



FY2013 Annual Report



This annual report highlights progress made by the Region’s planning partners in the planning and implementation of area projects. It reports on progress made on priority initiatives of the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan, and provides an overview of progress made on related projects during the past year. It describes some of the activities carried out by McLean County Regional Planning Commission as part of its ongoing work program, which is guided in part by the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan.

REGIONAL PLAN PRIORITIES

Progress continues to be made on a number of priority initiatives identified in the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan during this fourth year fol-

lowing completion of the plan. These initiatives are briefly described in Figure A, with the current status summarized in Figure B. These priority initiatives will continue to be the focus of planning efforts in succeeding years.

PROJECT UPDATES

The following pages highlight some of the planning and related work carried out in our region over the past year.

Natural Resources Inventory

MCRPC staff have continued developing and acquiring data for inclusion in the natural resources inventory. This resource is an expanding catalog of data, including regional geology, topography, agricultural and mineral resources, hydrology, flora and

fauna, that is available through McGIS. These resources will include metadata detailing data sourcing, and where available, information regarding how data age and collection methodology.

This information, in map format, will foster improved decision-making by private and public participants in the planning and development process. This aid to better planning will continue to add enhanced and new data, offering the ability to evaluate the impact of development proposals on regional resources using multiple variables.

East Side Corridor Environmental Assessment Study

MCRPC is continually involved in the East Side Corridor Study, through participation in the Project Study Group, public meet-

**Figure A
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, 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.

ings, and review of projects documents. MCRPC aided in preparation for the September 30, 2013 Joint Council and County Board meeting, wherein the project team described the process for identifying a preferred corridor for preservation, should the proposed highway be required in the future.

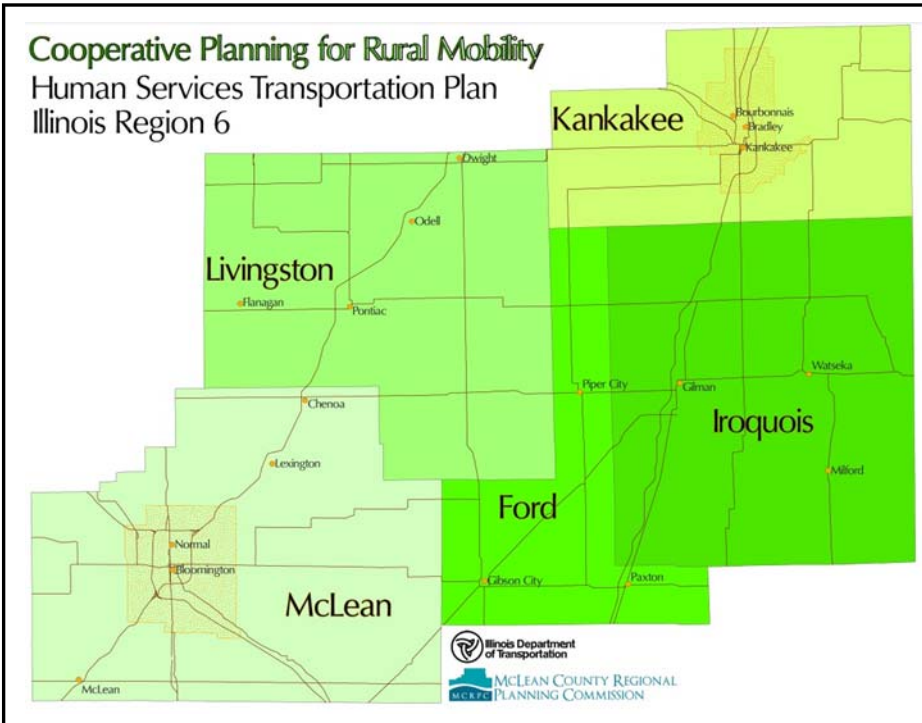
Throughout the year staff have worked with the project team in assessing study findings and evaluating the preferred alignment. The project team will continue with technical tasks through 2014. In October of 2014 the County anticipates holding a public hearing regarding the final Environmental Assessment document, which will also provide an opportunity for public review and comment. Final action on the Environmental Assessment by the Federal Highway Administration may occur in early 2015. County and project team staff continue to investigate the corridor protection process, and to evaluate future projects should the proposed highway eventually be built.

