CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2035

BRING IT
BLOOMINGTON!

PLAN IT. SEE IT. LIVE IT.

BRING IT, BLOOMINGTON!

PLAN IT. SEE IT. LIVE IT.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2035

Prepared By

McLean County Regional Planning Commission
115 East Washington Street #M103
Bloomington, Illinois 61701

In Cooperation with the

CITY OF *Bloomington*
ILLINOIS

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* Denotes persons who served as the working group chair, vice-chair, or co-chairs of the respective working group.

INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In twenty years (2035)...

Bloomington will be a unique, cohesive, and vibrant community, successfully uniting and integrating its downtown core, established neighborhoods, and future developments. Supported by its high quality of life and enduring economic stability, Bloomington will be the destination for people and businesses that seek a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. Its residents will continue to thrive, surrounded by rich history, arts and culture, lifelong learning opportunities, a healthy environment, and an active lifestyle.

ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Growth and development in a community reflect economic conditions and expectations, which in turn are influenced by regional, national and global factors. This effect has most recently been seen in Bloomington during the global recession that began in 2007 and from which local recovery in terms of unemployment, real estate transactions, general business activity and other measurements is continuing but not yet complete. The Bloomington-Normal area did not experience the severe level of economic damage that affected other communities in Central Illinois and throughout the state, but the near-cessation of new development projects during this period is clear evidence the economic uncertainties of recent years have left lingering wounds in an important economic sector in Bloomington.

Despite these challenges, Bloomington has reason to hope and to work towards better economic conditions. The City's central location for transportation and commerce and at the center of a highly productive agricultural region, is a substantial advantage in marketing the community and competing in a global marketplace. The well-regarded local schools, including colleges and universities, are a rich resource for the community, both current and potential individual and corporate residents. While challenged, Bloomington-Normal consistently outperforms the state in growth, economic resiliency and opportunity.

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

To fully exploit our advantages and strengths during changing economic conditions, Bloomington looks to an evolving approach to development. True to the core values derived during the outreach process, the plan focuses on the full use of existing infrastructure. It places its first priority on infill and redevelopment within the City. These efforts will be directed towards those areas of Bloomington that have suffered through inattention and disinvestment and where existing infrastructure has been allowed to deteriorate. Development beyond the City's incorporated area is then prioritized based on adjacency to the City and the existing availability of all City services. Still lower in priority for development are contiguous areas with limited access to City services. Finally, areas not adjacent to Bloomington's incorporated area, and without access to City services, should be considered for development only in extraordinary circumstances and otherwise are not expected to develop within the 2035 time horizon of this comprehensive plan.

Community Profile

$77,982
Median Family Income
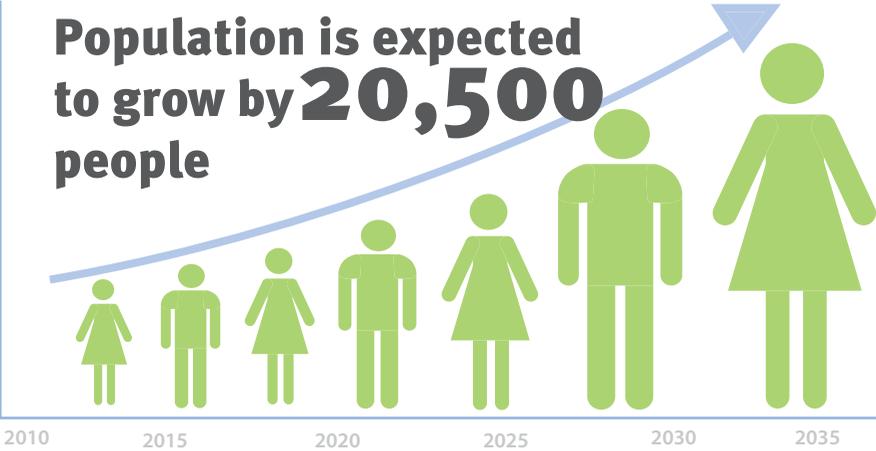
76,610
Population

44%
Completed Bachelor's Degree or higher

3.9%
Unemployment Rate
April 2015, Not Seasonally Adjusted

$700
Median Rent

$153,500
Median Home Value

62.9%
Home Ownership

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2010; Unemployment rate -U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for Bloomington MSA April 2015; Employment Projections for Bloomington-Normal, McLean County, Woods and Pool 2014; Population and housing projections for Bloomington MCRPC;

Bloomington Projections

Population is expected to grow by 20,500 people

2010   2015   2020   2025   2030   2035

13,200 More Housing Units to Accommodate New Growth

34,339

2010   2015   2020   2025   2030   2035

Bloomington-Normal MSA Projected New Jobs by 2035: 48,500

Source: Woods and Poole 2014 employment projections for the MSA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHAT IS IT?

Communities in Illinois are authorized to establish planning commissions and develop comprehensive plans under the provisions of the Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS 5). The comprehensive plan is the core statement of development policy and principle of the City of Bloomington. Comprehensive plans can be 18 to 36 month long processes that include a discussion of existing conditions, community outreach and a land use plan that identifies goals and objectives with respect to housing, infrastructure, education, recreation, transportation and other topics that influence land use. Comprehensive plans are advisory in nature, and are given implementation through adoption of zoning and other ordinances, codes and municipal regulatory tools conforming to the plan.

The Bloomington comprehensive planning process was 18 months long and was conducted in three phases as outlined on the following page. The outreach was extensive and included members of the community whose voices are typically not heard. The community involvement was further substantiated by involving many interested members of the community in the working groups. This plan provides a context for decisions about growth and development in the City. It reflects the City's policy intent with respect to many issues that confront Bloomington, including built, fiscal, social, environment and economic conditions. This plan sets forth a series of goals to be achieved over the next twenty years, defines objectives to be reached in support of the goals, and recommends actions by the City, and its regional partners, to reach the objectives. The plan also addresses implementation, by establishing benchmarks and measures of performance to gauge to what degree the goals and objectives are attained, and whether the progress achieved is producing the intended results.

WHAT IT IS NOT

The plan does not provide a mandate. It is advisory only. However, when adopted by local governments, it is 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. 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 feasibility from a cost/benefit perspective. The plan does provide a means to focus resources initially on those strategies that have been identified as short term. While in some instances the plan identifies sites that may be used for certain projects, comprehensive plans are not intended to provide site specific recommendations. Such actions should be based on area specific redevelopment plans or neighborhood level plans.

HOW TO READ

Chapters 4-10 discuss specific subject areas such as Neighborhoods and Economic Development. Each chapter introduces the reader to challenges and opportunities as they relate to that subject. This discussion is followed by Goals, Objectives and Actionable items. Following each actionable item is the agency identified with the lead responsibility for attaining that action along with a timeline. Timelines are stated as short for 1-3 years, medium for 4-10 years, and long for 11 years and over. Partner agencies and performance metrics have been identified for the objectives as well. Throughout the plan, local efforts, best practices, and funding mechanisms have been highlighted to provide additional information. The reader should know that actionable items are suggestions to achieve the goals and objectives but not mandates. The lead agencies may evaluate the feasibility or find other actions more appropriate to achieve the goals and objectives stated here.

2,706 SURVEY RESPONSES

WORKING GROUPS **13**

117 MEETINGS

GROUP MEMBERS **130**

650 ACTION ITEMS **!**

18 MONTH PLANNING PROCESS

PHASE 1
EXISTING CONDITIONS
Feb 2014 - July 2014

During this phase many pre-existing local, regional and strategic plans produced by the City or by other entities were reviewed and analyzed. These plans included master planning documents relating to water, sanitary and storm water, streets and sidewalks, parks and bicycle facilities, health, natural environment and Downtown. Recommendations from these documents that were still relevant were integrated into the final plan, directly or by reference.

This phase also included GIS based analysis of many data layers from multiple sources of information on topics ranging from demographics, housing, the quality of local education, existing land use, economic conditions, health and safety, the natural environment, public and private infrastructure, community facilities and regional issues.

A comprehensive Existing Conditions Report can be accessed at www.bringitonbloomington.com or www.mcplan.org. This report highlights the many strengths of Bloomington and the region but also points out the economic challenges in the core that includes Downtown and the surrounding established neighborhoods.

PHASE 2
COMMUNITY OUTREACH
July 2014 - October 2014

Bring It On, Bloomington! was the brand for the community outreach phase. MCRPC staff engaged over 6,000 members of the community using a plethora of traditional and electronic methods. Scores of meetings with community and neighborhood organizations were conducted. A survey was sent out via water bills. The Bring It On, Bloomington! website for the project provided access to all the materials and survey responses, and was a one-stop source for information about the plan its activities and outcomes. Mindmixer, Facebook and Twitter were the other tools used to engage Bloomington residents. Most importantly this effort was kicked off with an energizing video that introduced community members to the comprehensive plan and challenged them to participate. This resulted in over 2,000 survey responses from a wide range of community members. The 8000+ individual responses to the open-ended survey questions were carefully analyzed and summarized into guiding themes, core values and the vision for the community. The Vision and Values Report can be accessed at www.bringitonbloomington.com or www.mcplan.org

PHASE 3
STRATEGIC PLAN
August 2014 - June 2015

The information from the Existing Conditions report and the vision, values and guiding themes set forth by the Vision and Values report informed this phase. Thirteen different working groups addressed a range of subjects including housing, neighborhoods, education, arts and culture, natural environment, health, community well being, economic development, downtown, transportation, utilities, community facilities and regional cooperation. These complex and interrelated topics are presented comprehensively in 7 chapters. Nearly 130 working group members spent over 1300 hours in the last 10 months to address each of these subjects at length. The focus during this process has been on implementation. Each chapter outlines goals, objectives and actionable items. A time frame and lead agency were identified with each actionable item. Metrics and partner agencies are identified for each objective to provide additional guidance during the implementation. Finally, the land use map identifies areas appropriate for various developments. The information presented in this document is the result of the third and final phase of this process.

CORE VALUES

DYNAMIC NEIGHBORHOODS

...that are connected and have a mix of uses, offer affordable housing options for all; where established older neighborhoods are preserved; physical and social barriers between the East and the West Sides are dissolved...

GOOD EDUCATION SYSTEM

... where public schools are thriving and there are excellent opportunities for higher education...

STABLE ECONOMY

...that is well positioned in the 21st century with a diversified economic base, thriving local services and businesses, a culture of entrepreneurship...

SMALL TOWN FEEL WITH BIG CITY AMENITIES

... where history and character is preserved. Continues to be a safe, family friendly city that offers a variety of entertainment options.

HEALTHY COMMUNITY

... a small footprint of the City that fosters multimodal transportation and preserves the natural environment...

SOLID INFRASTRUCTURE

... City which maintains its current assets in good condition and carefully evaluates ongoing costs and benefits during expansion

EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

...that is careful and a thrifty steward of public resources...

For a more detailed discussion on the core values please refer to the Vision and Values document at www.bringitonbloomington.com
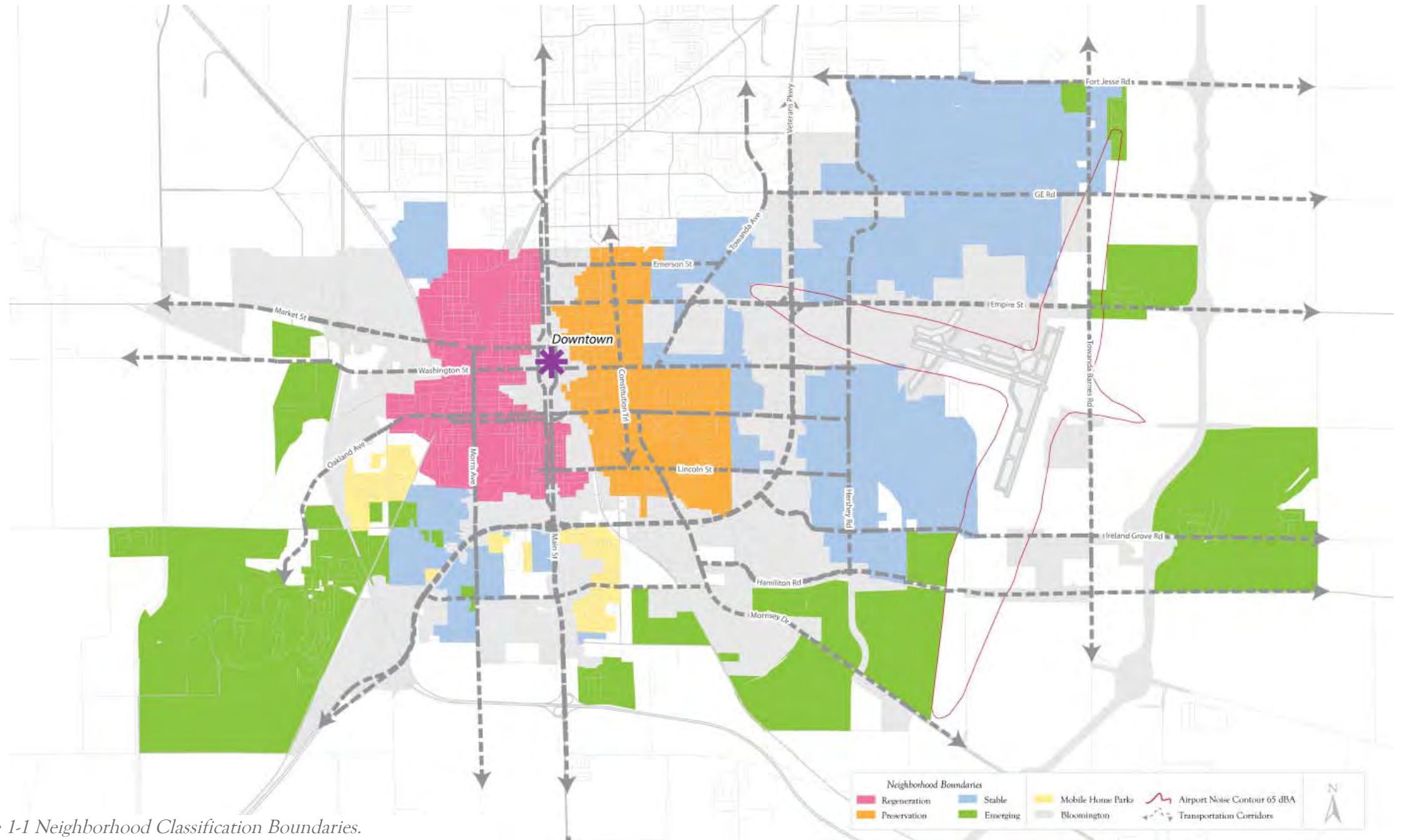
Figure 1-1 Neighborhood Classification Boundaries.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

NEIGHBORHOODS

Bloomington's appeal as a family friendly community is its choice of housing and neighborhoods. Continuing to offer that choice of old and new neighborhoods is critical to provide a sustained future. The goals and objectives are tailored to the Regeneration, Preservation, Stable and Emerging Areas, to address the unique challenges and capitalize on their specific strengths. Key discussion in this chapter includes:

- The unique characteristics, challenges and opportunities of each of the neighborhood areas identified in Figure 1-1.
- The need to address the physical and social divide between the established older neighborhoods and the suburban-style newer neighborhoods.
- Nearly half of the City and its neighborhoods are new, built within the last 50 years. The majority of this suburban style development is on the east side of Veterans Parkway. The average cost of a newly constructed single family house in these newer areas in 2013 was $297,000, nearly double the City's median home price, $153,000. Preserving the established older neighborhoods links residents to history while maintaining affordable housing options in the community.
- Stable areas are newer areas built within the last 50 years and will not require substantial intervention from the City. That is not the case with Regeneration and Preservation areas. City should prioritize its limited resources in these areas.
- The Regeneration Area experienced many years of disinvestment resulting not only in physical disrepair but social disadvantages. This plan recognizes the complex interdependencies of housing, education, unemployment, crime, and the overall neighborhood quality. Bloomington should prioritize spending its resources in this area, and partner with other public, private and not-for-profit entities to revitalize this area comprehensively.

EDUCATION

Like neighborhoods, education supports Bloomington as a family friendly community. This includes both K-12 and higher education. This is a great economic development tool as good educational institutions lead to an educated workforce and attract in-migration. The following findings are the foundation for goals and objectives for education:

- Bloomington is served by two well-regarded school districts, Unit 5 and District 87. District 87 is landlocked and primarily serves the established older neighborhoods in the Regeneration and Preservation areas. The social challenges in neighborhoods served by District 87 have immense negative effects on the schools, as can be evidenced by the difference in the test scores between schools serving the West and the East sides of the City. Education should be a primary focus of the revitalization efforts in the Regeneration and Preservation areas.
- This plan calls for heightened coordination of capital improvement projects between the City and the school districts, particularly Unit 5. Location of future schools can profoundly impact the City's future development pattern.

Figure showing the multi-directional relationship between education/ workforce training, economic development, and neighborhoods.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bloomington-Normal has a long history of good fortune with economic development. From the agricultural bounty of McLean County and contact with wider markets brought by the railroads in the 19th century to the strong corporate presence in the 20th century, the region has long been in the forefront of economic opportunity in central Illinois. However, the economic crises of the last decade pose some challenges to the region's historic prosperity. Below are some key discussions in this chapter.

- Bloomington-Normal and McLean County have many advantages such as its strategic location between Chicago, St. Louis and Indianapolis, connections with the rest of the world with road, rail and air connections, highly skilled workforce and high quality of life. All of these can be leveraged to grow existing jobs and attract new jobs to diversify the local economy. The key to our success is a unified regional approach to Economic Development.
- The Regional Economic and Market Strategy identified Advanced Business Services, Agri-business and Food Processing, Enterprenuership, Information and Communication Technology, Transportation, Logistics and Warehousing as the target sectors for our region.
- Once the center for community and economic activity, Downtown Bloomington suffered the loss of retail and other business activities to shopping centers and commercial strips along the auto oriented Veterans Parkway. The vitality of a city's downtown is an important element in a community's overall economic health.
- There are many opportunities for infill and redevelopment in Bloomington. The City should prioritize and incentivize development on these properties before greenfield development that requires additional infrastructure.
- The successful implementation of action items listed in various chapters of this plan are linked to the implementation of action items in economic development and vice-versa.

ARTS, CULTURE AND HISTORY

Thanks to ongoing public investment and an active private arts, entertainment and sports community, Bloomington boasts a wide array of cultural resources. This aspect of City life enriches residents and draws visitors. The following issues are considered in this chapter.

- Arts and culture play a key role in enhancing community quality of life while defining the City's unique character. Bloomington's arts and cultural scene is rich with many recurring and one-time events. However, attendance potential has yet to be realized, and more information and marketing is needed.
- The concentration of galleries and cultural venues in Downtown Bloomington makes it our de facto cultural district. Officially designating the Downtown as a cultural district combined with marketing and branding will boost redevelopment efforts within Downtown.
- Arts can also play a crucial role in revitalizing the key corridors and other public spaces in the City.
- The Historic Route 66 connection, already featured by the McLean County Museum of History and the Route 66 Historic Bike Trail, is a potent tool for attracting tourism. Bloomington needs more culturally-based economic development.
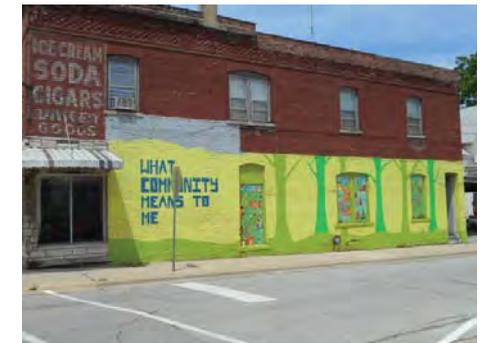
Public Art in the Regeneration Area

Historic Home in the Preservation Area

Boulevard in Whites Place Historic District

Community Garden in the Regeneration Area

Miller Park play area

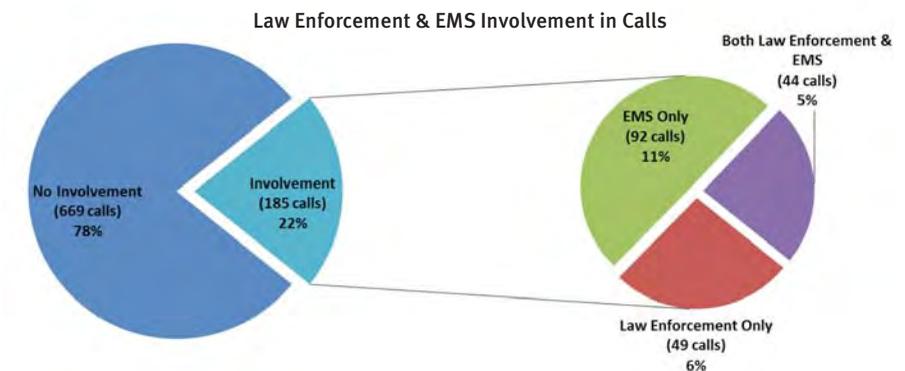*Farmers Market in Downtown Bloomington*

HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Bloomington has a vested interest in supporting healthy residents. Health influences and is influenced by many factors including physical, social and environmental conditions. As the demographics of the community change, it must adapt. The discussion in this chapter includes

- McLean County Health department's five-year plan, IPLAN, identified obesity as one of the three major health priorities for the County. Two factors that contribute to obesity are lack of physical activity and lack of access to fresh food, both of which can be influenced by land use and development policies. Allowing a mix of land uses, facilitating alternate modes of travel and maintaining a small footprint of the City all contribute towards addressing the obesity epidemic.
- The majority of the west side is a food desert. While trying to attract a neighborhood scale grocery store to the Regeneration Area should be the long-range goal, many interim steps that have proven successful in other communities such as fresh food vending at corner stores and gas stations can be implemented to address this issue.
- Connecting local food to local people improves health and the economy. A local food hub that aggregates, processes and distributes local food is a critical link that is missing in our community. Bloomington should strongly consider bridging this gap.
- Riparian corridors along streams and lakes are designated as conservation zones. These and other environmentally sensitive zones should be protected for air and water quality purposes. These areas can also double as passive recreational uses and bike trails while providing stormwater benefits.
- Mental health is the second major health priority identified in the County's IPLAN. Individuals with mental health concerns face many barriers including treatment, housing and personal safety. City should aid in the implementation of the McLean County Mental Health Action Plan to improve the quality of life for all.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety is one of the core functions of the city and takes up nearly 50% of the City budget. Hence police, fire and EMS need to be coordinated with land use and development to achieve efficiencies.
- Bloomington is a safe community. Crime reached an all-time low in 2014. However, the few crimes in the community are concentrated in the Regeneration Area. Addressing the safety concerns is a key to the revitalization of this area. Goals and objectives in this chapter includes police working closely with residents, design of public spaces to improve public safety and other coordinated approaches.
- Six minute fire response to at least 90% of the calls is a national standard. The Bloomington Fire Department does not achieve this minimum response rate today. Among other things, there is a lack of coordination with fire response zones during the development review process. Land use map and prioritization in this plan were heavily influenced by the locations of the six-minute zones.
- According to the County's mental health action plan, nearly 22% of the public safety calls are related to mental health/psychiatric disorders. This plan calls for a heightened vertical coordination with the County, Town of Normal and other agencies to achieve efficiencies in delivering the emergency services.

Law Enforcement & EMS Involvement in Calls

No Involvement (669 calls) 78%

Involvement (185 calls) 22%

Both Law Enforcement & EMS (44 calls) 5%

EMS Only (92 calls) 11%

Law Enforcement Only (49 calls) 6%

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is a complicated subject, and this chapter deals with its many facets. The focus is on maintaining what we have, limiting the need to build, and providing proper service to the community. The goals and objectives in this chapter call for coordination with other public and private utility providers, but the primary focus is on infrastructure owned and maintained by the City, such as water, sewer, storm water, transportation and community facilities. Discussion in this chapter addresses the following topics:

- Much of the City's infrastructure is aging and requires repair. Maintenance of these systems is essential. A core value identified in public outreach is to maintain what we have in good condition with extensions only when improving the overall efficiencies of the system. This core value heavily influenced the land use map and its prioritization.
- Infrastructure maintenance and repair is extremely costly, and much of the burden falls on the City. There are some federal funding sources for larger transportation projects, but grants are unpredictable and increasingly competitive.
- The plan calls for targeting regeneration and preservation areas for redevelopment and infill activities. This involves upkeep of existing infrastructure in those areas, without which no redevelopment will be possible. Funding and financing for these improvements is an ongoing challenge.
- Concentrating community facilities serving the entire City, such as the library and City offices, in the Downtown serves the community well. This concentration is fiscally sustainable, helps to keep the Downtown vibrant, and is accessible by public transit.
- A regional approach to assessing community facility needs, including exploring a shared fire station with the Town of Normal, can provide cost savings and operational efficiencies.

FISCAL IMPACT

The purpose of Fiscal Impact Analysis is to estimate the impact of a development on the costs and revenues of the City. Key findings include

- With approximately 78,000 people and 27 square miles, the City of Bloomington is relatively compact. However, the discontiguous development patterns within the last two decades indicate sprawl and are a strain on the City's resources.
- Provision of public safety services (police, fire and EMS) accounted for nearly 57% of City's operational expenditures. Given the high cost of providing public safety services, developments should be coordinated to ensure efficiencies in providing for police, fire and EMS services.
- Residential land uses accounted for 70% of the revenue and nearly 70% of the expenses. Newer single family units generally yielded revenue surplus.
- Developments on the fringes of the City, while new and generating higher tax revenue, yielded a net deficit. This is due to the fact that there is very little taxable development on the fringes, that requires provision and upkeep of expensive infrastructure.
- The Grove subdivision approved in 2005 is located furthest from the center of the City. The City invested $11 million ($10 million for sewer + $1million for water) to enable development in this area. As of 2013, the City recouped an estimated $0.5 million in eight years.
- The Fox Creek subdivision was approved over 20 years ago. The City invested approximately $10 million in sewer to enable this development. As of 2013, the City recouped an estimated $1.5 million in fees.
- The City invested large sums in expanding the sewer and water capacity to support development on the east and southwest far into the future. These investments need to be capitalized before investing in new infrastructure.

Bike lane going on Front Street

FedEx flights now flying out of CIRA

Local business

FUTURE GROWTH & LAND USE PLAN

The land use plan directs the implementation of the goals and objectives in the comprehensive plan. The goals for many aspects of the City's future are assigned to a physical place in the community, and a place in time as anticipated growth occurs. The plan includes the uses in built or established neighborhoods, and indicates areas that require renewed attention, regeneration and new investment. It also illustrates uses and development types in the current developed area that will evolve over the life of the plan. For land which might become part of the City, the land use plan indicates uses and development scenarios that best implement the preferred future composition of the City as described in the comprehensive plan goals and objectives. These uses are illustrated in figure 1-2

Land Use Designation in Existing Urban Areas

Land use categories shown in the current developed area of the City generally reflect either existing use in established areas likely to retain that use through the plan horizon, or evolving uses in areas where revitalization or redevelopment is anticipated, or where adjacent infill development may prompt use changes.

The use of Bloomington's existing development resources, of compact development patterns, and expansion only in areas contiguous to the City, are clear mandates of the comprehensive plan. The land use plan implements this core guidance by focusing on developing infill and redevelopment within the City's current boundaries.

- Residential land uses include all residence types, except those located in the Mixed Use designation.
  - Low Densities (under 8 units per acre)
  - Medium Densities (8 to 20 units per acre)
  - High Densities (>20 units per acre)
  - Special residential activities (retirement communities, assisted living, and similar residential uses)
- Mixed land use designates areas where multiple uses share spaces, including individual buildings, blocks or districts.
- Commercial land uses include business-related uses targeting

both small- and large-scale market areas, and includes health care providers.
  - Neighborhood Commercial - businesses expected to draw customers from their immediate surrounding area are located in Neighborhood Commercial areas.
  - Regional Commercial - businesses attracting customers or employees from throughout the community, or from elsewhere in the region.
- Employment Center includes large offices or office complexes or industrial or manufacturing uses that are destinations for many employees.
- Institutional includes both public and private institutional entities.
- Travel/Movement encompasses all land uses associated with transportation in any form or mode.
- Recreational includes areas used for participatory sports and recreational activities open to people, such as parks, playgrounds, outdoor and interior facilities for specific sports, and seasonal recreational areas.
- Conservation is characterized by areas set aside for environmental preservation or restricted from development due to land characteristics.

Land Use Designations and Guidance for Emerging Areas

The land use map defines new development areas based on their proximity to the incorporated area, level of access to City services and other service connections, and transportation access. For these areas, the map illustrates four types of new or potential development:
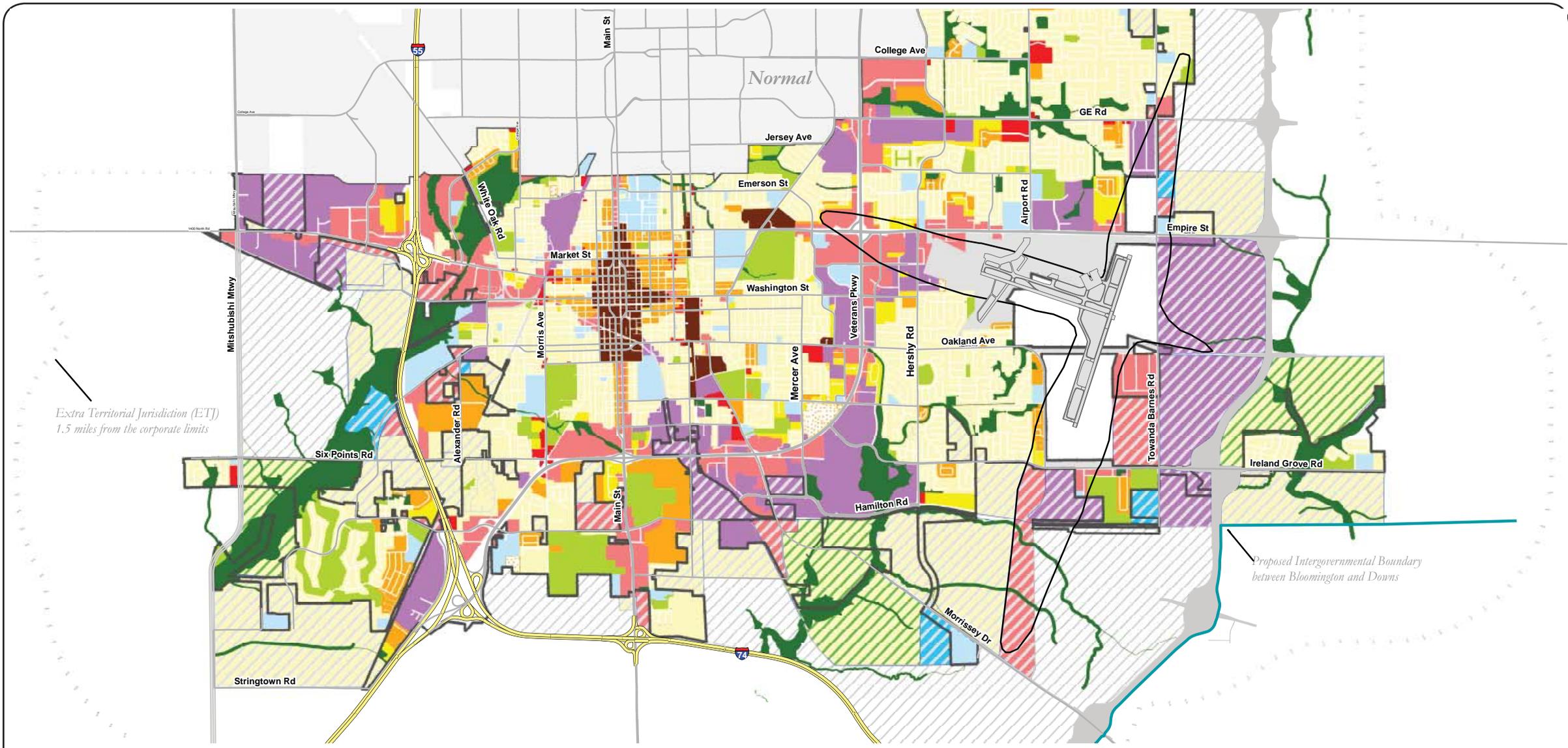- New Neighborhoods
  - Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)
  - Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
- Conservation Neighborhoods
- Commercial Activity Centers
- Employment Centers
- Civic
- Future Development Areas

Development Priorities

The development priorities map prioritizes development in tiers. The defined priorities consider the long-range nature of the comprehensive plan, and the extensive City resources required to seek and support appropriate new development activity. Emerging areas are

assigned a tier supporting the goals of compact development, leveraging Bloomington's investment in city services, and keeping growth contiguous to the City.
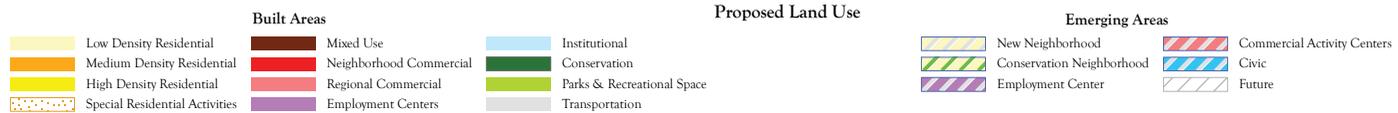- Tier 1:Includes vacant and underutilized land for infill development or redevelopment within the City, unincorporated land surrounded by incorporated areas, and areas platted for future development of existing subdivisions but not yet built out to completion. Tier 1 totals approximately three square miles, which is roughly equivalent to the City's annexations during the period from 2000 to 2010. This area total does not include redevelopment areas designated as Tier 1, as these areas may currently be occupied. Vacant land not identified on Figure 11.3 or land that might become vacant within the incorporated limits of Bloomington also falls under Tier 1.

- Tier 2: Land immediately adjacent to the City's incorporated area, and with access to all City services. Land designated as Tier 2 totals approximately six square

Figure 1-2
Future Land Use

Proposed Land Use

Built Areas

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Special Residential Activities
- Mixed Use
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Employment Centers
- Institutional
- Conservation
- Parks & Recreational Space
- Transportation

Emerging Areas

- New Neighborhood
- Conservation Neighborhood
- Employment Center
- Commercial Activity Centers
- Civic
- Future

Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) 1.5 miles from the corporate limits

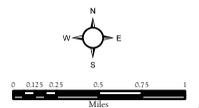*Proposed Intergovernmental Boundary between Bloomington and Downs*

Figure 1-3
Development Priorities

Tier 1 — Vacant and under-utilized land for infill development or redevelopment within the City. Unincorporated land surrounded by incorporated areas. Platted areas for future development of existing subdivisions but not built out to completion.

Tier 2 — Land immediately adjacent to the City's incorporated area, and with access to all City services.

Tier 3 — Land adjacent to incorporated area but with limited access City services.

Future Use — Land not contiguous to incorporated area and without access to City services.

miles, similar to the amount of land annexed in Bloomington between 1990 and 2000, a period of rapid growth and development in the City.

- Tier 3: Land adjacent to incorporated area but with limited City services. Tier 3 provides approximately six additional square miles of land for development, should it be needed if growth accelerates beyond currently anticipated levels. Development in these areas would require additional infrastructure investment.

- Future Use: Land not contiguous to incorporated area and/or without access to critical City services.

Implementation

The responsibility for the implementation of the comprehensive plan and its land use plan rests with the City of Bloomington – its administration and staff, led by the Community Development Department, the Bloomington Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals, and ultimately with the Bloomington City Council.

- The policies, directives and tasks are designed for orderly distribution of the work of implementation. Performance metrics are recommended to establish benchmarks for implementation and to evaluate success in achieving the goals and objectives.

- An initial step in carrying out the comprehensive plan is the establishment of staff committees to review the plan elements and allocate tasks and ongoing evaluation to staff best able to carry them out.

- The Staff Committee shall undertake:
  - Designation of lead departments or agencies for the action;
  - Identification of additional partner agencies;
  - Anticipated timeline for action;
  - Metrics to measure completion, and;
  - Identification of possible funding sources for the task.

- A critical implementation task is the revamping of Bloomington codes, ordinances, regulations and policies to reflect the content of the comprehensive plan

REGIONAL COOPERATION

The City of Bloomington and its twin city, the Town of Normal, form a vital and growing community in McLean County. To sustain these characteristics for the future, the twin cities and the region should work more collaboratively to anticipate, prepare for, and build together, instead of apart. There are many action items throughout this plan that reinforce the importance of regionalism for the long term sustainability of the community.

Bloomington Population Growth
1835 - 2015

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Bloomington and McLean County have for many years outperformed population estimates from state and federal sources. During the period of very high population growth peaking in the 1990s and continuing through the 2007 recession (see Figure 2-1), expectations for future growth grew with the City. The results of the 2010 Census reminded the community that not all trends are self-sustaining. In the aftermath and in the context of the comprehensive planning process, population growth assumptions were re-evaluated.

Certain trends derive from national population data available through the U.S. Census Bureau, including the decennial Census, and the American Community Survey of municipalities with populations greater than 50,000. The Census Bureau also publishes reports regarding specific demographic issues that affect policy. When considered in the light of local experience, this information clarifies expectations for future population parameters.

First among these issues is the impact from the ongoing generational march of the Baby Boom generation. The Census Bureau expects that by 2029, within the time horizon of the comprehensive plan, all of the "boomers" will have reached age 65. Not all will retire at that point, and some will find it difficult to finance retirement, but the group will have reached the stage in life when their view of what is desirable in a city may shift. The policy implications of their changing status extend from national programs such as Medicare and the Affordable Care Act to local decision-making regarding services to older residents and accommodating new housing alternatives designed for their needs.

People in this group may downsize their households and prefer not to manage suburban-style houses and yards. Access to medical care and public transportation is of great importance, and access to resources for everyday living is critical. Given the uncertainties of retirement income in an era of lengthening lifespans, affordability in housing and the cost of living have new significance. Ultimately, these demographic changes will require consideration of City policies and regulations, and their impact on residents' choices and options for aging in Bloomington.

The baby boomer cohort's move into retirement indirectly heralds another trend, the shift in the proportions of the local population in the workforce versus those who have retired or are semi-retired. This too is a policy issue on a national level but will also have consequences for local tax revenue and expenditures. Economic development goals targeting workforce retention and recruiting address the need to balance an expanding population of residents aged 65 or above, some of whom may remain in the workforce, with an substantial proportion of active workers anchoring economic activity.

Although Census findings

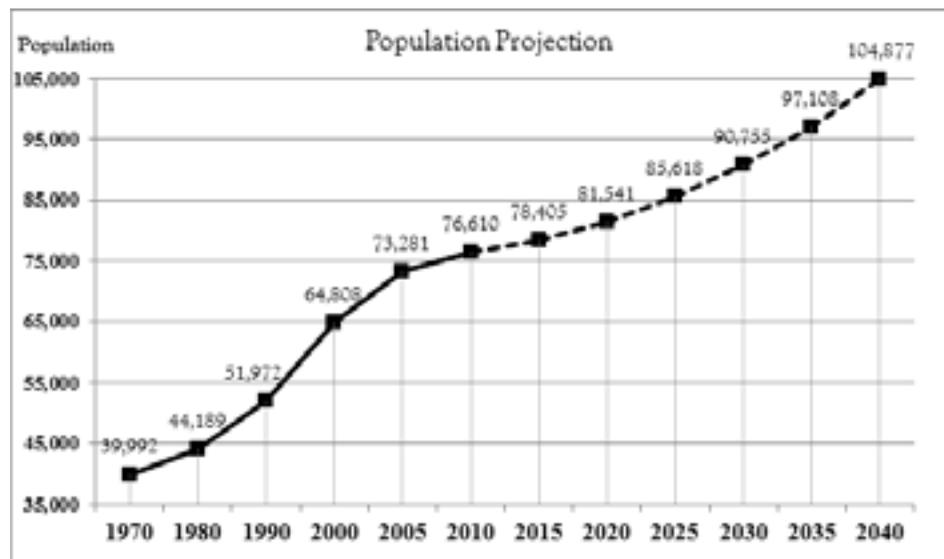*Figure 2-1. Bloomington Population Growth*

Figure 2-2. Population Projection

suggest that the trend towards smaller family size may have reached its peak, Census data also suggests the trend is most prevalent in the Midwest. Smaller families and a greater proportion of one and two-person households will also alter demand for housing and establish a market for smaller and more manageable houses. A smaller group of children enrolled in local schools would alter the economic picture for school districts and municipalities. However, as with all age cohorts, there will be some population growth; it is the proportional representation of each age group that will shift. The possibility of smaller classes will require decisions about maintaining extra capacity in schools, other infrastructure maintenance and investment, in the inverse of an expanding population of older residents requiring new infrastructure investment. Long-term planning must also consider the needs of the children of the millennial generation as they make their way through the school system.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Understanding the probabilities of future population is essential to the formulation of the comprehensive plan. The population to be housed, provided municipal services, educated and employed profoundly affects the nature of the City's growth and the action needed to provide community resources and infrastructure.

This projection considers the influence on growth of the recent global economic downtown and recession, as well as the City's historical growth trends, particularly from 1970 forward (see Figure 2-2). It postulates a gradual recovery from population change attributable to the recession in the short term, with growth rates increasing later in the plan's target timeframe.

The projection forecasts a 2035 population of approximately 97,000 persons, a 26.8% increase over the 2010 Census population result and producing an average annual rate of population growth of slightly more than 1%. The projection also indicates a rising rate of growth later in the planning period, predicated on action by the City and the region to foster economic development. The estimated population for 2015 is based on recent population data, including the 2010 Census, and on analysis of 2014 residential vacancies and issuance of permits by the City.

Methods and Analysis

Analysis of potential population change was done using a cohort-component model. As described by the U.S. Census Bureau, in a cohort-component method,

"the components of population change are projected separately for each birth cohort (persons born in a given year) based on past trends. The base population is advanced each year by using projected survival rates and net international migration. Each year, a new birth cohort is added to the population by applying the projected fertility rates to the projected female population."

Two population scenarios were derived from an age-cohort component model that incorporates racial or ethnic identification as well as age and gender. This permits more complex evaluation of population change, but it also requires that data inputs be obtained or imputed from a broader array of sources, for those data elements not collected or available locally. In some instances, data is available only at the state or national level. This information was incorporated into the model with adjustments to data derived from larger geographies, to better reflect patterns of growth and demographics in McLean County.

The model does not permit the forecasting of population for individual racial groups but does indicate a trend towards greater demographic diversity in all growth scenarios, a function of the changes in population composition reflected in the Census data used by the model.

County-level data incorporated in the model from the 2000 and 2010 Census years showing considerable divergence in migration behavior, reflecting the impact of the recession that preceded the 2010 Census. To reduce the anomalous impact of the 2010 data, migration rates in the model were modified to levels falling between the 2000 and 2010 rates.

Any projection should be regarded as predictive, but not prescriptive. As with any forecast, the population projection is not set in stone. The next update of the comprehensive plan should have the benefit of the 2020 Census data

in assessing projections.

When evaluating the potential for population growth in Bloomington over the next twenty years there is a danger of over-emphasizing recent challenges, both local and global. The impacts of recession and the consequences of corporate repositioning by a major employer are important considerations, but not determinative. Policy making and implementation by the City can affect how growth occurs in the years ahead.

A comparison of the projection (in black) and a range of deviation represented by two scenarios shown in blue and orange, is shown in Figure 2-3. The solid black line common to all of the scenarios illustrates Census population tallies from 1970 to 2010.

Scenario 1 (Historic Growth Pattern)

The first scenario considered for Bloomington's population growth is based on historic growth trends. This scenario indicates that by 2035 Bloomington could expect a total population on the order of 108,000 persons, a 41% increase over the 2010 Census population. This represents an average annual growth rate of 1.65% across the 25-year period. The chart puts the scenarios in the context of Bloomington's growth since the 1970 Census.

The assumptions underlying the historical population analysis and projections for the comprehensive plan provide a basis for refining the extrapolation of Census and other demographic data to arrive at population estimates that reflect Bloomington's past experience.

The core assumptions made in developing the historical population scenario include:

- Bloomington's geographic location and accessibility support continued growth;
- Future growth trends will not be significantly impacted by natural or man-made disasters;
- Bloomington demonstrates economic resiliency;
- Bloomington's land use and regulatory conditions favor growth, and;
- Bloomington's demographic profile indicates potential for growth in population and workforce participation.

The assumptions reflect long-term trends in Bloomington's history and their influence on
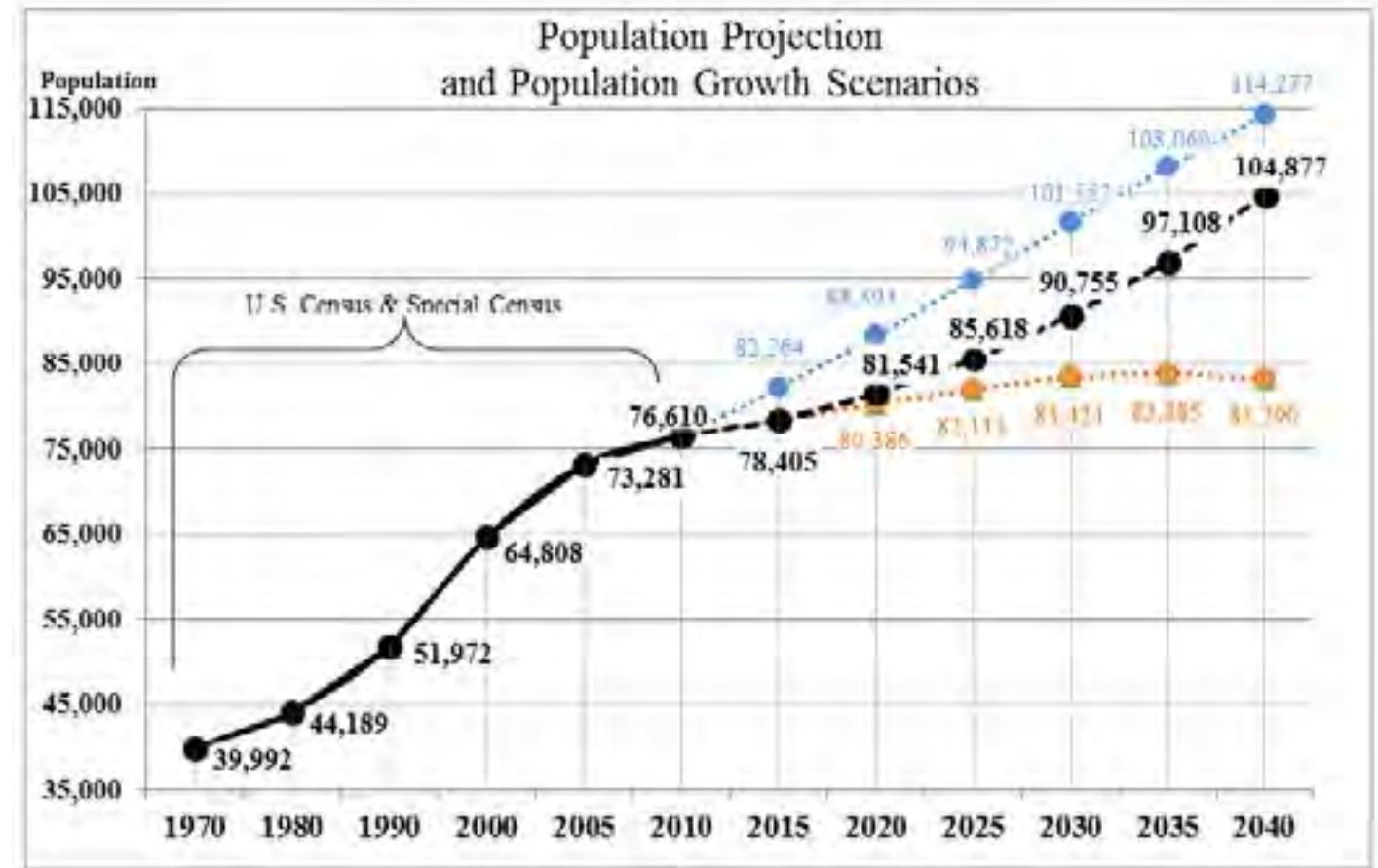
Figure 2-3. Population Projection and Population Growth Scenarios

population levels and growth. Generally, Bloomington and the Bloomington-Normal metropolitan area have consistently demonstrated resiliency during periods of national economic stress, and the ability to capitalize on the advantages of location and resources beyond that of other central Illinois communities.

This forecast suggests lower average annual growth than occurred during the period between 1990 and 2005, years impacted by an expanding global economy and market conditions driven by rapid technology shifts. This period also coincided with accelerated changes in local economic conditions, including expansion by local employers.

As we now know, these accelerated conditions were not sustainable in the face of the global recession, and as a result of corporate restructuring. The City may wish to assess underlying

assumptions in the context of structural changes in the economy at local, regional and global levels, and to apply that context in considering future development policy.

Considering and emphasizing recent housing and economic trends produces a less dynamic growth picture. In the slower growth scenario, Bloomington's population in 2015 is estimated at approximately
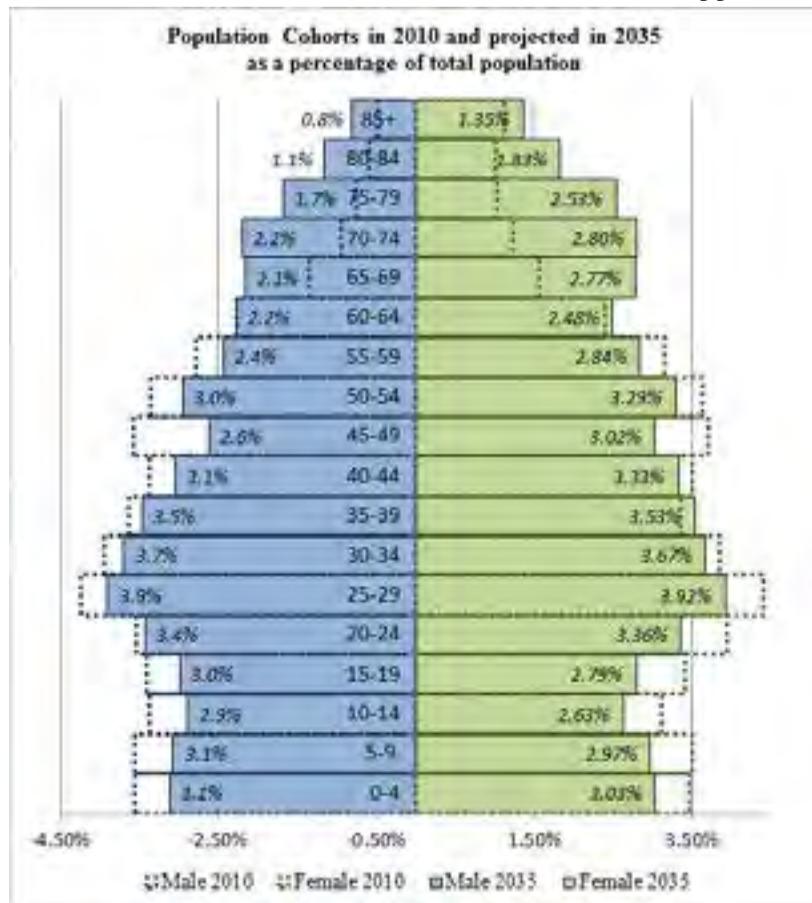

Population Cohorts in 2010 and projected in 2035 as a percentage of total population

Figure 2-4. Population Cohorts in 2010 and Projected in 2035

78,400, as opposed to 82,296 in the first scenario. This is based on available data for residential vacancies, and City statistics regarding housing permits. Assuming that the reduced rate of growth persists, in 2035 the City population may be on the order of 84,546, a 10.4 % increase over the 2010 population, resulting in an average annual growth rate of .41% over 25 years. This rate is approximately one-quarter of the anticipated growth rate produced by the historic trend scenario described above.

