

McLean County

Regional Comprehensive Plan

A Guide To Sensible Growth Through Regional Cooperation



McLean County Regional Planning Commission

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**McLEAN COUNTY REGIONAL
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Prepared By

McLean County Regional Planning Commission

November, 2009

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PREFACE

Dear Reader,

As the Regional Comprehensive Plan Update nears completion, the nation and the world are facing a financial crisis unlike any we have seen in many decades. Symptoms of the crisis include unstable fuel prices, rising utility costs, record numbers of home foreclosures, a steep rise in unemployment, and a precipitous drop in the stock market.

Bloomington-Normal emerged relatively unscathed in previous recessions, but is clearly feeling the effects of this current crisis. Although not impacted to the same degree as many communities, the unemployment rate in Bloomington-Normal is nevertheless at the highest level since the 1980s, foreclosures are on the rise, and higher energy prices are cutting into already-shrinking budgets.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the current financial situation is the impact of higher expenses and declining revenues on local government. McLean County communities have not been spared these budgetary woes. For example, in early 2009 the City of Bloomington announced a significant and growing budget shortfall, while other communities also struggle to balance their budgets. It is becoming clear that lower tax revenues coupled with higher expenses will seriously challenge not only Bloomington, but also Normal and the entire McLean County community to exercise sound fiscal management, especially in the areas of land use planning and development.

As members of the Regional Comprehensive Plan update committee, we struggled to reconcile the uncertainty of economic upheaval with the need to plan for long-term growth and development in McLean County. In the past 40 years Bloomington and Normal have greatly expanded their boundaries, with the growth areas largely designed as conventional, auto-dependent residential subdivisions and commercial areas. However, we recognize that this model of growth cannot be sustained over the long term. In a future with rising energy costs, more and more people will be unable to maintain large-lot residences and to rely primarily on a single-occupant vehicle for transportation. Government will struggle to maintain and replace aging infrastructure, including deteriorating roads, sewer mains, and water lines, over a sprawling, sparsely populated area.

Because of this new level of uncertainty about the future, the updated Regional Comprehensive Plan calls for sensible growth with a renewed focus on alternative transportation, more efficient infrastructure, and an overall view towards environmental sustainability. If sustainable growth practices become our “business as usual,” there is a likelihood that our community will continue to attract economic development, jobs and families. However, if outward growth is excessive and not well-managed, it is likely that tax levels will rise, government services will shrink, transportation costs will increase and the imaginative, creative and hardworking people we want as neighbors will be drawn to other communities.

McLean County Regional Plan Update Committee
Jeanne Moonan, Chairperson

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan presents a guide for sensible growth that supports efficient development, transportation alternatives, suitable housing for a variety of needs, local agriculture, and the enhancement of natural resources, human heritage, and quality of life. Sensible growth recognizes the potential benefits of population and economic growth, but sets high standards to preserve and enhance the community for both present and future generations. It involves the building of livable communities that feature distinctive identities with pedestrian-friendly designs and many social and cultural amenities. It also involves promoting economic growth to provide the jobs and tax base that can help support these amenities. Sensible growth also occurs in harmony with the natural landscape and environment.

The regional comprehensive plan provides a framework for continuing regional cooperation in support of sensible growth. Many growth issues involve multiple jurisdictions and may require cooperative approaches to achieve optimal solutions. Issues such as farmland preservation, urban revitalization and the delivery of services often impact more than one unit of government and can impact the quality of life for the entire region. It is becoming increasingly apparent that an individualized approach can not effectively address all of these issues. Therefore, a collaborative approach with participation by all levels of government and by a wide range of citizen and private interests was used to develop the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan. A cross section of those interests was also engaged to complete this update.

This plan presents a guide for sensible growth that supports efficient development, transportation alternatives, suitable housing for a variety of needs, local agriculture, and the enhancement of natural resources, human heritage, and quality of life.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Citizen committees representing a wide range of public and private interests were formed to assist in preparing the different elements (see Figure A) of the plan, which was completed in the year 2000. More than 100 persons from

many walks of life served on a series of committees representing the different elements of the plan and drawing upon the work of previous citizen-based visioning committees to help guide plan

development. These individuals provided ideas and expertise that benefited the plan in many ways, including the broadening of public understanding and support. Representatives from these committees served on the review committee, which played a major role in completing the update as described in Chapter 1. The review committee reviewed and refined the previously identified goals, objectives, policies and actions for each element of the plan. Additional citizen input was received through a

Figure A Elements of the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan

- Natural Environment
- Historic Preservation and Urban Revitalization
- Economic Development
- Population
- Housing
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Community Facilities and Services
- Implementation

series of public meetings and hearings on the plan update.

CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

The current patterns of growth and development were major considerations in developing and updating this plan. It is anticipated that the region's high quality of life will continue to attract the people and business needed to sustain a vibrant economy and generate continued population growth at least for the foreseeable future. The population of the county is predicted to exceed 234,200 by the year 2035, with the Bloomington-Normal urban area growing to nearly 185,000. Substantial growth is also predicted for a number of designated rural growth areas and smaller communities as well.

The current trend is for a continuation of the conventional, low density, suburban development that has been the norm throughout the nation for the past 60 plus years. Urban densities have been steadily declining in Bloomington-Normal and the plan recognizes that this trend may continue. At the same time, however, the plan identifies some of the challenges that result from decreasing densities, especially in context with rising energy costs, and presents some sensible growth alternatives. The strategies outlined in this plan reflect the sensible growth alternatives and are intended to guide decision making toward preserving and enhancing the region's quality of life through the year 2035.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The plan identifies future challenges and opportunities for preserving and enhancing quality of life. Challenges and opportunities are identified for each element of the regional Comprehensive Plan based on an assessment of current trends and characteristics. These challenges and opportunities were a consideration in forming strategies and priorities to address quality of life issues.

STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES

The citizen committees with technical assistance provided by the staffs of the local

governments and McLean County Regional Planning Commission originally identified and prioritized more than 300 strategies for consideration by local governments in addressing the region's future challenges. During this update, these strategies were reviewed and refined by the review committee to reflect current conditions for each element of the plan. The committee also identified the initiatives in Figure B as the top priorities for early consideration by community leaders. The identified strategies were considered in developing plans for land use, transportation, selected community facilities and services, and implementation.

FUNCTIONAL PLANS

Plans for land use, transportation, and community facilities and services were updated to reflect the revised strategies and recent development activity as well as known projects, including the East Side Highway Study.

Land Use

In addition to existing and currently proposed development patterns, the land use plan reflects the growth policies identified in adopted area plans as well as the other relevant strategies identified in this regional plan. Accordingly, the plan provides for a system of interconnected conservation and recreation areas consistent with the McLean County Regional Greenways Plan. It also designates other areas outside of urban growth areas for primary or secondary agriculture, depending upon the general soil and terrain characteristics. The plan provides for relatively compact and contiguous development within and adjacent to incorporated communities, with growth occurring in and around Bloomington-Normal, smaller municipalities in the western two-thirds of the county and in the selected rural growth areas. It also provides for regional service centers in Bloomington-Normal and for sub-regional service centers in the downtowns of the region's smaller communities, in the neighborhoods of Bloomington-Normal, and at selected highway interchanges.

Transportation

The transportation plan provides for the extension of transportation facilities to serve planned growth areas. The street and highway plan provides for the southward extension of Mitsubishi Motorway on the west side of the urban area and incorporates the corridor from the East Side Highway Study to serve the east side of the urban area. Other improvements and extensions to the urban classified and the rural road systems are also identified to meet future needs consistent with the Regional Land Use Plan. The transportation plan also addresses alternative modes of transportation and provides for numerous extensions to the existing trail system in the urban area and throughout the county, including the proposed Route 66 Bikeway. The plan for alternative modes also identifies potential future transit service for

planned regional and sub-regional service centers in the urban area and recommends consideration be given to forming a transit district to expand and enhance the public transit system.

Community Facilities and Services

The community facilities and services element presents strategies for water service; sewer service; schools; parks and trails; solid waste management; libraries; cultural and entertainment facilities; fire, police and emergency services; and energy and telecommunications. The plan addresses future water supply and distribution and wastewater collection and treatment. It also advocates coordinated planning for schools among communities and school districts, including consideration of development fees. The plan also identifies proposed sites for future parks as well

Figure B Priority Initiatives of the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan

- Identify communities, neighborhoods, and business districts to be targeted for revitalization activities and funding.
- Periodically review and update land use plans and ordinances to provide for more compact development patterns in urban areas to achieve more efficient use of land, energy, environmental, water, mineral, and fiscal resources.
- Create a comprehensive water resource management plan that addresses current and future water quality and quantity needs.
- Investigate the creation of a transit district to support expanded and enhanced public transit service throughout the Bloomington-Normal metro area.
- Consider alternatives for local governments to share costs and revenues from property and sales taxes resulting from future economic development.
- Support the development of a comprehensive digital database and directory of McLean County natural resources to provide an improved guide for making development-related decisions.
- Create a comprehensive and up-to-date inventory of historic and archaeological resources throughout McLean County to provide an improved basis for preservation efforts.
- Explore the costs, benefits, and alternatives for providing inclusionary housing in McLean County communities.
- Review the current structure of development fees to help ensure efficiency and equity in the provision of community facilities and services throughout McLean County.

as an interconnected regional trail system. The plan encourages the inclusion of libraries and cultural and entertainment facilities in the local budgetary process. Further coordination and cooperation among fire, police and emergency service providers is also encouraged. The plan recommends increased commercial and industrial recycling, and expansion of residential curbside recycling consistent with the McLean County Solid Waste Management Plan. Finally, the plan encourages continued communication and coordination among local governments and utility companies to help ensure adequate levels of service with minimal impacts on the community.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation element identifies a long range implementation strategy and a list of priorities for early consideration in carrying out the plan. The long range strategy encapsulates the strategies identified for all elements of the plan and summarizes key policies for implementation. It also identifies priorities for early consideration as outlined in Figure B. The implementation policies and priorities reflect the input of the plan review committee and provide a synopsis of the major issues identified and conclusions drawn in this update of the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan.

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Chapter 1



INTRODUCTION

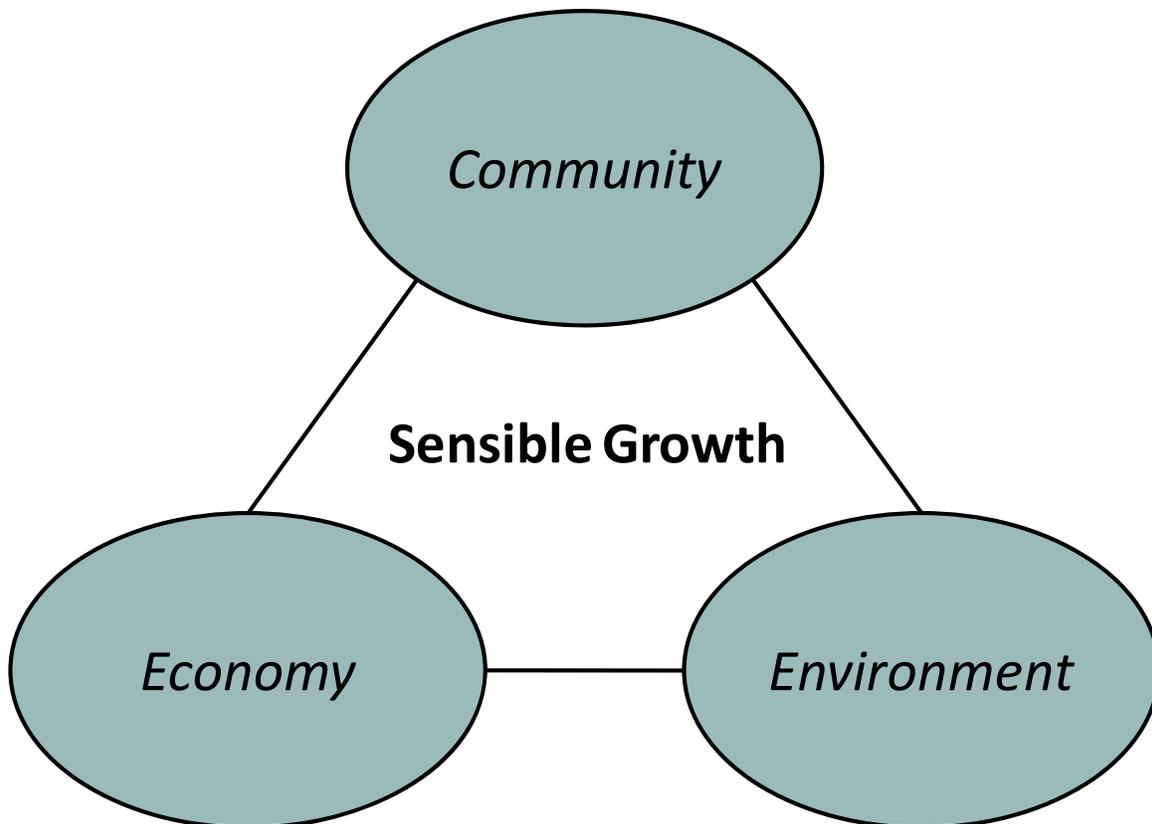
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

The growth and prosperity enjoyed in McLean County brings a host of benefits along with many challenges and opportunities. The benefits include a high quality of life and standard of living for many residents, due to low unemployment rates, relatively high pay scales and the availability of a wide range of services and amenities. A healthy economic base increases the capacities of local governments to provide services and amenities to residents. These factors in combination serve to attract more people and business to the region (see Map 1.1) and further contribute to the overall prosperity. The basic challenges and opportunities that accompany growth and prosperity relate to preserving and enhancing the social, economic and environmental resources that have made the region so attractive to people and business.

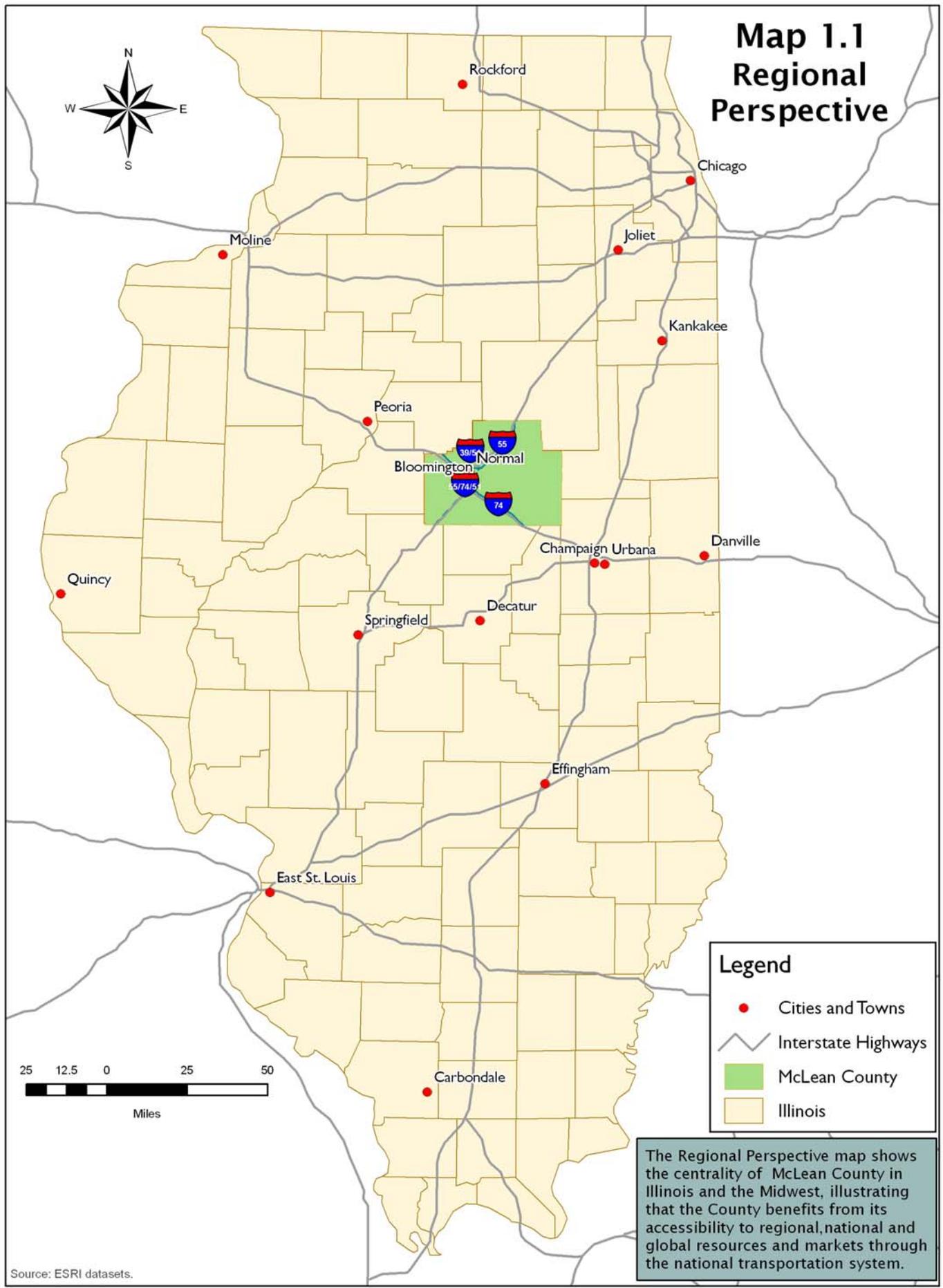
TOWARD SENSIBLE GROWTH

Sensible growth recognizes the potential benefits of population and economic growth but sets high standards to preserve and enhance the community for both present and future generations by minimizing the economic and environmental costs of growth. It attempts to balance concerns for community, economy and environment as illustrated in Figure 1.1. Sensible growth involves the building of livable communities that feature distinctive identities with pedestrian-friendly design and many social and cultural amenities. It also involves promoting economic growth to provide the jobs and tax base that can help support these amenities. Sensible growth also occurs in harmony with the natural landscape and environment.

Figure 1.1



Map 1.1 Regional Perspective



WHY A REGIONAL PLAN?

Many growth issues involve multiple jurisdictions and may require cooperative approaches to reach optimal solutions. While some issues may appear on the surface to be strictly urban or strictly rural, closer examination often reveals that one approach may apply to both issues, due to the complex interrelationships that often exist. For example, urban revitalization may appear to be only a concern for municipalities. However, successful revitalization of urban areas can direct some growth inwardly, resulting in less consumption of farmland. This would be considered by many to be a benefit to the rural area as well. Similarly, one means of addressing the seemingly rural issue of farmland preservation is through compact and contiguous urban development, which also provides many benefits to municipalities, developers and residents. Thus, many growth issues have both an urban and a rural side.

Growth issues affect multiple jurisdictions in other ways, too. The growth or lack of growth and development in one jurisdiction has an impact on neighboring jurisdictions in terms of development costs and revenues. Development in one jurisdiction could enhance or conflict with land use in another. Continuity and efficiency in the delivery of services can be greatly enhanced by how services are provided by neighboring jurisdictions.

These factors point to the need for a coordinated approach with participation by all levels of government in order to effectively address the many growth issues that confront this region. This regional comprehensive plan uses such an approach to provide a framework for continuing regional cooperation in support of sensible growth. The purpose of the plan, therefore, is to provide a guide to coordinate public and private actions toward this end.

WHAT THE PLAN DOES

The plan presents guidelines for coordinated actions in support of sensible growth to preserve and enhance the quality of life through a renewed focus on alternative transportation, more efficient infrastructure, and environmental sustainability.

It establishes regional goals, objectives and policies to guide growth, and specifies actions to be taken relative to each element of the plan (see Figure 1.2). Additionally, plans for the development of future land use, transportation and selected community facilities are formulated and presented in this document. And finally, the Regional Comprehensive Plan presents an implementation strategy and identifies priorities for initial consideration.

The comprehensive plan is long range in scope. It is designed to cover a period of approximately twenty-five years to the year 2035. This design period covers the normal life expectancy of many above-ground community facilities and utilities such as water and wastewater treatment facilities. It also represents the optimum planning and design period, because it becomes more difficult to develop reliable projections of population and community needs for longer periods.

WHAT THE PLAN DOES NOT DO

The plan does not provide a mandate. It is advisory only. However, when adopted by local governments, it does represent a statement of official public policy and should therefore be used to guide development decisions. Decisions made in this manner have a rational basis and are more likely to stand up to legal challenges as well as receive wider public support. Moreover, the plan provides a framework for actions that can be binding through zoning, subdivision regulations or other means.

The plan does not advocate the implementation of all actions identified in support of recommended strategies. It recognizes that many actions will require further study to determine appropriateness and/or the feasibility from a cost/benefit perspective. The plan does, however, provide a means to focus resources initially on those strategies that have been identified as high priorities.

HOW THE PLAN WAS PREPARED

The process used to update the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan is graphically illustrated in Figure 1.3. The process began

with forming a review committee to work with staff in updating the plan originally developed with the assistance of more than 100 citizens serving on ten committees that represented a wide range of public and private interests. The review committee was structured to include representation from each of the original ten committees. The review committee membership is listed on page iii.

Role of Review Committee

The review committee performed a number of roles crucial to this update process. Committee members provided guidance and assistance with identifying and collecting data needed for the update. Members also contributed to the review and refinement of planning strategies, as well as the maps and supporting text presented in this document.

Data Collection And Analysis

The data needs for each element were determined with the assistance of the review committee.

Recent plans and studies were used as sources of information for data, current policies, and trends. Committee members helped determine the needs for additional data, and in many cases, also provided direct assistance in collecting the data. The committee also aided in the interpretation of data and in determining the conclusions drawn from the data.

Review and Refinement of Strategies

The review and refinement of strategies was another important role of the review committee. The term “strategy” is used in this update to refer to the goals, objectives, policies and actions identified for each major element of the plan (see Figure 1.2). Goals are long range generalized statements of desired conditions. Objectives are more specific, intermediate-range goals that provide benchmarks and the means to measure progress in achieving the broader, long range goals. Policy statements are generalized statements of position that provide guidelines for actions in support of goals and objectives. Thus, the strategies identified in this plan include goals, objec-

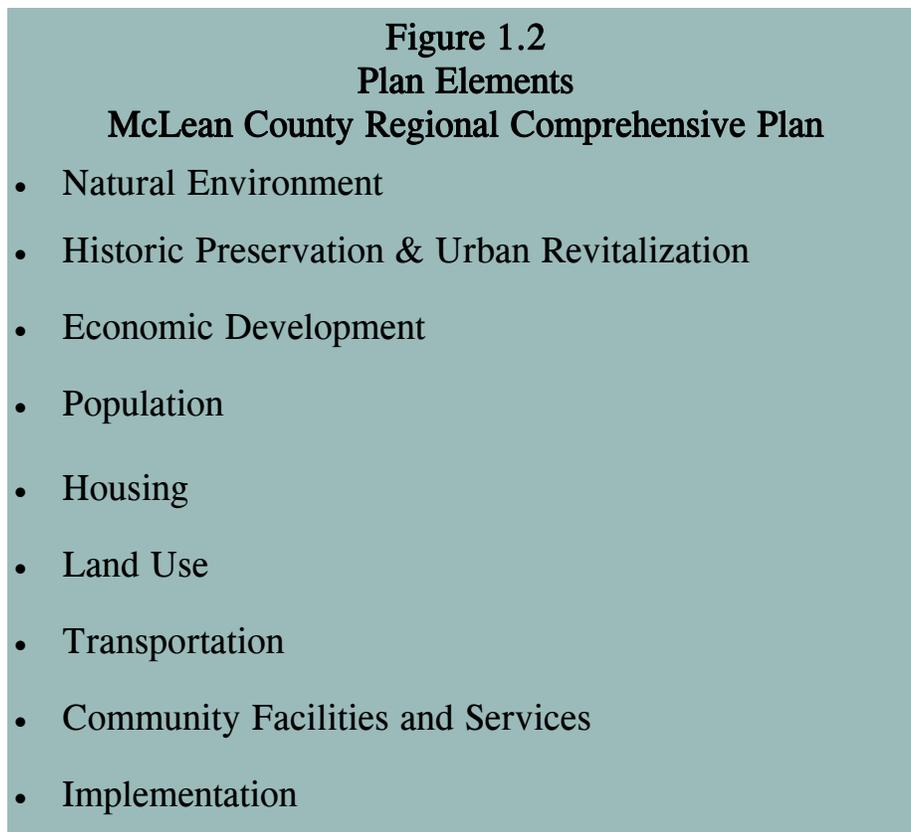
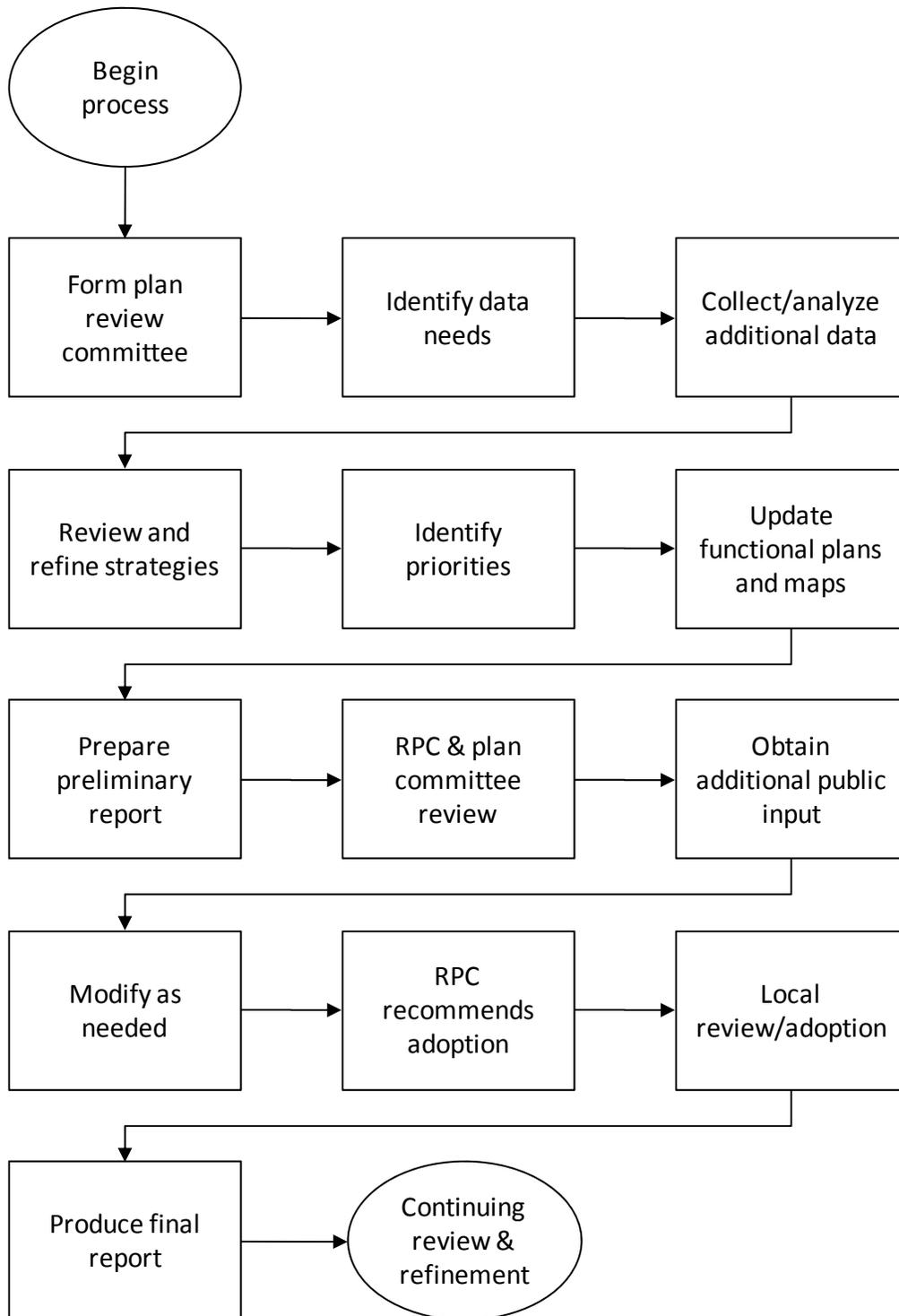


Figure 1.3
 Process Used to Update the
 McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan



tives and policies, as well as specific supporting actions. The components of these strategies were derived from the 2000 plan and further refined and updated for inclusion in this report.

Determining Priorities

Having identified a strategy for each element of the plan, the next step was to determine priorities for early consideration in order to focus initial efforts on key issues. Each committee member identified up to three priorities for each element of the plan. The results of this effort were then further refined by the committee to produce the short list of top priorities for early consideration presented in the concluding chapter of this plan and in the Executive Summary. Future progress on these priorities will be measurable and will add to the base of information needed to make development-related decisions.

Updating Functional Plans and Maps

The functional plans previously developed for land use, transportation and certain community facilities were updated to reflect the current 25-year planning period and the inclusion of recent development plans and projects, most notably the East Side Highway Study. These plans graphically illustrate many of the strategies and planning concepts identified throughout this document as they apply to land use, transportation and community facilities in support of sensible growth. These plans are intended to provide further guidance for development decisions.

Obtaining Additional Public Input

Following the preparation of a preliminary report on the Regional Comprehensive Plan, a series of public hearings will provide opportunities for additional public input. This input, along with committee and staff recommendations, will provide the basis for local government actions to adopt the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Local Review And Adoption

Upon recommendations by local planning commissions and staff, the government bodies

will be requested to adopt this plan as an official statement of policy on the future development of the region. As such, it will provide a basis for guiding decisions on both local and regional development issues. It will also provide a framework for enhanced regional cooperation in the pursuit of innovative solutions to growth related problems that are likely to confront the region in the twenty-first century.

HOW THE PLAN IS PRESENTED

Each of the nine plan elements is presented as a separate chapter of this report, beginning with Chapter 2. Each chapter summarizes the existing situation, including identifiable trends and resources that should be considered in the assessment of future needs. The focus then shifts to the future with an identification of challenges and opportunities based on the prior assessment of the existing situation. This is followed by a strategy for the future outlining the goals, objectives, policies and actions pertinent to the respective element of the plan. Where applicable, future projections and functional plans with accompanying maps and tables follow to illustrate and support the strategies. Priorities are also identified in Chapter 10.

The plan also contains many illustrations and supporting data. Pertinent information is noted in sidebars, and key points are highlighted throughout the plan, along with photographs and other graphic illustrations to help illustrate concepts. A bibliography and glossary of terms are presented at the end of this report.

Chapter 2



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Chapter 2: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

Building communities that preserve and enhance the natural environment is one of the primary components of sensible growth. The “environment” is defined as everything that affects a person during his or her lifetime and is generally considered our water, air, and land resources. How we use these environmental resources directly affects our quality of life. Sensible growth recognizes that communities can experience healthy growth with minimal impacts on the environment and grow within the context of the natural environment.

Regional cooperation is recognized as essential to protecting the natural environment. This is because potential threats to the environment such as air and water pollution are not restricted by jurisdictional boundaries. For example, increases in traffic in an urban area may impact the air quality of a whole region, rural and urban. Conversely, land use in rural areas, be it an industry located in an unincorporated area or agricultural operations, have the potential to impact water supplies that may provide drinking water to an urban area. For these reasons and others, planning to protect and enhance our natural environment must occur beyond the local level.

CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

Natural Features Affecting Development

Some of the more notable features that comprise McLean County's natural environment are illustrated in Map 2.1. These include important soil characteristics, areas of significant tree cover, lakes, floodplains, and streams and rivers. Hydrologic river basin boundaries (drainage basins) are shown on Map 2.2. Additional natural features addressed include climate, topography, wetlands, natural vegetation and wildlife habitat. Other features affecting development are also described and are identified on Map 2.3.

Climate

McLean County has a humid continental climate that is characterized by relatively hot and humid summers and cold winters. The July mean temperature is approximately 76 degrees and the January mean temperature is about 26 degrees. Outbreaks of cold, dry air masses from Canada produce sharp cold spells during the winter months. The growing season is approximately 172 days; the last killing frost normally occurs in mid-May and the first killing freeze in mid-October. The prevailing wind is from the west.

Warm, moisture-laden air masses moving up the Mississippi Valley from the Gulf of Mexico in early spring to late fall are responsible for the high relative humidity. Yearly rainfall averages about 37 inches with peaks occurring during the growing season. Annual snowfall averages 24 inches. In the spring and summer months, both frontal and convectional thunderstorms produce occasional heavy downpours that may cause localized flooding and ponding, which can be compounded by localized topography and soil conditions.

Topography and Drainage

The land surface in McLean County was formed as a result of glaciers, or giant ice sheets, that moved south from the Hudson Bay area of Canada several thousand years ago. These giant ice sheets were about 700 feet tall, approximately the height of a 60-story skyscraper. The ice sheets carried with them enormous amounts of sand, gravel, rock and sediment. As an ice sheet encountered warmer temperatures it would begin to melt and slowly recede. As it receded it would leave behind a pile or ridge of the material it had scraped down from more northern areas. Geologists refer to these ridges as moraines. Run-off from rains cut stream valleys into the slopes of these ridges and influenced the drainage patterns on the land surfaces formed by the glaciers. McLean County's land surface consists of a series of these moraines formed by an ice sheet called the Wisconsin Glacier during a period from about 20,000 to 15,000 years ago.

Each moraine generally runs from the northwest corner of McLean County to the southeast corner of the county. A birds-eye view of the northern part of Illinois would show that the series of ridges in McLean County are a part of a larger series of moraines that radiates outward from the Lake Michigan shore “like expanding ripples in a pond” (*Geology Underfoot in Illinois*, Raymond Wiggers, 1997).

The Bloomington Moraine cuts through the center of the county. To the south of the moraine the landscape is mainly nearly level to sloping, except near the major streams. To the north of the moraine in the northeastern part of the county, the landscape is mainly gently to moderately sloping, except near the Mackinaw and Sangamon Rivers where steeper slopes are present. In the extreme northwestern part of the county, the landscape is gently sloping to very steep.

One of the lowest points in the county is in the southwest where Sugar Creek flows out of the area. The elevation in this location is about 600 feet above sea level. One of the highest points is in the area due west of Moraine View State Park. This area is on the Bloomington Moraine and is at an elevation of about 920 feet above sea level. In general, water south of the Bloomington Moraine flows to the southwest through a series of creeks, such as Kickapoo Creek, Sugar Creek, and Salt Creek (Upper Sangamon Drainage Basin- see Map 2.2). This water eventually empties into the Illinois River drainage system. The Sangamon River, in the eastern part of the county, flows to the east and eventually drains into the Illinois River outside of McLean County (Upper Sangamon River Basin - see Map 2.2). North of the Bloomington Moraine, water flows to the northwest toward the Mackinaw River, which is also part of the Illinois River drainage system (Mackinaw River Basin - see Map 2.2). Surface water in the extreme northeastern part of the county flows due north into Livingston County and eventually empties into the Vermilion River” (Vermilion River Basin - see Map 2.2) (*Soil Survey of McLean County*, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, 1998, pg. 2). Various

characteristics of these four river basins are given in Table 2.1.

The county's smaller streams and drainage ways were also recently mapped (see Map 2.2) by the McLean County Department of Building and Zoning for eventual use in a stream buffer ordinance adopted by the Town of Normal. A stream buffer ordinance identifies required widths of vegetated buffer zones adjacent to waterways for purposes of protecting water quality and restoring eroded stream banks in areas of existing or planned urban development. Such buffers also provide a number of other aesthetic, ecological and recreational benefits. The width of the buffers are determined by the size of the stream or drainage ways that lie within the path of urban development.

Soil Resources

McLean County's most “famous” physical feature is its soils, which are described in the *Soil Survey of McLean County, Illinois* (United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service, 1998). The survey provides great detail about soil types, properties, use and management as well as other information related to the natural environment of McLean County.

Nine different soil associations exist in McLean County. A soil association is a unique natural landscape and has a distinct pattern of soils, relief, and drainage. The association may consist of one or more major soils and some minor soils. It is named for the major soils it contains (Soil Survey of McLean County, NRCS). The associations found in McLean County, selected properties and their suitability for various purposes are identified in Table 2.2. Map 2.1 illustrates the less productive agricultural soils in the county (Strawn-Mayville-Birkbeck) and areas with coarse-grained (sand and gravel) deposits found within five feet of the land surface. The less productive soils are important to note as traditional county policy has been to direct rural growth to areas within this association to preserve prime farmland, which comprises approximately 75 percent of McLean County's soils. The coarse-grained deposits represent areas where minable sand and gravel

Map 2.1 Physical Features

Map 2.1 Physical Features

reserves may exist and where water resources may be sensitive to contamination.

Geology and Mineral Resources

The material underlying McLean County's soils (its geology and mineral resources), have been thoroughly described in the 1972 *Natural Resource Plan* (McLean County Regional Planning Commission). This information is supplemented by a series of geologic maps recently produced by the Illinois State Geological Survey (Open file series 1a - 1f), and various other sources (Mackinaw River Area Assessment, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Volumes 1 and 2).

The land surface of McLean County was formed as a result of glaciers that deposited enormous amounts of sand, gravel, rock and sediment. These materials range in thickness from 50 to 150 feet in the eastern portion of the county and from 250 to 350 feet in the south and southwestern portion of the county (*Natural Resource Plan*, McLean County Regional Planning Commission). This surficial geology forms the land surface or topography and is also the source of the county's aggregate resources which include sand, gravel and crushed limestone. The thickest deposits of sand and gravel are associated with the Mahomet Bedrock Valley. As reported in the 1972 *Natural Resource Plan*, sand and gravel is most abundant along the Kickapoo, Sugar, Middle Fork Sugar, West Fork Sugar and Six Mile Creeks and the Mackinaw and Sangamon Rivers. Other deposits occur as hills and ridges scattered over various parts of the county (see Map 2.1.). Since the formation of that 1972 report, some of these deposits have been extracted. Aggregate materials are needed for concrete and asphalt. Because these commodities are expensive to transport, careful planning is needed to effectively develop these resources. The recycling of aggregates should also be encouraged.

The county's layer of bedrock nearest the surface is called Pennsylvanian after the geologic period in which it was formed. The Pennsylvanian bedrock ranges in thickness from about 300 to 600 feet and consists principally of shale with thin beds of sandstone, limestone and coal. Long

before the coming of the glaciers, the remains of materials that now comprise this bedrock formed the surface terrain and vegetation of McLean County. Additional information regarding this bedrock is available from the 1972 *Natural Resource Plan* (McLean County Regional Planning Commission) and the *Mackinaw River Area Assessment* (Illinois Department of Natural Resources).

Ground Water Resources

Rivers also flowed through the valleys of this Pennsylvanian bedrock surface to form bedrock valleys. The most prominent bedrock valley in McLean County is called the Mahomet Bedrock Valley. It is located in the southwest and southeast portions of the county. When the glaciers deposited sand, gravel and sediment, materials were deposited in the river valleys or lowest parts of the bedrock. The thickest formations of sand and gravel exist within these ancient bedrock valleys, including the Mahomet Bedrock Valley. One important implication of these deposits is the groundwater reserves found along with the sand and gravel deposits in the Mahomet Valley. These reserves have been thoroughly investigated and described in the following reports: (1) *Hydrogeology and Groundwater Availability in Southwest McLean and Southwest Tazewell Counties Part 1: Aquifer Characterization - Cooperative Groundwater Report 17, 1997* and (2) *Part 2: Aquifer Modeling, Final Report, Cooperative Groundwater Report 19, 1998*, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, (3) *Regional Water Needs Assessment Study: Summary of Findings*, Farnsworth and Wylie, P.C., 1994, and (4) *A Plan to Improve the Planning and Management of Water Supplies in East-Central Illinois*, East Central Illinois Regional Water Supply Committee, in cooperation with the Mahomet Aquifer Consortium, prepared under contract to the Office of Water Resources of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Springfield, Illinois, as authorized by the State Executive Order 2006-01, June 2009 Draft published at http://www.rwspc.org/documents/ECI-WaterPlan_062909.pdf.

Watershed	Size	Water Bodies	Land Use	Water Quality
Mackinaw River Basin	728,495 acres	Mackinaw River, Prairie Creek, Indian Creek, Money Creek, Crooked Creek, Lak Bloomington, Evergreen Lake, Turkey Creek, Patton Creek, Henline Creek, Buck Creek, Money Creek, Funk Creek, Spin Lake, Six Mile Creek	agricultural	Rivers & streams = 90% "Good" and 10% "Fair", lakes & ponds = 97% "Good" and 3% "Fair"
Upper Sangamon River Basin	912,662 acres	Goose Creek	agricultural	Rivers & streams = 48% "Good" and 51% "Fair" and 1% "Poor", lakes & ponds = .7% "Good" and 99% "Fair" and .3% "Poor"
Vermilion (Illinois) River Basin	845,432 acres	Prairie Creek, Rooks Creek, Mud Creek	agricultural	Rivers & streams = 85% "Good" and 15% "Fair"
Salt Creek of Sangamon River Basin	1,182,422 acres	Salt Creek, Sugar Creek, Kickapoo Creek	high density development, agricultural	Rivers & Streams = 60% "Good" and 40% "Fair", lakes & ponds = 3% "Good" and 97% "Fair"

Source: Illinois Department of Natural Resources, 2007

These groundwater reserves would serve as the source of water for a possible regional water system that could serve portions of McLean and Tazewell Counties. Clean and available potable water resources remain a concern as the McLean County region continues to grow. The Mahomet Aquifer has long been discussed as a partial solution to future anticipated water needs. A study published in June, 2003 titled *The Mahomet Aquifer: A Transboundary Resource in East-Central Illinois* and published by the Illinois State Geological Survey is an important source of information on this subject. Another important source of information that should be considered in the planning process is the results of groundwater flow modeling, cited above, which demonstrate the possible effect of large-scale groundwater development in the Mahomet Aquifer in southwest McLean County. There is also a growing body of information relating to the presence of naturally-occurring arsenic in the groundwater in McLean and neighboring counties. The presence of arsenic may impact costs to develop this groundwater resource. This information is summarized at the following references: *Arsenic in Illinois Groundwater—General Information*, Illinois State Water Survey, at <http://www.isws.illinois.edu/gws/arsenic>, and *Arsenic in Illinois Ground Water—Community and Private Supplies*, Kelly L. Warner, Angel

Martin, Jr., and Terri L. Arnold, at http://il.water.usgs.gov/pubs/wrir03_4103.pdf.

Vegetation, Tree Cover, and Species Habitat

Another natural feature within the county is tree cover. Although the acreage of land in tree cover is low in relation to the amount of cultivated land, fairly significant stands of trees remain. Major tree cover is confined to stream valleys and moraines. The Upper Mackinaw River Valley and Moraine View State Park are prime examples. Funk's Grove contains the largest contiguous stand of trees but numerous smaller stands are found in many areas (see Map 2.1).

Although of great economic importance to the county, the predominance of cultivated land has all but eliminated the natural prairie vegetation and much of the wildlife that once flourished here. The Mackinaw River, Sangamon River, Funks Grove, Danvers Geological Area and the Weston Cemetery have been identified by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources as Illinois Natural Area Inventory Sites. These and other natural areas and remaining stands of trees provide important habitat for endangered species as well as other wildlife and should be preserved.

**Table 2.2
Selected Properties of Soil Associations Found in McLean County**

Soil Association (% of County Soils)	Slope	Drainage	Suitability for cultivated crops	Suitability for Dwellings	Suitability for Septic Tank Absorption Fields	Other notes
Ipava-Sable (25%)	nearly level	somewhat poorly drained and poorly drained	well suited	poorly suited	poorly suited	
Catlin- Ipava-Sable (21%)	nearly level to sloping	moderately well drained to poorly drained	moderately suited (Catlin) well suited (Ipava-Sable)	moderately suited (Catlin) poorly suited (Ipava-Sable)	poorly suited	
Lawson-Sawmill (3%)	nearly level	somewhat poorly drained and poorly drained	well suited (Lawson) moderately suited (Sawmill)	generally unsuited	generally unsuited	
Strawn-Mayville-Birckbeck (13%)	gently sloping to very steep	well drained and moderately well drained	less productive agricultural soils	some moderately suited; some unsuited	sloping and strongly sloping are poorly suited	erosion hazard; well suited to woodland
Parr-Lisbon-Drummer (18%)	nearly level to sloping	well drained, somewhat poorly drained, poorly drained	moderately well suited and well suited	moderately suited (Parr) poorly suited (Lisbon-Drummer)	poorly suited	erosion hazard in more sloping areas
Catlin-Dana (3%)	gently sloping and sloping	moderately well drained	moderately well suited or well suited	moderately suited	poorly suited	erosion in sloping areas is major limitation
Chenoa-Ashkum-Varna (6%)	nearly level to sloping	poorly drained to moderately well drained	well suited or moderately suited	poorly suited (Chenoa-Ashkum) moderately suited (Varna)	poorly suited	
Chenoa-Drummer-Graymont (7%)	nearly level and gently sloping	poorly drained to moderately well drained	well suited	poorly suited (Chenoa-Drummer) moderately suited (Graymont)	poorly suited	
Drummer-Brenton (4%)	nearly level	poorly drained and somewhat poorly drained	well suited	poorly suited	poorly suited	

Source: Soil Survey of McLean County, USDA - NRCS. (1998)

Other Features Affecting Development

In addition to the naturally occurring features of McLean County summarized above, there are a number of significant man-made features identified on Map 2.3 that impact the natural environment and the location and intensity of urban development. Wind generation facilities are one such factor, although these facilities are situated beyond the urban area's projected 25-year growth. Another factor is the Nicor underground natural gas storage facilities located a short distance to the north of Normal. A third factor is the major electrical and natural gas transmission lines traversing the county and a planned crude oil line. Although the presence of these features is not likely to significantly curtail the region's development potential, their existence should be taken into account when considering proximate development.

