



**NEWALLEN  
ALLIANCE**

ALLEN COUNTY, INDIANA

Strategic Investment Plan

**LEO-CEDARVILLE  
INDIANA**

2016

# STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN for LEO-CEDARVILLE, INDIANA

2016

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Allen County Commissioners  
Allen County Council  
Allen County Department of Planning Services (DPS)  
Greater Fort Wayne, Inc. (GFW)  
NewAllen Alliance  
Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRCC)  
Town of Leo-Cedarville

### Prepared By

Sturtz Public Management Group, LLC



## PLAN OVERVIEW

The purpose of the *NewAllen Alliance Strategic Investment Plan* (SIP) is to develop a collaborative strategy toward retaining and attracting high-quality jobs to the participating NewAllen Alliance communities of East Allen County, Indiana, including: Harlan, Hoagland, Grabill, Leo-Cedarville, Monroeville, New Haven, and Woodburn. This has been accomplished through the following efforts:

1. Providing a roadmap for the communities to use toward creating an environment for future economic development to occur;
2. Guiding the alignment of the investment of time, talent, and treasure toward common goals for the communities; and
3. Building the capacity for engagement between the communities and organizations that provide community and economic development services within Allen County.

As a product of this initiative, each community will receive a sub-plan such as this tailored to their specific needs and desires. In addition, the overarching investment plan will provide recommendations and resources to aid in the overall collaborative strategy. With the assistance of Sturtz Public Management Group (SturtzPMG), the *Leo-Cedarville Strategic Investment Plan* (Plan) was spearheaded by the Leo-Cedarville Community Planning Oversight Committee (CPOC), comprised of members of the Leo-Cedarville community, with support from the NewAllen Planning Oversight Committee (NewAllen POC), consisting of regional stakeholder representatives and the CPOC.

In late November 2015, a “kick-off” event was held for presenting an overview of the project and the expected outcomes. Between December 2015 and March 2016, SturtzPMG met and regularly communicated with the CPOC, collected background information, performed stakeholder interviews, and distributed service provider questionnaires. Area demographic, housing, and economic data was also collected to provide additional context to the strategic planning document.

Subsequent meetings were held with the NewAllen POC and CPOC to provide feedback on the information collected, and to discuss the goals and strategies that were later developed into a recommended plan of action. The Plan was then finalized and approved for the NewAllen Alliance and the participating communities to use as a tool for the implementation of strategies toward continued economic development and an improved quality of life. The plan was presented to the Leo-Cedarville Town Council on August 11, 2016 and approved by resolution.

## COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

### History of Community

Leo-Cedarville, Indiana, located in north central Cedar Creek Township in Allen County, originated as two separate towns that formed early in the history of the township settlement. In 1838, William G. Ewing platted Cedarville as the first Cedar Creek Township town. The plat included land for a public square, and another portion on the east side of Main Street and bordered by the St. Joseph River, to be reserved as a landing area for boats. By 1860, town businesses included two general stores, two shoemakers, three blacksmiths, a shingle mill, a sawmill, a grist mill, and a wagon maker. Much like any other town, various businesses came and went throughout the town's history.

After World War II, Cedarville's public square was transformed into a more park-like venue incorporating an open-air shelter, baseball diamond, and playground equipment. In 1956, the Cedarville Dam was constructed across the St. Joseph River. Spanning 135 feet across and thirty feet high, the dam formed the Cedarville Reservoir and a 500 million-gallon water reserve for the City of Fort Wayne.

Leo, first known as Hamilton, was platted in 1849, and came to be important for its bridge across the St. Joseph River connecting Leo and Grabill which allowed pioneers to conduct business in both towns. The original section of Hamilton, north of Leo-Grabill Road, had a dry goods store, blacksmith forge, cider mill, hotel, hardware store, grocery, butcher shop, and ice house. In 1856, the congregation of St. Bonifacius Catholic Church built a church in the village, later changing its name to St. Leo's. The town became closely identified with the church, becoming informally known as "Leo," and then reincorporated under the name. The town grew, new businesses were formed, and the village prospered. In 1950, Apple Acres, Leo's first subdivision, was developed, and about this same time, a new business district developed south of the intersection of Grabill Road and State Road 1.

In 1995, fueled by a rapid rise in growth, the threat of annexation by the City of Fort Wayne, and a desire to have local control over governmental issues, the towns of Leo and Cedarville applied for joint incorporation, and became known as the Town of Leo-Cedarville in 1996. The town citizens then established a Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals, and in 1998, adopted a Comprehensive Plan. The incorporation brought many physical improvements including road enhancements, water line extensions, new town entrance signs, and new sidewalks.<sup>1</sup> Significant residential growth occurred from 2000 to 2010, with the town's population rising from 2,782 to 3,603, a 29.5% increase, although the 2008 economic downturn and sewer capacity restrictions have caused limitations. Leo-Cedarville continues to balance retaining its small, rural identity and high-quality schools that enhance the community as a desirable and convenient place to live with encroachment by larger developments such as the nearby Parkview Regional Medical Center.



*LEO-CEDARVILLE, INDIANA is located in the northeastern corner of the state, a region with a population of nearly 700,000 that is within a two-to-three hour drive from major Midwest cities such as Chicago, Detroit, and Indianapolis. Situated along State Road 1 in northeast Allen County, it is approximately three miles northeast of Fort Wayne, Indiana's second-largest city.*



*Early Leo Street Scene*

*Source: Country Folks: A History of the Grabill-Leo-Cedarville Area by John Larsen and Mark Souder*

<sup>1</sup>Lou Anne Gerdau, "Cedar Creek Township Including Leo & Cedarville," in *History of Fort Wayne & Allen County: 1700 to 2005*, ed. John D. Beatty (Evansville, IN: M.T. Publishing Company, Inc., 2006), 465-470.



Leo-Cedarville Town Hall

## Community Leadership

Leo-Cedarville is an incorporated town led by a Clerk-Treasurer, five-member Town Council, and Town Manager. This administration team is supported by the Stormwater Utility, Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Park Board. Fire and EMS service for Leo-Cedarville is provided by the Northeast Allen County Fire and EMS, and police protection is contracted through the Allen County Sheriff's Department.

Community efforts are supported by the Leo-Cedarville Chamber of Commerce, a business league whose purpose is to promote economic development for the benefit of Leo-Cedarville, although it has been dormant as of late. The Leo-Cedarville Foundation, formed in 2012, is a 501c3 non-profit entity that serves as a vehicle for receiving contributions made for funding local projects.

