



# Hamilton Heights Youth Vision Plan 2015-2016



**Prepared for:** the Towns of Cicero, Arcadia, and Atlanta; the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority; the Hamilton Heights High School Business Professionals of America Chapter; and Ball State University

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April 12th, 2016





The MCMV team and community stakeholders after conducting a meeting in February. **Photo:** Derek Arrowood.

The ideas and recommendations outlined in this plan are the result of the cooperation between Ball State University, Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), and the Hamilton Heights High School Business Professionals of America (BPA) Chapter in the 2015-2016 My Community, My Vision (MCMV) program. The contents of this document are recommendations made by Ball State and BPA students. This document is intended for use only in Cicero, Arcadia, and Atlanta, Indiana. Any photos not cited are taken by Chelsea Fenimore. All information presented is perceived correct at the final publishing date: April 12, 2016.

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# Executive Summary

Many Indiana cities, especially rural communities, are facing a problem often referred to as “brain drain.” Brain drain occurs when teenagers and young adults leave their hometown and move to a larger metropolitan area often associated with life, culture, job opportunities, and an ample amount of recreational activities. The Hamilton Heights communities—Cicero, Arcadia, and Atlanta—are currently seeing a decline of young adults who choose to move to a different community, assumed to be a more metropolitan region.

My Community, My Vision (MCMV), a partnership between the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority and Ball State University Department of Urban Planning, is a program which is supposed to combat brain drain by working with a community’s youth and create an action plan that would encourage them to stay in their hometown. The Business Professional of America students at Hamilton Heights High School were chosen to participate in the MCMV program.

These students began a qualitative analysis of their community (the three Hamilton Heights communities in Jackson Township of Hamilton County) and began looking at its strengths and weaknesses. One of the weaknesses was the lack of activities targeted for teens and young adults. Many activities and amenities in Cicero and the surrounding area are centered around Morse Reservoir. These attractions rarely centered towards teens and young adults.

After analyzing strengths and weaknesses of their community, students created three initiatives to help combat brain drain. If students saw these initiatives and other similar projects completed in Hamilton Heights, they would be more likely to stay in their hometown after graduating high school or returning home after graduating from college. The three initiatives the students thought would be most beneficial to the community are as follows:

- Adaptive Reuse of the NRG Plant
- Drive-In Movie Theater
- Bicycle Trail

The NRG plant in Cicero has sat vacant for years. It is a great opportunity for adaptive reuse or the redevelopment of the site for a multitude of uses. The students felt that there needed to be a unique commercial opportunity for budding entrepreneurs and craftsmen, so a makers district might be an ideal choice. Another use for the site is for quality affordable housing. Because of the higher housing prices, it is difficult for young professionals to return to the area typically saddled with college debt and entry-level income. Young professionals also typically are looking for rental units with low maintenance, which may not be represented in the area’s current housing stock. This is an opportunity to attract this younger demographic and retain the existing ones. The NRG plant can be adaptively reused to fit either or both of these uses, or architectural features can be saved to accentuate a new building on the site should the building be deemed unsalvageable.

The students dreamed of a drive-in movie theater. There are very few currently open, especially in the surrounding counties, so it would serve as an attraction for visitors and residents alike. Fellow students echoed their desire in the student-wide survey. The initiative is now a component of a multi-phase proposal by the Cicero/Jackson Township Plan Commission and Parks Department and could begin as soon as 2017 should the funding for Phase I come in May 2016. BPA students then could potentially partner and help run the drive-in theater as a business model exercise.

The students wished to connect all three communities via a bicycle trail. After mapping potential routes and connecting certain features from Strawtown Koteewi Park to Morse Reservoir, the Northern Hamilton County Trail Master Plan was unveiled, which followed many of students’ ideas. This initiative aligns with the master plan as to not duplicate efforts.

This plan further explains these initiatives and gives recommendations, improvement actions, and funding sources to assist in the completion of these initiatives.



Students present to community stakeholders in a February meeting.



Students present to the Cicero Town Council at a March meeting.

# About the Program

My Community, My Vision (MCMV) is a program sponsored by Lieutenant Governor in an effort to engage rural youth in community planning and is implemented through a partnership between Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) and Ball State University (BSU). This program strives to encourage the next generation of civic and government leaders to take an active role in shaping the future of their hometowns. Small, rural Indiana communities are targeted as many of these suffer from a collective “brain drain” of youth and talent moving to larger cities and urbanized areas for jobs, entertainment, and cultural amenities.

MCMV sought applications from communities around the state, which were to detail youth’s perspective and what they might include in a community vision plan assisted by BSU. Applicants provided information about their hometowns such as:

- How their organization was active in their community
- The strengths and challenges of their community
- The applicant’s vision for the community
- How the vision might impact their decision to return to their hometown
- The community demographics and other information that may support their described vision

The application also encouraged letters of support from elected officials in the municipality or state government as supporting documentation. For the second year of the program, IHCDA selected six communities based on how inclusive their vision was for the community as a whole and the level of student involvement in their plan.

A BSU mentor worked with each group with two mentors actively working with all groups for economic development and environmental analysis for a total

of eight mentors assisting with the creation of six community vision plans. The mentors introduced students to community planning, the process of bringing ideas to implementation, and how these ideas could shape the future of their hometowns. Both the students and BSU mentors held various meetings and brainstorming sessions to create this plan.

Each plan is unique, considering each community’s goals and needs and the process to reach the final stage. The following pages are the Hamilton Heights Youth Action Plan created by Chelsea Fenimore for the Business Professionals of America (BPA) Chapter at Hamilton Heights High School. This document was created through a series of meetings with the MCMV committee of the BPA and community stakeholder meetings.

## Importance

This action plan is important as it recognizes issues identified by students and provides solutions with implementation methods. The plan required extensive work by the students and faculty at Hamilton Heights School Corporation, town officials, and community members. As a result, the contents of this plan should hold merit as valuable information for future community improvement actions. If successful, the plan addresses the following youth requests:

1. Quality affordable housing options
2. Diversity of job opportunities
3. Entrepreneurship opportunities for youth and young adults
4. Additional recreational opportunities
5. Additional entertainment opportunities

These initiatives are identified as vital for Hamilton Heights students to stay or return to the community after graduation. Working to provide long-term, sustainable solutions to the above initiatives can reduce “brain drain” within the Hamilton Heights community.



Students present to other student groups at the March group meeting. **Photo:** Julie Oelschlager.

## Learning Opportunity

This plan acted as an immersive learning experience for the participating students and the BSU mentor. The program exposed the high school students to urban planning and its process. Besides learning about urban planning, creating this plan gave students experience in civic involvement and community development. BSU mentors gained experience teaching others the principles and practices of urban planning while guiding students through the planning process.

## Bicentennial Legacy Project

The Indiana Bicentennial Commission designated the My Community, My Vision program as a Bicentennial Legacy Project. In honor of the Indiana Bicentennial year, Bicentennial Legacy Projects recognize different achievable activities that engage the public and make an impact in communities.



Students and the BSU mentor exchange ideas at the September kickoff event. **Photo:** IHCDA.

# Hamilton Heights High School Business Professionals of America Chapter



Business Professionals of America (BPA) is a career and technical organization with over 43,000 student members nationwide that focuses on the development of workplace leadership skills. Members participate in mock situation competitions at the local, state, and national level. The BPA Chapter at Hamilton Heights High School has around 120 members, 11 of which are active participants in the My Community, My Vision program. The MCMV group aims to embody and act upon the values of community service that BPA instills in its members and seeks to improve relationships in northern Hamilton County. We want to link these communities together and create a community where people want to return to.

Pictured above is the chapter after the BPA State Competition (Photo credit: Whitney Gray). Pictured below is part of the MCMV committee at the kickoff event in September 2015 (Photo credit: IHADA).

(Left to Right) Kate Biggs, Kim Standeford, Sam Reitenour, Madeline Diller, Evan Alexander, former Lieutenant Governor Sue Ellspermann, Madelyn Merrell, Leigh Anne Reuter, and Ben Hiatt. Not pictured: Ashley Klopfenstein, Nathan Russell, and Riley Tindal.

# Acknowledgements

The My Community, My Vision team would like to thank and acknowledge several people and groups for their contributions to this plan throughout the process, including but not limited to:

## **Indiana State Government**

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Sue Ellspermann, former Lieutenant Governor

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Jacob Sipe, Executive Director  
Carmen Lethig, Placemaking Manager  
Beth Neville, Real Estate Department Graduate Assistant  
Elizabeth Patel, former Public Relations & Advocacy  
Kaitlyn Baffoe, former Real Estate Production Analyst

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Chelsea Fenimore, Hamilton Heights mentor  
Heath Harper, Gary mentor  
Kenneth Hughes, Martinsville mentor  
Paul Jones, Anderson mentor  
Bryant Niehoff, Muncie mentor  
Lindi Conover, economic development specialist  
Spencer Starke, environmental specialist

## **Hamilton Heights School Corporation**

Dr. Derek Arrowood, Superintendent  
Jarrod Mason, High School Principal  
Whitney Gray, High School Assistant Principal

## **Hamilton Heights High School Business Professionals of America Chapter – My Community, My Vision Committee**

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Kate Biggs, Student  
Madeline Diller, Student  
Ben Hiatt, Student

Ashley Klopfenstein, Student  
Madelyn Merrell, Student  
Sam Reitenour, Student  
Leigh Anne Reuter, Student  
Nathan Russell, Student  
Kim Standeford, Student  
Riley Tindal, Student  
Julie Oelschlager, High School Business Teacher & BPA Chapter Advisor

## **Community Members and Organizations**

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## **Cicero Town Council**

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Chad Amos, Vice President  
Chris Lutz, District 1  
Rusty Miller, District 2  
Craig Penwell, District 3

## **Cicero/Jackson Township Plan Commission**

Paul Munoz, Plan Director  
Shae Kmicikewycz, Community Development Specialist

## **Hamilton County**

Mark Heirbrandt, County Commissioner

## **HAND, Incorporated**

Nate Lichti, Executive Director  
Tracy Heaton de Martinez, Outreach Coordinator

## **Northern Hamilton County Chamber of Commerce**

Jane Hunter, Executive Director

## **Our Town Cicero**

Mary Devlin, Treasurer



# Components of the Plan

## Community Profile

This section provides a brief overview of the history, geography, and demographics of Hamilton County and the Jackson Township communities.

## Initiatives

This section describes three community initiatives and action steps to implement each one. The initiatives are:

- Adaptive Reuse of the NRG Plant
- Drive-In Movie Theater
- Bicycle Trail

Each initiative explains why it is important to the community and offers a recommendation as well as provide a case study for reference.

