



Bartholomew County
Indiana



Economic Development Plan

for the

Bartholomew County

Greater Northern Gateway

Economic Development Area

December 9, 2014

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Section I Geographic Area

This plan is prepared in accordance with IC 36-7-14-41 to promote economic development on the property shown on the map labeled "Attachment 1," depicting the proposed Economic Development Area. This area encompasses related industrial and commercial areas at the area surrounding I-65 exit 76, herein referred to as the *Bartholomew County Greater Northern Gateway Economic Development Area* (or "*Greater Northern Gateway Area*"). Upon its final adoption, this Development Plan shall be in full force and effect and shall be recorded with the Bartholomew County Recorder.

Section II Mission & Objectives

The Bartholomew County Redevelopment Commission mission is comprised of three components:

- Enhance the economic health and vitality of Bartholomew County
- Provide the environment for business and industry growth, expansion and attraction
- Increase the county's tax base

Central to the achievement of the overarching mission are the following objectives:

- Collaboration and facilitation - the Bartholomew County Redevelopment Commission may take an active lead, be a partner, or be a participant with other agencies and entities to implement the goals and objectives of Bartholomew County and the Bartholomew County Redevelopment Commission.
- Establish, maintain and enhance community assets that attract business, industry, residents, workforce, and visitors.
- Provide the full range of high-quality infrastructure elements necessary to support business and industry growth, retention and attraction.

In addition to the mission and objectives identified above, the plan is specifically designed to provide financing for transportation, fire protection, sewer, storm water, water supply, property acquisition and/or development, and funding for future economic development projects and workforce training as defined in I.C. 36-7-14-12.2(a), I.C. 36-7-11.9-3, and I.C. 36-7-25-7, to foster the goals and objectives of the Area to promote the full potential of the economic development area.



Section III Bartholomew County

Bartholomew County has long recognized the important role that Commerce and Industry plays in the overall economic health of the county. A number of goals and policies of the currently adopted *Comprehensive Plan* specifically identify Commerce and Industry as critical to the strength and vibrancy of the county.

County and economic development officials know that a healthy, vibrant community is vital to the county's ability to attract new economic growth in other parts of the county. Officials of companies located in Bartholomew have reported that the attractiveness of Bartholomew County and Columbus was an important factor in their decision to invest in Bartholomew County. A successful community also offers shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities for residents, and is important in employee recruitment. Continued improvements will help the community attract new businesses, and allow existing businesses to grow.

Section IV Plan for Economic Growth

Bartholomew County is a vibrant and attractive community. Throughout the planning process for the currently adopted *Comprehensive Plan*, commerce and industry were mentioned as a strong asset by both the Steering Committee and residents who attended the public workshops. Section IV of the *Comprehensive Plan* establishes *Goals* and *Policies* that will enhance the vitality and character of the County for Commerce and Industry.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY GOALS AND POLICIES (Excerpted from Bartholomew County Comprehensive Plan, adopted September 27, 1999)

Goal 18: Promote economic growth in the county by encouraging the location and expansion of businesses and industries that are compatible with their surroundings and provided with adequate services.

Policy 18-A: Require industrial centers and other similar uses to be built in areas with suitable transportation, utilities, water and sewage, and other needed infrastructure, or where there is an implementable plan to provide them.

Policy 18-B: Encourage industrial and commercial land uses to be consolidated in similar use areas.

Policy 18-C: Require measures to prevent flooding, pollution, and soil loss as a result of mineral extraction or other excavation.



Policy 18-D: Establish mechanisms to evaluate the short- and long-term effects of excavation and mining activities on the land.

Policy 18-E: Discourage scattered industrial and commercial land use.

Policy 18-F: Promote infill development in existing industrial areas, including brownfields redevelopment.

Policy 18-G: Encourage industry to use land with existing suitable roads or have a plan to provide suitable roads and bridges.

Policy 18-H: Encourage commercial and industrial operations to locate on land other than timberland, productive farmland, or land subject to flooding.

Policy 18-I: Encourage flexibility so that the county can respond to changing economic situations or needs.

Policy 18-J: Encourage lighting of parking areas and other spaces to promote safety and security, without adversely affecting neighboring properties, residential or farm land or traffic flow.