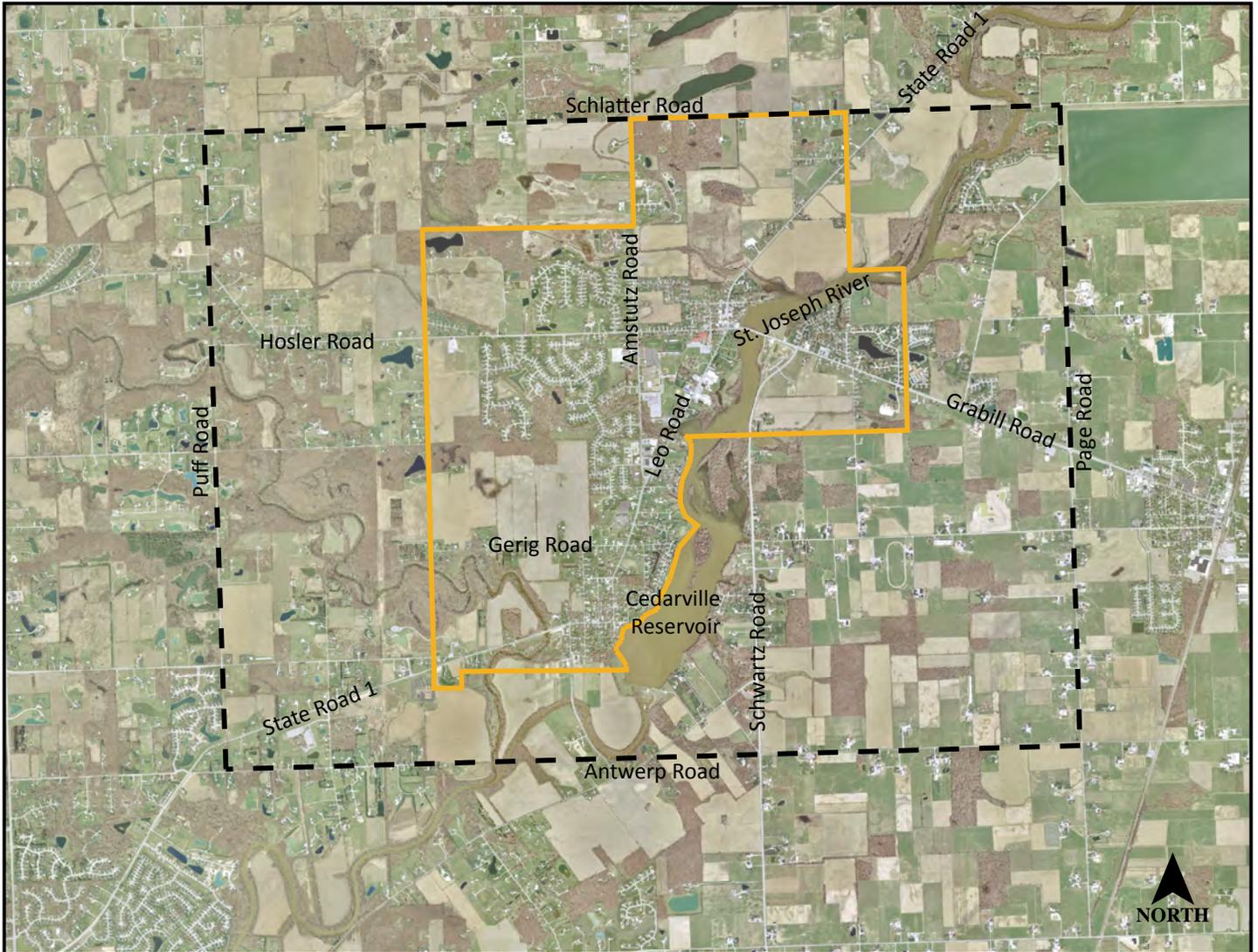
## Planning Efforts

Existing plans were referenced that support the development of this Plan including:

- Town of Leo-Cedarville, Indiana, Five Year Park + Recreation Master Plan 2015-2020 (2015)*
- NewAllen Alliance Organizational Action Plan (2014)*
- Envision Comprehensive Plan (2013)*
- 2035 Transportation Plan (2013)*
- Town of Leo-Cedarville ADA Transition Plan (2013)*

## Study Area

The study area for this Plan was developed in reference to the Leo-Cedarville town boundaries and extending approximately one-half to one-and-a-half miles beyond into unincorporated areas. The area is roughly bounded by Schlatter Road to the north, Page Road to the east, Antwerp Road to the south, and Puff Road to the west.

