



## Preliminary

### West Frankfort Community Plan & Development

2005

#### INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2004, the Mayor of West Frankfort reestablished the Planning Commission to be engaged in a city-wide planning effort that will envision life in this community in the next 20 years. The commission's work is based on the concept that they can and should shape that future and, by their energy, enthusiasm, and love for this city, lay out a course that can lead to economic prosperity in a healthy natural environment. The plan will be the culmination and integration of the work of two separate, yet progressive efforts.

This is a novel experiment for conservative West Frankfort. Traditionally, matters of economic and environmental development have been left primarily in the hands of the West Frankfort City Council and the Chamber of Commerce, both of which had other pressing matters to consider, or to the mandates of state and federal agencies far removed from the local sphere. The citizens had previously never been challenged to attack these problems, formulate solutions, and join forces to remedy them. The result of this effort should be a more thriving, healthier, and greener West Frankfort.

Community-based planning as a philosophy is an inversion of the old standard and practice of waiting to be told how to solve our problems by state and national agencies and elected officials. While characteristic of a national trend toward "bottom up" planning, this approach represents a marked departure from how our local leaders and citizens have approached community problems in years past. No longer content to wait and hope that solutions will trickle down, the people of West Frankfort accepted the challenge of local involvement in the development of their own plans for addressing our community needs.

In addition, West Frankfort expects to obtain additional assistance given by these agencies in the plan's creation, the city of West Frankfort expects to receive the added benefit of their support on initiatives that address the recommendations set forth in this document. With the completion of these plans, West Frankfort will work closely with FEDCO and the State.

## Economic Development Workgroup

### **Objective 1.0 Action Plan: Study of Impact of Local Taxes & Assessments on Business**

Recommends frequent review of the impact of local taxes and assessments on business and industry. Consider the establishment of TIF Zones.

Timeline Milestones for the achievement of Goal are as follows:

**One Year Milestone** - By 2005, the City of West Frankfort has developed a system for evaluating the impacts of local taxes and assessments on business and industry.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, the City of West Frankfort conducts reviews of the impacts of local taxes and assessments on business and industry.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014, the City of West Frankfort conducts reviews of the impacts of local taxes and assessments on business and industry.

### **Objective 1.1 Action Plan: Local Small Business Development Assistance**

Recommend obtaining professional small business development assistance through Federal, Local and State grant programs.

Timeline Milestones for the achievement of Goal are as follows:

**One Year Milestone** - By 2006, local entrepreneurs have access to local, scheduled small business development assistance.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, local entrepreneurs have local, scheduled access to small business development assistance.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014, local entrepreneurs have local, scheduled access to small business development assistance.

**Objective 1.2 Action Plan: Small Business Resource Center**

Recommend the development of a central small business development center for prospective business and agencies.

Timeline Milestones for the achievement of goal are as follows:

**One Year Milestone** - By 2005, West Frankfort entrepreneurs and small business owners have access to a small business resource center at the West Frankfort Public Library or other location.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, West Frankfort business people have access to a small business resource center.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014, West Frankfort business people have access to a small business resource center.

**Objective 1.3 Action Plan: Economic Development Incentives Package**

Recommend the development, organization, and packaging of economic development brochure and WEB access on incentives for prospective businesses and industry.

**One Year Milestone** - By 2005, economic development incentives are packaged and ready for review by prospective business and industry.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, all economic development incentives are packaged and ready for review by prospective business and industry.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014, all economic development incentives are packaged and ready for review by prospective business and industry.

#### **Objective 1.4 Action Plan: Annual Review Business Incubator**

Recommends the development of a business vision, strategy and goal to permit the established of measurable progress and proper use its resources of the Business Incubator.

Timeline Milestones for the achievement of Objective are as follows:

**Two Year Milestone** - By 2006, a set of goals and performance measurements are developed to measure success and or needed changes to the Business Incubator program.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2010, a completed review and changes are made as a result of evaluating progress towards goals and performance measurements.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014, a completed review and changes are made as a result of evaluating progress towards goals and performance measurements.