Other Resources

The features described above are important resources for McLean County. Productive soils are necessary to maintain a high level of agricultural production, and water resources must be protected and conserved to maintain a reliable supply of water for drinking and recreation. The climate, topography and vegetative characteristics of the county in combination also provide a substantial wind energy resource that has been developed in the county as illustrated on Map 2.3.

Natural resource mining and development present a degree of economic opportunity for the area, but a longer term and potentially more valuable economic opportunity lies with the preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the county's natural resources for active and passive recreation. Several not-for-profit organizations exist in the region whose goal is to preserve the natural environment and educate the community as to its importance. These include the ParkLands Foundation, Ecology Action Center, Sugar Creek Nature Center, the John Wesley Powell Audubon Society, Mackinaw River Partnership, and several others. These grassroots organizations are testimony to an excellent people resource that has played a vital role in

protecting and enhancing the area's natural environment.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The high growth experienced and expected nationally and in McLean County heightens the value of the natural environment and presents both challenges and opportunities for natural resource preservation. Growth poses a threat to prime farmland and other physical features. Conversely, growth may provide opportunities for natural resource preservation through greater economic stability and the proper enforcement of subdivision ordinances requiring land dedication for parks and trails.

The budgetary limitations faced by local governments for natural environment preservation should be balanced through the pursuit of state and federal grants that provide funding support for trails, open-space, watershed planning, and other programs.

The natural environment may place physical restraints on the growth of a community. Development should be avoided on poorly drained soils (see Table 2.2), flood plains, sand and gravel deposits, and tree cover (see Map 2.1). As previously indicated, traditional county policy has been to direct growth away from prime farmland. Protection of remaining tree cover should also be a consideration.

STRATEGY

While physical features can generally be altered to accommodate development, sensible growth dictates that growth occur within the context of the natural environment. This concept is reflected in the environmental strategy expressed by the goal, objectives, policies and actions outlined below. Priorities for implementation are addressed in Chapter 10.

Goal

A region that thrives within the context of the natural environment.

Map 2.2 Hydrologic Features

Map 2.2 Hydrologic Features

Map 2.3 Other Features

Map 2.3 Other Features

Climate and Air Quality

Objective

Clean air and a natural climate unharmed by human activities.

Policy #1

Identify and maintain acceptable levels of greenhouse gases and airborne pollutants.

Action

Support efforts of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to monitor air quality in urban areas.

Policy #2

Actively promote the increased use of public transit and other alternative modes of transportation through improved urban design.

Actions

- Encourage the use of improved urban design to facilitate increased use of public transit and other alternative modes of transportation, such as higher densities designed around activity centers that are accessible by pedestrians, automobiles, and bicycles.
- Consider the adoption of regulatory measures that support pedestrian and transit oriented design with appropriate building orientations, setbacks and density patterns at selected locations.
- Consider providing density bonuses for transit oriented design around regional and subregional activity centers.
- Extend public transit to developing areas that feature transit oriented design.
- Design arterial and collector streets to safely accommodate alternative modes of transportation.
- Provide bicycle racks and other amenities for bicyclists at new commercial and government buildings.
- Encourage the development of trails to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle transportation.

- Consider alternative parking requirements for developments with public transit service or ride sharing programs.
- Consider developing park and ride facilities with free parking.
- Consider providing incentives to public employees and private employers with approved programs for ride sharing and public transit usage.

Topography and Hydrology

Objective

Adequate drainage of urban and rural areas that minimizes excess runoff and subsequent impacts “downstream.”

Policy

Provide support for currently used and other innovative methods to reduce stormwater runoff.

Actions

- Support the Lake Bloomington Watershed project, the Soil and Water Conservation District, the Mackinaw River Project, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Wetland Reserve Program, and watershed management. Strongly encourage implementation of the Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake watershed plan and develop a financial plan approved by the City of Bloomington, Town of Normal, and McLean County.
- Adopt ordinances that address erosion and runoff.
- Encourage the use of storm water detention basins that compliment the natural environment, expand public open space, and increase recreational opportunities.
- Promote the use of natural features to control erosion and stormwater runoff.
- Promote the adoption of new ordinances to address erosion and stormwater runoff in municipalities that do not currently have such ordinances.
- Encourage the use of conservation practices from the Illinois Urban Manual to control urban

erosion and stormwater runoff, including that from parking lots.

- Encourage the use of global positioning systems or infrared photography to identify the location of future or existing tile drains.
- Promote agricultural practices that reduce sedimentation, nutrient, and pesticide leaching and runoff.
- Oppose stream channelization and encourage the restoration of streams already channelized.

Floodplains and Wetlands

Objective

Preservation of floodplains and wetlands.

Policy

Support plans and programs to preserve floodplains and wetlands and minimize potential losses due to periodic flooding.

Actions

- Adopt stream buffer ordinances for existing urban areas and planned growth areas.
- Develop a comprehensive set of countywide water resource management regulations to preserve and protect floodplains and wetlands.
- Raise awareness of the costs of building in the floodplains and the affects of urbanization on flooding through educational programs.
- Protect and preserve wetlands as an essential component of the hydrological system and wildlife habitat and restore drained wetlands where possible.
- Maintain and encourage use of conservation easement programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, and Wetlands Reserve Program.
- Encourage the measuring and recording of wetlands loss for planning and restoration purposes.

Water Resources

Objective

Reliable supplies of high quality potable drinking water and for recreational purposes.

Policy

Encourage the effective management of water resources.

Actions

- Promote the cooperative development and financing of the proposed regional water system.
- Monitor and restrict activities that can contribute to surface and groundwater contamination, including municipal wastewater discharge.
- Manage water as a shared resource.
- Promote existing local and state conservation programs.
- Promote public education for water conservation, water quality protection, species habitat, and pesticide usage best management practices.
- Support existing efforts to reduce water loss from municipal water systems.
- Support water conservation management practices.
- Encourage water recycling and reuse at the point of use.
- Examine the pricing structure of water to promote water conservation.
- Review and, if necessary, amend code requirements for water conservation.
- Promote responsible chemical use and prompt cleanup of spills to prevent water contamination.
- Consider establishing aquifer protection zones, including guidelines for appropriate land uses, to protect the Mahomet, Mackinaw, and other significant aquifers.
- Consider geology and aquifer sensitivity in land use and zoning to ensure protection of groundwater quality.
- Encourage the compilation of water quality data for planning and analysis purposes.

- Encourage development where central water and sewer service is available.
- Encourage the continuing assessment and implementation of *A Plan to Improve the Planning and Management of Water Supplies in East-Central Illinois*, draft published in June 2009 by the East Central Illinois Regional Water Supply Committee, in cooperation with the Mahomet Aquifer Consortium.

Soil

Objective

Preservation of the long-term productivity of soil with minimal off-site impacts from erosion.

Policy

Proactively support existing soil conservation and farmland preservation programs.

Actions

- Review and monitor farmland preservation programs in other areas.
- Consider establishing farmland protection (or exclusive agricultural) zones.
- Encourage infill development on vacant parcels, including brownfields, within existing urban and suburban areas prior to extending municipal services and developing farmland.
- Support urban revitalization.
- Continue to use Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system for assessment of proposed developments.
- Assess the potential impact of soil loss from erosion or other cause on crop production.

Geology and Mineral Resources

Objective

Managed extraction of McLean County’s geological resources with minimal impacts on the environment.

Policy

Restrict development in areas of known mineral resources and heighten the regulation of extraction sites.

Actions

- Consider the use of overlay districts in rural areas to permit possible agricultural, recreational, grassland or wildlife use in areas of identified mineral reserves while limiting urban development. Continue to collect data to support overlay area and make results available to developers as pertaining to gravel and other mineral deposits.
- Encourage interagency and intergovernmental discussion, including the County, municipalities, and school districts, regarding development in areas where mineral resources are present.
- Consider increasing regulation of extraction sites, including erosion control requirements, inspections of site performance guarantees to ensure compliance with reclamation plans, and higher standards for reclamation of extraction sites.

Natural Vegetation, Tree Cover, and Species Habitat

Objective

Expanded vegetation, tree cover, and species habitat

Policy

Support plans, programs, and practices for the preservation and restoration of natural vegetation, tree cover, and species habitat.

Actions

- Support the implementation of the McLean County Regional Greenways Plan.
- Encourage subdivisions with open space as an integral component of the design.
- Support the restoration of habitat, including the planting of trees and grasslands on small, isolated parcels in urban and rural areas.

- Review and, if necessary, revise ordinances to allow natural, low maintenance landscaping.
- Encourage the measuring and recording of changes in local wildlife populations.
- Encourage the use of native or appropriate vegetation in the place of exotic species and the control of exotic problem species.
- Consider the use of an urban arborist to provide education to developers, nurseries, and homeowners on the benefits of native and appropriate species.
- Establish backyard habitat demonstration sites in parks.
- Consider establishing an urban habitat program, such as the “Backyards for Wildlife” program from the National Wildlife Federation.
- Require buffer strips as part of nonagricultural development on or near existing farms.
- Provide budgetary support for public tree planting programs and consider adopting a tree planting and landscaping ordinance.
- Consider establishing a mechanism for creation of natural areas by donation, trade of land, or other methods.
- Consider developing individual and intergovernmental programs for the preservation, restoration, expansion, and connection of areas of major tree cover and prairie restoration.
- Reserve portions of future parkland, where appropriate, for species habitat and low intensity use.
- Encourage the inclusion of natural areas suitable for wildlife habitat in new developments.
- Promote existing local and state programs that aim to protect and enhance species habitat.
- Continue to promote the use of conservation tillage agriculture and filter strips.
- Promote agricultural mowing schedules not detrimental to animal nesting.
- Coordinate with local and state agencies to manage for species at risk or concern.

Chapter 3



HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND URBAN REVITALIZATION

Chapter 3: HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND URBAN REVITALIZATION

INTRODUCTION

The preservation of historic resources and the strengthening of central mixed-use neighborhoods are important ingredients for sensible growth. Historic resources help preserve the sense of community by providing character and appeal that promote civic pride among residents and help provide memorable experiences for visitors. Such resources may include rural features such as a rustic barn or farmstead; or urban features such as a historic building or a peaceful park setting. Features such as these can make an area special and help increase our sense of well being and sense of belonging by helping us to define who we are.

In urban areas, central business districts and surrounding neighborhoods usually include people friendly design and a variety of amenities that promote social, cultural and economic interactions that strengthen community and bolster the local economies. Vibrant central business districts and neighborhoods foster healthy economic activity, provide employment and contribute to the local tax base.

Successful revitalization of urban centers can produce an environmental benefit by reducing pressures to develop farmland and environmentally sensitive lands on the perimeters of communities through providing attractive alternatives for growth. Thus, historic preservation and urban revitalization is an important element of sensible growth.

Regional cooperation can significantly enhance the effectiveness of preservation and revitalization programs by jointly addressing issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries. These issues may include how to guide growth into existing service areas, including central business districts and older neighborhoods, in order to reduce the loss of farmland and natural areas to urbanization. Thus, urban revitalization can have a rural benefit as well. A regional approach is necessary to realize these benefits and protect the many resources in the rural areas of McLean County.

CURRENT PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION ACTIVITIES

This section addresses the status of preservation and revitalization activities in McLean County. It begins with a broad overview of county history to provide a basis for identifying resources. It also includes a summary of identified constraints to preservation and revitalization efforts in the county.

Overview of County History

Early Settlement

McLean County was settled during the 1820s by people of European descent who built their homes on the savannah land that formed a border between the prairie grasslands and the island-like groves of trees that dotted the area. Settlements of the native Kickapoo occupied these areas as well. Although some relationships were established between these competing settlements, the Kickapoo were forced out of the area within a decade. The early European settlers were of Scotch-Irish descent who migrated to this area from the South and became self-sufficient by practicing subsistence farming and swine herding. The sparsely wooded savannahs were well suited for these activities, and unlike the tough prairie sod, could be cultivated with reasonable effort. These locations were also near the water and timber needed by the settlers. The number of settlers grew as the original families were joined by friends and relatives.

Growth And Development

The establishment and growth of the cities of Chicago and St. Louis provided impetus for the growth and development of McLean County, attracting entrepreneurs from the East. These entrepreneurs, who were referred to locally as “Yankees,” began to use their considerable talents to establish businesses and towns as well as churches and schools. These businessmen were successful in locating the crossing of two major railroads at Bloomington in 1853, which

**Table 3.1
Historic Districts
McLean County, Illinois**

District Name	Location
Cedar Crest - NHD*	Normal
Davis-Jefferson	Bloomington
Bloomington Central BD - NHD	Bloomington
East Grove Street - NHD	Bloomington
Franklin Square - NHD	Bloomington
Highland	Normal
LeRoy Commercial	LeRoy
North Roosevelt Avenue	Bloomington
Old North Normal	Normal
White Place - NHD	Bloomington

* National Historic District

Source: Bloomington and Normal Comprehensive Plans and National Register of Historic Places.

assured the economic success of the area. Industrial development soon followed. The creation of jobs attracted Irish and German workers to the area, creating a budding urban community. The rural areas were also changing because of the introduction of the steel plow into common usage and the solving of drainage problems, both of which served to increase crop production. The market for these crops was enhanced by the rail service, providing access to Chicago and other markets as well as other destinations.

In the post civil war boom, the area experienced the effects of mass production and consumption with the county's population more than doubling between 1860 and 1900 to exceed 70,000 residents. The growth of this period served to integrate the various ethnic groups into the American Midwestern culture. After 1900, the county's growth was slow and steady until 1950 when another major period of growth began, persisting throughout the latter half of the twentieth century to the present.

Numerous small communities sprang up along railroads and trails throughout the county as service centers for the agricultural community. Bloomington-Normal was destined to become the regional service center for McLean County and surrounding areas due to outstanding transportation connections—first by rail, later by

state and interstate highways, and eventually by air.

Costs and Benefits of Early Growth

The early growth of McLean County brought both advantages and disadvantages. Growth sometimes outpaced a community's ability to provide essential services such as public sewers and water for drinking and fire protection. Fires reshaped a number of downtown areas, sometimes more than once. Cholera also took its toll. But on the positive side, growth eventually brought expanded services and cultural amenities such as public buildings and parks, important elements of community planning and design. Likewise, many rural historic features serve as important reminders of the region's agricultural heritage.

Resources

Civic and Cultural Features

McLean County contains many important historic, archeological, and civic resources that should continue to be preserved to enhance the sense of place, or community, and to provide expanded opportunities for tourism and economic development. Safeguarding such resources helps preserve the county's unique character and qualities as a special place to live or visit. A number of historic districts have been formed to assist preservation work (see Map 3.1 and Table 3.1). Many of the county's historic resources have been identified in previous studies. Historic features listed on the National Register of Historic Places are listed on Table 3.2, and illustrated in Map 3.2.

Urban Growth

When properly managed, growth can be an important resource in preserving civic and cultural features and in revitalizing central business districts and neighborhoods. Growth and development within established central business districts and neighborhoods is needed for effective revitalization. Effective growth requires that existing historical features be preserved and

Map 3.1 Historic Preservation Districts Bloomington - Normal, Illinois

The City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal have designated areas of special historic or architectural significance as historic preservation districts. In addition to the local designation, some are also included on the National Park Service National Register of Historic Places as National Historic Districts. Historic preservation designations can provide some protection to threatened historic and archeological resources.

Legend

BLOOMINGTON HISTORIC DISTRICTS

-  Davis-Jefferson
-  Downtown Bloomington - NHD
-  East Grove Street - NHD
-  Franklin Square - NHD
-  North Roosevelt Avenue
-  White Place - NHD

NORMAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

-  Cedar Crest - NHD
-  Highland
-  Old North Normal

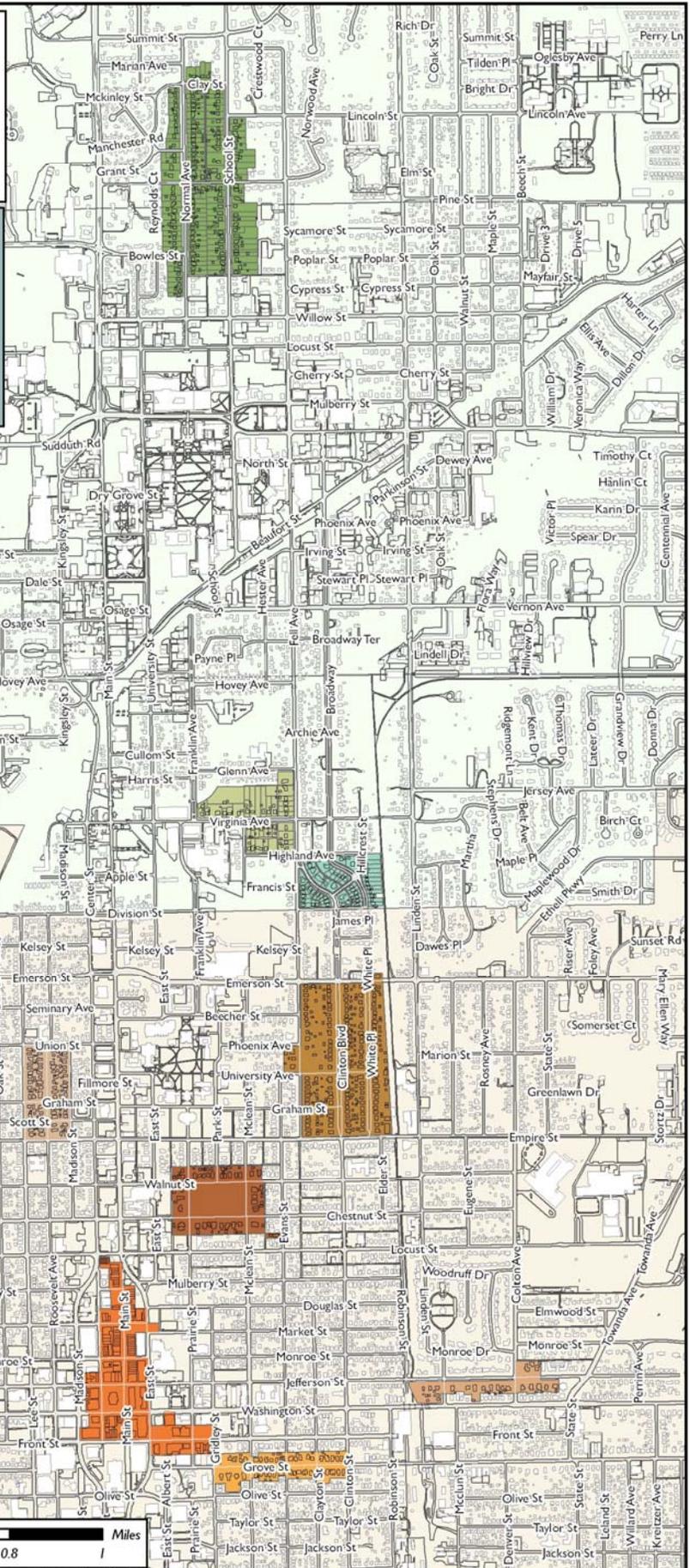
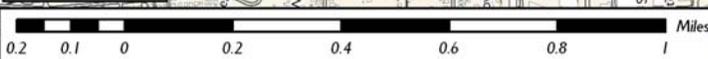
 Other Buildings

 Streets

 Town of Normal

 City of Bloomington

Source: Data on National Historic Districts and National Register of Historic Places locations from U.S. Department of the Interior; data on local historic districts from City of Bloomington and Town of Normal; data on structures, transportation facilities and corporate boundaries from McLean County GIS.

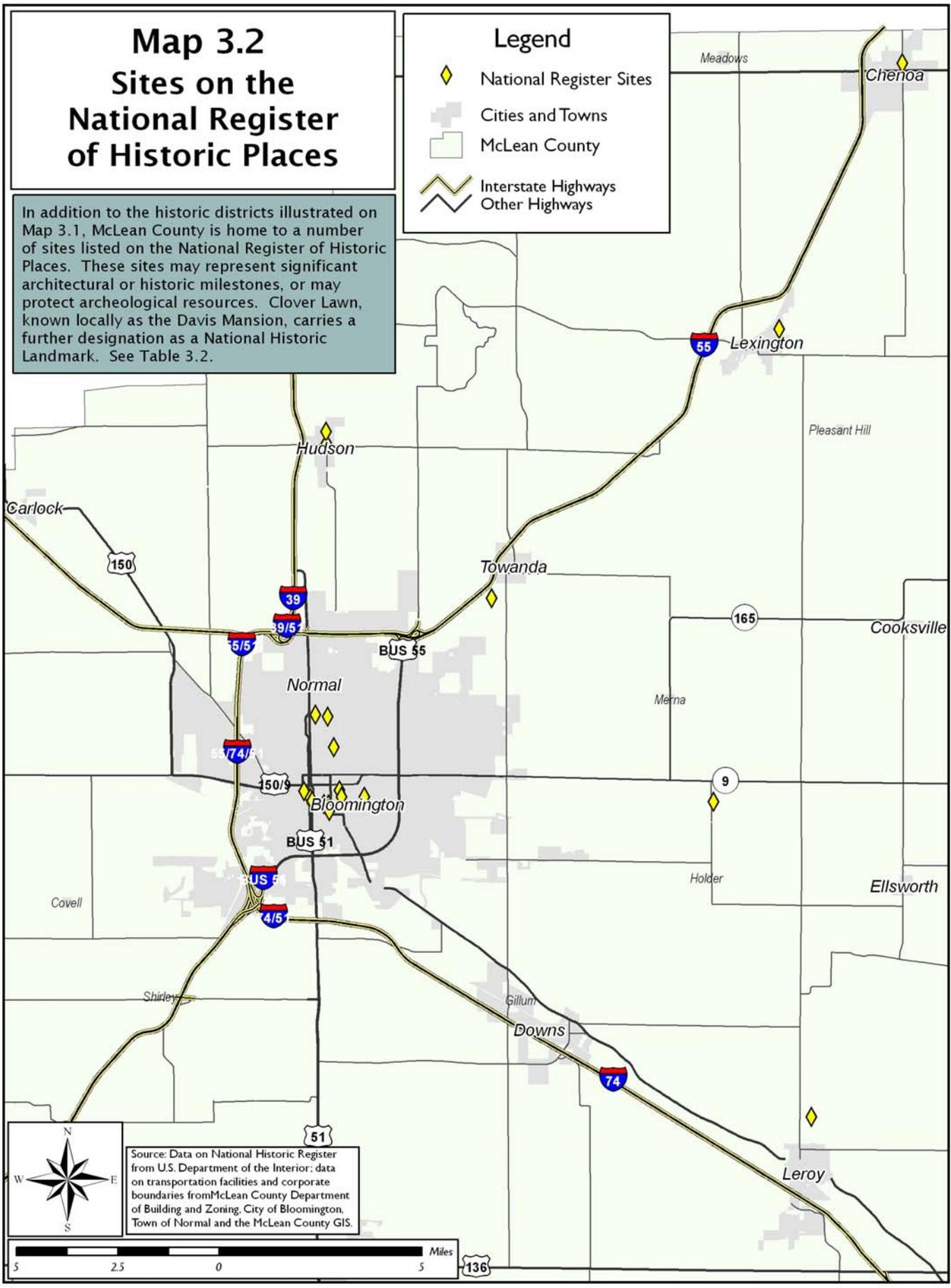


Map 3.2 Sites on the National Register of Historic Places

In addition to the historic districts illustrated on Map 3.1, McLean County is home to a number of sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These sites may represent significant architectural or historic milestones, or may protect archeological resources. Clover Lawn, known locally as the Davis Mansion, carries a further designation as a National Historic Landmark. See Table 3.2.

Legend

-  National Register Sites
-  Cities and Towns
-  McLean County
-  Interstate Highways
-  Other Highways



Source: Data on National Historic Register from U.S. Department of the Interior; data on transportation facilities and corporate boundaries from McLean County Department of Building and Zoning, City of Bloomington, Town of Normal and the McLean County GIS.

new architectural and urban designs complement the old. It may also require compromises to reach a desirable balance between urban core and suburban development.

Efforts should be made to preserve the region's historic and archeological resources while at the same time create urban and architectural designs worthy of preservation by future generations. An additional benefit to the community of development principles that use traditional patterns is the savings in cost in both initial infrastructure and long-term sustainability. These benefits are realized through compact development that employs a more grid-like street system, building design and scale in context with the surrounding neighborhoods, easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as automobiles, and in proximity to neighborhood-scale commercial areas.

Civic art and the effective design and integration of public spaces into the urban fabric contribute immensely to the sense of community and to the local quality of life. This in turn can produce economic benefits by making the area more attractive to people and business. The many notable historic features in McLean County pay tribute to the early architects, developers and urban designers of the region who helped create the distinctive communities and neighborhoods.

As in the past, communities and neighborhoods of today need features that set them apart. This can be particularly challenging in this age of the franchise, mass production and standardization. However, this challenge must be met if McLean County is to continue to develop unique qualities that give it character and make it special.

Preservation and Revitalization Organizations

Another important resource is the many area organizations that are dedicated to the preservation of historic features and the revitalization of urban centers in McLean County. These are listed in Table 3.3 along with key information about their respective roles in this important endeavor. In addition to these organizations, many dedicated citizens and developers have made significant contributions to historic preservation and urban revitalization

through the conscientious completion of individual rehabilitation and redevelopment projects.

Assistance Programs

There are a number of programs available to assist in the preservation of historic features and in the revitalization of central business districts and neighborhoods. Assistance may be available in several forms, including financial and technical. The programs are generally available through one or more of the organizations noted in Table 3.3. These organizations should be contacted for more information regarding assistance available for specific projects.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following were identified as significant challenges and opportunities for historic preservation and urban revitalization in this region: incorporating cultural landmarks and civic design, balancing cost considerations, managing urban growth, and being prepared to take the initiative in the absence of major federal or state guidelines. Each of these is discussed below.

Incorporating Cultural Landmarks and Civic Design

The McLean County region could benefit greatly from the development of additional local and regional cultural landmarks and from a re-emphasis on civic design. Although McLean County is fortunate to have many historic features and civic resources, including those noted in Table 3.1 as well as many other individual historic properties and public spaces, major cultural landmarks that add to the region's identity are rare. Most regions and communities have identifying features that set them apart—features that come to mind when the region's name is mentioned. Chicago has Grant Park, Soldier Field, Sears Tower and many others. St. Louis has the Gateway Arch, Busch Stadium and the Edward Jones Dome to name a few. Peoria has the riverfront with the skyline and renovated

**Table 3.2
National Register of Historic Sites
McLean County, Illinois**

Resource Name	Location
Grand Village of the Kickapoo (Warren Bane Site)	LeRoy/Ellsworth
Benjamin, Rubin M., House	Bloomington
Benjaminville Friends Meetinghouse and Burial Ground	Holder
Camelback Bridge	Normal
Clover Lawn	Bloomington
Cook, John W., Hall (ISU)	Normal
Cox, George H., House	Bloomington
Davis, David III & IV, House	Bloomington
Duncan Manor	Towanda
Franklin Square	Bloomington
Gildersleeve House	Hudson
Greenlee, Robert, House	Bloomington
Hamilton, John M., House	Bloomington
Hubbard House	Hudson
McLean County Courthouse and Square	Bloomington
Miller, George H., House	Bloomington
Miller-Davis Law Buildings	Bloomington
Normal Theater	Normal
Patton, John, Log Cabin	Lexington
Scott, Matthew T., House	Chenoa
Scott-Vrooman House	Bloomington
Stevenson House	Bloomington
US Army Aircraft C-53-DO-41-20124	Bloomington
White Building	Bloomington

Note: Numerous other important historic sites are located within and near the sites identified above and throughout McLean County.

Source: Bloomington and Normal Comprehensive Plans and National Register of Historic Places

train station. Springfield has the Capitol Building.

While the McLean County Museum of History and other area landmarks provide local identities, a more prominent feature could enhance the regional identity of the county and the Twin Cities area. This could be of particular benefit since the area also lacks a prominent natural landmark.

Civic design and public spaces should also be emphasized in developing areas to help provide distinctive identities and characters like was done in many older neighborhoods. The traditional central business districts and neighborhoods of the region's larger communities are generally well served by public buildings, art and open space. More recent developments, however, are generally more standardized and often lack the unique qualities that distinguish them from other developing areas. Parkland dedication

requirements for new subdivisions in the Twin Cities help ensure at least minimal open space requirements are met. Economies of scale often result in standardized designs for tract homes and franchise developments that consume large amounts of land, are not pedestrian-friendly, and lack artistic appeal.

Consideration should be given to exploring means to cost-effectively incorporate civic design features into new developments in order to enhance and preserve local identities throughout the region. Such features are employed in the revitalization efforts currently underway in Downtown Bloomington and Uptown Normal. The renovation and reintroduction of the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts has revived a long-standing civic resource and made it available to a broad new audience of users. The National Register-listed Normal Theater is a key feature in Normal's redevelopment plan. Its

preservation is secured through the expanded role of the theater as an element in a new convention facility.

An increasingly popular method of incorporating quality design into both old and new neighborhoods is through traditional neighborhood development (TND). In developing areas, TND is sometimes referred to as neotraditional or new urbanist design. TND is also similar in concept to transit-oriented development (TOD). These closely related approaches emphasize many of the same features. These features include: pedestrian friendly streetscapes and amenities; transportation alternatives; mixed use centers that provide convenient access to local services and jobs from residences, characteristic of traditional central business districts and neighborhoods; somewhat more compact and efficient development; and greater access to open space. Lot sizes are generally smaller in and near the neighborhood center and increase toward the

perimeter. Figure 3.3 illustrates the concept of TND.

Balancing Cost Considerations

The economic efficiencies that come with this age of specialization and standardization are often a deterrent to successful preservation and revitalization efforts, particularly when it comes to extending traditional design qualities to developing areas. The emphasis on profit and efficiency by large corporations too often outweighs that of good urban design. While the costs of materials and construction for pedestrian-friendly design may not be substantially different from the automobile-oriented designs typical of "big box" stores, it is easier and safer to follow the standard blue prints that have been successful in the past. Some communities have insisted that community standards take precedent over corporate blueprints by requiring conformance to local design standards. Other communities require greater diversity in the

**Table 3.3
ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED WITH HISTORIC PRESERVATION
AND URBAN REVITALIZATION
McLean County, Illinois**

Organization Name	Mission	Area Served	Resources	Funding
Bloomington Community Development Division	Housing Assistance for low to moderate income families	Focus on blighted and low to moderate income areas	Rehabilitation loans for single-family homes (HOME)	HUD, local
Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission	Identify and preserve historic sites	City of Bloomington	Education, site inventory, grants for restoration	City Council
Bloomington Neighborhood Coalition	Coordinate neighborhood goals with city government	Bloomington neighborhood associations	Information forum	NA
Downtown Bloomington Association	Promote downtown business	Downtown Bloomington	Newsletter, information forum	Membership dues
Uptown Normal Business Association	Promote uptown	Uptown Normal	Information forum	Membership dues
McLean County Museum of History	Museum	Countywide	Repository of historical resources	Membership fees, grants, donations
Neighbors Association of Normal	Coordinate neighborhood goals with Normal Town Government and Illinois State University	Town of Normal neighborhoods and individual residents	Quarterly meetings and other forums	Neighborhood and individual dues
Normal Community Development Department	Housing Assistance for low to moderate income families	Focus on low to moderate income areas	Rehabilitation loans for single-family homes	HUD, local
Normal Historic Preservation Commission	Identify and preserve sites	Town of Normal	Education, restoration, and grants	Town Council
Old House Society	Bloomington, Normal	Promote preservation of historic homes	Photo record of historic homes	Membership dues

design of houses in subdivisions. Still others have adopted traditional neighborhood development (TND) standards to help ensure that traditional amenities such as pedestrian-friendly streetscapes are available at least in some locations. Studies have shown that development costs for traditional neighborhoods are not significantly different from that of conventional neighborhoods and in some cases may be less.

The community benefits of these measures may be well worth some added costs. These same costs in combination with resistance to change will most likely be a constraint until such measures become more common. Therefore, opportunities for low cost options and methods of financing should be explored in conjunction with any consideration of these or similar measures for encouraging traditional amenities in developing areas. The formation of historic districts and the resulting increase in attention paid to the historic structures within, also provides economic benefits to the community. Property improvements increase the value of historic houses, and the effect can be cumulative for properties within a historic district. For homeowners, a designation as an historic place can provide access to grants, tax credits and other programs that can help defray the cost of restoration.

Managing Urban Growth

Just as well managed growth can be an important resource and opportunity for preservation and revitalization, poorly-planned and excessive peripheral development can be a serious constraint. An overabundance of low-cost suburban land is attractive for low density development but is often more costly for communities to serve than locations within the cities that already have infrastructure in place. Some services, such as transit, cannot be feasibly provided to suburban developments due to the lower densities and the greater travel distances. This results in most new developments becoming totally automobile dependent and this negatively impacts quality of life. Methods should be explored to “level the playing field” to make central business districts and surrounding neighborhoods more attractive for infill or

redevelopment and to help ensure that urban amenities are not unduly sacrificed when peripheral development does occur.

Taking a Local Initiative

Local governments in Illinois must be proactive in their preservation and revitalization efforts. Direction and support from federal and state agencies could improve the effectiveness of local preservation, revitalization and planning efforts. Guidelines are needed for a holistic approach for addressing the many complex and interrelated issues involved with preserving and revitalizing urban centers and developing well planned neighborhoods and communities. While many communities across the nation and a number of states, including California, Florida, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Wisconsin have been proactive in addressing many of these issues, consistent guidelines could make the tasks easier and pave the way for others to follow. The American Planning Association (APA) has developed model legislation for states to address a wide range of planning issues, including those that relate to the topics of historic preservation and urban revitalization (Meck, Stuart, 2002. *Growing Smart Legislative Guidebook 3*, Washington, D.C.). However, Illinois communities and counties must take the initiative in considering innovative solutions that generate economic growth.

STRATEGY

Although there are challenges to future historic preservation and urban revitalization in McLean County, these challenges also provide opportunities and direction to create an effective strategy to address them. The following goal, objectives, policies and detailed actions comprise the strategy developed through this planning process. While all components of this strategy are important, priorities for implementation are addressed in Chapter 10.

Goal

Attractive communities and neighborhoods with distinguishable local identities that feature vibrant

downtowns and are socially, culturally, and economically interactive.

Center City Growth

Objective

An expanded population base in and near the central business districts with wide ranges of housing choices and costs.

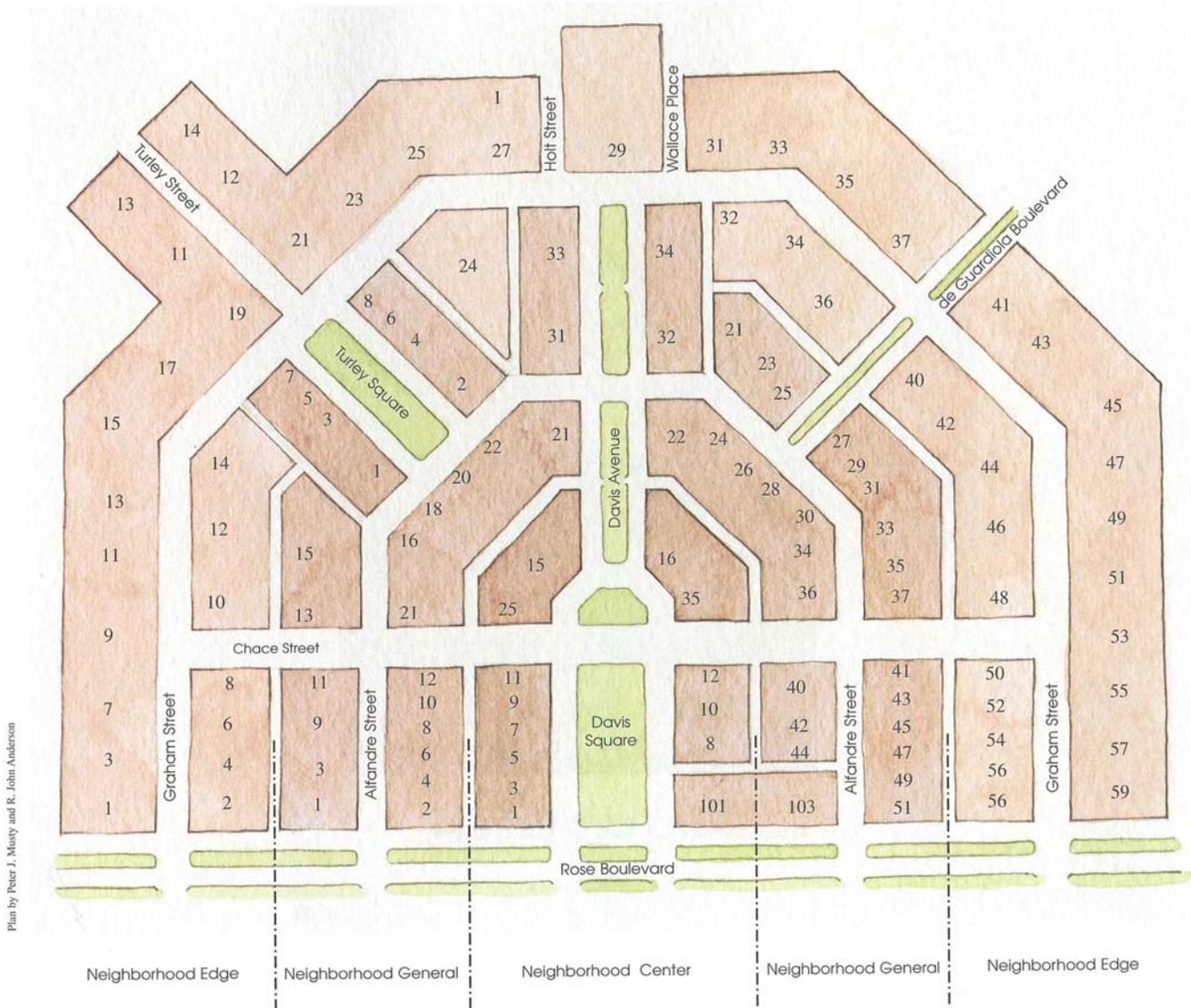
Policy

Guide peripheral development to locations within proposed growth areas.

Actions

- Participate with other local governments in the joint review of zoning, subdivision, and

**Figure 3.3
Nolan Park Traditional Neighborhood Plan
with Street Addresses Noted**



Source: Town Planning Collaborative, Traditional Neighborhood Design Series: Volume 1

service requests for consistency with planned urban growth areas.

- Explore the use of agricultural easements, transfer of development rights (TDR) and other innovative measures to encourage urban development inside proposed growth areas.
- Encourage adoption of area action plans, such as the West Bloomington Neighborhood Plan, to promote residential and commercial development and renewal through the use of financial tools and other techniques.
- Shape regional growth by coordinating transportation investments with land use policies.
- Discourage subsidies, including infrastructure, that support peripheral growth.
- Support education and outreach to broaden public support for planned growth strategies and transit in particular.
- Focus a portion of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for workforce housing in downtown locations.
- Designate for civic design improvements a portion of the potential savings that could be realized from reduced infrastructure costs resulting from limiting peripheral growth.

Economic Growth

Objective

An expanded range of shopping and professional services.

Policy #1

Promote business development in downtowns and neighborhood business districts.

Actions

- Provide budgetary support for the Economic Development Council, downtown associations, or other organizations to focus on the central business districts.
- Support funding strategic capital improvements in central business districts.
- Support the formation of downtown development corporations to facilitate acquisition and development.

- Provide budgetary support for complementary downtown revitalization programs.

Policy #2

Consider financial incentives to encourage development and redevelopment in central business districts and surrounding neighborhoods.

Actions

- Form partnerships among local governments and lending institutions and corporate stakeholders to offer low interest loans to developers of downtown properties.
- Consider property tax rebates for downtown projects.
- Reduce tap-on and other impact fees for projects in downtown locations.
- Provide grants for preservation/rehabilitation of building facades that exceed minimum standards.
- Consider sales tax credits for initial development related costs for downtown projects.
- Encourage public/private partnerships to fund tree planting, landscaping, seating, and other downtown beautification programs.

Design

Objective

Compact, pedestrian-friendly design that provides abundant opportunities for social, cultural and economic interactions.

Policy

Encourage mixed-use centers and traditional streetscapes that are both pedestrian-friendly and vehicle-friendly in downtowns and neighborhoods.

Actions

- Update local ordinances to consistently provide for mixed uses and traditional neighborhood development in both infill and peripheral locations.

- Utilize guidelines for mixed-use developments in downtowns and neighborhoods.
- Retain sidewalk entrances on downtown buildings with alleyway access for services and supplemental parking.
- Provide on-street parking and encourage the development of parking garages with ground-level, commercial use in downtown areas.

Neighborhoods

Objective

A diversity of housing types, costs and densities for all income levels and age groups, balanced around mixed-use centers with higher densities in and near the centers and lower densities toward the perimeters of neighborhoods.

Policy

Encourage mixed-use centers and traditional streetscapes that are both pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile-friendly in neighborhoods.

Actions

- Update local ordinances to consistently provide for mixed uses and traditional neighborhood development in both infill and peripheral locations.
- Consider reconfiguring all currently available public/private parking to optimize downtown parking spaces.
- Encourage the development of upscale housing units that front on the entryways to communities, downtowns, and neighborhood centers.

Transportation

Objective

Neighborhood units that are interconnected by arterial streets, sidewalks, bikeways, greenways and transit routes.

Policy

Encourage the practical use of alternative modes of transportation.

Actions

- Provide for well-maintained sidewalks, sheltered transit stops, bicycle racks in convenient locations, and bicycle route connections to regional trail systems.
- Focus the most intensive peripheral development adjacent to public transit routes.
- Support major investments in public transportation.
- Encourage employer incentives for use of public transit, such as employer purchase of monthly bus passes.
- Encourage employers to provide bicycle racks for employees.

Rural Sites

Objective

Expanded tourism development in rural areas and smaller communities.

Policy

Support measures to increase public awareness of local heritage and increase opportunities for tourism.

Actions

- Support the completion of an up-to-date and comprehensive inventory of archeological and historic sites.
- Consider adoption of a historic preservation ordinance to provide the county with a legal tool for historic preservation.
- Support the use of economic impact/benefit analyses for historic districts.
- Modify development ordinances as needed to encourage the preservation of rural historic structures for adaptive re-use.
- Support the preservation of high priority historic sites.
- Explore the use of tax incentives for preservation of obsolete farm buildings.
- Provide support for tourism development in rural areas.
- Encourage the development of signage and infrastructure for tourists.

Public Spaces

Objective

Public spaces that feature landmarks, monuments, public art, and boulevards enhanced by landscaping, lighting, and seating.

Policy

Encourage the use of civic art and design to enhance the sense of place in communities and the county.

Actions

- Consider the use of appearance codes to require high standards for building and civic design and appearance.
- Seek private participation in the development of civic features through negotiations of annexation agreements and through providing credits toward parkland dedication requirements for dedication of approved civic art.
- In the review of proposed development projects, consider sites identified for public spaces in comprehensive plans as possible sites for civic art.
- Coordinate with neighborhood associations and the general public to increase numbers of public spaces with landmarks, monuments, public art, and boulevards enhanced by landscaping, lighting, and seating.
- Designate potential major sites for landmarks and public art on community official maps and comprehensive plans.

Chapter 4



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

A healthy economy together with sound fiscal management provides a cornerstone for sensible growth. A strong economy attracts jobs and people. It also generates revenues from property and sales taxes that help finance a wide range of amenities to enhance quality of life without creating an excessive tax burden on residents. These factors serve to attract more business and people. McLean County has been enjoying this enviable cycle for an extended period of time. Sound fiscal management is the perfect complement to a healthy economy. It assures the wise use of resources to obtain maximum quality of life benefits with a minimum tax burden.

Economic prosperity can be greatly enhanced through regional cooperation. Local governments working together can present a united front for business retention and expansion that can be more effective and produce more community-wide benefits than can a fragmented, competitive

approach. Thus, economic development should be approached from a regional perspective.

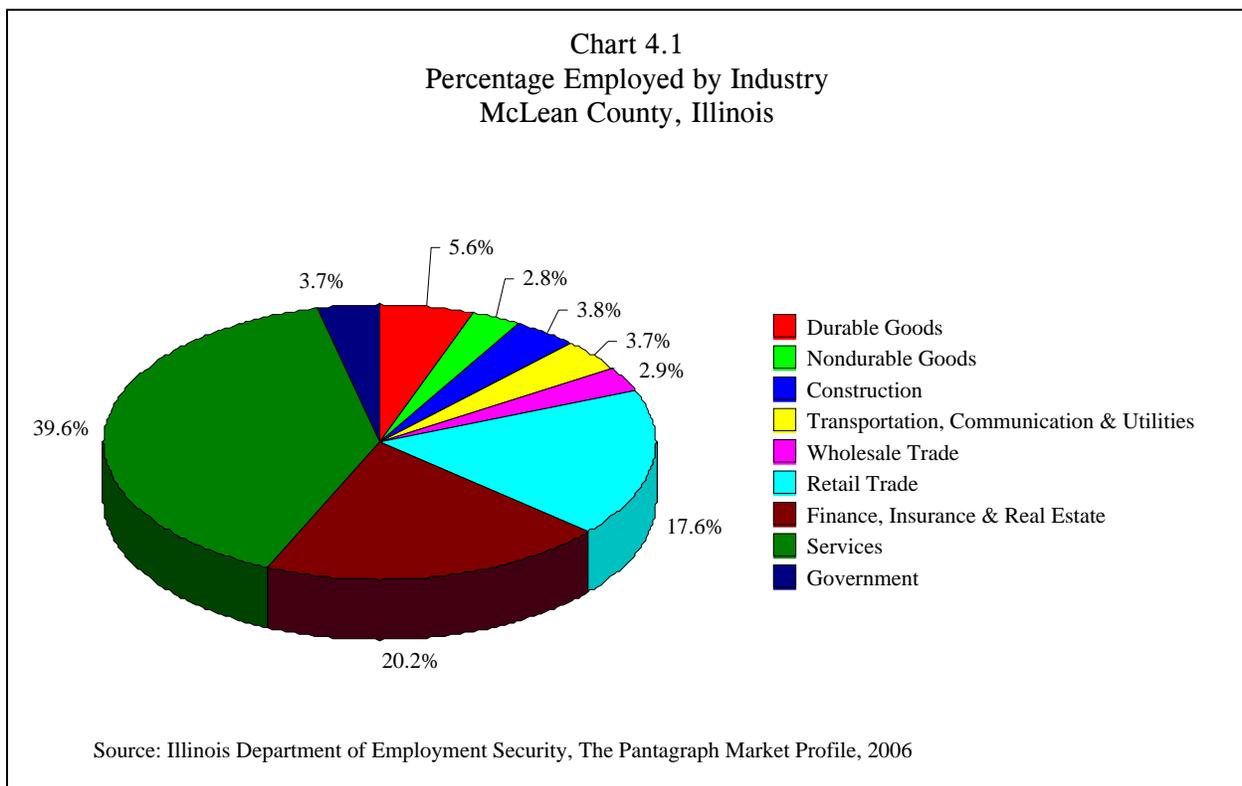
This chapter examines the region's economic trends and characteristics and provides policy direction for future economic development.

CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

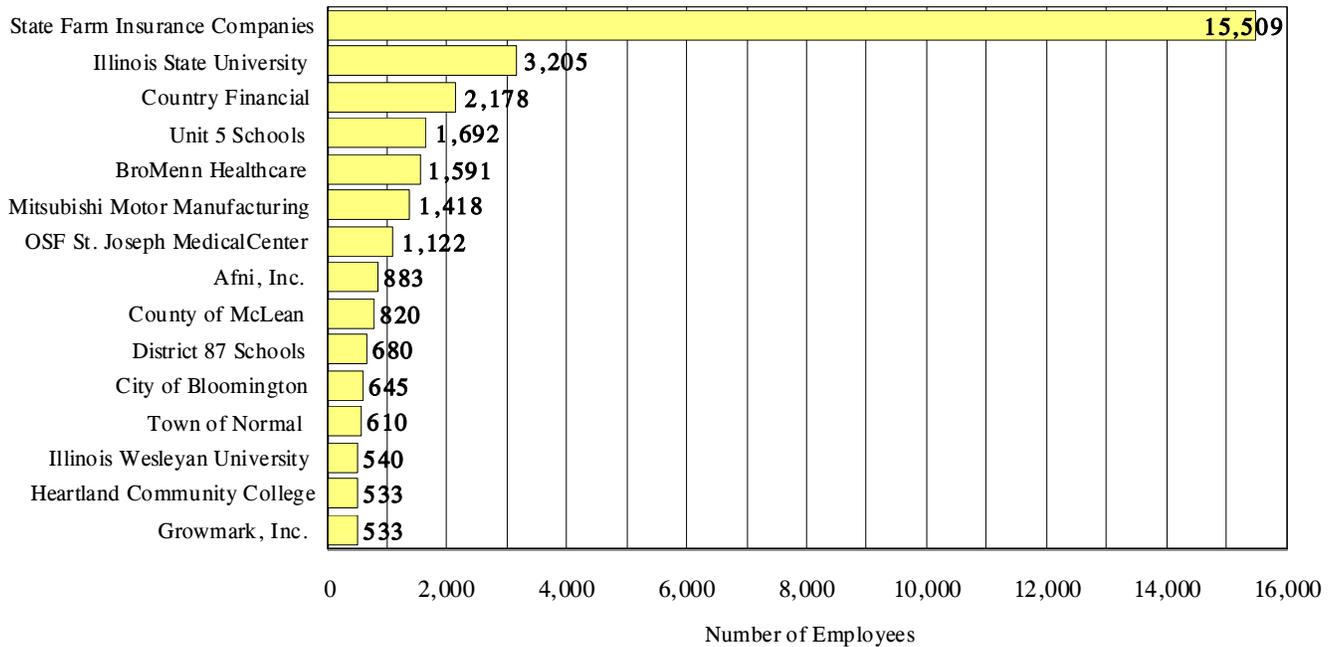
Overview of Regional Economy

From its agrarian beginnings, McLean County has developed a strong and diversified economy that continues to fuel the region's growth. Although agriculture and related industries remain vital to the regional economy, other services also contribute significantly to the region's economic growth. The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) reported in 2006 that services, real estate/finance/insurance, and retail trade were the three largest employment categories in McLean County (see Chart 4.1).

According to 2009 figures obtained from the Economic Development Council of the



**Chart 4.2
Top Fifteen Major Employers
McLean County, Illinois**



Source: EDC of the Bloomington-Normal Area, 2009

Bloomington-Normal Area, State Farm Insurance, Illinois State University, Country Financial, Unit 5 School District, and BroMenn Healthcare were the region's top employers (see Chart 4.2). Insurance and financial services, education, healthcare and manufacturing continue to be vital parts of the regional economy. Numerous other large and small employers provide significant levels of employment that contribute to the diversification and growth of the economy.

The county's unemployment rate has been substantially below the national and state levels since 1985 and consistently ranks among the lowest in the state (see Chart 4.3). These figures do not, however, reflect the reduction of employees by Mitsubishi Motors, the loss of additional jobs due to the closing of the local Eureka Plant, or the national financial crisis that began in the fall of 2008.

Retail sales in Bloomington-Normal have continued to increase each year (see Table 4.1). The region's recent growth in retail trade also compares favorably to other central Illinois urban

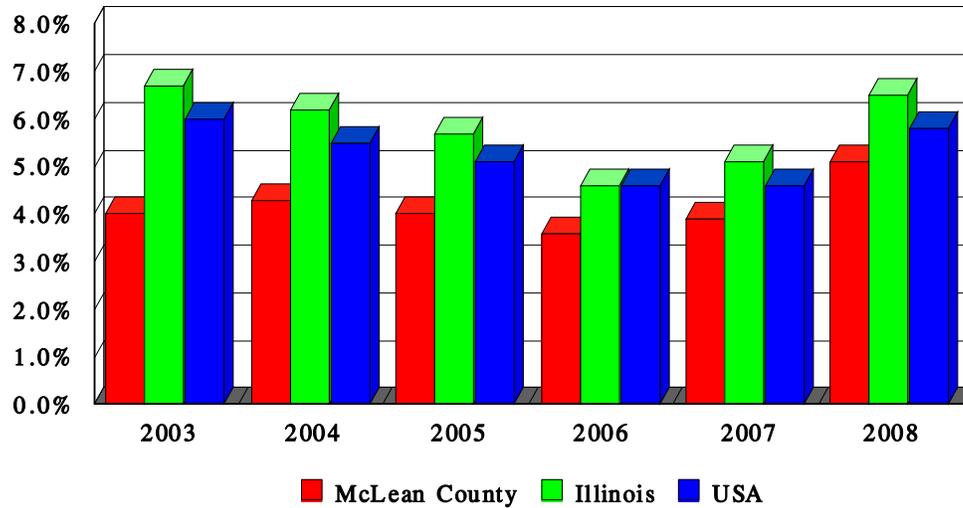
areas and is expected to continue to do so for the next several years. The long term outlook is for significant job growth in the county, especially in healthcare, computers, service, maintenance and education (see Table 4.2). Healthcare support is expected to show the greatest increase in the number of workers. Significant increases are also predicted for computer-related as well as a number of service-related jobs.

The most numerous jobs in the county by the year 2014 are expected to be in the office and administrative support category (see Table 4.3). Office professionals are predicted to account for the largest number of workers, consistent with current trends.

Economic Resources

The region has outstanding access, exceptional quality of life, and a favorable business climate that contribute to economic prosperity.

Chart 4.3
Unemployment Rates for McLean County, Illinois and Nation
2003-2008



Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security, 2009

Access

One of the region’s greatest resources is its outstanding access to raw materials, labor and markets made possible by its geographic location and excellent transportation network. Situated in the midst of America’s agricultural heartland approximately halfway between Chicago and St. Louis, the region is within 300 miles of millions of people. Access in these markets is enhanced by a network of railroads, state highways and the convergence of three interstate highways. These facilities are complemented by an extensive local street and road network that provides efficient access within Bloomington-Normal and throughout the county. McLean County is also home to Bloomington-Normal’s Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA), which provides both passenger and freight service, with direct flights and connections to points throughout the nation. Currently, five airlines serve the airport. These airlines offer service to Chicago, Detroit, Atlanta, Orlando, Dallas-Ft. Worth and Minneapolis.

Significant capital improvements have been made to the airport facility since 1998. These include a new terminal building, safety

improvements and expansions to runways, a new air traffic control tower, plus reconstructed and new taxiways. Business at the airport continues to increase from 382,092 passengers in 1998 to 532,870 in 2008.

Passenger rail service is also important to the area. Amtrak has five daily stopovers in each direction from Chicago and St. Louis. These trains also offer service to points beyond the Chicago-St. Louis rail corridor. The Town of Normal has also finalized designs for a multimodal transportation center to be built as part of the Uptown Normal renovation project. The center will service passenger trains, regional and local buses, private shuttles, taxis and bicycles. The building will include a 280-car parking garage to accommodate various parking needs throughout the town.

Commercial trucking firms have also taken advantage of the regional transportation system’s strategic location by either setting up facilities or establishing routes in and through the McLean County area.

Public transit has been enhanced by the addition of extended routes and evening service.

Table 4.1
Trends And Projections In Retail Trade
Bloomington-Normal And Selected Metro Areas, 2000-2010
(In Thousands of Dollars)

	Bloomington-Normal	Champaign-Urbana	Peoria	Springfield	Illinois
2000	\$1,508,270	\$1,639,489	\$1,717,856	\$1,622,344	\$88,816,253
2001	\$1,584,318	\$1,796,879	\$1,882,769	\$1,774,844	\$88,161,632
2002	\$1,667,704	\$1,969,379	\$2,063,515	\$1,941,168	\$89,835,243
2003	\$1,755,478	\$2,158,439	\$2,261,612	\$1,753,723	\$91,611,295
2004	\$1,760,469	\$2,365,649	\$2,478,727	\$1,758,714	\$100,405,970
2005	\$1,922,584	\$2,592,751	\$2,716,685	\$1,924,033	\$110,044,945
2006	\$2,105,229	\$2,841,655	\$2,977,486	\$2,104,892	\$111,101,370
2007	\$2,303,120	\$3,114,454	\$3,263,324	\$2,302,752	\$121,767,106
2008	\$2,521,916	\$3,413,441	\$3,576,603	\$2,519,210	\$131,456,744
2009	\$2,761,498	\$3,741,131	\$3,919,956	\$2,756,601	\$144,076,597
2010	\$3,023,840	\$4,100,280	\$4,296,272	\$3,021,234	\$157,907,943

Note: Retail sales figures represent total retail sales for metro areas, not individual cities.
Source: Illinois Department of Revenue website, 2006

Quality of Life

Another economic resource is the region’s outstanding quality of life. Numerous quality of life features attract business and people to McLean County. The region has been able to retain many of its small town qualities such as clean air and convenient access to consumer goods and services while offering a wide range of urban amenities that include outstanding school systems; two universities; two colleges; abundant parks, trails and greenways; a large array of employment, housing and shopping opportunities; and relatively short drive times due to the relatively compact development of the

metropolitan area and a well integrated transportation system. Additionally, McLean County is within a two to three-hour drive of three major metropolitan areas (Chicago, St. Louis and Indianapolis). To this can be added a favorable tax structure that results in relatively low residential property taxes (see Chart 4.4). These and other factors combine to make McLean County an outstanding environment in which to live, work, conduct business and raise a family. As a result, every effort should be made to preserve and enhance the region’s quality of life as one of its greatest economic assets.

Favorable Business Climate

The economic development policies of local governments in the region have created a

Table 4.2
Top 10 McLean County Jobs in 2014
By Percentage Increase

Rank	Occupation	Percent Increase
1	Healthcare Support	30.0
2	Healthcare Professionals & Technicians	25.0
3	Computer Related Occupations	20.0
4	Food & Beverage Workers	19.0
5	Building, Grounds & Maintenance	18.0
6	School Teachers	17.0
7	Professional Education & Training	16.5
8	Community and Social Service Workers	16.0
9	Personal Care Service Occupations	15.5
10	Information & Records Professionals	15.0

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security, 2006

Table 4.3
Top 10 McLean County Jobs in 2014
By Number of Workers

Rank	Occupation	Number of Workers in 2014
1	Office & Administrative Support	16,503
2	Sales & Related	12,042
3	Food Service & Related	9,316
4	Education, Training & Library	8,839
5	Management	8,583
6	Financial Operations	6,735
7	Retail Sales	5,584
8	Transportation/Material Handlers	5,457
9	Production Workers & Related	5,138
10	Business Operations & Related	4,333

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security, 2006

Organization	Mission	Resources
Economic Development Council of the Bloomington-Normal Area	Attract, retain and develop business opportunities.	Promotion, outreach, website
Bloomington-Normal Area Convention and Visitors Bureau	Enhance economy through promotion/attraction/retention of events/conventions/tourism.	Event and lodging coordination and marketing. Visitors guide, newsletter, website
McLean County Chamber of Commerce	Continuously improve business environment for members.	Strategic planning, leadership training, community and member support

favorable business climate. Bloomington, Normal and McLean County have jointly formed an Enterprise Zone that has attracted a number of important businesses, including Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing of America and the Twin Grove Wind Farm. It has provided important tax and revenue advantages for the industries and governments. Local governments have also demonstrated the capabilities and willingness to provide essential infrastructure and services such as water, sewer and transportation connections needed to attract and support industries. Likewise, local governments in the region have demonstrated the effective use of regulatory measures, such as zoning and subdivision regulations, to attract business and protect investments from land use conflicts.

The region's favorable business climate is further enhanced by ongoing programs and activities of regional business support organizations such as the McLean County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Council of the Bloomington-

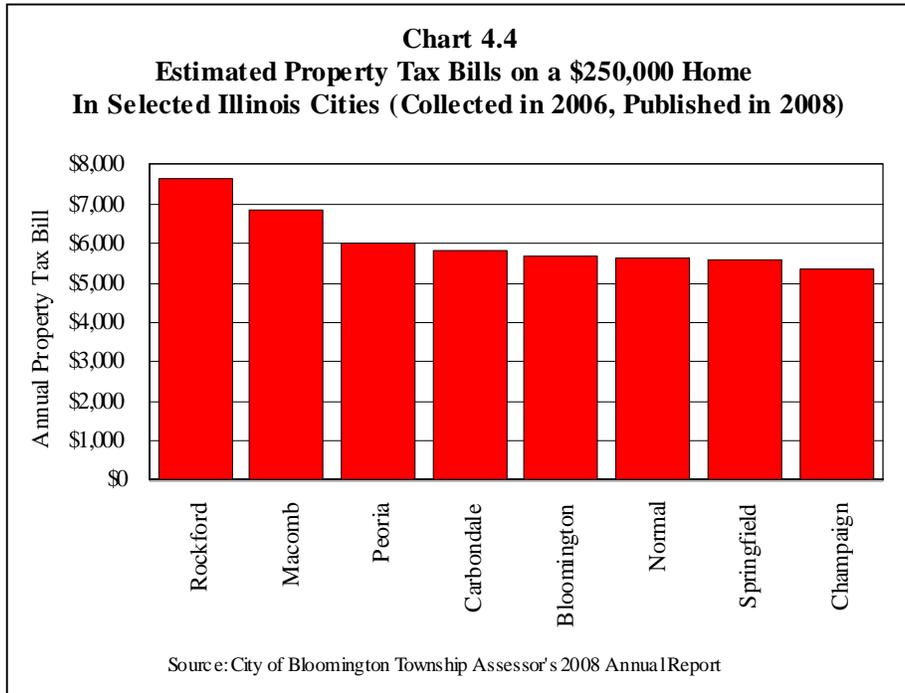
Normal Area (see Table 4.4). These organizations foster a favorable business climate through business recruitment and retention programs and provide a number of important services for business and the community.

Labor Force And Employment

The region has continued to exhibit a stable and growing labor force and employment base. Both labor force and employment levels have been relatively stable since 1998, showing only a slight overall increase (see Chart 4.5). This is consistent with the area's more moderate increases in population levels that followed the more dramatic growth of the preceding years. The high levels of employment in relation to the labor force population levels continues to produce some of the lowest rates of unemployment in the state.

Municipality	2005 Avg. HH EBI (in dollars)	Projected 2010 Avg. HH EBI (in dollars)	'05-'10 % Change
Bloomington-Normal	52,770	58,989	11.8
Champaign- Urbana	45,100	50,396	11.7
Decatur	42,448	45,844	8.0
Peoria	47,270	52,143	10.3
Springfield	50,104	56,230	12.2
Chicago	60,371	66,874	10.7
Illinois	55,627	61,819	11.1
Surrounding States	46,040	51,148	11.1
United States	49,200	54,910	11.6

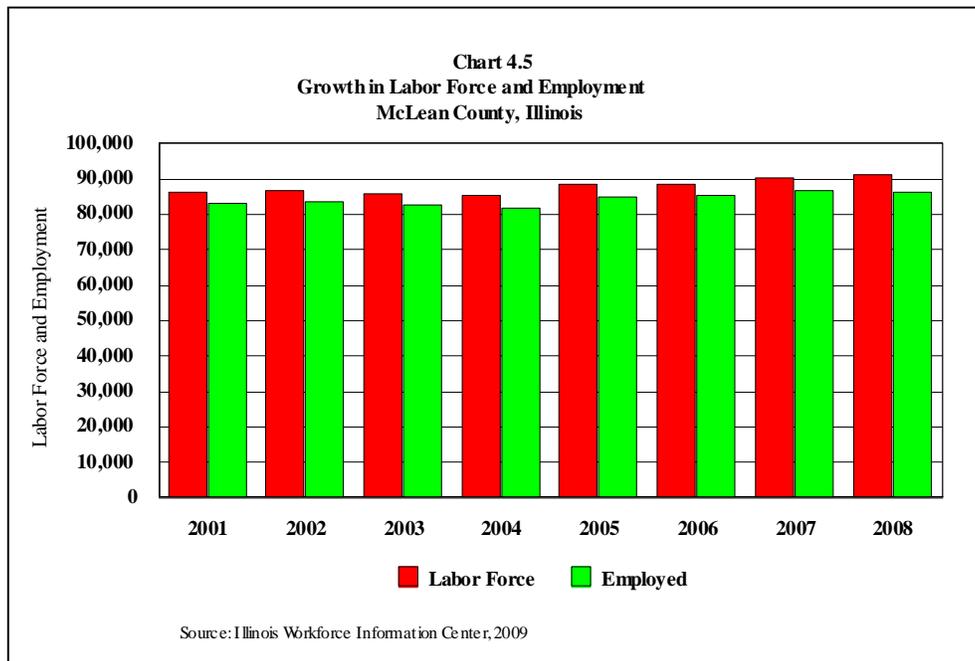
Source: Economic Development Council of Bloomington-Normal Area; Sales and Marketing Management 2005 Survey of Buying Power
Methodology: Surrounding States are MI, IN, KY, WI, IA, MO



Education And Training

McLean County employers continue to benefit from a highly educated labor force. According to the 2000 Census, just over 62 percent of people age 25 and over living in McLean County had at least some college training. Of those that attended college, 25.2 percent had obtained bachelor degrees while

another 11.0 percent had obtained a graduate or professional degree. Another 5.8 percent had been awarded associate degrees, while another 28.2 percent had received high school diplomas (see Chart 4.6). This can be attributed to the requirements of the local employment base and to the region's outstanding educational facilities, which include two universities, two community colleges, and excellent elementary and secondary



Year	Permits Issued			Dollar Amount (millions)		
	Bloomington	Normal	McLean County	Bloomington	Normal	McLean County
2002	428	284	72	\$51.1	\$26.1	\$13.5
2003	445	343	81	\$54.8	\$32.4	\$18.2
2004	433	269	68	\$64.2	\$24.9	\$15.8
2005	340	221	76	\$54.1	\$21.9	\$18.3
2006	356	180	75	\$60.6	\$18.5	\$17.9
2007	200	104	46	\$30.4	\$10.5	\$11.8
2008	251	76	38	\$36.6	\$7.9	\$12.0

Source: Bloomington, Normal, McLean County Building Departments.

school systems. Increased technology training is available for older adults. Some older adults have chosen to re-enter the workforce after retirement and have proven to be a benefit to the economy.

Income And Buying Power

In 2005, the Bloomington-Normal metropolitan area ranked first in downstate Illinois in average household effective buying income (EBI) (see Table 4.5). By 2010, the Twin Cities are again projected to have the highest EBI of all downstate Illinois communities. This significant and steady increase in buying income contributes to strong sales in the retail and service sector as well as a steady increase in home sales throughout the region.

Health Care

Health care represents another important area resource. The Twin Cities' two major hospitals—BroMenn Healthcare and OSF St. Joseph Medical Center—provide outstanding medical care as well as provide significant levels of employment for residents of the region. In addition, the Twin Cities area is within an hour's drive or less of other specialized care facilities in Champaign, Peoria and Springfield.

Farmland and Agricultural Heritage

The region's highly productive farmland and agricultural heritage are also important economic resources. The farmland is extremely valuable not only in terms of its capacity to produce crops, but also the agri-industry and culture it sustains. A number of agriculture-based

industries provide significant levels of employment and tax revenues that help support the region's high quality of life. Farming and related industries also provide identity that helps define the region's character and sense of place.

Concern has been expressed over the loss of local ownership of farmland. Continued loss of local ownership could translate into the further loss of rural population and loss of more rural schools, which could threaten the local rural character.

Concerns have also been raised over the anticipated establishment of minimum land requirements for rural subdivisions. This could result in larger-lot rural subdivisions being developed, which could threaten the agricultural landscape by taking more land out of farm production and encouraging non-contiguous development.

Regional Water Studies

The availability of clean, potable water resources remains a concern as the McLean County region continues to grow. A regional water study group comprised of experts on the Mahomet Aquifer (McLean, Iroquois, Vermilion, Champaign, DeWitt, Logan, Mason, and Woodford Counties) continues to meet periodically to discuss and plan for future water needs within the region. Tapping into the Mahomet Aquifer has long been discussed as a partial solution to future anticipated water needs. A study published in June, 2003 titled *The Mahomet Aquifer: A Transboundary Resource in East-Central Illinois* and published by the Illinois State Geological Survey of Champaign, Illinois is

considered an important research and informational document on this subject.

Regional High Speed Rail

The Midwest High Speed Rail Association includes communities located along the Illinois Amtrak Corridor that traverses McLean County. This organization has been promoting high-speed rail to serve as a long-distance commuter option as well as providing regular high-speed passenger service that would link Chicago and St. Louis and other destinations. The Midwest High Speed Rail Association supports the acquisition of new funding for high-speed rail. Some high-speed rail initiatives have already been implemented in some locations. This includes crossing and track improvements in several central Illinois locations.

Other Resources

McLean County boasts other resources that make it attractive. These include short commute times to work, multiple housing options, and numerous recreation opportunities.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

While the region’s economic resources far exceed any constraints, there are areas that if effectively addressed could provide opportunities for further enhancing existing resources and the favorable economic situation that currently exists. First and foremost is the preservation and enhancement of the region’s high quality of life. Preserving quality of life will involve a number of important considerations, including preserving convenient access and favorable commute times, providing affordable housing, and expanding cultural and entertainment opportunities. These

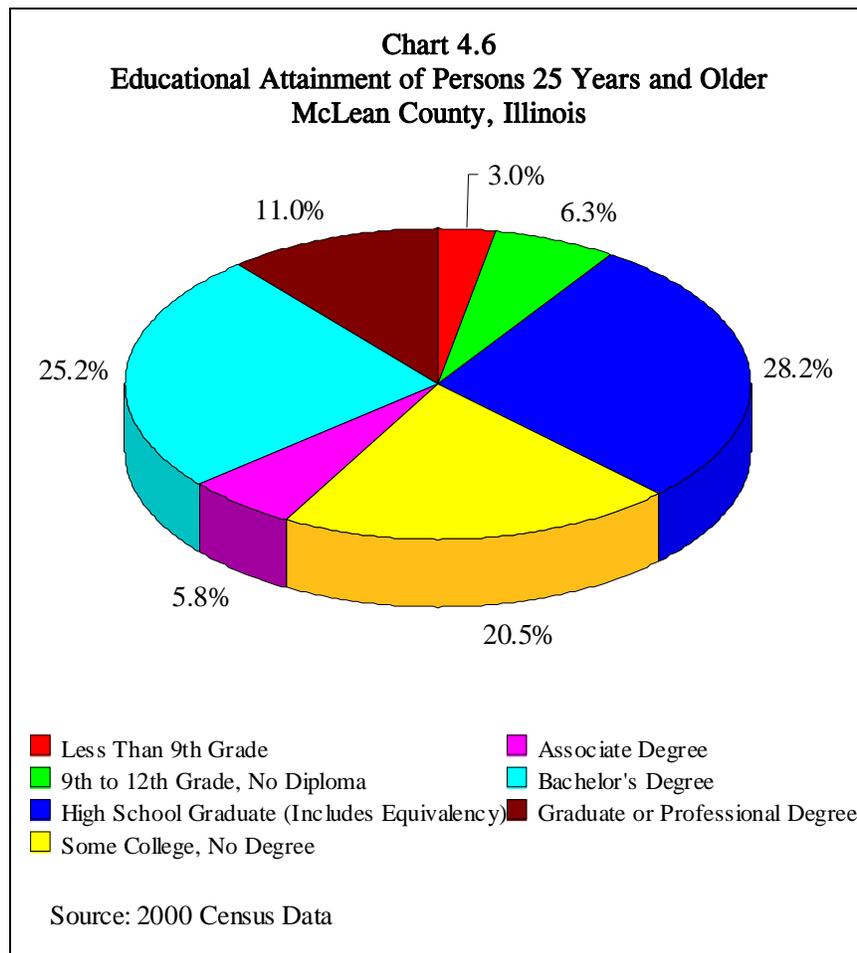
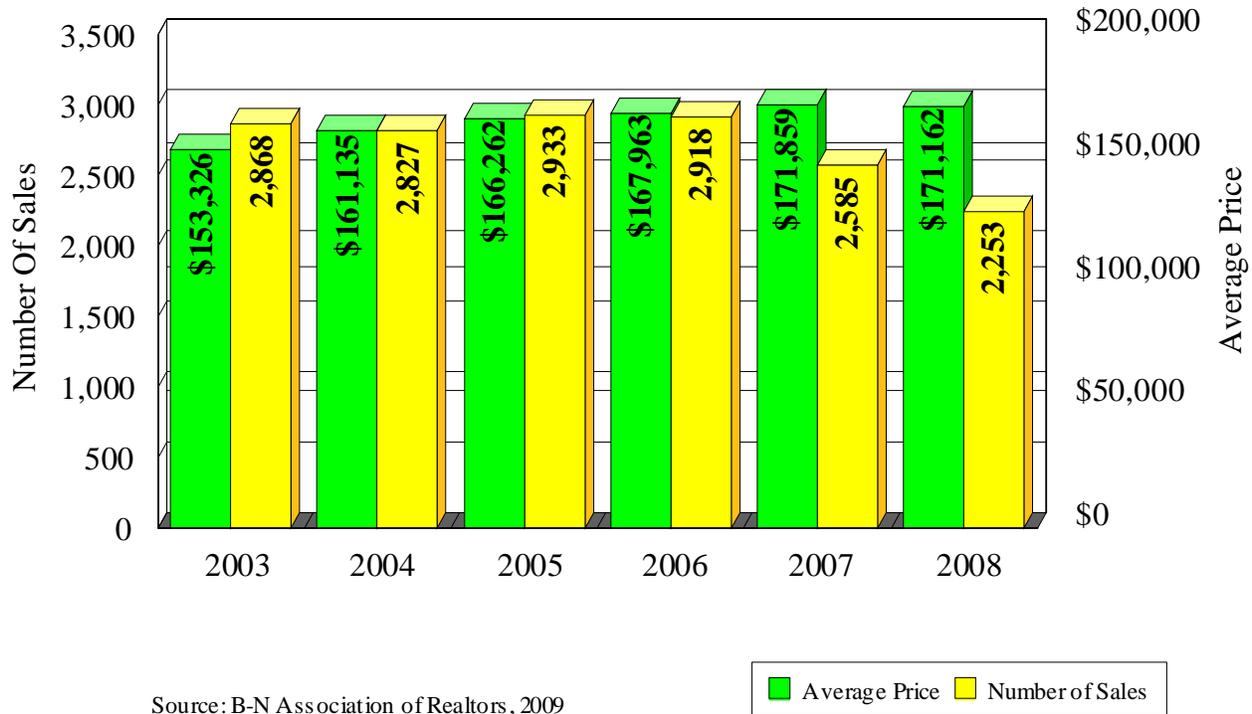


Chart 4.7
Bloomington-Normal Home Sales
Average Price and Number of Sales



and other challenges and opportunities are discussed below.

Preserving Convenient Access

The favorable commute times and relatively low traffic congestion of today will become threatened as more people use area streets and highways. Planning and development should provide for land use and transportation relationships that offer convenient access to work, shopping, services and other amenities through a variety of transportation modes. This will be particularly challenging as the region’s population continues to grow well beyond 100,000 and as changing demographics result in more drivers per unit of population. Local governments have generally developed streets and roads in advance of development, and have been progressive in the development of bicycle-pedestrian trails and sidewalks. These efforts should be continued or expanded in the future to

combat congestion and maintain attractive commute times.

Transit oriented development could help preserve and enhance convenient access between homes and the workplace. The Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System provides transit service to most of the urban area inside the I-55 and Veterans Parkway loop. However, like in most urban areas of today, low density development patterns have made it cost prohibitive to serve suburban locations. While on the surface this may appear to be a constraint, it could help give rise to innovative development concepts such as transit oriented development. This concept provides for a series of concentrated nodes of higher density development that are serviceable by transit. Such development could preserve and enhance access from homes to the workplace, despite the continued growth and development of the urban area.

Preserving Farmland and Agricultural Heritage

The challenge of balancing economic and community development with the need to preserve the region's farmland and agricultural heritage could also be aided through the more compact or dense development patterns characteristic of traditional and transit-oriented development. This type of compact development consumes less land and should be supported as a means to preserve the region's farmland and agricultural heritage.

Fortunately, farmland preservation is not always at odds with economic and community development. There exists an encouraging national trend that supports the "re-localization" of the food system. Often referred to as the "local food" or "food security" movement, a localized food system utilizes regional farmland capacity to produce food that will be consumed within the region, thus decreasing fuel use, pollution, exposure to food safety issues, and the vulnerability of the food pricing system to volatile petroleum prices. McLean County, with its rich soil and excellent transportation connections, is positioned well to become part of the local food movement and benefit from resulting farmland preservation, increased agritourism opportunities, and improved food security for local residents.

Another opportunity for preserving local farmland and agricultural heritage is through wind energy developments. Two wind energy projects, one with Phase I complete and another project in the planning stage, could support continued agricultural production. The Twin Groves Wind Farm began construction in late 2006 in eastern McLean County. The two-phase project was estimated to be completed by 2010. The proposed wind farm in northwestern McLean County was also recently approved. Besides adding significant tax dollars, both projects will assist local farmers as some take advantage of annual turbine rental fees for allowing the energy firms to erect turbines on private farm property.

Providing Workforce Housing

Innovative methods of providing workforce housing for residents of the region should be explored. Historically, Bloomington-Normal has fared well among small cities in the median price for a three-bedroom home. However, many people cannot afford the average price of more than \$125,000 required for such a home. Many homebuyers, particularly first-time homebuyers, cannot afford the down payment or mortgage payments on such a large amount. In recognition of this, lending institutions and communities have developed programs to assist homebuyers. However, the large number of retail and service workers projected for the year 2020 (Table 4.3) strongly suggests that providing workforce housing will continue to be a challenge in the years ahead. The issue of providing workforce housing is also addressed further in Chapter 6 of this document.

Expanding Cultural and Entertainment Opportunities

The City of Bloomington and Town of Normal continually review and reevaluate improvements to its cultural and entertainment programming. Both communities offer programming for children of all ages, teen activities and programming for adults and senior citizens.

In 2006, the City of Bloomington opened two new facilities, the U.S. Cellular Coliseum and the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts. The Coliseum expands offerings for sports, arts, and entertainment, while the Performing Arts Center offers a variety of entertainment and cultural opportunities. In 2005, the Town of Normal opened the Children's Discovery Museum. It provides an additional opportunity for scientific and cultural education for children of all ages.

These efforts are in part a response to citizen and community concerns that opportunities for arts and entertainment were deficient within the region. These new venues will assist in making the area more appealing in these areas. Progress has also been made in the area of professional sports entertainment as professional minor league

sports franchises in hockey and arena football are now operating in Bloomington, and planning for minor league baseball in Normal is well underway. This, in addition to previously existing opportunities in sports and entertainment, has positioned Bloomington-Normal and McLean County as a region that is willing to enhance education and entertainment opportunities.

Providing an expanded range of programs and activities that enable older adults to contribute to the cultural life of the community will also be a challenge. This will include providing opportunities for inter-generational learning centered around the arts. It will also include providing a variety of community-based programs in culture and arts that target or engage the talents of an increasingly older and diverse population.

Maintaining Low Crime Rates

Maintaining the region's relatively low crime rates will be another challenge. Various studies have shown that crime rates often increase substantially once cities exceed 100,000 population. Thus, innovative approaches will be required. Transit-oriented development and traditional neighborhood concepts provide opportunities to address some of the social conditions that often lead to rising crime. If future neighborhoods are developed using a holistic approach that supports the varied needs of all age groups and income levels, low income concentrations and corresponding social problems can be reduced. The major challenge will be to design neighborhoods and housing well enough to be attractive to the middle and upper income levels, and yet affordable for young married couples, the elderly, and other persons of lower incomes.

Meeting Labor Needs

The region must continue to be viewed as an attractive environment in which to work and live in order to attract enough qualified people to meet area labor demands. Rising employment levels, combined with declining unemployment rates, will most likely continue to attract people

to the region. However, the quality of life amenities must also continue to be present in order to attract new residents and to draw commuters from the Twin Cities' Area of Dominant Influence, which includes McLean, Livingston, Ford, DeWitt, Piatt, Logan, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties. This eight-county area includes a significant population base and provides an excellent opportunity to meet projected labor demands.

STRATEGY

The overall strategy for economic development is presented on the following pages. It consists of a goal and a series of objectives and policies, along with the corresponding actions. Priorities for implementation are addressed in Chapter 10.

Goal

A healthy economy that supports an ever-increasing standard of living through providing varied employment opportunities and a growing tax base to increase value received for taxes paid.

Economic Growth

Objective

A stable, growing recession-resistant economy that leverages the county's central location to attract resources and markets and contributes to the quality of life of McLean County residents.

Policy

Encourage intergovernmental cooperation in supporting existing businesses and targeting and recruiting new industries and in the sharing of costs and revenues associated with economic development.

Actions

- Consider alternatives for local governments to share costs and revenues resulting from property and sales tax revenues for future economic development.

- Support cooperative business retention and recruitment programs carried out by the Economic Development Council of the Bloomington Normal Area and the McLean County Chamber of Commerce.
- Target tourism, high-tech, and green industries, including alternative energy developments, for recruitment.
- Support alternative energy development.

Quality of Life

Objective

Communities that are attractive to people and therefore, attractive to business.

Policy

Maintain standards for community design and development, including commercial and industrial development that have a positive impact on community appearance and quality of life.

Actions

- Require development projects to adhere to established standards.
- Provide design standards to require development to take into account the appearance of buildings, density, and the open space around the development.
- Publicize community assets to stress quality of life as a means to attract industry.
- Encourage the use of boulevards and landscaping, and the review of signage regulations to enhance community entry ways.
- Provide financial support for appropriate arts and entertainment projects and activities.
- Support and promote locally grown foods.

Area and Sector Growth

Objective

Continued prosperity for all sectors throughout the region, including downtowns, neighborhoods and the agricultural and rural community.

Policy

Pursue a balanced overall economic growth program that provides benefits for all areas and sectors of the region and does not unreasonably benefit one area or sector at the expense of another.

Actions

- Direct development to proposed growth areas identified in adopted comprehensive plans.
- Promote geographically balanced development sites to include urban core sites as well as fringe area sites for commercial and industrial development.
- Consider the use of financial incentives for businesses that locate within a desired area.
- Restrict urban development to planned growth areas. Evaluate mechanisms for protecting family farms.

Education and Training

Objective

Education and training programs designed to meet labor force needs of existing and targeted employers.

Policy

Encourage communications between area employers and educational institutions to develop proactive education, recruiting, retention and training programs.

Action

Survey area employers and educational institutions to match job training resources with needs.

Access

Objective

Convenient access among homes, workplace and the world.

Policy

Support communication, land use and transportation relationships that enhance access from the home to the workplace and from the workplace to the world.

Actions

- Encourage the development of a wide variety of residential densities and supporting services, including daycare, in proximity to employment centers.
- Support the development of communication infrastructure that would allow local interaction with commercial ventures outside the region.
- Promote the availability and use of alternative transportation to connect employment centers and residential concentrations.
- Encourage development of high-speed rail as a viable option for long-distance and commuter travel.

Chapter 5



POPULATION

Chapter 5: POPULATION

INTRODUCTION

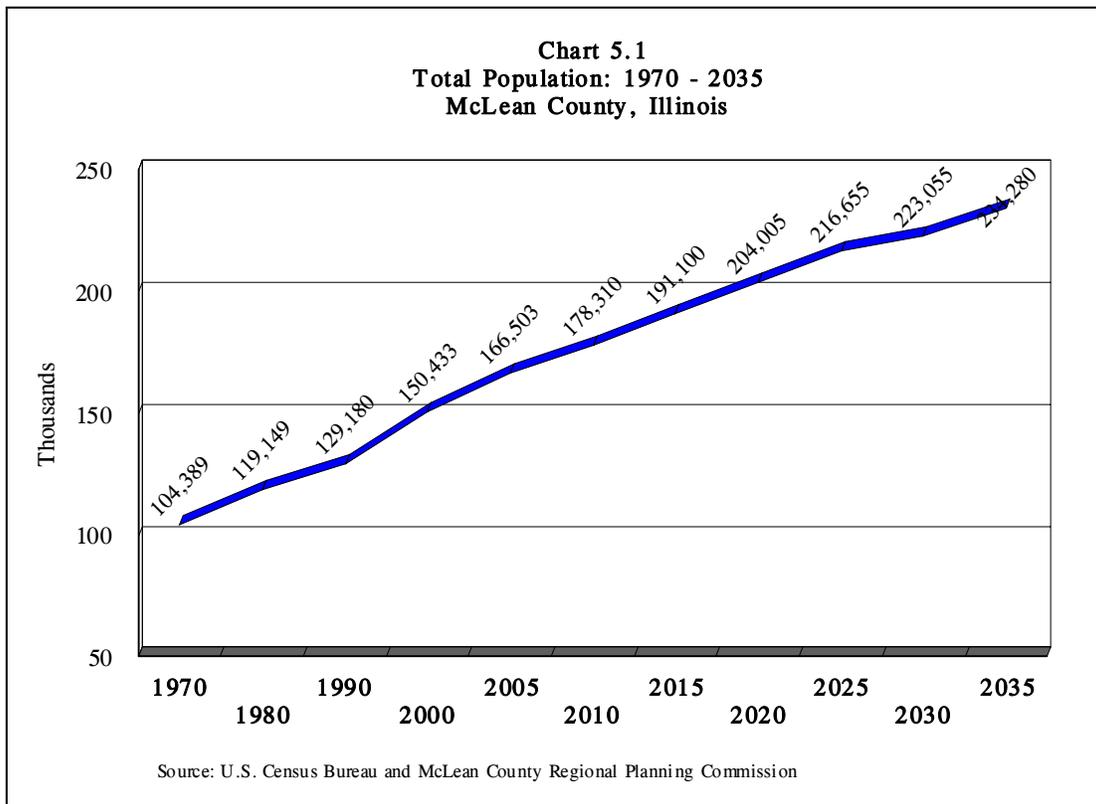
Consideration of population characteristics and growth is fundamental to planning. Age, income and other characteristics affect housing and service needs as does population growth. Projections of population growth provide the basis for determining future land use and service requirements and for providing physical improvements to streets, parks, water and sewer systems and other community facilities and services. Reliable projections of future population levels are therefore essential for purposes of planning and capital improvements programming. Information on population characteristics and trends, including projections to the year 2035 by five-year increments for McLean County and its townships and municipalities, is presented in this chapter.

CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

McLean County population has increased by over 60 percent since 1970. The county's

population increased from 104,389 in 1970 to approximately 167,000 in 2005 (see Table 5.1 and Chart 5.1). During this period, the county has experienced more absolute growth than any other Illinois county outside the Chicago region (see Chart 5.2). The 2005 figures shown in Table 5.1 reflect the results of the special censuses conducted for Bloomington and Normal and illustrate a continuation of robust growth in the region.

This growth has been the result of a number of important factors. Some of the world's most productive farmland has helped give rise to a healthy agribusiness industry that, along with manufacturing and insurance, has contributed to a diversified and vibrant area economy. Other contributing factors identified in Chapter 4 include outstanding transportation facilities (highway and air), two universities, excellent school systems and many other quality of life amenities, including cultural, recreational and entertainment opportunities. The region's population and economic growth have also benefited from its location approximately midway



**TABLE 5.1
McLEAN COUNTY POPULATION TRENDS AND PRELIMINARY PROJECTIONS
FOR METRO AND NON-METRO
TOWNSHIPS AND MUNICIPALITIES, 1970-2035**

PLACE	YEAR										
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
McLean County Total	104,389	119,149	129,180	150,433	166,503	178,310	191,100	204,005	216,655	223,055	234,280
Bloomington/Normal Metro Area	66,388	79,861	91,995	110,194	125,413	136,315	147,335	158,515	169,820	174,655	184,350
City/Township of Bloomington	39,992	44,189	51,972	64,808	74,975	82,645	90,935	99,230	107,520	108,720	115,130
Town of Normal	26,396	35,672	40,023	45,386	50,438	53,670	56,400	59,285	62,300	65,935	69,220
Urbanizing Townships*	13,829	14,918	13,707	15,003	15,950	17,000	18,425	19,750	20,650	22,020	23,235
Bloomington Township	4,896	4,939	3,699	3,176	2,850	2,800	2,750	2,700	2,650	2,600	2,550
Dale Township	943	1,018	1,221	1,276	1,350	1,400	1,475	1,550	1,600	1,670	1,735
Downs Township	1,170	1,014	1,028	1,079	1,850	2,500	3,300	4,050	4,300	5,135	5,780
Village of Downs	651	561	613	776	1,550	2,300	3,100	3,900	4,050	4,960	5,620
Dry Grove Township	993	1,501	1,458	1,649	1,750	2,000	2,200	2,400	2,600	2,820	3,030
Normal Township (unincorporated)	1,136	491	567	251	300	200	100	100	100	100	100
Old Town Township	960	1,570	1,651	2,692	2,850	3,050	3,300	3,550	3,850	4,000	4,200
Randolph Township	2,700	3,010	2,945	3,856	3,950	4,000	4,250	4,350	4,500	4,645	4,790
Village of Heyworth	1,441	1,598	1,627	2,431	2,850	3,000	3,000	3,600	3,900	4,140	4,410
Towanda Township	1,031	1,375	1,138	1,024	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050
Village of Towanda	578	630	543	493	535	575	600	620	640	670	695
Rural Townships	24,162	24,370	23,478	25,236	25,140	24,995	25,340	25,740	26,185	26,380	26,695
Allin Township	1,053	1,057	970	1,047	1,050	1,000	1,000	995	980	970	960
Village of Stanford	657	720	614	670	660	650	645	640	635	630	625
Anchor Township	528	441	439	376	355	330	310	285	265	245	225
Village of Anchor	200	192	184	175	170	165	160	155	150	145	140
Arrowsmith Township	646	566	512	569	535	500	490	475	460	440	420
Village of Arrowsmith	305	292	331	298	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Bellflower Township	952	794	716	682	625	565	520	500	495	490	480
Village of Bellflower	400	421	412	408	410	415	420	420	420	420	420
Blue Mound Township	685	616	483	473	425	370	335	300	295	290	270
Village of Cooksville	241	259	192	213	200	200	200	200	200	190	190
Cheney's Grove Township	1,192	1,223	1,079	1,069	1,050	1,000	985	960	930	920	870
Village of Saybrook	814	882	747	764	745	730	715	700	685	669	655
Chenoa Township	2,440	2,368	2,183	2,305	2,310	2,315	2,320	2,325	2,330	2,335	2,340
City of Chenoa	1,860	1,847	1,732	1,845	1,855	1,890	1,910	1,930	1,955	1,975	2,000
Cropsey Township	341	288	269	256	240	220	205	195	180	160	150
Danvers Township	1,486	1,595	1,687	1,953	2,000	2,050	2,150	2,200	2,300	2,350	2,400
Village of Danvers	854	921	1,008	1,183	1,220	1,250	1,300	1,350	1,400	1,450	1,480
Dawson Township	756	688	631	668	640	610	590	555	480	470	450
Village of Ellsworth	259	244	217	271	260	250	250	250	245	240	235
Empire Township	2,957	3,473	3,352	3,845	3,950	4,050	4,150	4,300	4,400	4,520	4,620
City of LeRoy	2,435	2,870	2,777	3,332	3,400	3,500	3,650	3,750	3,900	4,000	4,100
Funk's Grove Township	425	358	297	293	260	230	205	200	200	200	200
Gridley Township	1,628	1,805	1,878	1,914	1,950	2,050	2,050	2,070	2,080	2,080	2,080
Village of Gridley	1,007	1,246	1,304	1,411	1,500	1,550	1,650	1,700	1,750	1,825	1,890
Hudson Township	1,619	1,766	1,882	2,318	2,390	2,450	2,550	2,650	2,800	2,900	3,000
Village of Hudson	802	929	1,006	1,510	1,550	1,600	1,700	1,850	1,950	2,075	2,195
Lawndale Township	357	273	177	227	180	140	140	140	140	135	130
Lexington Township	2,206	2,441	2,400	2,331	2,380	2,450	2,650	2,850	3,100	3,270	3,470
City of Lexington	1,615	1,806	1,809	1,912	2,100	2,250	2,450	2,650	2,900	3,070	3,270
Martin Township	1,287	1,180	1,157	1,229	1,200	1,150	1,150	1,150	1,150	1,140	1,130
Village of Colfax	935	920	856	989	970	950	955	960	960	960	960
Money Creek Township	780	780	819	1,084	1,100	1,100	1,150	1,200	1,250	1,260	1,270
Mount Hope Township	1,276	1,170	1,169	1,172	1,150	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,050	1,040	1,030
Village of McLean	820	836	803	808	800	800	800	800	800	800	800
West Township	424	318	280	278	240	210	180	180	180	180	180
White Oak Township	647	761	803	807	815	855	885	910	945	975	1,010
Village of Carlock	373	410	391	456	485	525	555	585	620	650	685
Yates Township	477	409	295	340	295	250	225	200	175	170	160

*townships partially or completely within MPO boundary (excluding metro area)

Age Groups	Bloomington- Normal	McLean County	Illinois	United States
Children (birth-17)	21.9	23.5	26.1	25.7
Young Adults (18-24)	23.0	18.6	9.8	9.6
Working Adults (25-64)	46.1	48.2	52.0	52.2
Younger Retirees (65-74)	4.5	5.0	6.2	6.5
Older Retirees (75+)	4.5	4.7	5.9	5.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

between Chicago and St. Louis, as well as its proximity to several smaller metropolitan areas.