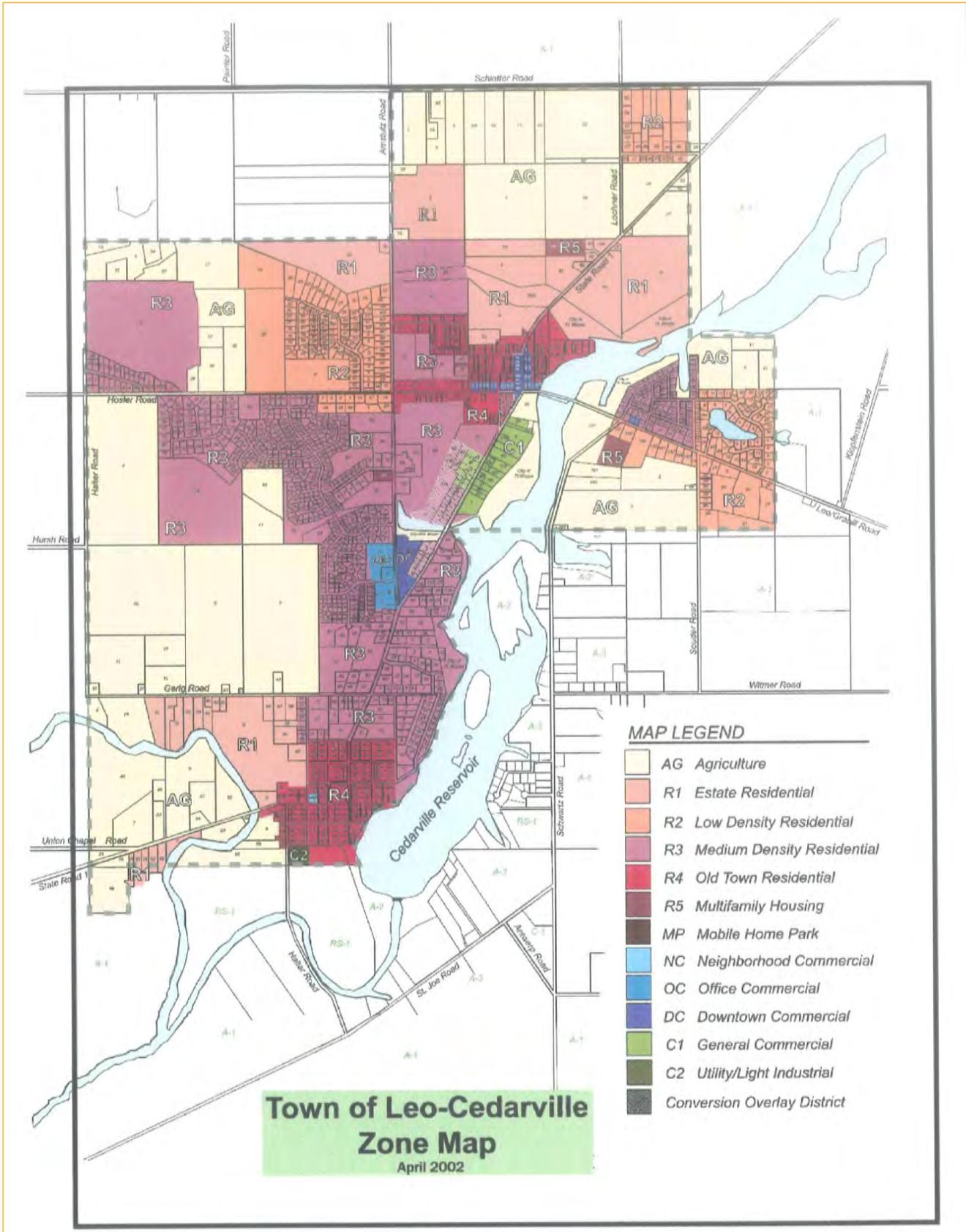


- - - Study Area Boundary

— Town Boundary

## STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN for LEO-CEDARVILLE, INDIANA

The Leo-Cedarville Zoning Ordinance, composed and overseen by the Plan Commission, is used to guide land development within the town boundaries. Most of the land is zoned as residential and agricultural, although areas for commercial use exist in the downtown area and along SR 1 and Hosler/Grabill Roads. A single parcel is zoned as Utility/Light Industrial.



# LEO-CEDARVILLE, IN



Population  
**3,742**

**POPULATION BY AGE\*** NumberPercentage

Under 5 years	214	5.7
Ages 5 to 14 years	785	21.0
Ages 15 to 24 years	508	13.5
Ages 25 to 44 years	890	23.8
Ages 45 to 64 years	886	23.7
Ages 65 years +	459	12.3



Advanced Education:  
2-year degree or higher  
**42.4%**

**HIGHER EDUCATION** Allen County Indiana

At least a 2-Year degree	36.3%	21.7%
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Employment

**TOP 3 INDUSTRIES** by Employee

- Professional & Business Services
- Education & Health
- Construction



Households  
**1,140**



**1,140**  
Housing Units:  
100% occupied; 0%

Allen  
Leo-Cedarville County Indiana

**INCOME\***

Median Household Income	\$67,727.	\$49,124.	\$48,737.
Per Capita Income	\$23,507.	\$25,485.	\$24,593.
Per Capita Income as % of National Average	82.3%	89.2%	86.1%

**POVERTY STATUS\***

All Families	3.1%	15.5%	15.5%
Of Specific Populations:			
Under 18 years	3.8%	22.5%	22.1%
Related children under 18 yrs	3.8%	22.2%	21.7%
18 to 64 years	3.0%	14.2%	14.7%
65 years +	2.2%	6.7%	7.2%

**HOUSING\***

Monthly owner costs 30% or more of household income	23.2%	20.9%	24.7%
Median Year Built	1992	1972	1972
Median Home Value	\$162,300.	\$112,600.	\$122,700.
Owner-occupied	94.0%	69.4%	69.5%
Renter-occupied	6.0%	30.6%	30.5%

\* U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2010-2014

## COMMUNITY ASSETS

An identification of existing physical community assets and conditions was conducted. A map of several of the assets described below is provided on page 8.

### Residential

Residential areas in Leo-Cedarville are concentrated around SR 1, Amstutz Road, Grabill Road, Hosler Road, and the west side of the Cedarville Reservoir. Older, and smaller, housing stock, in generally good condition, may be found in the areas closer to the center of each original town plat. Newer houses exist in several subdivisions platted between about 1964 and 2004 including Metea Valley (assessed values of \$200,000 - \$450,000), Pioneer Village (\$150,000 - \$250,000), and Lionsgate Passage (\$175,000 - \$350,000). Single-site, larger suburban homes have also recently been constructed in the Schwartz Road and Witmer Road area. Development in Leo-Cedarville has slowed over the past decade, as issues with sewer capacity resulted in a building moratorium, which has recently been lifted. Additional capacity has recently been made available and the Lakes of Leo Creek, a new subdivision is being constructed off Hosler Road.

The Cedars, a retirement community north of Grabill Road and east of the St. Joseph River, offers various housing options including skilled nursing care and assisted living facilities, 12 condominiums, and 34 single-family dwellings. The Katherine B. Norr Activities Center is also on site. Nearby to the east is Gateway Woods Family Services, an Apostolic Christian children's home that provides residential child care for abused, neglected, or delinquent teens.

Very little housing exists north of the SR 1 and the Grabill Road/Hosler Road intersection, where it is largely agricultural. The only known apartment complex in the area, consisting of two, one-story structures containing four units each, is on Amstutz Road across from Leo Junior/Senior High School. The structures were built in 1969 and remodeled in 2007.

### Commercial

Commercial uses in Leo-Cedarville are primarily concentrated along Amstutz Road, between SR 1 and Hosler Road, and along SR 1, between Amstutz Road and Walnut Street. The various businesses include two fitness centers, barber shop, insurance company, furniture store, photographer, office park, gas station/convenience store, drugstore, chain variety store, and storage facility. Restaurants are in limited supply, but include a sandwich shop, pizza shop, and pub. Automotive and building supplies establishments are also represented. Cedar Creek Produce, located just south of SR 1 near Leo-Cedarville's southern boundary, sells farm fresh produce to the local community on a year-round basis. However, the nearest grocery store is in the town of Grabill, approximately four miles to the east.

### Educational, Recreational, and Institutional

East Allen County Schools Corporation operates three schools in the Leo-Cedarville area. Cedarville Elementary, located at SR 1 and Hardisty Road west of the town toward Fort Wayne, is a kindergarten

through third grade facility with a population of over 700 students. In 2014, it was a National Blue Ribbon School, a United States program honoring schools accomplishing high levels of performance, and has received an "A" grade from the Indiana Department of Education for the past ten years. Leo Elementary, located at Hosler Road and Wayne Street, accommodates students in grades four through six. It has been an A-graded school since 1999. Students in grades seven through twelve attend Leo Junior/Senior High School, a 2015 A-graded school located on Amstutz Road between SR 1 and Hosler Road. Two pre-schools, Rainbow Child Care and Leo United Methodist Church, also operate in Leo-Cedarville.