The slow growth scenario assigns lower importance to some of the base assumptions in the historic growth scenario, due to recent local population and economic changes resulting from the recession and local corporate restructuring. Although the Bloomington-Normal area sustained less recessionary impact than other Central Illinois communities, recent data argue against too much reliance on historical patterns of economic resiliency. Reducing the estimated 2015 population to conform with the City's current data sources results in a lowered level of population growth projected across the period of the plan, and a

substantial reduction in the average annual growth rate.

It should be noted that this trend assumes that no countervailing action to encourage growth takes place over the period of the plan. This projection is based on the prevailing conditions during a very limited time frame. As noted above, demographic projections generally are carried out using long-term trends as a guide to future behavior, and deriving long-term estimates from very short-term conditions increases the chance of miscalculation. As further noted, estimates and projections are predictive but neither prescriptive or determinative. Policy options and action exist that may shift long-term trends. Such options would

support the population projection for 2035 of 97,108 persons proposed above.

The population projection also considers demographic shifts anticipated over the planning period, discussed above. In accordance with the global and national trend, Bloomington can expect an increase in the number of older residents in its population within the time horizon of the comprehensive plan. Greater ethnic diversity in the population is also anticipated, and as noted above, fewer children per family than in the past. The composition of the population in five-year age cohorts in 2010 and expected in 2035 is shown in the population pyramid illustration in Figure 2-4.

Housing Unit Demand

Year	Total Housing Units	% Owner Occupied	Owner occupied units	% Rental Units	Rental Units
1970	14,459	58.15	8,044	41.9	5,790
1980	20,050	57.1	10,386	42.9	7,818
1990	22,640	58.3	12,545	41.7	8,956
2000	28,431	63.1	16,802	36.9	9,840
2010	34,359	62.9	19,904	37.1	11,759
2020	36,732	62	20,957	38	12,841
2030	40,998	60	23,893	40	14,644
2035	44,267	60	25,799	40.5	15,812
Change 2010 to 2035	9,928		5,895		4,053

Table 2-1. Housing Unit Demand

HOUSING ESTIMATES AND PREFERENCES

The population projection is the foundation for determining future housing needs. In Table 2-1, the historical record of housing ownership also provides a basis for estimating the allocation of housing types and rental versus owned housing. The latter metric has been relatively stable for the last forty years, and thus is held at those levels for future allocation.

The forecast of housing demand also considers emerging trends and preferences for housing and neighborhoods. A 2013 national community preference survey conducted by American Association of Realtors (see Figure 2-5), revealed that a majority of respondents preferred houses with small yards and easy walks to schools, stores and restaurants over houses with large yards requiring residents to drive to get to local destinations, and especially preferred such housing combined with short commutes. People also preferred walkable mixed-use neighborhoods as opposed to strictly residential neighborhoods requiring driving. The survey revealed that mixed neighborhoods with a diversity in ages, income and ethnicities are more important to housing consumers than ever before, with a majority of respondents indicating a preference for diversity in race and ethnicity and income levels.

As of 2013, however, detached single-family houses, even where longer commutes were necessary, were still preferred over shared-space housing such as condominiums, townhouses or apartments. This preference is less pronounced than in past surveys, and the 2013 survey results show a strong minority of nearly forty percent selecting the more compact housing options. Over time, as the proportion of smaller households increased, this choice may move closer to a majority position.

As Bloomington incorporates the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan into the development review process, a move towards greater diversity in housing and neighborhood choices can be brought about across the implementation horizon of the plan, as the preferences of residents evolve to meet their personal and professional circumstances.
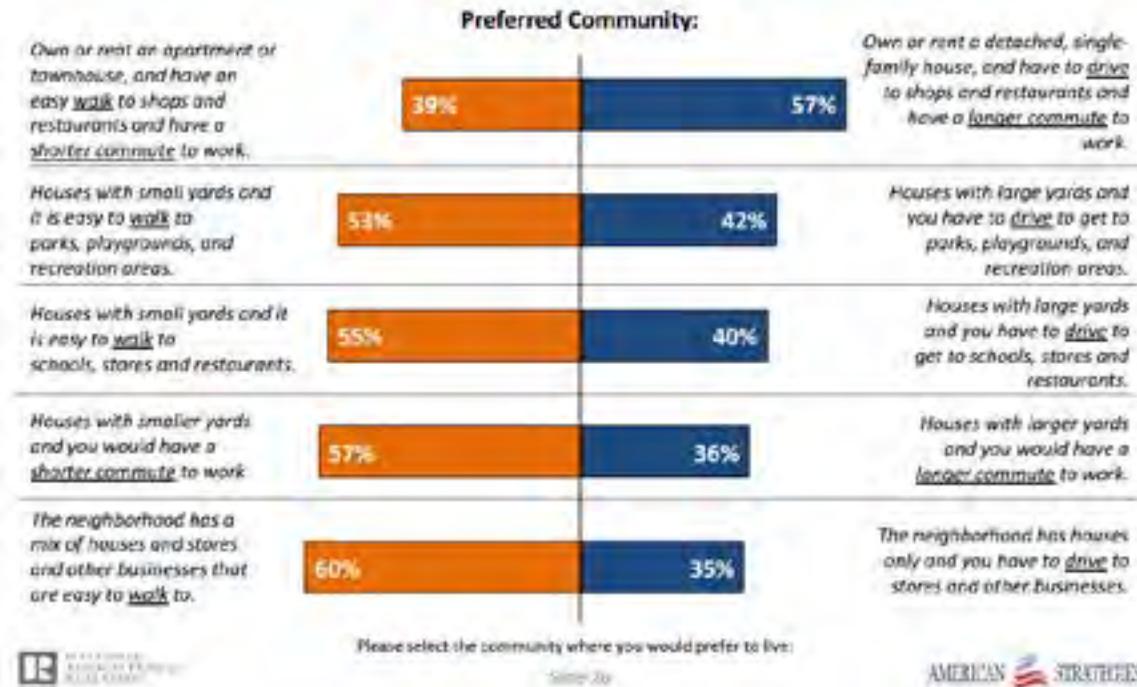
Figure 2-5 Community Preference Survey

2013 Fiscal Impact Study
City of Bloomington, Illinois

Prepared by:
GIS Research and
Development
Consultants
June, 2015
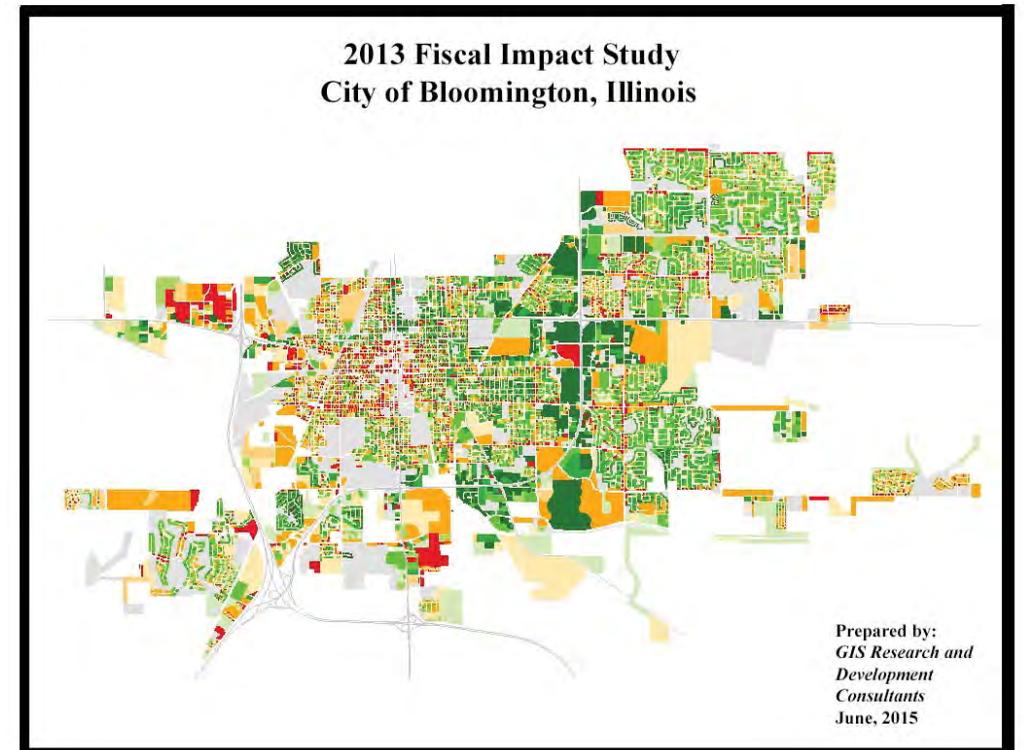
The purpose of fiscal impact analysis is to estimate the impact of a development or a land use change on the budgets of governmental units serving the development. The analysis is generally based on the fiscal characteristics of the community, e.g., revenues, expenditures, characteristics of the development, type of land use and distance from central facilities. This analysis enables local governments to estimate the difference between the costs of providing services to a new development and the revenues—taxes and user fees, for example—that will be generated by the development.

MCRPC hired the services of a consulting firm, GISRDC, to conduct Geographic Information System based fiscal impact analysis to understand the impact of various land uses and development patterns. The findings of this study informed the future growth aspects of the comprehensive plan. **The information presented in this chapter is a brief summary of the work conducted by GISRDC.** For a thorough understanding of the methodology and analysis, please refer to the complete report available at www.mcplan.org.

It should be noted this study only analyzed the fiscal impact on City budgets and not the environmental, social or economic impacts of a development on the community. This analysis also excludes fiscal impacts on other entities that provide infrastructure used by the City and its residents, such as the school districts and BNWRD. A development that does not yield positive tax revenue to the City may be beneficial for the quality of life and place. The intent of this study is not to eliminate non revenue yielding uses, rather to make informed decisions.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

The Location Based Method of Fiscal Impact Analysis is based on the premise that nearly all revenue a city collects is based on geographically distributed factors, such as the value of land parcels that generate property taxes, or population and employment that generate sales taxes. Nearly all expenditures are delivered to places in the City based on need or demands, such as police calls, or the need for access by public roads. Parcels are the basic unit of analysis. The intent is not to assess the impact per parcel but to gain a deeper understanding based on

the general groups such as use, ownership, tenancy, densities, age and other factors. Parcel level data and attributes obtained from the Bloomington Township Assessor was the foundation for this analysis.

- Revenue and expenses were analyzed based on the City's FY 2013 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)
- Population and employment was allocated by parcel to accurately understand the revenue and expenses per resident or per employee.
- Fiscal impact for major land use categories, residential, commercial/industrial were examined at a greater length to inform the future planning and development process.
- Tax exempt properties, while they do not yield revenue, incur expenses. They were analyzed and factored into the analysis.
- For the City whose corporate limits span a radius of seven miles from Downtown, distance affects the cost of delivering services. A distance factor was allocated to parcels located outside of 2.5 miles based on their distance from the Downtown (see Figure 3-1).

REVENUE AND EXPENSE ALLOCATION

According to the FY 2013 CAFR, the City's $96 million in spending was balanced against $98 million in revenue resulting in approximately $2.16 million surplus that was transfered to the enterprise funds. The operating revenues and expenditures were reviewed and analyzed separately from the capital revenues and expenditures. The operating revenues account for nearly 92% of total revenue

Operating Revenue ($90,577,580):

At $28.6 million, sales tax was the City's largest revenue source. Major generators of sales tax are population and employment. While it is extremely difficult to assign this revenue source per capita, 80% was allocated to resident population and 20% was allocated to employees for modeling purposes. At $22 million ($17.5 million in the general fund + $4.5 million in the library fund), the City's property tax revenue was allocated based on net assessed property value.

Other operating revenues such as charges for service ($11.4 million), commercial taxes (such as

City of Bloomington, Illinois
Distance From Center of City

Prepared by GISRDC
February, 2015
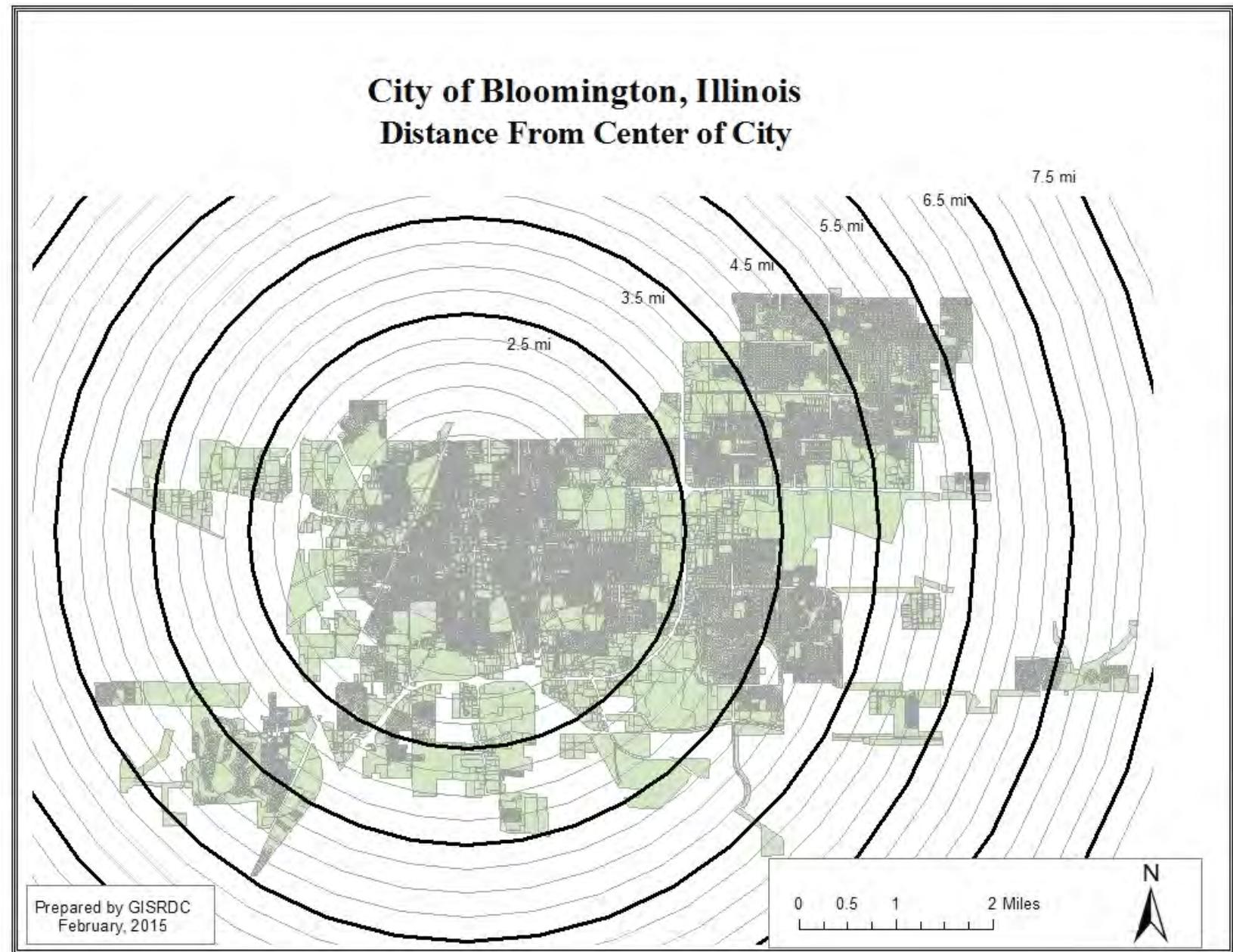
Figure 3-1. Distance From Center of City

City of Bloomington, Illinois
Revenue per Acre

Legend
FISCAL_IMPACT
Revenue per Acre

- Less than $500
- 500 - 4,999
- 5,000 - 19,999
- 20,000 - 29,000
- 30,000 - 39,000
- $40,000 and Greater

Prepared by GISRDC
February, 2015

0   0.5   1   2 Miles

N
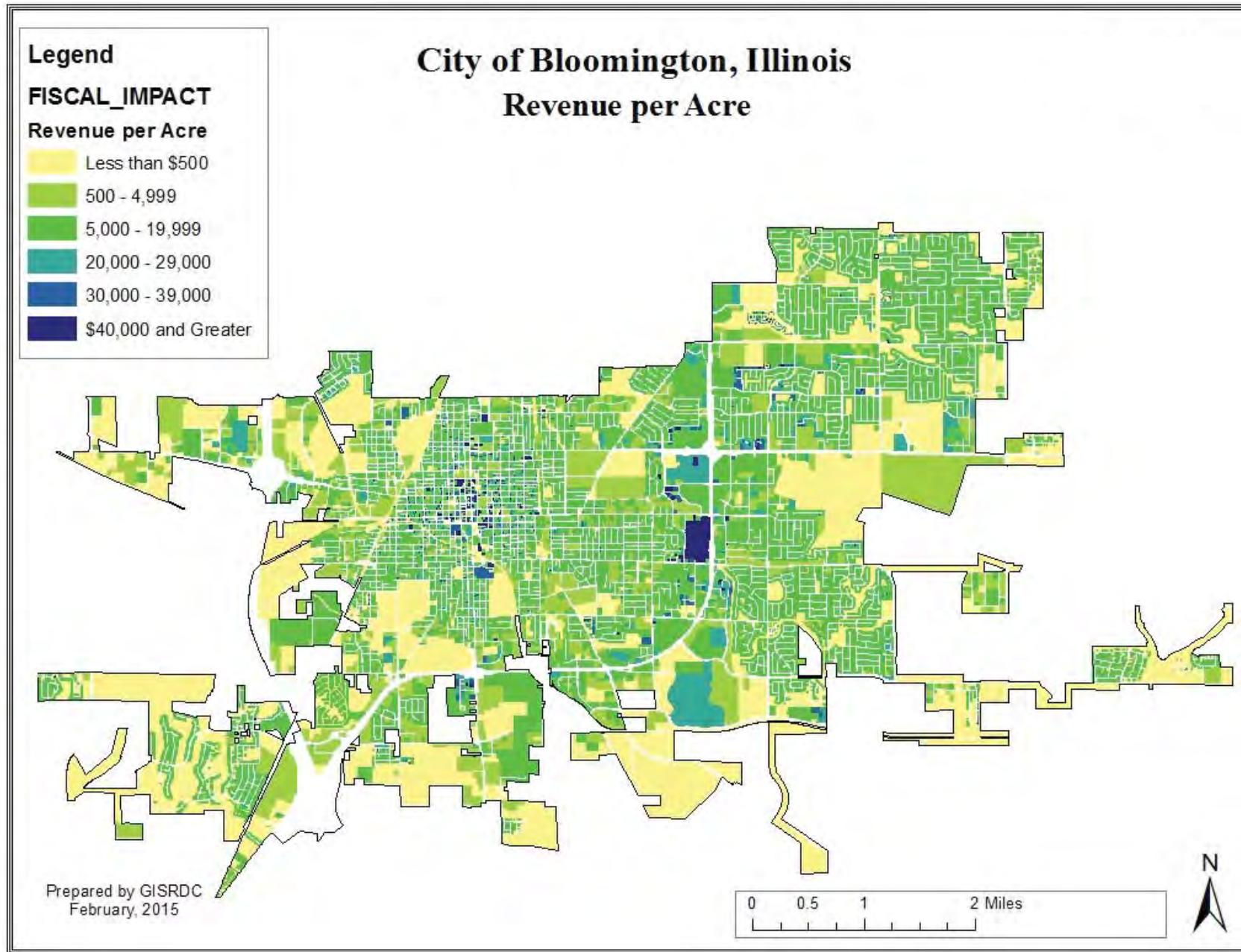
Figure 3-2. Revenue Per Acre

franchise tax, hotel and motel tax accounted for $11.4 million), utility tax ($6.4 million), income tax ($5.4 million), fines and forfeits ($1.2 million), licenses ($0.4 million), other taxes ($1.2 million) were all allocated based on the source of income and a variety of allocation factors and weights.

Capital and Special Revenue: The revenue sources in this category include, part of the property taxes appropriated for principal and interest on bonds, TIF, CDBG, parkland dedication fees, motor fuel tax, metro zone, elections and other miscellaneous income. City collected $7,441,927 that were designated towards capital expenditures or other special projects.
Figure 3.2 summarizes the net revenue per acre.

Operating Expenditures: The City had $72.5 million in operating expenditures of which public safety (police, fire and EMS) accounted for $41 million of that (nearly 42% of all City expenditure and 57% of operating expenditure).
    Since public safety was such a large expense, the costs were broken down to the maximum

possible extent allowed by data availability. Police/fire calls accounted for approximately 47%, patrolling and fire/EMS readiness accounted for 48% and approximately 5% of the public safety related expense was for building safety and code enforcement.

The majority of calls (77% police and 89% fire) were attributable directly to individual parcels. The remainder were calls to the streets and intersections that were assigned carefully using a distance factor.

In 2013, $6.3 million was spend on streets and roads. The study categorized streets by type (arterial, collector, local and alleys), as maintenance of the roads depend on the type of street. Each parcel was assigned a road type based on its frontage, this type of allotment resulted in higher frontage allocation for corner lots given their location.

Other expenditures include general government ($10.2 million), culture and recreation ($9.3 million), library ($4.4 million), parking ($0.4 million) and elections ($446,937) all of which were allocated based on variety of allocation factors and weights.
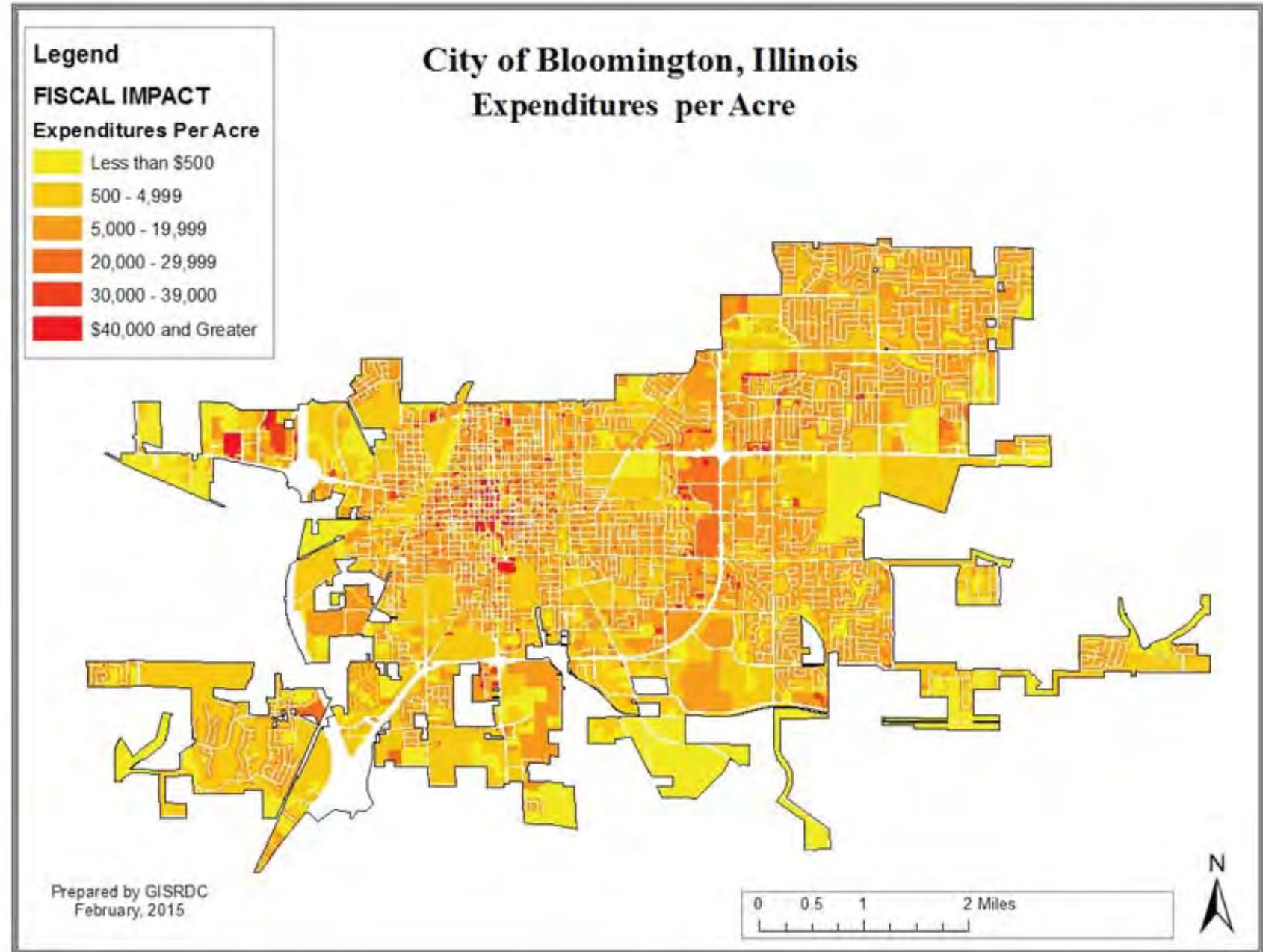
Figure 3-3. Expenditures Per Acre

City of Bloomington, Illinois
Net Taxable Fiscal Impact per Acre

Legend

FISCAL_IMPACT PER ACRE

- Deficit -$3000 and greater
- Deficit -600 to -2,999
- Deficit -300 to -599
- Deficit -1 to 299
- Tax Exempt
- Surplus 1 to 300
- Surplus 301 to 600
- Surplus 601 to 1,500
- Surplus 1,500 to 3,000
- Surplus greater than $3,000

Prepared by GISRDC
February, 2015

0   0.5   1   2 Miles

N
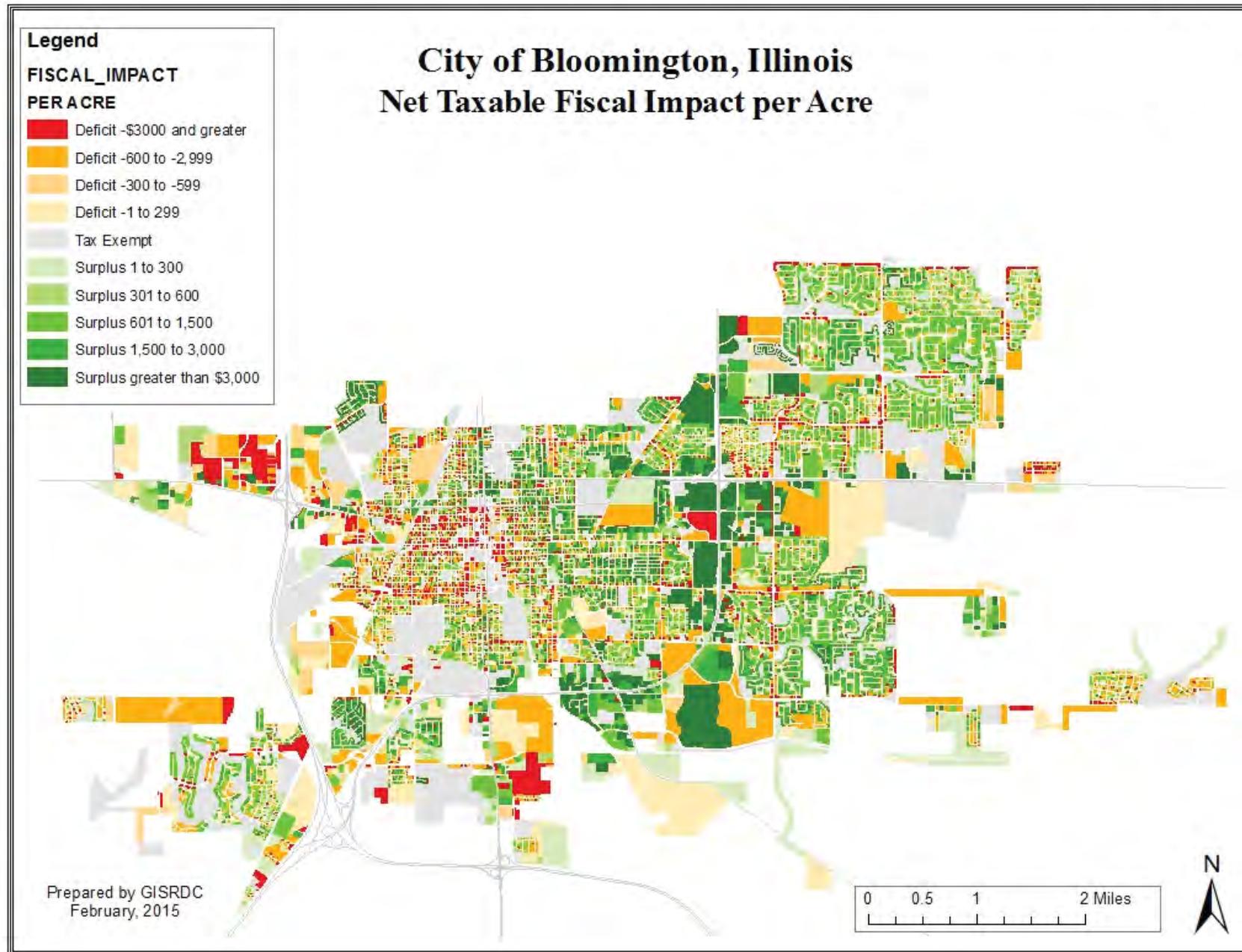
Figure 3-4. Net Taxable Fiscal Impact Per Acre

Capital and Special Expenditures: The City spent nearly $23,316,412 under this category. Those include general expenditure (nearly $4 million), parks and coliseum ($3.1 million), public safety ($1.2 million), streets ($7.3 million), CDBG ($2.7), Metro Zone ($1.2million), capital lease ($2.5 million) and TIF ($1.2 million) all of which were assigned based on the factors or to certain geographies based on the expense.

Figure 3.3 summarizes the net expenditures per acre.

FISCAL IMPACT BY LAND USE

Residential: The City has many types of residential land uses. Single family housing (attached and detached) is overwhelmingly the largest group. Others include duplexes, condominiums, apartments, mobile homes and mixed uses.

- Public safety calls for apartments, mobile home parks and duplexes are higher than those to single family homes. Calls to mixed use parcels are also higher.
- Road frontage: Newer single family homes have the greatest frontage, followed by single

family homes in general. Mobile home parks have the least amount of frontage as majority of the streets are interior private roads. Apartments also have smaller frontages per unit.

- Revenue and Expenditure Analysis: Residential land uses accounted for nearly 70% of total revenues and nearly 69% of the expenditures.
- Fiscal Impact: Single family units(attached and detached), especially newer units, generally generated a surplus.

Commercial and Industrial Uses:
These uses consist of approximately 20% of the City's land area. While the average surplus for these uses is $1,842/acre, there is a great range from surplus to deficit. Approximately a third of all commercial properties generated deficit. To better understand the impact of commercial properties, the land use data must be available at a finer scale.

NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS

Fiscal impact of a parcel varies greatly based on land use, age of development, distance from the center, and other factors. As outlined earlier, the purpose of

Legend

NEIGHBORHOODS

Fiscal Impact per Acre

- Deficit greater than $1,500
- Deficit $1,000 to $1,500
- Deficit $500 to $1,000
- Deficit $1 to $500
- Tax Exempt
- Sutplus $1 to $499
- Surplus $500 to $1,500
- Surplus $1,500 to $2,500
- Surplus Greater than $2,500

City of Bloomington, Illinois
NeighborhoodNet Taxable
Fiscal Impact per Acre

-$2,438   +$2,239   +$61

-$343

+$872

-$488

+$4,138

-$450   -$521   +$7

Prepared by GISRDC
February, 2015

Figure 3-5. Neighborhood Net Taxable Fiscal Impact Per Acre

City of Bloomington, Illinois
Streets With Excess Costs
and Others Used for Deadheading

Legend

Streets Maintained by City:
- ▬▬ streets on edge of city
- ▬▬ streets not in city
- ▬▬ Other City Maintained Streets

Streets Not Maintained by City:
- ▬▬ deadhead

- ☐ Skipped Over Areas
- ☐ Airport not in city

7.5 mi
6.5 mi
5.5 mi
4.5 mi
3.5 mi
2.5 mi

Prepared by GISRDC
February, 2015

0.15 0.3 0.6 Miles

N
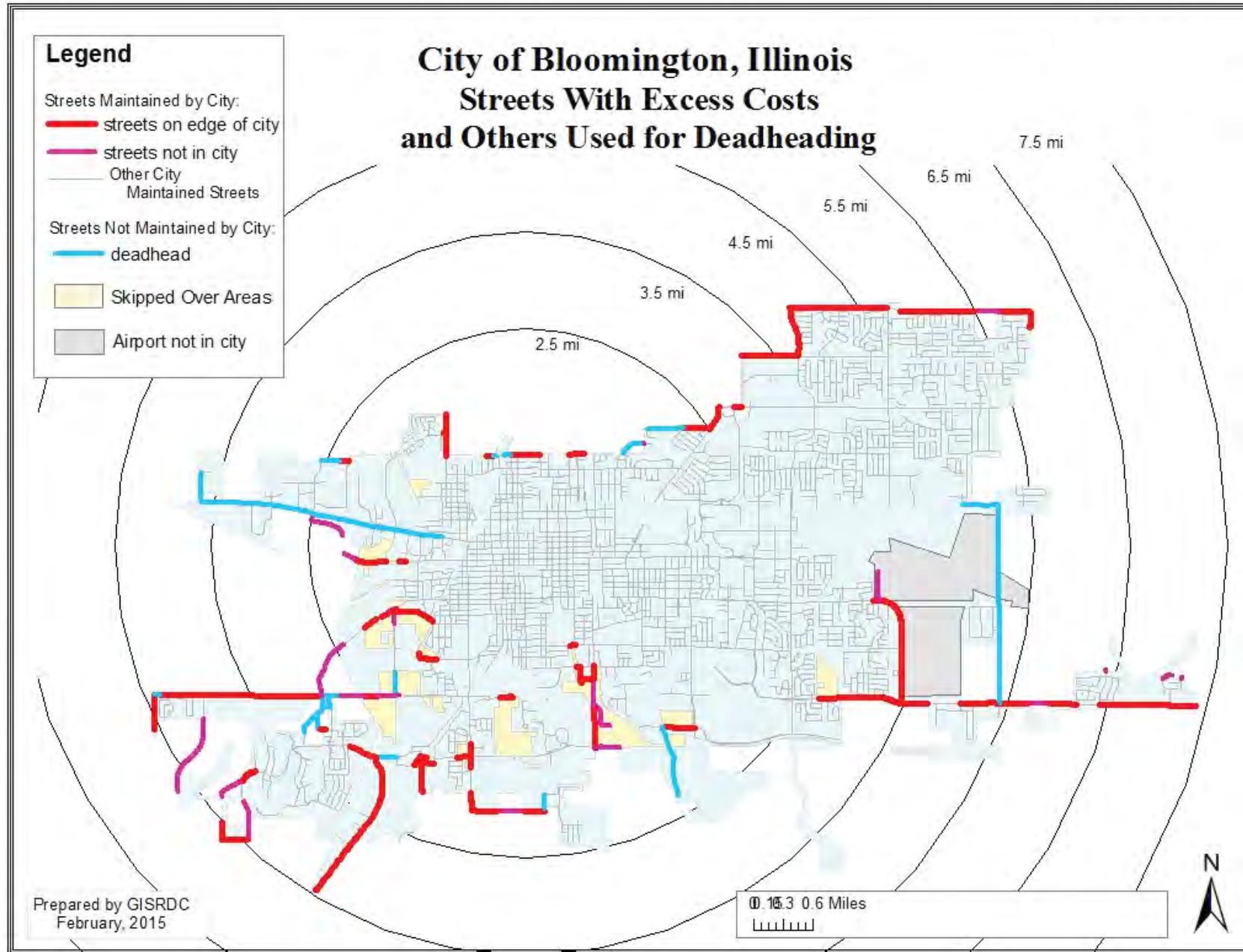
Figure 3-6. Streets With Excess Costs and Others Used for Deadheading

this study is not to calculate the impacts of individual parcels but to understand the impacts of broader development patterns. To do that, the study divided the City into generic areas or "neighborhoods" and aggregated the fiscal impact per acre across uses.

As can be seen in Figure 3-5, established older areas of the City are producing an overall deficit of $360 per acre. This can be expected due to the declining property values in this area and higher number of police and fire calls. A majority of the commercial areas along Veterans Parkway are generating a surplus. The commercial areas along Veterans Parkway and the residential neighborhoods that are contiguous generated a surplus. Of particular concern is the deficit generated by the newer neighborhoods along the edges of the City.

ESTIMATED COSTS OF SPRAWL

One of the objectives of this study was to determine the costs of development. The cost of providing services in some areas is much greater than in others. Compact and contiguous development areas can be serviced

more efficiently and economically than discontinuous "leap-frog" or "sprawl" development. Factors that contribute towards sprawl are capital and operating expenditures incurred to benefit only a small percentage of developments.

Streets

For efficient use of tax dollars spent on building and maintaining streets it is important for those to serve parcels, particularly taxable parcels, on both sides. On the edges of the City, this is most often not the case. As shown in Figure 3-6, streets highlighted in red are only serving a small percent of development while the City maintains the entire road. This resulted in allocation of the cost of construction and maintenance of these edge streets to a smaller percentage of developments reducing their otherwise handsome contributions to revenues.

The areas shaded in light yellow are those that have been "skipped over" as development spread outward from the center of the City. These areas have several roads shown in red, because they are on the internal "edge" of the city. There are other roads shown
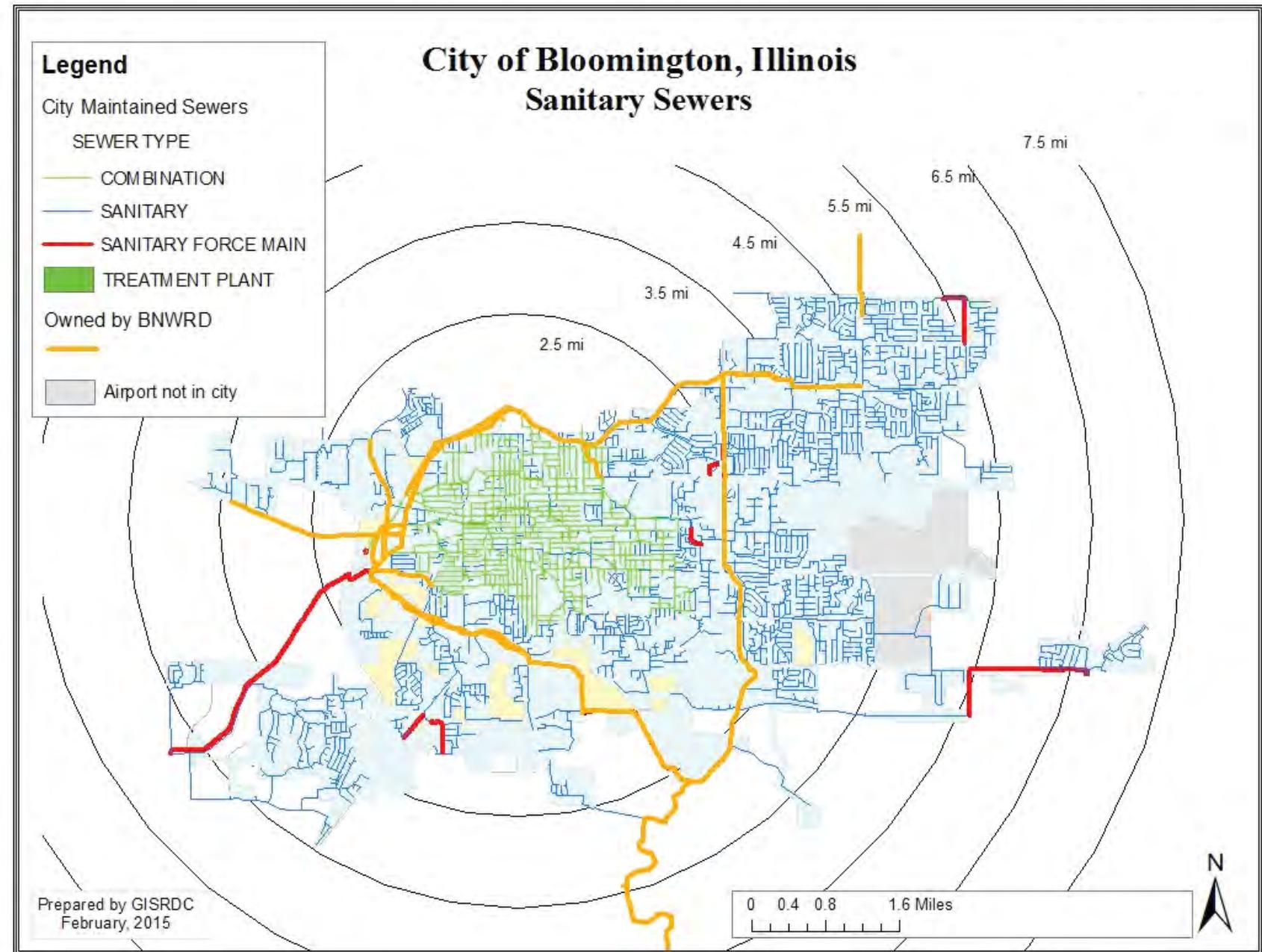
Figure 3-7. Sanitary Sewers
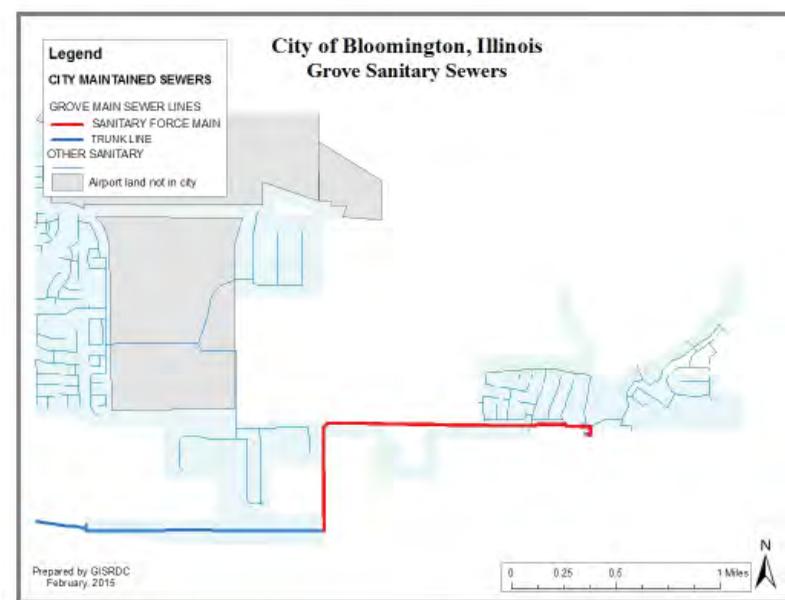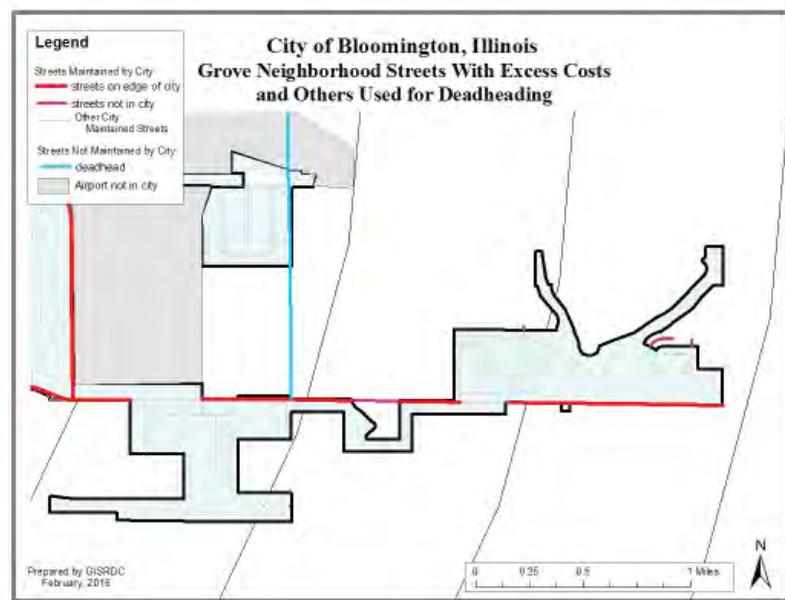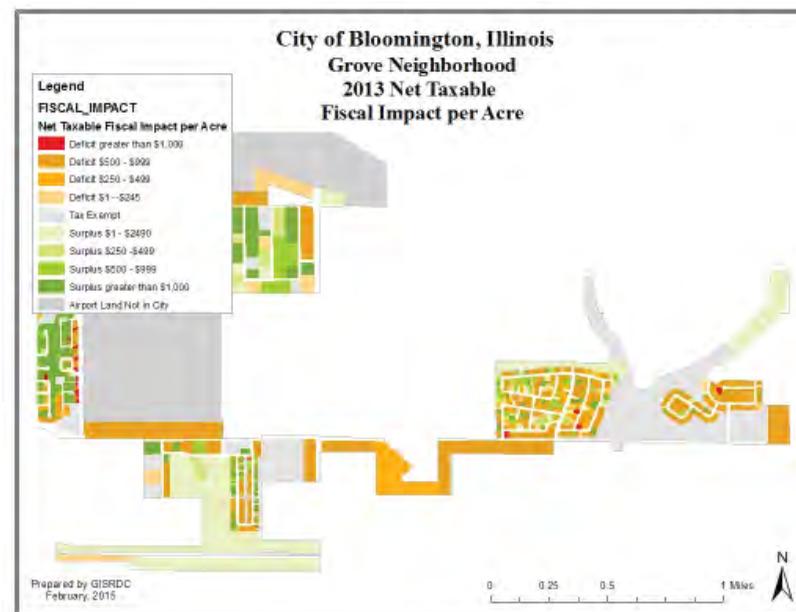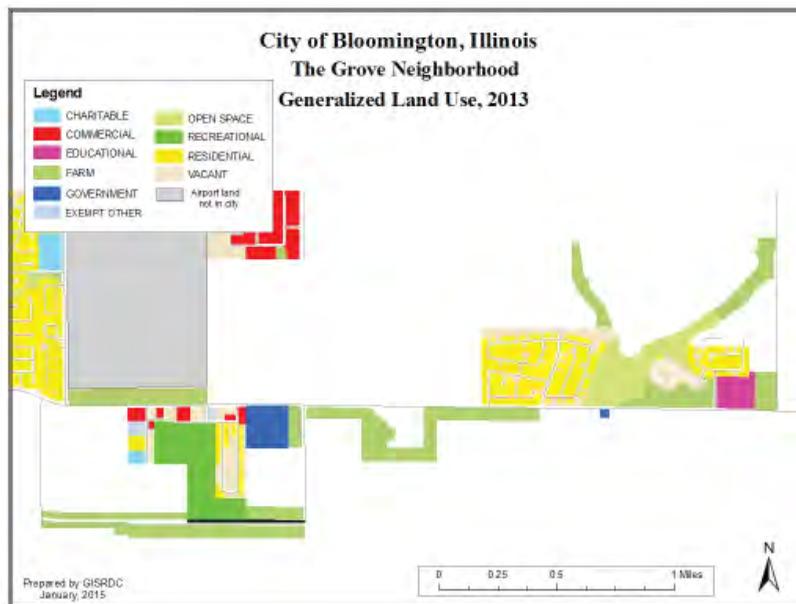
Figure 3-8. The Grove Neighborhood

in magenta that are maintained by the city, but since they pass through "skipped over" areas, the City does not receive any revenue to pay for the costs. There are also other roads outside the city boundary that are maintained by the city.

There are also roads that are not maintained by the City, yet must be used for "deadheading." "Deadheading" is the time and cost spent to get to one or more of the outlying parcels. For example, for the City to plow the roads in the northwest part of the City, municipal vehicles must travel over a state highway in order to get there. These costs were not dealt with directly, but the adjustment allocation based on population and distance compensates somewhat for this cost.

Sanitary Sewers

The enterprise fund has been carefully analyzed to understand the costs for services and infrastructure such as sewer, water, solid waste, storm water and parking. Of these, sewer and water are the most significant. Figure 3.7 shows the City's sewer system. Within the central area, the sanitary sewers are combined with the stormwater sewers, shown

in light green. These are old and need to be replaced over time. The sewers in blue are separate sanitary sewers. These run with gravity downhill to an interceptor (shown in orange), typically to lines owned by the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District (BNWRD). In cases where development is downhill from the interceptor, sewage must be pumped uphill by means of a force main. These are shown in red. While the cost of a force main is not great, the cost of a lift station is expensive and requires significant annual operation and maintenance costs. Major force mains are located in or connected to the Grove and Fox Creek neighborhoods.

