



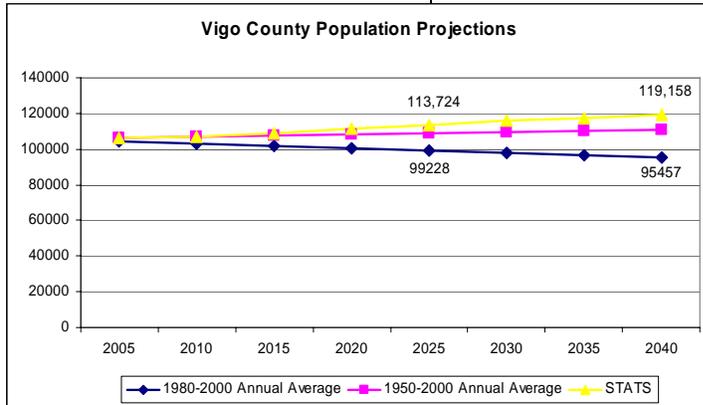
# Terre Haute Vigo County *Comprehensive Plan*

**HNTB**

## Appendix B: Existing Conditions

## APPENDIX B: Existing Conditions

The information presented in this chapter is a brief overview of the demographic and economic analysis and background information that was conducted as a part of the comprehensive planning process. It also presents the input that has been made throughout the comprehensive planning process in key person interviews, through the steering committee, and public workshops. The information helps to set the stage for the focus areas of plan.



### People

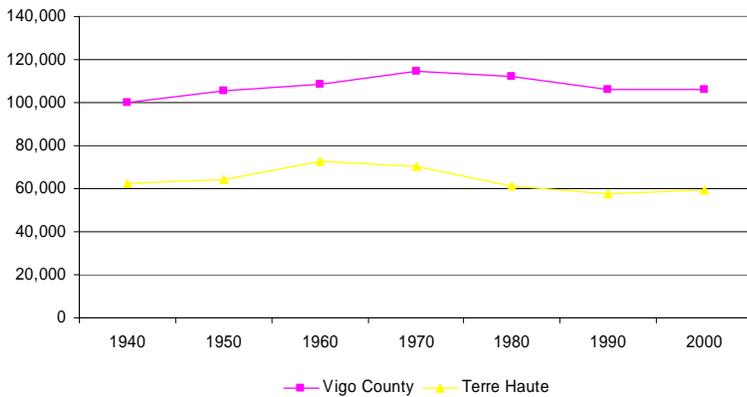
The population of Vigo County in the year 2000 was 105,848. The City of Terre Haute had a population of 59,614 for the same period. Terre Haute's share of the county population was 56 percent in 2000. West Terre Haute is the largest town in Vigo County, with a population of 2,330 in the year 2000. Seelyville is the next largest incorporated town in Vigo County. The town's 2000 population was 1,182. Riley is the smallest incorporated community in Vigo County. The 2000 population of Riley was 160.

Population shifts between the Terre Haute and the county indicate that more of the county residents are living outside of the central city, but these residents are not primarily engaged in agricultural activities like their pre-war predecessors. This pattern of population shift is an indication of unplanned growth.

In 2000, seven Vigo County townships were classified as primarily rural (one with an urban/rural mix), four were primarily urban (urban/rural mix), and one township was primarily urban. Hence, there are urban, suburban, and rural issues facing Vigo County.

Vigo County is by far the most populous of the counties in the West Central Indiana region and Terre Haute serves as a regional center. However, the counties that surround Vigo County experienced population growth during the 1990s, with Putnam, Sullivan, and Parke counties experiencing the most growth.

**Vigo County and Terre Haute Population Since 1940**



### Population Projections

The Vigo County population is projected to grow. The population is expected to reach 113,724 in 2025.

Using the projections provided by the table, the Vigo County population will be 20 percent school aged, 47 percent working age, and 18 percent Senior Citizens in 2025. This represents a shift toward more Senior Citizens, who have different housing and transportation needs than working age adults.

### Housing

In the City of Terre Haute, 73 percent of occupied housing units are single-family homes, with an additional percent which are mobile homes. Thirteen percent are in structures with two to four units and the remainder is in structures with more than five housing units. Terre Haute has a higher percentage of multi-family structures than the county average, but this is not unusual because of the universities.

Approximately 12 percent of Terre Haute residents and eight percent of Vigo County residents live in what the Census refers to as “group quarters.” These include dormitories at colleges and universities in addition to jails and prisons and nursing homes. The largest percentage of these residents in Vigo County (and Terre Haute) are non-institutionalized, so they are college students or living in nursing homes. In Terre Haute and Vigo County, institutionalized persons are at the federal prison. More than 4,500 people in Terre Haute are non-institutionalized persons living in group quarters.

Terre Haute and Vigo County have more renters than the statewide average. Approximately 41 percent of occupied housing units in Terre Haute are rental units. Statewide it is closer to 30 percent of housing stock is available for renters. The number of university students in Terre Haute does have an impact on this percentage.

Terre Haute has a higher residential vacancy rate than the state average. The city’s homeowner vacancy rate is similar to other comparable communities, but the rental vacancy rate is higher, even than among communities with similarly sized university populations, such as Muncie. The total vacancy rate in Terre Haute was 11 percent, compared to eight percent statewide.

