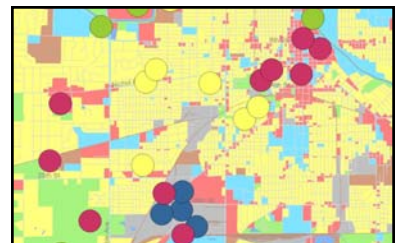


VISIONING DATA 14

PART III: SUPPORTING DATA



INTRODUCTION

A key component of creating the new Comprehensive Plan was the input of the people of Anderson. Over the course of the process, a number of participation opportunities were provided for Anderson residents. The project was guided by a Steering Committee made up of nearly 20 community members. Eleven interview sessions with key community stakeholder groups were conducted. Two rounds of public workshops were presented. In addition, a project website was used to disseminate information as well as gather additional input from the community.

This chapter provides a summary of the information gathered as part of the public input process for the Anderson Comprehensive Plan. The information contained in this chapter was originally issued as a series of interim reports after each stage of the input process. These reports can be accessed at the City of Anderson Planning Department.

The photo at right was taken during one of the public workshops held at City Hall. Throughout the public input process, a wide variety of participants were able to voice their opinions on the future of Anderson.



OVERVIEW

The first stage of collecting public input was a series of eleven Key Stakeholder Interview sessions conducted at the City of Anderson Planning Department. At those interviews, members of the consultant team and Planning Department staff had the opportunity to learn about the specific concerns of a wide variety of community stakeholders. The following is a list of the groups interviewed as part of this activity:

- Builders & Realtors
- Churches
- Major Employers
- West Side Neighborhood Group
- Schools
- Madison County Officials
- City of Anderson Officials
- Anderson Indiana Main Street (AIMS)
- Social Services
- Business Community Council
- Historic Preservation Group

Each group was provided with an hour-long interview session where they could express their concerns and desires for the future of Anderson. Over the course of the interviews, a total of forty-five individuals participated. The following section contains a summary of the discussions with each of the key groups.

ISSUES SUMMARY

Over the course of the Key Stakeholder Interviews, a number of issues surfaced as major themes for the Anderson community. While eleven different groups of individuals participated, many similar concerns could be derived from the discussions. The following is a summary of the top issues as discussed at those interviews.

- **Community Self Image:** One of the most-talked about issues was the current self-image of the Anderson community. Recent job losses and areas of blight have combined to create a negative self-perception on the part of the community. Many of the interview groups expressed a hope that the planning process currently underway could help to reverse this perception. Participants felt that though things may be perceived negatively in the short term, the community needs to have a higher ideal in mind as planning for the future continues and realize that this self-image can be changed for the better.
- **Employment/Economic Development:** Another serious issue in Anderson is the loss of jobs that has occurred in recent years. Each group discussed the need for new jobs in the community in some respect. Generally, it was felt that a strong, focused strategy for economic development in Anderson was needed. The groups recognized that the community is transitioning away from manufacturing as the focus of its employment base, and that other types of employers will need to be recruited to bring back jobs.

- **Impacts of Growth:** While the rate of growth in Anderson is not overwhelming, the location of new growth is beginning to affect city infrastructure and services. Of particular note was the need to reassess the location of fire stations to ensure that service coverage is efficient for all areas of the community. Similarly, provision of water and sewer services must be maintained at an adequate level as growth occurs. New development regulations in the County are resulting in more growth at the edges of Anderson, which will challenge City service provision in the coming years.
- **Education:** The quality of the local education system was discussed by many groups as well. Participants placed a high value on the school system, viewing quality schools as an important tool for bringing new residents to Anderson. They felt that the improvements occurring to school facilities was a positive step, but that further progress still needs to be made on the education side.
- **External Community Image:** Similar to the self-image issue, interview participants believed that Anderson also needs to change the image it projects to other communities. Many suggested that infrastructure and service enhancements, combined with a new and improved marketing strategy, could help to accomplish this. Anderson was seen to have many assets that could be better promoted to bring in new residents, including the low cost of housing and its convenient proximity to the amenities available in Indianapolis.
- **West Side Improvements:** The west side of Anderson was mentioned specifically as an area in need of attention. Housing improvements, infrastructure repairs, jobs, and shopping opportunities were all discussed in reference to this area of the community. There are many empty, abandoned commercial structures that could be reused to benefit the west side. Likewise, there are residential areas ripe for redevelopment that would improve housing conditions there.
- **Infrastructure:** Infrastructure in general was a concern, although the bulk of comments in this area focused on the need for road improvements. Participants acknowledged that some road improvements were being made, and that funding for such projects was limited, but still noted several areas of needed enhancements. Establishing a complete, four-lane corridor from Exit 22 to Downtown was discussed. Providing an improved connection between Raible Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard was seen as important to improving the west side. Sidewalk connections were perceived to be lacking in many areas of the community. Further, it was believed that the aesthetic quality of many road corridors could be improved with some enhancements.
- **Downtown Improvements:** While participants were supportive of recent improvements in Downtown Anderson, they also felt that continued efforts must be made. Downtown Anderson was seen as an area that could become a major attractor of new employers and residents if improvements happen. There was a perceived lack of retail and entertainment establishments needed to attract a younger crowd to Downtown. There was also concern about confusion caused by the 1-way streets in Downtown, as well as the need for further improvements similar to the Meridian Street corridor.

- **Redevelopment:** The closure of major employers and the relocation of commercial uses has resulted in numerous “brownfield” sites and structures in the community. While they may be seen as eyesores in their abandoned state, they are also seen as opportunities for redevelopment. The city needs to find a way to attract new users to these sites so that they can be cleaned up and serve the community again.
- **Planning & Development Guidance:** There was a perception among several interview participants that the community has lacked clear planning guidance, leading to development problems. In particular, the aesthetic appeal of the City was seen as a major issue. Many participants felt that more focused and clear land use guidance would be key in helping the City move forward. Further, stronger development standards for design issues would also improve the city’s image. There was concern that stronger design standards needed to be considered carefully, as the community would not want to cause businesses to locate elsewhere by enacting standards that are too stringent. Participants believed the key to this issue was ensuring that the strategies of the new plan are implemented, and that the community can see action and change as a result of their efforts.

OVERVIEW

The first phase of public workshops, called Visioning Workshops, was conducted for the purpose of collecting public input for the new Anderson Comprehensive Plan. The initial public input process was key in framing the specific issues that the Steering Committee analyzed in greater detail as the plan development process moved forward. The information gathered at these workshops also helped to define activities conducted at the Priorities Workshops.

The Visioning Workshops were held on three consecutive nights, at three separate locations, in order to provide a high level of accessibility to the community. The following locations were used (followed by the attendance at each meeting in parentheses):

- *November 8:* Madison County Community Health Center (14)
- *November 9:* Geater Center (10)
- *November 10:* City Hall (32)

At the workshops, attendees were seated in small groups to facilitate discussion. The bulk of the time at these workshops was spent discussing Anderson's assets and needs. Groups first listed and discussed as many assets of the community as they could generate. They next performed the same exercise to identify the community's needs. Finally, each participant voted for the needs they felt were most important. Once the voting process was complete, each group was given the opportunity to present their findings to the others.

Those that participated in the workshops were able to generate a considerable amount of useful information that was helpful to the planning process. The following section presents a summary of the issues discussed at the Visioning Workshops.

COMMUNITY ASSETS SUMMARY

The first component of the Visioning Workshops was a small group discussion of the Assets of Anderson. Participants were asked to generate a list of as many community assets as they could think of in the time allotted. The results from all three meetings were compiled to create a master list of community assets. The top ten assets, based on the number of times they were listed by participants, are summarized below.

- ***Cultural Institutions/Fine Arts:*** Many participants felt strongly about the cultural and fine arts resources that have been developed over time in Anderson. Specific references were made to such elements as the Library, the Fine Arts Center, Anderson Symphony Orchestra, the Paramount Theatre, and others. It was felt that these cultural elements add a great deal of value to the community.
- ***Location:*** Many aspects of Anderson's geographic location were noted as key assets. The City's proximity to major population centers, such as Indianapolis, Louisville, Chicago, and Cincinnati, was important. Its access to the interstate system and the state road network was also viewed positively. Many people felt that Anderson could take advantage of growth moving north and east from Indianapolis, and provide a lower-cost housing alternative to the northeast Indianapolis suburban communities.

- **Parks & Recreation:** The parks and recreation opportunities available in Anderson were seen as a valuable asset. Whether it was city park facilities, Mounds State Park, golf courses, Hoosier Park, or the White River, these resources were seen as great benefits to the overall quality of life. The Riverwalk was especially noted as a positive asset, and there was support for its expansion to serve more of the community.
- **Higher Education:** The higher education resources available in Anderson were noted frequently. At the top of the list was Anderson University, although other institutions such as Ivy Tech, Indiana Business College, and the Purdue satellite campus were also included. Participants felt that these education resources are quite valuable to the community during the on-going economic transition.
- **Not-for-Profits/Social Services:** Many participants valued the strong social services and not-for-profit organizations in Anderson. Organizations such as United Way, Second Harvest Food Bank, the Red Cross, and other groups were listed. Participants felt that the abundance and quality of these groups in Anderson was important. Likewise, the number of motivated and committed volunteers that help such organizations was highly valued.
- **Available Land & Buildings:** Many participants felt that the vacant land and buildings around Anderson provided an asset to build on. While the circumstances surrounding the vacant industrial buildings were unfortunate, many people felt that these sites are now opportunities for new development to occur. There was much support for the redevelopment of the vacant industrial and commercial sites in the community.
- **People:** One of the most valued resources in Anderson is its people. Many participants mentioned the diversity and participation of the community as an asset. They felt that it was good to have citizens who were willing to volunteer or get involved with community organizations in some way. This was seen as a resource that can be drawn on in the future, particularly with guidance from a new plan.
- **Churches:** The number and diversity of churches and related organizations in the community was seen as an asset. People felt that this provided the community with a strong spiritual base, as well as a number of charitable organizations that serve many people.
- **Downtown Revitalization:** Downtown Anderson is seen as an important asset as well. Participants liked the recent improvements, most notably along the Meridian Street corridor, and were hopeful that such improvements would continue in the future. They valued the new restaurants and entertainment venues that are beginning to appear in Downtown. Overall, improvements to downtown make Anderson a more attractive community, so continued work here was supported.
- **Public Safety:** The public safety services in the community are highly valued. Police, Fire, and Ambulance services were all recognized as important assets. Participants were particularly supportive of the new helicopter rescue service based at the airport, and spoke positively of the community's low crime rate due to excellent public safety services.

COMMUNITY NEEDS SUMMARY

The second component of the Visioning Workshops was a small group discussion of the Needs of Anderson. Participants were asked to generate a list of as many community needs as they could think of in the time allotted. Each participant was given three sticker dots to vote for the needs they considered the most important. The results from all three meetings were compiled to create a master list of community needs. The top ten needs, based on the number of votes received from participants, are summarized below.