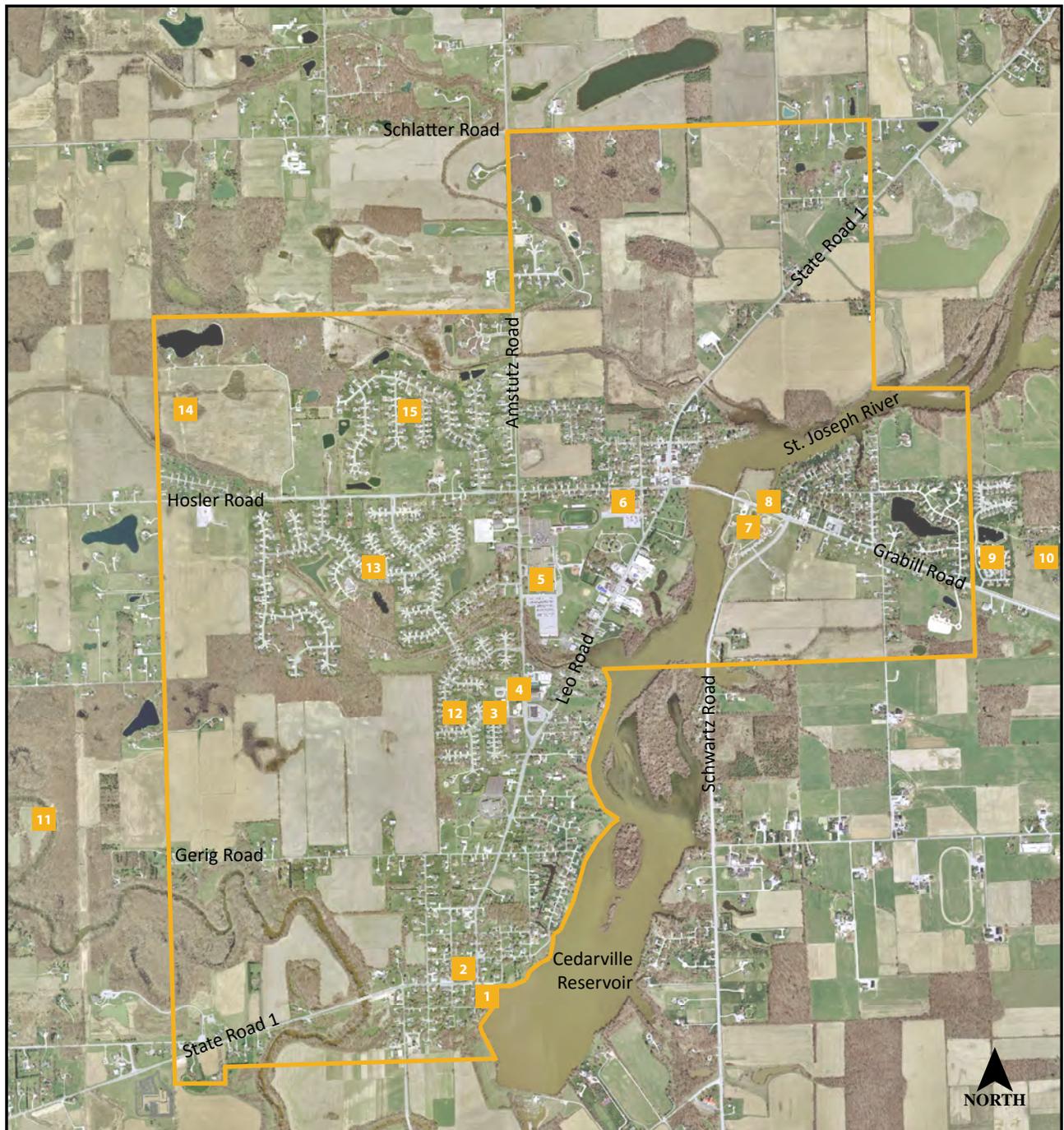
Recreational opportunities are numerous within Leo-Cedarville and the surrounding area. Metea County Park, located southwest between SR 1 and Hursh Road and operated by Allen County Parks, encompasses 250 acres and contains the 120-acre Meno-aki State Nature Preserve. Park amenities include trails, woodlands, wetlands, fishing, and cross-country skiing. The 1.84 acre Leo-Cedarville Park, located in the bend of SR 1 where it turns north, features an enclosed pavilion, playground equipment, basketball court, and picnic sites. Riverside Gardens is a 9-acre park situated along the east side of the St. Joseph River and south of Grabill Road that includes amenities such as open-air pavilions with picnic tables, restrooms, fishing access points, splash pad, playground, sand volleyball courts, horseshoe pits, and walking trails. One such trail is three miles long and connects to Leo-Cedarville proper to the west and to the neighboring town of Grabill to the east. Boat access for the Cedarville Reservoir and St. Joseph River is available at its southern end in Cedarville and just north of Grabill Road.

Other recreational providers include the East Allen County Schools Corporations, whose facilities in town have soccer, baseball, and softball fields as well as playground equipment. Leo United Methodist Church, Harvest Fellowship Church, and North Leo Mennonite Church also have play areas that area open to the general public when church services are not in progress.

Leo-Cedarville is home to nine churches of various denominations and includes Apostolic Christian Church, Cedar Creek Church of Christ, Cedarville Community Church, Church of the Good Shepherd, Crossview Church, Harvest Fellowship, Leo United Methodist Church, North Leo Mennonite Church, and Prince of Peace Church.

### Municipal, Government, and Other Community Services

The Leo-Cedarville Town Hall is located just west of Amstutz Road between Hosler Road and SR 1, and American Legion Post 409 is on SR 1 just east of Amstutz Road. The town is serviced by Lutheran Medical Group, Hughes Dental Group, and one branch each of iAB Bank and the United States Post Office. Two sections of the Leo Cemetery, Leo Memorial Park and Leo Cemetery - Old, occupy large sections of land on the east and west sides of SR 1 south of Grabill Road.



### Identified Properties

 Town Boundary

1. Cedarville Boat Launch
2. Leo-Cedarville Park
3. Leo-Cedarville Town Hall
4. U.S. Post Office
5. Leo Jr./Sr High School
6. Leo Elementary School
7. Riverside Gardens
8. DNR Boat Launch
9. The Cedars
10. Gateway Woods
11. Metea Park
12. Pioneer Village
13. Metea Valley Subdivision
14. Lakes of Leo Creek (under development)
15. Lionsgate subdivision

## PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

A leading factor in the ability of a community to grow is the condition of its public facilities and services, including drinking water, sanitary sewer, transportation systems, and public structures and lands. The intent of this review is to assess the needs for the infrastructure in regard to future growth rather than to analyze the physical conditions of the system within the community.

### Broadband

According to the Indiana Broadband Map last updated in 2014, internet availability within the Leo-Cedarville area consists of several wireless providers including AT&T Mobility, LLC; Verizon Wireless; and Sprint. Wireless speeds range from 768 kbps – 25 mbps for downloads to 200 kbps – 6 mbps for uploads. Frontier North, Inc. provides asymmetric xDSL technology ranging from 6 – 10 mbps for downloads and 200 kbps – 768 kbps for uploads. In addition, Mediacom Indiana, LLC provides cable modem technology with download speeds of 10-25 mbps and upload speeds of 1.5 – 3 mbps.

### Electric Utility

Indiana Michigan Power (I&M) provides electric service in the Leo-Cedarville area. As part of the American Electric Power Company (AEP) with operations across 11 states, I&M has the capacity to provide both transmission and distribution upgrades as needed for future development. Adequate lead time is requested in the event that a large energy investment is needed for a development.