The rental vacancy rate was nearly 12 percent in the city, compared to three percent for homeowners. West Terre Haute has a total vacancy rate of nearly 13 percent. Seelyville and Riley have total vacancy rates of seven and eight percent, respectively. In West Terre Haute, 43 percent of the vacant units are mobile homes. Seelyville has a number of vacant multi-family structures. The public felt that housing improvements were needed, especially in addressing vacant and dilapidated homes.

In Vigo County, nearly 32 percent of the housing stock was built before 1939. In Terre Haute, nearly 43 percent was built before that year. An additional 26 percent of Terre Haute's housing was built between 1940 and 1959. While housing development was down in Terre Haute during the 1980s, there was resurgence in home building during the 1990s.

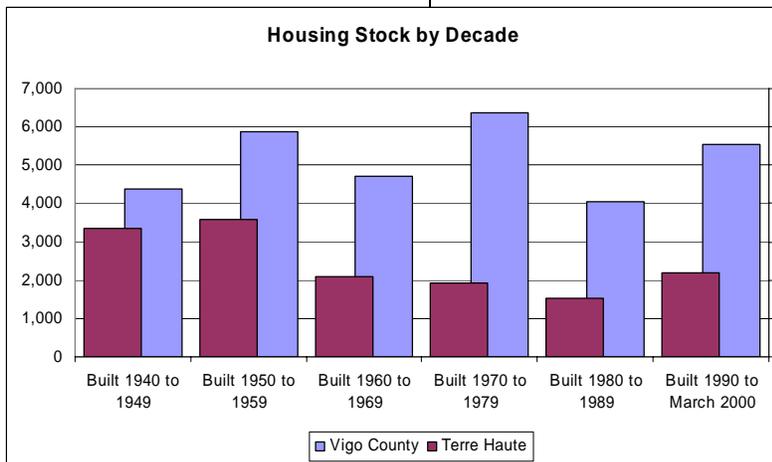
People felt that historic neighborhoods should be preserved and recognized. In addition, they felt that the historic fabric of the older neighborhoods is important to creating a sense of place.

New housing stock is primarily being built in areas of Vigo County outside of Terre Haute. New residential building permits in Terre Haute have accounted for less than one-third of building permits in Vigo County every year since 1996, with the exception of 1998 and 2000.

West Terre Haute's housing stock is comprised almost entirely of single-family homes and mobile homes. Approximately 75 percent of the homes in the town are owner occupied. In Seelyville the homes are also single family (80 percent) and mobile homes (20 percent), and fewer than 80 percent are owner occupied. In Riley the occupied homes

also tend to be single family (89 percent) and mobile homes (11 percent). Three quarters of homes are owner occupied.

Housing values are important to the community in terms of affordability. The median home value and median household incomes are used to determine affordability. The median home value in Terre Haute in 2000 was \$60,100 compared with \$71,800 in Vigo County and \$92,500 statewide. Median housing values in Vigo County were highest in Riley and Lost Creek townships. The lowest median values were in Harrison Township. Among municipalities, West Terre Haute had the lowest median home value, at \$39,000. Housing values in the outlying areas of the county are likely to be higher based on being newer housing stock and larger lot sizes. The median home value in Terre Haute, however, increased more between 1990 and 2000 than in Vigo County as a whole or statewide. One issue regarding neighborhoods that was



raised by the public is the need to improve trash enforcement, leaf pick-up, street cleaning, and maintenance of open spaces.

### ***Labor Force and Major Industries***

The labor force in Vigo County was 52,110 in 2003. Vigo County is also a part of the Workforce Investment Region 7, with a labor force of 108,560 in 2003. Vigo County has nearly half of the jobs in the region and serves as a regional employment center. This makes economic development critical in terms of land use and transportation systems.

Most industries in Vigo County have experienced stable employment levels over the past decade. The notable exception is services, which has experienced considerable growth.

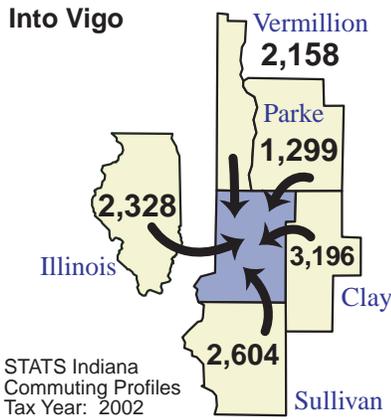
In 2001 and 2002, using the new NAICS classifications (North America Industrial Classification System), the largest sectors in Vigo County were retail (16%), government (15%), manufacturing (13%), and health care and social services (13%). The sectors that are traditionally considered service sectors accounted for nearly 40 percent of all jobs in Vigo County. The service sub-sectors with the most significant employment were health care and social services and accommodations and food services.

The retail sectors earnings for Vigo County compared to the region illustrate that Vigo County is the center of that retail trade area, particularly for everyday goods such as clothing and accessories; sporting goods, hobby, and book stores, and general merchandise stores. Vigo County accounts for more than 75 percent of the regions earnings in these sub-sectors. Overall, Vigo County accounts for nearly 60 percent of retail earnings in the region.