Urban Versus Rural Growth

The major portion of McLean County’s growth has been in the Bloomington-Normal urban area (see Chart 5.3). In 1950, the Bloomington-Normal metro area population accounted for just over 57 percent of the county’s population. By 2000, the urban area population more than doubled, increasing its share of the county’s population to more than 73 percent.

While not to the same degree, the county’s population growth outside Bloomington-Normal was nevertheless substantial at nearly 8,000 residents, or over 23 percent, during this same 50-year period. However, this rural area growth was far from uniform throughout the county as illustrated by the discussions that follow.

Population Trends of Area Municipalities

In general, municipalities in the western two-thirds of the county with easy access to the Bloomington-Normal urban area have experienced sustained growth, particularly in recent decades. Carlock, Danvers, Downs,

Heyworth, Hudson, LeRoy and Lexington have all grown, while most of the other municipalities have remained stable or declined in population.

The communities more distant from the urban area and the interstate highway system have generally shown greater declines in population (see Map 5.1). Also contributing to these declines are the nationwide trends toward urbanization and a reduction in the number of farms. Fewer farms mean fewer people requiring goods and services, and consequently, fewer businesses, people and tax base in the farming communities.

Population distribution within Bloomington-Normal has also experienced a shift. Population levels have remained stable or decreased slightly in the urban core areas, while suburban growth has been substantial (see Map 5.1). This is similar to national trends, although population loss in the core areas of Bloomington-Normal has been much less dramatic than in most other metro areas.

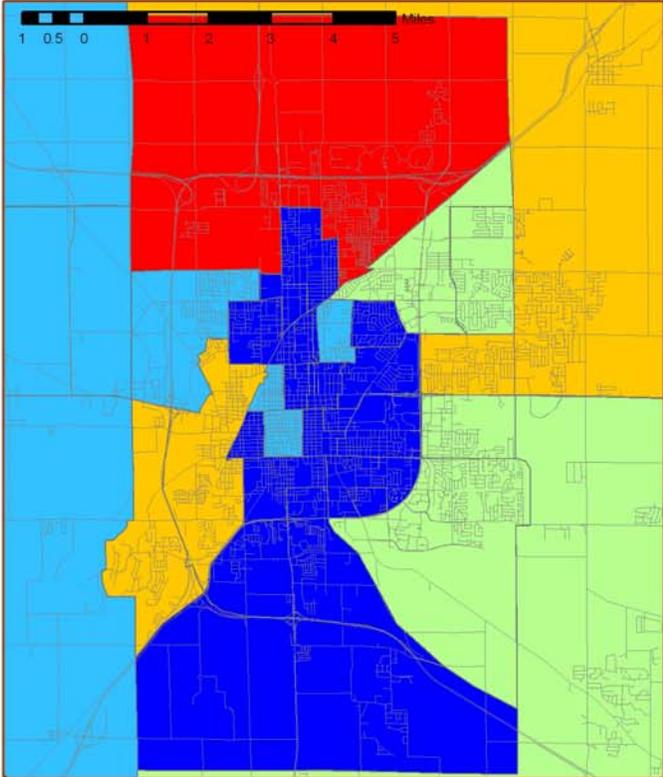
Township Population Trends

The distribution of population change among the county’s townships is similar to but more pronounced than those of the municipalities. Not

	1970	2000	Numeric Change	% Change
Total McLean County population	104,389	150,433	46,044	44.1
Children (0-4)	7,978	9,746	1,768	22.2
School-age children (5-17)	23,998	25,546	1,548	6.5
Young Adults (18-24)	20,760	28,000	7,976	34.9
Working Adults (25-64)	41,155	72,520	7,240	76.2
Younger Retirees (65-74)	6,050	7,521	1,471	24.3
Older Retirees (75+)	4,448	7,100	2,652	59.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

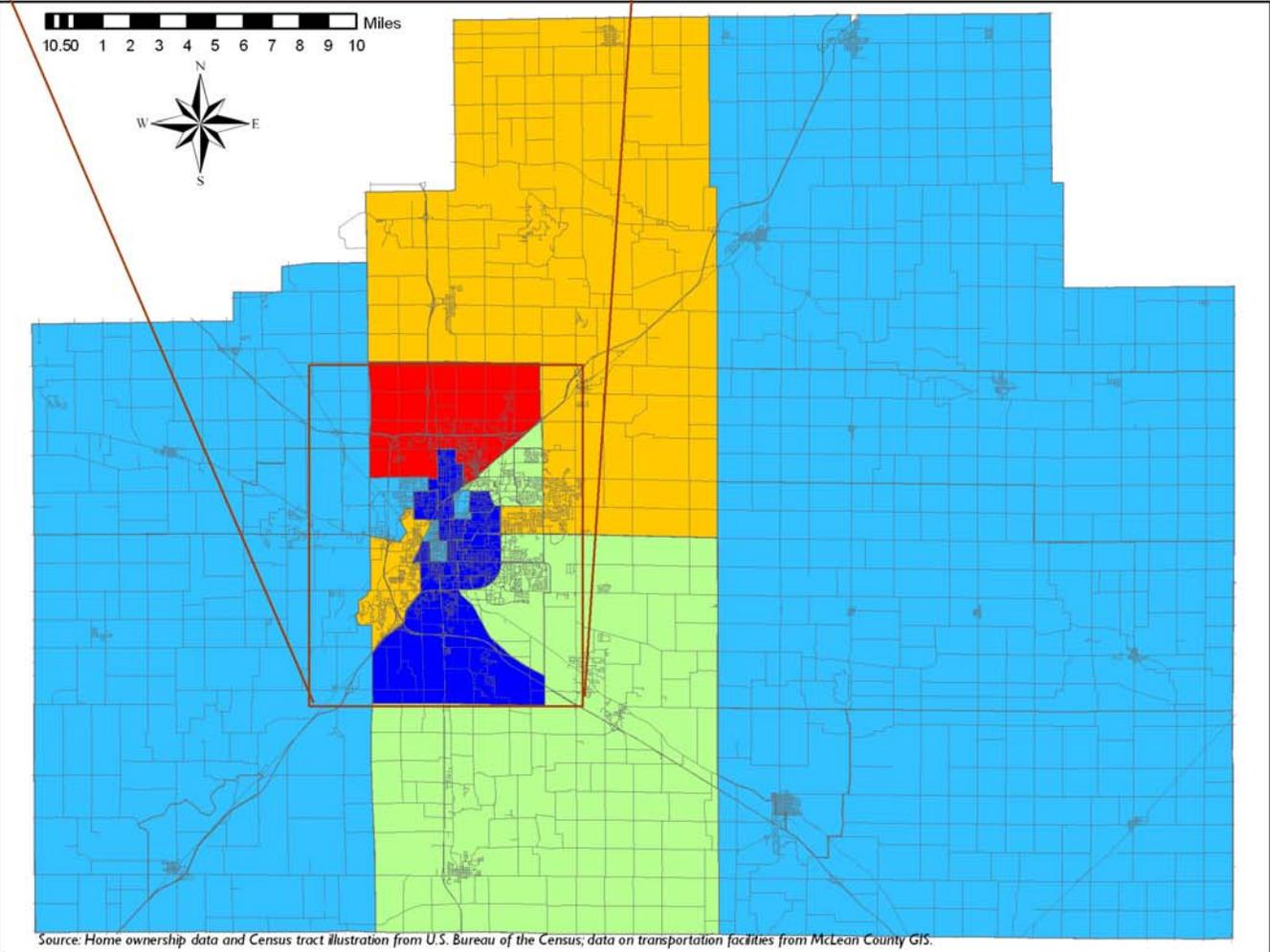
Map 5.1 Percentage Change in Urban and Rural Population, 1990 to 2000 Bloomington-Normal Urban Area (By Census Tract)



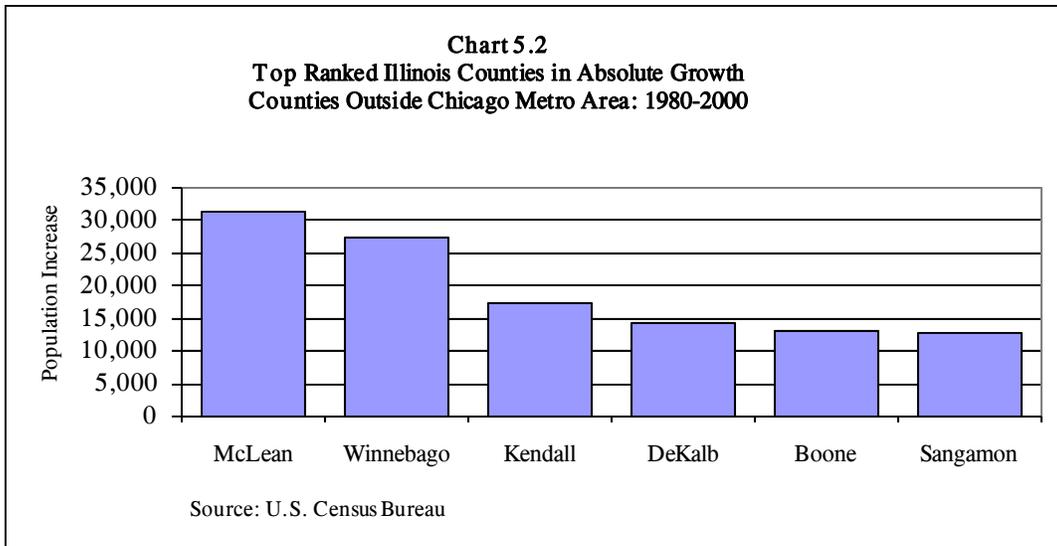
Legend

- Slight Decrease or Stable Population (-12% to 0%)
- Slight Increase (1% to 15%)
- Moderate Increase (16% to 35%)
- High Increase (36% to 70%)
- Substantial Increase (greater than 70%)

The area's population growth in the decade from 1990 to 2000, shown as a percentage change, has been in evidence throughout McLean County, and at notable levels in much of the urban area of Bloomington and Normal.



Source: Home ownership data and Census tract illustration from U.S. Bureau of the Census; data on transportation facilities from McLean County GIS.



only are many of the more distant townships losing populations but they are experiencing more significant losses than their municipalities, due to the rural to urban shift in population and the corresponding need for easy access to the urban area as noted previously.

While the less distant townships have not escaped the trend toward fewer farms, the loss of farming population is usually more than offset by the in-migration of those wishing to reside closer to, but not within, the urban area. Population growth in townships on the urban fringe sometimes reaches the point of being urbanized and in need of urban services. Growing areas within these townships can also be subject to annexation by municipalities. Annexation increases the land area and populations of the municipalities while decreasing those of the affected townships over what they would otherwise be, as is occurring in some of the urbanizing townships shown on Table 5.1.

Age Distribution

The current population in McLean County is younger than national and state averages, with more than double the percentages of those of the nation and state (see Table 5.2). This is due largely to the presence of the universities. Conversely, the county has a slightly lower population of very young and school-age children and of the adults aged 25 to 64 who are workforce age and are likely to be the parents of children living at home. The area is also home to

a lower percentage than the national average of adults at or post retirement age, particularly among persons age 75 and older.

The population in the urban area of McLean County is expected to gradually age over the next twenty years (see Chart 5.4). This is consistent with national trends. As a result, a small decline in the relative percentage of school-aged children is projected along with an increase in the percentage of older working adults and elderly populations.

It should be noted that a relatively modest rate of increase or even a decrease in the proportion of school-age children does not imply a decrease in absolute terms and a lessening in the demand for educational resources. As noted in Table 5.3, the population group consisting of children ages 5 to 17 was the slowest growing age bracket during the period between 1970 and 2000. However, as of 2000, more than 1,500 additional school-age children were present in the county than in 1970. In the intervening decades, school systems had to expand to accommodate the needs of this growing population. Thus, school district enrollment projections are essential to planning for future schools.

Educational Attainment

The education levels of McLean County's residents compare favorably with those of other central Illinois counties (see Table 5.4). Over 60 percent of the residents in McLean County have received some level of college training. Forty-

two percent have an associate’s degree or higher. These percentages are similar to Champaign County and are not surprising, considering both counties are home to major universities. DeWitt, Livingston, Peoria and Woodford counties have lower percentages of residents with some college training or college degrees and higher percentages of residents with less than a high school diploma.

Income Levels

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, McLean County has the highest median family income of any downstate county at over \$60,000 per year. Champaign, DeWitt, Livingston, Peoria and Woodford counties trail at somewhat over \$50,000.

McLean County has a relatively small percentage of residents in poverty in comparison to some other central Illinois counties (see Table 5.5). However, significant numbers of people in McLean County are not enjoying the benefits of high employment and prosperity that exist for most residents of the region.

Resources

Historically, its people have been one of McLean County’s greatest resources. Over time, these people have come to the region for a variety of reasons, including location, transportation network, availability of jobs, educational system and the overall quality of life (see Chapter 4). A continued increase in population could potentially enhance or degrade the qualities that attracted them here in the first place. Sound planning will be required to preserve and enhance these qualities as the region continues to grow.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Balancing the costs and benefits of population growth is a major challenge to achieving sensible growth. Increasing numbers of people in McLean County bring many opportunities, such as a large workforce, increasing diversity, ideas and creativity. Conversely, increasing population creates many challenges, such as increased traffic, a need for land and a variety of housing, increased costs for infrastructure, and potential threats to the natural environment and social fabric. Planning for sensible growth strives to

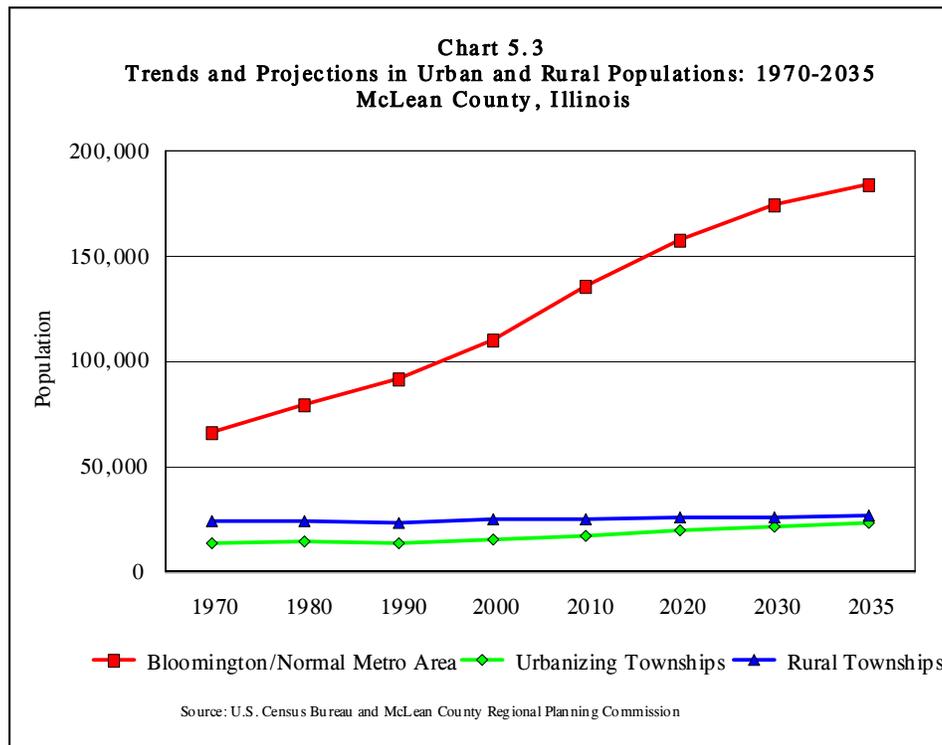
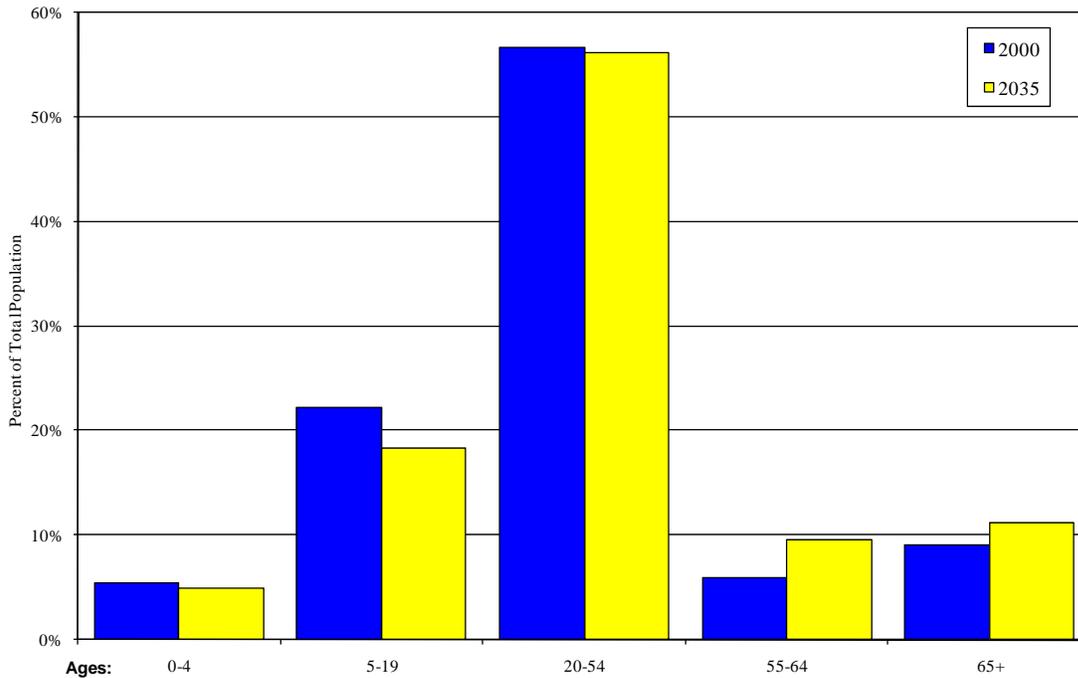


Chart 5.4
 Projected Change in Age Distribution in the Urban Area
 McLean County, Illinois



maximize the benefits of population growth and to minimize the potential detriments.

Another challenge will be to maintain and expand regional cooperation. Regional cooperation is necessary to achieve the planning required for sensible growth. Population growth will, in all likelihood, affect a number of the region’s jurisdictions. Cooperation among local governments will allow all to gain from the benefits of growth by working together to address common concerns such as meeting the needs of senior citizens.

Other specific challenges the region will face at the current rate of growth include providing the following: 1) a workforce for local employers in the face of low unemployment, 2) geographically distributed housing, including workforce housing for the increasing population, and 3) transportation alternatives, including expanded public transportation for the increasing levels of service orientated positions (see Chapter 4).

These and other services needed by older residents will also be in increasing demand, as the trend towards an aging population will also be a factor in McLean County. It is anticipated

that the aging of the Baby Boom generation will impact the region as it will the nation as a whole. Older citizens will require services including health care, transportation adapted to their needs, and supportive living arrangements that combine independence and autonomy with appropriate assistance and care.

Another considerable challenge will be to maintain and improve the high quality of life in the face of the currently projected population growth. Many of the amenities that have made the region attractive are characteristics common to smaller municipalities and rural counties. As the urban area grows, local communities must work to preserve the “small town” feel of the area.

STRATEGY

The following goal, objective, policy and specific actions comprise the population design strategy for use in this comprehensive plan.

Level of Attainment	McLean County	Champaign County	DeWitt County	Livingston County	Peoria County	Woodford County
Less than High School	9.3	9.0	16.5	21.9	16.2	12.2
High School Graduate	28.2	24.2	43.6	41.2	29.5	35.3
Some College	20.5	21.6	21.6	19.0	23.9	23.3
Associate Degree	5.8	7.2	4.8	5.2	7.1	8.1
Bachelor Degree or Higher	36.2	38.0	13.4	12.7	23.3	21.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Educational Attainment, 2000

Goal

Population growth levels that support the preservation and enhancement of the local quality of life.

Objective

Growth that supports an expanded range of urban amenities, adds to the labor pool, and provides for cultural diversity while minimizing the potential adverse affects of growth, such as increasing crime, traffic congestion, drive times, pollution and taxes.

Policy

For planning and design purposes, utilize population growth rates consistent with locally adopted comprehensive plans and county level population projections.

Actions

- Encourage community surveys and discussions on growth issues and alternatives.
- Encourage periodic reviews of plans and projections to incorporate public input on growth and related issues.
- Develop plans and policies that support sensible growth consistent with population projections presented in this report.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

This section presents the assumptions and resulting population projections developed for McLean County and its townships and municipalities through the year 2035, as well as the projected urban-rural distribution of population.

Assumptions

The population projections were based upon the following assumptions regarding future trends in population growth in McLean County:

- The location, economic, and quality of life factors that have shaped the county’s growth over the last several decades will continue to sustain a robust rate of growth well into the future.
- The diversified local economy will not be adversely impacted to any significant degree over the long term by national or state economic recessions.
- Future growth trends in McLean County will not be significantly impacted by natural or manmade disasters.
- Reductions in employment levels and/or reductions in the rate of employment growth in one economic sector or industry will be partially offset by gains in other sectors or industries, but

McLean	Champaign	DeWitt	Livingston	Peoria	Woodford
9.7	16.1	8.2	8.8	13.7	4.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

will nevertheless result in a slightly lower rate of population growth in the urban area through the year 2010 and somewhat lower yet beyond 2010.

- Local governments in McLean County will not institute regulatory controls aimed at limiting population growth.
- Rural growth will continue but at a lower rate than that of the Bloomington-Normal urban area.
- Communities in the western two-thirds of the county will continue to experience higher rates of growth than those located greater distances from the urban area and the interstate highway system.

Projections will likely change if future circumstances alter these assumptions. Additional assumptions of a more specific nature are stated or implied in the following discussions.

Projected Total County Population

The county population is projected at 234,280 for the year 2035 (see Chart 5.1 and Table 5.1). This is an increase of approximately 68,000 people or nearly 41 percent above the estimated 2005 level. Although significant, this projected rate of county growth is actually somewhat below the approximately 44 percent experienced during the previous 30-year period between 1970 and 2000. The total county population projections were derived by totaling the township and municipal projections as applicable. The municipal and township projections are summarized in the following sections.

Continued Urbanization

Bloomington-Normal will undoubtedly experience the bulk of the county's future growth and will thus increase its proportion of the total county population as illustrated in Chart 5.3. This is despite the significant growth projected for outside the Bloomington-Normal urban area. The county's population outside the Bloomington-Normal urban area is projected to reach 49,930 by 2035, an increase of 24 percent over the 2000 population of 40,239.

The 2035 urban area population is projected to reach 184,350. This represents an increase of more than two-thirds over the 2000 population of 110,194. Although quite robust, this projection reflects a declining long-term growth rate from the peaks that occurred in both Bloomington and Normal between 1990 and 2005. Reflecting the results of the mid-decade special Census, the Bloomington projections reflect an annual population increase of 2.4 percent from 2000 to 2010, and 1.3 percent between 2010 and 2035, as compared to an annual increase of 2.2 percent from 1990 to 2000. Similarly, the Normal projections reflect an annual increase of 1.7 percent from 2000 to 2010, and 1 percent between 2010 and 2035, as compared to 1.3 percent during the 1990s.

Growth of Other Municipalities

A number of other municipalities within the county are also expected to experience growth. Carlock, Danvers, Downs, Heyworth, Hudson, LeRoy and Lexington will continue to grow as depicted in Table 5.1. Projections developed for these communities were based on a continuation of the trend line from 1970, with adjustments made to reflect factors that are likely to affect those trends, such as the major annexation that occurred in the Village of Downs and the likelihood of sewer system construction in both Downs and Lexington.

As has been the case in the past, the municipalities more distant from the urban area and the interstate highway system are expected to remain relatively stable or experience more moderate growth, if not declining populations. For communities that have experienced declining populations in the past, the projections reflect a moderating rate of decline as the impacts of the declining number of farms on those communities are expected to "bottom out."

Township Projections

With some exceptions, future trends in township populations are projected to mirror those of the municipalities outside the Bloomington-Normal urban area. The townships in the western two-thirds of the county generally

have better access to the interstate highway system and the urban area and are projected to experience relatively stable to fairly significant growth as compared to other townships in the county, especially those in the eastern part of the county. Notable exceptions include Bloomington and Normal townships, which are likely to be significantly impacted by future annexations resulting in loss of land area and corresponding population in these townships.

Chapter 6



HOUSING

Chapter 6: HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

Providing a variety of housing styles and prices with supporting services in new developments in conjunction with maintaining housing quality and spurring revitalization in older neighborhoods is one of the challenges of sensible growth. Effectively meeting these challenges can provide many benefits including reduced costs for infrastructure, reduced travel distances and times, and a more equitable distribution of the local tax burden. It can also help preserve open space and farmland and enhance the aesthetics and “livability” of a community.

Regional cooperation is needed to meet housing goals. Establishing consensus as to type, intensity and location of housing development will maximize the benefits to be derived.

CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

In 2000, nearly 140,000 of McLean County residents were housed in nearly 57,000 housing units (see Table 6.1). The remaining 11,300 residents, comprising approximately 7.5 percent of total population, resided in group quarters, which include college dormitories, group homes and institutional residences such as nursing homes, corrections facilities, and housing for persons requiring specialized or long-term care. Most group quarters residents were students living in dormitories.

Average household size varied slightly by geographic location with somewhat larger households found more in rural areas. In

Bloomington-Normal, slightly smaller average household sizes were found. However, there was not a substantial overall variation in household size among various parts of the county.

Geographic Distribution

A well-conceived distribution of housing should include a mix of housing types, costs, and densities dispersed throughout individual neighborhoods, and balanced around employment and service centers. Owner and rental housing should be available in sufficient quantities and in direct proportion to the total needs of the community. Higher densities should buffer employment and service centers from lower density housing, and should be served by a variety of transportation, including vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit. A well-balanced distribution of housing stock as described above facilitates access to employment and services. It also helps avoid socio-economic segregation and the concentrations of low income populations that can lead to an increase in social problems and corresponding costs to the community.

While a mix of owner and rental housing is desirable within neighborhoods and communities, the significant conversion of owner- to renter-occupied dwellings can signal a neighborhood in transition. Decreases in the proportion of owner-occupied housing may indicate a decline in the maintenance of older, established neighborhoods, due to probable increases in absentee ownership and in the number of tenants with more limited resources. This trend, often accompanied by

Table 6.1 Housing Characteristics, Census 2000 McLean County and Specified Areas					
Geographical Area	Total Population	Population in Group Quarters	Population in Occupied Housing Units	Number Occupied Housing Units	Average Household Size
Urban Area (Bloomington-Normal)	110,194	11,031	99,163	41,799	2.37
Bloomington	64,808	2,447	62,361	26,642	2.34
Normal	45,386	8,584	36,802	15,157	2.43
Urbanizing Townships	15,003	0	15,003	5,474	2.74
Rural McLean County	25,236	262	24,974	9,473	2.66
McLean County Total	150,433	11,293	139,140	56,746	2.45

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data; Tables P1, P15, P16, P17, P37, H1, H3, H4

Area	Sample Housing Lot Size (SF)	Average Homes/Acre
Near Downtown Bloomington	5,000	7.0
Near IL Rt. 9 and Veterans Parkway (1960's era)	7,200	4.7
Pepper Ridge	6,600	5.0
Rollingbrook	8,000	3.0
White Eagle	7,500	2.6
Ironwood	15,000	2.2
Hawthorne Hills	19,000	1.7
Prairieland	7,500	5.3
Eagles Landing	8,500	5.2
Lexington	14,500	2.6
Heyworth	10,700	2.7
LeRoy	11,500	2.8

Source: Sidwell Maps (2007); McLean County MCGIS (2007)

significant suburban growth, is typical of many urban areas across the nation.

The Bloomington-Normal urban area has been experiencing similar trends of decreasing numbers of owner-occupied housing in many of its older neighborhoods accompanied by increasing numbers of owner-occupied housing around the perimeter of the urban area. Map 6.1 illustrates this general trend in Bloomington-Normal between 1990 and 2000. The map also shows a dramatic increase of owner-occupied housing in most suburban locations, indicative of the high growth and corresponding new subdivisions developed on the edges of the Bloomington-Normal urban area during this period.

Recent and ongoing redevelopment in the traditional downtown neighborhoods of both Bloomington and Normal suggest the decline in the number of owner-occupied housing units in these areas may be slowed or even reversed. Downtown Bloomington has seen a resurgence in the redevelopment of existing structures for residential use, many of which are being developed as condominiums for purchase rather than rental. The redevelopment plan for Uptown Normal also includes a significant residential component. In both communities, downtown residential development is seen as an integral part

of creating vital and sustainable core neighborhoods.

Density

A sampling of housing lot sizes in Bloomington-Normal indicates the oldest areas (near Downtown Bloomington) have the most dense housing, with the newer, higher-end subdivisions (Hawthorne Hills) having the least dense housing (see Table 6.2). Similar trends exist nationally. A 2000 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development report shows urban areas are expanding at twice the rate the population is growing. However, other older areas of McLean County provide examples of less dense housing, such as the homes along East Washington Street in Bloomington. The 1960s era housing and moderately-priced newer subdivisions (Pepper Ridge) have housing at a slightly less dense scale than the older areas near Downtown Bloomington. Recent residential developments, such as Savannah Green and Kelley Glen in Normal, employ some of the principles of traditional neighborhood development, including smaller lot sizes, and thus move away from the lower densities of standard suburban development practices.

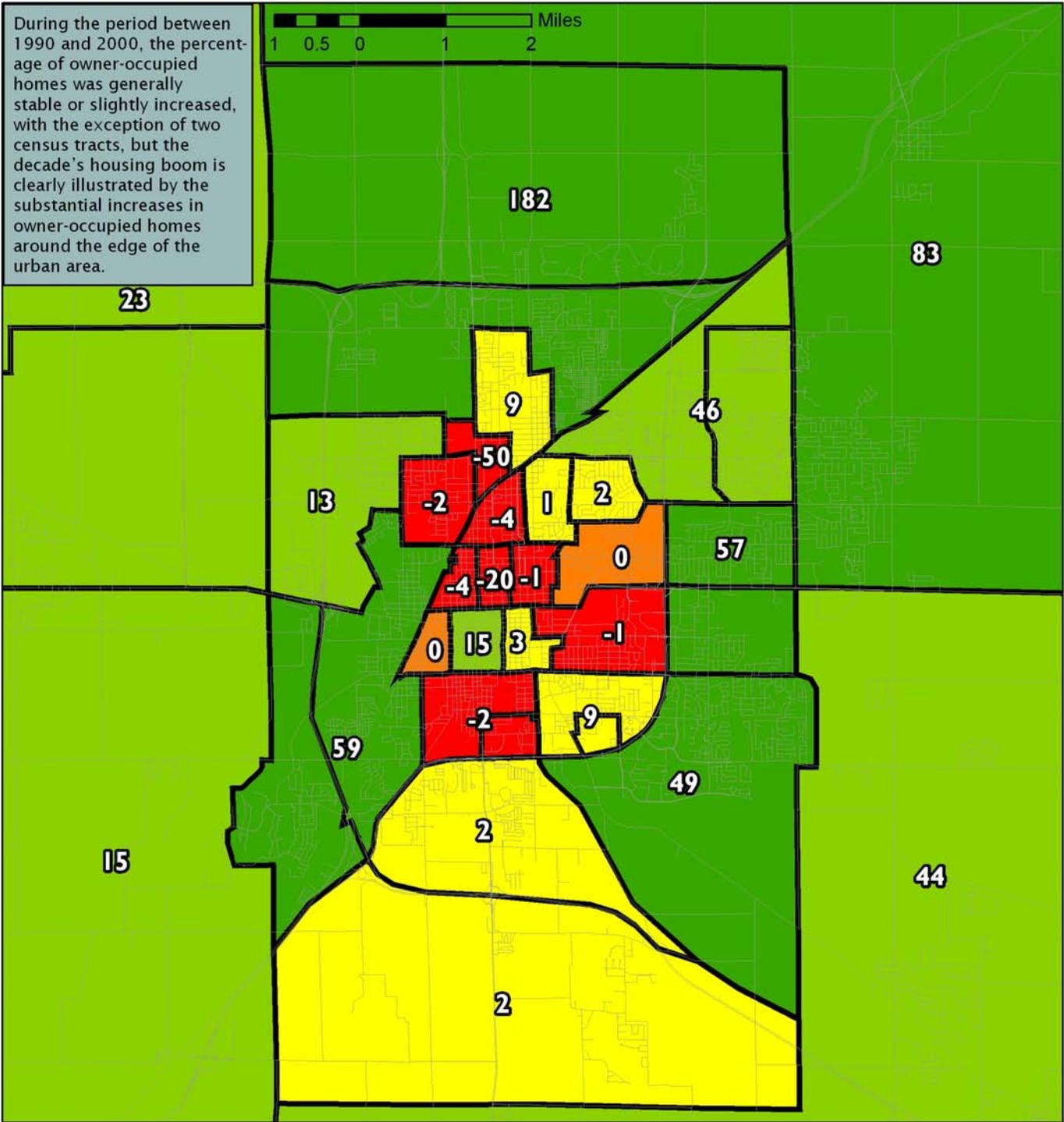
One implication of decreasing housing density is the potential for increased housing costs. Data from the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) suggest that site development costs fall with rising density. Decreased site development costs are attributed to less land per unit, less site preparation, less infrastructure, and typically less floor area and wall area. Housing built at six to eight units per acre density requires site development costs in the range of 44 to 57 percent less than housing site development costs built at two to three units per acre (NAHB, Cost Effective Site Planning - Single Family Development, Washington, DC, 1986, p. 56-97).

An additional effect of decreasing housing density is greater consumption of open space and farmland. From 1990 to 2005, the population of Bloomington-Normal increased more than 36 percent, while the incorporated area of Bloomington-Normal increased nearly 45 percent. Similar trends exist nationally; the State

Map 6.1 Percent Change in Owner-Occupied Housing, 1990 to 2000 Bloomington-Normal Urban Area

Legend

-  Census Tract Boundaries
-  Decrease (-50 to -1%)
-  No Change
-  Slight Increase (1 to 10%)
-  Moderate Increase (10 to 50%)
-  High Increase (50 to 182%)



Source: Data and Census tract definition from U.S. Bureau of the Census; street network data from McLean County GIS.

of the Cities 2000 report compiled by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development shows urban areas are expanding at about twice the rate the population is growing (*The State of the Cities 2000*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2000).

Other implications of the region's distribution and density trends include:

- decreasing housing density may increase costs of providing infrastructure for new developments, including water lines, sewer lines, and roads;
- decreasing housing density may increase distance and travel times from home to work, shopping, and other activities;
- greater increase in housing development on the outermost edges of Bloomington-Normal may be correlated with the closure of schools in some older neighborhoods;
- institutional growth has consumed housing units, especially owner-occupied housing;
- the decline of owner-occupied housing in some older neighborhoods is correlated with the increase in rental housing and may contribute to the weakening of those neighborhoods;
- slow housing growth and a decrease in owner occupied housing in some older neighborhoods may reduce revenues for school districts serving those areas;
- decreasing density can increase commuting times;
- lower density due to institutional growth sometimes consumes housing units, especially owner-occupied units;
- suburban school locations attract owner-occupied housing, thus drawing people away from central cities and increasing commuting times; and
- rural villages and towns are attractive as places to reside due to size, perceived community safety

and containing semblances of traditional neighborhood development.

Design

The innovative design of housing developments may be used to create a “win-win-win” solution for the growth related challenges faced by many communities. Good design can improve quality of life while enhancing the economy of a project. The proper arrangement of housing, open space, streets and services can make a neighborhood more livable and allow more housing units to be built per acre of land. This can allow the community to “win” by minimizing the consumption of open space, lowering infrastructure costs, lessening travel times, and decreasing housing costs. The consumer can “win” through access to appealing, affordable housing in livable neighborhoods. Builders can “win” through making development projects more cost effective. Finally, good design can help preserve desirable features when redeveloping older areas.

Traditional Neighborhoods

The design of older homes and neighborhoods provided residents with a high quality of life and made efficient use of the land. Physical features included mixed land uses with a variety of housing types and styles and neighborhood commercial buildings, the use of “granny cottages,” a grid-street pattern, periodic use of boulevards, relatively dense housing, front porches, access to homes through alleys, the absence of garages or one-car garages located behind homes, a variety of setbacks between homes and streets, and sidewalks on both sides of the street (see Figures 6.1 and 6.2). These design features naturally encouraged residents to interact and thereby created a strong sense of community. These neighborhoods also allowed a diversity of residents to live close to work and shopping, thereby encouraging walking. A sense of privacy was maintained in older neighborhoods through a variety of housing orientations and setbacks, the presence of trees, alleys, and sometimes garages as buffers between homes. The relatively narrow streets used in the older neighborhoods also

contributed to the sense of security and community by providing a built-in mechanism for accomplishing slower traffic in residential areas. The grid pattern of streets common to traditional design also reduced potential traffic congestion by offering alternative travel routes.

Contemporary Neighborhoods

Contemporary subdivisions offer a strong sense of security and comfort for homeowners by providing new or newer homes with modern

conveniences and segregating residential living from other aspects of life. The design of contemporary subdivisions differs from traditional design in its use of curvilinear and wider streets (sometimes with cul-de-sacs), the sometimes lack of sidewalks, larger setbacks and

lot sizes, larger block sizes, lack of alleys, more of a focus on the backyard with back decks instead of or in addition to front porches, and the segregation of residential and other land uses.

The Best of Both Worlds

Incorporating some of the design features of older neighborhoods into contemporary subdivisions could offer the “best of both worlds” by creating the feel of older neighborhoods with the comfort, convenience and security of the newer neighborhoods. While the segregation of land uses assures that residents will not have to live next to “noxious” commercial or industrial areas (a problem in the late 19th and early 20th century). Contemporary urban design could benefit from the integration

A major challenge for the future will be to achieve development that continues to be contiguous but is more compact.



Figure 6.1. A typical house in an older neighborhood of McLean County.



Figure 6.2. Top: Mixed commercial and residential use on an arterial commercial street. Bottom: Cottage-style housing in a mixed-density neighborhood; at center, the three-story, four-bedroom house has a 30' x 18' footprint.



of some commercial services and traditional amenities. For example, being able to walk to a well designed neighborhood book store or coffee shop looking onto a local park would be a desirable feature.

Design is also a key ingredient in offering higher densities and yet maintaining the privacy that homeowners desire. Sound design may also be used to enhance the “walkability” of contemporary subdivisions while accommodating automobile traffic.

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) is particularly well suited for “infill” development (development on vacant land within the existing community). It also offers an attractive alternative for development on the

fringe of existing communities. Features of TND developments include shorter housing setbacks, front porches, a mix of high and low density housing, garages located in the rear of the houses (may or may not be attached), and pedestrian friendly features including proximity to parks, schools, neighborhood shopping, and mass transit. Some TND projects also provide a variety of housing options to accommodate lower and higher income residents, young families and senior citizens. Such options may include cottages, detached zero-lot line homes, and apartments over garages.

Many successful new developments using the TND approach have been built around the country in recent years, including several projects in Illinois. While often designed to reflect local architectural and cultural standards, these new neighborhoods generally incorporate a range of the characteristics discussed above. In some cases, such as Seaside and Celebration in Florida and Middleton Hills in Wisconsin, newly built traditional neighborhood developments have proven so attractive that demand has driven housing costs in these communities out of the reach of moderate and lower income families. Over the longer term, as the TND approach to development becomes more widely implemented, price pressure on housing in these communities can be expected to ease.

Evidence for the success of TND neighborhoods can be found in the sustained appeal of the existing communities on which the concept is founded. The character and form of towns such as Evanston and Oak Park demonstrate that the key elements of TND combine to create very appealing places in which to live and work. Around the country, neighborhoods built according to what we now describe as TND standards have stood the test of time, remaining healthy and vital.

Housing Quality

Communities experiencing high growth typically face the challenge of maintaining acceptable building conditions in their older, centrally located neighborhoods in the face of significant levels of housing production in new developments. Sensible growth suggests that

housing quality must be maintained and improved in order to strengthen the viability of older neighborhoods, maintain a well balanced geographic distribution of housing, and realize the aforementioned benefits derived from this balance.

The principal explanation for deteriorated building conditions is a combination of socio-economic factors and the age of the buildings themselves. The areas with the worst building conditions also exhibit several demographic characteristics that would suggest a high potential for deteriorated building conditions. These include a high population density, relatively low household median income, average housing unit age over sixty years and single-family housing that has been adapted for multi-family use. Based on these data, it becomes clear that non-owner occupied housing units with little reinvestment may be a major contributing cause of deteriorated conditions.

The improvement of building conditions in the older downtowns and neighborhoods throughout McLean County must come through a concerted, comprehensive approach to enhance the potential development and redevelopment of these areas. This should include specific programs to improve building conditions in combination with programs to address the residents' economic, educational and social needs. While considerable challenges face several areas, a tremendous potential exists for providing a high quality of life in the older neighborhoods throughout McLean County, because they have the previously described traditional design features that are often sought by today's home buyer.

Affordability

The future demand for affordable housing will likely increase due to high growth and subsequent demand for housing in combination with a higher percentage of service oriented jobs in our society. For the purposes of this plan, affordable (or workforce) housing is defined as safe, decent and sanitary housing, the cost of which (including utilities, insurance, taxes) does not exceed 30 percent of a person's or family's after tax income.

In order to address ongoing needs, affordable housing opportunities must be sustainable, in that cost remains affordable to its target market through its expected useful life. (David A. Smith, Affordable Housing Institute, at www.affordablehousinginstitute.org.) This may be achieved by including subsidy programs and conditions on future sales that can protect equity but preserve the affordable cost standard.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) creates guidelines defining income levels that qualify as moderate and low income for a given community. These standards form the basis of eligibility for certain federal housing programs and are based on HUD's calculation of the community's Area Median Income. HUD program standards indicate that affordable housing, requiring no more than 30 percent of net income, should be available to families considered "low-income." This is defined as earning less than 80 percent of the community's Area Median Income. In McLean County and particularly in Bloomington-Normal, the supply of affordable housing even for moderate-income families can be limited. Table 6.3 compares the area median income and income ranges for low- and moderate-income families for several central Illinois communities.

HUD guidelines define income limits in terms of family size and a calculation of local fair market rent. Under these standards, a family of four in McLean County qualifies as low-income with a federal or state fiscal year 2007 income of \$58,800. For a single individual, 2007 income of \$41,150 is the threshold for qualification as low-income. For such families, the transition from renting to ownership can be difficult. For families whose income is at the lower end of the range, the barriers to ownership can be insurmountable. In these instances, home ownership may not be a reasonable goal, and appropriate long-term rental housing is a needed resource. HUD statistics indicate that more than 60 percent of families in McLean County fall within the moderate- or low-income categories.

An additional factor in housing policy is the ongoing impact of an aging population on the type and cost of housing required. As in the rest of the country, McLean County faces the

challenges created by the large “baby boomer” population moving into later life and the associated changes in household size and lifestyle. Housing choices should include options that permit aging residents to remain independent in safe and secure homes that are affordable and located in proximity to needed services including public transportation.

Future community design should also support “aging in place” populations and engage them to participate in the planning process. Moreover, zoning regulations should not discourage the implementation of “age appropriate” housing options, such as the inclusion of accessory dwelling units and senior-friendly housing in new and established neighborhoods. Partnerships should also be coordinated between business and government that address universal design and visibility in home construction and repair for senior citizens. Also, property tax relief programs for those in need in order to maintain home ownership should be studied.