Policy 18-K: Reduce points of traffic conflict on public streets through driveway and intersection separation requirements.

Policy 18-L: Prevent any industries that noticeably deteriorate the air quality from locating in the county.

Policy 18-M: Encourage development of commercial and office centers, rather than strip development.

Policy 18-N: Encourage doctors, veterinarians, lawyers, and other professional buildings to be in clusters.

Policy 18-O: Encourage rural-related businesses of a scale appropriate to their surroundings, such as agriculture products and services stores, seasonal produce markets, hobby and craft stores, wineries, greenhouses, small engine repair. Where these types of businesses are of a suitable scale and in appropriate rural locations, encourage them as home-based businesses.



CRITICAL ISSUES: NORTHERN GATEWAY – LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Bartholomew County also adopted on June 4, 2012, the *Northern Gateway – Land Use and Transportation Plan* as an element of the *Comprehensive Plan*. This element identifies the west, south and east quadrants of the interchange as important areas for future development, and also identified 26 Critical Issues effecting land use and transportation needs for the area. The most relevant Critical Issues (referenced as “CI.#”) are summarized below:

CI.1: DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Topic: New development will have an impact on the focus area.

Detail: There are underutilized and undeveloped properties throughout the focus area. When development occurs there are many positive outcomes including new property tax revenues, new businesses, new visitors, and new residents.

CI.2: VISIBILITY

Topic: The focus area serves as a representation of Bartholomew County, the City of Columbus, and the Town of Edinburgh.

Detail: The focus area is very visible because of the two thoroughfares, I- 65 and US 31, that carry large volumes of traffic. I-65 provides significant visibility because it is elevated above the railroad and US 31.

CI.3: UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES

Topic: Vacant and ‘underdeveloped’ properties provide opportunities.

Detail: (Various) parcels...are either available to or in close proximity of existing infrastructure. Many of the parcels are ‘underdeveloped’ because in addition to any structures and associated parking, there are areas that are vacant and not regularly maintained.

CI.4: COMMERCIAL APPEAL OF AREA

Topic: Current retail destination influences potential uses.



Detail: The Edinburgh Outlet Mall attracts tens of thousands of visitors per year to the area, and as a result the area has seen additional interest in retail and hotel development. (Heavy industrial land uses in the immediate vicinity of the Outlet Mall would not fit the appeal of a travel destination and should be placed in appropriate portions of the Joint District / Greater Northern Gateway Area where zoned I-2 or IR.)

CI.5: CONCENTRATION OF TRUCKING & LOGISTICS BUSINESSES

Topic: Section 1 (of the Northern Gateway) has become a location for trucking and logistics companies.

Detail: The focus area is readily accessible to I-65 and US 31. This connection has spurred locations for trucking and logistics businesses to the area.

CI.11: UNDEVELOPED PROPERTIES

Topic: Large agricultural properties provide potential for a wide range of development.

Detail: Section 4 of the Northern Gateway (and large tracts within the Joint District) have large undeveloped properties which are zoned for residential, commercial, and/or industrial but are used for agriculture. The road access in this area is currently limited, but there is a rail line to the east that provides transportation options for potential industrial users.

CI.12: LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Topic: Infrastructure and utilities may need to be extended to new development.

Detail: Development of properties in this area will likely need to provide new infrastructure. Extending essentials such as roads, water and sewer service may result in high infrastructure costs.

CI.13: DRAINAGE

Topic: Stormwater management will need to be addressed.

Detail: Section 4 is relatively flat, has relatively no natural drainage system, and no built drainage system. The soils in this area are sandy and have high permeability rates and therefore the potential for polluting the ground water is high. As new development occurs, stormwater will need to be addressed.



Conventional stormwater infrastructure costs could be high for this area and the County has no ability to maintain stormwater sewer infrastructure so the use of best stormwater management practices will be necessary. Alternative stormwater management techniques such as bioswales, rain gardens, and retention ponds could be used which would protect groundwater from contaminants.

CI.16: ACCESS ALONG US 31

Topic: Access management can affect vehicular safety and efficiency.

