processes for necessary approvals, including environmental clearances, planning/design approvals; legal/statutory processes, etc., depending upon the nature of the specific redevelopment project;
 - Includes documentation of redevelopment project-related activities;
 - Includes pursuit and prosecution of processes to thwart ongoing blighting activities, including detrimental actions by property owners which would have a blighting impact on the surrounding neighborhood.
- Ongoing coordinated vigilance between the BGRC and the BGDPW toward the effort to recruit, attract and retain business activity within the Redevelopment Area;

- Providing hard- and soft-cost assistance related to undeveloped/under-developed land in attracting new development, especially with regard to new industrial redevelopment at CSX and Refined Metals;
 - Identification and recruitment of new industrial investment;
- Providing hard- and soft-cost assistance related to undeveloped and under-developed parcels in achieving commercial redevelopment goals by encouraging new investment along Main Street and Emerson Avenue;
 - Identification and recruitment of new commercial investment;
- Investing BGRC resources into both hard- and soft-costs related to short-and long-term redevelopment projects, including prevention/elimination of blighting influences;
- Investing BGRC resources into hard- and soft-costs related to Redevelopment Projects in neighborhoods, including prevention/elimination removal of blighting influences.

Demographic Analysis

Population

Due to the geographic limitations on growth, the population of Beech Grove has remained substantially unchanged since 1970. The 2000 census shows that the population of Beech Grove is 14,880.

Between 1970 and 2000, the average household size, however, has declined from 3.3 persons per household to 2.38 persons per household, which conversely means that the number of households has grown during the same period.

INTERESTING FACTS:

There are several interesting facts regarding the population of Beech Grove during the 1970-2000 period:

- The largest population increase occurred in the 65+ age group, with the 2000 census showing 2,356 persons age 65 or older.
 - This represents 16% of the city's population.
 - This also represents approximately 1,000 households.
 - This demographic is important because the community must be prepared to accommodate the number of housing units that might become available on the market as a result of the aging of this age group.
 - This trend is the primary reason that Beech Grove's median age went from 27.9 years in 1970 to 36 years in 2000.
- The population of pre-school children (0-4 years) has stabilized and has begun to increase in recent years, nearly returning to 1970 levels.
 - This fact has a direct impact on school enrollment and likely results from the strength of Beech Grove schools.
- The school-age population (age 5-17) has stabilized, after dropping between 1970 and 1990.
 - In 1970, school age children accounted for 27% of the population.
 - In 2000, school age children accounted for only 18% of the population.
 - If the future population of school age children was to return to 1970 levels, there would be 4,023 school aged children in Beech Grove (based on 2000 census levels).

- Such a shift could have a significant impact on the school facilities, if it were to occur cataclysmically.
 - However, if this shift occurs gradually in conjunction with the redeployment of elderly population, the shift could be constructive.
- It is possible that the constraints of the residential housing market (tendency toward smaller homes for a significant segment of the market) has limited the school age population.
- The number of young adults (age 25-64) has grown since 1970 to its current level of 4,569 (31%).
- The number of older adults (age 45-64) has remained virtually constant between 1970 and 2000.

The population analysis clearly shows that Beech Grove is getting older. This trend is likely to manifest itself into the housing market as these older citizens relocate in their golden years, which would place a large number of housing units into the market.

The central strategic question of redevelopment, therefore, is whether the BGRC should attempt to influence the market to encourage the strongest possible growth as a result of this shift.

Income

It is difficult to conduct a simple and straightforward analysis of incomes, due largely to the reality that \$1 in 1970 bought more goods and services than \$1 in 2000. At the same time, it is possible to point out some simple facts relative to incomes which give a fair view of the income picture in Beech Grove.

INTERESTING FACTS:

Analysis of income data from the census shows the following facts:

- Median household income for Beech Grove tracks closely with that of Indianapolis.
 - In 1970, Beech Grove's median income was \$11,585 compared to \$10,754 in Indianapolis.
 - In 2000, Beech Grove's median income was \$41,548, compared to Indianapolis' \$40,051.
- Approximately 28% (1601 / 5820) of Beech Grove households make less than \$25,000 per year, compared to 29% (93,188 / 320,518) of Indianapolis households.
- Approximately 34% (1978 / 5820) of Beech Grove households make \$25,000-\$50,000 per year, compared to 32% (102,394 / 320,518) of Indianapolis households.
- Approximately 22% (1978 / 5820) of Beech Grove households make \$50,000-\$75,000 per year, compared to 20% (63,369 / 320,518) of Indianapolis households.
- Approximately 10% (566 / 5820) of Beech Grove households make \$75,000-\$100,000 per year, compared to 10% (30,508 / 320,518) of Indianapolis households.
- Approximately 7% (407 / 5820) of Beech Grove households make more than \$100,000 per year, compared to 10% (31,059 / 320,518) of Indianapolis households.

- This disparity is significant in terms of the impact on revenue streams and levels of business transactions.
- Lack of adequate high-level demographics generally forces economic impacts downward and distorts the correlation between statistical medians and means.
- In this case, the lack of sufficient high-income households results in a median household income which appears to be on par with Indianapolis, while per capita incomes in Beech Grove are substantially below those of Indianapolis.

The income analysis demonstrates that Beech Grove's income distribution is very closely aligned with that of Indianapolis, with the exception of the proportion of affluent families. If future redevelopment strategies could succeed in increasing this proportion, there would be a reduction of economic impact on lower income families over time.

Housing Characteristics

The demographic analysis of housing characteristics for the Beech Grove Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan will focus on three (3) primary issues: rental/ownership, distribution of residential values, and value of improvements, with specific narrative, below, dedicated to each. The reader should note that the census measures housing slightly differently, depending upon the measurement parameter, therefore, the total number of housing units will vary slightly between parameters (generally, 5,820 household income groups, up to 6,085 households, as reported, with 5,866 occupied housing units). For purposes of this analysis, we will use the number of occupied housing units (5,866) as the basis of analysis.

HOUSING RENTAL VS. OWNERSHIP

The table below presents the portion of the housing data related to the ratio of rental housing versus owned housing. The 2000 census comparison with Indianapolis demonstrates that Beech Grove enjoys a significantly higher proportion of home ownership than does the metropolitan area.

	2000 Census				1990 Census			
	Beech Grove	%	Indianapolis	%	Beech Grove	%	Indianapolis	%
Total Occupied	5,866		324,373		5,488		296,297	
Owner Occupied	3,570	60.9%	190,613	58.8%	3,340	60.9%	168,404	56.8%
Renter Occupied	2,296	39.1%	133,760	41.2%	2,148	39.1%	127,893	43.2%

It is noted and acknowledged that the issue of rental housing is extremely sensitive in Beech Grove, therefore, the analysis rental/ownership analysis did not stop with a simple comparison between Indianapolis and Beech Grove market splits.

Instead, further research was performed regarding the composition of rental housing in Beech Grove to determine the number of rental units contained in apartment complexes, versus the number of rental units contained in structures that were previously single family homes.

Of the 2,296 rental units reported, the street level research suggests that approximately 1,800

units are contained within Beech Grove's apartments, also called multi-family developments. This street-level measurement would therefore suggest that Beech Grove also has approximately 500 units of rental housing that are contained in former single-family structures.

The community's response to the survey conducted in 2006/07 indicates that the community at large is very concerned that neighborhoods are being adversely affected by the conversion of single family homes into rentals. The BGRC should begin to develop strategies to address this sensitivity in order to protect the residential property values of neighborhoods.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING VALUES

The table below shows the distribution of housing values in Beech Grove versus Indianapolis, based on data obtained from the 2000 Census.

Distribution of Housing Values				
Housing Values	Beech Grove	%	Indianapolis	%
< \$50,000	7	0.2%	19,027	10.9%
\$50,000 - \$100,000	2,261	66.1%	71,175	40.7%
\$100,000 - \$150,000	930	27.2%	53,524	30.6%
\$150,000 - \$200,000	155	4.5%	15,889	9.1%
\$200,000 - \$300,000	47	1.4%	9,560	5.5%
\$300,000 +	22	0.6%	5,782	3.3%
total	3,422	100.0%	174,957	100.0%
2000 census				

The table shows the following interesting facts with regard to Beech Grove:

- Beech Grove has a substantially lower rate of extremely low-cost housing than Indianapolis (0.2% vs. 10.9%), which indicates generally stronger neighborhoods and less extreme poverty.
- Beech Grove also has a substantially lower proportion (2.0%) of upper income housing (values > \$200,000) when compared with Indianapolis, where 8.8% of the housing has a value greater than \$200,000.
- Beech Grove's housing market is heavily concentrated in the value band between \$50,000 and \$150,000, which comprises 93.3% of the Beech Grove housing market, compared to only 71.3% of the Indianapolis housing market.
 - Based on windshield surveys of the neighborhoods, this statistic is based in the reality that many older Beech Grove homes have not received substantial re-investment over time.
 - It is common for elderly households to remain in their homes after retirement and to fail to reinvest substantially in their homes, especially once the children are grown and the physical ability to perform the work is diminished.
 - (recall that the population analysis suggested that there were as many as 1,000 elderly households in Beech Grove, which would tend to validate this assumption.)
 - In order for Beech Grove's housing distribution to more closely reflect that of Indianapolis, the following amount of re-investment would be required:

- 850 – 880 homes in the \$50,000 to \$100,000 bracket would have to be upgraded in value through reinvestment.
 - 110 – 130 homes in the \$100,000 to \$150,000 bracket would have to be substantially upgraded through reinvestment.
 - Another 200 – 300 homes would have to be value-redistributed across the brackets, either through demolition/reconstruction or through major reinvestment
- Beech Grove is also under-represented in the market segment between \$150,000 and \$200,000 by about half.

This analysis indicates that Beech Grove would benefit tremendously from a major re-investment in upgrading its housing stock.

BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY & VALUE OF IMPROVEMENTS

The table below shows Beech Grove building permit data for 2005 through 2007, including the stated value of construction.

Value of Construction & Building Permits Issued

April YTD 2007	\$4,980,445	141
2006	\$8,916,302	587
2005	\$4,505,474	234

The rate of building permits and reinvestment in property is an important factor for urban neighborhoods. Generally speaking, those neighborhoods which demonstrate a higher rate of reinvestment generally do better than neighborhoods where the property owners do not reinvest. As such, building permits and stated value of improvements represent a general indicator of the confidence that owners retain in the quality of the housing market. Those neighborhoods where there are substantial re-investments in housing tend to be able to fend off blighting influences better than those neighborhoods where no re-investment is taking place.

The table above reflects the building permit and value of construction data for Beech Grove for 2005-2007. The data shows that reinvestment activity in 2006 was roughly double the rate of 2005, and that the figures for the first four months of 2007 continued this trend. In fact, the first four months of 2007 have shown only 141 building permits, compared to 234 building permits during all of 2005, but even with the lower number of building permits, the value of construction for only a portion of 2007 was higher than for all of the permits issued in 2005. This shows that Beech Grove residents are investing in their property.

The figures for building permits and value of construction clearly show that the owners of property in Beech Grove are confident of their investment in their homes. More importantly, however, the trend data shows that Beech Grove property owners are making bigger investments

in their property than they were in 2005, which is considered a good indicator of market confidence.

School Quality as a Contributor to Residential Values

The National Board of Realtors recognizes that the quality of the public school system in any particular location is a strong determinant of property values. Therefore, when considering the relative property values of various neighborhoods, it is necessary to consider whether the school system is strong enough to adequately serve and attract families with school-aged children.

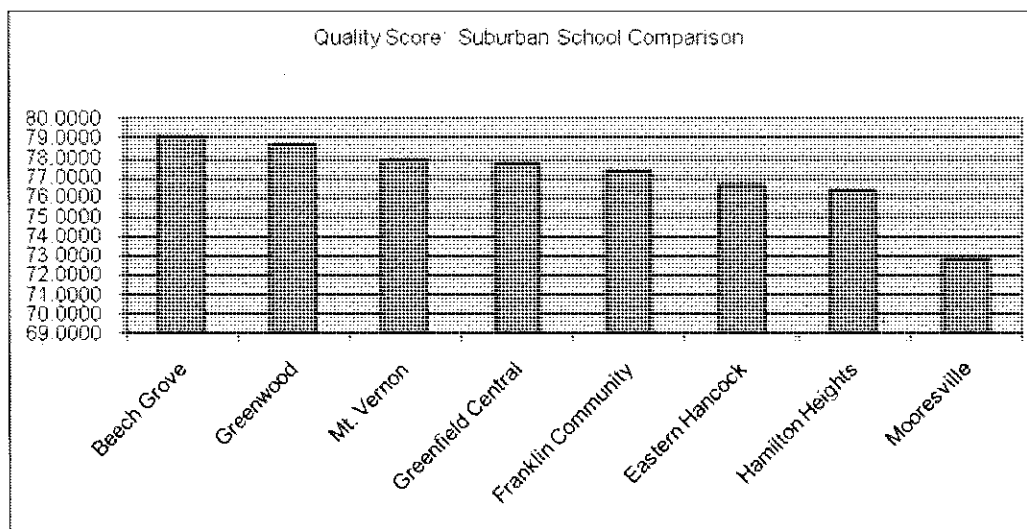
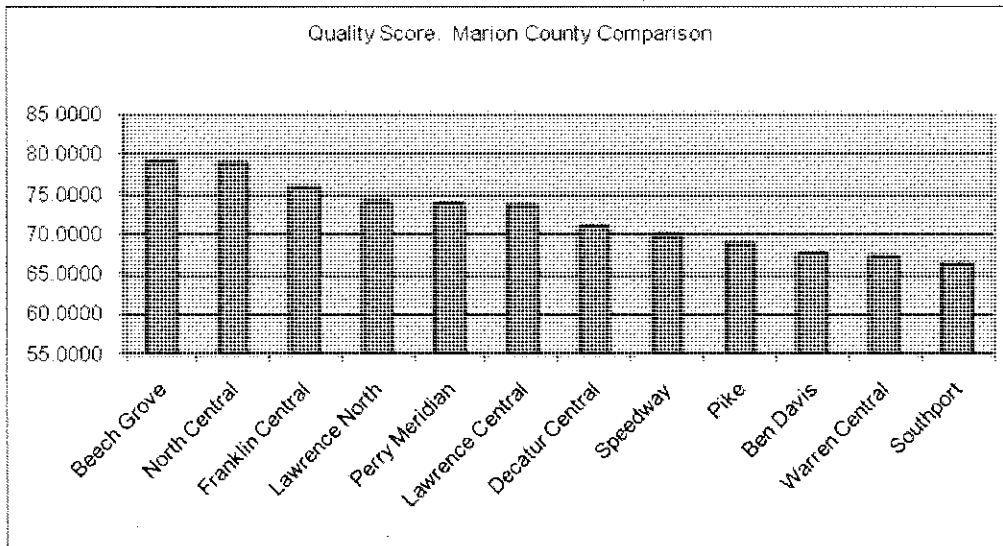
Given this correlation, it is important to note those situations where property values are high despite weak school systems. In many of those cases, the demographics of the neighborhood move away from moderate income families with children, and toward families who can afford private schools, or toward non-traditional households. Census data clearly shows that Beech Grove is a moderate income community with a core of families with children.

