Union County Comprehensive Plan
Steering Committee Meeting #2 Summary
May 19, 2020 | 5:30 – 7:00
Virtual Go-To Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY

A. **OVERVIEW**

The second Union County Steering Committee was held on Tuesday, May 19 at 5:30PM. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the Stay-at-Home mandate, the meeting was held as a virtual Go-To meeting. Participants were invited to join the call from a conference call number and/or video link. There were 6 people attending the meeting.

B. **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The project team started the meeting off by outlining the topics that would be covered within Chapter 2 of the final document. Chapter 2: General Background would serve as an existing conditions report. The project team collected and analyzed data related to demographics, economic base, and anchor institutions. Some preliminary data points and key finding were shared with the committee including population trends, age structure, labor force, commuting trends, industry breakdown, and job available. A member of the committee expressed concerns about how the 2019 estimates differed from the estimates used in a recently published Needs Assessment by the Union County Foundation. Our project team was pulling data from ESRI Business Analyst, while the Needs Assessment was using Indiana Stats. The project team revised the data to align with the estimates published by Indiana Stats.

C. **VISION & GOALS**

The project team explained the purpose and difference between a vision statement, goal statements, objective or policy statements, and strategies. A key component to a developing a vision statement is identify core values. The committee discussed what the County values today, and what the County should value in the future. Key takeaways from the discussion include:

- Existing values
  - Close-knit community
  - Small town charm
  - Environmental/recreational assets
  - Low taxes – affordable cost of living
  - Schools

- Future values
    - Agritourism
    - Tourism
    - Healthy, active lifestyles
    - Environmental stewardship
    - Diversifying the population

The project team had prepared a mablib exercise for developing a vision statement to show the committee. The committee liked the idea and suggested using it to gather feedback at the public meeting and on the survey. The madlib read,

"Union County will be a community comprised of _____ people, _____ businesses, and _____ places. Known for its _____, Union County values _____, _____, and _____. We are committed to investing in _____, _____, and _____ to ensure a _____ framework for quality growth and development."

D. COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

By the second committee meeting, the Union County Comprehensive Plan project website was live. The project team showed the committee how to use the website and asked them to share the link with friends and family. During this discussion, members of the committee expressed concern about the lack of participation from other committee members and the public. The plan of action developed was to draft a letter to encourage participation and share an FAQ document with the committee as another attempt to gain interest in the project.

E. NEXT STEPS

The project team shared their next steps for the upcoming weeks including hosting stakeholder meetings, and preparing for the first public engagement opportunity. The committee was asked to share an advertisement on social media about the upcoming meeting and to be on the lookout for an email asking them to review the existing conditions report.