The life sciences, advanced manufacturing, and advanced logistics industries are also areas where the public's desire to attract more highly skilled and better paying jobs, in addition to their desire to retain more college graduates, can be addressed.

The major manufacturing employers in Terre Haute and Vigo County include: Applied Extrusion Technologies, Bemis, and Columbia House. These companies each employ more than 500 people locally. Other significant employers include: Aegis Brake & Chassis, CSN, LLC, Navelli's, Ivy Hill, Pfizer, Staples, and Smith Aerospace.

Non-manufacturing employers also are significant employers. The hospitals employ 2,000 and Associated Physicians and Surgeons Clinic employs an additional 540. Indiana State University employs 3,250; Rose-Hulman employs 439, Ivy-Tech State College employs 161; and St. Mary of the Woods employs 155.



These major employers can have a significant impact on the way the Vigo County community develops. The importance of manufacturing to the local and regional economy identifies a need for industrial space that can best serve local industries land and transportation needs.

**Commuting**

As suggested earlier, Vigo County has the largest portion of the jobs in the region. Workers coming from surrounding counties eat and run daily errands in Vigo County, contributing to the strong retail climate.

Commuting patterns illustrate the flow of workers within a region. The patterns presented are taken from the IT-40 Indiana State Income Tax Returns. In 2002, 15.4 percent of the Vigo County workforce came from outside Vigo County. Only 3.8 percent of the workforce left the county for employment. The strongest commuting relationship is with Clay County. More than 3,000 workers come in to Vigo County from Clay County, and approximately 820 leave Vigo County for jobs in Clay County.

There are approximately 8,500 more workers who come into Vigo County for their employment than leave the county for employment. These commuting patterns suggest transportation corridors that may be needed to efficiently support travel in the county.

**Existing Land Use**

The change in developed land between 1984 and 2004 demonstrates that there is some infill building activity occurring within the City of Terre Haute, West Terre Haute, and Seelyville (Map 1). The development trend also demonstrates that a significant amount of development is occurring as strip developments along roadways, particularly in rural areas south and northwest of Terre Haute. The amount of developed land in the county expanded 52 percent, while the population declined by six percent. This indicates unplanned low-density development, is an issue in the community.

### **Agricultural**

The Natural Resource Conservation Service defines prime farmland as that which is available for agricultural uses and is not in built up land or water now. Much of the undeveloped land in Vigo County is classified as prime farmland. According to the US Census of Agriculture, 21,860 acres, or nearly 34 square miles, of land were taken out of farming from 1992 to 2002. The public identified management of open space and promoting agriculture by conserving prime farmland as key issues. The steering committee similarly felt that protection of prime farmland was important, primarily away from urban areas.

### **Mining Areas**

Vigo County has a significant number of surface and underground mining operations. These areas have land use implications in terms of the development rights of the properties, the desirability and suitability of adjacent areas for development, the redevelopment potential of abandoned mines, and environmental hazards and nuisances posed by mining operations.

Surface mining operations exist in the eastern portions of the county, primarily south of I-70 and east of US 41. There is a presence of surface mining operations along the county line in the northwest portion of the county as well.

Seams of coal exist in the northeast part of the county and in two areas west of the river. The steering committee felt that some of the reclaimed mining areas could be used for residential development.

### **Residential**

Residential uses are the single largest land use in Terre Haute. The percentage of residential land in the city of Terre Haute is comparable to other mid-sized communities that were studied as a part of a 1992 American Planning Association study.

However, as mentioned earlier, most of the recent housing development in Vigo County has occurred outside of the City of Terre Haute. Residential uses are one of the primary contributors to the sprawling development pattern that has occurred in the county over the past 20 years. Members of the public cited limiting sprawl as a need within the community. They also expressed a desire to steer housing development into the city and small communities.

Residents also expressed a need for zoning protections for neighborhoods and to stabilize neighborhoods through clear guidelines.

### **Commercial**

Downtown Terre Haute is a commercial core that has a number of retail, eating and drinking, office, and governmental establishments. Other than downtown, there are eight identified business cores. Those include:

- 12 Points Shopping Area
- Honey Creek Mall
- Plaza North
- Riverside Plaza
- Southland Plaza
- The Meadows Shopping Center
- Towne South Plaza
- Wabash Valley Plaza

Public input suggests a need for improving vacant buildings, especially downtown. People expressed that there were opportunities in the vacant commercial and industrial buildings. Downtown development was also identified as a need.

The primary commercial cores of the community are along Third Street and the Honey Creek Square area. Some of the transportation corridors related to these commercial areas have been mentioned as having significant visual impacts.

### **Industrial**

There are four industrial parks in Vigo County, all except Fort Harrison Business Park are Foreign Trade Zones. The Vigo County Industrial Park is owned by Vigo County and is located five miles south of I-70 on US 41. The park has 1,500 acres. The Fort Harrison Business Park is a 153 acre site at Fruitridge Avenue and Steelton Road. The Fort Harrison Industrial Park has more than 300 acres and normally has over 150,000 square feet of lease space available. Aleph Park was developed by Rose-Hulman Ventures and is a Certified Technology Park. The park is a 180 acre campus and is currently home to Rose-Hulman Ventures.