Human Services Transportation Plan

MCRPC staff coordinate the development and implementation of Human Services Transportation Plans for the Bloomington-Normal urbanized area, and for the Illinois Region 6 area for rural transportation services. Region 6 consists of five central and east central Illinois counties, including Ford, Iroquois, Kankakee, Livingston and McLean.

MCRPC staff continue to coordinate planning for Region 6

<p style="text-align: center;">Figure B Status of Priority Initiatives McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan December, 2013</p>	
Priority Initiative	Status
Target revitalization activities	Work continues on redevelopment and revitalization for Downtown Bloomington and Uptown Normal, and the West Bloomington Revitalization Project. MCRPC also continues to pursue improved transportation connections through Main Street improvements and Connect Transit route restructuring.
Update plans and ordinances	An update of the Long Range Transportation Plan for the Bloomington-Normal urban area was recently completed and submitted to the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. Work on the Bloomington Comprehensive Plan is expected to begin in the near future.
Create water resource management plan	Bloomington and Normal have taken steps to increase their respective capacities to deliver potable water.
Investigate creation of transit district	This was researched as part of the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan for the Bloomington-Normal urban area, and is currently being considered by Connect Transit.
Consider cost and revenue sharing	This is not included in the current year's work activities.
Update natural resource inventory	A natural resource inventory application including geology, topography, agricultural and mineral resources, hydrology, flora and fauna, and other data is available through McGIS.
Inventory historic/archaeological resources	This is not included in the current year's work activities.
Investigate inclusionary housing	This is not included in the current year's work activities.
Review/update development fees	This will be investigated as a component of the Bloomington Comprehensive Plan.



through June 2015. Coordination includes administration of regional Policy and Technical Committee meetings, management of the grant application review process and participation in county transportation committees throughout the region.

MCRPC also administers the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) for the Bloomington-Normal area, which brings together public and private service providers, social services agencies and other entities. The TAC also oversees the HSTP process for the urban area in McLean County.

The MCRPC Transportation Advisory Committee functions as the county transportation committee for representation to Region 6, and is also the clearinghouse for the urban area HSTP process. The TAC is administered by MCRPC staff, and its membership is comprised of transportation service providers, including public

transit, rural public transit and agencies providing transportation services to clients of qualified programs, and to the general public. MCRPC staff conduct meetings and provide coordination for local agencies and providers.

SHOW BUS

SHOW BUS, based in Meadows, provides rural public transit service for McLean County, as well as in DeWitt, Ford, Iroquois, Kankakee, Livingston and Macon counties. Details about SHOW BUS services are available at www.showbusonline.org.



Greenways and Trail Planning

The McLean County Highway Department is scheduled to begin construction of a 4.53 mile section of the Historic Route 66 Bikeway from Normal to Towanda in 2014.

In concert with the Regional Planning Commission, the Highway Department submitted two applications for Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) funds to help finance Phase One Engineering on two other trail sections. One section is for a 3.91 mile section of trail stretching from approximately 2.5 miles north of Towanda to Lexington. The other section cited for initial engineering is from the Village of Shirley to approximately 1.1 miles south. Grant announcements are expected sometime in early 2014.

When complete, the Historic Route 66 Bikeway will become part of a statewide Route 66 Trail system stretching from metropolitan Chicago to just outside of the St. Louis metro area.

