

PLAN ADOPTION
TOWN COUNCIL: APRIL 8, 2024
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: AUGUST 19, 2024

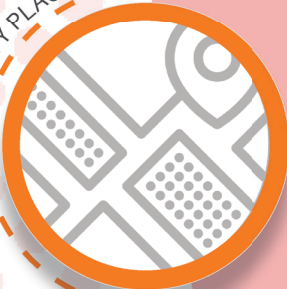
TOWN OF NEW AMSTERDAM

Comprehensive Plan

CELEBRATING OUR ASSETS



BUILDING QUALITY PLACES



EXPANDING OUR OFFERINGS



TOWN PLANNING
INITIATIVE
HARRISON COUNTY
The Town of New Amsterdam



**TOWN OF NEW AMSTERDAM, INDIANA
RESOLUTION NO. 2024- _____**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
OF NEW AMSTERDAM APPROVING THE
NEW AMSTERDAM COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

WHEREAS, Indiana Code 36-7-4-500, *et. seq.* empowers the Harrison County Plan Commission and Harrison County Board of Commissioners to prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the promotion of public health, safety, morals, convenience, order, or the general welfare and for the sake of efficiency and economy in the process of development and to make periodic updates thereto; and


WHEREAS, Indiana Code 36-7-4-500, *et. seq.* authorizes a Comprehensive Plan to include a variety of elements, including but not limited to a statement of objectives for the future development of the jurisdiction; a statement of policy for the land use development of the jurisdiction; a statement of policy for the development of public ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities; and any factors that are part of the physical, economic, and social characteristics of the town; and

WHEREAS, the Harrison County Plan Commission, in conjunction with the Harrison County Community Foundation, Taylor Siefker Williams Design Group, and The Wheatley Group, has undertaken a study to develop the New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan for the town; and

WHEREAS, the New Amsterdam Town Council did certify the New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan with a yea vote and forwarded the Comprehensive Plan to the Harrison County Plan Commission with favorable support for adoption.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF NEW AMSTERDAM, INDIANA that the town council is in support of the New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan and desires for the Harrison County Plan Commission and Harrison County Board of Commissioners to proceed with the official public hearing in accordance with Indiana Code 36-7-4-500, *et. seq.* and all other required adoption processes in order to adopt the New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan.

**PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF NEW AMSTERDAM, INDIANA
ON THIS 8 DAY OF April, 2024.**



Acknowledgments

NEW AMSTERDAM TOWN COUNCIL

Marlena Thompson

Patrick Thompson

Lee McCullum

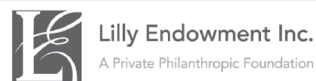
PLAN ADOPTION

The New Amsterdam Town Council approved this plan on April 8, 2024. Following the town's approval, the *New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan* went through the formal adoption process starting with a favorable recommendation from the Harrison County Plan Commission on August 1, 2024 and then went to the Harrison County Commissioners on August 19, 2024. (Resolution No. 2024-11)

SPECIAL THANKS

To the New Amsterdam community members that participated in the community engagement efforts.

FUNDED BY:



PREPARED BY:



My favorite thing about New Amsterdam is the quiet and peacefulness of going to the river and riding through town.

- Community Survey Participant

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CHAPTER 1

About the Plan

Serving as the introduction to the plan, this chapter explains the relationship between the *Harrison County Town Planning Initiative* and *New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan*. Following the plan overview, the planning process is documented with highlights of the key findings from data collection and public input.

Planning efforts should always be rooted in a fundamental understanding of a community's existing demographic, market, and physical conditions which provide guidance for community leaders when making decisions for the future. While this chapter only hits on a few key findings from the existing conditions inventory and analysis, and the public engagement process, the complete summaries can be found in the appendix.

PLAN OVERVIEW

The Harrison County Town Planning Initiative, funded by both HCCF and Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VII Implementation Grant, assisted each of the county's ten incorporated towns to complete a Comprehensive Plan and an Asset Management Plan, as required by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT).

What is the Harrison County Town Planning Initiative?

Planning for the future often begins as a grassroots effort within a community- meaning the issues that need to be solved and the big ideas for the future MUST come from the people, workers, and businesses of the town. Individuals and groups working together provide a base for the policies and development-related decisions, helping identify the projects and programs needed to help achieve the vision and goals for the future.

The *Harrison County Town Planning Initiative* was first introduced in the *2020 Harrison County Community Leadership Planning Initiative*, a plan that brought together the multiple governmental bodies, non-profits, and community organizations within Harrison County to provide a strategic and aligned direction related to the quality of life for those living and working in Harrison County. In response to this plan, the Harrison County Community Foundation (HCCF) recognized the importance and impact of providing the resources to each town for them to dream big and solve community issues. This initiative, funded by both HCCF and Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VII Implementation Grant, provided assistance to the county's ten incorporated towns to complete a comprehensive plan and an asset management plan to provide a foundation for each community to make the positive changes they felt were most critical to the town's future.

The *New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan* encourages the town to celebrate its seclusion and invites others to enjoy what the town has to offer. Residents and visitors can enjoy access to quality recreational opportunities, scenic views, and small-town living. A comprehensive plan works to identify a community's goals and aspirations for the future based on community needs, data-driven trends, and public perceptions. At the end of the process, the plan should be used to guide decisions related to growth and development and also help prioritize projects and programs identified for the short, mid, and long-term.

PLANNING PROCESS

The development of this comprehensive plan was guided by the ideas and feedback shared by the community. The *New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan* took place over ten months, starting in March 2023 and ending in April 2024. The process consisted of three key phases:

PHASE 1: EXISTING CONDITIONS (MARCH 2023 - JULY 2023)

The beginning phase consisted of data collection and analysis in addition to identifying the community's major assets and challenges through existing demographics and socio-economic conditions, mapping analysis, and the first public engagement event. This phase acted as the starting point for defining the big ideas for the future and big issues to solve.

Public Engagement Round 1 - The project team hosted the first public engagement opportunity for the Town of New Amsterdam on March 23 at Roys Hideout. Over 30 people stopped by the table at the fish fry to help the project team identify opportunities, challenges, and big ideas for the future. For individuals that weren't able to make it to the fish fry, an online survey was available.

PHASE 2: STRATEGIC PLANNING (AUGUST 2023 - DECEMBER 2023)

The second phase included the development of strategies, including crafting and refining the vision statement, goals, and big ideas, as well as using previous analysis and public input to develop the draft plan. This phase included a public engagement event allowing participants to review and provide feedback on the plan's draft plan content.

Public Engagement Round 2 - On September 7, the project team facilitated a second public meeting during a town council meeting to review the vision, goals, and big ideas for the future. There were 5 people in attendance. The project team went through each big idea with the attendees to ensure the content was headed in the right direction.

PHASE 3: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES (JANUARY 2024 - APRIL 2024)

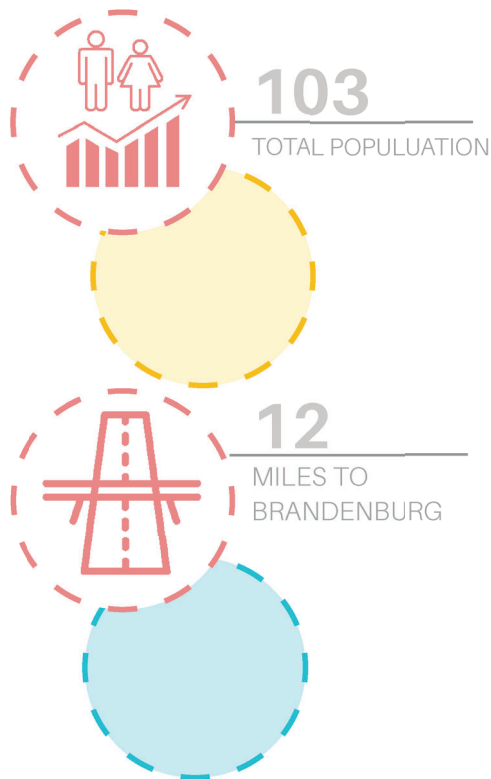
The final phase of the planning process focused primarily on implementation, including finalizing the prioritization of strategies and identifying supporting action steps for completing each strategy. This phase also included the final public engagement event, the public release of the draft plan, and the adoption process for the comprehensive plan.

Public Engagement Round 3 - The project team facilitated the third public meeting on April 8, 2024 at town hall to present the draft plan. Participants were invited to review the draft material and share any questions or comments. There were about 5 people in attendance. During this meeting, the project team asked the council to sign a resolution in support of the draft plan.

WHERE WE ARE TODAY?

DATA-DRIVEN

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES



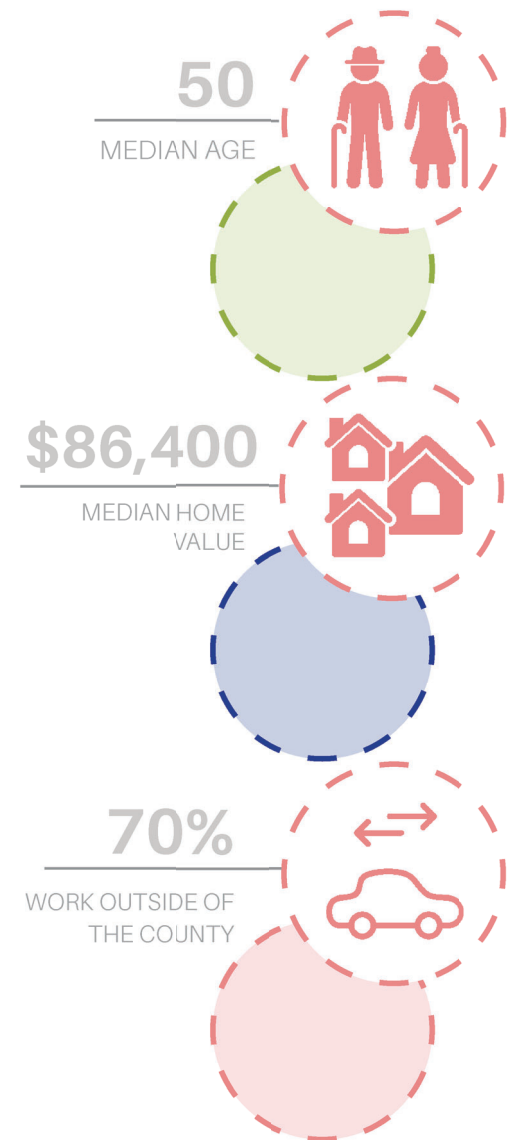
NEW AMSTERDAM'S OPPORTUNITIES

- **Population Growth** - Although comparatively small, Census data shows the population of New Amsterdam has grown in the past two decades, growing from 27 residents in 2010 to 103 people in 2020. However, this trend could be a result of a low participation rate in the 2010 census.
- **Proximity to Brandenburg, KY** - New Amsterdam is located within a short drive of Brandenburg, Kentucky, which offers retail, recreational and employment opportunities that are not available locally.
- **Rural, easy-going Lifestyle** - Harrison County is classified as a rural county in terms of population, density, and agricultural heritage. There are lifestyle characteristics that come with rural living that people find desirable. New Amsterdam's rural, easy-going lifestyle is an asset to the community.
- **Proximity to the Ohio River** - Serving as a recreational asset and adding to the scenic beauty of the community, the Ohio River provides a unique opportunity for the community. This asset provides easy access for fishermen and boaters.

During the planning process, a variety of demographic conditions were collected and assessed in addition to comments gathered directly from the public. The following pages show a high-level overview of New Amsterdam today. A more in-depth assessment can be found in the appendix on page 50.

NEW AMSTERDAM'S CHALLENGES

- **Aging population** - With a median age of 50, the older population of New Amsterdam creates challenges for the town. As current residents continue to get older, it will become more difficult for them to access the services and housing types needed to age. This demographic will likely have to leave the town as some point, and if they are not replaced with younger residents, the town may continue to decrease in population.
- **Home values have decreased, indicating that the housing stock may be in poor condition.** While the county as a whole and the state have experienced an increase in home values, New Amsterdam has experienced the largest decrease in home values of any town in the county. When considering the fact that all the homes are owner-occupied and the population is older, this may show that residents are having trouble keeping up with home repairs.
- **Most people work outside of the county.** With 70% of residents working outside the county and no one working within the town itself, people who live in New Amsterdam could be traveling long distances to get to their jobs.
- **Proximity to Goods and Services** - In towns like New Amsterdam, access to goods and services is very challenging. With only one retail establishment, the bait shop, residents have to leave the town for anything and everything. Furthermore, because the town is located in the most southern position of the county, the closest communities that provide access to everyday services are Brandenburg (12 miles), Corydon (15 miles), and Leavenworth (30 miles).
- **Potential for Flooding** - A large portion of the town limits lies within the 100-year floodplain, creating challenges for current residents and limiting the ability for future growth in those areas.



WHAT DID WE HEAR?

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

My biggest concern for New Amsterdam is the buildings that are sitting empty and falling down.

Would love to see more community gatherings like the fish fry.

New Amsterdam is missing a general store.

It would be nice to have a bigger park area with playground equipment for kids.

