SR 267 & US HWY 36
Gateway Plan

Town of Avon
Adopted June 12th, 2008
INTRODUCTION
The Town of Avon adopted the current Comprehensive Plan in 2005. This document provides the vision, or guide, for development over the next 20 years. In the Comprehensive Plan it calls out for redevelopment at, and near, the intersection of SR 267 and US HWY 36. The plan calls specifically for redevelopment as a Town Center.

The Town has considered this recommendation and feels that the Town Center, or Downtown Development, is better suited to an alternate location in Town. This plan will address the Town’s vision for how this corridor should redevelop as a gateway to downtown Avon.

STUDY AREA BOUNDARIES
The study boundaries were selected by using the guide in the future land use map of the Comprehensive Plan and looking at the existing development and redevelopment opportunities. The study area is bound to the north by the creek, to the south by the railroad, to the west by CR 625 E and stops at the east boundary of Park Place. Figure 1-1 shows a graphical depiction of the study area.

Figure 1-1 Study Boundary

DEMOGRAPHICS
STATS Indiana estimated the population of Avon in 2006 as 9,847, an increase of 36.5% from Census 2000 data. The 2005 Avon Comprehensive Plan projects the 2025 population of Avon as 35,000, which includes most of Washington Township (except those areas already annexed by Plainfield).
The study area and the Town share many similar demographic characteristics. The median age of the study area is 36.8 years of age. This indicates that the housing selections in this area are diverse and cater to a slightly aging population. Just outside of the study area there is an assisted living facility and several older single family neighborhoods.

The rental rate (11.9%) of the study area is higher due to the presence of the Washington Quarters apartments. The Town of Avon, as well as the study area, is predominately owner occupied. The study area has been a major crossroads for Hendricks County for quite sometime. The existing infrastructure and aging structures correlate back to this fact.

The Census data is approaching 8 years old now, and as the STATS Indiana data displays, the Town is continuing to grow, with many new families moving in from the surrounding area. While Avon has seen growth in the residential and retail sector since 2000 with new developments, other areas, like the study area, would benefit from a revitalization effort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Study Area</th>
<th>Town of Avon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population (Census 2000)</strong></td>
<td>2,531</td>
<td>6,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Age</strong></td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupied Housing Units</strong></td>
<td>880</td>
<td>2,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Owner-Occupied</strong></td>
<td>775</td>
<td>1,961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Renter-Occupied</strong></td>
<td>105</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rental Rate</strong></td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 1-1 Summary of Avon Demographics

**VISION**

The Town of Avon envisions the corridor where SR 267 and US HWY 36 intersect to be a gateway into downtown Avon. The area should transition in character and land use from regional commercial development to an area of mixed use development that promotes walkability, community pride, diversity in land use and design, and preserve the residential neighborhood character. The area should further provide a mix of commercial and entertainment uses designed for the pedestrian and not the vehicle. In order to make this area sustainable, the Town promotes redevelopment in the form of mixed use and/or multi-story buildings.

The area should also include streetscape for the area that incorporates the Town's adopted street light (Kim Structural), community banners, sidewalks, parkway trees, and landscape planters along the corridor. Buildings in this corridor may be located closer to US HWY 36 and SR 267 than along other portions of these highways and parking should be limited in the front whenever possible. Ground signs should be limited in size and location. Signage should be primarily wall signage and in the case of ground signs, integrated center signs are encouraged over individual ground signs.
LAND USE – (Existing)
The study area comprises a diverse mix of uses. The area is primarily commercial with a healthy mix of residential and institutional uses. The commercial development includes a grocery store, auto filling stations, personal service establishments, restaurants and offices. The residential development is primarily single family. The area also includes the Town Hall and Park, three (3) churches, Avon Community Schools Administration Center, Avon Middle School, Avon Intermediate School, and two (2) elementary schools.

The area includes two (2) state highways, US HWY 36 and SR 267. US Hwy 36 is a major east-west corridor to Indianapolis. SR 267 is one of the primary north-south arterials connecting Avon to interstates I-65, 70, and 74.

The comprehensive plan identifies a need for an additional 2,032 single family units and 390 multi-family units within the Town of Avon over the next 15 years. Further, 200 acres of new commercial over the next 15 years are needed. This would include office, retail, service, and other commercial uses.

LAND USE – (Planned Land Use)
As this area redevelops the Town envisions a mixed use area of development. Mixed use includes many combinations of land use including, but not limited to, retail, office, service, restaurant, and residential uses. The gateway land use plan found in Figure 1-3 establishes the Town’s vision for how this area should redevelop.
As noted in Figure 1-3, Gateway Land Use Plan, the commercially zoned land along US HWY 36 and SR 267 is shown to redevelop commercially or with a mix of commercial and residential in upper stories. Currently, there is a natural niche of offices and service establishments occurring in this area. To further build on this niche, this plan encourages continued development of medical offices, engineering, planning and architecture firms, attorney offices and service establishments that are complimentary with the existing uses in this area. Townhouses are planned for the residential areas along the east side of SR 267 and northwest portion of the study area.