Detail: US 31 is the major arterial that provides access to the area. Currently along US 31, within the focus area, there are 3 residential driveways, 8 commercial driveways, 12 road intersections, 8 center median breaks, and 2 traffic lights.

While the current road configuration generally provides adequate service for the current businesses within the focus area, the intersection of US 31 and Heflen Park Road in particular, is a cause for concern (*See CI.19*).

When new development occurs, traffic circulation and access will need to develop as well. Road intersections at County Road 800 North, Presidential Way, and Bear Lane currently feature median breaks along US 31. These intersections may need to be modified if future development occurs and traffic volumes increases.

CI.19-24: ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Topic: Safety and efficiency concerns exist along US 31 and among connecting roads, including connections from US 31 to Taylorsville.

Detail: The most important transportation concern for Section 4 will be connections to US 31, but some consideration needs to be given to connections to current stub streets to the east in Taylorsville.

Connections to 5th Street, Mill Street, and County Road 700 North, could improve the circulation for future development as well as improve access for existing residents and circulation along US 31. For example, County Road 700 North connects to County Road 200 West and then County Road 800 North which leads to the Edinburgh Industrial Park and the outlet mall area.

In addition, improvements Heflen Park Road, Tannehill Road, and Bear Lane are also identified as critical issues to be addressed.



EDINBURGH/BARTHOLOMEW/COLUMBUS JOINT DISTRICT

The northern quadrant of the interchange consists of a special overlay district -- the “Edinburgh/Bartholomew/Columbus Joint District”. This joint district was formed via interlocal agreement on January 23, 1989, to make and implement planning, zoning, platting or land use policy in the northern quadrant of the interchange. The area has a mix of zoning, including commercial, industrial reserve (I.R.), ~~and~~ heavy industrial (I-2), and some residential. The immediate area near the interchange has witnessed positive development, including the Edinburgh Outlet Mall, hotels, restaurants, and a few industrial developments. The industrial targeted area that is primarily north of CR 800 North ~~between US 31 and all the~~ I-2 ~~and IR~~-zoned areas east of the rail line, however, remains largely undeveloped after 25 years of efforts.

GREATER NORTHERN GATEWAY AREA

The county’s economic development consultant, the Columbus Economic Development Board, has identified the combined “Northern Gateway” and “Joint District” areas as the primary target area for development outside of Columbus city limits. The Comprehensive Plan, Northern Gateway Plan, and Joint District Zoning confirm the potential of the area, but also clearly articulate the significant challenges & critical issues that exist in preventing development. The Greater Northern Gateway Area (essentially the combined “Northern Gateway” and the “Joint District” areas) has the opportunity to be the most significant commerce, transportation, and development hub within the county outside of Columbus city limits assuming appropriate redevelopment assistance is made available to the area.



Section V Findings of Fact

The Redevelopment Commission makes the following findings with regard to the Economic Development Plan for Bartholomew County:

1. The plan for the Area cannot be achieved by regulatory process or by the ordinary operation of private enterprise but for utilizing the powers allowed to the Redevelopment Commission.

The Greater Northern Gateway Area lacks the infrastructure needed to implement the county's economic development strategy. Specifically, the property north of CR 800 N between US 31 and ~~I-65~~the rail line is suited for industrial development, but despite appropriate zoning and ten years of active marketing of the 250-acre "Meadow Lawn" site (located within the Joint District), no industrial or other user has chosen the site. According to data of the Columbus Economic Development Board, the area has been submitted an average of nine times per year (up to 90 times over the past ten years) to prospective companies who were actively seeking an industrial site. Noting lack of infrastructure and/or lack of "shovel-ready status", 87% of prospects declined to conduct a site visit. Among the 13% who did conduct a site visit (approximately 1.25 times per year), none have chosen the site for their investment and job creation activities. For those citing a reason, the lack of infrastructure and road connectivity are the chief reasons given. But for utilizing the powers allowed to the Redevelopment Commission, including the creation of the allocation area described in Section VI of this plan, it is the finding of the Commission that approximately ~~970~~552 acres of industrially-zoned parcels (I-2 and/or IR), will remain undeveloped due to the costs of improvements.

