

HOBART'S 2040 PLAN





IT'S HOBART'S TIME - 2040 PLAN

A starting point for the Hobart 2040 Plan is the development of a community-led Vision Statement. During the planning process, Hobart residents, interested stakeholders, and local leadership worked hand-in-hand to identify a unified direction for the City, supported by community aspirations and values. The vision statement provides the foundation and basis for the recommended community Themes, respective Goals, Strategies, and Actions that will guide local decision-making and the implementation of this Plan.

VISION

“In 2040, Hobart is a thriving and sustainable community that embraces its natural beauty and diverse cultural heritage. We envision a City that prioritizes equitable access to quality housing, education, park and recreation, and transportation for all residents. Our economy is robust, innovative, and inclusive, with thriving small businesses and clean technology. Hobart is advancing in environmental stewardship, with clean air and water, and healthy ecosystems supporting our community. We prioritize smart growth and development, preserving our heritage neighborhoods while creating vibrant, walkable, and mixed-use districts that offer a range of housing options and commercial amenities. Our community values inclusivity and fosters social cohesion, artistic expression, and civic engagement.”

PLAN ORGANIZATION

It's Hobart's Time 2040 Plan is supported by five community Themes, a series of Goals, targeted Strategies, and associated Actions that ensure this vision can become a reality. This effort will require active and ongoing collaboration between the City of Hobart, its residents, and local and regional partners.

- **Vision Statement** - Defines the long-term vision for the Hobart community and sets the expectation that the City is striving towards.
- **Themes** - Identifies topics of interest - similarly referred to as Community Pillars.
- **Goals** - illustrates what the City is aiming to achieve over the next 20 years. Each Theme has a respective set of Goals.
- **Strategies** - Outlines the various approaches Hobart can take to achieve a Goal.
- **Actions** - Represents tactics and initiatives to help implement Strategies.

COMMUNITY THEMES

The Hobart 2040 Comprehensive Plan focuses on five main Themes.

1



**Healthy
Neighborhoods**

2



**Responsible
Growth**

3



**Comprehensive
Mobility**

4



**Wealth of
Recreation**

5



**Quality
Lifestyles**

Each Community Theme was derived from extensive community engagement and planning analysis. A summary of the existing conditions analysis along with community input received over the course of the process are shared within each Theme chapter. Following the analysis section, Goals, Strategies, and Actions within each Theme will be outlined.



FUTURE LAND USE

Future land use is a key component of the Hobart 2040 Plan, setting up a framework that helps us manage future development and defining the character of the community over the next 20 years. The future land use strategy supports goals and strategies outlined in the five community Themes of this Plan, including defining future opportunities for housing, commercial areas, and conservation areas.

What is the Strategy?