Given the compact nature of the lots within this area, development is encouraged to build up and not out. Meaning, multi-story structures are strongly encouraged in lieu of single-story structures. Additionally, parking will be a key component for the proposed redevelopment of this area. Parking structures may be appropriate, however, any parking structure incorporated into a development should have commercial on the first floor facing a public street, and if visible from US 36, screening of some sort should be incorporated into the design of the structure. Appendix A provides examples of the desired mixed use development that would be consistent with this plan.

**LAND USE – (Recommendations)**
The zoning ordinance is the primary tool for implementation of the comprehensive plan. Currently, residential and commercial land uses are only permitted to coexist in a planned unit development (PUD) with significant buffer and open space requirements. These items may prove difficult in redeveloping land in this area according to this plan.
Therefore, the Town should consider adopting a mixed use zoning classification or developing a form based code to guide the development of this area. A mixed use zoning classification would include uses permitted, density standards, and developmental standards, with equal emphasis on use and form. A form based code addresses the design of the area and not necessarily use with the goals of promoting traditional urban form, emphasis on the public realm, and connectivity. Generally they include build-to lines, building materials, total height, roof pitch, streetscape, and the like.

**STREETScape**

In an effort to create an identity for the community and preserve its residential character, the Town envisions streetscape catering to the pedestrian in this area. Sidewalks should be installed along all public roads with connections to all buildings. The Town’s approved street light fixtures, as depicted in Figure 1-4, shall be incorporated into said streetscape. This fixture is full cutoff, complies with the zoning ordinance, and is being installed throughout the Town as part of new road projects and at entrances to subdivisions.

![Figure 1-4, Kim Lighting Structural Outdoor Cutoff Luminaire](image)

Streetscape should also include special paving features to create a gateway design, street furnishings like benches and trash receptacles, and parkway landscaping. Figures 1-5 through 1-7 illustrate these types of features.

![Figure 1-5, outdoor dining and street trees](image)
Infrastructure Improvements
The Avon Thoroughfare Plan identifies the road classifications for all roads within the Town of Avon. SR 267 and US HWY 36 are identified as Primary Arterials. The plan also encourages the creation of a frontage road, or Business Collector, system. Figure 1-9 shows the classification of roads within this corridor and where the future business collectors should be.
Improvements to primary arterials should follow the standards established in the Thoroughfare Plan titled “Primary Arterial A”, Figure 1-8. The cross section includes a landscaped median, sidewalk/pathway along both sides of the road, and a parkway buffer zone.

The Town is aware of needed improvements at the intersection of SR 267 and US HWY 36, the railroad crossing at SR 267, and INDOT has plans for improvements to US HWY 36. US HWY 36 has a failing level of service, which means that it cannot accommodate the volume of traffic as currently designed. The plans for US HWY 36 include additional travel lane(s) in each direction.
Much of this area is served by water and sewer. However, the majority of the homes in the Avon Heights neighborhood remain on well and septic. The Health Department has had to condemn some of the septic systems in this neighborhood because they are failing. The area needs to tie into water and sewer, but the cost at this point has been an obstacle for most residents. This neighborhood also is experiencing drainage problems. The Town is working to identify solutions to this issue and design proposed improvements. These improvements will likely include the use of alternative best management practices, such as native landscaping, and riparian corridors that will improve the water quality.

**Transit**

As outgrowth of Indianapolis continues to push west, transit options will continue to be a discussion item. The current traffic volumes along Avon’s primary arterials will likely continue to increase as the population increases. Almost half of the residents of Hendricks County commute outside of the County for employment. Avon’s comprehensive plan promotes the development of new jobs in the community to allow residents to live and work in the same community. By providing transit opportunities residents will be linked to Indianapolis and assist in reducing air pollution by parking their vehicles.

There are several transit options available to provide relief of the traffic volume on the roadways and release some of the burden on the roads. Park and ride lots, bus lines, and passenger rail are just some of those options. The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) provides regional transportation planning, including transit. IndyGo has also looked at options for provided service in this area. Currently, there are only smaller providers in the County, like Hendricks County LINK. This corridor may be the ideal location for a transit stop or station in the future.