#### **Objective 1.5 Action Plan: Regional Economic Development**

Recommends the City of West Frankfort will participate in a regional economic development group.

Timeline Milestones for the achievement of Goal are as follows:

**One Year Milestone** - By 2005, the City of West Frankfort has joined as a full partner in a regional economic development group and FEDCO the Franklin County Economic Corporation, and Coal belt Champion Community, Southern Illinois Development Group

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, West Frankfort is a full and active partner in a regional economic development group. Review of progress, goals and benefits.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014, West Frankfort is a full and active partner in a regional economic development group. Review of progress, goals and benefits.

### **Objective 1.6 Action Plan: Vacant Building Registry**

Recommends that a system be developed to identify and register vacant buildings/property to encourage their sale and upkeep.

Timeline Milestones for the achievement of Goal are as follows:

**Two Year Milestone** - By 2006, the Economic Development Committee has developed a system to identify, register, and advertise vacant buildings to encourage their sale and upkeep.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, a system is in place to identify, register, and advertise vacant buildings to encourage their sale and upkeep.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014, a system is in place to identify, register, and advertise vacant buildings to encourage their sale and upkeep.

### **Objective 1.7 Action Plan: West Frankfort Booth at State Fair**

Recommend the development of an informational booth established annually at the Du Quoin State Fair.

Timeline milestones for the achievement of Objective 1.7 are as follows:

**One Year Milestone** - By 2005, West Frankfort sponsors an informational booth at the Du Quoin State Fair.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, West Frankfort sponsors an informational booth at the Du Quoin State Fair.

**Ten Year Milestones** - By 2014, West Frankfort sponsors an informational booth at the Du Quoin State Fair.

## **Annexation Plans**

### **Objective 2.0 Action Plan: Review Benefits of Annexation**

Properly used, annexation preserves a growing urban area as a unified whole. City administrative and technical personnel are able to address fringe area's municipal needs, and do this in a manner consistent with policies of the annexing city. Urban growth without central planning and control becomes urban sprawl resulting in the city losing a great portion of its tax base.

#### **A. Benefits Favoring Annexation**

- a. Annexation can protect, or enhance, a city's tax base. The increased valuation of the city will result in a greater bonding capacity.
- b. After annexation, the new territory will obtain its necessary services from city departments that are professionally staffed and experienced. Duplication of services can be avoided. Considerable economies can result from the coordination of services over a larger area.
- c. Annexation increases a city's size and population, and in some instances raises its level of political influence, its prestige, and its ability to attract desirable commercial development. It may also increase its ability to attract grant assistance.
- d. Annexation may force new industry to develop in the city, and thus create additional jobs, revenues, and commercial opportunities.
- e. When the interrelationship between the city and the fringe area is close, there is need for unified planning and zoning. By means of annexation, a city's zoning ordinances may be extended to adjacent areas in a logical manner, thus helping to assure orderly growth. Coordinated action is much easier to achieve if the fringe community becomes part of the city.
- f. Annexation may bring about lower utility rates, since city utility surcharges to unincorporated territory would be lifted. Annexation also often results in lower fire insurance premiums and communications infrastructure. As more improvements and urban utilities are made available, real estate values and marketability may improve.
- g. Annexation gives suburban residents a voice in the government of the larger community in which they live. County dwellers can be substantially affected by actions of the central city, but they have no participation in its affairs.
- h. Political boundaries will, after annexation, more nearly reflect the true and existing sociological, economic, cultural, and physical boundaries of the city. The fringe and the city are inextricably bound together.