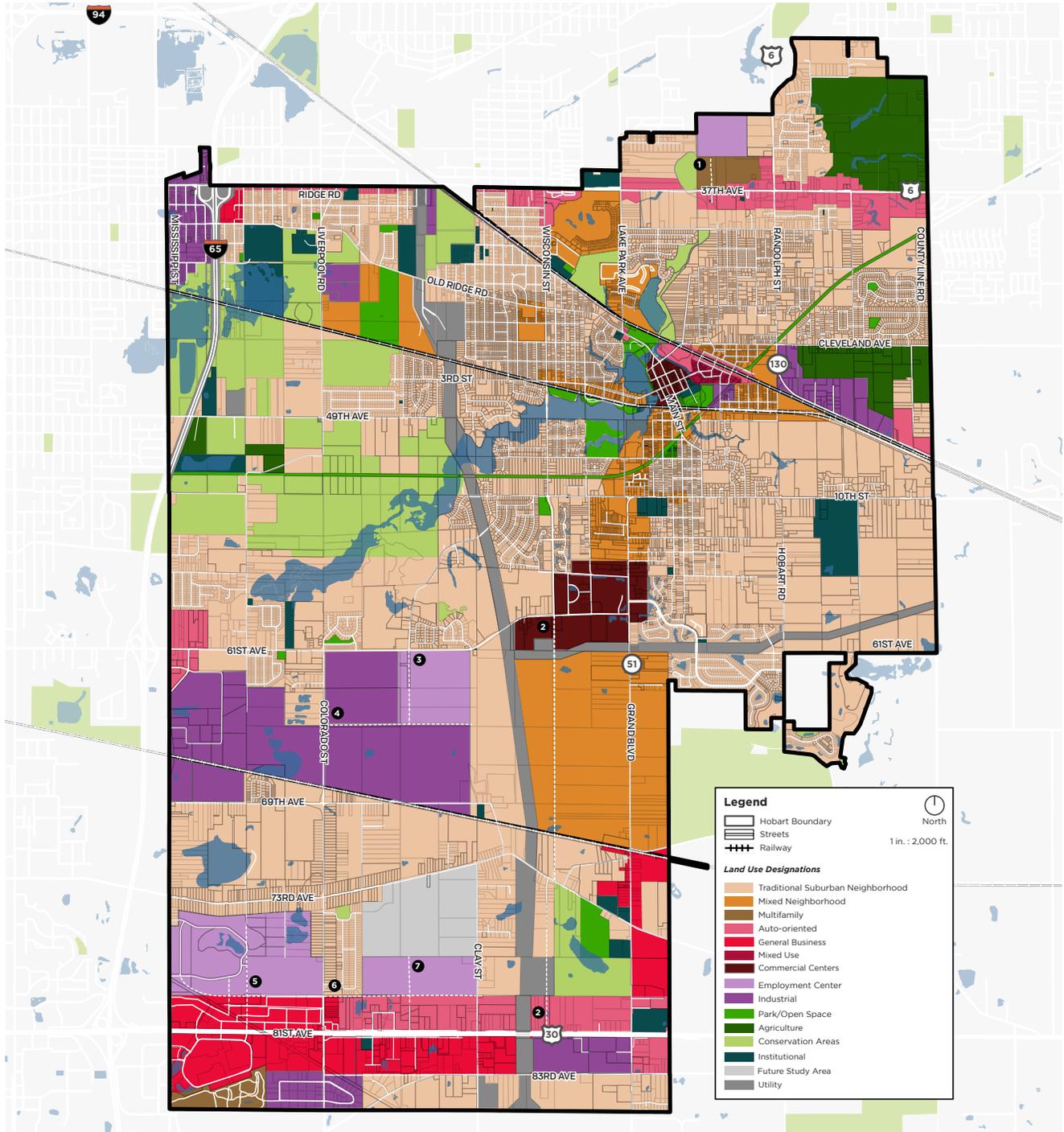
Similar to other suburban cities, land use changes over the years have been primarily responsive in their nature, influenced by roadway and infrastructure improvements, market demands for residential subdivisions, convenience stores, terrain changes, wetlands and natural resources, as well as open space. Hobart's current land use is limited to traditional categories, including residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, and parks, among others. This approach lacks flexibility and can often imply that such uses are mutually exclusive, which is further emphasized by zoning regulations. In reality, Hobart has a rich mix of uses near one another, resulting in the natural formation of many of Hobart's livable neighborhoods. The proposed future land use strategy aims to define future development through a variety of character-based land uses and districts that embrace a variety of already vested uses, such as residential, commercial, and institutional, among others. This approach emphasizes the City's strongest assets, such as Lake George, the downtown area, the medical campus, and key corridors including Highway 30 and Ridge Road, ensuring quality livable neighborhoods and overall quality of life.

More than 25% of Hobart is currently undeveloped, a large amount of which is ripe for future investment as opportunities arise. The future land use strategy sets forth expectations for the development community, while allowing for much needed flexibility. The proposed future land use is primarily derived from the existing mix of uses in Hobart, retaining quality neighborhood characteristics and amplifying nodes of activity throughout the City. This approach focuses on integrating a variety of land uses with appropriate transitions between the different character areas. This strategy sets the stage for thriving neighborhoods that address housing needs and amplify social bonds, and provides areas for active and passive recreation. This strategy also provides the community and City leadership with tools and policies for maintaining and enhancing Hobart's best qualities.

The next few pages outline the new land use categories proposed by the future land use strategy. While the majority of land uses have been retained or expanded on, the office and vacant uses have been absorbed. Aside from recent market trends which indicate that physical office spaces are no longer a focus for major employers, relying heavily on a single use, such as office, can make Hobart vulnerable to economic downturns. Alternatively, promoting mixed-use developments with office as one of many uses is emphasized in this strategy.

