

Executive Summary

The Bloomington 2040 Comprehensive Plan is a tool used by the Mayor, City staff, Plan Commission, City Council, developers, and other community leaders as they guide decisions about investment and resources. Though primarily a tool of the City's Plan Commission, the Plan is also used by others considering land use, transportation, and education decisions and business investment in the community. The Future Land Use Plan on [page 88](#) is one of the most significant guiding elements of the Comprehensive Plan, as it describes the pattern, character, and intensity of development across the City and its planning jurisdiction for the next twenty-four years. While planning criteria applied to specific zones or parcels may change in nature over the next two + decades, these principles should be the overall conceptual framework guiding Bloomington to 2040. The success of the Bloomington 2040 Comprehensive Plan will be measured in part by the application and practice of the goals and recommendations contained within. The Bloomington 2040 Comprehensive Plan includes seven chapters that work together to provide an implementable guidance document which is summarized below. Each chapter specifies objectives and indicators which, as performance indicators, can be measured annually and at times re-prioritized.

All chapters include Goals, Policies, and Programs that are implementation based and focus on creating quantifiable outcomes. Outcomes and indicators are tailored to track effectiveness of the Goals, Policies and Programs with measurable results

01 | Community Services

The Community Services chapter is an important first chapter because it provides a progressive vision to continue to provide and develop critical infrastructure, services and access as the City of Bloomington grows and develops. This chapter highlights Municipal Services, Local Government Partnerships, Open Government and Transparency, and Annexation subsections, which are introduced below:

Municipal Services | The City of Bloomington provides a range of governmental services that are integral to the function of the Community as a whole and describes a

significant role of local government in Bloomington. This subsection identifies their function and role within the governmental structure.

Local Government Partnerships | Bloomington has long strived to create a collaborative approach towards functioning both as a local and regional leader in government, managing resources, and long-range regional planning. This subsection identifies existing functionality and key components within existing partnerships, as well as new opportunities to collaborate.

Open Government and Transparency | Bloomington's innovation-based approach towards local governance focuses on providing more efficient, transparent and engaging services to residents, students, and visitors alike. This subsection provides a description of the City's policies as well as resources geared towards optimum outreach.

Annexation | The City of Bloomington is investigating how to be more efficient in providing Community Services. Currently, a patchwork of unincorporated areas exists within the City of Bloomington's Corporate Boundaries and as further growth and development occur it may make sense to annex strategic properties to maximize service efficiencies. This subsection discusses a policy defining annexation direction for the City going forward.

02 | Culture and Identity

The City of Bloomington is fortunate to have a high quality of life which is supported by its rich culture and identity. Multiple sources have identified Bloomington as one of the most livable communities both regionally and nationally. This chapter introduces subsections that define the culture and identity that helps make Bloomington such a desirable and attractive community. This Chapter sections highlight the History and Culture, Indiana University, Big Ten, Diversity, Tourism, Technical Education, Elementary and Secondary Education and Equity within Bloomington.

History and Culture | The City of Bloomington has a rich history as a deeply-rooted community which functions as a cultural hub. This subsection defines Bloomington's historical geography tied to the booming small city that has evolved over the past 200 years.



Indiana University | Bloomington is heavily impacted by and owes its vibrancy in part to the existence of Indiana University (IU). IU is a world class higher education institution which has grown with the City of Bloomington since its inception. This subsection explains the impact and importance of higher education as part of Bloomington's success story and its future as a choice community.

Big Ten | A high quality of life must be maintained by vibrant energy and activity through local events and experiences. IU is a Big Ten university which means sporting events, significant town and gown pride existing within the community. This subsection describes the impact that being a Big Ten community has on the City of Bloomington.

Diversity Bloomington has long been heralded as a community which champions human rights, openness, and tolerance and sets an example both regionally and nationally. This subsection examines the importance that human rights diversity brings to the City.

Tourism | Bloomington is a major tourist destination in the Midwest for sporting events, cultural amenities, and nearby natural features. This subsection identifies and seeks to support tourism draws within the community.

Technical Education | Bloomington has long led the region in manufacturing, high-tech industry, and quality of craftsmanship in limestone. As such, the city maintains a strong commitment to technical education to secure a stable workforce to fill an important aspect of Bloomington's economy. This subsection supports Technical Education in the broad Bloomington community.