New Amsterdam could use more family homes and a more accessible boat ramp.

Would love to see a big floating boat dock on the river.

The planning process included three public engagement opportunities which provided community members several ways to share ideas and feedback either in person at a scheduled event or through an online survey. A few of the big ideas that were shared during the process are highlighted below. A more detailed summary of each public engagement event can be found on the project website (harrisoncountytownplanning.org).

Broadband and cell service needs to be improved.

New Amsterdam is one of the best kept secrets of Southern Indiana. I love this place!

We should fix up the old houses and buildings in town and reopen the general store.

I love New Amsterdam and its rich heritage. I'd love to see a plan for its future.

We should remove any type of growth along the river bank that could result in erosion and property damage.

With this town being secluded comes the fact that there is very little to no cell service for individuals visiting or living in town.

HOW IS THE PLAN ORGANIZED?

A comprehensive plan serves many functions including but not limited to identifying a collective vision for the future, providing justification for growth and development-related decisions, shaping the appearance of the community, promoting economic development, balancing competing interests, and prioritizing strategic investments.

The *New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan* is organized into three chapters. Each chapter is outlined below.

Chapter 1: About the Plan

Serving as the introduction to the plan, this chapter includes a plan overview, an overview of the process used to complete the plan, highlights of key findings, and an outline of the plan's organization.

Chapter 2: The Path Forward

Utilizing community feedback and data-driven facts as the foundation, chapter two outlines the vision for the future and several supporting big ideas. This chapter is organized into three themes. Each theme covers a variety of topics and big ideas crucial to guiding growth and enhancing the quality of life in New Amsterdam. The project and program recommendations within these big ideas should be utilized by town staff, elected officials, and community leaders when determining how to allocate resources within the community.

- Theme 1: Celebrate Our Assets – The first theme focuses on building upon the existing assets and resources in New Amsterdam to create new opportunities based on placemaking, historic and natural assets, parks, recreation, and trails. Expanding New Amsterdam's existing assets not only widens entertainment options and activities for current residents but can draw new visitors and residents to the community.
- Theme 2: Build Quality Places – The topics within this theme cover the physical aspects of New Amsterdam including land uses, roads and sidewalks, utilities and broadband, and housing. These planning elements are critical components to supporting growth within the community because they provide the foundation needed for development to occur.
- Theme 3: Collaborate to Expand Our Offerings – The final theme addresses the additional programs and facilities which contribute to the quality of place and ensure the town is adequately addressing health and wellness, education, workforce, and economic development. These planning elements support a growing population and ensure current and future residents remain healthy and stay competitive within the workforce.

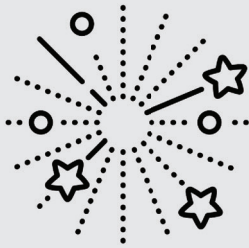
Chapter 3: Our Next Steps

Building on the highest priority strategies, chapter three provides additional details on the 8 catalytic initiatives that were identified as the most critical strategies to implement. This chapter is intended to assist the town in implementing each one of these projects, programs, or policies. Each catalyst initiative highlights specific information including a description, action steps, partners, resources, and tools.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

THEMES, GOALS, AND TOPICS

THEME 1 CELEBRATE OUR ASSETS



THE **CELEBRATE** GOAL

Enhance the town's identity as a river town by promoting New Amsterdam's local assets and rural character.

TOPICS EXPLORED

PLACEMAKING

HISTORIC & NATURAL
ASSETS

PARKS & RECREATION



THE **BUILD** GOAL

Explore policies and programs to maintain and improve the development and infrastructure within New Amsterdam.

TOPICS EXPLORED

LAND USE

TRANSPORTATION

UTILITIES

HOUSING

THEME 2 BUILD QUALITY PLACES

THEME 3 COLLABORATE TO EXPAND OUR OFFERINGS



THE **COLLABORATE** GOAL

Grow the community by providing additional recreational opportunities and access to everyday goods.

TOPICS EXPLORED

HEALTH & WELLNESS

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



New Amsterdam is a welcoming community that both celebrates its seclusion and invites others to enjoy what the town has to offer.



CHAPTER 2

The Path Forward

Chapter Two was created with the future in mind. This chapter starts by identifying the vision for the next 10 to 20 years. Following the vision, the chapter uses three themes to organize the goals, big ideas, and strategy statements. The strategies serve as the primary plan recommendations that should be implemented over time. Each strategy is ranked as a low, medium, or high priority. The high priority strategies are then carried forward to Chapter Three as catalyst initiatives.

DEFINING THE PLAN COMPONENTS

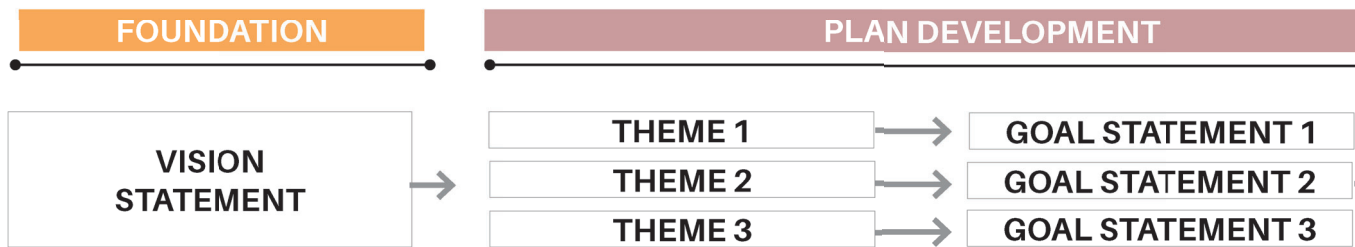
While the composition of every comprehensive plan may vary slightly, there are a series of common planning components that work together to create the guidance document. These components represent a hierarchy of detail starting with the broadest elements, the vision statement, at the top and working downward. With each step down (or in this case, moving right across the bottom of the page), the planning components get slightly more specific. The graphic below defines each of the components and illustrates how the components are used to build upon one another.

Before making a plan, it is important to know where you want to go first. A vision statement is an overarching and forward-thinking idea that captures the values of the community and outlines what the community wants to do or become in the future. After establishing a clear understanding of the town’s aspirations, the vision statement serves as the foundation for the goals, big ideas, and strategies.

The plan themes provide the organizational framework to ensure the comprehensive plan is addressing all the necessary topics. The goals, big ideas, and strategies transform the desired outcomes into an attainable, community-driven action plan. The plan recommendations are identified within the strategy statements. In essence, the strategies are the specific things the community needs to do in order to achieve the vision and goals.

By nature, a comprehensive plan covers a vast range of topics. Because of this, the number of strategy recommendations can quickly become overwhelming for plan users. **The Catalyst Initiatives help to narrow the focus by identifying the top priorities for the community.** The following chapter outlines the vision, themes, goals, big ideas, and strategies. The catalyst initiatives are outlined in Chapter Three: Our Next Steps.

Composition of Planning Components



The **vision statement** is a broad statement that highlights what the town wants to do or become in the future. The statement captures the values of the community and outlines what residents wish the community to strive for in the future.

The three **themes** are used as organizational elements to provide a consistent framework for all of the comprehensive plans completed as part of the Harrison County Town Planning Initiative. Within each theme, there are a number of topics explored.

The **goal statements** define what the town is striving to accomplish in order to achieve the vision over the next 10 to 20 years.

SETTING THE STAGE

The vision statement represents a blend of community values, aspirations, and commitments from local residents, staff and officials, business owners, and neighbors. It is a reflection of the community values and identifies the places, things, or characteristics that should be preserved. It documents the hopes and dreams for the future and demonstrates dedication to working towards the desired outcome. For New Amsterdam, the town is a welcoming community that both celebrates its seclusion and invites others to enjoy what the town has to offer.

This vision statement was developed based on the ideas and input that were collected throughout the public engagement process. The first round of engagement encouraged participants to dream big while sharing their ideas for the future. The second and third rounds of engagement were used to refine the statement and confirm the vision resonated with the community.

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

A vision statement is not about what the community is today but instead about what it want to do or become in the future.

*New Amsterdam is a welcoming community that both **celebrates its seclusion** and invites others to enjoy what the town has to offer. Residents and visitors can enjoy access to **quality recreational opportunities, scenic views, and small-town living.***

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

IMPLEMENTATION



The **big ideas** are a collection of opportunities identified by the community or within a previous planning effort. These ideas link the desired outcome with a specific strategy for addressing a challenge or leveraging an asset or opportunity.

The **strategy statements** identify a specific project, program, or policy that can be used or implemented to achieve the vision and goals. The strategies are prioritized to help narrow the focus of the community.

The **catalyst initiatives** are the top priority strategies for the town. Additional information such as a initiative description, action steps, partners, and resources is identified to assist the town in implementation.

CELEBRATE OUR ASSETS

GOAL STATEMENT

Enhance the town's identity as a river town by promoting New Amsterdam's local assets and rural character.

1. PLACEMAKING

What does this mean for New Amsterdam?

As a tight-knit, aging community, New Amsterdam is home to motivated residents that are looking to develop opportunities to attract future residents and visitors. While New Amsterdam is a long-standing community, there is a growing need to establish and promote an identity for the town. New Amsterdam could utilize placemaking strategies, such as community events and beautification, to help stabilize the population. With a median age of 50 years old, attracting the younger generation is essential to remaining a small but thriving community.



PLACEMAKING BIG IDEAS

What do we want to achieve?

Big Idea: Festivals and Events.

Bring the community together by establishing opportunities for local gatherings.

New Amsterdam is home to a passionate community with people who want to explore new ways to celebrate their town. By hosting local events, such as fishing tournaments or fish fries, the town and residents can collaborate to create more opportunities for people to enjoy their town. Not only do these events attract visitors but they also provide opportunities for social interaction for residents. While socialization is beneficial for all, it can be even more important for aging residents and individuals who live alone.

Big Idea: Community Upkeep.

Foster local pride and encourage quality places by involving the community in beautification efforts.

In a small town, the visual appearance of the community can go a long way. Through public engagement, the community expressed the importance of encouraging property owners to maintain their yards, homes, and commercial structures. Improvements could range from simple clean-up to larger, more extensive home repairs. The town can encourage residents to clean up their property by hosting community clean up events throughout the year.

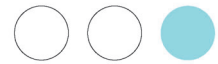
STRATEGIES

How will we achieve it?

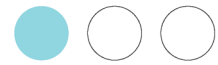
PRIORITY RANKING

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

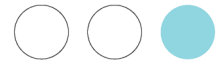
STRATEGY 1.1 - Form a volunteer committee of a few community members and Town staff to organize local events.



STRATEGY 1.2 - Identify an annual event or festival and explore local funding options for supplies or equipment that can be reused in following years.



STRATEGY 1.3 - Plan a seasonal community clean-up day that includes access to a dumpster for residents.





THEME #1

CELEBRATE OUR ASSETS

GOAL STATEMENT

Enhance the town's identity as a river town by promoting New Amsterdam's local assets and rural character.

2. HISTORIC AND NATURAL ASSETS

What does this mean for New Amsterdam?

The Ohio River is an integral component of New Amsterdam's history and natural environment. Part of celebrating this asset to its fullest extent relies on recognizing and acting upon both the opportunities and challenges presented by the river. For example, the town should consider how historic preservation efforts might be strengthened by mitigating future flood damage while also enhancing local access to the river.



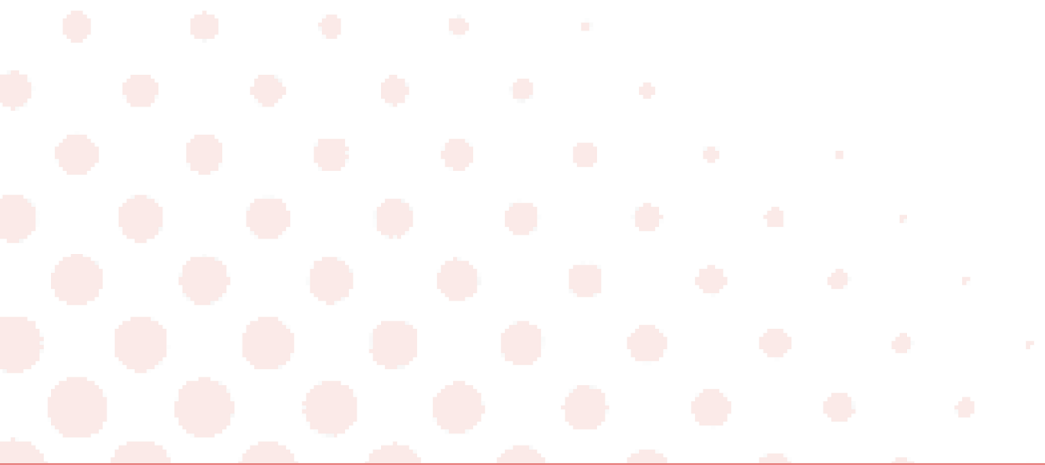
HISTORIC AND NATURAL ASSETS BIG IDEAS

What do we want to achieve?

Big Idea: Preserve and Promote Local History.