- **Jobs:** The number one need identified at each of the three workshops was jobs. Significant job losses in recent years have made this a top priority across the community. Some felt that more industrial jobs should be sought to replace those lost, while others looked to the technology sector or small business development as the best routes for new employers.
- **Improved Education:** Despite the positive regard the higher education resources in Anderson received, many participants felt that education on the K-12 level could still be improved. While the recent facilities improvements were recognized, it was noted that the education occurring inside those facilities needs to be reevaluated. Higher quality education was seen as a stepping stone to attracting the type of employers the community needs.
- **Street improvements:** Another frequently mentioned need was road improvements. Again, participants noted that some upgrades have been made recently, but that much more was needed over the long term. On one level, there was concern about the general quality of pavement, curbs, and sidewalks in the community. On another level, specific widening and rerouting suggestions were made. Road improvements were another area looked at as an important economic development asset.
- **Design Standards:** It was noted that the aesthetic quality of Anderson could be improved. Many suggested that stronger design standards as a component of the zoning ordinance would help the situation. In particular, better standards for landscaping and signage were mentioned. Participants felt that a balance between elevated design standards and being welcoming to new businesses needed to be found.
- **Job Training & Entrepreneurship:** Providing good job training programs was seen as a component of the overall strategy of attracting new employers. Anderson's pool of available employees can become more attractive as these employees take advantage of additional training. Further, some method of supporting entrepreneurship in the community was supported as a way to generate small businesses and associated jobs.
- **West Side Revitalization:** The west side of Anderson was suggested as an area of the community in great need of revitalization. This included housing improvements as well as getting new shopping and employment opportunities to locate there. Also mentioned were infrastructure improvements to make the area more accessible and attractive.

- ***Economic Development Strategy:*** While jobs were recognized as an important need in Anderson, it was also noted that a more comprehensive economic development strategy to attract new employers. Participants felt that a more consistent and focused strategy is needed if the community is to be successful. They felt that part of this strategy needed to be attention to quality of life issues in the community, as well as providing redevelopment opportunities at existing sites.
- ***Community Self-Image:*** Improving the self-image of the community was recognized as a key need for the future. Due to recent job losses and other issues, people in Anderson seem to have become less optimistic about the future. Participants felt that some method of getting people positive about the future was needed so that the community can come together and work on the important issues it is facing.
- ***External Marketing & Promotion:*** Like the internal image, the external image of Anderson needs to be improved. It was felt that, given the many assets noted during the first part of the meeting, the city needed to do a better job of promoting itself. Anderson has the potential to be very attractive to new residents if it can create a positive image and marketing strategy. In particular, participants noted that Anderson could attract residents from Indianapolis if it made a concerted promotion effort.
- ***Youth Activities & Investment:*** Many participants noted a need for more safe, positive activities for youth in the community. It was felt that more community centers could be helpful, as well as facilities such as a skate park. Generally, participants supported the development of recreation alternatives that were healthy and safe.

PRIORITIES WORKSHOPS

A second round of public workshops, called Priorities Workshops, was conducted in January to expand upon the information gathered during the Visioning Workshops. The Visioning Workshops framed several specific issues that were addressed in greater detail during the Priorities Workshops. The Priorities Workshops were held at three separate locations over a span of two weeks to provide a high level of accessibility to the community. The following locations were used (followed by the attendance at each meeting in parentheses):

- *January 11:* Ivy Tech - Flagship Extension Building (10)
- *January 13:* Anderson Public Library - Delaware Room (8)
- *January 19:* City Hall - Auditorium (5)

As with the Visioning Workshops, attendees were seated in small groups to facilitate discussion. Participants were led through a series of activities designed to elicit input on a number of issues, specifically focusing on Community Needs, Land Use, Infrastructure, and Downtown Anderson. Each activity began with a worksheet, followed by a group discussion about the information on the worksheet. Two of the activities, Land Use and Infrastructure, had additional mapping exercises to supplement the worksheets.

As noted above, the total attendance for the three workshops was low, prompting the City to schedule a fourth workshop. This additional workshop was held in the lower level lobby of City Hall on February 22, and brought in 19 participants. The data gathered at this workshop was supplemented by surveys administered at a City-sponsored Downtown seminar, as well as by the submission of several responses via the project website. The addition of this data resulted in an analysis that provided a more representative view of the community's priorities.

The results of each activity are summarized on the following pages.

COMMUNITY NEEDS

The first activity was a worksheet based on the Community Needs that had been identified as part of the Visioning Workshops. During the Visioning Workshops, participants generated a list of community needs, and then vote for the needs they felt were most important for the future of Anderson. The worksheet presented at the second set of workshops asked participants to review the original list of needs, and to rate the importance of each need from 1 to 5 (with 5 representing the highest importance). This exercise resulted in a new prioritized list of needs that helped define the key issues addressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

The table below contains the Community Need statements that received the highest aggregate scores based on the responses of the participants in the workshops.

Community Needs Priorities	
1	Bring jobs to the community to replace those that have been lost.
2	Develop a focused, strategic plan for economic development in Anderson.
3	Improve Anderson's tax base.
4	Enforce ordinances to clean up run-down properties.
5	Follow-Through: Make the new plans happen.
6	Improvements to Anderson's K-12 education system.
7	Clean-up and reuse of blighted areas in the community.
8	Better external marketing of Anderson as a good place to live & work.
9	Improve the "self-image" that Anderson residents have of the community.
10	Foster entrepreneurship.

The highest priority needs, as identified at the Priorities Workshops, are very similar to the “top 10” list that was assembled as a result of the Visioning Workshops. There continues to be a strong emphasis on pursuing new jobs and economic development activities. Ensuring that the recommendations of the new plan are implemented was also important to participants. As identified in the Visioning Workshops, such needs as improved schools, a more positive community image, an improved tax base, and revitalization of blighted areas remain key concerns of the community.

LAND USE

The second activity focused on Land Use issues. The worksheet asked participants to identify the most desirable types of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses for the future of Anderson. Participants then identified, on a map of Anderson, the most appropriate locations for this growth to occur. The resulting information is summarized below.

RESIDENTIAL

The first portion of the Land Use discussion focused on future residential growth in Anderson. Participants were asked to identify the types of the residential development that were most desirable for the future of Anderson. The top three responses are shown in the table below.

Most Desirable Types of RESIDENTIAL Development	
1	Traditional Neighborhood Single Family Homes
2	Suburban Single Family Homes
3	Mid Range Homes

Much of the discussion of future residential growth focused on continuing to build on the resources that Anderson already possesses. Redevelopment of existing traditional core neighborhoods was highly rated, as were the development of new single family homes in more suburban-style subdivisions. Many participants noted that Anderson was becoming a “bedroom community” for Indianapolis, and that housing styles to attract such residents would be appropriate. This includes the single family housing mentioned earlier, as well as the potential development of townhouse style condominiums that provide high-quality, low-maintenance housing option for commuters. High-density housing in general was rated as much less desirable than single family homes for future development.

Participants were also asked to identify locations within Anderson that would be appropriate for future residential growth. Most identified existing neighborhoods for redevelopment or focused on the south side of Anderson in recognition of the influence of Indianapolis on growth patterns. In addition, several areas of vacant land adjacent to existing neighborhoods were identified, with priority being placed on developing residential areas where services and infrastructure were already available.

COMMERCIAL

The next portion of the discussion centered on future commercial growth. Participants were asked to identify the types of commercial development that were most desirable for the future of Anderson. The top three responses are shown in the table below.

Most Desirable Types of COMMERCIAL Development	
1	Locally-Owned Businesses
2	Planned Commercial Centers
3	Specialty Shops (craft store, bike shop, art gallery, bookstore)

Locally-owned businesses were favored over national chain stores, while many recognized that a mix of the two may offer the best combination for the community. The poor planning of many existing commercial areas was noted, particularly the need to better control access to major roads for the sake of safety and efficiency. Better planning and design of these facilities was prioritized. Also, a wider mix of specialty shops in the community was desired. These could provide a welcome complement to the larger chain stores already found in the community.

Participants were asked to identify locations within Anderson that would be appropriate for future commercial growth. Some focused on existing commercial areas, emphasizing the need to reuse many of the buildings and sites that had been vacated in favor of new facilities. There was also a strong interest in developing more commercial resources in Downtown Anderson. Also, the west side of Anderson was recognized as needing more shopping opportunities.

INDUSTRIAL

The next portion of the discussion centered on future industrial growth. Participants were asked to identify the types of industrial development that were most desirable for the future of Anderson. The top three responses are shown in the table below.

Most Desirable Types of INDUSTRIAL Development	
1	Locally-Owned Companies
2	Small Manufacturers
3	High-Tech Industries & Service Companies

In terms of future industrial development, high-tech and research and development uses were favored slightly over more traditional industrial uses. However, many participants were emphatic that they would be happy to bring in any jobs, and were not too concerned about what type of jobs they were. Additionally, some were willing to prioritize job growth over the environmental impacts that some uses could incur. Small manufacturers and light industrial uses were seen as more desirable than heavy industrial uses.

Participants were asked to identify locations within Anderson that would be appropriate for future industrial growth. Many recognized the need to redevelop existing vacant industrial sites. It was noted that many of these sites were now surrounded by residential neighborhoods, so it would make more sense to develop them as business or office uses as opposed to traditional heavy manufacturing uses. The I-69 corridor was also a focus of interest for new industrial development in order to take advantage of the connectivity it provides.

CONSERVATION

The next portion of the discussion centered on conservation areas. Participants were asked to identify the types of land that were most desirable to protect from future development. The top three responses are shown in the table below.

Most Important Lands to Protect From Development	
1	Recreation Areas
2	Stream Channels
3	Wooded Areas

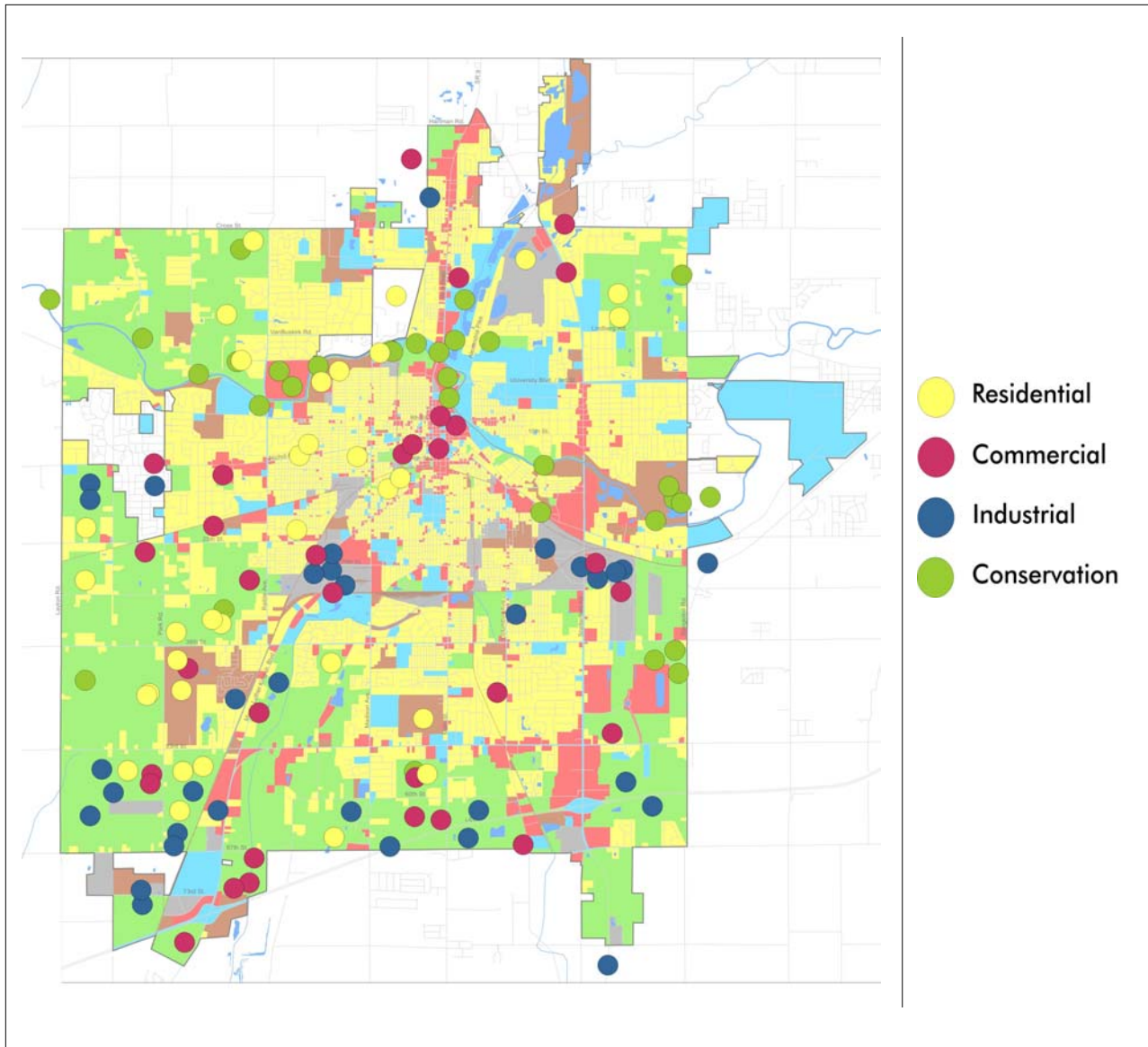
The presence of the White River and Killbuck Creek in the community likely influenced the participants' emphasis on protecting stream channels and floodplains. Wetlands were also recognized as needing some form of protection. Many participants discussed the possibility of using these protected areas for recreation, such as the creation of a riverside trail system. Protecting remaining wooded areas in Anderson was also rated highly.