Zoning regulations, which define and regulate the types of uses allowed within Hobart, will be influenced by the proposed future land use strategy. Proposed zoning changes, including amendments to the development regulations within certain zoning districts, should be further examined by City leadership.

Fig 11: Future Land Use



Street Extensions or Additions

- ❶ Colonial Drive Extension
 - ❷ Wisconsin Street Extension
 - ❸ Arizona Street Extension
- ❹ 65th Avenue (Proposed)
 - ❺ Iowa Street Extension
 - ❻ 78th Avenue (Proposed)
- ❼ Underwood Drive Extension

RESIDENTIAL USES

Planning for an inviting pedestrian-scaled City with compact development patterns supports aspirations put forth by members of the public and is reflected in the various goals of this Comprehensive Plan. Maintaining and enhancing Hobart's small-town character, while addressing current and future housing needs is essential. This can be achieved by increasing the variety of housing types in the community and revisiting the land use mix in areas typically recognized as exclusively residential or commercial. Diversifying Hobart's housing inventory to include variety of lot-sized single-family homes, townhomes, multi-family developments, and other types of dwellings near active commercial nodes can be addressed through physical land planning. Integrating housing into other land use districts will also promote livability in Hobart. The future land use strategy introduces a Mixed Neighborhood Land Use, which identifies residential uses as the primary use, yet allows for neighborhood-serving secondary uses that can foster an active sense of place.

Traditional Suburban Residential

Hobart's single-family homes, situated to the northeast and central areas of the City, currently comprise 72% of the housing inventory. A variety of architectural styles, including Neoclassical, Ranch, and Colonial Revival, define the traditional suburban character of Hobart's single-family homes. This land use designation is a single use, characterized by medium to large detached single-family residential lots (lot maximums of 12,000 SF), yet allowing neighborhood-serving uses such as institutional and open space uses. The future land use strategy envisions single-family homes to continue defining the majority of Hobart's residential character yet supplemented by other residential uses listed below. The "Traditional Suburban Residential" land use designation emphasizes the need to preserve the character-defining housing stock in Hobart, with future infill housing needing to be compatible with the existing low-density neighborhoods.



Mixed Neighborhood Residential

The Mixed Neighborhood Residential areas are defined by low-to medium-density neighborhoods with a mix of compatible uses. Such denser neighborhoods, characterized by smaller lot single-family homes, attached housing, and two- to three-flat multifamily buildings, are transitional areas that buffer higher intensity uses such as multifamily, commercial, and light industrial uses from the traditional suburban residential character. While primarily a residential use, these areas allow for a variety of other neighborhood serving uses promoting livability and fostering social interaction. This future land use designation was established to retain and further emphasize Hobart's naturally occurring mixed neighborhood areas, where a healthy mix of uses often suffuse predominantly traditional single-family residential areas.



Multi-family

The Multi-family Neighborhood designation applies to areas where higher-density residential uses, such as apartments, condominiums, and multi-family buildings are suitable. The future land use strategy envisions infill multi-family residential areas to grow in the Ross Township area, as well as in the northern portion of Hobart, south of 37th street, where larger developments are more appropriate. Proximity and access to major collector streets, such as Colorado Street, would support Hobart in becoming even more pedestrian friendly. This projected increase in multi-family development supports aging in place, offers adequate housing for a variety of household compositions, and promotes sustainable growth patterns that typically attract younger families. Bulk and mass may vary within this future land use category, ranging from townhomes and rowhomes to context-sensitive multi-family buildings.



	FUTURE LAND USE	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	ZONING CORRELATION
RESIDENTIAL	 TRADITIONAL SUBURBAN	<i>Detached Single-Family</i>	<i>Institutional Pocket Parks</i>	<i>R1, R2, PUD</i>
	 MIXED NEIGHBORHOOD	<i>Detached Single-Family Attached Single-Family Townhomes / Multi-Family</i>	<i>Commercial Institutional / Office Pocket Parks</i>	<i>R-1, R-2, R-3, PUD, O/S-1, B-1</i>
	 MULTI-FAMILY	<i>Townhomes / Multi-Family Senior Housing / Assisted</i>	<i>Commercial Institutional / Office Pocket Parks</i>	<i>R-4, PUD</i>



 Single Family Home in Hobart

COMMERCIAL USES

Commercial land uses in Hobart have developed along several key corridors, such as Route 30, Ridge Road, and south Mississippi Street. While these concentrations of commercial uses can generate momentum for growth and economic activity, they can lead to a saturation in commercial areas and draw interest away from other key areas in the City, including the Downtown. Future land use planning can help reconcentrate commercial land uses in these corridors, while facilitating healthy growth and activity in other areas of the community. The future land use strategy introduces a multi-layered commercial land use approach, allowing higher concentrations of commercial uses in pedestrian-oriented areas.

