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Tipton creating vision for its future

Comprehensive plan being developed, expected to be complete by May.

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Tipton — A bypass around downtown Tipton, a recreational area at the site of a former landfill and new access routes to U.S. 31 are among the projects the city of Tipton is considering for the future.

About 50 local residents gathered Wednesday at the Tipton Community Foundation to help develop a new comprehensive plan for the city.

The comprehensive plan for the city is being developed by the Illinois-based firm Houseal Lavigne Associates, which is also expected to receive a contract to develop the county's comprehensive plan.

"The focus is on what needs to be done about the issues over the next five to 10 years," said John Houseal, president of the company. "It's what people's visions are for Tipton in the next 10 years, everything is on the table."

Houseal said the comprehensive plan establishes a foundation for decision making in the future and guides the county plan commission, elected officials and potential developers on how the community wants to experience growth.

The comprehensive plan for the city of Tipton is expected to be complete by May, but could be delayed to integrate the county's new comprehensive plan, he said.

During Wednesday's session, residents were divided into seven groups to discuss several areas of concern and present their findings to the group. Houseal said the recommendations would be considered as the new plan is created.

Several of the groups discussed extending Industrial Drive to the west for traffic to go north on 300 West to Division Drive or south on 350 West to Ind. 28 and then to U.S. 31.

Jim Ashley said his group considered a bypass on the north side of Tipton for industrial truck traffic traveling east to I-69, using Division Road as the link.

Another group wanted the city to prohibit truck traffic through the downtown area and industrial development within the city limits. They also discussed development of a medical complex near the hospital.

Concerning recreational facilities, one group recommended converting the former landfill into an outdoor recreation area with access by a walking trail along Cicero Creek.

Other groups recommended a recreational area using current the 4-H fairgrounds, Tipton golf course and the high school.

There was a recommendation to construct a walking trail that would encircle the city of Tipton or create a walking trail to connect with the Nickel Plate Trail.

Mayor Don Havens said his group was recommending an overflow for Cicero Creek, south of downtown, to keep the creek from flooding during periods of heavy rainfall.

The overflow would extend along the south side of city and help when water gets more than two feet deep in Cicero Creek.

Most of the groups agreed residential development should be encouraged to the southwest of the core city, which provided the best area for access to city utilities.

Joe VanBibber said his group would encourage more mixed-use residential housing in the downtown area that would be closer to the available shopping.