Grove Subdivision

This subdivision was approved within the last 8 years. As can be seen in Figure 3-8 land use here is predominantly residential. It also has a school and park property that are tax exempt and is surrounded by farmland in the unincorporated area. Streets, sewers and water infrastructure improvements were made to enable this development. The directly attributable capital costs for this development is nearly $11 million
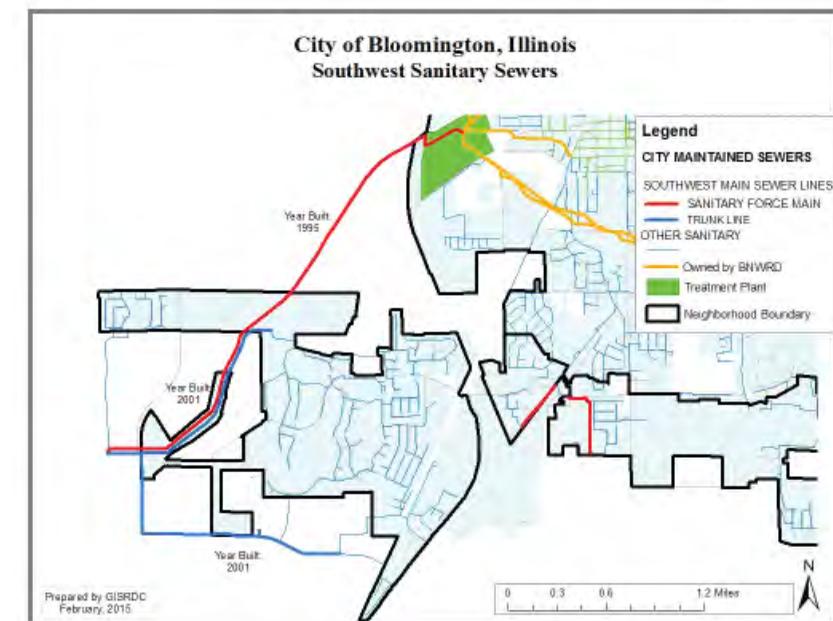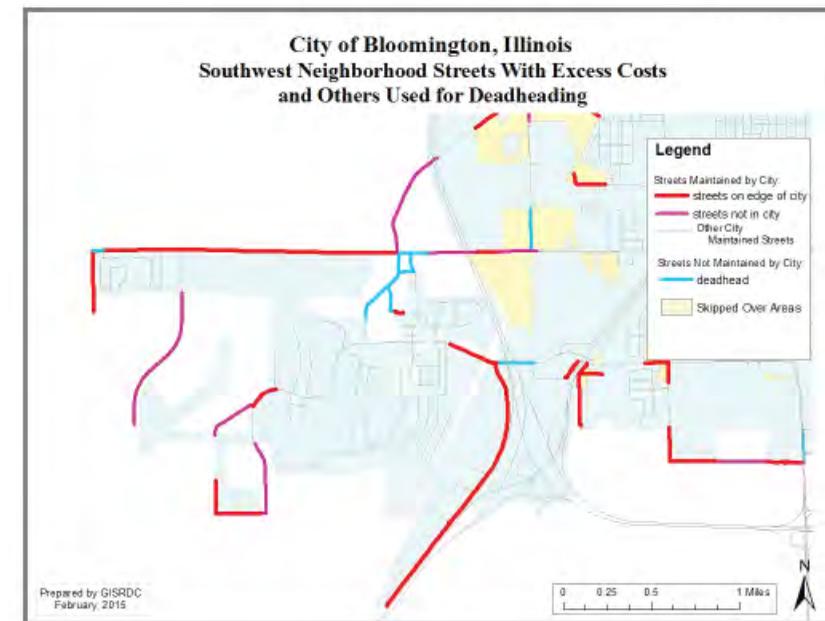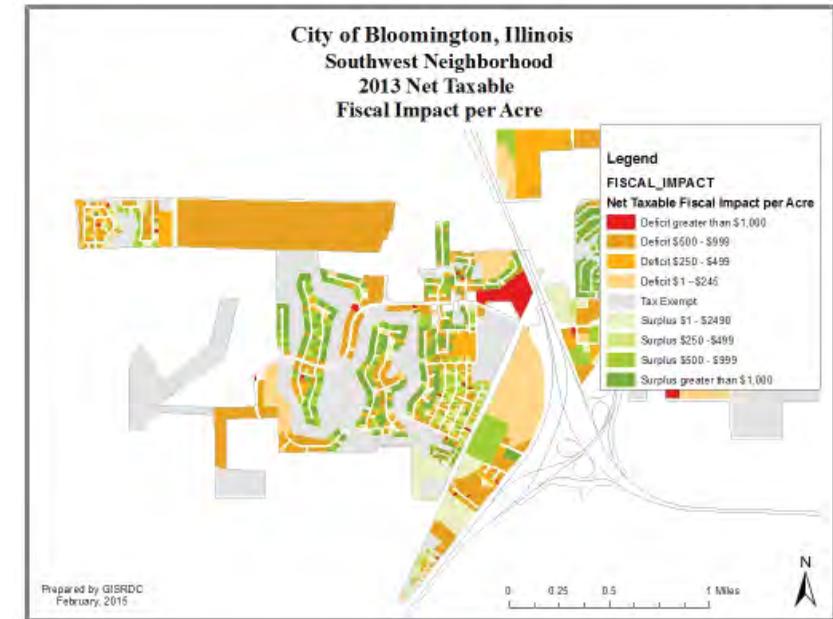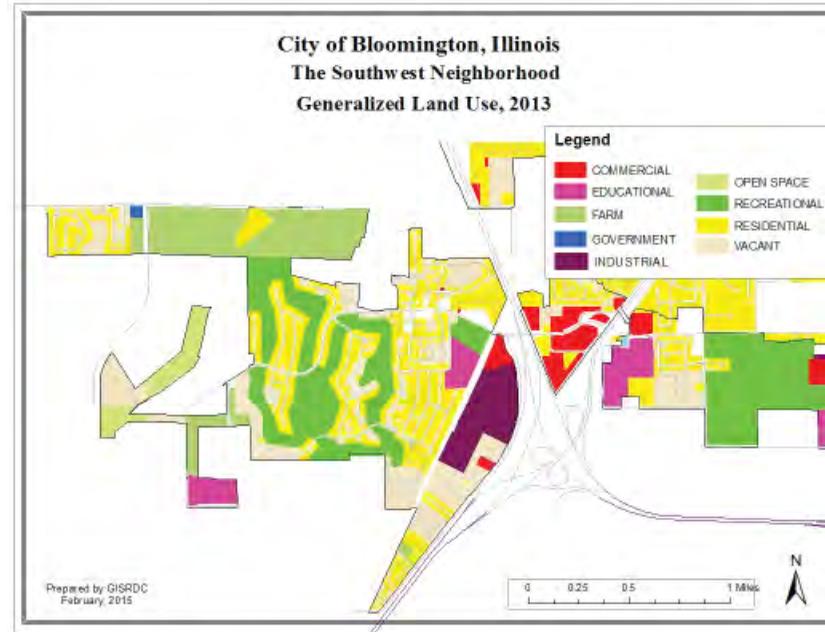
Figure 3-9. Southwest Neighborhood
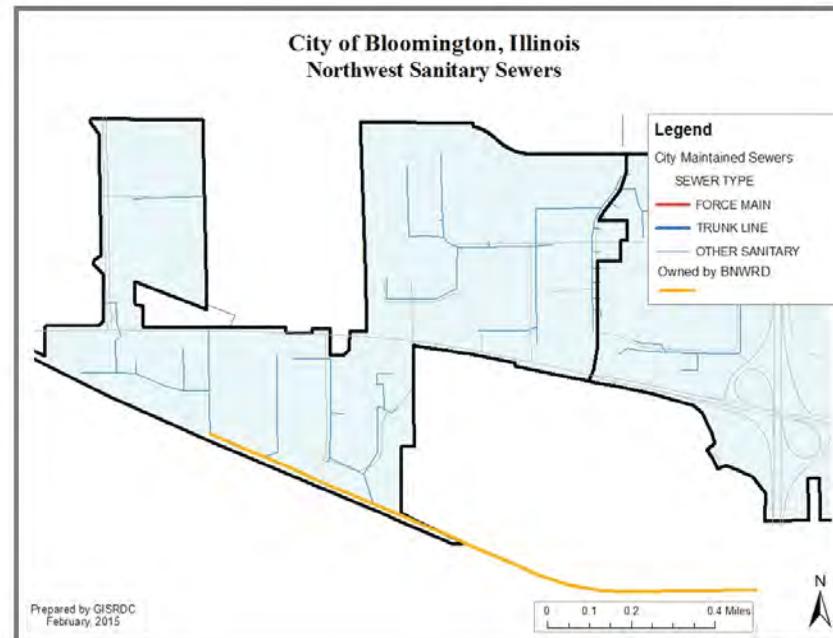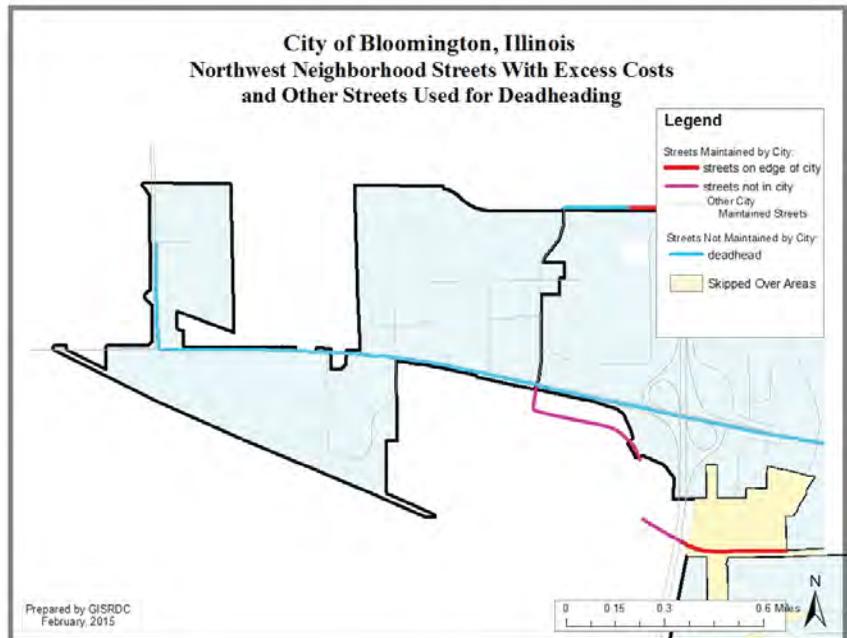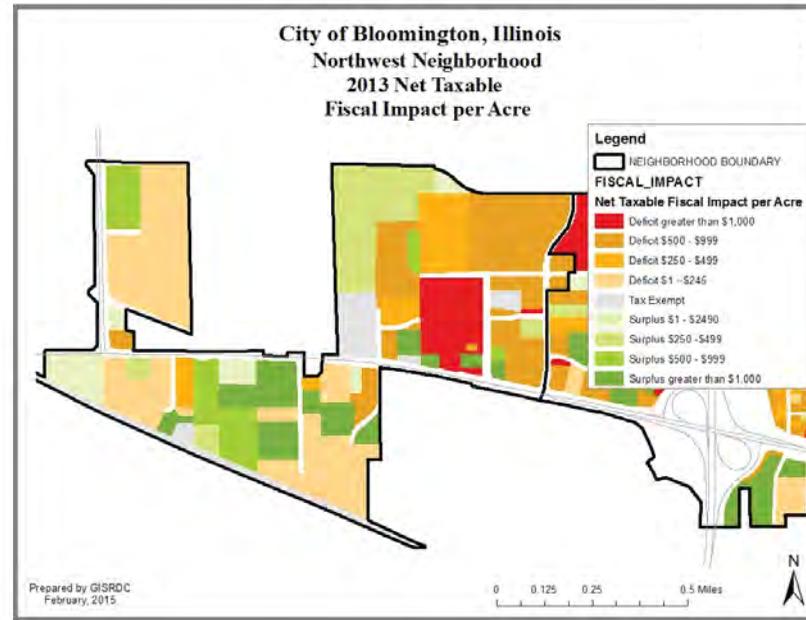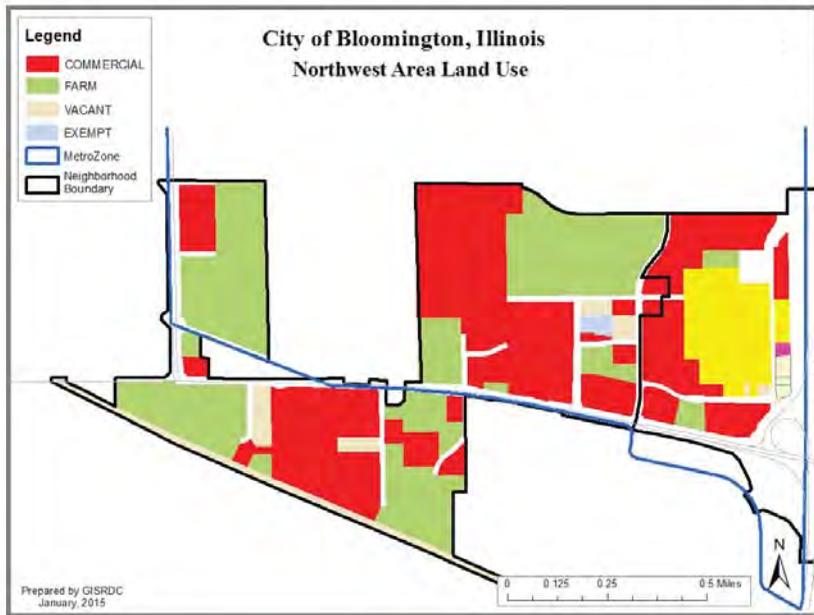
Figure 3-10. Northwest Neighborhood

(City invested $10 million for sewer and lift station improvements, $1 million for water infrastructure). As of 2013, the City recouped $0.5 or 4.5% of this investment via fees. It will be far into the future before the City can recoup its investment in this area.

This development happened at the height of the housing boom in the City. The unforeseen economic conditions that followed stalled development for much of the platted land.

Fox Creek Subdivision

This subdivision was approved 23 years ago. As illustrated in Figure 3.9, the land use here is predominantly residential, with tax exempt properties and a small amount of industrial use. There are many edge streets and City-owned streets outside of the City limits. The City invested nearly $10 million to sewer this area and recouped approximately 15% of its investment as of 2013. The sewer system here was engineered to serve 4,122 acres of residential land with 4 units per acre serving over 56,000 persons. The area developed as of 2013 is about 303 acres, and has a population of approximately 3,600.

Northwest Commercial Area (Market Street area west of the interchange) illustrated in Figure 3-10.

Given its relative proximity to the central City and the length of its existence, this area cannot be categorized as sprawl. However, given the fiscal deficit of -$2,438 per acre, the study investigated this area closely.

As is evident from the Figure 3-10, the land use in this area is predominantly commercial and industrial with some residential. With nearly 10,000 police calls to this area in 2013, unincorporated property combined with Metro Zone on some parcels (a tax and revenue sharing agreement with Town of Normal), this area resulted in a deficit of $2,438 per acre.

As outlined earlier, nearly a third of all the City's commercial properties recorded a deficit. The data on commercial properties need to be refined to better understand the negative fiscal impact of commercial properties.

In sum, the annual estimated operating costs to service the discontinuous sprawl areas is -$757,910 (-$252,675 for the Grove, and -$505,235 for the Southwest).

The City recouped approximately 10% or $2 million of its capital investment of $21 million ($11 million in Grove and $10 million in Fox Creek).

Note: The numbers presented in this section or the full complete fiscal impact analysis report (at www.mcplan.org) should not be misconstrued as exact revenues or expenditures per parcel. The City's financial systems are very complex. The numbers presented here are an attempt to model the real world scenario and include many assumptions. It is also limited by the accuracy of the inputs such as parcel and attribute data.

GUIDANCE FROM THE STUDY

1. Established older areas of the City are producing a net deficit. This is due to declining property values that resulted from decades of disinvestment in the area. The importance of this part of the City is only minimally addressed by the study with the distance factor allocation. However, without a vibrant and functional core, the outlying neighborhoods cannot be serviced. The reinvestment in this area is absolutely critical for the long term sustainability of the City. As outlined in Chapter 4, the comprehensive plan divided this area into Downtown, Regeneration and Preservation areas and urges the City to prioritize its investment in these areas.

2. The City invested large sums in expanding the sewer and water capacity to support development on the east and southwest to be usable far into the future. These investments need to be capitalized before investing in new infrastructure. Many areas were "skipped over" to enable leap frog development. The land use portion of this comprehensive plan highlights the importance of utilizing existing infrastructure and urges to prioritize development in areas that have existing infrastructure as outlined below

- Tier 1: Includes vacant and underutilized land for infill development or redevelopment within the City, unincorporated land surrounded by incorporated areas, and areas platted for future development of existing subdivisions but not yet built out to completion.

- Tier 2: Land immediately adjacent to the City's incorporated area, and with access to all City services.
- Tier 3: Land adjacent to incorporated area but with limited City services. Development in these areas would require additional infrastructure investment.
- Future Use: Land not contiguous to incorporated area and/or without access to critical City services.

4. NEIGHBORHOODS

VISION

Bloomington's neighborhoods will continue to be the friendly, vibrant and diverse foundation of our community, composed of historic houses, modern residences of all kinds, local businesses and community resources, serving all residents.

The cornerstone of a city's quality of life is its selection of housing and neighborhoods. Often thought of as the basic geographic unit by which urban residential areas are defined, a neighborhood is much more than simply the sum of all physical structures such as houses, public facilities and infrastructure elements within a certain area. Neighborhoods are informally defined by the sense of community and the quality of life enjoyed by the people who live there.

There are many ways in which a neighborhood can be defined. Physically, a neighborhood unit is a geographic area of the City that is predominantly residential, bound by streets, natural elements or other features. It usually contains community facilities like a park, a school, convenient shopping and a place of worship. Some of the community facilities are shared by more than one neighborhood depending on its size.

Bloomington is a growing community. This growth brings about changes, including demographic makeup. As outlined in Projections and Trends chapter, by 2035 Bloomington can expect a higher percentage of older adults, greater ethnic diversity, smaller family sizes and most importantly, a change in how residents experience and interact with their surroundings and the community.

BLOOMINGTON'S EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

The City's population nearly doubled in the last 50 years. The incorporated city limits grew by nearly 2.5 times, from slightly over 10 square miles in 1970 to 27 square miles in 2010. As a result of this growth in such a short time, the established older neighborhoods within the core are markedly different from the newer suburban style neighborhoods. The 10-square mile core is roughly bound by Veterans Parkway on the east and the south, the Town of Normal to the north and Interstate 74 to the west. The neighborhoods here are a case study of the City's settlement history and changing development patterns since its incorporation.

Like many communities across the Midwest during the 19th and early 20th centuries, Bloomington was designed with a simple grid street pattern conducive to all modes of travel, neighborhoods with a defined center and edge, and a Downtown that was the economic center of the community. The ad-vent of the Chicago-Alton railroad in 1853 introduced a new component to the City's development pattern. It not only brought the industrial uses to the rail corridor but also working class housing for the employees of expanding industrial concerns to the west of Downtown. Although the (old) east side retains some remains of the Illinois Central Railroad corridor, this area has historically drawn more affluent residents. This development history continues to influence the characteristics of the established residential neighborhoods. To appropriately address the unique needs of the various neighborhoods, this plan classified them into four broad areas: Regeneration Area, Preservation Area, Stable Area and Emerging Area as illustrated in Figure 4-1. The first two categories define the established older neighborhoods while the stable areas represent the neighborhoods built within the last 50 years. Emerging areas represent neighborhoods of the future.

The older neighborhoods have different needs and present different opportunities and challenges as they evolve and transition to cater to the needs of 21st century residents. A majority of the public infrastructure in these neighbor-hoods is a century old if not older. Understanding the needs and tailoring solutions to address them is critical for the future stability and sustainability of these neighborhoods and the community as a whole.

Regeneration Area

As identified in the existing conditions analysis and fortified by the community outreach, Bloomington's West Side (or the Regeneration Area) is different in many ways from rest of the community. There is a higher concentration of crime, a concentration of lower income households and a food desert. The assessed values in this neighborhood are declining which makes private reinvestment challenging. The concentration of these and many other social issues not only negatively impact the lives of people living there today but will continue to do so in the future if left untouched. The family and the neighborhood context both have a significant impact on the academic achievement of children. Education has been identified as a major factor that helps break the cycle of poverty. The poor performance of children in the schools serving the Regeneration Area can be attributed to the neighborhood context in that area. This complex multi-directional relationship is explained at a greater length in Chapter 5. This plan calls for a comprehensive and collaborative approach to revitalizing this area.

Preservation Area

The Preservation Area has the highest concentration of historic homes, landmarks and other assets, including the Whites Place, Franklin Square, and East Grove Street National Historic Districts, and the Davis-Jefferson local historic district. It also includes many sites scattered throughout the area. A walk down one of the tree-lined streets in these neighborhoods is a panorama of varied architecture, from lavish Queen Anne to humble Spanish Revival, with carefully manicured lawns and landscapes interspersed with homes awaiting their chance for restoration. While this area is experiencing some private investment, there are concentrated blocks that need attention. The competing interests between historic preservation and the market pressures for conversion or demolition need to be addressed as well. The City's last historic preservation plan was not updated comprehensively over more than two decades. It is critical for the historic preservation plan to be kept up to date. It not only identifies the historic assets but also identified strategies and resources necessary to protect those assets.

Stable Areas

The third category of established neighborhoods in Bloomington are grouped as the Stable Areas. This area is predominantly located to the east and south of Veterans Parkway. The majority of the neighborhoods in this area were built within the last 50 years. Neighborhoods here are suburban style development and can be characterized by larger single family houses (between 2,000 – 4,000 Sq ft) and cul-de-sac streets feeding into a central collector street. Many neighborhoods have only one or two connections to the larger street network making it difficult to use any modes of travel other than automobile. This type of neighborhood continues to be the primary form of development even today. As discussed in Fiscal Impact Analysis chapter, much of this development occurred in a contiguous form with an exception of a few neighborhoods that fit the definition of a leap-frog or sprawling development pattern. The cost of such sprawling development patterns is a burden on the broader community. The street patterns of these neighborhoods also make it difficult for emergency response teams to get to the residents quickly.

Emerging (Future Growth) Areas

To achieve the goals of compact and contiguous development, maximizing the use of existing infrastructure and community facilities and preserving prime farm land as identified in other sections of this plan, two general areas were designated for future residential use. Unlike the suburban type development, this plan calls for a human scale, mixed use, walkable and connected neighborhoods in these areas. Specific guidelines for the new neighborhoods are set forth in Future Growth and Landuse Chapter. To achieve these goals the City should play a more active role in the design and development of these areas.

In summary, Bloomington has an equal mix of old and new established neighborhoods that cater to the needs of diverse residents. While the prosperity of all the City neighborhoods is critical for the overall health of the community, the neighborhoods in the stable areas are fairly new and do not need much City intervention through the horizon year of this plan. The neighborhoods in the Regeneration and the Preservation Areas have experienced years of disinvestment. These areas need immediate City intervention from policy, regulatory and resource perspectives. The City should prioritize its limited resources to preserve and enhance the Regeneration and Preservation Areas, in that order. The success of many elements outlined in this plan such as education, natural environment, physical health and the community well-being are all tied to the health of the established older neighborhoods in these areas.

The key to a successful neighborhood (old, new or future) is creating a sustainable environment where the ongoing investment in property is supported by public investment in schools and parks; opportunities for social interaction; accessibility for pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles and careful and strategic placement of retail uses and other appropriate non-residential uses within the neighborhood area.
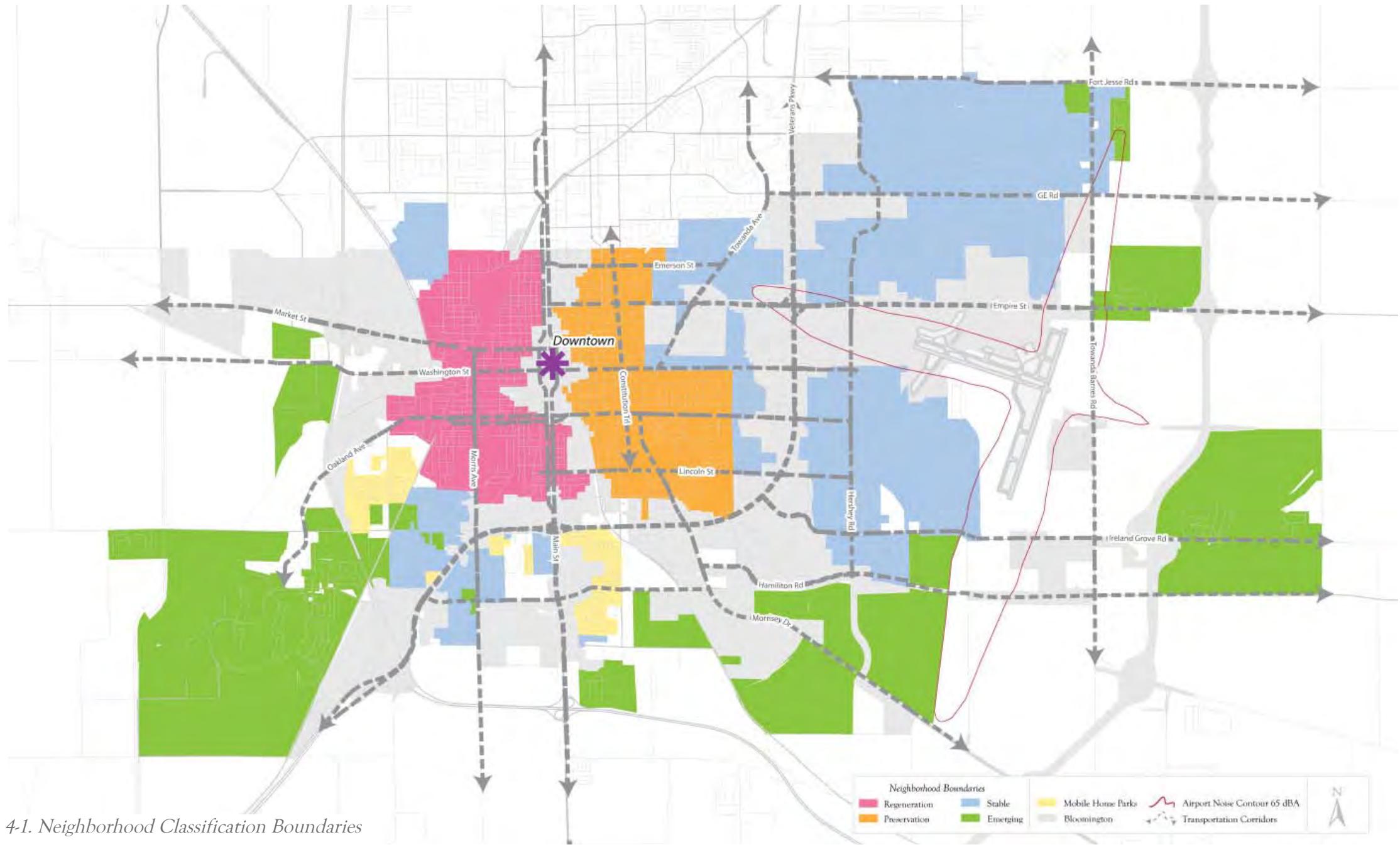
Figure 4-1. Neighborhood Classification Boundaries

Neighborhood Boundaries

- Regeneration
- Preservation
- Stable
- Emerging
- Mobile Home Parks
- Bloomington
- Airport Noise Contour 65 dBA
- Transportation Corridors

REGENERATION AREA

LOCATION: West side of Bloomington bounded by the Downtown and Main Street along the east, I-55/74 on the west, Miller Park on the south.

CHARACTERISTICS:

- Historically this area housed working class neighborhoods that served the Downtown and the Chicago/Alton Railroad and later the west-side coal miners. It was stable until the 1960's and has suffered severe disinvestment since then.
- Grid street pattern with mature tree lined streets is very conducive to the multimodal transportation.
- Typical block is approximately 1/10th of a linear mile or three acres. Neighborhood blocks present a mix of uses and residential densities. High and medium density residential blocks are prevalent closer to the Downtown and along the commercial corridors.
- Residential parcel sizes vary significantly from 30'X120' to 150'X100' with larger lots and houses closer toward the western edge of this area.
- Majority of the houses in this area are one-story cottage or two story foursquare detached houses typical of the 19th and early 20th century .
- Average square footage of a single family house is 1,000 sq. ft. and assessed value is less than $35,000, making it one of the most affordable areas in the City.
- Many houses sit on small lots that are legally non-conforming per current standards.
- Larger homes originally built for single family use were now converted into multi-family units resulting in inadequate off street parking.
- This area contains a higher percentage of rental units. As a result, the short and long term vacancy rates in the regeneration area are higher compared to the rest of the City.
- The infrastructure in this area, both above and under ground, is at least 100 years old and is in severe disrepair, contributing to the area's unattractiveness for private investment.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- High concentrations of low-income households, rental units, absentee landlords and crime results in issues such as transiency, social disconnect and lack of property maintenance. These issues pose a threat to property values and the area's long-term viability and sustainability.
- School choices and neighborhood desirability have a complex relationship. The social issues in the neighborhoods affect the educational achievements of the school students. This area is served by District 87. The schools serving this area have lower test scores by comparison to other schools in the City. This can be attributed to several social factors including transiency, poverty and health conditions in the neighborhood. Education helps break the cycle of poverty and create economic prosperity. Hence, education should be the center of the revitalization efforts in this area.
- The declining property rates make it very difficult not only to attract new investment but also for current homeowners to invest in their properties.
- This area is one of the most affordable areas in the community. Rehabilitation and preservation of housing stock in this area is key to maintaining Bloomington as an affordable community.
- There are many not-for-profit, grassroots and neighborhood organizations committed to improving the quality of life in this area. The City should collaborate with them to improve the physical, social and economic aspects of this area.

This area suffered decades of disinvestment. The City, along with the many community stakeholders, should make revitalization of this area the highest priority during this plan horizon period.

Segment within the Regeneration Area showing neighborhood blocks that accommodate a variety of densities and uses. A typical block is approximately three acres. Low density blocks accommodate anywhere between 7-8 housing units/acre; Medium density blocks accommodate between 12-20 units/acre and high density blocks accommodate more than 20 units/acre.

Multi-family apartment in Regeneration Area

PRESERVATION AREA

LOCATION: The old east side of Bloomington bounded by the Downtown and Main Street along the west and Veterans Parkway on the east and south.

CHARACTERISTICS:

- This area housed the elite members of the community during the 19th and early 20th centuries. At that time, these upper income neighborhoods expanded eastward with the expansion of the trolley system. This was the start of the east-west social divide in the community.
- Today, this area houses several locally and nationally designated historic districts including the Franklin Square District, East Grove Street Historic District, Whites Place Historic District, and Davis Jefferson Historic District (see Figure 4-2). Many individual properties are also listed on the national registry of historic properties.
- Mature tree lined streets in grid pattern is very conducive to multi modal transportation.
- This area houses many fashionable and attractive houses, many of which are designed by local architects George Miller and Arthur Pillsbury. Dominant architectural styles of homes here include Queen Anne, Italianate, Colonial, Tudor, Mission and Spanish Revival.
- Neighborhoods closer to the Downtown have smaller blocks, approximately 1.5 acres and accommodate a variety of densities, tenancies and uses. Example: Dimmitt's Grove Neighborhood. Lot frontages here range from 40' to 60' and depths vary from 80' to 140'. Assessed values of homes in these neighborhoods range from $35,000 to $75,000.
- Neighborhoods further east have larger blocks, approximately four acres and are predominantly single family, owner occupied housing units. Example: Founders Grove. Residential lot sizes here are fairly standard. Lot frontage varies between 50' to 65' and depth between

115' to 130'. Assessed values of homes range from $35,000 to over $100,000.

- Larger homes originally built for single family use are now converted into multi-family units resulting in inadequate off street parking. This is a major challenge for this area.
- The once elite neighborhood today houses a mix of income levels with a higher concentration of moderate income households.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- The Illinois Central Railroad that once traversed the north-south path through Bloomington passed through this area. While the rail line itself is long gone, it left its industrial remnants along its path adjacent to the residential neighborhoods. Today, many of these properties are vacant or underutilized. This abandoned rail corridor was converted into the Constitutional Trail in the last 25 years. This alteration in the nature of this corridor presents a tremendous opportunity to transform the land uses incompatible with residential uses into those that compliment the trail and the surrounding established historic neighborhoods.
- The preservation area is packed with historic resources, some of which have local historic designation. Neighborhoods not currently part of historic districts are generally hesitant to seek local historic designation, due to incomplete understanding of the requirements and limited resources available for their rehabilitation. The primary threat to these historic structures is conversion to multi-family units. When not planned properly, densities can have a negative impact on the surrounding property values and the neighborhood itself. The City should work closely with these neighborhoods to prepare neighborhood level plans to help protect these valuable historic and cultural assets.

Segment within the Preservation Area showing neighborhood blocks, closer to Downtown, that accommodate a variety of densities and uses. Low density blocks accommodate anywhere between 7-8 housing units/acre; Medium density blocks accommodate between 12-20 units/acre and high density blocks accommodate more than 20 units/acre.

- This area is also served by District 87. Some elementary schools in this area are more desirable than others. This again can be associated with the complex and multi-layered relationship between the neighborhood demographics and school performance. Education is a key component to keeping this area desirable.
- Downtown revitalization efforts can greatly benefit from the Preservation as well as the Regeneration Areas and vice-versa.
- The infrastructure in this area, both above and under ground, is at least 100 years old and in severe disrepair. This can be a key factor in stabilizing the declining property values and attracting additional private investment to the area.
- There are many active neighborhood associations committed to improving the property values and the quality of life in this area. The City should work with them to create neighborhood level plans to address needs specific to each neighborhood within this area.

This area should be prioritized for investment of public dollars, after the Regeneration area. The City should consider updating its historic preservation plan and adding resources strategically to protect the historic resources.

Adlai Stevenson house in Franklin Park neighborhood

Historic home in Franklin Park neighborhood

North Roosevelt Ave
Historic District

White Place
Historic District - NHD

Franklin Square
Historic District - NHD

Downtown Bloomington
Historic District - NHD

Davis-Jefferson
Historic District

East Grove St
Historic District - NHD

Figure 4-2. Historic Districts and the Preservation Area (yellow-dotted line)

Historic home in Whites Place historic district

Historic home in Whites Place historic district

Historic home in Grove Street historic district

Historic home in Grove Street historic district

Historic home in Grove Street historic district

Historic home in Davis Jefferson historic district

Historic home in Davis Jefferson historic district

STABLE AREA

LOCATION: Areas east and south of Veterans Parkway

CHARACTERISTICS:
- Bloomington's 20th century boom period, from 1960 to 2010, resulted in sustained growth of population and incorporated area. This area, predominantly built within the last 50 years, accounts for slightly more than half of the City's residential neighborhoods.
- Street patterns here are suburban style. Subdivisions are built on cul-de-sacs that feed into a collector street which eventually feed into the larger street network.
- Houses are larger, averaging around 2,000-2,400 square feet. In some neighborhoods, the average square footage of a house is over 3,000.
- Lot sizes and shapes are homogeneous depending on the zoning in that area. The current zoning ordinance is geared predominantly towards these newer areas.
- The uses and densities in this area are homogeneous and are separated from each other.
- Medium density residential is typically duplexes/townhouses or single family detached homes on smaller lots. Multi-family units are almost always apartment complexes typically around a central parking lot.
- Single family housing units are almost always owner occupied. Rental is accommodated through apartments.
- Assessed values range from $50,000 to over $250,000.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES:
- The suburban style development resulted in isolated subdivisions in place of connected neighborhoods.
- The street patterns are not conducive to alternate modes of transportation or emergency response.
- Some residential subdivisions in this area, built within the last 20 years, can be categorized as "leapfrog development" or "sprawl." As outlined in Fiscal Impact Analysis chapter, the cost of such development is huge for the City. This plan strongly recommends against such development in the future.
- Many subdivisions in the northeast and southwest parts of town are not within the 6-minute emergency response zone. While the City needs to find ways to respond to these existing neighborhoods within six minutes, the type of development that strains City's emergency response should be strongly discouraged.
- Housing in this area is mostly single family owner occupied detached housing or apartments. Housing densities between two and six units are almost non-existent in this area.
- The cost of a single family new construction in this area averaged $297,000 in 2014, nearly double the median home value in the City, $153,500, making this area very unaffordable for households at or below area's median income. This phenomenon discourages diversity within neighborhoods.

Given the age of this area and the continued private investment, this area does not require any redevelopment effort during this plan horizon period, except for isolated instances. It is very stable.

Segment within the Stable Area showing an area near the school with a variety of residential densities. Low density blocks accommodate anywhere between 2-5 housing units/acre; Medium density blocks accommodate between 6-10 units/acre and high density blocks accommodate 20-30 units/acre.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

The power of neighborhood/homeowner associations in creating vibrant and thriving neighborhoods cannot be underestimated. The planning process has revealed a blatant underrepresentation of neighborhoods within the local planning process. Bloomington has many active neighborhood associations. The City should fully embrace a neighborhood planning approach.

Both city officials and residents themselves have made strides in recent years with the West Bloomington Revitalization Project (WBRP), but more can be done to integrate a neighborhood focus into the larger effort to guide growth and change in the city. The comprehensive plan provides the "big picture" and identifies needs at macro scale. Neighborhood level plans, done at a much smaller scale, will identify specific issues for each neighborhood and how that neighborhood fits within the "big picture." This may include dealing with vacant business or increased traffic flow, crime or development densities. This comprehensive plan urges the City to engage and empower the neighbors to plan for themselves, particularly in the Regeneration and Preservation Areas.

1   Brookridge Court
2   Brookridge II
3   Brookridge
4   Country Club Place - Northcrest
5   Crown Court
6   Dimmitt's Grove
7   Downtown Bloomington
8   Franklin Square
9   Hawthorne Hills
10 Hedgewood Park Association
11 Lakewood/Hillcrest Homeowner's
12 Near East
13 North Pointe
14 Northwest
15 Oakridge
16 Oakwoods
17 Old East Side
18 Old Farm Lakes Property Owners
19 The Davis Jefferson Neighborhood Association
20 Olde Towne
21 Pinebach

22 Rollingbrook Manor
23 South Hill
24 Sunset Road
25 Founders' Grove
26 White Place
27 Lang's Alley
28 Alexander Estates
29 Eagle Crest
30 Evergreen Place
31 Evergreen-Winchester
32 Somerset Point
33 South Oakland
34 Wood Hill Towers
35 Links Landing
36 Old Farm Lakes Gardens
37 Irvin Park
38 Hawthorne II
39 Fox Creek Road
40 Gridley Allen Prickett
41 Miller Park Neighbors

Figure 4-3. Neighborhood Organizations

N-1. Ensure compact development of the City through denser, mixed-use developments and reinvestment in the established older neighborhoods.

N-1.1 Enhance the livability of all Bloomington neighborhoods.

N-1.1a Update the ordinances and regulations as needed to accomplish the goals of the comprehensive plan. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-1.1b Ensure sensitive transitions from residential to nonresidential. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-1.1c Improve the walkability to destinations such as schools, parks and neighborhood commercial centers to preserve and enhance the walkable character of neighborhoods. *City of Bloomington, medium*

N-1.1d Identify opportunities for mixed-use development and encourage such development to enhance neighborhoods. *City of Bloomington, short*

N-1.1e Update the ordinances and codes to reflect the unique needs of the Regeneration, Preservation, and Stable Areas and preserve their character. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

METRICS

- Equalized assessed value ↑
- Number of mixed-use developments ↑
- Mileage of complete streets ↑
- Updated codes and ordinances to reflect the unique needs of Regeneration, Preservation and Stable Areas

PARTNER AGENCIES

School districts, McLean County Wellness Coalition, MCRPC, McLean County Health Department, LifeCIL, Connect Transit, B-N Area Realtors, Developers, Neighborhood organizations

N-1.2 Prioritize, with urgency, the revitalization of the neighborhoods in the Regeneration area.

N-1.2a City should continue to use CDBG grants to support/partner with organizations such as West Bloomington Revitalization Project to have a collective impact on revitalization. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-1.2b Continue to implement the West Bloomington Revitalization Strategic Plan adopted in 2010 and utilize it as the framework for the Regeneration area. *WBRP, ongoing*

N-1.2c Create neighborhood level plans consistent with the comprehensive plan to address issues specific to each neighborhood. CDBG grants can be used to assist the neighborhood groups with this process. *Neighborhood organizations, short*

N-1.2d Identify and eliminate the barriers for infill development. *Bloomington Community Development department, ongoing*

N-1.2e Identify areas for commercial mixed-use developments to enhance the character of the existing neighborhoods. *Bloomington Community Development department, short-medium*

N-1.2f Identify potential areas as needed to create "Neighborhood Conservation Districts" to ensure the character of the neighborhood is protected. *Neighborhood organizations, medium*

N-1.2g Enhance key corridors into the City such as Washington Street, Macarthur Avenue, South Main/Center Street, and Market Street. *Bloomington Community Development department, short-medium*

N-1.2h Cluster capital improvement projects such as street resurfacing with housing improvement projects to heighten the positive impact in any given neighborhood. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-1.2i Recognize the importance of programming to create a sense of community within the neighborhoods and support organizations that offer such programs. *Neighborhood organizations, short*

N-1.2j Promote the usage of the Tool Library. City has funded portion of this project with the CDBG funds. This should be promoted on the City's Facebook and website. *WBRP, short*

N-1.2k Develop an expansion plan of the Tool Library recognizing the need for more hours as well as possible expanding locations. *WBRP, short-medium*

N-1.3 Redevelop the neighborhoods in the Preservation area while carefully protecting their historic nature and character.

N-1.3a Keep the City's historic preservation plan current through schedule of regular updates and ensure consistency between it and various elements of this comprehensive plan. City may need to hire a dedicated staff person to oversee this process. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-1.3b Create neighborhood level plans consistent with the comprehensive plan to address issues specific to each neighborhood. City can facilitate this process by creating a tool kit and encouraging the neighborhood organizations to lead their own planning process. *Neighborhood organizations, ongoing*

N-1.3c Foster preservation and adaptive reuse of significant historic buildings and structures. While residents can file variances, the sections of the zoning code that address setbacks should be revisited and amended to reflect the "non-conforming" condition. Such revision adds predictability and make this area more appealing for private investment. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-1.3d Encourage the use of the statewide historic property incentives such as "Illinois Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program." *City of Bloomington, short*

N-1.3e Continue to enhance the City's designated historic districts. City currently provides some funding for improvements in the historic districts through the Eugene D. Funk program. More resources need to be allocated to this program. *City of Bloomington, medium*

N-1.3f   Identify areas for commercial mixed use developments to enhance the character of the existing neighborhoods during the neighborhood planning process. *Bloomington Community Development department, ongoing*

N-1.3g Identify potential areas, as needed, to create "Neighborhood Conservation Districts" to ensure the character of the neighborhood is protected. *Neighborhood organizations, medium*

METRICS

- Equalized assessed value ↑
- # of permits for building improvements increase ↑
- Homeownership ↑
- Deconversions of multi-family units in single-family homes ↑
- Transiency ↓
- Vacancy rate ↓
- Code enforcement reports ↓
- Nuisance and calls for service ↓
- Usage of the "Illinois Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program" ↑
- # of neighborhood groups in the Preservation Area ↑
- # of adopted neighborhood plans ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

IHPA, MCMH, Old House Society, Neighborhood associations in the historic district, City of Bloomington, MCRPC, Neighborhood organizations, EDC

N-1.4   Identify opportunities to gradually transition the low density residential developments in the Stable Areas into mixed use, walkable neighborhoods that appeal to all residents.

- Population density ↑

N-1.4a Identify vacant lots and encourage mixed use development. *Bloomington Community Development department, short*

N-1.4b Improve connections and promote opportunities for bike trails, bus routes, road diets and on-street bike lanes to make the neighborhoods safer and more pedestrian friendly. *Bloomington Public Works department, short*

N-1.4c Connect neighborhoods with limited access to the greater street network. *Bloomington Public Works department, long*

Neighborhood organizations, Bike Blo-No, Friends of the Constitution Trail, Connect Transit, MCRPC

N-1.5   Promote creation of connected neighborhoods, focused on people, rather than isolated subdivisions in the Emerging areas.

- Sub-area plans for emerging areas created and adopted
- Complete street mileage ↑
- Sidewalks mileage ↑
- Bike trails mileage ↑
- Operating budget per mileage of infrastructure ↓

N-1.5a Proactively develop sub-area plans for the emerging areas guided by the land use plan. *Bloomington Community Development department, short*

N-1.5b   Incentivize subdivisions that follow sustainable neighborhood designs such as transit oriented development, mixed use development, traditional neighborhood design, cluster development and green building practices. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-1.5c Require new residential subdivisions to be connected to surrounding areas. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-1.5d Create guidelines for human-scaled and pedestrian friendly neighborhood development that also accommodates vehicles. *MCRPC, medium*

N-1.5e Create more pedestrian, bike and transit connections over Veterans Parkway to bridge the divide between neighborhoods on the east and west sides. Many transportation improvements are typically funded by Department of Transportation. However, smaller grants provided by the advocacy groups such as People For Bikes cannot be discounted. *Bloomington Public Works department, long*

MCRPC, School Districts, Connect Transit, B-N Realtors Association, Developers, City of Bloomington, Town of Normal, McLean County, Local/State bike advocacy groups, IDOT

N-2. Improve community identity and appearance by celebrating the unique nature and character of the City's individual neighborhoods.

N-2.1 Create and define neighborhood identity where none currently exists.

N-2.1a Create a tool kit or guide for neighbors wanting to organize themselves into a neighborhood organization. *MCRPC, short*

N-2.1b Provide networking opportunities for neighborhood groups to interact with each other and share resources. City can facilitate this by joining the Regional Neighborhood Network Conference. *City of Bloomington, short*

N-2.1c Identify under-utilized areas within the city for potential redevelopment opportunities that could enhance the surrounding neighborhood. *City of Bloomington, short*

N-2.1d Work to recreate a new identity for areas such as the Warehouse District, recognizing and respecting the associated history. *City of Bloomington, medium*

N-2.1e Investigate a brewery/arts district to revitalize the manufacturing complex off Bunn and Croxton Ave near the Trail. *Bloomington Community Development department, medium*

N-2.1f Leverage Route 66 tourism efforts to enhance the adjacent neighborhoods. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

METRICS

- # of neighborhood organizations ↑
- Neighborhood planning tool kit
- Neighborhood programming
- EAV of Warehouse District ↑
- EAV of the manufacturing facility off Bunn/Croxton Avenues ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

WBRP, Neighborhood organizations, COB Parks and Rec, EDC, CVB, Homebrew Associations, Breweriana Clubs, Restaurants, Jaycees (Bruegala), MCRPC, McLean County Chamber of Commerce, MCMH, DBA

N-2.2 Celebrate the uniqueness of Bloomington's neighborhoods.

- EAV of Regeneration, Preservation and Stable Areas ↑

N-2.2a Identify the unique qualities of each neighborhood and promote these as destinations for desirable areas to live, work, shop and play. *Bloomington Community Development department, short*

N-2.2b Councils, boards, and commissions should consider the uniqueness of the neighborhoods while reviewing and approving development proposals. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

Neighborhood organizations, EDC, MCRPC

N-2.3 Enhance Bloomington's public realm.

N-2.3a Promote the city's commitment to the tree-planting program. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-2.3b Prioritize tree-planting along major corridors. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-2.3c City and IDOT should coordinate beautification efforts including tree planting and landscaping along state corridors. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-2.3d Establish a program for public art (See Arts, Culture, & History Section). *BCPA, short*

N-2.3e Identify areas for micro-parks/play streets within neighborhoods. *McLean County Wellness Coalition, medium*

N-2.3f Encourage neighborhood cleaning and greening. *Neighborhood organizations, ongoing*

N-2.3g Promote the current City programs such as "Adopt-a-Street" and "Adopt-a-Park" to encourage more residents to actively become involved in the upkeep and beautification of their neighborhoods. *Bloomington Community Development department, short*

N-2.3h Actively promote incentive programs like the "50/50 Sidewalk Program" to improve the neighborhood aesthetics and livability. *Bloomington Public Works department, short*

N-2.3i Increase the use of complete streets safely accessible by bus, foot, bike and car. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

- Urban forestry ↑
- Participation in "Adopt-a-Street" and "Adopt-a-Park" programs ↑
- "50/50 Sidewalk Program" participation ↑
- Mileage of sidewalks and conditions ↑

Bloomington Parks and Recreation department, IDOT, Neighborhood organizations, Not-for-profits, McLean County Health Dept., MCRPC, Local bike advocacy groups, McLean County Wellness Coalition

N-3. Improve communication between the City, the citizens, and the neighborhood organizations to foster teamwork and community spirit.

N-3.1 City will use both traditional and non-traditional methods to communicate with its residents.

N-3.1a City will continue to post as much information as possible on its website in a timely manner. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

METRICS

- Nextdoor participation by neighborhood organizations ↑
- City has received the point of contact information from both organized and unorganized neighborhood groups
- Image of the City as measured by satisfaction surveys ↑

N-3.1b Conduct regular audits of the City website for usability and efficiency focusing on traffic, broken links and search engine optimization (SEO). *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-3.1c City will continue to use social media such as Facebook and Twitter to provide relevant information quickly. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

N-3.1d The biweekly mayoral open house will continue to be a forum for two-way communication between the City and its citizens. *City Mayor, ongoing*

N-3.1e The bimonthly "Focus Meetings" with the Bloomington Police Department will continue to be the forum for the residents to discuss safety issues in the City. *Bloomington Police department, ongoing*

N-3.1f City will utilize Nextdoor as one of the tools to improve its direct communications with its residents. *City of Bloomington, short*

N-3.1g Neighborhood organizations (or subgroups) will appoint a point person to receive information from the City and distribute to the residents within that neighborhood as well as bring neighborhood concerns to the City's attention. *City of Bloomington, short*

N-3.1h Continue to offer the citizen academy "Bloomington 101." *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

N-3.1i Make it easy for the residents to find information about City services/programs/incentives. *City of Bloomington, short*

Neighorhood organizations, WBRP, COB, BPD, City Mayor

HOUSING

Neighborhoods cannot be addressed without housing and vice-versa. Bloomington's growth since the 1970's resulted in the addition of 20,000 new housing units. The majority of the new housing permits were issued for the construction of detached single family housing or multi-family apartments. As identified in existing conditions, nearly 57% of all housing in Bloomington is single family and 30% is rental. Less than 7% of housing stock is duplexes. The housing choice between the detached single family and the high density multi-family is slim or non existent, especially in the stable areas. This type of housing increases density, walkability and affordability.

Bloomington's median home price at $153,500 and median rent at $700 seem affordable for a community with a median family income of $56,510. A household paying more than 30% of their income on housing-related costs is considered housing cost burdened. Nearly a quarter of all City residents are burdened with homeownership and approximately 40% are burdened with home rental.

As shown in Figure 4-5, the average price of a new single family home in 2014 was $297,000, almost double the area median home value of $153,500. This price differential is essentially a function of increased square footage of the newer housing units along with the increase in costs of construction. This phenomenon poses a threat to the affordability of housing and diversity of the community. As evidenced by the increased vacancy rates in Figure 4-4, the abundance of this type of housing stock can also pose a threat to the sustainability of housing stock in the older established neighborhoods.

Affordable housing is critical for young professionals, college graduates, seniors on a fixed income, people working in low paying professionals such as pre-school teachers. In Bloomington nearly 13,000 households earn less than median income.

Affordable Housing

To ensure safe, decent and affordable housing opportunity for all residents and to protect the older housing stock in the City, this plan calls for a diversity of housing types that are affordable and accessible. Communities committed

to affordability offer developers variety of incentives such as density bonuses and expedited approvals in exchange for permanent affordable housing for moderate and low income families to help preserve mixed-income neighborhoods. Others have affordable housing ordinances that require developments meet certain criteria and have a minimum percentage of rental units set aside as "affordable". Other communities offer developers alternatives such as pay-in-lieu-of or fee waivers. Communities can and should tailor these incentives to the local conditions and needs.

This plan proposes policy and regulatory changes and encourages partnerships and programmatic approaches to improving the housing quality and affordability in the Regeneration and the Preservation Areas, increasing mixed use residential developments in the Stable Area, and housing choices that encourage mixed neighborhoods that appeal to various ages, incomes and ethnicities in the Emerging Areas. It also calls for a political commitment to make Bloomington a community for all.