## Implementation Strategies

This section discusses the implementation strategies that could be taken for the three initiatives.

## Contacts

Implementation of the plan's initiatives requires the collaboration of many public and private entities and individuals. This section identifies potential collaborators at the state and local levels as well as their contact information.

## Appendices

This section contains the supporting information and data important to the initiatives and recommendations within the plan as well as outlines funding methods.



Students at the Neighborhoods NOW Conference. **Photo:** HAND, Inc.

# Planning Process

## August – September 2015

IHCDA sent out the call for community applications for the MCMV program. After selecting the six winning communities, all parties convened for a kickoff meeting in late September. Here, the BSU mentors met with their high school students for the first time and began to discuss their goals for the plans moving forward.

## October 2015

The MCMV Committee held two face-to-face meetings with the BSU mentor in addition to weekly Thursday evening meetings. During these meetings, students brainstormed potential projects (called “initiatives” in this plan) to achieve certain goals they identified. The students distributed a survey to the entire student body and faculty and received 589 and 67 responses, respectively.

## November 2015

The MCMV Committee attended the Neighborhoods NOW Conference at the invitation of the Hamilton County Area Neighborhood Development (HAND), Inc., on November 10th. Three of the six communities convened for a second group meeting at the Ball State Indianapolis Center on November 18th, where the BSU economic development and environmental specialists presented on their respective topics. The groups then discussed the progress on each respective plan and provided advice to the others.

## December 2015

The MCMV committee and BSU mentor met via Google Hangout for the final meeting before the holiday break. The student body survey results were compiled and work on the first draft of the plan began.

## January 2016

A rough draft of the plan was completed and published at <https://sites.google.com/site/mycommunitymyvision/home>. The Indiana Bicentennial Commission designated MCMV as a Bicentennial Legacy Project in honor of Indiana’s Bicentennial year.

## February 2016

The students and their mentor held a meeting on February 22nd to receive feedback from stakeholders and public officials on their ideas. Revisions were then made for final publication.

## March 2016

The students presented the plan to the Cicero Town Council at their March 15th meeting. The six communities convened at Ball State University on March 18th to discuss progress on each respective plan as well practice presentations before the final event in Indianapolis. The students also toured the College of Architecture and Planning facilities as well as other campus spots during their visit.

## April 2016

The final plans were published and presented at the 1899 Experience event venue in Indianapolis on April 12th.



BSU Mentor Chelsea Fenimore brainstorms with students at the September kickoff event. **Photo:** IHCDA

# Community Profile

## Hamilton County

Hamilton County's roots are in agriculture. However, after World War II, Indianapolis grew north and towns in the southern part of the county developed as suburbs. Many farm fields have been replaced by both residential and commercial development. The northern portion of the county, though, remains largely agricultural. William Conner was the first white settler in the county after the United States acquired the land by the Treaty of St. Mary's in 1818. In the summer of 1822, after realizing there were enough settlers in the area, Conner and the others applied to the Indiana Legislature for a charter authorizing them to become a separate and independent county under Indiana law. The Legislature reviewed and passed during the 1822-1823 session, and the governor officially approved on January 8th, 1823. The act took effect on Monday, April 7th, 1823. The County Commissioners first met on May 5th, 1823, at Conner's house, which also served as the County Circuit Court. They named the county after Alexander Hamilton, the first secretary of the treasury.

Today, the county is one of the fastest growing in the United States. According to U.S. Census estimates, the county's population increased from around 182,740 in 2000 to 261,661 in 2007, making it the fastest-growing out of Indiana's 92 counties. It is also the state's most affluent county. According to the 2014 U.S. Census estimates, Hamilton County has a population of 302,623. There are 394.27 square miles of land and 8.17 square miles of water, totaling 402.44 square miles, within the county borders.

In June 2008, Hamilton County was named "America's Best Place to Raise a Family" by Forbes.com due to its strong economy, affordable living, top-ranked schools, and close proximity to Indianapolis. The City of Carmel in the southwestern part of the county was designated CNN Money's top place to live in 2013. Geist and Morse Reservoirs are two manmade lakes that offer

residents and visitors recreational opportunities such as boating, fishing, and waterfront living.

The county seat is Noblesville while the largest city is Carmel. There are five school districts in the county, including Hamilton Heights, Noblesville Schools, Hamilton Southeastern Schools, Carmel Clay Schools, and Westfield-Washington Schools.

## Arcadia

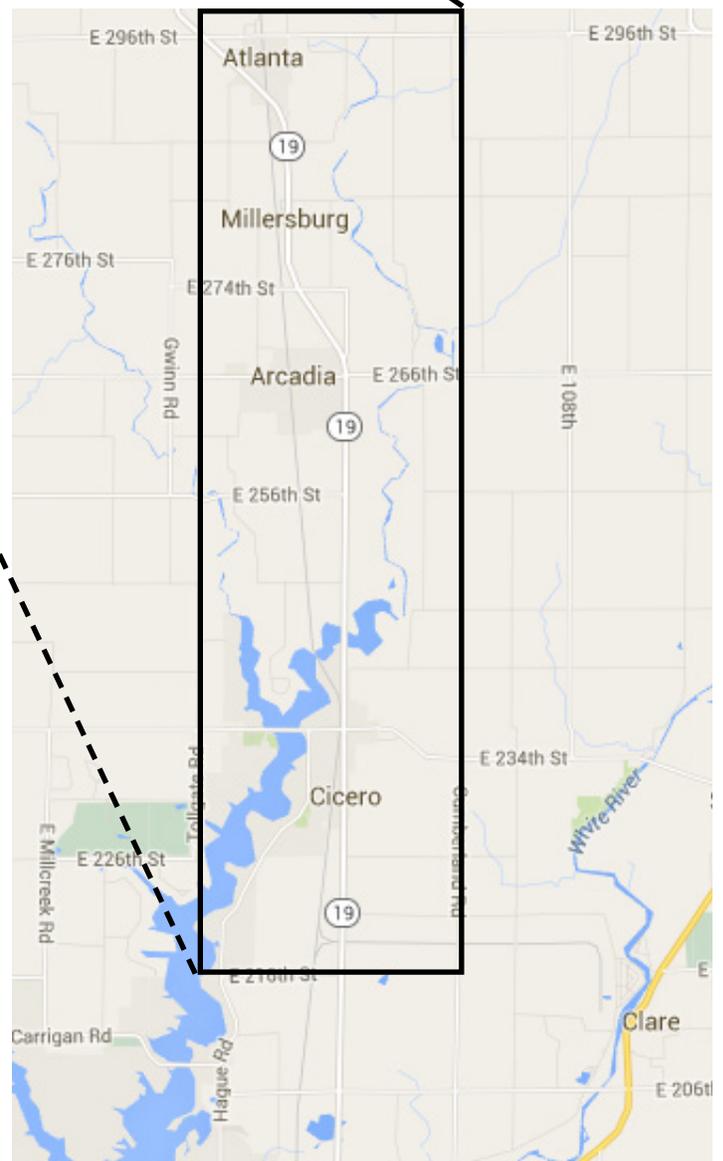
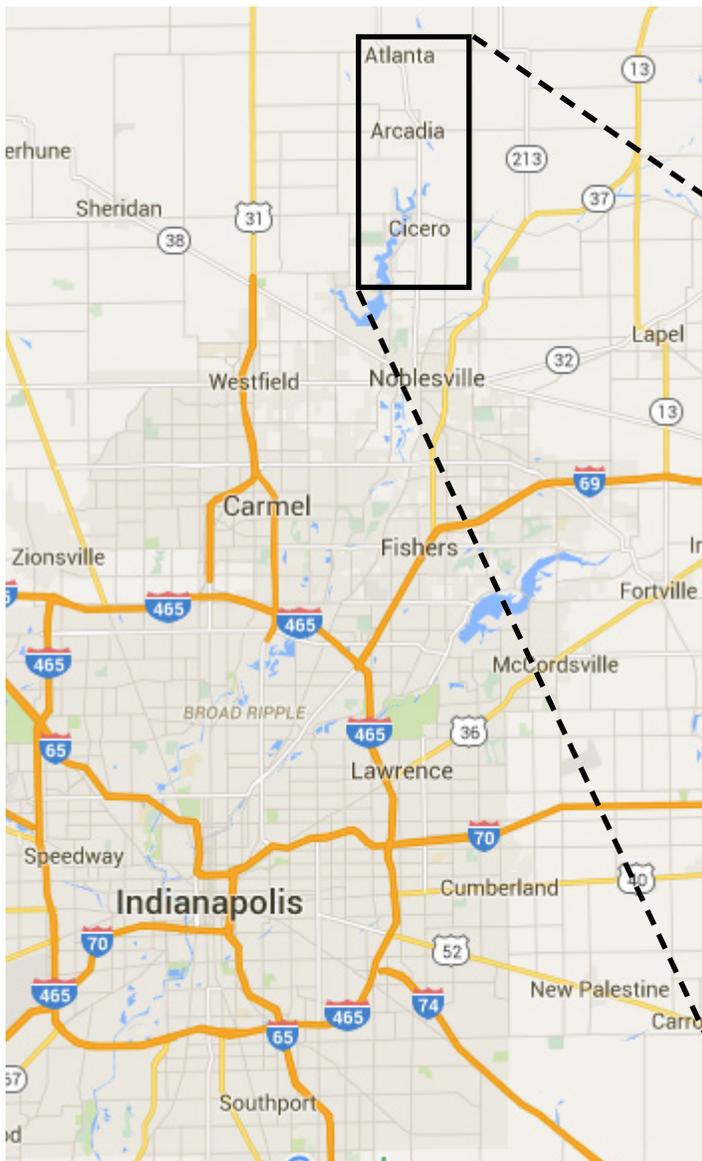
The Town of Arcadia was platted in 1849 in anticipation of a new railroad extension to the area. The name originates from the ancient region of Arcadia in Greece. The Arcadia Post Office opened in 1852. According to the 2014 U.S. Census estimates, Arcadia has a population of 1,680. Arcadia is also home to the Hamilton Heights School Corporation.

## Atlanta

The Town of Atlanta was formed through the merging of three neighboring towns of Spargerville, Shielville, and Buena Vista. The earliest part of what is now Atlanta was platted in 1834, and the town has been called Atlanta since 1885. The name likely originates from Atlanta, Georgia. Atlanta is most notably recognized for the Atlanta New Earth Festival held on the fourth weekend of September annually since 1973. According to the 2014 U.S. Census estimates, Atlanta has a population of 740.