Emphasize New Amsterdam's heritage by promoting historic events and preserving historic structures.

New Amsterdam got its start as a port town along the Ohio River in the early 19th century. The town has relied on access to the river for growth and trade, especially when steamboats were active. As with many river communities in the area, The Great Flood of 1937 greatly impacted the town and recent flooding continues to impact the community. Preserving this part of New Amsterdam's identity through historic flood-level markers and protecting existing historic structures from future flood events will help preserve the town's legacy.



STRATEGIES

How will we achieve it?

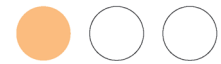
PRIORITY RANKING

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

STRATEGY 2.1 - Work with the current owner of the general store property to explore options for state and/or national historic property designation.



STRATEGY 2.2 - Partner with the Historical Society of Harrison County to develop interpretive or commemorative signage about the historic properties in New Amsterdam.





THEME #1

CELEBRATE OUR ASSETS

GOAL STATEMENT

Enhance the town's identity as a river town by promoting New Amsterdam's local assets and rural character.

3. PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS

What does this mean for New Amsterdam?

Regionally, New Amsterdam residents have access to state parks and natural areas, however, there is no local access to playgrounds or pavilions that can provide play and gathering space for the community. While the Ohio River is a driver for local recreation, there is interest in prioritizing investment in other recreational opportunities that will support residents and attract visitors.



PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS BIG IDEAS

What do we want to achieve?

Big Idea: New Park.

Develop a new park that will serve as a destination for locals and visitors.

New Amsterdam does not currently have a park and there is growing interest in designing and constructing a new park near the local boat ramp. A new park could provide a place for residents and visitors to enjoy. Potential amenities for a park might include picnic areas with grills, a playground, and public shelter with restroom facilities.

Big Idea: Boat Ramp Improvements.

Repair and potentially enhance the local boat ramp.

New Amsterdam has the only boat ramp along the Ohio River within the 15 miles between Leavenworth and Mauckport, however maintenance is needed to ensure the ramp remains a desirable place to launch boats in the coming years. By seeking grant funding and coordinating with the Army Corps of Engineers, upgrades can be made to ensure local businesses, recreational areas, and events can continue to be supported by this amenity. This improvement should incorporate how best to address erosion and explore how the town could provide additional parking for users.

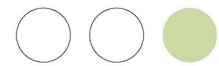
STRATEGIES

How will we achieve it?

PRIORITY RANKING

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

STRATEGY 3.1 - Survey the local community to determine what recreational amenities, such as a pavilion or playground, are top priorities in New Amsterdam.



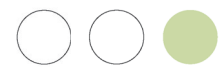
STRATEGY 3.2 - Coordinate with local property owners to determine their interest in selling or donating vacant land for the development of a park.



STRATEGY 3.3 - Partner with Harrison County Parks Department to explore local and state funding options to support the development and maintenance of a park in New Amsterdam.



STRATEGY 3.4 - Coordinate with the Army Corps of Engineers to assess the current condition of the boat ramp and determine ways to make improvements to the ramp and install parking nearby that will not exacerbate erosion.



STRATEGY 3.5 - Consider requiring a small fee or annual permit for using the boat ramp and any future parking to fund maintenance.



STRATEGY 3.6 - Explore state funding options for boat ramp and adjacent parking improvements.





THEME #2

BUILD QUALITY PLACES

GOAL STATEMENT

Explore policies and programs to maintain and improve the development and infrastructure within New Amsterdam.

4. LAND USE

What does this mean for New Amsterdam?

New Amsterdam is a primarily residential community with some concentration of community and commercial uses along Main Street and Green Street. In order to support the current population and potential new residents, ensuring properties are well-maintained and protected from future flooding is essential to New Amsterdam's land use efforts.

The following land use analysis and recommendations are intended to guide future development in a manner that respects the desire of the community to preserve its rural character and quality of life while identifying areas for additional residential development and neighborhood services for current residents and future generations. The term land use is used to describe the types of activities and uses taking place on a parcel of land or within a structure. The town's future land use plan considers the current uses of the land and determines how the land should be used ten to 20 years into the future. A future land use plan does not change the current zoning or use of a property, it only guides decisions on how that land should be used if the land use does change. The following big ideas summarize the policies, programs, and projects that are needed to support and implement the recommendations shown on the map. The map and big ideas below work together to create the future land use plan.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP



THEME #2

BUILD QUALITY PLACES

GOAL STATEMENT

Explore policies and programs to maintain and improve the development and infrastructure within New Amsterdam.



LAND USE BIG IDEAS

What do we want to achieve?

Big Idea: Maintain and Restore Properties.

Enhance the visual appeal of private properties by encouraging property maintenance.

New Amsterdam's residential and commercial buildings are both aging, and while some properties greatly contribute to the town's historic character and charm, varying levels of restoration and maintenance are needed to continue to support both functionality and attractiveness in town. The town can pursue different strategies to achieve this goal, such as establishing programs to encourage property owners to make improvements or seeking external funding to support improvements.

Big Idea: Flood-Prone Properties.

Protect buildings in flood-prone areas to ensure the town continues to be a safe and enjoyable place to live.

Like many low-lying river towns, New Amsterdam's proximity to the Ohio River is both a source of its success and a challenge to be mitigated. Recent and historic flooding has damaged structures, contributed population decline, and has made most forms of future development on properties along the river difficult or impossible to build, either legally or financially. By coordinating with Harrison County and federal and state agencies, New Amsterdam can utilize funding, guidance, and programs to properly develop these areas and mitigate future flooding.

STRATEGIES

How will we achieve it?

PRIORITY RANKING

LOW MEDIUM HIGH

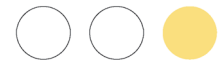
STRATEGY 4.1 - Create a contest that awards homeowners each year for improvements to front lawns, gardens, and/or facades.



STRATEGY 4.2 - Encourage local utilization of Indiana's Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit to offset maintenance costs for historic structures.



STRATEGY 4.3 - Encourage property owners to purchase flood insurance to protect their properties from flood damage.



STRATEGY 4.4 - Coordinate with the Harrison County Plan Commission to update the zoning map in order to limit development in areas with high flood risks.





THEME #2

BUILD QUALITY PLACES

GOAL STATEMENT

Explore policies and programs to maintain and improve the development and infrastructure within New Amsterdam.

5. UTILITIES

What does this mean for New Amsterdam?

Many cities, towns, and counties are responsible for providing and maintaining adequate public facilities and services, such as water, wastewater, stormwater, street maintenance, and solid waste disposal. New Amsterdam does not currently offer any public utilities or services. Limited utility access currently places a strain on local convenience and quality of life. Improvements to New Amsterdam's future utility network will ensure residents can easily connect with the broader community and access vital resources, while also preserving the distinct sense of seclusion and independence in New Amsterdam.



UTILITIES BIG IDEAS

What do we want to achieve?

Big Idea: Expand Broadband.

Improve online access to basic services by supporting broadband improvements.

Cell phone service and high-speed internet access have become a necessary utility, just as electricity and the telephone were in the early part of the last century. Due to the rural nature of the community, broadband wireless internet in New Amsterdam is spotty and, in some areas of town, is nonexistent, which creates challenges for residents. The town can work with the county to overcome these challenges. In 2022, the county completed the Harrison County's Broadband Readiness and Infrastructure Deployment Plan which identifies strategies for providing service to the entire county (including the towns) at speeds substantially faster than current speeds. According to the Plan, the census tract in which New Amsterdam is located lacks services and would require financial incentives to include broadband build-out due to its low population count.

Big Idea: Septic Maintenance.

Encourage regular maintenance of septic systems to protect water quality and ensure safe and effective treatment of wastewater.

Property owners in New Amsterdam rely on septic systems for safe and effective treatment of wastewater. When a septic system is not properly maintained or fails, untreated wastewater can reach water sources and introduce bacteria and harmful viruses into the water supply. Because of the high flood risk in New Amsterdam, the installation and maintenance of septic systems are regulated by the Harrison County Health Department. The town could partner with the Health Department to host workshops and develop educational materials to help residents learn more about how to effectively maintain their septic systems. The town could also explore a "Pay to Pump" program to work towards having every septic tank pumped over the course of several years. The town could budget a set amount of money from the Riverboat Funds to pump three tanks, free of charge, per year.

Big Idea: Street Lighting.

Strengthen local safety and comfort with street lighting along key routes.

Street lighting can improve the quality of life by making people feel safer and help reduce crime and vandalism. Currently, New Amsterdam lacks streetlights along the primary roads making it difficult to see at night. Installing a few streetlights at key locations could lead to a significant increase in the number of minutes people spend walking each week. It can also reduce the number of people who avoid leaving their homes at night, reduce social isolation, improve physical and mental well-being, and increase community pride.

Big Idea: Emergency Services.

Explore options for bolstering emergency response services.

New Amsterdam does not have its own police or fire services, meaning that emergency services are traveling quite a distance to service calls from residents. This commute could take up to 30 minutes depending on the situation and availability of first responders. Residents have expressed that the lack of services and police presence can leave people feeling apprehensive about their health and safety in a moment of unexpected circumstances. Town staff should consider strategies to improve outcomes while waiting for responders such as facilitating CPR training while also working with providers to lessen the response time for emergency personnel.

PRIORITY RANKING

STRATEGIES <i>How will we achieve it?</i>	<i>PRIORITY RANKING</i>		
	<i>LOW</i>	<i>MEDIUM</i>	<i>HIGH</i>
STRATEGY 5.1 - Support County efforts to expand broadband access into rural areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
STRATEGY 5.2 - Coordinate with the Health Department to host a workshop to educate residents about septic maintenance and installation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
STRATEGY 5.3 - Explore external funding options to support the installation of street lights.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
STRATEGY 5.4 - Explore the creation of a "Pay to Pump" program that could assist the town in pumping a specific number of tanks each year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
STRATEGY 5.5 - Host a CPR certification training for the community to increase preparedness during health emergencies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
STRATEGY 5.6 - Partner with Emergency Management to host a workshop on natural hazard preparedness, such as floodings, fires, and tornadoes.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



THEME #2

BUILD QUALITY PLACES

GOAL STATEMENT

Explore policies and programs to maintain and improve the development and infrastructure within New Amsterdam.

6. TRANSPORTATION

What does this mean for New Amsterdam?

Improvements to New Amsterdam's transportation network are focused on enhancing the local vehicular and pedestrian connectivity. By exploring funding options to maintain local roadways and support new pedestrian infrastructure, New Amsterdam will be working towards providing a more connected and comfortable community. Currently, New Amsterdam does not have a road department to maintain local roadways. If maintenance or improvements are needed, the town contracts local companies for each specific need.

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION MAP





THEME #2

BUILD QUALITY PLACES

GOAL STATEMENT

Explore policies and programs to maintain and improve the development and infrastructure within New Amsterdam.



TRANSPORTATION BIG IDEAS

What do we want to achieve?

Big Idea: Sidewalks.

Improve local mobility by filling gaps in the town's sidewalk network and expanding routes to priority destinations.

Sidewalk coverage in New Amsterdam is currently limited to certain segments of Green Street and Main Street, which does not support connections to residential areas. By completing the gaps in the existing sidewalk network and identifying new routes for pedestrian infrastructure, New Amsterdam will be better positioned to support travel for all residents. The town should work to identify priority locations for new infrastructure and then determine how to fund the improvements. Funding for sidewalks can come from a variety of sources. INDOT's Local Public Agency (LPA) program provides funds for sidewalks that require a 20% match locally. Other state and local non-profit or community organizations also provide funding for sidewalks.

Big Idea: Road Maintenance.

Repair existing roadways to preserve safe and comfortable travel throughout the town.

Road maintenance is a very large expense for communities with limited resources. Luckily, the state provides funding programs to assist cities and towns with the maintenance and expansion of infrastructure. The Indiana Department of Transportation's Community Crossings program can be used to convert gravel roads to hard surface roads, road and bridge projects that are included in an asset management plan, and drainage work that is associated with a specific road project. In order to be eligible for these funds, the town needs to maintain an updated Asset Management Plan.

STRATEGIES

How will we achieve it?

PRIORITY RANKING
LOW MEDIUM HIGH

STRATEGY 6.1 - Identify high priority road segments for sidewalk improvements.



STRATEGY 6.2 - Partner with Harrison County to apply for grant funding to expand sidewalks along high priority routes.



STRATEGY 6.3 - Maintain an updated Asset Management Plan.



STRATEGY 6.4 - Identify high-priority routes for road and drainage improvements.



STRATEGY 6.5 - Apply for grant funding to support roadway improvements.





THEME #3

COLLABORATE TO EXPAND OUR OFFERINGS

GOAL STATEMENT

Grow the community by providing additional recreational opportunities and access to everyday goods.

7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

What does this mean for New Amsterdam?

Despite local interest in having more shopping, gathering, and recreational options, businesses in New Amsterdam's boundaries are limited to one store. With a desire to attract new residents, offering basic retail options and attractions will create more opportunity to encourage new residents to relocate and existing residents to remain in New Amsterdam.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BIG IDEAS

What do we want to achieve?

Big Idea: Access to Essential Items.