Housing data from the US Census shows that development of new housing in Beech Grove was especially strong between 1990 and 2000, with a substantial number of upscale units developed and occupied. This is a strong indicator that the market recognizes the quality of Beech Grove schools, and that the quality of schools is a more important determinant of market value than property tax rates.

Additional research was undertaken to determine other issues of school quality which could serve to generate additional understanding of the importance of quality schools to the housing market. The Indiana Chamber of Commerce provided the best source of comparative data, with professional interpretation of the statistical analysis on a statewide basis. ***After a complete comparative analysis, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce concluded that Beech Grove was the only “best buy” schools in Marion County.*** The data considered by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce is presented below.

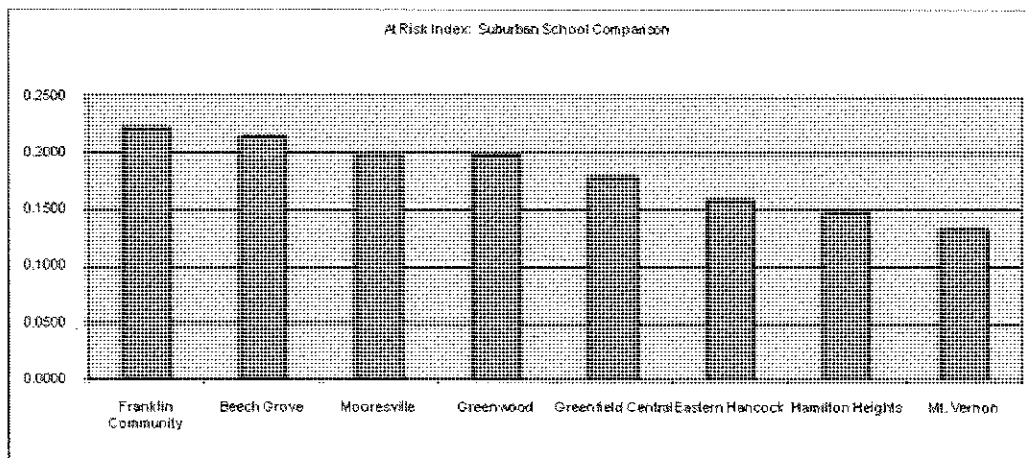
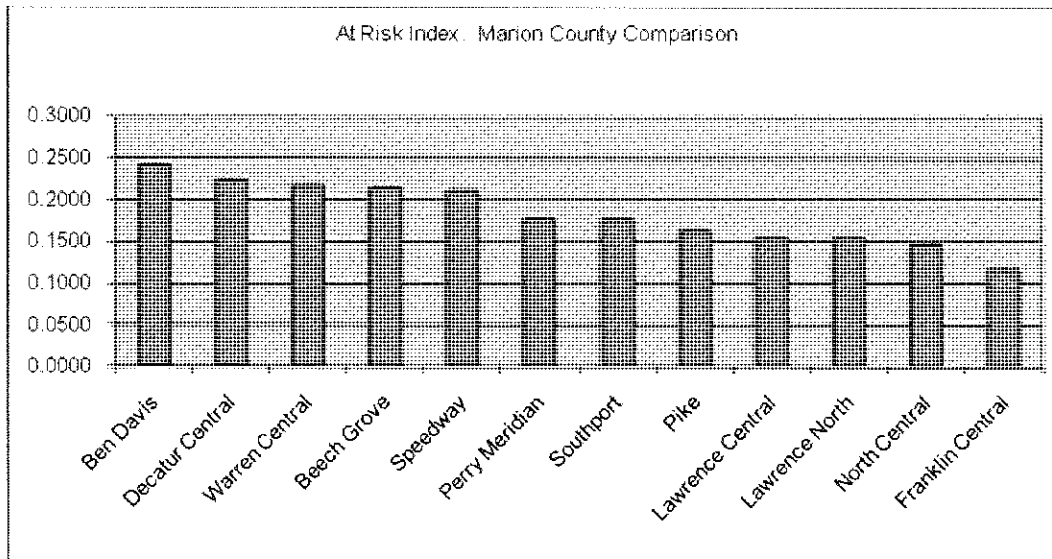
OVERALL QUALITY SCORE

As shown in the chart below, the State Chamber’s analysis gave Beech Grove schools an overall quality score of 79.066, which was not only higher than all Marion county schools, but was also higher than suburban schools such as Eastern Hancock, Hamilton Heights, Greenwood and Greenfield.



AT RISK INDEX

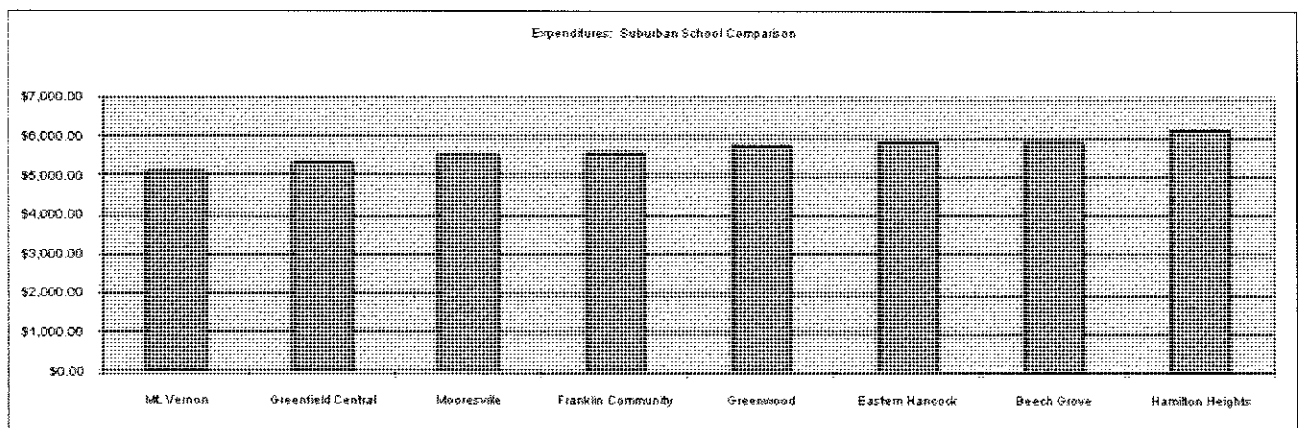
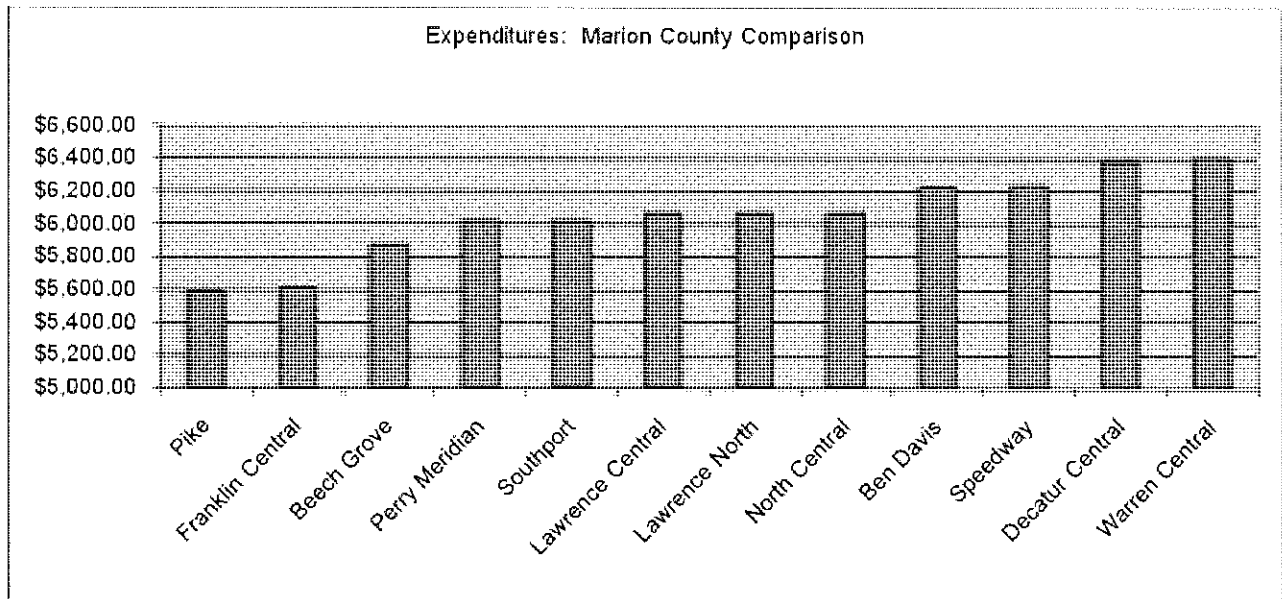
It is remarkable to also note that Beech Grove can succeed in such high achievements even at the same time that their students' "at risk index" is substantially higher than many of its competitors. The chart below shows that Beech Grove schools have nearly as many 'at risk' students as some of the school systems which are considered 'troubled.'



Historically, sociologists have argued that school performance is tied directly to the number of “at risk” students. The chart above shows that Beech Grove schools have managed to perform with excellence, even with a high level of “at risk” students. Arguably, if the school system could continue such high-quality performance while simultaneously reducing the number of at risk students, the statistical analysis of Beech Grove schools would be even more beneficial.

EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT

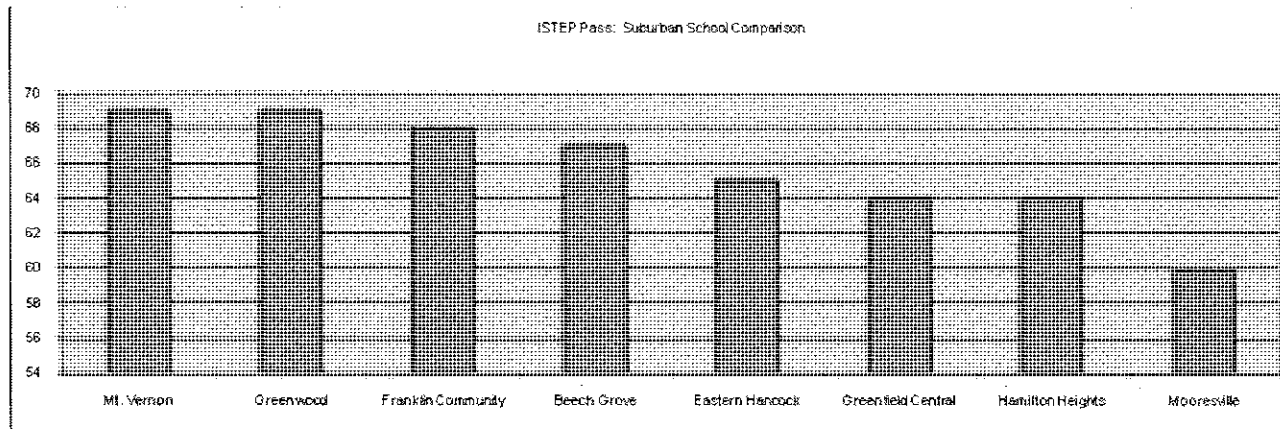
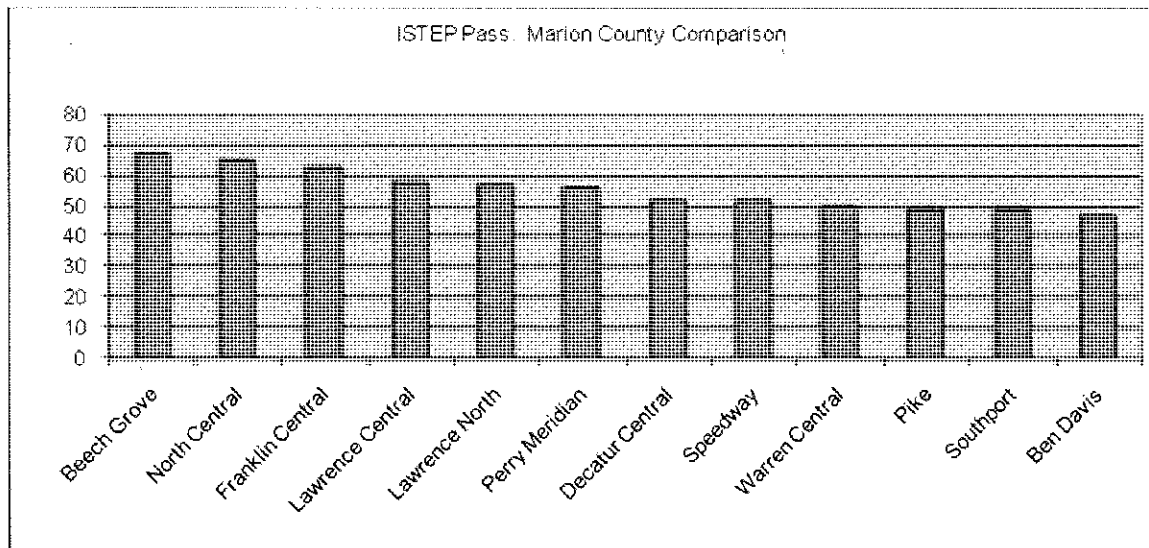
The State Chamber also praises Beech Grove schools for the low rate of expenditures per student. The chart below compares the per student cost of education in Beech Grove with other Marion County schools.



According to data obtained from the Indiana Department of Education, Beech Grove's expenditures per student are the third lowest in Marion County. Equally importantly, however, Beech Grove's expenditures per student were also competitive with those of many of the suburban schools. The chart above reflects this comparison.