## Cicero

The Town of Cicero was founded in 1835 with its name deriving from Cicero Creek. The first post office in Jackson Township was established at Cicero in 1839. Cicero is notable for welcoming teenaged AIDS activist Ryan White to its community in 1987, where he is buried. According to the 2014 U.S. Census estimates, Cicero has a population of 4,891. Morse Reservoir is located directly west of the town, making it a destination for boating and other water-based activities.



Source: Google Maps.



Looking out over Morse Reservoir.

# Initiatives

All initiatives address problems contributing to “brain drain” in the Hamilton Heights area. Within each initiative is a recommendation of what the youth would like to see done in the community.

## **Adaptive Reuse of the NRG Plant**

This initiative discusses the potential of the former NRG plant site. It can be adaptively reused into affordable housing and commercial space, such as a makers district.

## **Drive-In Movie Theater**

This initiative discusses the possibility of implementing a drive-in theater around the reservoir. This project would work in conjunction with current efforts by the Cicero/Jackson Township Plan Commission.

## **Bicycle Trail**

This initiative discusses the Northern Hamilton County Trail Master Plan proposal, which aligns with the students’ ideas for an inter-community recreation trail.

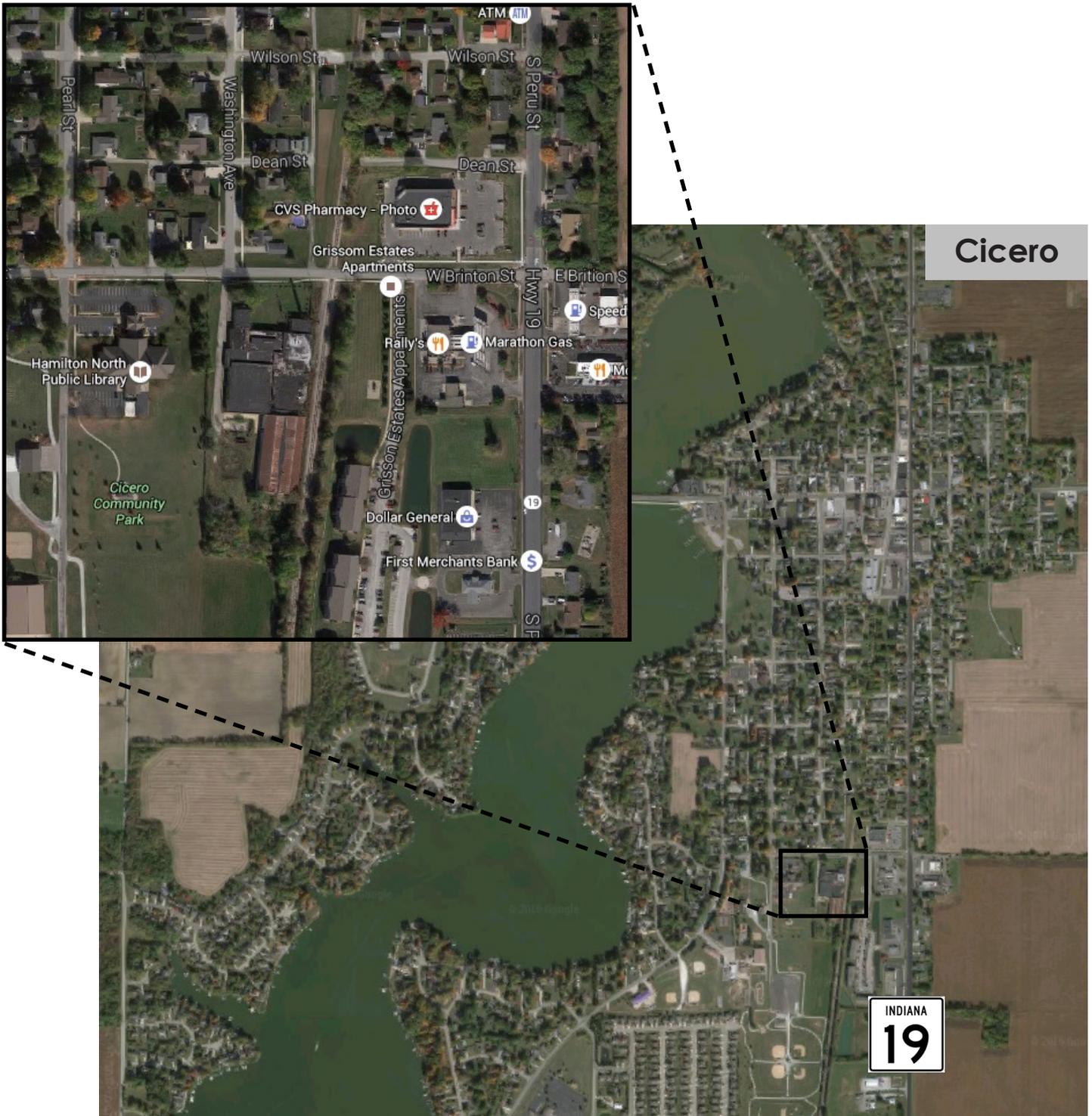


Figure 2: NRG Plant Location. Source: Google Maps.

# Adaptive Reuse of the NRG Plant



**Figure 3:** NRG Plant Exterior and Chimney.

This initiative discusses the potential within the former energy plant on West Brinton Street in Cicero (seen in Figure 2). The building has history with the community, so rather than demolishing the structure, there could be a variety of options. This, of course, is dependent on its structural integrity. Current investigations by Cicero public officials have deemed the structure unsalvageable, but there is potential to save features of the plant to add character to the future development. For example, the chimney could be salvaged as an architectural feature (seen in Figure 3). Another option is to salvage the existing brick to be reused in some part of the new development. As far as programming, one particular option to consider could be a maker district. A maker district attracts a wide array of businesses to occupy a large structure, such as a former warehouse or industrial building. The plant could serve as a prime opportunity to attract artists, brewers, woodworkers, and more with flexible

workspace. It could also be combined with affordable housing units to help with funding as well as provide housing that attracts young professionals since median housing prices are so high in the area.

## Why This is Important

The plant is at a key location toward the center of Cicero. It is located adjacent to the Cicero Community Park and Hamilton North Public Library on West Brinton Street. It is in close proximity to community amenities, the downtown, as well as nearby residential. It is also helpful to adaptively reuse what is currently there for a new purpose, therefore retaining the area and building character. Even if the entire building cannot be saved for adaptive reuse, salvaging character features such as bricks and the chimney stack (seen in Figure xx) will retain its historic character and charm as well as be a sustainable choice. It is more environmentally friendly to attempt to recycle building materials from a demolished structure in a new one, or in the case of the chimney, save it as an accent piece for the new development to pay homage to the site's history. This is also a unique economic development opportunity as there are no other maker districts in Hamilton County, setting Cicero and northern Hamilton County apart from the rest of the county. It is also proven that small, "mom and pop" businesses have a vested interest in their community's welfare.

## Recommendation

The property would need to be acquired by either the municipality or a nonprofit group as it is still currently privately owned. One potential partner, especially in the implementation of an affordable housing component, is HAND, Incorporated. They have worked on similar projects in the past. This is an ambitious project that requires much coordination to effectively execute. The person or group ultimately in charge would need to reach out and recruit potential makers to come. As previously mentioned, makers could include artists and artisans, but an increasingly popular option is attracting craft brewers

# Adaptive Reuse of the NRG Plant

and brewpubs. Anyone from the community could be encouraged to become makers, which could be a contributing feature to attract young people back to the Hamilton Heights area. The building seems to be in good condition to be retrofitted for the purposes of a maker district, which is an element to consider when retrofitting old buildings. Depending on what types of makers end up in the building, the utility capacities are another component to consider. Moving forward, the project's leadership could consult with previous maker district coordinators and receive guidance and advice from them. Affordable housing units could be incorporated into the design to provide makers or other tenants an affordable living option or live/work. "Live/work" units give tenants the ability to live and work in the same building, therefore reducing their transportation costs and eliminate their need to lease out a separate working space. The following case studies provide examples of past projects that could guide this project's design.

## Case Study: Southern Pacific Brewing

There are a variety of scales and uses within maker districts, but a trending use are brewpubs and craft beer producers in industrial buildings. One such example is Southern Pacific Brewing in San Francisco, California. Inspired by an early 20th century railway line running through San Francisco, the company transformed an old machine shop warehouse into a brewpub with seating for up to 300 customers. As much as possible was reclaimed on site during renovations as well as from nearby sites, such as beams and skylights (as seen in Figure 4).

This and several other maker district examples can be found here:  
<http://www.urbanghostsmedia.com/2015/02/adaptive-reuse-10-repurposed-industrial-buildings-abandoned/>



Figure 4: The Southern Pacific Brewing's adaptive reuse of a warehouse. Source: futuristspeaker.com

## Case Study: Northern Warehouse Artists' Cooperative

The City of Saint Paul, Minnesota, invited Artspace, a developer of art facilities, to redevelop a former 1908 Northern Pacific Railway warehouse. In 1990, the Northern Warehouse Artists' Cooperative (as seen in Figure 5) opened its doors and served as an economic and cultural catalyst for downtown's Lowertown neighborhood. It was the first project in the nation to use Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) for artist housing. There are 52 affordable live/work units for artists and their families on the upper four floors while the lower two offer office, studio, and commercial space for nonprofit art organizations, commercial artists, and others. Other uses include a coffeehouse and an art gallery. In 2011, Artspace used a new round of LIHTCs to refinance and add more energy-efficient windows, a new roof, and tuckpointing of the building's distinctive brown brick façade.

Source: <http://www.artspace.org/sites/default/files/public/downloads/place/northern.pdf>



Figure 6: NRG Plant and Detached Office Building.



Figure 5: Adaptive reuse of a warehouse to live/work units. Source: emporis.com



Figure 7: Morse Reservoir view from Red Bridge Park.



Figure 8: The Saco Drive-In on a movie night. Source: bangordailynews.com

# Drive-In Movie Theater

A drive-in theater would provide many opportunities for Cicero and the Hamilton Heights area. There are no drive-in theaters nearby, giving the area a unique attraction. The town can leverage this to attract business from outside the community. Working with Visit Hamilton County or even the Indiana Office of Tourism Development could market it at a county-level and even raise awareness beyond Hamilton County. Cicero could become a destination because of this project.

