



Elizabeth Public Meeting #3
March 19th, 2024

Meeting Summary

The project team facilitated the third public meeting for the Elizabeth Comprehensive Plan, part of the Harrison County Town Planning Initiative, on March 19th, 2024. The meeting occurred at the Elizabeth Civic Center at 8128 Hurricane Street in Elizabeth, Indiana and lasted 55 minutes from 10:30 a.m. to 11:25 a.m. The meeting was attended by the three members of the Elizabeth Town Council, two town staff members, the town's attorney, two community members, and two TSWDG members. The purpose of the meeting was to share a draft of the 10 high priority catalyst initiatives with the community. The project team also gathered feedback on these items so they can be refined to more appropriately suit Elizabeth's needs.

Attendees –

- Mike Sampson – Elizabeth Town Council
- Alan Worrall – Elizabeth Town Council
- Vincent Tuell – Elizabeth Town Council
- Willard Haas – Elizabeth Clerk Treasurer
- One Town staff member
- Marcus M. Burgher – Municipal Attorney, Burgher and Burgher PC
- Two Community Members
- Sam Wiser – TSWDG
- Matt Pytel – TSWDG

Overview and Discussion

The project team prepared several strategies for each big idea presented at the previous public meeting. The strategies were derived from those big ideas and given a priority ranking of high, medium, or low. Of the many strategies, 10 were ranked as high priority. These high priority strategies are known as catalyst initiatives. The project team reviewed the catalyst initiatives with the meeting attendees and gathered input from the community. An outline of that input is provided below.

1. Catalyst Initiative 1: Establish a community events committee with representation from the town, library, American Legion, and local churches to host events throughout the year.

- a. The Town Council suggested bringing back a previous event they use to hold in Elizabeth: "Spirit Day."

- b. Includes a car show with several vendors for food and crafts.
 - c. May be on the 4th of July Weekend.
- 2. **Catalyst Initiative 2: Survey the community to identify what types of youth programming would be most desirable.**
- 3. **Catalyst Initiative 3: Adopt and enforce an unsafe building ordinance to address dilapidated structures and abandoned homes.**
- 4. **Catalyst Initiative 4: Coordinate with Harrison County and INDOT to determine the feasibility of a trail to connect the town to nearby amenities.**
 - a. Harrison County Parks has purchased land between South Central Jr-Sr High School and South Harrison Park, presumably to connect the two with a trail.
- 5. **Catalyst Initiative 5: Continues pursuing opportunities, such as the lake on Sandy Branch Road, for additional recreational space.**
 - a. The town has already purchased the land and is starting to clean and prepare it for park development.
 - b. They could use additional funding but nothing has been planned or designed yet.
 - c. The Town Council proposed using the Spirit Day event to fundraise for this park.
- 6. **Catalyst Initiative 6: Identify and promote commercial redevelopment opportunities, specifically near the intersection.**
 - a. The community colloquially knows this intersection as the “four-way” stop.
 - b. The town perceives an issue with signage at the four-way. Hwy 11 turns at this intersection and that can be confusing. People often take wrong turns there. They hope to see signage for Hwy 11 and town signage there and on Hwy 111 at Hwy 211.
 - c. Could the town install a sign to distinguish Beech Street from Hwy 11.
- 7. **Catalyst Initiative 7: Explore the creation of a blight removal and/or housing rehabilitation program to support residential infill.**
 - a. The current housing mindset is to tear down old structures and rebuild. This is because many of the older vacant homes do not have enough space for septic systems.
- 8. **Catalyst Initiative 8: Collaborate with Harrison County, the Regional Sewer District, and the Health Department to address the need for wastewater infrastructure in Elizabeth.**
 - a. Search for more funding options to help with installing new infrastructure.
 - b. In Elizabeth, the higher priority is improving the water infrastructure. Some water lines are over 50 years old, erosion at the well field is compromising some of the town’s wells, and the town is currently working with the fire department to improve and replace old fire hydrants.
 - c. Due to rate hikes and costly infrastructure projects, the Town Council does not want to pursue wastewater until the state forces them to.
- 9. **Catalyst Initiative 9: Partner with Harrison County to implement the Broadband Readiness and Infrastructure Deployment Plan.**
- 10. **Catalyst Initiative 10: Improve street lighting at key intersections and along Main Street and Hwy 11.**
 - a. The Town Council would like to see this focus on more streetscaping elements for Main Street.
 - i. Decorative lighting
 - ii. Plantings

- iii. Signage
- iv. Recommend different types of low maintenance trees for Main Street streetscaping (they have not chosen a tree)
 - 1. Ex: New Middletown and Lanesville
- b. The decorative elements, especially the lighting, would start at the Civic Center and work down Main Street to the four-way.
- c. Implement street lighting in the alleys, especially the alley near the 1819 General Store.