Residents and key persons interviewed expressed a need for industrial development to be focused in the industrial parks.

The industrial parks have faced residential encroachment in some cases that can limit their ability to function as industrial parks.

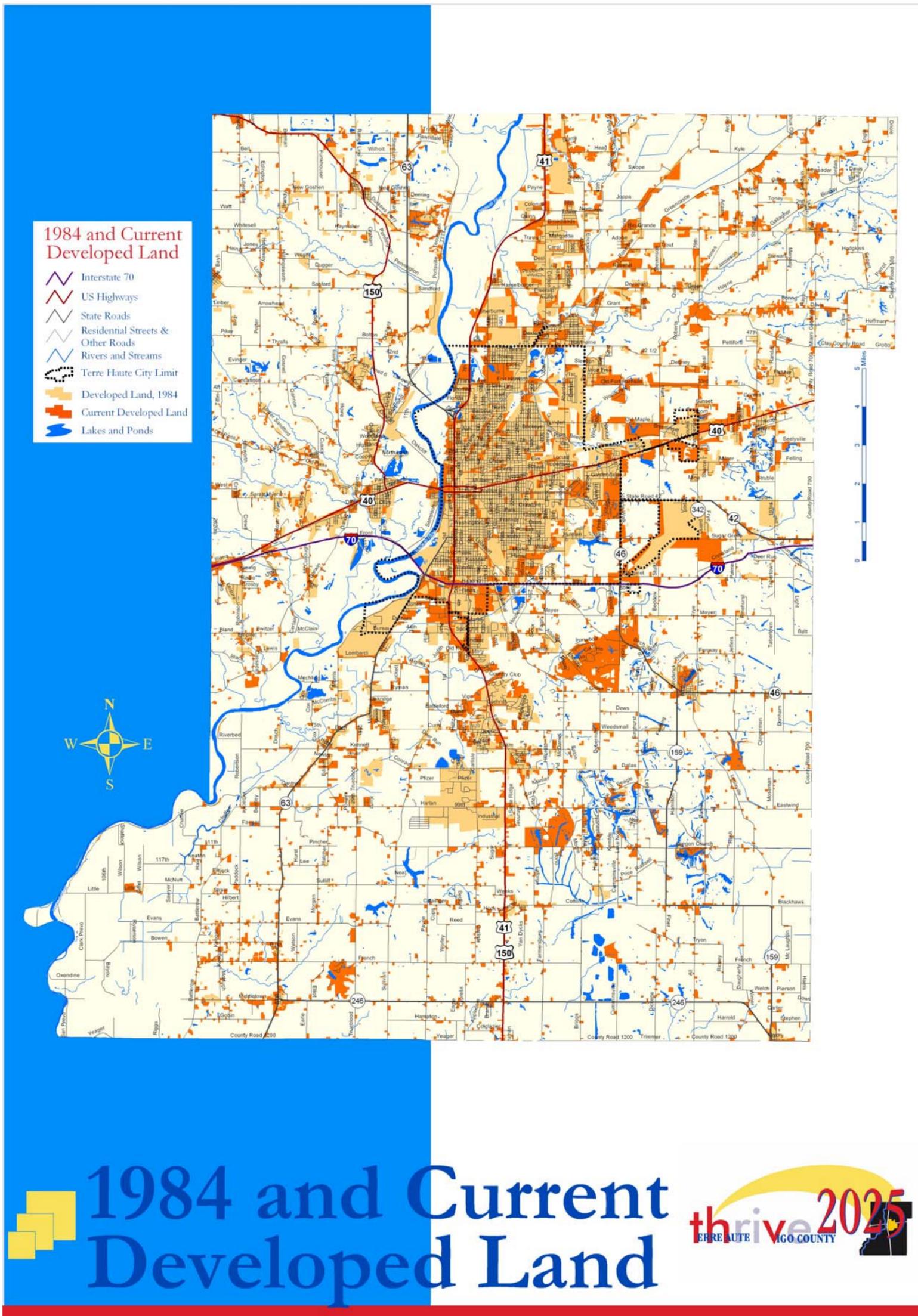
### **Parks**

The City of Terre Haute manages 28 parks totaling nearly 525 acres. These parks are classified as community parks, neighborhood parks, and block parks. The City also has two golf courses. The city's level of service in provision of park lands exceeds many of the communities that are providing an excellent level of service. The parks reflect a variety of types and offer both passive and active recreation.