ISTEP PASSING RATE

The State Chamber's analysis also considered the overall rate at which students passed the ISTEP test. Again, as shown in the charts below, Beech Grove schools led all of Marion County in the rate of ISTEP passing, and was extremely competitive with the suburban schools, despite a generally higher rate of 'at risk' students.



CONCLUSIONS RE: SCHOOL QUALITY

The State Chamber's comparative analysis of school system performance clearly leads to several basic conclusions:

- If a family (with children) is looking for a home in Marion County, the best educational opportunity appears to be Beech Grove.
- When adjusted for "at risk" students, Beech Grove schools perform competitively with suburban schools.
- Considering the affordability of Beech Grove housing, along with the quality of schools, Beech Grove represents an **excellent** investment for families with school-aged children.
- These analytical results should form the core of a future Beech Grove marketing and communications strategy.

Crime Rates & Residential Property Values

The academic and social research agrees that there is a strong correlation between crime rates and property values. As such, it is appropriate to include crime rate statistics in the Demographic Analysis for the Beech Grove Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan. The table below summarizes recent comparative data regarding crime in Beech Grove vs. that of Indianapolis.

Comparative Crime Statistics (per 10,000 people)

	(2006) Indianapolis	Beech Grove	percentage
Population	800,304	14,162	1.77%
Murder	1.1	0.7	63.64%
Rape	4.8	2.1	43.75%
Robbery	27.4	12.7	46.35%
Aggravated Assault**	23.1	2.8	12.12%
Arson**	1.9	0	0.00%
Burglary	95.3	32.3	33.89%
Larceny	269.2	125	46.43%
Vehicle Theft	87.6	20.5	23.40%

** data from IPD: not available from MCSO

Data in this table reported by BG Police Dept.

There is one important caveat which deserves mention with regard to comprehending the table, above. The reader must understand that there is a vast difference in size between Beech Grove and Indianapolis, and because of Beech Grove's small population, even a tiny increase in the raw number of crimes in any category would result in a soaring 'crime rate,' as measured in the table.

However, understanding the above limitation, the comparative data clearly shows that Beech Grove is not suffering from the crime wave that has buried Indianapolis. The grim statistics of increased murder and carjacking in Indianapolis during 2006 and 2007 have not found their way to Beech Grove.

The significant advantages offered by Beech Grove with respect to crime statistics should be considered a major benefit and market advantage for Beech Grove, and should be included in the BGRC's long-term development policies and strategies. If properly marketed, the crime statistics, alone, could present Beech Grove with a significant boost to local property values.

These crime statistics could also be read to underscore the importance of stable and dependable public safety services, including both police and fire. Beech Grove's public safety departments have enjoyed relative stability and have not experienced the turbulence that have burdened the Indianapolis and Marion County police departments over the past several years. It is noted that Beech Grove spends more than 100% of its property tax revenues on police and fire services.

Code Enforcement

One of the central issues of redevelopment in any urban community is the issue of urban blight,

including strategies to deal with blighting influences. Urban blight occurs as a direct result of inadequate maintenance, or through inappropriate activities, on private (or public) property. It could be reasonably argued that the central task confronting the BGRC is to control and eliminate urban blight in Beech Grove.

While some scholars and public policy experts might argue over issues of quantification, most experts agree that urban blight is more a matter of ‘incremental creep’ than of vast, precipitous events. In this case, the term ‘incremental creep’ simply means the result of many small actions or inactions that accumulate to cause urban blight. The book, *Fixing Broken Windows* (Kelling & Coles, 1996), presents the proposition that one of the most valuable activities that municipal government can employ to combat urban blight and escalating crime is to ‘fix broken windows’ rather than allow them to remind the neighborhood that the owner is neglectful. If the broken windows, or graffiti, are allowed to remain, the neighborhood suffers decline and an increase in crime often follows. If those same broken windows are repaired, and the graffiti removed quickly, the neighborhood is reminded that neglect is not prevalent.

For purposes of this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan, the BGRC intends to base its policies regarding prevention or elimination of urban blight on the premises promoted in *Fixing Broken Windows*. The BGRC’s operative premise is that the presence of broken windows and graffiti emboldens certain individuals who might be tempted to commit crimes, but who would be reluctant to do so if they thought that the community was vigilant. As such, the presence of a broken window, often leads to a second broken window, which leads to an abandoned/stripped car, which leads to incidents of graffiti, which leads to incidents of arson, and so forth. To combat these influences, the City of Beech Grove will lead the effort to prevent, reconcile and eliminate these blighting influences in Beech Grove’s neighborhoods.

The table below presents the results of an effort cooperatively engaged by the City’s Public Works staff, with the assistance of the Fire Department and other city agencies. This data shows the “Fixing Broken Windows Performance” of the efforts of the city since 2005, as reported by the Fire Department in its monthly reports to the City Council.

‘Fixing Broken Windows’ Performance: Beech Grove (2005-2007)

MCBH Inspections													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	total
2007	21	25	31	31									108
2006	13	25	55	38	22	22	28	24	19	25	17	13	301
2005	7	23	51	57	47	28	31	40	30	15	11	7	347

MCBH Work Orders Issued													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
2007	37	39	29	41									146
2006	43	28	63	44	57	85	56	62	68	43	29	27	605
2005	0	0	124	86	33	58	89	46	48	28	23	20	555

Abandoned Vehicles Tagged												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2007	14	16	15	18								63
2006	16	22	41	25	15	18	35	18	16	17	11	11
2005						40	43	40	38	22	16	8
												207

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH INSPECTIONS

The "Fixing Broken Windows Performance" table shows that, since 2005, there has been a 14% decline in the number of MCBH inspections into reported/alleged code violations between 2005 and 2006. Assuming that the final results for year 2007 continue to reflect a decline, the report data suggests that the anti-blight premises of 'fixing broken windows' would appear to prove true. The data shows that the decline in number of inspections as the city pursues active enforcement of health code violations, is reflected in the fact that owners begin to address those issues before a citation is issued. While it should not be assumed that the MCBH inspections would ever decline to 0, the fact that there appears to be a decline in the necessity for health inspections suggests that property owners are taking their responsibilities more seriously, and that blighting influences are declining.

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH: WORK ORDERS ISSUED

When the Board of Health issues a work order to correct a public health problem, the city of Beech Grove generally enforces the order, either through the street department or the sanitation department. The data from the table above shows the trends which would be expected when one considers the time necessary to obtain a work order. Note that no work orders were issued in January or February, 2005, and then the backlog was dislodged in the spring of 2005 with 210 work orders issued in the next 2 months. The year 2006 showed a 10% increase in the number of work orders issued annually, yet the early results from 2007 show that the property owners are, again, beginning to respond to the increased recognition of the city's intent to enforce the codes and are beginning to address the problems without need of an order.

This statistic also indicates that the actions of the city agencies are causing people to increase their vigilance in 'fixing' the incremental blighting influences that occur as a result of owner negligence, apathy or frustration. Assuming constant vigilance by the city and private individuals, when the statistic of work orders begins to consistently decline, there is evidence that the number and severity of blighting influences is also declining in the community as a whole. This is excellent news, and is consistent with other indicators of community pride.

The statistics reflected in 'MCBH work orders issued' demonstrates the vigilance of the city of Beech Grove in removing, reducing, and eliminating blighting influences in Beech Grove. Continue vigilance in this effort will contribute heavily to improved individual property values and reduced crime throughout the community.

ABANDONED VEHICLES TAGGED

It is important to understand the process by which abandoned vehicles are tagged for removal, in order to more fully comprehend the impact of this statistic on urban blight. The process is as follows:

- begins with the report of an abandoned vehicle and its location;
- the city then notifies the property owner of the violation and requests the vehicle removed;
- after a statutory waiting period, the vehicle is tagged for removal by city authorities;
- the property owner is responsible for the cost of vehicle removal and enforcement.

The data regarding abandoned vehicles from the table above also shows some predictable patterns related to the principles of ‘fixing broken windows.’ However, in the case of abandoned cars, there is an interesting twist. Clearly, the sight of an abandoned car is a signal that someone has neglected their responsibility to the neighborhood. The worst case occurs when the car sits abandoned for an extended period and is subsequently stripped and left as glaring evidence that the neighborhood is insensitive to crime. These things are not happening in Beech Grove.

The data reported to the City Council for 2005 and 2006 shows that there was an 18% increase in the number of abandoned vehicles tagged between 2005 and 2006. During these early periods of code enforcement, it is common for property owners to be unaware that the city is serious about eliminating these blighting influences, and it takes time for the property owners to become educated to their responsibilities and the potential penalties associated with the neglect. As the property owners are educated, they become aware of the penalties and increasingly address the problem without municipal action.

The ‘fixing broken windows’ performance data, shown in the table above, indicates that Beech Grove has a slight delay in getting started with policies regarding removal of abandoned vehicles (beginning in June, 2005), but once that effort was initiated, there was substantial vigilance through the remainder of 2005 and all of 2006. The data suggests that the bulk of the ‘inventory’ of abandoned vehicles was cleared in July, 2006, and since that time the number of vehicles tagged for removal has dropped substantially.

Every month in 2007, the number of vehicles tagged has been lower than the corresponding month in 2006, which suggests a declining trend in this blighting influence.

Perhaps equally interesting, however, is that city officials report that in 2007 for every vehicle tagged, there are 4-5 warnings issued. *This means that 75%-80% of the number of abandoned vehicles is being addressed by the violator before municipal action is required.*

*City of Beech Grove
Marion County, Indiana*

*Final
Redevelopment
Plan & Strategy*

Amtrak/Conrail Redevelopment Area

May 9, 2000

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Redevelopment Plan Overview

This redevelopment planning effort was undertaken by the City of Beech Grove in direct response to the community's need for new economic growth and the generation of a strong tax base. This motivation is common among well-managed cities. Since the fiscal basis of Indiana's cities is property tax assessment, each city must remain vigilant in protecting its existing core of investment and trying to augment that economic core with new development. This is particularly difficult for communities under Unigov. Cities such as Beech Grove cannot easily add new territory through annexation, therefore, they must optimize development within their corporate limits. If the city fails to generate new development, property tax rates must increase in order to maintain service levels.

New Development Options Are Limited

Beech Grove is like any other city in Indiana. In order for the city to be economically strong, it must achieve growth in its tax base. In most other Indiana cities, however, that growth can be achieved through development of new land on the outskirts of town. Since Beech Grove is a Unigov city, such development through annexation is terribly complicated. Consequently, the primary method for achieving economic growth among Unigov cities is the redevelopment of existing land (with appropriate zoning) within their corporate limits. Consequently, the search for new economic development begins with a review of parcels with specific zoning characteristics which permit intense development.

The development of local policies with regard to the recruitment of new business and industry has been a common theme in Indiana for at least two decades. The problem in the Unigov cities is that these policies are complicated to develop and implement.

Amtrak Actions Exacerbate the Problem

The need for development and redevelopment was further amplified in Beech Grove when federal (congressional) actions removed the Amtrak facility from the property tax rolls of the community. The financial impact of this decision was significant, and the fiscal impact was felt most severely on the budgets of the City of Beech Grove and the Beech Grove school system. To have such a large industrial operation removed from the municipal tax roles exacerbated a fiscal situation which was already difficult. Although this federal action was not the primary motivator for the City to pursue economic development, it certainly made the need more urgent. By making the Amtrak facility tax exempt, the impact on local municipal budgets had an economic impact on the community which was actually worse than closing the facility. Amtrak is a regional employer – only a small portion of the workers actually live in Beech Grove, therefore, the direct employment impact was minimal. However, if the facility had remained taxable and had simply closed, the corporation would still have to pay a portion of their property taxes. The tax-exempt declaration, therefore, had a far greater fiscal impact on the municipality than a closure. Major industrial closures have affected other cities over the years. Beech

Grove's situation was even more difficult.

The City was powerless to stop the Congressional action, despite the fact that Congress was essentially creating a Constitutional anomaly – a tax-exempt, for-profit corporation. The only alternative which the City could pursue to offset this loss was to step up its economic development efforts -- even though Unigov constrained those efforts. The City then reviewed its development patterns to determine whether adjacent industrial land could be developed or redeveloped to restore local tax base.

Identification of Areas With Appropriate Zoning

The area with the greatest industrial developmental potential is anchored by the Amtrak operation. This area contains the primary industrial core of the community, as clearly shown on the zoning map. Several parcels in the area are essentially undeveloped, and other parcels require redevelopment due to previously abandoned industrial operations. The parcel near the Amtrak yards holds a site of over 100 acres which is zoned I-4, for heavy industrial development yet has no productive occupancy. Another site previously held an operation called "Refined Metals" which has been abandoned. It is possible that environmental issues exist within these areas, however, in order to preserve the economic vitality of the community, the City must identify the areas and the problems and then begin to develop a strategy to deal with the relevant issues.

In order to objectively assess the prospects for achieving economic development at these locations, the City sought to initiate a planning process which would provide research information for the purpose of leading toward encouragement of the economic development/redevelopment of the parcels in this area.

New Statutory Authority

The 1999 Indiana Legislature amended the state statute governing the creation of Economic Development and Redevelopment Areas especially as it relates to Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Previously, the statute had created two sets of requirements for the creation of such economic incentives: one for areas outside of Marion County and another for areas inside of the old corporate limits of Indianapolis. Under this statutory arrangement, the incorporated cities outside of Indianapolis, but inside of Marion County, (Beech Grove, Lawrence, Speedway, etc.) were excluded from access to the statute and its accompanying economic development tools and incentives. In 1999, the General Assembly corrected this legislative oversight, allowing the City of Beech Grove to utilize these legislative tools. This Redevelopment Plan is therefore intended to be one of the first to be created under the new contents of IC36-7-14-15.

The Need for Redevelopment

For a combination of reasons, as presented above, the City commissioned a series of economic

studies to determine the best means of achieving economic growth. As part of that effort, the City actively advocated with Amtrak's national leadership to secure new jobs at the Beech Grove facility. While these new jobs had minimal fiscal impact on the City, this advocacy sent a clear message to Amtrak's leadership that the City wanted the facility to remain open and productive.

In addition, the City initiated an aggressive program to promote economic development within the current corporate boundaries. This included a thorough review of parcels possessing zoning which was appropriate to intense development activity. The area surrounding the Amtrak facility was found to retain I-4S zoning, which is among the most intense categories in Marion County. Virtually all of the land within the corporate limits of Beech Grove is already developed, which makes such an effort somewhat problematic. With the vast bulk of all real estate already developed, the opportunity to generate new development is constrained. The choices are limited. Economic development must take place where it has already been designated. Therefore, the owners of designated parcels must be made aware of the needs of the community.