- i. Business, professional, and community leaders who live in the fringe area can have a more direct role in community affairs by being elected or appointed to public office in the city.
- j. Annexation leads to a unified community and can prevent the fragmentation of local governmental authority among a large number of county districts. Fragmentation may cause “conflicts of authority and the absence of cooperation, political irresponsibility, a long ballot, duplication of services, inadequate service levels, lack of effective area-wide planning and programming, financial inequities and other problems.”<sup>6</sup>
- k. Annexation can provide a unified political representation, sound economic development, enhancement of property values, and high service levels at minimum costs can best come from total comprehensive planning that avoids duplication and conflict of authority.
- l. City and county/township boundaries can be squared off and made orderly and logical, eliminating a hodgepodge and resulting confusion as to whether a particular parcel should look to a city or to the county to obtain services. Fire and police departments, in particular, can determine whether calls are within their respective jurisdictions.
- m. Additional services may become available, such as sewer, water, ambulance, transit, and drainage control.
- n. The city can provide a tax plan to the areas being annexed that would ensure that taxes do not necessarily increase once annexed.

## **City Code and Ordinances Update**

### **Objective 3.0 Action Plan: All City ordinance and codes to be reviewed**

All City ordinances and codes are to be reviewed and updated to meet the needs and desires of the city government and its citizens. Codes should be updated to improve the value of personal and household property. Updates should also be used make the city more attractive and pleasant to reside in. Finally codes code need to be developed to improve the health, safety, and enforcement of codes for the benefit of its citizens.

Timeline milestones for the achievement of Objective 3.0 are as follows:

**One Year Milestone** - By 2005, a complete review of all codes and ordinances has been completed.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, all ordinances have been updated and put into affect.

**Ten Year Milestones** - By 2014, a Ten year review of ordinances is once again is started.

## **Housing - Environmental - Quality**

### **Objective 4.0 Action Plan: Housing Development**

Recommend through the use vacant building/Property register a process will be developed to offer delinquent and vacant lots/properties at a reduced cost or no cost to individuals who will build/remodel a house within West Frankfort. The city could expect to realize a \$500,000 to \$1.5m return over 30 years due to increased taxes on the improved properties. The city would retain rights to the property unit until all conditions of the agreement are satisfied.

Timeline Milestones for the achievement of Goal are as follows:

**Two Year Milestone** - By 2006, West Frankfort has developed a system offer to qualified individuals who will build/remodel delinquent properties within the City of West Frankfort.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, at least 20 qualified individuals will have completed building on or remodel delinquent properties

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014 at least 50 qualified individuals will have agreed to build on or remodel delinquent properties

### **Objective 4.1.a Action Plan: Reuse Buildings and Lots for Business and Homes**

Recommend a city plan that will encourages the citizens to "reuse buildings, houses, lots, and space, etc."

Timeline milestones for the achievement of Objective are as follows:

**One Year Milestone** - By 2006, 20 properties will have been identified for reuse.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, all old vacant buildings that are not structurally sound are torn down and that space is being reused.

**Ten Year Milestones** - By 2014, 50% of all vacant lots or condemned buildings are either torn down or refurbished and that space is now being used

#### **Objective 4.2 Action Plan: Community Clean up and litter free**

Recommend a city program and insensitive that challenges the people of the community to "clean-up and maintain their community, properties and area to be litter-free".

Timeline Milestones for the achievement of Goal are as follows:

**One Year Milestone-** BY 2006 the city of West Frankfort has hosted an area-wide community clean-up and household hazardous waste collection

**Five Year Milestone-** By 2009, West Frankfort has a bi-yearly community clean-up day with at least 100 citizens participating in each.

**Ten Year Milestone-** By 2014, 85% of all public and private spaces are litter free.

#### **Objective 4.3 Action Plan: City trails and paths**

Recommend that city designed and complete through grants multi-purpose recreational trails running through the city. Several old railroad beds could possibly be used for this purpose.

Timeline milestones for the achievement of Objective are as follows:

**Two Year Milestone** - By 2006, the first two miles of the multi-purpose trails are designed and completed.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, four miles of the multi-purpose trails are designed and completed.