## Why It Is Important

According to student survey Question 15 (found in Appendix A), 78% of students said that they would visit a drive-in theater “very often.” This is a unique attraction that is not found in neighboring areas, which would put Cicero on the map. It provides an activity for adults and youth alike as well as outside consumers who would contribute to the local economy by eating at restaurants or shopping at local shops. Rather than visiting Noblesville or another city to see a movie, youth can stay in Cicero and watch new movies (should digital be the chosen movie type). A variety of film genres could be shown, catering to children and adults alike. This attraction could also be rented out for parties. This could also give BPA students the opportunity to learn about business models and running a business in a real-world environment.

## Recommendation

The Cicero/Jackson Township Plan Commission and Parks Department are currently working on the first phase of a long-term project to begin as soon as this summer. The first phase is a pier project wired with lights and speakers that would offer the public and nearby boats the opportunity to enjoy live music or other attractions from the pier. The pier would be located off of Red Bridge Park, not far from the location in Figure 7. The three areas of the pier’s purpose include recreation, education, and entertainment. The recreation component would

provide a third public access point to the reservoir for fishing and enjoying the water. The education component would add to Cicero Parks Department’s educational program offerings, such as water safety. The drive-in theater would incorporate into the entertainment purpose since the pier will provide an outdoor public gathering venue to enjoy music or movies near the reservoir. The type of movie selection—digital or reel-to-reel—would be decided when the time comes to purchase equipment. The costs for either option vary greatly and also attract different customers.

The grant for Phase 1 would cover the construction of the pier itself, lighting, landscaping, setting it up for electricity, and more foundation pieces for the pier. The first phase would begin and be completed as soon as Summer 2016 dependent on the grant currently in the application process. Should it follow this timeline, applying for funding sources for the screen(s) and movie components can commence in early 2017.

## Case Study: Saco Drive-In

In 2011 three students from the University of Southern Maine managed the Saco Drive-In using their knowledge from their classes, faculty advice, and \$30,000 of investor capital to cover the initial costs. They put together a business plan and presented it to the owners for lease. They paid their debts back in three weeks early in part because the students reached out to many demographics by showing movies ranging from *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part 2* to *Dolphin Tale* (Figure 8). The students found the experience a great supplement to their education as it applied their classroom knowledge and skills in a real-world business scenario. This is a successful example of how the Hamilton Heights BPA students can potentially manage the drive-in theater and hone their business skills.

Source: <http://usmfreepress.org/2011/09/26/students-find-success-in-drive-in-theater-business/>

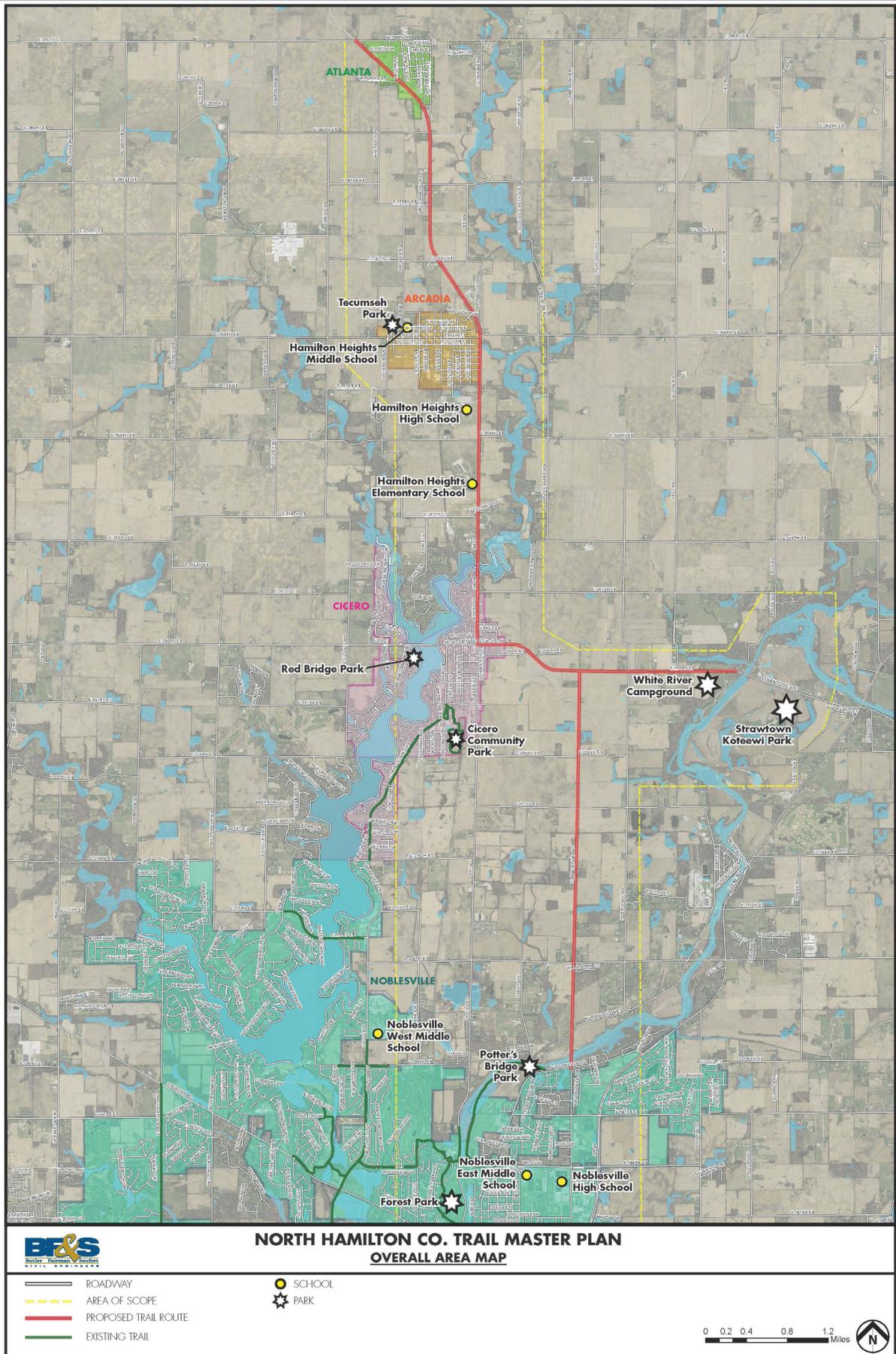


Figure 9: Proposed Trail Master Plan. Source: Butler Fairman & Seufert.

# Bicycle Trail

This initiative focuses on connecting the three communities—Cicero, Arcadia, and Atlanta—as well as providing an opportunity for recreation and alternative transportation.

## Why It Is Important

While brainstorming initiatives, a few students suggested adding bike trails, and the team embraced the idea. They also pointed out there are many active enthusiastic cyclists in the community who might benefit from a dedicated trail as well as attract budding and casual cyclists. Currently there is no safe place to cycle; instead, people have to bike on country roads or even State Road 19.

As seen in Appendix A, Question 13 asks students if they would use a dedicated bicycle trail. 22% of students responded that they would use it bi-weekly.

## Recommendation

During an October meeting, the students identified State Road 19 as the major backbone of the trail since it the main connector to the three communities of Cicero, Arcadia, and Atlanta. They also identified certain landmarks and amenities to connect from there, such as Strawtown Koteewi Park, Beck's Hybrids, and Morse Reservoir. On November 18th, 2015, Butler Fairman & Seufert held a public meeting at Hamilton Heights High School to unveil the initial draft of the Northern Hamilton County Trail Master Plan. Many

members of the public attended to ask questions of the steering committee as well as the firm. The proposed trail aligned with the students' proposal, so it makes sense to join efforts rather than devise two separate plans. The final draft of the master plan was presented at the Arcadia, Atlanta, and Cicero Town Council meetings throughout February 2016. The following section outlines the proposal.

This is a master plan proposal, meaning that the design is not permanent or unchangeable. The goals of the master plan are similar to the students' original plan, which include enhancing community and regional connections as well as increasing the number of people cycling for exercise and transportation. The path would be shared by pedestrians and cyclists and run along existing roadways, separated by a minimum 10-foot-wide vegetated buffer (depicted in Figure 10). As seen in Figure 9, the trail runs along State Road 19 starting at Potter's Bridge Park and splits on East 234th Street to head east towards Strawtown Koteewi Park and west towards downtown Cicero, where it reconnects with State Road 19. The trail then runs north to Arcadia and Atlanta with a potential future extension along East 281st Street towards Beck's Hybrids. The plan has been approved by all three municipalities.

More information can be found at [northhamiltontrail.com](http://northhamiltontrail.com).

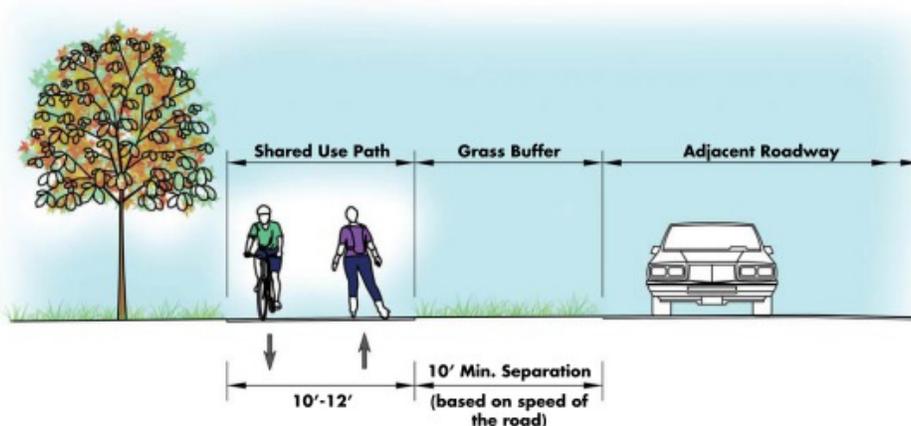


Figure 10: Proposed Trail Section. Source: Butler Fairman & Seufert.

# Implementation Strategies

## Overview

While each community has their specific goals and initiatives, there are several factors that each plan has in common. A list of economic improvement strategies (see below) was developed at a meeting of MCMV Year One community members in November 2014 in Columbus, Indiana. The list was compiled and organized by India Ballard-Bonfido. This portion of the plan is intended to share resources which empower each community to achieve their goals. Online resources on the MCMV website (<https://sites.google.com/site/mycommunitymyvision/home>) supplement this information. It is highly recommended that each community review these resources.

## Overall Strategies

Smaller Projects/ Programs (1-5 years)	Longer-Term Goals (5-15 years)
Crowdfunding	Business improvement districts
Revolving loans funds	Heritage tourism
Student-lead restaurants	Makers districts
Community gathering events	Downtown living opportunities
Farmers markets	Food security
Community gardens	Resource recovery

Oftentimes, larger goals must be broken down into smaller projects, pilot projects and use project-specific funding sources to be achieved. Once a history of success is established, then higher-dollar funders will be more likely to give, as is the case for federal funding resources.