Through this effort, the area capable of the greatest industrial redevelopment was found to be located in the vicinity of the Amtrak yard. The parcels in this area are zoned for heavy industrial development, yet much of the land remains either undeveloped or in need of active redevelopment at this time. Several of these parcels have been appropriately zoned for many years, but they have either never been developed, or are under-developed in accordance with their identified best use. The potential assessed value which could be generated through full development of these areas would be a significant fiscal benefit to the community.

Definition of the Study Area

The planning process for this project included the investigation of those areas where industrial development would be permitted by zoning, as well as the areas where industrial development would not be intrusive to the existing development patterns. Due to the economic, developmental and statutory characteristics of the situation, it was recommended that the City pursue designation of a redevelopment area in this case. It would appear, given the developmental history of the area, that eminent domain action may become the final alternative to achieve economic growth in one or more of the designated parcels. On that basis, the consultant recommends that the City of Beech Grove consider the following report as pertaining to the area hereafter defined as the Amtrak Conrail Redevelopment Area.

AMTRAK CONRAIL AREA:

The area defined as the "Amtrak Conrail Area" for purposes of this report shall be defined as having the following boundaries:

Beginning at the point of intersection of the southwest right of way line of Garstang Avenue and the east right of way line of Emerson Avenue, thence proceeding west to the west right of way line of Emerson Avenue,

Then proceeding north along the west right of way line of Emerson Avenue to the point of intersection with the northern corporate boundary of the City of Beech Grove,

Then proceeding southeasterly along the northeastern corporate boundary of the City of Beech Grove to the point of intersection with the west right of way line of Arlington Avenue,

Then proceeding south along the west right of way line of Arlington Avenue to the point of intersection with the south right of way line of Big Four Road,

Then proceeding northwestward and westward along the south right of way line of Big Four Road to the point of intersection with the southwest right of way line of Garstang Avenue,

Then proceeding westward along an alignment following to utility easement (which aligns with Churchman Avenue extended) to the point of intersection with the north right of way line of Churchman Avenue,

Then proceeding westward to the point of intersection with the west right of way line of Schaff Street,

Then proceeding north along the west right of way line of Schaff Avenue to the point of intersection with the southwest right of way line of Garstang Avenue,

Then proceeding northwest along the southwest right of way line of Garstang Avenue to the point of beginning.

The area described by the boundaries above contains several dominant parcels which have varying levels of development. The table below is offered only as a summary table, identifying the most prominent parcels in the Amtrak/Conrail Area and the conditions found in this study.

Site	blight finding
Amtrak Yard	#2, #3, #4, #5
Conrail site (undeveloped)	#1, #2, #3, #4
Refined Metals	#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6
Gas Company	no blight findings
McCurdy Materials	no blight findings
Shelby Materials	no blight findings

The area described above contains those parcels which were determined to meet the statutory definition of blight, as well as some other parcels which were contiguous to the blighted parcels. Some of the parcels contained in the area prescribed are not to be considered blighted, but are included as part of the overall redevelopment of the area in order to integrate the infrastructure systems of the redevelopment area.

Conformity with Other Plans

Background

Beech Grove does not have a city plan commission to govern its development and set development policy. Instead, development in Beech Grove is governed by the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County (MDC) which is staffed by the Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD). From that organizational base, the city of Beech Grove also lacks a single, integrated comprehensive plan which can be consulted regarding developmental matters, such as the economic development and redevelopment issues to be considered in this Redevelopment Plan.

Development and land use policy for Beech Grove is set forth in the Marion County Comprehensive Plan, which is composed of a series of plans governing individual geographic areas of Marion County or specific areas which have some physical or social attribute which merits special attention, such as individual corridor plans for major traffic corridors or neighborhood plans for various urban neighborhoods.

Although the Emerson Avenue corridor is a primary county thoroughfare, no corridor plan has ever been developed to address Emerson Avenue development issues, nor has a specific plan ever been developed for the incorporated city of Beech Grove, as a neighborhood. This lack of a singular planning study for the city of Beech Grove contributes to an overall sense of developmental confusion on the part of the community, which becomes important when attempting to address developmental problems.

The portion of the Marion County Comprehensive Plan which covers Beech Grove is actually contained in at least 4 separate planning sub-documents. These planning sub-documents consist of the individual township plans for Center Township, Perry Township, Warren Township and Franklin Township. Copies of these plans are available from DMD on the 18th floor of the City-County Building, however, the Center Township Plan has not been updated recently and is not available in print form. The summary of relevant portions of these township plans is presented below.

Franklin Township Plan Summary

The following summary attempts to select and relate all information relevant to Beech Grove from the Franklin Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan dated November 6, 1991, as distributed by DMD. (Comments regarding the relevance of certain information to Beech Grove are offered in parentheses.)

GENERAL

Franklin Township has a higher percentage of land available for development than any other township in Marion County (although not within Beech Grove). Some other notable planning-related features in Franklin Township are the presence of Buck Creek in the east, large agricultural tracts throughout the township, and three interstates: I-74, I-465, and I-65. (All interstate corridors are proximal to Beech Grove, either through direct or secondary access.)

Detailed data on population, land use, zoning, transportation, schools, utilities, and other township characteristics are included in the *Franklin Township Planning Study Data Inventory*.

The Franklin Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan is comprised of the narrative report, it's accompanying Franklin Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map, and the Official Thoroughfare Plan for Marion County.

Between 1980 and 1990, the population increased by 30%, a rate second only to Pike Township in Marion County. (Most of the increase occurred outside of Beech Grove.)

According to the 1980 Census, Franklin Township averaged 3.12 persons per household, the largest household size in Marion County. More people per household generally means more school-age children per household.

The Plan recommends policies that (1) prevent fast-developing suburban areas from overburdening school, roadway, sewer, and water systems, and (2) lower development costs in rural areas by encouraging them to develop after such systems are in place. (These policies, however, are noteworthy as being somewhat conflicting with the development environment of the City of Beech Grove, and therefore, somewhat contradictory to the interests of the City.)

Much of the commercial development in the township is along Emerson Avenue, north of Shelbyville Road (which is also the vicinity of the South Emerson Redevelopment Area).

Nearly all industrial development is within Beech Grove in the northwest corner of Franklin Township. (Which is also the vicinity of the Amtrak/Conrail Area.)

Development pressure is mounting in the western section of the township, including areas such as Emerson Avenue and the planned I-65 interchange at the Johnson County Line. (This interchange is south of Beech Grove, and the Emerson Avenue corridor is a direct interest of this planning effort.) The Comprehensive Plan recommends land uses appropriate to these areas. Also, six of the plan's "critical areas" are in the Beech Grove area, indicating that the boundary lines for recommended land use should be interpreted as definitive and fixed.

Except in rapidly growing areas in the west, (along Emerson Avenue) the township's roadway and sewer system capacities are underutilized. (This could have a potential impact on the Beech Grove infrastructure services.)

The only arterial road projected to be at or near capacity by the year 2005 is Emerson Avenue (which links the two areas under study) and the section of South County Line Road between Emerson Avenue and Arlington Avenue.

Development of land for commercial and industrial use between 1972 and 1988 was minimal except in the Beech Grove area near the I-465 interchange at Emerson Avenue. (This means that Beech Grove is acknowledged as being the primary site for industrial development in the Township.)

The 1984 Comprehensive Plan did not recommend that industrial uses locate adjacent to the township's three interstate interchanges. Rather, the plan recommended that industrial development take place on land adjacent to railroad lines, much of which remain undeveloped. (This is precisely the recommendation of the City with regard to the Amtrak Conrail Area.)

Between 1972 and 1988, heavy industrial was the only land use that did not increase in acreage. (Again, the Amtrak/Conrail Area contains land that could contribute to this form of development.)

As the number of school-age children grows, limited tax revenue from commercial or industrial development may result in higher residential property taxes to support the public school system. (As noted, the impact of this type of development is recommended within the City of Beech Grove.)

The plan recommends commercial and industrial uses near interstate interchanges and arterial roads. (Specifically, the two areas under consideration in this Plan.)

TOWNSHIP PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS

During the Franklin Township Comprehensive Plan revision process, the Franklin Township Planning Committee identified the following goals (which more or less demonstrate the lack of attention given to Beech Grove in this plan.)

1. Increase the rate and amount of commercial and industrial development relative to residential development. (This goal is the specific preference of this Plan.)
2. Regulate development in order to enable the transportation, sewer, and water service systems to meet future demands;
3. Allow the park system to meet future recreational needs;
4. As much as possible, enable the (township) school system to keep pace with the growing school-age population. (Beech Grove schools can handle new industrial growth.)
5. As much as possible, help (township) police and fire services maintain acceptable public safety standards among a growing population; (Beech Grove has separate police and fire protection) and

6. As much as possible, provide for an orderly transition from agricultural land uses (in the township) to suburban land uses (in the township) by recommending Very Low Density Residential development in the more rural areas of the township. (Beech Grove is already urban.)

THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The Thoroughfare Plan recommends the following priority improvements:

1. Two-lane connector of Troy Avenue from Emerson Avenue to Ritter Avenue, with implementation recommended between the year 2002 and 2005. (Priority D.) (This recommendation was removed from the Thoroughfare Plan in 1998.)
2. Two-lane connector of Hanna Avenue to Churchman Avenue, with implementation recommended between 2002 and 2005 (Priority D) (also formally removed from the Thoroughfare Plan.)

STAGES OF GROWTH

The Franklin Township Comprehensive Plan identifies areas of the township being in Development Stages 5, 6, and 7.

Stage 5 (Established Suburban Area)

Stage 5 development constitutes less than one square mile in the northwest corner of the Franklin Township (the City of Beech Grove). The eastern and southern boundaries of Stage 5 are the old railroad yards and shops now used by Amtrak. Non-industrial development in and around Stage 5 should be buffered from the visual impact and noise of the railroad yards and other associated industrial uses.

Stage 6 (Developing Suburban Area)

Undeveloped transitional areas are at critical junctures because of development pressure from commercial land uses. This is especially true along Emerson Avenue, where residential land will experience pressure for commercial development from both north and south. Because of the development pressure in Stage 6, the boundary lines for recommended land uses—particularly in critical areas—should be interpreted as definitive and fixed. Over half of the designated critical areas are in Stage 6.

Development should be sensitive to the environment and to nearly existing development. Open space should be preserved wherever a large or intensive development is proposed, such as industrial development along I-65 and I-465, or office development adjacent to Emerson Avenue and Arlington Avenue. Careful site design and planning, as well as provision of public facilities, should accompany new development.

CRITICAL AREAS

The Plan indicates that, "It is essential to the Franklin Township Comprehensive Plan that these "critical areas" to be developed as recommended. This list of critical areas can only be expanded by official adoption of a new critical area as a comprehensive plan segment."

Critical Area 2

Land Use Plan Recommendation: Light Industrial (LI)

Stage of Development (6 – Developing Suburban Area)

Why Critical: A Thoroughfare Plan roadway connector is planned to extend Hanna Avenue from Emerson Avenue on the west to Churchman Avenue on the east. With Heavy Industrial recommended on the north, east and south of the site, the existing residential land is recommended for industrial use in the future. (This "critical area" was later negated by omitting the proposed road project.)

Critical Area 4

Strip commercial development is characterized by uses that increase traffic volumes, build on shallow lots without proper design for traffic flow, require multiple entrances and exits for each commercial use, and create additional traffic congestion. (This is the key problem in the South Emerson area.)

Commercial development should not occur in this area because adequate acreage is recommended for future commercial use at more appropriate locations on Emerson Avenue. Much commercial land is recommended at or near the designated Community Shopping Centers at both the Emerson Avenue/Thompson Road intersection (281 acres) and the Emerson Avenue/Southport Road intersection (289 acres). Locations at these intersections of arterial roadways and/or near interstate interchanges are more appropriate for commercial land use than is Critical in Area 4.

Warren Township Plan Summary

GENERAL

The following information is taken from the Warren Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan dated November 4, 1992, as distributed by DMD. (Only a very small portion of Beech Grove is located within Warren Township)

Between 1980 and 1990, the township population decreased by 1.4%, ranking Warren Township's growth rate eighth (out of nine) in Marion County.

TOWNSHIP PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Through the planning process, the Warren Township Planning Committee identified the following goal statements to be reflected in the Warren Township Comprehensive Plan revision:

Concentrate industrial development in and around areas already industrially zoned and infrastructure served, except the southwest portion of the township, where more industry should be encouraged. (This is the portion in/near Beech Grove.)

THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The following projects were recommended as part of the Thoroughfare Plan for the township:

1. Widening of Emerson Avenue from a two-lane primary arterial to a four-lane primary arterial; between Prospect Street and Raymond Street. (Just north of Beech Grove.)
2. Construction of a four-lane primary arterial connector of Prospect Street between Emerson Avenue and Brookville Road (Priority D). Initially this would be constructed as a two-lane roadway until traffic demand warrants four lanes. (Providing secondary interstate access to the Amtrak/Conrail Area.)
3. Construction of a four lane primary arterial connector of Troy Avenue between Emerson Avenue and Ritter Avenue (Priority D). Initially this would be constructed as a two-lane roadway until traffic demand warrants four lanes. (Formally removed from the Thoroughfare Plan in 1998.)

STAGES OF GROWTH

The following comments were offered about the stages of growth in Warren Township. (Relevant to Beech Grove.)

Stage 5 (Established Suburban Area)

The Stage 5 growth area in Warren Township is bounded by Emerson Avenue, Troy Avenue, Ritter Avenue, Raymond Street. (This area contains land within the city of Beech Grove, although the Plan makes no reference thereto.)

CRITICAL AREAS

The following excerpts relate to “critical areas” identified in the Township Plan:

Critical Area 10

Located south of Brookville Road, west of Shadeland Avenue, north of Iona Road (extended), and east of Hunter Road.

Land Use Plan Recommendation: Light Industrial and Very Low Density Residential

(In the vicinity of Beech Grove, but not directly related.)

Critical Area 11

Land Use Plan Recommendation: Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, Low Density Residential, and Very Low Density Residential

Right of way for the planned Emerson Avenue and Brookville Road widening also should be preserved.

Critical Area Recommendations:

1. Obtain by dedication Prospect Street, Emerson Avenue, and Brookville Road right-of-ways.
2. When Prospect Street is constructed, it will provide a good boundary between residential uses to the south and industrial uses to the north.