Housing Prices

Housing in McLean County has become less affordable in recent years. The mean home price in McLean County increased more than 32 percent from 1998 to 2006 (see Table 6.4). It is important to note the mean reflects extreme home prices. In recent years, a high number of expensive homes have been built in McLean County that may have skewed the mean home price for the area. Mean household income rose 21 percent during the same period. The average housing price to average housing income ratio increased more than 8 percent during the same period. The increase in this ratio indicates that housing has become more expensive relative to incomes.

Future Jobs

The predicted rise in service oriented jobs in our society will increase the need for affordable housing. Data indicate that five out of the top ten projected McLean County jobs by percent increase during the period from 2006–2014 are in service industries (see Table 4.2 in Chapter 4). The salary range for these jobs is generally quite

low, suggesting the problem of housing affordability is likely to grow in the years ahead.

The high growth rate and increasing housing costs in McLean County contribute to the segregation of lower and higher income individuals and families. As previously mentioned, socio-economic and building conditions data provide evidence that the population of Bloomington in need of social, economic, and educational opportunities is concentrated in the area of the worst building conditions. This is typical of many urban situations. Mixed income developments that provide a limited amount of affordable housing within newer, moderate or higher-end developments would alleviate this situation by allowing lower income individuals and families the opportunity to take advantage of educational, social and economic opportunities typically available only to higher income individuals and families.

The mixing of workforce housing with moderate and higher end developments could also contribute to neighborhood stability. It provides an opportunity for increased diversity including interaction and understanding between lower and higher income populations, seniors, young families and other populations. It also helps prevent a given area of a city or town from becoming deteriorated due to the concentration of low income individuals and families. For these and similar reasons, some jurisdictions require a limited number of affordable housing units to be included in virtually all new housing developments (inclusionary housing).

Resources

Virtually all the resources needed to enhance sensible housing growth already exist in McLean County. These include developers, government agencies, not-for-profit organizations, social service groups, neighborhood associations, local universities, lending institutions, and other organizations that play a role in shaping housing growth in McLean County. Developers have the opportunity to develop a traditional neighborhood development or find other ways to incorporate sound urban design principles into new development to help meet needs for new housing

Table 6.3
FY 2007 Estimated Area Median Income (HUD)
For Family of Four

Central Illinois MSAs*	Median Family Income	Low Income 30% to 80% of median	Moderate Income 80% to 120% of median
Bloomington-Normal	\$70,900	\$22,050 to \$58,800	\$56,720 to \$85,080
Springfield	\$64,500	\$19,450 to \$51,900	\$51,600 to \$77,400
Champaign-Urbana	\$61,600	\$18,800 to \$50,100	\$49,280 to \$73,920
Peoria	\$63,400	\$19,000 to \$50,700	\$50,720 to \$76,080
Decatur	\$57,600	\$17,300 to \$46,100	\$46,080 to \$69,120
Danville	\$49,400	\$15,650 to \$41,750	\$39,520 to \$59,280

*Metropolitan Statistical Areas; Bloomington-Normal MSA includes McLean County

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2008.

that is attractive and available to a wide range of income levels and age groups. Neighborhood associations and other citizens groups can further their involvement in working to improve conditions in the region's older areas. This may entail the formation of neighborhood plans or other programs. Lending institutions may work with local governments to further assist with increasing the percentage of owner-occupied housing in declining neighborhoods. Local governments can pursue grants and provide education and outreach programs to bring balance to housing growth, improve design, building conditions, and increased housing affordability. Furthering the already high degree of cooperation among these entities will

maximize the resources that each organization brings to the community.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The region faces a number of challenges and opportunities with regards to housing. Deteriorated building conditions in older areas, although a challenge, represents an opportunity to revitalize older neighborhoods that offer many of the amenities that make a community more "livable." High growth offers an opportunity for innovative housing and neighborhood design, such as a traditional neighborhood development. High growth can also provide a relative degree of wealth that may be used to support revitalization efforts. The need for affordable housing presents an opportunity to provide a higher degree of diversity and stability in our neighborhoods by building a limited number of lower-priced homes along with moderate and higher-priced homes in new neighborhoods. Through design, higher density developments typically opposed by residents become an opportunity to provide a pedestrian friendly, urban neighborhood that conserves land and resources, and is economically efficient for local governments and developers. Strategies for addressing these challenges and taking advantage of opportunities are described on the following pages.

Year	Mean Price	Mean Household Income*	Price/Income Ratio
2006	\$167,963	\$83,465	2.01
2005	\$166,262	\$81,985	2.02
2004	\$161,135	\$80,085	2.01
2003	\$153,326	\$79,050	1.93
2002	\$144,549	\$76,550	1.88
2001	\$139,121	\$74,597	1.86
2000	\$134,081	\$72,875	1.83
1999	\$131,081	\$71,375	1.84
1998	\$126,927	\$68,779	1.85

*For a family of four
 *Source: Bloomington-Normal Association of Realtors; Woods & Poole Economics; McLean County Regional Planning Commission

STRATEGY

The overall strategy for housing is manifested by the following goal and objectives as well as the policies and corresponding actions identified for consideration. Priorities for implementation are addressed in Chapter 10.

Goal

A wide-range of affordable, high quality, well designed housing in downtowns, older neighborhoods, older suburban locations and newly developing areas that enhance a sense of community.

Redevelopment

Objective

Revitalization of and improved building conditions in downtowns and older neighborhoods, including infill development, throughout McLean County.

Policy #1

Establish programs to support the revitalization of the downtowns and older neighborhoods

Actions

- Establish small grant programs and educational efforts for landlords and homeowners for home improvements and neighborhood beautification.
- Utilize business retention and development programs to strengthen and create neighborhood-based businesses.
- Encourage education and outreach to provide information and training to property owners, landlords, and trades people regarding building codes, housing rehabilitation guidelines, accessibility guidelines, available funding for housing rehabilitation, and other issues related to building conditions.

- Identify priority neighborhoods with greatest housing needs and focus spending in those areas.
- Direct municipal funding toward strategic improvements in roads, sidewalks, curb cuts, etc., in priority* areas.
- Support government buyouts and lending to bring properties into compliance with current zoning and building codes.
- Establish guidelines for older neighborhoods for the preservation of traditional design features of homes and neighborhoods.

Policy #2

Discourage peripheral growth outside projected growth areas.

Actions

- Discourage the granting of zoning and subdivision approvals and expenditures for development (including infrastructure) outside of planned growth areas.
- Encourage the use of vacant, older buildings for a new purpose, e.g., old school for business or housing.
- Consider a variety of innovative mechanisms to preserve open space and farmland outside of projected growth areas.

Policy #3

Support programs and efforts aimed at improving building conditions in downtowns and older neighborhoods

Actions

- Support conservation and redevelopment of homes in existing neighborhoods.
- Continue to improve and expand existing local rental registration and inspection programs.
- Survey all pre-1940 housing stock to identify conservation and restoration areas.
- Involve local lenders in providing low-interest loans to developers of priority areas.

*Priority areas are defined as areas with deteriorated building conditions, low to moderate household income, high crime or other areas that are defined by the local government.

- Utilize existing staff to focus code enforcement on priority areas.
- Solicit local input and cooperation to target projects in priority areas.
- Reach out to developers to assist in creating opportunities for redevelopment of priority areas.
- Focus existing social, economic, and educational programs on priority areas.
- Reduce existing non-conformities in land use, building use, lot size, and building codes.

Policy #4

Support socio-economic and cultural diversity in downtowns and older neighborhoods.

Actions

- Broaden alternative home and neighborhood design opportunities to allow a variety of housing setbacks, densities, street widths, etc., and provide alternatives for all residents, including seniors, low to moderate income populations, and persons with disabilities.
- Explore the costs, benefits, and alternatives for providing inclusionary zoning in McLean County communities to require the inclusion of a proportionate share of workforce housing in residential development.

Design Consistency

Objective

Design consistency and/or compatibility in the infill and redevelopment of downtowns and older neighborhoods throughout McLean County.

Policy

Encourage urban design that compliments measures for revitalizing downtowns and older neighborhoods and provides alternatives to peripheral development.

Actions

- Support the provision of safe on-road bicycle routes and separate trails through existing neighborhoods.

- Establish guidelines for older neighborhoods for the preservation of traditional design features of homes and neighborhoods.
- Establish standards and guidelines for housing rehabilitation.
- Incorporate energy-efficient design into new and rehabilitated housing units.

Design Alternatives

Objective

A wider choice of design alternatives and housing densities, including traditional design features in new developments.

Policy

Incorporate urban design into the planning and development review process to enhance the sense of community and the desirability of high quality, workforce housing.

Actions

- Use surveys, including “visual preference surveys,” to determine local market for various housing and neighborhood designs.
- Consider the use of techniques that provide for appropriate design in urban areas.
- Amend local ordinances when necessary to allow for desirable mixed land uses.
- Incorporate accessibility guidelines and specifications into single family and multi-family housing.
- Add design requirements to local zoning and subdivision ordinances.

Workforce Housing

Objective

A wide range of evenly dispersed, high-quality, aesthetically appealing, single-family and rental housing types, styles, and costs for all income levels, age groups, and people with disabilities.

Policy #1

Provide incentives for affordable housing developments.

Actions

- Consider incentives for well-developed higher density developments that include affordable housing and make efficient use of land and infrastructure.
- Reduce tap-on and other fees and provide tax incentives for projects in priority areas.
- Consider incentives for landlords and/or owner-occupied single family dwellings who maintain sound building conditions and meet or exceed building codes in priority areas.
- Allow developers to utilize tax credits and funds via bonds from the Housing Authority of Bloomington for affordable and accessible housing projects.
- Consider adopting inclusionary zoning to require the inclusion of a proportionate share of more affordable housing in residential development projects.

Policy #2

Encourage the development of smaller lots and homes with innovative designs to buffer activity centers from areas featuring greater proportions of larger lot homes.

Actions

- Review and, if necessary, modify minimum house size requirements for single family detached development.
- Consider creative parking solutions, such as clustered parking spaces near residential units for small lot developments.
- Consider creating new small lot districts for smaller lot, smaller homes that include guidelines to ensure privacy, such as landscaping, fences, restricted window size and placement, etc.

Policy #3

Promote homeowner counseling and existing affordable housing.

Actions

- Provide funding for personnel to secure and administer additional federal and state grant monies for housing.

- Facilitate the organization and involvement of residents in the improvement of their neighborhoods.
- Utilize state and federal lending programs to facilitate owner-occupied housing.
- Provide funding for advertising currently available affordable housing programs.
- Provide other funding to further the efforts of currently available affordable housing programs.

Policy #4

Encourage the redevelopment and/or construction of affordable housing to be proportionate to community needs and total housing units.

Actions

- Consider adopting inclusionary zoning to require the inclusion of a proportionate share of more affordable housing in new residential development.
- Require housing inspections by licensed inspectors prior to home sales.

FUTURE HOUSING DEMAND

The primary driving factor in assessing the demand for housing in 2035 is anticipated population growth. As noted in Table 6.1, in 2000 the county had nearly 140,000 people living in housing units and an additional 11,000 living in group housing. Household size in non-group housing averaged nearly 2.5 persons per housing unit, with large households being more prevalent in urbanizing townships and rural areas, and smaller households more common in Bloomington and Normal. Much of the population in group housing consisted of college students living in dormitories or other student-oriented group housing and of residents in nursing homes.

In projecting housing demand in 2035, the statistical basis of Census 2000 provides a starting point for expected population growth and for the demographic characteristics of the future population. Trends already in evidence in the population and the impact of institutional policies over the coming decades will create a new demographic and social profile in McLean

County. The anticipated effect on housing demand is summarized in Table 6.5. As noted in Chapter 5, the population in 2035 will have a higher average age than was the case in 2000. This expected shift is due to the aging of the general population triggered by the post-war baby boom generation, the 75 million Americans born between 1946 and 1964. In 2035, all of the surviving “boomers” will have reached age 70. The oldest surviving members of that generational wave will have reached the upper reaches of current population categories, at ages of 85 and older. Given greater overall longevity in the population, it is likely that a substantial proportion of the baby-boom generation will survive to 2035.

Locally, the demographic shift will result in a population in which persons age sixty and above constitute a larger percentage than was the case in 2000. In regular households and group housing, these residents will require a broad scope of housing choices in terms of design and cost. Smaller, accessible and easily maintained housing units, housing that sustains neighborhood contacts for older persons living alone, and housing that is affordable to residents on fixed retirement income will all be needed. Innovative approaches to development that integrate housing appropriate to older residents into age-diverse neighborhoods will aid in providing a range of housing options for residents preferring to remain in their homes instead of retiring into institutional facilities. Development that supports diverse housing opportunities for senior residents will also limit the burden on group facilities, reserving their resources for seniors who require

or prefer to avail themselves of more supervised living and care arrangements.

The colleges and universities in Bloomington-Normal, in particular the 20,000 student Illinois State University, have created a population bubble of young adults in McLean County. The influence of the student population on the pool of available housing has been mitigated to some degree by the percentage of students housed in dormitories and other forms of group housing. In its current planning process, ISU has indicated that future campus development will de-emphasize dormitories for student housing, relying instead upon off-campus housing options for students. As is the case for seniors, college-age adults require housing options beyond typical single-family and multi-unit options, as well as affordable options. These can include apartments designed to be rented by bedroom rather than by unit, wherein common living space such as kitchens is shared and maintained by multiple leaseholders. Some students may also seek housing located within age-diverse neighborhoods, with units suited to student residents integrated with single-family and apartment units. In cases where development targeted to the student population is adjacent to other housing types, care must be taken to design neighborhoods that comfortably meet the needs of all residents.

The projections summarized in Table 6.5 include consideration of the demographic changes discussed above and assume a slightly lower percentage of the population will be living in group housing in 2035. The increase in smaller households has been influenced by households

Table 6.5
Projected Population and Housing Demand, 2035
McLean County and Specified Areas

Geographical Area	Total Population	Population in Group Quarters	Population in Occupied Housing Units	Projected New Population in Housing Units (over 2000)	Projected Average Household Size	Projected Increase in Housing Units by 2035
Urban Area (Bloomington-Normal)	184,350	15,454	168,896	69,733	2.2	31,697
Bloomington	115,130	4,300	110,830	48,469	2.2	22,031
Normal	69,220	11,154	58,066	22,418	2.2	10,190
Urbanizing Townships	23,235	300	22,935	7,932	2.2	3,605
Rural McLean County	26,695	350	26,345	1,371	2.3	596
McLean County Total	234,280	16,104	218,176	79,036	2.2	35,898

Source: Census 2000 (see Table 6.1), McLean County Regional Planning Commission, 2007

comprised of seniors and young adults. This has had an effect on determining future housing demand. Given the potential increase in fixed-income senior households and the anticipated concentration of job creation in retail and related sectors, a significant proportion of the 36,000 new housing units needed will be sought by residents needing affordable housing choices. New and redeveloped neighborhoods should be structured to accommodate those needs. Providing for this housing growth and maintaining the local quality of life will require attention to the geographic distribution, densities, design, quality and affordability of the region's housing.

Chapter 7



LAND USE

Chapter 7: LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

The distribution and intensity of land use are major determinants of sensible growth. Thus, land use planning attempts to balance social, economic and environmental needs in support of sensible growth to achieve optimum efficiency and livability. The location and amount of land developed for different uses largely determine economic efficiency and the livability of a community as well as environmental soundness.

In general, higher intensity development with compact residential and commercial areas is more efficient in terms of tax revenues received in relation to public expenditures for services in a given area. It can also be more environmentally sound because less land per capita is used than for low intensity development such as large lot

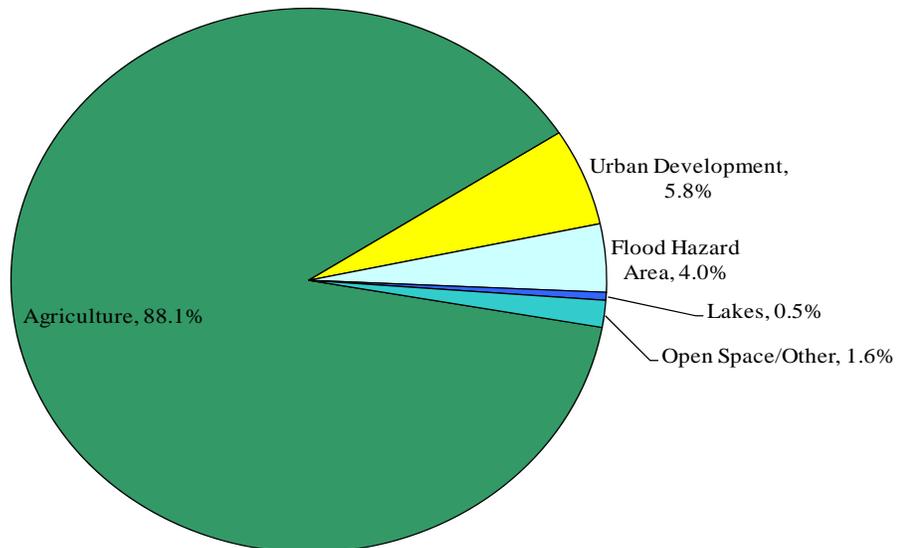
subdivisions and strip malls with expansive parking lots. Livability on the other hand usually requires a wide range of land use types and intensities in order to provide for a wide range of human needs and lifestyles. The land use plan seeks an effective balance among these sometimes conflicting ideals.

... regional cooperation is essential in the formulation and implementation of region-wide plans and policies

For the land use plan to be effective, regional cooperation is essential in the formulation and implementation of region-wide plans and policies. The

cooperation must begin with the development and adoption of the regional land use plan. There must be mutual understanding and support of the goals, objectives and policies set forth in the plan. This can pave the way for implementing specific actions to address regional land use issues that may have impacts that cross jurisdictional boundaries. Thus, regional

Chart 7.1
Land Use by Percentage of County Total, 2007
McLean County, Illinois



Source: McLean County Department of Information Technology; McLean County Department of Building and Zoning; McLean County Assessor's Office; City of Bloomington, Town of Normal

cooperation is a basic ingredient of effective regional land use planning.

CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

Land use trends and characteristics have important implications for planning future land use. The distribution and intensity of existing land use are major considerations in the allocation of future land uses. Similarly, the implications of current trends in land use development must be considered in context with plan objectives to identify possible needs for changes of direction. Following is an overview of the region's existing land use characteristics and development trends.

Development Patterns

Over 88 percent of McLean County is currently unincorporated, agricultural land, and nearly 6 percent is urban development (see Chart 7.1). Bloomington and Normal by far account for the greatest portion of the urban land with the remainder accounted for by the county's nineteen other municipalities (see Map 7.1). An undetermined number of rural, non-farm dwellings also exist, with greater numbers to be found within an easy commute of the metro area.

At 4 percent, floodplains and related flood hazard areas account for the next greatest proportion of the county's land area, followed by public and semi-public open space at 1.6 percent. Public and semi-public areas include major conservation and recreation areas such as Moraine View State Park, Funk's Grove and major municipal parks and golf courses.

Map 7.2 illustrates how the Bloomington-Normal urban area has expanded since 1970. Chart 7.2 illustrates how the urban area is likely to continue to expand during the planning period if current trends continue. The likelihood of continued expansion of the urban area is supported by trends toward smaller households and low-density development, both of which contribute to greater per capita consumption of land for urban development. Development outside planned urban growth areas is expected to be limited due to county zoning requirements

and the use of annexation agreements by Bloomington and Normal.

Resources

Land use resources include both the land itself as well as the planning resources designed to make the most effective use of the land. Each of these resources is described in the following paragraphs.

Land, Wind and Water

Land resources include the region's farmland. One of the region's greatest resources is its vast amounts of farmland, much of which is prime farmland and among the most fertile in the entire world. The region's farmland that lies in the paths of urban growth is also often prime land for urban development, due to the nearly level to gently sloping terrain and the general lack of major physical constraints. The flood plains, streams and lakes of the region are important resources that provide significant environmental benefits, but account for less than one percent of the total land area. Tree cover is an extremely important resource, due in part to the environmental and aesthetic benefits provided, and in part to the scarcity of major stands of trees in McLean County. As noted in Chapter 2, wind resources have emerged as a critical aspect of environmental management of particular concern in connection to land use planning.

Planning

Planning resources include the plans, planning processes, and ordinances available to local governments for use in guiding growth and development. McLean County and a number of communities in the western one-third of the county have adopted comprehensive plans to assist in these efforts. Communities with adopted comprehensive plans are listed in Table 7.1.

A number of jurisdictions also have zoning ordinances to regulate land use and subdivision ordinances to assure minimum standards for development (see Table 7.1). Bloomington, Normal, and McLean County have revised their

**MAP 7.1
EXISTING LAND USE**

**MAP 7.1
EXISTING LAND USE**

Map 7.2 Urban Area Expansion 1970 - 2008



McLean County Regional
Planning Commission

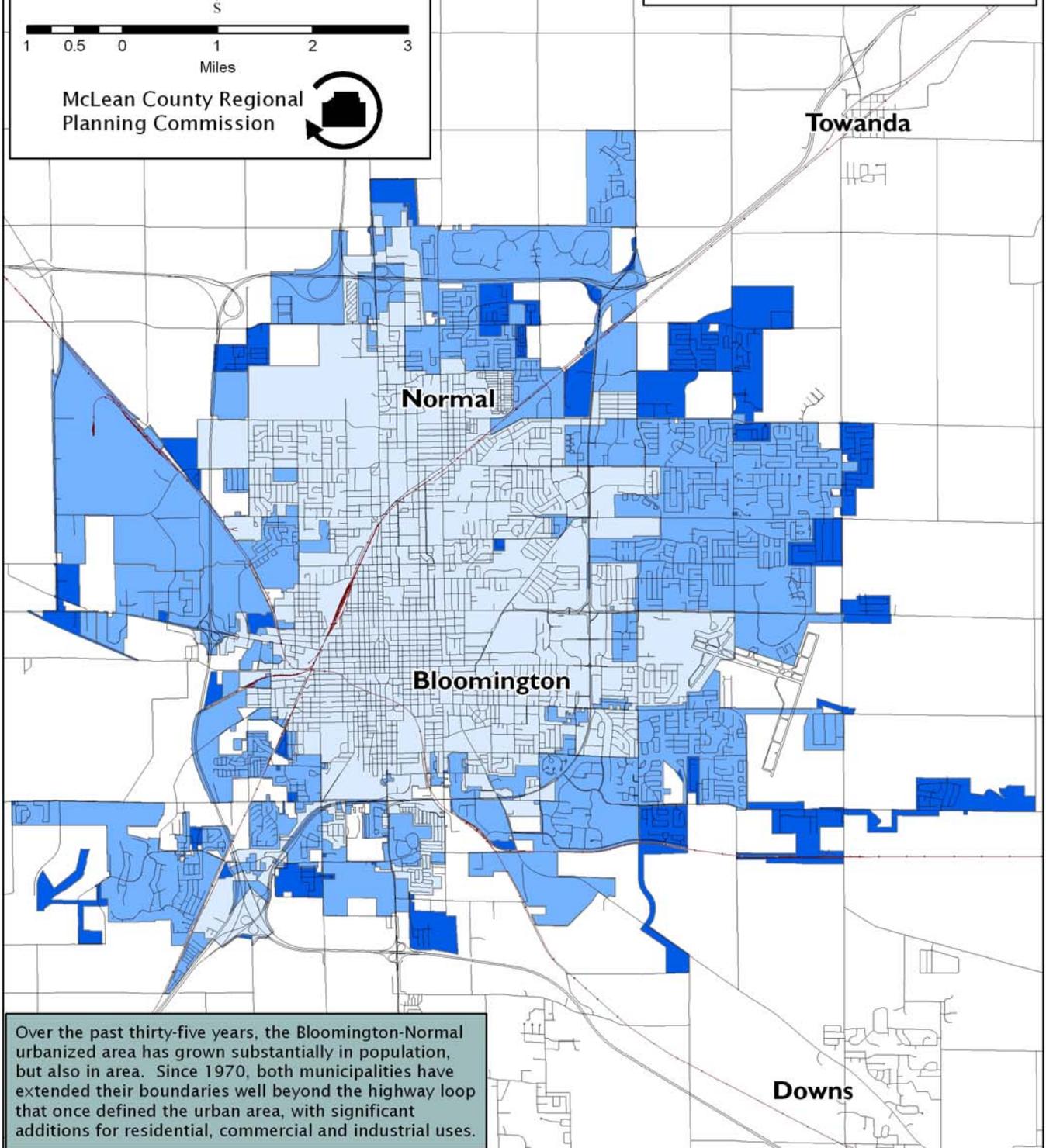


Bloomington/Normal Incorporated Area

- 1970 (18.3 square miles)
- 2000 (39.1 square miles)
- 2008 (43.2 square miles)

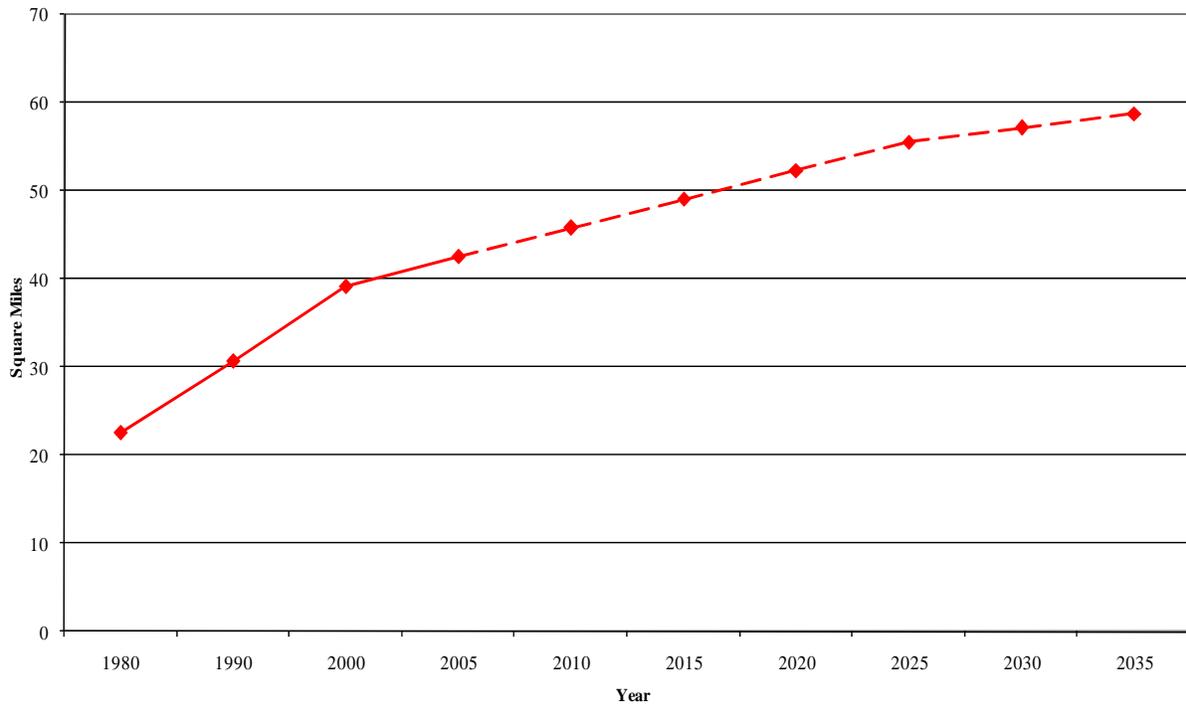
- Streets, Roads and Highways
- Railroads

Data Sources: Data representation from the McLean County GIS; data on County boundaries, incorporated areas and roads and streets from McLean County, City of Bloomington and Town of Normal



Over the past thirty-five years, the Bloomington-Normal urbanized area has grown substantially in population, but also in area. Since 1970, both municipalities have extended their boundaries well beyond the highway loop that once defined the urban area, with significant additions for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

Chart 7.2
Trends in Urban Expansion
Bloomington - Normal



Note: Projection derived from extrapolation trend based on anticipated population growth, household size and development demand.
 Source: McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan (1999); City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan (2005); Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan (2006); McLean County Department of Information Technology (2007).

subdivision ordinances to make them more uniform in their requirements. Towanda, Lexington, Carlock, and Chenoa have also updated their subdivision regulations to be more uniform as well. Municipalities that have adopted comprehensive plans and subdivision ordinances have planning and subdivision jurisdiction for an additional mile and a half beyond their corporate limits. These extra-territorial jurisdictions are shown on Map 7.1.

The comprehensive plans provide important considerations in the development of the regional land use plan. The plans provide data and, in most cases, policy direction for consideration in the delineation of future growth areas. Of particular value are projections of future population and land use as well as maps of planned future growth areas and land use. These data offer a means to identify the implications of local land use policies on the region and to assess the challenges and

opportunities that may result from projected growth.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The growth predicted for the region presents a number of land use challenges and opportunities that will have an impact on the region's quality of life. These include achieving compact and contiguous development patterns, minimizing land use and environmental conflicts, preserving farmland and open space, achieving fiscally sound development patterns, and providing people-friendly neighborhoods. Each of these is described below.

Achieving Compact And Contiguous Development

The concept of compact and contiguous urban development is consistent with the social, economic and environmental requirements for

sensible growth. Compact development is usually more efficient than sparse and fragmented development because it requires less land and resources per unit of population. However, there are different degrees of compactness that can have wide-ranging implications. For example, the region's growth has traditionally been compact, with a reasonable average lot size and only a small number of isolated pockets of development occurring outside urban areas. Although most new development occurs at the fringe of developed areas, it is usually contiguous and provided with services and proper zoning. Annexation agreements help ensure this in Bloomington and Normal.

On the other hand, the decreasing urban densities described earlier indicate that development is becoming less compact. The consequences of less compact development often include a less pedestrian-friendly environment, greater per capita costs and corresponding increases in impact fees and/or taxes to provide services, and greater losses of farmland and open space.

A major challenge for the future will be to achieve development that continues to be contiguous but is more compact. Meeting this challenge will help avoid the consequences noted above and provide opportunities to preserve and enhance the local quality of life. Some of the concepts noted earlier in this report, such as transit-oriented development and traditional neighborhood development, can also be effective in achieving compact and contiguous development and thus offer opportunities that could prove beneficial in achieving land use objectives as well as other community development objectives outlined throughout this report.

Minimizing Conflicts

Another great challenge will be to develop land use and transportation relationships that allow convenient access to jobs, services and amenities with a minimum of conflicts with the built and natural environments. An important early step in meeting this challenge is to identify general guidelines for where growth should and should not occur. These guidelines are

incorporated in the "Strategy" section of this chapter and should be considered in the review of specific development proposals.

Preserving Farmland And Open Space

Although the region's growth will continue to present a challenge for preserving farmland and open space, the achievement of more compact development by its very nature would reduce land consumption of all types. Success in achieving other plan objectives for urban revitalization, balanced economic development and housing would also serve to reduce land consumption and help preserve farmland and open space.

Achieving Fiscally Sound Development Patterns

Achieving fiscally sound development patterns can be enhanced through compact growth, commercial development, mixed-use neighborhoods and impact fees. The per capita cost of providing services increases as the compactness, or density, decreases. Thus, higher relative development costs are being spread over fewer people. As a result, the ability of many communities to fund services is being stretched to the limit or exceeded.

A consequence of the increasingly unfavorable cost/benefit ratios of new development is often increased taxes and/or other revenues needed to support new development. Impact fees require developer contributions proportionate to the increased cost burdens placed on local governments as a direct result of a development project. Such fees can help finance new development and keep taxes from rising as much, or if set at very high levels, can be used as a mechanism to discourage growth. While those wishing to stop growth seem to be in a minority at this time, there does seem to be a growing sentiment that growth should pay for itself as evidenced by the recommendations of earlier community visioning reports. Both impact fees and more compact development are means by which to achieve more fiscally sound development.

Another means is through commercial and industrial development. Studies have shown these

Jurisdiction	Plan	Zoning	Subdivision
McLean County	X	X	X
Anchor	-	-	-
Arrowsmith	-	-	-
Bellflower	-	-	-
Bloomington	X	X	X
Carlock	X	X	X
Chenoa	X	X	X
Colfax	-	X	X
Cooksville	-	-	-
Danvers	X	*	X
Downs	X	X	X
Ellsworth	-	-	-
Gridley	-	-	X
Heyworth	X	X	X
Hudson	X	X	X
Lexington	X	X	X
LeRoy	X	X	X
McLean	-	X	-
Normal	X	X	X
Shirley	-	-	-
Stanford	-	X	-
Towanda	X	X	X

* In progress.

Source: McLean County Building & Zoning, McLean County Regional Planning, respective municipal offices (2007)

uses generally provide greater tax revenues for local governments than they require for services. These revenues are often used to subsidize residential development. This has worked fairly well in the Bloomington-Normal urban area because of the large scale commercial and industrial development that has located in both communities. It has been a problem for the smaller bedroom communities that surround the urban area. These communities often do not have a sufficient commercial tax base to meet the full service needs of their residents, many of whom help meet the labor needs of Bloomington-Normal employers and spend sales tax dollars in the urban area. It will also become less effective in Bloomington and Normal if densities continue to decline, especially if future commercial development should decline in relation to residential development.

Commercial and industrial development is an essential component of land use planning, both regionally and locally. Sufficient land should be allocated for both regional and local centers of business and commerce. Continued regional economic development will help maintain a stable economic base while community and

neighborhood economic development will offer convenient access and contribute to the fiscal soundness of developing areas. When certain types of commercial and industrial development are effectively integrated into local downtowns and mixed use neighborhood centers, added tax revenues can make for a more sound investment from the perspectives of both the developer and the community. If designed in a pedestrian-friendly manner, the development can also be very attractive and financially sound for residents as well.

Providing Pedestrian-Friendly Neighborhoods

Providing pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods is key to preserving quality of life. Pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods contain a range of housing types and densities for all age groups and income levels, balanced around a commercial and mixed use center. Ideally, each neighborhood would have a park, school, and a community center, village green or landmark to serve as a focal point and gathering place to provide local identity and distinguish it from other places. Pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods in urban areas may be viewed as small towns within themselves that serve as building blocks for the larger urban area.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to developing pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods is the present paradigm for low density, automobile oriented development. It has taken most of the twentieth century for the pendulum to swing from the compact, pedestrian-friendly designs of traditional neighborhoods to the present mindsets. There are significant indications that the socio-economic and environmental problems associated with automobile dependency, combined with increasing land and development costs, have caused the pendulum to begin to swing back. Hundreds of pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods are being developed around the nation, and significant interest has been expressed in this region.

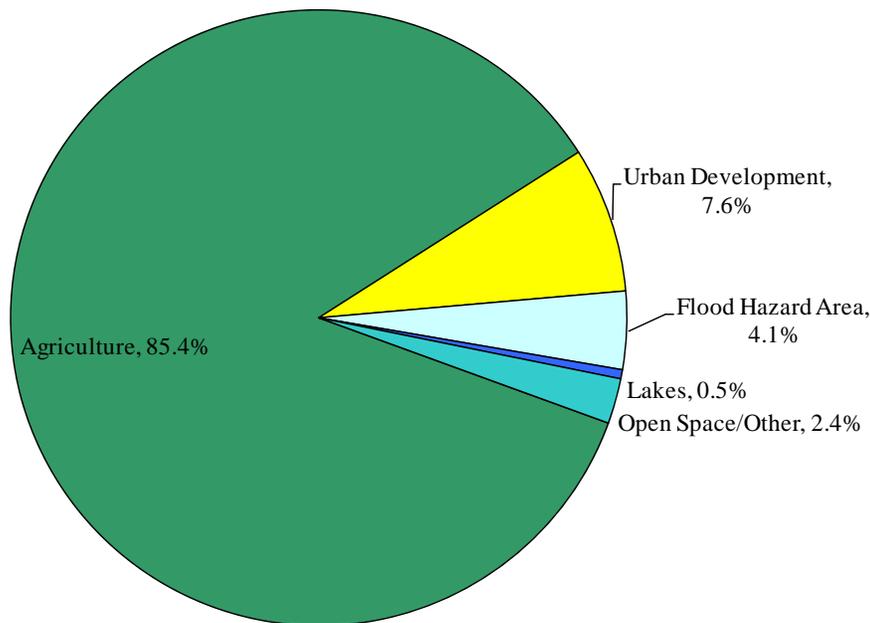
STRATEGY

The following goal, objectives, policies and actions comprise the strategy for land use. The

MAP 7.3
REGIONAL LAND USE
PLAN - CO

**MAP 7.3
REGIONAL LAND USE
PLAN - CO**

Chart 7.3
Projected Land Use by Percentage of County, 2035
McLean County, Illinois



Source: McLean County Regional Planning Commission; see Chart 7.1 for percentage distribution of existing land use.

land use strategy, together with the maps presented in this chapter, provides a framework for evaluating major development projects and for implementing land use initiatives in the region. The strategy was derived from the 2000 McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan and updated and refined as appropriate to reflect current conditions. The strategy includes an assortment of actions depicting measures available to support the respective policies. Each action should be considered in context with specific issues to determine applicability. Priorities for implementation are addressed in Chapter 10.

Goal

Land use patterns and intensities that enrich the quality of life by equitably meeting the social, economic and environmental needs of present and future generations.

Open Space

Objective

Abundant open space to meet ecological and recreational needs.

Policy

Support the provision of open space and greenways consistent with the McLean County Regional Greenways Plan and locally adopted comprehensive plans and subdivision ordinances.

Actions

- Periodically update the McLean County Regional Greenways Plan to ensure its continued viability as a guide for regional greenway development.
- Identify planned greenways as a priority land use in comprehensive plans.
- Identify priority greenways, summarize available strategies, and form an implementation plan.

- Adopt stream buffer ordinances for planned growth areas.
- Maintain a close working relationship with public, private and not-for-profit agencies that provide funding and technical assistance to aid in developing parks, open space and bikeways.
- Support the use of subdivision ordinances to help meet standards for new development and open space.
- Consider creating environmental overlay districts that include additional provisions or restrictions for identified areas within other zoning districts that contain environmental features in need of special attention.
- Consider establishing transfer and purchase of development rights programs to reserve open space outside planned growth areas.
- Encourage the use of conservation easements to preserve open space outside planned growth areas.
- Encourage state level support for various farmland preservation programs, including tax relief.

Farmland

Objective

Agricultural areas capable of sustaining the economic and cultural significance of farming while providing reasonable opportunities for rural non-farm development and not inhibiting the efficient growth of municipalities.

Policy #1

Restrict non-farm development in areas of more productive farmland outside urban growth areas and consider limited non-farm and quasi-farm development on less productive land outside urban growth areas.

Actions

- Consider adopting site development requirements to protect environmental resources such as tree cover, reduce soil erosion, and protect water quality in areas where non-farm rural residential growth occurs.

- Consider adoption of right-to-farm ordinances to protect farmers from nuisance lawsuits in areas planned for agriculture.
- Support education and outreach to publicize the current and historical importance of agriculture and urban-rural interdependence, including the development of agritourism.
- Consider creating environmental overlay districts that include additional provisions or restrictions for identified areas within other zoning districts that contain environmental features in need of special attention.
- Consider establishing transfer and purchase of development rights programs to reserve farmland outside planned growth areas.
- Encourage the use of agricultural conservation easements to preserve farmland outside planned growth areas.
- Consider adoption of agricultural district laws to allow farmers to form special areas where commercial agriculture is encouraged and protected.
- Encourage state level support for various farmland preservation programs, including tax relief.
- Consider the use of mitigation ordinances and policies for urban development outside planned growth areas to require a donation of a given amount of farmland in exchange for a given amount of farmland developed, or payment in lieu thereof.

Policy #2

Preserve farmland and open space in urban buffer areas as holding zones for possible urban expansion after the planning period.

Actions

- Identify urban buffer areas on the map depicting the land use plan.
- As one of the conditions for approval, require non-farm development in urban buffer areas to be designed in a manner that conserves farmland and natural areas and facilitates the possible future provision of urban services to these and neighboring areas.

Areas Where Growth Should Not Occur

- In areas designated as greenways in the McLean County Regional Greenways Plan
- In areas designated as primary agriculture
- Within designated flood plains
- On steep slopes where there is an erosion hazard
- In areas where significant tree cover would be destroyed
- Over mineable mineral deposits
- In areas that will require an excessive expenditure of public funds to provide necessary services
- In areas where public water and sewer service are needed but not available at reasonable cost to government
- Adjacent to public water supply impoundments
- Where land use conflicts are likely

Urban Growth

Objective

Urban growth areas contiguous to existing urban areas and of sufficient size to accommodate economic growth and projected population at a wide range of densities, along with supporting services.

Policy

Encourage urban development in or adjacent to incorporated municipalities that are in a position

to provide essential services, and discourage urban development in areas where growth should not occur (see sidebar).

Actions

- Support comprehensive land use planning throughout McLean County to achieve balanced and sensible growth.
- Identify and utilize planned urban growth areas as a guide for development decisions.
- Consider the use of developer incentives to develop housing, retail, and business projects that use tracts of land currently within municipalities and disincentives in areas not already appropriately zoned.
- Review and update zoning ordinances as appropriate to guide urban expansion and implement land use plans.
- Use the extension of urban services as a tool to guide development into planned growth areas.
- Use annexation agreements to provide for proper zoning and municipal services for development projects that meet local requirements and support the comprehensive plan.
- Support intergovernmental cooperation and agreements in considering specific development proposals as a means to guide urban expansion.
- Offer density bonuses that allow projects to be developed at higher densities than normally permitted when project strongly supports plan objectives.
- Review and update impact fees as needed to ensure fees are proportionate to the added costs for public services needed to serve new developments.
- Adopt official maps to identify locations of future public facilities, including parks, schools, municipal buildings and streets, to reserve land and require conformance to a planned street system.
- Consider establishing a program for tax base sharing to provide an equitable means of sharing costs and revenues from new economic development and to reduce intergovernmental competition as a factor in making land use decisions.
- Utilize tax increment financing to encourage redevelopment in urban areas and discourage development outside planned growth areas.

- Coordinate long range planning for urban land use development with EPA authorized Facility Planning Areas to help ensure appropriately-sized tracts of land are available to accommodate planned growth.

Service Centers

Objective

Regional, sub-regional and neighborhood activity centers that strengthen communities and neighborhoods by providing abundant opportunities for social, cultural and economic interactions.

Policy

Encourage urban development that is balanced around institutional, commercial, industrial and mixed use centers in order to reduce drive times, provide convenient opportunities for human interaction, and strengthen community and neighborhood identities.

Actions

- Identify service centers in comprehensive plans to provide a guide for land use decisions.
- Consider identified service centers as areas for density bonuses and as receiving zones for possible transfer of development rights programs.

FUTURE REQUIREMENTS AND DISTRIBUTION

The Bloomington-Normal urban area is expected to expand significantly over the next 25 to 30 years, growing by approximately seventeen square miles by the year 2035 (see Chart 7.2). This does not include rural growth or the developing areas around other municipalities. Total urban development is expected to grow by nearly 2 percent of total area as of 2007, to account for 7.6 percent of the county's land in 2035 (see Chart 7.3).

Outside the urban areas, it comes as no surprise that agriculture will continue to be the primary rural land use, although it is expected to decrease in proportion to urban growth.

Nevertheless, agriculture will continue to be the dominant land use type throughout the planning period. The policies identified previously support the preservation of the region's limited amount of tree cover and lakes (see Chart 7.3).

Unincorporated residential development, though limited by county zoning, could nevertheless consume significant acreage. Chart 7.4 illustrates the number of single-family dwelling permits issued by the county for unincorporated areas since 1990. This number has averaged approximately 90 units per year during this period. Assuming a future average of 75 units per year and an average acreage of 2.5 acres per rural lot, it is expected that approximately 190 acres per year will be consumed by unincorporated development. This equates to over 5,000 acres by the end of the 2035 planning period.

Open Space Plan

Open space distribution is the first component of future land use addressed in this plan. The open space plan identifies general areas that should not be intensively developed for urban uses due to physical constraints, distance from urban services, agricultural significance and/or need to provide open space and recreation opportunities for the population. The plan identifies areas for conservation and recreation, primary agriculture and secondary agriculture. Each is described in the following paragraphs and the geographic distribution of each is illustrated on Map 7.3.

Conservation And Recreation Areas

These areas include parks and nature preserves as well as lands not well suited for urban development due to location and/or physical constraints, such as floodplains and steep slopes. Included are major public, semipublic, and private recreation areas, such as golf courses and state and municipal parks, as well as the major floodplains and conservation areas that were identified in the McLean County Regional Greenways Plan.

These areas often have scenic, aesthetic, and ecological value and many serve to help meet

recreational needs as well. However, additional local parks and public open space will be needed in some communities to supplement the regional public open space system and to meet local needs. Some of the floodplain areas may be suitable for agricultural or other low intensity use such as some forms of recreation, but a potential hazard exists for contamination of surface and subsurface water in these areas. Floodplains can help prevent pollutants from distant sources from entering groundwater and streams. As a result, floodplains are excellent areas for the implementation of conservation programs as described in Chapter 2 of this report.