Commission staff continues involvement in all statewide and regional planning activities promoting trail connections and greenways efforts through the McLean County Greenways Advisory Committee, Route 66 Trail Executive Committee and The Illinois State Greenways and Trails Council. The local Greenways Advisory Committee has developed an electronic greenways newsletter that is distributed to over 200 parties. It is published quarterly and available for review on the MCRPC website. The Committee is also increasing its efforts in public educational outreach for 2014 and beyond through reports and updates to local government-

tal bodies and involvement in public events.

Long Range Transportation Plan

The current Long Range Transportation Plan was adopted by the Policy Committee in October 2012. During the past year Commission staff has continued to amass information discussed in the plan and to seek public input, in preparation for an anticipated update of the plan in 2014. The plan update will include several new elements, including an extensively expanded public participation process, new information on transportation issues under the provisions of the Civil Rights Act, and identification of additional target planning areas.

Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is an annually updated plan for transportation investment over a five year period, and includes projects for streets, roads, highways, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and streetscape improvement. It details the amount and source of transportation funding for all projects undertaken by the City of Bloomington, McLean County, the Town of Normal and the Illinois Department of Transportation within the designated metropolitan planning area. That area includes both the City and Town, the urban boundary area in McLean County's jurisdiction, and the Villages of Downs and Towanda. The TIP also includes programmed and planned capital investment and operating ex-

penses for public transit providers such as Connect Transit and SHOW BUS, as well as not-for-profit service providers, which currently include the YWCA of McLean County, marcfirst, and Advocate BroMenn Adult Day Services.

Our TIP includes all transportation projects, whatever the funding source, to make available the best information regarding the cost of maintaining and expanding transportation infrastructure and services, and how that cost is met.

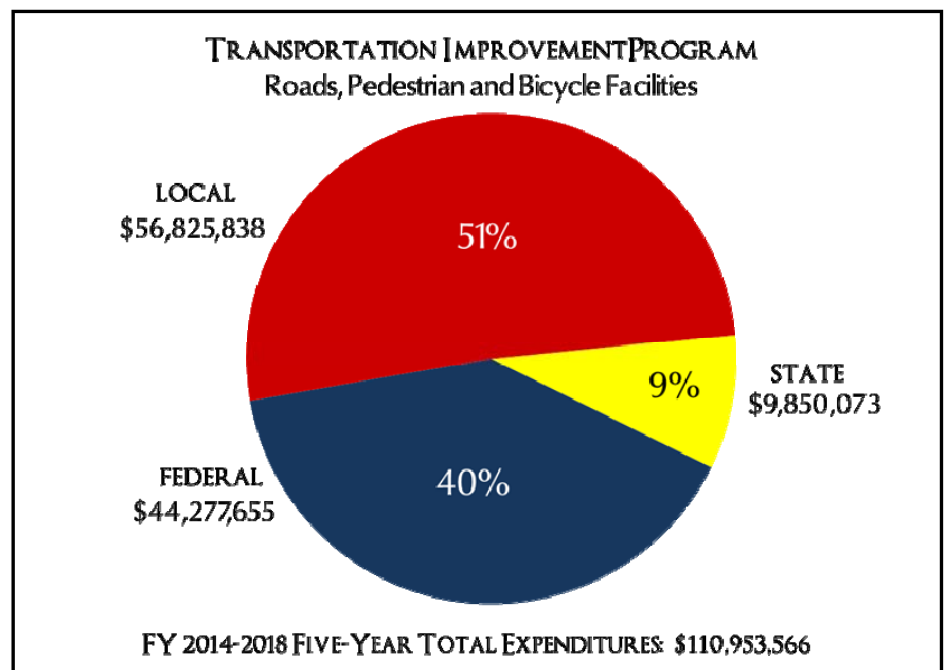
The pie chart illustrates anticipated investment in street, bicycle and pedestrian projects during fiscal years 2014 through 2018, as reported in the TIP currently in force.

The TIP also details capital and operating costs for transit services, including public transit providers Connect Transit, serving Bloomington-Normal, and SHOW BUS, providing rural public transit throughout McLean County and in six other counties.

