

# **TOWN OF MORGANTOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN September 1988**

## **BACKGROUND**

The Town of Morgantown is a community of approximately 900 people located in Morgan County. Its eastern boundary is Johnson County, and its southern boundary is approximately one and one half mile north of Brown County. Brown County, particular Nashville, is a area of considerable tourist activity, particularly in summer and fall. At the time of this writing, it is anticipated that another major tourist attraction will be constructed in Johnson County. The Town of Morgantown wishes to prepare for the development of the surrounding area. Since 1956, the town's land use regulation has been under the jurisdiction of Morgan County through its plan commission and board of county commissioners. In the spring of 1988, the Morgantown Town Board decided to establish a plan commission within the town and formulate its own comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance.

The town's goal is to gain control over its own future growth. In order to do so, the plan commission has decided to plan for an area beyond the corporate limits of Morgantown. In the judgment of the plan commission, the area shown on Map 1 includes that portion of the unincorporated are of Morgan County which bears reasonable relation to the development of the Town of Morgantown. As provided by IC 36-7-4-502, this document represents the mandatory elements of the comprehensive plan for Morgantown and its jurisdictional area. The town intends to adopt other optional plan elements in the near future.

This plan contains both short and long term objectives for Morgantown. The short term objectives are intended to be accomplished within five to ten years. The long-term objectives are to be accomplished in ten to twenty-five years. It is intended that the Plan Commission will review this plan in five years and make changes and adjustments as necessary.

## **PART I: A Statement of Objectives for the Future Development of Morgantown**

The heart of Morgantown is a compact, lively downtown which contains a mixture of commercial and residential uses. It is a fundamental objective of the community to retain this mixed use character in the central portion of the town. The town wishes to encourage population growth through residential and commercial growth of a nature which is compatible with the community and at a rate which will enable the town to provide proper services. While Morgantown is a physically attractive place to live, employment opportunities are limited, which in turn limits population size. As a short-term objective, the town wishes to encourage population growth to an extent which will enable it to support an elementary school, which it has not had for some years. Morgantown is a clean, uncluttered community with an adequate level of public services. It is the town's objective to retain this atmosphere while experiencing residential and commercial growth, some of which may be directly related to the development of an electric park in Johnson County.

## **PART II: A Statement of Policy for the Land Use Development of Morgantown**

### **1. Residential Land**

The center of Morgantown (see Map 2), has traditionally been a mixed-use area, where commerce, government, and residences have complemented one another. The town wishes to retain this mixed use character by promoting the use of downtown buildings, particularly upper floors, for residential use. In addition, the town wishes to encourage development of residential subdivisions in outlying area. A variety of lot sizes and types of housing are desired. It is the policy of Morgantown to require new residential development to be served by

adequate sewerage, water, roads, police and fire protection, and other municipal services. Areas to be developed as residential subdivisions should be annexed to Morgantown as they are developed.

In order to emphasize the unique character of the downtown, Morgantown's policy is to separate the various categories of use in the outlying areas. Residential subdivisions should not contain commercial uses. While the town recognizes that manufactured houses are often affordable and desirable dwelling, the town wishes to discourage proliferation of the traditional mobile home, typically single-wide, flat-roofed, metal structures without permanent foundations. This type of dwelling is to be particularly avoided in the downtown area, where a more efficient and effective use of limited land is desired.

## **2. Commercial Land**

Morgantown's objectives is to center commercial activity in the downtown and to retain a wide availability of goods and services in this area. This commercial development typically will be dense, close to the street, and will depend upon on-street and shared parking. Residential uses and governmental buildings will continue to be interspersed with the commercial uses.

In the outlying area, Morgantown encourages commercial development to be in planned shopping centers. Strip commercial development along major roadways is discouraged.

## **3. Industrial Land**

Morgantown is not an industrial center, and with its small population, it does not need major industry to provide employment. In addition, the town does not have sufficient public utilities to support any large industrial development. It is not necessary to reserve large tracts of land for industrial development, but small-scale, nonpolluting manufacturing or other industry could be desirable. Such uses should be located in areas where the adverse effects on residential (i.e. traffic, noise) uses will be minimized.

