



APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT



KENDALLVILLE PLAN: COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

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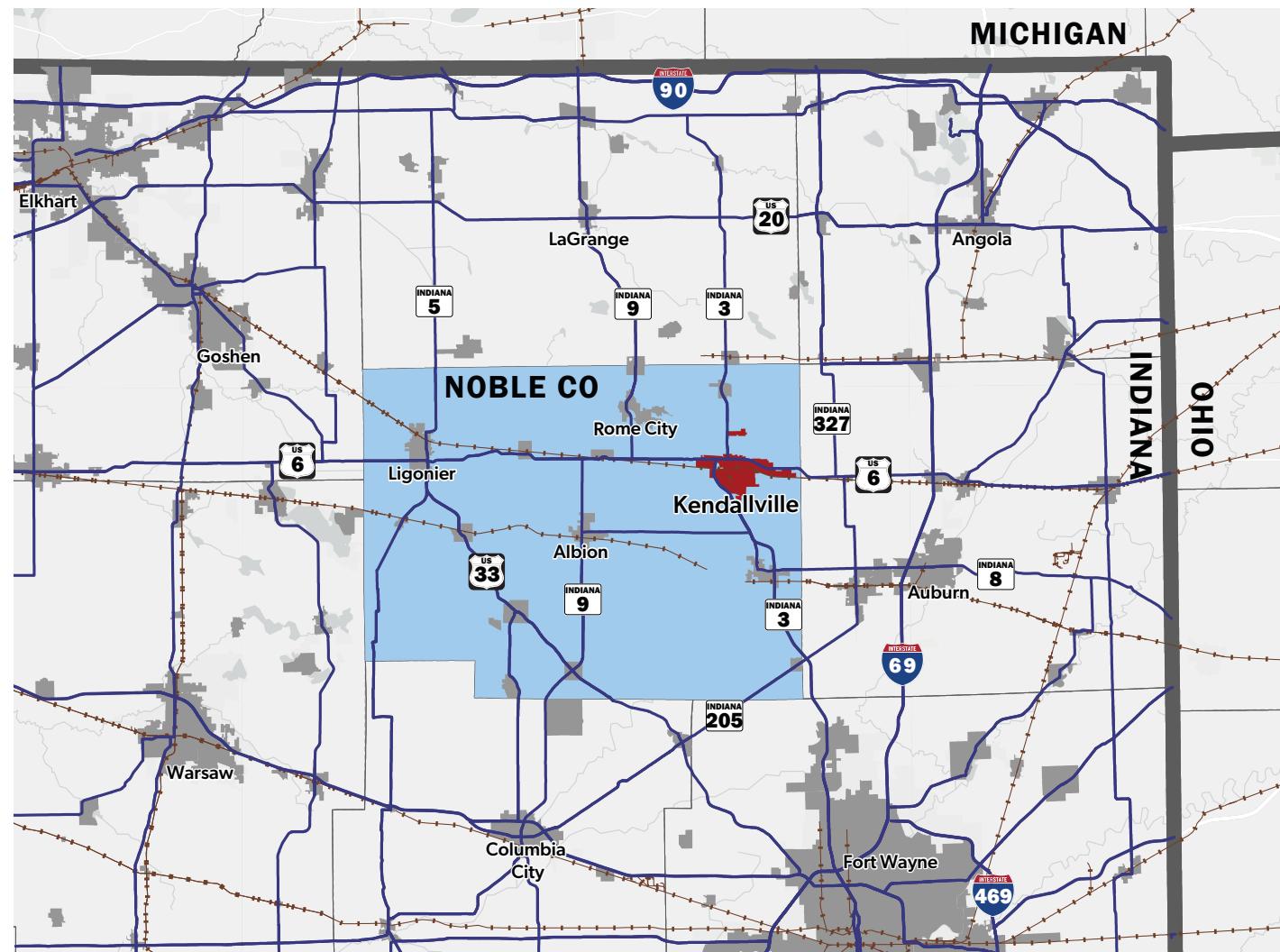
COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

Overview

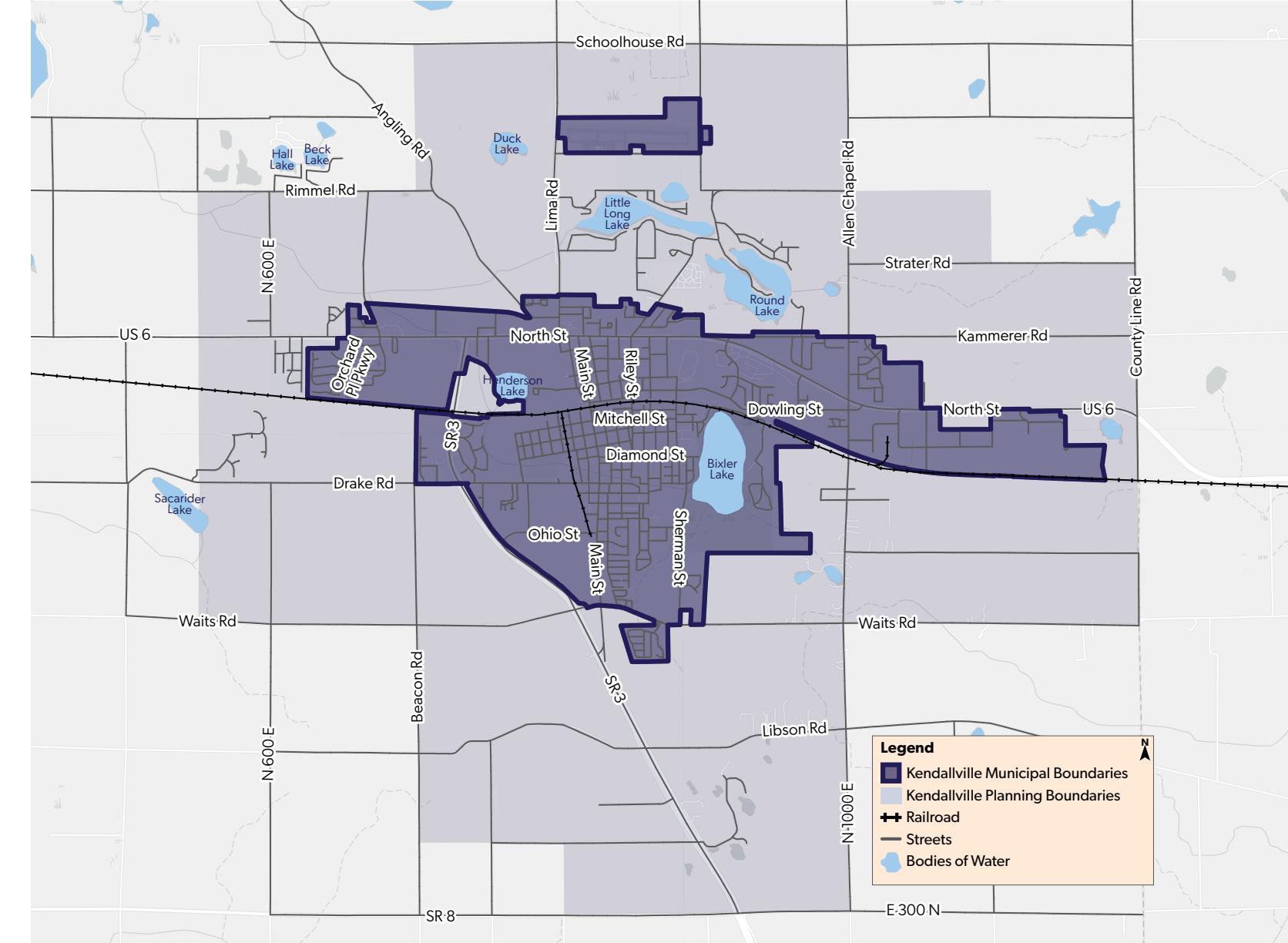
Context

Kendallville, a quaint community of approximately 10,000 people, was incorporated as a town in 1863 and quickly upgraded to a city just three years later. Nestled in the northeast corner of Noble County, Kendallville is adjacent to DeKalb, LaGrange, and Steuben Counties. While it is not the county seat, it is the largest community in Noble County.

Conveniently located along both the U.S. 6 and State Road 3 corridors, Kendallville has been a railroad community since the 1850s. Today, the Norfolk Southern Railroad actively operates a line through the middle of the city. Local industries have capitalized on this transportation asset by establishing their own rail spurs to efficiently transport goods in and out of the community.



Kendallville lies 28 miles northwest of Fort Wayne and 66 miles southeast of South Bend. In relation to larger metropolitan areas, Fort Wayne is centrally located between Indianapolis (150 miles to the south), Chicago (160 miles to the west), and Detroit (170 miles to the northeast).



Planning Boundaries

As part of the Kendallville Plan Comprehensive Planning Initiative, the project boundaries include the legal, incorporated limits of the City of Kendallville. The planning area also encompasses the City's Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), established through an interlocal agreement between the City and Noble County in 1990. Broadly, the planning boundary extends north to Schoolhouse Road, east to County Line Road, south to E 300 N, and approximately one-half mile west of N 600 E.

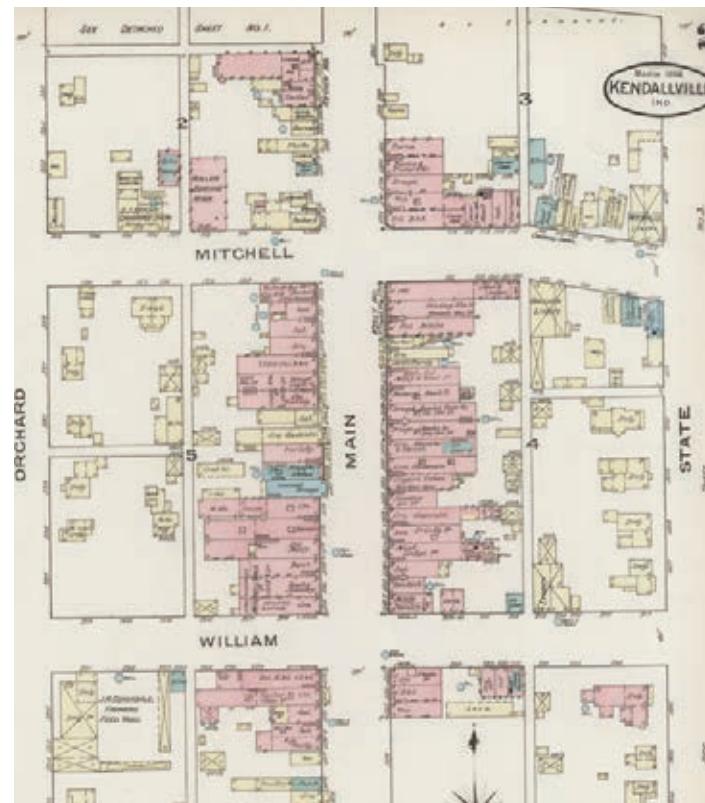


COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

History

In 1836, William Mitchell of New York constructed a double log cabin in what is now Kendallville. Although not the area's first settler, Mitchell's arrival marked a turning point. With ownership of approximately 500 acres and ample resources, he helped catalyze the development of a town. His influence extended to securing the establishment of a post office, around which the community began to form. By 1847, the growing settlement was named Kendallville, in honor of Amos Kendall, the U.S. Postmaster General from 1835 to 1840.

Mitchell played a key role in routing the east-west railroad through Kendallville in the 1850s, a vital development that would see the line change hands several times over decades. Roughly 25 years later, a north-south railroad was added, complementing the earlier plank road that had brought Mitchell from Fort Wayne. Together, these transportation routes transformed Kendallville into a regional trading hub and the largest community in Noble County.



An 1886 Sandborn map shows a flourishing Downtown Kendallville with a variety of goods and services available.

Kendallville was officially incorporated as a town in 1863 and as a city three years later. The late 1800s were a time of significant growth. Commercial buildings emerged along the plank road – now Main Street – and industry flourished near the rail lines, with companies such as Flint & Walling leading the way. Residential neighborhoods soon formed around these bustling centers. In 1886, a devastating fire swept through downtown, destroying many wooden structures. Reconstruction efforts replaced them with more durable masonry buildings, many of which still stand today.

Development in Kendallville followed a linear pattern along Main Street, later designated as Indiana State Road 3. In the 1920s, North Street – also known as the Toledo-Chicago Pike – began to develop, becoming part of the first designated U.S. highway in the area (U.S. Route 6) by 1932. Portions of the highway were already paved by that time.

Over the years, Kendallville evolved into an ideal location for families, offering employment, retail options, and abundant recreational opportunities. Its strategic location near Fort Wayne and proximity to scenic lakes added to its appeal.

The southern portion of the State Road 3 bypass was completed in the early 1970s, connecting U.S. Route 6 to Fort Wayne and several other state highways. This bypass redirected traffic away from the city's core and spurred commercial development along U.S. 6 throughout the 1970s

"It is apparent that even though Kendallville began humbly 150 years ago, it has flourished into a city filled with rich Hoosier heritage."

Indiana House Rep David Ober, 2013



kpcnews.com

and 1980s. During this same period, Kendallville experienced notable industrial growth, with two industrial parks established and a third developed soon afterward on the city's east side.

In 2003, downtown Kendallville was recognized for its historic significance. It was listed on the Indiana Register of Historic Sites and Structures and later that year, designated as a Historic District by the National Register of Historic Places. The district encompasses six blocks of the original 1847 plat, bounded roughly by Harris and Rush Streets and the alleys east and west of Main Street. Remarkably, it includes 46 contributing historic resources.

Despite challenges over the years – from the 1886 fire to a tornado in 1992 and an active shooter incident in 2023 – the Kendallville community has consistently demonstrated resilience, unity, and an enduring spirit. As noted by Indiana House Representative David Ober in the 2013 resolution commemorating the city's sesquicentennial:

"It is apparent that even though Kendallville began humbly 150 years ago, it has flourished into a city filled with rich Hoosier heritage."

Sources

- Indiana House Representative David Ober's 2013 House Concurrent Resolution 19
- Published "150 Years Kendallville Indiana," Terry G. Householder and supported by Courier, Kendallville's 3rd largest American book manufacturer



Kendallville's signature green streetlight posts with decorative luminaires are a distinctive design element the community has proudly preserved over time.

COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

Community Spirit

Kendallville is a city defined not only by its history and small-town charm, but by the enduring strength of its community spirit. Neighbors know one another here, and that familiarity fosters a sense of safety, belonging, and mutual support. Whether it's a volunteer clearing trails at Bixler Lake, a youth coach mentoring the next generation, or a local business donating to a school fundraiser, civic pride runs deep in Kendallville.

The community comes together for events like the Apple Festival, Fourth of July celebrations, and downtown concerts, where families gather, local vendors thrive, and traditions are shared. Public spaces are well-used and well-loved – from the parks and recreation facilities to the library and farmer's markets – each a reflection of the community's investment in quality of life. In times of need, churches, nonprofits, and neighbors step up without hesitation, proving time and again that Kendallville isn't just a place to live – it's a place to belong.

There are many well-known people from Kendallville, with Arthur Franklin Mapes being one of them. The Indiana General Assembly officially adopted Indiana's State Poem in 1963, authored by Mapes.



INDIANA

God crowned her hills with beauty,
Gave her lakes and winding streams,
Then He edged them all with woodlands
As the setting for our dreams.
Lovely are her moonlit rivers,
Shadowed by the sycamores,
Where the fragrant winds of Summer
Play along the willowed shores.
I must roam those wooded hillsides,
I must heed the native call,
For a pagan voice within me
Seems to answer to it all.
I must walk where squirrels scamper
Down a rustic old rail fence,
Where a choir of birds is singing
In the woodland . . . green and dense.
I must learn more of my homeland
For it's paradise to me,
There's no haven quite as peaceful,
There's no place I'd rather be.
Indiana . . . is a garden
Where the seeds of peace have grown,
Where each tree, and vine, and flower
Has a beauty . . . all its own.
Lovely are the fields and meadows,
That reach out to hills that rise
Where the dreamy Wabash River
Wanders on . . . through paradise.

Arthur Franklin Mapes
Kendallville, Indiana

COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

Past Planning Efforts

Past planning efforts provide a valuable foundation for shaping future priorities, identifying community needs, and tracking progress over time. They offer insight into the vision, values, and strategies that have guided decision-making and development. For this review, past planning efforts are organized into three key categories: Comprehensive Plans, Housing Strategies and Studies, and Economic Strategies and Reports.

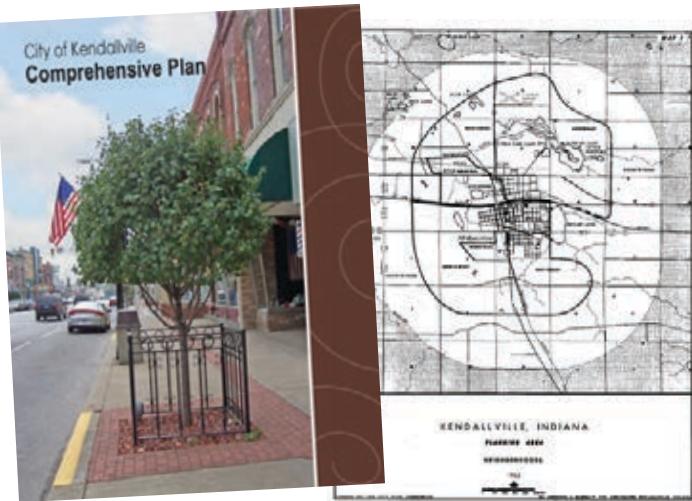
Comprehensive Plans

2019 Update / 2010 Comprehensive Plan

The Plan Commission made minor updates to the 2010 Comprehensive Plan in 2019 to incorporate changes in housing demands and noting fire stations being appropriately located to serve the north and south sides of town. The City has successfully implemented many of the initiatives identified in this plan including revitalizing downtown buildings; developing a small downtown park or plaza; establishing a co-working space; organizing and promoting community events; and maintaining and enhancing historic structures and cultural amenities.

1994 Data Inventory + Land Use Analysis

The plan includes public participation and emphasizes several community goals: expanding and improving the housing stock, preserving the area's small-town character, retaining and diversifying the business and industrial base, and managing growth. It provides a high level of detail on environmental concerns, including underground storage tanks, hazardous waste handlers, and air quality - supported by Toxic Release Inventory data. The plan is notably data-driven, offering population, housing, and employment projections, and using those forecasts to estimate future land consumption and public service needs.



1977 Comprehensive Development Plan

It is unclear if this plan was ever adopted by the City of Kendallville, but the plan provides an excellent snapshot of the community. The City doubled in area between 1962 and 1977 from annexing on the south (residential) and east (industrial) sides of the City. This plan promotes continued steady residential growth and protection of environmentally sensitive areas. The plan called for commercial development to support the health of the central business district and limiting commercial strip development such that it was focused on convenience for neighborhood residents.

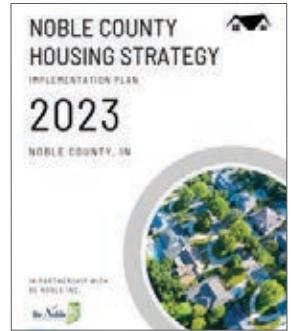
1963 Comprehensive Plan

The Kendallville Plan Commission was established in June of 1962 to have jurisdiction over the City of Kendallville as well as the unincorporated 2-mile jurisdiction. The City's first comprehensive plan focused on the efficient use of public funds; development of well-balanced neighborhoods; providing an efficient system of thoroughfares; coordination of schools, parks, public health and safety authorities; and public utility expansions consistent with growth areas. State Road 3 is shown through downtown. The plan also identified congestion and lack of cohesion at the intersection of North Street (U.S. 6) and Main Street (SR 3). The Plan shows a "proposed" bypass for State Road 3 both south and north of U.S. 6. The maps in this Comprehensive Plan also show the municipal airport.

Housing Strategies + Studies

2023 Noble County Housing Strategy

This strategy identifies housing as the biggest barrier to growth in Noble County. Nearly 2,300 households have the potential to move to Noble County each year, with 33% wanting rental units; 8% demanding townhouses; and 3% preferring condominiums.



2022 Residential Market Study

The study identifies the target market potential from a family and household perspective, noting traditional and non-traditional families make up 43% of the target market potential. Young couples and singles make up 33% of the target market potential, with empty-nesters and retirees at 24%. This study also identifies the housing preference types of these families/households, with nearly half wanting something other than single-family detached homes. While the study includes affordability ranges, those figures are now outdated. Kendallville's market potential accounts for 52% of Noble County's overall potential, or approximately 810 housing units.

2018 Noble County Regional Housing Study

This county-wide study includes population projections and a deep dive into Noble County's industrial sectors and anticipated growth. It identifies Noble County as having the second-largest manufacturing concentration in the State of Indiana and highlights a strong correlation between living and working in the same county. The study provides a detailed analysis of owner-occupied and rental housing units, along with a series of strategies developed through focus group sessions.

Economic Strategies + Reports

2025 Comp Regional Development Strategy

This regional strategy for Northeast Indiana outlines goals to support workforce development, strengthen regional infrastructure, promote business development and entrepreneurship, and enhance quality of life across the region.

2022 Transformational Strategies Report

The Historic Downtown Kendallville Transformation Strategy is built on the foundation of family, entrepreneurship, and local vibrancy. Residents actively participate in downtown revitalization through events, while city leaders work to attract young professionals, improve accessibility, and support small business growth. From transforming vacant storefronts to encouraging youth to envision their futures as entrepreneurs, Kendallville is shaping a resilient, people-centered identity while preserving its heritage.

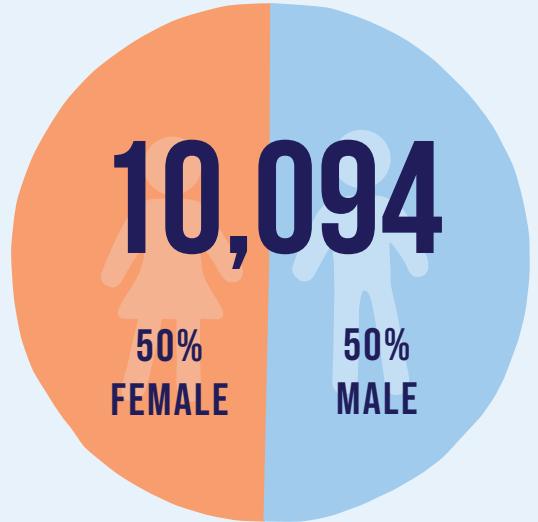


2011 Downtown Action Agenda

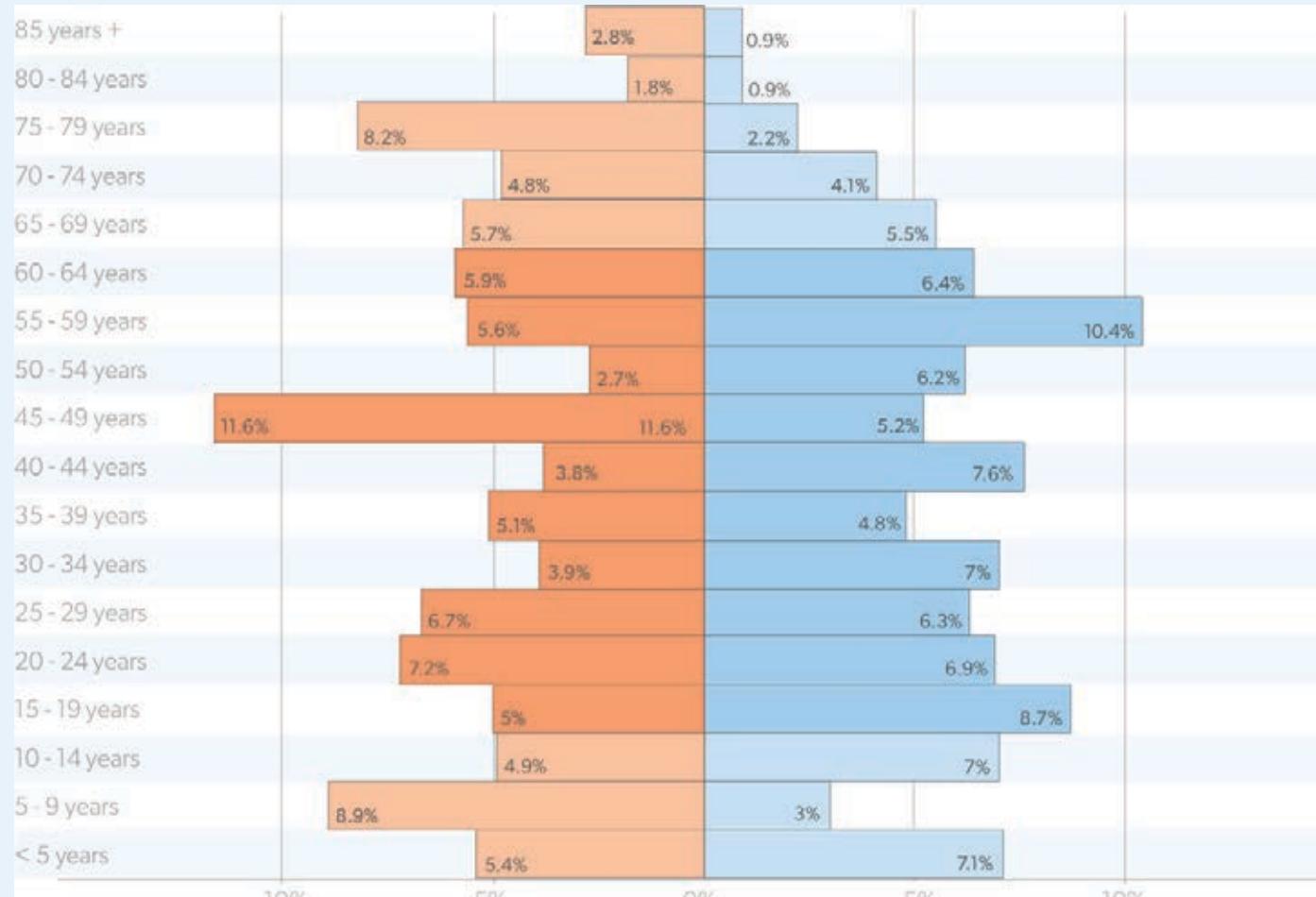
This agenda was developed through community surveys and extensive public involvement. It places a strong emphasis on data, identifying the primary market area and retail demand for various goods and services. It also called for multi-generational amenities, including a downtown skate park and senior housing. Increasing the number of restaurants was identified as the top downtown priority.

Demographics + Socio-Economics

Population

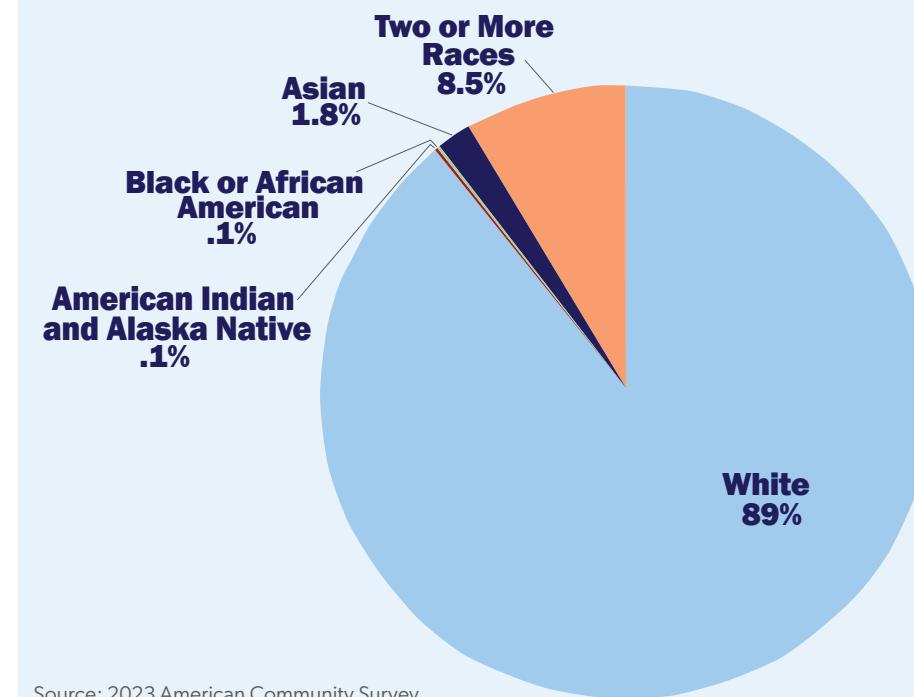


40.6
MEDIAN AGE
22.3%
< 18 YEARS OLD
18.4%
65+ YEARS OLD



Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Race + Ethnicity



Source: 2023 American Community Survey

8.5%
TWO OR MORE RACES

7.4%
HISPANIC OR LATINO

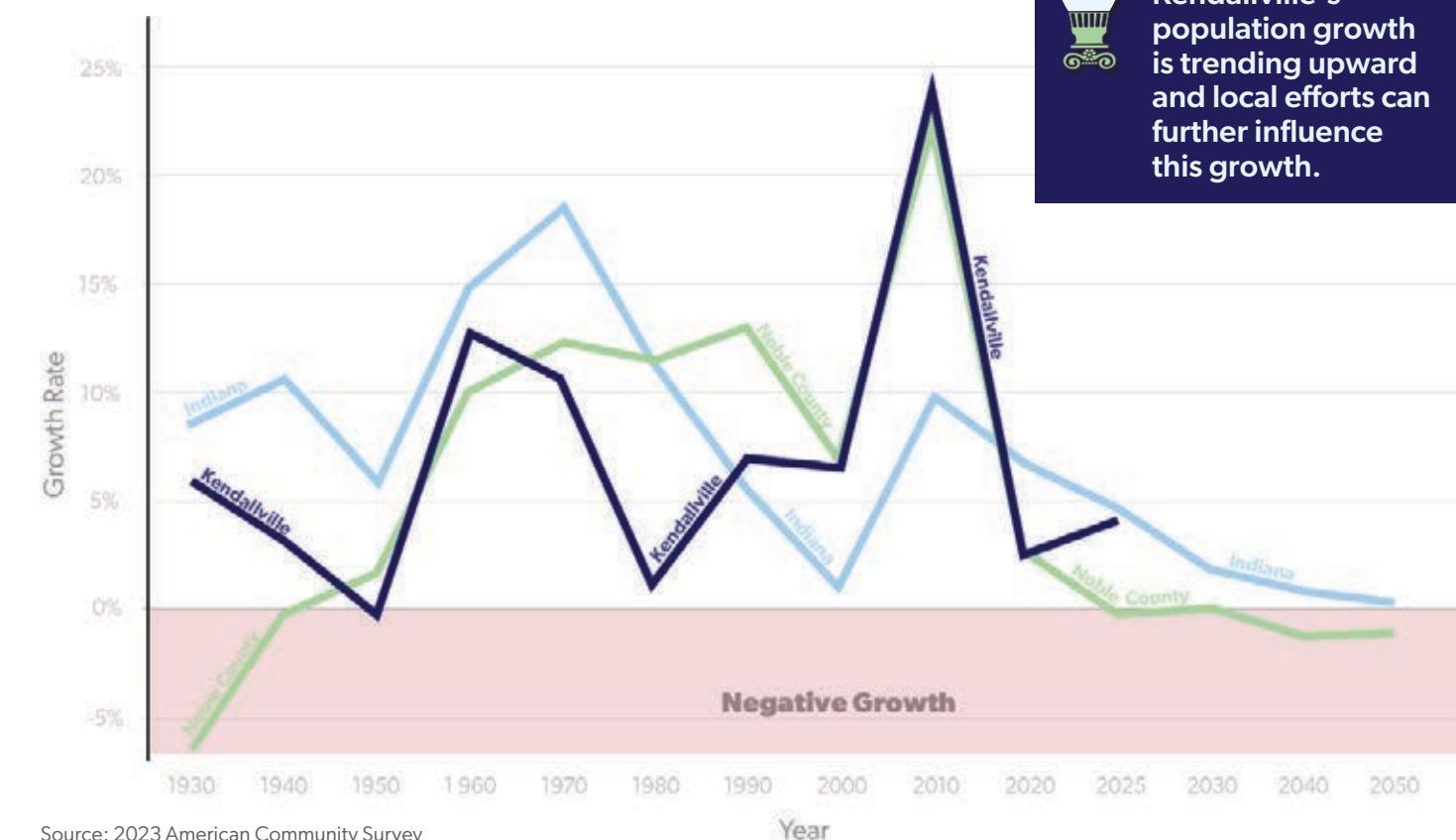
14.3%
HOUSEHOLDS SPEAK LANGUAGE
OTHER THAN ENGLISH AT HOME



Takeaway

Kendallville's population growth is trending upward and local efforts can further influence this growth.