Smaller areas of commercial land uses are dispersed throughout the community in the form of commercial nodes, particularly where primary transportation routes intersect, such as Old Ridge Road and Wisconsin Street. Such nodes represent opportunities to establish more commercial and multifamily land uses, increasing the economic vibrancy in various parts of Hobart. Commercial land uses around the medical campus and in the Downtown represent central nodes and should be distinguished from outer commercial nodes along Ridge Rd. and 61st St., further away from the “Heart” of Hobart. Commercial land use intensity, density, form, and character, among other factors can help physically differentiate between the various commercial nodes in Hobart.

Auto-oriented Commercial

Situated along Route 30 to the south and 37th Avenue and Ridge Road to the north, Auto-oriented Commercial uses are intended to provide for establishments that primarily accommodate motorists and are intended to meet local and regional needs. The physical environment, characterized by large parcels, deep building setbacks, and substantial building footprints, plays a major role in defining this commercial future land use designation. National franchises, gas stations, auto repair, and strip mall areas existing in Hobart today often feature one- to two-story commercial buildings with drive-thrus. The single-use character of the areas has the potential to be retrofitted to more compact and pedestrian-serving commercial areas.



General Business

General Business commercial uses are located along major arterial and collector streets and are characterized by medium-intensity (1- to 2-story) commercial buildings with a tight street fabric and reduced setbacks. This land use category, while still considered a single use, is typically accessed by vehicles. However, its character is more approachable at the pedestrian scale than the Auto-oriented Commercial land use designation. It caters to a variety of users including pedestrians, promoting a more urban character. Located adjacent to Auto-oriented commercial uses, the General Business commercial land use category envisions a potential for more continuous and compact street character.



Mixed-use Development

The Mixed-use Development designation, while primarily commercial, envisions residential development on upper stories as a secondary use. Mixed-use developments encourage an increase in residential housing units that can support thriving commercial areas. South of the medical campus along Grand Boulevard, Mixed-use buildings can also be incorporated into new development, promoting smart growth areas with greater densities and activated commercial storefronts. In comparison to the Mixed Neighborhood use, this land use promotes a higher intensity of retail, service, office, and other compatible commercial uses. Large parcels (50 acres +) designated as Mixed-use can be predominantly light industrial, if they are commercial or office facing and aim to bring more pedestrian activity to the neighborhood. Overall, mixed-use developments aim to largely serve Hobart residents, increasing economic opportunities, household diversity, and overall enhancing community character.



Commercial Core

The Commercial Core use is intended to achieve a cohesive mix of high-intensity commercial and high-density residential areas, integrated with character-defining uses, such as entertainment and other special uses. The medical district has the opportunity to expand into a commercial core, adopting a town center character with a healthy mix of uses. Commercial Core areas can be framed by architecture and landscape design appropriate to local history and ecology. Such areas can be potentially funded through Tax Increment Financing or other business-related funding tools. This catalytic land use promotes planning principles like walkability and place-making that create a destination for residents, visitors, workers, and employers, as well as foster an attractive live-work environment.



	LAND USE	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	ZONING CORRELATION
COMMERCIAL	SS AUTO-ORIENTED	<i>Commercial</i> ex. Franchises / Auto Repair	<i>Large-scale Office</i> <i>Institutional</i> <i>Undeveloped</i>	<i>B-3, PUD</i>
	SS GENERAL BUSINESS	<i>Commercial</i> ex. Bank / Medical / Super Market	<i>Large-scale Office</i> <i>Institutional</i> <i>Undeveloped</i>	<i>O/S-1, O/S-2, B-1, PUD</i>
	SS MIXED-USE	<i>Commercial</i> ex. Small-scale retail / Coffee shop	<i>Multi-Family Residential</i> <i>Institutional / Office</i> <i>Pocket Parks</i>	<i>PUD (until new form-based or mixed-use district(s) are created)</i>
	SS COMMERCIAL CENTER	<i>Commercial</i> Specialty stores / Integrated District	<i>Multi-Family Residential</i> <i>Institutional / Office</i> <i>Pocket Parks</i>	<i>B-2, PUD (until new form-based or mixed-use district(s) are created)</i>