All programs, whether they are small projects with a short timeline, or larger projects that will take five years or more, require collaboration with various local, state and federal partnerships. Such partnership is essential for success, but also demonstrates strong, grassroots commitment to community improvement.

An online video guide on the MCMV website accompanies the following action items and the economic tools and fundraising resources listed below. In this guide, Lindi Conover takes you through the following components with an example to explain the particular organizing goals and strategies, along with the fundraising and economic implementation tools.

## Adaptive Reuse of the NRG Plant

The Hamilton Heights MCMV group has chosen to try to encourage small business growth within their communities by promoting the adaptive reuse of the NRG plant. This structure could house a makers space as well as affordable housing.

While a lofty goal, the Town of Cicero is primed for such a step. This bedroom community has just been designated a Main Street Associate with the state, has a growing population, a robust community planning commission, and an eager community base. While this goal is a multi-year process with many steps along the way, this initiative is certainly an achievable goal.

When considering adaptive reuse of an abandoned building for both commercial and residential use, the community has several steps which they need to be ready to take. The first step in this process is going to be to identify a taskforce or committee of volunteers who is ready to spearhead this project. It would serve the committee well to affiliate themselves with a non-profit in the area. The committee must make their intentions known to the local planning commission and work with them to identify their goals.

The commission will need to approve zoning variances or re-zone the entire area for a mixed-use development. Additionally, the area may need to undergo brownfield remediation, since it was once an energy plant. After determining the general idea for the building, the Town of Cicero should bid out options for the redevelopment of this project. The developer should produce proforma for this project,

after which the Town must be prepared to leverage public dollars for private funding. Funds from the town, grants from the state and other sources should be combined with loans and investment dollars to help make this project successful.

The timeline on this project is likely 3-5 years after the initial ideas are proposed to the planning commission. The funding database that is available to MCMV partners lists potential partners that would be good candidates for helping to finance this project. Specifically, see the community development section of the resource.

### **Drive-In Theater**

A drive-in theater would provide much needed youth entertainment in the region. Cicero is the most reasonable site for a theater, for several reasons. The proposed site for the theater is a hill near the reservoir, and dining options within the town also attract people, so a family could grab dinner and a movie.

Funding for this project could come from a number of sources, like grants, NAP credits, and monetary and in-kind sponsorships. NAP credits are an opportunity through the State of Indiana whereby a non-profit can apply for tax credits that can be sold to an individual or business. The dollars acquired through this sale can be applied to just about any component of this project. Dollars from NAP credits can help to supplement components of this project that cannot be gathered through alternative support forms detailed below.

### **Sponsorships**

A committee of dedicated individuals may solicit sponsorships from local businesses and, in turn, provide advertising opportunities for those businesses and/or individuals. For example, a local business, Agency XYZ, may choose to sponsor the project at the \$5,000 dollar level, and in turn, the theater might be named the "Agency XYZ Drive-In" and the business

can place their logo and advertising information around the plaza.

### **Grants**

Grants from the local community foundation or other private foundations can be sought out to help with components of the project. It is important to understand that oftentimes, grantors will not fund all components of a project. For example, finding bricks and mortar grants can be quite tricky. But, looking for grants that support parts of the construction of the theater might be more effective.

### **In-Kind Donations**

In-kind donations or sponsorships occur when an entity provides goods or services free-of-charge as a donation and does not include direct monetary donations. Local businesses are usually good candidates for requesting in-kind donations, especially for specific and clearly detailed projects such as this. Asking an entertainment store for supplies for the project would help to offset other capital costs. In turn, the theater should provide marketing and advertising materials for the sponsoring business.

### **Bicycle Trail**

This initiative focuses on connecting the communities of Cicero, Arcadia and Atlanta by providing an opportunity for recreation and alternative transportation. Currently there is no safe place to cycle; instead, people have to bike on country roads or even State Road 19.

The Northern Hamilton County Trail Master Plan has already been proposed and adopted by all three municipalities. Each municipality might also be expected to contribute monetarily to the process. Hamilton County has an excellent resource for planning projects and funding through Mendenhall & Associates, a grant administration company based in Arcadia. The company has worked to help make the trail a reality and should not be overlooked.

# Contacts

## Cicero Economic Development Committee

70 North Byron Street

Cicero, IN 46034

**Contact:** Brett Morrow, EDC President

**Email:** brettmorrow@gmail.com

**Website:** <http://www.ciceroin.org/government/cicero-economic-development-committee>

## Cicero Parks Department

1050 South Pearl Street

P.O. Box 884

Cicero, IN 46034

**Contact:** Charlie Cambre, Parks Superintendent

**Email:** ccambre@ciceroin.org

**Phone:** (317) 984-3475

**Fax:** (317) 984-5980

**Website:** <http://www.ciceroin.org/departments/cicero-parks-department/>

## Cicero Town Council

70 North Byron Street

Cicero, IN 46034

**Contact:** Brett Foster, President

**Email:** brettstfoster@gmail.com

**Website:** <http://www.ciceroin.org/government/town-council>

## Cicero/Jackson Township Plan Commission

150 West Jackson Street

P.O. Box 650

Cicero, IN 46034

**Contact:** Paul Munoz, Plan Director

**Email:** pmunoz@ciceroin.org

**Phone:** (317) 984-5845

**Fax:** (317) 984-5938

**Website:** <http://www.ciceroin.org/departments/cjt-plan-commission>



## Hamilton County Commissioners

1 Hamilton County Square, Suite 157

Noblesville, IN 46060

**Contact:** Mark Heirbrandt, County Commissioner

**Email:** mark.heirbrandt@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

**Phone:** (317) 776-8493

**Website:** <http://www.hamiltoncounty.in.gov/629/County-Commissioners>

## Hamilton County Tourism, Inc.

37 East Main Street

Carmel, IN 46032

**Contact:** Brenda Myers

**Phone:** (317) 848-3181

**Website:** <http://www.visithamiltoncounty.com>

## Hamilton Heights School Corporation

410 West Main Street

P.O. Box 469

Arcadia, IN 46030

**Contact:** Derek Arrowood, Ph.D, Superintendent

**Email:** darrowood@mail.hhsc.k12.in.us

**Phone:** (317) 984-3538 ext. 5090

**Website:** <http://www.hhschuskiies.org>

## HAND, Incorporated

347 South 8th Street, Suite A

Noblesville, IN 46060

**Contact:** Nate Lichti, Executive Director

**Email:** nate@handincorporated.org

**Phone:** (317) 674-8108

**Website:** <http://www.handincorporated.org>

## Northern Hamilton County Chamber of Commerce

70 North Byron Street

Cicero, IN 46034

**Contact:** Jane Hunter, Executive Director

**Email:** jane@hamiltonnorthchamber.com

**Phone:** (317) 984-4079

**Website:** <http://www.hamiltonnorthchamber.com>

### Our Town Cicero

70 North Byron Street  
P.O. Box 590  
Cicero, IN 46034

**Contact:** Mary Devlin, Treasurer  
**Email:** dmaryOTC@gmail.com

### Town of Arcadia

208 West Main Street  
Arcadia, IN 46030

**Contact:** Jennifer Pickett, Clerk  
**Phone:** (317) 984-3512

### Town of Atlanta

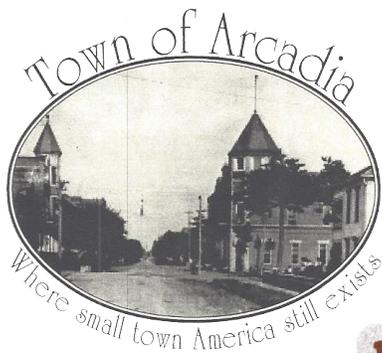
105 West Main Street  
Atlanta, IN 46031

**Contact:** Robyn Cook, Clerk-Treasurer  
**Email:** atlantact@iendeavor.com  
**Phone:** (765) 292-2626

### Town of Cicero

150 West Jackson Street  
P.O. Box 650  
Cicero, IN 46034

**Contact:** Jan Unger, Clerk-Treasurer  
**Email:** ciceroct@comcast.net  
**Phone:** (317) 984-4900  
**Fax:** (317) 984-5938  
**Website:** <http://www.ciceroin.org>



### Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority

30 South Meridian Street #1000  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

**Phone:** (317) 232-7777  
**Toll Free:** (800) 872-0371

**Website:** <http://www.in.gov/ihcda>

Indiana Housing &  
Community Development  
Authority



### Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs

One North Capitol #600  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

**Phone:** (317) 233-3762  
**Toll Free:** (800) 824-2476

**Website:** <http://www.in.gov/ocra>



### Indiana Office of Tourism Development

One North Capitol #600  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

**Phone:** (317) 232-8860  
**Fax:** (317) 233-3261

**Website:** <http://www.visitindianatourism.com>





Students discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Hamilton Heights communities. **Photo:** IHCDA.

# Appendices

This section is separated into three appendices. These documents offer supplemental information to initiatives discussed earlier in the document.