The TIP also includes program and budget information for agencies that provide transportation to their clients, such as marcfirst and Advocate BroMenn Adult Day Services, and to the general public, such as the YCWA of McLean County, which operates the Medivan and Wheels-to-Work programs. Both urban and rural public transit providers continue to experience considerable growth in demand for service, and smaller providers also confront cost and service volume challenges. Unpredictable fuel costs and uncertain vehicle availability through the state procurement program are major concerns in developing program budgets and managing increasing demand. New funding streams will be needed to supplement funding support from state and federal programs.

Development Reviews

In Fiscal Year 2013, four regionally significant development



projects were reviewed by the Intergovernmental Development Committee comprised of local governmental planners and engineers from the city, town and county.

Projects are reviewed for consistency with local and regional comprehensive plans and are normally developments of five acres or more.

These project reviews are submitted to local government entities for consideration in the local review process. Projects are rated from "A" (highest) to "E" (lowest) based on the number of minimal and optional features provided.

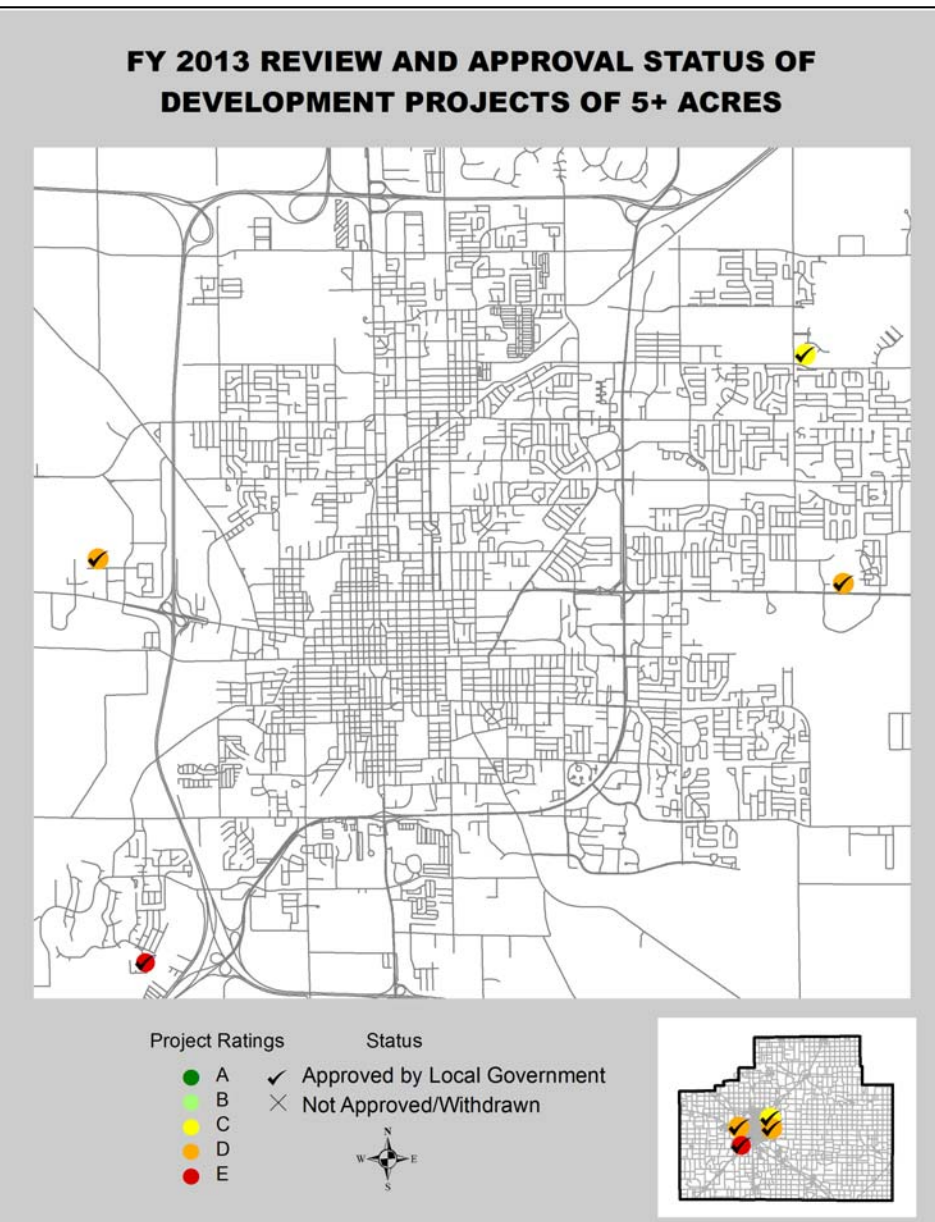
Project modifications are also recommended by the development committee and the regional planning commission as well as planning commissions from the city and town.