Critical Area Additional Data

1. Transportation – Prospect Street is a proposed primary arterial. It is identified in the Thoroughfare Plan as a priority improvement as a four-lane connector to be initially constructed as a two lane facility.
2. Other streets in the critical area which are identified as priority improvements include: Emerson Avenue (widening from two lanes to four lanes), and Brookville Road (widening from two lanes to four lanes).

Critical Area 12

Land Use Plan Recommendation: Light Industrial, Low Density Residential, and Neighborhood Shopping Center

Recommendations: Require industrial truck and auto traffic from I-74 and I-465 to access the area via Southeastern Avenue. Require industrial traffic and auto traffic to access the western portion of the area from Arlington Avenue. (Affects northeast portion of Beech Grove and Amtrak/Conrail Area.)

Redevelopment Plan Intent

This Redevelopment Plan is primarily intended to help the City develop a strategic economic policy environment which can generate economic growth to replace the revenue lost through the federal action at Amtrak. In pursuit of this goal, the city of Beech Grove conducted preliminary investigations to determine those areas which have the greatest potential for renewing economic growth. These studies focused primarily on land which was undeveloped or minimally developed and which had commercial or industrial zoning. Commercial and industrial development generates the most minimal impact on school services and the greatest net revenue impact on the taxing units of the area.

It was found that virtually all of the land within the corporate limits of Beech Grove is already developed, which made the effort somewhat problematic. However, there were two areas identified which appeared to have the potential to generate substantial net gains in NAV: the Amtrak/Conrail Area (located around the rail yards), and the South Emerson Area (located west of Emerson Avenue, immediately south of I-465).

By seeking undeveloped land which is already zoned for industrial growth, the effort to replace lost tax base would not substantially alter the overall land use composition of the community. However, it must be understood that the amount of undeveloped land within the city limits is minimal, regardless of zoning, and the opportunities to create new tax base are, therefore, minimal. The two areas identified appear to have, by far, the greatest chance of generating a net increase in the NAV of the city of Beech Grove. By way of comparison, Net Assessed Values (NAV's) for adjacent parcels with similar zoning ranges from \$100,000 to \$200,000 per acre.

Preliminary Recommendations

This planning effort was undertaken to examine the developmental issues and relationships of the Amtrak/Conrail Area. Research was performed regarding the area with regard to developmental characteristics, future planning, infrastructure service to the parcels/area, and other developmental issues. In addition, statutory research was undertaken to determine which specific courses of action would lead toward the economic development solution which would generate the most substantial impact on the NAV of Beech Grove.

This research information was then used to generate preliminary recommendations with regard to the type of planning which should be undertaken in each of the two areas. The research suggests that the City has the option of creating either an Economic Development Area (EDArea) or a Redevelopment Area (RDArea) as the first step in encouraging the economic development necessary to increase the community's NAV. Either of these alternatives would avail the City of approximately the same set of economic development incentives. Creation of an RDA, however, is slightly more difficult to accomplish, in practical terms.

Creating A Redevelopment Area

The primary difference between the establishment of an EDArea and an RDArea relates to the power of eminent domain. Under the law, eminent domain affords a municipality the right to acquire property (with just compensation) for a public purpose. All incorporated cities possess the power of eminent domain, if the property is acquired for use as a public facility, such as a town hall, road, sewage plant, and so forth. In cases where an RDArea has been established, however, the City is effectively empowered to acquire land through eminent domain for economic development purposes. In such cases, the land can be acquired by the City/Redevelopment Commission and then transferred through a public process to a private developer for the purposes of redevelopment to generate new NAV. In order to create an RDArea, however, the area must exhibit statutory characteristics of “blight.” The narrative below will provide detailed preliminary information regarding the extent to which these two areas meet the statutory definition of “blight.”

Based on our review and information developed thus far, Wabash Scientific, inc., recommends the creation of a Redevelopment Area. The primary reason for recommending an RDA is that it may be necessary, if all other efforts fail, to exercise the power of eminent domain in order to bring economic development to the property.

Statutory Context of a Redevelopment Plan

This Redevelopment Plan (RDPlan) is undertaken to address the specific needs for economic development within the City of Beech Grove. This information is then to be offered to the community for consideration and public discussion, with the final decision as to the course of action left to the Beech Grove City Council and the Metropolitan Development Commission. The area is described as follows:

1. The Amtrak/Conrail Area consisting primarily of an area located east of Emerson Avenue and adjacent to the Beech Grove Main Street Area, south of the city limits, west of Arlington Avenue, and north of Big Four and Garstang. The economic development potential of the area is centered around the heavy industrial sites and the Emerson Avenue frontage.

It is noted that the Comprehensive Plan for Marion County, as executed by the Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD), did not approach development issues with specific regard to Beech Grove as an incorporated city. Instead, the Comprehensive Plan relates to Beech Grove as a part of four separate townships, and any direct reference to Beech Grove was incidental to the issues dominating the township. As a result, there is not a lot of specific developmental policy-making contained in the Comprehensive Plan with respect to Beech Grove. This is unfortunate and somewhat misguided with regard to public policy. The city of Beech Grove is an important urban area, yet the comprehensive plan treats it as if it were some form of developmental aberration. Beech Grove needs a comprehensive plan.

Within the Redevelopment Area (RDArea) there are certain blighting influences which have already taken place and which will be discussed below. The purpose of this Redevelopment Plan (RDPlan) is to identify the blighting influences and set forth a general strategy for correcting these blighting influences which can be updated periodically as opportunities become available.

By establishing a Redevelopment Area, the City can implement strategies on several levels in cooperation with other organizations in order to achieve the benefit of economic development in this area.

Establishing the Statutory Parameters of the Project

Indiana law (IC36-7-15.1-8) sets forth the terms and conditions under which a Redevelopment Area can be established. The three tests are:

1. IC36-7-14-15(a) Whenever the redevelopment commission finds that an area...has become blighted, deteriorated or deteriorating to an extent that cannot be corrected by regulatory processes or by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without resort to this chapter, and
2. that the public health and welfare will be benefitted by the acquisition and redevelopment of the area....
3. The commission shall cause to be prepared a redevelopment or urban renewal plan.

The discussion which follows represents a review of the conditions within the proposed Redevelopment Areas and the extent to which they meet, or fail to meet, the statutory tests cited above.

Obviously, each of the three tests cited in IC36-7-15.1 are rooted in the determination that an area is "blighted." Therefore, it is also necessary to establish a statutory definition of "blight" and then determine whether the details of the Plan project and its strategy meet the specific terms of the definition. IC36-7-1-3 cites eight criteria for determining a "Blighted Area," as follows:

1. Lack of development;
2. Cessation of growth;
3. Deterioration of improvements;
4. Character of Occupancy;
5. Age;
6. Obsolescence;
7. Substandard Buildings;
8. Other factors that impair values or prevent a normal use or development of property.

Based on this section of the statute, the two proposed redevelopment areas retain many of the statutory attributes of "blight." It is important to note, however, that Indiana statute uses a flexible definition of "blight" which does not suggest that an area must be a slum area in order to qualify for designation. In short, a substantial amount of the land in the area remains undeveloped, it has experienced a cessation of growth, some of the existing facilities are obsolete in relation to newer development in adjacent areas, some of the existing developments apparently cannot function competitively in the modern marketplace, and some of the buildings do not meet current development standards. A detailed explanation of these considerations is set forth below. Please note that although the blighting influences cited above appear as separate arguments, they are, in fact, interwoven, therefore, the blight findings discussed below will contain some redundancy of data, information and conclusions, from one blight finding to another.

FINDING OF FACT #1: LACK OF DEVELOPMENT

This finding appears to be obvious, especially for parcels in the north end of the RD Area. The city of Beech Grove has been incorporated for almost a century and is effectively landlocked due

to the Unigov statute. The RDArea is located along one of the highest traffic thoroughfares (Emerson Avenue) in the County with direct access to the interstate highway system, yet there has been no appreciable improvement to some of these parcels.

In the case of the Amtrak/Conrail Area, the parcels north of Amtrak have been in the ownership of rail companies for nearly a century. These same rail companies have actively participated in promoting economic development throughout the State of Indiana, and have actively marketed thousands of acres of land for industrial development purposes. Furthermore, the Amtrak/Conrail RDArea retains a significant amount of heavy industrial zoning, which is very rare in Marion County, today. This intense industrial zoning reflects the historical uses of the area, and generates a direct market benefit/opportunity. The fact that the RDArea has so much undeveloped land emphatically meets the definition of blight.

In addition, the area also contains such parcels as the Refined Metals site where the industrial facility has not been in use for some time and which would qualify as being undeveloped for purposes of the industrial use for which the site is zoned.

FINDING OF BLIGHT #2: CESSATION OF GROWTH

The entire redevelopment planning effort is necessitated by the overall cessation of growth within the corporate limits of Beech Grove. The loss of Amtrak property tax revenues was a fiscal hardship on the City and the schools, however, the community continues to need economic growth in order to keep tax rates reasonable. In order to overcome these hardships, the City is seeking to generate new economic development (growth). The lack of developmental attention to the City of Beech Grove is demonstrated by the lack of attention paid to the City in the Comprehensive Plan, which is the document primarily responsible for stating the developmental policies of the community.

“Cessation of growth” and “lack of development” are intertwined issues in this case. Since Beech Grove is located adjacent to the City of Indianapolis, the urban/suburban situation is not the same as a rural community located 10-20 miles from the next economic center. Considering the economic environment, any suitable land which is not developed essentially also represents a cessation of growth. Such is the developmental nature of a city within the bounds of Unigov.

Thus, the fact that many of the parcels within the RDArea are fundamentally undeveloped, when combined with the fact that virtually all of the land within the corporate boundaries of Beech Grove is developed, and in conjunction with the fact that the City is statutorily landlocked, presents a clear finding that the community at large, as well as the individual areas, have ceased to grow. In addition, such sites as Refined Metals (as well as the Amtrak facility) have either ceased operation altogether or have reduced operations significantly from previous levels, thus also meeting the definition of “cessation of growth.” Consequently, the RDArea is judged to meet the strictest statutory definition of blight as related to “cessation of growth.”

FINDING OF BLIGHT #3: DETERIORATION OF IMPROVEMENTS

The third blight finding is also applicable to the RDArea. The term, “improvements” as referred

to herein, could apply to either public sector (infrastructure) or to private improvements. Further, the idea of “deterioration” applies to real estate development in two very real manners. First, there is the traditional definition of “deterioration” which relates to the reduction in quality with the passage of time. Second, and more subtly, however, there is an alternative definition of “deterioration” which relates to the ability of something to meet its intended purpose.

In the case of the Amtrak/Conrail area, it is obvious that the area is distressed. Close examination shows that the distress occurs on a number of levels. First, the Conrail site was previously used for industrial purposes, yet most of those uses have been terminated. As such, the improvements necessary to support the initial industrial activity are no longer present. Even the most cursory professional review of the site suggests that the land has been contoured and re-contoured for some purpose which is no longer clear, and then the site was left abandoned. Site grading is an important improvement which is no longer viable (i.e., deteriorated) at this site.

Second, the infrastructure that once supported the site and its activity is no longer viable. Many of the rail lines that served the site previously have been removed. Public improvements such as sewer and water service to the site are not clearly delineated, nor is it clear that the level of that utility service is sufficient to support the level of activity for which the site is zoned.

Transportation access through direct corridors is also limited, despite the obvious benefits of the RD Area’s location with respect to major thoroughfare corridors. Internal roadways are not developed and have fallen into disrepair, thus further validating the finding that “deterioration of improvements” is present in the Amtrak/Conrail Area.

Third, sites like Refined Metals, which are essentially abandoned industrial facilities, represent precisely the type of blighting conditions which the statute seeks to address. The old facility is physically deteriorated, as well as appearing to be obsolete on a number of levels. It is doubtful whether this old facility would ever be able to function competitively in modern markets, and these findings all meet the statutory definition of blight.

FINDING OF BLIGHT #4: CHARACTER OF OCCUPANCY

Beech Grove’s fiscal condition requires that the City take positive action to generate new growth in NAV. Consequently, the character of the development which is to be promoted is of utmost importance. The City must strike a balance between those types of development which generate the greatest NAV impact and those types of development which would help to ensure the long term viability of the community as a whole.

The Amtrak/Conrail Area represents the oldest and most intense industrial land use in Franklin Township, as noted in the Comprehensive Plan. The areas of eastern Beech Grove (adjacent to the RD Area) are also predominantly industrial; however, they are much newer in development and adhere to more modern development standards. The industries adjacent to the I-465 corridor represent the modern type of industrial development which the city is seeking for the Amtrak/Conrail Area.

Conversely, the Amtrak/Conrail area is dominated by three parcels: the Conrail site (abandoned/undeveloped), the Amtrak site (developed almost a century ago), and Refined Metals (abandoned). None of these three meets the preferred character of the city with regard to new industrial development. The Refined Metals site (being essentially abandoned) is a community eyesore and desperately needs redevelopment. The Conrail site is also an eyesore and would be an ideal location for new industry if certain improvements can be made. Both of these sites could potentially have environmental problems which need to be addressed. Finally, the Amtrak facility has struggled for years to remain economically competitive, and a recent study found that it needed substantial improvements in order to fulfill its full potential. In all three of these cases, the character of the occupancy is an important problem confronted by the parcel, as it relates to the future of the City.

FINDING OF BLIGHT #5: AGE

The blight finding of “age” presents an interesting argument in the presence of other statutory findings such as “obsolescence,” “substandard buildings,” and “deterioration.” The statutory implication is clearly that the chronological age of something is sufficient to find it blighted.

In the case of the Amtrak/Conrail Area, age is clearly an issue. The RDArea was originally developed as a heavy industrial site for the purpose of railroad equipment repair. In fact, the primary developmental stimulus for the entire City of Beech Grove was wrapped around the location of the rail yards. During this original development period, the industrial activity which took place on this site has covered a wide expanse, much of which pre-dates any regulatory activity with regard to environmental issues or standards of safety. The “age” issue can therefore, be manifested in several ways which could be classified as “blighting” issues.

In the case of the Refined Metals site, the age of the facility would appear to be a clear problem. The abandonment of a productive industrial facility is normally a fairly strong indicator of market obsolescence/age, and in this case, the facility has been abandoned long enough that age is an increasingly prominent issue in any potential opportunity to re-start the old plant. When an industrial facility does not receive the benefit of periodic reinvestment, the “age” of that facility becomes a blighting influence.