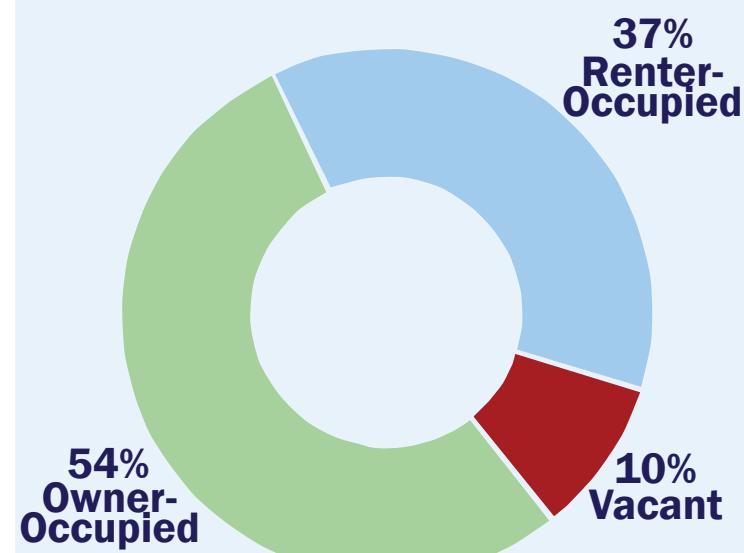
Growth Trends + Projection



Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Housing + Households

Housing Tenure

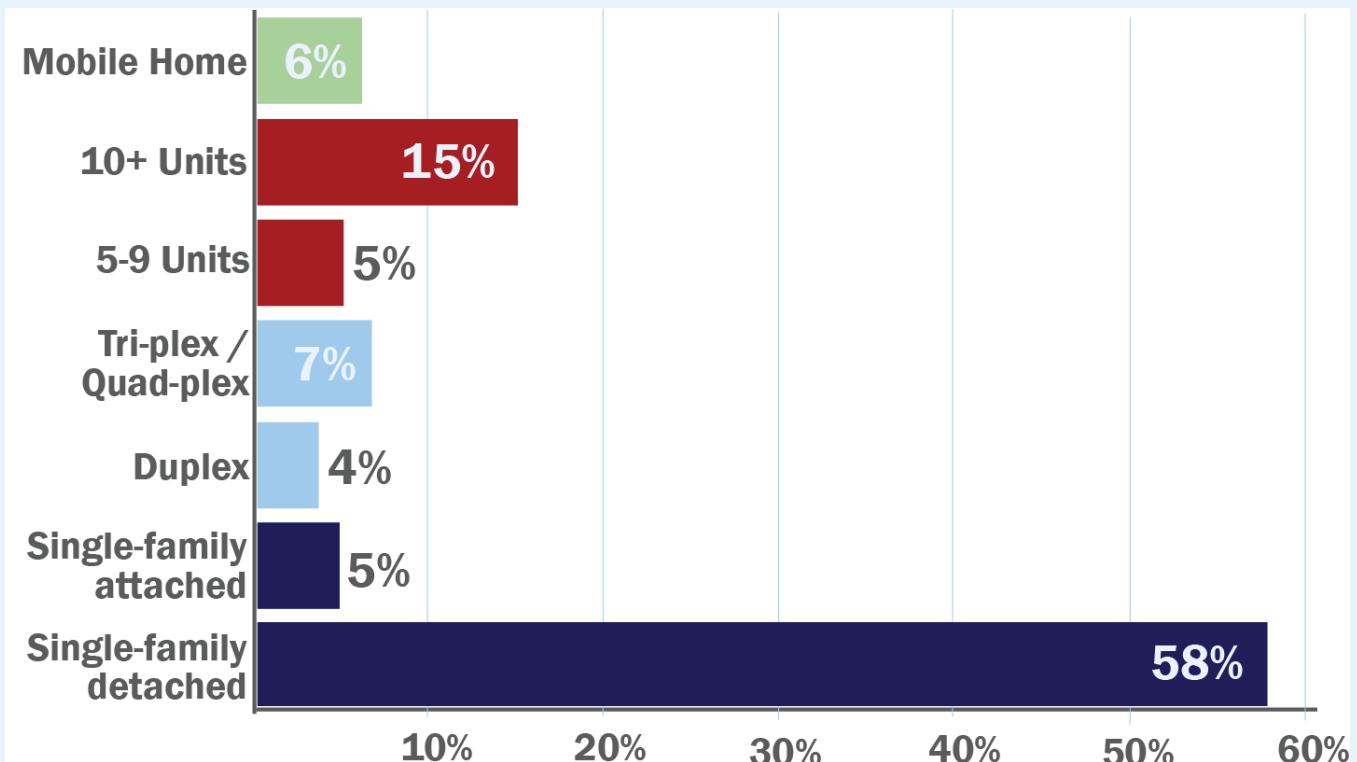


4,556
HOUSING UNITS

\$130,000
MEDIAN HOUSE VALUE

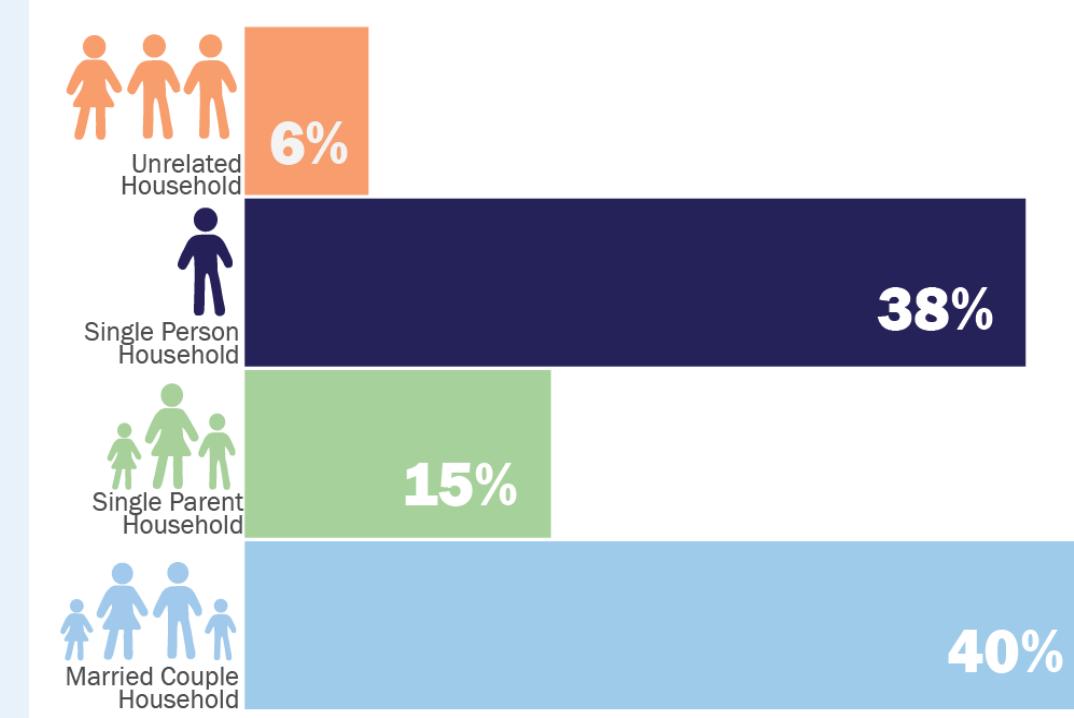
1969
MEDIAN YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT

Housing Type



Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Household Type



In Kendallville, 38% of all households consist of individuals living alone. Looking specifically at that 38%, 18% of all households have a householder age 65+ living alone and 20% include a householder under age 65 living alone. By comparison, just 26% of households in Noble County are single-person households (11% age 65+), while statewide in Indiana, 30% of households are single-person, with 12% age 65 or older.

Source: 2023 American Community Survey



Takeaway
Single-person households often have different housing needs than larger households.

\$60,909
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



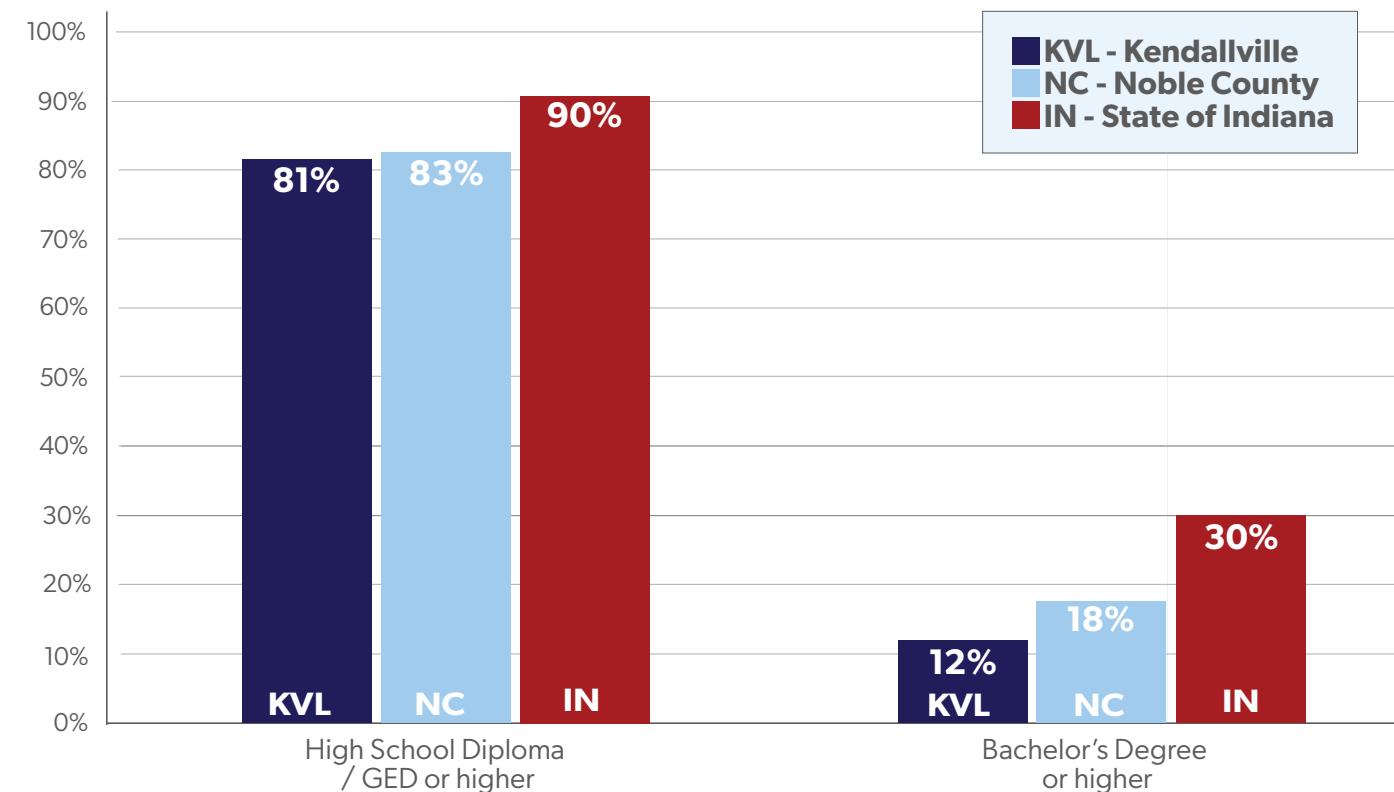
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MEAN TRAVEL TIME TO WORK, IN MINUTES

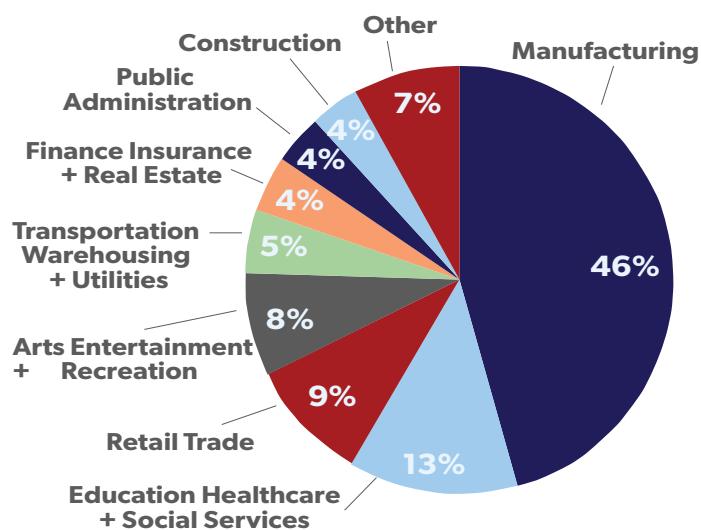
Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Socio-Economic Data

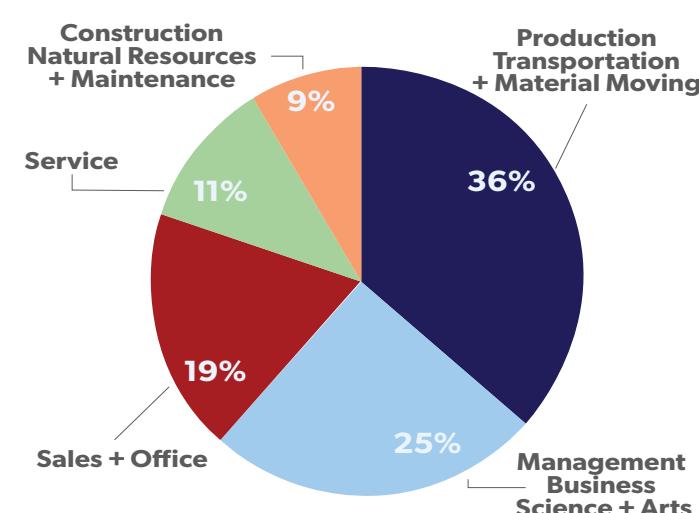
Educational Attainment (25+ years old)



Industry

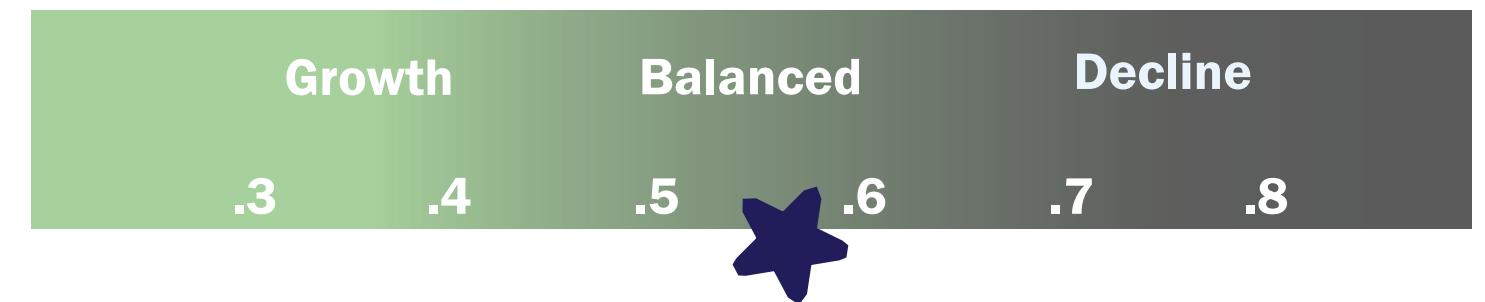


Occupation



Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Dependency Ratio



Kendallville .576

The dependency ratio is a measure that compares the number of dependents – typically those under age 18 and over age 64 – to the number of working-age individuals, usually those between ages 18 and 64. A lower dependency ratio means there are fewer non-working individuals for every working-age person to support, which can ease the burden on social services and promote economic growth.

Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Kendallville has a dependency ratio of 0.576, meaning there are approximately 58 dependents for every 100 working-age residents. This represents a balanced ratio, indicating that Kendallville has a healthy share of working-age individuals relative to its dependent population. This balance supports economic stability and suggests that the community is well-positioned to meet the needs of both its workforce and its dependents.

Livability Index

The Livability Index is a scoring system used to evaluate how “livable” a place is—how well it meets the needs and desires of its residents. Livability isn’t a single number; it usually encompasses multiple factors or categories that impact quality of life.

Kendallville Plan looks specifically at the AARP’s Livability index. Components of the AARP’s Livability Index are listed below, as well as Kendallville’s score (out of 100) in each category.

- Housing - 70
- Neighborhood - 48
- Transportation - 53
- Environment - 63
- Health - 39
- Engagement - 37
- Opportunity - 61

Source: AARP Livability Index



The overall livability index score for Kendallville, Indiana is 53.

This is in the **top half** of **communities** in the U.S.

COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

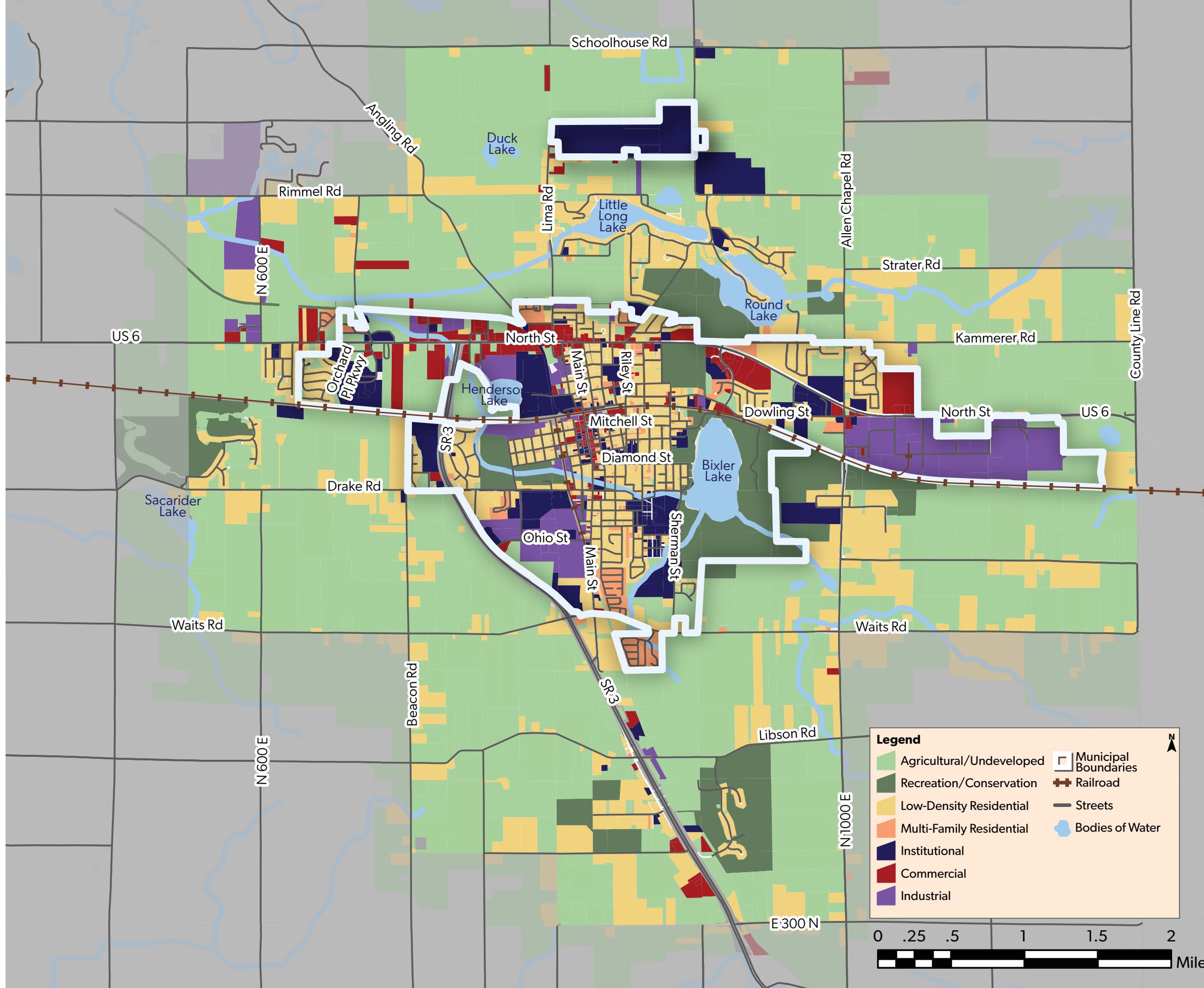
Land Use + Zoning

Existing Land Use

Kendallville has experienced both periods of growth and stagnation – reflected not only in population changes but also in the City's physical expansion. The most recent annexation occurred in 2020, when a new single-family subdivision was annexed. Today, most of Kendallville's corporate boundaries are contiguous, with the exception of the Kendallville Municipal Airport to the north. Over the past decade, state legislation has made annexation more challenging for Indiana municipalities, including Kendallville.

The City entered into an agreement with Noble County in 1990 to assume planning and zoning authority in areas beyond its municipal limits. This area, known as the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), or "two-mile jurisdiction," allows Kendallville to guide development in a broader area.

Kendallville's incorporated area covers 6.21 square miles. When including the ETJ, the total planning area expands to 27.2 square miles.



The predominant land use in Kendallville's planning area is classified as Agricultural, Undeveloped, or Vacant, accounting for approximately 60% of the total area. These properties are primarily located within the City's ETJ. The second-largest land use category is Low-Density Residential, comprising 18% of the planning area.

The detailed map on the page prior illustrates the land use designation of every parcel within the planning area, while the graphic below breaks down the various land use categories:

- Agricultural, Undeveloped, or Vacant: 60%
- Low-Density Residential: 18%
- Recreation / Conservation: 7%
- Institutional: 5%
- Industrial: 4%
- Commercial: 3%
- Multi-Family Residential: 1%
- Other / Rights-of-Way: 2% (includes streets, utilities, railroads, etc.)



Agricultural, Undeveloped, + Vacant
60%

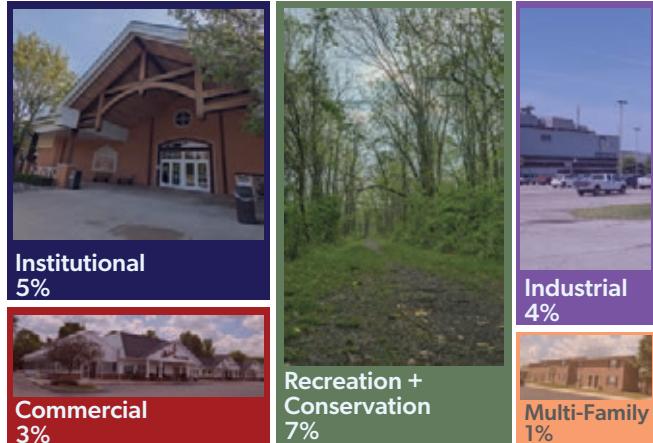
2010/2019 Comprehensive Plan: Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map from Kendallville's 2010/2019 Comprehensive Plan identifies 12 distinct land use categories, many of which align closely with current land uses. In most cases, the future land use designations reflect existing development patterns and are consistent with anticipated growth in the near term. Continued updates to the Zoning Code, Zoning Map, and Subdivision Control Ordinance to reflect these categories will help bring the 2010 Comprehensive Plan's vision to life over time.

One notable goal from the 2010 Plan – the creation of an Airport Hazard Overlay District – remains unfulfilled. Although the concept has been the subject of ongoing discussion, no formal steps have been taken to implement this overlay district to date.



Low-Density Residential
18%



Zoning + Subdivision Control Ordinance

The City of Kendallville's current Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 2017 and has undergone a handful of amendments since. It establishes 16 zoning districts and recognizes three Planned Unit Development Districts (PUDs). The ordinance outlines development standards for each district, incorporates the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, and details procedures for the Board of Zoning Appeals and establishment of Planned Unit Development Districts.

The current Zoning Ordinance also includes an Arterial and Collector Road Overlay District which applies to commercial districts, aiming to enhance site design and functional characteristics.

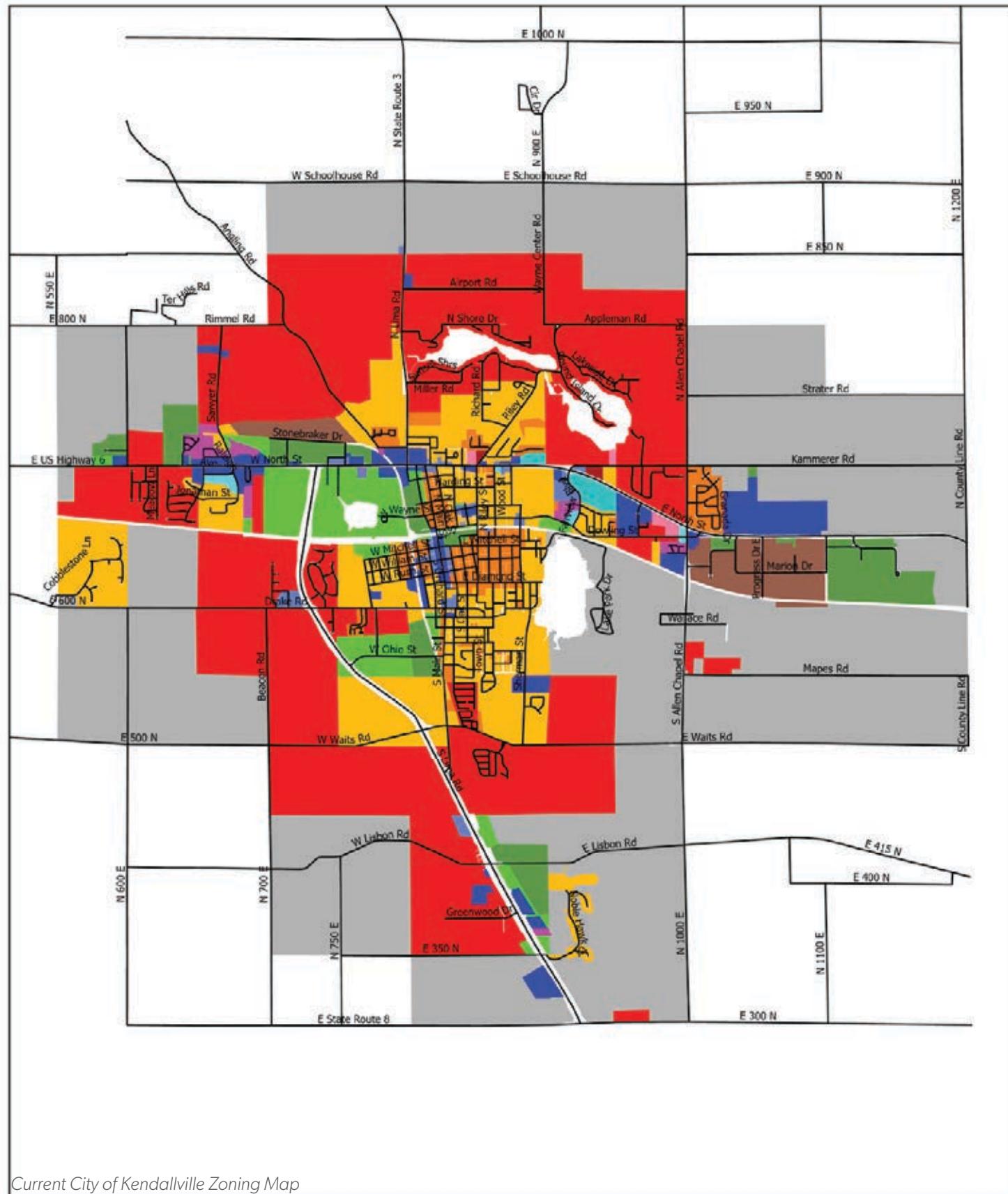
Nearly 50% of Kendallville's planning area is zoned A: Agricultural, while about 30% is zoned RS: Suburban Residence. A full list of zoning districts and their respective land area percentages is provided alongside the zoning map on the following page.