Existing Conditions

- Total Housing Units: 34,339
- Median home value: $153,500
- Median rent: $700
- Homeownership rate: 62.9%
- In 2010, Bloomington's homeownership rate was 62.9%, nearly 4.5% lower than that of Illinois. Bloomington's median family income was higher than that of the state by $9,746. Typically, higher median incomes are associated with higher homeownership rates in the community. However, that was not the case in Bloomington. This could be due to factors such as affordability, student populations, or transient workforce.
- Multi-family units (or apartments) make up 30% of Bloomington's housing units. The majority of these units are concentrated in the core of the City and along Veterans Parkway.
- The majority of the rental units are in the core of the City. Vacancy rates of rental properties are typically higher than those of ownership properties. Consistent with this trend, there is a higher concentration of vacant housing units in Bloomington's core. The long-term vacancy rate (vacant for 36 months or more), has grown from 2000 to 2010 (see Figure 4-4).
- Median home values and median rents are both lower when compared to that of the state averages. However, 23% of all homeowners are burdened (paying more than 30% of the household income on housing-related costs) with housing and 39.1% are burdened with rental payment. The percentage of homeowners burdened with mortgages is higher when compared to that of the state while the percentage of renters burdened is lower.
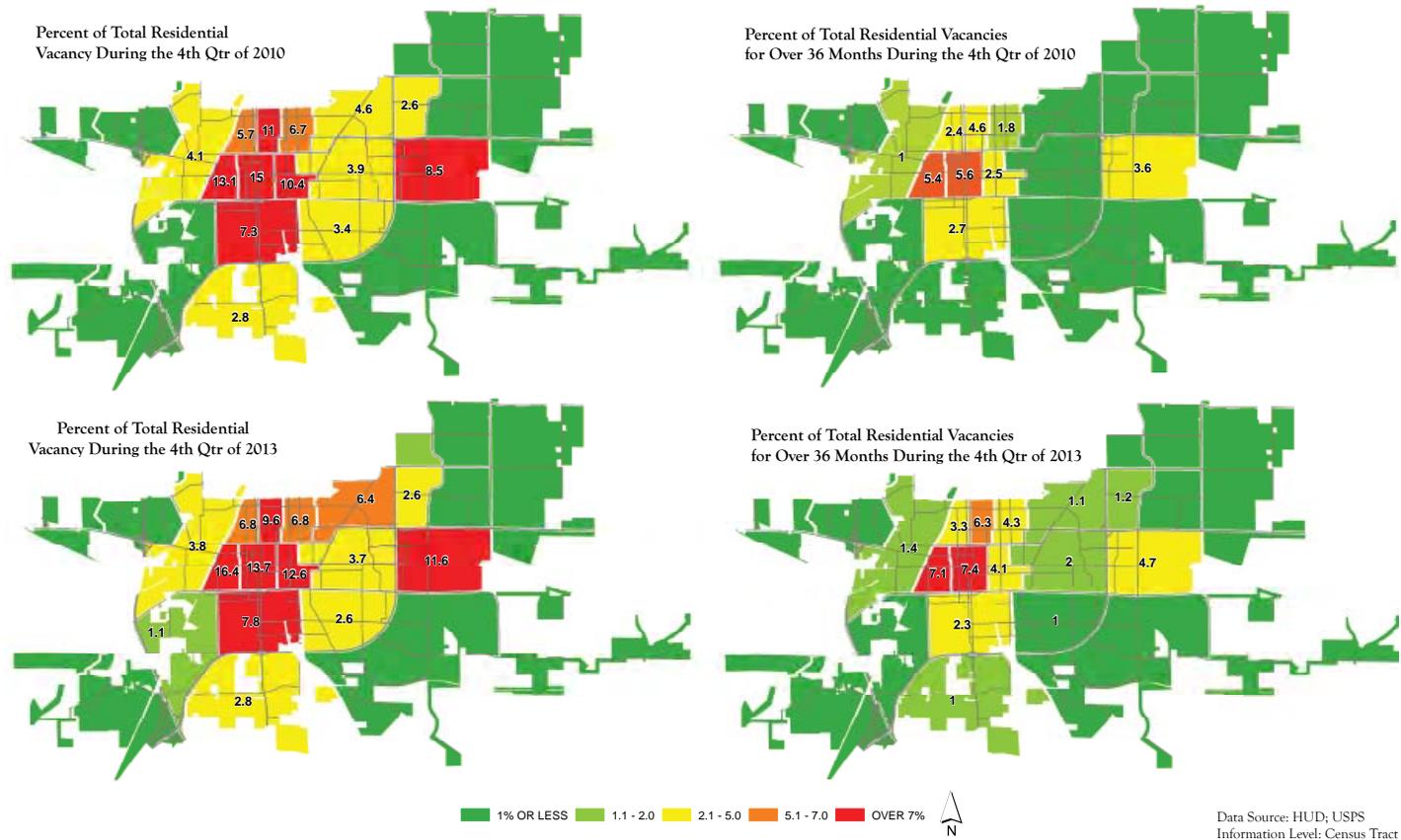
Figure 4-4. Residential Vacancy Analysis, City of Bloomington

Please refer to the housing chapter in the existing conditions analysis for a detailed discussion on this subject.

Legend: 1% OR LESS | 1.1 - 2.0 | 2.1 - 5.0 | 5.1 - 7.0 | OVER 7%

Data Source: HUD; USPS
Information Level: Census Tract

Figure 4-5. Average cost of new single family house in thousands and number of new constructions in Bloomington Normal.

Figure 4-6. Average construction cost per square feet.

Source: Bloomington Normal Association of Realtors

H-1. Ensure the availability of safe, attractive and high quality housing stock to meet the needs of all current and future residents of Bloomington.

H-1.1 Ensure that the housing to accommodate the new growth is a broad range (of types, sizes, ages, densities, tenancies and costs) equitably distributed throughout the City recognizing changing trends in age-group composition, income, and family living habits.

METRICS

- Percent of housing with 2-6 units ↑
- Percent of newer housing under 2,000 sq. ft. ↑
- # of housing units in mixed use ↑
- Home Ownership ↑
- Vacancy rates ↓
- Code violations ↓
- Annual report to track complaints by ward

PARTNER AGENCIES

City, City Township assessor, BHA, Local government units, Bloomington-Normal Realtor's Association, Habitat for Humanity, MCCA, League of Women Voters, Normal, McLean County

H-1.1a Review and improve the current ordinances, codes, regulations, and permitting processes and fees, as needed and desirable, to provide more efficient mechanisms for new developments and redevelopment opportunities. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

H-1.1b Provide supporting infrastructure for housing such as roads, sanitary sewer facilities, park and trails. The provision of such infrastructure will occur in a way to ensure that no new development occurs unless adequate public infrastructure is readily available or planned. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

H-1.1c Monitor housing market and residential trends (census data, permit data, assessed values, home sales data, median rents) to provide better information to policy makers and the community. This could allow for better comparisons with surrounding communities. *Bloomington-Normal Realtors Association, ongoing*

H-1.1d Track ownership and rental vacancy rates citywide as well as by census tracts. Ensure a downward trend of the vacancy rates. *MCRPC, short/ongoing*

H-1.1e Improved code enforcement. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

H-1.1f Sponsor education seminars for developers, realtors and policymakers on housing topics such as latest demands, changing trends, redevelopment and historic preservation. *MCRPC, short/ongoing*

H-1.1g Evaluate, update and enforce the "Rental Property Program," "Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance," and the "Nuisance Abatement Ordinance." *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

H-1.1h Make the annual report available to the public by ward using GIS. Present these reports to the City Council periodically. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

H-1.1i Create a regional housing plan to address housing issues in Bloomington-Normal and McLean County. *MCRPC, medium-long*

H-1.2 Ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing for low to moderate income households.

H-1.2a Educate the policy makers and community at large on affordable housing issues. *BHA, short/ongoing*

H-1.2b Work with community partners like Habitat for Humanity, MCCA and Bloomington Housing Authority to have a collective impact on affordable housing issues. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

H-1.2c Encourage collaborations among affordable housing providers. *BHA, short/ongoing*

H-1.2d Identify creative solutions for affordable housing such as home sharing, micro units, and tiny homes. *BHA, medium-long*

H-1.2e Increase supply of affordable rental housing, especially in areas close to job centers, schools and community facilities. *Developers, long*

H-1.2f Identify and reduce barriers for mixed income housing. *City of Bloomington, medium-long*

Bloomington Housing Authority (BHA)

The Bloomington Housing Authority provides housing for the low to moderate income populations in Bloomington-Normal and McLean County. It is primarily funded by Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) and is responsible for managing public housing and the Section 8 voucher program. The Section 8 program is a rental assistance program which provides vouchers to very low income families, the elderly, and those with disabilities helping to assist with rental housing in the private market. Public housing is rental housing owned and managed by BHA which provides affordable housing for families, elderly and people with disabilities. BHA currently manages approximately 600 rental units throughout nine housing sites identified in Figure 4-7 and is a key entity in providing affordable housing in the community.
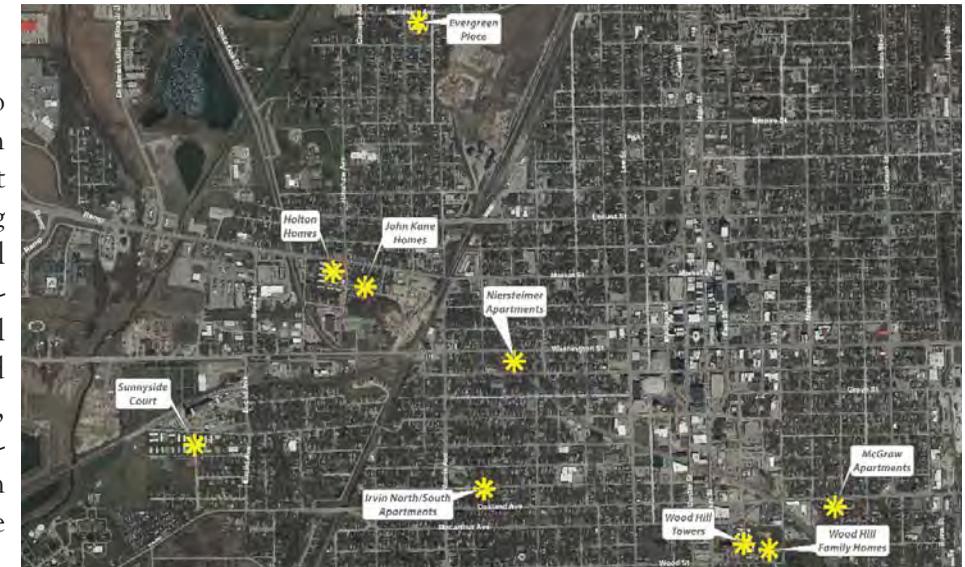
Figure 4-7. Bloomington Housing Authority Properties

Affordable Housing Toolkit
(Source: Affordable Housing toolkit for communities in DuPage County)

Affordable Housing Trust Fund: Housing trust funds are distinct funds established by legislation, ordinance or resolution to receive public revenues, which can only be spent on affordable housing. Administered by the local agency or department that handles federal housing programs, a housing trust fund generates a consistent stream of funds that can be used in a variety of ways to serve a variety of affordable housing initiatives. In addition, trust funds can effectively harness and leverage additional resources for affordable housing programs. Housing trust funds are set up differently from community to community to meet their own needs. Examples of communities with this tool: Cambridge, Massachusetts, Chicago, Illinois, San Diego, California, and Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Community Land Trust: A community land trust can be created to acquire and hold land to provide affordable access to land and housing within the community. A community land trust, typically a non-profit organization, receives land as gifts or uses public or private funds to acquire land. Quite often, a community may use revenues from its trust fund to acquire land for a community land trust. The policies used in Burlington, Vermont, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Durham, North Carolina demonstrate how homeownership can be made possible through a community land trust for extremely low- to moderate-income households.

Zoning Tools

Inclusionary zoning requires that a percentage of units in residential developments (new construction, substantial rehabilitation, and condo conversions) be made available for low and moderate-income households. An inclusionary zoning program can take many forms. The policy can be mandatory or voluntary; the affordable housing units can be built within the development or at a different location; the developers can be required to build the affordable housing units directly or in some circumstances, may be allowed to contribute to a housing trust fund or to donate land in lieu of building affordable units. The developers receive benefits or incentives to help offset the cost of the affordable units. These incentives or benefits can include: density bonuses, an expedited permit process, the waiver of certain fees, relaxed design standards, tax breaks or direct subsidies. Because inclusionary zoning links the creation of affordable units to the creation of market rate housing, it is most effective in areas that are experiencing significant growth and development or gentrification.

Case studies from Davis, California, Montgomery County, Maryland and Newton, Massachusetts, highlight the use of this tool around the country.

Flexible rehab codes allow municipalities the flexibility to determine when buildings must meet new construction standards based on the nature of the work to be done (and its effect on safety) instead of the cost of the work. Municipalities should standardize the process through clear steps and not make rehab too cost prohibitive.

Other Zoning Tools might include allowing accessory dwelling units, such as coach houses, in a single-family zoned area.

Other Local Funding Mechanisms

Commercial Linkage Fee: This fee can apply to new commercial, retail and/or industrial development, under the rationale that this new development creates a need for affordable housing. The funds generated from this fee are usually directed into a housing trust fund and used to support affordable housing initiatives. The fee is based on a rate per square foot.

Real Estate Transfer Tax: This is a tax based on the sales price of property and is paid every time a property is sold.

The real estate transfer tax provides a steady stream of income without relying on annual budget processes. The real estate transfer tax could be dedicated to an affordable housing trust fund.

Tear Down Fee and Tax: The permit fee and demolition tax apply to the tear down or removal of a residential structure. The demolition tax per unit is based on the type of residence. Such a mechanism could generate revenue needed to accomplish affordable housing initiatives in a community. The City of Highland Park recently implemented a tear down fee and tax to help provide a revenue stream for its local housing trust fund. The permit fee is set at $500 and the demolition tax is $10,000 for a single-family residence. Residents of a multi-family unit pay either $10,000 or they pay $3,000 per unit – whichever is higher.

Vacant, Abandoned and Substandard Property Rehab & Sale Programs: Many cities have created programs that acquire vacant, abandoned and substandard property in order to rehabilitate that property and produce affordable housing. This tool could be an effective method for providing affordable housing to low- and moderate-income home buyers while simultaneously improving the quality of life of affected neighborhoods. A local government could operate this program in collaboration with a community land trust and with funds from a housing trust fund.

Employer Assisted Housing (EAH) Source: www.reachillinois.org
EAH is a tool to increase homeownership in targeted areas, while assisting employees of the participating employers with down payments for their new homes. This program allows employees to live close to work thus reducing their commute times and greater mode choice. Participating employers get tax benefits while also helping the community achieve its goals of increased homeownership and revitalization of neighborhoods. Employers using this type of housing program see increased employee retention of their employees. Communities in Illinois with EAH programs include, Evanston, St. Charles, and Chicago. REACH, Illinois is a not-for-profit organization that help communities navigate the legal, technical and financial aspects of this program.

H-1.3 Create a life long community by fostering housing stock that meets the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.

H-1.3a Increase supply of housing options accessible to seniors and people with disabilities. *LIFE-CIL, medium-long*

H-1.3b Consider amending the building codes and design standards for accessibility and visitablity of new home construction. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

H-1.3c Evaluate and amend as needed zoning and other regulations to include the development of housing for multi generational families. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

H-1.3d Work collaboratively with the County's mental health organization to collectively address housing for those dealing with behavioral health issues. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

H-1.3e Ensure neighborhoods are walkable and have access to alternative modes of transportation and other amenities to make them attractive to aging populations. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

Aging In Place

Aging in Place:
A State Survey of Livability
Policies and Practices

*A Research Report by the
National Conference of State Legislatures
and the AARP Public Policy Institute*

AARP   NCSL
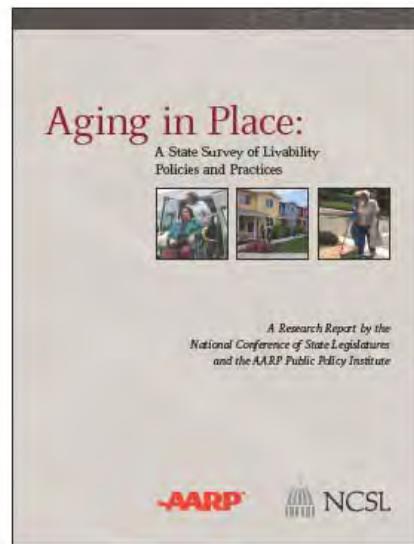
A 2005 survey conducted by AARP, indicated that 89 percent of those surveyed who were 50 years and over would prefer to stay in their own home indefinitely as they aged. "Aging In Place" describes older adults living independently in their current residence or community for as long as possible.

Policies to promote aging in place provide long-term care services and supports in the home. Aging in place is also affected by the physical design and accessibility of the home as well as community features such as nearby services and amenities. Existing homes can be modified to improve accessibility and safety for older residents. Local governments can take numerous steps to support home modifications. In some cities, like Boston, landlords who rent to older adults or those with disabilities are eligible to apply for zero and low interest home modification loans through the city's Metropolitan Housing Partnership. In the case of new homes or apartments, jurisdictions should consider building codes that include accessibility features.

Community land use policies that separate homes from services can make aging in place difficult. Other considerations that might be made to make aging in place less difficult includes: a supply of moderately priced units, tenant based rental subsidies, tax relief for older adults based on the ability to pay or not pay, homestead exemptions (reduces the portion of a property's assessed value that is subject to taxation), property tax deferral (allows older homeowners to postpone payment of all or part of their property taxes until sale of property or their death) and "circuit breaker" programs that reduce the property tax burden to both homeowners and renters.

H-1.4 Encourage energy efficiency in existing structures and promote energy efficient new housing.

H-1.4a Promote energy efficient new construction by updating the building codes to incorporate the latest energy efficiency standards. *City of Bloomington, short*

H-1.4b Facilitate weatherization programs for low income housing. *MCCA, short*

H-1.4c Create guidelines for residential scale renewable energy technologies. *City of Bloomington, short*

H-1.4d Actively promote utility provided energy efficiency programs. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

H-1.4e Investigate the merits and demerits of amending the building code to promote the usage of grey water for lawn irrigation. *MCRPC, long*

H-1.4f Advocate for and utilize funding structures such as Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) to make green home improvements attractive to home owners. City of Bloomington/MCRPC, *short/ongoing*

PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY (PACE)

The PACE initiative will enable building owners to achieve energy and water efficiency as well as implement renewable energy upgrades to their buildings by leveraging the City's existing property tax collections mechanisms. PACE pays for 100% of a project's costs and is repaid for up to 20 years with an assessment added to the property's tax bill or to the utility bill. PACE financing stays with the building upon sale and is easy to share with tenants. State and local governments sponsor PACE financing to create jobs, promote economic development and protect the environment.

Illinois has enacted PACE enabling legislation that enables home rule communities to sponsor these programs. Currently there is a PACE program for commercial, educational and institutional building in development in Chicago as outlined in the structure below.
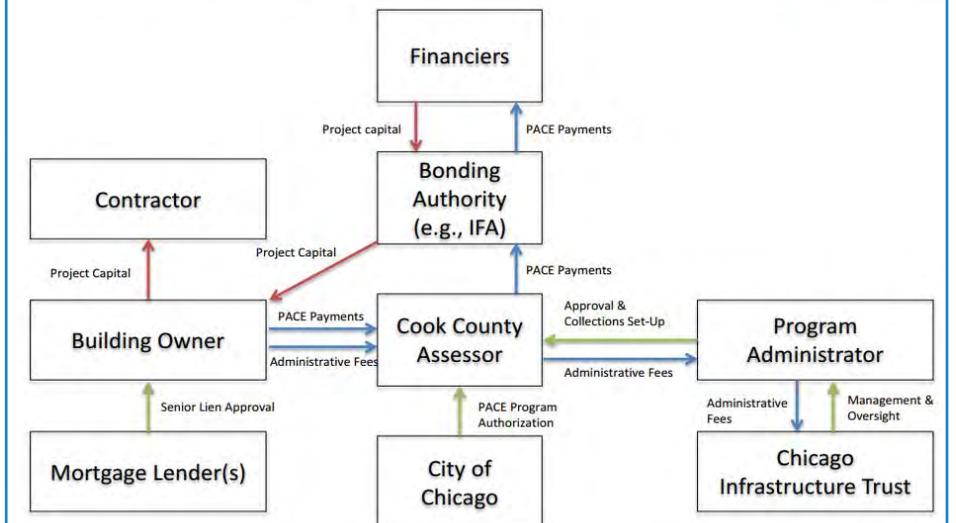
H-2. Ensure reinvestment in the established older neighborhoods and compact development of the City.

H-2.1 Improve transportation and land use coordination to ensure denser and walkable neighborhoods.

H-2.1a Identify areas for infill and mixed-use development and proactively promote them. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

H-2.1b Identify ways to increase home ownership in the already walkable Regeneration and Preservation Areas. *MCCA's Financial Coaching & Housing Counseling, ongoing*

H-2.1c Designate land for a variety of residential densities sufficient to meet its housing needs for a variety of household sizes, with higher densities being focused in the vicinity of major employment centers and transit service. *City of Bloomington, medium-long*

H-2.1d Concentrate commercial development in compact, mixed-use districts interspersed with lower density uses and open space along corridors rather than commercial strips. *City of Bloomington, medium-long*

H-2.1e Use public investments to promote compact mixed use districts. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

H-2.1f Promote creation of new neighborhoods rather than isolated subdivisions and/or apartment complexes. *City of Bloomington, medium-long*

H-2.1g Coordinate land use and transportation planning to ensure that new housing is easily accessible to multiple transportation options, including walking, bicycling, and public transportation. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

H-2.1h Ensure a majority of the new housing of new housing demand is met through mixed use developments. *City of Bloomington, short*

H-2.1i Continue to protect the green space within residential neighborhoods. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

METRICS

- Population density ↑
- Housing units within 1/4th mile of major employment centers ↑
- Complete street's mileage increase ↑
- Transit ridership ↑
- Vehicle miles traveled ↓
- Home ownership in Regeneration and Preservation Areas ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

City of Bloomington, MCRPC, EDC, Developers, Realtors, Connect Transit

H-2.2 Preserve historic homes and structures in the designated Preservation Area.

H-2.2a Update the City's historic preservation plan on a regular basis, preferably every five years. *Historic Preservation Committee, short/ongoing*

H-2.2b Continue protecting the concentration of historical buildings structures, sites and other cultural resources through maintaining designation of existing historic districts. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

H-2.2c Continue to apply code enforcement, zoning and historic review tools to protect homes within the historic districts. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

H-2.2d Create historical design guidelines and standards with consideration to financial feasibility to provide predictability for developments in the historic districts. *Historic Preservation Committee, short*

H-2.2e Update the historic district regulations based on the guidelines as needed to maintain adequate protection of historical properties. *Historic Preservation Committee, short*

H-2.2f Actively pursue funding for preservation and provide financial incentives for restoration, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures. *Historic Preservation Committee, medium*

H-2.2g Create/Maintain a database of historic homes and other assets such as historic gateways, carriage walks, brick streets and sidewalks. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

H-2.2h Create, maintain and promote the database of financial tools, resources and historic preservation professionals. *Historic Preservation Committee, short/ongoing*

H-2.2i Avail educational information on benefits and impacts of historic preservation, related codes and regulations for current and potential home owners. *Historic Preservation Committee, short/ongoing*

H-2.2j Foster collaborations among the historic preservation community. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

H-2.2k Promote deconstruction, not demolition, in historic districts to salvage key historical architectural features. *Historic Preservation Committee, short*

H-2.2l Create incentives for deconversion programs for structures that were converted from single family to multi family. *City of Bloomington, medium*

H-2.2m Ensure the City zoning code reflects Preservation Area's lot and home sizes, its character and needs. *City of Bloomington, short*

H-2.3 Rehabilitate housing in the designated Regeneration Area.

H-2.3a Create/update the database of housing conditions. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

H-2.3b Develop and maintain programs that identify substandard housing and provide a wide spectrum of options to correct housing code violations. *City of Bloomington, medium-long*

H-2.3c Create/maintain and promote a database of financial tools, resources, housing and programs to encourage home ownership in the area. *MCCA's Financial Coaching & Housing Counseling Services, short/ongoing*

H-2.3d Create incentives for deconversion programs for structures that were converted from single family to multi family. *City of Bloomington, medium*

H-2.3e Encourage home ownership through programs like employer assisted housing. *City of Bloomington, medium-long*

H-2.3f Encourage the use of homes for "live/work studios." *City of Bloomington, short*

H-2.3g Recognize the need to evaluate neighborhood density when considering infill development/zoning changes. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

H-2.3h Carefully evaluate the rehabilitation potential of vacant/abandoned homes before demolition. *City of Bloomington, medium*

H-2.3i Ensure municipal services and infrastructure compliment housing related initiatives. *City of Bloomington, short*

H-2.3j Consider instituting a first time home buyer program for low to moderate income households. *MCCA's Financial Coaching & Housing Counseling Services, short/ongoing*

METRICS

- Homeownership rates ↑
- Demolitions of homes ↓
- Live/Work Studios ↑
- Participation of first-time home buyers ↑
- Database of housing conditions created

PARTNER AGENCIES

City, Township assessor, WBRP, County Board,Major employers, Local business, EDC, Financial Services & Realtor partners of MCCA's down payment assistance program

West Bloomington Housing Collaborative

The West Bloomington Housing Collaborative (WBHC) was developed to help support the revitalization efforts on the west side of Bloomington. This was kick started with a 1.5 million dollar foreclosure settlement through Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office. The key funding partners of this initiative include Mid Central Community Action (MCCA), West Bloomington Revitalization Project (WBRP) and Habitat for Humanity. Other key partners include residents, community leaders and corporate partners in the neighborhood revitalization efforts.

MCCA will purchase and rehabilitate 13 homes for current renters to purchase and provide financial counseling for homeowners and renters. The West Bloomington Revitalization Project, with the help of volunteer labor, will renovate 20 owner-occupied homes in need of expensive repairs, and Habitat will build three new homes on vacant lots.

5. EDUCATION

VISION

Education in Bloomington will continue to be a pillar of the community, enriching our culture and economic competitiveness.

A good education system is the bedrock of our community. A major factor in consideration of a community for potential residential and business locations is the quality of educational opportunities available to its residents. The Bloomington-Normal area public schools have a great reputation of providing a high quality education. This image has and continues to serve the community well.

The community is also home to two universities and two community colleges providing higher education for over 25,000 students. The quality educational opportunities found within the City have attracted many new residents and businesses.

There is a wide range of educational opportunities available for people of all ages in the Bloomington area. However, the ever-changing needs of the education system and the funding challenges faced by the public schools and universities do pose a threat to the quality and sustainability of our public education system.

The City of Bloomington is served primarily by two public school districts, Bloomington School District 87 and McLean County Unit District 5, along with private schools. The City of Bloomington's older established neighborhoods are primarily served by the Bloomington School District 87. This district is surrounded and landlocked by the Unit 5. The majority of growth in the City since the 1970s was located in Unit 5. The opportunities and challenges presented by this situation are unique and should be addressed contextually.

Over 60% of District 87's revenue source is based on property taxes. The property values and the health of the established older neighborhoods are critical for the long term sustainability of the district. In addition, due to changes in education policy and practice, funding and other challenges, schools are continually evolving. The average size of the newer school sites is much bigger compared to just a few decades ago, with students increasingly being transported to the school site. Walkable neighborhood schools are becoming a rarity in the newer areas. The goal to achieve a multi-modal community, as outlined in the neighborhoods section, cannot be achieved without the City working closely with the school districts and understanding their needs. Tools such as school land dedication/fee-in-lieu policies can be very useful to achieve compact walkable neighborhoods in emerging areas while meeting the needs of the school districts.

The City and the broader

Average Difference in Reading Standardized Test Scores between 90th and 10th Income Percentile Families

The achievement gap between high- and low-income students is at an all-time high
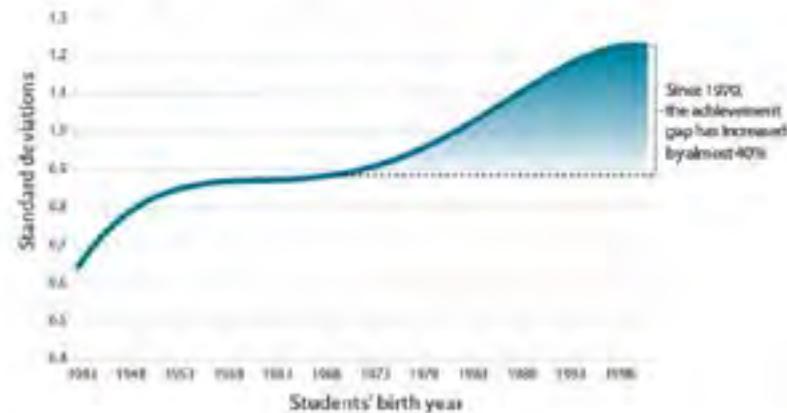
Figure 5-1.
Source: SNS White Paper: Supporting the Education Imperative: The Role of Community Development

"Aimed at providing comprehensive, critical support to children and families and reweaving the very fabric of community life, the HCZ® Project began as a one-block pilot in the 1990s. With bold ambition, careful planning, and a strong infrastructure, we set out to address not just some, but all of the issues children and families were facing within a finite geographic area: crumbling apartments, rampant drug use, failing schools, violent crime, and chronic health problems.

Building on the success of this early initiative, we launched a 10-year strategic plan in 2000, steadily and systematically expanding the depth and breadth of our programming to encompass 24 blocks, then 60 blocks, and ultimately 97 blocks. Today, the Children's Zone® serves more than 12,000 youth and nearly 9,500 adults and our organization as a whole serves over 13,700 youth and 13,200 adults.

With 70% of children in the Zone engaged in our pipeline of programs each year and thousands of youth well on their way to achieving the ultimate goal of college graduation, we have not only reached the tipping point, but also have become a national model and thought leader in the fields of education, youth and community development, and the fight against poverty."

Figure 5-2. Harlem Childrens Zone (HCZ) Model

- Bloomington will continue to be a magnet for families by investing in its public school system. Public schools will strive to become more balanced socioeconomically.
- Beyond providing educational opportunities, our colleges and universities, in partnership with the community, will enrich our culture and boost our economic competitiveness.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Bloomington is a highly-educated community. Forty-four percent of the population 25 years and older have attained a bachelor's degree or higher and 92.9 percent are high school graduates.
- K-12 public education is provided by two public school districts.
  1) **District 87** is surrounded by Unit 5 and primarily serves 5,697 students in the established older neighborhoods of the City. There are six elementary Schools, one junior high and one high school. District 87 also has a pre-K program. At 61.0 percent, property taxes make up the District's primary revenue source followed by 17.1 percent state revenue.
  2) **Unit 5** boundaries extend beyond the City limits of Bloomington. A majority of the newer areas in the City (approximately 15.52 square miles or 57%) are served by Unit 5. There are 16 elementary schools (five serve Bloomington alone), four junior high schools, two high schools and one pre-K. Nearly 54 percent of district's revenue comes from the property taxes followed by about 35 percent from the state.
- There are eight parochial schools and a pre-K run by Hearland Head-start that also serve Bloomington students.
- The four higher education institutions in the Bloomington-Normal area cater to nearly 25,000 students. Illinois State University (~20,000); Illinois Wesleyan University (~2,000) ; Heartland Community College (~3,500); and Lincoln College (~500).

community must work closely with the school districts and universities to ensure the current quality education that leads to a steady stream in the talent pipeline and overall economic prosperity.

BRIDGING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

School districts will continue to employ a number of strategies within the schools to improve student achievement. Factors that influence achievement within the schools include smaller class sizes, increased spending per pupil and improved teaching practices.

However, there is an increasing body of literature[1] stemming from a social experiment in Harlem (see Figure 5-2) describing how efforts within the school are not enough to decrease the achievement gap. Factors such as poverty, housing, food security, family stability and the overall neighborhood context affect student achievement. Figure 5-1 shows how the gap in achievement is at an all-time high between high and low income students.

This literature also suggests that the achievement gap can be closed more in the early years than later. Figure 5-3 is a snapshot of the
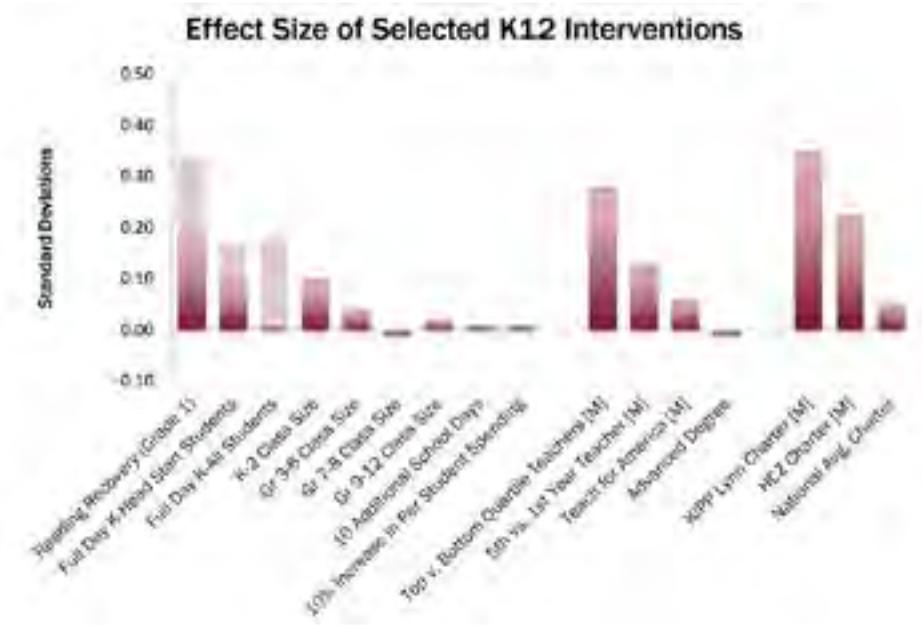
Figure 5-3.
Source: SNS White Paper: Supporting the Education Imperative: The Role of Community Development

effect of select intervention programs outside the school. Figure 5-6 highlights the effects of select socioeconomic factors on academic achievement as measured by test scores in Bloomington elementary schools in both school districts. As is evident from this map, the students attending the schools on the West Side, or the Regeneration area as defined in the neighborhood chapter, are performing at a lower level than their peers.

It is absolutely critical that the City, the school districts, and

the community take a holistic approach to addressing neighborhood and school issues, particularly in the Regeneration area.

Footnote 1 "Return on Investment: Evidence-based Options to Improve Statewide Outcomes." Washington State Institute for Public Policy.
"A Dozen Economic Facts About K-12 Education." Hamilton Project.
Will Dobbie, Roland Fryer, Jr." Are High-quality Schools Enough to Close the Achievement Gap? Evidence from a Social Experiment in Harlem." NBER Working Paper Series, 2009. Lisa Sanbonmatsu, Jeffrey R. Kling, Greg J. Duncan, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn "Neighborhoods and Academic Achievement: Results from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment." NBER Working Paper Series, 2006.

EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

With over forty-four percent of all adults over 25 years of age with a bachelor's degree or higher, Bloomington is a highly educated community. As shown in Figure 5-4, college education leads to higher earnings and lower unemployment rates which correlate with the higher median incomes and lower unemployment rate of the Bloomington-Normal area. This figure also highlights the relationship between higher education and poverty. In the 21st century economy that is predominantly driven by knowledge and innovation, our ability to compete for future growth and overall economic competitiveness hinge on our ability to attract and retain an educated workforce.

While the City recognizes this and supports the workforce development efforts of the Bloomington–Normal Economic Development Council (EDC), there is a gap in the quality of and access to education and workforce training, particularly for low income youth and minority groups. This was clear during the outreach process as well as from the 2014 United Way's community assessments. Bridging this gap requires a focus on improving educational attainment at all levels and for all students. The goals and objectives listed in this chapter address some ways in which the City, in partnership with EDC, higher education institutions, school districts and not-for-profit organizations, can help bridge the gap and match the skills of the local workforce to the local employment needs in the area. This chapter recognizes the interdependencies of education, economic development and neighborhoods (see Figure 5-5). It identifies several opportunities for the City and other community partners to help achieve the most from our investment in education.

The implementation of this chapter will not be without its challenges.

- This comprehensive planning process is the first attempt to identify a role for the City and the broader community to bridge the academic achievement gap. While there were and continue to be numerous not-for-profit organizations that work on programs, such as after school programs, city governments have not made education their priority. There is unexplored territory in this new collaborative approach.

- With two public school districts serving Bloomington, one landlocked by the other, the issue of merging these two school districts comes up frequently. This politically sensitive question was on the referendum in the 1990s and was passed by District 87 voters with Unit 5 voters against the merger at that time. However, with the change in economic times, a similar referendum question may have a different outcome now or in the future.

Figure 5-4.
Source: PEW Research Center

Figure 5-5. Multi-directional relationship between education/workforce training, economic development, and neighborhoods. Source: MCRPC
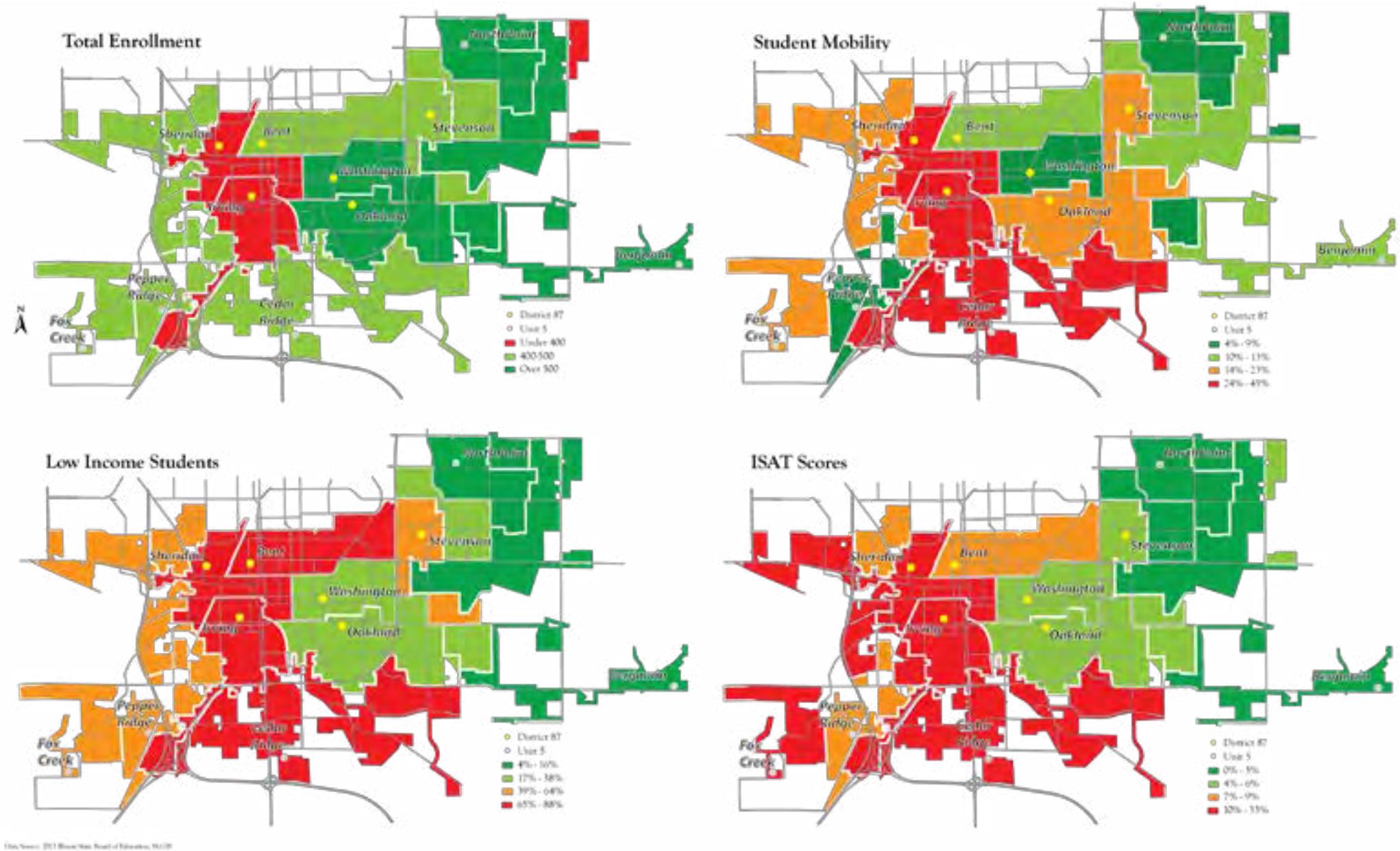
Figure 5-6. Socioeconomic Factors and Academic Achievement in Bloomington Elementary Schools

EDU-1. Increased coordination between the City and the school districts to maintain high quality educational opportunities equitably for all students within the City.

EDU-1.1 Implement and maintain mechanisms to coordinate comprehensive planning between the City and the schools.

METRICS

- # of collaborative capital improvement projects between the City and the School Districts ↑
- # of students walking/biking ↑
- Truancy rates ↓
- Graduation rate ↑
- A comprehensive walking/biking audit for all the schools
- Funding for improving sidewalks and bike routes ↑
- Mileage of sidewalks with a rating of 5 or better ↑
- Established school land dedication/fee-in-lieu

PARTNER AGENCIES

District 87, Unit 5, City of Bloomington, Town of Normal, Other school districts in McLean County, McLean County, United Way, BPD, Juvenile Justice System, DA's office, School Resource Officers, Promise Council, Developers; Connect Transit; MCRPC

EDU-1.1a Annually scheduled meeting between the City and the school districts' leadership to discuss policy level issues of mutual concern. *Regional Office of Education, short/ongoing*

EDU-1.1b Regularly scheduled meetings to discuss growth and development issues, population and student projections to ensure the plans of the school districts and the City are compatible with each other. This can be achieved by having representatives from the school districts at the intergovernmental staff meetings. *MCRPC, short*

EDU-1.1c The City and the school districts shall continue to engage in joint planning for capital projects. (ex: parks, sports fields and libraries). This can also be achieved by having representatives from the school districts at the intergovernmental staff meetings. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

EDU-1.1d Identify and remove the barriers for children to walk or bike to school. The first step for such a project will be to conduct a thorough walking and biking audit for all the schools. A comprehensive database of identified barriers for each school is an important step for working towards their removal. *McLean County Wellness Coalition, short-medium*

EDU-1.1e Encourage and enhance the ability of children and families to walk and bike to school through programs such as safe routes to school. *McLean County Wellness Coalition, ongoing*

EDU-1.1f School districts are encouraged to share data on the school enrollments on an annual basis with the City. The City should consider the effects of development on the schools during their development review process. *MCRPC, short*

EDU-1.1g Assist in the exploration of the merits/demerits of merging the schools districts serving Bloomington. *Regional Office of Education, short-medium*

EDU-1.1h Establish a baseline evaluation of school facilities to identify issues and future needs. *MCRPC, short*

EDU-1.1i Identify and remove barriers contributing to truancy. *Regional Office of Education, ongoing*

EDU-1.1j Enhance the civic engagement programs for K-12. *MCRPC, ongoing*

EDU-1.1k Ensure appropriate school land dedications or "fee-in-lieu" of sufficient size to meet future needs. *City of Bloomington, short*

EDU-1.2 The City will partner with District 87 to revitalize the established neighborhoods in the core of the City.

EDU-1.2a Investigate the feasibility of community schools as a mechanism to revitalize the neighborhoods in the designated Regeneration and Preservation areas. *United Way, short-medium*

EDU-1.2b Establish a mechanism to coordinate the redevelopment efforts in the Regeneration and the Preservation areas between the City and District 87. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

EDU-1.2c Build upon the availability, use, and attainment of technology for low-income neighborhoods to address the digital divide issues. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

EDU-1.2d Continue to make Regeneration and Preservation areas attractive to families with young children. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

EDU-1.2e The City and school districts should coordinate when considering altering an existing school location to build upon the opportunity to redevelop the subject site and surrounding neighborhood. *City of Bloomington, long*

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources such as health and social services, youth and community development to foster improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities.

The coalition for community schools says "Most people think of schools today as serving a single purpose where teachers teach and students learn. Community schools are more akin to smart phones. Schools and communities connect, collaborate, and create. Children and families have an array of supports from community partners right at their school. Communities and schools leverage their shared physical and human assets to help kids succeed."

Fairview Elementary School, Normal, is a successful local example of a community school. It is a partnership between the school, Baby Fold, United Way, the community and families. The funding of this program is provided by the United Way of McLean County.

Figure 5-7. Source: The Pantagraph

In recognition that the educational outcomes of children are heavily influenced by many social and neighborhood factors beyond the control of schools, the Department of Education established the Promise Neighborhood Fund for the improvement of education. These funds are granted to communities to ensure all children and youth growing up in designated Promise Neighborhoods have access to great schools and strong systems of family and community support that will prepare them to attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and a career.

The grant application identifies the purpose of Promise Neighborhoods as: to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children and youth in our most distressed communities, and to transform those communities by:

1. Identifying and increasing the capacity of eligible entities that are focused on achieving results for children and youth throughout an entire neighborhood;
2. Building a complete continuum of cradle-to-career solutions of both educational programs and family and community supports, with great schools at the center;
3. Integrating programs and breaking down agency "silos" so that solutions are implemented effectively and efficiently across agencies;
4. Developing the local infrastructure of

systems and resources needed to sustain and scale up proven, effective solutions across the broader region beyond the initial neighborhood; and
5. Learning about the overall impact of the Promise Neighborhoods program and about the relationship between particular strategies in Promise Neighborhoods and student outcomes, including through a rigorous evaluation of the program.

Locally, designating the Regeneration Area as a Promise Neighborhood will not only bring much needed focus and attention to the social and neighborhood aspects that contribute negatively to the educational achievement of the students in that area but also help streamline various ongoing efforts to bring about a positive change in education.

Figure 5-8. Promise Neighborhood Model

EDU-1.3 The City shall coordinate with the Unit 5 School District, which serves the outlying areas of the City, to meet the demand placed on schools from new development.

EDU-1.3a New public school facilities should be coordinated with the City to ensure availability of necessary services and infrastructure compatible and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. *City of Bloomington, long*

School Land Dedication/Fee-in-Lieu

In recognition that there is a direct impact on schools due to development, many communities adopt a school land dedication or fee-in-lieu ordinances to meet the infrastructure demands placed upon the City and the school districts to adequately serve new residential development. In such ordinances, the sub-divider of new residential lots or the developer of existing undeveloped residential lots and new multi-family residential dwelling units for which building permits are issued shall provide public school sites or fees in lieu thereof to reasonably serve the proposed subdivision or residential development.

The City, in consultation with the school district, decides if the sub-divider shall dedicate land or provide cash in lieu thereof and the location of the land to be dedicated.

The school districts adopt a methodology which incorporates school needs and school population and results in a formula which indicates the average number of people living in single-family detached homes, single-family attached homes, and multi-family homes. This methodology further incorporates analysis performed by the school district relating to construction costs of school facilities and the relationship of those costs to the individual students. The amount of land to be dedicated and the size of development is set forth in the methodology.

Locally, the Town of Normal adopted a school land dedication/fee-in-lieu ordinance nearly a decade ago. The City of Bloomington and Town of Normal both have a parkland dedication/fee-in-lieu ordinances along these same lines to fulfill the open space and recreational needs of new developments.

Promise Council

Promise Council is a collection of caring individuals who work to connect community resources to the specific needs of students as identified by teachers and staff at local schools. These councils exist to remove barriers to learning and give all children the opportunity they deserve to achieve success through education.

In Bloomington, Pepper Ridge Elementary School was the first to have a Promise Council, in 2008. Since then, many schools in the Bloomington-Normal area have established Promise Councils. Currently there are Promise Councils at Cedar Ridge Elementary, Fox Creek Elementary and Bloomington Junior High providing the things children need outside the classroom to succeed, such as food, clothing, and mentoring.

Pepper Ridge Promise Council

EDU-2. Provide life-long skills and learning opportunities for all by investing in excellent schools, colleges and continuous education.

EDU-2.1 Coordinate with area high schools and higher education institutions to develop and nurture a skilled workforce in the community.

EDU-2.1a Work closely with the area universities to expand workforce training and educational programs to meet the needs of the current and the targeted industries. *EDC, ongoing*

EDU-2.1b Work with the local universities to expand their training programs and research capabilities to ensure the students are receiving training in emerging employment sectors. *EDC, ongoing*

EDU-2.1c Initiate a program to provide counseling to students about the post-high school educational opportunities such as vocational training or higher education options within the community. *School districts, short*

EDU-2.1d Create a culture of entrepreneurship through effective coordination between educational institutions and local businesses. *EDC, short*

EDU-2.1e Continue to support programs that address education issues such as "Cradle to Career" spearheaded by McLean County United Way. *United Way, ongoing*

Internships

A strong, highly skilled workforce is one of the basic pillars of local economic development. Cities around the nation are acknowledging that a skilled workforce is one of the strongest incentives for businesses to locate in a city where there is a constant stream of talent in the pipeline. Job opportunities exist in the Bloomington-Normal area. It is critical for us as a community to bridge any gap in skills, if they exist.

Internships, both college and high school, create a pathway for students to engage with the local employers and increase their knowledge of the kinds of opportunities available in the community after graduation while bridging the gap between academic knowledge and real world needs. Internships also add great value to the organization and its ability to expand its talent pipeline. Internships give businesses the opportunity to see interns in action, test their thinking, check for talent fit and assess their personal and professional connection to the team and workplace. Internships are a great tool to retain young talent in the organization and in the community.

 Urban Alliance is a successful city-wide high school internship program geared towards under-resourced youth to prepare them for a life of self-sufficiency. It usually starts small, follows a strategic vision and scales up based on what works. In Washington, D.C. the program began with only a few seniors at a single high school in 1996, it has since grown into a citywide initiative that has reached over 12,000 students and has been replicated in three other metro areas: Baltimore, Chicago and Northern Virginia. Students are employed part-time during the school year and work from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. On Fridays, they receive life-skills training and participate in job readiness workshops. During the summer, they work full-time and attend financial literacy workshops on Fridays. All internships are paid and students who perform well may receive raises if their employers approve.

EDU-2.2 Identify and address existing industry gaps to help alleviate the potential workforce shortages.

- # of workforce certification programs ↑
- # of workforce program graduates ↑
- # and type of internships available in McLean County ↑
- # and affordability of educational after-school programs ↑

EDC, MCC, Major employers, Universities, Community colleges, Business community, School Districts, YMCA, United Way, Local businesses

EDU-2.2a Initiate a broader conversation between the public agencies, school districts, local universities, and the private sector to address employment in Bloomington. *EDC, ongoing*

EDU-2.2b Continue partnership with EDC to promote the work readiness of city residents and the development of skills that correspond to emerging opportunities with employers that offer jobs. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

EDU-2.2c Work with the EDC, McLean County Chamber of Commerce and other private entities to create internship and summer job programs for college and high school students to help retain them in the area. *EDC, short*

EDU-2.2d The City and school districts shall actively support after school programs that focus on educational enrichment and skills. *School districts, ongoing*

StriveTogether

StriveTogether is a framework of civic infrastructure that helps to support individuals from cradle to career. The tool can help communities identify who they are serving now and help them think strategically about where they want to focus their efforts in the future. Typically, StriveTogether partnerships are more than collaborations or partnerships. Their vision is to have a collective impact by:

1. **Shared Community Vision:** All participants have a shared vision for change, as well as a common understanding of the problem and how they will work collectively to solve it.
2. **Evidence Based Decision Making:** Partnerships make decisions based on local data that shows areas of need and promising practices that are already working for children.
3. **Collaborative Action:** Community members come together to use data to collectively move outcomes.
4. **Investment and Sustainability:** Partnerships initiate or redirect resources (time, talent and treasure) toward data-based practices on an ongoing basis, and engages the community to ensure long-term sustainability.

A Cradle to Career Vision for Education

Locally, United Way of McLean County is investigating this model to help improve the high school graduation rates in McLean County.

EDU-2.3 Strengthen job training programs for low-skilled workers.