All four projects reviewed during the fiscal year were approved by the appropriate governing bodies. Two projects received "C" ratings while one project received a "D" rating and another an "E" rating.

Information Forum

Janet F. Kavinoky, Executive Director of Transportation and Infrastructure for the United States Chamber of Commerce was the featured speaker at the Regional Planning Commission's 2013 Community Information Forum. The eighth annual event was held at the Double Tree Hotel and Conference Center in Bloomington. The topic of Ms. Kavinoky's presentation was "Expanding Transit to Meet Future Travel Demands."

Selected as speaker for the 2014 event is Charles Marohn,



Jr., Co-Founder and President of Strong Towns, a non-partisan and not-for-profit organization based in suburban Minneapolis. The agency advocates and instructs communities how to develop and plan productive changes in development patterns.

Mr. Marohn speaks at various national and international events and is a professional engineer and certified planner. His topic for the 2014 forum is "Neighborhood and Redevelop-

ment Planning and Finance." The event will be held on April 9, 2014 at the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in Normal and begins at 7:00 a.m.

A special "Neighborhood Chat" session is also being planned for the evening of April 8 with Mr. Marohn. For registration and more information, visit www.mcplan.org.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

The Commission serves as the coordinating agency for the six-member regional GIS consortium (McGIS). The Commission is mid-way in the implementation of a multi-year comprehensive GIS Plan for the consortium which is guiding continued regional GIS development.

A digital base mapping refresh project is planned for spring of 2014 to refresh data last acquired in 2008. The online mapping component continues being enhanced for general public and government users based on several intuitive and powerful user interfaces. Training is being offered at no cost to all. The consortium also started using Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network (CIRBN) services this year and is exploring opportunities to expand its services to others through this resource as possible.