The Subdivision Control Ordinance was adopted in 1993, with a major update in 2001. This ordinance governs the subdivision of land as authorized by Indiana Code and sets standards and procedures for:

- Minor and major subdivisions
- Resubdivision of land
- Plat vacations
- Construction plans

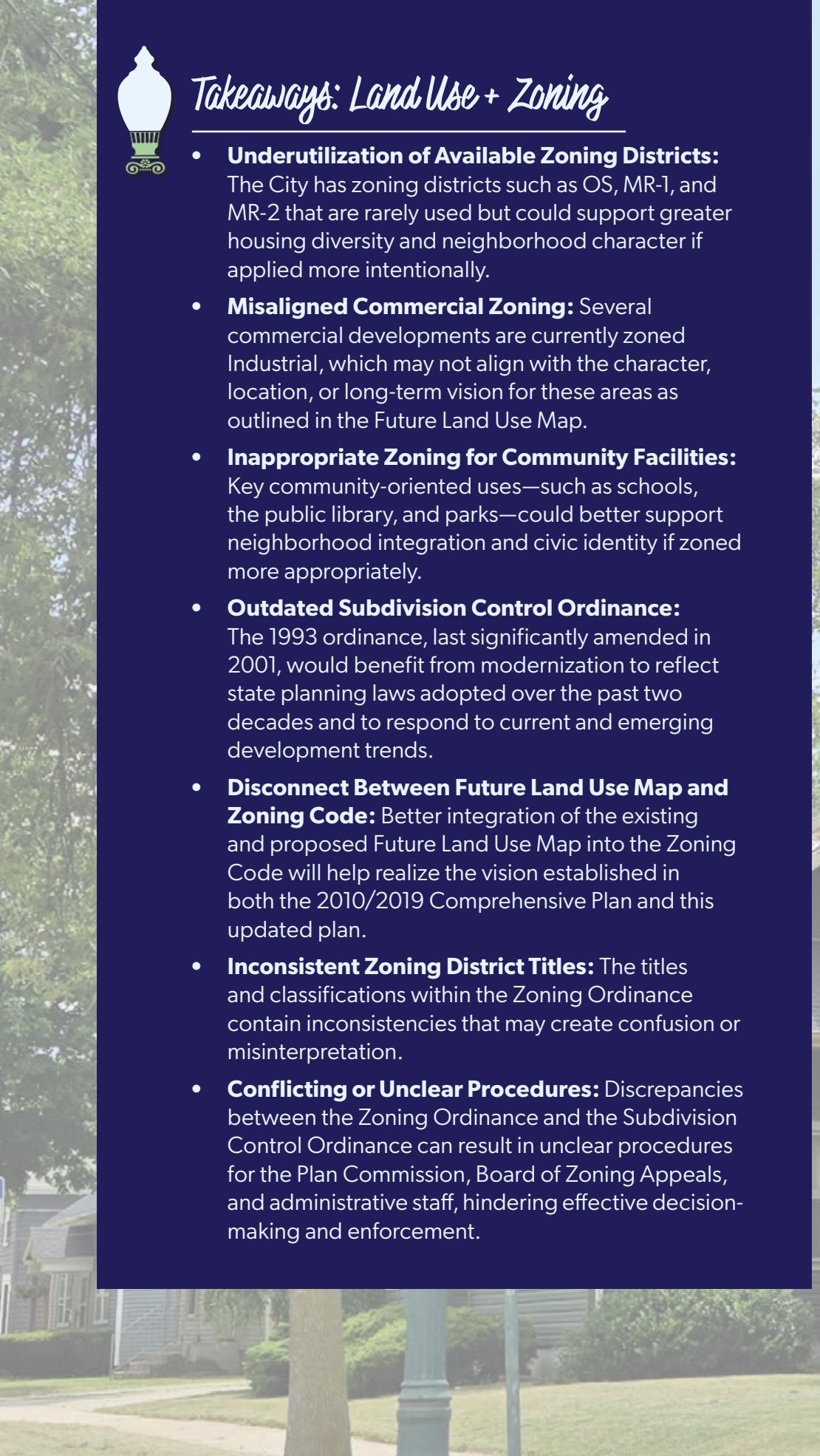
It also includes provisions for variances, enforcement, violations, and penalties, ensuring orderly development and land division throughout the City's planning jurisdiction.

Zoning District	% of Planning Area	
A	Agriculture	48.18%
OS	Open Space	0.0%
RS	Suburban Residence	28.63%
R-1	Single Family	9.79%
R-2	Single and Two Family	1.90%
R-3	Condominium	0.05%
AR	Apartment District	0.41%
MR1	Manufactured Housing District	0.0%
MR2	Manufactured Housing / Mobile Home District	0.0%
C-1A	Local Commercial, Professional Offices	0.12%
C-1B	Local Commercial, Retail Sales	0.44%
C-1C	Local Commercial, Intense	0.02%
C-2A	General Commercial	2.53%
C-3	Shopping District	0.27%
I-1	Light Industry	2.78%
I-2	Heavy Industry	4.75%



Zoning Classification
A
AR
C-1A
C-1B
C-1C
C-2A

C-3	PUD
I-1	R-S
I-2	
I-R	



Takeaways: Land Use + Zoning

- Underutilization of Available Zoning Districts:** The City has zoning districts such as OS, MR-1, and MR-2 that are rarely used but could support greater housing diversity and neighborhood character if applied more intentionally.
- Misaligned Commercial Zoning:** Several commercial developments are currently zoned Industrial, which may not align with the character, location, or long-term vision for these areas as outlined in the Future Land Use Map.
- Inappropriate Zoning for Community Facilities:** Key community-oriented uses—such as schools, the public library, and parks—could better support neighborhood integration and civic identity if zoned more appropriately.
- Outdated Subdivision Control Ordinance:** The 1993 ordinance, last significantly amended in 2001, would benefit from modernization to reflect state planning laws adopted over the past two decades and to respond to current and emerging development trends.
- Disconnect Between Future Land Use Map and Zoning Code:** Better integration of the existing and proposed Future Land Use Map into the Zoning Code will help realize the vision established in both the 2010/2019 Comprehensive Plan and this updated plan.
- Inconsistent Zoning District Titles:** The titles and classifications within the Zoning Ordinance contain inconsistencies that may create confusion or misinterpretation.
- Conflicting or Unclear Procedures:** Discrepancies between the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Control Ordinance can result in unclear procedures for the Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and administrative staff, hindering effective decision-making and enforcement.

COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

Economic Development

Both local government and community organizations play a role in economic development, redevelopment, and long-range planning. While some of these efforts may go unnoticed locally, they are gaining recognition across the region and state.

Local Organizations

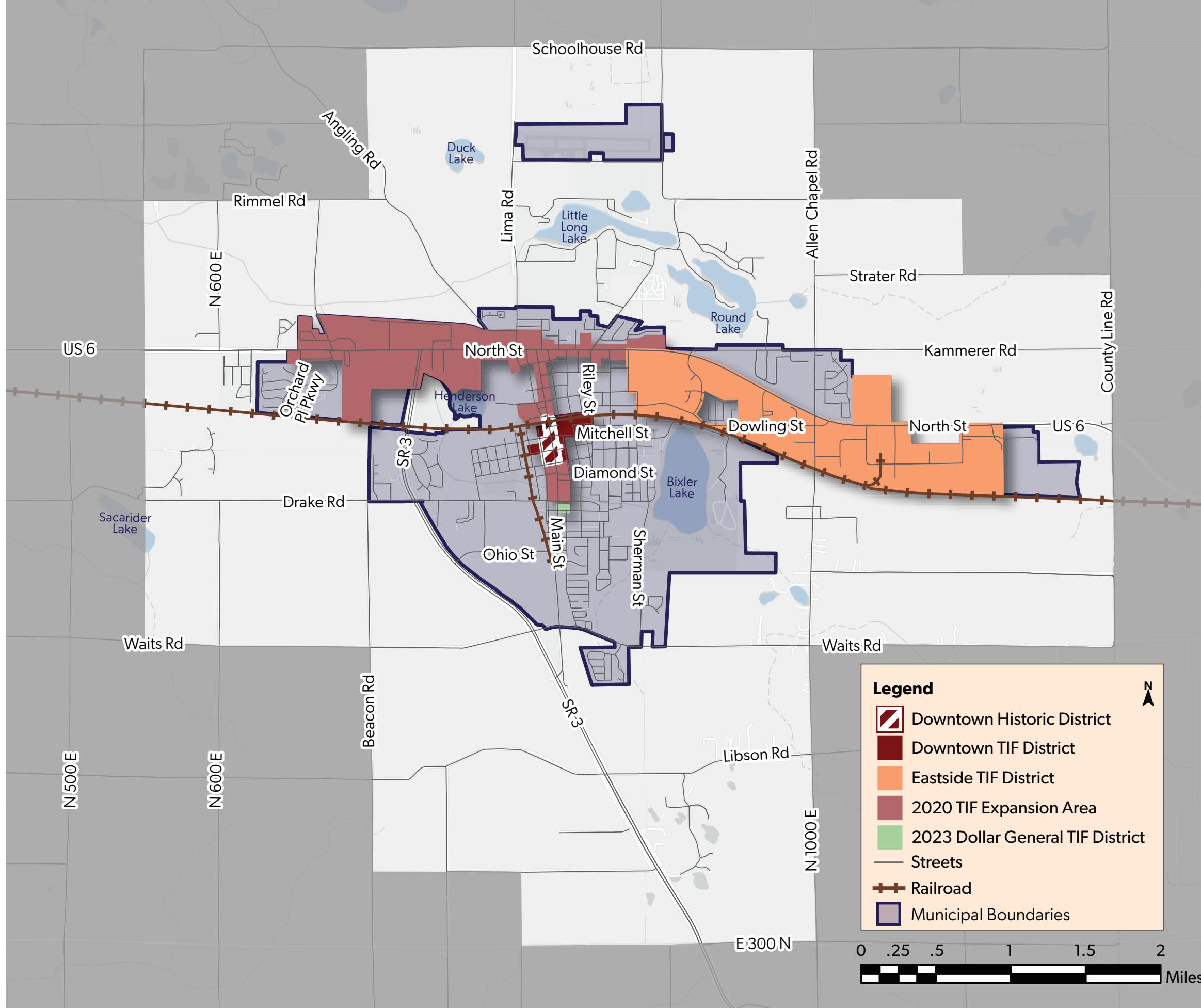
Kendallville Redevelopment Commission

The Kendallville Redevelopment Commission plays a key role in supporting innovative economic development projects that contribute to the City's revitalization. Through alternative financing options and targeted grant programs, the Commission helps foster private investment in key areas of the community. The five-member appointed board meets monthly to review and approve funding requests, including the following active programs:

- Façade Improvement Matching Grant – Property owners within the 2020 TIF District are eligible to apply for a 50/50 matching grant of up to \$15,000. Funds may be used for façade enhancements, awnings, roofing and building envelope repairs, signage, lighting, and murals. Additionally, costs associated with architectural or engineering assistance can be reimbursed up to \$1,000.
- Merchant Marketing Assistance Program – This program offers support to businesses located within the 2020 TIF District for marketing expenses related to print, radio, or digital advertising.

Prior to 2020, the Kendallville Redevelopment Commission maintained two separate Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts:

- Downtown TIF District – Centered around Main Street, this district was scheduled to sunset in July 2025.
- Eastside TIF District – Spanning east of Fair Street along U.S. 6 and south to the railroad tracks, this district is set to expire in 2033.



In 2020, these areas were consolidated and expanded into a single Consolidated Economic Development Area, giving the Commission greater flexibility to support new development. In 2023, the district was expanded to include the site of a new Dollar General on South Main Street.

Kendallville Economic Development Commission

The City of Kendallville's Economic Development Commission plays a key role in expanding job opportunities and promoting economic diversification. This three-member board, appointed by the mayor, is tasked with studying local economic conditions and recommending strategies to strengthen and diversify the city's economic base.

Historic Downtown Kendallville

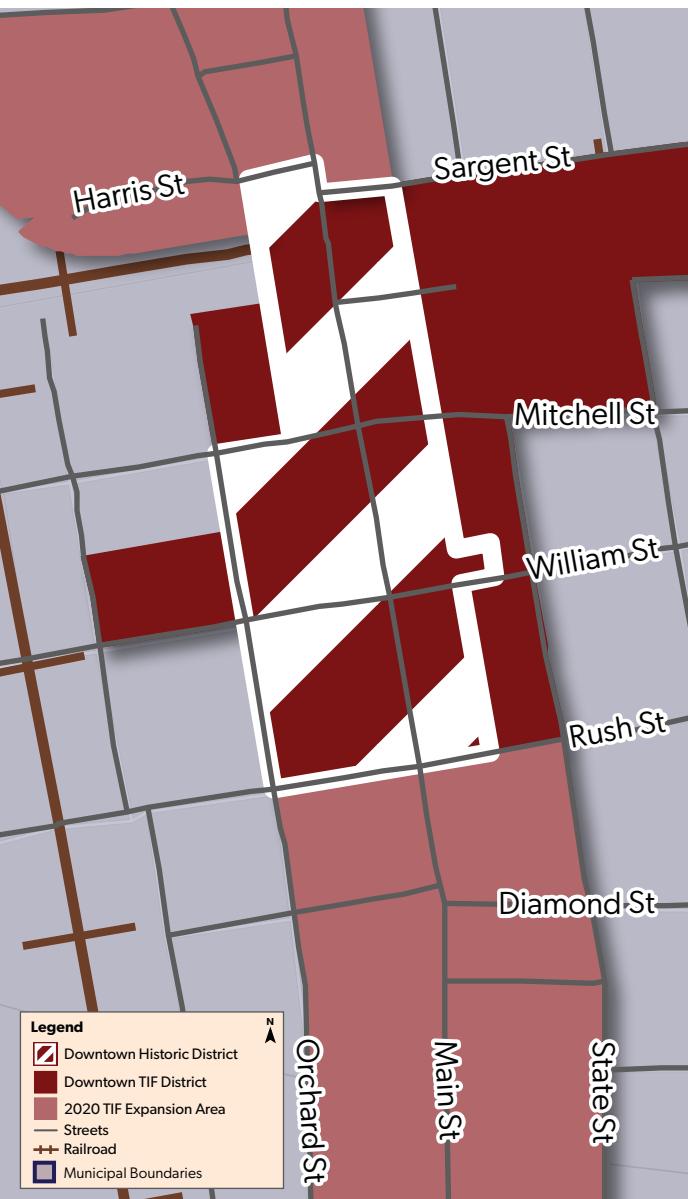
Historic Downtown Kendallville (HDK) is a state- and nationally-accredited Main Street organization dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of Kendallville's historic downtown. A volunteer-driven nonprofit, HDK focuses on marketing and promotions, economic development, design and historic preservation, and organizational governance.

HDK played a central role in the 2020–2021 Main Street Revitalization Project, funded through the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, which transformed Main Street's streetscape. In 2021, HDK received the PreservINg Main Street grant award of \$2 million to be used primarily for building and preservation improvements.

HDK also brings life to the downtown through annual events such as the Fairy, Gnome & Troll Festival, Art on Main, Anniversary Celebration, Kendallville Lantern Parade, and the Christmas Tree Lighting & Parade – helping foster community pride and supporting small businesses.

Downtown Historic District

Kendallville's central business district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003 as the Downtown Kendallville Historic District. This designation includes 45 contributing and 7 non-contributing buildings – an impressive number, especially considering the city lacks a traditional courthouse square. The district is recognized for its architectural diversity and commercial importance from 1863 to 1940. Oversight falls to the City's Historic Preservation Committee, which applies local guidelines to maintain the district's character. The district extends roughly from Harris Street to the north, Rush Street to the south, and is bounded by alleys on the east side of Main Street and the alleyways and Orchard Street on the west side of Main Street.



231 Main Kendallville Co-Working

Founded in 2023 by Historic Downtown Kendallville, 231 Main provides affordable offices and workstations for startups/entrepreneurs, small businesses who are working to build capital, and traveling/nomadic workers. This space offers a meeting space for events, limited private offices, and a community working space. Memberships include day passes or monthly memberships.

Additionally, 231 Main offers monthly workshops on a variety of small business topics, as well as regular office hours with professional experts from the Northeast Indiana Small Business Development Center and the Northeast Indiana Innovation Center in Fort Wayne.

Kendallville Restorations Inc.

Kendallville Restorations Inc. (KRI) is a volunteer-led organization with a mission to eliminate blight, stabilize neighborhoods, restore homes for single-family living, and build community pride. Operating on a break-even model, proceeds from property sales are reinvested into future rehabilitation projects. KRI focuses on Kendallville's core neighborhoods, especially along the Main Street corridor. The organization acquires homes through tax sales, sheriff's sales, and referrals, completing everything from minor repairs to full renovations to demolitions and rebuilds before returning properties to the housing market.

Kendallville Chamber of Commerce

The Kendallville Chamber of Commerce supports local enterprises by equipping its members with tools and resources to help their businesses grow and succeed. From marketing and promotions to professional development, networking, and business referrals, the Chamber plays a key role in strengthening the local economy.

County + Regional Agencies or Programs

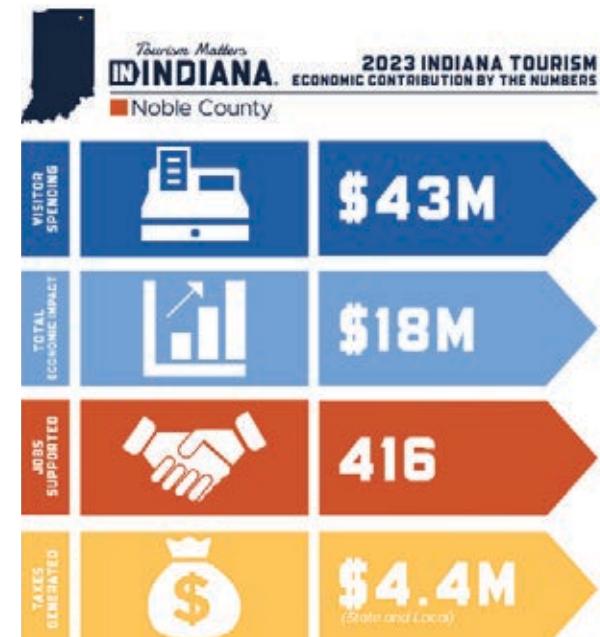
Noble County and Northeast Indiana are home to a range of economic development organizations offering various forms of support. Whether focused on business retention and expansion, attraction, or leadership development and training, these agencies share a common goal: advancing the region's prosperity and long-term success. These agencies include:

- Be Noble Inc. (Noble County Economic Development Agency)
- Engage Noble Leadership Program
- Noble County Workforce Readiness Grants
- Region 3-A Development and Regional Planning Commission

Tourism

Beyond economic development, Kendallville and Noble County place strong emphasis on quality of life through cultural events, recreation, and community engagement. Annual events like the Apple Festival and Tri-State Bluegrass Festival, and attractions such as Bixler Lake Park, the Mid-America Windmill Museum, and Noble Hawk and Cobblestone Golf Courses, help create a vibrant community and draw tourism.

In 2023, tourism generated an estimated \$18 million in economic impact in Noble County, supporting more than 400 local jobs and reinforcing its role as a key contributor to the local economy.



Top Industry + Recent Investment

Kendallville's strategic location at the intersection of State Road 3 and U.S. 6 - just minutes from Interstate 69 and served by the Norfolk Southern rail line - makes it an ideal hub for logistics and manufacturing. The city's freight connectivity is further strengthened by private rail spurs creating a direct connection to industries and supporting efficient goods movement and supply chain operations.

In 2023, Noble County recorded over \$170 million in real estate and industrial equipment investments—setting a new regional record. Major contributors to this growth included Hendrickson in Kendallville and Dexter Axle in Ligonier. Building permit data from 2024 shows that Kendallville accounted for \$1.6 million in reported industrial investment, highlighting the city's continued momentum in attracting and expanding industry.

The top 5 trades in the Kendallville area include:

- Manufacturing (39%)
- Government (9%)
- Retail Trade (9%)
- Crop + Animal Production (5%)
- Health Care + Social Assistance (4%)

The top employers for Kendallville are below:

- Creative Liquid Coatings: 600 employees
- Kraft-Heinz: 550 employees
- Parkview Health: 480 employees
- East Noble School Corporation: 460 employees
- LCS Communication: 420 employees
- Flint and Walling: 419 employees

In 2024, the Building, Planning, and Zoning Department issued nearly 200 permits that totaled in \$13.8 million in investments. Commercial projects accounted for \$6.3 million; industrial projects accounted for \$1.6 million; and residential projects accounted for nearly \$6 million.



Takeaways: Economic Development

- **Experiencing Growth:** Demographic trends and ongoing investment from local companies indicate that both Kendallville and Noble County are experiencing meaningful economic growth.
- **Economic Development Tools:** Kendallville has a strong foundation of economic development tools in place - including the Redevelopment Commission, TIF Districts, grant programs, and other incentives - which position the City to easily expand future opportunities.
- **TIF District:** With the original Downtown TIF District expiring in July 2025, the City developed the 2020 Consolidated Economic Development Area to allow captured TIF dollars to be continue to be reallocated to all districts within the expanded economic development area, including Downtown.
- **Amenities:** Through these economic development efforts, Kendallville supports a variety of local events and attractions that not only engage the community but also draw visitors from across the region.



COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

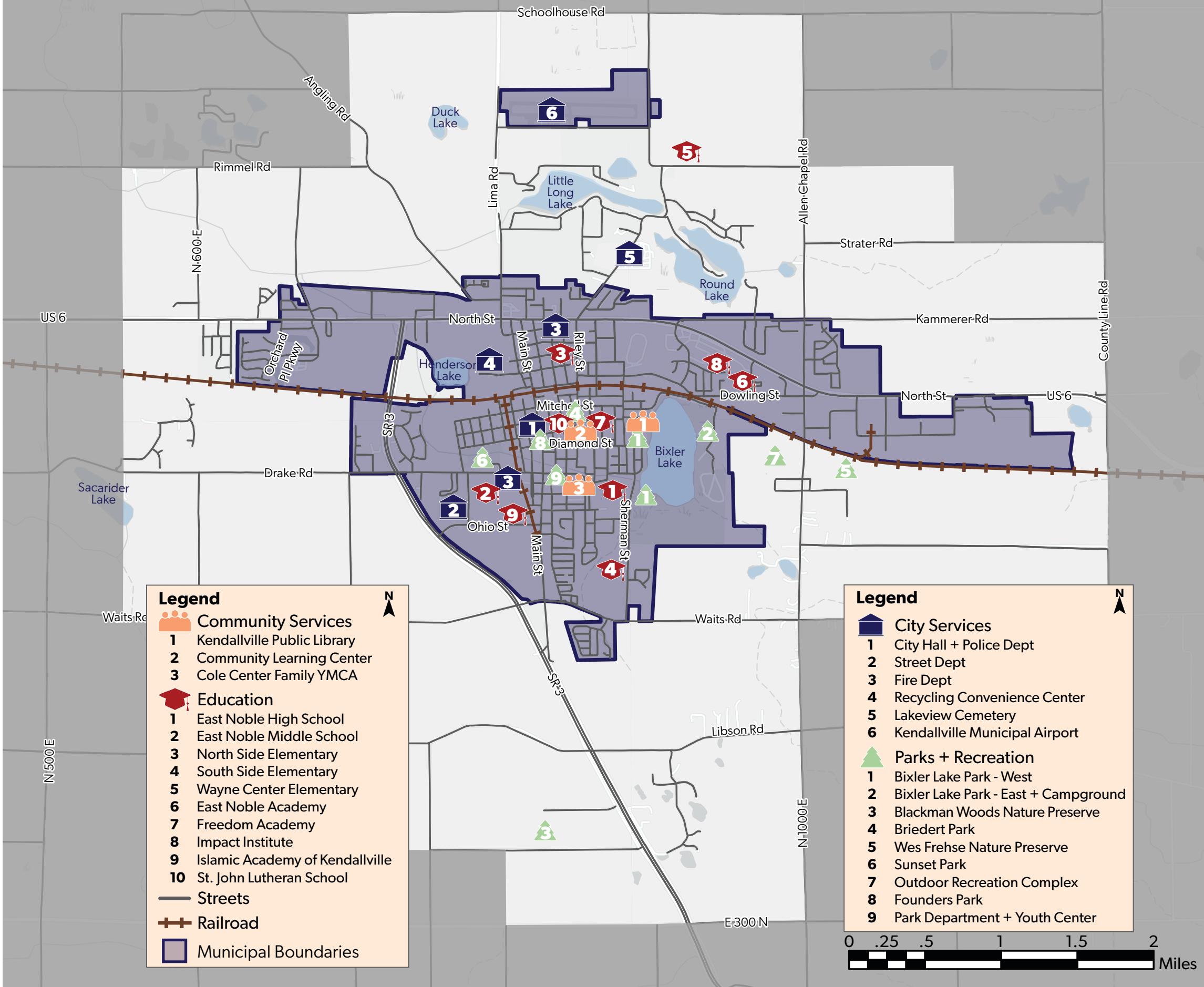
Public Facilities + Services

Kendallville is home to a variety of public facilities that help keep the city running smoothly and contribute to the community's quality of life. City Hall houses key administrative offices and public services, while departments like Parks and Recreation, Street, and the Municipal Airport provide essential services and amenities for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. Together, these facilities reflect the City's ongoing commitment to serving the public and supporting a strong, well-connected community.

Kendallville City Hall

The heart of Kendallville's local government is housed in the Kendallville City Hall and City Hall Annex, located on South Main Street in the Historic Downtown District. The current City Hall was constructed in 1914, replacing the original structure lost to a fire earlier that year. Designed in the Classical Revival style, the two-story building remains a prominent civic landmark and is a contributing structure within the Kendallville Downtown Historic District.

In 1981, the City expanded operations into the adjacent building, now known as the City Hall Annex, which was acquired to accommodate the growing needs of city government. Together, the original structure and the annex form a cohesive civic campus that reflects Kendallville's long-standing commitment to accessible, effective, and historically rooted public service.



Administrative Offices

Kendallville City Hall serves as the central hub for the city's administrative operations. The building houses the Mayor's Office, Clerk-Treasurer, Building and Planning, Engineering, and various other departments involved in the daily administration and governance of the community. The facility is ADA accessible and includes updated entrances and signage to better serve residents and visitors. Its continued use speaks to the city's pride in preserving its heritage while supporting modern municipal functions.

To support downtown vitality and accessibility, the City of Kendallville also owns and maintains two public parking lots located directly behind the downtown buildings along South Orchard Street. These lots provide approximately 150 parking spaces and are essential to the success of downtown businesses, offering convenient and free parking for employees, customers, and visitors alike.



Kendallville Street Department

The Kendallville Street Department is headquartered at 720 Weston Avenue, serving as the city's frontline provider of infrastructure maintenance and public right-of-way services. The department plays a vital role in ensuring safe, clean, and accessible streets for residents, businesses, and visitors.

The Street Department's responsibilities include:

- Street maintenance
- Sign maintenance
- Tree, limb, and debris removal
- Leaf pick-up
- Snow removal and snow emergency response
- Right-of-way maintenance

Through these services, the department supports public safety, traffic flow, and neighborhood appearance. With a consistent schedule, responsive service, and a dedicated team, the Street Department remains essential to the daily operations and quality of life in Kendallville.

Kendallville Police Department

The Kendallville Police Department is also located within City Hall, operating from the historic structure while maintaining a modern, professional presence. The department's mission is to provide "professional, high-quality, and effective policing" in partnership with the community, focusing on crime deterrence, traffic control, and school safety.

Key highlights of the department include:

- A nationally recognized School Resource Officer (SRO) program with officers embedded in local schools.
- Emphasis on training and outreach, with officers certified in areas like firearms and defensive tactics, and the department offering public education initiatives
- A strong record of community engagement, transparency, and a balanced approach to enforcement, rooted in trust and service.

In summary, the Kendallville Police Department reflects the city's blend of heritage and forward-thinking public service, operating from a building that continues to symbolize Kendallville's civic identity.



Kendallville Fire Department

Kendallville is served by two strategically located fire stations: Station #1 at 307 Drake Road on the city's southwest side and Station #2 at 304 East North Street (U.S. 6) on the northeast side. Both stations have direct access to railroad overpasses, minimizing potential delays from stopped trains and ensuring reliable emergency response across the community.