The Amtrak site is also suffering from “age.” Since the federal government created this corporate anomaly, its fate has been unclear. Amtrak, as a corporation, has been kept afloat financially through huge federal subsidies. At the same time, Congress refers to the legal entity as a “for profit” corporation whose stock is held by the Secretary of Transportation, yet the facility is Congressionally designated as a “tax exempt” facility. Through all of this, the Amtrak yards have undergone severe reorganization as a means of cutting costs, including a substantial reduction of work force. Much of this reduction was ostensibly undertaken due to the “age” of the facilities, suggesting that the processes could be more economically performed elsewhere in the Amtrak system. The Amtrak facilities have been in place for many decades, and since Amtrak was formed, there has been only nominal reinvestment to increase productivity, therefore “age” can be considered a blighting influence.

FINDING OF BLIGHT #6: OBSOLESCENCE

As stated above, the issue of age and obsolescence are interconnected. In the case of the Amtrak yard, the buildings there would be very difficult to re-use for any purpose other than rail equipment repair. Since passenger rail travel is no longer time efficient, and rail is no longer the dominant form of travel in the U. S., such buildings could be considered obsolete the moment that these facilities are not allowed to serve their original purpose. In fact, during the past 10-20 years, even Amtrak, itself, has determined that many of its buildings are obsolete, even for use in their intended purpose, and some of those buildings have been torn down. Others have been the source of considerable argument as to whether they can be restored to productive use. Amtrak has demolished some buildings and re-configured its site for more efficient production, however, the issue of “obsolescence” continues to be an issue. Similarly, Refined Metals would appear to meet the strictest definition of “obsolescence” as an abandoned manufacturing facility. As such, “obsolescence” is clearly a blighting factor in the Amtrak/Conrail area.

FINDING OF BLIGHT #7: SUBSTANDARD BUILDINGS

The applicability of the finding of “substandard buildings” relates most to the Amtrak and Refined Metals facilities. Amtrak buildings have been heavily and repeatedly retrofitted since the early 1900's, however, it is clear that they would probably not meet any use other than the most generic demands of industrial manufacturing due to the highly specific nature of their industrial purpose. The concrete floors appear to be sturdy, as well as the trusses and skeletal structure of the buildings, however, the buildings, themselves would be in need of substantial reconfiguration in order to be viably re-used. For example, the main production buildings at Amtrak have been built with deep “trenches” which are used by workers to work under the rail cars which are being repaired. Similarly, the site is networked with railroad track for the purpose of moving rail cars from one stage of repair to another. Thus, the facilities are essentially single-purpose-dedicated buildings which would not be likely to function efficiently in any other role than rail equipment repair, and they would not be expected to meet modern industrial development standards for any other industrial use. As such, it is suggested that the current buildings at the Amtrak facility would meet the definition of “substandard buildings.”

The argument regarding Refined Metals is similar, but far more pronounced. Refined Metals is effectively abandoned and has no current operations. The buildings are deteriorating and the site is an eyesore. There would appear to be no alternative for achieving redevelopment beyond taking some form of legal action against the owners.

IC36-7-15.1(a)...an area...has become blighted...

Having examined the conditions within the proposed Redevelopment Areas and having determined that those conditions meet the statutory definition of blight, as explained above, this section of the Redevelopment Plan will establish for the record that the areas defined as the proposed Redevelopment Areas meet the statutory tests of a Redevelopment Area.

Redevelopment law in Indiana evolved from federal initiatives for urban renewal. Those federal initiatives were based in the premise that older urban areas were difficult to revitalize because the property was in diverse ownership, and could not be brought into a revitalization program because

the diversity of interests could never be reconciled to a single initiative. By creating a legal vehicle allowing a Redevelopment Commission to acquire land in accordance with an overall strategy for redevelopment of an area, communities would have the opportunity to correct problems which had developed and to revitalize areas which had not remained competitive in the local economy. This general principle forms the basis for the two caveats contained in IC36-7-15.1 (a) *that the (blighting) situation cannot be corrected by (1) the regulatory processes or (2) through the ordinary operations of private enterprise.*

As stated previously, the proposed Redevelopment Area suffers from a number of blighting influences, including a fundamental lack of development. But the smaller forces which have been at work have, in fact, perpetuated the blight process. The fact that the city of Beech Grove has recognized its economic situation and has taken steps to encourage the growth necessary to overcome these economic hardships does not reduce or remove the fact that blighting influences are increasing in the proposed redevelopment area. The Findings of Blight presented above clearly demonstrate that the area is suffering from economic blight and that, despite the City's best efforts of regulatory control, the blighting influences continue. The fact is that the owners of parcels in the proposed redevelopment area have conflicting needs and as a result, the city cannot restore economic growth to the RDArea 'without resort to this chapter.'

...TO AN EXTENT THAT CANNOT BE CORRECTED ...WITHOUT RESORT TO THIS CHAPTER...

The RDArea reflects blighting factors that are beyond the reach of either regulatory processes or the normal operation of private enterprise. The regulatory process has evolved over the years. Current planning, zoning and environmental requirements contain performance parameters which far exceed anything contemplated when the RDArea was developed, especially in the case of the Amtrak/Conrail Area. Consequently, communities must resort to the provisions of the Redevelopment Statute to correct the problems that have evolved from the lack of previous controls over the development and its activity.

The Amtrak/Conrail Area provides a perfect example of this type of problem. The Amtrak Yard was originally developed very early in the 20th century as a private, for-profit, railroad repair facility. Over the years, the facility changed ownership several times, as the result of the "normal operations of private enterprise," which has been extremely unique considering that the railroad business has always had a very unique relationship with government. Government and railroads have always had a relationship which blurred the lines between private enterprise and public subsidy. The reality of this unique relationship became obvious when the federal government formed Amtrak as several major passenger rail operations teetered on the brink of financial collapse. And even while Amtrak drew heavy financial subsidies directly from the government, private rail companies were forced to compete against these same federal subsidies, which effectively used the taxes generated by their private sector profits to compete against them. Thus, it would be unreasonable to expect that "the ordinary operation of private enterprise" would be able to correct the problems associated with an area whose primary original purpose was to serve the railroad industry.

At the same time, a similar lack of ability to compete as a private enterprise led to the current situation at the Refined Metals facility. This facility will could easily require the full spectrum of the statutory provisions of this chapter in order to achieve viable redevelopment of this facility, possibly including acquisition and demolition of the existing facility.

The Conrail site is also a classic example of the need to create the statutory capacity to redevelop these parcels. Conrail has owned this site for an extended period, yet it has not endeavored to develop it. At the same time, Conrail has developed numerous other sites and has actively participated in the economic development efforts of the state of Indiana, in partnership with other communities. Beech Grove has directly discussed the issue of economic development with Conrail officials several times, but the company simply seems to lack direct interest in any activity, whatsoever, and offers no genuine explanation as to why. Therefore, the Conrail site explicitly meets the statutory test, as presented above.

For these reasons, it is clear that “the ordinary operation of private enterprise” will not help to reconcile the blighting influences which beset the RDArea. The area was almost unilaterally developed as a heavy industrial area committed to railroad and railroad services. The Amtrak facility is now being forced to compete in the open market, which could either prove beneficial or fatal to its financial interests. Regardless of that, as a precursor to that entry to the unsubsidized market, the federal government heaped upon Beech Grove the ultimate in regulatory contradictions – it forced the city to treat Amtrak as a tax exempt entity while officially declaring the corporation a private, for-profit corporation. As such, there has never been such a definitive and conclusive official statement that the conditions within an area “cannot be corrected by regulatory processes or the ordinary operations of private enterprise without resort to this chapter.”

One thing is clear beyond question – The City of Beech Grove has tried for over a year to generate some interest and initiative on the part of the Owner in developing the Conrail site for its intended (and zoned) purpose. There is a shortage of I-4S zoned land in Marion County. This site not only has the zoning, it has direct access to at least two interstate interchanges, making it one of the most accessible sites in the area, yet the owner has no apparent interest in developing the site. As such, the Amtrak/Conrail Area represents a most unique example of the need for redevelopment, as provided by statute.

...THAT THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE WILL BE BENEFITTED BY THE ACQUISITION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA...

The benefit which could accrue to the community with the creation of a Redevelopment Area is potentially enormous.

The Amtrak/Conrail area is a mess, especially at the Conrail and Refined Metals sites. There has been a substantial amount of pre-regulatory activity (dating back to the turn of the century) at these sites which is not clearly explained or recorded. There have also been findings which have served as the basis for official environmental enforcement actions on some of the property. It is unquestionably clear that the public health and welfare will be benefitted by the redevelopment of

that property for several reasons, including the prospect of cleaning up the site (environmentally), the prospect of developing land which is zoned for industrial activity in an economic environment of industrial growth, and the prospect of removing a community eyesore. All of these considerations clearly indicate that the “public health and welfare will be benefitted by the acquisition and redevelopment of the area.”

...THE BLIGHTED AREA IS A MENACE TO THE...ECONOMIC INTEREST OF THE (CITY) AND...IT WILL BE OF PUBLIC UTILITY AND BENEFIT TO ACQUIRE AND REDEVELOP (THE AREA)....

The arguments presented above clearly show that this statutory provision applies directly to the proposed RDArea.

The Amtrak/Conrail Area has a substantial amount of land which carries environmental questions, as well as substantial aesthetic problems. The aesthetic problems are predictable, considering the operative history of the area and the individual parcels, but they are nonetheless real. The environmental and aesthetic problems are a “menace” to the economic interests of the city. As a result, the redevelopment of the area would be of direct and indisputable public utility.

The term “menace” is acknowledged to be legislatively rhetorical. The current conditions of the RDArea is clearly not in the best interests of the municipality or the public at large. As such, these conditions serve to jeopardize the competitive position of the City of Beech Grove with respect to future development, and unless the City can compete effectively for new development, its taxpayers are effectively doomed to an environment of rising property taxes and declining property values. The prospect of rising property tax rates is, in fact, an economic “menace” to the community. As stated earlier in this Plan, the statute is flexible enough to foresee that an area need not have become a crime-ridden urban slum in order to apply the provisions of the Redevelopment Statute. In this case, Beech Grove is simply seeking to remedy its difficult economic conditions, which have amplified the need for new development in a constricted location.

At this time, the proposed redevelopment areas contain a large portion of the city’s older industrial development. It is common for industrial and commercial development to carry a large share of the assessed value for the community and that assessed value is the basis for dominant municipal revenue streams. Therefore, if the proposed redevelopment areas are allowed to remain undeveloped, the city and the school system will have to raise its revenues from a stagnant property tax base, thereby creating an economic menace by placing a higher tax burden on the rest of the populace. It is clearly in the best economic interests of the City to proceed with development of these areas in accordance with current zoning.

Therefore, these findings clearly show the existence of blighting influences and it will be a public benefit for the community to create a Redevelopment Area in order to use redevelopment tools to combat the blighting influences and restore economic growth to the local economy.

Conclusions Regarding Findings of Blight

The findings presented above offer conclusive arguments regarding the existence of blighting influences as defined in the statute. It is important, however, to understand that these findings are not offered as subjective and/or negative comments about the proposed Redevelopment Area or any of the individual buildings within the Area. Rather, the findings of blight are offered as an acknowledgment of the conditions which exist in the proposed Redevelopment Area as a precursor to the development of an economic strategy for dealing with the blighting factors and creating local public policy which would restore growth to the economic base of the community. Therefore, the purpose of this discussion is not to criticize, but to point out the importance of identifying these blighting influences before they become so severe that they cannot be overcome by any feasible action of the City.

The “findings of blight” presented above demonstrate that the conditions within the proposed Redevelopment Areas match the statutory definition of blight as promulgated under Indiana law. Of the eight definitions for blight, it has been found by virtue of the arguments presented above, that the conditions within the proposed Redevelopment Areas meet six of those parameters. Without substantial effort on the part of the community, the proposed redevelopment area will likely further deteriorate into dysfunction, or more likely, the area will continue to remain undeveloped, despite the fiscal needs of the community.

The community at large suffers when the property tax base erodes such that revenues for vital services are lost. It is the goal of this Redevelopment Plan to set forth a strategy to overcome these problems.

Based on these considerations, it is clear that the proposed Redevelopment Area meets the statutory definition of blight in accordance with IC36-7-1-3, and that redevelopment of the area will be necessary in order to deal with the circumstances of these blighting influences.

The Redevelopment Strategy

The primary goal of the Redevelopment Strategy is to economically revitalize the city of Beech Grove by restoring the property tax base of the community, and correcting the blighting influences in the proposed redevelopment area. Consequently, several possible redevelopment tools can be provided to encourage redevelopment of the area and bring viable businesses to locate in the proposed redevelopment area. These tools are generally outlined below.

Acquisition of Certain Parcels

By establishing a Redevelopment Area, the City will be empowered to acquire certain parcels of real estate by several methods. In pursuing land acquisition, however, it is important to note that the City Council retains ultimate control over the land acquisition process by controlling the budgetary allocations for land acquisition, as well as any municipal financing necessary to carry out the strategy. Without money, land cannot be purchased. The only manner in which the City can acquire land requires a distinct public process and the scrutiny of public bodies.

It is possible to envision several situations where land acquisition would be appropriate. First, it would be appropriate for the City to consider acquiring land to support overall redevelopment of certain parcels in accordance with their current zoning. The City could consider acquiring land, especially when it is offered for public sale, to enhance the opportunity to develop the area. The City could also acquire land for the purposes of making public improvements to improve the overall function of the area with regard to traffic flow and utility service.

It might also be appropriate to acquire land to eliminate a substandard or obsolete development or other form of environmental hazard. If the demolition of a building would unite other available parcels for possible redevelopment and new construction, the redevelopment strategy will have been productive. Also, if the acquisition of land is implemented for the purposes of initiating environmental cleanup, the Redevelopment Strategy will have directly addressed a threat to the public health and safety of the community.

The Redevelopment Commission must review land acquisition on a case-by-case, parcel by parcel basis, judging each parcel independently. If a parcel is to be acquired, the Redevelopment Plan must use the statutory process to reflect the specific parcel(s) to be acquired and the purpose of the acquisition. In each case of land acquisition, the City Attorney must be intimately involved in the process in order to assure that it is statutorily executed, and the City Council must ultimately approve the action.