INDUSTRIAL USES

Industrial and light industrial land uses are an essential part of the land use mix in Hobart, representing approximately 3% of the total land acreage. Self-storage facilities, manufacturing, warehousing, and other uses are supported by a strong regional road network connected to the interstate highway system. Because of Hobart's strategic location and land available for development, current land use policies envision large parcels as being used for industrial purposes. Concentrating industrial land uses in key opportunity sites will support prosperity of such uses in specific pockets of the community that have access to the regional transportation network.

Employment Center

Employment Center areas encourage development that is largely compatible with adjacent residential and other less intensive land uses, supporting high technology and service-based activities. Inherently compatible with residential uses, this land use does not allow manufacturing, contrary to the industrial land use. Incubator spaces, storage facilities, start-up facilities, research businesses, assembly, and communication facilities, among other uses are supported within such areas. This land use increases resiliency in the local economy by allowing Hobart the opportunity to respond to market trends and support the northwest Indiana region with flexible and affordable spaces for a variety of business enterprises. For parcels of five acres or less, mixed-use, multi-family residential, and commercial and retail uses can be permitted by City Council.



Industrial Use

The Industrial land use has been reserved as part of the future land use strategy to retain and attract higher-intensity industrial uses where appropriate in the City. Hobart's current distribution of land uses, and various highway access points allows for manufacturing and other high industry uses to exist with appropriate distancing from neighborhoods and other active areas. Industrial uses can have a harsh impact on surrounding neighborhoods. While Hobart may regulate the types of uses that are permitted in such areas, it is more meaningful to focus on the externalities that need to be contained and the different measures required to mitigate negative impacts. Effective measures include incorporating appropriate setbacks, buffers, screening, and traffic controls. Existing industrial uses in Hobart include equipment suppliers, cable manufacture and management, and Albanese Candy warehouse, among other uses.



	FUTURE LAND USE	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	ZONING CORRELATION
INDUSTRIAL	 EMPLOYMENT CENTER	Warehouse, distribution, research and development, business parks, offices, and indoor, low-impact industry. Multi-unit residential may serve as transition to lower intensity neighborhood areas.		PBP, M-1, PUD
	 INDUSTRIAL	Manufacturing	Light Industrial	PBP, M-1, M-2, PUD

BUFFERING EMPLOYMENT CENTER & INDUSTRIAL USES

Light industrial uses are on the rise due to the growing demand for clean tech and logistics facilities. With the increasing emphasis on sustainability and renewable energy, there is a greater need for facilities that produce and distribute clean technologies. Similarly, with the rise of e-commerce and online shopping, there is a greater demand for logistics facilities such as warehouses and distribution centers. These facilities also fall under the category of light industrial uses and require specialized equipment and processes to handle and transport goods efficiently.

However, the proximity of residential areas to industrial sites can cause issues for both the residents and the industries. It is important to buffer light industrial and heavy industrial uses away from adjacent uses, particularly residential uses. Emphasizing the health and well-being of community residents, as well as being cognizant of heavy vehicle traffic impacts of proposed developments will be key moving forward.

To address these issues, Hobart leadership needs to consider the importance of buffering industrial uses from residential uses. This can be achieved through zoning regulations that require the use of clear visual and physical barriers such as green spaces or soundproofing materials. Fronting industrial uses with commercial or office spaces can be an effective way to maintain a street fabric and enhance the aesthetic appeal of industrial areas. Traffic controls can also address these issues, and Hobart should consider prohibiting truck traffic on Colorado Avenue north of US 30.

DID YOU KNOW?