The Kendallville Fire Department is a combination department, staffed by both full-time and volunteer firefighters. The department responds to approximately 1,200 calls annually providing fire suppression, rescue services, Basic Life Support (BLS), and hazardous materials (Hazmat) response. The department's service area extends beyond the Kendallville City Limits to include adjacent townships. In total, the Kendallville Fire Department service area includes 40 square miles.

Both fire stations are modern, well-maintained facilities built in the latter half of the 20th century. The department maintains a regularly refreshed and advanced fleet, ensuring readiness for a variety of emergency situations.

In addition to emergency response, the fire department plays an active role in community education and training, reinforcing its commitment to public safety and preparedness. The dual-station model provides effective citywide coverage and supports the department's continued focus on operational excellence and service to the community.

Recycling Convenience Center

Located in the 400 block of West Wayne Street, Kendallville's Recycling Convenience Center provides a seasonal drop-off location for organic yard waste. Accepted materials include leaves, garden plants, shrubs, limbs, brush, and grass clippings—all limited to natural, compostable items. The site operates annually from April through November, with both weekday and weekend hours. In addition to collection services, the center also offers free woodchips and compost on a first-come, first-served basis. This site supports Kendallville's environmental efforts by promoting sustainable yard waste disposal and providing a useful resource for gardeners and landscapers.



Kendallville Parks and Recreation

The City of Kendallville is home to a diverse and well-maintained parks system that supports outdoor recreation, environmental stewardship, and community well-being. From expansive lakefront property to intimate neighborhood parks and natural preserves, these public facilities offer year-round amenities for residents and visitors of all ages.

Bixler Lake Park + Campground

Bixler Lake Park is the crown jewel of Kendallville's park system. Centered around a 117-acre lake and surrounded by over 500 acres of parkland, this expansive public space offers a rich mix of recreational and natural amenities. Visitors can explore wetland nature areas, hike trails through native grass and wildflower fields, relax at a scenic gazebo, or participate in community gardening. The park also features athletic fields, picnic shelters, a swimming beach, and a campground, making it a popular destination for both day-use and overnight stays. A free miniature golf course funded through community donations has been recently installed.

Blackman Woods Nature Preserve

Blackman Woods is a dedicated nature preserve that showcases the region's native woodland ecosystem. This tranquil site is ideal for walking, birdwatching, and experiencing undisturbed natural surroundings. It serves as a quiet escape and contributes to local conservation efforts by preserving biodiversity and habitat for wildlife.

Briedert Park

Briedert Park is a small neighborhood park that provides a peaceful, community-focused green space. While modest in size, it serves nearby residents with open areas for informal recreation, relaxation, and gatherings. It's a vital piece of Kendallville's commitment to making outdoor space accessible in every part of the city.

Wes Frehse Nature Preserve

The Wes Frehse Nature Preserve offers visitors an opportunity to explore undeveloped natural landscapes, emphasizing environmental education and quiet outdoor enjoyment. With its wooded trails and seasonal plant life, it is an excellent resource for passive recreation and a living classroom for students and nature enthusiasts.



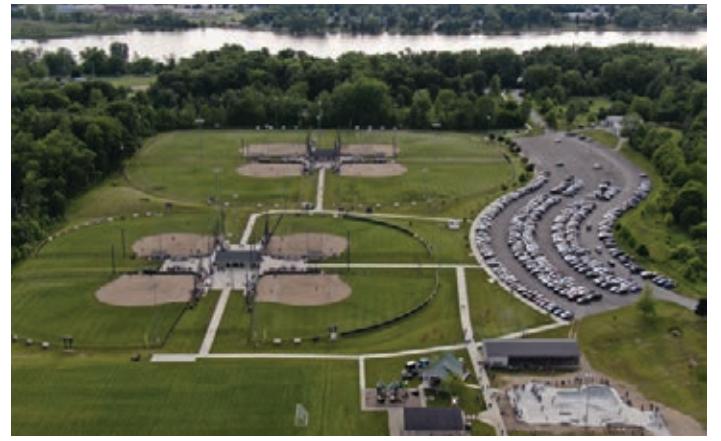
Sunset Park (400 Drake Road)

Located at 400 Drake Road, Sunset Park is a popular community park known for its open green space, walking paths, and family-friendly atmosphere. It's a great spot for casual outings, exercise, and enjoying the outdoors. Its accessibility and central location make it a well-used asset in Kendallville's parks network. The playground was recently upgraded with accessible features for all users.



Outdoor Recreation Complex (524 South Allen Chapel Road)

The Outdoor Recreation Complex at 524 South Allen Chapel Road is a hub for organized sports and active recreation. With multiple playing fields and support facilities, it hosts youth leagues, tournaments, and other athletic events throughout the year. This complex plays a key role in promoting health, teamwork, and youth development through sports, while also serving as an economic draw for the community.



Founders Park

Founders Park is a charming pocket park located on Main Street in Historic Downtown Kendallville, Indiana. Established in 2022, the park features whimsical sculptures like 'Bird Man' and 'Play Time Dog,' which add an artistic touch to the downtown atmosphere. The park serves as a welcoming space for relaxation, photos, and small community events such as holiday tree lightings. Founders Park reflects Kendallville's commitment to placemaking, art, and community connection in its revitalized downtown.



Park Department + Youth Center (211 Iddings Street)

The Kendallville Park Department operates out of 211 Iddings Street, which also houses the city's Youth Center. This facility offers indoor programming, youth activities, and community events, serving as a central point for park administration and recreation outreach. The Youth Center reinforces the city's dedication to supporting families and youth through structured, positive engagement.



Lakeview Cemetery

Established in 1867, Lakeview Cemetery is Kendallville's primary public burial ground, located just north of U.S. 6 on North Riley Road. Spanning both sides of the road, the cemetery features well-maintained grounds, mature trees, and a peaceful setting with a mix of historic and modern monuments.

Operated and maintained by the City of Kendallville, Lakeview serves as both a resting place and a reflection of the community's history, with graves dating back to the 19th century. The site includes clearly marked sections, a "Potter's Field," and thoughtful landscaping that enhances its respectful and reflective atmosphere.

Kendallville Municipal Airport

Established in 1946, the Kendallville Municipal Airport is located at 363 Airport Road, approximately two miles north of the city. The facility features a single asphalt runway measuring 4,399 feet in length, accommodating general aviation and small corporate aircraft.

The airport is operated by the Kendallville Board of Aviation Commissioners, which oversees its maintenance, operations, and strategic development. As a local transportation asset, the airport supports business travel, recreational flying, emergency services, and aerial agricultural applications, contributing to the region's economic vitality and accessibility.



Education

Well-versed in educational opportunities, Kendallville is home to many educational facilities. While the organizations listed below primarily focus on primary education and local opportunities for secondary education or career development, it was heavily mentioned that early childhood education and child care for young children in general is lacking in the community.

East Noble School Corporation

East Noble School Corporation includes 1 high school, 1 middle school, 5 elementary schools, preschool programming, and East Noble Academy. Of those 9 facilities, 6 are located within Kendallville's planning jurisdiction: East Noble High School, East Noble Middle School, North Side Elementary, South Side Elementary, Wayne Center Elementary, and East Noble Academy. East Noble School Corporation provides public educational opportunity for Kendallville and East Noble County residents ranging from preschool-aged children to high school, providing opportunity for children to complete their primary education all within their community.

Freedom Academy

Located in the Community Learning Center, Freedom Academy provides "quality, demand driven workforce development and certification training in Northeast Indiana." Freedom Academy offers training and education opportunities in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and professional services through 20 different course options. Since 1991, Freedom Academy has been serving Northeast Indiana communities, currently offering courses in 11 Counties.

Impact Institute

Impact Institute is centered around vocational programming, administering to adult education, and coordinating with State agencies. It is an alternative educational option for those interested in pursuing targeted education or certifications for careers in the trades. The program currently serves 5 Indiana Counties and 13 school corporations. There are 13 programs available to high school students and a multitude of services for adults looking to further their education and training experiences.



Islamic Academy of Kendallville

Located in recently renovated facility just off of South Main Street, the Islamic Academy of Kendallville offers another private, religious educational opportunity who has a vision of "establishing a learning community that promotes academic achievement, leadership, and Islamic values." Classes are offered for Kindergarten through 6th grade and currently serves around 50 students.

St. John Lutheran School

Originally founded in 1859 and reopened in 1981, St. John Lutheran School offers a private, religious educational opportunity for the community. Christ-centered education is offered featuring small class sizes. St. John Lutheran School provides education for preschoolers through 8th grade.

Kendallville Public Library

The Kendallville Public Library serves as a cornerstone of community life and an essential partner in the City's efforts to strengthen educational attainment, workforce readiness, and overall quality of life. With a modern facility, the library provides access to a broad collection of print and digital resources, meeting spaces, and technology that support both individual learning and collective engagement. It functions as more than a repository of information; it is a civic institution that fosters literacy, digital competency, and life-long learning across all age groups.

Programming at the library extends well beyond traditional services. The institution offers early literacy initiatives, youth and teen enrichment opportunities, and adult education programs ranging from job-skills development to technology training. The library also plays a central role in cultural and civic life, providing venues for community dialogue, hosting events that celebrate local heritage, and aligning its resources with broader community development goals. By combining educational resources with accessible spaces for connection and collaboration, the Kendallville Public Library directly contributes to the City's vision for a vibrant, inclusive, and future-ready community.

Community Learning Center

Based in the former Kendallville High School property, the Community Learning Center (CLC) strives to "further the community in the areas of health and wellness, work force and economic development, and the performing and fine arts." After being established in 2019, the CLC creates a place that offers something for the entire community. The CLC houses 11 dedicated programmers ranging from the Noble County Convention and Visitors Bureau, to the Gaslight Playhouse, to Freedom Academy and many more.

Additionally, the CLC offers a wide variety of classes and programming appealing to the masses. A few of the more permanent classes include The Pottery and The Cookery, providing space and equipment that may be otherwise unattainable. Not only does the CLC host informative events for Kendallville and surrounding communities, it also features rent-able spaces for others to host events. One prominent event that has successfully rooted in the CLC's is the Kendallville Farmer's Market.

Cole Center Family YMCA

The Cole Center Family YMCA is a non-profit, charitable organization that strives to strengthen community through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. The organization offers 10 varieties of programs and services that support their mission, all of which can be further broken down to meet individual needs of the community:

- Child Care
- Education + Leadership
- Swim, Sports, + Play
- Camps
- Family Programs
- Health, Well-Being, + Fitness
- Sports + Recreation
- Volunteering
- Giving
- Training + Certifications



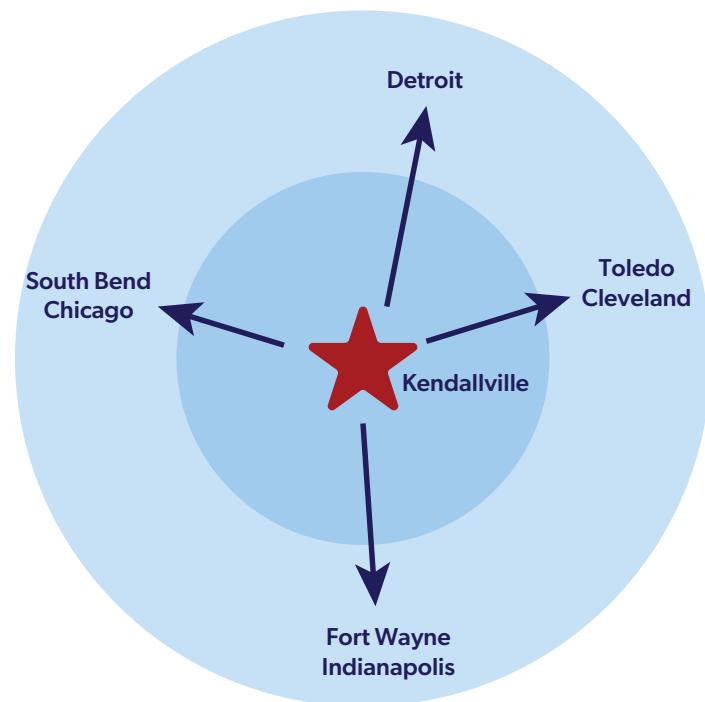
Takeaways: Public Facilities + Services

- **City Departments:** Kendallville's departments provide essential public services efficiently and reliably, supporting daily life and long-term community needs.
- **Parks + Recreation:** The City offers a wide range of amenities and programs encouraging active living and providing recreation for all ages.
- **Unique Services:** Kendallville stands out with its municipal airport and City-operated cemetery, offering services not commonly found in similar-sized communities.
- **Educational Opportunities:** Many facilities are available for primary education, alternative education, and secondary education / career-based training, there seems to be insufficient opportunities for early childhood education and child care in general.
- **Community Services:** Furthering the community spirit found in Kendallville, many local organizations exist to serve and promote the community.

COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

Streets, Trails, + Sidewalks

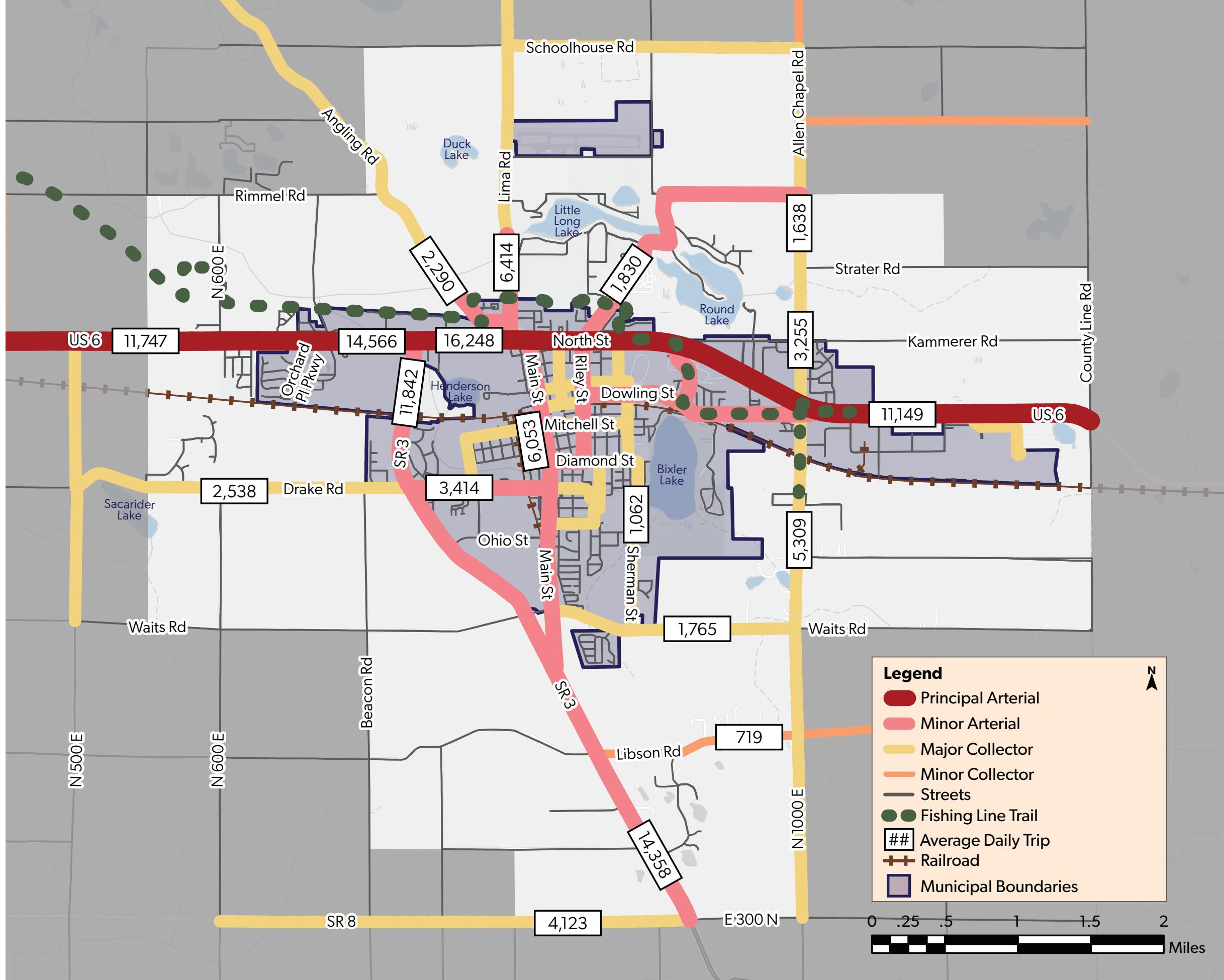
Kendallville's location offers excellent regional connectivity. Situated at the crossroads of State Road 3 and U.S. 6, and just a short drive from Interstate 69, the city provides easy access for travelers, commuters, and freight. Its central position among several major metropolitan areas makes Kendallville well-positioned as a hub for growth, transportation, and economic activity.



Streets

The map depicts the current designations of streets and thoroughfares in Kendallville. The Average Daily Trips (ADT's) support these designations and shed light on heavily traveled areas.

State Road 3 and U.S. 6 serve as major transportation corridors in Kendallville—not only for regional thru-traffic but also for local residents and industries. Both routes are maintained by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), making a strong partnership between the City and INDOT essential to ensure roadway designs prioritize safety and efficiency for all users, including drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.



U.S. 6, locally known as North Street, functions as Kendallville's primary east-west corridor and is lined with much of the city's suburban commercial development. In contrast, State Road 3 south of U.S. 6 is a four-lane divided highway with limited access points, creating a distinct development pattern.

Unlike U.S. 6, direct driveway access is not allowed on State Road 3 south of U.S. 6. North of U.S. 6, State Road 3 transitions into a two-lane highway with appropriate turn lanes bordered by suburban commercial strip-mall developments. Access to adjacent properties is limited. Further north along State Road 3, past the N Angling Rd intersection, the street narrows more serving local and thru traffic via a traditional rural route.

Complementing these state routes is a well-maintained network of local streets overseen by the City and Noble County. These roads provide critical access to neighborhoods, schools, parks, and businesses, and help shape travel habits for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. Key local corridors include the following:

North/South

- Main Street
- Riley Street / Riley Road
- Lima Road / State Road 3
- Angling Road
- Allen Chapel Road / N 1000 E
- Sherman Street
- N 500 E

East/West

- North Street
- Drake Road
- Dowling Street
- Diamond Street
- Waits Road
- Mitchell Street
- E 300 N

Main Street



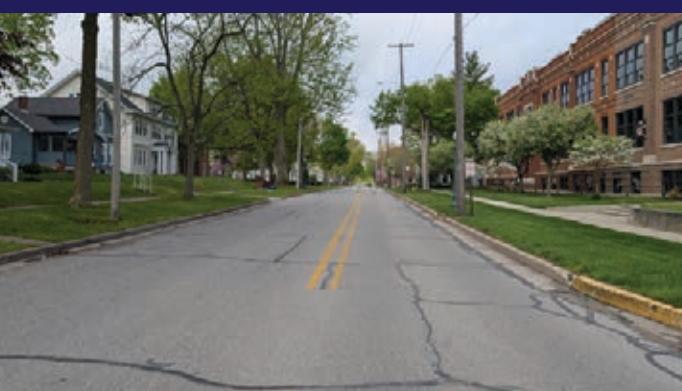
North Street / U.S. 6



Drake Road



Diamond Street



Sidewalks and Trails

Kendallville offers a generally accessible downtown, supported by a network of sidewalks in many adjacent neighborhoods. The downtown area is walkable, and existing trails through Bixler Lake Park, the campground, and surrounding wetlands provide meaningful opportunities for outdoor recreation and nature engagement.

The 5-Year Park Master Plan explored the implementation of trails around Sunset Park that would explore the natural features as well as connect pedestrians from Drake Road to Rush Street. However, during stakeholder engagement, challenges were noted along the U.S. 6 corridor, where sidewalk gaps and narrow walkways make pedestrian movement difficult and uncomfortable in places.

At the regional level, the Fishing Line Trail is well-utilized, but many residents have expressed a desire for more direct connections between the trail and downtown Kendallville. Opportunities exist to better connect this regional amenity to local destinations like Bixler Lake and the city's core.

Kendallville's local street network includes sidewalks and pedestrian routes that support movement throughout the community, particularly to key destinations such as parks, schools, and downtown. Major corridors such as U.S. 6 present both opportunities and challenges for pedestrian access due to traffic volumes and limited right-of-way in some areas.



Takeaways: Streets, Trails, + Sidewalks

- **Vehicular Access:** Kendallville supports efficient travel for both local and regional traffic.
- **U.S. 6 Corridor:** Sidewalks exist along most of U.S. 6, but aren't always safe or user-friendly.
- **Non-Vehicular Access:** U.S. 6 and State Road 3 lack pedestrian and bike-friendly infrastructure in non-residential areas.
- **Fishing Line Trail:** The trail offers key pedestrian access north of U.S. 6 where sidewalks are limited.
- **Trail Expansion:** There's a clear need for trail connections south of U.S. 6.
- **Sidewalk Network:** Older neighborhoods have sidewalks, though some need repair. Newer developed areas lack consistent or connected paths.

COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

Utility Services

Growth of Utility Systems

The provision of water treatment, distribution, and sanitary sewer services is essential to Kendallville's continued growth. With existing capacity and the ability to expand, the City remains committed to supporting residential, commercial, and industrial development while meeting the long-term utility needs of the community.

Water

The Kendallville Water Department serves over 3,500 customers, including all major industries within the city, as well as areas beyond the corporate limits such as Meadow Lane, Noble Hawk Golf Links and subdivision, and the Kendallville Outdoor Recreation Complex.

The system includes:

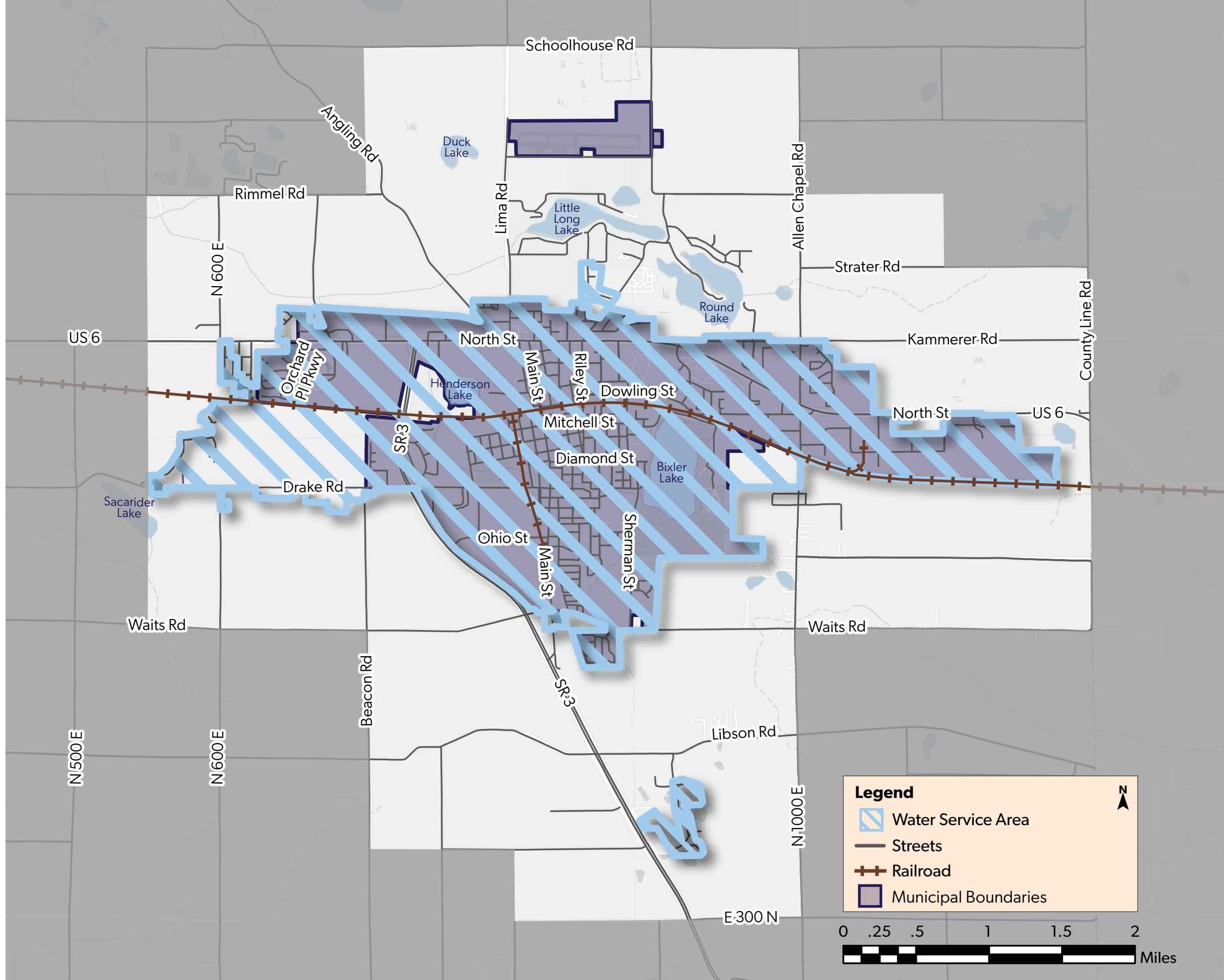
- Three 500,000-gallon water towers
- Three water plants
- Nine wells

The system has an average daily flow of 1.3 million gallons per day (MGD), with a peak flow of 2.6 MGD. Due to the closure of local foundries, the system currently operates with 60% excess capacity, providing capacity and flexibility for future growth.

Approximately half of the distribution system is over 100 years old, resulting in an average of 15 main breaks per year. The system also includes a significant number of lead service lines, with an estimated 2,000 replacements needed.

A \$17 million bond, currently being repaid, will be paid off by 2026. Once retired, the City plans to redirect the associated debt service payments to fund a lead service line replacement program. The City is also exploring the possibility of a smaller bond paired with grant funding to accelerate the replacement timeline.

Most water meters are located within homes and include remote reading capabilities, improving efficiency in meter monitoring and billing.



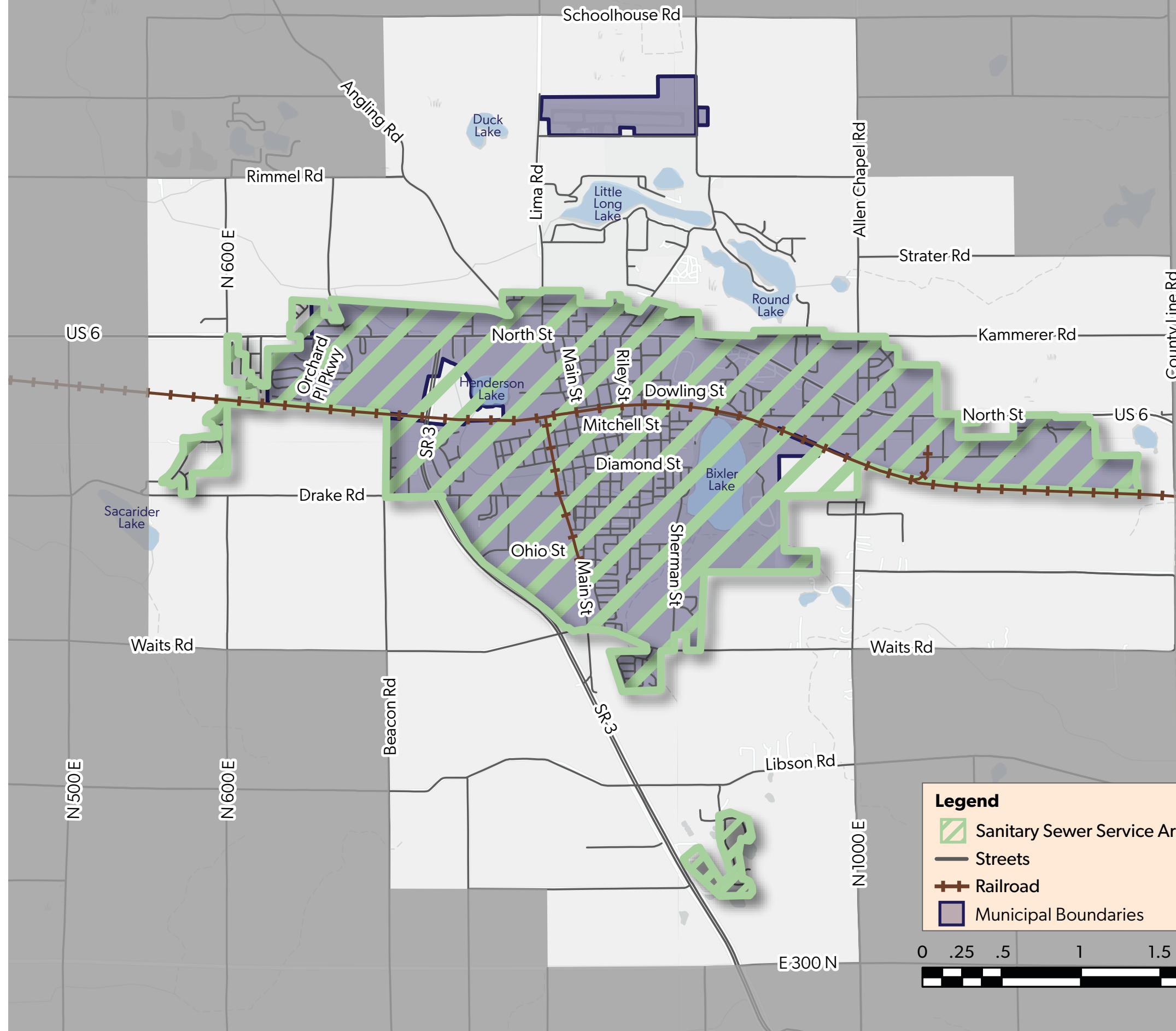
Wastewater

The Kendallville Water Pollution Control Facility, located on West Wayne Street, has a treatment capacity of 2.68 million gallons per day (MGD) and currently operates with an average daily flow of 1.5 MGD. The facility recently gained significant capacity after Kraft Heinz installed its own pre-treatment system, which is expected to free up additional capacity. Previously operating at 75% of its design load, the facility now has increased capacity and flexibility to support new residential, commercial, and industrial growth.