Tax Abatement

Please note that Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is not the same as tax abatement. In TIF, the new business still pays the full amount of their tax liability, while in tax abatements, the new business pays a portion/percentage of their property tax liability with that percentage increasing over time.

In order for tax abatement to be offered, the Town would have to pursue an entirely different designation of the area under a different agency of Town government. This Plan does not offer any recommendations regarding tax abatement.

Tax Increment Financing

One of the most important redevelopment tools is the ability to extend Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as a means of supporting redevelopment activity within the area. In TIF, public, tax-exempt financing is offered using new property tax revenues generated by the new NAV as the basis for repayment. In cases where TIF is used, all taxing entities continue to receive their existing allocation of property taxes, but the increase in property taxes generated by the new investment is captured to support the redevelopment project.

As a theoretical example of TIF, suppose that a new business were to come into the proposed Redevelopment Area and invest an amount sufficient to increase the net assessed value of the area by \$10 million. If the overall, combined tax rate for that location were \$10 per \$100 for this investor, this new investment would generate increased property taxes in the amount of \$1 million per year. Depending upon the term of the bond and the prevailing interest rate, the community could levy municipal debt based on these new property tax revenues which would be identified as Tax Increment Finance (TIF) revenues.

DECLARATION OF "TIF" ALLOCATION AREA

In order to implement TIF, the City would be required to declare the Redevelopment Area as a tax allocation area under the statute. This designation will require approval actions of the City and the MDC.

DETERMINING THE "BASE ASSESSED VALUE":

When a TIF Allocation Area is established, the County Auditor determines the "Base Assessed Value" of all property within the Allocation Area. This "Base Assessed Value" is established as the fiscal baseline for the Allocation Area. The statutory intent is that the community, including all local taxing entities, continue to receive property tax revenues based on the assessed value as of the origination date of the Allocation Area. This "original" assessed value is called the "Base Assessed Value" or "BAV."

Any additions to the BAV which result from new development then form the potential revenue stream to repay TIF bonds. As cited in the example, above, if new economic development is introduced to the undeveloped parcels, the property tax revenue which results from this new development could be used to pay for infrastructure or other improvements necessary to make the site more functional.

Infrastructure Improvements

One of the primary purposes of establishing a redevelopment area is to create a basis for making necessary improvements to the infrastructure service in the area. This could include

reconfiguration of utilities (such as water, sewer, gas or electrical service), as well as thoroughfare reconfiguration which would increase the safety and/or efficiency of moving traffic into and out of the site.

It is noted that providing public improvements is a normal function of government, therefore, it is appropriate for the City to consider paying for infrastructure improvements in order to facilitate new development. In some cases, the developer will also share these costs, and the City must consider each development proposal in order to determine whether the proposal is worthy of the long term interests of the City.

Possible Amendments to the Redevelopment Area

Indiana statute includes provisions for amending a Redevelopment Area. While there is no current reason for including property outside the boundaries of the proposed Redevelopment Areas within the designated boundaries, it may become prudent at some future date, based upon some future development proposal, to amend the boundaries of the Redevelopment Areas to include or exclude certain property. If and when this happens, the City can consider such proposals on a case by case basis and can amend the boundaries of the Redevelopment Area, with the approval of the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC). Depending upon the size of the property to be added to the amended Redevelopment Area, it may also be necessary to formally amend the Redevelopment Plan in order to comply with statutory requirements.

Recommended Projects

Beech Grove has the authority to implement a broad range of projects in an effort to redevelop the proposed Redevelopment Area. The statutory procedure for project and funding approval assures that any proposed project is considered and approved on several levels before it can be implemented. Therefore, the process for considering and approving any project to be funded as a redevelopment project has a substantial number of public checks and balances.

After following the required procedure, the City has a great deal of authority. The City has the power to acquire and assemble parcels of land under single ownership in order to promote new development. In order to implement such projects, the City must implement the projects which are specified in the Redevelopment Plan. This Redevelopment Plan, therefore, recommends that Beech Grove consider the following projects:

Infrastructure Redevelopment

Improvements may be sought to improve the thoroughfare, water, natural gas, electric power, drainage or sewer service systems to the Redevelopment Area, as well as other infrastructure improvements which would enhance the opportunities to redevelop parcels within the Redevelopment Area. Although there are no specific, detailed, plans for such improvements at this time, considering the various forms of redevelopment activities which may be undertaken, it

is logical to foresee the need for future improvements to these infrastructure systems.

Acquisition & Demolition

The City should also carefully consider acquiring property in an effort to improve industrial activity and to re-direct development within the Redevelopment Area. Within the RDArea there are several vacant parcels which could be redeveloped in a variety of ways within the current zoning and development parameters. Any acquisition must be undertaken with careful compliance to state and federal statutory processes.

The City has the ability to acquire land within the Redevelopment Area. This land can then be reconfigured and sold back into the private marketplace. For example, a parcel can be reconfigured in several different ways, including, but not limited to:

1. The property purchased and re-defined allowing wider rights of way for proposed road improvements. In some cases, such acquisition will facilitate road improvement projects by reducing the difficulty of right of way acquisition.
2. The property purchased and assembled with adjoining properties for redevelopment en masse. This technique was used for retail development projects such as the Circle Centre Mall in downtown Indianapolis.
3. The properties purchased and structures demolished to enable the land use to be changed on a wholesale basis. For example, acquisition and demolition of several parcels to create a permanent office or new industrial development.
4. The property purchased and redeveloped to provide adequate thoroughfares, parking, landscaping and other ancillary requirements of current zoning for industrial land use.

The net result of such redevelopment activities is to generate reinvestment in property within the Redevelopment Area which would allow it to reflect current market realities, and restore the local tax base, as previously explained. In fact, acquisition and demolition may, in some cases, be the only means of enabling a particular site to be redeveloped to meet the demands of the current market. At this time, however, acquisition through eminent domain is only anticipated to be used as a last resort in order to achieve the development goals of the RDArea.

Estimated Cost of the Proposed Projects	
Infrastructure Redevelopment	\$0 to \$2,000,000
Land Acquisition & Demolition (not anticipated at this time)	\$0
<i>Total Estimated Cost of Projects</i>	<i>\$0 to \$2,000,000</i>

Conclusions & Recommendations

The Redevelopment Plan contains an analysis of the statutory definition of blight as well as the finding that the property within the Redevelopment Areas is blighted in accordance with Indiana law. Based on the findings outlined in this Plan, the following conclusions and recommendations are offered for the consideration of City of Beech Grove and the Metropolitan Development Commission.

Conclusions

The total body of analysis contained in this Redevelopment Plan leads to a series of fairly succinct conclusions, which are listed as follows:

1. The area recommended for declaration as the “Amtrak/Conrail Redevelopment Area” meet the statutory definition of blight.
2. This Redevelopment Plan identifies and outlines a series of projects which can be undertaken to address the blighting influences which currently afflict the area.
3. The projects which can be undertaken to address the blighting influences within the Redevelopment Area includes: the redevelopment of infrastructure systems within the Area, such as thoroughfare, water, natural gas, electric power, drainage or sewer service systems;

The acquisition and demolition of property should be considered in order to improve industrial and commercial activity and re-direct development in the Area.

Recommendations

The Beech Grove Redevelopment Area Plan and Strategy represents an analysis of the property within the proposed “Amtrak/Conrail Redevelopment Area” and has concluded that the area meets the statutory definition of blight as defined by Indiana law. Based on this analysis and the information provided in the Redevelopment Plan, the following recommendations are hereby offered for the consideration of the Redevelop authorities;

That the authorities should establish the “Amtrak/Conrail Redevelopment Area” in accordance with the information presented and the findings of blight contained in this Redevelopment Plan.

That the authorities should approve the list of recommended projects as have been outlined in this Redevelopment Plan as a strategy for addressing the blighting conditions found in the Redevelopment Area.

That the authorities should also move to establish the Redevelopment Area as a Tax Allocation Area for the purpose of possibly offering Tax Increment Financing for projects undertaken to combat the blighting conditions within the Redevelopment Area.

That the authorities should initiate the statutory approval process for the Redevelopment Plan, including a presentation to the City Council and the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC) for confirmation of the findings, conclusions and recommendations contained herein.

List of Property to be Acquired

The Redevelopment Plan does not support that any parcels within the proposed Redevelopment Area be acquired at this time. However, if at some future time, parcels should be acquired by the Redevelopment Commission, this plan will have to be amended to identify those parcels.

/bg amtrakrdpfinal

*City of Beech Grove
Marion County, Indiana*

Amended
**Redevelopment
Plan & Strategy**

South Emerson Redevelopment Area

*(This document includes the original Redevelopment Plan,
as approved by the Metropolitan Development Commission in May, 2000.
The amended text is shown in a 10-point, arial, bold, italic font
in order to facilitate the reader=s recognition
of those sections which have been amended.)*

March 6, 2001

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Please note that this electronic file for this
Amended Redevelopment Plan & Strategy
South Emerson Redevelopment Area
was converted from the original
WordPerfect document
as developed in 2001
to Word 2007, April 7, 2008
for use in this document.

Reasons for Amending the RD Plan

The South Emerson Redevelopment Plan (RD Plan) is being amended because the original RD Plan has achieved its goal. At this time, the City of Beech Grove has received what amounts to a two-phase redevelopment proposal for the Redevelopment Area (RD Area). Therefore, the RD Plan is being amended to refine and reflect the specific development parameters of the proposed redevelopment project.

The original South Emerson Redevelopment Plan was developed for the specific purpose of enabling the City of Beech Grove to recapture lost Net Assessed Value (NAV) through the integration and redevelopment of the commercial area located in the southwest quadrant of the I-465/Emerson Avenue interchange. The original Redevelopment Plan found that there was extensive evidence of blighting influences in the Redevelopment Area, and the RD Plan was presented to, and processed by, the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC) and was ultimately approved by the MDC in May, 2000.

The original RD Plan simply identified the blighted area and suggested the types of projects that would be needed to redevelop the RD Area and re-invigorate the commercial economy of the RD Area. There was no immediate proposal to redevelop the RD Area, nor was there a developer available to initiate such actions. It was the intent of the City of Beech Grove to actively promote the designation of the Redevelopment Area within the community of development professionals, noting the potential incentives associated with the designation. Therefore, the original Redevelopment Plan identified the general parameters necessary to generate a successful redevelopment package.

Upon approval by the MDC, the South Emerson Redevelopment Area was designated in May, 2000. Thereafter, the City of Beech Grove began promoting the RD Area among major real estate developers as a good location for major retail investment. Within the last few months, discussions with real estate developers have generated a significant opportunity for redevelopment, including the proposal to locate a major new retailer, as well as the development of additional outlots and other commercial development within the RD Area.

In order to implement the redevelopment proposal, the Redevelopment Plan must be amended to provide additional detail with respect to the specific proposal of the developers. Where the original RD Plan cites two generalized forms of Recommended Projects, this amended set forth the specific developmental parameters for the current redevelopment proposal, and specifically defining the public sector projects to be undertaken, as well as setting forth a more timely and specific estimate of the costs of such projects.

This Amended Redevelopment Plan will then be re-presented to the Metropolitan Development Commission in accordance with their standards and policies for consideration, review, comment, and public discussion. Hopefully, the MDC process will ultimately generate an approval, enabling the City of Beech Grove to begin the actual redevelopment effort.

Redevelopment Plan Overview

This planning effort was undertaken by the City of Beech Grove in direct response to the community's need for new economic growth and the generation of a strong tax base. This motivation is common among well-managed cities. Since the fiscal basis of Indiana's cities is property tax assessment, each city must remain vigilant in protecting its existing core of investment and trying to augment that economic core with new development. This is particularly difficult for communities under Unigov. Cities such as Beech Grove cannot easily add new territory through annexation, therefore, they must optimize development within their corporate limits. If the city fails to generate new development, property tax rates must increase in order to maintain service levels.

New Development Options Are Limited

Beech Grove is like any other city in Indiana. In order for the city to be economically strong, it must achieve growth in its tax base. In most other Indiana cities, however, that growth can be achieved through development of new land on the outskirts of town. Since Beech Grove is a Unigov city, such development through annexation is terribly complicated. Consequently, the primary method for achieving economic growth among Unigov cities is the redevelopment of existing land (with appropriate zoning) within their corporate limits. Consequently, the search for new economic development begins with a review of parcels with specific zoning characteristics which permit intense development.

The development of local policies with regard to the recruitment of new business and industry has been a common theme in Indiana for at least two decades. The problem in the Unigov cities is that these policies are complicated to develop and implement.

New Statutory Authority

The 1999 Indiana Legislature amended the state statute governing the creation of Economic Development and Redevelopment Areas especially as it relates to Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Previously, the statute had created two sets of requirements for the creation of such economic incentives: one for areas outside of Marion County and another for areas inside of the old corporate limits of Indianapolis. Under this statutory arrangement the incorporated cities outside of Indianapolis, but inside of Marion County, (Beech Grove, Lawrence, Speedway, etc.) were excluded from access to the statute and its accompanying economic development tools and incentives. In 1999, the General Assembly corrected this legislative oversight, allowing the city of Beech Grove to utilize these legislative tools. This Redevelopment Plan is therefore intended to be one of the first to be created under the new contents of IC36-7-14-15.

The Need for Redevelopment

All communities must achieve some form of economic growth in order to absorb the cost of

providing services. It is a demonstrable fact that the public's expectations with regard to public services increases constantly. In conjunction with these increased expectations, there are increased costs. In order to keep the property tax rates reasonable, therefore, municipalities must find a means of achieving economic growth.

In conjunction with this reality, the City of Beech Grove initiated an aggressive program to identify new economic growth opportunities. Since the City is fundamentally restricted in any annexation efforts, the majority of this investigation was expended in analyzing opportunities for economic growth from within the current corporate limits of the City. These studies suggested that the most important potential for economic development will likely occur in areas zoned for intense commercial and industrial development.

In response to the findings of these studies, the city of Beech Grove initiated several actions, including an effort to identify major parcels within the corporate boundaries which had the potential for substantial economic development. Virtually all of the land within the corporate limits of Beech Grove is already developed, however, making this venture somewhat problematic. With the vast bulk of all real estate already developed, there is minimal opportunity to generate new development of any kind.

Through this effort, however, an area was identified which appears to have immediate developmental potential. The area, located south of I-465 on Emerson Avenue, is zoned for fairly intense commercial development (C-3, C-4, C-6 and SU). The land has been available for development for many years, but has never been developed in accordance with its identified best use, therefore the potential assessed value which could be generated through full commercial development of the area has not been achieved.