## **4. Recreational Land**

Any significant increase in population will increase the need for recreational facilities in Morgantown. It is the town's policy to require private developers to consider and provide for neighborhood recreational needs in conjunction with residential development.

## **5. Community Appearance**

The Town of Morgantown recognizes the importance of the community's appearance to the quality of life. The attractiveness of the town is particularly important if local commerce is to be partly dependent on tourist trade. Morgantown has a number of buildings of historic architectural interest. In the downtown area, the town's policy is to encourage the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and to encourage new construction to be of a style and scale which will be compatible with these buildings.

In addition to architecture, signs and landscaping are important visual elements of a community. The town encourages sign that are of a design and scale which is suitable for the architectural character of the buildings. Proliferation of unsightly signs is to be avoided. Appropriate landscaping of all property is encouraged.

# **PART III: A Statement of Policy for the Development of Public Ways, Public Places, Public Lands, Public Structures, and Public Utilities**

## **1. Public Ways**

It is important for Morgantown to plan for the safe and efficient flow of traffic. As the town grows, street and traffic improvements must be made also. In addition, the town's street pattern needs to be part of a coordinated regional circulation system. The town needs to adopt a functional street classification system and a set of design and construction standards for streets. On major highways, frontage roads are to be encouraged as a means of access to property, to avoid large numbers of driveways opening directly onto high-traffic roads. When new development requires the extension of existing streets or the construction of new ones, the developers should be required to make these improvements at their expense.

## **2. Public Places and Public Lands**

The Town of Morgantown has an obligation to provide suitable public areas to serve its citizens. Public parks and open space are necessary for a good quality of life, and they also enhance community appearance. It is the town's policy to provide parks and open space for the town's residents in accordance with accepted standards.

## **3. Public Structures**

Public buildings are necessary to house the functions of municipal government in Morgantown. These functions now are located in the center of the community, and it is the town's policy to retain these functions in the downtown. No major expansion of these facilities is anticipated during the time frame covered by this plan; however, if such need should arise, it is the town's policy that public structures be designed and located where they will be convenient and accessible to the citizens who will use them.

## **4. Public Utilities**

The Town of Morgantown operates public water and sewer systems. While the town wishes to encourage growth, it is important that new development be adequately served by these utilities. Growth which will overburden these services should not be permitted, and the capacity of these services needs to be continually evaluated. Long-range improvement plans need to be developed for these services. Where improvements are directly related to new development, the developers should be required to pay for and/or install these improvements.

# SUMMARY

## **PART I: Objectives for Future Development**

- Maintain and encourage a lively, mixed-use downtown
- Discourage mixed-use development in areas other than the town center
- Encourage population growth sufficient to support an in-town elementary school
- Ensure that population growth does not exceed the town's ability to provide adequate services to its citizens
- Maintain the small-town atmosphere

## **PART II: Land Use Policy**

- Encourage the continuation of residential uses downtown
- Encourage the development of well-planned residential subdivisions in outlying areas
- Ensure that new residential development is served by adequate public utilities, services, and streets
- Encourage development of a variety of sizes and types of housing, in order to accommodate all age and income groups
- Discourage mobile home development in the town center and in subdivision
- Maintain and encourage commercial development in the town center
- In outlying areas, encourage development of commercial centers, rather than strip development
- Encourage development of small-scale, clean industries in outlying areas, properly separated from residential uses
- Encourage development of neighborhood parks and recreational areas in conjunction with new residential development
- Maintain the historic character of the town center through preservation and restoration of structures
- Encourage new structures in the town center to be compatible in design to existing buildings
- Encourage attractive landscape throughout the community
- Encourage the use of business signs which are of a style and size appropriate to the structures
- Discourage proliferation of signs

## **PART III: Policy for Public Ways and Public Facilities**

- Promote safe and efficient traffic flow
- Adopt a functional street classification and a thoroughfare plan
- Encourage development of frontage roads to serve properties located adjacent to major highways
- Require developers to provide adequate access and streets to serve their developments
- Provide adequate public parks and recreational facilities for the citizens of Morgantown
- Locate public buildings in convenient, accessible places
- Ensure the provision of adequate public utilities for new development
- Develop long-range improvement plans for public utilities
- Require developers to provide adequate utilities for new development