EDU-2.3a Target workforce development programs and services for unrepresented and under-represented groups, such as low-income youth and adults, people of color, women, individuals with disabilities and the homeless. *McLean County Compact, short*

EDU-2.3b Partner with existing organizations such as LABYRINTH that provide training in "soft skills," vocational skills, daycare, and other services that enable people to enter the workforce and earn a living wage. *EDC, short*

EDU-2.3c Work to develop transition programs that help workers transition into higher paying jobs. *EDC, medium*

EDU-2.3d Ensure training, services, and jobs are accessible to and located near those with the greatest need. *City of Bloomington, long*

EDU-2.3e Continue to link job creation for unemployed and underemployed residents to community job training programs such as Career Link. *EDC, ongoing*

METRICS

- # of workforce transition programs ↑
- # participating in workforce training programs in general, particularly vulnerable populations ↑
- Participation in vocational training ↑
- Unemployment rate for population 1) without high school diploma; 2) without higher education ↓
- # of jobs located in the Regeneration area ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

YWCA, MARC First, Youth Build, LifeCIL, Multicultural Leadership Program, School districts, BACC Program, Community colleges and Universities, Major employers, Neighborhood organizations, PATH, DOORS
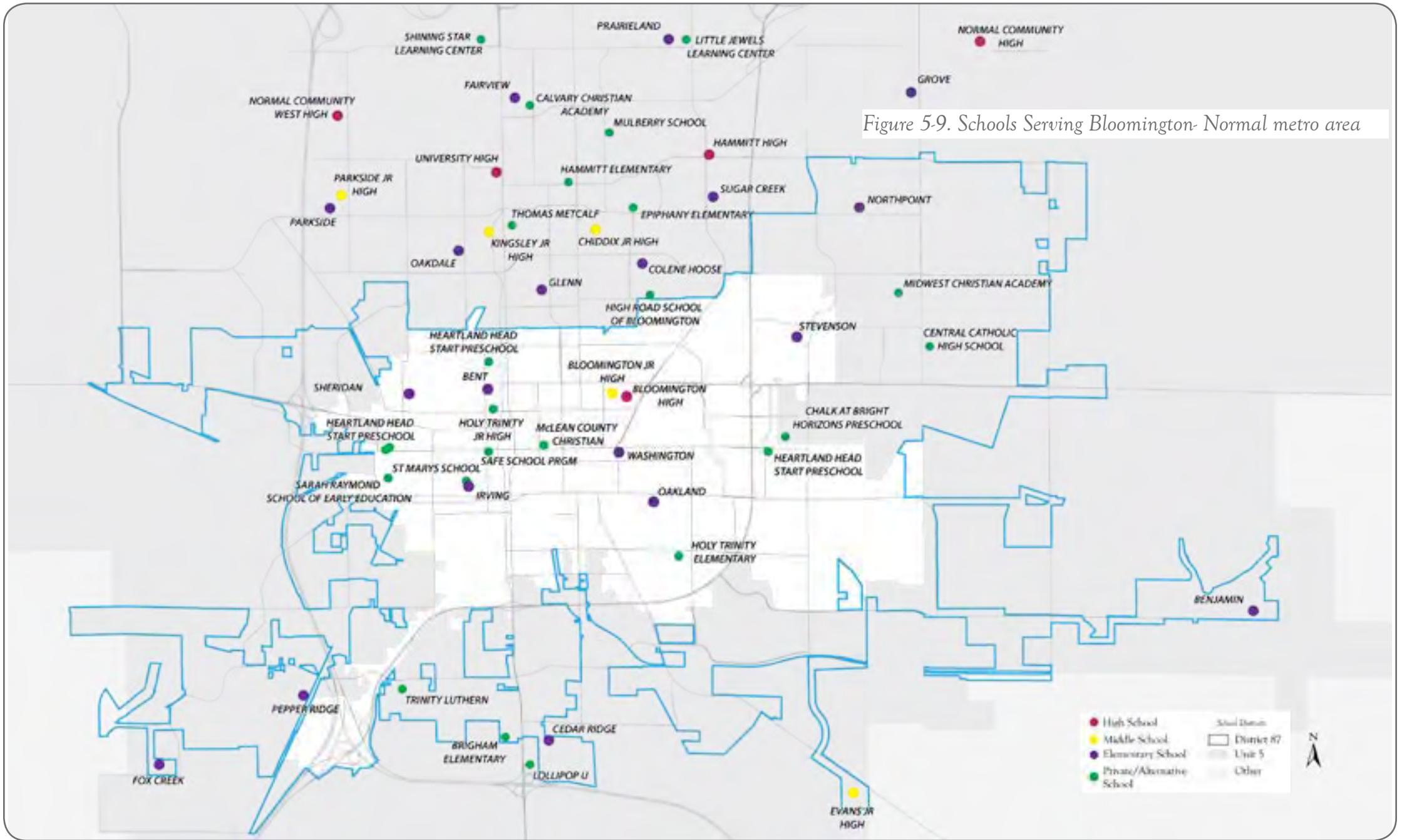
Figure 5-9. Schools Serving Bloomington- Normal metro area

Legend:
- High School (red)
- Middle School (yellow)
- Elementary School (purple)
- Private/Alternative School (green)

School District:
- District 87
- Unit 5
- Other

N

6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

VISION

Bloomington will be thriving, with a diversified local economy and a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation. As a regional economic leader, it will attract and nurture a highly skilled workforce. The community's high quality of life will bolster its economic competitiveness.

Bloomington has a long history of good fortune with economic development. The City began with the agricultural bounty of McLean County and contact with wider markets brought by the railroads in the 19th century. The 20th century brought a Fortune 500 company. The City has long been in the forefront of economic opportunity in central Illinois. Bloomington's location at the crossroads of the state and the richness of its resources have provided decades of stability and economic consistency. During the recent recession Bloomington-Normal and McLean County were consistently less affected economically than other communities in Illinois. Events that had serious worldwide repercussions created hardship in Bloomington, but not to the extent that was seen in similar communities.

However, the economic crises of the last decade make clear that globalization continues to alter the workings of our economic system. Advanced telecommunications and data networks, containerized shipping and a shifting economic relationship with overseas manufacturing centers has continued the process begun over forty years ago, when heavy industry and manufac-

turing in the United States began to lose ground to foreign companies. Today the transfer of manufacturing capacity outside the country is largely regarded as a settled process, as is the growing dominance of service sector business.

What American steel producers learned in the 1970s is now true for small business and individuals; transactions once thought to be local now can be conducted directly in the global marketplace. This expanding access to the world economy poses several challenges for communities like Bloomington and the people who live and work here. Where once the purchase of basic goods meant a trip to a local retailer, today individual consumers have access to products found on the internet and delivered from their point of origin anywhere in the world direct to the buyer's doorstep.

In a worrisome corollary, sales taxes once paid on local transactions are now avoided, reducing the resources local and state governments have at hand to address community needs. Similar impacts at the state level continue to frustrate efforts to resolve budget shortfalls in Illinois and have created greater difficulties for local governments

now receiving reduced allocations from state revenues. While these economic stresses increase, Bloomington now competes for resources and opportunities not just with neighboring communities, but in a global marketplace.

To respond to this challenge, five regional agencies, including the Central Illinois Regional Airport Authority, the McLean County Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Council of the Bloomington-Normal Area, the Bloomington-Normal Area Convention and Visitors Bureau and the McLean County Regional Planning Commission, joined together to sponsor a study of current economic conditions and to formulate an economic development strategy for the area. The Bloomington and Normal councils and the County Board met jointly in May 2015 for a preliminary findings presentation by IO Inc., the consultant leading the Regional Economic And Market Development Strategy.

As outlined on page 85, the Bloomington area including the Town of Normal and McLean County has many economic advantages. However, the community complacency resulting from the his-

toric advantage of relying on large employers who a created stable economic base is no longer an option. There is a need to create a range of jobs and diversify beyond the current major employers into a broader range of industries to sustain the local economy going forward.

The regional strategy reviewed and analyzed a number of qualitative and quantitative factors, including the area's economic advantages, quality of life, regional and state economic growth, average wages, location quotients and fastest growing industries. This information was further screened to identify compatible sectors and industries for the region based on:
1.   Primary industries with 10%

GUIDING THEMES

- Bloomington will continue to leverage its strategic location and infrastructure capital as tools for economic development.

- The Bloomington area will continue to have a strong local economy with varied employers and job opportunities for people of all ages and skill levels. It will lead the efforts in the region for attracting, retaining and nurturing a highly skilled workforce.

- Downtown will be thriving as a unique local attraction and regional destination. It will be the City's cultural hub and entertainment center, with positive and welcoming public spaces appealing to people of all ages for living, working and playing.

- Bloomington will continue to be a regional destination for shopping and dining, with a wide variety of establishments for everyone to enjoy.

- The City will seek to remain an affordable community.

- Bloomington will enhance its standing as an attractive regional destination.

DEMOGRAPHICS	WORKFORCE	EMPLOYMENT	MARKET ACCESS	REAL ESTATE

ABOUT 1%
ANNUAL PROJECTED GROWTH

32.2
MEDIAN AGE

49.3%
SHARE OF WORKING AGE (25-64)

$62,089
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

$30,460
PER CAPITA INCOME

Demographic strengths include low median age, above average income levels and a trend towards increasing household and per capita incomes.

4
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

49%
WITH ASSOCIATES DEGREE OR HIGHER

6.4%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (2014)

87,415
LABOR FORCE (2013)

77%
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

Workforce strengths include high educational attainment with a large share of residents in management/ financial occupations at competitive wages.

23.1%
JOBS HELD BY AGE 29 OR YOUNGER

18.7%
JOBS HELD BY AGE 55 OR OLDER

24.2%
EARN LESS THAN $1,250/MO

44.0%
EARN MORE THAN $3,333/MO

165,900
TOTAL JOBS PROJECTED BY 2035 IN THE METRO AREA

Strengths include above average long-term employment growth projections, and above average earnings profile for the resident workforce relative to comparable areas.

1
REGIONAL AIRPORT WITH 9 DAILY DEPARTURES AND 8 NON-STOP DESTINATIONS

2
CLASS ONE RAIL CARRIERS

3
INTERSTATES I-39, I-55, I-74

Strengths include local access to multiple interstates and rail carriers; excellent connections to major freight centers in Chicago and St. Louis; and a regional airport with non-stop service to major destinations in the Midwest and Southeast.

$13/SQFT
OFFICE/BUSINESS PARK

$3.5/SQFT
INDUSTRIAL

16.5%
VACANCY RATE FOR OFFICE/BUSINESS PARK

18.0%
VACANCY RATE FOR INDUSTRIAL

102.7
CONSTRUCTION COST INDEX (NATIONAL AVG 100)

Strengths include a good inventory of for-lease space for smaller users, comparative office and industrial lease rates and lower construction costs relative to the Chicagoland area(Construction Index of Chicago Land Area is 117.2).

ADVANCED BUSINESS SERVICES	AGRIBUSINESS/ FOOD PROCESSING	ENTREPRENEURSHIP	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY	TRANSPORTATION AND LOGISTICS
The two subsets of this sector include Finance & Insurance and Shared Services & Back Office Centers. **Finance and Insurance services:** This sector builds on the existing industry base in the region with major employers such as State Farm and Country Financial. National projections for growth in employment and output for this sector are above average. Given the strong presence of this sector locally, there is a good base of skilled workers to support additional employers in this sector. **Shared Services and Back Office Centers** are a way of organizing administrative functions to optimize cost effectiveness and reliability. They include administrative service centers, call centers, customer support and technical support centers. They can also include a range of professional services related to management, human resources, legal, marketing, security and accounting functions. This sector is typically attracted to communities such as Bloomington-Normal that offer lower operating costs and highly skilled workforce.	McLean County is the top agricultural production county in Illinois. The county produces over $500 million per year in agricultural products, primarily grain and livestock. Its connections in terms of interstates, highways and rail complement its position as the top ag producing county in the state. The Department of Agriculture at Illinois State University (ISU), offering programs of study in a large number of specialty areas within agricultural sciences, provides strong support for this sector. This sector includes grain crops and livestock that already have an established presence in the region. It also includes value added food processing industries that are directly related to the types of commodities produced in the county such as meat and poultry processing, and other snack food that frequently uses corn products. The target industries within this sector include confectionery manufacturing, culinary arts and agri-tourism. Many of these industries show strong historic employment growth in Illinois over the past five years.	The needs for entrepreneurs are varied, but communities that want to foster entrepreneurship must provide a supportive ecosystem that includes access to capital, favorable regulatory environments and professional support services. The rate of entrepreneurship nationally tends to be highest among 30-39 year olds, followed by 40 to 49 year olds. However, there is a rising trend toward entrepreneurship among pre retirement baby boomers in the 55-64 year old range. The age characteristics nationally bode well for Bloomington-Normal. The region could capitalize on the younger cohort of recent graduates as well as growing cohort of Boomers that are approaching retirement from large corporate environments and potentially seeking other opportunities for full or part time employment on their own terms. The level of entrepreneurship is also high among the less educated, driven primarily by economic necessity. Immigrants are twice as likely as native-born residents to start new business. Immigrant entrepreneurs are particularly successful in high tech fields such as biotech, software, semiconductors and medical devices.	Companies in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector may be consultants, or they may be outsourced functions of larger companies. Large companies within this industry have the advantage of offering a broader range of services and potentially serve a global market, while smaller firms can compete more effectively within specialized market niches. These smaller firms often specialize in particular industries such as insurance and financial services, health care or government. This industry requires highly skilled labor and availability and quality are a constant challenge. Growth opportunities in this sector include • Increased threat of security breaches that will continue to create opportunities for IT firms. • Increased use of wireless devices that will require companies to create mobile apps. • E-Commerce has also increased the demand for IT services • Cloud computing technologies that will directly impact ICT sector. This sector builds on the existing IT employment base in the region.	Industries rely on the transportation and logistics network to efficiently and securely deliver their products to end users, and also to allow them to manage their supply chain. Subsectors within this industry includes air and express delivery, rail, trucking and maritime shipping. Logistics is also a subsector within this sector that includes fleet management, warehousing and storage, order fulfillment, transportation network design, inventory/supply chain management, process and logistics consulting, third party logistics coordination, and other support services for rail, trucking and air transportation. McLean County is well suited for this sector given its strategic location and connections to reach 78 million consumers and a significant manufacturing base within one trucking day. Industries within this sector include warehousing and storage, support services for rail, trucking and related support services, air transportation and order fulfillment as represented by electronic shopping and business to business electronic markets. There is an established base for this sector that primarily supports the agriculture industry.

Figure 6-1. Target Sectors for Bloomington-Normal Metro Region; Source: Information on this page is summarized by MCRPC based on the research conducted by IO Inc for the Regional Economic Strategy.

or more employment growth in Illinois from 2008 to 2013, or a local growth rate from 2008 to 2013 that was greater than the national growth rate.

2. Positive projected national output and employment growth.
3. Average wages above $40,000.
4. Current statewide employment of at least 250.

Figures 6-1 and 6-2 identify the targeted sectors and their occupation requirements for those targeted sectors respectively. Some of these sectors already have a strong presence locally but show potential for expansion.

The leading direction from the strategy is the critical importance of a regional economic coalition working together to achieve and maintain a competitive position in attracting and retaining both employers and the workforce needed to sustain them. A final copy of the strategy will be available in August 2015.

This chapter of the comprehensive plan was informed by preliminary findings of the above mentioned strategy. The goals, objectives and action items focus on diversifying the economy and providing a broad range of employment opportunities for all residents.

They focus on maintaining and growing existing businesses through local and state level policies and incentives, as well as developing current data resources for use by City and regional economic development staff.

These efforts can be facilitated by the Bloomington Normal Economic Development Council, in concert with City staff. Attracting new business to the City and region involves promoting community assets as beneficial to new businesses and highlighting our standard of living and amenities to gain competitive advantages over other regions. A one stop shop website that highlights the competitive advantages of the region and makes information for business location and expansion needs easily accessible is very important. While such a website would be created and maintained at the regional level, the City needs to designate a contact person to ensure the information regarding Bloomington is current and accurate.

WORKFORCE

Attracting and nurturing a workforce that can support the existing and target sectors is key for economic development. Goals

and objectives for the workforce are considered from the standpoint of identifying workforce needs, and making the community attractive and welcoming for new residents seeking economic opportunity.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship as an economic driver is at the forefront of economic growth strategies in many communities throughout the United States. This phenomenon is not surprising given that small and mid sized businesses are the backbone of the American economy, accounting for nearly 40% of all new jobs created.

The needs of individual entrepreneurs are varied and highly contextual, but the base requirements of a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem are consistent including access to capital, favorable regulatory environments, access to finance, and a support system that fosters a culture of entrepreneurship.

The goals and objectives in this chapter aim towards developing a culture of entrepreneurship and providing resources to promote new and innovative businesses through public-private partnerships in Bloomington and Normal. Extending that concept, the plan objectives

OCCUPATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

ADVANCED BUSINESS SERVICES

Finance and Insurance Sector:
(Bachelors - Graduate degree) Accounting, Finance, Business Administration, Marketing, Insurance, Insurance-Business Information Systems.

Shared services/ Back Office:
(Associates - Graduate degree) Accounting, Human Resources, Management, Marketing, Management, Finance, Organizational Leadership, Communication, Office Administration, Legal Studies.

AGRICULTURE

Agribusiness:
(HS Diploma - Graduate degree) Agribusiness, Management, Agricultural Science, Agronomy, Animal Science

Food Processing:
(HS Diploma - Graduate degree) Machine Tool Technology, Manufacturing Technology.

TRANSPORTATION AND LOGISTICS
(HS Diploma - Associates degree) Diesel mechanics, Aviation Management, Commercial Driver

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY
(Bachelors - Graduate degree) Information technology, Information system security, Information Systems Integration, Systems Development/ Programming, Web Application Development, Network Administration

Figure 6-2. Occupational Requirements of Target Sectors; Source: Refer to 6-1

seek to position Bloomington as a business-friendly community. Of particular interest is an initiative to examine the City's regulatory and permitting practices, and reduce barriers to business identified in development review and approval.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ITS RELATION TO OTHER CHAPTERS OF THE PLAN

As outlined in the **Neighborhoods** chapter and the **Downtown** section later in this chapter, the Regeneration Area,
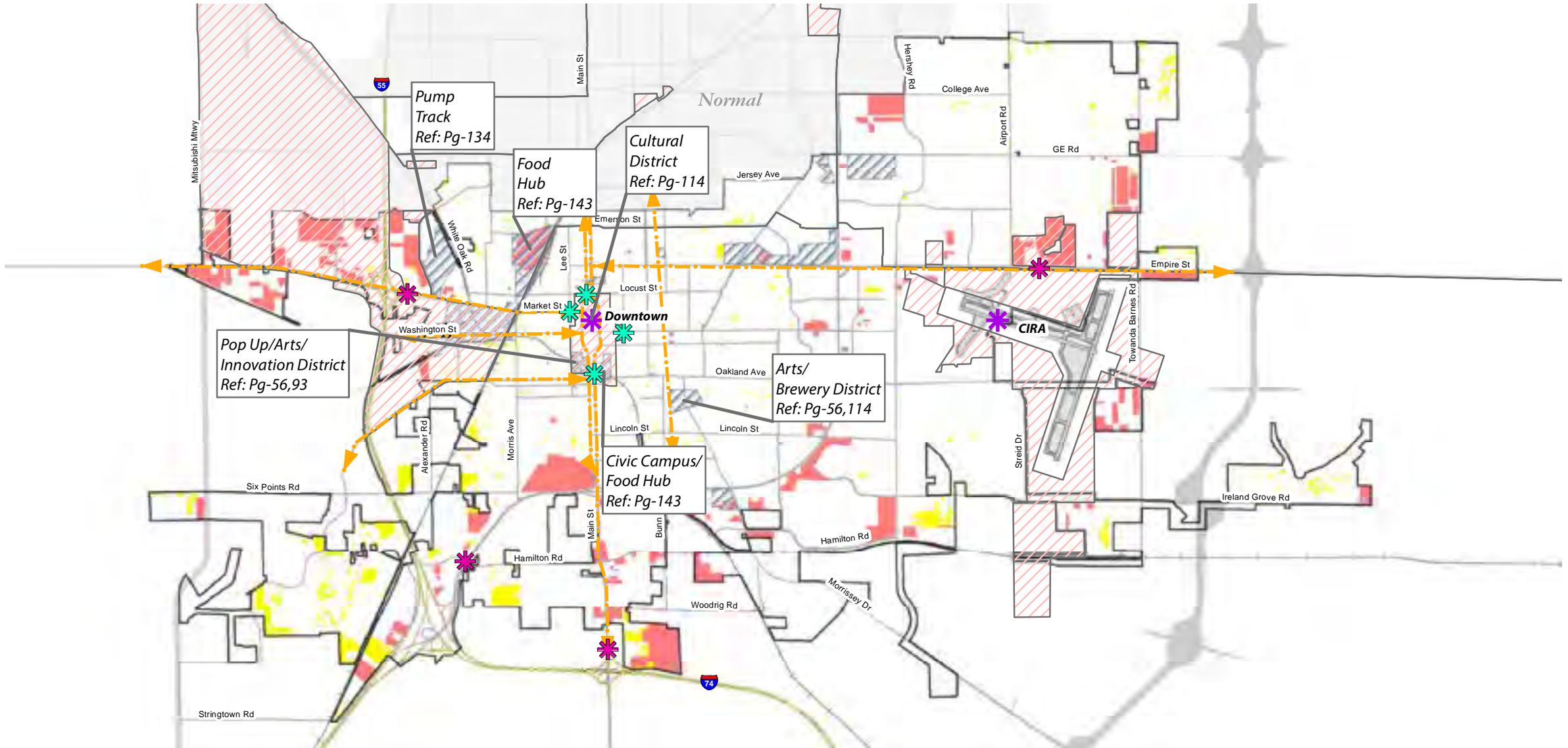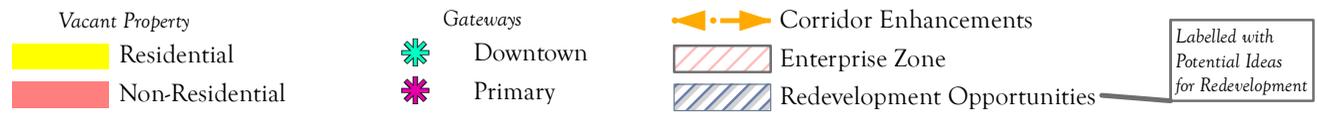
Figure 6-3. Opportunities for Infill Development and Redevelopment

Pump
Track
Ref: Pg-134

Food
Hub
Ref: Pg-143

Cultural
District
Ref: Pg-114

Normal

Pop Up/Arts/
Innovation District
Ref: Pg-56,93

Downtown

Arts/
Brewery District
Ref: Pg-56,114

CIRA

Civic Campus/
Food Hub
Ref: Pg-143

Vacant Property
- Residential
- Non-Residential

Gateways
- Downtown
- Primary

Corridor Enhancements
Enterprise Zone
Redevelopment Opportunities — Labelled with Potential Ideas for Redevelopment

0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles

Preservation Area and the Downtown have suffered years of disinvestment. The sustainability of this core area is key to the overall fiscal, social and economic health of the community. These areas should be prioritized for reinvestment of both public and private resources during the next 20 years. Jobs and employment should be a key component of any meaningful redevelopment efforts in these areas.

As shown in Figure 6-3, many opportunities for infill and redevelopment are identified within the established older areas of the City. These sites are just a beginning of what needs to be a continuous process of identifying opportunities for redevelopment. The redevelopment of sites in the Regeneration Area and the West Side in general should focus on bringing living wage jobs close to the people in that area.

The **Education** chapter highlights the interdependence of education and the economy. With nearly half of all residents in Bloomington-Normal with a associates degree or higher and nearly 44% of them with a bachelors degree or higher, the community is at an advantage to attract industries that need a high-caliber workforce.

However, the community cannot lose sight of the need that still exists, particularly among minority groups and low skilled workers for jobs that pay a living wage.

Bloomington and the greater area is rich with cultural resources, but arts and culture related tourism is yet to be fully exploited. This plan strongly recommends expanding the cultural tourism efforts that will boost the local economy.

Throughout the outreach process, the respondents of the survey made it clear that they value local stores and restaurants over chains and big boxes. There are a number of well documented benefits when more members of the community buy local. "Make Your Money Mean More" is a local effort led by McLean County Chamber of Commerce to help promote local purchasing. All of these economic benefits apply directly to the local food and related policies listed in the **Healthy Living** chapter.

Public safety *services* ,police, fire and EMS, make up over 50% of the City's operating expenses. Coordinating development where public safety services can be efficiently provided is key to the long term economic sustainability of the City.

Construction and maintenance of **Infrastructure** involves huge public costs. Given the current economic realities at the federal, state and local levels and the funding challenges for infrastructure, the **Future Growth and Land Use** chapter recommends a tiered approach for future development which will effectively utilize streets, sewer, water and public safety infrastructure.

This plan strongly recommends prioritizing infill and contiguous development in Tiers 1 and 2, prior to investing resources to foster discontigous or green field development in Tier 3. This prioritization applies to both residential and non-residential uses. If a development opportunity arises in the land designated as Tier 3 or as Future Use areas, the City should carefully evaluate the public costs and benefits of such a development.

Figure 6-4 illustrates that a higher percentage of land has been dedicated to the employment centers in Tiers 1 and 2. This is an acknowledgment that the need for residential neighborhoods will follow employment.
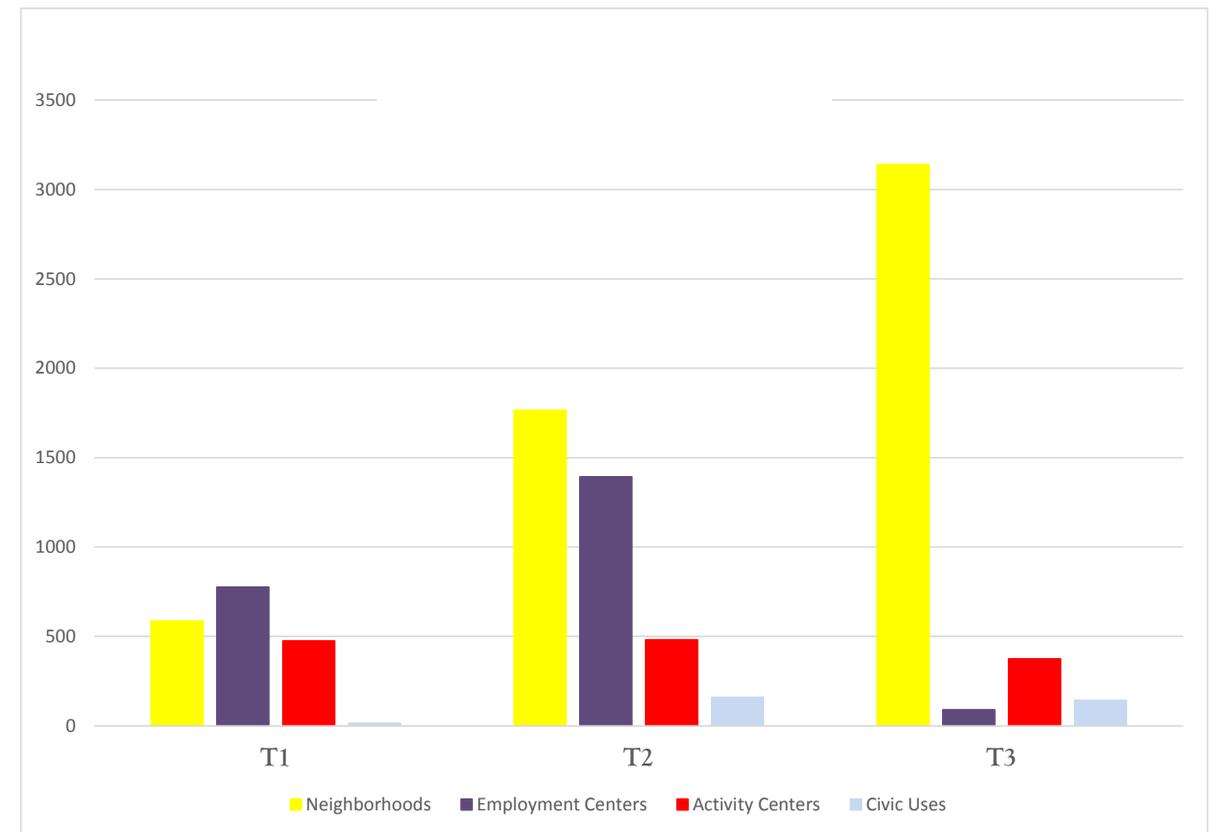

Figure 6-4. Land Use Acreage by Tiers

ED-1. Ensure a broad range of employment opportunities for all residents.

ED-1.1 Focus on retention and expansion of existing businesses.

ED-1.1a Continue to support the growth and expansion of community's core economic sectors (financial services, information technology and health care). *EDC, ongoing*

ED-1.1b Maintain communication with major employers and stakeholders to identify and mitigate risks (where practical) to ensure local economic stability. *EDC, ongoing*

ED1.1c Create and maintain a database of available resources for existing and new small and/or local businesses. *EDC, short/ongoing*

ED-1.1d Maintain the City's economic development web page with up-to-date incentive information and other resources. *City of Bloomington Office of Economic Development, short*

ED-1.1e Provide technical assistance and support to existing businesses in the community. *EDC & City of Bloomington Office of Economic Development, ongoing*

ED-1.1f Explore state level policy initiatives to support local economic development. *EDC, ongoing*

ED-1.1g Offer incentives for retention and expansion of existing businesses, particularly those that help diversify the local economy, create jobs at or above the City's median wages, are located in regeneration areas, or those that yield positive cost-benefit to the community. *City of Bloomington Office of Economic Development, short-medium*

ED-1.1h Promote collaborative marketing for business clusters. *EDC, ongoing*

ED-1.1i Create a local talent resource network. *EDC, short*

ED-1.2 Leverage community assets in attracting business.

ED-1.2a Continue to be an active partner in the regional economic development initiatives and diversify the local economy. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

ED-1.2b Create a one-stop shop economic development web portal for Bloomington-Normal and McLean County, a unified external voice for Bloomington-Normal metro area's strengths and economic development efforts. Include database of available resources for businesses and residents currently in the area. *EDC, short*

ED-1.2c Proactively market the relatively low lease rates, construction costs(particularly when compared to the Chicagoland Area) and other factors that demonstrate the competitive costs in the Bloomington metro area. *EDC, short*

ED-1.2d Market the area's quality of life factors, such as good education, safety, range of housing options, reasonable cost of living, recreational and cultural opportunities, that attract a highly skilled labor force for potential businesses. *EDC, short*

ED-1.2e Leverage the region's digital infrastructure and other assets to attract businesses in Information and Communication Technology (ICT's) industry. *EDC, short*

ED-1.2f Leverage Bloomington-Normal's multimodal access via rail, air and interstate to attract transportation, logistics, warehousing and distribution centers. *EDC, short*

ED-1.2g Work with the Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA) to attract businesses that can benefit from air transportation and surface transportation. *EDC, short*

ED-1.2h Promote regeneration area infill sites on the west side of Bloomington to take advantage of existing infrastructure and attract quality jobs closer to residents. *City of Bloomington, short*

ED-1.2i Offer financial incentives to attract new businesses that meet one or more of the following criteria

a) businesses that diversify the local economy and create jobs at or above the City's median wages.
b) located in the Regeneration Area

c) located on infill/redevelopment sites
d) produce positive cost-benefit result.

City of Bloomington, short-medium

ED-2. Foster a culture of entrepreneurship.

ED-2.1 Promote access to resources, funding and information.

ED-2.1a Create and maintain a database of available entrepreneurship resources for Bloomington-Normal and McLean County. *EDC, short*

ED-2.1b Create a dedicated web page on the regional web portal featuring the aforementioned database, current events, articles and other entrepreneurial resources. *EDC, short*

ED2.1c Create a regional Entrepreneurship Leadership Council (ELC) to serve both as a catalyst and a steward for existing and future entrepreneurship programs. *EDC, BN Tech Town, short*

ED-2.1d Identify and promote successful entrepreneurship efforts. *EDC, short*

ED-2.1e Host conferences and workshops to share state and national level expertise on entrepreneurship with area residents. *EDC & ELC, ongoing*

ED-2.1f Evaluate the feasibility for establishing an incubator in Bloomington's Downtown through public-private partnerships. *EDC, ongoing*

ED-2.1g Explore the potential of a public-private partnership to attract one of the nations' leading accelerators to the community. *City of Bloomington, short*

ED-2.1h Identify and remove barriers to establishing startup businesses within the City. Create a panel of local entrepreneurs and City staff to identify barriers in the licensing and permitting processes. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

ED-2.1i Advocate at state and federal levels for legislation that support and foster entrepreneurship. *City of Bloomington, short*

ED-2.1j Facilitate funding for entrepreneurial efforts in the community. *EDC, ongoing*

INNOVATION DISTRICTS

Innovation districts are geographic areas where leading-edge companies, research institutions, start-ups, and business incubators are located in dense proximity. These districts facilitate new connections and ideas, accelerate the commercialization of those ideas, and support metropolitan economies by growing jobs in ways that leverage their distinct economic position.

Innovation districts constitute the ultimate "mash-up" of entrepreneurs and educational institutions, start-ups and schools, mixed-use development and medical innovations, bike-sharing and bankable investments—all connected by transit, powered by clean energy, wired for digital technology, and fueled by caffeine.

Given the vast distinctions in regional economies, the form and function of innovation districts differ markedly across the United States. Yet all innovation districts contain economic, physical, and networking assets. When these three assets combine with a supportive, risk-taking culture they create an innovation ecosystem—a synergistic relationship between people, firms and place (the physical geography of the district) that facilitates idea generation and accelerates commercialization.

Burgeoning innovation districts can be found in dozens of cities and metropolitan areas across the United States. These districts adhere to one of three general models.

The **"anchor plus"** model, primarily found in the downtowns and mid-towns of central cities, is where large scale mixed-use development is centered around major anchor institutions and a rich base of related firms, entrepreneurs and spin-off companies involved in the commercialization of innovation. "Anchor plus" is best exemplified by the Cortex district in St. Louis (flanked by Washington University, Saint Louis University, and Barnes Jewish Hospital).

The **"re-imagined urban areas"** model, often found near or along historic waterfronts, is where industrial or warehouse districts are undergoing a physical and economic transformation. This change is powered, in part, by transit access, a historic building stock, and their proximity to downtowns in high rent cities, which is then supplemented with advanced research institutions and anchor companies. This model is best exemplified by the remarkable regeneration underway in Boston's South Boston waterfront and Seattle's South Lake Union area.

The third model, **"urbanized science park,"** commonly found in suburban and exurban areas, is where traditionally isolated, sprawling areas of innovation are urbanizing through increased density and an infusion of new activities (including retail and restaurants) that are mixed as opposed to separated. North Carolina's Research Triangle Park is the strongest validation of this model.

Practitioners in leading edge innovation districts offer five pieces of advice to build a vibrant innovation district:

1. **Build a collaborative leadership network,** a collection of leaders from key institutions, firms and sectors who regularly and formally cooperate on the design, delivery, marketing and governance of the district.

2. **Set a vision for growth** by providing actionable guidance for how an innovation district should grow and develop in the short-, medium- and long-term along economic, physical and social dimensions. Most practitioners cite the importance of developing a vision to leverage their unique strengths—distinct economic clusters, leading local and regional institutions and companies, physical location and design advantages and other cultural attributes.

3. **Pursue talent and technology** given that educated and skilled workers and sophisticated infrastructure and systems are the twin drivers of innovation. Pursuing talent requires attraction, retention and growth strategies; integrating technology requires a commitment to top notch fiber optics (and, in some places, specialized laboratory facilities) to create a high quality platform for innovative firms.

4. **Promote inclusive growth** by using the innovation district as a platform to regenerate adjoining distressed neighborhoods as well as creating educational, employment and other opportunities for low-income residents of the city. Strategies should focus on equipping workers with the skills they need to participate in the innovation economy or other secondary and tertiary jobs generated by innovative growth.

5. Finally, **enhance access to capital** to support basic science and applied research; the commercialization of innovation; entrepreneurial start-ups and expansion; urban residential, industrial and commercial real estate (including new collaborative spaces); place-based infrastructure (e.g., energy, utilities, broadband, and transportation); education and training facilities; and intermediaries to steward the innovation ecosystem. Districts in Cambridge, Detroit and St. Louis have successfully re-deployed local capital to meet these needs.

ED-2.2 Establish partnerships.

- # of established partnerships with reputed entrepreneurial networks ↑

ED-2.2a Establish partnerships with area higher education institutions such as ISU, IWU, Lincoln College and Heartland College to increase educational offerings and assistance in entrepreneurial education. *EDC, ongoing*

ED-2.2b Establish partnerships with state and national level entrepreneurial networks to market and promote Bloomington-Normal entrepreneurial activities. *EDC, short*

PARTNER AGENCIES

Local higher educational institutions, entrepreneurial networks

ED-3. Build and maintain a skilled and employable workforce to meet the needs of the current businesses.

ED-3.1 Workforce availability and retention.

METRICS

- Labor force participation rate ↑
- Labor force ↑
- Unemployment ↓
- "Boomers" labor force participation ↑
- Workers under age 24 labor force participation ↑
- Workforce needs assessment for target industries

ED-3.1a Monitor key indicators of healthy workforce such as unemployment, labor force and participation rates. Continue to report to the community every quarter. *EDC, ongoing*

ED-3.1b Identify the workforce and talent needs and gaps of current and targeted businesses and industries. *EDC, ongoing*

ED3.1c Work collaboratively with the area higher education institutions to match the educational and training programs to fill any identified gaps. *EDC, short*

ED-3.1d Expand the entrepreneurial and job options for new college graduates to retain them in the community. *EDC, medium-long*

ED-3.1e Position Bloomington and the metro area as welcoming and conducive to Baby Boomers who want to start a new businesses. *EDC, short*

PARTNER AGENCIES

Higher education institutions, East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging, and other senior organizations

ED-4. Enhance the image of Bloomington as a business friendly community.

ED-4.1 Plan for a diversity of ready-to-build sites to meet the demand.

ED-4.1a Identify the site/building needs for targeted industries/ businesses. *City of Bloomington, short*

METRICS

- Target industry needs identified
- # of CoB ready-to-build sites developed ↑
- Site certification program established
- Up to date regional site selection database

ED-4.1b Create a regional "site certification" program to market shovel ready sites with appropriate zoning and access to utilities. *EDC, short*

ED-4.1c Create a certified site selection database for the entire County. *EDC, short*

ED-4.1d Ensure availability of ready-to-build sites with sufficient support infrastructure and services needed to meet the demand for new commercial and industrial growth, such as those in the enterprise zone. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

City of Bloomington, Realtors association, property owners, MCRPC, Town of Normal, McLean County, EDC

ED-4.2 Prioritize infill and redevelopment to spur growth and reinvestment in the City.

METRICS

- # of brownfield sites redeveloped ↑
- Current inventory of City-owned property
- Equalized assessed value (EAV) of the identified infill and redevelopment sites/areas ↑
- EAV along the key corridors identified for revitalization ↑
- Gateways enhanced

ED-4.2a Identify potential brownfield sites. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

ED-4.2b Conduct phase 1 and phase 2 environmental evaluations, as applicable, to facilitate private investment. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

ED-4.2c Catalog and maintain an up to date list of the City property. *City of Bloomington, short*

ED-4.2d Develop incentives to encourage private reinvestment in targeted neighborhoods, including funding resources and infrastructure to make private reinvestment feasible. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

ED-4.2e Target efforts to improve areas identified in the redevelopment areas map, prioritizing as opportunities are presented. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

ED-4.2f Improve the appearance of the City's primary entrances. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

PARTNER AGENCIES

EDC, IDOT, private businesses and industry

ED-4.3 Facilitate and enhance pedestrian-friendly neighborhood centers to support mixed use developments.

METRICS

- # of mixed-use development projects ↑
- # of mixed-use neighborhood oriented commercial developments
- EAV in Downtown, Regeneration and the Preservation Areas ↑

ED-4.3a Explore land use opportunities for retail, office and neighborhood shopping in residential areas, at development intensities that are appropriate to the area. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

ED-4.3b Allow mixed use as buffer between low density residential uses and high density industrial uses. Ex: Along the Constitution Trail corridor in the Preservation area. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

PARTNER AGENCIES

EDC, realtors, developers

ED-4.4 Evaluate commercial land use needs in the context of changing economic trends.

METRICS

- EAV per acre on commercial parcels ↑
- Airport Overlay Zone designation and zoning codes amendments

ED-4.4a Evaluate the existing commercial areas and sites for adaptive reuse, particularly in the context of changing demands. Ex: closed malls and expansive parking lots. *City of Bloomington, short*

ED-4.4b Designate land sufficient for commercial and industrial uses to provide for employment and other commercial needs in the City. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

ED-4.4c Prevent the encroachment of incompatible land uses around CIRA thereby preserving the utility of the airport into the future. CIRA should work closely with the City to establish overlay district boundaries and amend the zoning ordinance to deter land uses incompatible with airport operations in that district. *City of Bloomington, short*

PARTNER AGENCIES

EDC, CIRA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES TOOLKIT

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts are created to fund economic development projects in blighted areas where development would not otherwise occur or in conservation areas that may become blighted. Property tax rates applied to increases in property value that occur after the district is established, or the "tax increment," are used to fund TIF district projects. The current version of the Tax Increment Allocation Redevelopment Act allows municipalities to designate TIF districts that meet criteria as a blighted area or a conservation area. Improved areas must meet at least five criteria to be considered blighted. For conservation areas, at least half of structures in improved areas must be at least 35 years old and the area must meet at least three of the criteria. Criteria include dilapidation, obsolescence, deterioration, presence of structures below minimum code standards, illegal use of individual structures, excessive vacancies, lack of ventilation, light or sanitary facilities, inadequate utilities, excessive land coverage and overcrowding of structures, deleterious land use
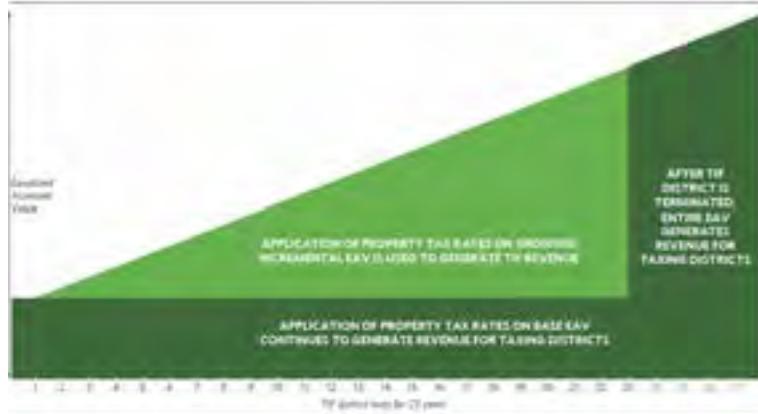

Illustration representing general concept of a TIF District
Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), Examination of Local Economic Development Incentives in Northeastern Illinois, August 2013.

or layout, lack of community planning, need for environmental remediation, and decline in property values. Vacant areas can qualify as blighted by meeting two of the following criteria: obsolete platting, diversity of ownership of parcels, tax delinquencies, deterioration of structures in neighboring areas, need for environmental remediation, and decline in property values. Alternatively, vacant land can qualify if it qualified as a blighted improved area before becoming vacant, is subject to chronic flooding, or has an unused quarry, mine, rail yard, rail track, railroad right-of-way, or disposal site.

Sales Tax Rebates/ Development Agreements are used to attract or retain sales tax-generating developments like shopping centers, auto dealerships, supercenter/discount stores, and home improvement stores. This is a popular tool among Illinois municipalities as sales tax revenues often exceed the costs of serving these developments. Caution should be exercised as the fiscal benefits of these developments can create an intraregional competition among communities for sales tax-generating developments, which may not be in the best interest of the broader region.

Property Tax Abatements: Any district that extends a property tax can abate (or decrease) any portion of its taxes for certain properties. In McLean County there are well over 100 taxing districts. Implementation of property tax abatements requires municipalities and counties to solicit the participation of underlying districts, such as school districts and townships, if they wish to abate a substantial portion of the property taxes. Property tax abatements can be abated for projects that generate jobs such as commercial or industrial developments or projects that improve the quality of life in the community such as affordable or low income housing.

A **Business Improvement District ("BID")** is a special taxing district, authorized to undertake certain public improvements to be financed through the issuance of notes or bonds that are,

in turn, retired by the levy of sales tax within the geographic boundaries of the District. If the municipality approves a business district development or redevelopment plan, they may impose a tax, at a rate not to exceed 1% of the gross receipts from the sales until all business district project costs have been paid.

The **New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program** was enacted by Congress as part of the Community Renewal Tax Relief Act of 2000 to encourage private investment in low-income communities. Qualified Community Development Entities (CDE) will apply for an award of new markets tax credits. The CDE will then seek taxpayers to make Qualifying Equity Investments in the CDE. The CDE will in turn be required to use substantially all of the qualifying equity investments to make qualified low-income community investments in/to qualified active low-income businesses located in low-income neighborhoods/ communities. The taxpayer will be eligible to claim a tax credits for about 7 years and up to 39% total. These investments are expected to result in the creation of jobs and material improvement in the lives of residents of low-income communities. Examples of expected projects include financing small businesses, improving community facilities such as daycare centers, and increasing home ownership opportunities.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program enacted by Congress as part of the Tax Reform Act of in 1986 to provide the private market with an incentive to invest in affordable rental housing. Federal housing tax credits are awarded to developers of qualified projects. Developers then sell these credits to investors to raise capital (or equity) for their projects, which reduces the debt that the developer would otherwise have to borrow. Because the debt is lower, a tax credit property can in turn offer lower, more affordable rents.

ED-4.5 Identify and reduce barriers for local growth and economic development.

ED-4.5a Identify barriers in the City's development review process. Create a panel of local builders, developers, City staff and other interested parties to identify barriers in the regulatory procedures. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

ED-4.5b Streamline development review and permitting process for speedier processing of applications. *City of Bloomington, short*

ED-4.5c Provide clear and objective standards for development reviews that provide for a quick and predictable approval process with reduced amount of uncertainty. *City of Bloomington, short*

ED-4.1d Consider adopting a local procurement policy that will give preference to local vendors, when all other factors are equal or relatively close. *City of Bloomington, short*

Make Your Money Mean More is an effort led by McLean County Chamber of commerce to encourage residents of Bloomington-Normal McLean County buy local goods and services. There are many well documented studies that highlight the benefits of buying local for local economies. Throughout the BringItOn-Bloomington outreach process, residents expressed a desire to see more local buying and eating options over chains and big boxes. This plan encourages the City to foster creation of a stable economy with a strong presence of small and local businesses.

ED-5. Enhance tourism based-economic development.

ED-5.1 Expand tourism attractions and destinations.

ED-5.1a Continue to advance sports-based tourism. *City of Bloomington Office of Economic Development, short-medium*

ED-5.1b Facilitate the expansion of meeting spaces. *City of Bloomington, medium*

ED-5.1c Facilitate the expansion of multi use sports facility that accommodate soccer, lacrosse and cricket to attract regional sports tournaments. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

ED-5.1d   Improve the signage to various attractions in the community. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

ED-5.1e Heritage and Cultural tourism (See Arts, Culture and History chapter for more details on this action item). *City of Bloomington, short*

ED-5.1f Develop and expand agritourism. *City of Bloomington Office of Economic Development, short/ongoing*

METRICS

- Hotel/motel tax revenue ↑
- # of sports events held annually ↑
- Multi-use sports facility
- # of cultural and arts events ↑
- Agri-tourism ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

CVB, DBA, MCMH, DCEO; Land of Lincoln Regional Tourism Development Office; ISU Department of Agriculture

DOWNTOWN

Once the center for community and economic activity, Downtown Bloomington, like downtowns across the country, suffered the loss of retail and other business activities to shopping centers and commercial strips along Veterans Parkway. The vitality of a city's downtown is an important element in a community's overall economic health.

In 2008-2009, the City retained the services of Farr Associates to create a redevelopment strategy for Downtown. That report concluded that Bloomington's Downtown has immense potential that is yet to be realized. It also pointed out that revitalization of Downtown is threatened by failure of consensus on how to maintain, regulate, redevelop and generally manage this valuable and unique asset. The Downtown strategy report was officially adopted by the Council in 2014. While the City, in partnership with Downtown Bloomington Association and other key partners, is making inroads in Downtown redevelopment efforts, many recommended actions of that strategy are yet to be acted upon.

This section of the Economic Development chapter begins with an examination of the goals and objectives of the aforementioned Downtown Strategy, to avoid duplication of effort.

While efforts are currently underway by the Downtown Bloomington Association (DBA) and the City towards implementation of the adopted Downtown Strategy, many action items are yet to be addressed. This plan emphasizes the function of the Downtown as the core attraction for employment, specialty retail, innovative mixed uses, and cultural and entertainment should be preserved and expanded.

In addition, the outreach process made it clear that there is no clear understanding in the community about the boundaries of Downtown. Goals and Objectives to address this short fall include unified marketing and branding for the Downtown district, creation of signage and wayfinding installations promoting the brand, and support for cultural, entertainment and commercial ventures.

The Downtown district is particularly important as the core of historic Bloomington. The goals and objectives emphasize the need to maintain its historic features and character through careful preservation and thoughtful redevelopment where needed.

The support and expansion of attractions in the Downtown district is complemented by goals for furthering the public perception of Downtown as a safe and clean place while also instituting practices to ensure safety. Improving access and convenience is addressed through objectives for parking options, as well as car and bicycle sharing programs, and access to public transportation.

Downtown is a neighborhood as well as an economic center, and the plan guidance recognizes the interaction between these functions, and between the Downtown district and the adjacent neighborhoods. Developing and sustaining an active urban core that includes Downtown, Regeneration Area and the Preservation Area is vital to the longterm success of the community.

Figure 6-5. Downtown Bloomington Study Area and Warehouse District

D-1. Continue to build a healthy Downtown that offers a range of employment, retail, housing, cultural and entertainment opportunities for all.

D-1.1 Strengthen business recruitment and retention activities.

D-1.1a Identify and seek development and business opportunities appropriate for Downtown. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, ongoing*

METRICS

- # of businesses in Downtown district ↑
- # of jobs in Downtown district ↑
- Commercial vacancy rate ↓
- # of start-up companies in Downtown district ↑
- # of resources available for Downtown business ↑
- Database of financial tools for business available for use
- Inventory of Downtown sites and buildings added to site certification database
- # of incentives provided to Downtown businesses ↑

D-1.1b Actively promote Downtown sites and buildings for business locations. *DBA Economic Restructuring Committee, ongoing*

D-1.1c Identify the needs of current and future employees to make Downtown attractive to employers. *DBA, short*

D-1.1d Create and maintain a current database of financial tools and other resources for existing, new and start-up businesses in Downtown. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short*

D-1.1e Create and maintain a current database inventory, coordinated with the City of Bloomington's proposed site certification program, of available sites and buildings in Downtown, as proposed in the Economic Development Strategy. *DBA Economic Restructuring Committee, short/ongoing*

D-1.1f Examine the feasibility of creating a small business incubator in Downtown. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short-medium*

D-1.1g Prioritize mixed-use development/redevelopment projects for the Downtown area. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

D-1.1h Continue to develop, promote and provide incentives for property owners or developers to reinvest in Downtown. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, ongoing*

D-1.1i Create an economic development staff position focused on Downtown business retention and recruitment. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-1.1j Leverage assets, such as the Constitution Trail, to encourage business retention and attraction. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

DBA Economic Restructuring committee; EDC, MCRPC, U.S Cellular Coliseum, MCMH, Bloomington Public Library

D-1.2 Pursue catalyst projects that can serve as additional Downtown anchors.

D-1.2a Amend Coliseum management contract to involve its management in economic development projects compatible with Coliseum operations. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-1.2b Consider other Downtown needs during the expansion of community facilities currently located in Downtown, such as the BCPA/Creativity Center and the Bloomington Public Library. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-1.2c Encourage other community anchors, such as the YMCA, to expand in Downtown. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-1.2d Leverage Downtown assets, such as the Route 66 Visitors Center, to attract other catalyst projects. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-1.3 Reinvent the Warehouse District.

D-1.3a Investigate designation of a special use district, such as an Art or Innovation district, to bring a renewed focus to the warehouse district. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-1.3b Introduce and promote incentives for investment for property owners or developers in the Warehouse District. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short-medium*

D-1.3c Coordinate with local businesses and Constitution Trail advocates regarding trailside businesses development to boost economic development in the area. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short-medium*

D-1.3d Encourage and enable alternative business operations, such as pop-up businesses, in the Warehouse District. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short-medium*

D-1.4 Develop a wide variety of Downtown housing options.