Primary Agricultural Areas

These areas include the county's best agricultural land that is not expected to be needed for urban development during the planning period. Primary agricultural areas are best suited for intensive farming; therefore, other uses should continue to be restricted. Consistent with existing county land use and the objective to sustain the

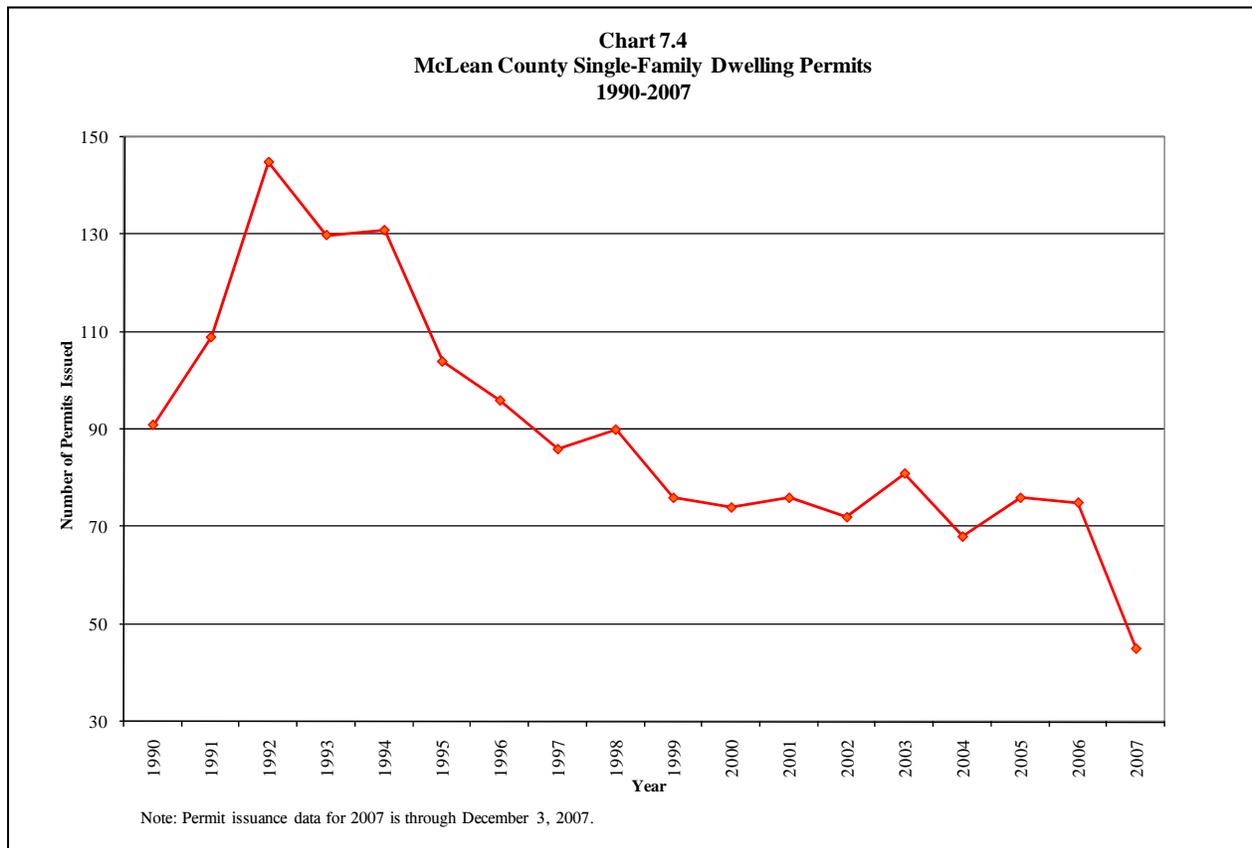
economic and cultural significance of farming, primary agricultural areas comprise the greatest amount of land area of all proposed future land uses.

Secondary Agricultural Areas

Secondary agricultural areas are generally suitable for most types of agricultural uses but contain somewhat less productive soils and may contain some steeper slopes or limited amounts of tree cover. In the past, low intensity uses such as farmettes, ranchettes, or limited non-farm residential development were considered appropriate. Due to limited resources, these uses should be discouraged and secondary lands should be preserved with the same urgency as prime farmland, except in the areas planned for urban growth.

Plan For Urban Growth

The plan for urban growth identifies selected rural areas for development as well as areas within and on the fringe of the region's



municipalities. The identified rural growth areas have been designated for low to medium intensity development, while the municipal growth areas have been designated for medium to high intensity development (see Map 7.3). It should be noted that the limits of growth delineated represent the desired general directions for growth and that specific development proposals should be individually evaluated in context with the principles and strategies outlined in this plan.

... specific development proposals should be individually evaluated in context with the principles, objectives, policies and strategies outlined in this plan.

Low to Medium Intensity Areas

These areas are situated on the less productive agricultural soils within an easy commute of Bloomington-Normal (see Map 7.3). These general areas were originally identified in the 1994 county comprehensive plan and expanded upon somewhat in subsequent plans to meet the goal of preserving prime farmland. Low to medium intensity urban growth areas provide advantages and disadvantages. These areas usually consist of large lot subdivisions that provide an alternative to urban and rural life styles that some people find attractive. Urban services, particularly sewers, are generally not cost effective in these areas due to the low densities. Expansion of the Crestwicke area could be an exception due to the proximity of the recently constructed wastewater treatment plant to the southeast. Although a full range of urban services is lacking in these areas, other amenities are a relatively short distance away and neighbors are closer than other more rural areas. A disadvantage is that the larger lot sizes consume more land, thus further emphasizing the need for rural growth to be developed on less productive land. Building in secondary agricultural areas also decreases the growth of established urban areas where services are available. Wildlife habitat can also be destroyed in these rural growth areas, forcing wildlife into urban areas and creating additional problems.

Conservation subdivisions are often appropriate for low intensity urban growth areas. The use of conservation subdivisions and cluster development in these areas offers a means to preserve open space and makes the provision of water and especially sewer service more economical should it become available. The design of a conservation subdivision is conceptually illustrated in Figure 7.1.

The three general areas designated for rural growth in the 1994 and 2000 county plans have been updated and designated for low to medium intensity urban growth. These are located west of the urban area in Dry Grove and Dale Townships, south of the urban area in Bloomington Township, and southeast of the urban area in Old Town Township. Therefore, some additional expansion of these growth areas is provided for in this plan.

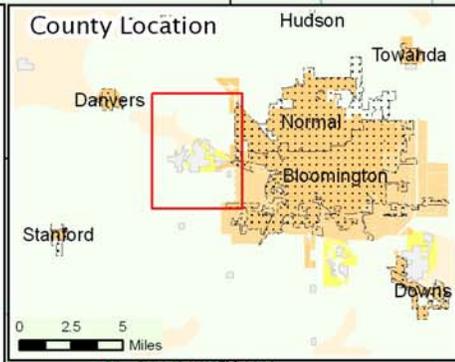
Dry Grove and Dale Townships. This rural growth area is located a short distance to the west of the urban area on both sides of Route 9. It includes the flood plain of Kings Mill Creek which should not be developed. This growth area also includes a considerable amount of existing low intensity development, some of which has occurred within the past five years. Areas around the perimeter of existing development have been designated for future growth (see Map 7.4).

Bloomington Township. This rural growth area is situated south of Interstate 74 and east of U.S. Route 51. It includes the Crestwicke subdivision and golf course. The Little Kickapoo Creek and flood plain traverse this growth area from north to south and should not be developed. Limited growth has occurred during the past ten years or so, leaving much of the land designated in the 1994 plan still available for low to medium intensity growth. The construction of a new regional wastewater treatment facility a short distance to the southeast, combined with the availability of public water service from the City

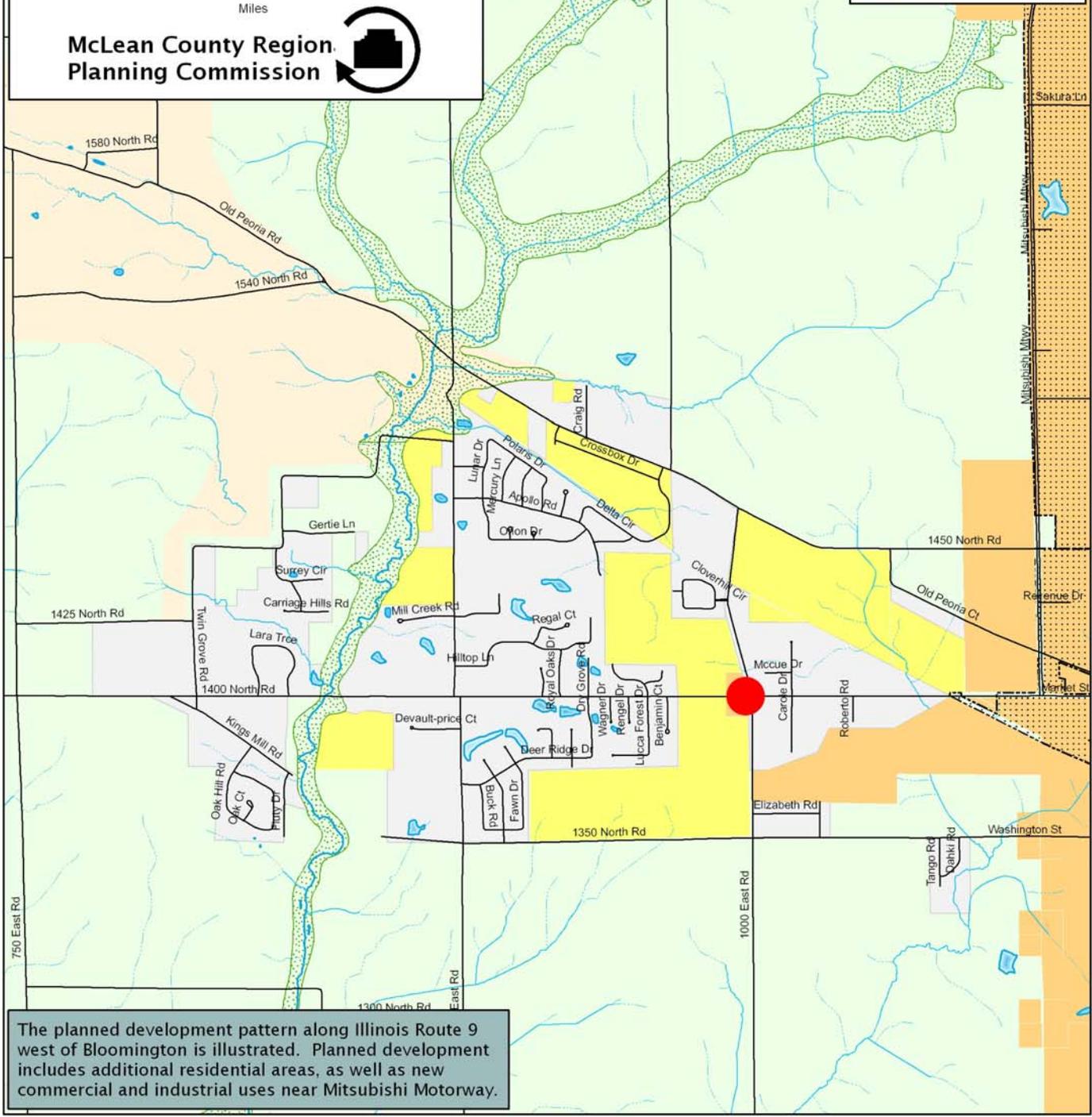
Map 7.4 Generalized Land Use Plan for Rural Growth Area Dry Grove and Dale Townships



McLean County Region
Planning Commission



Legend	
	Existing Developed Area
	Primary Agriculture
	Secondary Agriculture
	Conservation/Recreation
	Low Intensity Urban Growth Area
	Medium/High Intensity Urban Growth Area
	Subregional & Local Service Centers
	Streets and Roads
	Current Corporate Limits
	Lakes and Detention
	Streams

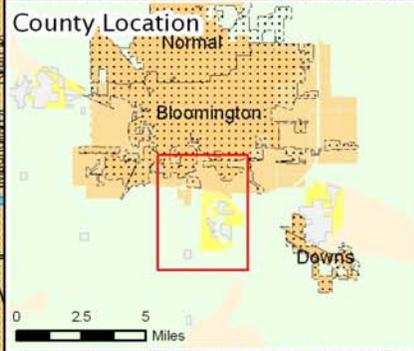


The planned development pattern along Illinois Route 9 west of Bloomington is illustrated. Planned development includes additional residential areas, as well as new commercial and industrial uses near Mitsubishi Motorway.

Map 7.5 Generalized Land Use Plan for Rural Growth Area Bloomington Township

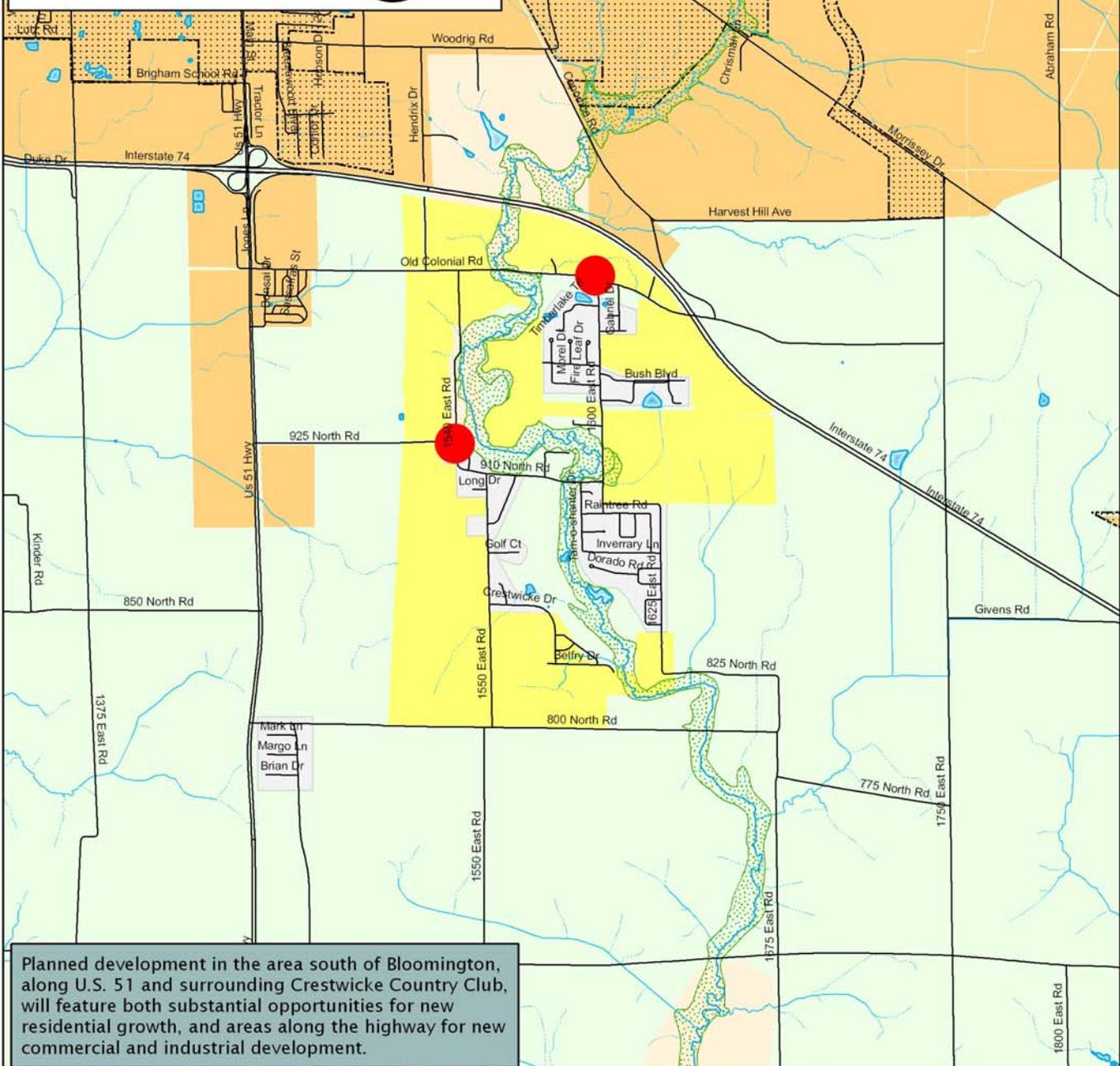


McLean County Regional
Planning Commission



Legend

- Existing Developed Area
- Primary Agriculture
- Secondary Agriculture
- Conservation/Recreation
- Low Intensity Urban Growth Area
- Medium/High Intensity Urban Growth Area
- Subregional & Local Service Centers/Interchange Development
- Streets and Roads
- Current Corporate Limits
- Lakes and Detention
- Streams



Planned development in the area south of Bloomington, along U.S. 51 and surrounding Crestwicke Country Club, will feature both substantial opportunities for new residential growth, and areas along the highway for new commercial and industrial development.

of Bloomington, adds to the growth potential of the Crestwicke area. Some additional expansion of this growth area is provided for in this plan (see Map 7.5).

Old Town Township. This rural growth area has also been retained from the 1994 and 2000 County plans and is located to the north and west of the village of Downs, southeast of Bloomington. The planned growth areas are located along most edges of the existing rural subdivisions situated in this area (see Map 7.6). Future growth capacity in this township may be limited due to lack of water and sewer infrastructure and the ability to provide it due to rough terrain. There are also concerns the Tri-Valley School district may not be able to adequately serve significant new development without making major additions to its facilities.

Medium to High Intensity Areas

These are the areas designated for contiguous growth within and adjacent to the region's municipalities. The densities in these areas are intended to support a full range of urban services. The plan's designated urban growth areas incorporate a sufficient market factor to allow for considerable locational choices without having to develop additional lands designated for other use. The market factor provides this built-in flexibility by designating more land for future development than would be required to accommodate the projected populations at the planned densities. Commonly used market factors range from as low as 10 percent to as high as 50 percent. The market factor used in this plan is toward the high end of this range, especially in the Bloomington-Normal urban area where the development pressures are greatest. The high market factor used in the plan also provides additional flexibility in the event population growth exceeds projections. Thus, the plan's designated growth areas should be more than sufficient to accommodate projected growth

while allowing considerable flexibility in the selection of development sites.

Bloomington-Normal. The Bloomington and Normal Comprehensive Plans were used as a basis to delineate the urban region's growth areas. The proposed land uses in these plans were generalized for the purpose of defining the urban growth area and expanded somewhat to accommodate the 2035 planning horizon based on the updated populations projections. These

growth areas will be reevaluated as the City and Town update their respective comprehensive plans following the availability of the 2010 Census data.

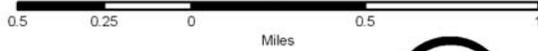
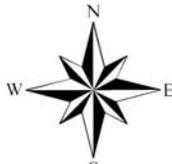
Growth is planned in all directions from the urban area (see Map 7.7). To the north growth is planned to Ziebarth Road, while Interstate 74 provides a boundary to the south. The general boundary to the East is 2100 East and to the west is Mitsubishi Motorway. The growth is proposed to be contiguous, but at a slightly decreasing density as current trends suggest is likely. The amount of land required to accommodate this growth was addressed earlier in this chapter, as was the importance of increasing compactness and corresponding densities.

Smaller Municipalities. The delineation of growth areas for smaller municipalities was done in two separate ways. For those communities that have adopted comprehensive plans and maps of proposed land use available, those maps were generalized and incorporated into the Regional Land Use Plan for each respective community. This was done for Danvers, LeRoy, Towanda, Lexington, Carlock and Chenoa. While other communities may have comprehensive plans, their maps were not available for use in the Regional Plan.

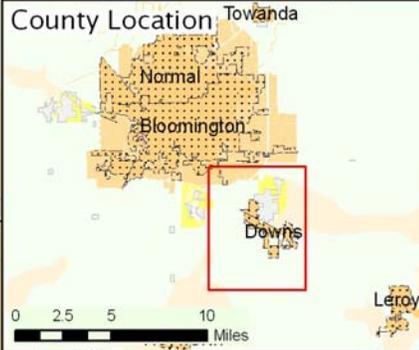
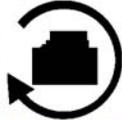
For communities that did not have maps of proposed land use available, the undeveloped areas within their respective corporate boundaries were considered to be areas for future growth if and when it occurs and were designated as such.

... the plan's designated growth areas should be more than sufficient to accommodate projected growth ...

Map 7.6 Generalized Land Use Plan for Rural Growth Area Old Town Township

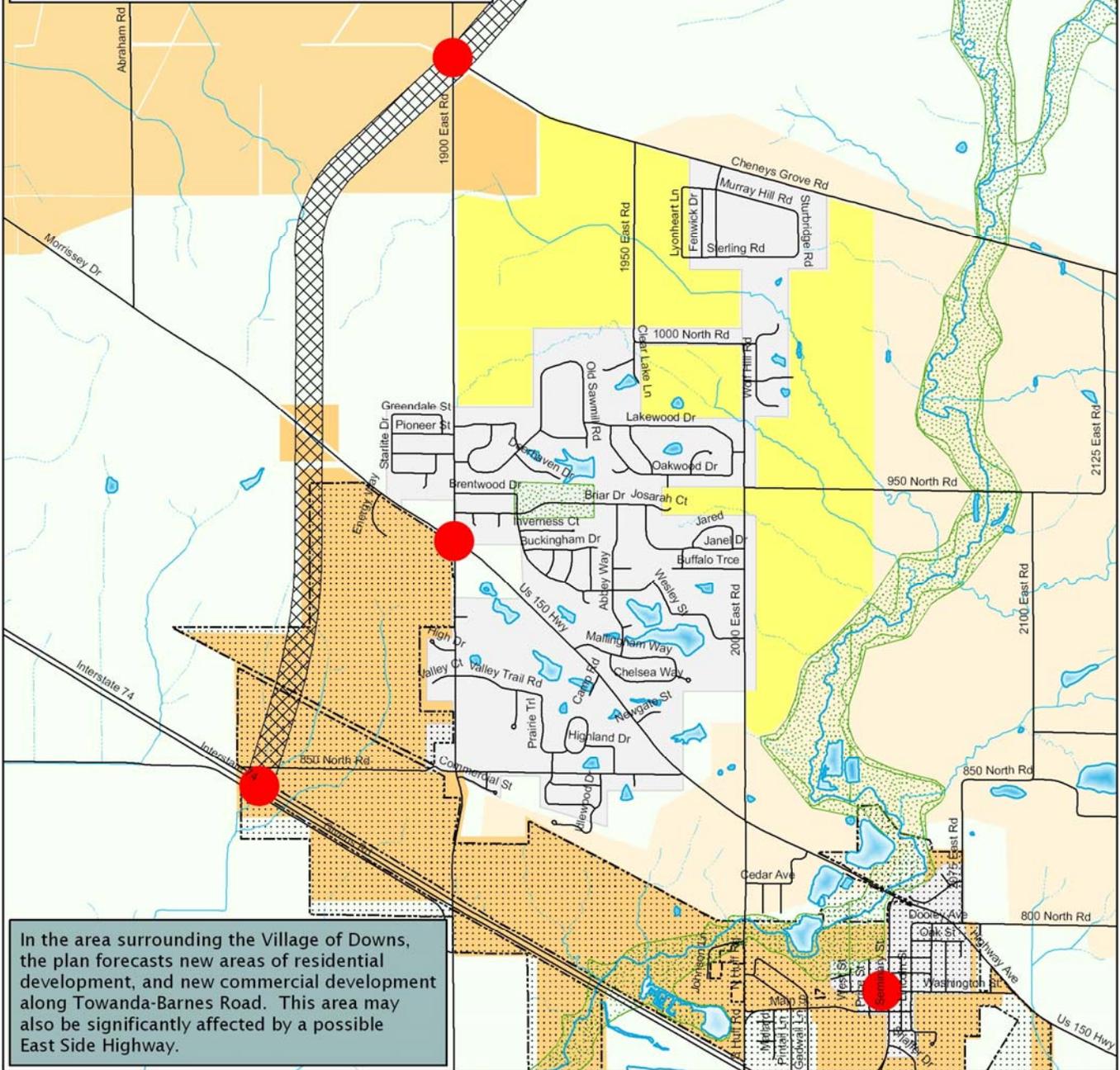


McLean County Regional
Planning Commission



Legend

- Existing Developed Area
- Primary Agriculture
- Secondary Agriculture
- Conservation/Recreation
- Low Intensity Urban Growth Area
- Medium/High Intensity Urban Growth Area
- Highway Corridor
- Subregional & Local Service Centers/Interchange Development
- Streets and Roads
- Current Corporate Limits
- Lakes and Detention
- Streams



In the area surrounding the Village of Downs, the plan forecasts new areas of residential development, and new commercial development along Towanda-Barnes Road. This area may also be significantly affected by a possible East Side Highway.

The growth areas of the smaller municipalities are shown on Map 7.3.

Urban Buffer Areas

Urban buffer areas extend a distance of one and one-half miles beyond the present boundaries of the county's municipalities. These areas comprise the municipalities' extra-territorial jurisdictions for those that have comprehensive plans and/or subdivision regulations. The remaining municipalities have the potential to develop plans and ordinances and were therefore also shown with urban buffer areas (see Map 7.3). The urban buffer areas include the currently planned urban growth areas of the county's municipalities, as well as additional lands that could become incorporated beyond the planning period of this comprehensive plan.

These areas should be preserved primarily as open space at least until the land is needed to accommodate future expansions of municipalities. Compatible uses include agriculture, parks, trails, natural areas, greenways, and possibly other forms of active and passive recreation. Conservation and cluster subdivisions may also be appropriate in urban buffer areas, as these types of development are designed to preserve open space and be adaptable to the provision of urban services in the event the services become available (see Figure 7.1). If and when urban development occurs in these areas, significant amounts of the open space should be incorporated into the new developments.

The impact of expanding extra-territorial jurisdiction on the range of agricultural activities should also be considered. Proximity to areas within such municipal jurisdiction may change the outcome of Land Evaluation Site Assessment (LESA) and result in adverse constraints on agricultural uses.

Plan For Activity Centers

The highest intensity uses are usually found within activity centers. These areas contain concentrations of commercial, industrial, governmental or institutional uses that provide employment, shopping, entertainment and services for residents and visitors. The plan addresses activity center uses according to regional and sub-regional function.

Regional

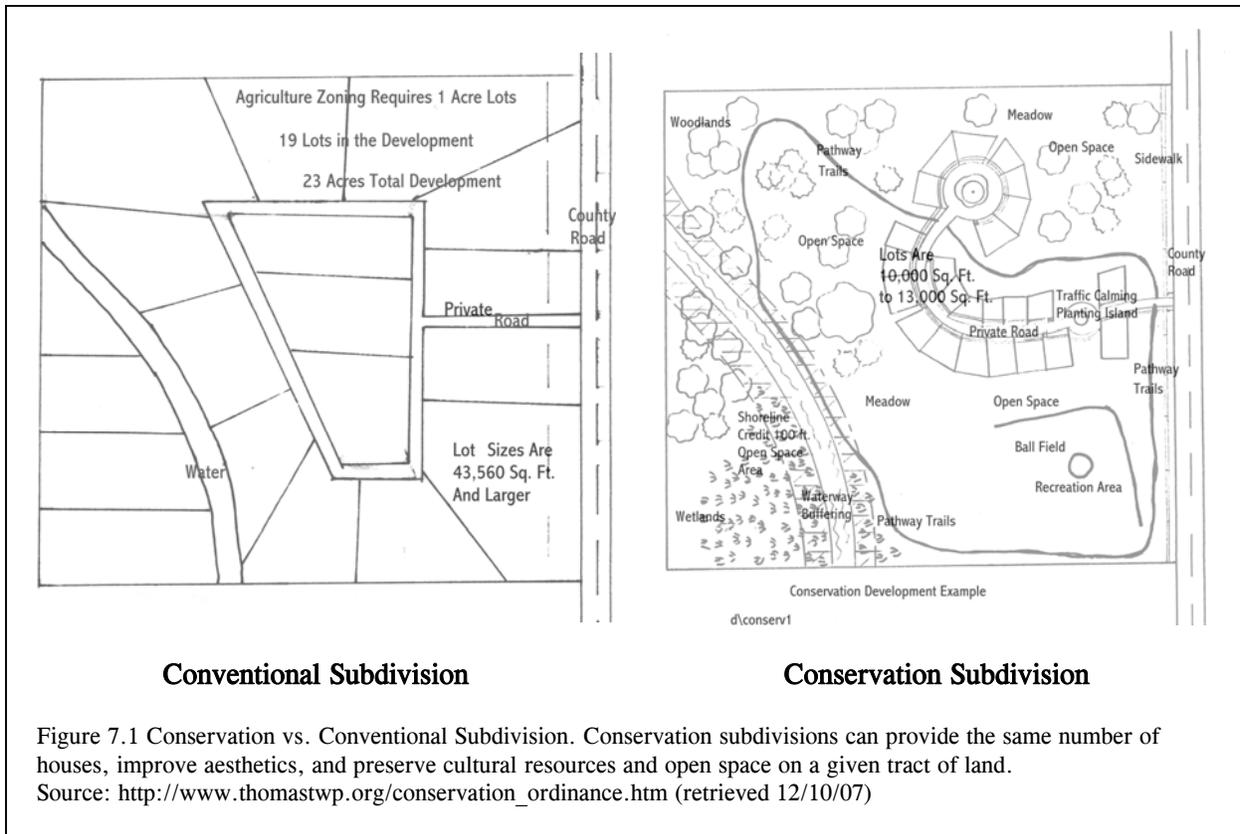
Conservation and cluster subdivisions may also be appropriate in urban buffer areas ...

Regional activity centers attract people from a large service area. In Chapter 4, it was noted the Twin

Cities' area of dominant influence extends over eight counties and includes over 448,000 people. The urban area's regional activity centers contain the employers, goods and services that draw people from such a wide area.

To be most effective, regional centers should in fact be centers of concentrated activities that can be conveniently accessed from both within and outside the immediate area. These areas should be located with complementary services and near major transportation routes, including alternative transportation, in order to enhance access. They should also be screened from low intensity uses by intermediate uses, such as medium to high density residential areas, or the use of open space or landscaping to provide buffer zones. The location of the three general types of regional centers are illustrated on Maps 7.3 and 7.7 and are described below.

Commercial. The plan identifies 13 regional commercial centers. Six of these are in excess of 300 acres and are in various stages of development. These include the Shoppes at College Hills/Wal-Mart area and the Eastland Mall/Kmart area. These are well established but have at least some expansion potential. Another is the Route 9 West area that includes Wal-Mart, Crossroads Center, a multi-plex theater complex, interchange development, Farm & Fleet, and considerable room for expansion. The fourth



major regional center is the Route 9 East area in the vicinity of the Central Illinois Regional Airport. Significant commercial development has occurred and is anticipated to continue to the north of the airport between Airport and Towanda-Barnes Roads. Office and other light industrial development is also expected in this general vicinity. The fifth major commercial center includes the Menards/Home Depot/Sams area in east Normal. The sixth is the Raab Road/Main Street area of north Normal.

Seven other regional commercial centers of less than 300 acres are also identified. These include two in north Normal, one to the east and north of the I-39/55 interchange and one at the intersection of Towanda Barnes Road and the proposed East Side Highway; one southeast of Bloomington around the proposed East Side Highway/U.S. Route 150 intersection; one in the vicinity of Veterans Parkway and Morrissey; one east of the airport at the intersection of Route 9 and the proposed East Side Highway; and one each in uptown Normal and downtown

Bloomington. Some commercial development is already present in most of these.

Industrial. The plan identifies fourteen regional industrial centers, four of which exceed 300 acres, including Mitsubishi Motors and vicinity, the area along I-39 north of I-55, the State Farm Insurance office complex and vicinity, and the area from Hamilton Road south to encompass the area in the vicinity of Route 150. Regional industrial centers include concentrations of manufacturing, warehousing or office uses that provide significant employment, storage and/or production capabilities.

Of the ten smaller regional industrial centers, three are substantially developed with some expansion potential. These include the areas in the vicinity of Nestle, Growmark and the Route 9/I-55/74 interchange. The others feature various levels of development. One of these is located along Route 9 West, south of the Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing plant. This area is populated by smaller distribution and industrial operations. Three others are located in the vicinity and south of the airport. This area

includes service, retail, or commercial operations. One includes Lowe's and vicinity in Bloomington. One is in northeast Normal east of Pipeline Road and south of Raab Road. Another is the natural gas pumping station further north on Pipeline Road. Two others are proposed at the G.E. Road and Ireland Grove Road intersection with the proposed East Side Highway.

Governmental and Institutional. The plan identifies five governmental and institutional centers, including the Central Illinois Regional Airport and the campus of Illinois State University which also encompasses Normal City Hall. Both of these centers exceed 300 acres. The other three include the county and municipal government complexes in downtown Bloomington, the campus of Illinois Wesleyan University and the campus of Heartland Community College.

Subregional and Local

Subregional and local service centers include other downtowns, neighborhood business districts and highway interchanges that offer potential for development. As the name implies, the service areas of these centers are more limited and generally serve primarily the residential areas in the immediate vicinity of the community or neighborhood, or in the case of interchange development, highway commercial needs. Subregional and neighborhood centers are shown on Maps 7.3 and 7.7.

Downtown and Neighborhood Business Districts. A mix of uses including apartments over retail, townhouses, higher density single family housing and appropriate commercial uses are desirable in downtowns and neighborhood business districts in order to expand opportunities for human interaction, provide local identities and enhance the economics of development. These areas are envisioned as future "town centers" as discussed in the "Providing People Friendly Neighborhoods" section of this chapter. These areas provide localized shopping, employment, services and housing. They are also more efficient and provide greater tax revenues than single-use, low density residential development. These areas include the central business districts of each municipality and the

proposed neighborhood centers in the Bloomington-Normal urban area.

Interchange Development. The plan incorporates the areas identified in the 2000 county plan for interchange development based on location and availability of sewer service (see Map 7.3).

Map 7.7 Urban Area Land Use Plan Bloomington - Normal, Illinois



McLean County Regional
Planning Commission



A more detailed look at the planned development activity in the Bloomington - Normal urbanized area is shown.

Legend

EXISTING

- Incorporated or Developed Area
Streets and Roads

EXISTING OR FUTURE OPEN SPACE

- Conservation and Recreation
- Primary Agriculture
- Secondary Agriculture
(Site development guidelines recommended for non-farm development)
- Lakes

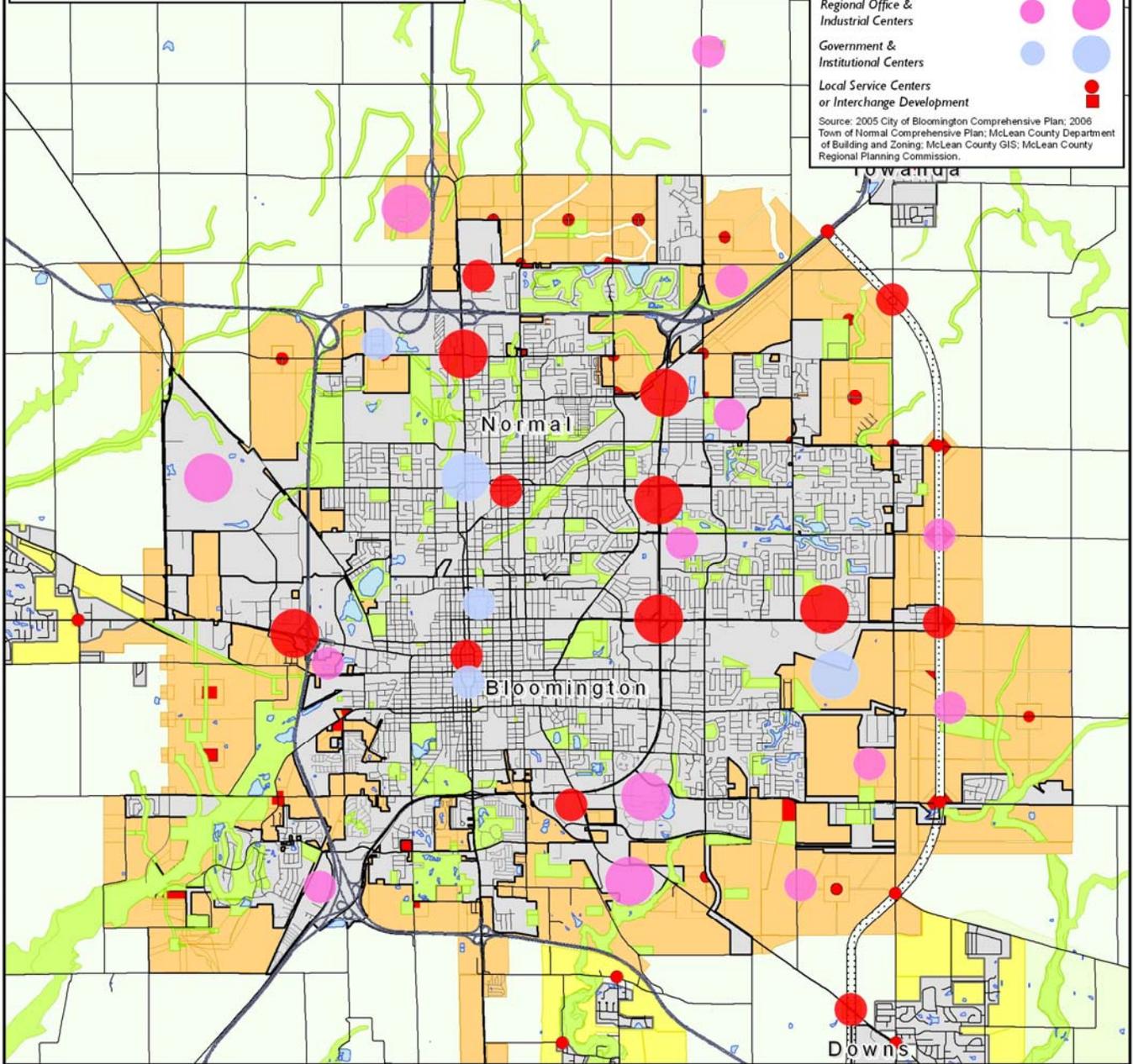
URBAN GROWTH AREAS

- Low to Medium Intensity
(Conservation subdivisions and site development guidelines recommended)
- Medium to High Intensity
- Proposed Highway Corridor

EXISTING OR FUTURE SERVICE CENTERS

	<300 Acres	>300 Acres
Regional Commercial Centers		
Regional Office & Industrial Centers		
Government & Institutional Centers		
Local Service Centers or Interchange Development		

Source: 2005 City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan; 2006 Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan; McLean County Department of Building and Zoning; McLean County GIS; McLean County Regional Planning Commission.



Chapter 8



TRANSPORTATION

Chapter 8: TRANSPORTATION

INTRODUCTION

Transportation planning and development has a major impact on sensible growth. The location of transportation facilities has a profound effect on the location and intensity of land use development. Therefore, the transportation plan should be designed to support the land use plan, both in terms of location and intensity of service to be provided by different modes. For example, regional service centers should generally be served by major thoroughfares designed to accommodate high volumes of automobile, bus, truck and possibly rail traffic to facilitate regional and inter-regional access. Residential areas on the other hand should be served by much narrower streets with shorter turning radii, wide sidewalks and other features designed to provide for safe and enjoyable pedestrian use as well as automobile and bicycle access to individual homes. A well integrated array of transportation facilities and service levels is needed for sensible growth and is necessary to maintain the region's quality of life.

The need for regional cooperation in the planning and development of transportation facilities cannot be overemphasized. Units of government must cooperate to ensure efficient connectivity and the wise use of resources. In recognition of this, the U.S. Department of Transportation mandates a comprehensive, cooperative and continuing approach to metropolitan transportation planning as a prerequisite to the receipt of federal transportation funding. In McLean County, this process is coordinated by McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC), which has been designated by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) as the metropolitan planning organization for the Bloomington-Normal metropolitan area. MCRPC works closely with IDOT, Bloomington, Normal, McLean County, the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System and the Bloomington-Normal Airport Authority, engaging in an ongoing cooperative effort to establish regional goals, objectives, policies, strategies and plans for

transportation. The transportation-related elements of the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan are a product of the metropolitan planning process carried out in this region in support of sensible growth. Additionally, this plan extends the planning process countywide to help ensure rural transportation needs are addressed in concert with those of the metropolitan area.

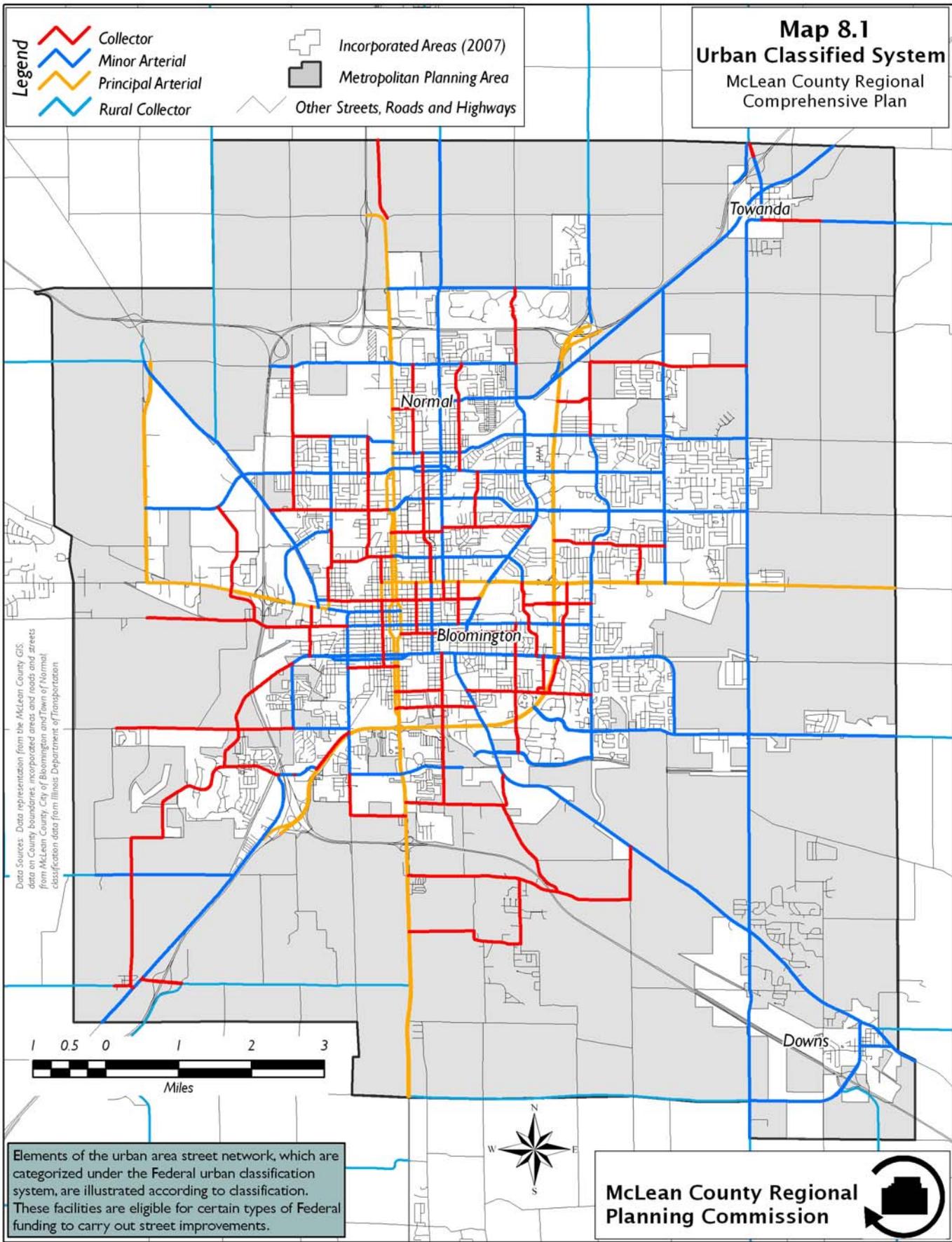
CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

The existing transportation system includes the Urban Classified System and local streets, as well as a number of alternative modes in addition to the rural roads network. Each of these is summarized below and described in more detail in the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035 for the Bloomington - Normal Urbanized Area* (McLean County Regional Planning Commission, 2007, pp. 9-21).

Urban Classified System

The Urban Classified System is a hierarchy of streets and roads that provides for the movement of people, vehicles and freight within and across the Bloomington-Normal metropolitan area. It includes the portions of the interstate and state routes that are located within the urban area, in addition to the urban area's system of major internal streets. The Urban Classified facilities include freeways, expressways, major arterials, minor arterials and urban collectors. These facilities have a functional relationship to each other and to the system of local streets described in Table 8.1. The Urban Classified System is illustrated in Map 8.1. Further detail on the components of the classified system may be found in the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035 for the Bloomington - Normal Urbanized Area* (pp. 111 - 116).

Although the Urban Classified System is a standard implicitly recognized in many Federal transportation funding programs, alternative standards have emerged that are adapted to the neighborhood and urban design principles at the center of the New Urbanist movement. The



Congress for New Urbanism and the Institute of Transportation Engineers, collaborating with the support of the Federal Highway Administration, have developed the *Urban Thoroughfares Manual*, intended to provide guidance in the planning and design of major thoroughfares in walkable communities. Proposed recommended street design practices focus on developing roadways through the context sensitive solutions process, which emphasizes interconnectedness between streets and land uses, and early and frequent input from the community on development goals and practices. As this type of development becomes more prevalent in the region, and once standards now being drafted are accepted by state and federal transportation authorities, such alternative schemes for street design may be integrated into local development practice along with or in place of the existing Urban Classified System.

The existing Urban Classified System for the most part provides for relatively efficient movement of traffic. The system is well connected and provides for fairly continuous traffic flow resulting in good circulation. Some exceptions can be found during peak travel periods particularly on Veterans Parkway and on Main Street (U.S. Route 51). But even on these facilities, traffic flow is enhanced by a number of synchronized traffic signals. Bloomington, Normal, McLean County and IDOT have each anticipated and responded well to the urban region's dramatic growth by programming street and road construction in a timely fashion as evidenced by recent or ongoing improvements to Veterans Parkway, Towanda-Barnes Road, Raab Road and Hamilton Road. There have also been significant improvements made in sections of the interstate highways adjoining the community, including reconstruction of the Market Street and Veteran's Parkway/Pipeline Road interchanges, and bridge and lane reconstruction. Maintenance programs have also resulted in generally well-maintained streets and roads. Annual investment in the local transportation system, while subject to variation, has in recent years included federal, state and local funding, public and private, totaling in excess of \$30 million.