McGIS Membership

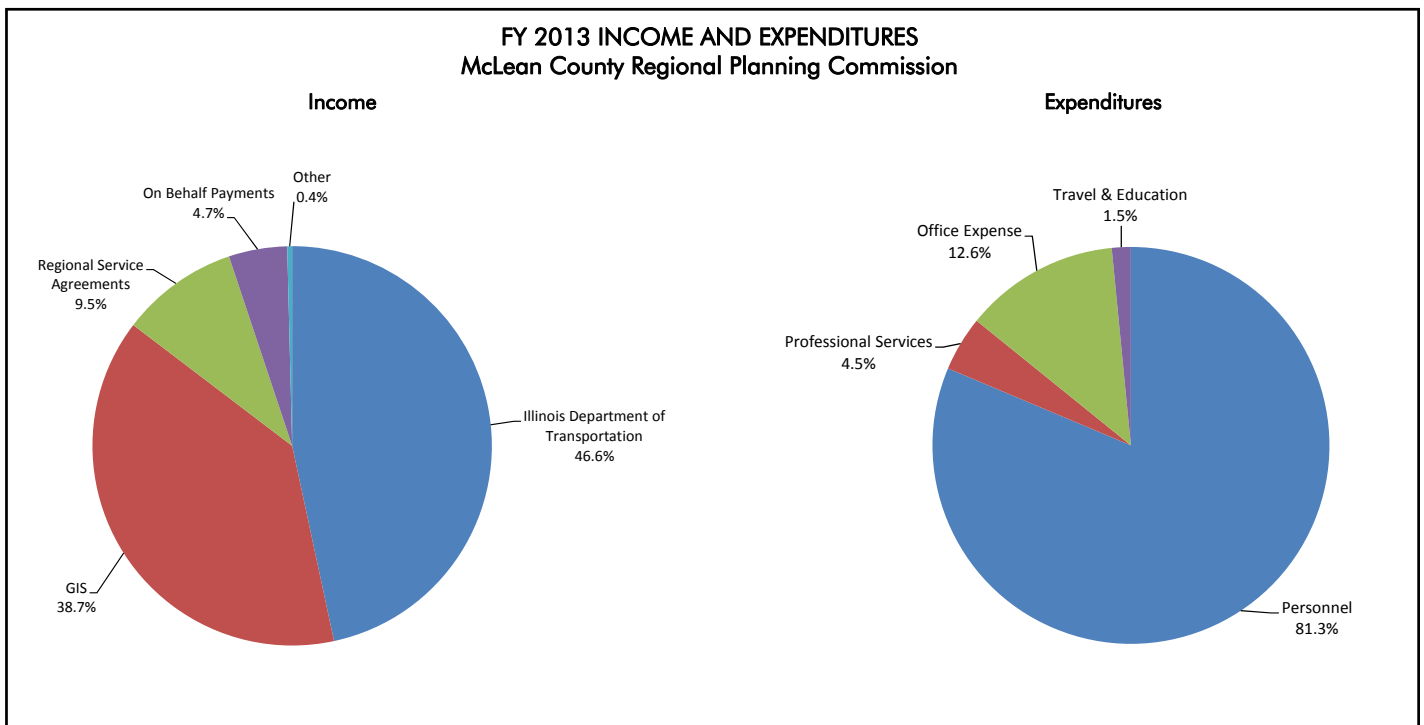
- City of Bloomington
- City of Bloomington Township
- Town of Normal
- McLean County
- Emergency Telephone System Board (ETSB)
- McLean County Regional Planning Commission

The consortium members also continue extensive collaborative work on improving the content and quality of GIS data. Enhancements to GIS workflows, technology updates and integration with other business systems are ongoing activities of the consortium. These efforts allow public, private, business or government concerns quick and easy access to regional geographic information and resources through the central McGIS.org website portal.

FINANCES

The Commission's revenue of \$731,837 was obtained from a variety of sources as illustrated in the chart below. Funding is provided by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), GIS revenues, regional service agreements, and interest and other miscellaneous income sources. IDOT funds support transportation related programs. GIS revenues include recorder's fee funding and member contributions to support the regional GIS program.

Total disbursements of \$757,490 included personnel expenses, office expenses, professional services, and travel and education as shown on the chart below.



This publication presents information on planning and development issues that impact the quality of life in the Community of McLean County. We can be reached by mail at 115 E. Washington St. #M103, Bloomington, IL 61701, by phone at (309) 828-4331, by fax at (309) 827-4773.

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Message from the Chairman and Executive Director

Presented in this annual report is a summary of progress made by this Commission and its planning partners in completing a number of important area projects that enhance the quality of life in this Region. This report also notes progress made in carrying out strategies outlined in the McLean County Regional Comprehensive Plan as well as other area comprehensive plans.

We thank our community leaders and planning partners for their vision and leadership and continued support for long range planning in our Region.

Respectfully Submitted,



George Benjamin, Chairman



Vasudha Pinnamaraju, Executive Director