D-1.4a Encourage the inclusion of residential units in mixed-use redevelopment. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short*

D-1.4b Investigate creating an Employer Assisted Housing zone in and around Downtown. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short-medium*

- # of housing units (ownership and rental units) ↑
- % vacancy rate ↓
- # of residential parking spaces ↑

DBA, Downtown Property Owners Association

D-1.4c Explore employer-based incentives for home ownership. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short-medium*

D-1.4d Encourage and support business development that serves Downtown residents, such as neighborhood scale grocery. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, ongoing*

D-1.4e Improve parking access/facilities for Downtown residents. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short-medium*

D-2. Market and promote the unique brand and image of Downtown Bloomington.

D-2.1 Identify and designate gateways to Downtown.

D-2.1a Use City of Bloomington land or street r-o-w to create gateway features such as landscaping, artwork, pocket parks, etc. *City of Bloomington, short*

- Gateways identified
- Signage installed

D-2.1b Install gateway signage. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short-medium*

DBA, EDC, CVB, MCRPC, Town of Normal

D-2.1c Create and sustain consistent Downtown streetscape design, including gateway areas. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-2.2 Expand the Downtown Bloomington Association's marketing efforts.

D-2.2a City of Bloomington continue to support DBA. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

D-2.2b Investigate regional and state funding sources. *DBA, ongoing*

D-2.2c Continue and expand the event programming activities. *DBA Promotions Committee, ongoing*

D-2.3 Improve wayfinding Downtown.

D-2.3a Install wayfinding signage for parking garages and attractions. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-2.3b Develop consistent branding and iconography for gateway and wayfinding signage. *DBA, ongoing*

D-2.3c Solicit cooperation from Downtown businesses in adopting and promoting consistent branded wayfinding. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-2.4 Develop and adopt a Downtown signage code appropriate to the area.

D-2.3a Review existing code for suitability to Downtown character. *City of Bloomington Economic Development staff, short*

D-2.3b Adapt code to encourage signs visible to pedestrians and bicyclists as well as auto traffic. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-2.3c Adapt code to discourage sign placements and sizes that detract from the Downtown character, while offering options to businesses. *City of Bloomington, short*

METRICS

- $ DBA funding ↑
- DBA programming and marketing activities ↑
- Adopted branding for Downtown
- Wayfinding signs installed

PARTNER AGENCIES

DBA, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Bloomington Public Library, Downtown property owners, contractors

D-2.5 Consolidate retail uses within in the Downtown core.

D-2.5a Ensure codes and regulations facilitate use of the area for retail locations. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-2.5b Modify street configuration and short-term street parking to promote access to retail locations. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-2.5c Encourage synergy in adjacent retail to promote multi-stop visits. *DBA, ongoing*

D-2.6 Encourage commercial and corporate uses along the U.S. 51 corridor surrounding the Downtown core.

D-2.6a Adopt access management policies on through routes in Downtown district. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-2.6b Coordinate parking deck access points and side street parking to support longer-term parking along couplet. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-2.7 Continue support and coordination efforts for the Farmers Market.

D-2.7a Provide assistance to the Farmers Market to resolve issues and continue to support the market's efforts in the future. *DBA, ongoing*

D-2.7b Make infrastructure changes or recommendations, including parking, streetscape, and signage. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-2.7c Investigate Downtown site/venue/street facilities for Farmers Market to allow for expanded market hours and seasons. *DBA Promotions Committee, short*

D-3. Protect Downtown's historic character and encourage appropriate new development.

D-3.1 Protect the scale and character of historic Downtown and provide appropriate parameters for new development that complements its historic character.

D-3.1a Implement the Downtown Bloomington Strategy recommendations for a zoning overlay ensuring that future developments are compatible with Downtown's historic character. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-3.1b Target façade rehabilitations to concentrated areas of the Downtown. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-3.1c Develop incentives for façade rehabilitation in mixed-use redevelopment projects. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-3.1d Continue educating property owners regarding other funding sources or tax benefits of rehabilitation. *DBA, ongoing*

D-4. A clean and safe Downtown.

D-4.1 Improve and promote Downtown as a clean and safe place.

D-4.1a Task Public Works department to develop a Downtown district trash removal and street cleaning program in cooperation with private service providers. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-4.1b Streamline and standardize snow removal for Downtown district, in cooperation with businesses and private service providers, through Code revisions as needed. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-4.1c Establish landscaping standards for parking to manage stormwater, provide shade and aesthetic benefits. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-4.1d Address infrastructure issues. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

D-4.1e Work with the Bloomington Police Department to reduce crime and fear of crime in Downtown. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

D-5. Continue to develop a multi-modal transportation network in Downtown.

D-5.1 Improve parking conditions and access and encourage shared public and private parking supplies.

D-5.1a Ensure that public parking is positioned for access to multiple destinations. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

D-5.1b Evaluate parking ordinance standards and requirements. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-5.1c Investigate innovative parking solutions for effective parking management in Downtown. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

METRICS

- Adoption of Downtown district-wide trash/snow removal programs
- Adoption of code revisions as needed to implement trash/snow program
- # of crimes in Downtown ↓
- Infrastructure rating ↑

D-5.1d Allow developments to pay in-lieu fees for public facilities instead of on-site private parking. *City of Bloomington, short*

D-5.1e Consider appropriately designed street parking in core retail are bounded by Center, East, Locust and Front Streets. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-5.1f Adopt parking code revisions consistent with appropriate standards for Downtown district. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-5.1g Require screening of parking facilities from street right-of-way using landscaping. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-5.1h Encourage interior parking within building footprints. *City of Bloomington, medium*

D-5.1i Coordinate shared private parking arrangements. *DBA, short-medium*

D-5.1j Coordinate and manage shared parking, such as valet or parking broker, to serve multiple restaurants, stores, and drinking establishments. *DBA, short-medium*

PARTNER AGENCIES

DBA, Bloomington Public Works Department

D-5.1k Consider the installation of parking meters in designated locations. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

D-5.2 Enhance the walkability and bikability within and to Downtown and facilitate access to car-sharing and bicycle sharing services in the Downtown district.

- Implementation of shared parking policy
- Installation of parking meters in designated locations
- Downtown location selection for car/bicycle sharing program
- # of bicycle access routes to Downtown district installed ↑
- # of bike/pedestrian wayfinding signs installed ↑
- Bicycle LOS ↑
- Sidewalk ratings (in PASER) ↑
- Aggregate sidewalk length in Downtown district ↑

D-5.2a Use wayfinding signage to identify walking and cycling routes and connections. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

D-5.2b Continue to expand the bike connections to Downtown Bloomington. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

D-5.2c Identify a Downtown location for transportation sharing services, including accessible office space and vehicle/bicycle parking. *DBA, short*

DBA, BikeBloNo, Friends of Constitution Trail, Connect Transit, City of Bloomington

D-5.3 Enhance the public transit access to Downtown.

- Completed Downtown public transit transfer center
- Transit usage at Downtown transfer point ↑

D-5.3a Upgrade Front Street transfer location. *Connect Transit, short*

D-5.3b Include transit signage and transit stop information in wayfinding installations. *Connect Transit, short*

City of Bloomington, MCRPC

D-6. Reinforce the connections between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

D-6.1 Encourage development on sites that will link Downtown with surrounding neighborhoods.

METRICS

- Development along the edge of the Downtown district ↑
- Equalized assessed value in regeneration and preservation areas ↑
- # owner-occupied housing units in the Regeneration and Preservation Areas ↑
- Vacancy rates in Regeneration and Preservation Areas ↓

D-6.1a Encourage development on opportunity sites on the outskirts of the area, especially as prioritized in the Downtown Master Plan. *DBA, ongoing*

D-6.1b Condemn properties that are not maintained. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

DBA, Local employers

D-6.2 Form organizational alliances between the DBA and organizations active in surrounding neighborhoods.

METRICS

- # of joint DBA neighborhood meetings and programs ↑

D-6.2a Establish and/or maintain close contact with organizations in surrounding neighborhoods. *DBA, ongoing*

D-6.2b Work with surrounding neighborhood organizations to help improve the surrounding area. *DBA, ongoing*

D-6.2c Explore opportunities for joint programs, particularly those that assist property owners with rehabilitation and development, and document projects developed. *DBA, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

DBA, Neighborhood organizations

D-6.3 Pursue public-private development opportunities with major employers seeking employee housing near offices.

METRICS

- # of employers participating in employer-assisted housing program ↑
- Employer-assisted housing zone established in Downtown Regeneration and Preservation areas

D-6.3a Identify major employers in and near Downtown Bloomington that desire improved and expanded housing options for their employees. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

D-6.3b Establish employer-assisted housing zones in established and regeneration neighborhoods surrounding Downtown. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

PARTNER AGENCIES

DBA, Local employers

7. ARTS, CULTURE AND HISTORY

VISION
Our future should be inspired by the rich and important history with abundant art and cultural opportunities.

Across the country, communities have come to recognize the many ways in which arts and culture are intricately interwoven into the fabric of a community. Arts and culture have the power to inspire and connect people and cultures. Music, dance, theatre, and the visual arts entertain and engage us aesthetically; public festivals and celebrations of local history give participants a sense of community and a unique cultural identity; and public art can transform city's gateways, corridors, and neighborhoods alike. Beyond quality of life benefits, arts and culture amenities contribute a positive economic impact by increasing tourism and revenue, driving community development, attracting new businesses and a skilled, educated workforce, and propelling urban renewal.

Bloomington-Normal has a variety of arts and culture attractions for residents and tourists to experience. There are over 25 annual events and festivals, 20 performance groups and venues, 15 local organizations that support arts and culture, four colleges and universities, and dozens of historically significant sites. All of these amenities are made possible by the over 900 people working in artistic occupations. In addition to making Bloomington-Normal a culturally rich community and contributing to the local economy, those people and the government agencies, nonprofits, and local businesses share their passion for the arts with thousands of local children each year through arts education and enrichment programs.

In terms of land use, this plan highlights certain areas of the City as particularly appropriate for arts and culture planning. The foremost of these is Downtown. Much of the artistic and cultural activity that occurs in Bloomington happens in the Downtown area. Dozens of galleries and studios, public art work, performing arts venues, and historic sites are clustered in Downtown, and events such as First Fridays, the Farmers Market and Artists' Alley make it a regular destination for those interested in the Bloomington-Normal cultural scene. This density of cultural activity represents an opportunity for the City to promote arts and culture by establishing Downtown as the City's official cultural district. A planned district centered on the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA), the adjacent Lincoln Park, and the Mc-Lean County Arts Center (MCAC) never came to fruition; however, the concept still has potential, and Downtown's existing arts and culture assets make it a natural fit for that designation. A well-supported cultural district with boundaries stretching across the entire Downtown area could serve as a powerful marketing tool and a geographic framework for future arts and culture initiatives. Given appropriate zoning and financial incentives, the City could attract new artists and cultural organizations, strengthening the district further.

Immediately south of Front Street in Downtown, a collection of unused and underutilized industrial buildings, generally referred to as the "Warehouse District," presents a different sort of opportunity for the City. A once-thriving district that has largely fallen into neglect (though a few small businesses are still located there), the Warehouse District is one of the areas identified for targeted redevelopment. Other post-industrial cities have had success in repurposing former industrial buildings as galleries, studios, and live-work spaces. Bloomington could revitalize its Warehouse District in the same way by using relaxed zoning regulations and tax incentives to open up the area to artists. Similar pockets of ex-industrial space exist elsewhere throughout the City. The area surrounding Morrissey Drive south of Oakland Avenue is one example, and that area has already seen some adaptive reuse by artists.

Apart from land use, one of the City's main challenges in arts and culture planning is to promote the amenities it already has. One of the City's key deficits in this area is the absence of a central online clearinghouse for information about arts and culture in the community. Information about major attractions and events can be found scattered across several websites and brochures, but visitors and even residents may find it difficult to find dates, times, and descriptions of all of the City's arts and culture attractions without digging. The creation of a comprehensive arts and culture website, complete with a single calendar showing all arts and culture events and a comprehensive inventory of galleries, studios, venues, events, and organizations, would make it easier for consumers to discover everything the City has to offer. Such a resource would be of great benefit to the City and the local artists, businesses, and nonprof-

BCPA

McLean County Arts Center

GLT Summer concert

- The Bloomington area will value, support and fully integrate the arts, in all their diversity, into the fabric of civic life.
- The community will honor its past and provide a perspective for the future by preserving historic buildings, neighborhoods and other links to the City's early years.
- Bloomington will foster community interaction and reinforce a sense of place through positive, welcoming and unique public spaces.

EXISTING CONDITIONS - KEY FINDINGS

- Downtown Bloomington is the cultural center of the community. Many artists live and work here, and there is a higher concentration of performing arts venues, galleries, and works of public art Downtown than anywhere else in the Bloomington-Normal community.
- Bloomington-Normal is home to dozens of annual, one-time, and seasonal festivals, fairs, and other events, giving residents and visitors a plethora of year-round opportunities for entertainment and involvement. The weekly Farmers' Market and the summer Illinois Shakespeare Festival are two particularly popular events, with the Farmers' Market drawing an estimated 85,000 attendees and the Shakespeare Festival drawing over 12,000.
- Bloomington-Normal has a vibrant community of artists. Over 900 people—roughly 1% of the workforce—are employed in the arts, with many more amateur and student artists making valuable contributions. This compares favorably to other Central Illinois cities and even larger metropolitan areas such as Chicago.
- Despite Bloomington-Normal's many arts and culture amenities, there is no central online clearinghouse for arts and culture information. As a result, it can be difficult for residents and tourists to discover everything the community has to offer.

its who produce arts and culture in the community.

There are smaller, less ambitious, but no less important things that the City can do to support its arts and culture community. Increased support for public art programs, arts tourism initiatives, and simply increasing awareness among the public and local officials about the City's vibrant cultural assets would all help better integrate arts and culture into the fabric of civic life.

The goals and objectives outlined in this chapter will provide additional guidance in resolving the aforementioned matters. In recognition of the great importance of arts and culture in shaping our community, this comprehensive plan is the first in the City's history to treat arts and culture as a key consideration in land use and future policy. Transitioning from plan to action will not be without its challenges. Members of the Arts and Culture working group that helped develop these goals and objectives have identified several roadblocks that have prevented the City's past arts and culture initiatives from achieving success:

- Political will: Past initiatives have rarely made it past the initial planning stage, possibly reflecting a lack of commitment to arts and culture issues among the city's leadership.
- Political Opposition: Arts and culture expenditures are often mistaken as "nice to haves" and fall victim to the "wants" vs. "needs" discussions.
- Funding: Grant opportunities in this area are limited and very competitive.
- Awareness: The economic impacts of Arts and Cultural scene are not fully understood by many, including the City staff and policy makers.
- Codes and regulations: Many codes and regulations unduly, and often unintentionally, restrict artists from plying their trade. For example, zoning regulations make it difficult for live-work arrangements. Developers and city leaders rarely think to incorporate arts in the development proposals.

None of these problems are insurmountable, however. Ongoing dialogue among the City, artists and cultural organizations, and the public will increase awareness of the benefits of supporting and promoting arts and culture. Over the 20-year period covered by this plan, Bloomington has every chance to capitalize on its arts and culture assets and make arts and culture an even greater contributor to this community's high quality of life.

ACH-1. Create a unique identity for the Bloomington area arts and cultural scene.

ACH-1.1 Designate and promote Downtown Bloomington as the arts, culture and entertainment district locally and regionally.

ACH-1.1a Officially designate Downtown Bloomington as a local cultural district. *BCPA, short*

ACH-1.1b Identify and remove zoning and other regulatory barriers within Downtown. Encourage and support arts-related uses such as galleries, studios, artists housing etc. This can be achieved through Arts overlay zoning or amending the B-3 Central Business District zoning to be more conducive to Art related uses. *BCPA, short*

ACH-1.1c Promote art-related activities in the Warehouse District. *BCPA, short-medium*

ACH-1.1d Promote the cultural district with adequate signage at the Downtown gateways and in other high-traffic areas of town. *DBA, short*

ACH-1.1e Increase visual arts in the public sphere Downtown. *Bloomington Center for the Public Arts, ongoing*

ACH-1.1f Continue to enhance the Downtown Mural project efforts. *DBA, short*

Cultural districts are defined as well recognized, labeled areas of a city in which a high concentration of cultural facilities and programs serve as the main anchor of attraction. They help strengthen local economies, create an enhanced sense of place, and deepen local cultural capacity. Cultural districts often include designated spaces for artists who are interested in locating in a district. These spaces may include gallery spaces, exhibit spaces, and artist live/work spaces.

States like Iowa and Indiana have cultural district enabling legislation that is associated with state funding. Illinois does not. However, municipalities can create their own local cultural districts.

Many communities in Iowa, including Ames, use a cultural district as a tool to preserve and enhance arts and culture in their respective communities. Main street cultural district promotes the City's historic and Cultural Downtown.

Broad Ripple Village cultural district in Indianapolis, Indiana: This district boasts unique art galleries, sidewalk cafes, fabulous restaurants, public art, graffiti murals, and beautiful greenways and parks.

Arts overlay districts are a type of geographic zoning tool created to preserve and enhance the character of arts-related uses, in a defined area, to benefit the area and the entire city. These districts protect existing arts-related uses, and provide incentives for the creation of new ones, including artists' housing, artists' studios, theaters, galleries, and crafts stores.

Support for arts within such districts include financial incentives for conversion of underutilized space in existing buildings for "Arts- Related Uses", granting density bonuses for creation of "Arts Related Uses, giving parking relief for continued or new reuse of those building for "Arts Related Uses". Typically these districts impose design guidelines to assure that new projects reinforce the walkable character of the designated area. Rockford, Illinois and Seattle, Washington are two communities that have implemented these zones successfully.
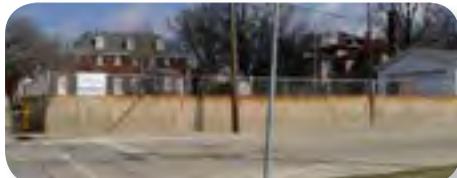
1. Oakland at East Street. East side of City Works building, across from the YMCA. The Main Street side of the building is another possibility.

2. Oakland on Railroad, across from Mission Mart

3. Bloomington Public Library - Tower mural

4. Corner of East and Albert, across from library. Wall around Beck's parking lot, good for a children's mural

6. Lincoln Garage on East Street
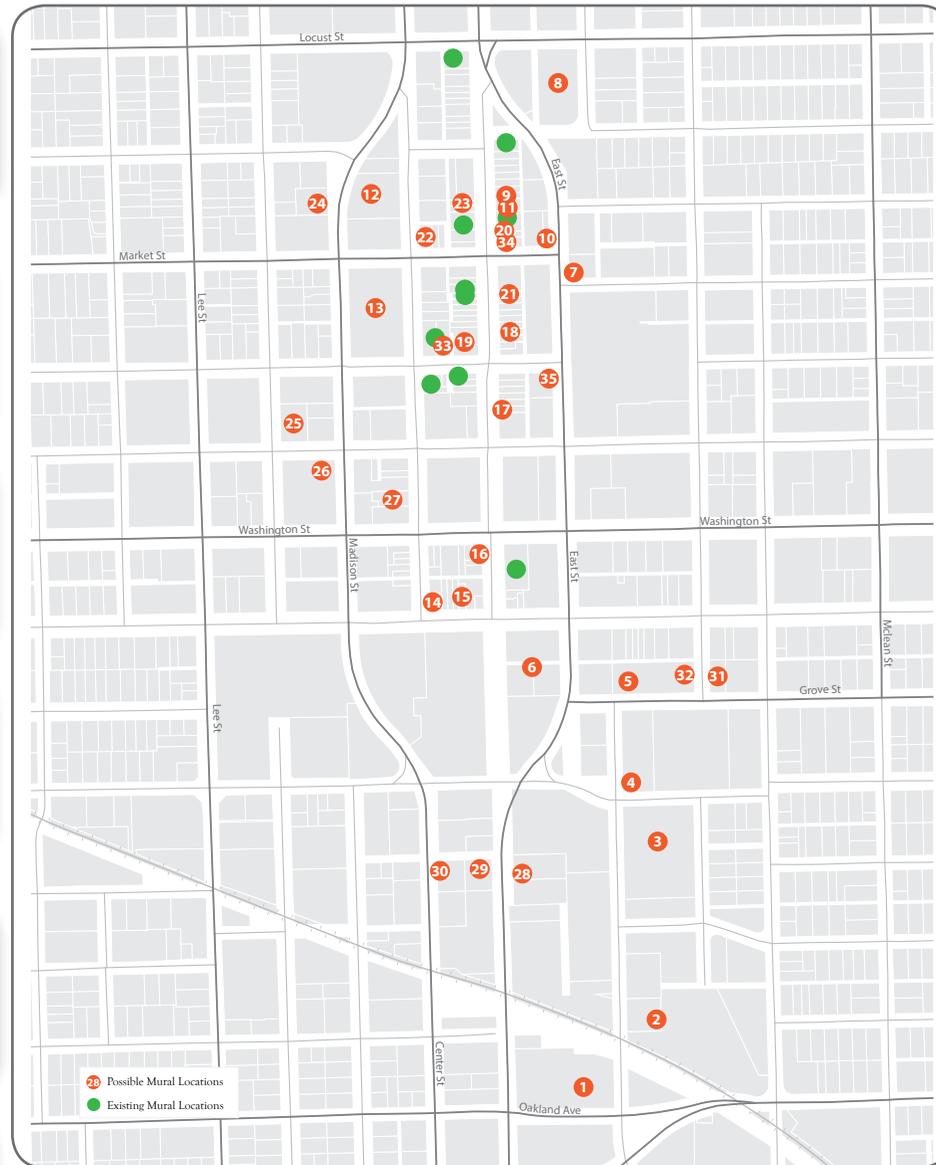

7. Clark and Barlow Building, East Street

Figure 7-1. Summary of the Downtown Mural Committee's Report
Sites in green are existing mural locations and those in orange are potential future sites contingent upon permissions. These sites were identified for the purpose of enhancing the visual appeal and interest in and around Downtown. For more information visit www.downtownbloomington.org

- 28 Possible Mural Locations
- Existing Mural Locations

8. Back of BCPA

12. Bases of tower, 520 N. Center

13. East side Market Street Garage, Center Street

14. Center and Front, Johnson Law Group

15. Main Street, behind Elroys in parking lot

17. 309 N. Main. Top of building with peeling paint

21. Main and Market Streets, north side of Manna's Building

24. Madison Street, north side of Diesel Dicks

26. Pantagraph wall, Madison Street. Welcome to Downtown sign?

27. Back of Osco's seen from Madison and Washington

29. Main Street across from the Eagles

33. Monroe Street, in alley on side of Monroe Building

ACH-2. Increase the visibility of the Bloomington arts and cultural scene.

ACH-2.1 Increase marketing efforts within and outside the region.

ACH-2.1a Establish a regional arts council to represent and advertise all of the organizations and artistic people in all arts fields. *MCAC, short*

ACH-2.1b Establish a full-time marketing position to develop a state-wide and national advertising campaign to encourage art tourism in BN area cultural districts. *MCAC, short-medium*

ACH-2.1c Create an arts and culture website as a resource for information about community organizations and businesses related to arts and culture. *MCAC; short*

ACH-2.1d Develop a common Arts and Culture online calendar for listings of arts and culture events, with links to further information. *MCAC; short*

ACH-2.1e Advertise using signs and billboards to inform residents and visitors of local arts and culture organizations, businesses and events, and educational opportunities, along with website addresses for additional information. *DBA; short*

ACH 2.1f Encourage and support arts, cultural and heritage festivals to expand cultural tourism. *MCAC; short-medium*

An artist relocation program encourages the re-location of artists to a particular neighborhood or geography within a community. Regulations and incentives are geared toward making the "district" appealing for artists to use as studio and gallery space while also providing affordable housing.

Within municipal government, zoning and development regulations can prove to be a barrier in establishing artist live-work spaces. Due to these regulations, older structures may be excluded and unavailable to use, limiting opportunities for affordable housing. Regulations often also restrict or require an excessive approval process, which then discourages new forms of arts and culture space within a community. However, regulations can assist in distinguishing specific locations for artists establishing creative zoning clusters in the community. Initial zoning and development regulations also prevent underground art hubs, reducing conflicts and maintain a thriving artisan community. The key to establishing zoning and development regulations that permit live-work spaces within the community is to recognize and work to eliminate these roadblocks to creativity.

Paducah, Kentucky, a small community that shares a border with the southern tip of Illinois, is a national model for this program. In 2000, the City–together with Paducah Bank–embarked on an innovative program that over the next ten years would infuse its struggling Lower Town neighborhood with almost seventy artists. The project was seen as high risk at the time. The City advertised nationally for artists to relocate to Paducah and purchase and renovate historic structures with favorable financing and incentives–for example, loans have been approved at up to 300% of the appraised property value to help fund renovations. In return, artists would have to fund much of the renovation from their own pockets following the City's historic preservation and other design guidelines. Yet it was the combined investment of the City, the public sector, and the artists themselves–not to mention low real estate costs–that have made this program a resounding success. The City designated the Lower Town area (where the properties are located) a historic district and it enforces design guidelines to maintain the neighborhood character throughout the rehabilitation.

Since 1999, 70 artists have rehabilitated 80 properties and constructed 20 new buildings in the neighborhood, resulting in a10-1 return on investment for the city. Paducah created specific zoning for the Lower Town neighborhood to allow live/work spaces where artists could both live and run galleries, arts studios, restaurants, and other mixed uses.

ACH-2.2 Increase community awareness.

ACH-2.2a Increase awareness and availability of art education offerings for the public in art education, lectures, and hand-on projects. MCAC; *short*

ACH-2.2b Encourage and support coordinated school district/City arts programs in the community centers, museums, libraries and schools. MCAC; *short*

ACH-2.2c Create and promote walking, biking and bus tours of arts and cultural attractions. The walking and biking tours can be coordinated along with the health and wellness activities. BCPA; *short*

ACH-2.2d Collaborate with area agencies to cross-promote arts and culture. MCAC; *ongoing*

ACH-2.2e Educate the City staff, boards, commissions and councils on the availability and importance of arts, culture and history in the community. This can be done by scheduling tours for the City officials as well as making the art tour part of the City staff onboarding process. BCPA; *short*
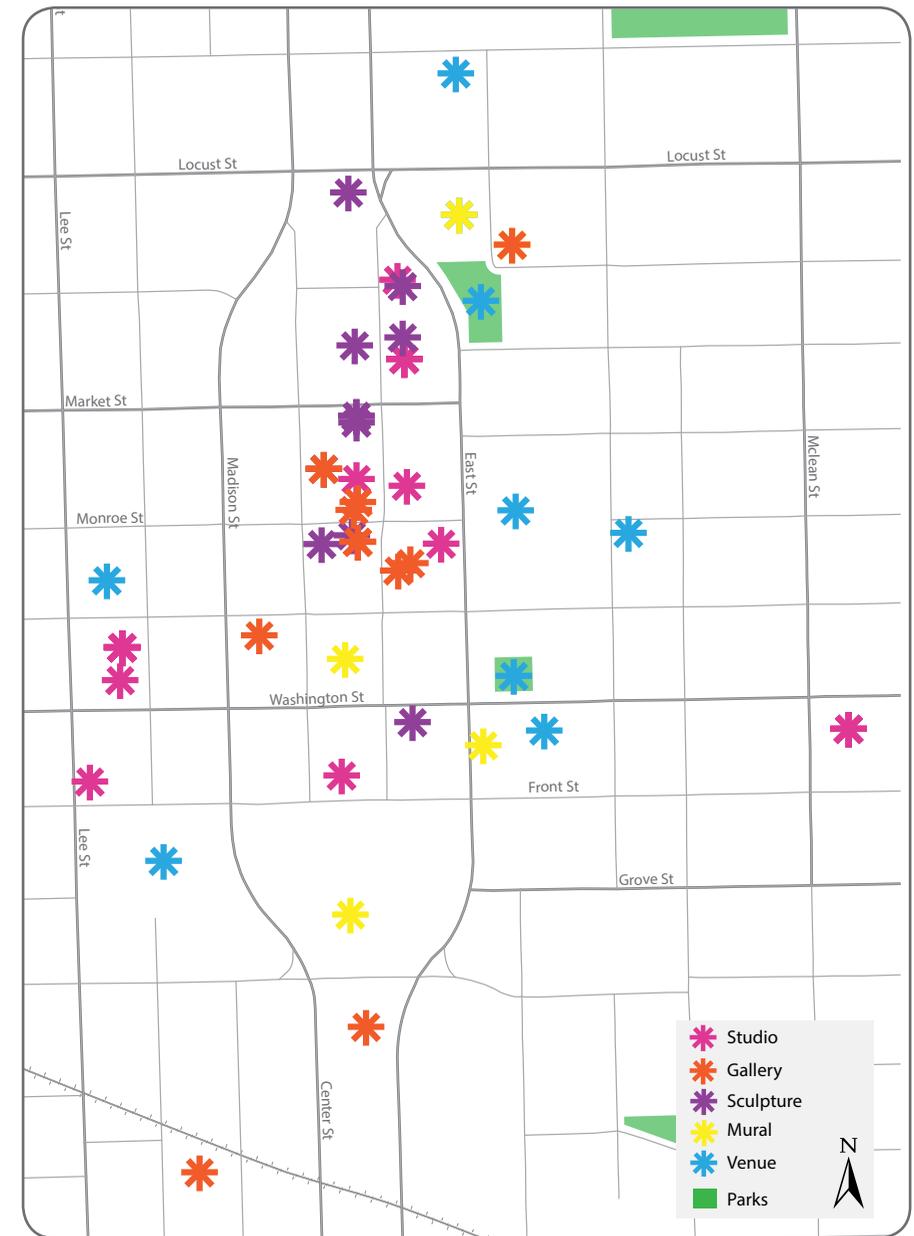

Figure 7.2. Cultural Amenities In Downtown Bloomington

ACH-3. Support and promote arts and culture in the community.

ACH-3.1 Coordinate with public and private agencies to provide funding for the arts.

ACH-3.1a Identify and maintain a database of art-related grants. *MCAC, IWU ARC*

ACH-3.2 Advocate at local, state and federal levels for continued support of arts in the community.

METRICS

- Up-to-date art database
- $ local and non-local art funding ↑

ACH-3.2a Advocate for arts funding during the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council's One Voice trip. *Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts; short term*

ACH-3.2b Advocate for arts funding at the state level. *Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts; ongoing*

ACH-3.2c Encourage local philanthropic efforts and planned giving for the promotion of the arts in the community. *Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts; ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

AART, BCPA, DBA/Uptown, CVB, IPCF, MCAC, Shirk Family Foundation, EDC, Town of Normal

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MAJOR NATIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

ART PLACE AMERICA is a ten-year collaboration, formed in 2013, that exists to position art and culture as a core sector of comprehensive community planning and development in order to help strengthen the social, physical, and economic fabric of communities.

ArtPlace focuses its work on creative placemaking, the set of practices in which art and culture work intentionally to help to transform a place. ArtPlace has four core areas of activity: it manages a national grants program that supports creative placemaking projects in communities of all sizes; it will extend this work by investing more deeply through multi-year investments in 5 communities; it seeks to understand, document, and disseminate successful creative placemaking practices through its research strategies; and it works to connect practitioners, organizations, and communities with one another.

ArtPlace is a collaboration among the Barr Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Ford Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, William Penn Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Rasmuson Foundation, The Surdna Foundation, and two anonymous donors.

ArtPlace seeks advice and counsel from its close working relationships with the following federal agencies: the National Endowment for the Arts, the US Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Education, and Transportation, along with leadership from the White House Office of Management and Budget and the Domestic Policy Council.

ArtPlace also partners with six major financial institutions: Bank of America, Citi, Deutsche Bank, Chase, MetLife, and Morgan Stanley. Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Inc. (RPA) provides ArtPlace with financial, grants management, and administrative support.

Art Place offers two types of grants each year. The National program and the neighborhood based program. The latter is only offered to place-based NGO's. More information can be obtained from www.artplaceamerica.org

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Through "Our Town" grants, subject to the availability of funding, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) will provide a limited number of grants for creative placemaking projects that contribute towards the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and resilient places with the arts at their core.

"Our Town" prioritizes partnerships between arts organizations and government, private, and nonprofit organizations to achieve livability goals for communities.

LOCAL ART FUNDING

- **Mirza/Illinois Prairie Community Foundation Arts and Culture Grants.** Winter-spring application time table; Grants available in the fields of art education and enrichment, and performing, visual and literary arts
- **Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts $3,000** "BCPA Student Spotlight Series." Engages 5,000 students and teachers pre-K through 12 with a live theatrical performance and residency programming that will compliment and expand in-classroom programs.
- **Brass Band of Central Illinois $3,000** "Spring 2015 Concert." Support to bring awareness and appreciation of the traditional British brass band style of instrumental music to the public.
- **Community Players Theatre $1,720** "Of Mice and Men School Production." Enables students from middle school and up to attend a live performance during the school day and to participate in a Q & A session

with the actors.
- **Conexiones Latinas de McLean County $4,142** "Ballet Folklorico de Central Illinois." Supports a new program that will teach students traditional Mexican dance, history and geography and culminate with a public performance.
- **Heartland Theatre Company $2,310** "The Glass Menagerie." Provides an opportunity for area high school students to attend a special showing of the production with a talkback afterwards.
- **Illinois Shakespeare Festival $2,500** "Modern Shakespeare for Modern Youth." Students at the Regional Alternative School will adapt Shakespeare's work into a contemporary and accessible form while earning academic credit.
- **Illinois State University (ISU)** "Boys and Girls Club Friday Arts Experience." $699 Provides supplies for a program where ISU teacher candidates teach seven 90-minute open-ended arts lessons to

Boys and Girls Club members.
- ISU "2014 Concerts on the Quad." $3,250 Pays for artists' fees for the groups L'Esprit Creole and Switchback to perform at two concerts in this popular series.
- ISU "Saturday Creative Drama for Kids." $2,000 Program teaches approximately 200 children K-6 about the elements of drama and provides them with stronger social awareness, empathy, enhanced creativity and appreciation of theatre.
- "ISU String Project." $2,000 Offers low-cost instruction on orchestral stringed instruments from ISU School of Music faculty and undergraduate and graduate students to children in McLean and Livingston Counties.
- University Galleries at Illinois State University $4,086 "All Around Art" Program provides free visual arts workshops to middle- and high school-aged students as well

as age appropriate lessons for K-5.
- **Illinois Symphony Orchestra $3,500** "Free Tickets for Low Income Students to ISO Concert." Provides tickets and transportation for elementary school students to attend ISO's "The Concert for Kids."
- **Illinois Wesleyan University $1,500** "Summer Music Program." Provides intensive music camps for junior and senior high school students with instruction from professional musicians and includes free faculty and student concerts for the community.
- **McLean County Arts Center $5,000** "ROVER: Mobile Arts Center." A rural outreach program designed to encourage, promote, and practice visual arts for youth and adults who reside in McLean County.
- **Midwest Institute of Opera $3,500** "MIOpportunities" Program seeks to enrich the community through high quality, accessible, free opera performances and hands-on activities.
- **Share the Music $3,000**

A musical instrument recycling program that rehabilitates and refurbishes musical instruments and provides them at low (or no) cost to financially qualified El-Hi students in music education.
- **Western Avenue Community Center $1,134** "Summer Camp" Program brings six local artists to discuss their art which leads to workshops in which participants create a piece of art similar to the visiting artists

The following **banks** have provided grants for Arts and Culture in the past. State Farm Bank, PNC Bank, Bank of America, US Bank, JP Morgan Chase & Co, Citigroup, Wells Fargo & Co, First Third Bank

Performance at BCPA

Girl Scout Mural @ 102 W. Market St.

David Davis Mansion

Sculpture in front of MCAC

ACH-4. Identify, conserve, and preserve the City's heritage resources as a basis for retaining and enhancing strong community character and a sense of place.

ACH-4.1 Fully integrate considerations of historic and cultural resources as a major aspect of the City's planning, permitting and development activities.

ACH-4.1a Maintain and update a historic and cultural database and use that as a primary tool for protecting those resources. *MCMH; ongoing*

ACH-4.1b Use zoning, code enforcements and other regulatory tools to protect the City's historic and cultural resources. *COB Community Development Department/Historic Preservation Commission; ongoing*

ACH-4.1c Protect and maintain publicly owned cultural resources. Such resources may include buildings, monuments, streets and trees. *City/Illinois Historic Preservation Agency; ongoing*

ACH-4.1d Pursue an active and comprehensive program to document and preserve historic buildings, structures, sites (including archaeological sites), objects, landscapes, and natural resources. Historic Preservation Commission/*MCMH; ongoing*

ACH-4.1e Continually update identification and designation of historical buildings that are eligible for local, state and national designation based on 50 year age guideline. *MCMH; ongoing*

ACH-4.1f Conduct educational programs to promote an understanding of the significance of the City's cultural resources and criteria for historic designation. *Lead Agency: Historic Preservation Commission/MCMH; ongoing*

ACH-4.1g Maintain the Illinois Main Street designation. *DBA; ongoing*

ACH-4.2 Promote cultural heritage tourism.

ACH-4.2a Leverage the Route 66 tourism efforts to enhance the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods. *MCMH/CVB, ongoing*

ACH-4.2b Educate visitors and the public regarding local heritage tourism sites. *MCMH/CVB; ongoing*

ACH-4.2c Identify historic and cultural sites that can be linked to the trails and greenways. *MCMH; ongoing*

METRICS

- Up-to-date historic database
- # of people participating in the cultural heritage tours and activities ↑
- # of structures rehabilitated and restored ↑
- # of structures with historic designation ↑
- # of Route 66 visitors and tourists ↑
- # of attractions along Route 66 ↑
- # of attractions along the bike trails and routes ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

Old House Society, City of Bloomington, Town of Normal, McLean County, State of Illinois, National Trust, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, MCMH, Neighborhood organizations, MCRPC, COB Community Development Department, BCPA, Local bike advocacy groups (Bike BloNo; Friends of the Constitution Trail), DBA, Uptown

Figure 7-3. Historic Sites Along the Route 66 Corridor in Bloomington-Normal

ACH-5. Encourage the use of public art to enhance neighborhoods and public spaces and foster engagement throughout the community.

ACH-5.1 Utilize art in public places to enhance the image of the City.

METRICS

- Public Art Master Plan
- # of public art projects in general and parks in particular ↑

ACH-5.1a Prepare a master plan for existing and proposed art in public places. *BCPA; short-medium*

ACH-5.1b Identify and remove barriers to both visual and performance arts in the parks. *BCPA; short*

ACH-5.1c Maintain existing permanent public art in good condition. *BCPA; ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

COB Community Development Dept., Community Facilities Dept., Downtown Bloomington Association, Neighborhood organizations, MCRPC

ACH-5.2 Use public art and cultural programs to help support neighborhood identity and foster neighborhood pride.

METRICS

- Database of sites and buildings suitable for public art/mural projects
- # of public art projects along the key corridors and entrances ↑
- # of interactive public art (particularly in regeneration and preservation neighborhoods) ↑

ACH-5.2a Continue to develop and support outreach programs that bring arts into every area of the community to increase participation in the arts and broaden the reach of arts and culture. *BCPA; ongoing*

ACH-5.2b Enhance the neighborhoods along the Route 66 corridor with public art and neighborhood-scaled commercial that complements the Route's history. *COB Community Development Dept.; short-medium*

ACH-5.2c Utilize public art as a tool to enhance the key corridors in the community (see Map Key Corridors and Entrances). *COB Public Works; short-medium*

ACH-5.2d Utilize public art to enhance the entrances into the City as well as Downtown (see Map Key Corridors and Entrances). *COB Public Works; short-medium*

ACH-5.2e Identify sites for installation of temporary or permanent art work that will help build connections between the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods (ex: parking lots). *DBA; short*

ACH-5.2f Engage the neighbors where feasible, particularly at-risk youth, during any art installation. *BCPA; ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

MCRPC, IDOT, EDC, Neighborhood organizations, Non profits - particularly the ones working with youth such as YMCA, Boys and Girls Club and Youth Build, Action Research Center

ACH-5.3 Temporary art installations

ACH-5.3a Identify potential areas for temporary art installation along the key corridors as well as in the regeneration and preservation areas. Install temporary art on a rotating basis to bring attention to those areas. *BCPA; short*

ACH-5.3b Identify potential areas for temporary art installation along the Constitution Trail and other walking/biking routes. *BCPA; short*

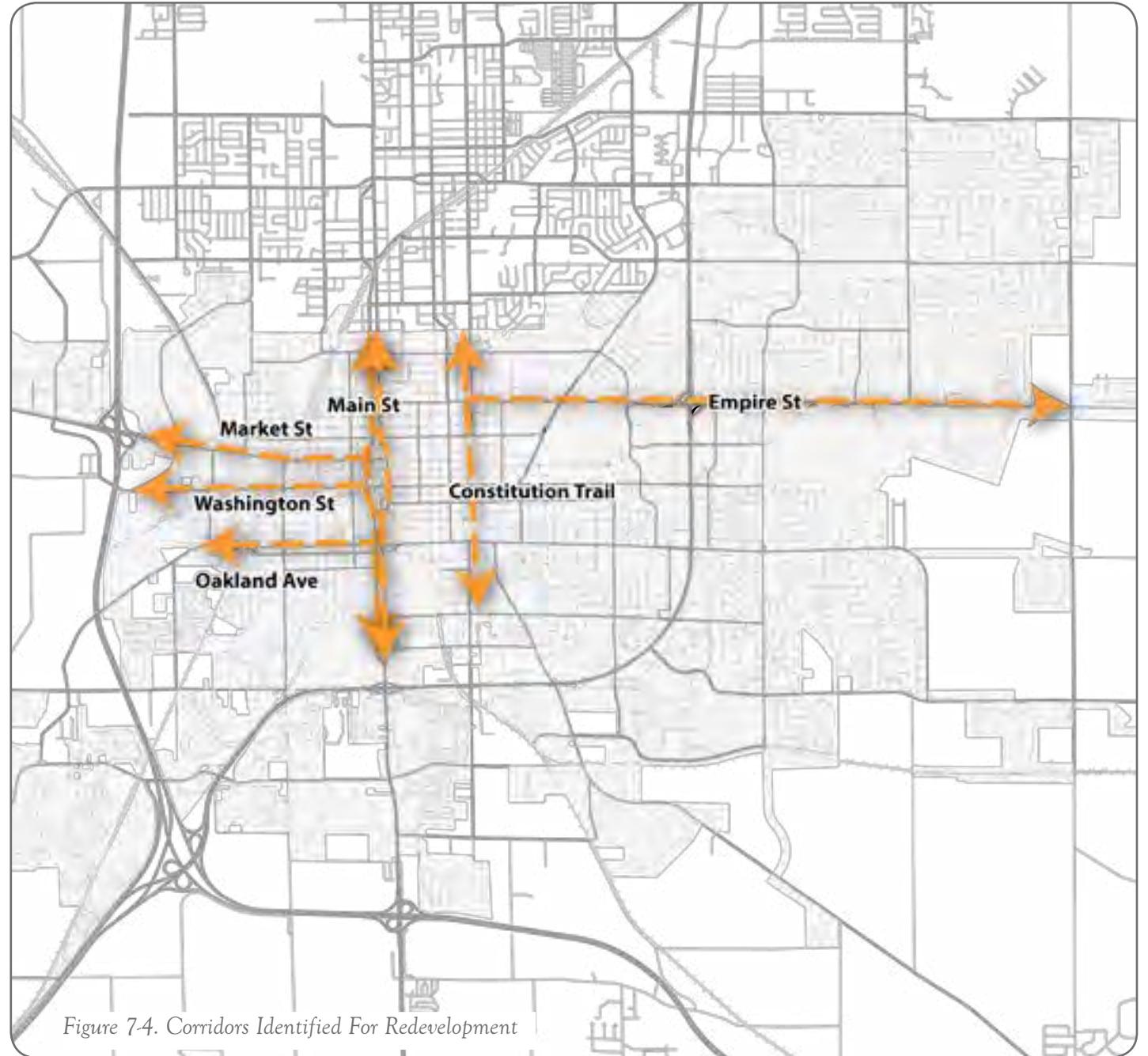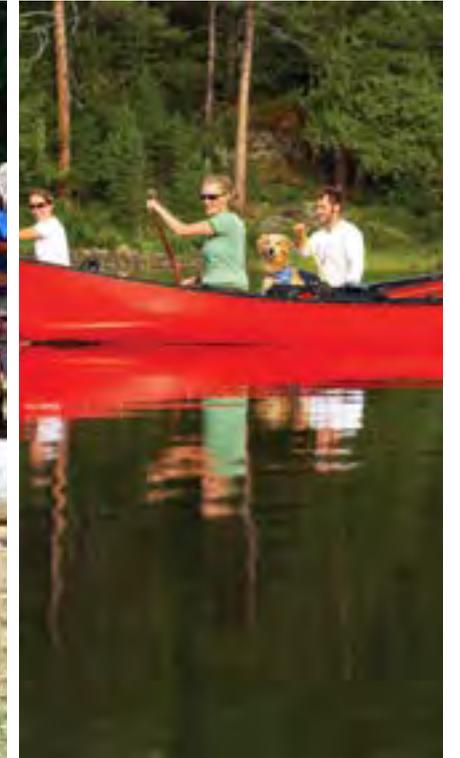| METRICS	PARTNER AGENCIES
• Database of sites and buildings suitable for temporary art installations • # of temporary art installations ↑	IWU ARC, MCRPC, Local bike advocacy groups (Bike BloNo, Friends of Constitution Trail), Neighborhood organizations

Figure 7-4. Corridors Identified For Redevelopment

8. HEALTHY COMMUNITY

VISION
Bloomington will practice environmental stewardship and provide healthy and active lifestyle choices for all.

Planning in the United States originated with a public health purpose. Rapid urbanization in the 19th and early 20th century resulted in overcrowded and often poorly constructed housing, noxious industrial and manufacturing uses, new levels of human and animal waste, and intensified outbreaks of infectious diseases. Planning was rooted in the need to reduce congestion, improve public health, and support reform in housing and sanitation. Given this history, the concept of "health" has historically been associated with issues surrounding physical health.

Today however, healthy communities are those that embrace a complex set of factors that contribute to good health such as clean environments, active transportation, cultural and recreational opportunities, employment options, quality education, availability of public health programs and services and many more as illustrated in Figure 8-1. While many of these components are addressed in many sections of this plan, this chapter is devoted solely to discuss the physical health, social health (or community wellbeing) and the health of the environment surrounding us. While access to good quality health care services is a major factor that contributes towards the overall health of the community, it is not a primary topic of discussion in this chapter.

The City's policies relating to land use, food access and the transportation system have a strong influence on people's lifestyles and in promoting the physical, social and environmental health of the community. This section provides a framework for consideration of health in all policies essential to building a healthy and vibrant community for all.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

The McLean County Health Department's IPLAN identified obesity along with mental health and oral health as a major health priority for the county. Over 62.5% of all adults in McLean County were either overweight or obese during the years 2007-2009. The percentage of obese adults in McLean County increased from 20.7% in 2004 to 22.0% in 2008. The percentage of overweight adults increased from 35.0% to 39.5% during the same time period. This is an alarming trend. The two primary factors contributing to obesity

Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991

Figure 8-1. Factors Influencing Health

are lack of physical activity and access to fresh food.

Physical Activity

To address the issues that resulted from rapid urbanization in the early 20th century, a series of policies related to zoning, housing, and transportation were created. Many of these policies were geared toward separation of residential land uses from the non-residential uses. They had a lasting impact on the ways in which we develop the built environment. In many communities across the United States, including Bloomington, the residential land uses are segregated from other uses to the point of strongly discouraging any active mode of transportation. As shown in Figure 8-2, 8.9% of residential units in Bloomington are within ¼ mile of a grocery store, 2.6% live within ¼ mile of a pharmacy, and 29.7% are within one mile of an elementary school. Today, many studies show that people tend to be more active when they can easily and safely access key destinations such as parks, schools, workplaces and shops by walking and biking. Throughout the public outreach campaign, residents emphasized the value of parks and recreational opportunities. The Constitution Trail

- Bloomington's enjoyable, accessible, safe park system enhances the quality of life and promotes a strong sense of community.

- Bloomington's walking and biking network will enhance healthy lifestyle choices in the community by connecting people to places in a safe and attractive way.

- Bloomington will become a food-secure community that promotes the ability to grow, consume, and distribute healthy, locally produced food. Our food system will benefit our community, our economy and our environment.

- Bloomington will be a community that provides quality physical and mental health care to all of its residents.

- Bloomington will demonstrate stewardship of its environment and natural resources.

- Bloomington will be an active community year-round with plenty of recreation options for people of all ages and income levels.

- Bloomington strives to be an inclusive City that provides a basic quality of life and opportunity for all.

spanning Bloomington- Normal is a treasured local amenity for recreation, fitness, and transportation.

Changes in demographics are bringing in many changes in the trends of popular recreational activities. It is important to be aware of these changing needs for the park and recreational facilities to be relevant and utilized. This will require an ongoing analysis and resources for the City's parks and recreation department.

Improvements in placement of sidewalks, conditions of sidewalks, bike lanes and safety measures such as proper lighting are steps the City can take to encourage greater physical activity in existing neighborhoods. It is important for the City to take an active role in county-wide efforts such as those initiated by the health department, school districts or the McLean County Wellness Coalition to improve the overall health of the community.

Current development regulations, such as the subdivision ordinance, should be revisited and revisions made to encourage mixed use developments that foster active living.

Access to Fresh Food

Along with lack of physical activity, poor nutrition is also a risk factor for obesity and related chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers. While people's health is influenced by personal decisions, national research shows that in communities where healthy food options like fresh fruits and vegetables are available, residents have better diets and lower rates of obesity and diet-related chronic disease.

Municipalities addressing the access to fresh food is a relatively recent phenomenon that is triggered by the obesity epidemic and increased food insecurity, particularly among low-income households. The availability of fresh, affordable, healthy food is of particular concern on the west side of Bloomington, or the Regeneration Area. A majority of this area has been designated as a food desert by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The lack of available fresh food, including transportation access to grocery stores and the concentration of lower income households are contributing to that designation.

Although the Walmart on West Market Street is on the west side of the City, the I-55/I-74 interchange presents a dangerous barrier to accessing the store by non-motorized transportation. While attracting a neighborhood grocery store to locate within the Regeneration Area (West Side) can solve the issue to some degree, the challenges of attracting one are much greater.

There are some grassroots efforts like the "gleaning" project, a partnership between the Wellness Coalition, IWU Action Research Center and the Downtown Farmers Market and Artists Alley, that gleans and distributes left over fresh produce from the farmers market to the residents in the Regeneration Area.