## **Appendix A: Hamilton Heights High School Student Survey**

Compiled by the BPA MCMV Committee

Prepared by Chelsea Fenimore

## **Appendix B: Environmental Resource Inventory & Hazards**

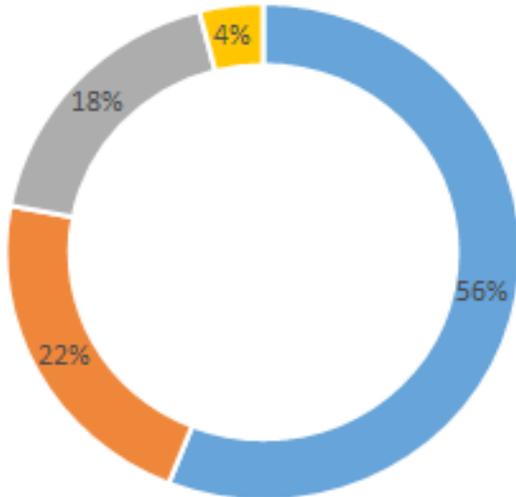
Prepared by Spencer Starke

## **Appendix C: Funding Methods**

Prepared by Lindi Conover

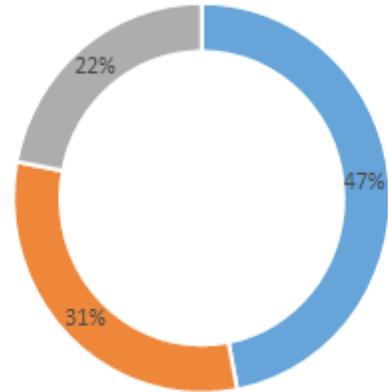
# Appendix A: Hamilton Heights High School

**1** Where do you live?



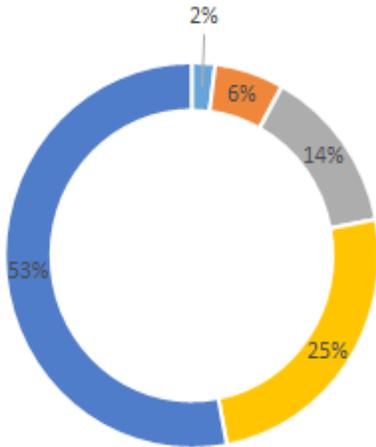
■ Cicero ■ Arcadia ■ Atlanta ■ Strawtown

**3** How like are you to work in the Hamilton Heights area at any point in your life?



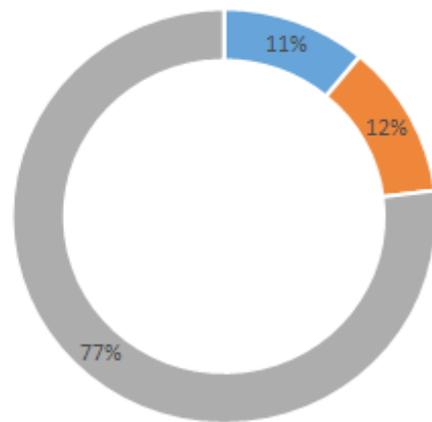
■ Likely ■ Somewhat likely ■ Unlikely

**2** How likely are you to live in the Hamilton Heights area directly after college?



■ Very likely ■ Likely ■ Unsure ■ Not likely ■ Very unlikely

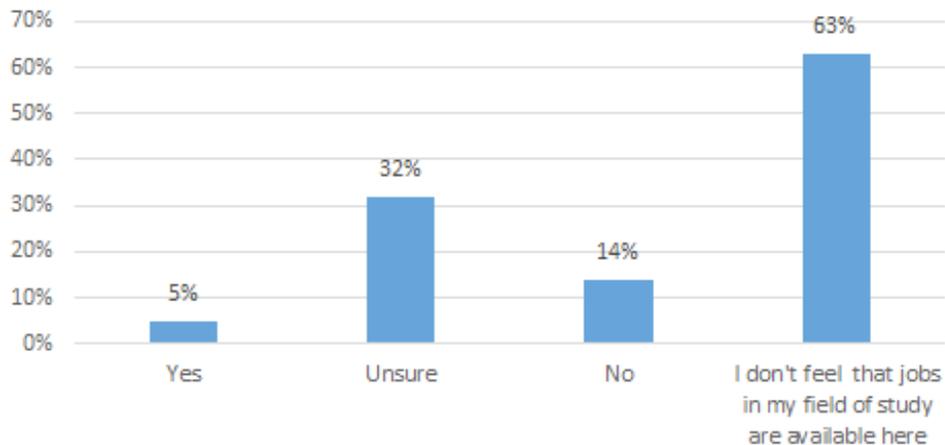
**4** How likely are you to work in the Hamilton Heights area as an adult?



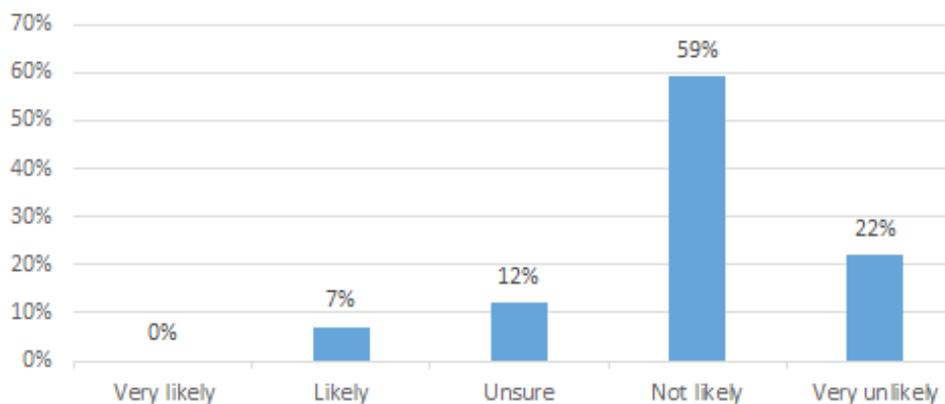
■ Likely ■ Somewhat likely ■ Unlikely

# Student Survey

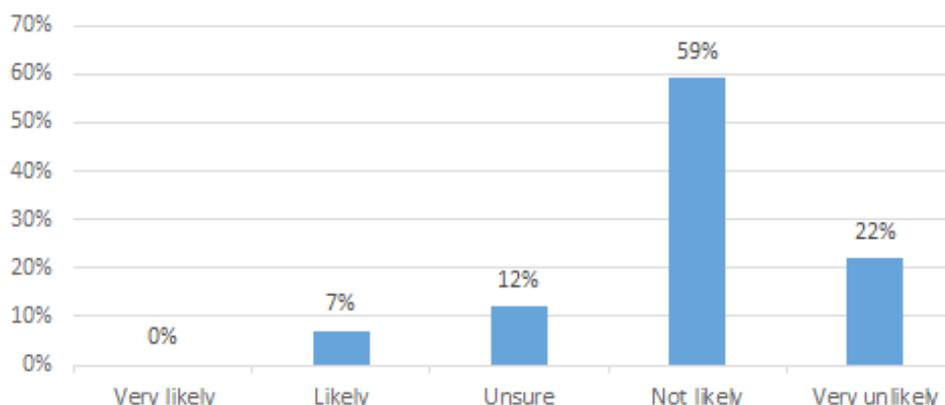
**5** If you received an offer for a quality job in the Hamilton Heights area, would you accept it?



**6** Would an increase in recreational opportunities increase in likelihood of your living in the Hamilton Heights area as an adult?

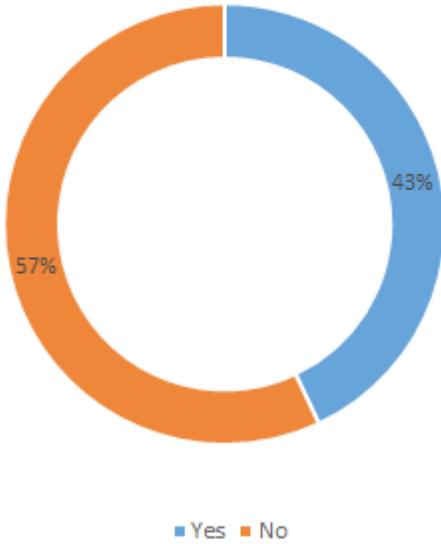


**7** Would an increase in recreational opportunities increase in likelihood of your living in the Hamilton Heights area as an adult?

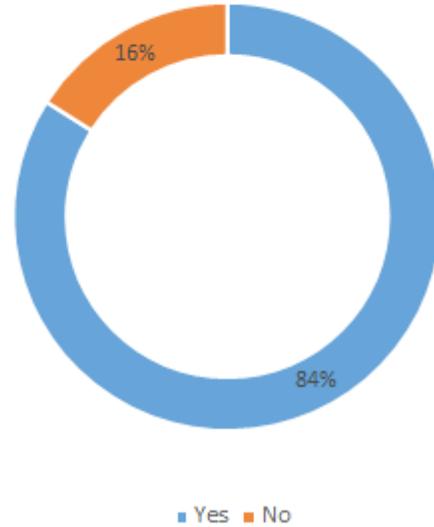


# Appendix A: Hamilton Heights High School

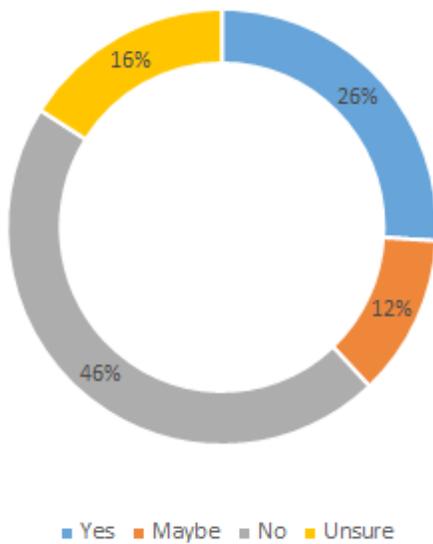
**8** Do either of your parents work in the agriculture field?



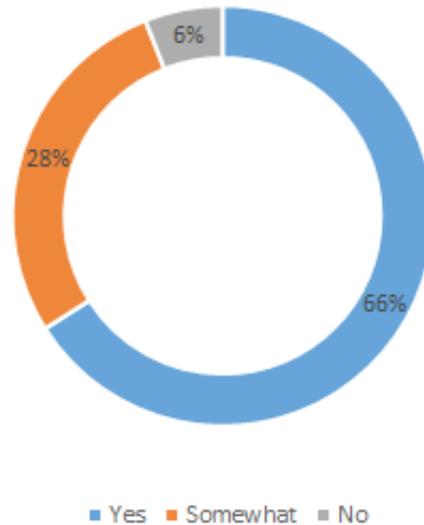
**10** Do either of your parents commute to their job?