Alternative Modes

Providing convenient access to alternative modes of transportation increases travel options for both people and goods. It can also be an important factor in reducing automobile trips. McLean County offers a variety of transportation alternatives that contribute to the local quality of life and economic base and provide a solid framework for meeting the future challenges of continuing growth. These alternative modes include public transit systems serving both urban and rural riders, an excellent basic system of bicycle-pedestrian paths, passenger and freight rail service, a network of designated truck routes, intercity bus service, and an array of flight destinations to points around the country offered through the Bloomington-Normal Airport Authority's Central Illinois Regional Airport. Coordinated land use and transportation planning can help ensure that land use patterns and intensities support alternative transportation. Different modes of transportation should interconnect and complement each other. The basic features of the region's alternative transportation routes are illustrated graphically in Map 8.2.

Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System

The Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System has been operating public mass transit service in the Bloomington-Normal community since its takeover from the private mass transit service provider in 1972. In 1974, the service was significantly restructured to serve a greater portion of the community than had been served by the private provider. In 1975, the system began offering a complementary paratransit service for disabled persons in the community. Fixed route service was again expanded in 1976. Until 1995, service was added in small increments to meet the changing needs of the community. In 1995, a major route restructuring was implemented that again expanded service area coverage while maintaining the overall service hour offering to the community.

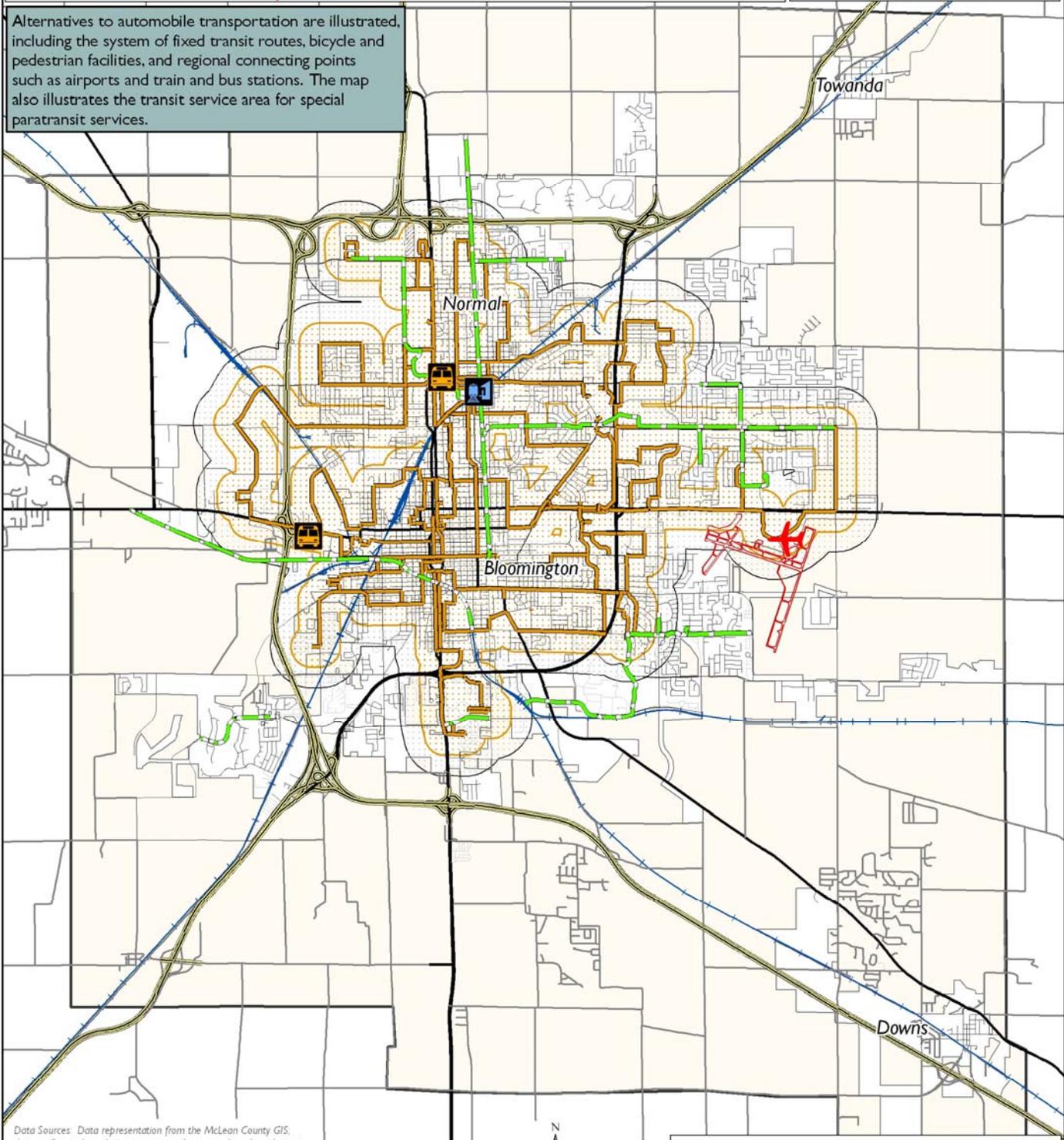
In 2003, the transit system completed a major study of transit demand in the community and began implementation of priority

Map 8.2 Alternate Transportation Modes

McLean County Regional
Comprehensive Plan

- Legend**
- Trails, Streets and Roads
 - Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail
 - City Street
 - County/Township Roads
 - State/U.S. Highway
 - Interstate Highway
 - Transit Fixed Routes
 - B-NPTS Special Service Area
 - B-NPTS Service Area
 - Regional Bus Centers
 - Central Illinois Regional Airport
 - Passenger Rail Station
 - Railroad
 - Incorporated Areas (2008)
 - Metropolitan Planning Area

Alternatives to automobile transportation are illustrated, including the system of fixed transit routes, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and regional connecting points such as airports and train and bus stations. The map also illustrates the transit service area for special paratransit services.



Data Sources: Data representation from the McLean County GIS; data on County boundaries, incorporated areas and roads and streets from McLean County, City of Bloomington and Town of Normal; classification data from Illinois Department of Transportation; transit route data from Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System.



**McLean County Regional
Planning Commission**

recommendations derived from the study outcomes. These include route additions to serve commercial and residential areas on the far west side of the urban area, expansion of service hours into the evening, and an increase in the number of buses in service.

The transit system currently operates eleven fixed routes, from approximately 6:15 a.m. to 9:20 p.m. on weekdays and from approximately 7:15 a.m. to 9:20 p.m. on Saturdays. The Teal J route is the first to provide service east of Hershey Road, and also supports intermodal choice through service to Central Illinois Regional Airport. Regular fixed route service requires the use of fifteen buses, with an available fleet reserve of five buses. Complementary paratransit service is offered during the same operating hours and on the same days of the week as fixed route services. Although paratransit service availability is generally confined to points located within three-quarters of a mile of a fixed transit route, the transit system attempts to provide service to qualified paratransit riders located outside the traditional service area, on a time and space available basis. As is the case with fixed route service, paratransit operations must remain within the incorporated areas of Bloomington and Normal. The fixed route system is illustrated on Map 8.2.

During the Illinois State University academic year, the transit system provides evening fixed-route and complementary paratransit services from 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. to the greater campus area. NiteRide buses run every half hour during this period. The NiteRide service area extends from Heartland College (Raab Road) to the Shoppes at College Hills with stops at various buildings on the ISU campus. Late NiteRide service is also available with variable service dates and times of service closure. As with all of B-NPTS fixed route services, this service is available to students and the general public.

Beginning in the fall semester of 2004, the transit service also began operation of the Redbird Express, a campus shuttle provided under contract with Illinois State University. Redbird Express operates throughout the day and into the evening, until 7 p.m. Service is also

provided to the Occupational Development Center on weekdays, through operation of a tripper service, defined as service that employs route alterations, modified fare collection or fare subsidy arrangements, varied frequency of service and alternate vehicles to serve destination locations such as schools, institutions and concentrated employment centers not readily served on standard fixed routes. The Transit System is also facilitating increased transit use by employees of State Farm through a pilot program to provide State Farm staff with system access using employee identification, a program similar to the universal access agreement with Illinois State University.

The Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System receives the bulk of its funding through the State of Illinois (IDOT) and the Federal Transit Administration. The remainder of its funding is provided by the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal, and operating revenue. Some operating revenue is collected under service agreements with Illinois State University. The transit system has diversified its fare structure by offering monthly passes for fixed route and paratransit services, as well as token packages for multi-fare purchases. Recent changes in Illinois law mandated free transit rides for seniors on fixed route systems; Bloomington-Normal Public Transit has implemented free senior access, and extended the program to include persons with disabilities subject to qualifying criteria.

Transit operations and services are discussed in detail in the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035 for the Bloomington – Normal Urbanized Area* (pp. 13 - 17). Information on year-to-year transit investment and services may be found in the annually updated Transportation Improvement Program for the Bloomington-Normal Urbanized Area.

Rural Bus Service

McLean County supports SHOWBUS, a provider of public transportation in rural areas operating in several central Illinois counties. Using vehicles accessible for persons with disabilities, SHOWBUS provides demand-response service throughout the county. While

SHOWBUS is not permitted to operate between points within the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit service area, it can provide transportation into and out of the urban area. SHOWBUS is funded by federal, state, local and other sources, and provides services eligible for reimbursement under various social service programs.

Intercity Bus Service

Greyhound, Burlington Trailways and Peoria Charter Coach provide regional bus service between Bloomington/Normal and destinations statewide, including Chicago and its airports, Champaign/Urbana, Peoria and St. Louis. Greyhound and Burlington Trailways operate from the Bus Center located on Brock Drive, near the Market Street interchange with Interstates 55 and 74. Peoria Charter Coach operates from the Bone Student Center on the campus of Illinois State University. Discussions are underway with all carriers to encourage their eventual use of the multimodal transportation terminal planned for Uptown Normal.

Bicycle-Pedestrian Routes

The Constitution Trail forms the spine of the urban area's system of designated bicycle-pedestrian routes. This multi-use trail presently consists of over 21 miles of hard surface providing transportation connections to many area activity centers in the urban area (see Map 8.2).

The trail serves both a recreation and transportation function and is ideal for walking, jogging, rollerblading, biking or strolling. The north-south segment of the trail follows the abandoned Illinois Central Gulf railroad from Kerrick Road in north Normal to Grove Street in Bloomington. The east-west segment intersects south of the Normal City Hall Annex and continues east to Towanda-Barnes Road via Tipton Park. The "Liberty Branch" starts near State Farm Park and continues east to Lincoln Street, while another branch starts at Rollingbrook Park and travels east to Oakland Avenue. An extended segment of the trail travels west through Bloomington along a former rail alignment.

In addition to the routes identified in Map 8.2, the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal both have walking plans developed for travel to and from schools and have identified intersections that warrant crossing guards. City and Town parks also incorporate facilities for pedestrian and bicycling use, which in some instances also provide access points to the Constitution Trail system and vice versa.

Additional bicycle routes are also available on the campus of Illinois State University, including some that use public streets rather than off-street trail areas. Both municipalities have considered implementation of a broader system of designated bikeways using existing streets. This system will be suitable for use by experienced riders for commuting and other intensive non-recreational bicycling. Action on these concepts has been stymied by concerns regarding liability assignment under current state law. Both communities are currently considering the development of plans to address this on a metropolitan scale.

Passenger Rail

Amtrak provides passenger service on the Union Pacific rail lines from Chicago to St. Louis. Amtrak runs five daily trips to both Chicago and St. Louis. The Amtrak station is located in uptown Normal, just north of City Hall. This is the only Amtrak station in Illinois that has a direct connection with a bicycle-pedestrian path, and thus offers an opportunity to enhance tourism through rail-bike vacations (see Map 8.2). Bloomington-Normal Public Transit provides a transit connection to the Normal station. Efforts continue at the federal and state levels to institute high speed rail service between Chicago and St. Louis, which would provide enhanced passenger rail service for Bloomington-Normal. Under the February 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, further federal study of high-speed rail for the Illinois corridor has been initiated. There has also been interest in the possible development of a commuter link that could include a rail connection between Bloomington-Normal and Peoria.

**Table 8.1
Street Design Criteria**

Principal Arterials (Interstates, Expressways, and Other Principal Arterials)

Service	Principal arterials should provide for a high degree of continuity for travel through or around the urban area.
Connection	Principal arterials should connect to other similar facilities.
Form	Principal arterials should have a total of at least four lanes with opposing traffic divided by a median.
Frequency	Spacing of principal arterials should relate to the need to connect major destinations.
Access	Properties abutting the principal arterial should not have access onto those facilities.
Land Use	Residential land uses adjoining a Principal arterial should be protected from the negative effects of traffic by deep setbacks and landscaping techniques including the use of tree screens and earthen berms.

Minor Arterials (Major Streets)

Service	Minor arterials should provide continuous travel through the urban area.
Connection	Minor arterials should provide connection to areas of high activity and can connect the County Highway System to the Urban Street System.
Form	Minor arterials should have a total of four lanes wide with opposing traffic separated by a median or two lanes wide with a third lane for turning movements.
Frequency	Minor arterials should occur at a frequency of no more than one mile intervals throughout the urban area.
Access	Access to minor arterials from abutting property should be limited to public roads and larger developments.
Land Use	Residential land uses adjoining a minor arterial should be protected from the negative effects of traffic by deep setbacks and landscaping techniques including the use of tree screens and earthen berms.

Collector Streets

Service	Urban collectors provide access by linking local streets to minor arterials. Urban collectors should not provide a high degree of continuity for travel or serve as alternatives to minor arterials.
Connection	Urban collectors should collect traffic from local streets and distribute it to the minor arterials.
Form	Urban collectors should be from two to four lanes wide and should not be over two miles in length.
Frequency	Urban collectors should occur throughout the urban area.
Access	Abutting properties should have access onto urban collectors.
Land Use	When urban collectors only provide connection between local streets and minor arterials no special land use considerations are needed.

Local Streets (Minor Residential Streets)

Service	Local streets should provide for travel from individual properties to urban collectors.
Connection	Local streets should connect local traffic to urban collectors.
Form	Local streets should be not more than two lanes wide in residential areas.
Frequency	Local streets should occur throughout the urban area.
Access	Properties are allowed direct access on to the local street.
Land Use	Local streets typically require no special land use considerations.

Freight Rail

Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific Lines are the two rail carriers operating in the Bloomington-Normal urban area. Norfolk has six freight trains that pass through the urban area daily. Union Pacific traverses the urban area from the Northeast to the Southwest. Rail lines are identified on Map 8.2.

Truck Routes

A number of truck routes serve the Bloomington-Normal area. These routes use the state and interstate highway system to provide for the movement of truck freight, including hazardous wastes, across the metro area. Truck routes are managed through a cooperative process involving McLean County, the City of

Bloomington and the Town of Normal, which endeavor to create a standardized system for handling truck traffic.

Scheduled Air Service

McLean County is served by the Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA), located on the east side of Bloomington. After significant increases in passenger volume during the late 1990s, in which passenger traffic through the airport more than tripled, CIRA experienced a slight downturn in volume during the air travel slowdown that followed the September 11, 2001 hijackings. However, Federal Aviation Administration data for FY 2007, the most recent FAA statistics available, illustrate the renewed vitality of the airport, with total passenger boardings demonstrating steady annual growth, as shown in Table 8.2.

When total passenger volume is considered, the impact of the nationwide decline in air travel in the early years of the decade is apparent. In 2000, CIRA reached a peak of total passengers in excess of 475,000; over the next two years, the number of total passengers would drop by more than 32,000 passengers annually. In 2003 and 2004, use of the airport began to recover, but the total number of passengers had not yet returned to the peak usage seen in 2000. However, by 2005 passenger volume at CIRA had rebounded to near pre-911 levels, and in December of 2006 CIRA welcomed its 500,000th passenger of that year. Between mid-December and the end of 2006, CIRA would serve nearly 20,000 more passengers for an annual total of 519,811 passengers traveling through the facility. Passenger use of the airport grew by an additional 2.4 percent in 2007 with 532,075 passengers traveling through CIRA. Passenger use of the airport grew by an additional 2.4 percent in 2007 with 532,075 passengers, and in 2008 experienced a slight additional increase of 532,870 passengers traveling through CIRA.

Airlines currently serving CIRA include AirTran, American Eagle/American Connection, Northwest AirlinK, and Delta. Over 35 inbound and outbound flights per day provide direct (and often non-stop) service to various destinations, including Detroit, Orlando and Dallas-Ft. Worth.

Carriers at CIRA also provide direct flights to the two most heavily trafficked airports in the nation, Chicago - O'Hare and Atlanta - Hartsfield.

The airport is also used by private planes, charter services and for flight instruction. The airport is served by Bloomington-Normal Public Transit, both through the fixed-route system, and through paratransit service for qualified passengers.

Freight traffic at the airport, which includes use by the DHL air freight regional facility at CIRA, is also a significant contributor to CIRA's service volume. Cargo operations at the airport grew 34 percent from 2006 to 2007.

Rural Roads

Rural roads comprise the third major component of the region's transportation system. These roads include the state and interstate routes that are located outside the urban area in addition to the network of county and township roads. The functional relationship of these roads is similar to the classifications presented on Table 8.1.

The state and interstate facilities provide critical links to other regions and states while the county road network provides the essential function of moving people and goods from farm to market. McLean County is fortunate to be at the hub of a number of state and interstate routes providing outstanding transportation connections to other regions and states. These routes include Interstates 39, 55 and 74; U.S. Routes 24, 51, 136 and 150; and State Routes 9, 54, 122 and 165. The state routes are complemented by the county's system of other rural roads that provide connections with the state and interstate routes and with the urban area.

While IDOT has the responsibility for developing and maintaining the state and interstate routes, McLean County is confronted with a number of significant challenges regarding its network of rural roads. Among these is the need to coordinate land use and development planning with the planning, construction and maintenance of rural roads. This is of particular importance in a high growth county such as McLean, as are the needs for access management

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Passenger Volume	236,343	218,392	202,866	207,278	219,918	227,881	253,708	259,797
% Change	---	-7.6	-7.1	2.2	6.1	3.6	11.3	2.4

and the completion of alignment/corridor studies to preserve rights-of-way in developing areas. The allocation of cost burdens for road improvements is also of particular concern in rural areas that are experiencing development pressures.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The twenty-first century brings a host of transportation challenges and opportunities. A major challenge for the future will be to coordinate land use and transportation planning to address potentials for increased congestion, longer drive times and degradation of air quality that could result as the urban area continues to expand and as the number of vehicles in use continues to increase. Meeting this institutional and individual challenge will serve to enhance the local quality of life presently enjoyed by McLean County residents. Maintaining a high quality of life will continue to attract people and business to the region to help ensure continued prosperity.

Currently, planning for the metropolitan area is framed in content and method by the provisions of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU identifies challenges and opportunities for future transportation planning by specifying eight planning factors for consideration in the metropolitan planning process. These factors were considered in the development of the regional transportation strategy and plan outlined in this chapter.

Supporting Economic Vitality

One of the key roles of the region's transportation system of the twenty-first century will be to support the economic vitality of the region. This will involve enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency. Recognition of this role can lead to the

development of effective strategies and plans to help meet this challenge.

Increasing System Safety

Another important challenge will be to maintain and increase the safety and security of the transportation system, both for motorized and non-motorized users. This will become increasingly important as the population grows and system usage increases. System safety, while addressed in all transportation projects undertaken by local jurisdictions, is also considered in the context of the State safety improvement plan. Participation in the ongoing statewide safety planning process will aid the Region in coordinating responses to safety issues with neighboring regions.

Increasing System Security

In an increasingly security-conscious world, heightened emphasis will be placed on enhancing the security of the transportation system for all users. Sustaining the region's transportation security requires coordination among local agencies and governments, public and private transportation providers, and state and federal oversight agencies.

Increasing Accessibility and Mobility Options

Increasing the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight will be crucial to preserving quality of life and supporting economic activity. Convenient access from homes to jobs and services is an extremely important quality of life consideration. Preserving favorable commute times and expanding transportation options will be a critical challenge. Similarly, favorable accessibility and mobility options for freight will help sustain the region's enviable economic position.

Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

The wise planning of transportation facilities will be a major challenge in the years ahead. Coordinated transportation and land use planning will also be an important element in formulating approaches to mitigation of environmental impacts created by transportation system enhancement and expansion.

Effectively meeting these challenges provides opportunities to promote energy conservation and quality of life by decreasing drive times and the resulting automobile emissions. Deliberations regarding transportation improvement decisions must reflect consideration of environmental hazards, environmentally sensitive features, water resources, air quality, and agricultural, historical and cultural resources.

Enhancing System Integration and Connectivity

Enhancing the integration and connectivity of the region's transportation system across and between modes for people and freight will be another major challenge of the twenty-first century. The implementation of effective strategies to accomplish this will be an important factor in meeting other transportation challenges as well.

Promoting Efficient Management and Operation

Without efficient management and operation, many of the region's strategic transportation advantages would be lost. Therefore, every effort must be made to promote efficient management and operation. These efforts should include the pursuit of land use and transportation relationships that maximize the use of different modes of transportation and contribute to the local quality of life.

Encouraging efficient management and operation also requires planning for the costs incurred. Consequently, the transportation planning process in Bloomington-Normal will reflect the budgetary demands of managing and operating all facets of the transportation system.

Preserving Existing Systems

Using the existing transportation system to the maximum benefit will help ensure quality service to the existing community and minimize future transportation investments. Effective maintenance programs will help preserve existing service levels. Infill and redevelopment of central city areas would take advantage of existing systems and could reduce investments in future transportation extensions to peripheral areas. More compact development could also reduce future investments required for transportation systems. Thus, emphasis should be placed on factors that will help preserve the existing transportation system.

The SAFETEA-LU planning factors described above were major considerations in formulating the regional transportation strategy summarized in this chapter and presented in more detail in the Long Range Transportation Plan 2035 (McLean County Regional Planning Commission).

Resources

The region has many important transportation resources. First and foremost is the system of facilities described above that make it possible for the region to take advantage of its geographic location and that contributes to the region's high quality of life. Other resources include the high degree of planning and cooperation that exists among area governments. These resources will help the region to take advantage of opportunities in meeting the transportation challenges ahead.

STRATEGY

The following goal, objectives, policies and actions comprise the strategy for transportation. The elements of the strategy, and the plan maps presented in this chapter, provide the framework for evaluating and implementing major transportation projects in the region. Additional guidance on specific technical issues in transportation planning may be found in the Long Range Transportation Plan 2035 cited above.

The strategy includes an assortment of actions available to support enumerated policies. These actions should be considered in context with issues related to the relevant policy. Priorities for implementation are addressed in Chapter 10.

Goal

A system of safe, reliable and efficient modes of transportation to support the social, economic, environmental and land use policies outlined in this comprehensive plan.

State and Interstate Highways

Objective

A network of state and interstate highway facilities to provide for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles, people and freight to, from and across the region.

Policy #1

Support the development and maintenance of a safe and efficient highway system that enhances proposed regional land use and economic development and provides linkages to other regions of the state and nation.

Actions

- In cooperation with federal and state agencies, conduct corridor studies to establish appropriate locations for needed facilities.
- Encourage discussion among all levels of government to provide access to funding required for system maintenance and improvements.
- Conduct analysis of traffic volumes and patterns to assess system needs.
- Coordinate the timely acquisition of needed right-of-way for facilities.

Policy #2

Promote coordination and communication among federal, state, regional and local agencies in the planning, evaluation and improvement of state and interstate highways.

Actions

- Continue the practice of coordinated planning and development review involving local, state and federal agencies as appropriate.
- Use context sensitive solutions techniques to obtain broad input into planning decisions.
- Utilize all available funding sources to underwrite coordinated planning efforts.

Policy #3

Facilitate integrated land use and transportation planning that addresses land use patterns, densities and designs to accommodate and support multi-modal transportation systems.

Actions

- Promote planning concepts that encourage the use of alternate transportation modes.
- In accordance with federal transportation legislation and regulations, incorporate multi-modal transportation options in municipal and comprehensive plans and transportation plans.
- Plan and implement multi-modal transportation improvements to support and complement planned areas of development.
- Conduct corridor studies to establish appropriate locations for needed facilities.
- Consider the recommendations of the Main Street corridor redevelopment plan (*Main Street: A Call for Investment*) to guide the planning and development decisions along the Main Street corridor through Bloomington and Normal.
- Plan and implement creative redevelopment of highways in densely developed urban areas.

Arterials and Collectors

Objective

A continuous network of arterial and collector streets that provides for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services between existing and proposed residential areas and major activity centers, and provides linkages to the state and interstate highway system.

Policy #1

Promote efficient traffic flow on arterial and collector streets.

Actions

- Conduct analysis of traffic volume and patterns to assess system needs.
- Promote the use of innovative local street patterns to maximize the performance of the street network.

Policy #2

Develop transportation plans and projects that are financially constrained.

Actions

- Plan and implement cost-sharing arrangements to distribute the economic burden of system improvements.
- Identify and program funding from diverse sources, including public funding beyond transportation programs and public-private partnerships.
- Identify opportunities for cost reduction through innovative design and materials, and the use of alternative funding mechanisms and incentives.

Policy #3

Identify, preserve and protect rights-of-way for needed transportation systems.

Actions

- Incorporate official maps into planning documents to provide a basis for land use, community facility, and transportation location coordination.
- Conduct corridor studies to establish appropriate locations for needed facilities.
- Coordinate the timely acquisition of needed right-of-way for facilities.
- Implement cost-sharing arrangements among public and private entities to distribute the economic burden of system improvements, including acquisition of right-of-way.

Policy #4

Encourage the use of low and medium cost improvements to improve traffic safety and efficiency.

Actions

- Identify opportunities for cost reduction through innovative design and materials and the use of alternative funding mechanisms and incentives.
- Coordinate the timely acquisition of needed right-of-way for facilities.
- Conduct analysis of traffic volumes and patterns to assess system needs, encouraging programming of improvements to meet documented needs.

Policy #5

Design street systems to accommodate alternative modes of transportation whenever practical.

Actions

- Promote planning concepts that encourage the use of alternate transportation modes.
- Plan and implement multi-modal transportation improvements to support and complement planned areas of development.
- In accordance with federal transportation legislation and regulations, incorporate multi-modal transportation options in municipal and regional comprehensive and transportation plans.
- Plan and implement means for safe pedestrian crossings of major streets.

Local Streets

Objective

A local street system that provides safe and efficient connections between arterial or collector streets and individual parcels.

Policy

Discourage through traffic on local streets in a manner that does not impede overall system efficiency.

Actions

- Implement design standards for local street alignment and configuration that sustain neighborhood character, improve safety, and incorporate passive disincentives for diversion from collector and arterial streets.
- Evaluate the use of traffic-calming measures to reduce speeds on local streets and support their use as appropriate.

Bicycle - Pedestrian Routes

Objective

A system of safe and efficient off-road bicycle trails, supplemented by safe and direct on-road connections where off-road facilities are not feasible, and that connect residential areas to major activity centers, newly developing areas and other modes of transportation, including transit.

Policy

Encourage bicycling and walking as viable alternative modes of transportation.

Actions

- Plan and implement expansion of the pedestrian-bicycle trail system to provide greater access and interconnection with other travel modes.
- Continue to provide alignment for trail locations in new development.
- Investigate and where possible implement a system of on-street bicycle routes.
- Design bicycle trails and routes to coordinate with transit.
- Where feasible, create incentives for development of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Explore means to reduce and manage liability exposure for local governments, including advocating changes to existing law.

Public Transit

Objective #1

Encourage transit use as a viable alternative mode of transportation for the general population.

Policy

Support measures that would make it practical for more people to use transit.

Actions

- Support the expansion of the transit system to provide improved route coverage, more frequent headways, and more inclusive schedules.
- Plan and implement multi-modal transportation improvements, including transit options to support and complement planned areas of development.
- Investigate the creation of an urban area transit district with independent taxing authority.
- Promote planning concepts, such as transit-oriented development, that encourage the use of alternate transportation modes.
- Encourage the acquisition of green vehicles, including alternative fuel and power source vehicles, for use by transit providers.

Objective #2

Expanded travel options for the economically disadvantaged, persons without access to automobiles, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Policy

Emphasize service for the transit dependent.

Actions

- Support the development of transit routes and services accessible to transit-dependent persons.
- Investigate alternative sources of funding for accessible services, through Federal and state programs directed towards challenged riders.

- Use the Human Services Transportation Planning process to expand the range of transit options.

Objective #3

Public transit service that is reasonably accessible to rural residents of McLean County.

Policy

Provide scheduled service to the Bloomington-Normal urban area from smaller communities in McLean County and other nearby areas.

Actions

- Investigate the creation of an urban area transit district with independent taxing authority.
- Promote coordinated service between urban and rural transit providers.

Truck and Freight Rail

Objective

The safe and efficient movement of intercity freight by truck and rail throughout the community and surrounding areas to serve local, state, national, and international markets.

Policy

Support a highway and rail network capable of meeting market demands for truck and rail freight services.

Actions

- Promote development that supports intermodal connectivity, particularly in areas accessible to the interstate highway and rail systems.
- Conduct analysis of traffic volumes and patterns to assess system needs.
- Coordinate the timely acquisition of needed right-of-way for facilities.

Intercity Passenger Rail

Objective

Improved level of passenger rail service, including the development of high-speed rail.

Policy

Promote improvements to passenger rail service, including the development of Amtrak high-speed rail.

Actions

- Provide for easily accessible passenger rail facilities in municipal and transportation plans.
- Encourage the implementation of high-speed rail service serving the region.
- Promote development decisions that make adequate provision for rail infrastructure.

Air Transportation

Objective

An airport and air transportation system that provides for the safe and efficient movement of passengers and freight with minimal conflicts with adjacent land uses.

Policy #1

Promote the Central Illinois Regional Airport as a regional transportation center

Actions

- Explore economic incentives to sustain air travel that maintains current system connectivity.
- Provide for multimodal connections to and from the Central Illinois Regional Airport.

Policy #2

Encourage compatible development in proximity to the Central Illinois Regional Airport that does not conflict with airport operations.

Map 8.3
PLAN FOR URBAN
CLASSIFIED SYSTEM

Map 8.3
PLAN FOR URBAN
CLASSIFIED SYSTEM

Actions

- In municipal and regional comprehensive and transportation plans, encourage appropriate land uses in areas adjacent to or impacted by the Central Illinois Regional Airport.
- Continue ongoing coordination with the Airport Authority in community and transportation planning.

Regional Commuter Transit

Objective

A safe and efficient commuter transit system that connects Bloomington-Normal and other central Illinois communities in order to provide a viable alternative mode of transportation between communities.

Policy

Evaluate the feasibility of commuter transit between Bloomington-Normal and other central Illinois communities.

Actions

- Pursue funding for further study of demand for commuter transit services between the Bloomington-Normal and other central Illinois communities.
- Investigate the feasibility of alternative modes of commuter service.

Intercity Bus

Objective

A safe, economical and efficient intercity bus transportation system that connects existing and potential bus users with major and minor destinations throughout Illinois and the nation.

Policy

Support measures that preserve and enhance intercity bus service for McLean County.

Actions

- Coordinate with service providers regarding use of existing and planned intercity bus terminals.
- Continue ongoing cooperation between local governments and the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System regarding connectivity with intercity bus service providers.

Rural Roads

Objective

Safe and efficient transportation network that includes alternative modes between rural areas and the state, urban and interstate highway system.

Policy #1

Improve rural roads to collector and arterial roads when merited by traffic volumes and function, including increased weight limits to safely accommodate increasingly large-sized farm equipment, garbage trucks, and school buses.

Actions

- Require signage for seasonal farm equipment.
- Conduct analysis of traffic volume and patterns to assess system needs.
- Coordinate with municipalities in the implementation of improvements to minimize duplicative investments.

Policy #2

Determine exact alignments on proposed collector and arterial roads and subsequently obtain or reserve adequate rights-of-way to allow for the construction of safe rural roads previous to or as a part of development.

Actions

- Conduct corridor studies to establish appropriate locations for needed facilities.
- Coordinate the timely acquisition of needed right-of-way for facilities.

- Encourage greater setbacks to allow for expansion of the transportation corridor as urbanization occurs.

Policy #3

Develop an equitable method of financing rural road improvements.

Actions

- Investigate and implement cost-sharing arrangements to distribute the economic burden of system improvements, including acquisition of right-of-way.
- Investigate innovative funding sources, including public-private partnerships and development impact fees.

Policy #4

Limit access to collector and arterial roads.

Action

- Adopt coordinated access management ordinances.

Policy #5

Develop bike trails where identified in the adopted McLean County Regional Greenways Plan or otherwise desired.

Actions

- Plan and implement expansion of the pedestrian-bicycle trail system.
- Continue to provide alignment for trail locations in new development areas, and to connect to parks and other recreational facilities.

FUTURE REQUIREMENTS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The transportation plan identifies projects to be considered for development through the year 2035. These projects are addressed for each of the three major components of the transportation system in McLean County. More information on currently programmed and planned transportation

infrastructure may be found in the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035*, and in the current *Transportation Improvement Program* (McLean County Regional Planning Commission, 2009). Transportation planning for McLean County is carried out pursuant to the Public Participation Plan adopted in by the McLean County Transportation Study in 2007.

Urban Classified System

The plan for the Urban Classified System provides for the upgrading and extension of the existing streets and roads to accommodate projected growth and land use development as illustrated in Map 8.3. Major new roadways include the Mitsubishi Motorway extension and the further widening of Towanda-Barnes Road from Fort Jesse Road north to Towanda. The plan also provides for the extension of the arterial-collector network into projected high-growth areas on the west and east sides of the urban area. This will create a framework within which new neighborhoods can grow.

An addition to the classified system may also emerge from the recommendations of the East Side Highway Phase 1 Engineering Study, which was completed in late 2008, with a report issued in 2009. The study report recommends that an arterial facility be provided on the east side of the urbanized area, with interchanges providing connections to Interstate 55 and 74. The highway, studied as an partial access-controlled four-lane facility with intersections at major east-west arterial streets, would provide connectivity into developing areas, and would also relieve anticipated congestion on existing streets and roads in the area. The study report defines a 500' corridor within which such a facility may be located, illustrated on Map 8.3. Although the parameters of the facility as studied suggest a right-of-way of 250', future development of a controlled-access highway requiring 300' of right-of-way within the corridor is not precluded.

Review and evaluation of the study report and its recommendations by local governments is expected to take place in 2009. Should there be a decision to move forward with the project, further study will be required as defined by Federal law for highway construction on new alignments. The

Map 8.4
PLAN FOR ALTERNATE
TRANSPORTATION
MODES

Map 8.4
PLAN FOR ALTERNATE
TRANSPORTATION
MODES

Table 8.3 Estimated Expenditures					
Total Programmed Expenditures 2008 - 2012					
		Total	Local	State	Federal
		\$129,861,858	\$62,037,520	\$11,883,425	\$55,940,913
Projected Expenditures 2013 - 2035					
Project Category		Total Cost	Local Revenue	State Revenue	Federal Revenue
Anticipated Extensions and Improvements in the Classified System	% of Total	\$293,290,548	\$46,926,488	\$61,591,015	\$184,773,045
Local	16.0%				
State	21.0%				
Federal	63.0%				
Routine Rail Crossing Improvements		\$7,242,800	\$0	\$1,448,560	\$5,794,240
Routine Maintenance of Interstate Routes		\$57,558,774	\$0	\$11,511,755	\$46,047,020
Routine State Route Repair and Rehabilitation		\$219,500,299	\$0	\$43,900,060	\$175,600,239
Anticipated Locally Funded Street Improvement Expenditures		\$315,685,899	\$315,685,899	\$0	\$0
Total Expenditures 2008 - 2035		\$1,023,140,178	\$424,649,907	\$130,334,815	\$468,155,456
<i>as percent of Total:</i>		100%	41.5%	12.7%	45.8%
<i>as average annual expenditures:</i>		\$36,540,721	\$15,166,068	\$4,654,815	\$16,719,838

next phase of study would include extensive public involvement, and would focus on a detailed environmental study of the corridor and the surrounding area. Should the next phase of study result in a decision to design and construct a new highway, a specific alignment for the proposed highway would be defined.

The next phase of study can be expected to require three to five years to complete, contingent upon local, state and Federal government action, and upon the availability of funding. Construction of a new highway would also require considerable time, as well as significant funding commitments at all levels of government. Many factors must be considered to reach a final determination as to the need for this investment.

Alternative Modes

The plan for alternative modes is presented in Map 8.4. This plan includes the identification of general directions for the potential future

expansion of transit service if and when higher density activity centers develop in accordance with the land use plan. Projected expenses and revenues for the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System, excluding any potential service expansions are discussed in the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035*. Additional information regarding urban and regional transit services may be found in *A Framework for Coordination: the Human Services Transportation Plan for the Bloomington - Normal Urbanized Area* (McLean County Regional Planning Commission, 2007). The plan also identifies proposed extensions to the urban area system of bicycle-pedestrian paths as identified in the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035*. Additional information on potential long range connector routes for bicycle-pedestrian paths in the urban area are also illustrated on Map 8.4. Rail routes are also identified on Map 8.4, as are the airport, Amtrak and bus terminals.

Table 8.4 Estimated Costs for Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System			
Assumed Rate of Cost Increase	Total Cost – Annual Operating and Capital Expenditures	Operating Costs	Capital Expenditures
Total program cost 2008 - 2035	\$719,638,171	\$564,799,831	\$154,838,340
Average annual cost	\$25,701,363	\$20,171,423	\$5,529,941

Financial Feasibility

This section provides documentation that the long range transportation plan is financially constrained and therefore, financially feasible. This is determined by comparing the estimated cost of proposed transportation system improvements and operations with the revenues that can realistically be expected to be available from federal, state and local sources through 2035. The figures presented include an adjustment for annual inflation based on federal recommendations. Estimates derived based on alternate assumptions may be found in the previously cited *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035*. Estimated costs and projected revenues to implement the long range transportation plan are summarized on Table 8.3. The estimated costs for the projected improvements are broken down by project categories in the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035*.

Implementation of these projects is contingent upon the availability of federal and state funds and appropriation by the Illinois General Assembly and approval by the Governor. The projected revenues for urban classified system projects listed in Table 8.3 are based on the continuation of past funding levels. The local revenue listed on Table 8.3 is expected to be acquired from developer contributions and local government revenues based on a logical progression of past funding history. The costs for specific upgrade and extension projects that are expected to utilize federal funding are illustrated in the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035*. Also listed are projects in the Bloomington/Normal urbanized area that are expected to be growth driven and funded by developer contributions and local matches. However, this does not preclude the potential for

federal or high priority funding that may be available should a project become a priority.

The projected costs and revenues for the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System are listed in Table 8.4. The costs and revenues for current annual operations of the Bloomington-Normal Transit System are described earlier in this chapter. It should be noted that the projected expenditures include capital investment for the construction of a new transit headquarters and garage facility. This project is being undertaken in support of an overall expansion initiative for the transit system, which is expected to double the resources of the transit system within the next decade.

Rural Roads

The plan for rural roads includes specific county proposals for the construction or upgrading of the internal road network to better accommodate existing and anticipated future development. Anticipated improvements in the county highway and rural road system are illustrated on Map 8.5. The map depicts the planned improvements to the county's internal network of rural roads and the Bloomington-Normal planned improvements to roads that are currently in the rural area but are anticipated to become urbanized. These improvements should be made in conjunction with new development to ensure adequate transportation facilities, but not so far in advance that they spur unplanned growth. More detailed information on specific planned improvements to the county's rural road system is presented in the *Long Range Transportation Plan 2035*.

Map 8.5
RURAL ROADS Plan

Map 8.5
RURAL ROADS Plan

Chapter 9



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Chapter 9: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The costs and potential impacts of providing community facilities and services for a growing community is one of the most compelling reasons for implementing sensible growth strategies. Public buildings, parks, schools, water and sewer systems and other facilities and services are important in guiding future growth.

Regional cooperation in the provision of community facilities and services can provide a number of important benefits. It can help avoid duplication of services. It can allow units of government to take advantage of economies of scale to reduce costs and improve efficiency. In some cases, regional cooperation can make services available that would not be possible for individual governments due to excessive per capita costs. Regional cooperation in the placement of facilities also helps to ensure subsequent growth will result in development that is consistent with local and regional land use and transportation plans.

CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

Regional Overview

Facilities and services addressed in the Regional Comprehensive Plan include water, sewer, schools, parks and recreation, libraries, cultural and entertainment facilities, solid waste, emergency services, and energy and telecommunications. Each of these is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Water Service

The provision of clean, adequate water at a reasonable price is an essential requirement for growth. The Bloomington-Normal area is supplied with water from Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake (Bloomington) and fifteen groundwater wells (Normal). The combined capacity of these water sources is approximately a sustained 36 million gallons per day. A number of smaller municipalities also maintain public water supply systems.

The drought of 1988-90 heightened the region's awareness of the importance of planning for the area's water needs and water conservation. Since the drought, increased attention has been given to erosion and sediment control, drought contingency planning, flood damage mitigation and other water-related and conservation issues. Also, Evergreen Lake Dam has been raised to increase capacity and significant research and planning efforts have been made toward a regional water system. The following reports provide details regarding these efforts and future plans: (1) *Regional Water Needs Assessment Study, Summary of Findings, Long Range Water Plan Steering Committee*, Farnsworth and Wylie, P.C., 1994; (2) *Hydrology and Groundwater Availability in Southwest McLean and Southeast Tazewell Counties*, 1995, Cooperative Groundwater Report 17, Department of Natural Resources, Illinois State Geological Survey, Illinois State Water Survey; (3) the *Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan*, 2006; and, (4) the *City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan*, 2005.

Building on earlier planning efforts, the *Evergreen Lake and Lake Bloomington TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) Studies* (2006 and 2008) were completed and submitted to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) for review. The purpose of the TMDL studies is to establish measures to protect the watersheds from contamination. Both the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal regularly monitor their respective water supplies to ensure local water capacity is keeping pace with demand, is safe for use, and is in compliance with IEPA standards.

Studies have found the Mahomet-Sankoty Aquifer located in western McLean and eastern Tazewell Counties could potentially provide an adequate water supply for the region to 2050 or beyond. The aquifer stretches from Danville on Illinois' eastern border to the northeastern corner of Tazewell County near Peoria. Water in the aquifer can be found at various depths from 100 to 200 feet. It is estimated the aquifer holds up to four trillion gallons of water. Plans have been created for phasing in a regional system while

maintaining the existing water supply systems (see Map 9.1). Local government leaders have entered into discussions with community officials in surrounding counties regarding use of the aquifer by communities in McLean County. Several McLean County governments and agencies are represented in the Mahomet Aquifer Consortium, exploring alternatives for future water sources.

Sewer Service

Metro Area. To address previous water treatment capacity problems and better utilize conservation techniques in the treatment process, the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District (BNWRD) built an additional wastewater treatment facility in Randolph Township. The treatment plant opened for operations in June of 2005. It is designed to accommodate 20 years of regional growth. The Randolph plant currently operates at between 40 to 60 percent of design capacity. Additional treatment capacity will be added in the future to accommodate anticipated regional growth. The Randolph Township plant will also provide wastewater treatment for the Village of Downs once the village develops a sewer system. The respective facility planning areas were recently expanded as shown in Map 9.2 to accommodate the extension of sewer service to projected growth areas in the Bloomington-Normal metro area. The BNWRD treatment plant located at West Oakland Avenue in Bloomington operates at approximately 50 percent of its design capacity.

An additional project has been implemented by the City of Bloomington and BNWRD. Combined storm and wastewater flows will be captured and held for treatment, which previously were discharged into Sugar Creek during storm events. Much of this flow will be arrested from older parts of the city. This project is intended to alleviate the chances of flash flooding during significant storm events.

The existing and proposed sewer service areas for Bloomington-Normal are illustrated in Map 9.2. Bloomington and Normal each have identified growth areas that could be serviced by “gravity flow” sewers. This means these areas do not require lift stations to pump the wastewater to the treatment plant and are therefore more

economical serve. This is an important point in favor of developing these areas prior to others that would require a pump station. However, the amount of land that may be serviced by gravity flow will not be adequate to accommodate the projected 2035 population at projected densities. Municipalities in the urbanized area will have to construct pump stations to allow for the provision of sewer service and subsequent development of land for the future population. Proposed gravity flow and pump station service areas shown on Map 9.2 reflect the growth areas identified in the regional land use plan (Chapter 7). These growth areas take into consideration some redevelopment in urban core areas as proposed in the Main Street corridor redevelopment plan.

The Village of Downs has been attempting to secure funding for wastewater infrastructure. The Village plans to construct, own and operate a sewage collection system. Wastewater from this system would be treated by BNWRD at its Randolph Township plant.

Details regarding wastewater treatment plans in the urban area are provided in the City of Bloomington and Town of Normal Comprehensive Plans and the BNWRD fifty year plan, *Report on Long Range Plans for Wastewater Collection and Reclamation Services in the Bloomington-Normal Metropolitan Area*, Farnsworth and Wylie, P.C., March, 1990.

Rural Areas. The provision of wastewater treatment is oftentimes the primary growth challenge faced by smaller municipalities in the county. The City of Lexington and the Village of Downs are already planning for sewer systems within their growing communities. Alternatives for the smaller towns include public or private systems. Although private sewage disposal systems should not be discounted when central systems are not available, communities face challenges in using them, including potential threats to water quality.