AmeriPlex, Merrillville

AmeriPlex in Merrillville demonstrates how to achieve a healthy mix of uses while buffering industrial areas from adjacent uses. By creating a physical barrier and carefully siting the different uses, cities can create a more sustainable and vibrant urban environment that benefits both businesses and residents. The industrial area is located at the back of the development, buffered from the other uses by a greenbelt and a drainage ditch. The commercial and office uses are situated along the front of the development, facing the main road. This creates a more inviting and pedestrian-friendly environment that helps to break up the visual monotony of the large industrial buildings. The residential areas are located nearby, but are buffered from the industrial uses



PARK & RECREATION

Hobart offers a variety of park and recreation land including sites managed by the Park Department, natural areas, and agricultural land. The latter two categories are currently categorized under a generic land use "Agriculture / Undeveloped". The future land use strategy aims to distinguish between these different character areas to better serve the Hobart community and ensure the proper use of land is projected for the community's future. The end result are three park and recreation land use categories and an additional land use defined as "Future Study Areas (FSAs)" that will require additional analysis and visioning effort.

Parks

The parks and open space land use category identifies parks that are managed by the Hobart Park Department, ranging from small-scale tot lots tucked behind residential subdivisions to large-scale community parks. Athletic fields, playgrounds, trails, sports courts, and the Hobart Community Center, among other open spaces, are included in this designation. To better distinguish between City-managed open space that provide primarily active recreation and other natural areas managed by local and regional providers, another land use category "Conservation Areas" is proposed in the future land use strategy. Below is a description of the Conservation Areas Land Use.



Conservation Areas

Conservation areas in Hobart are owned and managed by public and quasi-public organizations that strive to preserve and restore habitats and ecosystems in the region. Such entities include the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, the Shirley Heinze Land Trust, and the US National Park Service, among other providers. Hobart's natural areas include wetlands, waterbodies, natural habitats, nature preserves, and forested land. This land use category prohibits any use that impairs the natural environment or disturbs the natural ecosystem of such areas. Conservation areas also prohibit uses that conflict with applicable water management and wildlife protection policies of local, state, and federal agencies.



* *The City of Hobart should revisit the recommendations of The Hobart Conservation Zoning + Sub-Area Plan. Natural Resource Conservation District (NRC) is a proposed new zoning district, which applies to existing and future managed conservation lands.*

Agriculture

The Agricultural land use is intended to protect existing viable farmland and promote Hobart as an active farming community that encourages maintenance and improvement of its agricultural lands. Such existing uses, situated along County Line Road alongside the eastern boundary of Hobart, include County Line Orchard, Johnson’s Farm, and Remus Farm. This land use designation allows the City to continue venturing into Agritourism, a growing sustainable field that has the potential to diversify and contribute to the local economy. This unique form of commercial enterprise is in line with regional market trends that focus on responsibly programming natural areas.



	FUTURE LAND USE	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	ZONING CORRELATION
OPEN SPACE	 PARKS	<i>Parks & Recreation Sites Athletic Fields Playgrounds</i>		<i>Consistent with surrounding zoning (until new public/institutional district(s) are created)</i>
	 AGRICULTURE AGRITOURISM	<i>Agriculture / Farming Commercial / Agritourism</i>		A-1
	 CONSERVATION AREAS	<i>Natural Areas</i> ex. Wetlands, Lakes, Floodplains, etc.		NRC *

Future Study Areas (FSAs)

The future land use strategy identifies certain areas as Future Study Areas (FSAs), highlighted in light grey. These sites will require in-depth research, analysis, and planning to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities. Hobart should take a leading role in planning these areas considering adjacent land uses, transportation, economic development, and environmental sustainability, among other factors. The City’s participation in planning these areas, including gathering data and input from stakeholders, as well as developing conceptual site plans, can help solidify a community-led vision and ensure desired outcomes. The City’s active role in envisioning future uses on Future Study Areas can guide investment decisions and align efforts with community needs. Such areas include large parcels west of Clay Street and south of 73rd Street, as well as areas within the northwest region of Hobart.

FSAs	FUTURE STUDY AREAS	Areas requiring further research, analysis, and planning to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities.	R-2, B-3, NRC *
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OPPORTUNITY SITES

During the Hobart 2040 Plan process, City leadership identified three opportunity sites as having the potential for development or redevelopment. All three sites are currently vacant and some are often targeted for revitalization and potential economic development. Preliminary site plans are created for these sites to help the Hobart community visualize potential development scenarios or outcomes for the sites.

The designs help to illustrate future land use, scale, and site layout that is in-line with the overall community vision. The Opportunity Site visualizations help shape and manage community development in the future. Site 1 will require additional analysis before a design concept can be proposed.