In addition, the *Northern Gateway Plan* identifies the presence of multiple additional parcels within the proposed economic development area that are underdeveloped, underutilized, and in need of infrastructure and transportation improvements. The improvements to these and other areas are needed to ensure the successful implementation of the Plan, which in turn will help stimulate and retain economic growth in the entire Area.

2. The plan promotes significant opportunities for gainful employment of Bartholomew County residents.

The strategic goal of the county's overall economic development plan is "to grow and attract well-paying, high value-added, community minded base/primary businesses..." (Columbus Economic Development Board, 2012 Strategic Plan). The county will



accomplish this by supporting the expansion and recruitment of companies who fit this general description, by developing areas within the Greater Northern Gateway that will meet the needs of these employers and the residents who will fill the jobs called for by these employers, and by preparing the region's workforce to participate in a competitive and global economy by supporting eligible educational, work training &/or retraining programs.

3. The public health and welfare will be benefited by the accomplishment of the plan for the Greater Northern Gateway Area.

Implementation of this plan will lead to job creation across a broad spectrum. These jobs include office, sales, financial, and support service jobs. They also include manufacturing, research, and other jobs in the industrial and research areas. These jobs will improve the standard of living in the community and thus will benefit the public health and welfare.

4. The accomplishment of the plan for the Greater Northern Gateway Area will be a public utility and benefit as measured by the attraction and retention of permanent jobs, an increase in the property tax base, improved diversity of the economic base, increase in tourism and other beneficial economic and quality of life activities.

This plan is aimed specifically at retaining and adding new jobs and diversifying the Bartholomew County economy. The new businesses that will be attracted to the Greater Northern Gateway Area will invest in new buildings which will increase the property tax base for the county.

This plan is also intended to improve the quality of life and safety of area residents and businesses through enhanced transportation, infrastructure, and economic opportunities.

5. The plan for the Development Area Conforms to other development plans for the unit.

As referenced elsewhere herein, Bartholomew County has an adopted Comprehensive Plan and a supplemental Northern Gateway Land Use & Transportation Plan. The portions of those plans that relate to the Greater Northern Gateway Area are hereby incorporated as part of this plan.



6. The Greater Northern Gateway Area is an appropriate geographic area to be designated as an Economic Development Area.

A successful northern gateway and economic center is critical to a successful economy of the county. The gateway's influence extends well beyond any defined boundaries of the gateway itself, as its vitality is an important factor in the locational decisions of business enterprises. The capture of tax increments from new development will enable the county to provide the public improvements necessary to make the gateway and joint district a thriving hub of economic activity to benefit the entire county.

7. Identified Projects and Estimated Cost of Redevelopment Activities.

Based on the Northern Gateway Land Use & Transportation Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and the strategic planning efforts of the Columbus Economic Development Board, numerous potential projects have been identified for the beneficial redevelopment of the Greater Northern Gateway Area. A general description of identified projects includes:

- Public Service Facilities, including fire protection, medical services, and law enforcement
- Road & Intersection Improvements
- Utility Upgrades and Improvements
- Drainage Improvements
- Rail Spur & Crossing Improvements
- On-site development costs, such as land acquisition, site preparation, construction of structures, and machinery & equipment purchases/installation.
- Contracts with eligible entities for educational and training programs designed to prepare individuals to participate in a competitive and global economy.

Based on currently available information, it is estimated that the costs for the above projects could exceed \$30 million over a period of 20 years or more.



Section VI Allocation Area

Within the proposed Economic Development Area, one or more Tax Increment Finance Allocation Areas may ultimately be desired.

1. The initial allocation area will be designed to promote the Plan's efforts to foster development that will lead to well-paying, high value-added operations of primary/base businesses. Taking into consideration zoning and other identified components of the Comprehensive Plan, Northern Gateway Plan, and advice of the Columbus Economic Development Board, the initial allocation area is shown in Attachment 2. This area will be commonly referred to as the "Bartholomew County Greater Northern Gateway Allocation Area".
2. Future allocation areas may be desired and approved at later dates.