**9** Do you plan to work in an agriculture-related field?

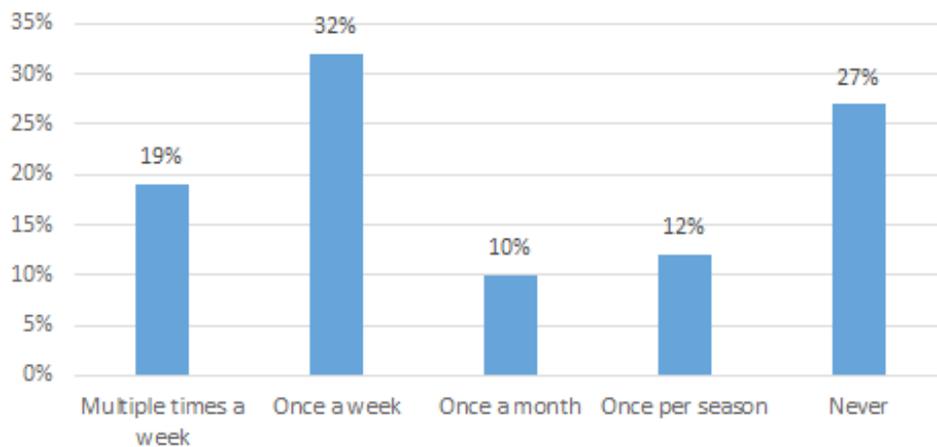


**12** Do you feel that Morse Reservoir is a major asset to our community?

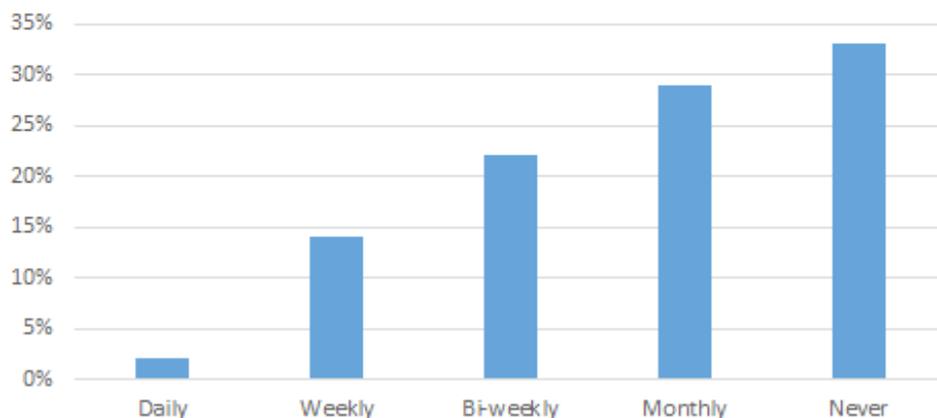


# Student Survey

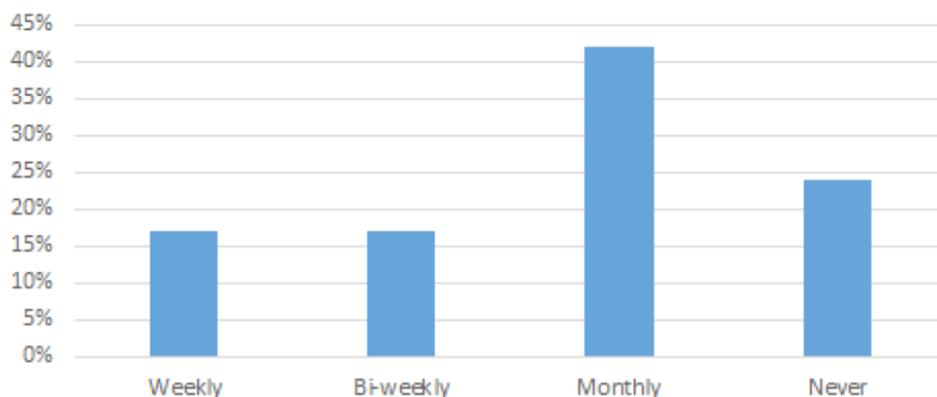
**11** How often do you and/or your family and friends use Morse Reservoir during the boating season?



**13** How often would you use a walking/biking trail that connects Cicero, Arcadia, Atlanta, and Strawtown?

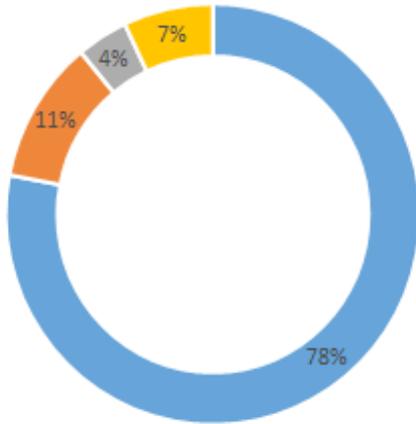


**14** How often do you think you and your family members would visit the Cicero Farmers Market to buy local food if expanded?



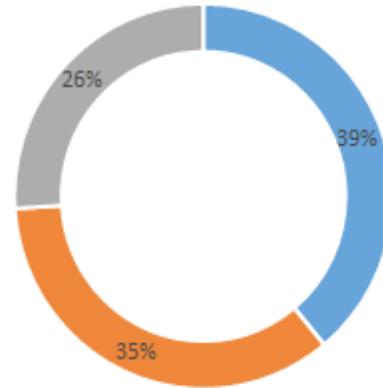
# Appendix A: Hamilton Heights High School

**15** How often would you visit a drive-in movie theatre?



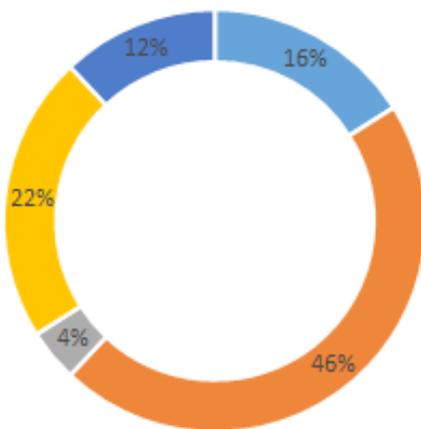
■ Very often ■ Somewhat often ■ Not often ■ Never

**17** Would you be interested in working at a local business after school?



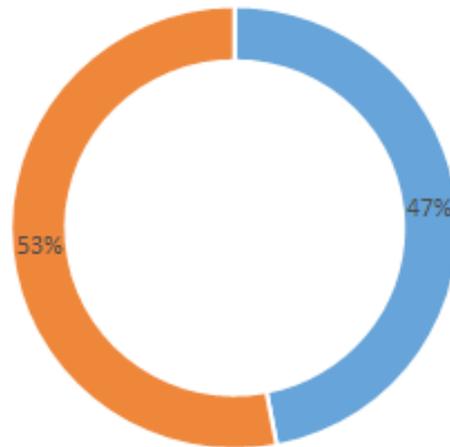
■ Yes ■ Unsure ■ No

**16** How likely would you take a high school class that focuses on how to run a small business?



■ Very likely ■ Likely ■ Unsure ■ Not likely ■ Very unlikely

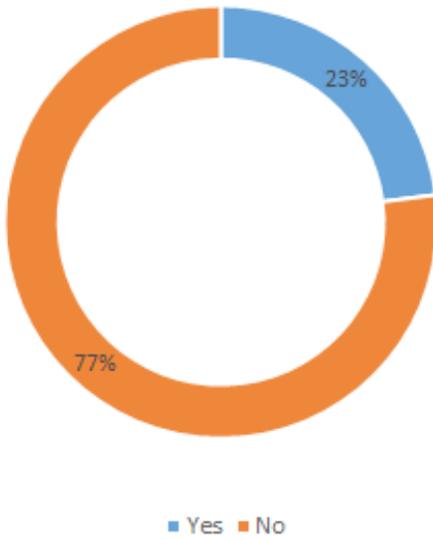
**18** Do you currently have a job?



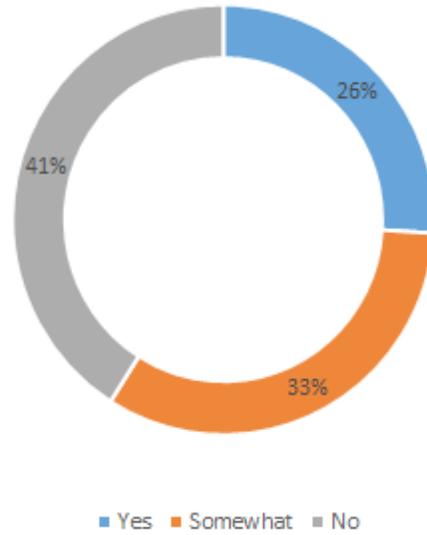
■ Yes ■ No

# Student Survey

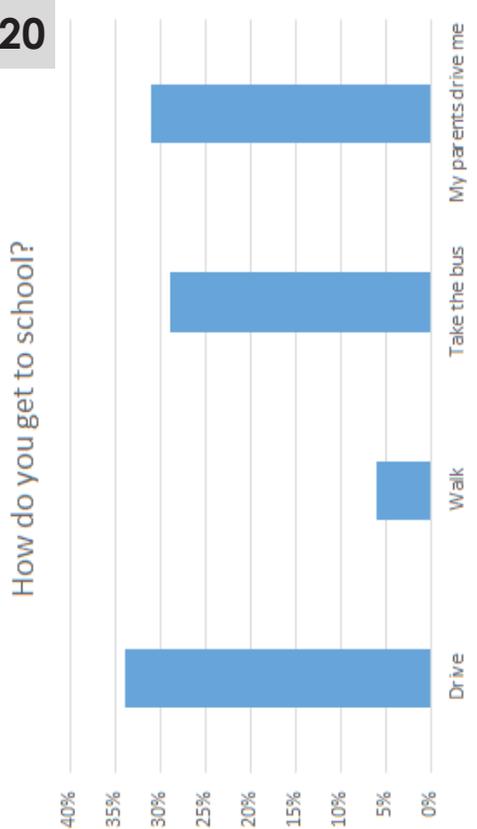
**19** If you do have a job, is it in Arcadia, Atlanta, or Cicero?



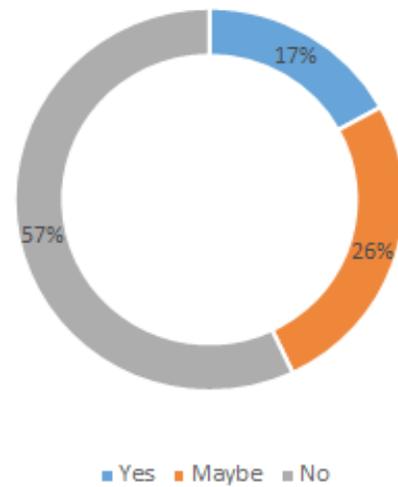
**21** If you walk to school, do you feel safe walking?