### Natural Gas

The Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO), the natural gas service provider to the Leo-Cedarville area, has sufficient capacity to extend services. Adequate lead time is requested in the event that a large energy investment is needed for development.

### Transportation

Leo-Cedarville, bisected northeast to southwest by SR 1, is approximately three miles northeast of Interstate 469, and five miles north of US 37. The Town of Leo-Cedarville has jurisdiction of all public roads within the town boundaries with the exception of SR 1, which is under the jurisdiction of the State of Indiana. The Allen County Highway Department is the authority for roadways in unincorporated areas. Amstutz Road, Grabill Road, Schwartz Road, Halter Road and SR 1 south of Grabill Road are classified as Minor Arterial roads as defined by the Indiana Department of Transportation Functional Class Map for Allen County. Hosler Road and SR 1 north of Grabill Road are Major Collector roads, and are therefore eligible for federal funding.

Within the study area are seven bridges, each under the jurisdiction of the Allen County Highway Department. They are located at Hursh Road over Cedar Creek, Hosler Road over Nettlehorst Ditch, Grabill Road over the St. Joseph River/Cedarville Reservoir, Settlers Trail over Nettlehorst Ditch, Amstutz Road over Nettlehorst Ditch, SR 1 over Nettlehorst Ditch into the Cedarville Reservoir, and Halter Road over Cedar Creek. Two other bridges in the area, under the authority of the State of Indiana, are both located along SR 1. One crosses Cedar Creek southwest of town and the other crosses the Cedarville Reservoir northeast of town.

As part of the *Town of Leo-Cedarville ADA Transition Plan*, completed in 2013, streets and sidewalks within the town boundaries were inventoried and their physical condition and accessibility was assessed. Of the 138 ramps and 77 sidewalks identified, most were not ADA-compliant. As a result, the Town has made an annual appropriation to repair, modify or reconstruct sidewalks and ramps to remedy the accessibility issues.

In 2013, as the community had expressed a desire to build upon existing trails such as the three-mile section between Leo-Cedarville and Grabill, a map indicating areas for future trail construction and expansion was included in the *Envision Comprehensive Plan*. As a priority project, the Town is considering connecting to the Leo-Cedarville-Grabill trail by adding a segment to the west. This would cross over the Cedarville Reservoir and continue along Hosler Road to Amstutz Road where it would head south to tie into Leo-Cedarville Park. Along the way, the trail would provide connectivity to several other community assets including Riverside Gardens, Leo Elementary School, and Leo Junior/Senior High School. The Town is also exploring a combination project that would include trail and bridge improvements as well as roadway reconstruction along Amstutz Road. According to the *Envision Plan*, the goal for the Leo-Cedarville Schools Focus Area improvements is to “Promote safe and efficient traffic flow for students, faculty, parents, and local residents using multiple modes of transportation: pedestrian, bicycle, automobiles, and buses.”



Splash Pad at Riverside Gardens

## Sewer

The Leo-Cedarville Regional Sewer District (LCRSD) provides sanitary sewer and wastewater conveyance infrastructure to the town and surrounding area, and has an agreement with Fort Wayne City Utilities to treat its wastewater. According to the LCRSD, the sewer system is a gravity collection system with pressure transmission. The original system was built for approximately 600 residents in the 1970s, at a time when environmental regulations were minimal. In the event of heavy rain events, the system was designed to overflow into the St. Joseph River. An 18-inch pipe conveyed sewage from Leo-Cedarville to Fort Wayne.

The area experienced growth in the 1990s, and by the early 2000s, the system was serving 1,700 homes as a line was also being shared with nearby Grabill and Harlan. As the infrastructure aged, issues such as leaks began to develop. The LCRSD put a moratorium on new connections in 2002/2003, and Grabill and Harlan were taken off the system to relieve overflow. Working with the City of Fort Wayne, capacity recently has been increased to support up to 700 new homes through a scaled improvement plan which has included adding two, 12-inch conveyance pipes, pump station improvements, and pipe relining. Rates are currently at \$54.25 equivalent residential units (ERU). A number of other projects are planned for future improvements including the following:

- Local area pump station replacement (2016)
- Pump station on-site generator improvements (2016)
- Siphon-Interceptor replacement/improvement (+300' - 2016)
- Local area transmission main improvements (+600' - 2016)
- O&M fleet additions (2016)
- Local area pressure transmission main replacements/extensions (2017 thru 2020)
- Collection system point repairs/rehabilitations (2017 thru 2020)
- SCADA replacements/enhancements (2017 thru 2020)
- Operations and Maintenance fleet replacements (2017 thru 2020)
- Interceptor sewer rehabilitation (2017 thru 2020)
- Manhole rehabilitations (2017 thru 2020)
- Local area pump station control and pump/motor replacements (2017 thru 2020)
- SSE program activities (2017 thru 2020)
- O&M equipment replacements (2017 thru 2020)

## Water

Water service to the Leo-Cedarville area is provided by private investor-owned Pioneer Water. The company began in 1992 as Pioneer Village Water, a not-for-profit organization developed to service only the Pioneer Village subdivision, but due to demands for public water in the Metea Valley and Lionsgate Passage subdivisions, it became a for-profit public utility in 1998 so that it could service these and other areas.

The system capacity is 432,000 gallons per day with an average daily use of 200,000 gallons. Within the last five years, five new high-pressure pumps have been installed, and the water tower located at



*Amstutz Road*

14633 Amstutz Road is scheduled to be painted and recoated for an estimated cost of \$200,000. Pioneer Water is also interested in installing loop systems to increase waterflow in the Amstutz Road and SR 1 area. Fire hydrants are also needed throughout the town.

## Public Safety

The Town of Leo-Cedarville contracts with the Allen County Sheriff's Department to provide police protection. For 40 hours per week, a community resource officer (CRO) is assigned to work with town citizens, employees, and business owners to address issues such as crime, community concerns, traffic enforcement, and general public safety matters. According to the CRO, traffic congestion that routinely occurs in the area around Leo Elementary School and Leo Junior/Senior High School needs to be addressed, and as the community grows, an additional CRO may be needed to keep up with the expected increase in the number of calls for service. During the hours that the CRO is not on duty, other Sheriff's Department officers respond to calls for service. Expenditures for most police equipment, including vehicles, and training are provided by the Sheriff's Department while the Town has purchased a portable radar unit.

Primary fire and EMS response to the Leo-Cedarville area is provided by Northeast Allen County Fire & EMS.