Fig 12: Opportunity Sites in Hobart



37th Ave and Colonial Dr

Located near Strack & Van Til and wetlands, this site has potential for light industrial, commercial, and higher density senior housing.

2

61st Ave and Wisconsin St
 Located near St. Mary Medical Center, this site has the potential to become a mixed-use commercial and residential hub that serves hospital visitors and staff, as well as surrounding neighborhoods.



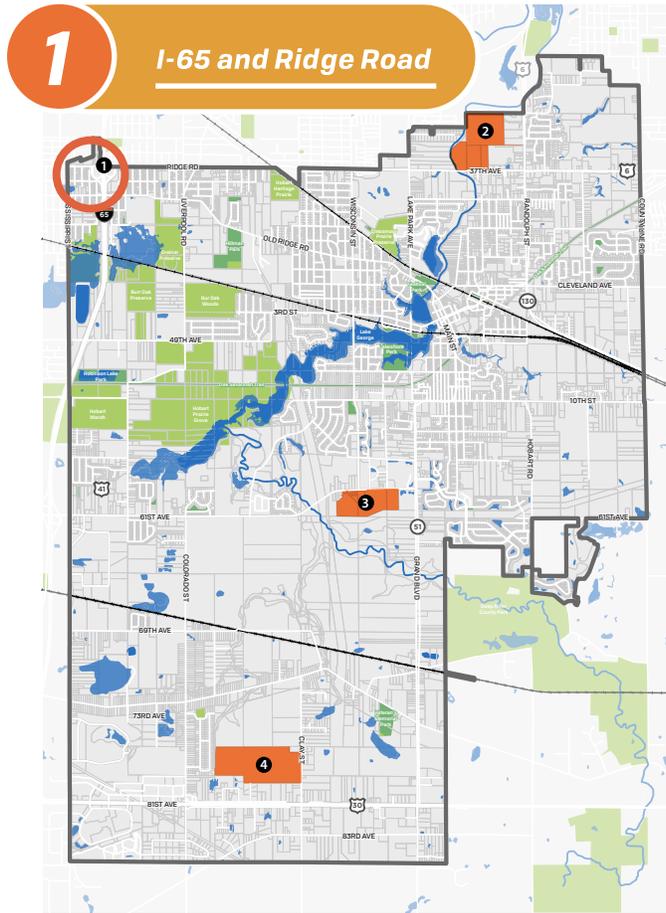
3



4

Former Drag Strip

Located near the Lincoln Highway commercial area, this site has the potential to become an Employment Center that includes light industrial, office space, and other unique uses, such as incubator space.



1 I-65 and Ridge Rd

ABOUT THIS SITE

There are several developable sites surrounding the I-65 interchange on Ridge Road, located to the southwest of the interchange. Due to their prime location on the Hobart boundary and their highway accessibility, these sites have high redevelopment potential and should be considered for industrial uses. Before development activity occurs, Hobart must ensure that the area has adequate utilities to serve future uses. The primary development challenge will be consolidating sites, which currently have different owners.



2 37th Ave and Colonial Dr

ABOUT THIS SITE

This site is owned by the Hobart Sanitary District and located in close proximity to a key commercial area and natural wetlands. The site has the potential to be developed as light industrial, commercial, or higher density senior housing. A full site concept can be completed once nearby uses are assessed.

NOISE ASSESSMENT

A nearby Hobart Police Department shooting range may pose a challenge to any residential development on this property. Though there is minimal safety risk, excess noise has the potential to impact the surrounding area. A noise assessment can be conducted to determine whether the range will affect future development.