The City of Kendallville owns and operates an extensive sanitary sewer system, which extends beyond the corporate limits to serve areas such as Noble Hawk, Cobblestone, Meadow Lane, and the Kendallville Outdoor Recreation Complex. Users outside the City pay a 40% surcharge for wastewater services.

The City continues to explore service expansion opportunities, including the potential to extend sanitary sewer to serve approximately 350 homes in the Round Lake area. Additionally, infrastructure improvements in the western neighborhoods have opened up further opportunities to connect businesses west of the city.

Kendallville has also made significant progress in separating its combined sewer system. Approximately 95% of the system has been separated. The remaining 5% cannot be separated due to physical or engineering limitations. Currently, one Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) exists at the treatment plant, which is rarely activated, reflecting effective management of the system.



Electric

Residents and businesses in Kendallville receive electric service from Indiana Michigan Power (I&M) – a subsidiary of American Electric Power (AEP) serving northeastern Indiana. I&M handles local distribution and reliability efforts

AEP's Kendallville Area Improvements Project aims to enhance grid reliability and capacity in the region through upgrades to existing substations – Kendallville, Bixler, and a new Henderson substation – as well as the installation of approximately 6.5 miles of new 138-kilovolt transmission lines. These upgrades are designed to reduce outage frequency and improve system resilience, replacing aging equipment from the 1960s. Construction is now planned to start in 2027.

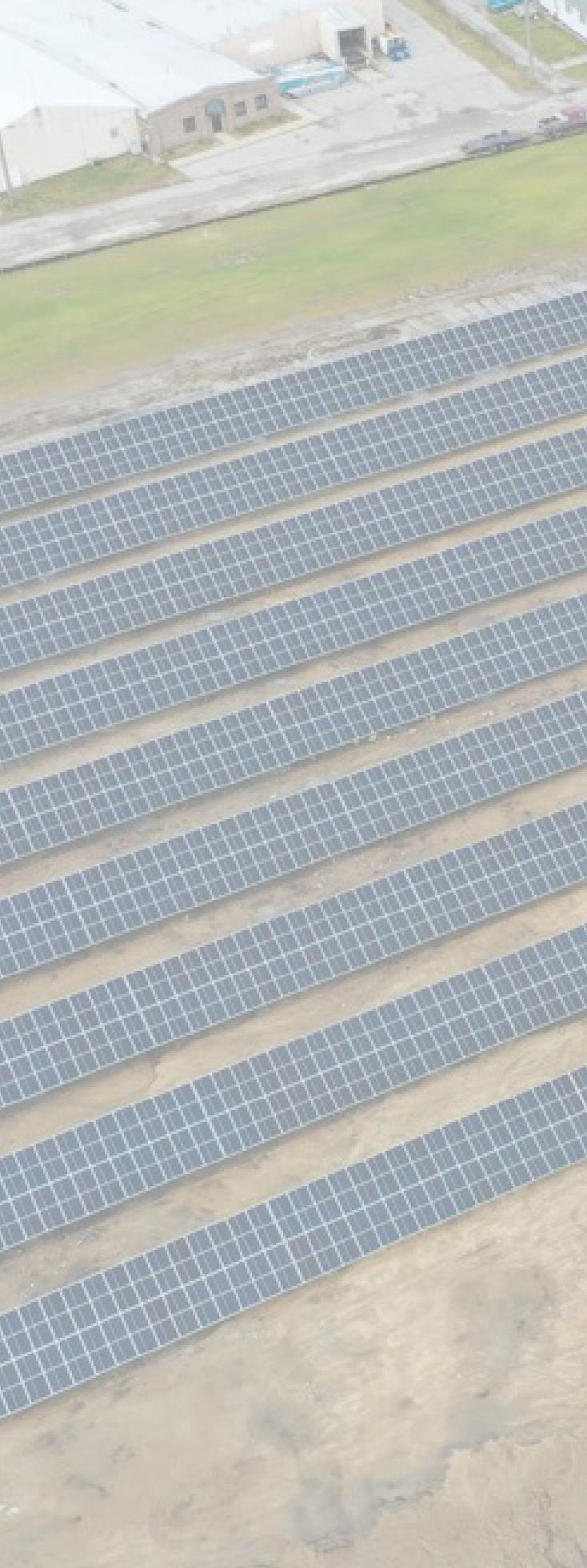
In areas outside the city's core - particularly rural and agricultural areas - Noble REMC (Rural Electric Membership Cooperative) provides electric service. Noble REMC operates under the Touchstone Energy cooperative model and offers services tailored to rural customers.

Internet

While there are a handful of internet service providers serving Kendallville, LigTel Communications offers fiber-optic internet in Kendallville. LigTel Communications is currently expanding their service area and is aiming to provide fiber-optic internet connection to all properties in the incorporated City of Kendallville by the end of 2026.

Gas

Residential and commercial natural gas service in Kendallville is provided by NIPSCO (Northern Indiana Public Service Company), a subsidiary of NiSource. Concerns of capacity without infrastructure upgrade has been generally discussed throughout the entire community.



Takeaways: Utility + Services

- **City Utility Capacity:** The City owns and operates its own water and wastewater utility systems, both of which have an abundance of capacity considering recent utility upgrades to local industrial facilities. The City will be able to serve any growth for many years to come.
- **Private Utilities:** As with most communities, the City does not have ownership of electric, internet or gas utilities. This can make planning for development and long-range visioning challenging as the City does not have any control or in-depth knowledge of the issues that may arise. Having a good working relationship with these utility companies is imperative for the continued growth and revitalization of the community.

COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

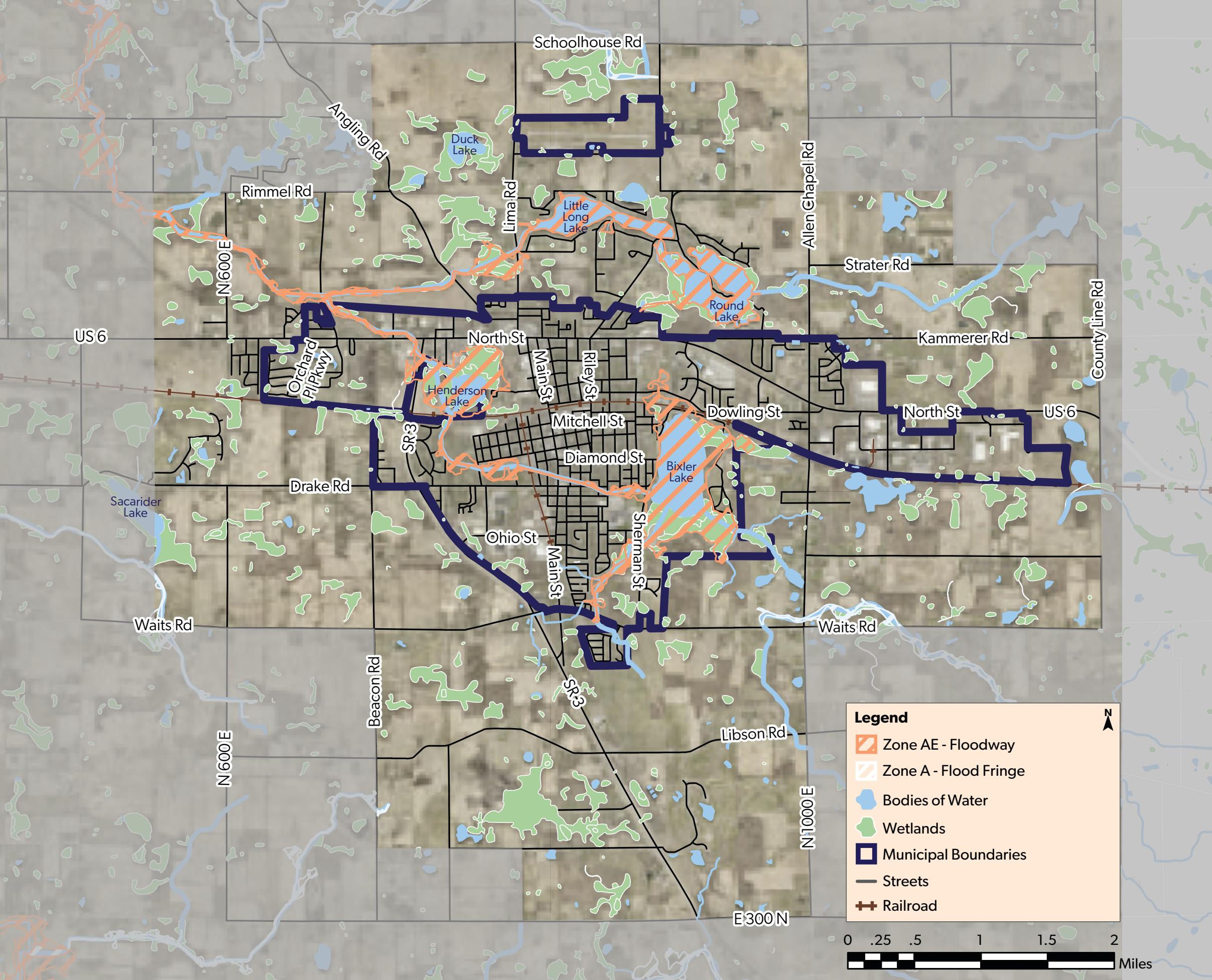
Environmental

Kendallville – a community well-known for its recreational amenities – also offers a rich variety of natural features that enhance quality of life and environmental character. From lakes and wetlands to floodplains and natural drainage systems, these environmental assets contribute to the city's charm and livability.

At the heart of Kendallville's natural landscape is Bixler Lake, the community's most prominent body of water. Spanning 117 acres and reaching depths of over 35 feet, Bixler Lake is a popular destination for swimming, fishing, and boating. It features two public beaches, a public-access boat launch, and multiple observation platforms. The lake is surrounded by woodlands, trails, campgrounds, city parks, and the Kendallville Public Library – making it a year-round asset for residents and visitors alike. While water quality has occasionally been a concern, as indicated by historic E. coli levels and public feedback, the City actively monitors conditions and issues alerts when water quality is unsuitable for swimming.

Beyond Bixler Lake, the region is home to numerous other lakes and ponds, including Henderson Lake, Little Long Lake, Round Lake, Duck Lake, and Sacarider Lake. Among these, Little Long Lake, Round Lake, and Sacarider Lake offer public access and are favored by boaters and anglers. Residential development around Little Long Lake and parts of Round Lake reflects the appeal of lakefront living in Kendallville.

Several natural drainage systems connect these lakes, including Waterhouse Ditch, Henderson Lake Ditch, and Bixler Lake Ditch. Bixler Lake Ditch flows through Kendallville's older neighborhoods and can act as a physical barrier between residential areas and key community destinations such as the Cole Center YMCA, East Noble High School, and the Kendallville Youth Center. Although some streets bridge the ditch, others like Iddings Street, are interrupted by it, affecting connectivity.



With these environmental features come concerns of flood risk and wetland zones. According to local mapping, flood-prone areas are generally confined to individual lakes, ponds, and drainage channels. Fortunately, Kendallville has avoided overdevelopment in these sensitive areas. Many have been intentionally preserved as recreational spaces – such as the trails winding through the wetlands near Bixler Lake or the wetlands surrounding Round Lake, which are part of the Lonidaw Nature Preserve managed by ACRES Land Trust.

While flood protection and wetland preservation remain important, the overall environmental conditions in and around Kendallville reflect a thoughtful balance between natural conservation and community use. The city's abundance of natural amenities continues to be an asset for residents, recreation, and sustainability.



Takeaways: Environmental

- **Lakes:** Bixler, Little Long, and Round Lakes are valuable natural assets. Bixler Lake, in particular, offers public recreational access rarely found in similar-sized communities.
- **Water Quality:** Bixler Lake is actively monitored, with public alerts issued during high E. Coli levels. Little Long Lake and Round Lake are surrounded by properties on septic tanks, which poses long-term water quality concerns.
- **Wetlands:** Areas outside of Kendallville's historic core contain significant wetlands, which may limit or complicate future development.



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Kendallville Plan
POWERED BY THE PAST. FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE.

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT





KENDALLVILLE PLAN: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Overview

Inclusive and comprehensive engagement throughout the planning process is imperative to ensure the community is authentically represented through the vision, goals, and implementation of a comprehensive plan. This level of engagement is achieved through ongoing community dialogue, collaboration, and targeted engagement opportunities.

The Project Team and Steering Committee were proactive about engaging the community, which is apparent through the Community Engagement Report. The following report is a summary of the various aspects of community engagement opportunities:

- Communication
- City Official Questionnaire
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Survey #1
- Planning Pop-Up #1
- Planning Pop-Up #2
- Community Survey #2
- Community Open House
- Steering Committee

Throughout the entire planning process, there was over 2,100 interactions with community members.



Communication

In order to effectively receive community input, creating a communication strategy is critical. This communication strategy laid a framework of expected community engagement opportunities to have satisfactory community outreach. It was determined that development of a Project Website and utilization of the City's existing Social Media pages would be the most effective ways of communication.

Project Website

The Project Website, www.KendallvillePlan.com, was developed and launched in March 2025. It hosted information about the planning process, the project timeline, and the importance of comprehensive plans. It displayed updates and events the planning team would be attending. The website also held a launch page to the community surveys. Finally, viewers had an option to subscribe to an email distribution list to receive updates about the project. In total, 63 people subscribed to the distribution over the course of the project.

Email Distribution

For those who subscribed to receive updates regarding the planning process, emails were sent informing them of upcoming events, surveys, and updates throughout the planning process. A total of 4 emails were sent to this distribution.

Additionally, the planning team sent emails to the Steering Committee and Stakeholders to encourage these individuals to participate in the surveys.

City Social Media

Rather than creating a new social media following, it was determined that the planning team would create a series of social media posts for the City to post on its Facebook page. The first post on Kendallville Plan appeared on April 7, 2025 and caught the attention of a local TV station, WANE TV. WANE TV reporters visited Kendallville and interviewed Mayor Waters on April 9 with the spot airing on local news.



Throughout the duration of the project 21 posts were scheduled. Over 430 reactions, 127 comments, and 249 shares helped boost the social media campaign and community engagement.

Posts ranged from educational posts about comprehensive plans, to promotion of planning pop-up attendance and promotion of the community surveys.



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WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A document providing building blocks to create a better tomorrow...



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

City Officials Questionnaire

A short questionnaire was distributed to elected and appointed officials, including department heads. In total, 47 City Officials were emailed a link to the questionnaire, with 3 of those emails being returned to sender with no valid email address available. Responses to the questionnaire were received from 20 City Officials.

The questionnaire asked City Officials to evaluate biggest wins and missed opportunities over the last 10 years. These questions provided a look into past efforts.

City Officials widely appreciate the City's revitalization of key infrastructure, downtown aesthetics, and community-centered programming (especially through CLC) and consider these elements foundational to recent progress.

While Kendallville City Officials appreciate past progress, there's a shared sense that the City has not been aggressive enough in incentivizing business growth, buying land, or supporting the development of childcare facilities.

The questionnaire asked about upcoming capital projects over the next 5 years. Commonly mentioned projects include:

- Rehabilitation of water towers and replacement of lead water service lines
- Upgrading and expanding the campground at Bixler Lake
- Drake Road expansion
- Fire apparatus purchase
- Expansion of business lots on U.S. 6 west



Big Wins

Main Street and Downtown Revitalization

noting streetscape improvements, building restoration, new businesses, and local events.

- **Community Learning Center (CLC)** is recognized as a vital hub for arts, workforce development, and community programming.
- **Infrastructure upgrades** including the solar field, wastewater plant improvements, street repairs, and water tower rehabilitation.
- **Parks and recreation** in the City including the expansion of City parks, the sports complex, and campground upgrades.
- **Public facility and safety improvements** including a new East Noble Middle School, improved City Hall, and increased police and fire staffing levels.

Challenges over next 10 years

- **Housing** needs, especially affordable and workforce options and specifically rental.
- **Aging infrastructure** including streets, water, sewer, campground, and other City-owned facilities
- **Limited staffing and volunteer shortages**, particularly in public safety and community events and programs
- **Unfunded mandates** from the state and federal government
- **Overcoming lingering stereotypes** (Kendall-tucky) to help align public perception with Kendallville's identity as a safe, welcoming, and family-friendly community.

Missed Opportunities

- **Lack of commercial opportunities**, specifically frustration with the lack of large retailers, limited and lack of a variety of restaurants, and rumors of hotels that didn't materialize.
- **Failure to secure strategic parcels** of property for future development and/or annexation.
- The **under-use of – or perception of under-use of – financial tools** to recruit business or retain staff.
- **Lack of childcare** options available locally is considered a workforce participation barrier.

Policies and Actions

- **Annexation and land use strategy** that includes revisions to the zoning code to better align it with the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Updated City codes and enforcement** of those codes to clean up neighborhoods
- **Citywide communication strategy** director
- **Childcare** solutions
- **Update internal policies** including the employee handbook and adequate pay to retain City employees

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Stakeholder Interviews

A series of stakeholder interviews were conducted on Thursday, April 17, 2025, and Wednesday, April 23, 2025, to garner feedback from key groups of vested community members and public service partners. Additionally, a virtual stakeholder interview was conducted on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, to meet with those who were not able to attend in-person interviews. In total, the planning team interviewed a total of 44 community members in 8 separate stakeholder groups:

- Business + Industry
- Community Organizations + Advocates
- Downtown
- Health + Human Services
- Housing + Economic Development
- Public Services + Regional Collaboration
- Trails + Sidewalks
- Utilities

Each interview began with a brief presentation which included an explanation of a comprehensive plan, achievements from the 2010 / 2019 Comprehensive Plan, the project timeline, and project boundaries. From there, open discussion ensued typically starting with a SWOT Analysis, which are detailed on Page B-9



Takeaways: Stakeholder Interviews

- **Housing** is the #1 cross-cutting issue, affecting workforce attraction, economic growth, and community balance.
- Recreation and downtown revitalization are **high-potential growth areas** but need sustained investment, marketing, and diversification.
- **Youth and family engagement** is essential—both for retaining population and ensuring long-term volunteerism and leadership.
- **Economic development strategies** must address both industry needs (industrial sites, workforce training) and lifestyle amenities (dining, retail, entertainment).
- **Transportation limitations** hinder access to jobs, recreation, and services – especially for lower-income households.
- **Perception management** is needed to highlight progress, improve local pride, and position Kendallville as a regional destination.
- **Collaboration** among stakeholders and community organizations is strong.
- Enforcing **property maintenance** codes and encouraging private property **investment** will take strategic leadership skills.

S strengths

- Recreational opportunities
- Natural amenities
- High quality institutions - library, hospital, schools, CLC
- Strong cultural presence
- Variety of events and festivals
- Historic downtown
- Historic character, in general
- Existing industry and economic players
- High quality public services
- Strong collaboration
- Housing affordability (older neighborhoods)
- Small town atmosphere

O pportunities

- Housing development
- Recreation Expansion
- Continued downtown revitalization and growth
- Economic growth
- Tourism marketing
- Annexation
- Community perception
- Cultural inclusion
- Childcare innovation

W eaknesses

- Housing shortages
- Lack of housing turnover
- Dining and retail gaps
- Youth engagement
- Young adult activities
- Childcare affordability and availability
- Poor condition of many general commercial and highway commercial plazas and properties
- Limited public transit and inconvenient scheduling
- Insufficient facilities for pedestrians
- Perception issues

T hreats

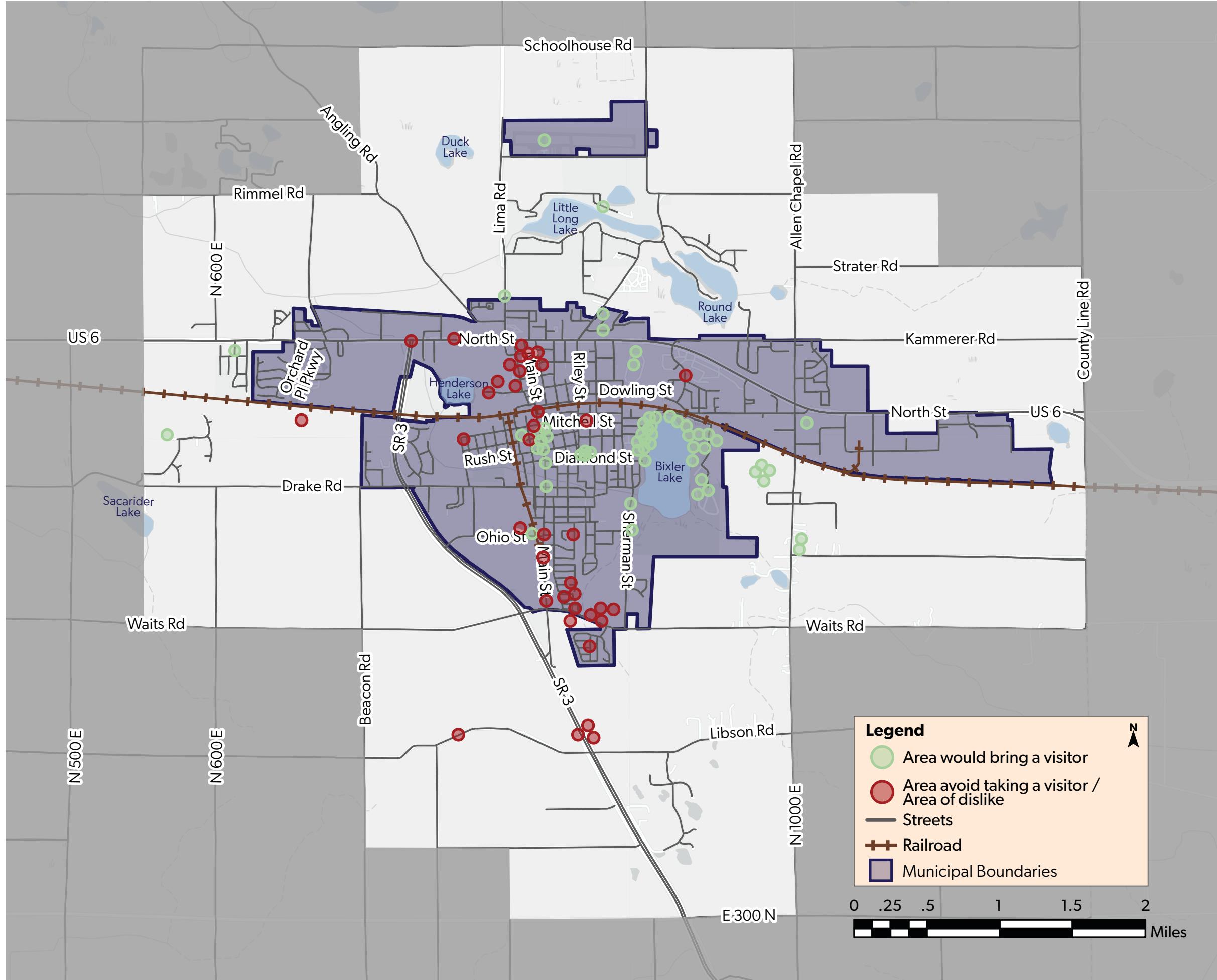
- Workforce gaps stemming from difficulties retaining younger workforce
- Aging volunteer base
- Economic stagnation
- Regional Competition: Nearby cities drawing residents for work and recreation.
- Commercial vacancies
- Continued decline of commercial properties
- Increasing mental health-related incidents impacting public safety resources

Stakeholder Mapping Exercise

As guests arrived, they were asked to place dots on a map of the planning boundaries of Kendallville. Green dots represented places attendees would take a visitor to showcase Kendallville. Red dots represented places where they would avoid bringing a visitor OR a place where they thought needed improvement.

Each attendee could place two green dots and two red dots on the map. The dots could be stacked if they felt strongly about a place.

The amenities most frequently cited as sources of pride by attendees include Bixler Lake, the Kendallville Public Library, and Downtown Kendallville. Additional highlights mentioned were the CLC, the Fishing Line Trail, and the Outdoor Recreation Complex/Sports Park. In contrast, North Main Street (between US 6 and the railroad) was identified as an area attendees would avoid when hosting visitors. Another area noted for improvement was the manufactured home communities along Waits Road on the city's south side.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Community Survey #1

Overview

The first community survey launched May 2, 2025 and closed on June 29, 2025. The survey was created to gather broad feedback by reaching as many community members as possible. It was advertised on the Kendallville Plan website and the City's social media pages. Flyers were also distributed through the community encouraging participation in the survey.

A press release was emailed to the local newspaper and radio station to communicate information on Kendallville Plan and to generate interest in the survey.

The survey was available online and as a hard copy at City Hall, Kendallville Public Library, Community Learning Center, and Cole Family YMCA. The survey consisted of 30 questions including the following topics:

- Placemaking + Identity
- Land Use, Development, + Transportation
- Parks + Recreation
- Housing
- Downtown
- Participant Information

THE SURVEY RECEIVED 380 RESPONSES

This response rate is 3.8% of the community and is considered a valid level of response. The results of the community survey are displayed on the pages that follow.



Flyer that was distributed throughout the community.

Placemaking + Identity

1) What are the first 3 words that come to mind when you think about Kendallville?

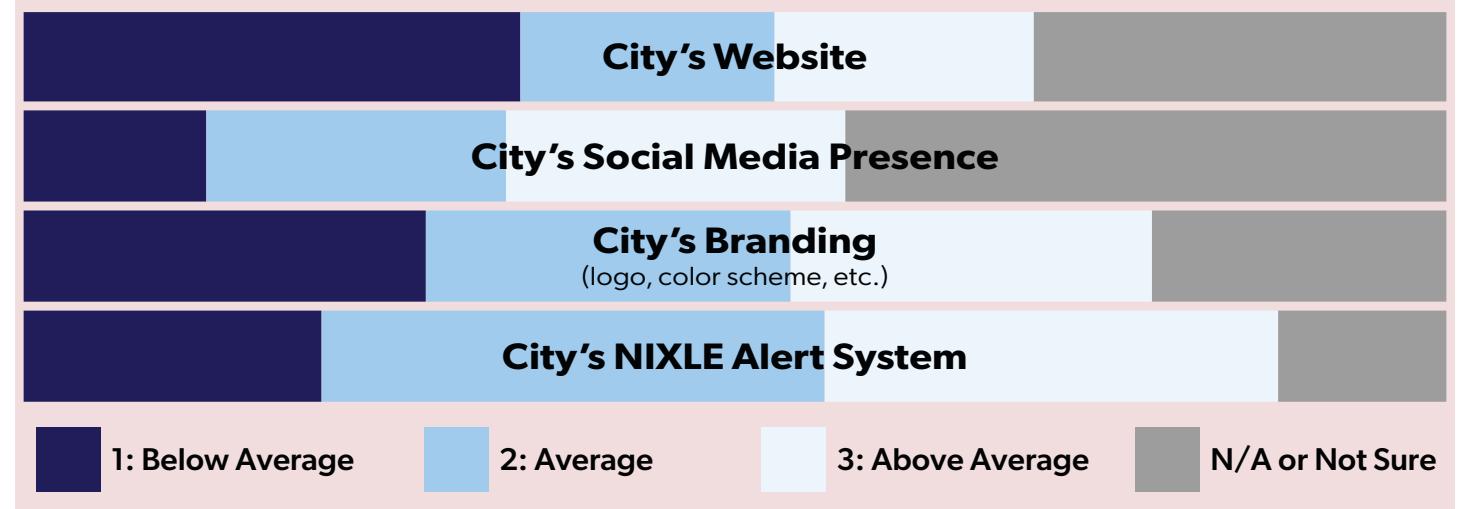
2) *One thing I love about Kendallville is...*



3) *My least favorite thing about Kendallville is...*



4) Rate Kendallville's public communication and community identity by ranking the following from 1: Below Average to 3: Above Average...