CONTEXTUAL RESEARCH

As part of the overall *NewAllen Alliance Strategic Investment Plan* (SIP) initiative, contextual research was conducted of each community which included site visits with a drive-by tour and meetings with individual Community Planning Oversight Committees (CPOC). Each CPOC was asked to describe what they were hoping to achieve from the planning process. The following is a compilation of common responses given by the communities:

- To establish our community as a great place to live in Allen County
- To improve community identity and pride
- For the rest of Allen County to learn more about our community
- To facilitate new, smart growth that leads to more jobs being created (Hoagland and Leo-Cedarville do not desire industrial growth)
- To retain the authentic heritage of our community
- To improve the volunteer structure and community involvement
- To be better positioned to seek funding for projects

In addition, the six strategic focus areas of the SIP were discussed with each CPOC. Common issues and possible strategies identified include:



New Growth & Development

To improve developmental regulations to influence the quality of new development as it occurs  
 To explore alternatives to enhance opportunities to fund and sustain community improvement (i.e. incorporation, economic improvement districts, tax increment financing, etc.)



Economic Development

To develop a better local understanding of economic development processes  
 To develop marketable sites for future industry  
 To increase a community-wide focus on the agriculture industry  
 To increase space for small business activities  
 To contribute to the larger economic goal of attracting people to the region by providing an alternative place to live



Redevelopment

To revitalize downtowns  
 To preserve and repurpose existing vacant structures



Housing

To differentiate by promoting unique elements not common in urban areas  
 To promote housing for young families and seniors  
 To promote the rehabilitation of existing, aging housing stock

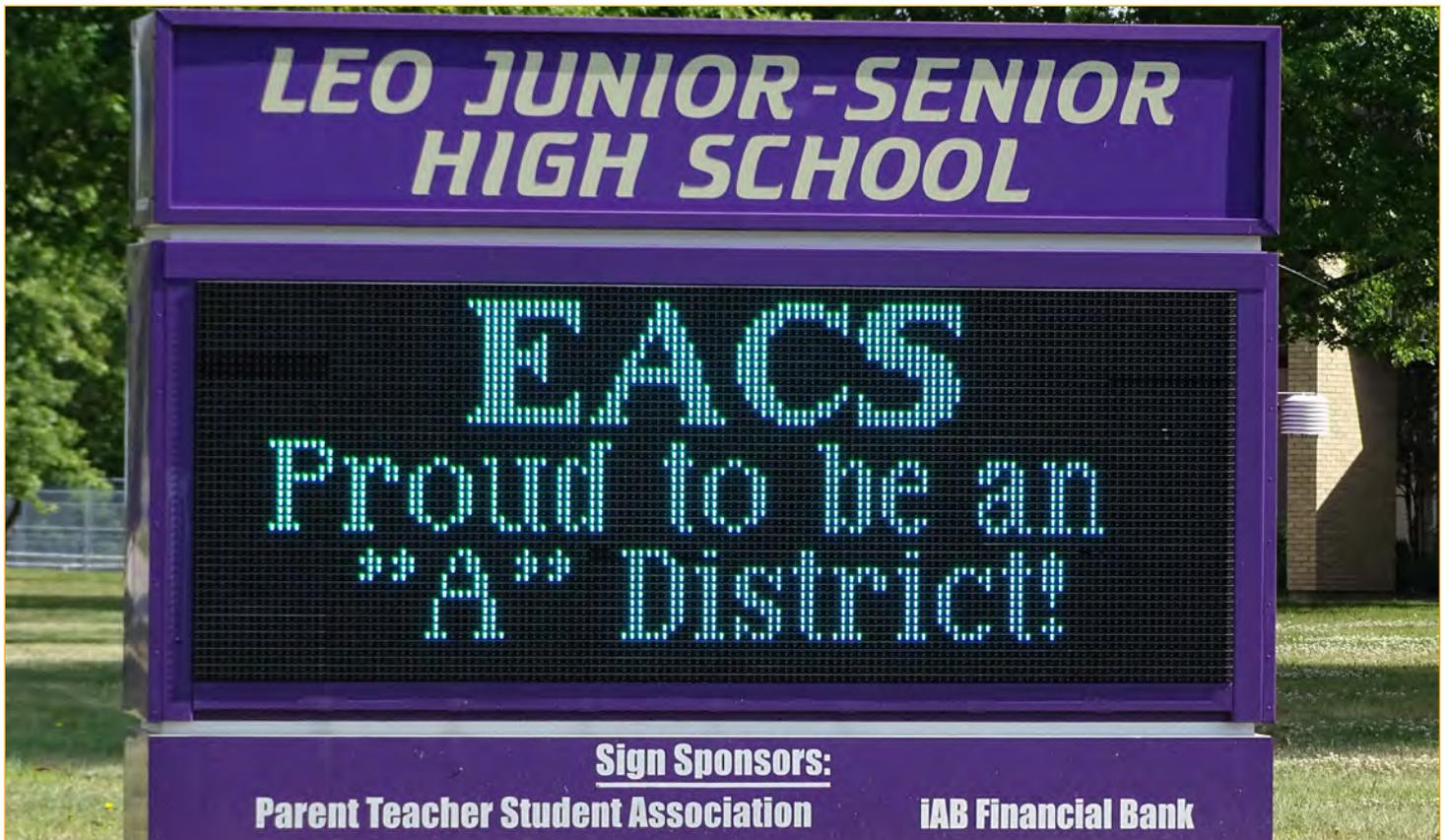


Infrastructure

To develop a county-wide focus to support broadband development  
 To understand limitations and opportunities of sewer and water infrastructure to help form approaches to future development decisions



To create and/or enhance community parks and gathering spaces  
 To develop sidewalks and trails to improve walkability throughout each community  
 To connect each community and to larger trail infrastructure through trails and bike lanes  
 To provide places to enhance community wellness



*Leo Junior-Senior High School*

Additional contextual research was conducted through interviews with over 30 community leaders throughout Allen County and Northeast Indiana to get a “big picture” perspective of the strengths and weaknesses of East Allen County in addition to gaining a broader understanding of the regional environment and identifying potential opportunities for funding and leveraging other resources. Below is a summary of some of the key findings of this research:

- Due to the proximity of Interstate 469, the recent upgrade of US 24 to an expressway, and the Maplecrest Road extension, momentum and interest in East Allen County appears to be growing.
- Planning will give communities a course of action and align county resources in support of these endeavors.
- East Allen County is a very diverse region consisting of urban, suburban, and rural areas.
- There are significant transportation assets in East Allen County (Interstate 469, US 24, US 30, Adams Center Road and the planned intermodal facility) prompting a need to better understand how to capitalize on them.
- East Allen County should focus on agricultural businesses and industry in addition to the clustering of supportive business and industry to large employers such as Steel Dynamics, Inc. and BF Goodrich.
- Perceptions of the East Allen County Schools Corporation vary. Due to recent consolidation efforts, the loss of a public school in some places has equated to a loss of identity, while others view having five high schools in the system as spreading limited resources over too many facilities.
- Workforce development is important. Programs such as the East Allen County Schools’ Associated Builders and Contractors Program, Future Farmers of America Programs, and other professional development training opportunities through the local libraries and schools should be promoted and enhanced.
- The entity with control of the sewer and water systems has significant influence into how, when, and to what level development occurs. There are some who advocate for a county-wide sewer district managed by an appointed board, and others who prefer retaining more direct involvement and oversight by elected officials.
- More housing is needed, particularly for seniors and young families. Communities are encouraged to seek out companies willing to design developments that are unique to their area and that enhance and serve the housing needs, thereby differentiating themselves from other nearby communities and creating an opportunity to attract new residents.
- There is a lack of park and recreational opportunities throughout eastern Allen County.
- There are libraries in four of the seven communities. As these facilities are significant assets, they could potentially be a strategic partner for other community initiatives such as workforce training, co-working space, and the integration of storytelling into community park and trail offerings.
- Restaurants, frequently suggested as a need in most of the communities, can also sometimes serve to attract people to visit.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

As has been mentioned, previous plans for Leo-Cedarville, the *Five Year Park + Recreation Plan 2015-2020* and the *Envision Comprehensive Plan*, were completed in the last three years and have been reviewed for information relevant to this planning document. A variety of community input strategies were employed to gather information for those plans making it redundant to go through the process again so soon afterward.