In an effort to do its part, the Town of Avon further encourages the creation of pedestrian and multi-modal pathways throughout the Town to create a more walkable community. The redevelopment of SR 267 and US Hwy 36 will be a key link in providing this connectivity. The issue of crossing US HWY 36 will be the most difficult challenge facing this initiative. This gateway plan envisions a system of interconnected sidewalks and bike trails connecting residential, recreation, institutional, and commercial uses in the study area. Sidewalks along arterials should be no less than 6 feet in width and all others should be a minimum of 5 feet. The specific locations of the sidewalks and bike trails should match the recommendations of the Avon Trails and Sidewalks Master Plan and its subsequent updates. In the event multi-use trails were developed it should be provided along the west side of SR 267 and the south side of US HWY 36 with respective sidewalks on the opposing side of the street. The width and design standards for trail and sidewalk development should be to the standards recommended in the Avon Trails and Sidewalks Master Plan. When possible, bike lanes should be incorporated into road designs, particularly on business collectors. Through the provision of alternate methods of getting around, the volume of traffic on area roads may be reduced and further a reduction in air pollution.
Appendix “A”

Land Use Building Style Guide

The gateway plan identifies recommended land uses for the Gateway Corridor. Appendix “A” defines those uses and discusses the highly desired uses for the area. Further, this appendix also includes a building style guide including photos of mixed use and townhouse buildings that are consistent with the recommendations of this plan.

Definitions:

Mixed Use: The mixed use district allows for the development of more than one complimentary use within a building co-existing both horizontal and/or vertical. Appropriate mixed uses office, retail, restaurant, personal service, residential, institutional, and other similarly related uses.

Townhouse: A building containing dwelling units, each of which has a primary ground floor access to the outside and which are attached to each other by party walls without openings. (typically owner occupied)

Apartments: A detached residential building containing three or more dwelling units living independently of each other. (Typically a for rent product), apartments may be located in the upper stories of commercial buildings or integrated within mixed use developments.

For the purposes of this study the following uses may be appropriate in a mixed use development and are further defined in the Avon Zoning Ordinance.

Office
Personal Service
Retail: Single retail establishments over 25,000 sq. ft. should be contained in a multi-story structure

Restaurants: This includes cafes, tea rooms, sit down restaurants (Class A), sandwich shops, and outdoor cafes. Drive-thru windows are discouraged; specifically any drive thru (including menu boards, stacking, window, etc.) would be visible from and/or along the frontage of SR 267 and/or US HWY 36.
**Building Design:**

The following images are examples of the types of structures and architecture envisioned for this area.

*Residential and Commercial Mixed Use buildings:*

Mixed Use: 1<sup>st</sup> floor – Commercial, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor – Townhomes

Mixed Use: 1<sup>st</sup> floor – Commercial, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor – Commercial and Townhomes
Mixed Use: 1st floor – Commercial, 2nd and 3rd floor – Commercial and Townhomes

Residential upper stories and retail on first floor

Residential Buildings:

Brick Townhomes
Brick Townhomes

Brick Townhomes

Townhomes (These are brick on three sides with vinyl in the back)
Themed Townhomes:

Commercial Mixed Use Buildings:

Mixed Use: 1st and 2nd floor – Commercial (Note: Outdoor seating for restaurant)
Mixed Use: 1st and 2nd floor – Commercial (Note: Outdoor seating for restaurant)

Mixed Use: 1st and 2nd floor – Commercial (Note: only the corner building is 2 stories)

Mixed Use: 1st and 2nd floor – Commercial (1st – Retail/Restaurant, 2nd – Office)
Mixed Use: 1st and 2nd floor – Commercial (1st – Retail, 2nd – Office)

Mixed Use: Commercial Front/Parking Deck back

Mixed Use: 1st floor – Retail; 2nd and 3rd floors – Office
Appendix “B”

Streetscape

Through the development of the SR 267 & US HWY 36 Gateway Plan, it became evident that streetscape standards will be as important and the building design standards. Appendix B contains a catalogue of graphics illustrating the types of features deemed appropriate for this area. The specific styles should be selected for this area and made a standard for the redevelopment of this gateway to create a consistent appearance. For the purposes of this study, these images serve as a catalogue of appropriate styles or examples of the types of amenities that should be incorporated into the streetscape design.

**Benches**
Benches should be a wrought iron or similar style and evenly placed along the sidewalk to establish gathering spaces.
**Trash Receptacles**
Trash receptacles should be placed along sidewalks. The preferred receptacles should be iron or metal to match the benches.

**Planters**
There are several options for plantings along the sidewalk. Planters may be placed in front of businesses and along sidewalks that are either metal or concrete or planting beds may be placed strategically in the sidewalk. Hanging baskets on light poles would also be an acceptable landscaping method, provided the design is consistent with the other selected street furnishings.
**Street Banners**

Street banners provide an option to advertise special events and holidays as well as provide four season color to a streetscape. Street banners can also create identify for an area or district. They may be attached to street lights or on poles.
Bicycle Racks
In order to encourage pedestrians to walk and bicycle in the district, it is important to provide places for bicycles to park. Bicycle racks should be placed in appropriate locations to protect from weather conditions whenever possible. Standard metal bicycle racks provide one option; the other is a more customized bicycle rack to further identify the area and the community.

Bollards
In the event that it is necessary to utilize bollards in the gateway area, they should be of a design that is consistent with the other street furnishings. Concrete and steel bollards should be avoided in favor of decorative bollards as displayed below.