Participants were asked to identify locations within Anderson that should be conserved from future growth. The vast majority of participants identified the White River corridor as an area that should be protected. It was recognized as a major resource to the community which should be utilized as a quality of life amenity. Some participants also identified the protection of as-yet undeveloped areas, emphasizing the need to reuse already developed areas where possible.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The final section of the worksheet asked participants to evaluate a number of options for managing future development. A strong emphasis was placed on redevelopment of existing sites and neighborhoods over spreading new development to undeveloped land. There was also an emphasis on streamlining the development review process to better facilitate redevelopment activities.

LAND USE ACTIVITY SUMMARY MAP



INFRASTRUCTURE

The third activity of the Priorities Workshops focused on Infrastructure and Public Services. The worksheet asked participants to identify priorities for future investment in infrastructure and public services, as well as to rate the importance and quality of various infrastructure components. Participants then identified, on a map of Anderson, the most needed transportation and infrastructure improvements.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

The first portion of the worksheet asked participants to prioritize funding among a variety of city services and infrastructure. The resulting top three priorities are shown in the table below.

Public Services That Should Get The Highest Funding Priorities	
1	Construction & Maintenance of Streets and Roads.
2	Economic Development
3	Law Enforcement

Improvements to roads throughout the community was a key issue for most participants. Concerns included patching potholes, reconfiguring existing intersections, widening high-traffic corridors, and developing new roadway connections in some areas. This was seen as a way to improve local traffic circulation, as well as provide the infrastructure needed to attract and support new employers. Economic development was also a clear priority among workshop participants. Many emphasized the need to concentrate on bringing in new employers to replace the jobs that have been lost in Anderson in recent years. Coming in a close third among the choices was law enforcement, a high priority public service in every community.

TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

The transportation section of the worksheet had two key questions. The first question asked which transportation modes or facilities were most important to Anderson’s future, and the second asked which facilities were in the best condition at the present time. The results of those questions are shown in the tables below.

Most Important Transportation Facilities	
1	City Roads (i.e. Raible Avenue, Main Street)
2	Interstate Highways (i.e. I-69)
3	Major State Highways (i.e. SR 9, SR 32)

Current Condition Of Transportation Facilities	
1	Interstate Highways (i.e. I-69)
2	Major State Highways (i.e. SR 9, SR 32)
3	Local Air Travel (i.e. Anderson Municipal Airport)

Generally, the road system in Anderson, whether it was local or state roads, was regarded as the most important transportation resource for Anderson’s future. The major state and interstate highways that are a part of Anderson’s transportation network were recognized as key resources for economic development. In addition, people saw an increasing role for these resources as Anderson continues to serve a commuter market for Indianapolis.

In terms of the condition or quality of existing transportation resources, state and interstate highways were seen as being in the best condition. Likewise, Anderson’s airport was generally regarded as being well-maintained. Resources that were seen as needing more investment in the future included sidewalks for pedestrian use, railroads for commuters to Indianapolis, and local public transportation. Many participants recognized a need to supplement the high-quality vehicle transportation network with these alternative forms of transportation to form a complete system.

Participants were also asked to identify the most needed transportation improvements in Anderson. One of the overwhelming favorites noted as part of this exercise was the intersection of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Raible Avenue, and 38th Street. Bridging the gap caused by the railroad line in this area was seen as a crucial improvement. Other transportation upgrades identified included a frontage road along I-69 to support industrial development, improvements to SR 32 west of the city, a new east-west corridor generally following the 25th Street, and enhancements to the airport to accommodate more kinds of airplane traffic.

PUBLIC SERVICES & FACILITIES

Similar to the transportation section, participants were asked which public services or facilities were most important to Anderson’s future, and which of those services or facilities were in the best condition at the present time. The results of those questions are shown in the tables below.

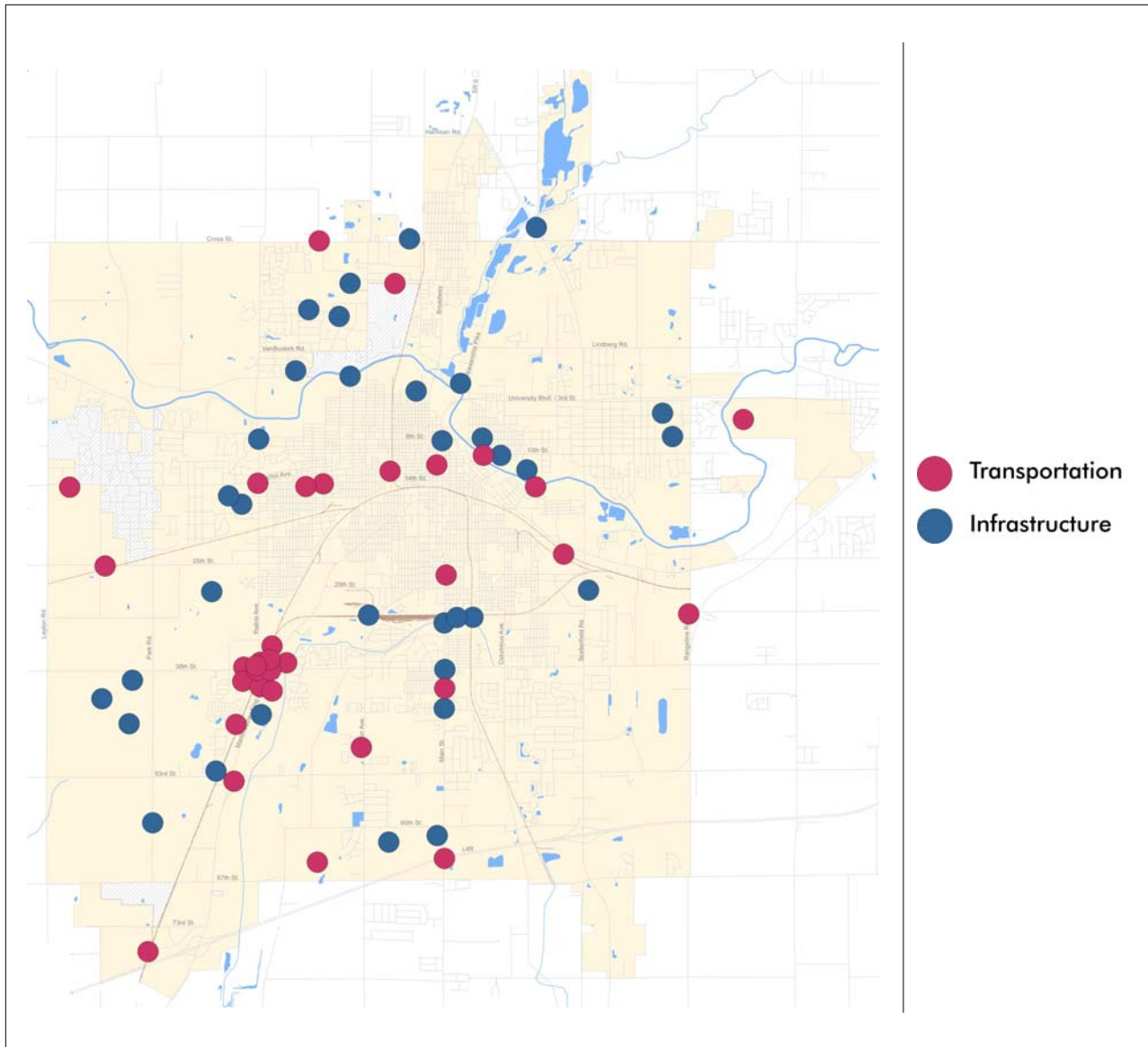
Most Important Public Services or Facilities	
1	Fire Protection
2	Road Maintenance (including snow removal)
3	Schools (K-12)

Current Condition Of Public Services or Facilities	
1	Fire Protection
2	Law Enforcement
3	Parks & Recreation

Most participants found this portion of the exercise very challenging, as all of the listed options play an important role in the welfare of Anderson. Fire protection ranked highest among the competing choices, with road maintenance and schools following closely behind. In terms of the condition of existing public facilities and services, public safety and parks and recreation were both quite highly regarded by participants. In contrast, code enforcement and schools were two areas that were seen as having significant room for improvement.

On the same map from the transportation exercise, participants were asked to identify what key infrastructure improvements needed to be made. Drainageway improvements were noted in several locations around the community. Some felt that utilities should be extended to certain areas of Anderson so that they would be attractive for future industrial development. Continued development of parks facilities, such as a riverside trail, was also supported by workshop participants.

INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIVITY SUMMARY MAP



PRIORITIES WORKSHOPS (CONT.)

DOWNTOWN

The final activity explored issues relating to Downtown Anderson. The worksheet asked participants to identify the appropriate mix of land uses for Downtown, key improvements needed within Downtown, and issues of parking and circulation. This activity did not have a map component. The resulting information is summarized below.

IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF DOWNTOWN

Participants were first asked about the characteristics that make Downtown important to the community. The top three responses to the question are shown in the table below.

Most Important Aspects Of Downtown Anderson	
1	The role of downtown as the seat of City and County governments.
2	The historic architecture of the theaters, stores, and other buildings.
3	The social atmosphere that is created by the restaurants, specialty stores, and theaters.

Downtown's role as a government center was key to many, due to the convenient, centralized location of many of the public services they take advantage of. Many felt that Downtown is a social gathering spot, providing an interesting atmosphere of destinations and activities that can't be found elsewhere. Also, several participants recognized the value of the unique historic architecture that can be found in Downtown Anderson. Many other characteristics came close in emphasis to the top three shown above. The recent improvements to the Meridian Street corridor were appreciated, and the continuation of such enhancements was supported.

FUTURE ENHANCEMENTS TO DOWNTOWN

The next section asked participants to consider how Downtown Anderson could be improved in the future. The first question asked what the highest priorities should be for enhancements to Downtown. The top three responses to the question are shown in the table below.

Highest Priorities For Enhancements To Downtown Anderson	
1	Provision of adequate parking to meet the needs of employees and visitors in Downtown.
2	Provision of quality streets, sidewalks, drainage, and utilities, so that property owners are encouraged to invest in the area.
3	Continue Downtown improvements & increase businesses located there.

The number one issue discussed by participants was the need to bring more businesses to Downtown. There needs to be a reason for people to come downtown, particularly for shopping and restaurants. Many also felt that part of the problem was that existing downtown businesses were very spread out, and people weren't willing to walk between them. Also important was improving the infrastructure in the Downtown area so that sidewalks were safe, and that adequate infrastructure was available for new businesses that may locate there.