CONSERVATION ZONING STANDARDS

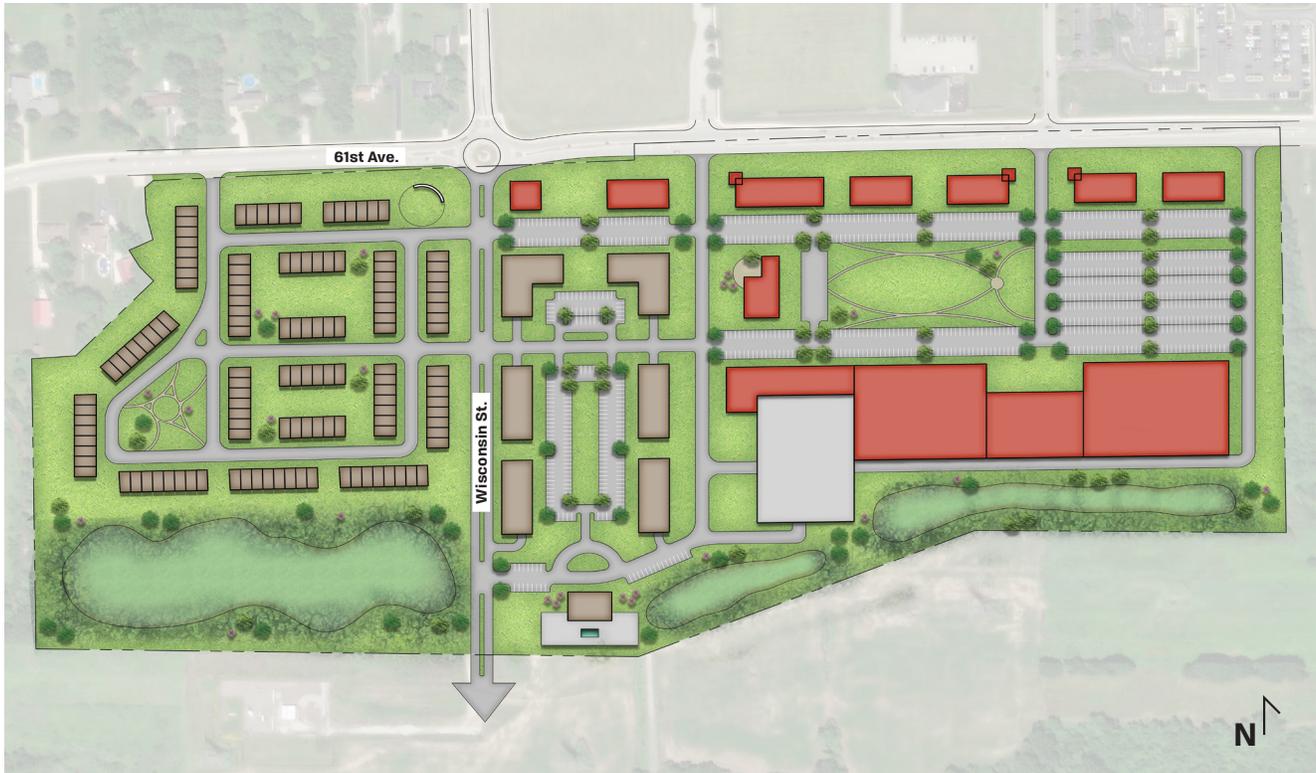
In order to reduce the adverse impacts of land uses on this site, future concepts should include ample buffering to protect the river and wetlands that border the site.

STREET CONSTRUCTION & EXTENSIONS

The extension of North Colonial Drive (N/S) and the service road (E/W) to the north of the Strack & Van Til shopping center will help with accessibility on this site. Any future development should consider these street extensions in their plans.



3 61st Ave and Wisconsin St



ABOUT THIS CONCEPT

This site is located near the St. Mary Medical Center and is the ideal location for a mixed-use hub that provides amenities for surrounding residents, hospital visitors, and hospital staff. The concept includes multiple commercial spaces and higher density housing that is well-suited for seniors, hospital workers, and other potential residents. It also includes a central gathering space, which lends to a community feel.

MIXED USES

Commercial/entertainment spaces, residential buildings, and green space are in close proximity to one another in this concept. This helps to create an authentic neighborhood environment, while also providing amenities for the broader community.

STREET CONSTRUCTION & EXTENSIONS

This concept includes the extension of Wisconsin Street and additional roads that connect back to the Hobart street network.



4 Former Drag Strip



ABOUT THIS CONCEPT

This site is primed for light industrial and office uses given its location near key regional routes. The Employment Center land use designation would allow for light industrial uses, such as incubator spaces, small distribution centers, and offices.

CONSERVATION ZONING STANDARDS

In order to reduce the adverse impacts of land uses on this site, this concept includes ample buffering to protect surrounding neighborhoods and the natural environment.

STREET CONSTRUCTION & EXTENTIONS

This concept includes the construction of 78th Avenue (E/W) and the extension of Underwood Drive (N/S).