**Ten Year Milestones** - By 2014, six miles of the multi-purpose trails are designed and completed.

#### **Objective 4.4 Action Plan: Residential Green Space**

Recommend that the city challenge the citizens to "increase, reclaim, and connect green space." Donated lots could be used for this purpose.

Timeline milestones for the achievement of Objectives are as follows:

**One Year Milestones** - By 2006, one residential green space has been established.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, two residential green spaces have been established in West Frankfort.

**Ten Year Milestones** - By 2014, there is residential green space within six blocks of each household in West Frankfort.

#### **Objective 4.5 Action Plan: Downtown Improvements**

Recommend the city develop and plan and program that envisions "downtown West Frankfort as a Main Street Mall with benches, sidewalks and improved store fronts, especially second floors and windows. Special consideration will need to be given to the historic area of the city to retain its past and character while embracing the new and the need for modernization.

Timeline milestones for the achievement of Objective are as follows:

**Two Year Milestone** - By 2006, restoration plan is developed and completed. The city has pursued and applied for grants.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, West Frankfort has completed more that 15 % of the downtown preservation project.

**Ten Year Milestones** - By 2014, West Frankfort is regionally recognized for its historic downtown areas with benches and new sidewalks and curbs through out the downtown area.

#### **Objective 4.6 Action Plan: City-Wide Beautification Plan**

Recommends a plan, to promote, implement, and maintain an on-going city-wide beautification program.

Timeline milestones for the achievement of Objective are as follows:

**Two Year Milestone** - By 2006, West Frankfort will have started a tree planting project and a beautification program.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, the City of West Frankfort has planted trees and shrubs on Main, St. Louis, Poplar, Oak, Logan, and Elm Street, with an on-going city-wide beautification program.

**Ten Year Milestones** - By 2014, the City of West Frankfort has an on-going city-wide beautification program through out the city and park areas.

## Infrastructure Workgroup

### **Objective 5.0 Action Plan: Capital Improvement Plan**

Recommends begin "planning the development, replacement and responsible growth of buildings, roads, businesses, homes, sidewalks, and infrastructure."

Timeline milestones for the achievement of Objective are as follows:

**Two Year Milestone** - By 2006, a Capital Improvement Plan that considers the environmental, economic, and social needs of the community is designed that serves as a working management tool for the City of West Frankfort. Once completed the ability of the city to obtain and apply grants and assistance will be quicker and easier. Sections plan can be used for specific economic need.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, the Capital Improvement Plan is sustainable in that it is being utilized in all planning decisions, and reviewed and upgraded annually.

**Ten Year Milestones** - By 2014, the Capital Improvement Plan is sustainable, is being utilized in all planning decisions, and reviewed and upgraded annually.

### **Objective 5.1 Action Plan: Storm Sewer and drainage ditch rehabilitation**

Recommends the city develop and plan to upgrade the existing storm drains and to replace many of the drainage ditches with storm sewers and drains through out the city. Also and at a minimum, ditches and adjacent sidewalks need to be improved to reduce hazards to traffic and pedestrians while improving the property values and appearance.

Timeline milestones for the achievement of Objective are as follows:

**One Year Milestone** - By 2007, the storm sewer system that need to be rehabilitated or installed have been identified and cost estimates have been determined to upgrade them.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2011, grants have been received and projects initiated to upgrade the storm sewer system. Water towers have been refurbished and painted as required

**Ten Year Milestones** - By 201, the new environmentally compliant storm sewer systems has largely be completed.

### **Objective 5.2 Action Plan: Railroad Overpass used to Connect Taft to Winery Road**

Recommend the construction of a new street using the existing Northern Burlington abandoned rail road bridge across Interstate highway 57. The Street would be located between Taft and Winery Road. This would be open adjacent land to development and city improvement growth, while providing an additional traffic route across Rt. 149 to the area. Timeline milestones for the achievement of Objective are as follows:

**Two Year Milestone** - By 2006, work will begin to develop funding to for a feasibility study to consider the and cost of a new street across Interstate highway 57 using the abandoned railroad overpass.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2008, a feasibility study completed, funding being sources identified and requested. The initial road bed could be constructed while applying for grants to put in a appealing boulevard and median.