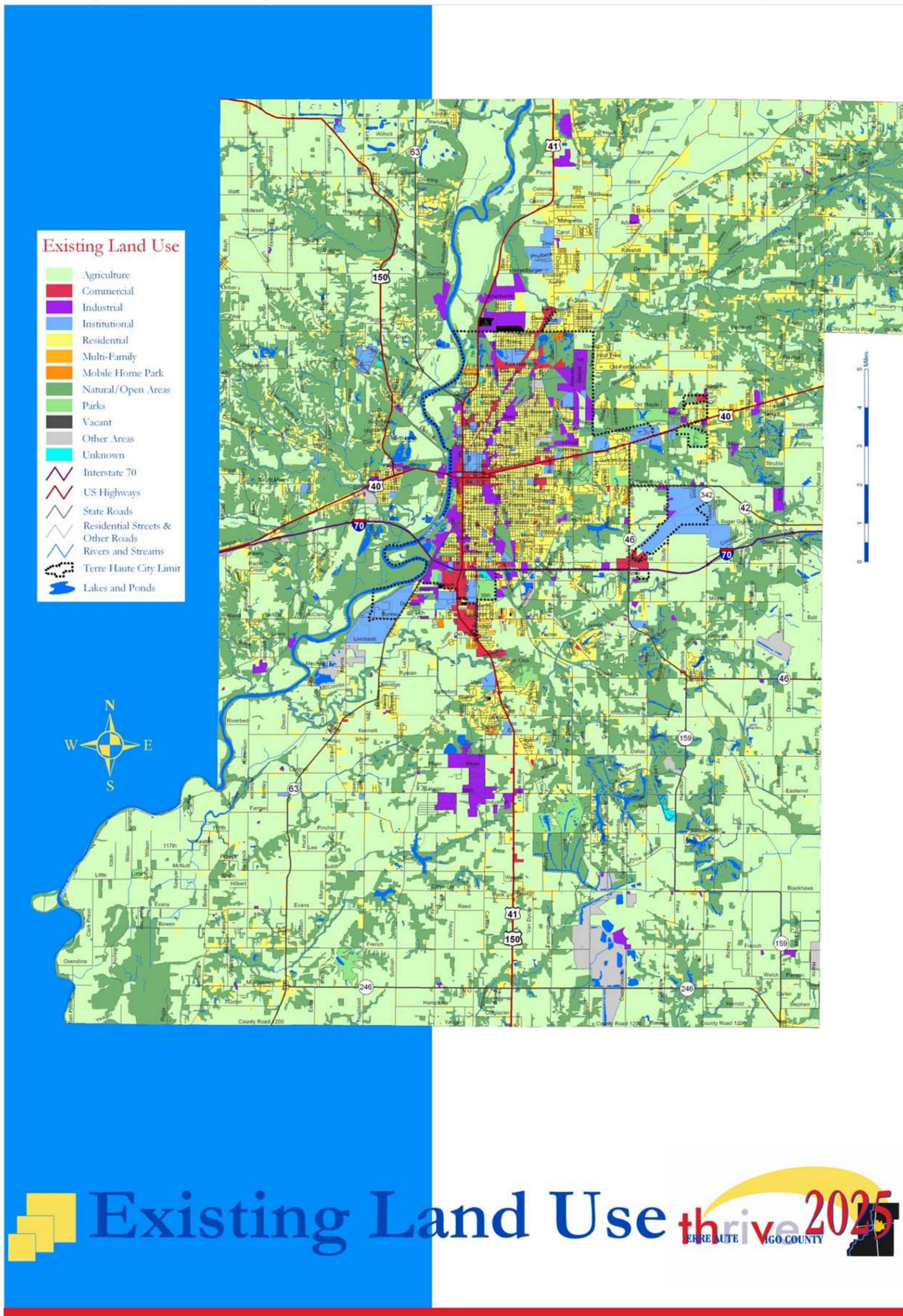
Vigo County maintains eight parks that contain approximately 1,055 acres. The county parks are large and provide more of a regional park experience. They include a variety of functions, including nature preserve and wildlife refuge.

The National Road Heritage Trail is a multi-use trail that was developed as a cooperative partnership between the City of Terre Haute, Vigo County, Indiana State University, and Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. There are trailheads with parking located at the Twigg Rest Park on US 40 and the ISU Memorial Stadium. Eight other access points without parking facilities exist along the trail. Both the West Central MPO and the Terre Haute Tomorrow initiative are working to address trail development in the county.