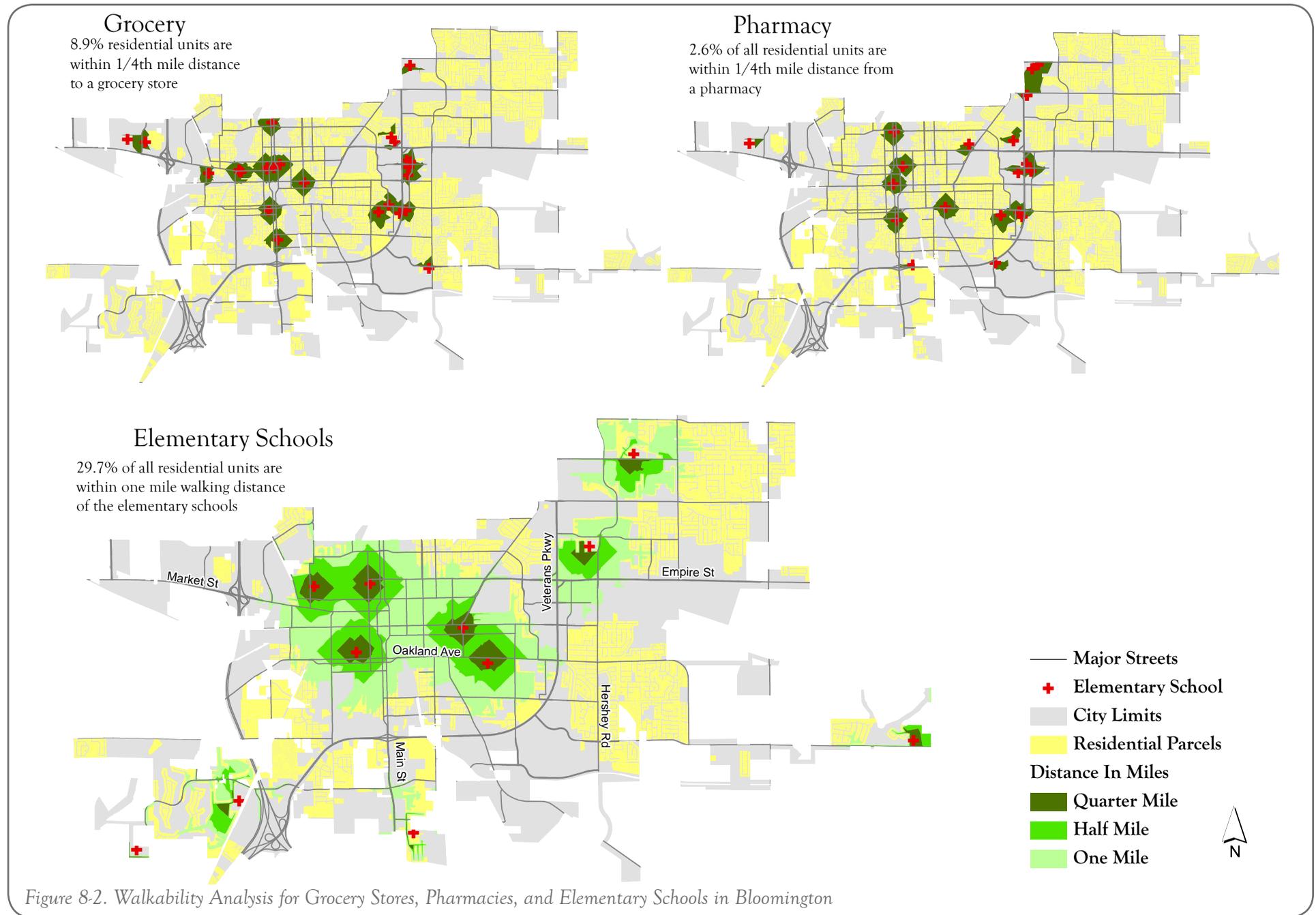Recently the USDA, through its Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women,

- There are 9 acres of parks per 1,000 residents, falling approximately 75 acres short of the 10 acres per 1,000 residents.
- Currently there are 44 parks, 3 golf courses, 2 aquatic facilities, a zoo, an ice rink, 15 facilities and shelters and 25 miles of Constitution Trail in Bloomington (37 within Bloomington and Normal).
- Health Department's IPLAN (2012-2017) identified obesity, mental health and oral health as the major health priorities for McLean County.
- The USDA designated a majority of the west side of Bloomington as a "food desert."

Infants and Children (commonly known as WIC), introduced the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) to increase access to fresh produce to low-income families. McLean County Health Department administers this program locally. In 2014, only 35% of all tokens issued were redeemed at the farmers market. This indicates a need for increased education and promotion.

Green Top Grocery, Bloomington-Normal's first co-op grocery store, recently announced that it would be locating just east of the Downtown area at 921 E. Washington Street. This facility, located in a food desert, is anticipated for completion in mid to late 2016. Along with connecting fresh food from local farmers to local consumers, one of Green Top's core values is social responsibility. While this is definitely a step in the right direction for affordable fresh food in this community, it does not respond to all the needs.

Bloomington is also fortunate to have Home Sweet Home Ministries, a local not-for-profit organization, operating its Bread for Life co-op which allows low income individuals and families to work at the co-op a certain number of

Grocery
8.9% residential units are within 1/4th mile distance to a grocery store

Pharmacy
2.6% of all residential units are within 1/4th mile distance from a pharmacy

Elementary Schools
29.7% of all residential units are within one mile walking distance of the elementary schools

Legend
— Major Streets
+ Elementary School
City Limits
Residential Parcels
Distance In Miles
Quarter Mile
Half Mile
One Mile

Figure 8-2. Walkability Analysis for Grocery Stores, Pharmacies, and Elementary Schools in Bloomington

hours in exchange for fresh healthy food for themselves and their families.

The local food movement has grown in popularity throughout the country as a way to increase connections between locally grown foods to the community. This trend is growing fast in Bloomington-Normal and McLean County. This is evidenced by the success of the Downtown Farmers' Market, an increase in the number of community gardens, and farm to fork restaurants like Epiphany Farms and Garlic Press.

The local University of Illinois Extension office is making strides in encouraging more small to mid-size farmers. Despite these efforts, there are significant gaps in all aspects of the local food chain from production and processing to distribution and consumption. This plan calls for increased collaboration among the local government units, schools, universities, local farmers, and restaurants to ensure access to fresh local food to residents of all ages and income levels.
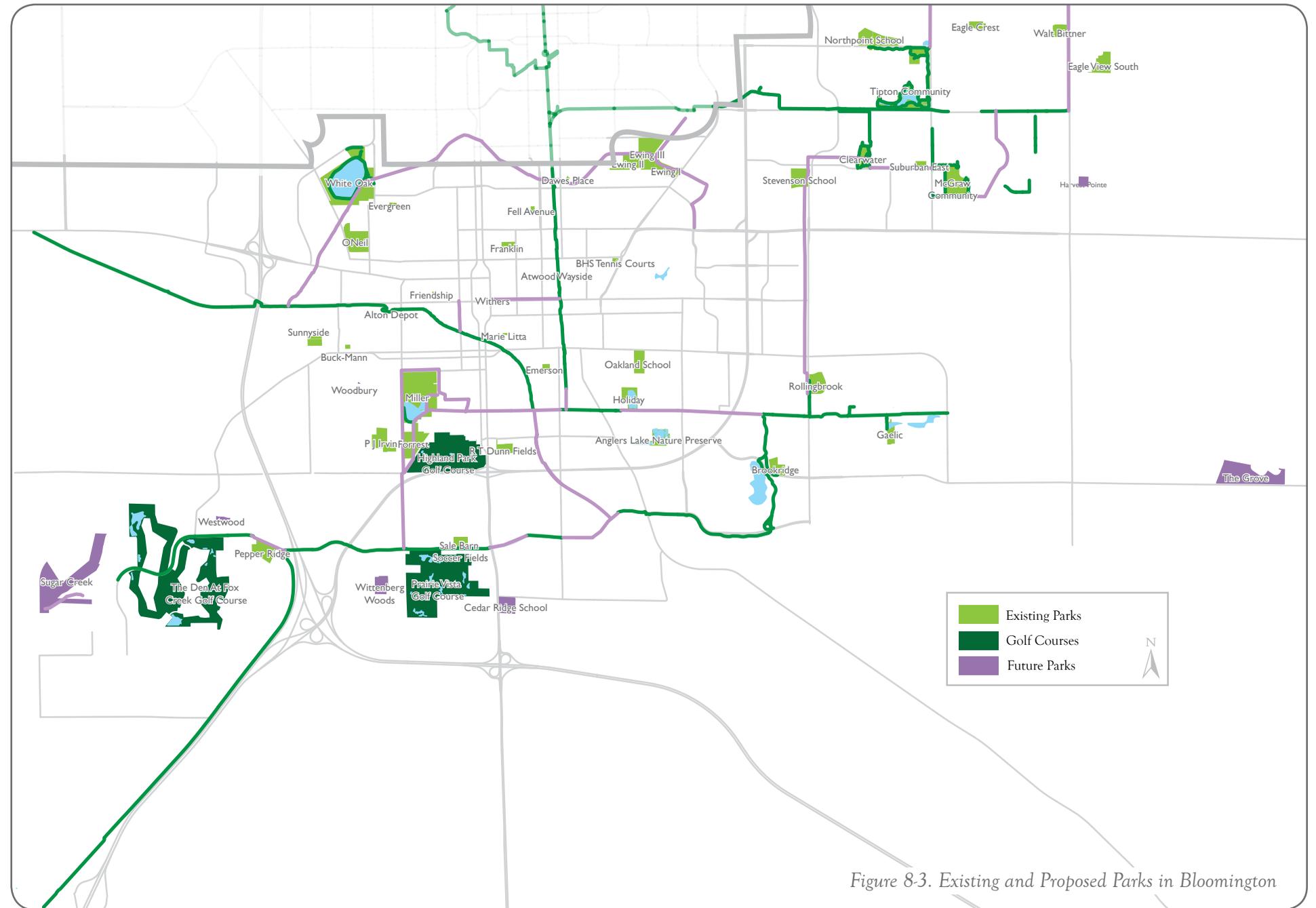

Figure 8-3. Existing and Proposed Parks in Bloomington

HL-1. Create a park and green space system that provides for a variety of active and passive recreational and wellness activities for current and future residents.

HL-1.1 Coordinate park planning with other agencies and entities.

HL-1.1a Keep the City's parks plan current through regular schedule of updates every five years that provide detailed guidelines necessary to plan, finance, develop and manage the individual park facilities and programs. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

HL-1.1b Maintain consistency among the City's parks plans, adopted comprehensive plan, long range transportation plan and other special purpose plans specifically undertaken to address components of the park systems. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

Constitution Trail

Miller Park Pavillion

Table 8-1. Park Upgrades or Improvements as Suggested by the Current Parks Master Plan

PARK	Maintanence	Trail Upgrades	Play Ground Improvements	Sports Field Upgrades	ADA Improvements	Pavillion	Landscaping
Airport Park		■		■			
Alton Depot Park			■		■		
Anglers Lake Nature Preserve		■			■	■	
Atwood Wayside Park	■	■					
BHS Tennis Courts	■						
Brookridege Park	■						
Buck-Mann Park			■	■			
Clearwater Park	■			■			
Dawes Place							■
Eagle Crest Park		■	■				
Emerson Park			■			■	
Evergreen Park			■	■		■	
Ewing I Park		■					
Ewing I I Park		■	■				
Ewing I I I Park		■					■
Fell Avenue Park	■						
Forrest Park					■		
Franklin Park			■				
Holiday Park					■		
Marie Litta Park			■				
McGraw Community Park	■	■					
Miller Park					■		
O'Neil Park					■		
PJ Irvin Park	■						
RT Dunn Fields Park				■			
Rollingbrook Park		■	■	■			
Sale Barn Soccer Fields				■			
Stevenson School Park			■				
Suburban East Park			■	■			
Sunnyside Park			■	■			
Tipton Community Park	■						
Walt Bittner Park							■
White Oak Park							
Withers Park						■	

HL-1.2 Protect, enhance and maintain parks and green space equitably throughout the City.

HL-1.2a Increase developed outdoor parkland to reach 10 acres per 1,000 residents. (Neighborhood parks are generally 1-10 acres in size, community parks 10-50 acres, and regional parks 50-100 acres). *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, medium*

HL-1.2b Update older equipment in various City parks as identified by the City's Parks Plan. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

HL-1.2c Consider latest trends in recreation, including the water recreation, when updating park facilities. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

HL-1.2d Parks and other community facilities serving the newer areas should be closer to the center of the development or within 1/4 mile of all its housing units. Where feasible, colocate future park space within or near the conservation areas and regional detention ponds to create an integrated park and open space system. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, medium*

HL-1.2e Address neighborhood crime and safety concerns. Work with area residents, property owners and law enforcement to develop and implement design-oriented solutions that address the safety concerns identified in neighborhoods with higher crime rates. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

HL-1.2f Promote park and facility design principles that discourages vandalism, deters crime, provides natural surveillance, and creates a safe, comfortable environment. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

HL-1.2g Add a dog park to one of the existing parks, preferably on the south side of Bloomington. Investigate the feasibility of a future dog park at parks such as Emerson or Pepper Ridge Park. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

HL-1.2h Investigate adding a pump track facility, which can become a regional attraction. The currently underutilized quarry lake on Bloomington's west side could be a great location. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

Pump Track

A pump track is a continuous loop of dirt berms and "rollers" (smooth dirt mounds) that you ride without pedaling. The name "pump track" comes from the pumping motion used by the rider's upper and lower body as they ride around the track. The idea of a pump track is to use this pumping motion to maintain your speed around the track without pedaling. The old quarry site on Dr. Martin Luther King Junior Drive could be a great location for this type of facility. A pump track at this location could become a regional attraction on this currently underutilized City property.

HL-1.3 Enhance the walking, jogging and biking trails system.

HL-1.3a Walking/jogging/biking trails to continue to receive the highest priority in development of public recreational amenities. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

HL-1.3b Implement the recommendations of the City's Bicycle Master Plan. *City of Bloomington, short*

HL-1.3c Adopt and implement the City's Sidewalks Master Plan. *City of Bloomington, short*

HL-1.3d Prioritize trails and street improvements to promote safe walking and biking routes for all age groups around schools, parks and employment centers. *City of Bloomington & Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

HL-1.3e Accommodate walking/biking infrastructure in any future bridge improvements. *Bloomington Public Works, ongoing*

HL-1.3f Provide park-to-park trail linkages as identified in the City's Park Plan (O'Neil Park to White Oak Park; Clearwater Park to McGraw Park and P. J. Irvin). *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, medium*

HL-1.3g Develop additional walking routes that network with existing trails so that neighborhoods are linked to retail areas, major employers, and activity areas. *Bloomington Public Works, medium*

HL-1.3h Adopt strategies (crime watch, lights) to enhance personal safety in areas (playgrounds, bike lanes, walking paths, etc. where people are or could be physically active). *City of Bloomington, short*

HL-1.3i Integrate the City's park system with regional parks through trails and greenways. *Regional Greenways Committee, ongoing*

HL-2. Ensure maximum usage of the City's parks and recreational facilities and associated resources.

HL-2.1 Ensure easy access and availability of park facilities for residents as well as community groups.

HL-2.1a Ensure greater access to the area parks from the surrounding residential areas, GIS analysis to identify such connections. *City of Bloomington & Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

HL-2.1b Conduct a walking/biking audit as a metric to measure the accessibility of the City's parks. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

HL-2.1c Focus groups with seniors to identify the parks and recreational needs of older adults. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

HL-2.1d Dedicate times for seniors at the City's parks and pool facilities. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

HL-2.1e Develop Woodbury Park (currently undeveloped) to increase recreational access to the surrounding residential mobile home parks and subdivisions as identified in the City's parks master plan. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, medium*

HL-2.1f Provide assistance to community groups wishing to enhance physical activity in the parks. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

HL-2.1g Integrate with external parties such as schools to promote physical activity in off-hours. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

METRICS

- # of households within 1/4th mile of parks (excludes golf courses) ↑
- # of community groups/schools using the parks ↑
- A database of senior recreational needs
- # of seniors participating in parks programming ↑
- Walking/biking audit for all the schools, parks and other community facilities

PARTNER AGENCIES

Local schools and universities, Community groups, School Districts, Community centers, MCHD Health Promotion, IPLAN Obesity Task Force, McLean County Wellness Coalition

Play Streets

Play Streets is an initiative aimed at providing children with safe, supervised opportunities for play and recreation in areas that do not have easy access to parks. With a play street event, a city street is closed down to offer the children in the neighborhood a variety of activities in which to participate. This program benefits neighborhood children in two ways, one in that they are provided a safe environment in which to play, the second in that they are engaging in physical activity. These types of events can also be a tremendous tool for building community and bringing neighborhoods together in a positive environment. In recent years, Chicago has utilized this method to offer opportunities for physical activity and community building in neighborhoods all throughout the City. These events in Chicago were made possible through collaboration between the Chicago Department of Public Health, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois, and other partners from throughout the community. The City of Bloomington can utilize the concept of the Play Streets in the Regeneration and Preservation Areas where adding a new park or green space can be challenging.

HL-2.2 Create a smoke free and tobacco free environment in parks and public spaces.

HL-2.2a Prohibit smoking, except in designated smoking areas, in all City-owned recreational properties including parks and playgrounds, Constitution Trail, swimming pools, and sporting and recreational facilities. *City of Bloomington & Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short-medium*

Health Department's Tobacco-Related Efforts

In recent years, it has become more and more important to address tobacco use both as a personal and public health issue. The McLean County Health Department has shown a continued commitment to assisting individuals who are trying to quit using tobacco and educating the public on the impact of tobacco use on individuals and to the public at large.

Illinois Tobacco-Free Communities Grant (ITFC)
1. Services offered in this grant include providing education and enforcement of the Smoke-Free Illinois Act, promoting the Illinois tobacco Quitline via fax referral partners, tobacco-free media campaigns, providing smoking cessation programs and working toward smoke-free policies such as smoke-free parks and smoke-free multi-unit housing.
2. Advocacy and enforcement of the Smoke-Free Illinois Act is extremely important because there is a possibility that the law may cease to exist in Illinois, exposing patrons to deadly secondhand smoke. It is also important to continue educating the community on emerging tobacco issues and offering services to help them quit, such as Freedom From Smoking at little to no cost. Many efforts focus on preventing tobacco use among youth, which is extremely important for the future of the community.

REALITY Illinois
1. This program engages teens from McLean County to spread tobacco-free messages in talking to other teens, planning events and activities, and advocate for smoke-free policies at a local level.
2. Last year, REALITY Illinois empowered teens to learn more about their local government and how to get adults to listen to their ideas. The community at large will benefit from smoke-free policies at local parks because it will limit exposure to secondhand smoke and model healthy behaviors for children and teens. It also adds to the normalcy of tobacco-free public spaces all across the country.
3. REALITY is about engaging youth for positive change and allows teens to find their voice and discover that they can evoke change in an adult run world. Government leaders are likely to listen to youth in their community and this program provides teens a professional platform to do so.

HL-3. Ensure a healthy environment and accessibility of parks and open spaces.

HL-3.1 Eliminate barriers that discourage people from walking and biking to parks and recreational facilities.

- Database of walking/biking barriers to parks and recreation facilities
- # of Part 1 and Part 2 crimes within 1/4 mile of parks ↓
- # of deaths from obesity-related chronic illnesses.↓

HL-3.1a Provide for the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists in compliance with the City's Sidewalk and Bicycle Master Plans. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

HL-3.1b Work with law enforcement to identify land use issues affecting safety and security in neighborhoods. *Bloomington Community Development, ongoing*

HL-3.1c Provide street calming measures and ensure appropriate levels of lighting to make recreational facilities accessible and safer. *City of Bloomington, medium*

Bloomington Police Department, MCRPC, Bloomington Public Works, YMCA

HL-3.2 Ensure accessibility of parks, open spaces and other recreational facilities to all residents.

- # of ADA accessible sidewalks ↑
- # of ADA accessible parks and playground equipment ↑

HL-3.2a Continue to comply with the American with Disabilities Act. *Bloomington Public Works, ongoing*

HL-3.2b Coordinate with the transportation plans to provide safe walk/ bike routes to promote physical activity. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

MCRPC, LifeCIL, Connect Transit, McLean County Health Department Health Promotion

Accessible Parks and Playgrounds

Having parks and recreation amenities that are accessible to residents of all ages and abilities is an objective of this plan. Many lifelong communities make their parks, playgrounds and other recreational facilities wheelchair accessible. They have ramps to the playground activities so that children in wheelchairs can enjoy them as well. Many of the activities at these types of playgrounds are sensory in nature and have flat surfaces to make them all easily accessible to children with disabilities. Some also feature accessible swings that accommodate children with disabilities. A great example of such a playground can be found in Pocatello, Idaho in Brooklyn's Playground. This effort was begun by a couple whose young daughter suffers from spina bifida and wanted to provide her, and other children like her the opportunity to enjoy a playground accessible to them. Over $500,000 was raised to build the playground.

HL-4. Continue to develop quality parks and recreational programming for all.

HL-4.1 Ensure that all parks have amenities and facilities that appeal to residents of all ages and abilities.

METRICS

- # of outdoor and accessible physical activity stations ↑
- Amount of available programmable space ↑
- # of skating rinks (permanent and temporary) and ice time ↑
- # of age-friendly park amenities and programs ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

U.S. Cellular Coliseum, Central Illinois Arena Management (CIAM), Local community centers like the YMCA, Western Avenue Community Center, and Lincoln Leisure Center, McLean County Health Department and Collaborative Community Health Needs Assessment

HL-4.1a Provide physical activity stations and play equipment that is accessible for people of all ages and abilities. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

HL-4.1b Additional programmable indoor space to serve the community, providing more recreation opportunities in the form of classrooms and multi-purpose programming, possibility of incorporating gymnasium space within community center. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation/YMCA, short*

HL-4.1c Maximize use of U.S. Cellular Coliseum ice to meet ice demand. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

HL-4.1d Investigate possibility of temporary ice skating rinks to address the high demand for ice time during winter. *City of Bloomington, medium*

HL-4.1e Implement Miller Park Master Plan. *City of Bloomington & Bloomington Parks and Recreation, medium*

HL-4.1f Conduct periodic surveys to identify the changing recreational needs of the community. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

HL-4.1g Ensure collaboration among various city departments to design age-friendly parks amenities and programming and see that they are integrated into the parks master plan. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

Snapshot of Current Park Programming

The City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department currently has 51 parks and recreation facilities throughout the City offering a variety of activities for residents of all ages. The parks department publishes a winter/spring programming guide, a summer guide, and a fall guide, each detailing the parks and recreation activities available in each season. The Parks and Recreation Department offers artistic, educational, and recreational opportunities for the youth of the community year round including such activities as swimming and skating lessons, art classes, soccer, t-ball, and many others. In addition to physical activities for the youth of Bloomington, the parks department also offers opportunities for adults such as Zumba and tennis. For senior citizens, the parks department offers the adult center with a variety of daily activities, in addition to plays, concerts, and bus trips. The Special Opportunities in Recreation (S.O.A.R) program is designed to provide individuals with disabilities and special needs with traditional recreational programming. The program, jointly sponsored by the City of Bloomington and Town of Normal Parks and Recreation Departments, works towards the goal of therapeutic recreation opportunities, skill development, and socialization for participants. As evidenced during the community outreach survey, there has been and continues to be great appreciation throughout the community for the S.O.A.R program. The parks and recreation department also partners with local schools for parks facilities. The Bloomington High School tennis courts and parks at Northpoint, Oakland, and Stevenson Schools serve as parks for those school buildings and their students, as well as to the general public.

HL-5. Provide access to healthy foods and promote food security to build community.

HL-5.1 Encourage local food production.

- # and acres of community gardens ↑
- # of community gardens on City property ↑
- # of community gardens at schools ↑
- # of small to mid-size farms ↑
- A regional food plan

MCRPC, local farmers, Ropp Farms, Rader Farms, Epiphany Farms, Prairie Earth Farms, U of I Extension Office, neighborhood organizations, WBRP, Heartland Community College, YMCA

HL-5.1a   Create a regional food plan to address the local food issues from production to consumption. *MCRPC, Green Top Grocery, HSHM, medium*

HL-5.1b   Facilitate a strong network of small to mid-size local farmers growing sustainable food. *Legacy of the Land, medium*

HL-5.1c   Consider expanding community gardens on City property, including parks and surplus property, to expand our capacity to grow, process, distribute, and access local foods. *City of Bloomington, short*

HL-5.1d   Expand the number and acres of community gardens in Bloomington. *City of Bloomington & University of Illinois Extension office, medium*

HL-5.1e Identify and remove regulatory barriers and develop mechanisms to provide permanent community garden plots. Ex: Amend the zoning ordinance to define community gardens and allow them in residential areas as a permitted use. *City of Bloomington, short*

HL-5.1f   Support development of school gardens, especially in USDA-designated food desert areas on the West Side. *City of Bloomington & local school districts, medium*

Legacy of the Land - www.thelegacyoftheland.com
Legacy of the Land is a network of local farmers in McLean and Livingston County. The group, which is an LLC formed three years ago as a way to make small-scale farming viable and sustainable for local farmers. The company is currently comprised of nine farms spread throughout the central Illinois area. This collective produces chemical free, non-genetically modified organism (GMO) fruits and vegetables to the local community.

Sustainable Agriculture Food Systems Funders (www.safsf.org)
The Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems Funders (SAFSF) is a network of individuals and organizations providing grants for projects that connect sustainable agriculture to food systems. SAFSF has a membership that includes nearly 100 foundations and organizations across the United States. SAFSF's mission is "To create networking, educational, and collaboration opportunities for the philanthropic community working to support vibrant, healthy, and just food and farm systems."

HL-5.2 Facilitate local food processing and distribution.

- A food hub
- A food processing and distribution center in McLean County
- # of convenience stores and grocery stores offering healthy food choices ↑
- # of grocery stores on the west side of Bloomington ↑
- # of CSA offerings ↑
- # of food co-ops ↑
- # and type of farmers at the local farmers markets ↑
- Participation at the farmers markets ↑
- # of SNAP/WIC tokens being used at the local farmers markets ↑
- Local food database/resources
- Urban ag workforce and jobs ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

Local farms, City of Bloomington, Religious institutions with commercial-scale kitchens, Bloomington Technical Academy, ISU Agriculture Department, U of I Extension Office, ISU SBDC, Local convenience stores and grocery stores, Green Top Grocery; Midwest and other Food Banks; Clare House and other food pantries

HL-5.2a Create a food hub that allows urban agriculture scalable and feasible for local farming operations from preparation of goods to distribution. Consider the railyard site or the Sugar Creek packing facility site for this operation. *City of Bloomington, medium*

HL-5.2b Partner with Heartland Community College to create an urban agriculture workforce development program. *HCC, EDC, medium*

HL-5.2c Encourage food based entrepreneurship. This can be done by providing incentives as well as identifying and removing barriers for start up restaurants and food trucks. *EDC, Chamber, ongoing*

HL-5.2d Consider creating a worksite Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program for the City employees. Encourage other public agencies to do the same. *City of Bloomington, long*

HL-5.2e Coordinate with convenience stores and gas stations to offer healthy food options, especially in the food deserts. *City of Bloomington, medium*

HL-5.2f Encourage a food co-op or grocery store to locate on the West Side. *City of Bloomington, medium*

HL-5.2g Gather and distribute data on local food efforts in the community. *City of Bloomington, short*

HL-5.2h Expansion of Downtown Bloomington Farmers' Market to include more farms. *Downtown Bloomington Association, medium*

HL-5.2i Identify and encourage successful models to increase food security for low income residents such as HSHM's Bread For Life (low income food co-op). *McLean County Health Department, long*

HL-5.2j Identify and remove barriers to mobile food markets. *McLean County Health Department, short*

HL-5.3 Facilitate consumption of healthy, affordable, locally produced food for all residents.

- # Death statistics from obesity-related chronic illnesses ↓
- # of SNAP/WIC tokens being used to buy fruits, vegetables and dairy ↑
- # of schools sourcing local food ↑
- # of restaurants sourcing locally grown food ↑
- # of healthy vending options at public venues ↑
- # of low cost food co-ops ↑
- # of mobile food markets (stands) ↑

Local farms, school districts, local universities, local restaurants, Green Top Grocery, Double Value Coupon Program, Normal Seed Library, Master Gardeners, local nurseries, Illinois Prairie Community Foundation, University of Illinois Extension, IWU ARC Gleaning Project, McLean County Health Department, OSF St. Joseph Center for Healthy Lifestyles, Advocate BroMenn, YMCA

HL-5.3a Encourage locally grown ingredients for school lunch programs. *City of Bloomington, medium*

HL-5.3b Encourage locally grown ingredients at university cafeteria programs. *City of Bloomington, medium*

HL-5.3c Encourage restaurants to source locally grown food. *City of Bloomington, medium*

HL-5.3d Encourage programs that distribute free or low cost produce on the West Side, e.g., OSF Community Garden providing vegetables to Home Sweet Home Ministries and farmers' market distribution of leftover vegetables. *City of Bloomington, medium*

HL-5.3e Collaborate with McLean County Health Department to maximize the role of WIC and SNAP programs for use of nutritious food. *City of Bloomington & MCHD, short*

HL-5.3f Investigate HUMAN Healthy Vending and consider contracting with them to provide healthy snacking options for residents at public venues. *City of Bloomington, medium*

HL-5.3g Provide a place for breastfeeding, identified through signage, at City facilities. *City of Bloomington, medium*

HL-5.3h Increase community education on issues related to childhood obesity. *City of Bloomington & MCHD, short*

HL-5.3i Create an educational campaign on what eating healthy means and encourage ownership in growing, selecting, and preparing food. *McLean County Wellness Coalition, short*

Best Practices in Promoting Local and Healthy Food Options

Throughout the country, communities are using a variety of methods to provide healthy, local and fresh food to residents. From small measures to comprehensive campaigns, communities have used a number of approaches to provide greater access to fresh and healthier food options. A few of them are listed here.

Healthy Food Options in Convenience Stores

The New York City Health Department works with bodegas (convenience stores) in areas of the city with higher rates of obesity and diabetes to promote and provide healthier food and beverage options to residents. Partnering with the bodegas, the health department provided signage on the benefits of low fat milk, as well as connecting the bodegas to farmers markets and local distributors to provide fresh produce in their stores.

Healthy Vending in Public Places

Moving beyond gas stations and convenience stores, entities such as the City of Chicago Park District have taken steps to see that healthier options are offered in vending machines as well. In the summer of 2011, 98 healthier choice vending machines were put in place in parks throughout Chicago. The park district engaged in a vending contract to see that all items featured in vending machines in parks met "Fit Pick" guidelines. The Fit Pick program focuses on providing vending options that are lower in calories, sugar, fat, and sodium. As of 2015, there are now 117 healthier choice vending machines in Chicago parks.

The Illinois "Rethink Your Drink" campaign was launched in 2014 to encourage residents throughout Illinois to drink less sugar-sweetened beverages, and educating the public on the adverse effects that those kinds of drinks can have on your health. Many organizations have taken this a step further through a "green-yellow-red" signage campaign at grocery stores to educate the public on healthier beverages and encourage them to put more thought into their beverage choices. This system uses green signage to identify beverages that the public should be drinking regularly, (e.g., water, low-fat milk and unsweetened teas), beverages that should be drank in moderation (diet soda, 100% juice) and those that people should drink rarely, if at all (sodas, energy/sports drinks, whole or 2% milk).

Initiatives such as these not only make the healthier food and beverages choices easier for residents but also work to educate them.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FNMP)

This initiative is geared towards providing healthy food options to low-income families. The WIC Program is an initiative to provide assistance to low-income mothers and their children. The program provides funding for food, access to healthcare services, and nutritional information to pregnant and postpartum women and their children. All of these services are provided at no cost to those who participate in the program. The Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) began under WIC in 1992 as a Congressional program as a way to provide fresh, local fruits and vegetables to those participating in the WIC program. The McLean County Health Department currently oversees the WIC program for McLean County, including the City of Bloomington. Currently, there is an average of 2200 individuals in McLean County who are enrolled in the WIC program. This year, the Health Department received 1,000 checks to distribute to WIC participants, 250 in June and 750 for the remainder of the farmers market season. Of the checks distributed, only about 35% of them are redeemed at the farmers market.

Food Hub

A comprehensive method of providing access to local, fresh, and healthy food that has grown in popularity across the United States is the establishment of a food hub.

Food hubs are facilities that streamline the process of food collection, processing and distribution by housing all of those activities in one building. Facilities such as these can be a tremendous asset to a community as both a place for farmers to process and sell their crops, as well as providing healthy food to local residents. It can be difficult for one small farmer to support an entire community and a food hub can act as a conduit for bringing many farmers together in one location, strengthening the overall state of local agriculture and the services that it provides to the community. Two possible locations for a food hub in Bloomington include the Sugar Creek Packing facility near Downtown and the railyard site in the Regeneration Area.

These are just a few examples of methods that could be brought to the City of Bloomington to help provide local, healthy, fresh food to residents and strengthen the agriculture community.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (NATURAL ENVIRONMENT)

Bloomington is a growing community. Locating that growth carefully within or adjacent to the existing urban areas or eliminating sprawl is key to assuring the provision of adequate urban services in a fiscally sustainable manner and preserving the prime farmland in McLean County. Preserving farmland and other environmentally critical areas such as riparian buffers, and trail and habitat corridors should be an integral part of planning. These measures help provide essential natural resources such as fresh air, clean water and other natural resources critical for a sustainable future.

Natural resources often cross jurisdictional boundaries and are best addressed at the regional level. Local support for protecting the environmentally sensitive areas at the regional level is evidenced by many intergovernmental and public/private groups such as the McLean County Solid Waste Management Committee and McLean County Greenways Advisory Committee. While the comprehensive plan does not duplicate any of the individual plans created by these groups, efforts have been made to integrate the relevant recommendations into this section.

Many of the goals and objectives in this section depend on well-maintained spatial data and inventory of natural resources that is essential to guide development, prioritize resource conservation efforts, evaluate natural resource management practices and guide policy. The City of Bloomington's draft storm water master plan points out that the official flood map does not reflect the existing conditions on the ground. Given the potential impact of this project on development, the City should undertake the floodplain remapping effort and utilize that revised GIS layer to identify and remove structures encroaching the floodway.

Significant natural communities, including wetlands, riparian ecosystems and rare plant sites, should be conserved and preserved to retain living examples of natural ecosystems, furnish a baseline of ecological processes and function, and enhance and maintain the biodiversity and water quality of the region. The designation of the conservation land use in this plan is the first step in protecting the environmentally sensitive areas from adverse impacts in the future growth areas.

Air, water and noise pollution and overall environmental degradation should be reduced as much as possible or eliminated in order to prevent potential harm to life, health and property. Transportation is one of the significant contributors to environmental pollution. Promoting the use of alternatives to driving alone, such as walking, bicycling, use of transit, and carpooling reduces transportation impacts on the environment.

The Ecology Action Center (EAC) conducted a study of greenhouse gas emissions in the area and calculated baseline levels of the relevant pollutants. The EAC analysis also extrapolated the levels of greenhouse gas emissions produced by the operations of local units of government, including the City, and evaluated which sectors of activity contributed to greenhouse gas pollution. Generally, energy generation is the largest producer of greenhouse gas, followed by transportation. Ongoing assessment using the process the EAC has begun will allow the City and other local governments to determine if implementation of the steps for addressing regional air quality result

KEY FINDINGS

- **Water:** Bloomington's primary sources of drinking water are Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake. The City faces two challenges in managing the public water supply. The short-term need is to mitigate the effects of high nitrate levels in Lake Bloomington. This requires reducing nitrate infiltration from watershed and agricultural runoff, and ongoing improvements to water treatment systems. The long-term challenge is adding public water supply sources to meet the need of a growing community, by preserving current resources and identifying new sources for water.
- **Energy:** The Ecology Action Center calculated that as of 2008, residential use in Bloomington accounted for 31% of greenhouse gas emissions produced by electricity use, 61% of emissions were from commercial users, 5% from industry, and 3% from local government use of electricity. Private sector users produce nearly all emissions caused by transportation.
- **Waste:** The McLean County Landfill #2 is scheduled for a 2017 closure upon reaching its capacity of nearly 4 million cubic yards. Annual volume in the landfill has been 90,000 tons, equaling 300 tons per day. Discussion of alternative disposal sites is underway, with locations outside of McLean County under consideration.
- **Farmland Preservation:** The growth of the City of Bloomington has often been achieved by converting farmland into new development. Historically, the City expands in area at a faster rate than it grows in population. Much of the farmland that surrounds the City is highly productive, and development there results in the loss of all the food it might grow in the future.

in lower levels of these pollutants.

Vegetation, especially street trees, has an important role to play in minimizing air pollution. For example, large street trees that provide an overhanging canopy improve air quality, calm traffic, and act as buffers between people and

automobiles. As the Emerald Ash Borer continues to ravage the vegetation, it is important for Bloomington, along with Town of Normal, to be cognizant of the diversity in the regional urban forestry. It is important to introduce more native plants into the local landscape. Native plantings are hardy, less susceptible to pests and diseases, and unlikely to escape or become invasive.

A sufficient supply of safe water is essential – without water a community cannot survive. We are fortunate our region is not experiencing the historic levels of lengthy drought conditions experienced in the Southwest and California, which continue to devastate agriculture, industry and economic conditions for millions of Americans. To address future demand and potential vulnerabilities in the water supply systems, the City should consider the adoption and ongoing updating of the Interim Water Supply Plan completed in 2010, and the implementation of recommendations it contains.

The comprehensive plan goals specifically address the interim plan discussion regarding long-term regional solutions for sourcing water for the Bloomington-Normal urban area. In addition to the

surface water resources at Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake, the plan looks to the future of water sourcing from the Mackinaw River, and the potential for drawing water from the Mahomet Aquifer. Use of the Mackinaw is already subject to regulatory limitations needed to protect the river itself. Developing well fields to tap into the Mahomet Aquifer will require coordination with other communities for which the aquifer is already a primary water source.

Lastly, this section addresses the need to reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill. With landfill #2 scheduled to close in 2017, this subject is more important now than ever before. Through an intergovernmental agreement, the EAC acts as the Solid Waste Agency for McLean County, the City of Bloomington, and the Town of Normal. This plan recognizes the importance of the above mentioned collaboration to increase awareness of the issue and addressing recycling, household hazardous waste and composting at a regional level.

Greenways

Definition

Greenways are narrow bands of open space that provide habitats for wildlife, essential routes for species migration, filter pollutants from water, enhance scenic and aesthetic qualities, and in many instances expand recreational as well as social, cultural and economic opportunities. Greenways can run along natural corridors such as streams or man-made corridors such as old rail lines.

McLean County Greenways Plan

The 2009 McLean County Greenways Plan presents a vision for greenways and provides a framework for the establishment of a regional system of interconnected greenways throughout McLean County. It identifies local greenways resources, including streams, watersheds, forested areas, parks, and other open spaces that can be developed or utilized for recreational purposes or conservation. It also suggests goals and strategies for maintaining and developing open spaces in the future for recreation or conservation as well as suggesting methods and respon-

sibilities for local greenway implementation. The objectives of the plan supports the local greenways vision by identifying future priority greenways and potential greenways linkages to other regions.

High-priority greenways identified in the plan include the Constitution Trail, the Lake Bloomington/Money Creek Watershed, the Mackinaw River Watershed, the Kickapoo Creek Watershed, Sugar Creek and its tributaries, Six Mile Creek, and the Sangamon River, among others.

This Greenways Plan is a local response to the national and state greenways movement that arose from a need to address urban and environmental problems. It was also a response to meet growing demands for recreation and open space.

Implementation of the plan is the responsibility of the McLean County Regional Planning Commission along with the McLean County Greenways Advisory Committee that serves as an umbrella organization to direct

plan implementation.

The Greenways Plan also identifies strategies for acquisition, easement, and zoning for greenways. See Table 5.1 of the Greenways Plan available at www.mcplan.org.

Advisory Committee

The Committee is comprised of government, not-for-profit agencies and citizens charged with local greenways advocacy and education.

Current membership includes representatives of the McLean County Regional Planning Commission, Town of Normal, City of Bloomington, McLean County, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois State University, Sugar Grove Nature Center, Pheasants Forever, ParkLands Foundation, Prairielands Preservation Foundation, Ecology Action Center, Audubon Society, Friends of Constitution Trail, McLean County Wheelers, Bloomington Cycle and Fitness, and Good To Go.

Ecology Action Center

The Ecology Action Center is a not-for-profit environmental agency with a mission to inspire and assist residents of McLean County in creating, strengthening and preserving a healthy local environment. EAC is a central resource for environmental education, information, environmental advocacy and environmental technical assistance within McLean County.

Since 1971 and the origin of Operation Recycle, the EAC has grown into a local environmental resource and educational center that is a leader in solid waste and residential recycling, stormwater education, storm drain stenciling, and various other environmental and ecological programs and initiatives. The agency also publishes regular newsletters on the local environment and does an extensive ecological educational outreach to local elementary and high schools.

The EAC sponsors residential electronics and computer recycling, household hazardous waste events, water monitoring and testing, distribution of rain barrels, and instruction on rain garden construction. It also is responsible for writing and helping to implement the area's solid waste plan which is updated every five years. The agency also sponsors various workshops on recycling, alternative energy planning, eco-responsible lawn care and various clean water initiatives.

As a not-for-profit, the EAC relies on the financial support and backing of local organizations, grantors and business partners. It is with the assistance of these organizations and others that the EAC is also able to provide programs and environmentally-responsible resources. Some EAC sponsors are: Center for Sustainable Community, Friends of Kickapoo Creek, John Wesley Powell Audubon Society, Vision 2020 Bloomington-Normal, Sugar Grove Nature Center, Park-Lands Foundation and Wild Ones-Illinois Prairie Chapter.

The EAC also is a member and works in concert with the Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake Watershed Management Oversight Committee to improve and protect not only the watersheds of the two city reservoirs but other wetlands and streams that feed these important water sources. The McLean County Soil and Water District serves as agency liaison for this important group who assists in the updating and implementation of local watershed plans and initiatives.

The EAC also sits on the McLean County Greenways Advisory Committee, which is responsible for assisting in the implementation of the Regional Greenways Plan. The Center is an active partner with the Heartland Community College Green Institute that supports a wide-range of campus programs related to sustainability, energy renewables and conservation and other environmental technologies.

Besides local governments, the agency also partners with Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, McLean County Health Department, and Home Sweet Home Ministries. Statewide partnerships include: Illinois Recycle Association, Illinois Green Business association, Illinois Environmental Council and Faith In Place.

Sample EAC Programs: YARD SMART WEEK
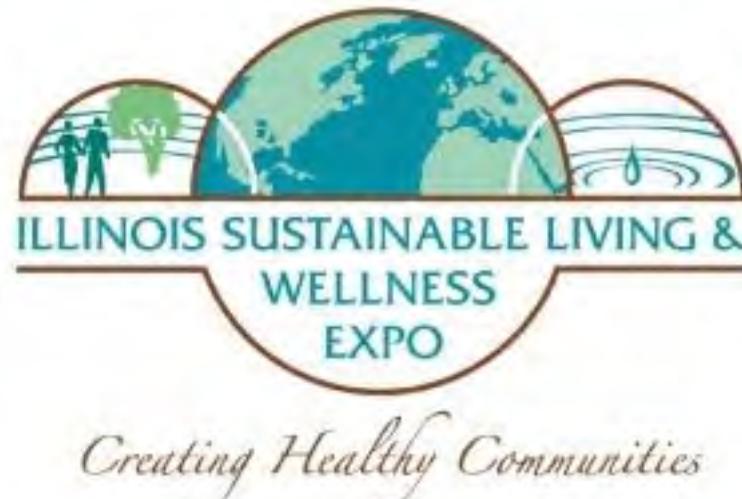
Sustainable EXPO

Sugar Creek Cleanup Day

NE-1. Protect and conserve the community's vital natural resources.

NE-1.1 Identify and protect sensitive environmental areas and promote conservation of habitats and native species.

NE-1.1a Maintain an updated regional Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Database on bodies of water, floodplains, flora and fauna and other environmentally sensitive areas. *MCRPC, ongoing*

NE-1.1b Identify linkages between environmentally sensitive areas in and around the urban area. *Greenways Committee, MCRPC, short*

NE-1.1c Encourage development in the urban core to alleviate development pressures on farmland. *Bloomington Community Development, ongoing*

NE-1.1d Carefully consider the impact of development projects on environmentally sensitive areas. Utilize the database to inform the environment aspects during the development review process. *Bloomington Community Development, ongoing*

Natural Resource Inventory

Harmonious coexistence of natural and built environments begins with a good understanding of our natural resources. In an effort to provide the environmental data that can form a basis for local planning and development review process, the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) created a comprehensive Natural Resources Inventory for McLean County.

The goal of this inventory is effective integration of nature into the man-made environment by compiling the natural resources of our County in a usable format and interpreting the findings. While an inventory at the parcel level might be quite useful, this county-wide GIS based Natural Resources Inventory is, by necessity, more generalized.

The data is gathered from a host of public sources including the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS), the National Soil Survey and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. MCRPC has compiled this data, along with additional data generated in-house in an interactive map format that enables users to query, locate and analyze a variety of natural resources.

The "Natural Resource Inventory" application is available via the www.McGIS.org website and includes resources such as lakes and streams, flood zones, wetlands, aquifers, soils, slopes, watersheds, hydrology, bedrock geology, surficial geology, coal resources, wind resources and the natural areas in the County. Data gathering for this project is a work in progress. The application will be enhanced with additional layers of data as they become available.

NE-1.2 Establish a greenway standard to protect the streams and high-priority bodies of water in the urbanized area.

NE-1.2a Implement a floodplain remapping effort in areas where the official mapped floodplain is not representative of existing conditions such as Sugar Creek along its upper reaches, and Little Kickapoo through Ireland Grove to Stone Brook Court as identified in the City's stormwater master plan. *Bloomington Public Works, short-medium*

NE-1.2b [upon completion of NE 1.2a] Utilize the updated floodplain map and GIS software to create a database of structures (houses, fences or other features that could impede the flow) encroaching on floodplains. *Greenways Committee, Bloomington Public Works, short-medium*

NE-1.2c [Upon completion of NE 1.2b] Work with the property owners to remove or retrofit the encroaching structures. This can be achieved by establishing a cost share program using the City's stormwater funds. *Bloomington Public Works, short-medium*

NE-1.2d Implement streambank restoration projects in the areas of moderate to severe erosion identified in the City's Stormwater Master Plan. Conservation easements can be an effective tool to achieve this objective. *Bloomington Public Works, short-medium*

NE-1.2e Create regulations to protect the riparian corridor identified as the conservation zone in the figure . Ensure that these areas meet the flood control and water quality needs while accommodating maintenance vehicles and pedestrian access. *Bloomington Public Works, short-medium*

METRICS

- Flood plain remapped
- Structural barriers in the floodplain ↓
- Miles of stream bank restored ↑
- Levels of pollutants (nitrate and phosphorus) and sedimentation in Evergreen Lake and Lake Bloomington ↓
- Monitor Sugar Creek and Kickapoo Creek for ammonia, phosphorous and dissolved oxygen.

PARTNER AGENCIES

Engineering firms, Major organizations with a stake in the remapping effort (ex: Illinois Wesleyan University)

Conservation Zones

The intent of the conservation land use is to protect the riparian buffers. Riparian areas are the green ribbons of trees, shrubs, and grasses growing along water-courses. They serve as a buffer between the water body and the land based systems protecting from runoff by providing filtration, bank stability, recharge, attenuation, volume reduction, and shading. In the process:

- These buffers reduces pollution, minimize erosion, control flooding and provide natural stormwater management.
- These greenways provide aquatic and terrestrial habitat.
- They enhance bike/pedestrian linkages by providing connections between multiple neighborhoods, maintaining a continuous path along a stream while minimizing roadway crossings.

The purpose of the conservation land use designation is to ensure protection and proper functioning of these riparian areas in the future growth areas. The right of way (ROW) widths of the conservation zone is based on the drainage areas guidelines in the City's draft storm water master plan.

Drainage Area in Acreage	ROW widths
<80	50'
80-160	75'
160-320	100'
320-640	125'
640-1280	160'
1280-2000	175'
>2000	200' (Minimum).

For drainage areas with over 2,000 acres, actual ROW should be based on engineering analysis of floodplain width, existing wetlands and pedestrian corridor needs. Also see Future Growth and Landuse chapter.

Figure 8-4. Proposed Conservation Zones

Legend:
- Existing Parks
- Future Parks
- Public Golf Courses
- Private Parks/Open Space
- Conservation Zones
- City of Bloomington
- Future Growth Area

DRAFT STORMWATER MASTER PLAN

Snapshot of Storm Infrastructure

- 46 dry bottom detention ponds totaling 60+ acres
- 27 wet bottom detention ponds totaling over 150 acres and 2.5 miles of shoreline
- 300 privately owned detention ponds; about 75% of them under 0.5 acres

Key Definitions

Greenways are defined based on the impacts on the stormwater and the multi-use needs. It includes riparian corridors, floodplain/floodway, access for maintenance vehicles and staff, pedestrian/bicycle linkages, allows for regional stormwater detention and provides wetland and stormwater quality enhancements.

Level of Service is defined as storm and sanitary sewers flowing freely without placing a burden on property owners by way of frequent surface flooding or basement backups.

Issues

- Issues with flooding: floodplain is not contained within the channel corridor; land use changes and development altered the peak flow rates and flood plain elevations; many structures built within the stream corridor and often within the easement
- Outdated flood plain maps do not reflect the current conditions on the ground.
- Undersized sewer infrastructure: Deteriorating pipes/manholes; drainage channels not centered within the easement; maintenance difficult or impossible due to limited widths of the easements

- The bottoms of both public and private dry ponds have become difficult to maintain due to lack of underdrains/outlet structures, clogged under drains, accumulated sediments.
- Erosion along the shorelines and nuisance due to vegetation

Key Recommendations

- Implement floodplain remapping in the areas where official floodplain is not representative of the existing conditions. Use the new data to remove encroachments in the floodway.
- Conduct streambank inventory. Implement streambank restoration projects. In areas where the channel is too deep or too constrained to access, explore the feasibility of a dual open/closed conveance system.
- Implement City-wide detention pond inspection program for both public and private ponds
- Establish a shoreline stabilization program for wet bottom detention ponds assuming a 20 year maintenance cycle. Encourage naturalized shorelines.

For Future Development

- Evaluate the appropriate corridor width for greenway easement/ROW acquisition.
- Utilize regional stormwater detention basins instead of smaller basins. These publicly owned ponds would be much more efficient than the many smaller public and private ponds.

Good and Bad Examples of Greenways
Source: City of Bloomington Stormwater Master Plan

NE-2. Create a park and green space system that protects the environment and provides for a variety of active and passive recreational activities for current and future residents of Bloomington.

NE-2.1 Increase the diversity, quality, and quantity of tree cover and greenery throughout the City.

NE-2.1a Achieve diversity in urban forestry. Plant more native trees. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

NE-2.1b Follow best practices in tree spacing and maintenance to ensure their long-term health. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

NE-2.1c Encourage site-appropriate tree planting. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

NE-2.1d Expand the City's landscaping ordinance to include an acceptable plant list and an invasive plant list. *Bloomington Community Development, short*

NE-2.1e Create a 50/50 tree program where the City and the citizens can split the cost of planting trees. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

NE-2.1f Encourage rain gardens on private properties. *Bloomington Community Development, ongoing*

NE-2.1g Create a GIS database of urban forestry in conjunction with the Town of Normal. Such information will help plan with long-range urban forestry planning and avoid problems like the Emerald Ash Borer. *MCRPC, short*

NE-2.2 Encourage the use of native prairie plantings.

NE-2.1a Create prairie habitats, where practical, in City-owned parks. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

NE-2.1b Use passive natural parks to highlight Illinois natural prairie ecosystem. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, ongoing*

NE-2.1c Install interpretive signs to help educate the public on the importance of the native prairie plantings. Tipton Trails can be a good pilot project. *Bloomington Parks and Recreation, short*

Urban Forestry

Urban forests provide enormous environmental, social, and economic benefits. In addition to aesthetics, urban forests conserve natural ecosystems and sustain clean air and water. The need for effective planning and implementation of urban forestry is becoming more apparent in a nation that is increasingly focusing its attention on serious environmental challenges like climate change. In recent years, urban forestry research has documented and quantified a variety of benefits from trees. These include:

- stormwater runoff filtering;
- soil stabilization;
- filtering of some types of air pollution;
- urban heat island mitigation;
- reduced building energy consumption (through tree shading and wind breaks); and
- improved mental health and social interaction for residents, particularly in densely developed areas

Considering the benefits associated with the urban forestry and the unique needs of each community, the regulations to protect the urban forestry should respond to such needs. The objectives identified in this plan are in response to the needs of Bloomington's urban forestry.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is a catch-all term for a variety of methods of reducing the harmful effects of stormwater runoff by using or mimicking natural processes. The U.S. EPA identifies several such measures including:

- *Downspout disconnection* refers to the rerouting of rooftop drainage pipes to drain rainwater to rain barrels, cisterns, or permeable areas instead of the storm sewer. Downspout disconnection stores stormwater and/or allows stormwater to infiltrate into the soil. This simple practice may have particularly great benefits in cities with combined sewer systems

- *Rainwater harvesting systems* collect and store rainfall for later use. When designed appropriately, rainwater harvesting systems slow and reduce runoff and provide a source of water. These systems may be particularly attractive in arid regions where they can reduce demands on increasingly limited water supplies.