**Ten Year Milestone**- By 2014, a highway overpass has been built connecting Winery Road to Taft Street. Planning for possible extension to the industrial park and 7<sup>th</sup> street could start.

### **Objective 5.3 Action Plan: Sign Regulations**

The City of West Frankfort will develop regulations to control the design and placement of public and private signs to insure that they are attractive and inviting.

Timeline Milestones for the achievement of Goal are as follows:

**Two Year Milestone** - By 2006, the Zoning Commission has completed a review of sign regulations and develops recommendations for revision of the relevant sections of the zoning ordinance.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, the City of West Frankfort has in place regulations that control the design and placement of public and private signs to insure that they are attractive and inviting.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014, the City of West Frankfort has in place regulations that control the design and placement of public and private signs to insure that they are attractive and inviting.

#### **Objective 5.4 Action Plan: Inter-Agency Collaboration**

Encourages the city for more collaboration between agencies with emphasis on common definitions and accounting of services so that duplication of services can be avoided.

Timeline Milestones for the achievement of Objective are as follows:

**Three Year Milestone** - By 2005, a working system of inter-agency collaboration is in place and working.

**Five Year Milestone** - By 2009, a working system of inter-agency collaboration is in place and operating.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014, a working system of inter-agency collaboration is in place and operating.

#### **Objective 5.5, Action Plan: City Funding and Assistance Commission**

Recommend the City of West Frankfort explore a city permanent commission managed by the city that will continually seek and obtain funding options from public and private sources.

Timeline milestones for the achievement of all objectives and goals are as follows:

**One Year Milestone** - By 2005, the city of West Frankfort Funding Commission exploring all funding options needed to achieve the West Frankfort Community Development Plan's goals and initiatives.

**Five Year Milestone** - by 2009, the city of West Frankfort has obtained 50 % of all funding needed to achieve the West Frankfort Community LAN's goals and initiatives.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2014, the city of West Frankfort has obtained 85% all funding needed to achieve the West Frankfort Community Plan's goals and initiatives.

## **Objective 5.6 Action Plan: Form West Frankfort Community Development Corporation**

Recommend the city form a non-profit development corporation to improve the process and methods for which the City of West Frankfort can raise of funds and accept donations from the private citizens, community, state and federal agencies.

In doing so West Frankfort will be creating the necessary structure by which to make real the visions articulated in this document, formation of a development corporation will be undertaken to serve as the vehicle for the advancement of these objectives. The West Frankfort Community Development Corporation (WFCDC) will be formed by a group of citizens determined to see these efforts reach fruition. WFCDC will be a not-for-profit corporation with IRS 501© (3) status. Once the corporation is established, it will have the capacity to receive and disburse resources including charitable donations, and to manage projects and continue the planning process.

This corporation, whose members will be charged with moving forward with these visions for the future, will work hand-in-hand with the West Frankfort City Council, the Chamber of Commerce, School Boards, Community Action Groups, and other State, County, and Local Agencies. The intention is to advance this agenda on many fronts and in a manner independent of, yet coordinated with, the many organizations that have the financial and/or human resources to make as much a positive impact in the community as is reasonably possible.

**One Year Milestone** - By 2005/6, West Frankfort Community Development Corporation will be established.

**Five Year Milestone** - by 2006/7, the West Frankfort Community Development Corporation, City of West Frankfort City, and the West Frankfort Funding and Assistance Commission will begin receiving and obtains donation and funding for the plans work and objectives.

**Ten Year Milestone** - By 2010, West Frankfort Community Development Corporation established in working with the city in meeting the needs of the community and business needs of the community.

**Additions to be developed**

**Enforcement of Codes, Ordinance, and Laws**

**Zoning & Development Plans**

**Home Rule**

**Eminent domain and economic development plans**