When asked to identify specific improvements needed in Downtown Anderson, the following three items received the highest priority:

Most Important Improvements For Downtown Anderson	
1	The provision of adequate parking for visitors to Downtown.
2	Increased code enforcement to require the upkeep of properties and buildings.
3	Provision of economic incentives (such as tax breaks) to encourage investment in the area.

Parking for visitors to Downtown was at the top of the list of improvements needed. Specific issues relating to parking will be discussed later on in this section. While virtually all participants felt that more businesses were needed Downtown, many believed that some form of economic incentives would be needed to make this happen. Also, increased emphasis on cleaning up and maintaining properties in and around Downtown was desired. Participants felt that people would not want to visit Downtown if it was dirty or in disrepair. Many noted that there are some vacant industrial parcels near Downtown that should be cleaned up and reused instead of being lingering eyesores.

Participants were then asked to identify the specific types of businesses or other uses that would be appropriate to Downtown Anderson. The following are the top three responses:

Most Needed Types Of New Development In Downtown Anderson	
1	Entertainment Commercial (restaurants, theaters, nightclubs)
2	Pedestrian Friendly Routes and Areas
3	Specialty Shops (craft store, bike shop, art gallery, bookstore)

The heavy emphasis in the responses and discussion was making Downtown an entertainment and recreation center for the community. Many felt that Downtown was currently lacking in the type of restaurants, bars, shops, and other specialty uses that would make it an exciting destination. People felt that Downtown couldn't, and shouldn't, compete with the major retail stores in other commercial areas. Rather, it should find a unique niche that allows it to complement the other areas. Going back to infrastructure issues, people felt that maintaining safe and friendly pedestrian routes was key in making visitors feel comfortable moving around within Downtown.

PARKING & TRAFFIC ISSUES

Two important Downtown issues identified in the Visioning Workshops were explored as part of the Downtown worksheet. Participants were asked about the best way to meet parking needs in Downtown. The top three responses to the question are shown in the table below.

Most Effective Method Of Providing Adequate Parking In Downtown Anderson	
1	Creation of additional public parking lots and/or structures.
2	Better directional signs for existing parking.
3	Encouraging alternative forms of transportation (i.e. public transit, bicycling, walking).

Most felt that more parking spaces needed to be created to serve the demand. Others believed that better directional/wayfinding signage for existing parking areas would be an improvement. One interesting result is the response given to encouraging the use of alternative forms of transportation. This would help to reduce the demand for parking spaces instead of adding more parking spaces to fit current needs.

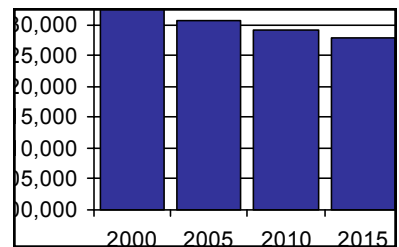
In addition to parking issues, many participants from the first round voiced concerns about the system of one-way streets in and around Downtown. A general question was asked about the need to make modifications to the one way streets. The top three responses to the question are shown in the table below.

Modifications To The 1-way Streets In Downtown Anderson	
1	Change some to 2-way traffic for better traffic flow.
2	Nothing, they are functioning adequately.
3	Change all to 2-way traffic, the current system is too difficult.

Changing some, but not all, of the 1-way streets to 2-way traffic was most selected response. Even so, there was very little consensus as to which specific streets needed to be modified to accomplish a better traffic flow. Coming in a close second was leaving the streets alone as they are, with some participants saying that even though they can be problematic at times, making major changes would only cause more trouble.

PHYSICAL DATA 15

PART III: SUPPORTING DATA



INTRODUCTION

In addition to public input, significant research and analysis was conducted in order to establish an understanding of the physical and demographic issues facing Anderson. Only when the public input is combined with the analysis can a truly clear picture of the community's needs be created. These two components of the process were brought together to help shape the vision, goals, and policies of the Anderson Comprehensive Plan.

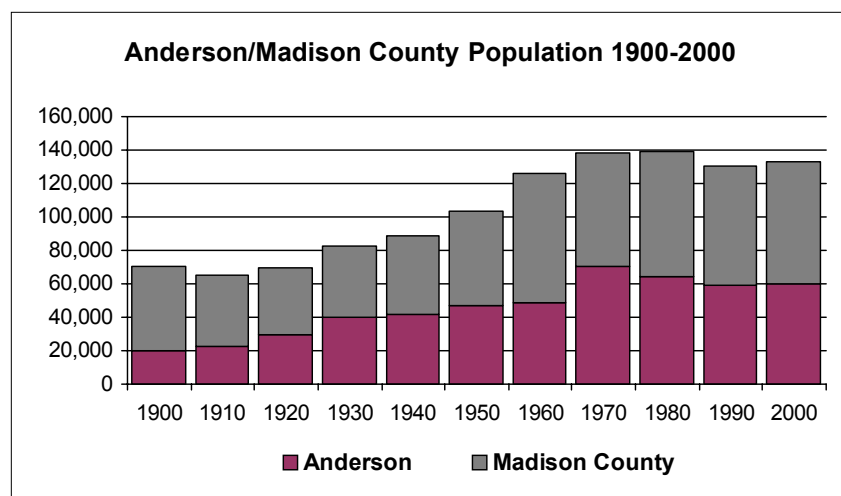
This chapter provides a summary of the information generated as a result of the extensive physical and demographic analysis conducted for the Plan. In addition to the text, there is a series of maps which highlight a variety of physical issues within Anderson.

This demographic profile looks at population change, wealth, education and job creation as indicators of community prosperity. Anderson and Madison County have a number of positive economic assets to build upon but a look at this profile demonstrates there are some areas of concern as well. For instance, the high rate of residents who commute out of the county to work would indicate that there is a talented resident labor force in the area but not enough high quality jobs to keep them working in Anderson. However, outbound commuters support claims of quality and value in housing as well as in quality of amenities

The following pages provide a brief overview of Anderson’s performance in population, wealth, education and job creation. Following this overview is an analysis of Anderson’s (Madison County’s) economic and demographic performance within the context of similar Midwestern communities.

POPULATION

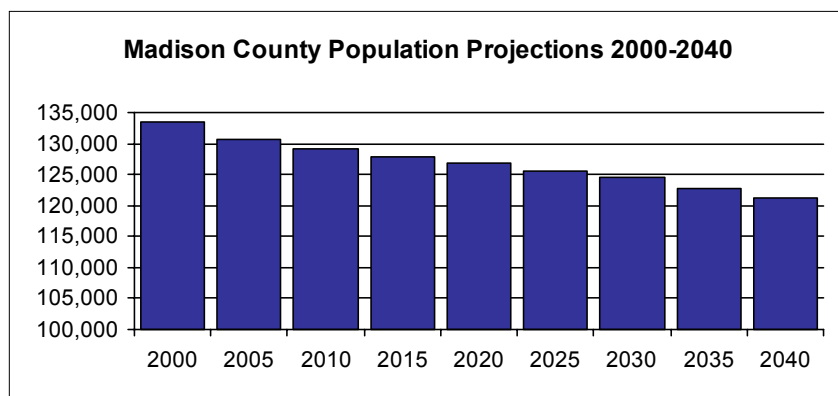
Like many communities, Anderson experienced steady population growth between 1900 and 1970, expanding by two and a half times over that period. The greatest increase occurred between 1960 and 1970 where the cities population increased by over 20,000 to reach a peak of nearly 71,000 inhabitants. After 1970, following the nations first energy crisis, Anderson began to experience a steady decline in population, which has been fueled by the erosion of the manufacturing base throughout much of the Midwest.



A closer look at Anderson’s census profile demonstrates that the population is aging at a greater rate than the Indiana average. A particular cause for concern is the proportion of Anderson’s population that is between the ages of 35-55 is nearly 4 percent lower than Indiana’s as a whole. This is the age range that would be working, raising families, and contributing leadership and volunteer talents in Anderson

Population Breakdown by Age (2000)		
Age Group	% of Anderson	% of Indiana
Under 5 years	6.90%	7.00%
5-9 years	6.70%	7.30%
10-14 years	6.10%	7.30%
15-19 years	6.80%	7.50%
20-24 years	8.00%	7.00%
25-34 years	14.00%	13.70%
35-44 years	13.60%	15.80%
45-54 years	12.20%	13.40%
55-59 Years	5.00%	4.80%
60-64 Years	4.20%	3.90%
65-74 Years	7.20%	6.50%
75-84 years	6.40%	4.40%
85 years and over	2.20%	1.50%
Median age	36.1 years	35.2 years

It is this aging population that causes demographers to predict that Madison County will continue to lose population through 2040. If nothing changes, it is expected that the population will decline by 12,000 residents over next 35 years.

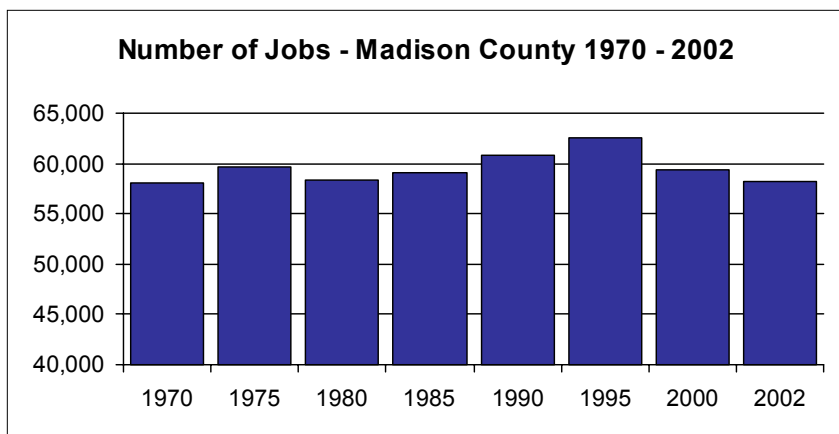


WEALTH & JOB CREATION

In recent years, urban areas have tended to lag behind state averages when it comes to income levels while having higher rates of unemployment and poverty. This has been due largely to suburbanization and subsequent inner city abandonment. Anderson certainly adheres to this trend. The concern when comparing Anderson to the state in these statistics is the comparatively slow rate of improvement between 1990-2000. Anderson’s median household income, for instance, has grown 24 percent over that period while Indiana’s grew by 44 percent. Also, Indiana as a whole has seen a significant drop in unemployment rates between 1990-2000 while Anderson’s rate has stayed the same.

Income & Unemployment Comparisons				
	Anderson 1990	Indiana 1990	Anderson 2000	Indiana 2000
Median Household Income	\$26,272	\$28,797	\$32,577	\$41,567
Per capita Income	\$12,619	\$13,149	\$19,142	\$20,397
Average Wage per Job*	\$24,065	\$21,107	\$29,899	\$32,389
Unemployment Rate	8.20%	5.70%	8.20%	3.30%
Persons below the Poverty Level	17.90%	10.70%	13.40%	9.50%

Between 1970 and 2002, the Anderson area maintained a consistent number of jobs despite heavy losses in the manufacturing sector. The job market peaked in 1995 with a total of over 62,000 jobs and has declined steadily since.