Elementary and Secondary Education | Bloomington has one of the strongest high school graduation rates in the State of Indiana and leads public schools regionally. The culture and identity of Bloomington is one of an educated, thoughtful, and forward-thinking community. Furthermore, this subsection supports continued efforts to continue supporting a strong public elementary and secondary school system.

Equity | The City of Bloomington has long been a community which is inclusive of people of all abilities, beliefs, races,

and orientations. A strength of the community as identified in this subsection is that Bloomington is an equitable community where people want to live.

03 | Environment

The City of Bloomington has a long-held commitment to environmental protection. The City has long been a leading voice of cities nationally to implement measures that improve the quality of life through a healthier environment. It also introduces subsections that express Bloomington's long-term commitment to protecting the environment; "Think Globally, Act Locally", Solid Waste, Water, Green Building, Air and Emissions, Energy and Natural Resources.

Think Globally, Act Locally | The City of Bloomington has been at the forefront of crafting local environmental Policies and programs that reflect global issues, and its status as a cultural and education center means that focus has global implications. This subsection defines the holistic approach towards thinking globally and acting locally that the City of Bloomington leadership embraces with every land use and development decision.

Solid Waste | Bloomington has invested heavily in recycling and solid waste recovery programs to minimize solid waste entering landfills. This subsection defines current efforts and places emphasis on the importance of continued investment in systems to reduce reliance on landfills.

Water | Bloomington is known as the gateway to "Scenic Southern Indiana" and as such, protecting downstream habitats are of principal importance to the community. This subsection illustrates storm water and agricultural runoff implications to reservoirs, natural areas, and its geologically unique and sensitive setting.

Green Building | Bloomington has over 80,000 residents and has a strong and diverse construction market focused on the development of new sites and redevelopment of previously developed sites. This subsection summarizes efforts to reduce waste and improve the efficiency of the built environment.



Air and Emissions | Clean air is a natural resource we tend to take for granted. Many air pollutants are not visible, have no odor, or immediately detectable impacts. Significant impacts by greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels result in trapping heat and making the planet warmer. Electricity, transportation, and land uses are leading economic sectors that are primary sources of greenhouse emissions. This subsection supports efforts by the City of Bloomington to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect clean air.

Energy | The City of Bloomington supports solutions to implement a higher percentage of renewable energy sources to provide affordable alternatives to fossil fuel use and combat climate change at a local level. This subsection supports efforts by the city to be a responsible consumer of energy resources, minimize the use of non-renewable energy, and become a leader in continuing to support innovation to mitigate the severity of climate change.

Natural Resources | Bloomington is situated on some of the most diverse Karst geology in the Midwest. This subsection is focused on protection of natural areas and wildlife corridors, promote a renewed connection to natural systems through food systems and recreation.

04 | Downtown

This chapter contains goals, policies, and programs that are informed by the Vision and Goal Statement. This chapter introduces subsections illustrated throughout in Bloomington's long-term commitment to the continued success of its downtown. The Downtown Chapter highlights the Sense of Place, Main Street, Design, BEAD (Bloomington Entertainment and Arts District), Trades District and Conference Center, subsections, which are introduced below:

The sense of Place | Density is of principal importance to Downtown Bloomington's sense of place. As density continues to increase, however, a balance needs to be struck between student-centric development and mixed-use downtown amenities that support the entire community. This subsection focuses on providing an introduction to Downtown as a place and how it is influenced by its continued growth and redevelopment.

Main Street | Downtown is a highly walkable district that is enhanced by a mix of commercial, entertainment, residential and cultural amenities with strong multi-modal access. This subsection looks at Downtown as a "Main Street" or as a front door to Bloomington and how it continues to evolve and redevelop as a district.

Design | Downtown Bloomington has a particular aesthetic that continues to define its character. This subsection supports quality design initiatives that strengthen the quality of its Downtown “Brand”.

BEAD | The BEAD district is a district within downtown that encompasses entertainment and arts amenities that positively influence the quality of life and place for the entire community. This subsection supports mixed-use cultural opportunities that bring life and vibrancy to Bloomington’s downtown.

Trades District | The Trades District is within Bloomington’s Certified Tech Park. This site located just northwest of City Hall is a prime redevelopment site and a rare opportunity to revitalize a key component of the City’s core. This subsection supports the redevelopment of this site to create a landmark development that supports the continued renaissance of downtown.