Community participation for the comprehensive plan was obtained via interviews with key community stakeholders, a March 2013 public workshop, and an August 2013 open house. The approximately 85 workshop attendees identified three top priorities for Leo-Cedarville:

1. Utilize a multi-use path to enhance pedestrian connectivity
2. Strengthen the downtown identity by improving facades and streetscapes and add infill development to connect the old Leo downtown area to other commercial areas throughout Leo-Cedarville
3. Improve the image of the Cedarville Reservoir as a community amenity

Also, residents overwhelmingly preferred the character and style of a traditional downtown, as opposed to a more contemporary style, as being the most appropriate for their community.

Community participation for the park and recreation plan occurred during two public meetings between late fall 2014 and winter 2015, and through the distribution, collection, and analysis of surveys given to community leaders, Leo Elementary and Cedarville Elementary school students, and the general public. After compiling the feedback, the resulting priorities were to:

1. Focus on an athletic complex, community parks, and neighborhood parks
2. Build a swimming center, field house, and community center
3. Develop trails for biking, hiking, jogging, and walking
4. Add more shaded areas adjacent to playgrounds

It was acknowledged that several of the desired projects exceeded the park department budget and would need to be addressed through other funding sources.



Riverside Gardens



Downtown Leo-Cedarville



Boat Launch

## ACTION PLAN

Through the synthesis of research and community discussion detailed throughout this document, a plan of action was developed. Overarching strategies are those established by the NewAllen Alliance. Plan elements are presented in a manner that is both individual to the community, but also complements activities conducted throughout East Allen County. The action plan also acts as an implementation tool by listing the strategic action, responsible parties, potential resources, and a targeted time period for implementation.

1. MANAGE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT				
	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
1.1	Update the zoning ordinance to reflect more appropriate development guidelines for the community.	Town of Leo-Cedarville	Allen County DPS	0-2 years
1.2	In the event of significant commercial development, evaluate the value of establishing a TIF District.	Town of Leo-Cedarville	Allen County Redevelopment Commission	As Needed
2. CREATE A RURAL AND SUBURBAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT APPROACH				
	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
2.1	Promote awareness of small business development training and capital resources.	GFW, Leo-Cedarville Chamber of Commerce, NewAllen Alliance	Brightpoint, Indiana Small Business Development Center, Northeast Indiana Innovation Center, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)	On-going
2.2	Support the development of economic development initiatives focused on the agricultural industry.	GFW, Leo-Cedarville Chamber of Commerce, NewAllen Alliance	Purdue Extension, Indiana Farm Bureau, Indiana Department of Agriculture, USDA	On-going
2.3	Support and collaborate on workforce development efforts.	East Allen County Schools (EACS), GFW, Leo-Cedarville Chamber of Commerce, NewAllen Alliance	Area Institutes of Higher Education, Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs, Indiana Workforce Development, Workone Northeast	On-going
2.4	Support the development of a restaurant/mixed retail development along the Cedarville Reservoir.	GFW, Town of Leo-Cedarville, Private Developers	Allen County Capital Improvement Board, Private Investment, Regional Cities funds, City of Fort Wayne, Town of Leo-Cedarville	0-2 years
3. PRESERVE AND CAPITALIZE UPON OUR AUTHENTIC HERITAGE				
	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
3.1	Participate in a branding and marketing effort in collaboration with NewAllen Alliance.	Leo-Cedarville Foundation, NewAllen Alliance, Town of Leo-Cedarville	East Allen County Schools, Local Fundraising, NewAllen Alliance	0-2 years
3.2	Explore participation in the Indiana Main Street Program.	Leo-Cedarville Foundation, NewAllen Alliance, Town of Leo-Cedarville	Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs	0-2 years
3.3	Develop a downtown plan that is compliant with Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs guidelines and includes design estimates for streetscape improvements.	Leo-Cedarville Main Street Organization (once organized)	Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs	1-2 years

**3. PRESERVE AND CAPITALIZE UPON OUR AUTHENTIC HERITAGE**

	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Potential Resources</b>	<b>Time Period</b>
3.4	Pursue funding to improve streetscapes within the downtown area.	Leo-Cedarville Main Street Organization (once organized), Leo-Cedarville Foundation	Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs	1-3 years

**4. CELEBRATE COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH INVESTMENT IN CENTERS OF ACTIVITY**

	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Potential Resources</b>	<b>Time Period</b>
4.1	Participate in an initiative to physically improve local community parks and downtowns based on collective branding and landscape design. Involvement includes development of a "Quality of Life" design plan that unifies the look of the community at major entrances, in the downtown area, and within the parks with investments into street lighting, sidewalks, furnishings, signage, landscaping, and park improvements.	Town of Leo-Cedarville, Leo-Cedarville Foundation, Leo-Cedarville Main Street (once organized), Leo-Cedarville Park Board, NewAllen Alliance	Local Fundraising, NewAllen Alliance	0-2 years
4.2	Pursue funding to implement "Quality of Life" design plan.	Town of Leo-Cedarville, Leo-Cedarville Foundation, Leo-Cedarville Main Street (once organized), Leo-Cedarville Park Board, NewAllen Alliance	Allen County Capital Improvement Board, Local Fundraising, Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, Regional Cities funds	0-2 years
4.3	Support infill commercial development within downtown Leo-Cedarville.	Town of Leo-Cedarville, Leo-Cedarville Foundation, Leo-Cedarville Main Street (once organized), NewAllen Alliance	Private investment, NewAllen Alliance grants and loans, Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, USDA	On-going
4.4	Complete downtown streetscape improvements.	Town of Leo-Cedarville, Leo-Cedarville Main Street	Local Fundraising, Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, Town of Leo-Cedarville	0-5 years
4.5	Explore the establishment of a co-op to support reinvestment efforts.	Town of Leo-Cedarville, Leo-Cedarville Main Street	Private Investors	0-2 years
4.6	Explore a collective contract for maintenance of quality of life investments.	NewAllen Alliance	Allen County Parks Department	0-2 years
4.7	Support the connection of communities through trails and bike lanes/shoulder improvements throughout East Allen. In respect of Leo-Cedarville, support and pursue the addition of trails along State Road 1 to the west toward Metea Park and Fort Wayne, and north along the St. Joseph River.	Allen County Highway Department, NIRCC, Town of Leo-Cedarville	Allen County Highway Department, Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)	On-going