When possible, growth should be directed to areas with central collection and disposal systems to avoid the drawbacks of individual disposal systems. Sand filter systems, a form of private sewage disposal, is more costly than a standard septic system and may result in the discharge being classified as public when it exceeds certain

Map 9.1
**PROPOSED REGIONAL
WATER SYSTEM**

Map 9.1
**PROPOSED REGIONAL
WATER SYSTEM**

levels. In these cases, a permit may be required that would hold the property owner, homeowner's association, or municipality responsible for regular sampling and testing of waste for federal contaminant levels. This monitoring can be costly and holds the potential of becoming a significant liability to the permit holder. For a period of time, the State of Illinois halted the use of sand filter systems due to litigation claiming the systems did not provide adequate treatment. As a result, additional treatment ("tertiary") is required with these systems, adding to their costs.

The need for sand filter systems is also a drawback to development in the rural areas of the county. The three recommended rural growth areas discussed in Chapter 7 contain poorly drained soils that often require sand filters. This is one of the consequences of directing growth to areas with poorly drained soils. Ultimately, this provides additional rationale for limiting the amount of rural growth and for encouraging compact and contiguous growth in the urban areas of the region.

Public sewer service may become an option for additional rural communities if BNWRD continues to expand its services outside of the urban area. This is perhaps the only method by which these smaller towns could obtain public wastewater treatment to allow considerably more growth. Another possible option for rural communities is the use of alternative treatment methods such as constructed wetlands, which artificially re-create the filtering capacity of natural wetlands by anchoring vegetation in a gravel or similar type of base. The plantings assist in cleaning the water and reducing the amount of discharge. Other alternative treatment systems include aerobic systems, sand filters, and leaching field chambers.

Solid Waste

McLean County's solid waste is managed through a variety of public and private collection disposal and recycling systems. Bloomington and Normal provide public collection and disposal of the waste through a local, privately owned transfer station. The smaller municipalities generally contract with a private hauler for collection, who then disposes of the

waste at either the local transfer station or landfills located in adjacent counties.

The region's solid waste program is administered by the Ecology Action Center (EAC) through an intergovernmental agreement with Bloomington, Normal, and McLean County. Although the EAC is the primary management and programming agency for the area, local governments are responsible for implementing many of the solid waste programs and activities that occur within their jurisdictions.

The McLean County Solid Waste Management Plan provides details regarding waste management programs and disposal in McLean County. The plan outlines goals for residential and commercial waste recycling, composting landscape waste, construction and demolition debris recycling, public education programs, and hazardous waste disposal among others.

The Five-Year Solid Waste Plan was updated by the EAC in 2007. This plan is a shorter range companion document to the comprehensive management plan and outlines solid waste goals for the county for the next five years. Increased commercial and industrial recycling and expansion of residential curbside recycling (including rental properties) is planned through 2012.

Schools

Providing public education to the community is one of the most important and expensive community services. In McLean County, this service is provided by special taxing districts. The region's proposed school locations are illustrated on Map 9.3.

Financing public education is a great challenge facing this region. This is particularly true for high growth districts, which must maintain high standards of education for increasing numbers of students. This is the primary challenge for McLean County Unit District #5, which serves the area with the greatest amount of growth in the region, past and projected. Other districts that have been or may become challenged with growth include: Tri-Valley (Downs) Unit District #3, Lexington Unit District #7, Leroy District #2 and Heyworth Unit District #4. All of these districts have experienced an increase in residential development with more

planned for the future. It can be reasonably assumed these new households will include school-aged children. Blue Ridge Community School District #18 anticipates limited growth while Olympia School District #16 has experienced some growth but has recently had student populations level off to where the administration anticipates they will be for the foreseeable future. The recent consolidations of the Gridley and El Paso School Districts and the Chenoa School District into the Prairie Central School District (Fairbury) ensure that respective student populations in those communities should be well-served for many years.

Areas of the region facing stable or possible declining populations may be faced with the equally difficult task of a stagnant or declining tax base to support public education. Local comprehensive plans provide an important framework for consideration by school districts in developing detailed plans and projections of individual district needs.

In addition to providing education, school districts should consider how the maintenance and development of school facilities will impact the overall community. In the neighborhoods of the urban area and the smaller municipalities alike, schools serve as community and neighborhood activity centers. The most desirable location for school sites is therefore at the centers of these respective service areas. In addition to placing a school at the center of its service area, developing schools in conjunction with neighborhood parks facilitates establishing the school as a center of community activity.

Preserving and maintaining older schools can also be a great challenge. The older neighborhood schools are oftentimes perceived as less cost-efficient than larger, more modern schools. This lack of efficiency must be balanced with the consideration that these schools play an integral role in the smaller municipalities and older neighborhoods of the region. If not utilized for education, these facilities should be preserved and used as community centers. Urban revitalization efforts should be supported by the local school districts to raise property values and assist with financing public education in older city neighborhoods. Every effort should be made to

upgrade such facilities as a means to help preserve neighborhood identity and character. The great challenges facing local school districts will be assisted by working with other local governments to ensure school planning is consistent with community land use, transportation, and other plans.

Parks and Recreation

Maintaining adequate levels of parks and open space for conservation and recreation is essential for maintaining a high quality of life in the face of high growth. Parks and open space play a key role in revitalizing urban areas and neighborhoods, protecting the environment, boosting tourism, promoting economic development, attracting investment, and providing health and recreation opportunities. Considerable effort has recently been given to the formation and implementation of plans for the provision of parks and open space in McLean County. These include locally adopted comprehensive plans, the recently updated *McLean County Regional Greenways Plan*, the City of Bloomington's *Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan* and the Town of Normal's *Comprehensive Parks and Open Space Master Plan*. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standard of ten acres of parkland for each 1,000 persons became a commonly accepted standard used by a majority of communities when determining future open space needs. However, other standards have been used to determine these future needs such as user characteristics, participation projections, and park needs based on the carrying capacity of the land. Park managers in the region have planned for future needs based on a number of factors. These include population projections, demographics, program enrollments, regional and local planning documents, community surveys, park facilities comparisons with other communities, and input from public meetings.

Outside of metropolitan Bloomington-Normal, parks and open spaces are owned and operated by the County of McLean or rural municipalities. The county owns and manages COMLARA Park, surrounding Evergreen Lake, and West Park, located north of LeRoy near Mo-

Map 9.2
PUBLIC SEWER SERVICE

Map 9.2
PUBLIC SEWER SERVICE

rairie View State Park. The Funk's Grove Nature Area in southwest McLean County is owned and managed by the University of Illinois and various other Funk Heritage trusts. Other natural and conservation areas are owned by private agencies such as The ParkLands Foundation, which oversees the Merwin Nature Preserve near Lake Bloomington and Lexington. The foundation also owns and manages significant tracts of land along and adjacent to the Mackinaw River in northern McLean County.

Libraries

Libraries are playing an increasing role in supporting business and economic development, thereby functioning as a vital community resource. Many companies consider libraries to be important in decisions to expand or relocate to a community. Thus, careful attention should be given to the provision of library facilities.

Libraries provide an important informational and educational function within each respective community. Both Bloomington and Normal libraries have undergone physical expansions in 2006 and 1993, respectively. Most rural communities in McLean County have smaller facilities that provide basic services to their immediate populations. In all, there are 15 library districts in McLean County serving urban and rural locations.

Libraries in McLean County belong to the Alliance Library System. The system includes 258 public, academic and private libraries. This system promotes community-wide services that facilitate resource sharing and reciprocal borrowing. The boundaries of the system extend beyond McLean County and encompass much of central Illinois. There are approximately 30 libraries in McLean County, including public, academic, and corporate facilities.

In the metropolitan area, assessing existing facilities and identifying locations for potential branch libraries are addressed in the local comprehensive plans and should be reviewed as the population continues to grow, especially on the expanding east and west sides. Libraries should be designed using current design standards that utilize green technology when possible. The facilities should also be designed to encourage

walking, bicycling and access by public transportation. Libraries should be designed to minimize barriers and ensure safe access for children, seniors, and the disabled.

Cultural and Entertainment Facilities

McLean County boasts a number of cultural and entertainment facilities that contribute to the region's quality of life. The U.S Cellular Coliseum and the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts in Bloomington offer regional arts and entertainment options. The Children's Discovery Museum, McLean County Museum of History and the Challenger Learning Center are facilities that offer scientific and cultural education for a variety of interests and ages. These facilities also feature interactive displays and hands-on experiences that entertain as well as educate.

These facilities have been built and/or upgraded in response to community concerns that the area fell short in providing opportunities for culture and entertainment. Local universities and some rural communities also offer facilities and programs to complement those noted above and contribute to local cultural and entertainment options.

Fire, Police, and Emergency Services

Fire, police, and emergency services are provided to the region by a variety of agencies, including local police and fire departments, the McLean County Sheriff's Department, fire protection districts with volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians, and private ambulance services. Mutual aid agreements allow communities to take advantage of and offer assistance to each other in times of need. Local comprehensive plans assist communities in the review and planning for fire and police protection in Bloomington-Normal and a number of the smaller municipalities.

Countywide emergency call dispatches (except for the City of Bloomington) are received by Metcom-911. The Metcom-911 system automatically identifies a caller's location. The City of Bloomington police and fire 911 system uses an analog UHF and VHF frequency system while

the ambulance service utilizes a UHF repeater to receive emergency dispatches. State police emergency assistance requests are received directly by the nearest state police satellite office. Police, fire and medical emergency service boundaries are established by the 911 system and are exhibited in Map 9.4.

Energy and Telecommunications

Energy and telecommunications include natural gas, electricity, telephone and other communication services provided by private utility companies. These companies conduct their own planning for services to the community. Local governments maintain communication and coordination with utility companies as new areas develop and older areas require maintenance or service improvements. These efforts must continue to ensure continued provision of services with minimal impacts on the community.

Resources

In addition to the physical facilities described above, intergovernmental cooperation and communication are extremely important resources in the provision of community facilities and services. Currently, the region maintains a high level of cooperation and communication that helps ensure facilities and services are not duplicated and are provided as efficiently as possible. Joint meetings of elected and appointed officials, intergovernmental staff meetings, and cooperatively funded efforts, such as the Enterprise Zone and recycling education, are all excellent examples of cooperative programs that have improved the efficiency of service delivery and contributed to the local quality of life. Organizations such as the McLean County Mayor's Association are also valuable resources in cooperatively addressing common issues.

Grants and low-interest loans are another potential resource available to local governments in the region. Such resources can minimize the financial burden on local taxpayers and fund facilities and services that otherwise may not be possible. The high degree of intergovernmental cooperation and planning enhance the region's likelihood of obtaining grants and loans.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Major challenges and opportunities facing the region include striking a balance between efficient and effective service delivery, preserving local identities, and maintaining equity in the funding and delivery of services.

Striking a Balance

The primary challenge for the region is to strike a balance between providing needed community facilities and services for existing and future population, while not overextending these services to the point of encouraging inefficient, low-density development. This includes deciding where community facilities should be located. It is often desirable to locate these facilities in the core of the urban area where they are equidistant access for a majority of the population. This also enables these facilities to take advantage of existing infrastructure connections. Not providing adequate community facilities and services decreases the appeal of the community and thereby slows growth. Conversely, overextending services could stretch the financial capacities of local governments and result in unattractive development to people and business, and at the same time, reduce the resources needed to implement strategies designed to provide other amenities and address other important issues.

Striking this balance may be very difficult because it is typically more efficient in the short run to extend facilities and services beyond what is currently needed. For example, if a pump station is needed for land development for an expanding population, it is often more efficient to locate and design the pump station to serve a much larger area than the initially proposed development. It may also appear to be more cost effective to locate and design the pump station to serve an area much larger than the growth areas identified in comprehensive plans. While this maximizes the service area of the pump station, in the long run it could be more costly due to the less efficient development that could be encouraged by the extensive service area. Sensible growth, with firm adherence to locally adopted land use plans and consideration of other possible growth management strategies, such as transfer

Map 9.3
PARKS, TRAILS &
SCHOOLS

Map 9.3
**PARKS, TRAILS &
SCHOOLS**

or purchase of development rights programs, will help achieve the balance needed to help ensure attractive development.

The regionalization of the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District presents a similar challenge. As previously indicated, the potential now exists to provide public sewer service to a wider area, including several of the region's smaller municipalities. This is clearly a positive opportunity for these communities to grow and prosper, but it could encourage scattered low-density development between Bloomington-Normal and the smaller towns if appropriate policies are not in place.

Preserving Local Identities

Another area of concern is the potential of the smaller towns being absorbed into the Bloomington-Normal urban area, thereby losing their distinctive and attractive identities. This has indeed been the case in other growing metropolitan areas such as Chicago, where once unique farm villages have become swallowed up by the growing suburbs. Sensible growth would allow for the healthy growth of all communities, yet implement strategies to clearly define and enhance their role as independent communities with distinctive characters.

Water Conservation

Conservation of water resources at all levels is an important component in ensuring that water continues to be safe and available to all. This includes wise water use on the part of governments, institutions, business and agriculture, as well as conservation practiced by citizens in their daily lives. Information on conservation best practices is available from the Ecology Action Center at www.ecologyactioncenter.org.

Funding Service Delivery and Maintaining Equity

The funding of community facilities and services will always be a challenge of major concern in both the expanding and less dynamic areas of the region. As previously indicated, intergovernmental cooperation and communications can help address this concern and encourage maximum efficiency in providing services.

Concerns have also been expressed regarding the potential inequities of development costs that could result from expanded regionalization. Efforts should be made both collectively and on a case-by-case basis to evaluate the situation and make any policy adjustments that may be needed to ensure costs are shared equitably.

STRATEGY

The strategy for community facilities and services is contained in the following goals, objectives, policies, and actions. Priorities for implementation are addressed in Chapter 10.

Goal

Cost-effective community facilities and services that support the land use and transportation plans.

Water

Objective

Safe, reliable and efficient water for consumption and for domestic, industrial and recreational use at a reasonable cost.

Policy

Provide public water service consistent with locally adopted land use plans.

Actions

- Continue to monitor and protect water quality at Lake Bloomington, Evergreen Lake and other important water resources in the area pursuant to watershed plans and intergovernmental agreements.

- Encourage continued intergovernmental cooperation in the development of regional water resources and the delivery of public water supplies.
- Protect local watersheds from contamination by surface runoff and other sources of pollution.
- Continue reasonable levels of investment in municipal water supply, treatment, and distribution systems.
- Encourage water conservation, including the promotion of conservation techniques discussed on the Ecology Action Center website at www.ecologyactioncenter.org.

Sanitary Sewer Service

Objective

Environmentally sound wastewater treatment at a reasonable cost.

Policy

Provide wastewater treatment service consistent with regional and municipal land use planning strategies.

Actions

- Support cost/benefit monitoring and service extensions that are consistent with local land use plans.
- Consider Facilities Planning Area (FPA) expansion as future growth warrants, and as part of a comprehensive water quality enhancement program.
- Encourage the use of emerging technologies in wastewater treatment to assist in effectively managing wastewater operations.

Schools

Objective

Modern schools that offer an excellent education, operate efficiently, and contribute to healthy communities.

Policy

Cooperate with school districts to establish well-equipped and properly staffed schools at appropriate locations that function jointly as centers of education, recreation and community activity, and are consistent with local and regional land use and transportation plans.

Actions

- Consider the use of development fees to help meet the demand for schools generated by new growth and development.
- Coordinate with school districts in determining desirable locations for schools, including the possible rehabilitation of existing schools.
- Continue to establish and promote schools as important neighborhood or community centers.
- Encourage efficient land utilization in the development of schools to include green concepts and multi-storied buildings that contribute to neighborhood stabilization.

Parks & Recreation

Objective

Ample parks and open space connected by greenways and trails.

Policy

Encourage the development of parks, greenways and trails consistent with locally adopted plans.

Actions

- Collaborate with regional, state and federal governments, and private entities to promote and plan for future parks, open space, and trails.
- Research opportunities for funding of regional parks, open space, and trails, including public and private grants.
- Promote future bike trail development in urban and rural areas.
- Support and promote on-going projects and proposals, including the Constitution Trail, McLean County Historic Route 66 Bikeway, State Route 66 Trail, and Mackinaw Valley

Trail, as a means of establishing an inter-connected regional trail system.

- Support and partner with local and regional parks and recreation departments in improving and expanding regional open space and passive recreation such as natural areas.

Solid Waste

Objective

Economically efficient and environmentally sound solid waste collection, reuse, recycling, and disposal.

Policy

Support the Ecology Action Center and other relevant agencies and organizations in the implementation and administration of the McLean County Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan.

Actions

- Provide technical support in the implementation of the solid waste program through the McLean County Solid Waste Technical Committee.
- Support efforts of local governments and private companies in the implementation of their respective solid waste programs.
- Encourage Best Management Practices (BMP's), including public education, to reduce or encourage the re-use of solid waste.

Libraries

Objective

A well-rounded and efficient informational and educational function for the citizens of the county.

Policy

Support efforts of libraries to expand and grow their respective operations in order to continue providing an important regional service.

Actions

- Promote the placement of “library branch locations” as the population continues to expand.
- Continue to study options for the expansion of primary library facilities.
- Promote public education opportunities and functions sponsored by regional libraries that draw attention to library services.

Cultural and Entertainment Facilities

Objective

A wide variety of high quality cultural and entertainment facilities for the community.

Policy

Work in concert with public and private entities to develop or upgrade cultural and entertainment facilities.

Actions

- Continue to seek public input and feedback concerning future wants and needs in this area.
- Continue to promote these facilities as a quality of life feature that adds value to the region.

Fire, Police and Emergency Services

Objective

Prompt and efficient response by emergency services provided by fire, police and public service agencies.

Policy

Facilitate coordination between responders, including fire, police, and public service agencies, to enhance the level of service provided to each community.

Actions

- Provide appropriate levels of funding for facilities and services.

- Consider intergovernmental service agreements as needed to fill gaps in services and/or to improve efficiencies.
- Encourage interoperability of emergency systems.

Energy and Telecommunications

Objective

Efficient provision of gas, electric, and telecommunication services to meet the demands of existing and future development.

Policy

Promote active coordination among local governments and utility companies.

Actions

Encourage periodic meetings among representatives of local governments and utility companies to help insure coordinated provision of services.

FUTURE FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Regional Water System

Future water needs will entail protecting available regional water resources while continuing to explore and tap into new sources of water to ensure the availability of adequate supplies to meet growing demands. Appropriate maintenance measures should be implemented and upgrades to existing facilities and distribution systems should be made as needed. The quality of water should be continually monitored with emphasis on protecting local watersheds from contamination by all sources of pollution. Each municipal water system should provide service that is consistent with local land use plans. Existing and planned water service areas are illustrated on Map 9.1.

Public Sewer Services

The two treatment plants operated by BNWRD, should be able to serve the forecasted growth for the area. These facilities (located in Bloomington and Randolph Township) will have

the capacity to serve a larger area outside of metropolitan Bloomington-Normal. The Facility Planning Area (FPA) expansion in 2005 allows for extension of service to areas of anticipated growth. This growth will extend around the periphery of Bloomington-Normal and may eventually lead to BNWRD providing services for some neighboring rural communities. Existing and planned sewer service areas are shown for the urban area on Map 9.2.

Schools

Additional schools and school expansions will be needed to accommodate projected land development and population increases. The number and types of new schools or expansions required will be affected by development demand and enrollment projections of each school district. Planning for schools should be coordinated with local communities and should be consistent with local comprehensive plans. The use of development fees for schools should also be considered to help meet demands generated by new growth and development.

Parks, Trails and Recreation

The Parks, Trails and Schools Map (Map 9.3) illustrates proposed sites for future parks and proposed open space. The *McLean County Regional Greenways Plan* provides a framework for establishing a regional system of parks and open space in McLean County. This plan should be consulted and utilized as a primary resource for implementing parks and open space initiatives in McLean County. Support for completion of on-going projects (Constitution Trail, McLean County Historic Route 66 Bikeway, State Route 66 Trail and Mackinaw Valley Trail) will be important in continuing to establish an interconnected regional trail system. Intergovernmental and interregional partnerships should continue to be pursued toward these ends.

Libraries and Cultural and Entertainment Facilities

Providing a wide variety of high quality libraries and cultural and entertainment facilities

Map 9.4
EMERGENCY SERVICE
NETWORK BOUNDARIES

Map 9.4
EMERGENCY SERVICE
NETWORK BOUNDARIES

that contribute to the region's quality of life will require continued coordination and support among public and private organizations and the general public. Such facilities should therefore be institutionalized as part of the local budgetary processes.

Police, Fire and Emergency Services

Continued coordination and cooperation between police, fire and emergency service agencies should be encouraged. These agencies should receive the appropriate funding necessary to guarantee the public safety of the county. Intergovernmental cooperation will likely be necessary to fill service gaps and improve efficiencies in rural areas.

One challenge that currently faces the region is to maintain an adequate number of fire protection and emergency service technician volunteers for rural areas and smaller municipalities. This comes partially as a result of people commuting to the urban area for work from rural locations and smaller municipalities. This reduces the number of capable volunteers within adequate proximity during the daytime. This becomes particularly important with an increasing number of elderly persons at home during the day. Some of the smaller communities have also been challenged with a lack of adequate private ambulance service. Intergovernmental cooperation will be essential in addressing this need. Smaller communities must also remain cognizant of the need for adequate water supply for fire protection services and the need to capitalize fire, police, and emergency service vehicles and facilities in the face of growth.

It may also be necessary to expand the McLean County Jail or provide alternatives to incarceration. The jail, adjacent to the McLean County Law & Justice Center in downtown Bloomington, was originally built to hold approximately 250 inmates. In February 2008, the county expanded its short-term holding areas for inmates as part of a \$10 million expansion of the Law and Justice Center. The county continues to make arrangements with other Illinois counties to house inmate population overflows. An expansion of the jail facilities would not likely be as economical as continuing the in-place agreements

with other counties. Other solutions may be found in "drug courts" and in electronic monitoring systems for parolees. However, the number of jail inmates may continue to exceed capacity at the present county facility. Cooperative planning in this area of concern is essential as McLean County continues to grow.

Solid Waste

Increased commercial and industrial recycling and expansion of residential curbside recycling (including rental properties) is emphasized in the current five-year plan to keep pace with the demands of a growing population.

Energy and Telecommunications

Communication and coordination among local governments and utility companies will continue to be required to help ensure adequate levels of service are provided with minimal impacts on the community.

Chapter 10



IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 10: IMPLEMENTATION

This comprehensive plan has outlined regional strategies and plans for sensible growth in McLean County through regional cooperation. The implementation element of the comprehensive plan provides direction for the follow-up actions that will be required to carry out the plan.

The implementation element is approached in a similar manner to that of other plan elements presented in the previous chapters of this report. It begins with a review of current approaches and resources, followed by an identification of challenges and opportunities for implementing the Regional Comprehensive Plan. It then presents a long range strategy for implementation that reflects the goals, objectives, policies and actions identified throughout this report. It also presents priority initiatives for early consideration. And finally, it addresses the need for monitoring and reporting on future progress made in carrying out the plan and achieving its vision.

CURRENT APPROACHES AND RESOURCES

Regional Approaches

The local governments of the McLean County region have a long history of cooperation in addressing many issues that pertain to economic and community planning, development and management. Area governments have cooperated in transportation planning and development for more than forty years. This has ensured the continued availability of federal transportation funding for the region. Bloomington and Normal currently fund the local share of the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System (B-NPTS) and participate as members with B-NPTS, McLean County, Central Illinois Regional Airport, and Illinois Department of Transportation on the Transportation Technical and Policy Committees of McLean County Regional Planning Commission. Regional cooperation has also been advanced with other McLean County communities through the intergovernmental agreement for developing the

Route 66 Bikeway and the expansion of the Metropolitan Planning Area boundaries.

Economic development is another important area of regional cooperation in McLean County. The local governments support and participate in the activities of the Economic Development Council of the Bloomington-Normal Area, the McLean County Convention and Visitors' Bureau and the McLean County Chamber of Commerce. Bloomington and Normal also jointly formed the enterprise zone that has brought significant economic development and has been a major benefit to the region.

Another important area of intergovernmental cooperation has been in the regulation of subdivision development. Bloomington, Normal and McLean County revised their subdivision ordinances to make them more up-to-date and consistent in form and content. As a result, the ordinances provide more uniform standards for development in the region. Several smaller communities have also adopted similar ordinances.

Regional cooperation in the implementation of a number of other plans and programs can be cited as well, including the regional water study, emergency services, geographic information systems and law enforcement and administration.

Local Approaches

In addition to the regional implementation approaches noted, local governments also rely on a number of locally applied methods as well. Comprehensive plans identify development policies in a number of communities and zoning ordinances are in use by many local governments to regulate land uses (see Chapter 7). Service extensions are also determined on a local basis. Annexation agreements are used by Bloomington and Normal to provide services and zoning and subdivision approvals when requirements are met. Normal requires the dedication of land for school sites, and Bloomington and Normal require land dedication for parks and trails. McLean County requires land dedication for trails.

Resources

A major implementation resource is the advanced state of local and regional planning and cooperation that currently exists. The history of regional and intergovernmental cooperation in McLean County has produced many benefits that lend support for further cooperation toward meeting the objectives of this plan. In addition, the existing plans and ordinances present policies and standards that were considered in the development of this plan and provide a sound basis for further advancements.

The region's economic prosperity is also a very important implementation resource. The strong commercial/industrial base, combined with low unemployment and high effective buying income (Chapter 4) provides tax revenues that can and do support a wide range of services and amenities. The plan can serve as an important guide for the wise use of economic resources to help sustain the region's high quality of life.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Major challenges and opportunities for the implementation of the plan include funding planned improvements, maintaining and expanding regional cooperation, monitoring progress and keeping the plan current.

Funding

Despite the region's prosperity, there is never enough funding available to finance all planned improvements. While many of the plan's strategies are institutional or managerial in nature, others will require funding to implement capital projects. This plan can serve as a basis for establishing local and regional funding priorities, and for achieving economies of scale through regional cooperation.

Maintaining Cooperation

Interaction among public officials, staff, and private enterprise has been key to achieving the cooperative atmosphere that exists here. Continuing and expanding upon such interaction

will be a challenge but will also continue to be a key factor in preserving and enhancing the cooperative environment and reaping the benefits from it.

Monitoring Progress

Another important challenge will be to continue monitoring progress made toward carrying out the plan. Monitoring and reporting progress not only provides important motivational feedback, but more importantly, provides a means to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan's policies and strategies and gives direction for making any necessary adjustments. This will enhance opportunities for successful implementation of the plan.

Keeping The Plan Current

Keeping the plan current is a difficult challenge in a high-growth region like McLean County. The passage of time and changing circumstances will continue to dictate a need for periodic revisions and updates to the plan.

An effective method for monitoring and incorporating changes will be needed for the plan to continue to be of value. This is related to and should be done in concert with the monitoring of progress described above. However, additional provisions should be made for periodic updates of a more substantial nature to include a comprehensive review and reprinting of the plan as has been done in the past. This will help ensure that the plan continues to be an effective decision making guide.

LONG RANGE STRATEGY

The long range implementation strategy encapsulates the goals, objectives, policies and actions identified for preceding elements of the plan. This implementation strategy also includes a goal and objective, as well as a series of policies and specific actions aimed at carrying out the plan. The implementation policies are also highlighted in Figure 10.1 to serve as a quick reference guide to illustrate the plan's central theme and conclusions. Additional details on strategies for other plan elements are outlined

in the corresponding chapters of this report. Priorities for early consideration are outlined later in this chapter.

Goal

Proactive support for sensible growth that balances and satisfies social, economic, and environmental needs throughout the community of McLean County.

Objective

Sensible growth as an overarching concept in local and regional decision making.

Policy for Regional Cooperation

Seek out and capitalize on opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation and public/private partnerships in promoting sensible growth.

Actions

- Jointly adopt this regional comprehensive plan.
- Continue participation in the joint council/board meetings.
- Support the intergovernmental development review process as a tool to assist in local decision making.
- Continue to support long range planning for land use, transportation, greenways, water supply, solid waste, and wastewater management.
- Continue to support intergovernmental cooperation in GIS management, the use of jurisdictional boundary agreements, economic development, infrastructure development, service delivery, and other areas of mutual benefit.

Figure 10.1. Summary of Implementation Policies McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan

- Seek out and capitalize on opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation and public/private partnerships in promoting sensible growth.
- Support plans, programs, and developments that are in harmony with the natural environment of McLean County.
- Support the revitalization of McLean County communities, neighborhoods and downtowns, and the preservation of historic resources throughout McLean County.
- Promote and support local and regional economic development.
- Encourage and support the development of a wide range of well-designed housing and neighborhoods for all income levels and age groups.
- Support development that is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive plan.
- Support the planning, development, and management of safe and cost-effective area transportation systems that offer practical options for alternative travel.
- Cooperate in the development of coordinated and cost-effective infrastructure for community facilities and services in support of adopted land use plans.

Environmental Policy

Support plans, programs, and developments that are in harmony with the natural environment of McLean County.

Actions

- Consider the environmental impacts of development proposals as an integral part of the project review and decision making process.
- Support the development of a comprehensive, digital database and directory of McLean County natural resources to provide an improved guide for making development-related decisions.

Policy for Historic Preservation and Urban Revitalization

Support the revitalization of McLean County communities, neighborhoods and downtowns, and the preservation of historic resources throughout McLean County.

Actions

- Identify communities, neighborhoods, and business districts to be targeted for revitalization activities and funding.
- Promote business activity in downtown locations.
- Consider incentives for downtown development and redevelopment.
- Encourage mixed used centers and traditional streetscapes in downtowns and neighborhoods.
- Expand alternative transportation.
- Promote historic attractions for tourism in rural areas and smaller communities.
- Create a comprehensive and up-to-date inventory of historic resources throughout McLean County to provide an improved basis for preservation efforts.
- Encourage the use of civic art and design to enhance the sense of place.

Economic Development Policy

Promote and support local and regional economic development.

Actions

- Support existing businesses.
- Target and recruit new industries.
- Expand sharing of costs and revenues associated with economic development.
- Maintain high standards for community design and development.
- Pursue balanced economic growth.
- Support the development of transportation and electronic infrastructure for businesses.

Policy for Housing and Neighborhoods

Encourage and support the development of a wide range of well-designed housing and neighborhoods for all income levels and age groups.

Actions

- Support programs for improving building conditions.
- Promote social, cultural, racial, and economic diversity.
- Explore the costs, benefits, and alternatives for providing inclusionary housing in McLean County communities.

Policy for Comprehensive Planning

Support development that is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive plan.

Actions

- Periodically review and update land use plans and ordinances to provide for more compact development patterns in urban areas to achieve more efficient use of land, energy, environmental, and fiscal resources.
- Require consistency of location, intensity of development, civic design, and compatibility of land uses with the comprehensive plan.
- Strongly support community revitalization projects and programs.
- Require provision of open space and greenways in accordance with adopted plans.
- Strongly support projects that preserve historic or agricultural resources, or otherwise

make significant contributions to the natural and human environments.

- Require availability of infrastructure as a precondition for project approvals.

Transportation Policy

Support the planning, development, and management of safe and cost-effective area transportation systems that offer practical options for alternative travel and promote transportation

system improvements that reduce environmental impacts and support sustainable growth.

Actions

- Design, build, and where practical, adapt streets and highways to safely accommodate and encourage the use of public transit, bicycling, and walking as viable options.
- Plan for and extend transportation systems in advance of planned urban growth.

Figure 10.2. Priority Initiatives McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan

- Support the development of a comprehensive, digital database and directory of McLean County natural resources to provide an improved guide for making development-related decisions.
- Identify communities, neighborhoods, and business districts to be targeted for revitalization activities and funding.
- Create a comprehensive water resource management plan that addresses current and future water quality and quantity needs.
- Create a comprehensive and up-to-date inventory of historic resources throughout McLean County to provide an improved basis for preservation efforts.
- Consider alternatives for local governments to share costs and revenues from property and sales tax revenues resulting from future economic development.
- Explore the costs, benefits, and alternatives for providing inclusionary housing in McLean County communities.
- Periodically review and update land use plans and ordinances to provide for more compact development patterns in urban areas to achieve more efficient use of land, energy, environmental, water, mineral, and fiscal resources.
- Investigate the creation of a transit district to support expanded and enhanced public transit service throughout the Bloomington-Normal metro area.
- Review the current structure of development fees to help ensure efficiency and equity in the provision of community facilities and services throughout McLean County.

- Investigate the creation of a transit district to support expanded and enhanced public transit service throughout the Bloomington-Normal metro area.
- Promote Bloomington-Normal and McLean County as a regional transportation hub for air, bus, rail, truck, and intermodal transfer of passengers and freight.
- Adopt an official map to designate and help preserve proposed future transportation corridors for automobile, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel (see Map 10.1).

Infrastructure Development Policy

Cooperate in the development of coordinated and cost-effective infrastructure for community facilities and services in support of adopted land use plans.

Actions

- Review the current structure of development fees to help ensure efficiency and equity in the provision of community facilities and services throughout McLean County.
- Support efforts to secure a safe and reliable long term source of public water supply for the region.
- Coordinate with the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District in meeting wastewater treatment needs in the metro area.
- Support the McLean County Solid Waste Management Program to promote recycling and provide oversight and coordination for the disposal of solid wastes.
- Provide advance planning for parks and recreation and open space needs throughout McLean County.
- Coordinate with area school districts in planning future school locations that are consistent with adopted comprehensive plans and thus may warrant consideration for funding support.
- Cooperate with other McLean County jurisdictions in the planning and delivery of fire, police, and emergency services.
- Coordinate with private providers in the planning and development of other public

utilities, including electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications.

PRIORITIES

Eight initiatives have been identified and listed in Figure 10.2 as priorities for early consideration by community leaders. These initiatives are intended to focus initial efforts on key issues reflected in the plan's implementation strategy. These initiatives are not intended to be undertaken to the exclusion of other identified actions, but rather to direct additional efforts toward addressing some key areas of need identified through this planning process. A significant result of implementing these initiatives is expected to be an expanded base of information to aid decision making relative to the region's continuing development. The identification of initiatives also provides a tangible means of measuring future progress made in carrying out the plan.

FUTURE UPDATES AND MONITORING

The success of the comprehensive plan will be measured in large part by the degree of progress achieved towards implementing the plan's policies and strategies. Although a comprehensive plan has significant intrinsic value as an information resource, its greatest benefits derive from its role as an instrument to assist in preserving area assets and in bringing about positive change. Thus, to gauge the real worth of a plan requires an evaluation and reporting of progress made towards its implementation. Moreover, the feedback obtained often strengthens support for the plan and the planning process and provides encouragement that can lead to greater successes.

One method to evaluate and report on the progress of implementation is the periodic updating of the comprehensive plan. Not only is new information incorporated into the update, but current conditions are compared with previous conditions and corresponding adjustments to policies and strategies can be made to maintain the plan's relevancy and usefulness. These updates are usually quite substantial and result in a new plan document. An update cycle of three

Map 10.1
OFFICIAL MAP

Map 10.1
OFFICIAL MAP

to five years or more is common, depending on local conditions and needs. This pattern has generally been followed in McLean County and should be continued for the foreseeable future.

Another more frequent method is the annual progress report. This method outlines important features of the comprehensive plan and identifies progress made during the past year. In so doing, the annual progress report can also identify areas of needed attention for coming years. This has been the focus of the Annual Report edition of the VISIONS newsletter produced by McLean County Regional Planning Commission, since the last update of the Regional Plan in 2001. This approach is expected to continue, using the plan's implementation strategy and priorities as a basis for evaluation and reporting.

A number of other methods can also effectively communicate progress in carrying out the plan. Publishing highlights from the plan in newsletters and other media is one such method. Another is posting the plan on community web sites. Presentations of the plan to civic and service organizations is yet another method of communicating progress and building support for the plan and its recommendations. A combination of these methods should be used to monitor and publicize progress made toward realizing the vision of this comprehensive plan.

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GLOSSARY

Agricultural District Laws: laws that allow farmers to form special areas where agriculture is encouraged and protected

Agricultural Easement: legal agreement limiting the use of land to predominantly agricultural or related use

Agritourism: practice of attracting travelers or visitors to an area or areas used primarily for agricultural purposes

Annexation: the process by which an incorporated city expands its boundaries to include a specified area

Aquifer: An underground bed or layer of earth, gravel, or porous stone that yields water

Aquifer Protection Zone: designated area to be managed to minimize the potential of groundwater contamination by human activities that occur on the land surface or in the subsurface

Area Median Income: income that is in the middle of the distribution of all family incomes in a specified area

Arterial Street: any major road that carries or has the potential to carry through traffic as well as to provide access to adjacent development

Brownfield: a piece of industrial or commercial property that is abandoned or underused and often environmentally contaminated, especially one considered as a potential site for redevelopment

Buffer Zone: a transitional area between two areas of different predominant land uses

Central Business District: downtown section of a city, generally consisting of retail, office, hotel, entertainment, and governmental land uses with some **high density** housing

Cluster Subdivision: technique in which detached dwelling units are grouped relatively close together, leaving open spaces as common areas

Collector Street: street that functions as a feeder from an area of limited traffic to a major street or highway

Community Development Block Grant: federal funding program that works to ensure decent affordable housing, to provide services to the most vulnerable, and to create jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses

Compact Development: smart growth technique of minimizing land consumption by more efficient land use. May be accomplished through **cluster development**, **higher density development**, **mixed-use planning**, and/or **traditional neighborhood development**

Comprehensive Land Use Planning: specialized planning that deals with how land is used in the planning area

Comprehensive Plan: long-term plan prepared to guide the development of a community that physically covers the community in its entirety

Conservation Easement: voluntary, legally binding agreement that limits certain types of uses or prevents development from taking place on a piece of property now and in the future, while protecting the property's ecological or open-space values

Conservation Subdivision: a housing development in a rural setting that is characterized by compact lots and common open space, and where the natural features of land are maintained to the greatest extent possible

Contiguous Growth: growth that is connected to existing developed areas

Cooperative Business Retention and Recruitment Program: interjurisdictional program aimed at retaining businesses at risk of closing or relocating, and identifying opportunities for business expansion

Corridor Alignment Study: an examination of transportation needs on a particular stretch of road to gather knowledge for future potential transportation improvement projects

Enterprise Zone: area in which businesses are exempt from certain taxes and are given other economic advantages as an inducement to locate there and employ residents

Environmental Overlay District: an additional environmental zoning requirement that is placed on a geographic area but does not change the underlying zoning

Erosion Control Requirements: policies geared towards preventing or controlling wind or water erosion in agriculture, land development and construction

Facility Planning Area: an area in which a designated management authority plans, designs, constructs, owns, and operates sewer facilities, including wastewater-treatment facilities

Farmette: small residential farm run by an owner who earns income from a source other than the farm

Farmland Protection Zone: special area where agriculture is encouraged and protected

Fixed-Route: public transit that follows set schedules and routes

Form-Based Zoning: zoning that regulates the *form* of the built environment, as opposed to land use and density

Geographic Information System (GIS): computer/network/Internet based system for integrating hardware, software and geographically targeted data, used to develop maps and mapping systems that allow multiple layers of geographic information to be plotted, compared and analyzed. The McLean County GIS manages data for numerous types of natural and built features, demographic characteristics, events and patterns, each with associated geographic information. GPS data (*see below*) may also be incorporated. Additional information and an online mapping utility may be found at www.mcgis.org.

Global Positioning System: system of satellites, computers, and receivers that is able to determine the latitude and longitude of a receiver on Earth

Government Buyout: purchase of the entire holdings or interests of an owner or investor by a governmental agency

Gravity Flow Sewers: sewer system that relies upon gravity to move the sewage to a treatment facility. Service lines and mains must be buried at depths and at grades to permit sewage to flow down the pipe by gravity

Greenhouse Gases: atmospheric gases that absorb and trap the Earth's heat, causing an insulating effect that keeps the Earth's temperature warmer than it would be otherwise

Greenway: an open space connector linking parks, nature reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with each other and with populated areas

Groundwater: water beneath the earth's surface, often between saturated soil and rock, that supplies wells and springs

High Density Development: technique of compact development that results in a higher overall number of units built in the same area and reducing the demand for development in other areas. Characterized by larger number of people or housing units per unit of land. Higher densities can be achieved by building homes on smaller lots, by building attached homes (rowhouses or townhomes) or by building multifamily structures (apartment buildings).

High Intensity Development: development that generates high activity patterns and high traffic generation, characterized by high-density residential development, major employment centers and commercial and industrial developments

Human Services Transportation Plan: federally-mandated plan that outlines how transit agencies, social service agencies, school districts, and other transportation providers can most efficiently and effectively work together to improve regional mobility for individuals with special transportation needs

Impact Fees: fee imposed on property developers for the new infrastructure that must be built or increased due to new property development

Inclusionary Zoning: requirement that developers who build more than a specified number of residential units must include a certain percentage for low- and moderate-income households

Infill Development: development on vacant land within an existing community

Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA): point-based approach for rating the relative importance of agricultural land resources based upon specific measurable features

Low Intensity Development: development characterized by low activity patterns and traffic generation; predominantly single-family residential development

Low Density Development: small number of people or housing units per unit of land (compare to **High Density Development**); may be characterized by single family residential development and larger lot sizes

Metropolitan Planning Organization: designated organization that coordinates transportation planning and prepares applications for funding

Mitigation Ordinance: farmland protection policy that requires developers to provide equivalent farm acreage elsewhere when agricultural land is converted to other uses, or paying a fee when farmland is converted to other uses

Mixed-Density Neighborhood: development that integrates units of varying densities (e.g. single-family/multi-family residential, varying lot sizes) in a single neighborhood

Mixed-Use Development: development that combines several uses on one site in a coordinated way (including office, retail, hotel, or residential development), to create an accessible, time-saving “live-work-play” environment

Multi-Modal Transportation Improvement: area or facility designed to accommodate multiple forms of ground transportation (e.g. city and regional buses, shuttles, rail, taxis, limousines)

Neighborhood Beautification: projects or ordinances designed to enhance the quality and appearance of a community

Neo-Traditional Neighborhood Design: type of community that mixes uses and housing types to create a form more like the towns of the past, which contrast with present automobile-dominated suburbs. The communities are pedestrian-oriented, allowing residents to walk to shops, schools, places of worship, parks, and transit stops

New Urbanism: urban planning trend/movement towards **neo-traditional neighborhood design** and **transit-oriented development** as a reaction to urban sprawl

Paratransit: demand response system of transit in which passenger trips are generated by calls to a transit operator who dispatches a vehicle to pick the passengers up and transport them to their destination

Peak Travel Period: period when transit gets the most use, as in morning and evening rush hours

Peripheral Development: development in non-urban areas or urban fringe areas

Primary Agricultural Area: land in active agricultural use

Purchase/Transfer of Development Rights Program: voluntary program, where a land trust or some other agency usually linked to local government, makes an offer to a landowner to buy the development rights on the parcel. Once an agreement is made, a permanent deed restriction is placed on the property that restricts the type of activities that may take place on the land indefinitely

Ranchette: A small ranch or large home lot

Reclamation: Causing a change in land from an unusable or undevelopable state to a usable or developable state

Right-to-Farm ordinance: ordinance that defines and limits cases in which agricultural operations may be considered a nuisance. May include disclosure notice to prospective property buyers notifying them that if their property is near agricultural land, there may be certain inconveniences associated with normal agricultural operations and special agricultural setbacks may be required

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU): federal act guaranteeing funding for highways, highway safety, and public transportation

Secondary Agricultural Area: land with a mixture of rural/agricultural and residential uses that, as such, is not a prime agricultural area

Sedimentation: process of depositing sediment

Sensible Growth: – planned development that is intended to help protect open space and farmland, revitalize existing communities, maintain affordable housing and provide a variety of transportation choices

Setback: minimum distance between a property line and a building, as required by ordinance or code

Storm water detention basin: an artificial lake that is used to manage stormwater runoff to prevent flooding and downstream erosion, and improve water quality in an adjacent river, stream

Stream buffer: vegetated area, including trees, shrubs, and herbaceous vegetation, that exists or is established to protect a stream system

Subdivision: tract of land divided into lots suitable for homebuilding purposes

Surface water: water that collects on the ground or in a stream, river, lake, wetland

Tap-on fees: the cost to connect a property to a water or sewer system

Tax increment financing: method of financing real estate development costs to encourage developers to construct buildings or other private improvements or to pay for public improvements, such as streets, sidewalks, sewer and water, and similar improvements. Additional property taxes collected as a result of the development are used to pay for part of the development costs.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL): calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive and still meet water quality standards, and an allocation of that amount to the pollutant's sources

Topography: state of the surface of the land, such as rolling, rough, or flat

Traditional Neighborhood Development: see **Neo-Traditional Neighborhood Design**

Transit-Oriented Development: high density development that is structured so that every residential unit within it is within walking distance of a transit stop

Unincorporated Residential Development: residential development on county lands that are not part of a municipality

Urban Buffer: The areas extending a distance of one and one half miles beyond the present boundaries of the County's municipalities. Urban buffer areas include the currently planned urban growth areas of municipalities as well as additional lands that could become incorporated beyond the planning period of this plan.

Urban Classified System: a hierarchy of streets and roads that provides for the movement of people, vehicles and freight within and across a city

Urban growth: expansion of a city due to population growth, economic development, or land development

Urban Revitalization: the process of rebuilding thriving economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable urban areas and populations in areas that have been in decline or in areas that are stressed from a continuing influx of people

Visual preference survey: technique that assists the community in determining which components of a plan contributes positively to a community's overall image or features, using images and simulations to help people focus on how they would like to see future development occur

Watershed: ridge of high land dividing two areas that are drained by different river systems. On one side of a watershed, rivers and streams flow in one direction; on the other side they flow in another direction

Wetland: lowland area, such as a marsh or swamp, saturated with moisture, especially when regarded as the natural habitat of wildlife

Zoning: legal mechanism for local governments to regulate the use of privately owned property to prevent conflicting land uses and promote orderly development. All privately owned land within the jurisdiction is placed within designated zones that limit the type and intensity of development permitted.

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