

## Hamilton County, IN

Hamilton County has very specific zoning categories. There are 4 different types of Agriculture zoning, as well as 4 different types of residential zoning. Zoning for agriculture is classified by A-1, A-2, A-3, and A-4. A-1 zoning is for conservation and preservation, or protection of floodplains, wetlands, forests, wildlife refuges, and other things along that nature. No structures are permitted within A-1 zoning, but agriculture use is permitted where the existing tillable track is 3 acres or more. A-2 is an agriculture district. Full range of agriculture activity as well as planned large lot residential development that is designed to protect the full range of agriculture use is permitted. Farms, farm buildings, single family dwellings, public schools and parks, and limited agriculture retail sites are allowed. A-3 district is an agriculture and planned residential county district. Everything allowed from A-2 zoning is allowed in A-3 except for commercial livestock. Municipal and government office buildings and subdivisions are permitted. The focus of this zone is to allow for planned residential use within designated agriculture areas normally in close proximity to existing residential development and existing agriculture uses. Agribusiness is classified under A-4 zoning. The intent is to provide areas for business or commercial activities which are related to agriculture business. A-3 uses are permitted along with commercial processing of agriculture products, except livestock, including grain elevators and mills, raising animals for biological purposes, furs, or for pets, and commercial grain storage elevators.

Agriculture use excludes Confined Feeding Operations and Feedlots. Confined Feeding Operations are classified by having 300 or more cattle, 600 or more swine/sheep, or 3000 or more fowl (please note the large difference on fowl animal numbers compared to IDEMs numbers). CFOs are special exceptions that must be approved through the county Plan Commission, and the BZA. The BZA has the final vote. Hamilton County requires a traffic study and an odor control assessment. Hamilton County's Plan Director, Charles Kiphart, explained that this is simply done by the owner of the proposed CFO. The owner submits the plan for the operation to the boards, including manure management plans and traffic plans, and the boards review the location of manure storage and wind direction and will give recommendations as they see fit. These recommendations can include anything from putting the manure storage facility upwind from the barns to create a wind block, to planting trees as a barrier.

As of 2014, Hamilton County only had 8 active CFO permits, compared to Whitley County's 30 (in 2014). Hamilton County also has very high land prices, and a very dense population which is

unappealing for CFO development. According to Charles Kiphart, and some other people familiar with the area, there has not been any growth in large scale animal agriculture in the last 5 years.

It is important to note that Hamilton County government only has control over approximately 33% of the county (according to Kiphart), as the other approximate 66% is in municipality jurisdiction (compared to Whitley Counties 92% county jurisdiction). Hamilton County has also not had any issues with their current confined feeding operations (noise, pollution, odor, ect.) despite having a dense population.

In conclusion, Hamilton County and Whitley County are 2 very different counties with very different development goals, but share similar processes and zoning, Hamilton counties zoning is just more detailed and specific, while Whitley County currently has a more free range approach. I feel as though our counties free range of development is important and beneficial to all development as long as the comprehensive plan is taken into consideration.