## 5. PROVIDE A RANGE OF QUALITY HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
5.1	Support the rehabilitation of existing homes.	Area Housing Non-profits	Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Program	0-5 years
5.2	Support the addition of senior housing.	Private Developers	Private investment	0-5 years

## 6. PROVIDE ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE

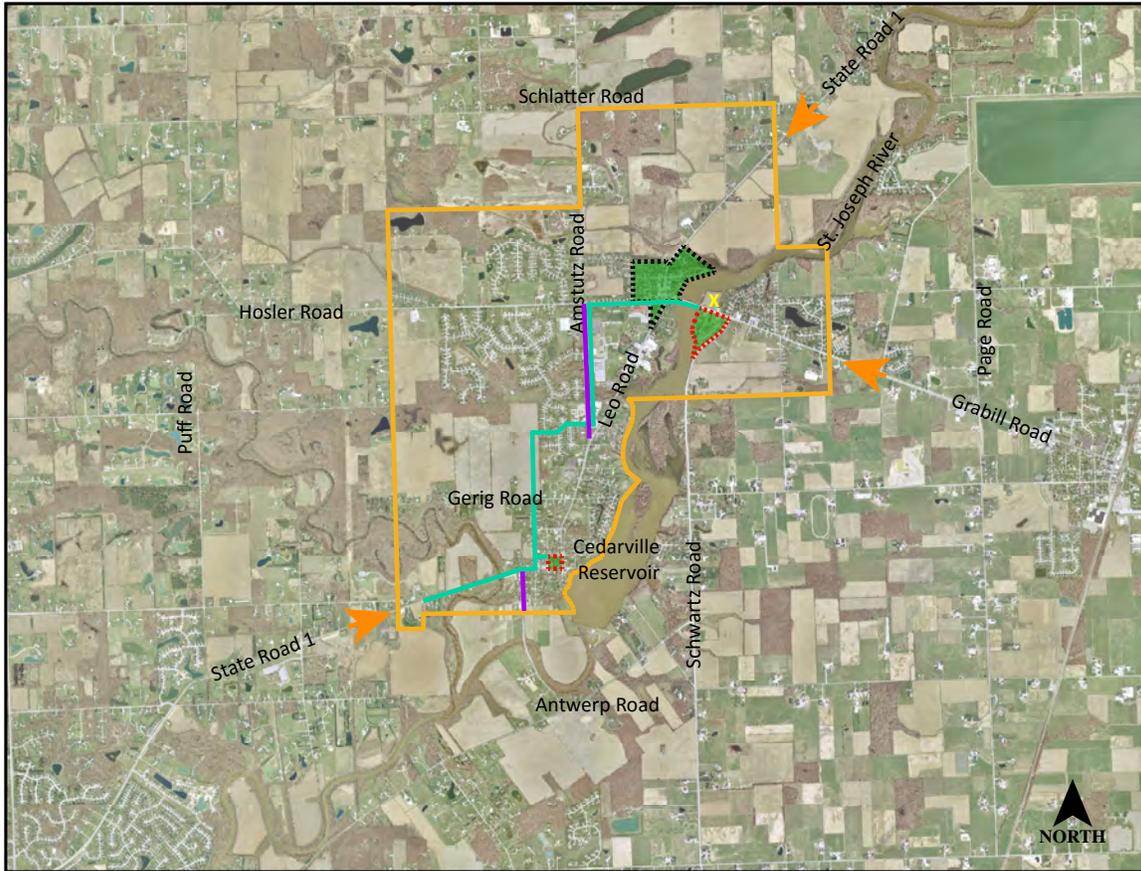
	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
6.1	Implement an annual sidewalk and ramp ADA improvement program with priority given to areas that connect to public facilities such as schools and parks, an in areas with the poorest condition of existing facilities.	Town of Leo-Cedarville	INDOT, NIRCC, Town of Leo-Cedarville	On-going
6.2	Develop preliminary cost estimates and pursue funding to improve the Hosler Road/Amstutz Road Intersection as well as roadway reconstruction along Amstutz Road from Hosler Road to State Road 1. Project will include trail connections along Hosler Road from Grabill Road Bridge near Riverside Gardens to Amstutz Road and along Amstutz Road and extending further south to connect to Leo-Cedarville Park. Bridges should also be improved within construction limits.	Allen County Highway Department, Town of Leo-Cedarville	Allen County Highway Department, INDOT, NIRCC, Town of Leo-Cedarville	0-5 years
6.3	Pursue funding for improvements to Clay Street/Halter Road at the intersection with SR 1.	Town of Leo-Cedarville	INDOT, Town of Leo-Cedarville	0-2 years
6.4	Explore and pursue the opportunity to enhance broadband speed and reliability throughout the community (both business and residential areas).	GFW, NewAllen Alliance	Community Resources, Private Investment, USDA	0-5 years
6.5	Construct a Street Department Building.	Town of Leo-Cedarville	Town of Leo-Cedarville	0-2 years
6.6	Continue to maintain and upgrade sanitary sewer improvements.	Leo-Cedarville Regional Sewer District	Leo-Cedarville Regional Sewer District, Indiana Finance Authority, USDA	On-going
6.7	Explore coordination of water loop system improvements along Amtutz Road with the road reconstruction project to minimize cost and rework.	Pioneer Water, Town of Leo-Cedarville	Pioneer Water, Town of Leo-Cedarville	0-5 years

## 7. ENGAGE AND CONNECT TO SUPPORT INVESTMENTS

	Strategy	Responsible Parties	Potential Resources	Time Period
7.1	Participate in an on-going NewAllen Strategic Advancement Committee to oversee Strategic Investment Plan implementation.	Allen County DPS, Leo-Cedarville Foundation, NewAllen Alliance, Town of Leo-Cedarville	Not Applicable	On-going
7.2	Work with a newly hired Community Development Liaison to advance initiatives.	Allen County DPS, Leo-Cedarville Foundation, NewAllen Alliance, Town of Leo-Cedarville	Allen County Government, NewAllen Alliance	On-going
7.3	Foster and participate in community leadership development activities.	Allen County DPS, Leo-Cedarville Foundation, NewAllen Alliance, Town of Leo-Cedarville	Local Business Sponsors, Local Foundations	On-going



Leo-Cedarville Location Map



- |                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Town Boundary                     | Roadway Improvements    |
| Downtown Area Boundary            | Pedestrian Pathway      |
| Leo-Cedarville Parks              | Development Opportunity |
| Quality of Life Improvement Areas | Gateways                |



# NEWALLEN ALLIANCE

ALLEN COUNTY, INDIANA

LEO-CEDARVILLE, INDIANA

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