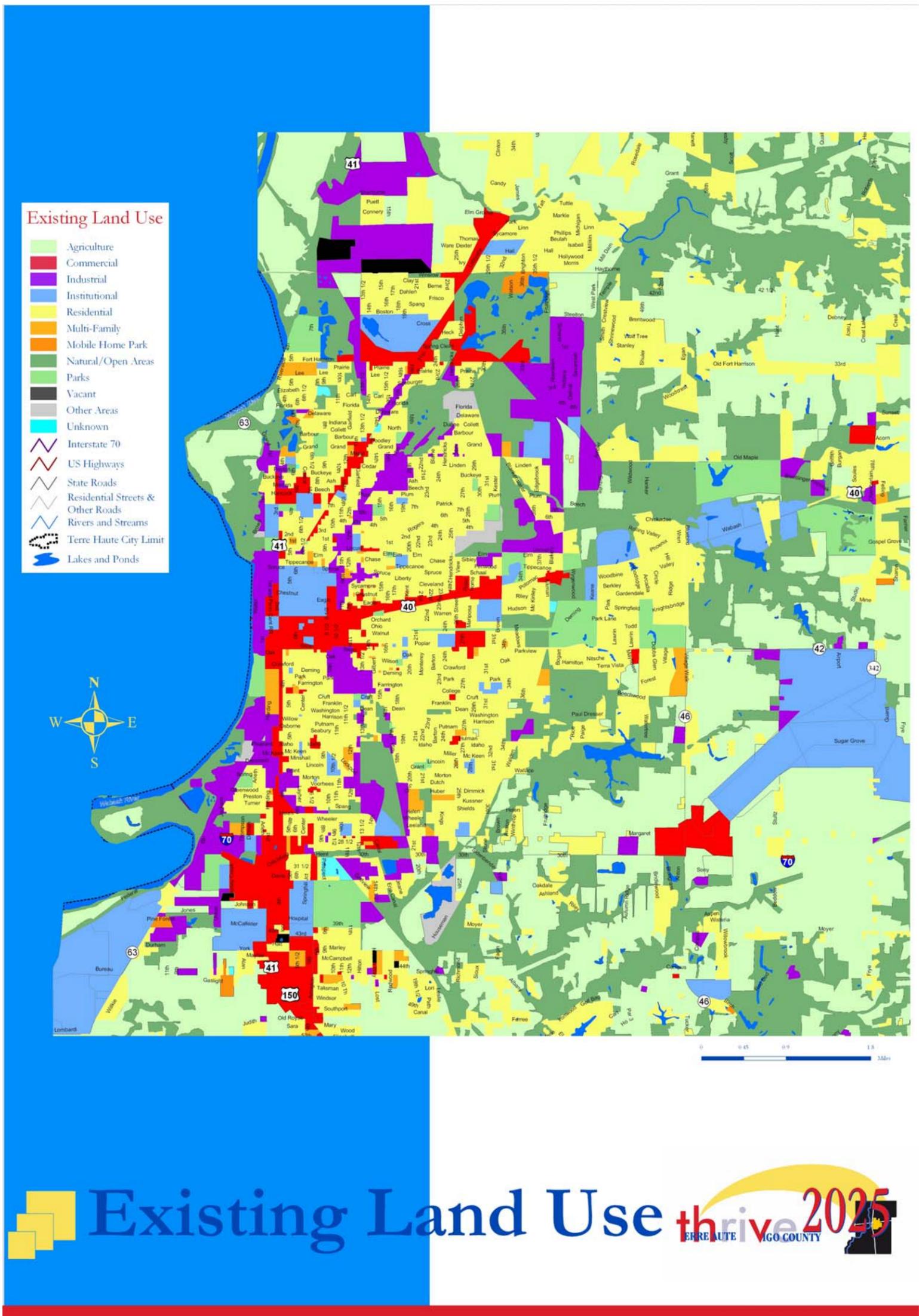
Map 1: 1984 and Current Developed Land



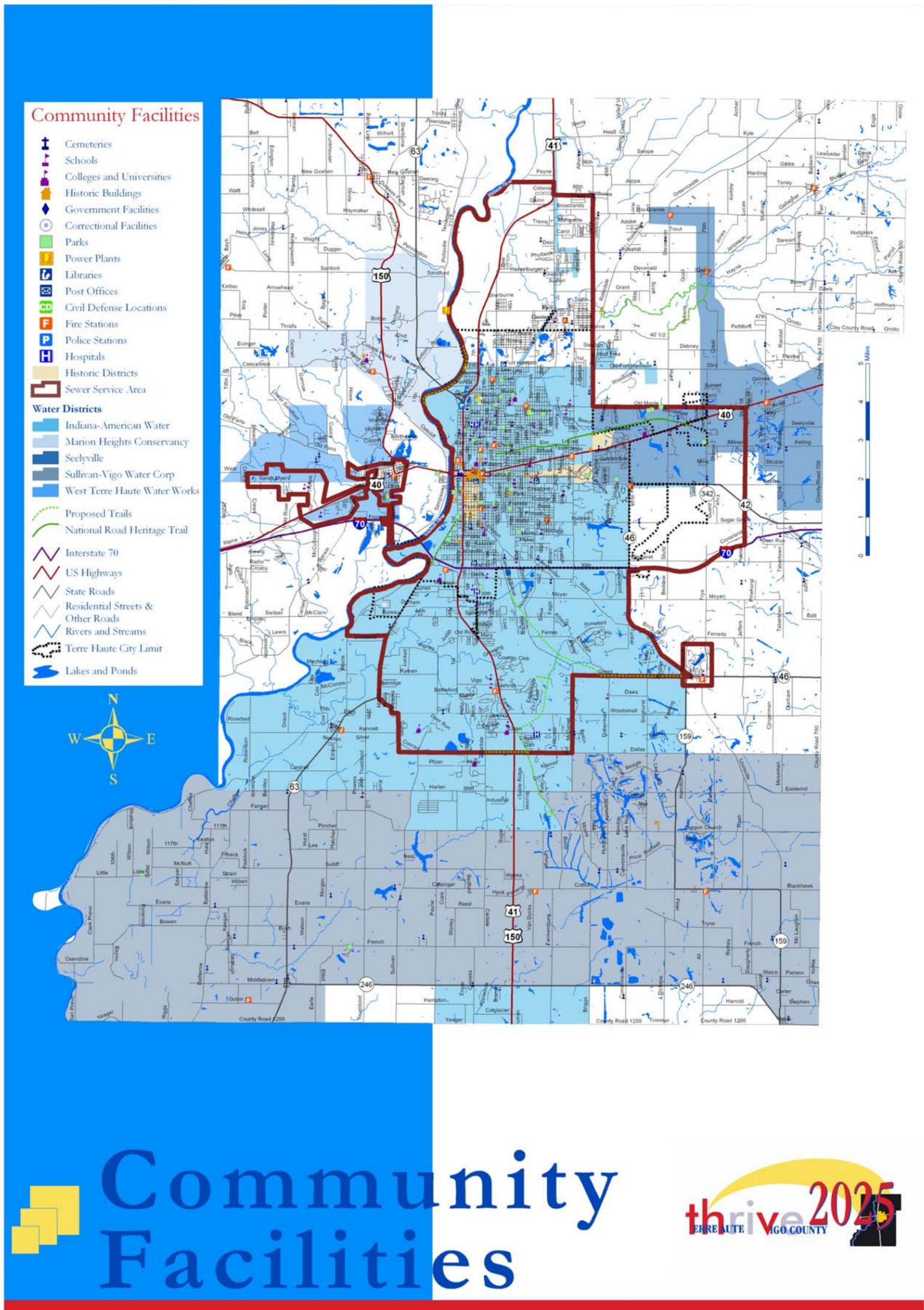
Map 2: Vigo County Existing Land Use



Map 3: Terre Haute Existing Land Use



Map 4: Community Facilities



## **Public Facilities**

### **Fire and EMS**

Fire service is provided by the City of Terre Haute and township fire departments. The fire station locations are presented on Map 4. At this time, there are proposals to close four of the existing fire stations. The stations that were closed were replaced by two new fire stations that are strategically placed for maximum effectiveness.

The location and service areas of a fire station affect insurance premiums and the cost of living or doing business. The fire stations in Vigo County ensure that virtually all urbanized areas are within a three-mile radius of a fire station.

### **Water**

There are five water utilities that provide water service in Vigo County. Indiana-American Water Company has the largest service area, covering much of the City of Terre Haute and areas south of the city.

The Sullivan-Vigo Water Corporation primarily services the southern part of the county. Seelyville supplies water to the eastern portion of Terre Haute, the Town of Seelyville and areas in between.

West of the river, the Marion Heights Water Conservancy services an area including St. Mary of the Woods College and areas north. The West Terre Haute Water Works services the area in and around West Terre Haute.

### **Wastewater**

Wastewater treatment is provided by the Terre Haute Sanitary District, in addition to facilities in West Terre Haute, Riley, and Seeleyville. (Refer to Map 4 for specific boundaries) There have been a number of issues in the community related to wastewater treatment. Some of the issues relate to the odor that has been associated with Terre Haute, others relate to the need for development to occur in areas where sewer service is available or can be efficiently extended. Members of the steering committee felt that the current existence of sewer service was not as important for residential development as the ability to affordably extend the utilities.

### **Schools**

The Vigo County School Corporation maintains 35 facilities. These facilities house 970 classrooms in addition to administrative functions. The school corporation's facilities include nearly 3,000,000 square feet of space.

Indiana State University has a downtown campus with residence halls, apartments, recreation facilities, a student union, classrooms, labs, and a computing center. Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology was founded