Improve access to basic goods and services through different retail options.

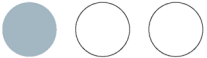
New Amsterdam's location in Harrison County creates challenges for conveniently accessing everyday necessities. Historically, the town has had retail to support the community and residents are now interested in exploring options to encourage a new general store that offer essential goods to New Amsterdam residents, neighboring areas, and visitors. While the town likely does not have the market to support a full-sized or neighborhood-scale convenience store, the town can explore creative solutions for ensuring residents have access to essential items. A quicker, cheaper solution may include a mobile food pantry or little free pantries that operate on a take what you need, give what you can model. Other possible solutions could require an interested party to reopen the General Store that was once located in town.

STRATEGIES

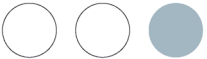
How will we achieve it?

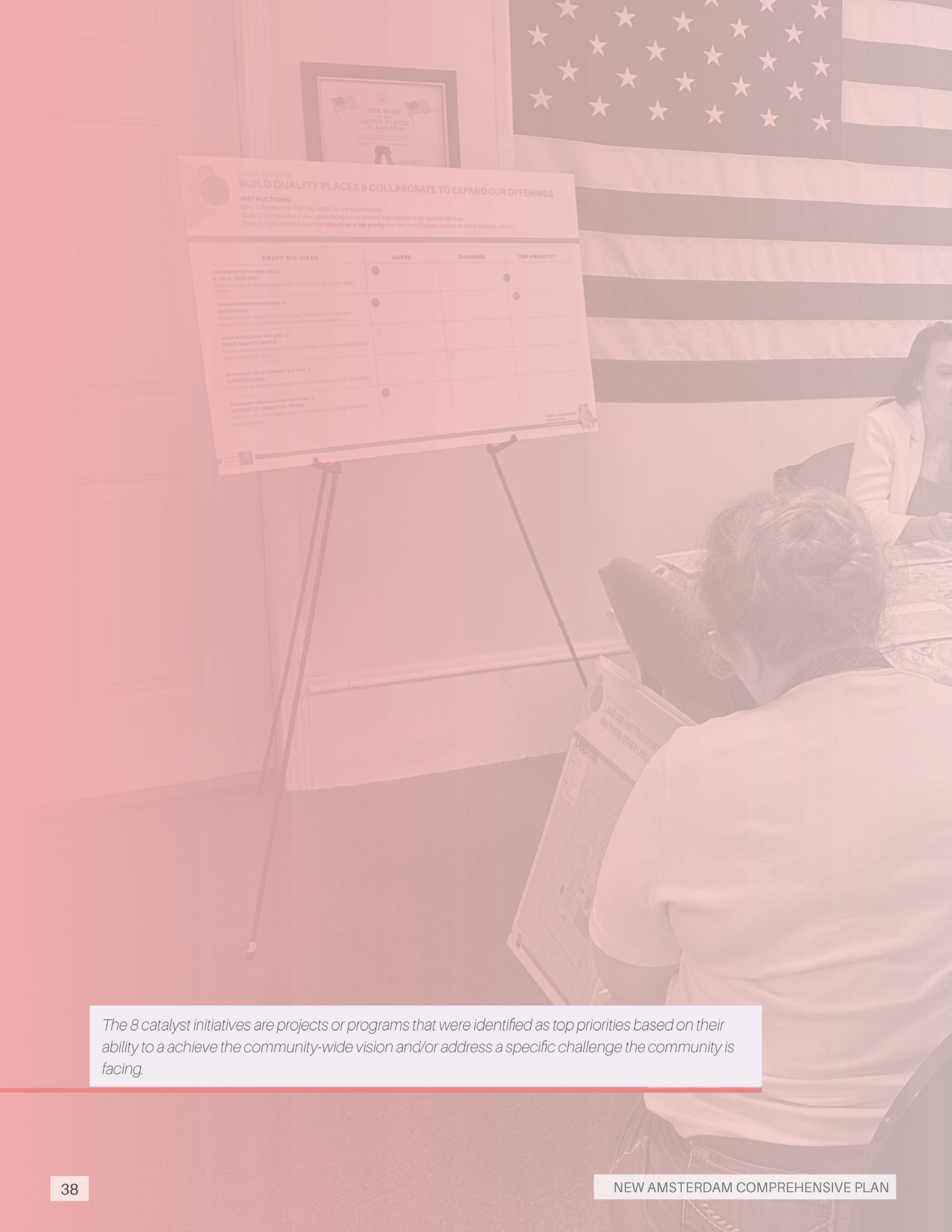
PRIORITY RANKING
LOW MEDIUM HIGH

STRATEGY 7.1 - Increase local access to food by collaborating with Purdue Extension to connect residents with an existing Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program or to develop a new one.



STRATEGY 7.2 - Revitalize the former General Store building and repurpose the property to be used as a combine park and convenience store.





The 8 catalyst initiatives are projects or programs that were identified as top priorities based on their ability to achieve the community-wide vision and/or address a specific challenge the community is facing.



CHAPTER 3 Our Next Steps

Building on the highest priority strategies, chapter three provides additional details on the 8 catalytic initiatives that were identified as the most critical strategies to implement. This chapter is intended to assist the town in implementing each one of these projects, programs, or policies. Each catalyst initiative highlights specific information including a description, action steps, partners, resources, and tools.

CATALYST INITIATIVE 1

Supports the *Festivals and Events Big Idea* (See Page 21)

PLACEMAKING STRATEGY 1.1

Form a volunteer committee of a few community members and town staff to organize local events.

DESCRIPTION

By forming a volunteer events committee that is composed of a few dedicated community members, the town can explore options for hosting public events without overextending the capacity of staff. In order to do this, the town should start by identifying one town staff member and another community member who can lead the committee, determine the roles and responsibilities of committee members, schedule meetings, and invite new members. Initially, the committee should focus on planning an initial event and, once that is completed, work towards establishing and achieving annual goals for the committee.

The town and committee should be thoughtful and realistic about the number, size, and types of events that can be held each year. This is particularly important when considering the costs of hosting community events and the time and level-of-commitment for each committee member. It is important to not exhaust resources and volunteers, so it is very important to be thoughtful about the level of commitment required from individuals, businesses, or organizations who dedicate time or resources to supporting events.

ACTION STEPS

- Identify one staff person and one community member who can lead the committee.
- Determine what the responsibilities of the committee and committee members should be and draft a letter to individuals who should be invited to join the committee.
- Establish a regular meeting date, time, and location for the committee.
- Identify and plan an initial event or series of events that the committee can host.
- After the initial event, the committee should continue to set and work towards fulfilling annual goals.

PARTNERS

- Local churches
- Local businesses
- Town staff
- Local volunteers

RESOURCES / TOOLS

- Indiana Office of Tourism Development
- Marketing Asset Grant, IOTD
- Indiana Arts Commission (Art Events or Performances)
- Non-Profit Grants

CATALYST INITIATIVE 2

Supports the *Community Upkeep Big Idea* (See Page 21)

PLACEMAKING STRATEGY 1.3

Plan a seasonal community clean-up day that includes access to a dumpster for residents.

DESCRIPTION

Organizing volunteer clean-ups can benefit communities in two ways. First, volunteers expand the capacity of a local government and help beautify an area by removing garbage or cleaning facilities/amenities. Second, a well-run event can get volunteers energized about getting more involved with the community. The town can help improve the appearance of the community by hosting and promoting an annual “dumpster day” when residents can dispose of over-sized garbage on their properties. To successfully run this event, the town should work with a local garbage collection service to organize the event, or even work with Harrison County to develop a county-wide trash removal event. The dumpster should be located in an easily-accessible area and the town should work with the service provider to communicate what items can or cannot be disposed of as part of the event. With New Amsterdam’s aging population, the town should explore options for getting volunteers or County Staff to help residents dispose of heavy items. For an event like this to be successful, the details and rules of participation must be well-promoted.

ACTION STEPS

- If already established, coordinate with the Volunteer Event Committee (Catalyst Initiative 1) to develop a detailed event plan.
- Secure a garbage collection service that is willing to participate in the event. Create a flyer and social media post to promote the event.
- Organize the supplies needed for the event and seek supply donations wherever possible.
- Create and assign specific tasks during the cleanup event.
- Determine how to thank volunteers for their help, whether that’s through a gift or meal at the end of the event or a follow-up note.

PARTNERS

- Local garbage service
- Harrison County Solid Waste Authority
- Local property owners
- Town Council/Staff
- Local volunteers

RESOURCES / TOOLS

- [How to Organize a Neighborhood Cleanup](#)

CATALYST INITIATIVE 3

Supports the *New Park Big Idea* (See Page 25)

PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS STRATEGY 3.1

Survey the local community to determine what recreational amenities, such as a pavilion or playground, are top priorities in New Amsterdam.

DESCRIPTION

By asking your community about the types of park amenities or equipment they would like to see, New Amsterdam can ensure that future investments in a public space align with what residents really want. Developing and maintaining parks can be expensive, so that investment should benefit the community as much as possible. Additionally, if seeking grant funding, survey responses can help demonstrate how important the project is to community members.

Successful surveys often include a few important elements: they do not take very long for someone to complete, they offer some kind of incentive (raffles, etc.) to encourage participation, and the questions are easy to understand and answer. Most surveys today are hosted online, so participants can submit their answers with a click of a button. If home internet access is a potential barrier in and around New Amsterdam, the town should also consider creating a paper version of the survey. A paper survey can easily be made available at popular businesses or community spaces, so that someone can quickly complete and submit the survey. For a higher cost, the town could also mail out copies to individual addresses. When the survey response period has closed, the town should share some highlights with the community to help demonstrate how their participation can help strengthen public projects and guide decisions.

ACTION STEPS

- Brainstorm possible questions for the survey and then narrow the questions down to the most important/informative ones. Shorter surveys tend to be the most successful.
- Determine the method for sharing the survey and receiving responses, such as mailing paper surveys or a link to an online survey, posting the survey online, or providing the survey at local businesses or community spaces.
- Decide if a survey incentive, such as a raffle, should be offered to help with promotion.
- Release the survey and share a closing date.
- After the closing date, review the responses and share a few highlights from the responses with the community.

PARTNERS

- Town staff
- Volunteer residents

RESOURCES / TOOLS

- [Survey Monkey: Surveys 101](#)

CATALYST INITIATIVE 4

Supports the *Boat Ramp Improvements Big Idea* (See Page 25)

PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS STRATEGY 3.4

Coordinate with the Army Corps of Engineers to assess the current condition of the boat ramp and determine ways to make improvements to the ramp and install parking nearby that will not exacerbate erosion.

DESCRIPTION

The New Amsterdam community wants to repair and upgrade the town's boat ramp on the Ohio River by switching from a gravel to a paved surface and adding adjacent parking spots. Repairing the boat ramp is an important priority for the town, but it is a project that will require substantial coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers and could also require substantial financial investment, especially with added parking. The boat ramp improvements could also bring more visitors to the town and support community events, so while this project might present certain challenges, devoting time and resources into this project could be justified by the ultimate benefit that it will bring to the community.

ACTION STEPS

- Initiate coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers to determine the type of improvements that are needed for the boat ramp and the options for installing parking spots near the ramp.
- If needed, working with adjacent property owners to acquire a small area of land for parking.
- Consider external funding options to support the boat ramp and parking improvements.

PARTNERS

- Army Corps of Engineers
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- Local property owners
- Town Staff and Officials

RESOURCES / TOOLS

- Indiana American Water - [Environmental Grant Program](#)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife: Boating Access Grant Program

CATALYST INITIATIVE 5

Supports the *Flood-Prone Properties Big Idea* (See Page 26)

LAND USE STRATEGY 4.2

Encourage property owners to purchase flood insurance to protect their properties from flood damage.

DESCRIPTION

In addition to standard home insurance, flood insurance can be purchased by homeowners to protect their properties from expensive flood damage. Since most home insurance providers do not supply flood insurance as part of standard home insurance packages, FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program should be promoted in order to encourage property owners to consider acquiring flood insurance. Flood insurance is relatively inexpensive, with the average homeowner's flood insurance premium costing \$42 per month. Promotion can include mailed flyers, social media posts, or even workshops to provide more in-depth information about the need for flood insurance and the steps to obtaining it. This type of insurance can help combat challenges related to erosion and stormwater. It is important to note that a natural disaster does not need to be declared for the insurance to cover future damage, but it would not cover damage incurred prior to enrollment.

ACTION STEPS

- Coordinate with EMA and IDHS to obtain any existing promotional materials for flood insurance that can be shared online or through the mail.
- Consider hosting a training on the National Flood Insurance Program if there is enough interest from the community.

PARTNERS

- Local property owners

RESOURCES / TOOLS

- Harrison County Emergency Management Agency (EMA)
- Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS)

CATALYST INITIATIVE 6

Supports the *Septic Maintenance Big Idea* (See Page 31)

UTILITIES STRATEGY 5.2

Coordinate with the Health Department to host a workshop to educate residents about septic maintenance and installation.