Identification of Area With Commercial Zoning

The area with the greatest commercial developmental potential is located south of I-465, along the west side of Emerson Avenue. The area is anchored by a hotel operation, but is primarily a strip commercial development where only the frontage land is developed. Several parcels in the area are essentially undeveloped, and other parcels are developed in such a way that the access to the site is obscured and/or problematic in other ways. As a prominent Indianapolis real estate lawyer once indicated publicly, *It is clear that the area has been cherry picked.* @

Although there is substantial undeveloped commercial acreage in this area, the problem is that the strip development obstructs full development of internal parcels. The frontage development is incremental and individual. Each lot has its own driveway access, thereby creating numerous curb cuts along a busy thoroughfare. Turning movements into and out of these individual parcels creates traffic congestion and unsafe traffic conditions, especially during peak periods. The only way the remaining area can be developed effectively in accordance with its intense commercial zoning is to unify the development standards of the remaining parcels and develop the remaining land with a fully coordinated development.

In order to objectively assess the prospects for achieving economic development at this location, the City sought to initiate a planning process which would provide research information for the purpose of leading toward encouragement of the economic development/ redevelopment of the parcels in this area.

Definition of the Study Area

The planning process for this project included the investigation and analysis of large areas than normal in order to comprehend the full potential of the city for new economic growth. It is the recommendation of the consultant that the City pursue designation of a redevelopment area at this location because it would appear, given the developmental history of the area, that eminent domain action may eventually become the final alternative to achieve growth in one or more parcels. On that basis, the consultant recommends that the City of Beech Grove consider the following report as pertaining to the following defined area.

SOUTH EMERSON REDEVELOPMENT AREA:

The area defined as the South Emerson Area for purposes of this report shall be defined as having the following boundaries:

Beginning at the point of intersection of the south right of way line of I-465 with the centerline of Emerson Avenue, then proceeding southward along the centerline of Emerson Avenue to the point of intersection with the northern boundary of the Fazoli's property (parcel # 5011746),

Then westward along the northern boundary of the Fazoli's property (parcel # 5011746) to the northwest corner of said parcel,

Then southward along the west boundary of said parcel # (5011746) to the point of intersection with the southern boundary of the undeveloped tract identified as parcel # (5023451),

Then westward along the southern boundary of the undeveloped tract identified as parcel # (5023451), to the southwest corner of said parcel,

Then southward along the eastern boundary of parcel #5007188 to the southeast corner of said parcel,

Then westward along the southern boundary of parcel #5007188 to the point of intersection with the eastern boundary of parcel # 5011090,

Then westward along the southern boundary of parcel #5011090 to the southwest corner of said parcel,

Then northward along the west boundary of the undeveloped tract identified as parcel # (5011090) to the point of intersection with the boundary of parcel # (5007188),

Then northward along the western boundary of the undeveloped tract identified as parcel # (5007188) to the northwest corner of said parcel,

Then eastward along the northern boundary of parcel #5007188 to the point of intersection with the western boundary of parcel #5003904,

Then northward along the western boundary of parcel #5003904 to the northwest corner of said parcel,

Then westward along the southern boundary of parcel #5029064 to the southwest corner of said parcel,

Then generally northward and northeastward along the western boundary of parcel #5029064 to the point of intersection with the south right of way line of I-465,

Then eastward along the south right of way line of I-465 to the point of beginning.

The area described above contains those parcels which were determined to meet the statutory definition of blight, as well as some other parcels which were contiguous to the blighted parcels. Some of the parcels contained in the area prescribed are not to be considered blighted, but are included as part of the overall redevelopment of the area in order to integrate the infrastructure systems of the redevelopment area. There is statutory precedent to support this designation.

Conformity With Other Plans

Background

Beech Grove does not have a city plan commission to govern its development and set development policy. Instead, development in Beech Grove is governed by the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County (MDC) which is staffed by the Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD). From that organizational base, the city of Beech Grove also lacks a single, integrated comprehensive plan which can be consulted regarding developmental matters, such as the economic development and redevelopment issues to be considered in this Redevelopment Plan.

Development and land use policy for Beech Grove is set forth in the Marion County Comprehensive Plan, which is composed of a series of sub-plans governing individual geographic areas of Marion County or specific areas which have some physical or social attribute which merits special attention, such as individual corridor plans for major traffic corridors or neighborhood plans for various urban neighborhoods.

Although the Emerson Avenue corridor is a primary county thoroughfare, no corridor plan has ever been developed to address Emerson Avenue development issues, nor has a specific plan ever been developed for the incorporated city of Beech Grove, as a neighborhood. This lack of a singular planning study for the city of Beech Grove contributes to an overall sense of developmental confusion on the part of the community, which becomes important when attempting to address developmental problems, especially as they relate to assessed value and tax base.

The portion of the Marion County Comprehensive Plan which covers Beech Grove is actually contained in at least 4 separate planning sub-documents. These planning sub-documents consist of the individual township plans for Center Township, Perry Township, Warren Township and Franklin Township. Copies of these plans are available from DMD on the 18th floor of the City-County Building, however, the Center Township Plan has not been updated recently and is not available in print form. The summary of relevant portions of these township plans is presented below. Since the entirety of the South Emerson Redevelopment Area is located in Perry Township, only the relevant portions of the Perry Township Plan and the Franklin Township Plan (because it is located across Emerson from the RDArea) are included herein.

Franklin Township Plan Summary

The following summary attempts to select and relate all information relevant to Beech Grove from the Franklin Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan dated November 6, 1991, as distributed by DMD. (Comments regarding the relevance of certain information to Beech Grove are offered in parentheses.)

GENERAL

Franklin Township has a higher percentage of land available for development than any other township in Marion County (although not within Beech Grove). Some other notable planning-related features in Franklin Township are the presence of Buck Creek in the east, large agricultural tracts throughout the township, and three interstates: I-74, I-465, and I-65. (All interstate corridors are proximal to Beech Grove, either through direct or secondary access.)

Detailed data on population, land use, zoning, transportation, schools, utilities, and other township characteristics are included in the *Franklin Township Planning Study Data Inventory*.

The Franklin Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan is comprised of the narrative report, it=s accompanying Franklin Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map, and the Official Thoroughfare Plan for Marion County.

Between 1980 and 1990, the population increased by 30%, a rate second only to Pike Township in Marion County. (Most of the increase occurred outside of Beech Grove.)

According to the 1980 Census, Franklin Township averaged 3.12 persons per household, the largest household size in Marion County. More people per household generally means more school-age children per household.

The Plan recommends policies that (1) prevent fast-developing suburban areas from overburdening school, roadway, sewer, and water systems, and (2) lower development costs in rural areas by encouraging them to develop after such systems are in place. (These policies are noteworthy as being somewhat conflicting with the development environment of the City of Beech Grove, and therefore, somewhat contradictory to the interests of the City.)

Much of the commercial development in the township is along Emerson Avenue, north of Shelbyville Road (which is also the vicinity of the South Emerson Redevelopment Area).

Nearly all industrial development is within Beech Grove in the northwest corner of Franklin Township. (Which is also the vicinity of the Amtrak/Conrail RD Area.)

Development pressure is mounting in the western section of the township, including areas such as Emerson Avenue and the planned I-65 interchange at the Johnson County Line. (This I-65 interchange is south of Beech Grove. The Emerson Avenue corridor is a direct interest of this planning effort.) The Comprehensive Plan recommends land uses appropriate to these areas. Also, six of the plan=s Acritical areas@ are in the Beech Grove area, indicating that the boundary lines for recommended land use should be interpreted as definitive and fixed.

Except in rapidly growing areas in the west, (along Emerson Avenue) the township=s roadway and sewer system capacities are underutilized. (This could have a potential impact on Beech Grove infrastructure services.)

The only arterial road projected to be at or near capacity by the year 2005 is Emerson Avenue (which links the two areas under study) and the section of South County Line Road between Emerson Avenue and Arlington Avenue. (This has a direct implication toward the South Emerson RD Area.)

Development of land for commercial and industrial use between 1972 and 1988 was minimal except in the Beech Grove area near the I-465 interchange at Emerson Avenue.

The 1984 Comprehensive Plan did not recommend that industrial uses locate adjacent to the township's three interstate interchanges. Rather, the plan recommended that industrial development take place on land adjacent to railroad lines, much of which remain undeveloped. Between 1972 and 1988, heavy industrial was the only land use that did not increase in acreage.

As the number of school-age children grows, limited tax revenue from commercial or industrial development may result in higher residential property taxes to support the public school system. (As noted, the impact of this type of development is recommended within the City of Beech Grove.)

The plan recommends commercial and industrial uses near interstate interchanges and arterial roads. (Specifically, the area under consideration in this RD Plan.)

TOWNSHIP PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS

During the Franklin Township Comprehensive Plan revision process, the Franklin Township Planning Committee identified the following goals (which more or less demonstrate the lack of attention given to Beech Grove in the Comprehensive Plan..)

1. Increase the rate and amount of commercial and industrial development relative to residential development. (This goal is the specific preference of this RDPlan.)
2. Regulate development in order to enable the transportation, sewer, and water service systems to meet future demands;
3. Allow the park system to meet future recreational needs;
4. As much as possible, enable the (township) school system to keep pace with the growing school-age population. (Beech Grove schools can handle new commercial and industrial growth.)
5. As much as possible, help (township) police and fire services maintain acceptable public safety standards among a growing population; (Beech Grove has separate police and fire protection) and
6. As much as possible, provide for an orderly transition from agricultural land uses (in the township) to suburban land uses (in the township) by recommending Very Low Density Residential development in the more rural areas of the township. (Beech Grove is already urban and is assumed to be excluded from this goal.)

THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The Thoroughfare Plan recommends the following priority improvements:

1. Two-lane connector of Troy Avenue from Emerson Avenue to Ritter Avenue, with implementation recommended between the year 2002 and 2005. (Priority D.) (This recommendation was removed from the Thoroughfare Plan in 1998.)
2. Two-lane connector of Hanna Avenue to Churchman Avenue, with implementation recommended between 2002 and 2005 (Priority D) (also formally removed from the Thoroughfare Plan.)

STAGES OF GROWTH

The Franklin Township Comprehensive Plan identifies areas of the township being in Development Stages 5, 6, and 7.

Stage 5 (Established Suburban Area)

Stage 5 development constitutes less than one square mile in the northwest corner of the Franklin Township (the City of Beech Grove). The eastern and southern boundaries of Stage 5

are the old railroad yards and shops now used by Amtrak. Non-industrial development in and around Stage 5 should be buffered from the visual impact and noise of the railroad yards and other associated industrial uses.

Stage 6 (Developing Suburban Area)

Undeveloped transitional areas are at critical junctures because of development pressure from commercial land uses. This is especially true along Emerson Avenue, where residential land will experience pressure for commercial development from both north and south. Because of the development pressure in Stage 6, the boundary lines for recommended land uses—particularly in critical areas—should be interpreted as definitive and fixed. Over half of the designated critical areas are in Stage 6.

Development should be sensitive to the environment and to nearby existing development. Open space should be preserved wherever a large or intensive development is proposed, such as industrial development along I-65 and I-465, or office development adjacent to Emerson Avenue and Arlington Avenue. Careful site design and planning, as well as provision of public facilities, should accompany new development.

CRITICAL AREAS

The Plan indicates that, it is essential to the Franklin Township Comprehensive Plan that these critical areas be developed as recommended. This list of critical areas can only be expanded by official adoption of a new critical area as a comprehensive plan segment.

Critical Area 2

Land Use Plan Recommendation: Light Industrial (LI)

Stage of Development (6 B Developing Suburban Area)

Why Critical: A Thoroughfare Plan roadway connector is planned to extend Hanna Avenue from Emerson Avenue on the west to Churchman Avenue on the east. With Heavy Industrial recommended on the north, east and south of the site, the existing residential land is recommended for industrial use in the future. (This critical area was later negated by omitting the proposed road project.)

Critical Area 4

Strip commercial development is characterized by uses that increase traffic volumes, build on shallow lots without proper design for traffic flow, require multiple entrances and exits for each commercial use, and create additional traffic congestion. (This is the key problem in the South Emerson area.)

Commercial development should not occur in this area because adequate acreage is recommended for future commercial use at more appropriate locations on Emerson Avenue. Much commercial land is recommended at or near the designated Community Shopping Centers at both the Emerson Avenue/Thompson Road intersection (281 acres) and the Emerson

Avenue/Southport Road intersection (289 acres). Locations at these intersections of arterial roadways and/or near interstate interchanges are more appropriate for commercial land use than is Critical in Area 4.

Perry Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan

The following excerpts are taken from the Plan distributed by DMD and dated September 16, 1992 (with relevant comments offered parenthetically.)

Township characteristics are identified in more detail in a background information document entitled *Perry Township Comprehensive Planning Study Data Inventory*. The 1992 Perry Township Comprehensive Plan revision, a part of the Comprehensive Plan for Marion County is comprised of this narrative, its accompany Perry Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map, and the Official Thoroughfare Plan for Marion County (1991).

TOWNSHIP POPULATION AND LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

The township's population is growing slowly. According to the 1980 Census, Perry Township averaged 2.7 persons per household. By 1990 the figure was 2.5. Generally, more people per household means more children per household, however, the average number of persons per household in Perry Township declined between 1980 and 1990, suggesting smaller family groups and/or more single person households.

Between 1972 and 1985, commercial land use development increased at a rate greater than that of any other land use category.

Comprehensive Plan Response B This Comprehensive Plan recommends that future commercial and industrial development occur near those areas currently developed for such uses.

Township Planning and Development Goals

1. Reduce the traffic congesting along Meridian Street, U.S. 31, Madison Avenue and Emerson Avenue. (Directly affecting the South Emerson Area.)
2. Expand office development along Interstate 465, Interstate 65, and Emerson Avenue. (Directly affecting the South Emerson Area.)

Thoroughfare Plan

1. Four-lane primary arterial connector of Hanna Avenue from Sherman Drive to Emerson Avenue, Priority D. Initially this would be constructed as a two-lane roadway until traffic demand warrants four lanes.

STAGES OF GROWTH

The northeast corner of Perry Township (part of Beech Grove) is identified as development Stage 3. This area contains some of the oldest subdivisions in the township. Community services are in place but some facilities may need reconstruction or replacement due to age. (This is precisely the case in Beech Grove, and the South Emerson RD Area.) Roadway services