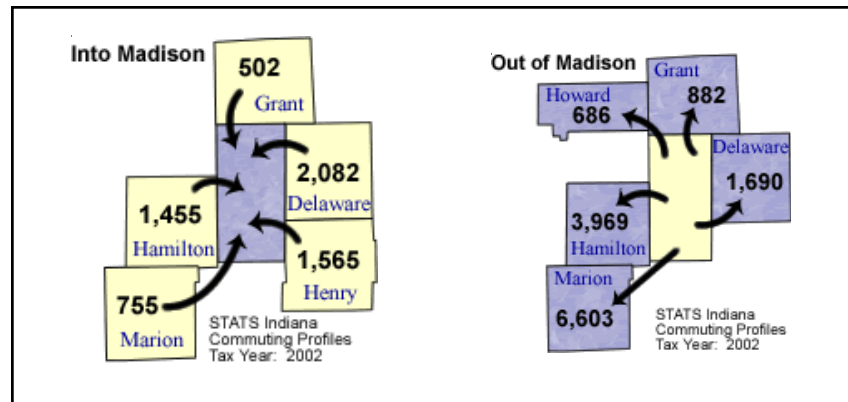
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational attainment in Anderson and Madison County has tended to be below state averages. Though the community’s public schools and Anderson’s higher education institutions continue to produce well educated graduates, many of these individuals leave the community for careers in other locations. Nearly one quarter of Anderson’s residents above the age of 25 has not achieved a high school diploma, which puts local educational attainment lower than the state average.

Educational Attainment for Persons 25 Years and Older				
Education Level	Anderson 1990	Indiana 1990	Anderson 2000	Indiana 2000
Less than 9 th Grade	10.1%	8.5%	6.7%	5.3%
9 th – 12 th Grade (no diploma)	18.6%	15.8%	15.9%	12.6%
High School Grad or equivalency	39.3%	38.2%	39.0%	37.2%
Some College, No Degree	15.7%	16.6%	19.7%	19.7%
Associate Degree	4.3%	5.3%	5.6%	5.8%
Bachelor’s Degree	7.0%	9.2%	7.9%	12.2%
Graduate or Professional Degree	5.0%	6.4%	5.2%	7.2%

COMMUTING PATTERNS

A look at the commuting patterns for Madison County shows that the number of workers commuting out of the county nearly doubles the total of workers coming in from other counties. Nearly 11,000 Madison County residents commute to Marion and Hamilton Counties alone. This trend would suggest that Anderson and Madison County is home to a skilled labor force who view the area as a desirable place to live with quality and affordability in housing as well as quality amenities. The next step would be to create more high quality jobs to keep these people working where they live and to attract more people to the area.



In order to assess Anderson's transformation over the last three decades, SDG selected ten peer communities in the Midwest based on comparable characteristics in 1970. Information is presented at county levels to reflect the interdependence of the dominant municipality and resource characteristics of the surrounding area. The community characteristics have been analyzed in six key areas including population, median household income, educational attainment levels, poverty, unemployment, and the distribution of jobs by sector. These community characteristics contribute to evaluating the Anderson area economy in terms of population, education, wealth creation, and employment.

The following pages present the tables and charts with a short commentary on Anderson's position in each. The data was retrieved from the United States Census Bureau and other public sources. The resulting analysis shows how the peer group as a whole has progressed and how Anderson (Madison County) has fared as a part of the group.

SELECTED PEER COMMUNITIES

JACKSON, MI (JACKSON COUNTY)

Jackson can be described as the Crossroads of Michigan. It is accessible from Interstate 94, US 127, Highway 50, Highway 106 and Highway 60, making Jackson an easy destination for industry and travel. The city's chief claim to fame is that it was the birthplace of the Republican Party.

BATTLE CREEK, MI (CALHOUN COUNTY)

Battle Creek is situated 70 miles east of Lake Michigan at the confluence of the Kalamazoo and Battle Creek rivers. Located on Interstate 94, Battle Creek benefits from its enviable position midway between Detroit and Chicago. The city is home to the Kellogg Company World headquarters which has earned Battle Creek the moniker "The Breakfast Capital of the World." Battle Creek is also home to Western Michigan University whose renowned school of aviation coupled with the Regional Manufacturing Technology Center has made Battle Creek a magnet for the aviation industry. Major aviation industry employers include Duncan Aviation and Waco Classic Aircraft.

JANESVILLE, WI (ROCK COUNTY)

Janesville is known as "Wisconsin's Park Place" because of its 2,300 acres of beautiful parks and bicycle trails. The Janesville area has a large manufacturing base with an emphasis on the automotive and food production industries. Some of the largest employers include General Motors Corporation, Lear Corporation, SSI Technologies, Hormel, Frito-Lay and Lab Safety.

MANSFIELD, OH (RICHLAND COUNTY)

Mansfield is situated in the rolling foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Downtown Mansfield has experienced a renaissance in recent years with downtown employment having grown from only 3,500 in 1985 to over 9,000 by 2000. The largest employers in the area include General Motors, MedCentral, Sprint, Therm-O-Disc, Hi-Stat, Jay Industries and MANCI.

PEER GROUP ANALYSIS (CONT.)

COVINGTON, KY (KENTON COUNTY)

Covington is located on the Ohio River directly across from Cincinnati, Ohio. As the nucleus of a vital and growing region, Covington has been described as “the Keystone of Northern Kentucky.” Being a suburban community, Covington’s largest employment sectors are professional services and retail. Major companies include Fidelity Investments, Cigna Financial and BBI Marketing services. The largest manufacturing employers are CTS Manufacturing, OEM Electric and Overhead Door.

MUNCIE, IN (DELAWARE COUNTY)

Located just northeast of Anderson, Muncie is home to Ball State University. Muncie’s community and economic development efforts have received a lot of attention lately. In November 2004 the Indiana Chamber of Commerce recognized Muncie as the “*Community of the Year*” for its efforts in community and economic development. In June 2004 *Money Magazine* ranked Muncie as one of the top five “*up and coming*” communities under 150,000 people in the United States. Muncie’s economic base is still heavily tied to the automotive industry with the two largest manufacturing employers being BorgWarner Automotive and Manual Transmissions of Muncie. Also, the area has one of the highest concentrations of tool and die making shops (per capita) of any community its size in the country. Other major employers include Cardinal Health System, Inc. and Ball State University.

HOLLAND, MI (OTTAWA COUNTY)

Located on the coast of Lake Michigan, Holland is one of the fastest growing communities in the country. The city is home to a thriving tourist industry and each year they celebrate the communities Dutch heritage by staging its Tulip Festival, which is said to be the third most attended festival in the nation. The Holland area is home to some of the best-known names in the food industry. Heinz North America produces pickles at its plant in Holland. Other famous Holland-area producers of food products and household goods are Mead Johnson Nutritionals, Pfizer, Perrigo Company and Boar’s Head Provisions Co., Inc. Also, several automotive component suppliers have plants in the Holland area. One of the largest is Johnson Controls, Inc., which produces components for auto interiors and MAGNA DONNELLY, which is an international manufacturer of automotive mirrors, windows and door handles.

ELKHART, IN (ELKHART COUNTY)

Known as the R.V. Capitol of the World, Elkhart is the center of this industry that is responsible for over 1 billion dollars a year in total wages paid to workers in the 4-county area. Elkhart is also remembered as the home of Miles Medical Co., which invented such popular pharmaceuticals as Alka-Seltzer and Once-A-Day vitamins. Other major industries in Elkhart include the manufacturing of musical instruments and manufactured homes.

KENT, OH (PORTAGE COUNTY)

Located in Northeastern Ohio, Kent is home to Kent State University and Hiram College and the city touts itself as the “Original Tree City USA.” Kent is easily accessible from Cleveland, Akron, Canton, and Youngstown, and the city serves as a significant transportation link between these and other major metropolitan areas. Educational institutions are by far the leading employers in Kent but there is also a strong manufacturing base in the city. Metalworking, Plastic & Rubber Products and Printing/Publishing lead the county’s manufacturing sector. The largest manufacturing employers in the area include GE Lighting Inc., St. Gobain Performance Plastics, McMaster-Carr and Foundry Systems International.

BEAVERCREEK, OH (GREENE COUNTY)

Beavercreek is situated in the heart of the Cincinnati-Dayton-Columbus triangle of Southwestern Ohio. Largely a suburban community, many Beavercreek residents are current or former Air Force and civilian employees of nearby Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and its defense industry contractors which serve this huge administrative command, support services, and research facility. Beavercreek is home to numerous research and manufacturing firms engaged in defense technologies, aerospace, automotive components, electronics and other specialized advanced technologies.



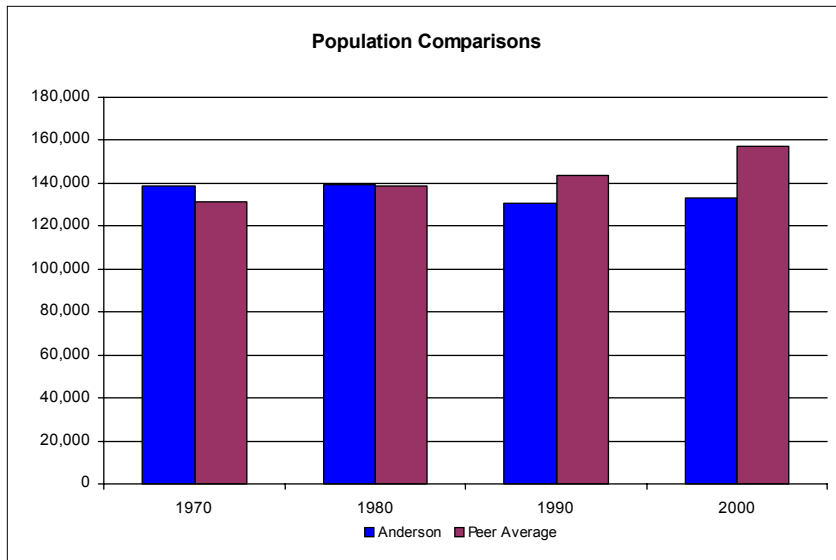
The map at left shows the location of the ten communities selected as part of the Peer Group analysis.

POPULATION

Communities with a dynamic economy and high quality of life are keeping their citizens and attracting new ones. Residents remain in communities and move to communities that offer excellence and opportunity for jobs, education, cultural enrichment, recreation, and for a safe and healthy lifestyle. Declining populations typically occur where economic opportunity is declining due to job losses, where public safety is being compromised, where education is not meeting resident expectations, or where public services are not supporting resident demands.

In 1970, Madison County was the third largest community in the peer group; by 2000, it had dropped to ninth. It was surpassed by Janesville, Wisconsin; Covington, Kentucky; Holland, Michigan; Elkhart, Indiana; Kent, Ohio; and Beavercreek, Ohio. Only nearby Muncie had a greater population decline. Anderson has slowly lost population since 1970 and has the highest percentage of decline among its peer communities. This sharply contrasts with the state of Indiana as a whole with a 17.1 percent gain and the peer communities as a group with a 19.6 percent gain.