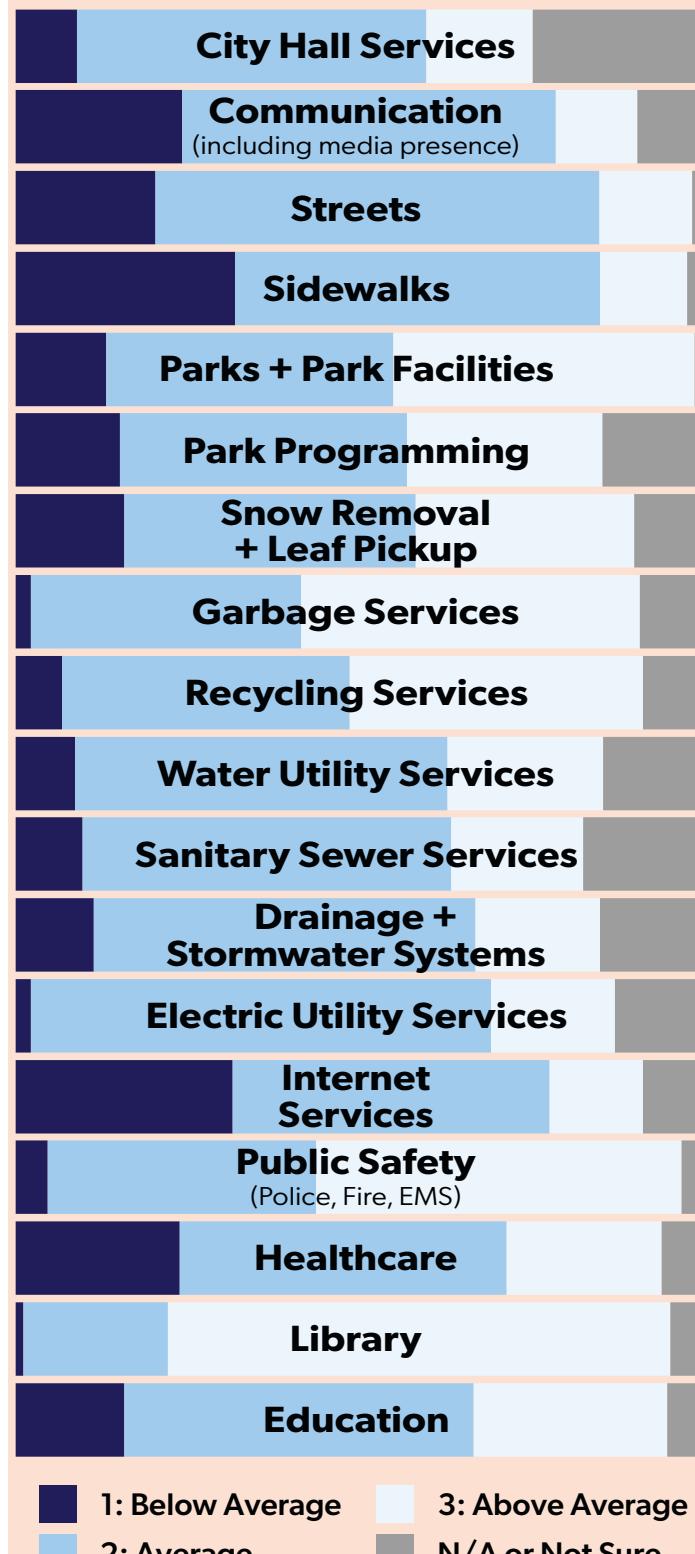
5) Identify the top 3 quality of place initiatives Kendallville should focus on over the next 10 years:
(Participants were asked to select 3)



Because respondents were asked to select three options, results will not add up to 100%.

Land Use, Development, + Transportation

6) Rate the quality of each of the following services offered in Kendallville using a scale of 1: Below Average to 3: Above Average...



7) Identify the top 3 development priorities for Kendallville to focus on over the next 10 years:
(Participants were asked to select 3)



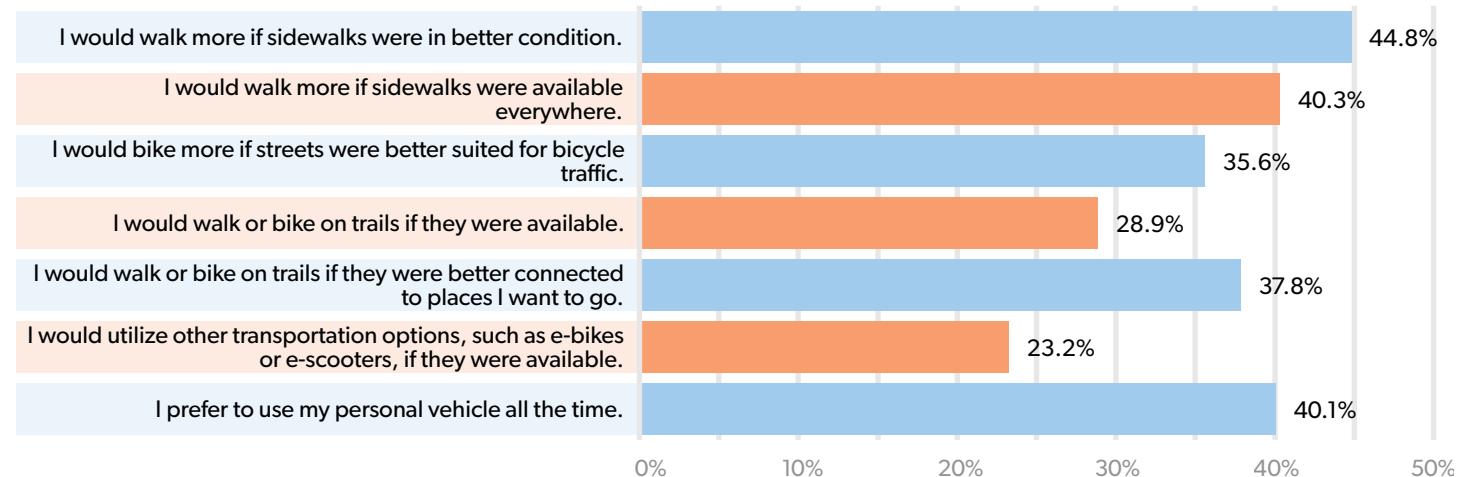
Because respondents were asked to select three options, results will not add up to 100%.

Other Comments

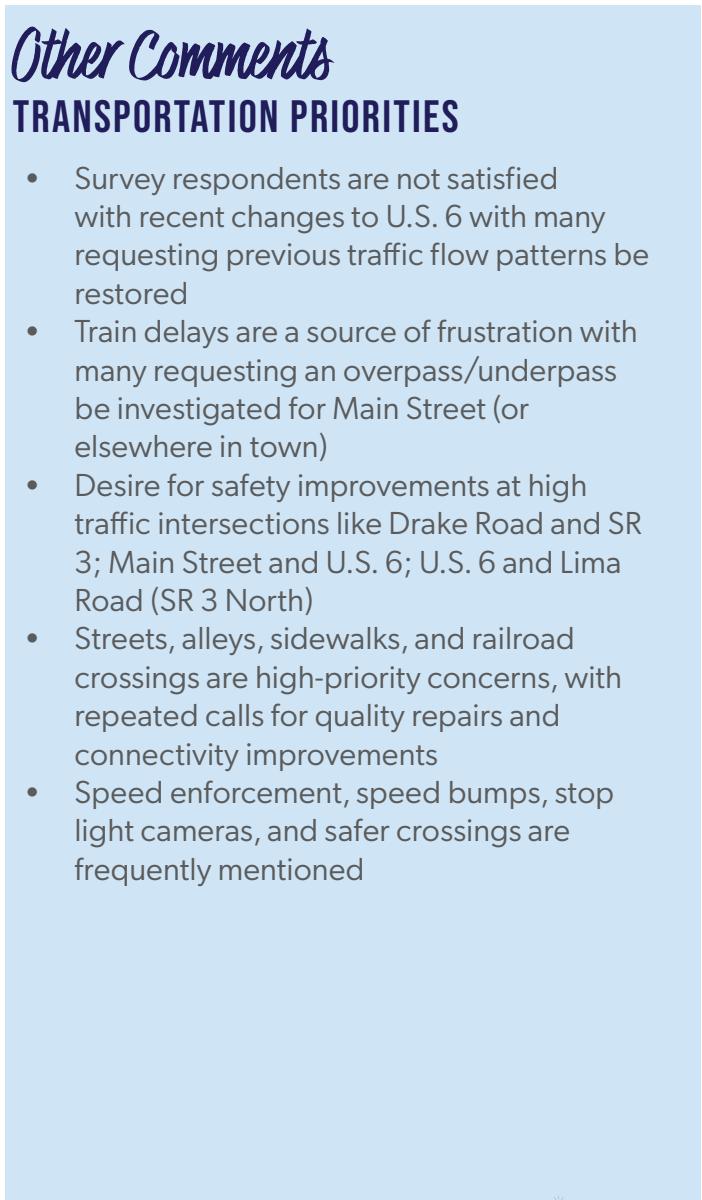
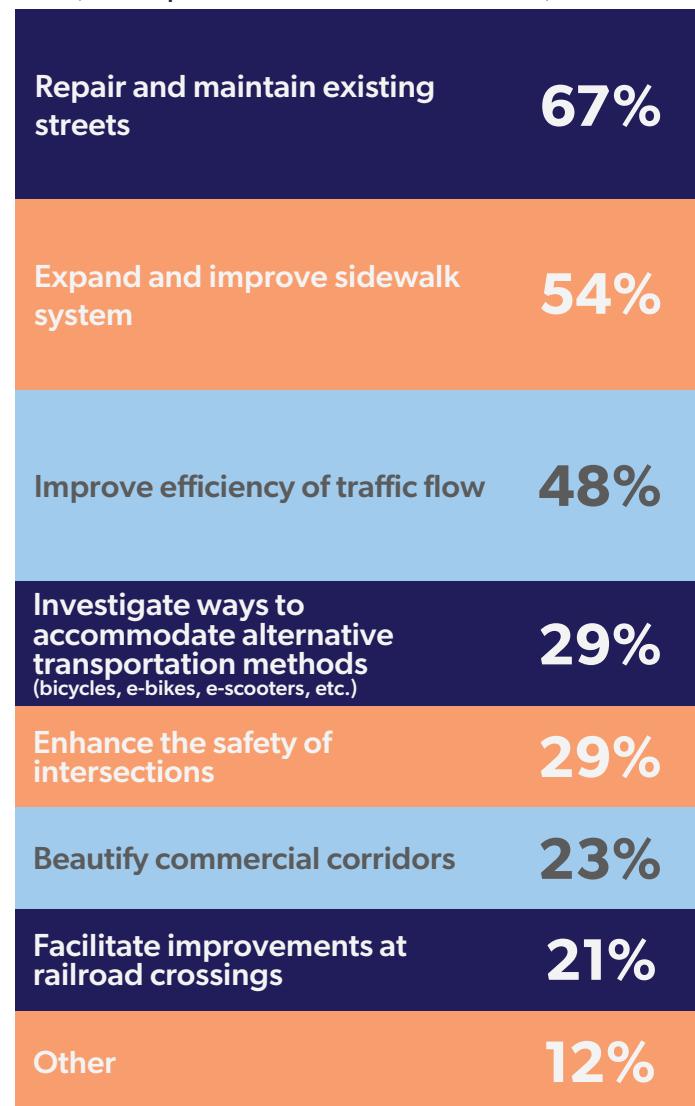
DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

- There are multiple mentions of Bixler Lake being improved and beaches restored
- Beautification improvements need expanded beyond downtown to include neighborhood streets and sidewalks
- There is strong desire for Bixler Lake to be improved, as well as park expansions, specifically a dog park and splash pad
- More restaurants, nightlife, and retail opportunities
- Concerns were expressed about drug activity and affordability

8) Select all the following statements that are true:
(Participants were asked to select all that apply)

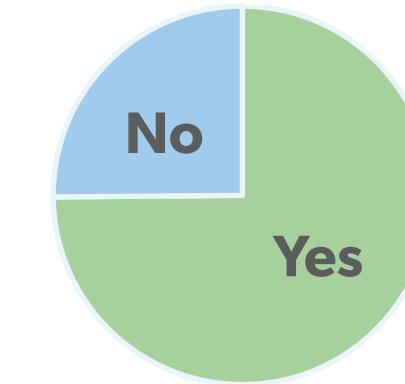


9) Identify the top 3 transportation priorities for Kendallville to focus on over the next 10 years:
(Participants were asked to select 3)

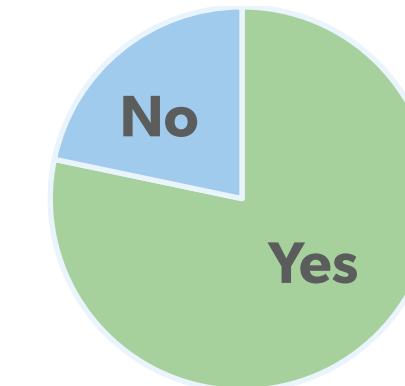


Parks + Recreation

10) Do you believe the Kendallville **parks system** meets you and your family's needs?



11) Do you believe the **trail system** in Kendallville meets you and your family's needs?



12) Please rank the following statements in order of importance to you and your family:
(1: Most Important to 4: Least Important)



13) Identify the top 3 park and recreation priorities for Kendallville to focus on over the next 10 years.
(Participants were asked to select 3)



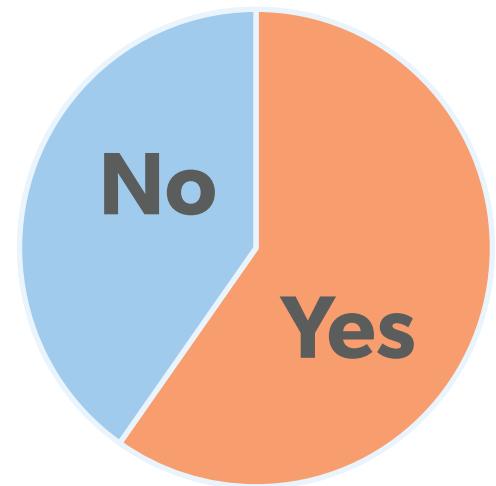
Because respondents were asked to select three options, results will not add up to 100%.



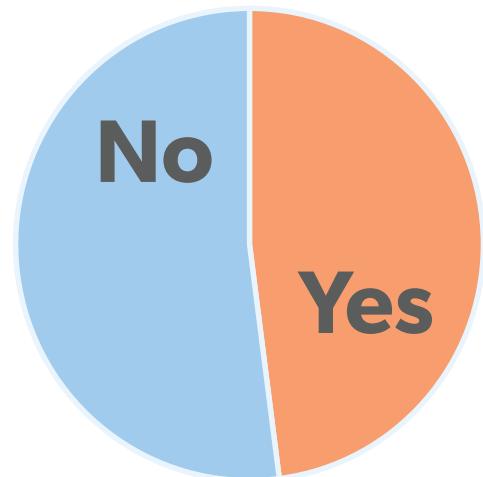
- Splash pad is the most mentioned single improvement
- Residents want beach access, rafts, lifeguards, and boating/swimming facilities at Bixler Lake
- Pickleball, volleyball, amphitheaters, and dog parks are top facility requests
- Bathrooms, trash receptacles, campground improvements, and internal road repairs will improve the park experience
- Many see Bixler as a "gold mine" for tourism and community enjoyment if fully developed and maintained

Housing

14) Does Kendallville's housing stock fit your **current** needs?



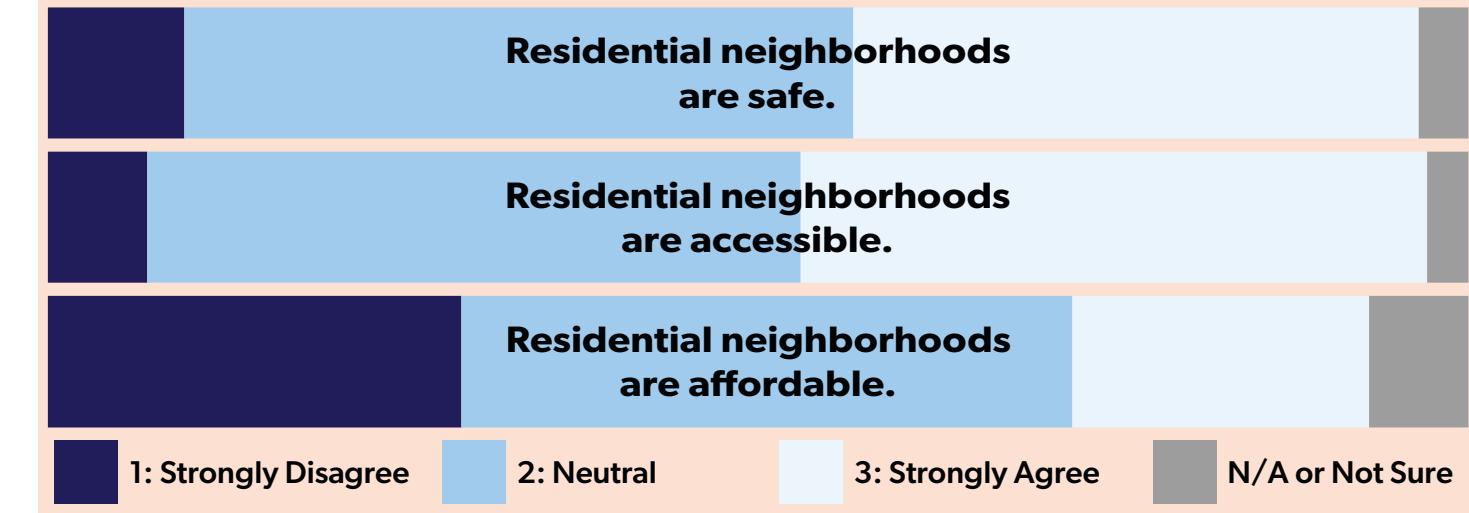
15) Do you believe Kendallville's housing stock will fit your housing needs in the **future**?



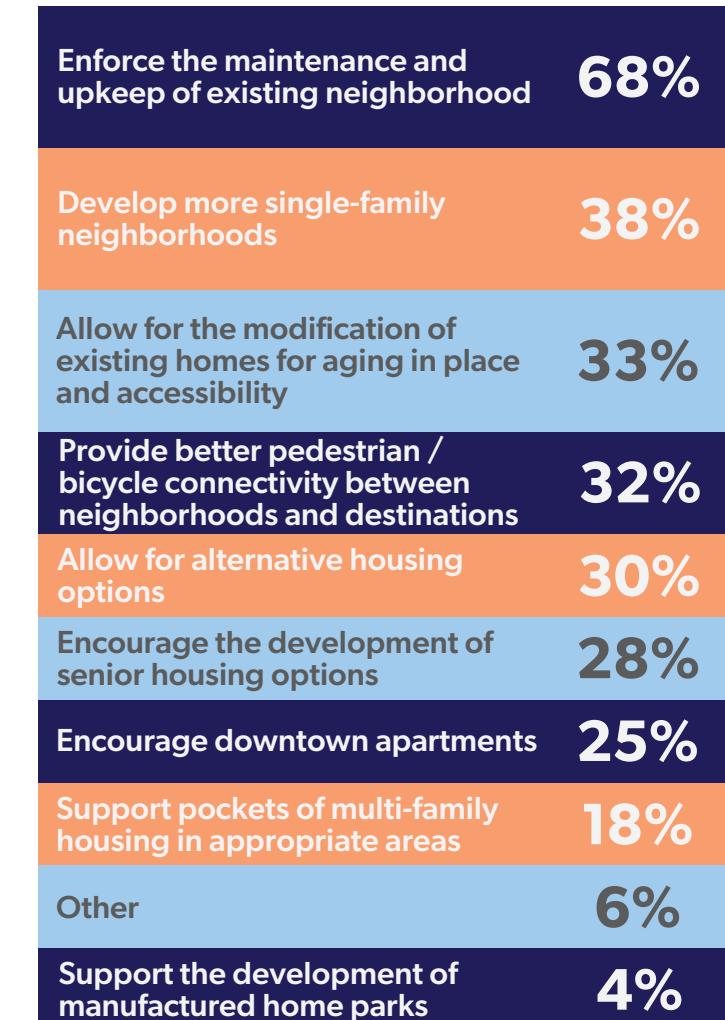
16) Do you believe Kendallville's housing stock includes an adequate supply of...



17) Please rate the following statements regarding residential neighborhoods from 1: Strongly Disagree to 3: Strongly Agree:



18) Identify the top 3 priorities for housing in Kendallville over the next 10 years.
(Participants were asked to select 3)



Because respondents were asked to select three options, results will not add up to 100%.

Other Comments HOUSING PRIORITIES

- Multiple comments call for more low- and median-income housing, income-based housing, and housing support for vulnerable populations
- Suggestions for upscale apartments, condos, and modern units aim to draw in young professionals and graduates
- Landlord accountability, homeowner support programs, and stricter code enforcement to improve neighborhood appearance are housing priorities
- Housing near commercial areas and mixed-use development align with modern planning trends

Downtown

19) My favorite thing about Downtown Kendallville is...

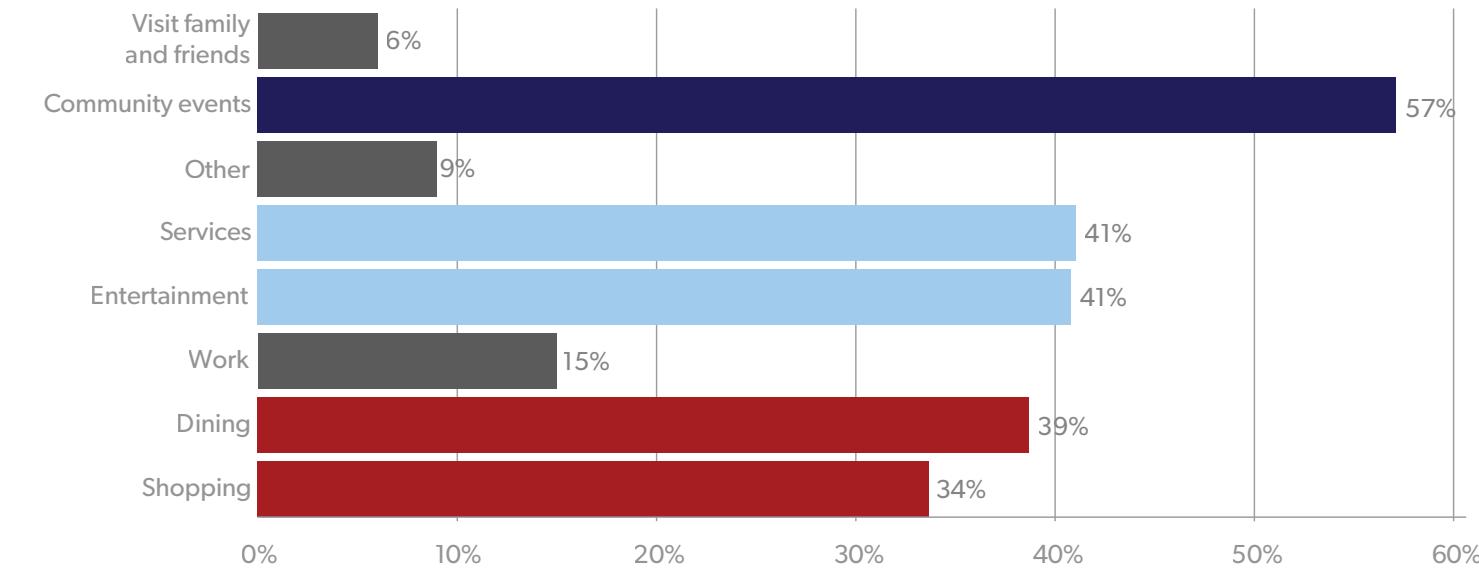


20) *My least favorite thing about Downtown Kendallville is...*

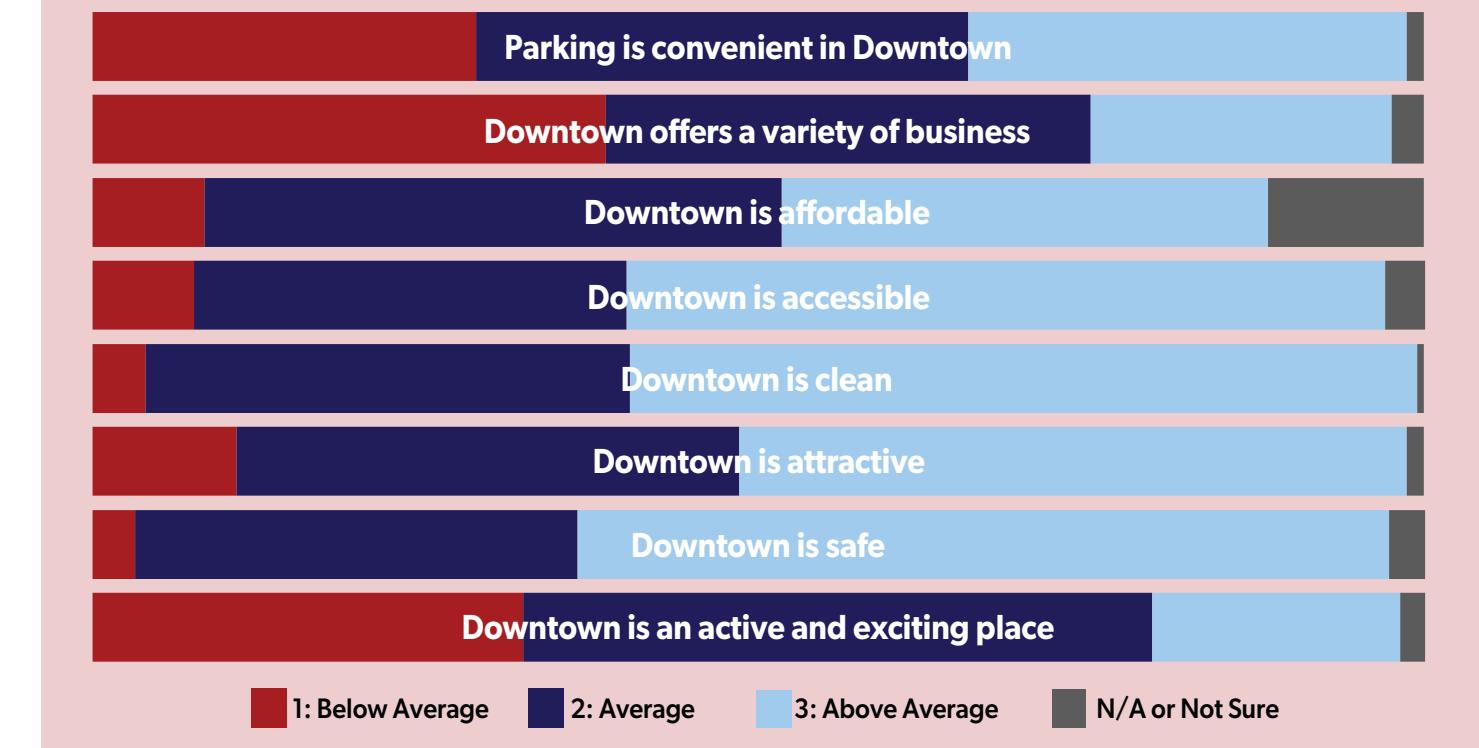


21) *What brings you downtown?*

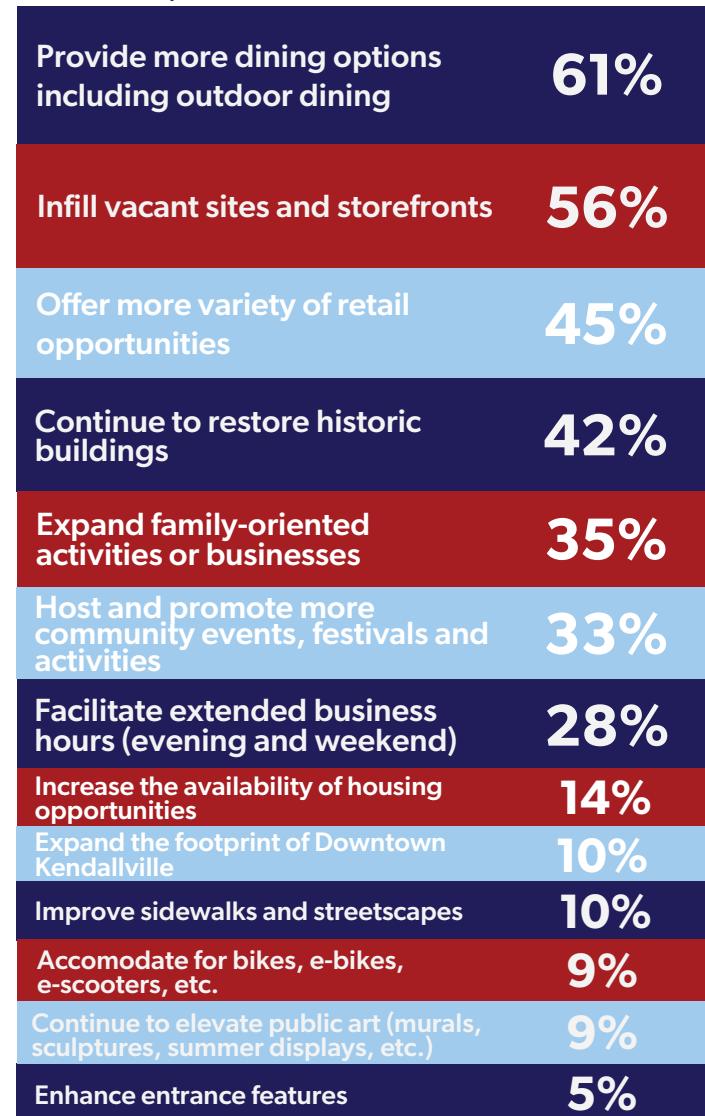
(Participants were asked to select all that apply)



22) Rate each statement below from 1: Strongly Disagree to 3: Strongly Agree.



23) Identify the top 4 priorities for Downtown Kendallville over the next 10 years:
(Participants were asked to select 4)



Because respondents were asked to select three options, results will not add up to 100%.