DESCRIPTION

New Amsterdam's rural location requires residents to rely upon septic, rather than sewer, for wastewater disposal. Maintaining existing septic systems is an important responsibility for property owners, but many people are not fully educated on the ins and outs of caring for their septic system. This is especially important for properties located within the 100-year flood plain, which are not eligible for new septic systems, so maintaining existing systems is critical for the continued use of those lands. To alleviate some of the burden on property owners, the town can help introduce residents to the Harrison County Health Department's process and standards for septic improvements and maintenance. In addition to spreading information to local property owners, the town can host a workshop with the Health Department in order to inform the community and allow residents to interact directly with the Health Department.

ACTION STEPS

- Contact the Health Department to organize a workshop on septic systems.
- Set a date for the workshop and widely promote it throughout the community.
- Host the workshop and document any consistent issues or questions that are discussed at the meeting.

PARTNERS

- Harrison County Health Department
- Local property owners

RESOURCES / TOOLS

- Harrison County Health Department: [Septic System Maintenance](#)

CATALYST INITIATIVE 7

Supports the *Emergency Services Big Idea* (See Page 31)

UTILITIES STRATEGY 5.5

Host a CPR certification training for the community to increase preparedness during health emergencies.

DESCRIPTION

As the town evaluates options for improving access to emergency services in New Amsterdam, some of the more immediate needs of the community can be met by providing educational opportunities for residents about important health and safety techniques that can be used in emergencies. Certain health trainings, such as CPR trainings, could be hosted by the town in order to equip community members with vital skills and knowledge that could save lives when waiting for emergency services. The town should also coordinate with community partners to determine what other kinds of training or resources should be shared with the community.

ACTION STEPS

- Coordinate with the Harrison County Health Department to determine what kinds of training and/or resources would be most beneficial to people living in and around New Amsterdam.
- Determine what trainings and resources can be facilitated by the Health Department and if there are others that would require a different partner.
- Promote and host an initial CPR training that is open to the public.

PARTNERS

- Harrison County Health Department

RESOURCES / TOOLS

- American Red Cross
- AARP of Indiana

CATALYST INITIATIVE 8

Supports the *Access to Essential Items Big Idea* (See Page 37)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 7.2

Revitalize the former general store building and repurpose the property to be used as a combine park and convenience store.

DESCRIPTION

During community discussions, residents have determined that a high priority for the town should be supporting the development of a small grocery or convenience store to improve local access to basic goods. Residents are interested in renovating the former general store building on Green Street to reopen the store; however, the building is in need of repair and there are additional sewer-related issues on-site. There are different pathways the community can follow to accomplish this goal. One option is for the town to identify local developers or businesses that would be interested in locating in New Amsterdam, but this could be challenging due to the area's small population. Another option is for the town to purchase the property in order to access grants and loans to update the building and then leasing the building to an independent business and/or a community co-op. Ultimately, the financial success of any business in this space will rely on offering a mix of different services. This could include combining retail with a café at the general store or providing a mix of different retail options, such as selling fishing/boating supplies or local farm products alongside basic goods.

ACTION STEPS

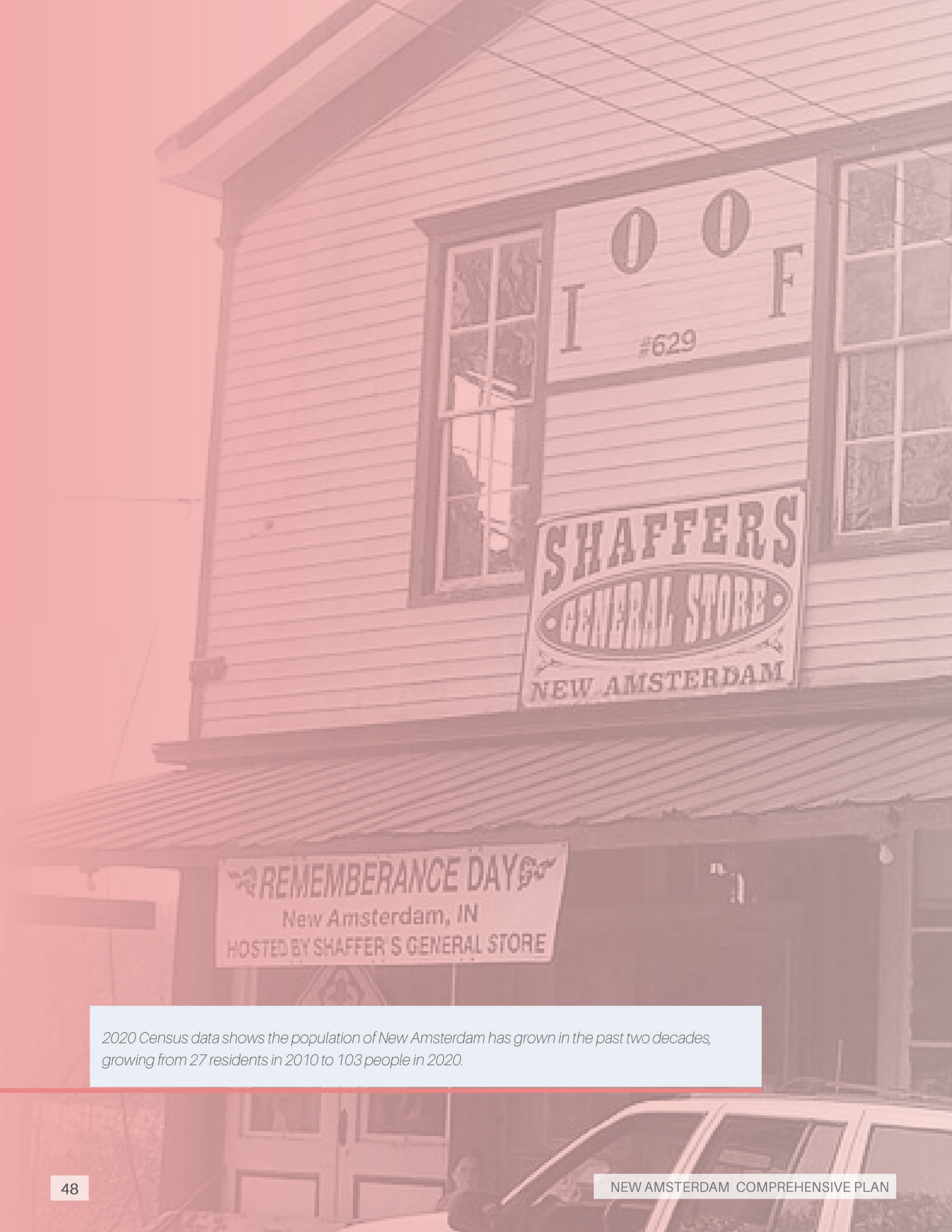
- Work with the general store property owner and community members to determine whether the town should purchase the property or if a nonprofit should be established to manage the property for community use.
- Partner with Indiana Landmarks to secure funding for renovations to the structure while still preserving the site's historic integrity.
- Determine what combination of commercial services, such as types of retail and dining, should be offered in the general store and how community partners should be involved, such as partnering with local farmers, expanding or relocating the existing bait shop, or developing a community retail co-op.

PARTNERS

- Town Staff and Officials
- Indiana Landmarks

RESOURCES / TOOLS

- Harrison County Community Foundation
- Harrison County Health Department
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Neighboring Food Co-op Association: [Starting a Co-op in your Community](#)



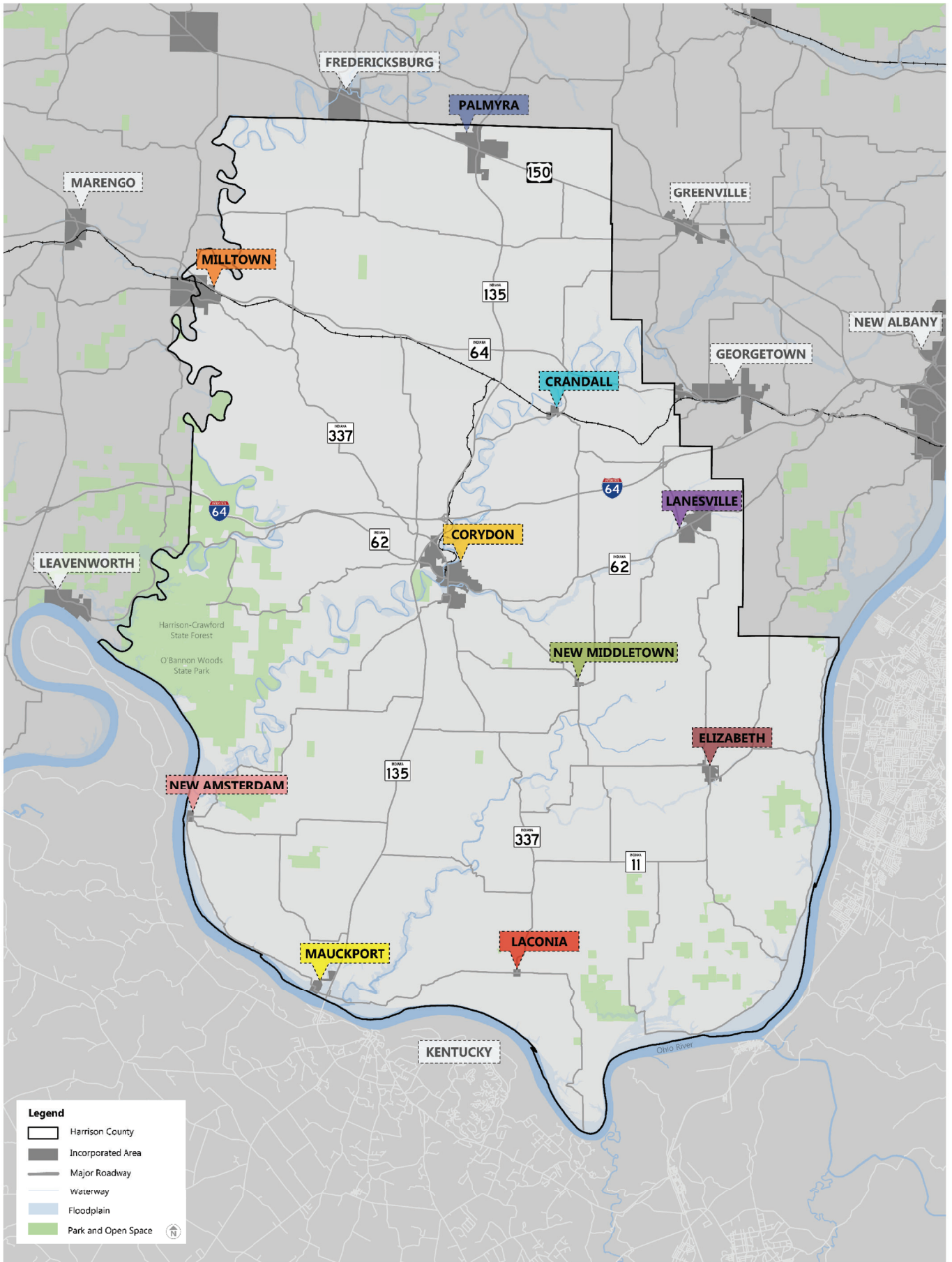
2020 Census data shows the population of New Amsterdam has grown in the past two decades, growing from 27 residents in 2010 to 103 people in 2020.



Appendix

Existing Conditions Summary

A clear and cohesive understanding of New Amsterdam, as it exists today, is a critical building block in developing a comprehensive plan. The *New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan* will outline a community-wide vision with associated goals and recommendations for how to achieve the town's future wants and needs. It is important to complete a baseline assessment of the demographic and socioeconomic status, and inventory of the built environment, to identify issues and opportunities that should be considered as parts of the plan. Ultimately, the issues and opportunities identified will inform the town's goals and recommendations for meeting its overall vision.



REGIONAL CONTEXT

Located in Southern Indiana along the Ohio River, Harrison County is perfectly situated near a large metropolitan area (Louisville, KY) amongst rural landscapes. Harrison County neighbors several natural features including Cave Country and the State Parks that offer spelunking and hiking, and the Ohio River which offers all canoeing, boating, and other water activities.

In the far southwest corner of Harrison County lies New Amsterdam. Once a bustling riverboat town and the largest town in Harrison County, the town is now the smallest in the state. The position on the Ohio River that brought New Amsterdam its early economic success also led to its downfall—the 1937 flood destroyed 75% of the town’s structures, and it never recovered its population. Today, the river continues to be both an asset and a threat to residents, as most of the town lies within the floodplain. Parts of the surrounding area are heavily forested, including Harrison-Crawford State Forest to the north, providing ample spaces for nature lovers and wildlife. A large rock and sand quarry called the New Amsterdam Quarry provides building materials to the region.

PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

Crafting a comprehensive plan is an opportunity to build upon past planning efforts. New Amsterdam was established in 1815, and since then, the town has continued to evolve. With an understanding of past planning efforts and current conditions, this planning effort can better respond to residents’ needs and better account for the impacts and opportunities of growth and redevelopment. While New Amsterdam does not have any town-specific past planning documents, Harrison County has completed plans that include New Amsterdam. The following plans were considered as part of the planning process:

Harrison County Comprehensive Plan - 2009

The county’s current comprehensive plan establishes a vision that emphasizes the value of the small towns and rural lifestyle and balances development opportunities with good stewardship of the land. The plan outlines eight key goals that range from providing responsible development and preserving the rural character to responding to lifelong educational needs and supporting the expansion and enhancement of services, programs, and facilities. Additionally, the implementation chapter focuses on updating policies, establishing new regulations, and conducting further plan-related studies.