in 1874 and has a campus of over 200 acres. St. Mary of the Woods College is located on 65 acres in West Terre Haute. The Wabash Valley Ivy Tech State College campus was established in 1968. Ivy Tech – Wabash Valley has one regional campus and off-campus locations in venues such as hospitals and schools.

The colleges and universities are an important component of the economic development plan. They have a role in the life sciences initiative and in attracting new manufacturing and warehouse/distribution businesses. Attracting new businesses and residents was important to the public. Further, downtown development relies heavily on input and plans of Indiana State University due to the university's downtown location.

### ***Transportation***

As part of a separate activity, the long-range transportation plan is being updated to address new air quality requirements and to expand the planning horizon to the year 2030. This work is being done by Bernardin Lochmueller Associates, Inc. on behalf of the West Central Indiana Economic Development District. Coordination will occur throughout the process, however, to insure that the linkage between land use and transportation is fully considered. Ultimately, the adopted Transportation Plan will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan, as appropriate.

### **Roadways**

Based on information from the 2000 Census Tiger Line Files for Vigo County, there are currently an estimated 1,565 miles of streets and highways serving the city and the county. This includes approximately 16.4 miles of Interstate (I-70), 56.2 miles of U.S Highways (US Highways 40, 41, 150), 66.4 miles of State Highways (42, 46, 63, 159, 246, and 342), 1,411.2 miles of local, neighborhood, and rural collector roads, and 15.6 miles of other roads.

Terre Haute/Vigo County uses a functional classification system for the administration, planning and design of roadways. These classifications are defined to serve expected future land use and to provide continuity within the transportation network.

Maps 1 and 2 of Appendix A show that Vigo County and Terre Haute have five different categories for roadway classification. They are: interstate, primary arterial, secondary arterial, collector, and local streets.

During workshops and focus group meetings, the general consensus was that transportation is a topic that is very important and should be discussed. The different groups indicated that the most important aspects are: aesthetic issues for corridors, updating US 41 to alleviate

congestion, stoplight synchronization on US 41, and upgrading all curbs, gutters, and sidewalks.