38%
of the additional comments
about Downtown are
regarding insufficient
handicap parking

Other Comments

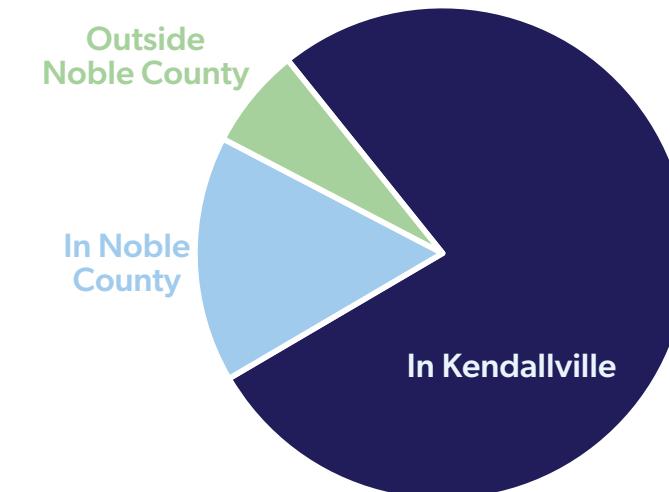
DOWNTOWN PRIORITIES

- There is a need for more handicap spaces downtown and stricter enforcement to ensure they are used properly
- Programming should appeal to both families and individuals without children
- Sidewalk extensions, especially to the south toward Waits Road, are desired
- Encourage small businesses and retail shops as opposed to non-retail uses

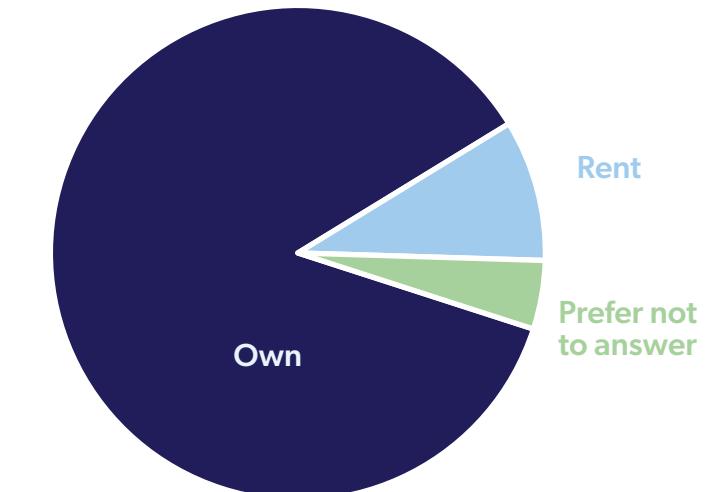


Participant Information

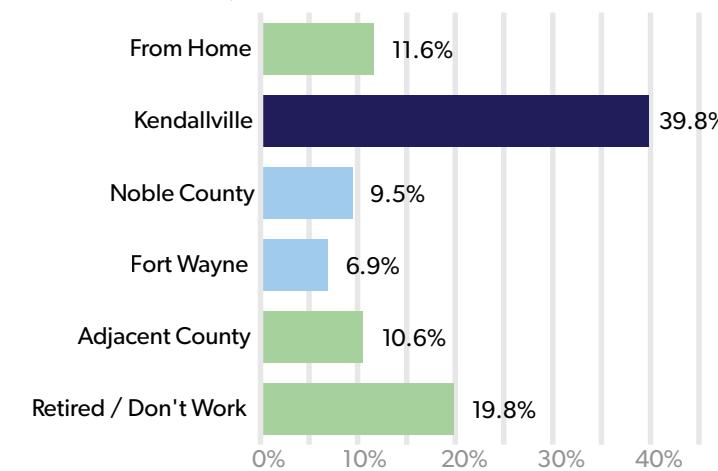
24) Where do you live?



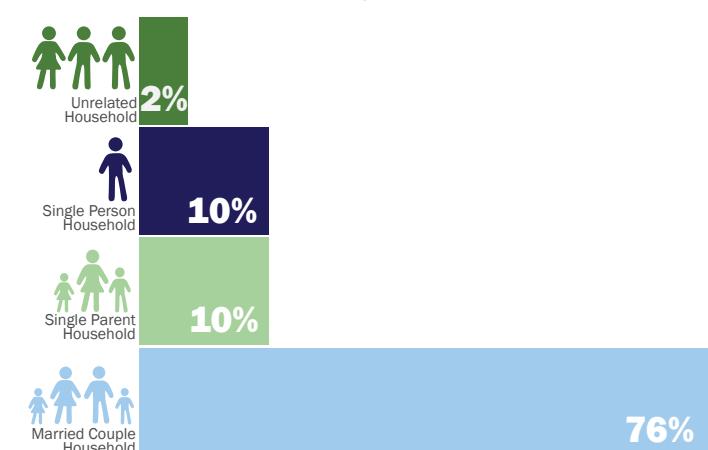
27) Do you own or rent your residence?



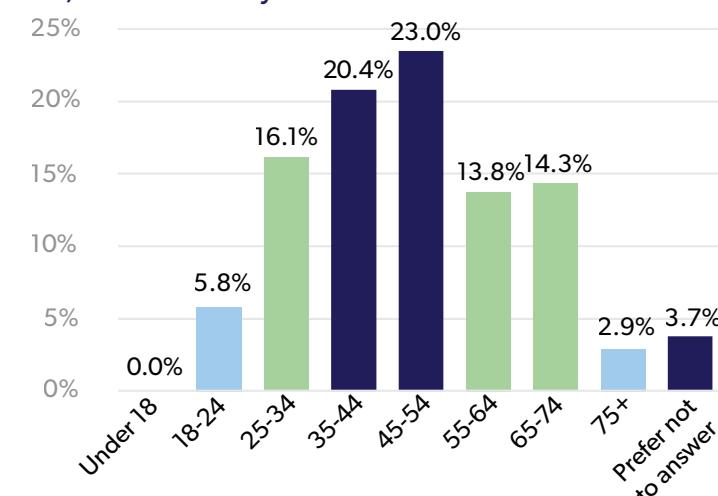
25) Where do you work?



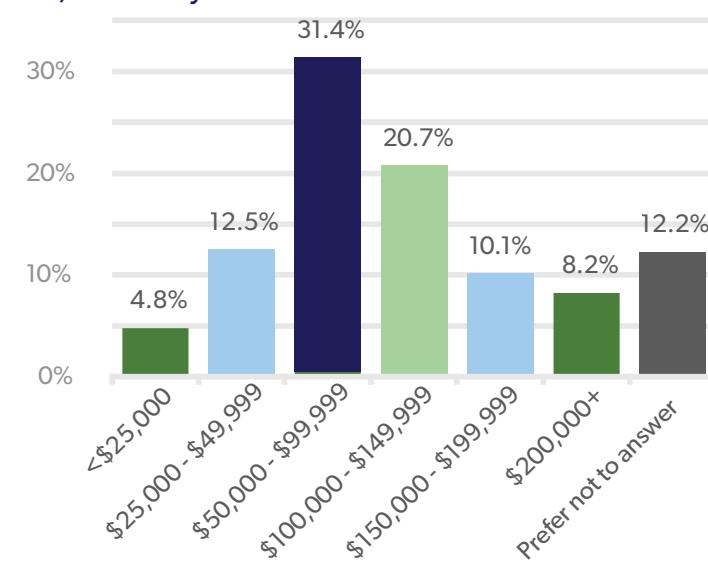
28) What best describes your household?



26) How old are you?



29) What is your annual household income?



Last Thoughts

30) Please provide any additional comments regarding Kendallville...

Over 200 respondents provided additional comments regarding Kendallville. Below is a summary of those additional comments.

Additional Comments

SURVEY #1

- Many residents are proud of recent progress and like living in Kendallville, but feel growth has stalled versus neighboring peer communities. Respondents want momentum to spread beyond downtown.
- Respondents express a strong demand for sit-down dining (steak, Italian, brewery); coffee/dessert shops; and unique retail.
- Multiple requests for family entertainment options (arcade, bowling, skating, go-karts, mini-golf, live music, festivals).
- Repeated comments to clean up Bixler Lake, restore beaches/lifeguards/concessions, consider winter activities, add a splash pad, fix restrooms, add trash cans, and upgrade Sunset Park.
- There is a need for affordable rentals and more housing options (senior, condos, quality apartments).
- Respondents want to see entrances and gateways into Kendallville improved.
- There is a strong appetite for stricter code

- enforcement: landlord upkeep, run-down homes, parking over sidewalks, weeds, tall grass, and require commercial parking lot maintenance.
- There is a strong desire to attract employers and name-brand retail while supporting local small businesses and filling vacant storefronts. Interest in grants/assistance for building rehab and new entrepreneurs.
- Requests to fix U.S. 6 traffic flow, add turn lanes, improve streets and snow removal, expand / repair sidewalks (especially to Waits / Drake Roads), calm speeds near parks / schools, and consider one-way streets near schools.
- Requests for online utility bill paying.
- There is a demand for more and better communications about events, activities, and City/community information.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Planning Pop-Up #1

On Saturday, May 17, 2025, the planning team attended the Fairy, Gnome, and Troll Festival held in Downtown Kendallville. A tent and tables with coloring post cards, two interactive boards, candy, and fairy garden decorations were set up. Attendees responded to the following boards using star-shaped sticky notes aligning with the festival theme. Comments for the boards are below:

Board One

I love Kendallville because...

- Downtown buildings being re-done
- Festivals + stuff
- Love the Main Street events! More!!
- We like the Fairy Festival and advertise on Facebook
- Love the festivals and programs that go on
- Continued downtown business additions
- Small town, great community
- Has fun things and my friend lives here
- I love festivals
- Kendallville has done a lot over the last few years
- Great work done recently on the downtown streetscape

Board Two

I wish Kendallville would...

- Micro-brewery!
- Noble County Fair like it used to be with rides and grandstands
- Sit down, nice downtown restaurant
- A Panda Express
- Get stuff for teens to do

Festival-goers were offered appropriately-themed postcards that could be colored. The back of each postcard included a short note from Mayor Waters along with a QR Code for the community survey. Coloring supplies were available with some kiddos taking advantage of those. Overall, we estimate half the participants we spoke with were from Kendallville and/or the Noble County area. The other half were from outside of Noble County. Some of the visitors were there because they liked the event, while others were there as spectators for their kids' performance.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Planning Pop-Up #2

On Saturday, July 19, 2025, the planning team attended a local farmer's market at the Community Learning Center (CLC). A tent and tables with display boards showcasing questions from the ongoing, second short survey as well as a map of the planning area were available for interested parties. In total, the planning team spoke to approximately 70 attendees. Nearly 50 attendees voted on the two boards available, and several attendees briefly spoke with the planning team and accepted a flyer with a QR Code to the online survey.

Board One

What is your preference for dining options?

Attendees were given six options and were able to apply two stickers for their preferred options. The stickers could be used to vote for separate options or they could be stacked on the same option.

Results are as follows:

- Sit-Down Local Restaurants: 49 Votes (52%)
- Upscale Dining: 19 Votes (20%)
- Brew Pub: 15 Votes (16%)
- Sit-Down Chain Restaurants: 6 Votes (6%)
- Food Trucks: 4 Votes (4%)
- Fast Food: 2 Votes (2%)

Board Two

What is your preferred style for missing middle housing?

This board showcased an infographic educating voters about "missing middle housing" then asked voters to select their preferred options for missing middle housing out of five options. Again, voters were able to apply two stickers on separate options or stack both stickers on the same option. Results are as follows:

- Duplex / Triplex: 31 Votes (42%)
- Townhomes: 17 Votes (23%)
- Courtyard Apartments: 10 Votes (14%)
- Mid-Level Multi-Plex: 9 Votes (12%)
- Live-Work: 7 Votes (9%)

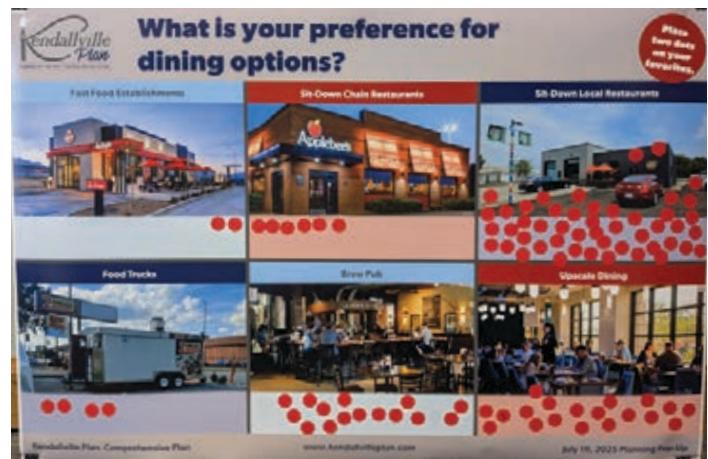
Finally, the planning team was open to hearing any additional comments regarding the City of Kendallville. Those comments were written on sticky notes and placed on the overall planning boundary map for other attendees to view. Those comments include in no particular order:

- Need an ALDI
- BBQ Restaurant
- No new housing. Takes away farmland.
- Restaurants that cater to healthier options and are mindful of dietary restrictions and allergies.
- Absentee landlords, particularly downtown. Tenant has been without heat for year.
- Need fast casual dining.
- Condos for seniors.
- Convert existing housing stock into multi-units and encourage shared housing options as a lower-income housing option.
- Kendallville has a small town feel. Don't lose it.
- No new housing. Keep farms and rural residential that allow livestock. Look into property that allow for unlimited hunting with extra license.
- Senior housing should have common gathering areas.
- City needs to take ownership in community. There are many strays, specifically cats. Need to fix up housing. The CLC is a wonderful asset.



Observations: Farmer's Market

- Housing is a huge topic, and many people noted the need for alternative housing options but were cautious to select the higher-density "missing middle" options.
- Absentee landlords and lack of maintenance of rental units were mentioned.
- There were a few comments regarding no new housing to preserve surrounding farmland.
- People liked the idea of Food Trucks for events, but not as a permanent dining option.
- There were mixed opinions on "upscale dining." While most people really liked the idea, they were concerned Kendallville didn't have the demand to support that type of dining.



Community Survey #2

Overview

The second short survey launched July 19, 2025, during Planning Pop-Up #2 and closed on August 10, 2025. The survey focused on topics that were heavily emphasized during the public engagement to that point. The survey consisted of 8 quick questions to gain more information on dining, housing, and parks and recreation themes.

The survey was promoted at the second Planning Pop-Up hosted at the Farmer's Market. It was also advertised via the planning website and City's social media pages. Flyers were created and distributed at the Farmer's Market and throughout the community to encourage participation. The website subscription list was also notified when the survey launched.

THE SURVEY RECEIVED 741 RESPONSES

This response rate is 7.3% of the community and is considered a valid level of response. The results of the community survey are displayed on the pages that follow.

Dining

1) *The results of the first community survey indicate a strong desire for additional restaurants and dining options in Kendallville. Choose the top two dining options you would like to see developed in Kendallville: (Participants were asked to select up to two options)*



Sit-Down Chain Restaurants	36%
Upscale Dining	26%
Fast Food Establishments	22%
Food Trucks	4%
Other	4%

Because respondents were asked to select two options, results will not add up to 100%.

Other Comments

DINING PREFERENCES

- Sit-down dining with decent dinner options including steakhouses, Italian, buffets, family restaurants (open later hours)
- Rooftop bar, arcade, cute cafés, non-franchise/local eateries
- To-go healthy and vegan-friendly places
- Specific chains mentioned include Chick-fil-A, Raising Cane's, White Castle, Rally's, Steak 'n Shake, Logan's, Culver's, Cracker Barrel, Sonic, Popeyes, Papa John's, Panda Express

Housing

Missing Middle Housing refers to a range of residential building types that fall between single-family homes and large apartment complexes that are often "missing" from communities, hence the term "missing middle" as shown in the picture below from www.missingmiddlehousing.com.



2) *The initial community survey revealed that Kendallville is receptive to housing options that would be considered missing middle housing. Of the following, select your top two options you would prefer to see developed in Kendallville: (Participants were asked to select up to two options)*



Because respondents were asked to select two options, results will not add up to 100%.

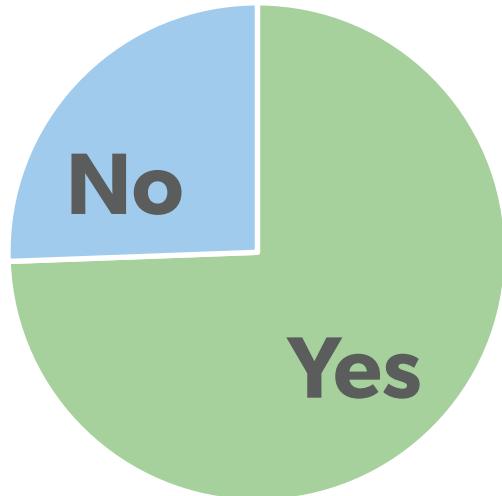
Other Comments

HOUSING PREFERENCES

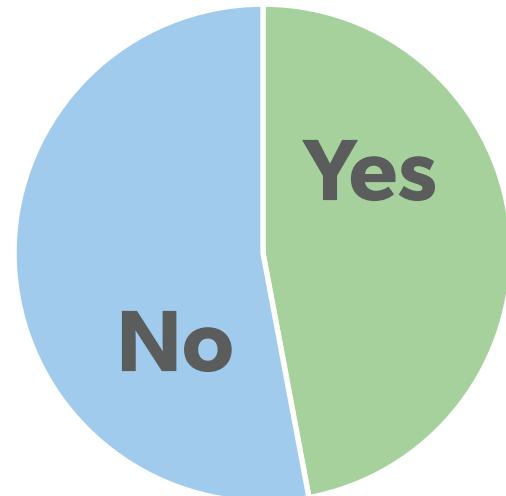
- Affordable housing options – single-family, rentals, condos/villas, senior housing, and small homes on small lots
- Senior-focused housing – 55+ housing, apartments, condos, and villa-style homes
- Alternative housing options – tiny home communities, modern manufactured homes, and mini-farming/homesteading lots
- Strong demand for affordability but frustration with poor-quality or income-based housing
- Calls for fewer rentals and more ownership opportunities
- Desire for family homes with garages and off-street parking
- Some want to expand the city through new housing developments, while others stress fixing current stock first

Parks + Recreational Amenities

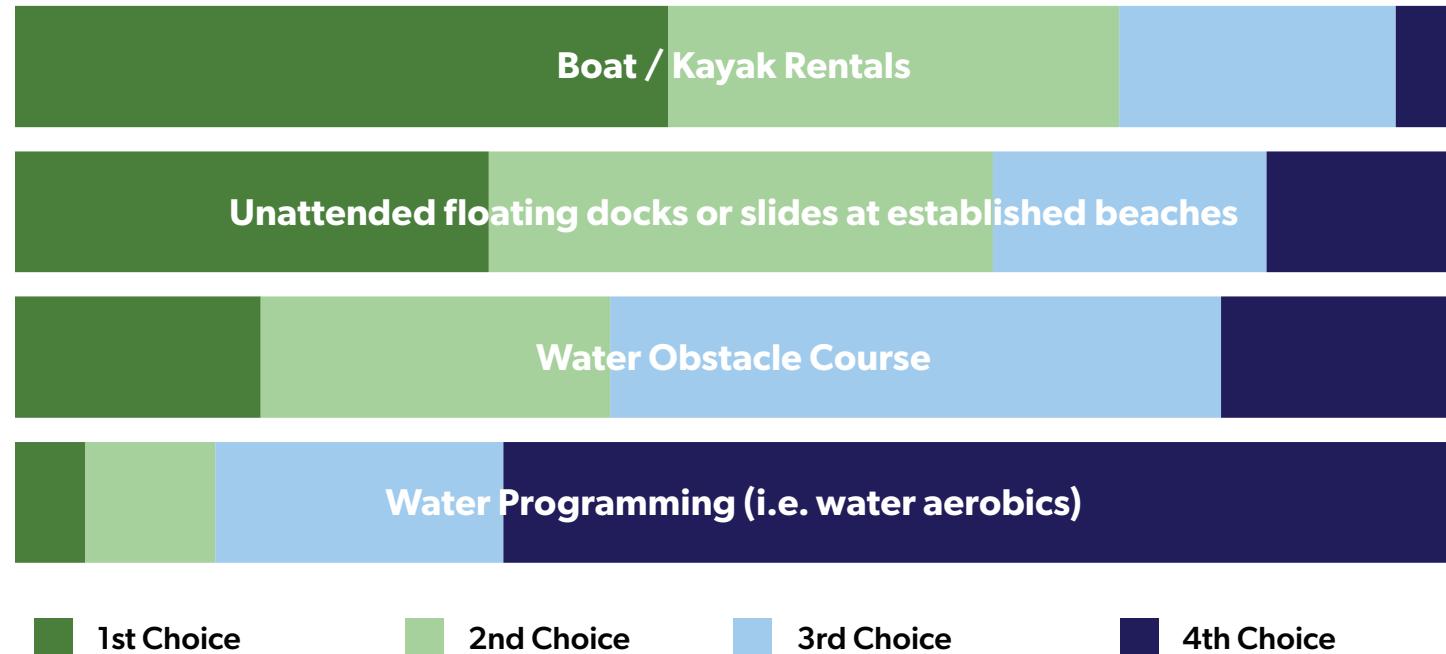
3) Do you support the City exploring the possibility of creating a dog park?



4) Would you use a dog park if there were one in Kendallville?



5) If the City were to expand water-based recreation on Bixler Lake, rank your preference from the options below as follows, 1: Top Choice to 4: Least Desired Choice:



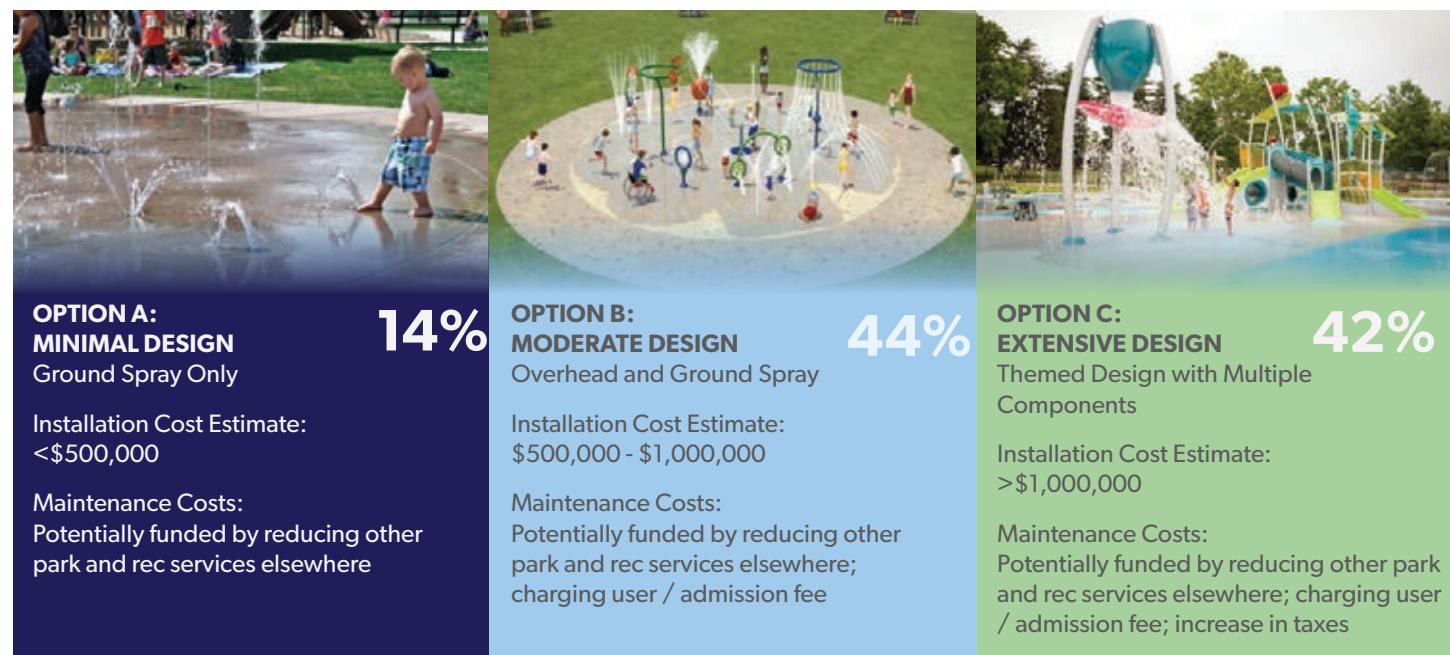
1st Choice

2nd Choice

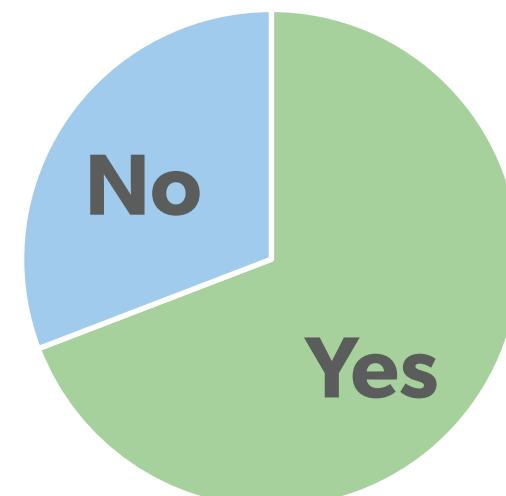
3rd Choice

4th Choice

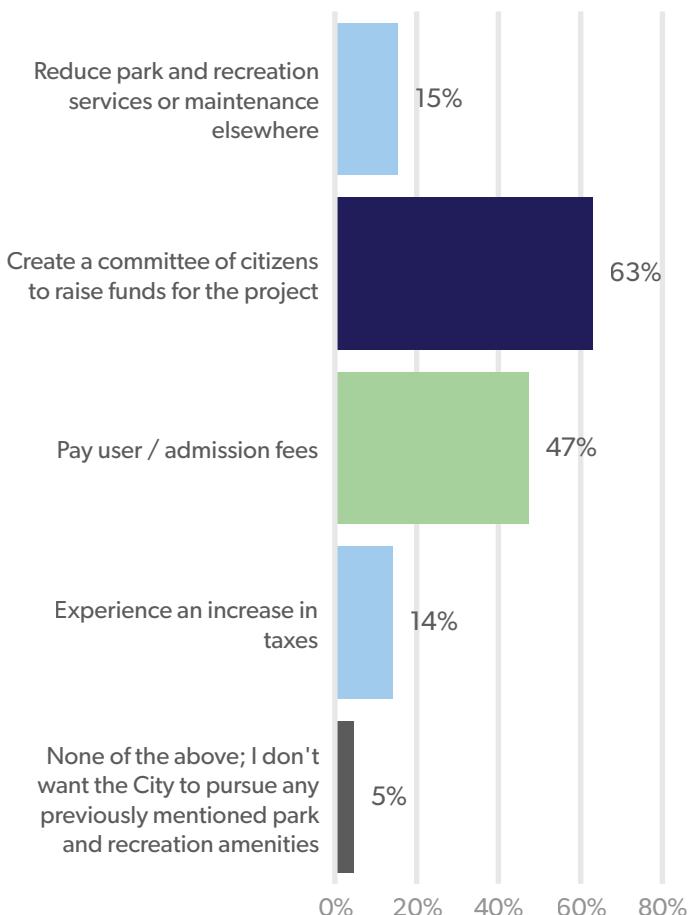
6) If the City were to consider adding a splash pad, which option would you prefer?



7) Would you use a splash pad if there was one in Kendallville?



8) How would you prefer the City fund any of the previously mentioned park and recreation amenities?
(Participants were asked to select all that apply)



Because respondents were asked to select all, results will not add up to 100%.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Community Open House

On Sunday, November 16, 2025, the Kendallville Plan planning team participated in the Holiday Market held at the Community Learning Center (CLC). This well-attended event featured more than 70 local vendors and attracted hundreds of community members, providing an excellent opportunity for outreach and engagement.

The planning team's exhibit was located in the second gymnasium, where four informational boards were prominently displayed. These boards showcased the overarching themes and goals of the Kendallville Plan, with additional boards that displayed key initiatives such as Trails and Sidewalks, Housing Development, and Corridor Enhancements. To complement the festive atmosphere, the display included a decorative holiday village, a Christmas tree, and a selection of candies for visitors.

In addition to the visual materials, flyers were distributed to direct attendees to the project website for further information. The primary objectives of participating in this event were to

- Increase public awareness of the Kendallville Plan.
- Share progress on initiatives completed over the past year.
- Educate residents about the next steps in the plan's adoption process.



The engagement was highly productive, resulting in 28 meaningful interactions with individuals interested in learning more and contributing feedback. Conversations largely reinforced themes identified through previous public engagement efforts and provided additional insights into community priorities. Key discussion topics included:

- Development and maintenance of trails.
- Expansion of restaurant and dining options.
- Housing development and property maintenance.
- Opportunities for economic growth and investment

This event served as a valuable platform for strengthening community connections and ensuring that local voices continue to shape the future of Kendallville.



Steering Committee

Over the course of the planning process, the Steering Committee met four times to discuss the data, input, vision, and goals and strategies laid out in this plan. The Steering Committee also provided final feedback before the public review and adoption phase. The meeting minutes from those meetings are included in the following pages.

Meeting Dates + Topics

- February 26, 2025: Kick-Off + Introduction
- April 17, 2025: Community Engagement + Visioning
- August 21, 2025: Report Reviews + Plan Development
- October 16, 2025: Plan Development

Steering Committee Members

- Mayor Lance Waters
- Jenna Anderson
- Amy Ballard
- John Blume
- Kim Clouse
- Kristen Johnson
- Dave Lange
- Mindy London
- Julia Tipton
- Matt Stinson



Project:	Kendallville Plan
Meeting:	Steering Committee #1 – Kick-off
Date / Time:	February 26, 2025 / 4:00 pm
Location:	231 Main Kendallville Co-Working
Participants:	David Lange, John Blume, Julia Tipton, Kim Clouse, Kristen Johnson, Matt Stinson, Mayor Lance Waters, Mindy London
Hosted by:	Hometown Initiatives, LLC / JPR: Amber Bassett, Amy Schweitzer, Joshua Barkley

Amy of Hometown Initiatives LLC (HI LLC) welcomed the group and began the meeting with introductions. She discussed the Project Team and Steering Committee. The Steering Committee's role in the project was highlighted before Amy talked a little about Hometown Initiatives, LLC. Josh Barkley told the Committee about JPR. Amy talked briefly about the relationship between HI LLC and JPR.