Bartholomew County
Indiana



Map Attachments

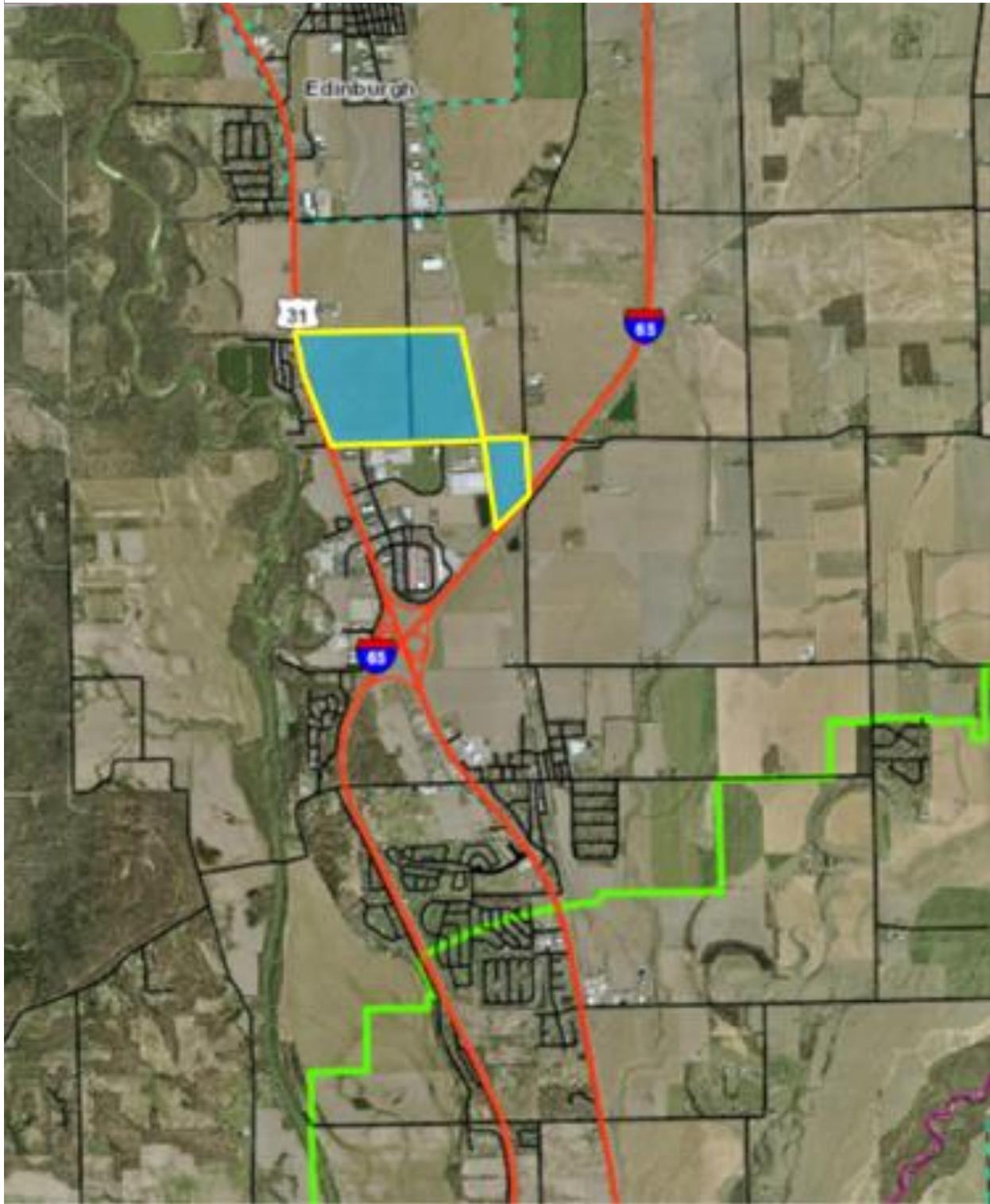
Attachment 1

Bartholomew County Greater Northern Gateway Economic Development Area



-  Economic Development Area
-  City's 2-Mile Jurisdiction

Attachment 2
Bartholomew County Greater Northern Gateway Allocation Area



-  Allocation Area
-  City's 2-Mile Jurisdiction