Conference Center Area | Bloomington’s conference center is a strong downtown asset and a community and regional asset. This subsection supports continued growth and development of the Conference Center and surrounding areas.

05 | Housing & Neighborhoods

Bloomington has strong neighborhoods and a strong housing market. This chapter introduces subsections illustrated throughout in Bloomington’s long-term commitment to revitalizing its housing stock and neighborhoods as well as providing smart growth supply strategies for future development and redevelopment. The Housing and Neighborhoods Chapter highlights the Today’s Context, Housing Trends and Issues and Neighborhoods subsections, which are introduced below:

Today’s Context | Bloomington’s supply of affordable quality single family and multi-family housing continue to be a concern. This subsection identifies the impact of an expensive, high demand real estate market within multiple cohort groups.

Housing Trends and Issues | Bloomington’s

neighborhoods are diverse and mostly stable but are trending towards a lower percentage of new homes and a higher proportion of apartments. With greater density comes the opportunity to strengthen neighborhoods as active community centers. This subsection examines housing trends and offers supply side solutions to further enhance the availability of quality housing in Bloomington.

Neighborhoods | Bloomington has many types of neighborhoods. This subsection identifies existing neighborhoods, discusses previous neighborhood planning efforts, demonstrates the importance of preservation and the revitalization of urban neighborhoods.

06 | Land Use & Design

The Land Use chapter contains goals, policies, and programs that are informed by the Vision and Goal Statement. This Chapter introduces subsections illustrated throughout in Bloomington’s long-term commitment to preservation, sustainability, Future Land Use and focus redevelopment areas.

Preservation | Bloomington places a high value on maintaining the authentic fabric of the community. This subsection includes a statement of intent for preservation as a key influencer of land use.

Sustainability | Bloomington prides itself on being a community which uses sustainability as a factor in the promotion of sound growth and development decisions. This subsection describes linkages between mixed-use development, preservation, eco-boomers, and form-based code to regulate the development and redevelopment of neighborhoods which are socially, economically and ecologically sustainable.

Future Land Use Map and Designations | Bloomington has a strong focus on land use that is not aimed at separating uses, but instead on complementing uses. This subsection describes the Future Land Use Map and corresponding land use designations that will help guide future development and zoning in Bloomington. Future Land Use descriptions include Park and Open Space, Downtown, Regional Activity Center, Mixed-Urban Residential, Urban Residential, Institutional/Civic and Employment Centers.



07 | Transportation

This chapter highlights subsections illustrated throughout in Bloomington's long-term commitment to providing an equitable multi-modal transportation system. The Transportation Chapter highlights the Transportation Portfolio, Health Friendly Network, Bicycle Friendly Network, Transit Friendly Network, Transportation Investments and Master Thoroughfare Plan, subsections which are introduced below:

Transportation Portfolio | Bloomington has a diverse transportation portfolio made up of the bus, bicycle and pedestrian and vehicular modes. This subsection provides an introduction to Bloomington's multi-modal transportation portfolio.

Health Friendly Network | Bloomington aspires to continue to place a high emphasis on becoming a healthier and more active city. Studies have shown that multi-modal transportation users are far more active than single transportation mode users. This subsection supports the health benefits of a balanced transport network.

Bicycle Friendly Network | Bloomington has presently achieved a Gold level Bicycle Friendly City by the League of American Bicyclists. This shows the community's dedication to cycling. This subsection further details initiatives, programs and bicycle amenities.

Transit-Friendly Network | As part of its multi-modal transportation portfolio Bloomington has an outstanding public transportation system. This subsection describes the importance of public transit in the community.

Vehicular Network | Bloomington maintains a Vehicular Network and keeps working to make it safer and cleaner. This subsection looks at safety and environmental impacts of vehicular transportation and how to make improvements.

Transportation Investments | Bloomington is working to make critical investments to enhance its multi-modal transportation system. This subsection defines projects, initiatives and steps towards implementing those investments.

Master Thoroughfare Plan | Bloomington's Master Thoroughfare Plan satisfies State Statute and supports future transportation growth with a focus on multiple modes. This subsection includes a multi-modal thoroughfare map, transportation policies and a definition of functional classifications.