Amber informed the Committee of Indiana Code requirements for a comprehensive plan, as well as additional items often found in plans. She introduced the project logos highlighting the inspiration behind the logos. Amber browsed through the project website, www.kendallvilleplan.com, before walking through each phase of the project and explaining the overall 12-month timeline for the project. Amber noted that the phases intentionally overlap. She also displayed a map of the boundaries of the project noting Kendallville has an extra-territorial jurisdiction that would be included in the plan.

Amber talked about the Community Engagement Strategies identifying community engagement as one of the most critical components of the plan. The objectives of community engagement are to raise awareness about the plan; gather local knowledge; develop strategic partnerships; foster community support; and assist with prioritization. A variety of tools will be used to engage the community including the project logo and branding, website, using the City's website and social media accounts, as well as various forms of media including newspaper, radio, signs, and the like. Amber briefly noted the opportunities including open house, engaging the community at existing community events, interviewing stakeholders, a community survey, as well as a required Public Hearing.

Julia mentioned upcoming Noble Palooza on March 8 as an opportunity for community engagement noting it is a well-attended event. Hometown will get a flyer with a QR code developed for Noble Palooza.

The group engaged in a SWOT analysis activity. The notes for the activity are included beginning on Page 3.

At the conclusion of the SWOT analysis, Hometown discussed recent initiatives in Kendallville and highlighted some demographic characteristics, most notable that 38% of households in Kendallville are single-person households which is substantially higher than the same figure for Noble County and the State of Indiana. HI LLC was also surprised with the 24-minute mean travel time to work. Committee members noted a lot of folks work in Albion, Fort Wayne, and DeKalb County.

Amber read the lengthy vision statement from the current comprehensive plan and highlighted Kendallville's major accomplishments from that plan:

- Revitalize commercial buildings in and around Downtown



- Connect pedestrian networks to pedestrian facilities outside of Kendallville (Fishing Line Trail)
- Update and adopt five-year park and recreation master plans
- Develop a small park or plaza in Downtown
- Establish an entrepreneurship center or small business incubator
- Organize and promote events throughout the year
- Achieve “Tree City USA” status
- Maintain and enhance historic structures and cultural amenities
- Encourage the participation in Main Street Organization

Amber told the Committee that the next steps include a set of Stakeholder Interviews. She asked the Committee their preferences providing some options. The Steering Committee prefers Stakeholder Interviews to be smaller groups because it's more likely to garner honest and real feedback. Hometown Initiatives LLC asked the Committee to think about and provide names and contact information for potential Stakeholder Interviews.

Next Steering Committee meeting will be April 17, 2025 at 4 PM at the Community Learning Center (CLC).

Action Items:

Hometown Initiatives LLC

1. Prepare flyer for Noble Palooza and provide to City
2. Provide spreadsheet for Stakeholders names and contact information
3. Send out meeting invite for April 17, 2025 at 4 PM at the CLC

Steering Committee Members –

1. List of community events with primarily local attendance for a planning pop-up. The following events were noted:
 - Gnome and Fairy Festival – May 17
 - 4H Fair – July
 - Downtown Car Show – September 1st week
 - Farmers Market – May 10
 - Library Summer Reading programs
2. Identify people that would be Stakeholders. Include contact information.

SWOT Analysis

The group was asked to write strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats individually on sticky notes. After a few minutes, the sticky notes were placed on larger sticky notes in the respective categories. Once done, the group reconvened and further discussed and added to the lists. The items are listed in no particular order.

STRENGTHS

- Abundance of community events, festivals, concerts, tourism etc.
- Private local foundations are intentional, which leads to generosity throughout the community
- Local government is responsive, tactful, supportive
- Library is well-known in the region and draws people from outside of community; partners with City, CLC, Historic Downtown, and so on
- Family ties are rooted deep; ensure plan is respectful of those families
- Good educational opportunities in East Noble, St. John's, IMPACT. Residents are involved with the schools and extra curriculars. And schools offer playgrounds/recreational opportunities
- Bixler Lake and surrounding recreational opportunities; has not been overdeveloped
- Recent Downtown development
- Affordable housing; restoration in older homes
- Sense of community + associated pride
- Support of small businesses
- Parkview: birth center, high satisfaction rating, local clinics; health advocacy and education
- Safe city and good public safety
- Golf courses
- City uses resources effectively
- CLC offers many learning and community engagement opportunities
- YMCA
- Quality of life opportunities already exist: trails, parks, natural systems, entertainment, community events, downtown
- Relatively close to many things
- Historic preservation / intact structures

- Collaboration between groups / organizations / government; City is a partner to many organizations which emphasized as being unique
- Airport

WEAKNESSES

- Residents don't always see the positive changes around them or appreciate what already exists
- Lack of workforce
- Lack of central location to find all events and activities
- Lack of technical industries
- Need more executive housing
- More diverse dining is needed (sit down; family-friendly; drinking). Something that creates a niche or nightlife
- Lack of affordable infant/toddler childcare
- Need more community volunteering in civic organizations; sense of apathy and complacency; get the next generation involved
- Lack of affordable/workforce housing
- Centrally located between other communities that have a lot to offer (Goshen, Fort Wayne, Auburn, Angola, etc.) and draws people out of Kendallville
- Lack of Interstate drawing less people / making it less desirable for developers
- Lack of opportunities for evening activities/later hours; Downtown business hours
- Population decline; some people do not want growth
- General resistance to change
- Railroad crossings

OPPORTUNITIES

- Vacant spaces; specifically for retail
- Build the next generation of leaders
- Entrepreneurship opportunities (restaurants, bars, businesses)
- Housing, specifically apartments
- Expand trails to better connect to sidewalks and into Downtown
- ADA upgrades at the wetlands
- Growth through incoming businesses and workforce
- Annexation within 2-mile radius; which increases range for elected/appointed officials
- Commercial plazas (Rural King + IMPACT area) could be beautified and attract more business
- Capability to expand services and utilities
- City festivals
- Attract distant retirees to Kendallville
- Involve a new portion of existing population
- New development opportunities
- Hotel developments
- Proximity to Fort Wayne; developers are aware of the growth of Fort Wayne/Hunertown and are already looking to Kendallville for opportunities
- Public Relations (highlighting who we are)
- Weaknesses can become opportunities

THREATS

- Short-sightedness
- Outside image – those not from Kendallville
- Economic downturn that would prevent plan from being implemented
- Unknown environmental and economic changes
- Not agreeing on what's important to help community thrive/coming to a consensus for the common good
- State legislation
- Poor landlords / property owners allowing properties to deteriorate
- Maintaining hometown feel and refocus on home opportunities
- Losing high schoolers / young adults

Project: Kendallville Plan

Meeting: Steering Committee #2: Community Engagement

Date / Time: April 17, 2025 / 4:00 pm

Location: Community Learning Center – 401 E Diamond St

Participants: Amy Ballard, John Blume, Kim Clouse, Kristen Johnson, Mindy London, Matt Stinson, Julia Tipton, Lance Waters

Hosted by: Hometown Initiatives, LLC / JPR: Amber Bassett, Amy Schweitzer, Joshua Barkley

Amber of Hometown Initiatives (HI LLC) welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda for the evening. She then provided a quick recap of the project so far reviewing the project timeline. She noted Phase 1: Kick-Off was completed. Phase 2: Data Gathering / Analysis was in the process of being completed and will be wrapped up with a Community Profile Report, which will be distributed to the Steering Committee upon completion. Phase 3: Community Engagement was in the beginning stages and will be discussed in further detail later in the meeting. Phase 4: Plan Development and Phase 5: Adoption are later to come this year, resulting in Kendallville Plan being adopted and effective with a target goal of January 1, 2026.

From there the group transitioned into a visioning session. The goal of this exercise was to think big and dream about the future of Kendallville. The group was challenged to create statements of what future Kendallville will consist of. The following themes and statements from that session are below:

- Growth + Families
 - Retain Generations
 - Downtown is full + vibrant
 - Quality housing
 - Variety of housing for all
 - Affordable childcare
 - Desirable livability, attracting visitors and residents
 - Well-kept + maintained neighborhoods
- Arts, Entertainment + Recreation:
 - 3 champion level golf courses
 - Event center
 - Natural amphitheater at the Library
 - Bike trails
 - Overall connectivity/walkability
 - Hub of frequent activity for families
- Business + Employment
 - Innovation Center
 - Small Business Retail
 - Business/Employer Hub
 - Industries
 - Trades
 - Upscale hotel for executives
- Inclusivity
 - Awareness of events and activities
 - Equal opportunities to communication
 - Transportation availability + reliability

After the visioning session, Amy discussed the upcoming details of the Community Engagement Phase, beginning with Stakeholder Interviews. The first two focus groups, Sidewalks + Trails and Utilities, were interviewed earlier that day. The following groups will be interviewed on April 23rd: Downtown; Economic Development + Housing; Public Services + Regional Collaboration; Health + Human Services; Business +

Industry; Community Organizations + Advocates. Approximately 80 individuals representing various sectors of the community were invited to the interviews. Amy discussed what each group and agenda would like, then she asked the group if there were specific questions or topics that should be discussed. The group suggested asking groups who they were connected with to ensure proper awareness of the planning process. The group also suggested asking what will contribute to growth or draw people to Kendallville and make it desirable. The last suggestion was for businesses and industries to be asked what they will need to be successful.

Amy explained in lieu of having a formal sit-down meeting with department heads and elected / appointed officials, a simple questionnaire will be sent to them instead. Doing so will avoid conflict with Open Door Laws and will hopefully garner more feedback.

Amber discussed a media campaign with the Steering Committee highlighting the success that is already being seen after the April 7th Facebook post and WANE TV interview April 10th. The www.KendallvillePlan.com website saw sessions spike after both occurrences and many people signed up for a newsletter when updates were announced. The social media posts are being planned and developed for the remainder of the community engagement phase, with at least 15 posts drafted. Press releases will also be prepared for radio, newspaper, and WANE TV. Mayor Waters announced that Viewpoint with Dennis Quaid has also contacted the City to highlight all the achievements being made in Kendallville. It is expected to be scheduled within the next 4 months.

Amber explained the first survey will be a comprehensive survey, accounting for as much community feedback as possible. The survey will be released Friday, May 2nd, and will end Sunday, June 29th. For a survey to be considered successful, at least 3% of the community will need to submit responses. However, HI LLC's goal is to receive at least 5% response rate. The group discussed how the survey will be available online and as a hard copy at the Library, City Hall, CLC, and Cole Center YMCA. A promotional flyer with a QR Code will also be available for businesses to display for their patrons. After reviewing the survey together, the Steering Committee made the following changes:

- Clarify survey responses are anonymous.
- Add Healthcare, Library, and Education to Question 6.

HI LLC and JPR teams will attend the Fairy, Gnome, + Troll Festival on May 17th as the first Planning Pop-Up. The primary purpose of this attendance is to promote the survey and Kendallville Plan. The team will also have interactive community engagement and activities for kids, as well. Mindy noted the Library is able to print large banners and will send HI LLC the dimensions so a banner can be designed and printed for events of this nature.

Amber explained instead of having a community workshop where the public is invited to attend a workshop, it seemed that a second Planning Pop-Up and second survey would garner more community feedback. The second Planning Pop-Up will be at the Farmer's Market on either July 12th or 19th. The pop-up will feature issues highlighted in the first survey and/or a visual preference survey. The second survey will mirror the second Planning Pop-up and will be available beginning Friday, July 11th, and closing Sunday, August 3rd. The survey will be available online and as a hard copy, just like the first survey.

Amy began wrapping up the meeting by reminding the group of what is to come in the following months and encouraged members to actively participate and share the community engagement opportunities. She noted that Steering Committee #3 will be focused on reviewing the Public Engagement Report, which will highlight

major themes. The group will also circle back to the visioning exercise and begin to brainstorm broad goals and other focus areas. Steering Committee Meeting #4 will dive into goals, objectives, and detailed focus areas.

Finally, Steering Committee Meeting #3 was scheduled for August 21st at 4:00 pm at the Library.

Project: Kendallville Plan
Meeting: Steering Committee #3: Vision + Plan Development
Date / Time: August 21, 2025 / 4:00 pm
Location: Kendallville Public Library – South Park Avenue
Participants: Kim Clouse, Mindy London, Matt Stinson, Julia Tipton
Hosted by: Hometown Initiatives, LLC / JPR: Amber Bassett, Amy Schweitzer, Joshua Barkley



Amber of Hometown Initiatives (HI LLC) welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda for the evening. She then provided a quick recap of the project so far reviewing the project timeline. She noted the project is in the Phase 4: Plan Development phase.

Amy introduced the Community Profile Report and highlighted the key takeaways. The report was available to the committee prior to the meeting, and both the report and key takeaways were available in printed form at the meeting.

Amber introduced the Community Engagement Report and highlighted the key takeaways. Like the Profile Report, the Community Engagement Report was available prior to the meeting, and both the report and key takeaways were available in printed form at the meeting.

Asking for comments, questions, and discussion, committee members brought up the following items:

- Are there tax incentives to property owners for intentionally keeping properties vacant? HI LLC will conduct some research, but other than claiming a loss on income taxes, HI LLC is not aware of any. HI LLC also mentioned that keeping it vacant may also reduce the value of the property keeping the property taxes lower.
- Were the missed opportunities regarding land acquisition specified because it would be good to know? HI LLC noted those comments grew out of the City Officials questionnaire and likely dated back 10+ years. There was also mentioning of a project associated with Carla Lowe that was mentioned a few times. The airport and school near the airport were one of the items mentioned.
- The "good working relationship" between the community and utility companies (specifically NIPSCO) was discussed. It seems there are no "cost savings" to the community to run infrastructure – even if it is for a non-profit and community-serving institution. HI LLC clarified that the "good working relationship" related more to coordination of work in the rights-of-way. HI LLC will modify the language in the Community Profile Report to provide better clarity.
- What components of Kendallville's population is growing – because student enrollment is declining? Discussion centered around age cohorts seeing the most growth (45 – 60 year olds); the fact that Noble County's population has been declining since 2020; and the large number of single-person households in Kendallville are contributing factors to declining school enrollment. It was also clarified that homeschooling numbers do not account for the declining public school numbers.
- Code enforcement was brought up – specifically the City's personnel dedicated to code enforcement. It used to be one full-time employee. The question came up about it currently being two part-time employees. HI LLC will follow up.

- The retail strip malls (Rural King, Dollar Tree) with large, poor-quality parking lots were mentioned. What can be done with them? Property owners are out of state, and there is no incentive to maintain the properties.
- US 6 and the recent changes to turn lanes near N Main Street and Lima Road North were discussed. The new "Michigan Lefts" at Waits Road was also discussed. There was mention about INDOT installing roundabouts, but it was not clear where those roundabouts are planned. HI LLC will conduct some research.

Four vision statements were provided to the committee. They were asked to review each and then discuss which one they preferred or which components best represented what the vision of Kendallville should be. Discussion included:

- Kendallville should focus on more than just focusing on families. The number of single-person households supports this.
- Like "bold aspirations"
- Like "abundant opportunities"
- Needs to be "future tense," Kendallville "strives to be" as opposed to Kendallville is.
- Like the concentration on arts
- Would like to have a combination that includes all components. Likes the second sentence in the third vision: "By blending our historic charm with bold investments in housing, innovation, recreation, and inclusivity, we are building a city where every generation can thrive."

HI LLC introduced Key Themes / Plan Chapters for the new 2025 Kendallville Plan and went over each. These Themes grew out of the Community Profile Report, Community Engagement Report, Vision Statements, and the 2010 / 2019 Comprehensive Plan.

- Enable Strategic Growth + Land Use
- Focus on Housing + Neighborhoods
- Inclusive Transportation
- Continue to Invest in Parks + Recreation
- Facilitate Economic + Business Development
- Promote Identity + Community Spirit

Additionally, each theme or chapter included some potential "deep dive" topics that the Plan will research and consider in closer detail. These deep dives often provide a community with a real life example of how the policies within the Plan can be applied.

- Enable Strategic Growth + Land Use Deep Dives:
 - Growth Areas + Annexation
 - Commercial Strip Mall Redevelopment
- Focus on Housing + Neighborhoods Deep Dives:
 - Zoning enablement for different housing types
 - Housing Education + Promotion
- Facilitate Economic + Business Development Deep Dives:
 - Dine-In Test Kitchen
 - Hi-Tech Industry
 - Indoor Recreation Conversion

- Inclusive Transportation Deep Dives:
 - Trail Expansion
 - US 6 Study
 - Intersections of North / Main / Lima
- Continue to Invest in Parks + Recreation Deep Dives:
 - Bixler Lake Water-Based Recreation
 - Splash Pad
- Promote Identity + Community Spirit Deep Dives:
 - Gateways + Wayfinding
 - Community PR Campaign

The Steering Committee was asked if there were any other topics that are missing or need to be tweaked. Considerable discussion regarding the Noble County Fairgrounds ensued confirming that this piece was an integral part of Kendallville's identity and regardless of ownership, this piece needed to be addressed. There was also discussion on the impact the COVID pandemic had on changing community events. There seems to be a reset occurring or needing to occur for some cherished events. Additionally, the topic of generational differences was discussed and how it is something to be aware of and to prepare for as we continue to see that shift. There was also conversation regarding the support of a splash pad and the logistics of a developing one as well as potential locations.

The Steering Committee was then asked to prioritize and choose which deep dives they would like to see incorporated into the final plan. After some adjustments to the deep dives provided, the Committee decided to pursue the following:

- Focus on community motivators / amenities to have people not just work in Kendallville but stay in Kendallville. These can include redevelopment and retail infill to existing commercial developments.
- Focus on different housing types, where they could exist, and how to promote them through education.
- Attracting Hi-Tech Industry
- Splash Pad Next Steps
- Community Gateways through corridor beautification

HI LLC walked through the remaining meetings for the project starting with the Kendallville Plan being completed and adopted for 2026. HI LLC will need to go through these items with City Officials, as well.

- October 16, 2025: Final Steering Committee Meeting at the CLC at 4 PM
- Late October – Public Open House @ East Noble Football Game – OR -November 16 – Public Open House @ Holiday Market at CLC (11 AM – 3 PM)
- December 1, 2025: Public Hearing @ Kendallville Plan Commission
- December 16, 2025: City Council

Project: Kendallville Plan
 Meeting: Steering Committee #4: Plan Development
 Date / Time: October 16, 2025 / 4:00 pm
 Location: Community Learning Center / 401 E Diamond St
 Participants: Mayor Lance Waters; Jenna Anderson; John Blume; Julia Tipton
 Hosted by: Hometown Initiatives, LLC / JPR: Amber Bassett, Amy Schweitzer, Joshua Barkley



Amber of Hometown Initiatives (HI LLC) welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda for the evening. She then provided a quick recap of the project so far reviewing the project timeline. She noted the project is towards the of Phase 4: Plan Development phase.

Amy reintroduced the Community Vision and Community Tagline that was developed at the last meeting. Amy then transitioned into Plan Development discussion providing an example of how the plan would be organized: Key Theme and Goal Statement supported by Objectives, and Paths to Progress which incorporated actionable steps to make implementation of the plan successful. In each "Key Theme" discussion, the planning team read the Goal Statement and Objectives, then discussed the "Paths to Progress" in further detail, allowing the Steering Committee to provide input. Finally, the Steering Committee were handed cards for each "Key Theme" and were asked to select the top 2 or 3 choices to assist in prioritizing the Objectives in the plan.

Key Theme: Enable Strategic Growth + Land Use

Paths to Progress:

- Future Land Use Map: it was noted that the Map will also include land use category descriptions.
- Modernization of Ordinances + Zoning Map: ordinances are not exciting to talk about, but critical in enabling Kendallville's vision and goals in becoming a reality.
- Growth, Annexation, + Redevelopment: a map was displayed showing growth, annexation, and redevelopment areas.
- Downtown Kendallville: a map was displayed illustrating downtown historic district boundaries, observed downtown boundaries, potential sites for a large redevelopment projects, and parking areas. The downfall of having too much parking was discussed, and the committee was surprised by the map illustrating all the parking areas.
- Utilities and Public Facilities: these items will be addressed in the plan.
- Commercial Infill + Redevelopment (Deep Dive): a potential redevelopment scenario for Fairview Center and/or Deerfield West will be explored as part of this deep dive.

Additional Discussion:

- Avilla has experienced substantial growth over the last decade.
- A 200-lot development was attempted on property just north of City Limits (east of Lima), but the soils made the project cost prohibitive.
- One area shown on the map for growth has limitations from high-pressure gas mains. Mayor will provide map of gas main locations.
- Meadow Lane area, shown as an annexation area, still includes some property owners who have not hooked up to city utilities.

- It was also noted that growth should extend west to the industrial complex at N 400 E.
- Childcare was identified as a need in downtown.

Key Theme: Focus on Housing + Neighborhoods

Paths to Progress:

- Preserve + Improve Existing Homes: KRI is a great example; collaboration can assist with home improvements; importance of mobile home parks and how to make them more inviting, aesthetically pleasing, and part of the community; also highlighting the importance of accessibility improvements for aging in place.
- Strengthen Neighborhoods + Infrastructure: vacant properties do not receive any special tax break. Examples from Fort Wayne, Terre Haute, and South Bend were shared.
- Advance New Housing: a map illustrating appropriate housing types was shared and discussed.
- Code Enforcement: providing assistance when needed, but also holding property owners accountable.

Additional Discussion:

- KRI collaborates with Impact Institute and various trades
- CLC, Ivy Tech, and Indiana Historic Landmarks are collaborating to offer classes and training on preservation techniques to the trades.
- The Elks golf course will likely remain recreation into the future.
- SE corner of Drake and SR 3 has had discussion of townhouse development.
- Townhomes have been discussed in front of Noble Hawk.
- How does one streamline approval for subdivisions with utilities?

Key Theme: Inclusive Transportation

Paths to Progress:

- Future Thoroughfare Plan: a map was displayed showing the street classifications and extension and development of future roads, as well as problematic intersections. The integral components of the Future Thoroughfare Plan include:
 - Classifications + Street Sections
 - Complete Streets
 - Access Management
 - Intersection Improvements
- Sidewalks + Trails Plan: map was displayed noting existing trails, proposed trails by NIRCC, proposed trails for the purpose of the Kendallville Plan initiative, and other important pedestrian connections. It also highlighted the Urban Sidewalk Area, noting most of the sidewalk network existed, but conditions were a concern to the public. Other integral parts to consider in the Sidewalks + Trails Map include:
 - Importance of Pedestrian + Bicyclist Safety
 - Residential Sidewalk Program
 - Trail Expansion + Community Connections

Additional Discussion:

- In order to be truly inclusive in transportation, considerations need to be given to the Amish community who travel by horse and buggy. Perhaps this includes widened shoulders on key corridors.

- Jenna Anderson, a Noble Trails committee member, informed the planning team that Noble Trails had additional proposed trail locations and she would relay that information.
- It was decided to remove the NIRCC Proposed Trail over the railroad spur as that was still very much active.
- Riley Street "Important Pedestrian Connection" should be upgraded to a Proposed Trail.
- A trail head could be strategically located at City-owned property along Sargent St, between Main and Riley Streets, directly adjacent to the railroad.
- The Mayor informed the group of a recent Tree Survey identifying hundreds of trees that have caused sidewalk damage. The City has budgeted money to repair those sidewalks and offer residents to improve their remaining sidewalk at the same time of repair construction.

Key Theme: Facilitate Economic + Business Development

Paths to Progress:

- Support Existing Business: concept applies to employment center (industrial) support and strengthening downtown core.
- Build Capacity: building space and infrastructure for growth – using a restaurant in downtown as an example. Due to Kendallville's size and market area, the community is unable to attract the type of restaurant it desires. To achieve Redevelopment Commission makes the initial investment in a facility – kitchen, chairs, computer system for sales, etc. Focus should be on growing from within (entrepreneurship). Perhaps this "test kitchen" is a stepping stone from a food truck or the Cookery. Could apply to high tech and retail, as well.
- Attract + Expand: Commercial infill, the potential of the fairgrounds as a conference center, and boutique hotel.
- Attract High-Tech (Deep Dive)

Additional Discussion:

- Mayor will provide hotel feasibility study that was recently completed.

Key Theme: Promote Identity + Community Spirit

Paths to Progress:

- Public Communication Strategies: ensuring consistent branding and messaging; conduct community-wide survey for new logo; hire a public relations coordinator or contract with a PR firm.
- Promoting Community Identity: overcome stereotypes by showcasing highlights and achievements (before and after photos of improvements); focus on regional but also local awareness; promote and advertise community vision and aspirations
- Increasing Community Engagement: find common cause to rally around (splash pad); encourage ownership; celebrate big and small wins; showcase success stories; host and grow community events; clearly communicate
- Expanding + Promoting Community Events: year-round events; Christkindl Market; utilization of fairgrounds; creating something entirely new that would draw regional interest; promote less-recognized events
- Pride Through Property Maintenance + Revitalization: showcase the good work already happening with DHK, KRI, CLC; consider extending historic district boundaries and incorporate housing design guidelines for historic homes

- Art Commission + Public Art Initiatives: exemplify the existing public art initiatives and continue to nurture and grow this passion by establishing an Art Commission
- Corridor Enhancements (Deep Dive): highlight priority corridors through Kendallville and provide ideal design and material guidelines; amenities and enhancements along the corridor (benches, street lights, wayfinding, gateway signage, street trees, sidewalks / trails, etc.)

Additional Discussion:

- The Mayor found the Common Council adopted community logo, which is used as the community seal. It consists of hands shaking. It was noted by the group that this was not well-known as being the logo, and that the other two logos (cursive Kendallville text and "Kendallville on the rise") were being used instead.
- The Mayor informed the group of a young child who had submitted a design for a "community flag", which included many elements that represented Kendallville well.
- The City has wrapped up the interview process with *Viewpoint with Dennis Quaid* and received the full interview as well as a 30-second clip which will be distributed to the public once available.
- Noble County is pursuing a County Art Commission through IAC.
- The City was approached about an opportunity to installing a new gateway sign at the intersection of SR 3 and Main St. There would be enough room to make this gateway sign more prominent than others.
- There has been discussion about installing "Welcome to Downtown Kendallville" signage at the north and south gateways to Downtown along Main Street.

Key Theme: Continue to Invest in Parks + Recreation

Paths to Progress:

- Park and Recreation Master Plan: reiterate main goals and objectives in plan and encourage continued implementation
- Bixler Lake Water-Based Recreation: introduce unattended floatation amenities and slides at beaches per public input
- Creative Programming + Partnerships: supports Parks Dept and also ties into Promoting Identity and Community Spirit by encouraging ownership
- Year-Round Activities: finding ways to activate parks throughout the whole year (temporary ice rink; sledding hill, etc.)
- Environmental Considerations: focus on utilizing wetlands or flood prone areas for passive recreation (trails, education paths + signage); developing natural trails through Blackman Woods Preserve in compliance with deed restrictions (similar to ACRES Land Trust properties or Metea Park)
- Splash Pad (Deep Dive): section will focus on next steps being a feasibility study which will need to consider utility availability, soil quality, requirements for facilities, and design considerations when determining the location. Will also take account of funding opportunities and community support

Additional Discussion:

- Josh noted the Park and Recreation Master Plan calls for a connection between Rush Street and Sunset Park and a pathway around the natural prairie.

After Key Themes, Goal Statement, Objectives, and Paths to Progress were discussed, Amber explained the next section of the plan would focus on how to successfully implement the plan in the Implementation Chapter. The chapter would begin by explaining how successful implementation will create a community that motivates people to not just work and play in Kendallville but to stay and call it home.

This will be showcased by four "deep dive" projects that will show in detail how this plan can work together to achieve successful projects that move Kendallville forward. Those "Deep Dives" include:

- Focus on Commercial Infill + Redevelopment: specifically looking at a few underutilized commercial strips and redeveloping into uses that better support Kendallville's vision.
- Attracting High-Tech Industry: exploring why this industry is a logical choice and the opportunities it brings and beginning to think about potential locations, including downtown.
- Corridor Enhancement: highlighting important community corridors and exploring design options to create a welcoming and pleasing environment with design elements, materials, and amenities.
- Investigating Splash Pad Development: discuss the next steps in splash pad development including a feasibility study and all the research and consideration involved in finding the right location.

Additionally, Amber noted that in the last meeting, the Steering Committee chose these four "Deep Dives", as well as a "Deep Dive" for housing types. After drafting the housing chapter, it was decided that a housing "Deep Dive" would be a reiteration of that chapter and the planning team chose to eliminate it here.

Amber then explained the plan would conclude in an Implementation Matrix which would list each objective by Key Theme. Each objective would be cross-referenced and identified to all the Key Themes that supported the objective. Every objective would be prioritized based on the feedback from the Steering Committee. Paths to Progress would be listed, as well as Community Partners who would be instrumental to implementation. A timeframe would also be designated with the understanding that some projects or objectives could be quick wins and accomplished early on; others would be a long-term achievement; and some would constantly be ongoing.

Amy discussed the final next steps, explaining an 80% draft plan would be sent to the Steering Committee next week for review and comment. She also explained a Public Meeting would be held at the Holiday Market on November 16th at the Community Learning Center. Kendallville Plan would be released to the public for review shortly after. The Plan Commission would consider recommendation at the December 1st meeting, and the Council would consider it for adoption by resolution on December 16th. Amy noted the planning team would assist with drafting the public hearing notice as well as the resolution.

Finally, Amy concluded the meeting by thanking the Steering Committee members for being dedicated to this process and providing critical guidance. She encouraged them to support the plan when it came time to publish and adopt the plan.