Harrison County Community Leadership Planning Initiative - 2020

This initiative focused on five areas that were identified as the highest priorities for the County’s future that should be addressed through the combined efforts of the County’s leadership. The five priorities included:

- A shared vision for Infrastructure and Land Use Planning
- Workforce and Education
- Diverse Housing Options
- Business Development and Support
- Substance Abuse, Health, and Wellness

This initiative identified the need to create comprehensive plans for each of the ten incorporated towns as well as the County as a whole. The New Amsterdam Comprehensive Plan is one of ten town plans being completed as part of the Harrison County Town Planning Initiative.



DEMOGRAPHICS

PEOPLE | HOUSING | ECONOMICS

This section will provide a snapshot of the conditions within New Amsterdam today. Looking at where the town is today and the recent trends it has experienced can reveal issues and opportunities that may be addressed with future planning. Population demographics, housing stock, and employment are the three main topics that will be explored using data from the U.S. Census. Data is from 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, unless otherwise stated.

The Census is a self-reported data-collection system in which each resident fills out a form in order to be counted. Because New Amsterdam is a very small town, the Census data that is collected has a small sample size. This can result in a large margin of error and possibly skew data. This is further compounded when people do not return their Census form, and past years appear to have had a low participation rate. Therefore, while the data can provide a helpful starting point, it must be considered within context. More accurate data could be gathered from a local, door-to-door survey if specific statistics are needed when implementing this plan.

PEOPLE

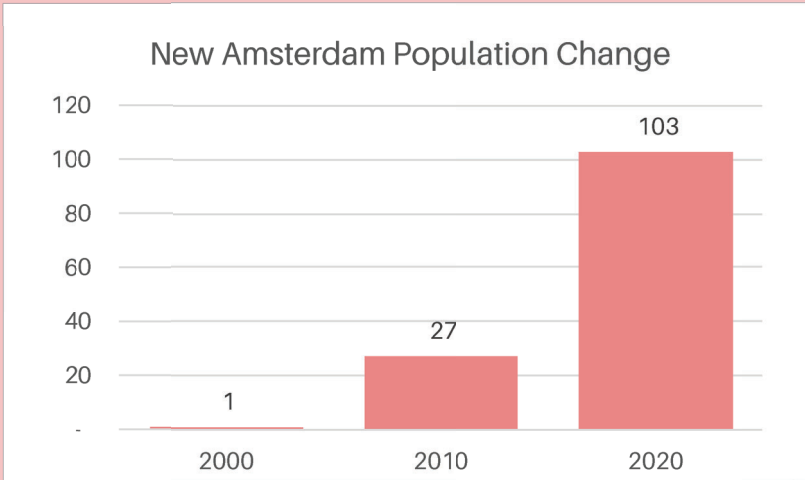
The population of New Amsterdam is growing.

Although comparatively small, Census data shows the population of New Amsterdam has grown in the past two decades, growing from 27 residents in 2010 to 103 people in 2020. However, this trend could be a result of a low participation rate in the 2010 census.

The number of households has grown in the past decade.

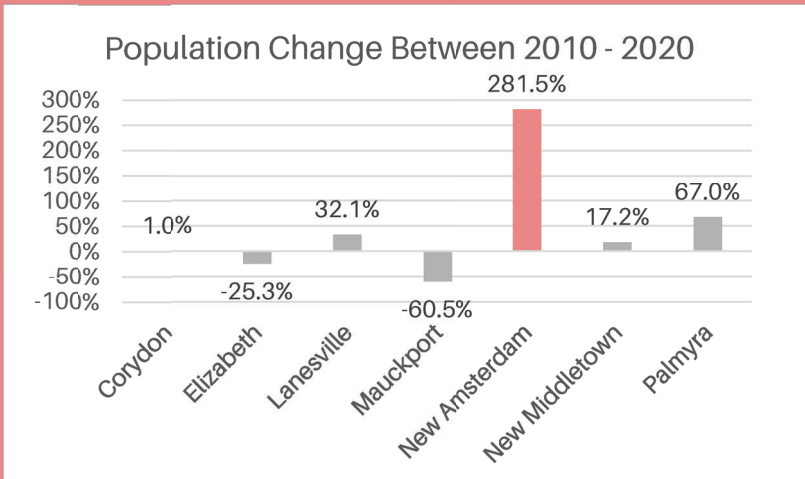
According to the census, the number of households in New Amsterdam grew from 3 households in 2010 to 27 households in 2020. However, based on historical aerials, this data is likely not accurate – possibility due to a lack of people reporting during the 2010 census. According to 2010 aerial imagery and address data, the town appears to have had around 30 homes in 2010. In addition, the data shows that the median household size increased from 2.0 in 2010 to 3.8 in 2020, meaning that on average, more people are living together in one home than in 2010.

TOTAL POPULATION



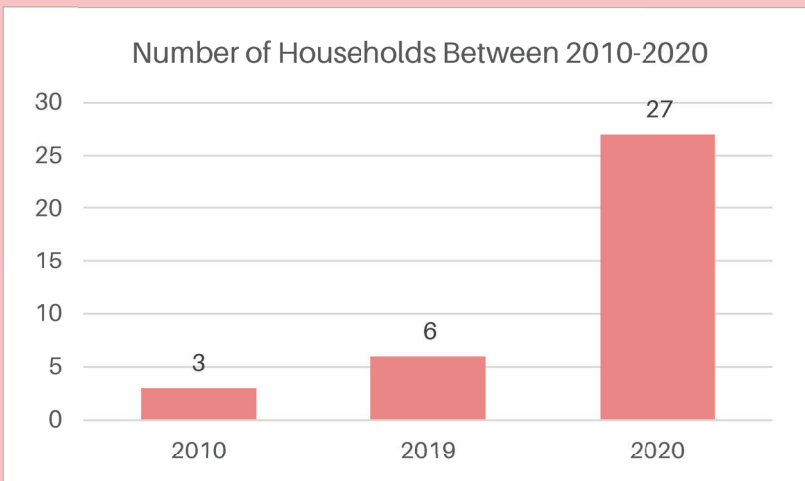
The total population of New Amsterdam has increased over the past two decades but the previous populations may be higher than historically reported.

POPULATION CHANGE



While the American Community Survey indicates a large population change over the past decade, the data may be inaccurate due to survey participation.

HOUSEHOLDS



Similarly to the total population, the number of households seemed to increase from 3 households in 2010 to 27 households in 2020.

If this is true, it could have implications for the size and type of housing that is desired within the town. Like the population data trends, the significant growth in household size should be viewed with the consideration that it likely has low accuracy.

New Amsterdam is 100% white.

Caucasian is the only racial groups currently represented within the town, and there are also no residents who identify as Hispanic. The county has been diversifying racially and ethnically, although at a slower rate than the state and country. Harrison County was 96.3% white in 2020 (97.1% in 2010) while Indiana was 82.3% white in 2020 (85.1% in 2010). If New Amsterdam's population grows in the future, it will also likely diversify to some extent.

New Amsterdam has a comparatively older and aging population.

In 2020, the median age in the town was 50.1 years old, up from 42.5 in 2010, making New Amsterdam the oldest town within the county. In comparison, second and third oldest towns in the county are Corydon and Laconia, both with a median age of 43.5 years old. The median age in the state is 37.8 years old, more than ten years younger than New Amsterdam. Older residents have specific needs that may be addressed in planning, such as accessible housing, healthcare needs, transportation services, and senior programming. While planning for the town's older adults, it also important to attract or keep younger residents and families who can be future leaders for the town.

New Amsterdam has the highest median household income of any town in the county.

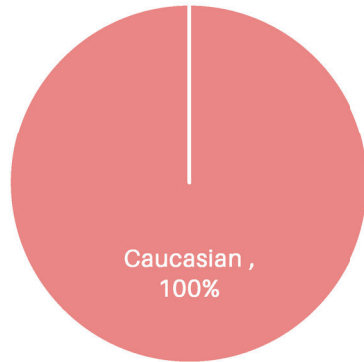
At \$90,893, New Amsterdam's 2020 median household income surpassed the rest of the county. Lanesville has the next second highest at \$82,188 per year, and Palmyra has the lowest at \$33,077 per year. New Amsterdam's median household income is also significantly higher than the state of Indiana (\$58,235) and the US (\$64,944). With this said, the reliability of this data should be questioned by comparing it to other statistics, such as education. Again, a low participation rate in the census may have resulted in inaccurate income data for the town.

All of New Amsterdam's residents have at least a high school education, but none have a bachelor's or master's degree.

The town has a comparatively high proportion of high school graduates, at 100% for both 2010 and 2020. However, like Mauckport, New Amsterdam has no residents with bachelor's or master's degrees. However, most residents in New Amsterdam have either completed some college courses without earning a degree or have earned an associates degree. It is probable that some people who live in New Amsterdam go on to earn advanced degrees, but they do not continue living in the town afterwards. This is a common trend in many rural areas, where the highly educated move to larger metropolitan areas where they can find more options for professional employment that makes use of their skills and education.

RACE & ETHNICITY

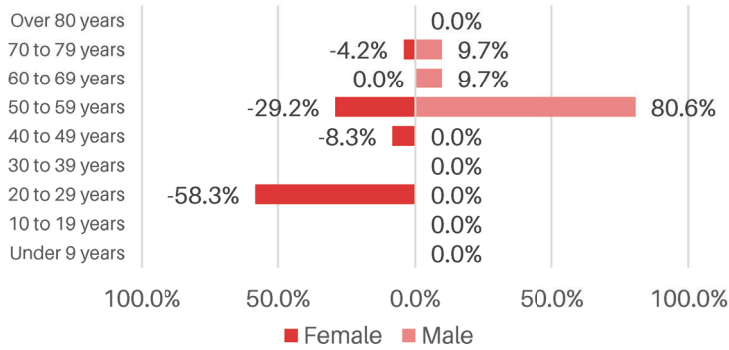
2020 New Amsterdam Racial Makeup



New Amsterdam is not racially diverse compared to the slightly more diverse Harrison County (96.3% white).

AGE STRUCTURE

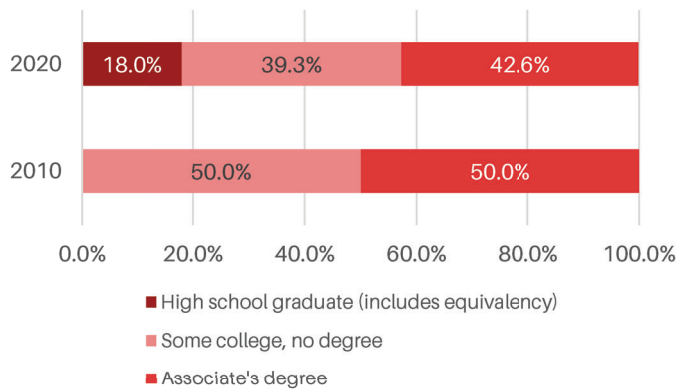
2020 New Amsterdam Age Structure



New Amsterdam has the oldest town median age in the county. The town's median age has increased by 7.6 years since 2010 (42.5 years).

EDUCATION

Change in Educational Attainment



With an increased total size, the population has changed in overall educational attainment levels. While technically, the percentage of the population with an associates degree decreased, the total number increased.

PEOPLE - KEY CONCLUSIONS

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR NEW AMSTERDAM?

- **Population growth presents opportunities.** New residents, whether gained through births or people moving into the town, bring new energy and ideas, workforce power, tax revenue, business opportunities, and more. If the town continues to grow, it will need to consider how to keep up with the needs of new residents through providing adequate housing, schools, utilities, and other amenities and services.
- **The median household size has grown.** Because more people are living in one house than there were ten years ago, market trends could desire larger homes to accommodate larger families. It is also possible that more people are living together because there are not enough housing options. In that case, building more homes in general would be advantageous so that people who would like to live in their own house can do so.
- **The population is older.** With the median age around 50 years old, the town is older than most of Harrison County. Future planning should accommodate the specific needs of seniors, such as access to healthcare options, transportation, accessible homes and retail, and social and recreational opportunities. Rural areas, like New Amsterdam, present special challenges for people getting older as crucial amenities are often located miles away from the home. If people are unable to drive, they may be reliant on someone else to bring supplies to them or give them a ride. At the same time, it is important for New Amsterdam to attract the younger generation to prevent population decline.

HOUSING

The majority of units are occupied, and all are occupied by their owners.

New Amsterdam had a total of 30 housing units in 2020. Most units were occupied, with only three vacant (10% of the total housing stock). All of the homes were owner-occupied, with no rental units in the town. According to 2010 aerial imagery and address data, the town appears to have had around 30 homes in 2010.² New Amsterdam may need to attract developers to build new homes as the population grows. Note that the census data show that there were only three housing units in 2010, but according to aerial imagery, this does not appear to be accurate.