Peer Group Population Comparisons					
County (Largest City)	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change
Jackson, MI (Jackson)	143,274	151,495	149,756	158,422	10.6
Calhoun, MI (Battle Creek)	141,963	141,557	135,982	137,985	-2.8
Madison, IN (Anderson)	138,451	139,336	130,669	133,358	-3.7
Rock, WI (Janesville)	131,970	139,420	139,510	152,307	15.4
Richland, OH (Mansfield)	129,997	131,205	126,137	128,852	-0.9
Kenton, KY (Covington)	129,440	137,058	142,031	151,464	17
Delaware, IN (Muncie)	129,219	128,587	119,659	118,769	-8.1
Ottawa, MI (Holland)	128,181	157,174	187,768	238,314	85.9
Elkhart, IN (Elkhart)	126,529	137,330	156,198	182,791	44.5
Portage, OH (Kent)	125,868	135,856	142,585	152,061	20.8
Greene, OH (Beavercreek)	125,057	129,769	136,731	147,886	18.3
Peer Average	131,150	138,945	143,636	156,885	19.6
Indiana	5,193,669	5,490,224	5,544,159	6,080,485	17.1

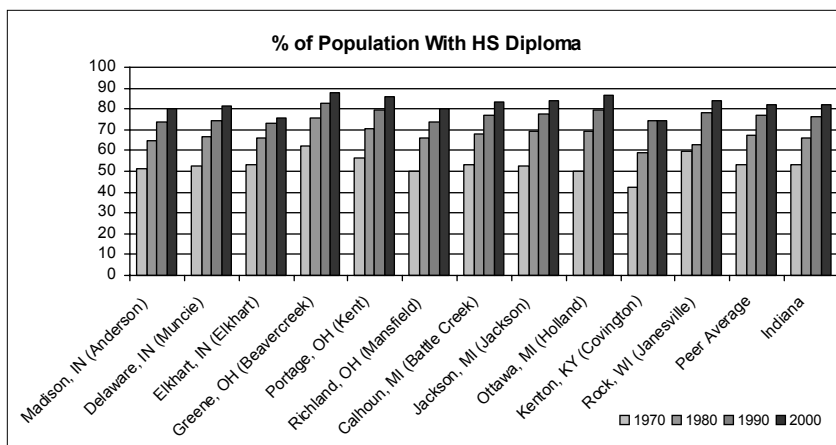


EDUCATION

Educational attainment and educational opportunities are key to community success. Communities with higher average educational attainment levels have greater resources for leadership and community problem solving. It also contributes to the productivity and effectiveness of the workforce making businesses more efficient and productive.

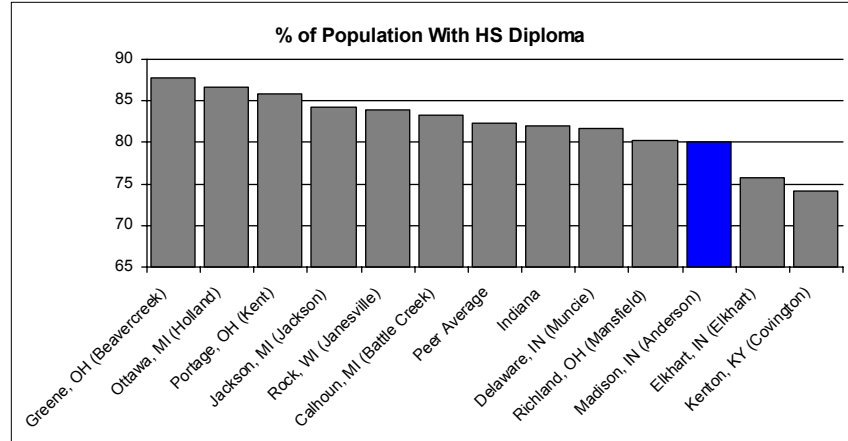
The quality of educational resources ensures that the intellectual capital to sustain the community and make it progress will remain in place. Strong local schools are also key factors in attracting new businesses and new residents.

Educational attainment throughout the peer group has increased dramatically from an average of slightly over 50 percent of the population with a high school diploma in 1970 to more than 80 percent in 2000. This is a 60 percent overall average increase.

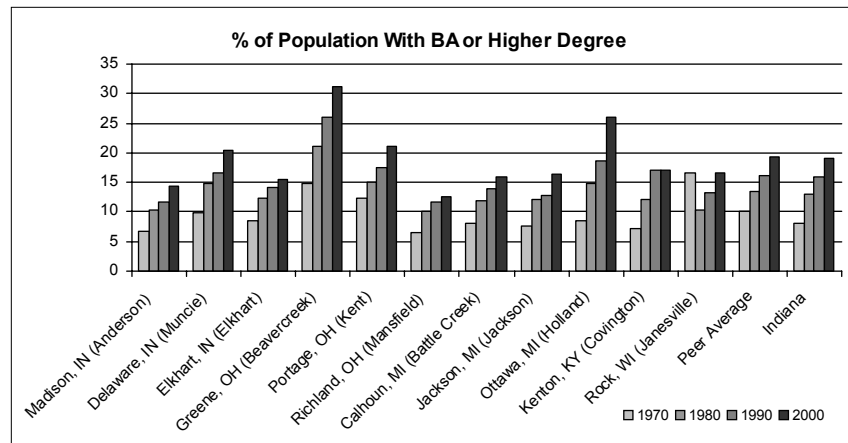


PEER GROUP ANALYSIS (CONT.)

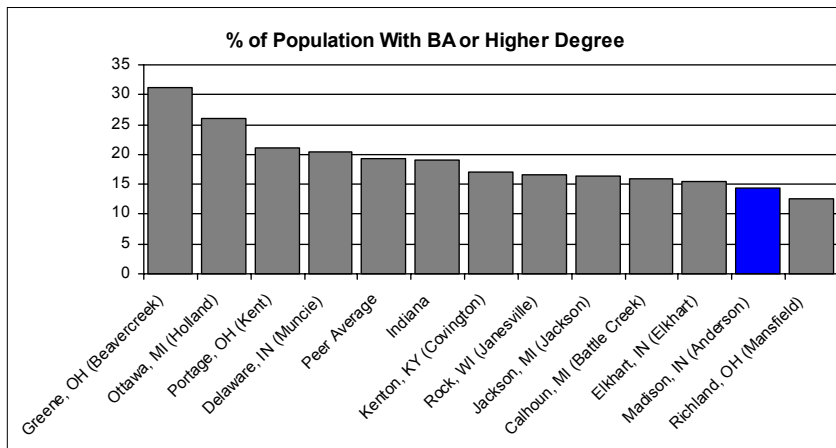
Though high school graduations have increased in the population, Madison County still ranks in the last half of the peer group. In 1970, Madison County placed ninth in the peer group for the percentage of population with a high school diploma. By 2000, its rank has not improved. The rank is also below Indiana state averages. Over the next thirty years, it narrowed the gap in terms of percent difference with its leading peers but still placed third lowest overall at 80.1 percent for high school graduates and second to last in the level of college graduates at 14.4 percent.



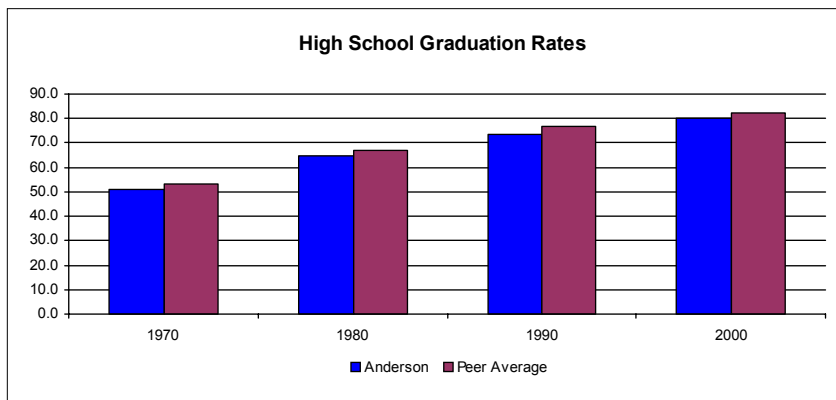
College level educational attainment has also increased throughout the peer group. The peer average of 10 percent in 1970 was slightly ahead of the Indiana average at the time. By 2000, the peer average had almost doubled at slightly over 19 percent as the Indiana average more than doubled increasing from 8 percent to 19 percent.



Madison County has maintained a ranking of ninth among the group for adults with a BA or higher degree throughout the last 30 years.



Local high school graduation rates lag behind the peer group, though the percent of difference in 2000 indicates progress being made in Madison County.



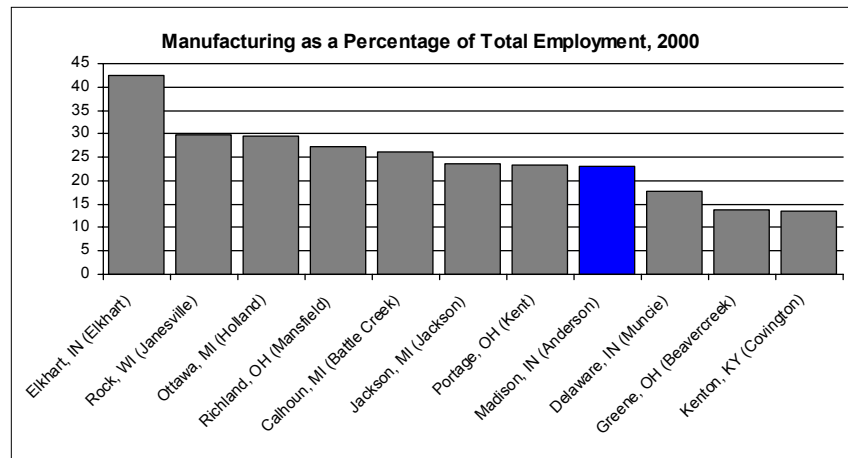
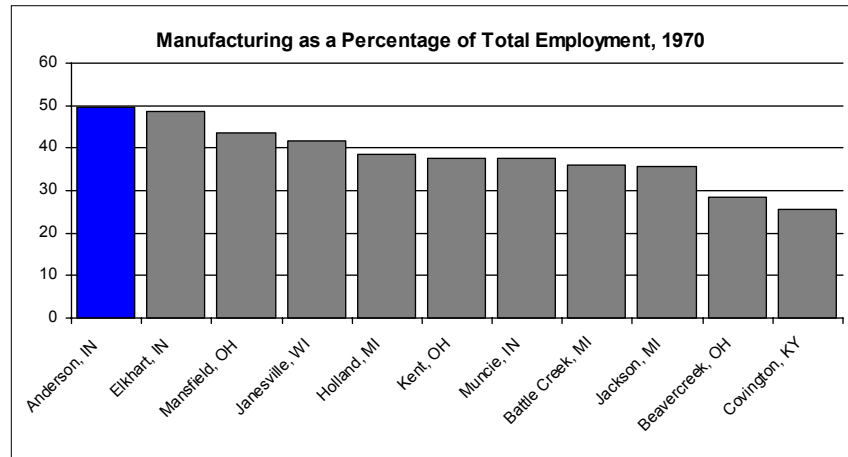
PEER GROUP ANALYSIS (CONT.)

JOB CREATION

Jobs serve to help bring money in to the community and to distribute wealth among the community. Jobs in manufacturing, agriculture and other “basic” industries add value to products and services sold outside the community. These bring new money in to the community proportionally to the value added. The many service, retail, and government jobs tap in to the “multiplier effect” of economic impact and spread the money throughout the local economy.

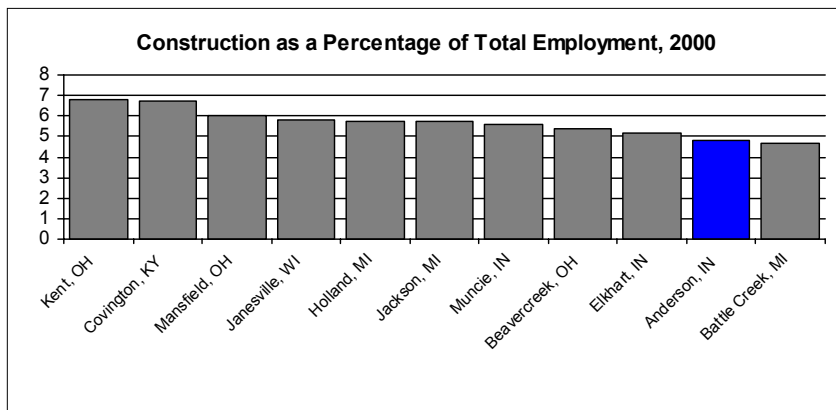
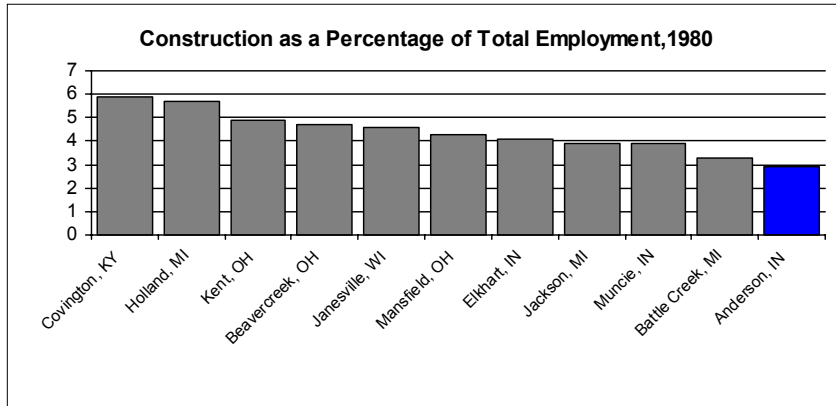
MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT

Within the peer group, Elkhart, Indiana has been the only community to maintain its relative level of manufacturing employment. Manufacturing has declined in all the other communities with Madison County leading the decline by losing six positions, 2nd to 8th in the ranking.



CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT

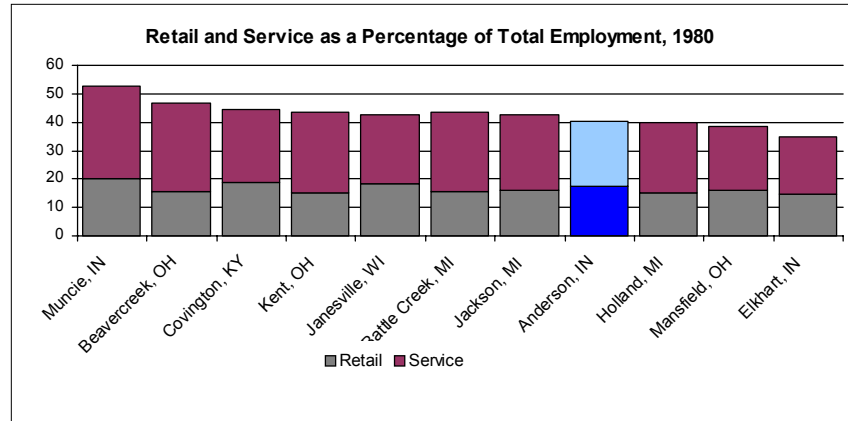
Construction employment and expenditures are recognized indicators of economic growth. Construction appears to be stagnant in Madison County, though the community did see a one position gain in the peer group as the building industry employment in Battle Creek, Michigan slowed even more than in 1980.



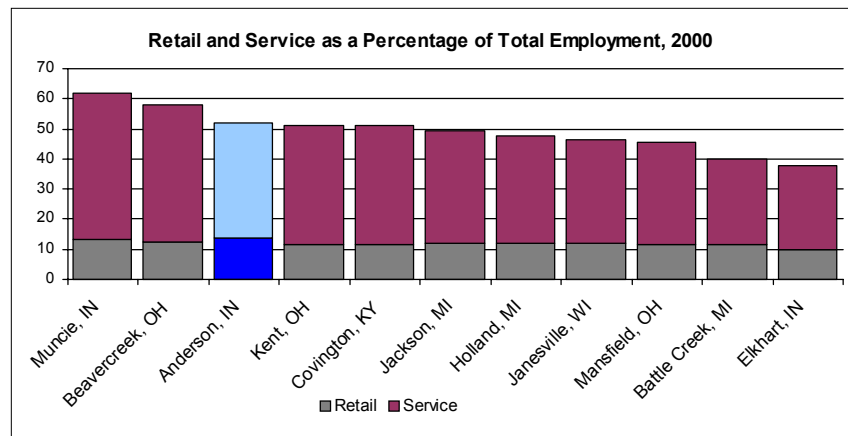
PEER GROUP ANALYSIS (CONT.)

RETAIL & SERVICE EMPLOYMENT

Growth in the retail and service sectors suggest economic activity but are not an accurate measurement of growth. Anderson had a modest position among the peers in 1980 and placed significantly behind neighboring Muncie in retail and service employment.



By 2000, the relative picture of retail and service employment had changed drastically among the group. Anderson's ranking had moved up to third in the group surpassing even Covington, Kentucky, a highly developed commercial suburb of Cincinnati.



UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment throughout the peer group and in the state peaked in about 1980. In Madison County, unemployment is consistently higher than averages. Anderson's unemployment rate was slightly above average with its peers in 1970 and also marginally above the state rate.

WEALTH CREATION

Wealth creation takes the form of investment in public works, private property, bank deposits, business ownership and community philanthropy. In addition, the strength of the population, educational resources, and job assets add to the overall intrinsic total of community wealth. Communities that have invested wisely during their history and created these kinds of wealth are generally poised to make successful economic transitions.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

In 1970, Anderson ranked eighth among its peer communities in median household income and held that position through 2000. Between 1970 and 2000, only Mansfield, Battle Creek, and Muncie had lower percentages of increase in income. From 1970 through 1980, Anderson maintained a slightly higher income than the state median, but from 1990 through 2000, fell increasingly below the state median.

The relative decrease in median household income in Madison County suggests that the community is declining in its purchasing power among the peer group and within the state of Indiana.

POVERTY

The poverty rate of 8.3 percent in Anderson was below both the peer and state averages in 1970. It increased to 9.4 percent in 1980, peaked at 12.7 percent in 1990, and then dropped to 9.3 percent in 2000. Anderson's poverty rate only exceeded the state and peer averages in 1990.

For more than half of the 20th century, Anderson was home to some of the greatest economic strengths and opportunities of the times. As a result of the 1970s energy crisis, there were many threats imposed on the community as a result of General Motors closures and some of its weaknesses were exposed. In the 30 years that local business and community leaders have been dealing with this situation, there have been changes, yet many of the key issues remain the same.

Various city administrations and business groups have engaged in projects to redirect Anderson's economic direction back to new times of great progress. In all this time, 2004 is the first opportunity the community as a whole has been asked to play a major role in planning for the future and addressing community issues on a community-wide scale.

STRENGTHS

In its current state, Anderson has many strengths on which to build a prosperous future. These include the following:

- **Depth and Breadth of Potential Leadership:** Anderson has an existing economic vitality. Its proximity to Indianapolis, and presence of a university have helped maintain a cadre of educated, qualified, and engaged community leaders. This is a group that is able to deal with community issues from a variety of perspectives and make informed decisions on community actions and direction.
In addition to the visible and currently active leadership, there are others to be recruited into the development of the comprehensive plan and the implementation of its recommendations.
- **A Population of Engaged Citizens:** Much of the current leadership consists of long time Anderson residents who have witnessed a continuing community decline during their lifetimes. Many of these citizens have college educations, work in some of Anderson's more prosperous enterprises, and serve the community in various non-profit and government sector roles. The volunteer community of Anderson is highly regarded and is instrumental in providing human and other services to the underprivileged and other citizens.
A key to Anderson's future will be the ability to mobilize and coordinate this ample and diverse resource into a planned and orchestrated community development effort.
- **Retired Engineers and Technical Workers:** Over the years that Delco-Remy and Guide Lamp operated in Anderson, hundreds of workers retired with skills developed in Anderson manufacturing plants. Some are known to have started small new businesses and others are known to be active in other community roles.
This population has often been mentioned as a resource for business and entrepreneurial development. However, it still remains an under-utilized resource and its members are diminishing in numbers. If Anderson is going to actively engage these skilled retirees, it should be one of its foremost and earliest priorities.

- **Location:** Anderson's location and locational resources, such as highways, airports, industrial and technical parks, and railroads, continue to be important to its future. It is close and well connected to Indianapolis, yet far enough away to avoid some of the current sprawl and development problems.

Anderson's location is one of the aspects that has long been used in community marketing and development efforts. Recent increases in population and business location verify its importance.

- **Cost of Living:** Housing and cost of living are a relative bargain in Anderson. Housing values are key to attracting new residents and the availability, affordability and convenience of other communities make the city a competitive residential choice.

Like location, the community has used this strength to its advantage. As the community plans for its future, it will be important to retain and build on this advantage.

- **Education:** Anderson public schools and Anderson University are well regarded by the community as educational resources. Though the public schools rank low in some areas of measurement, their abilities to produce college and employment ready graduates is not in dispute. Anderson University attracts students from all over the globe who wish to get a highly valued education in a small college setting. Ivy Tech, the Purdue Satellite campus, and Indiana Business College provide even more educational avenues.

The positive aspects of Anderson schools are definite advantages. There is, however, room to engage the community in efforts to raise the lower levels of attainment thereby increasing the overall performance and performance ratings.

- **Art and Cultural Assets:** Interest in and appreciation of the arts rate high in Anderson. Cultural facilities and activities are well supported, well patronized, and perceived to be essential elements of the community's future.

These arts assets will continue to be valuable for the enhancement of the local quality of life and to increase activity in tourism, new resident recruitment, and business development. Anderson's connection to the gospel music industry is a particularly unique cultural asset.

- **Community Networks and Organizations:** Anderson is in the midst of a highly religious geographical area and the ties between community and churches are strong. In addition, service and social organizations, including the YMCA stand ready to help meet social and moral needs of the citizens. Local non-profit organizations are active in filling community needs.

There are many specific tasks to be accomplished in the implementation of a successful comprehensive plan. Some of these can be appropriately met by delegating tasks to various groups and organizations. The plan should examine the mission and purpose of community organizations to discover ways that they can be brought into the plan development and community improvement processes.

- **Parks & Recreation and Natural Areas:** Anderson’s investment in public parks and recreational resources has provided the community with exceptional outdoor and other recreational amenities. The White River also provides acres of natural areas in its meandering path through Anderson. City officials report these to be well above par for other communities of similar size.

Though the comprehensive plan may well suggest additional park and recreational development, the existing assets are currently valuable for image improvement, resident attraction, land and water conservation, downtown development, and overall quality of life.

- **Public Safety:** Public safety resources are highly valued and well perceived. Police, fire, ambulance, and emergency care services are all regarded as excellent.

A well crafted comprehensive plan should be a collaboration with public safety professionals resulting in a mutually beneficial results where services are delivered more efficiently and residents and facilities are less at risk.

WEAKNESSES

There are aspects of Anderson that need improvement and are not up to community expectations. The list is relatively short but the work needed for improvement will be challenging.

- **Internal Image:** Anderson residents recognize that many of its citizens see more negative about the community than positive. This may be caused by residents comparing the Anderson of today to the Anderson of the 1960s. Such a comparison would focus on what no longer exists and that which used to be better.

In spite of what Anderson has lost, there has been much gained. Public services and facilities, particularly parks, are on and above par with other cities of its size. Opportunities for higher education are reasonably accessible and there is much going on to make it a continually improving place to live and work.

- **External Image:** Anderson, and many of its sister communities, were once viewed as destinations for those who desired work in the manufacturing sector. When that situation changed, the rest of the world was quick to focus on unemployed and unemployable workers, failures of organized labor, labor and management struggles, economic decline and urban blight. Fueled by media reports of the era, these images remain the perception of Anderson and other of the Midwest’s once thriving manufacturing communities.

As much as the world in the 1970s caught on to the “Rust Belt” image, today’s world is equally captivated by winners. Anderson’s successes, both through the current time and into the future, should be captured, interpreted, and communicated to the greatest possible extent.