The interstate interchanges serve as the major intersections in Vigo County. Managing their access and development is important to the economic vitality of the community. Members of the steering committee felt that the interstate interchanges have become the major intersections in the community and that I-70 serves as the center of the community.

### **Trails and Bicycle Facilities**

In 1999, the Vigo County Park and Recreation Department formulated a 2000-2004 Master Plan to improve the quality of life for all citizens in Vigo County. Areas emphasized in the master plan include (1) park areas and facilities, (2) program services, (3) leisure education, and (4) the preservation and protection of the environmental and natural resources.

The existing Vigo County Park system has 10 miles of trails. There are two other types of trails in the Vigo County Park system. At Hawthorn and Prairie Creek Park, the trails are compacted aggregate. At Fowler Park and the Fowler Park Wilderness Area, the trails are sod (Vigo County, 1999). The National Road Heritage Trail is an existing 5.8 mile asphalt trail in Terre Haute, from 13th street to Twig Rest Area, east of Hunt Street. Future plans to extend the trail include a 1.5 mile trail linking the Wabash River, passing through the Indiana State University campus, and a north-south trail linking North High School, Ohio Boulevard, Deming Park, and Dobbs Park. The trail, once all phases are complete, will serve as a 7.25 mile non-motorized transportation corridor, linking eastern Vigo County and the City of Terre Haute to historic Fairbanks Park, located on the Wabash River.

The public expressed a need for more sidewalks and bicycle/trail facilities in the county.

### **Public Transportation Services**

The Terre Haute City Bus System is the only fixed-route public transit carrier in Vigo County. During 2003, the service carried about 158,492 passengers, down 2.5% from the 2002 ridership figure of 161,346 passengers.

The system is owned by the City of Terre Haute. In 2003, the system operating revenue included 50 percent from Federal sources, 14 percent from the State, 28 percent local sources, and 8 percent from bus fares. The Terre Haute City Bus System only provides transit service throughout the Vigo County area.

The majority of the transit routes are oriented to the southern edge of Terre Haute, reflecting the growth of businesses and shopping centers in the area.

## **Air**

Terre Haute/Vigo County offers two airports, the Terre Haute International Airport – Hulman Field, the major facility serving the area, and Sky King, a small, privately owned field which provides general aviation services.

The Terre Haute International Airport is the dominant air facility serving Terre Haute and the County for cargo. It furnishes an important transportation link to local and international/national markets. Passenger air service is primarily provided by the Indianapolis International Airport, located in I-70 west of Indianapolis.

The 181st Fighter Wing (FW) of the Indiana Air National Guard occupies 891.88 acres of leased land on the Hulman Regional Airport Field and occupies 4 administrative, 23 industrial and 4 services buildings totaling approximately 323,335 square feet with 275 full-time personnel. Under the proposed closure list for the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process, this facility will lose employment. It is not yet clear whether there will be physical changes to the facilities as a part of the realignment.

## **Rail Transportation**

The city and county are currently served by Class I rail service via CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSX) and the rail service of the Soo Line, a Canadian Pacific Railway subsidiary. CSX handles many important commodities, such as agricultural products, metals and minerals. The CSX network includes one bulk transfer site located in Terre Haute. Grain elevators and mills within the county serve as primary customers of railroad transportation services. CSX is vital in transporting farm and farm-related commodities, such as grain and other agricultural products, and sweeteners and processed products used as raw materials for other industries.

Canadian Pacific Railway, through its Soo Line subsidiary, owns and operates approximately 94 route miles between Terre Haute and Bedford, Indiana. The Soo Line handles commodities such as agricultural products, metals and minerals, connecting to other rail service carriers for national distribution of these commodities. This line segment is connected to Chicago and Louisville by trackage rights on CSX and Norfolk Southern.

Freight movement of goods will continue to be a principal area of growth for the railroad traffic base in Terre Haute/Vigo County.

**Physical Appearance**

The physical appearance of a community can have a significant impact on how the community is perceived from the inside and outside, and how well the community is able to attract new businesses and residents as well as retain existing businesses and residents. It is also a facet of the community that cannot be quantified with secondary data.

The physical appearance of the Terre Haute and Vigo County communities has become a key issue for the comprehensive plan due to public input regarding the topic. The citizens of Vigo County and Terre Haute have expressed concerns that the overall appearance and cleanliness and pollution of the community needs to be addressed. In addition, they have raised the need for higher standards regarding landscaping and signage, and for increased code enforcement. They also expressed the need and desire for the community to develop an identity.

The steering committee was asked to complete an urban design scorecard to rate the quality of various urban design elements in the community. The results of that survey were:

Landmarks	Low to Medium
Pedestrian Orientation and Signage	Low to Medium
Building Context	Low to Medium
Treatment of Edges	Low
Open/Public Spaces	Medium to High
Strong Linkages	Medium
Gateways	Low (tied with Low to Med)
Defined Districts and Neighborhoods	Low to Medium
Parking	Low to Medium
Signage and Wayfinding	Low to Medium

Map 5: Existing and Proposed Trails