All of New Amsterdam's homes are single-family, detached houses.

As of 2020, the town did not have any condos, townhomes, multi-unit homes, or manufactured/mobile homes, RVs, or other types of homes. This may show the preference of the current population, but it may also be worthwhile to diversify the housing stock by encouraging other appropriate options, such as duplexes.

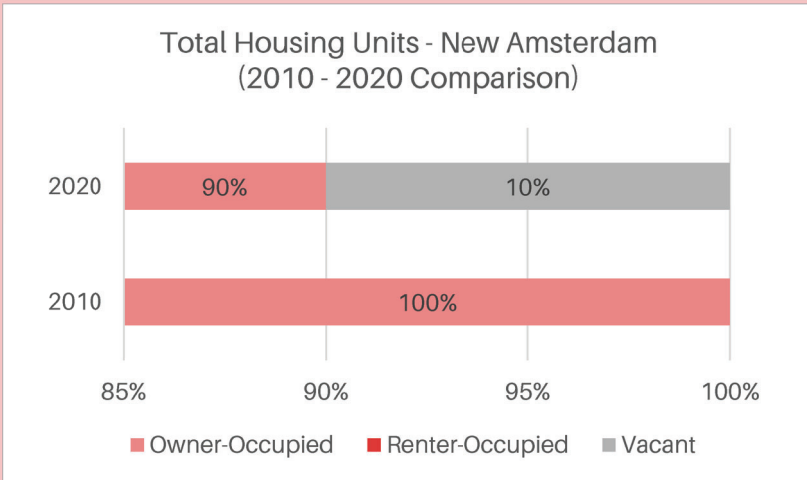
The median home value has decreased in the past decade, while those in the county and the state have increased.

Between 2010 and 2020, New Amsterdam's median home value dropped by almost half, from \$162,500 to \$86,400. This is the largest decrease in value of any town in Harrison County. Most other towns experienced an increase in their average home value during that time. A careful look into the conditions that may be causing this loss in value might be merited.

The housing stock is relatively old.

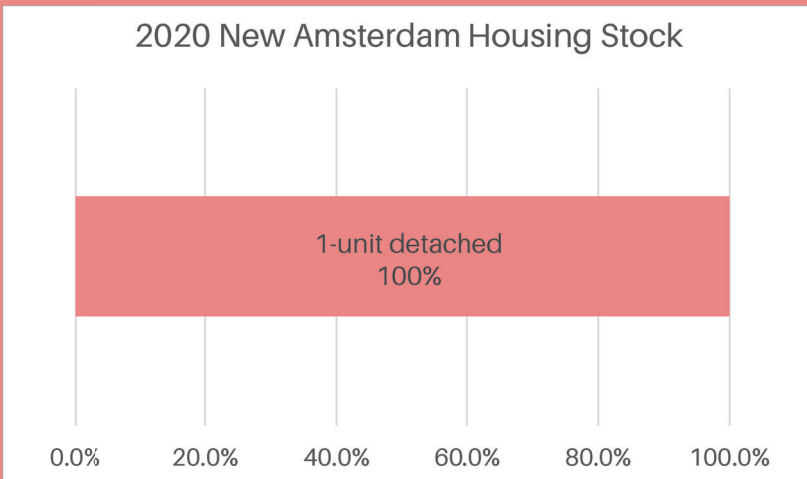
Most of New Amsterdam's housing, 70%, was built before 1939. These are likely homes that survived the 1937 flood because they were situated on higher ground. Since the population of the town decreased after the flood, rebuilding has been slow. The age of the housing stock is likely linked to the loss in home value that the town has recently experienced. Existing historic homes may not be receiving the maintenance necessary to retain their value. Tapping into existing resources for maintaining historic homes and creating new programs, if necessary, could help residents to increase their home equity and their quality of life at the same time. Older homes are often not accessible, presenting problems especially for older residents. Programs exist to assist with upgrading homes so that residents can age in place.

HOUSING UNITS



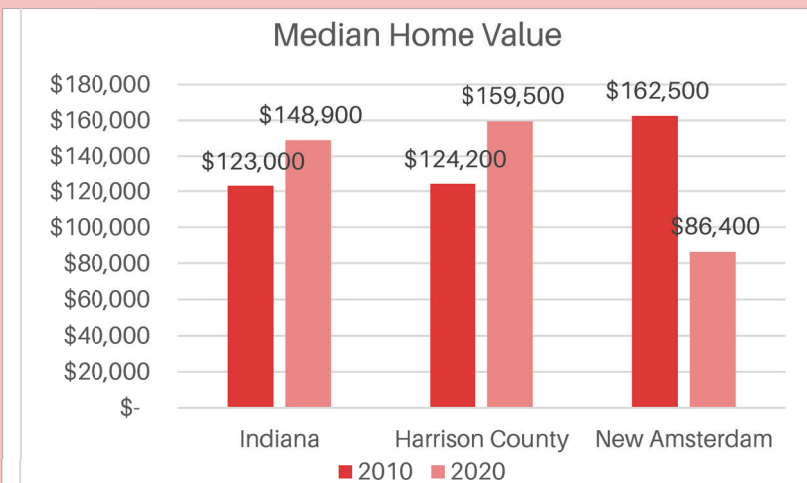
Of the total units, 90% are owner-occupied and only 10% vacant in 2020.

HOUSING TYPES



In 2020, 100% of New Amsterdam's housing stock was single-family detached homes.

HOME VALUES



New Amsterdam has experienced one of the few decreases in home value in the county since 2010.

HOUSING - KEY CONCLUSIONS

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR NEW AMSTERDAM?

- **The vacancy rate is low.** With just three vacant homes in 2020, most of New Amsterdam's homes are currently occupied. If the town's population is increasing as the census data suggests, or if it increases in the future, more homes will need to be constructed to keep up with housing demand. This could provide the opportunity to encourage other housing types that may be desired.
- **The housing stock is exclusively detached, single-family, owner-occupied homes.** The town should consider ways to diversify its housing stock to include single-family attached homes, such as condos and townhomes, and duplexes. This diversity would help to support the changing needs of seniors, young people, and future residents. Likewise, adding rental options would be a benefit to people who are not able to buy a home or who prefer the flexibility of renting. Many seniors prefer to live in rentals, where the home and lawn maintenance is taken care of for them. Condos, townhomes, and duplexes can provide convenient homes for seniors, young people, individuals who are in transition, and those who cannot afford a down payment. As the population grows, more housing options will become necessary to accommodate diverse residents.
- **Home values have decreased, indicating that the housing stock may be in poor condition.** While the county as a whole and the state have experienced an increase in home values, New Amsterdam has experienced the largest decrease in home values of any town in the county. When considering the fact that all the homes are owner-occupied and the population is older, this may show that residents are having trouble keeping up with home repairs. Home maintenance and repairs can be costly, especially for older homes. In addition, older residents may need help with the logistics of making these repairs.
- **Most homes are historic.** Since only nine homes have been built in New Amsterdam since 1939, depressed home values are likely driven by the age of the housing stock as well as lack of demand. If this is the case, home values could be stabilized by implementing maintenance programs tailored for historic homes and making use of federal and state programs that offer incentives and support for historic preservation. Programs that help to upgrade older homes to allow residents to age in place could also benefit New Amsterdam's older residents. Both of these initiatives have the potential to increase not only a home's value and function but the quality of life of its residents.

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE

A high percentage of working-age adults participates in the workforce.

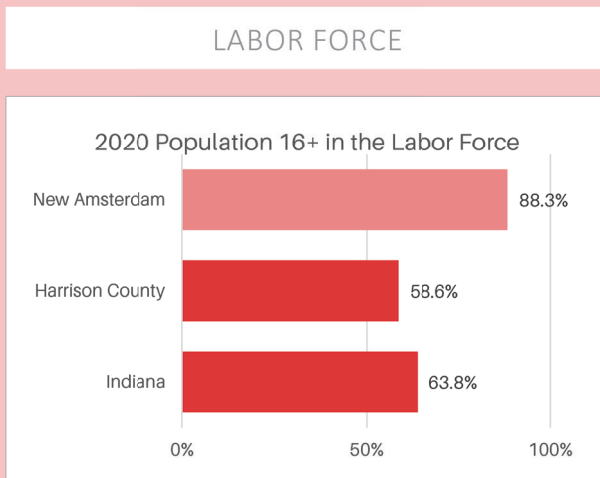
In 2020, the Census reported that over 88% of New Amsterdam's residents were part of the labor force. In comparison, around 64% of Indiana residents are in the labor force. Like previous statistics, this data could also be skewed. The town has the highest labor force participation rate when compared to the other towns within Harrison County, where less than 60% of working-age adults are in the labor force. This means there are more people earning an income and able to spend money meeting basic needs as well as on recreation and luxury items. More people earning an income also gives families more resilience if one person loses a job. However, the workforce data is questionable considering that the town's median age is around 50 years old.

Most of New Amsterdam's residents work in construction.

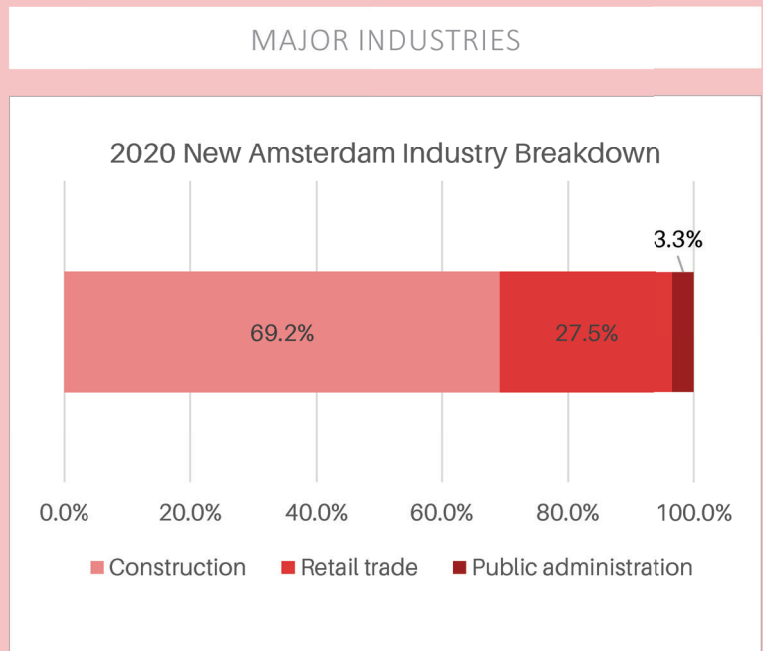
Of a total of 91 people in the labor force in 2020, the majority of them (63 people) worked in the construction industry. The occupations they hold are categorized as natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations. The next largest industry was retail trade, employing 25 people in sales and office occupations. Three people were employed by the government in public administration jobs.

The unemployment rate is low in New Amsterdam.

According to census data, the 2020 unemployment rate in New Amsterdam was 0%. STATS America shows the 2021 unemployment rate for the town at 1.2%. This means that nearly everyone who wanted and was able to work was working. That is a positive trend for the town and means that people are able to find employment to support their lifestyle.



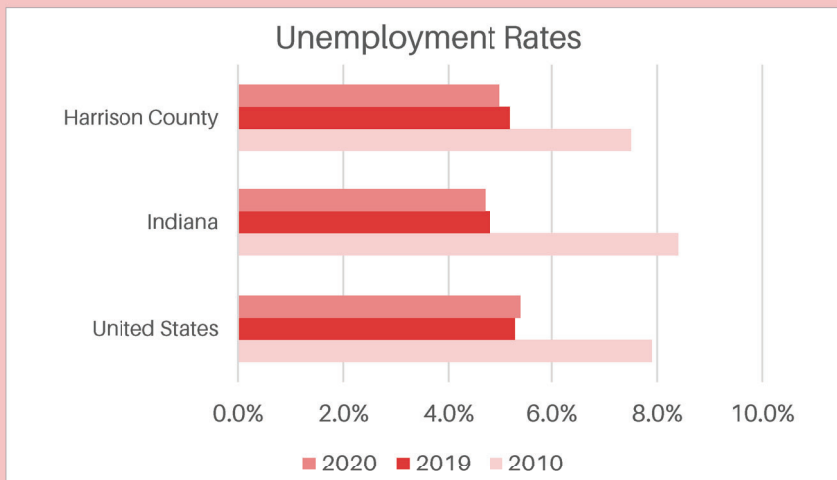
New Amsterdam's percentage of population participation in the labor force is the highest in Harrison County in 2020.



The majority of residents work outside of Harrison County.

In 2020, 70% of people who were employed worked outside of Harrison County, while 30% worked within the county. In addition, none of them worked within New Amsterdam, which means they are commuting to jobs in other places. All of these workers drove a car alone to work.

UNEMPLOYMENT



Similarly to the state and nation, New Amsterdam continued to have a very low unemployment rate over the past decade.