**20**

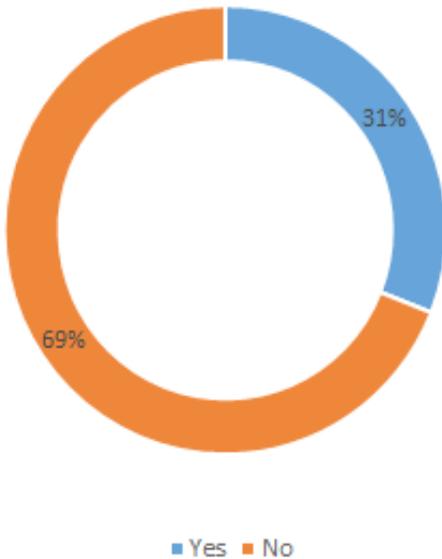


**22** Would you walk or bike to school if there were more sidewalks/a recreational trail?

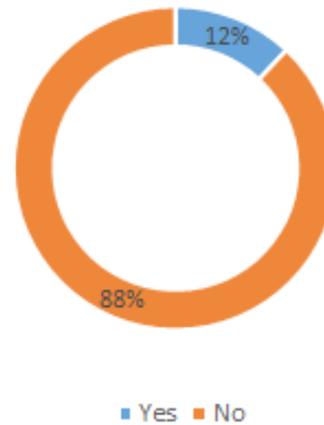


# Appendix A: Hamilton Heights High School

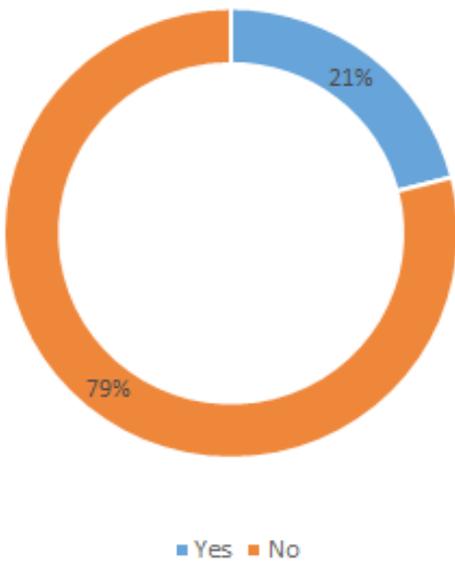
**24** Do you like living in the Hamilton Heights area?



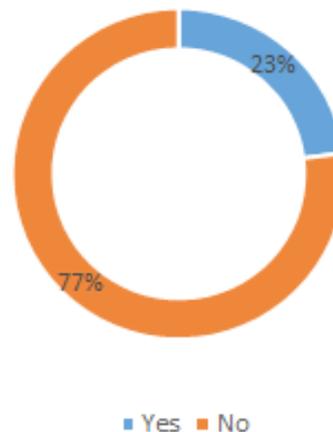
**26** Do you participate in decision-making for projects, programs, or politics outside/inside of the school environment?



**25** Are you an active leader in the community and school?

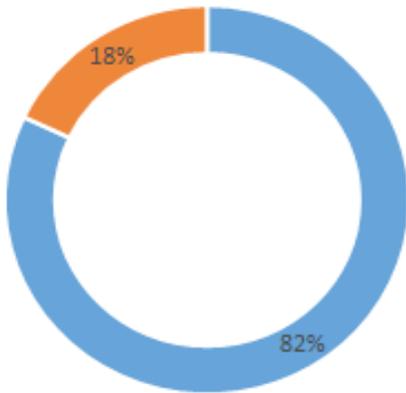


**27** Do you feel that adult decision-makers in our community listen to your opinions and concerns regarding civic affairs?



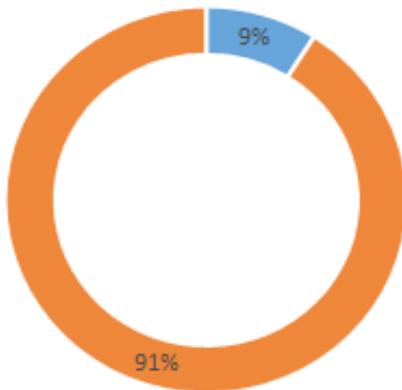
# Student Survey

**28** Do you currently recycle?



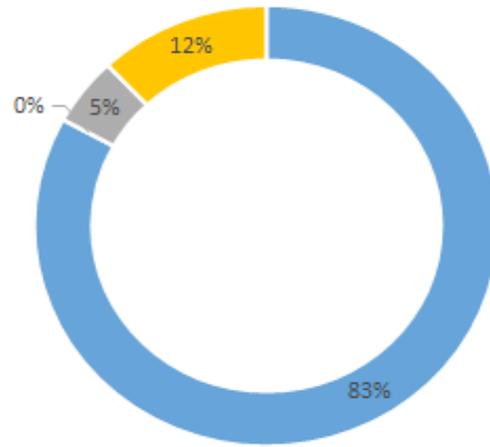
■ Yes ■ No

**29** Would you recycle more if a recycling drop-off were located at the high school?



■ Yes ■ No

**30** I plan to go to college



■ Yes ■ Unsure ■ No ■ Other

## What general career field do you plan on going into?

Business / finance	<b>31</b>
Physical therapy	
Medical field	
Education	
Veterinary	
Agriculture	
Engineering	
Sports management	
Computer engineering / computer science	
Music	
Firefighting	
Human resources	
Construction technology	
Manufacturing	
Architecture	

## What would you want to see in the Hamilton Heights area?

Sidewalks	<b>32</b>
Basketball court	
Turf football field	
Connection to the Monon	
More restaurants	
More entertainment	
More open fields to hang out in	
More businesses	
More indoor hangouts	
More recreation	
More shopping places	
Starbucks	
Taco Bell	
Drive-in movie theater	
Movie theater	
ATVs legal on the road	

# Appendix B: Environmental Resource Inventory & Hazards

This document is a list of the environmental hazards and environmental resources in the Hamilton Heights area. The hazards are mainly chemical in nature, including active and archived sites. The resources are areas and features available to Cicero, Atlanta, and Arcadia, which are opportunities for development.

## Hazards

### Superfund Sites

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has listed no active superfund sites. These sites are potentially harmful to human health and are on schedule to be cleaned up.

### Archived Superfund Sites

There is 1 superfund site that has already been cleaned up and is listed as archived. These sites may be redeveloped potential depending on the specification of the site. More information can be found here Superfund Redevelopment initiative and an example close to home Indianapolis Landfill Redevelopment.

## Resource Inventory & Recommendations

### Morse Reservoir

Morse Reservoir is in Cicero. The reservoir offers a picturesque location while still being close to the metropolitan area of Indianapolis.

### Agricultural Land

The location of the three towns is within close proximity of Indianapolis and its suburbs while still being rural. The opportunity for agricultural development is quite large. If some of the farm fields began to grow alternative crops that attracted city dwellers for both the products and aesthetic generated by the new crops. Transferring agriculture from conventional crops, to vineyards and orchards for

example would create a market for tours and sales. Vegetable farms might also be strategically located around these three towns to service Noblesville and Fishers.

### Bike Paths and Parks

1. Tritown Park
2. Cicero Community Park
3. Red Bridge Park

### Recommendations

The three towns are severely under serviced in the area of parks. Creating more large parks would drastically increase the quality of life in this area. With more parks and paths interconnecting the three towns, the area becomes more accessible and becomes more attractive to from the metropolitan area.

### Empty Lots and Brownfields

The abundance of empty lots is great opportunity for establishing local green space. These areas have tremendous potential. Putting these spaces to use would not only improve the quality of place in Cicero, Atlanta, and Arcadia, but could also brand them as innovative communities. The recommendations below are just few uses out of a myriad that may be implemented.

### Recommendations

1. Urban gardens
2. Butterfly gardens
3. Songbird gardens
4. Neighborhood parks
5. Art parks
6. Outdoor theatre space
7. Local markets

# Appendix C: Funding Methods

## Grants

Grants are monies which are applied for by organizations from foundations. These are monies that do not need to be repaid, but often have certain requirements, including public acknowledgement and reporting. Foundations which grant money usually have one or more application rounds each year and give priority to particular program areas or project types. Local community foundations grant funds in each county, and their giving levels can vary based on available funds.

## Private Corporate or Business Sponsorship

Oftentimes, corporations or local businesses are interested in working with local communities to support projects, especially if those projects have some connection to the business's mission or commercial matter. Like grants, sponsorship dollars do not need to be repaid but may require significant public acknowledgement and reporting. Business sponsorship committees may also have application deadlines, or rolling deadlines. One great way to encourage sponsorship is to frame it as an advertising opportunity for the local business by giving them naming rights and/or allowing the entity to place their logo on publicly displayed objects like signs, etc.

## Individual Sponsorship

Individual sponsorship generally occurs for a particular event and is funded by an individual, family, or small group of individuals who have donated money to the same thing. Typically, this type of sponsorship involves direct solicitation and request, and does not include an application. These types of sponsorships might be given as memorials for a loved one, because the individual(s) cares about the program/project, and can include naming rights.

## In-Kind Sponsorship

In-kind donations or sponsorships occur when an entity provides goods or services free-of-charge as a donation and does not include direct monetary donations. This is often appropriate for projects that might require supplies that can be donated by a local business but can occur at any scale. It might also be appropriate for overhead costs that an organization might not have in their budget as they start up, like marketing services.

## Crowd-Funding

Crowd-funding is an emerging field of fundraising in which funds are requested from a large group of people, usually for a singular project, and typically occurring through intense social media campaigns. There are 3 participants in the crowd-funding model: the project initiator who proposes the project, individuals/groups who support and fund the project; and a moderator to bring the groups together. The project initiator creates a business plan and marketing strategy for their idea. After deciding on an appropriate crowd-funding platform, they connect with a moderator. The moderator assists them in finding local supporters appropriate for the project. An organization typically sets up a website which accepts pledges; if a particular amount is met, then those pledges are turned into donors and the project is funded.

See this resource for rules about crowd-funding projects in Indiana: <http://www.in.gov/sos/securities/4114.htm>.

## Tax Incentives

This type of economic development tool requires detailed coordination with governing bodies like state and local councils and government agencies. Tax incentive tools are designed to bring a certain type of business or resident to an area and offer certain tax credits or benefits for those people/businesses.

# Appendix C: Funding Methods

## Business Improvement Districts

A business improvement district (BID) is an economic development tool with a purpose to improve the livelihood of a downtown area. Through a BID, all owners within the proposed district are required to contribute to the communal fund through an assessment fee. Additional funds can be raised (through efforts like those described above). These communal funds are then used for services that benefit the downtown; this in turn makes the area more attractive to visitors, tourists, residents, which spurs businesses, and propels from there. This requires intensive local organizing and buy-in from policy makers who will approve the plans and assessments, owners within the district, and intense management once implemented.

## Revolving Loans

Revolving loan funds (RLFs) provide a source of capital within the community that can be used to fill in gaps for funding. They provide low interest loans to community members. When the loans are repaid, the loan amount is returned to the fund and is available to other borrowers. This type of funding is most useful for projects that will eventually make money and be self-sustaining. RLFs are typically administered by planning and development commissions or economic development organizations. Initial funding can come from federal grant programs and other sources, listed above.

## Business Loans

Business loans are available through banks. Loans must be repaid with varying levels of interest. The best resources are usually those in one's own community, including local credit unions and banks.