- Local Roads & Streets:** Some image perceptions are based in fact. Local streets, roads, curbs, and sidewalks are visible to residents and visitors alike. In Anderson, many of these are in poor condition. *Investment in infrastructure is often an accepted method of initiating private investment. Plans for these kinds of improvements can be used to help improve neighborhoods, recreation areas, commercial districts, and other areas of Anderson.*
- Declining & Blighted Neighborhoods:** Some parts of Anderson have been particularly affected by urban poverty and blight. Areas near to and west of downtown have been cited as being of particular concern to the community. *Within the comprehensive plan, Anderson has the opportunity to assess these conditions and make plans for more in-depth analysis to move toward improving neighborhoods.*
- Youth Opportunities:** It is unlikely that Anderson is unique in its perception of inadequate youth opportunities. It is unique and commendable that this issue has the opportunity to be an element of the new long range comprehensive plan. *Providing youth opportunity is also an opportunity to engage the younger generation in the planning process. Beginning such a process now could be an initial step in curbing brain drain in the longer term.*

THREATS

With every task, there are some conditions and circumstances that appear to be obstacles. Anderson has faced many of these for decades but has not previously called upon the entire community to overcome these major hurdles. The survival of Anderson and its potential to survive hinge on the ability to combat the most serious of these threats. Hard work by dedicated leaders, citizens, organizations and others will be necessary. In the words of author Thom Hartmann, “If you do not do the impossible, you will be faced with the unthinkable”.

- Employment and Economic Development:** Recent trends in Anderson’s employment shows a dramatic shift from manufacturing to service and retail. At risk is the community’s ability to create wealth by bringing in new money from external locations. Anderson’s manufacturing prominence through the early 1970s contributed to a strong tax base that funded schools, public works, public services, a thriving housing market, strong local banks, and prospering local retail and service businesses. The change over the last three decades is well known to community leaders working actively to reinstitute Anderson’s earlier prosperity. *It is essential that Anderson remain active in the attraction and expansion of “basic employers”, those companies that add value and sell their products and services in national and international markets. Systems to capture portions of that income to invest in community facilities and services and distribute other portions to other local businesses must also be part of the overall economic development effort. Alternative economic development means, such as entrepreneurial development, job training, and others should be included in a comprehensive effort.*

- **Aging Population:** Community leaders are quick to recognize this demographic trend and are concerned about its impact. Among the immediate impacts are increased demand for health care and human services, more persons on fixed incomes, and increased demand for government services.

Some in Anderson also believe that the future loss of some elderly residents will have a negative impact on the private wealth that has accumulated over the last half century. Anderson's near future will include focusing on health maintenance for seniors, providing for independence and inclusion for seniors, developing or retrofitting housing and public facilities to meet mobility and access needs, developing service systems that are sustainable, and accomplishing these tasks in a framework that is flexible enough to meet changing needs.

- **Post-Manufacturing Environmental Conditions:** Early manufacturing operated with little or no environmental controls and those controls that have come about have done so slowly and sporadically. As a result, some areas of Anderson do not meet current environmental criteria for redevelopment and some facilities, due to size and configuration, are unsuitable for new commercial or industrial occupants.

Remediation and reuse of these kinds of parcels may carry high price tags. Business and community leaders should continue to investigate alternative methods to bring these areas back to community use or business production.

- **The Unforeseen and Unsuspected:** The world has seen catastrophic events unfold in unprecedented form in recent years. Natural disasters, crime, terrorism, environmental catastrophes, and industrial accidents occur almost daily somewhere in the world, many times in the United States.

The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to engage the community and its public health and safety professionals in a meaningful dialogue and strategic planning for the possibility of such events happening in Anderson.

OPPORTUNITIES

Even Anderson's best attributes have room for improvement. Residents view their community as a place worthy of investment and with the potential to be among the best places in America to call home.

- **Downtown Anderson:** During the same years that many cities lost downtown resources, Anderson made steady investments and improvements. City and county government offices, the Paramount Theater, and many commercial operations have helped maintain the physical assets as well as the economic and social vitality of the downtown business district.

The Comprehensive Plan is the ideal instrument to further enhance downtown. Whereas previous efforts have been singular in focus, the downtown's relationship to the entire community can be utilized as an asset to involve multiple partners in multiple activities that further advance the redevelopment of this vital community area. Continued revitalization of the downtown will also help address the (real or perceived) lack of entertainment opportunities for residents.

- **Tourism:** Anderson has the advantages of convenient location and desirable destinations. Mounds State Park, Hoosier Downs, and other attractions serve as primary destinations for visitors. Interstate 69 provides a convenient access route from more distant communities while state highways connect conveniently to Indiana communities.
Tourism opportunity, external image, and product development are all inextricably linked. The comprehensive plan will use tourism as both an economic development tool and a means to increase quality of life and employment assets for residents.
- **Existing Manufacturing Base:** Though Anderson's previous mega employers have lost their prominence in the local employment market, the community's manufacturing base still includes many companies with growth potential.
The first priority of the community should be to retain as much manufacturing as possible. Beyond that, efforts to help existing basic employers develop new products and value added services can provide economic benefits for comparatively low community investment.
- **Surrounding communities and countryside:** Anderson's labor and commercial market, that area within a one hour or less drive, contains hundreds of thousands of people. These can be called upon to fill new employment positions, assist with developments, and to patronize local businesses.
Part of Anderson's success will be measured by its ability to increase the involvement of this immediate market area in the city's economic and social activities and opportunities.
- **Education:** Public education, in many ways, is an entity that marches to the beat of its own drummer. At the same time, it and the community can become more effective partners in the educational process. There are many opportunities to excel in education and many reasons for a community to accept such a challenge. Anderson's combination of well performing schools, local university, imaginative leadership, and desire to advance provide a strong foundation to excel in this arena.
All of Anderson should commit to capitalizing on the value of strong educational systems and highly educated populations. The strength of the local educational system can be enhanced with stronger community efforts such as more meaningful business-education partnerships, increased student mentoring, and increased parental involvement. Another innovation could be broader, and possibly paid, student internships for both high school and college students. These could be throughout the community in a variety of business, government, non-profit, healthcare, and other organizations. The anticipated benefit would be the creation of a more engaged, informed, and interested younger generation that is willing to continue to work and contribute in Anderson.
Increasing the overall educational level of the population can begin by recruiting well educated former residents. This is a population familiar with the community and who are likely to have strong affinitive ties to the people, the institutions, and the future of Anderson. This increase in educational level will add even more to the quality of leadership, increase the value of volunteers, and contribute more intellect to solving community problems and advancing community opportunities.

- **Technology:** Anderson is of a significant enough size that technology infrastructure is a good investment for providers. The existing population and business base supports various information technology sources and there is room for growth. In addition, Anderson has a strong technological history with many patented items having been developed by local workers in local manufacturing plants.

The development of new technology firms has been an on-going effort in Anderson's economic development strategies. It should remain a key focus and be a key consideration in other comprehensive plan elements such as business development, land use, education, downtown development, job creation, image enhancement, quality of life, and housing.

- **Healthcare:** There are two hospitals and a broad spectrum of health care providers and services in Anderson. Anderson University's Wellness Center and a state focus on bio-technology business development are additional factors that place the city well with regard to creating new health care benefits.

Anderson has both a challenge and an opportunity with regard to health care. Part of the challenge will be meeting the future health care needs of an aging population, which may even experience greater growth with elderly persons moving here from smaller communities. The local health care community will be providing combinations of in-patient and out-patient services, clinical and laboratory services and home health care. On the other side of the issue is payment for health care services. Third party payors currently provide more than adequate support for services but trends in insurance and government policy provide for an uncertain future.

- **Land Use Planning:** With the city at a historically low rate of occupancy, it is a relatively good time to institute changes in land use. It is also a time to evaluate such improvement suggestions as design standards and landscape and sign ordinances.

Changes in land use will be the physical evidence of the comprehensive plan. Where much of the community may have been developed in the absence of planning, zoning, and other regulation, the new plan will strive to make the community more livable, more attractive, and more sustainable in the future. The plan will allocate space for the wide variety of community use including residential, various forms of commerce, industry, education, worship, recreation, and government.

- **Housing:** Anderson's housing supply has two prominent opportunities. In the city's historic near-downtown areas, there are large older homes, many of which are well maintained and highly desirable residences. Within the historic areas, there is a mix of well maintained homes and "fixer-uppers" that are still structurally sound and reasonably available. Anderson's older suburbs, built during the 1950s and 1960s are also valuable housing assets. Many of these homes are larger than average ranch style dwellings on larger lots and in established neighborhoods. These represent the wealth that was generated in the post-war years when manufacturing in Anderson reached its peak.

Anderson has already acted on its residential assets and has attracted a significant number of workers who commute to Indianapolis. The continuation of these actions will help maintain and improve the existing housing stock and contribute to curbing urban sprawl into surrounding undeveloped areas. This form of residential growth will also preclude the extension of costly roads, water, and sewer services and make better use of existing infrastructure.

OPPORTUNITIES RELATED SPECIFICALLY TO STRENGTHS

- Leadership potentially exists to make significant progress in plan implementation and overall community progress.
- The engaged population of Anderson can be called upon to support community progress and volunteer time and money to accomplishing objectives. The existing population can also be the network through which the community works to publicize Anderson's strengths, its improvements, and attempts to recruit educated former residents back to the city.
- Retired engineers and technical workers are seen as an asset to help develop the technological aspects of existing business, help develop new technological businesses, and otherwise help advocate and develop community wide technological advances.
- Anderson's location provides advantages for many types of business and access to the community from a large number of in-state and out-of-state communities.
- Anderson's comparatively low cost of living makes it a good location for both residents and businesses.
- Public education and Anderson University provide competitive secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities.
- Art and cultural assets enhance the quality of life and serve as valuable marketing material for business development, resident recruitment, and image enhancement.
- Community networks and organizations can serve as communication mechanisms to inform and involve the community in the plan and its implementation.
- Parks and recreation and natural areas enhance the quality of Anderson life, contribute to environmental conservation, and serve as valuable marketing material for business development, resident recruitment, and image enhancement.
- Anderson's highly regarded public safety resources are an active part of developing the comprehensive plan.

OPPORTUNITIES RELATED SPECIFICALLY TO WEAKNESSES

- Changing the image of Anderson, both internally and externally will be a gradual process supported by the accomplishment of goals, objectives, and projects laid out in the comprehensive plan.
- Local road and street improvements can be reasons to solicit more state and federal construction funds and, when completed, can help spur private investment where improvements have been completed.
- The improvement of declining and blighted neighborhoods will raise overall property values, enhance internal and external images, and provide a means to increase construction employment at least temporarily.
- Studying the need for additional youth services will help Anderson be more up-to-date with the younger generation and learn ways to make the community more attractive to existing and potential future residents. This also provides an avenue for involving Anderson's younger citizens in planning for the future.

OPPORTUNITIES RELATED SPECIFICALLY TO THREATS

- The alleviation of post-manufacturing environmental conditions will make available more land available for community use in commerce, recreation, housing, government, or conservation.
- Employment and economic development needs provide incentives for the community to become even more active in business development and more serious about and dedicated to community improvements. Community improvements will both improve image and make Anderson an even more desirable business location and visitor destination.
- The aging population already serves as a source of wisdom and perspective. Many of these retired individuals can serve as mentors, volunteers, and advisors for community initiatives. In addition, their physical needs, such as health care, housing and special mobility resources, will make Anderson a more livable and enjoyable place for all generations.
- The possibility unforeseen and unexpected catastrophic events can provide a means to engage public health and safety professionals in the plan to evaluate each proposed objective from a public safety perspective.

The following pages contain a series of maps used to analyze various physical characteristics of the City of Anderson. The information presented on these maps was consulted throughout the planning process to assist in the decision-making process. As a result, the policies and maps in this comprehensive plan have been crafted in a way that reflects the opportunities and constraints that this information presents. The maps that follow include:

- Existing Land Use
- Existing Thoroughfare Plan (1995)
- Schools and School Districts
- Fire Protection Service Area
- Natural Features, Park & Open Space