COMMUTING TRENDS

WORKED IN STATE OF RESIDENCE	
<i>Worked in county of residence</i>	30.8%
<i>Worked outside county of residence</i>	69.2%
WORKED OUTSIDE STATE OF RESIDENCE	0.0%
WORKED IN PLACE OF RESIDENCE	0.0%
WORKED OUTSIDE PLACE OF RESIDENCE	100.0%

Due to the lack of local businesses, the large majority of workers commute to other major employment hubs each day, but remain within Indiana.

ECONOMICS - KEY CONCLUSIONS

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR NEW AMSTERDAM?

- **New Amsterdam is well-employed.** With a higher labor force participation rate than the county and the state and an unemployment rate of 0%, the data shows that residents who are able to work are working. This is a good sign for the economy and residents' ability to afford their cost of living.
- **Most people are employed in construction jobs.** These careers can be stable and pay well, but they can also be physically strenuous and sometimes dangerous. Especially for older adults who still need to work, construction jobs may not be a good fit. Retail trade is the only other industry employing a significant number of people.
- **Most people work outside of the county.** With 70% of residents working outside the county and no one working within the town itself, people who live in New Amsterdam could be traveling long distances to get to their jobs. Residents may commute to the larger city of Brandenburg, Kentucky, which is about 20 minutes away by car, or Fort Knox, about a 40-minute drive. Data was not available for the average commute time, but if residents have long commutes, it could greatly impact an individual or a family's quality of life. Finding ways to attract employers to the region could help to provide jobs closer to home. Otherwise, maintaining the things that make New Amsterdam special is important to keep people from moving away to be closer to their jobs.

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THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

LAND USE | TRANSPORTATION | UTILITIES | COMMUNITY FACILITIES

An inventory of the built environment complements the demographics analysis by providing information on how land use is currently being used and what types of infrastructure is in place to support current and future residents. This section outlines the land use, transportation network, and utility infrastructure within New Amsterdam, and it inform the plan’s recommendations for future growth and development.

EXISTING LAND USE

Land use describes what activities are taking place on a parcel. This section provides a summary of the current land uses within New Amsterdam. A land use analysis may identify those uses that are missing or conflicts that could be addressed in a plan for the future. The existing land use map categorizes each parcel within the town limits by how it is being used today. Through understanding the way land is used today, opportunities to improve the quality of life in the town may arise.



Each of the following existing land use categories are described below.

- **Single-family Residential** – This category refers to land that is used for a single structure where only one family lives. The majority of the land in New Amsterdam falls into this category. The lots vary in size, with most of them being larger, rural-residential lots.
- **Commercial** – This category includes land that is used for providing goods and services. One parcel in the southwestern corner of the town has a commercial use, where the Bitin’ Bait Shop is located.
- **Institutional** – Institutional uses include land used for religious, educational, medical, or civic uses. At the center of town, the New Amsterdam Town Office, New Amsterdam United Methodist Church, and the cemetery make up the town’s institutional land uses.
- **Undeveloped / Natural Area** – This category includes land that is not developed. This land provides opportunities for possible future amenities, such as a park, as well as a public campground, additional housing, or other assets to the town.

Although the existing land use inventory focuses on the area within the town limits, it is worth noting that much of the surrounding area to the east and north is agricultural land, to the south it is forest, and to the west is the Ohio River. This context plays a major role in shaping the identity of the town.

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TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

A transportation network allows people to get to the places where they live, work, shop, and play. This network also enables the movement of both essential and non-essential goods to stores where they can be bought and sold. The quality of a transportation network can have a large impact on how people move through space, and how safe and enjoyable it is to do so. Rural areas tend to have smaller roads, less sidewalks, and less public transit than urban areas with larger populations. Because destinations tend to be spaced out, people often need cars to get where they need to go, and they may have to travel longer distances to work, school, or the store.

ROADS

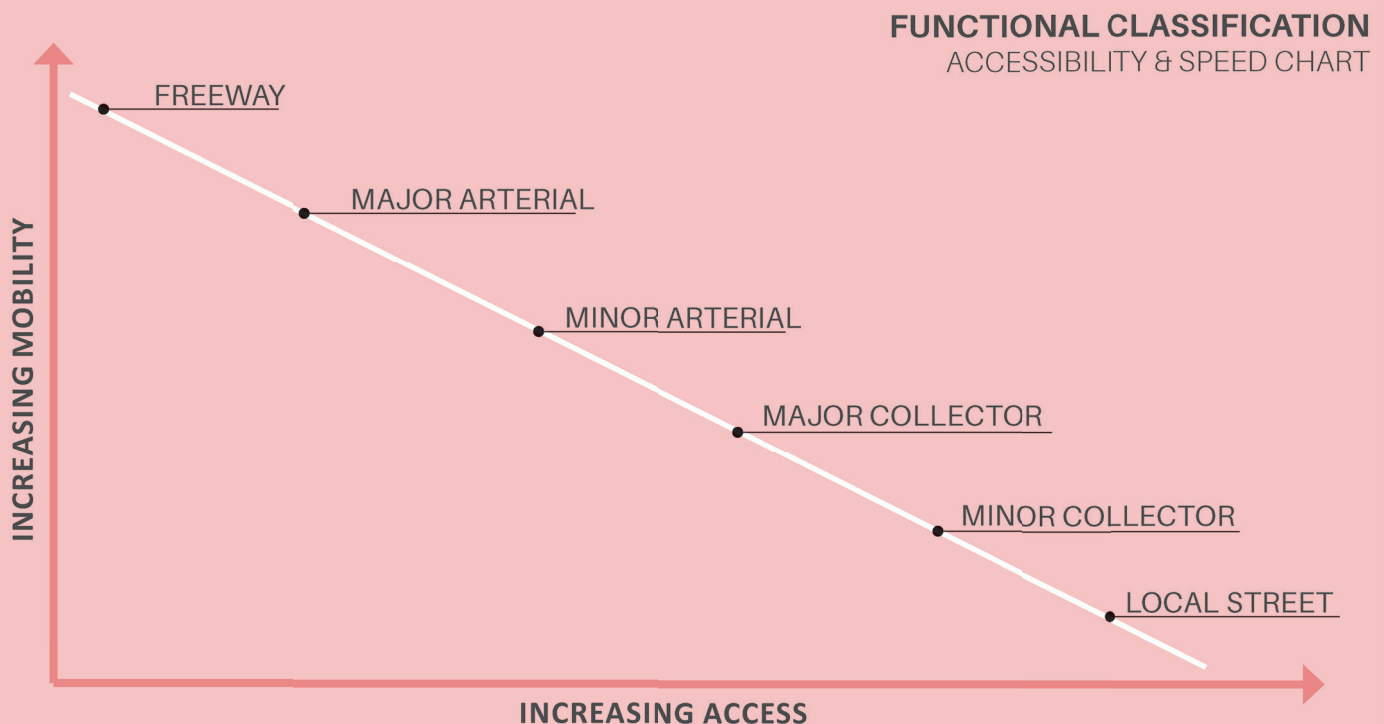
Indiana's Department of Transportation (INDOT) uses the Federal Highway Functional Classification system to categorize roadways. The categories in this system are based on several factors including the traffic volume, number of lanes, and speed limit. Listed in order from largest to smallest, the primary functional classifications include (1) interstates, (2) freeways or expressways, (3) principal arterials, (4) minor arterials, (5) major collectors, and (6) minor collectors. Any roadways that are not categorized are considered local roads.

New Amsterdam has three major collectors that all connect. River Road Southwest comes into town from the south and becomes Green Street. This road functions as a major collector until it reaches Main Street. Other major collectors include the segment of Main Street between Green Street and New Amsterdam Road and New Amsterdam Road starting at Main Street and running southeast out of town. Blue Spring Road is classified as a minor collector. The town has several local roads that end near the river to the west or lead north from the downtown area.

In terms of ownership and maintenance, New Amsterdam owns and is responsible for maintaining all the roads within town limits. Any road outside of town limits is owned and operated by Harrison County or the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT).

SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks serve to separate people from vehicles on the street, allowing a safer way to get around on foot. Segments of Green Street and Main Street near the center of town have sidewalks on one side, which makes it easier for people to access downtown destinations without a car and stay safe on these higher-traffic streets. No trails or bike facilities currently exist within the town.





BUS ROUTES

New Amsterdam is served by the Southern Indiana Transit System (SITS). In partnership with the Harrison County Commissioners and Blue River Services, Inc., SITS is a rural bus service serving Crawford, Harrison, Scott, Washington, and Floyd counties. This door-to-door service operates Monday-Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. and must be scheduled ahead by phone. Costs range from two to four dollars one-way depending on the distance traveled. SITS could be a good option for people who do not own a car or cannot drive to get to work or other destinations.

UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

WATER, WASTEWATER, AND STORMWATER

Because rural areas are very expensive to serve, many utilities in these areas are provided by member-owned co-operatives rather than investor-owned companies. South Harrison Water Corporation provides potable water to New Amsterdam. This member-owned, non-profit utility is headquartered in Corydon and maintains about 400 miles of distribution water mains throughout the rural, southwestern portion of Harrison County.

New Amsterdam falls within the Harrison County Regional Sewer District, but the town does not currently have sewer service. This means that residents use septic systems to manage their wastewater.

ELECTRIC

Harrison REMC, headquartered in Corydon, is a locally-owned co-op that provides electricity to 22,000 members throughout parts of Harrison, Floyd, Crawford, Clark, and Washington counties. Hoosier Energy is the power supplier to Harrison REMC and 17 other cooperatives in Central and Southern Indiana and Southeastern Illinois.

Duke Energy also provides electricity to Harrison County. A *Fortune* 150 company and one of the largest energy companies in the nation, Duke Energy serves 8.2 million customers throughout North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky.

BROADBAND

Internet services within New Amsterdam are available from a variety of companies, including T-Mobile, Frontier, Viasat, HughesNet, WATCH, MainStream Fiber Networks, Community Wireless of Charlestown, EarthLink, and Q Wireless.

Over the last several years, Harrison County has prioritized improving broadband connectivity by investing over \$5 million in broadband with MainStream Fiber. More recently, the Chamber of Commerce of Harrison County and the Harrison County Community Foundation launched a Broadband Readiness and Infrastructure Deployment Plan. This plan identifies areas in need of broadband infrastructure, find the greatest return on investment, and outline strategies for implementation. While the plan was completed at the county level, New Amsterdam will reap the benefits as the recommendations are implemented.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Parks, schools, and community centers are examples of common community facilities. These spaces allow people to gather for recreational, education, political purposes, and much more. Community facilities greatly enhance the quality of life and strengthen the social fabric of a place. The only community facilities within the town today is the New Amsterdam Town Hall and the Hero Reward River Retreat. The river retreat provides veterans and their families a weekend getaway (3 days) for free of charge. There are a few campers, shelter house, fire pit, and basketball court for users to enjoy.



KEY CONCLUSIONS

New Amsterdam's Strengths & Opportunities

The inventory collected and outlined within this analysis informs the planning process by revealing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats based on what the community has to offer today and what it could offer in the future. The following sections highlight the key conclusions that served as the foundation for the vision, goals, and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Proximity to Brandenburg, KY** - New Amsterdam is located within a short drive of Brandenburg, Kentucky, which offers retail, recreational and employment opportunities that are not available locally.
- **Rural, easy-going Lifestyle** - Harrison County is classified as a rural county in terms of population, density, and agricultural heritage. There are lifestyle characteristics that come with rural living that people find desirable. New Amsterdam's rural, easy-going lifestyle is an asset to the community.
- **Proximity to the Ohio River** - Serving as a recreational asset and adding to the scenic beauty of the community, the Ohio River provides a unique opportunity for the community. This asset provides easy access for fishermen and boaters.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

New Amsterdam's Challenges & Threats

- **Aging population** – With a median age of 50, the older population of New Amsterdam creates challenges for the town. As current residents continue to get older, it will become more difficult for them to access the services and housing types needed to age. This demographic will likely have to leave the town as some point, and if they are not replaced with younger residents, the town may continue to decrease in population.
- **Limited capacity and financial resources to get things done** - While not unique to New Amsterdam, smaller communities have few financial, technical, and staff resources. Because of this, the town likely depends on a select few individuals to keep things moving and struggle to see how things could be different than they are today.
- **Proximity to Goods and Services** – In towns like New Amsterdam, access to goods and services is very challenging. With only one retail establishment, the bait shop, residents have to leave the town for anything and everything. Furthermore, because the town is located in the most southern position of the county, the closest communities that provide access to everyday services are Brandenburg (12 miles), Corydon (15 miles), and Leavenworth (30 miles).
- **Primary Residential Land Use** – All of the residents who work leave the town for employment. This is typical for a smaller community, but the challenges lie in the financial constraints that come with a town having little to no commercial or industrial uses to generate tax revenue. The lack of commercial and industrial stems from two community challenges; lack of market demand to support the existing businesses and the lack of wastewater infrastructure to support new businesses.
- **Potential for Flooding** – A large portion of the town limits lies within the 100-year floodplain, creating challenges for current residents and limiting the ability for future growth in those areas.

**TOWN PLANNING
INITIATIVE**

HARRISON COUNTY

The Town of New Amsterdam