- *Rain gardens* are shallow, vegetated basins that collect and absorb runoff from rooftops, sidewalks, and streets. Rain gardens mimic natural hydrology by infiltrating and evapotranspiring runoff. Rain gardens are versatile features that can be installed in almost any unpaved space.

- *Bioswales* are vegetated, mulched, or xeriscaped channels that provide treatment and retention as they move stormwater from one place to another. Vegetated swales slow, infiltrate, and filter stormwater flows. As linear features, vegetated swales are particularly suitable along streets and parking lots.

- *Permeable pavements* are paved surfaces that infiltrate, treat, and/or store rainwater where it falls. Permeable pavements may be constructed from pervious concrete, porous asphalt, permeable interlocking pavers, and several other materials. These pavements are particularly cost effective where land values are high and where flooding or icing is a problem.

- *Green streets and alleys* integrate green infrastructure elements into the street and/or alley design to store, infiltrate, and evapotranspire stormwater. Permeable pavement, bioswales, planter boxes, and trees are among the many green infrastructure features that may be woven into street or alley design.

- *Green roofs* are covered with growing media and vegetation that enable rainfall infiltration and evapotranspiration of stored water. Green roofs are particularly cost effective in dense urban areas where land values are high and on large industrial or office buildings where stormwater management costs may be high.

- *Land conservation:* Protecting open spaces and sensitive natural areas within and adjacent to cities can mitigate the water quality and flooding impacts of urban stormwater while providing recreational opportunities for city residents. Natural areas that are particularly important in addressing water quality and flooding include riparian areas, wetlands, and steep hillsides.

NE-3. Reduce environmental pollutants.

NE-3.1 Identify and reduce air pollutants.

METRICS		PARTNER AGENCIES

NE-3.1a Work to attract and provide incentives for wind, solar, geothermal, biofuel, and other types of renewable energy development. *EAC, ongoing*

- Greenhouse gas emissions per capita ↓
- Public transit ridership ↑

NE-3.1b Expand and improve the City's public transportation network. *Connect Transit, short*

NE-3.1c Expand and improve the City's network of trails, bike lanes, sidewalks, and other walking and bicycling infrastructure. *Bloomington Public Works, ongoing*

NE-3.1d While considering new development opportunities with other public and private entities, consider the environmental impacts (oil drilling, hydraulic fracturing, or other fossil fuel production projects have an impact on the region). *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

NE-3.1e Maintain a greenhouse gas inventory and develop a climate action plan. *EAC, short-medium*

MCRPC, Connect Transit, EAC, Greenways Committee, IDOT, Local bike advocacy groups

NE-3.2 Identify and reduce water pollutants.

METRICS		PARTNER AGENCIES

NE-3.2a Adopt and implement the recommendations of the proposed 2014 Stormwater and Sanitary Sewer Master Plans to reduce the impact of stormwater and wastewater on local bodies of water. *Bloomington Public Works, short/ongoing*

- Nitrate and phosphorus levels in Lake Bloomington and Evergreen ↓

NE-3.2b Increase the use of green infrastructure. *Bloomington Public Works, ongoing*

EAC, McLean County Greenways Committee

NE-3.3 Identify and reduce light and noise pollutants.

NE-3.3a For areas with light pollution issues, identify appropriate action for mitigation. *Bloomington Public Works, short/ongoing*

NE-3.3b Continue to control truck traffic routing to reduce transportation-related noise impacts on residential uses. *Bloomington Public Works, ongoing*

NE-3.3c Continue to minimize construction noises in residential areas. *Bloomington Public Works, ongoing*

NE-3.3d Continue to enforce existing codes to minimize noise. *Bloomington Community Development, ongoing*

NE-4. Increase cooperation and coordination among governments, nonprofits, and businesses across the region to address shared environmental issues.

NE-4.1 Continue to protect greenways at the regional level.

NE-4.1a Continue to participate on the Greenways Advisory Committee. *Bloomington Community Development & Public Works departments, ongoing*

NE-4.1b Continue to play an active role in the implementation of the Regional Greenways Plan. *Bloomington Community Development & Public Works departments, ongoing*

NE-4.1c Coordinate with railroad companies to expand the use of abandoned railroad rights-of-way for greenways and trails. *MCRPC, medium-long*

PARTNER AGENCIES

McLean County Greenways Committee

METRICS

- Rails to trails ↑
- Miles of greenways ↑

NE-4.2 Continue to participate in regional efforts to establish a sustainable and responsible water supply.

- Nitrate and phosphorus levels in Lake Bloomington and Evergreen ↓
- Water demand estimates revised at least every 5 years

MCRPC, MCSWCD, Mahomet Aquifer Consortium, McLean County watershed committees (Urban, Ag and Biological), Town of Normal, McLean County

NE-4.2a Continue to maintain and analyze water department data regarding municipal water supply conditions, service issues and anticipated demand by all municipal water customers. *Bloomington Water Department, ongoing*

NE-4.2b Continue to be an active partner in the Mahomet Aquifer Consortium. *Bloomington Water Department, ongoing*

NE-4.2c Continue implementation of Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake watershed plans. *Soil and Water Conservation District, ongoing*

NE-4.2d Expand watershed planning to include Sugar Creek and Kickapoo Creek. *Soil and Water Conservation District, ongoing*

NE-4.2e Schedule periodic updates for the watershed plans. *Soil and Water Conservation District, ongoing*

NE-4.2f Continue to implement streambank stabilization projects to prevent erosion and also curb nutrients from entering the streams. *Soil and Water Conservation District, ongoing*

NE-4.2g Implement programs to reduce phosphorus and other pollutants entering the streams from the urban run off. *Soil and Water Conservation District, ongoing*

NE-4.2h Increase monitoring efforts to monitor urban runoff. *Soil and Water Conservation District, ongoing*

NE-4.2i Reduce water consumption. Promote xeriscaping. *Bloomington Water Department ongoing*

Regional Watershed Efforts

The City of Bloomington Water Department and the McLean County Regional Planning Commission continue to be involved with the Mahomet Aquifer Consortium. The City Water Department sits on the Board of Directors and Technical Advisors for the Consortium while MCRPC is invited to attend as an interested party.

The Mahomet Aquifer Consortium (MAC) was formed in 1998 by stakeholders concerned about the future longevity and health of the aquifer. The Consortium expanded its mission in 2010 to include all water resources (groundwater and surface water) in the aquifer's 15-county area. Members of the consortium include water authorities; water companies; local, county and state governments; professional groups; and interested members of the general public. MAC operates with funding from private donors and also receives funds from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Office of Water Resources. The Illinois State Geological Survey is a primary technical advisor to the MAC.

The City of Bloomington and other government representatives, along with the MCRPC are members of the Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake Watershed Management Oversight Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to periodically update and be responsible for the implementation of the Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake Watershed plans. The committee also provides a forum for proactive strategies to protect the watersheds and tributaries in order to maximize local oversight of these important supplies of water.

NE-4.3 Increase education, awareness, and public involvement on environmental issues.

NE-4.3a Partner with area schools to educate students. *Ecology Action Center, ongoing*

- Gallons of water usage/capita ↓
- Gallons of irrigation water/capita ↓
- Greenhouse gas emissions/capita ↓
- Nitrates and phosphorus in local water bodies ↓

NE-4.3b Continue to make an effort to inform public officials on the importance of environmental issues. *Ecology Action Center, ongoing*

NE-4.3c Expand awareness and outreach programs aimed at the general public. *Ecology Action Center, ongoing*

NE-4.3d Include the local environmental professionals during planning of major development projects. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

School districts, Regional solid waste management committee (EAC, COB, Town of Normal, McLean County, MCRPC), McLean County Greenways Committee

NE-5. Provide more efficient and sustainable municipal solid waste management.

NE-5.1 Reduce the amount of waste and toxicity going to the landfill.

- Waste going to the landfill ↓
- Residential recycling ↑
- Commercial recycling ↑
- Zero waste community events ↑
- Household hazardous waste collection events ↑

NE-5.1a Continue to actively promote Bloomington's automated single-stream curbside residential recycling program for single family homes. *Bloomington Public Works department, ongoing*

NE-5.1b Investigate means to increase recycling in small businesses and apartments with more than 6 units. *Ecology Action Center, ongoing*

NE-5.1c Promote zero waste community events for City events. *Ecology Action Center, ongoing*

NE-5.1d Encourage recycling in public places, such as parks and Downtown, by providing necessary infrastructure. *Bloomington Public Works Department, short*

NE-5.1e Promote source reduction of household hazardous waste. *Ecology Action Center, ongoing*

Regional solid waste management committee (EAC, COB, Town of Normal, McLean County, MCRPC)

NE-5.2 Continue to address solid waste issues at the regional level.

- Composting ↑
- Permanent household hazardous waste site
- Electronic recycling ↑

NE-5.2a Research methods to provide food scrap composting services to community residents. *Ecology Action Center, ongoing*

NE-5.2b Work with area schools to increase recycling. *Ecology Action Center, ongoing*

NE-5.2c Target recycling awareness campaigns to populations recognized as currently not being reached satisfactorily—senior citizens, lower income households, and non-homeowners. *Ecology Action Center, ongoing*

NE-5.2d Continue participation in the Regional Solid Waste Committee. *Bloomington Public Works, ongoing*

NE-5.2e Explore sustainable and innovative ways to address the waste generated in McLean County after the scheduled closure of the local landfill in 2017. *Ecology Action Center, short-medium*

NE-5.2f Explore the possibility of providing a permanent household hazardous waste collection site within McLean County. *Ecology Action Center, short-medium*

Regional solid waste management committee (EAC, COB, Town of Normal, McLean County, MCRPC)

NE-5.2g Devise a sustainable framework for safe disposal of electronic recycling in the County. *Ecology Action Center, short-medium*

NE-5.2h Investigate sourcing during City procurement. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

SOCIAL HEALTH (COMMUNITY WELLBEING)

Communities should be places where people of all ages and abilities can live as long as they would like. All too often, individuals find the community in which they have lived for years no longer meets their needs. Communities should support development of a wide range of accessible housing options that are close to services and available to a full range of incomes. Communitis should also encourages mobility and service options. These factors ensure that as individuals age, they can access basic services and remain independent. Many of these interrelated issues are addressed throughout this plan. This section focuses on addressing the needs of all ages and abilities, behavioral health, homelessness and access to services.

The built environment can have a tremendous impact on a person's social health and overall state of mind. Creating environments that are safe and inviting can go a long way in improving the mental health and overall community well-being for Bloomington residents. According to the Human Environment-Research Lab, exposure to greenspace helps to foster an increased sense of community and also lessens the effects of chronic mental fatigue, which reduces violence and aggressive behavior.

Behavioral/Mental Health

For many people, having a mental health condition may have minimal impact on their lives. Most people can and do live independently in their own homes. However, serious mental illnesses disrupt people's ability to carry out essential aspects of daily life, such as self-care and household management. Mental illnesses may also prevent people from forming and maintaining stable relationships or cause people to misinterpret others' guidance and react irrationally. This often results in pushing away caregivers, family, and friends who may be the force keeping that person from becoming homeless. As a result of these factors and the stresses of living with a mental disorder, people with mental illnesses are much more likely to become homeless than the general population.

In McLean County, mental health is a growing concern. The Health Department's IPLAN identified mental health as one of the three major health priorities for McLean County. In May of 2015, the McLean County Board adopted a Mental Health Action Plan in response to the serious mental illness issues in the County jail. That plan points out that the prevalence of people with serious mental illnesses in jails is three to six times higher than for the general population. Once incarcerated, they tend to stay in jail longer and upon release, are at a higher risk of returning than individuals without these disorders (recidivism).

While issues related to the jail triggered that action plan, it highlighted the complexity of mental illness and identified many consequences including homelessness, public safety and access to services. It urged breaking down the silo approach for providing services and increased collaboration among stakeholders and community leaders including the local governments, hospitals, and service providers.

The 'no wrong door' model focuses on providing training to all the agencies and organizations throughout the community, including residents, teachers, doctors, and employers to recognize the signs of a person having a mental health crisis and to provide assistance.

Facilitating care solutions for mentally ill residents is incentive enough, but doing so in cooperation with the County and other organizations, the City of Bloomington can use its resources much more effectively. As identified in Figure 8.5, nearly 22% of all law enforcement and EMS calls were related to mental health issues. This comprehensive plan not only calls for increased training for emergency response personnel on behavioral health issues, but also recommends investigating the possibility of diverting the behavioral health calls at the dispatch center.

Homelessness

The City of Bloomington is an active member in the Central Illinois Continuum of Care (COC). This group of agencies and organizations, led by PATH, play a significant role in addressing homelessness in McLean County. They provide and coordinate housing options, programs and services for veterans, families, youth and individuals facing homelessness who are dealing with issues like disabilities, health challenges, domestic violence, and unemployment.

Despite these efforts, there is unmet need. Homelessness and housing was identified as one of the five major areas of concerns that needs to be addressed in the County's mental health action plan. The City can encourage a range of housing options along with housing-based services to help people stay in the community in the least restrictive environment possible. The City can address this need in partnership with other agencies and organizations.

Knowledge of model shelters and supportive services can help the City of Bloomington to help improve upon others' successes. These models and best practices can give a sense of the range of approaches to homelessness and stimulate new ideas. One such approach to addressing homelessness that has gained traction throughout the nation is the "Housing First" model. The state of Utah was the first to implement this model and report positive results.

This comprehensive plan encourages various City departments within Bloomington to become more involved, beyond providing support through Community Development Block Grants, in mental health and homelessness issues to not only improve the quality of life in the community but also achieve greater efficiencies.

- **Permanent Supportive Housing:** This program works to provide housing and supportive services to those experiencing issues such as chronic homelessness, substance abuse issues, mental illness, or chronic health challenges. The program works with tenants to assess their housing needs and permanent supportive housing allows them to stay in the housing unit for as long as they choose, provided they pay their rent, which is usually not more than 30 percent of their income. In Bloomington, Permanent Supportive Housing is provided through Mayor's Manor. This facility, located just west of Downtown has 26 efficiency units available to residents, provided that they meet the criteria of being 18 years or older, meet income requirements, and for 15 units they must meet the HUD definition of being homeless or disabled.

- **Transitional Housing:** Transitional housing aims to allow homeless individuals temporary housing and stability in order for them to work their way up to having their own housing. Unlike permanent supportive housing, transitional housing is for a shorter period of time, usually lasting at most two years. Individuals in this type of program could be those who have experienced sudden, unexpected homelessness, or are victims of domestic violence. Mid-Central Community Action in west Bloomington offers a transitional housing program that provides homeless families housing for up to 24 months, along with case management, provided they are working full-time, or attending school and working at least part time.

- **Emergency Shelter:** An emergency shelter provides a temporary place for individuals to reside while experiencing homelessness. These facilities typically offer beds to homeless individuals on a first-come, first-served basis. The City of Bloomington currently has two such facilities in Home Sweet Home Ministries (HSHM) and the Salvation Army. The HSHM shelter has over 90 beds, and provides services such as a case worker to assist with employment, day care,

and housing, among others. The Salvation Army through its Safe Harbor Program allows individuals to stay for 8 weeks. This program requires that individuals work towards overcoming their homelessness in that time and provides services including drug and alcohol treatment, mental health referrals and training for job counseling.

- **Recovery Housing:** Recovery housing is geared towards those individuals that are recovering from drug and alcohol addiction, or are experiencing mental illness, providing them a positive environment from which they can work towards bettering their lives. Chestnut Health Systems in Bloomington offers services such as Adolescent Addiction Treatment Services as case management for those dealing with mental illness, family therapy, domestic violence counseling, and community support services.

- **Seasonal Housing:** The McLean County Department of Human Services works to provide shelter to homeless individuals throughout the winter through offering a warming shelter at its facility. Seasonal housing is a program that could be further investigated to provide housing to homeless residents during the summer and winter months when the homeless face further challenges of the harshness of outdoor conditions during those periods.

HOMELESSNESS ISSUES IN McLEAN COUNTY

DEFINITIONS

Chronic Homelessness:
The Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development defines chronic homelessness as: "Either (1) an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, or (2) an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years."

Transitional Homelessness:
Individuals generally enter the shelter system for only one stay and for a short period. Such persons are likely to be younger, are probably recent members of the precariously housed population and have become homeless because of some catastrophic event, and have been forced to spend a short time in a homeless shelter before making a transition into more stable housing. Over time, transitionally homeless individuals will account for the majority of persons experiencing homelessness given their higher rate of turnover.

Episodic Homeless:
Individuals who frequently shuttle in and out of homelessness are known as episodically homeless. They are most likely to be young, but unlike those in transitional homelessness, episodically homeless individuals often are chronically unemployed and experience medical, mental health, and substance abuse problems.

CONTINUUM OF CARE

The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program is an initiative from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide aid to state and local municipalities as well as nonprofits with the goal of ending homelessness.

One such tool for achieving this goal is through Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs). The intent of CDBGs is to provide states and municipalities with the means

A tent city on the west side of Bloomington

to offer affordable housing to low and moderate income individuals and families, along with expanded economic opportunities. These CDBGs are supervised locally by the City of Bloomington Community Development Department.

The local coordination for the Continuum of Care is handled by Providing Access to Help (PATH) through the Central Illinois Continuum of Care. The McLean County Continuum of Care grew out of a decision to pool resources among counties in the region to be able to make a stronger case for HUD funding. There are currently 11 counties that participate in this regional Continuum of Care. Each of these counties has a local continuum that meets and the entire continuum meets bimonthly. Due to the increase in funds from HUD to assist people at the local level, along with an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness, the number of people assisted by HUD grants through the McLean County Continuum of Care has grown from 806 in 2003 to 1,813 in 2014.

CWB-1. End chronic homelessness and reduce the severity of situational homelessness.

CWB-1.1 Reduce homelessness through programs for prevention.

CWB-1.1a The City of Bloomington should actively partner with groups such as McLean County Continuum of Care and Human Service Council to address factors contributing to homelessness. *McLean County Continuum of Care, short*

CWB-1.1b Continue to increase focus on prevention of homeless by making funds available that would alleviate the need for emergency shelter for families and individuals with income < 80% of median family income. This can also help alleviate foreclosures. *McLean County Continuum of Care, short*

CWB-1.1c Foster public-private partnerships to make permanent housing available for the extremely low income population where there is the most need. *McLean County Continuum of Care, medium-long*

CWB-1.1d Establish a housing first/rapid re-housing model to prevent homelessness. *McLean County Continuum of Care, short*

CWB-1.1e Obtain local research showing savings/quality of life improvements for the above mentioned programs. *McLean County Continuum of Care, short*

PATH

Throughout its over 40 year history in the Bloomington-Normal area, Providing Access to Help (PATH) has continually expanded the services it offers to the community including crisis response, services for seniors, and coordinating efforts to combat homelessness.

Through its presence as the local affiliate for the Illinois 2-1-1 crisis help line, PATH is able to offer 24/7 assistance to individuals who are in need of health and human services. PATH serves over 30 counties throughout the state providing adult protective services to seniors with disabilities in McLean and Livingston County. In addition to its work with the senior population, PATH works to connect homeless individuals and families with temporary emergency shelter, as well as permanent housing.

PATH has been able to continue this work over time through grant funding from various sources to provide for different segments of the population. A grant received in 1985 allowed them to provide outreach to older adults age 60 and over. In the ensuing years, PATH has expanded its services to the senior population to include in-home counseling, elder abuse prevention, and caregiver support, among others.

PATH received an additional grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1998. It was used for providing outreach to the homeless in McLean County. Currently, PATH coordinates efforts for the homeless throughout the county and operates three homeless service programs.

CWB-2. Create a lifelong community that meets the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.

CWB-2.1 Promote the welfare of older adults and persons with disabilities to foster maximum independence so they can continue to be an integral part of the community.

CWB-2.1a Ensure that affordable and safe transportation services are available, especially for older adults and persons with disabilities. *Connect Transit & MCRPC, short*

CWB-2.1b Collaborate with community organizations to identify and remove barriers to mobility and access to public and private facilities and services. *LIFE-CIL & MCRPC, ongoing*

CWB-2.1c Analyze the needs of older adults for possible engagement opportunities, new or additional projects, programs, and activities for this growing segment of the community. *ECIAAA & MCRPC, short*

Seniors Playing pool at the senior center

LIFELONG COMMUNITY

Providing the type of community where people want to grow up and grow old is essential for any City, particularly those with an aging population. There are many steps the City can take to ensure that Bloomington is the kind of City that will be appealing to residents as they grow older and retire. Ensuring housing and neighborhood environments that are accessible and walkable for seniors, along with the mobility to be able to continue to be active members of society can go a long way in attracting and retaining the senior population in the community.

The City of Bloomington has many organizations working towards providing for the aging population within the community. Groups such as the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging, Mid Central Community Action and PATH are committed to seeing that Bloomington continues to be a City where older adults can continue to reside and live an active lifestyle. The City, collaborating with these organizations and others, can work towards seeing Bloomington is the kind of City where senior citizens will want to live and to have the kind of life that allows them to be active, involved members of society.

One of the greatest keys to achieving this goal is connectivity. Creating neighborhoods that are walkable and accessible to public transportation is essential to allowing seniors to have access to facilities and services including neighborhood retail, pharmacies, and appointments. Designing for connectivity also allows for greater opportunities for social interactions for older adults, providing for their behavioral health. In examining planning for their own aging population, the Atlanta Regional Commission established seven lifelong community planning principles; connectivity, pedestrian and transit access, neighborhood retail and services, social interaction, dwelling types, healthy living, and consideration for existing residents.

CWB-3. Develop a coordinated and efficient system of services that addresses comprehensive needs of children, families and communities.

CWB-3.1 Coordinate access to social services.

- One-stop shop database of resources, data, programs and services
- # of social service agencies to receive cross-training ↑
- # of Community Schools ↑
- Funding for 211

CWB-3.1a Enhance public transportation access to the social service sites. Identify and remove any public transportation barriers to those sites. *MCRPC, ongoing*

CWB-3.1b Enhance the viability and long term sustainability of McLean County's 211 system. *PATH, medium*

CWB-3.1c Investigate community schools as a model for increasing access to social services within neighborhoods (also see Education). *United Way, short*

CWB-3.1d Promote creation of a one stop shop database and website for all available social services in the County. *PATH, medium-long*

CWB-3.1e Foster cross-training for all the social service agencies. *PATH, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

Center for Human Services, MCRPC, Connect Transit, school districts, YWCA, Marcfirst, Advocate Bromenn, Faith in Action, Homes of Hope, Connect Transit, SHOW Bus, YWCA, YMCA, LIFE CIL

Pay for Success

Pay for Success is an initiative similar to that of the Social Impact Bond Program in the United Kingdom. It serves as a way to build public-private partnerships between sectors, as well as to spend public dollars in the most effective way possible. With the "Pay for Success" model, private investment is made towards a particular goal or objective with an agreement with the public sector that if the goal or objective is achieved, the investment will be reimbursed. This program can be a very efficient method in conserving public dollars by only devoting funds to those investments that have been proven to be effective. In 2014, the City of Chicago, along with private partners announced a pay for success program of nearly $17 million to provide early childhood education to over 2,600 children.

Summary of the County-Wide Health Plans

Health Department's IPLAN

The McLean County Community Health Plan, completed in 2012 with a five-year horizon period, established the top health priorities in McLean County. These priorities are established through an analysis of seven criteria: Demographic and Socioeconomic Indicators, General Health and Access to Care Indicators, Maternal and Child Health Indicators, Chronic Disease Indicators, Infectious Disease Indicators, Environmental Health/Occupational Health/ Injury Controls, Sentinel Events (e.g., Infants Hospitalized for Dehydration, Children Hospitalized for Asthma, Adults Hospitalized for Uncontrolled Hypertension)

Through an analysis of these criteria, the plan identified obesity, mental health and oral health as the top three health priorities for McLean County. Obesity and its related adverse health effects were selected as one of the top priorities for the county. It established that 62.5% of adults in McLean County were overweight or obese. This plan looks to address both obesity and mental health in ways that will improve the quality of life for Bloomington residents. The City can work with the McLean County Health Department and others to ensure the community is more walkable and bikeable and provide healthy food options to improve the health of citizens. Collaborating with the McLean County Board and its Mental Health Action Plan will allow for coordination among local municipalities and organizations.

County's Mental Health ACTION Plan

The McLean County Mental Health Action Plan initially grew from an analysis that was conducted to assess mental health conditions within the McLean County jail. This assessment provided recommendations to improve the jail environment for those in the jail system with mental health issues and to create a greater access to services for those individuals once they have served their sentence and are back in the community. In 2014, the McLean County Board Executive Committee formed two working groups, one which would assess the mental health needs in McLean County and the other identifying best practices to resolving these issues. The action plan sets out short and long-term goals for achieving its objectives, along with establishing timelines and lead agencies for each of the next steps.

The action plan outlines five areas of focus for improving the overall mental health of residents in McLean County:

1. Collaboration and Coordination: This section encourages all sectors working together and advocates the "no wrong door" model for addressing mental health. Residents could use any number of avenues in order to get the assistance that they need.

2. Access to Medical Services and Medical Management: This chapter focuses on improving access to medication and medical services for those suffering from mental illness and of the need to recruit additional behavioral health professionals to the community to address the behavioral health needs of children, adolescents, and adults.

3. Juvenile Services (21 and under): highlights a wellness recovery action plan (WRAP) for different youth age groups, with action plans from birth to 5 years, 5 to 12 years, 11 to 15 years, 14 to 21 years, and post-high school. The WRAPs identify measures that can be taken from prevention and identification, to intervention, to possible institutionalization for someone experiencing a behavioral health crisis.

4. Housing: The plan identifies two main concerns for housing to those suffering from mental illness.

   a. To provide access to clean, safe, and sanitary housing on a transitional/temporary, seasonal, or permanent basis, and

   b. Ensure the availability to supportive housing.

5. Crisis Services: Needs assessed by the County Board Mental Health Advisory Committee for crisis services include enhanced crisis services such as a crisis response team with the necessary knowledge and skills required to effectively respond to crisis situations. It also calls for a 10-14 bed crisis stabilization program for adults .

The Mental Health Action Plan provides action plans for each of the areas of focus, outlining short-term and long-term objectives. Such action items for the Housing section include seeking additional housing vouchers for behavioral health clients, forming a coordinated system for reviewing applications for housing assistance to maximize resources, and construction of a sufficient number of housing units – permanent and transitional to meet different levels of need.

## CWB-3.2 Support coordination and integration of behavioral health services for all residents.

CWB-3.2a   The City should actively participate at the county level on behavioral health training. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CWB-3.2b The City should participate in the County review of behavioral health data for the City, assess local resources and needs for behavioral health. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CWB-3.2c Strengthen relationships between behavioral health providers and local schools. *McLean County Health Department, short*

CWB-3.2d Provide "Crisis Intervention Training" for those in law enforcement and public safety to help them better understand symptoms of mental illness. *City of Bloomington, Bloomington Police Department, Bloomington Fire Department, ongoing*

CWB-3.2e Investigate the possibility of screening the behavioral health related calls and dispatching a crisis intervention team. This can be done more efficiently in collaboration with the County. *City of Bloomington, Bloomington Police Department, Bloomington Fire Department, Short-Medium*

Law Enforcement & EMS Involvement in Calls

Figure 8-5. Source: McLean County Mental Health Action Plan
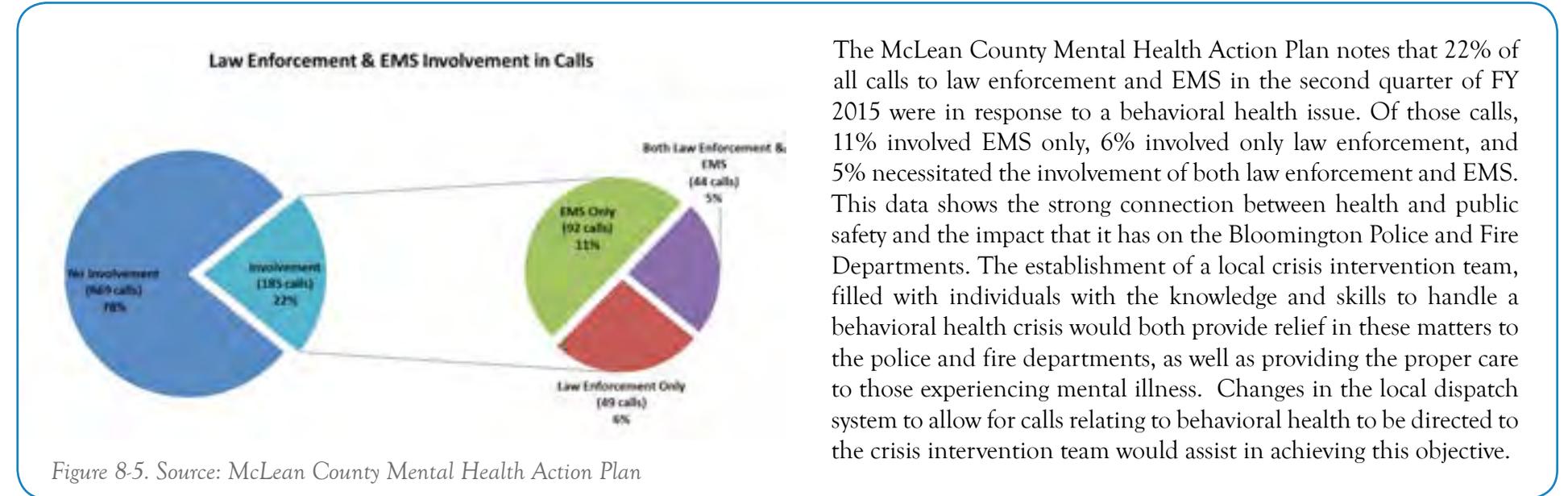
The McLean County Mental Health Action Plan notes that 22% of all calls to law enforcement and EMS in the second quarter of FY 2015 were in response to a behavioral health issue. Of those calls, 11% involved EMS only, 6% involved only law enforcement, and 5% necessitated the involvement of both law enforcement and EMS. This data shows the strong connection between health and public safety and the impact that it has on the Bloomington Police and Fire Departments. The establishment of a local crisis intervention team, filled with individuals with the knowledge and skills to handle a behavioral health crisis would both provide relief in these matters to the police and fire departments, as well as providing the proper care to those experiencing mental illness. Changes in the local dispatch system to allow for calls relating to behavioral health to be directed to the crisis intervention team would assist in achieving this objective.

Figure 8-6. Social Service Agencies and Bus Routes

ABC Counseling and Family Services
Faith in Action

The Baby Fold

Homes of Hope

MarcFirst

Special Olympics Illinois

Bridgeway

Chestnut Health Systems

YWCA McLean County

Easter Seals

East Central Illinois Area
Agency on Aging, Inc.

Girl Scouts of
Central Illinois   American Red Cross

LIFE Center for
Independent Living (LIFE OIL)

Center for Youth and Family Solutions

McLean County Center for Human Services

Heartland Head Start   The Salvation Army   Child Care Resource & Referral Network

Habitat for Humanity

Mid Central Community
Action, Inc.   Project Oz   McLean County   United Way   Big Brothers Big Sisters   Alzheimers Association -
Health Dept   PATH   Children's Home and Aid   Greater Illinois Chapter

Boys & Girls Club

YMCA   Home Sweet
Home Ministries

Social Service
Agencies

✳ Bloomington

✳ Normal

Midwest Food Bank

CWB-3.3 Education and Awareness.

CWB-3.3a Increase awareness on homelessness issues. *Continuum of Care, ongoing*

CWB-3.3b Coordinate with existing agencies to raise awareness on issues around poverty with programs such as the poverty simulation. *PATH, Continuum of Care, short*

CWB-3.3c Coordinate with McLean County to bring awareness to behavioral health issues. *City of Bloomington & MCHD, short*

Mental Health First Aid

The Mental Health First Aid Program works to train people how to identify the signs of someone struggling with a behavioral health crisis and directing them to the proper resources to provide them the help that they need. It provides courses for providing aid to both children and adults and has a five-step action plan for reaching the desired outcome. The McLean County Center for Human Services, in partnership with other entities and local organizations, is currently providing this training to the community for those who want to learn how to identify the signs of mental illness and to provide help to those that are suffering from it.

VISION
Our responsive police, fire and emergency services will ensure safety and security for residents to live, learn, work and play.

A safe community provides for better neighborhoods, economic development, and an overall quality of life that benefits all of its residents. The City of Bloomington is fortunate to be served by excellent police and fire departments that help make it a safe community where people want to live and raise their families. Protecting its citizens continues to be one of the City's highest priorities. This section outlines the current capacity and highlights the future needs for the emergency response departments in preparing for the growth and expansion of the City.

POLICE

Reducing crime and the fear of crime is a top priority for the Bloomington Police Department (BPD). Crime in Bloomington has been declining for many years and was at an all-time low in 2014. The department's data-driven approaches, such as Problem Oriented Policing (POP) and public engagement, are two examples of how the BPD continually strives to achieve excellence and improve safety in the community.

The decline in crime rates can be directly attributed to a more proactive approach by the BPD through calls for service. In 2014, there was a 10% increase in the number of calls compared to the previous year. While the declining crime rate is a positive sign for the community, increased strain on BPD resources needs to be considered for future growth. This plan calls for a periodic assessment of staffing, training, and the latest technologies that can help improve staff efficiencies to continue to provide a high level of service.

While the overall crime rate in Bloomington is low, there are certain areas of the City with higher concentrations of crime. As highlighted in Figure 9-3, the West Side, or the Regeneration Area as defined in the Neighborhoods section, shows a major concentration of the Part 1 crimes (violent crime and property crime) in the City. During the community outreach, respondents from Wards 6 and 7 in the Regeneration Area, felt more unsafe than safe. They called for increased public safety measures in the area, including more police surveillance.

The perception of crime, particularly in the Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods, is something the police department should also address.

Public safety cannot be the sole responsibility of the Police Department. BPD recognizes that partnerships are crucial in crime prevention. It continues to work towards strengthening its relationship with the public through programs such as Coffee with a Cop, neighborhood watch groups, and community forums. The newest position of Youth Intervention Specialist, established in April of 2015 through a $25,000 grant from State Farm, is yet another way BPD is trying to help young people in the community involved in activities linked to delinquency and criminal activity. A needs assessment will be conducted and a plan developed to reduce future juvenile issues in Bloomington. BPD's increased communication through social media helps provide a connection between the police and residents, building trust and a stronger relationship between them.

There are aspects of physical planning that can affect crime and the perception of crime. A nationally renowned method of preventing crime called Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a proven model to fight crime. For example, creating vibrant urban centers, well-used parks and walkable neighborhoods puts more

"eyes on the street," making these areas safer. This plan recognizes the importance of improving the physical conditions to fight crime and urges the police to partner with the Community Development departments to identify areas that could benefit from CPTED.

While this plan calls for a variety of safety-related improvements, it is also sensitive to the challenges involved. These include budget constraints, unfunded mandates (such as concealed carry screening, sex offender monitoring and registration, and traffic stop data collection) and legislation that cannot keep up with technological advances. The negative perception that the public, at times, has of the police is a significant challenge. This is an issue that has garnered national attention in recent years,

and the Bloomington Police Department has shown commitment to addressing that issue and working to help improve relationships between the police and the public through programs such as the Breaking Barriers community/police dialogue event.

FIRE AND EMS

The Bloomington Fire Department (BFD) provides the fire suppression and prevention service, emergency medical service (EMS) and fire education to protect the people, property and businesses of the City. In 2013, BFD hired the Illinois Fire Chief Associations Consulting Services to conduct a thorough analysis of operational staffing levels, fire station locations, and emergency response times. That report included and priori-

- **Police:** The Bloomington Police Department is currently staffed with 124 officers. The BPD has one headquarter station, centrally located in Downtown Bloomington next to City Hall. The current police/population ratio is 1.61 officers per 1,000 residents. With the population of Bloomington projected to increase by nearly 20,000 residents by the horizon year of this plan, an ongoing assessment of the police to population ratio will need to be conducted to ensure that there is a sufficient police force to effectively serve the community. Maintaining the current ratio would necessitate additional 35 or so officers to the police force over the next 20 years, should the City grow at that rate. In 2014, the Bloomington Police Department received 81,662 calls for service, a nearly 10% increase from 2013. This resulted in a decrease of Part 1 crimes (violent crimes and property crimes) in the City by 13.3% from the previous year, nearly 307 fewer reported incidents.

- **Fire and EMS:** The Bloomington Fire Department has five staffed stations located throughout the community and one vacant station, #5 on the southwest side of the City. The department currently staffs 116 total personnel. Full-time firefighters with the department have Fire Fighter II and Firefighter III certifications, as well as EMT-Basic, EMT-Intermediate, or EMT-Paramedic certifications. The fire department serviced a total of 10,459 calls in 2014, a 4% increase in call volume since 2013 and a 26% increase from 2004. Of those calls, 2,509 were fire response, with the remaining 7,950 calls being EMS response.

- In 2015, the BFD's Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating was upgraded from a 3 to a 2. ISO evaluates fire departments based on response times, equipment, levels of training and other criteria when determining its rating. Departments are rated on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being the best. Bloomington is among the 18% of communities in the United States with ISO ratings of 1 to 3.

tized nearly 30 recommendations, from effectively dispatching staff to improving the response times. This plan attempted to integrate those recommendations, as many will directly affect or be affected by land use and transportation decisions.

Ideally, communities want to respond to all fire and EMS calls within a six-minute response time, a national standard set by the Fire Protection Association. Given the resource constraints, it is often impossible to achieve that standard. The National Fire Protection Association set a minimum standard for meeting that requirement of 90% of the calls complying with the standard. In 2013, Bloomington Fire Department responded to 73.5% of all fire calls and 63.9% of all EMS calls within six minutes. Detailed discussion on this subject can be found in the 2013 Illinois Fire Chief's report.

Vehicle availability and staffing levels are an important factor in emergency response. A fire company unavailable for response provides no service to the community. Availability threshold is calculated by the Unit Hour Utilization (UHU) method. The UHU method considers the number of hours a unit is committed on an emergency or other activity, divided by the number of overall hours a unit is available to respond. An acceptable UHU range for a traditional fire station is 0.25 to 0.3. As illustrated in Table 9.1, there are number of instances that this is being exceeded at various fire stations. The BFD's headquarters fire station located at 310 N. Lee Street has an average UHU of 0.36. Several factors such as road conditions, layout, traffic flow and time of the year all have an impact on UHU, along with the incidence location.

The department continues to strive to achieve the minimum standard. Given current conditions, achieving the minimum standard seems to be a lofty goal. While the BFD is working hard to

cut down on the alarm processing time and the turn out time, this plan focuses on achieving efficiencies in travel time. This includes both fixes within the existing system such as traffic preemptions and adding engine companies, as well as reinforcing vertical and horizontal collaborations. According to the County's Mental Health Action plan, nearly 11 % of the EMS call volume was related to a behavioral/psychiatric disorder. Increased coordination with the McLean County Health Department's behavioral health initiatives could lessen the burden and financial strain on the Bloomington Fire Department.

Most importantly, the type of urban growth has a significant impact on the efficiency of emergency services. In the last 50 years the City's incorporated area has increased more than 2.5 times. The majority of the growth occurred to the east and south. Most of these suburban style neighborhoods have a cul-de-sac street layout with

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Response Time = Alarm Processing Time + Turn Out Time + Travel Time

Alarm processing time includes the time from the minute dispatcher received a call to the point of notification to the responding agency. Turn out time includes the time from when the call was received to when the vehicle leaves the station. Travel time is time from leaving the station to arriving at scene. The nationally acceptable standard for a response time is six minutes.

limited entrances and exits to the neighborhood. While most of the developments are contiguous, there is some sprawl, on the east and southwest sides. Many of the east-west connecting streets are curtailed by the location of the airport. All of these factors together have a major impact on the response times. Figure 9-1 shows the incorporated areas on the east, northeast, west, and southwest and around the airport that cannot be reached within four minute travel time (or six minute response time). The Fire Chief's Association conducted analysis using various parameters, including working with the Town of Normal, to identify optimal solutions for reduced response times. As with the police department, a challenge faced by the BFD is providing a sufficient level of service to the community while faced with budget constraints.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Communities always hope that a major disaster or emergency situation is not something that they will have to deal with. However, they must have a plan in place should such an event occur. Having a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan is a necessary step
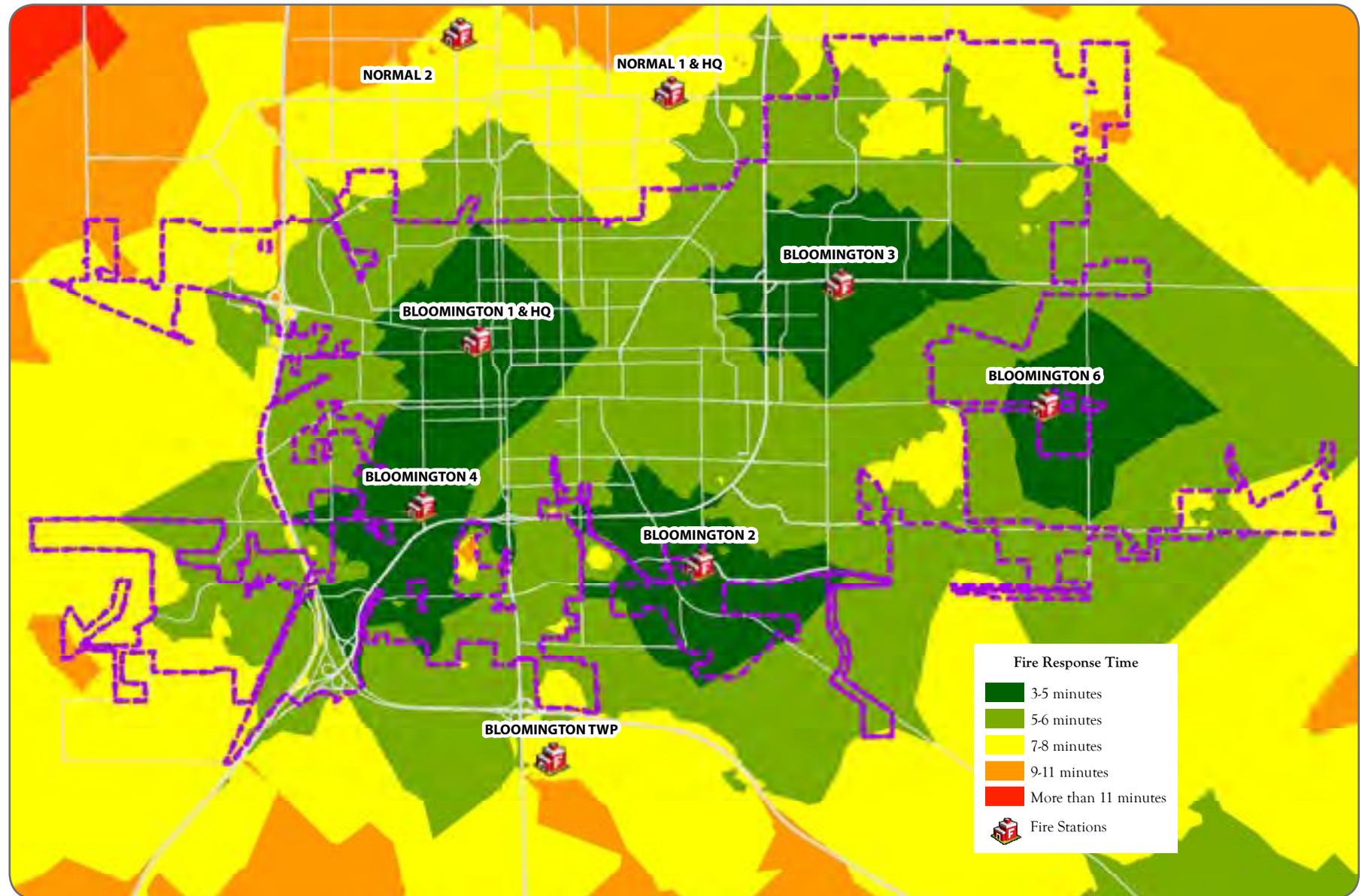
Figure 9-1. City of Bloomington Fire Response Time
Source: Existing Conditions Report, City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan
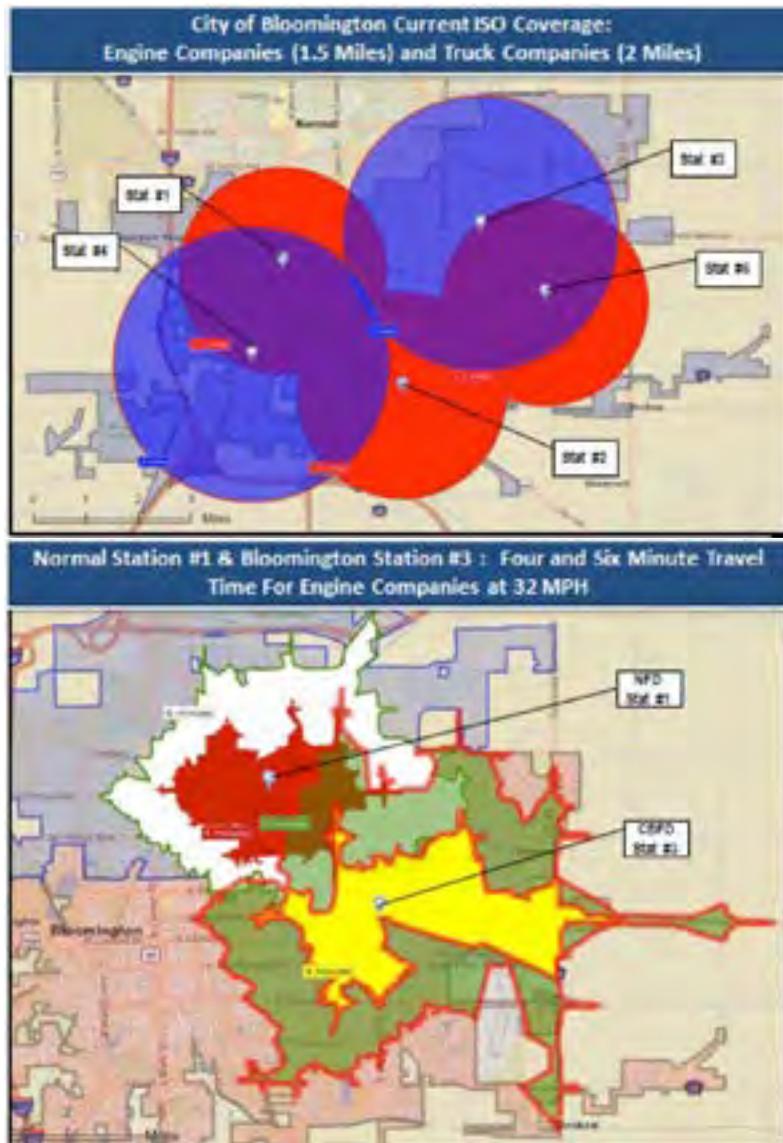
Figure 9-2. ISO coverage area analysis; four and six minute travel times on the northeast side of Bloomington using Bloomington and Normal Fire Station locations.
Source: Illinois Fire Chiefs Association Report

that all areas must take to ensure that any emergencies, disasters, natural or otherwise, are managed in the proper way.

It will be crucial for the City of Bloomington Emergency Preparedness Plan to be integrated with the McLean County Emergency Preparedness Plan as consistency between these documents is necessary to ensure coordination and collaboration among all government entities in the event of an emergency.

REGIONALISM

In emergency response, working in silos is not an option. Currently there are many intergovernmental relations amongst emergency responders in Bloomington-Normal and McLean County.

The Bloomington Fire Department (BFD) is part of the Statewide Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS). This provides mutual aid with any other agency that is a MABAS member anywhere in the State. MABAS (Mutual Aid Box Alarm System) in partnership with IEMA (Illinois Emergency Management Agency) have established a statewide, non-discriminatory mutual aid response system for fire, EMS and specialized incident oper-

ational teams. Sharing the effort are representatives from the Office of the State Fire Marshal, Department of Public Health - EMS Division and Illinois Fire Chiefs Association.

BFD also has an agreement with Central Illinois Regional Airport to provide emergency Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF) for the airport. Without this service there would not be any commercial flights. Aircraft rescue and firefighting (ARFF) is a special category of firefighting that involves the response, hazard mitigation, evacuation and possible rescue of passengers and crew of an aircraft involved in (typically) an airport ground emergency.

Bloomington Police Department is part of the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS). The Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS) was formed in 2002 in response to the September 11th attacks as a joint venture of the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, the Illinois Sheriffs' Association, and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. This was created to meet the needs of local law enforcement throughout the State of Illinois in matters of mutual aid, emergency response and the combining of resources for public

safety and terrorism prevention and response. As evidenced by this, there is good cooperation among the emergency responders. This plan acknowledges the importance of cooperation and calls for more.

This public safety chapter will outline how the City of Bloomington will ensure the safety and security of its citizens by reducing crime and the fear of crime, providing adequate fire and EMS service and protecting residents in the event of an emergency through a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan.

PS-1. Reduce crime and the fear of crime.

PS-1.1 Maintain adequate staffing to meet the policing needs of the community.

METRICS

- Officer to population ratio at or under 1.66
- Call response time ↓
- Amount of time spent on scene ↓

PS-1.1a Staffing levels researched and needs assessments conducted in preparation for future city growth and changes in crime trends. Align staffing level to calls for service. If calls for service increase over 5,000 in one year, consider an increase in the number of officers. *Bloomington Police Department, ongoing*

PS-1.2 Develop personnel and increase departmental efficiencies; review and research relevant technologies.

METRICS

- # of training hours beyond core requirement ↑
- IT department capacity ↑

PS-1.2a Provide the latest available training and technology to police officers so they may continue to provide great service to the community. Ex: Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), Traffic Preemption and Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training. *Bloomington Police Department, short*

Neighborhood Watch Groups

Launched in 1972, Neighborhood Watch counts on citizens to organize themselves and work with law enforcement to keep a trained eye and ear on their communities while demonstrating their presence at all times of day and night. Neighborhood Watch works because it reduces opportunities for crime to occur; it doesn't rely on altering or changing the criminal's behavior or motivation. There are currently 45 neighborhood watch groups in the City of Bloomington.

PS-1.3 Enhance community and police partnerships.

PS-1.3a BPD continues to participate in community programs and committees. *Bloomington Police Department, ongoing*

PS-1.3b Chief of Police continues to host bi-monthly citizen meetings to build a dialogue and strengthen relationships within the community. *Bloomington Police Department, ongoing*

PS-1.3c Assist and support outside agencies that manage grants or initiatives aimed at reducing crime and disorder in Bloomington. *Bloomington Police Department, medium*

PS-1.3d Explore grant opportunities to advance the mission of BPD. *Bloomington Police Department, medium*

PS-1.3e Continue partnerships with the neighborhood watch groups through active communication. *Bloomington Police Department, ongoing*

METRICS

- # of neighborhood watch groups ↑
- Crime ↓
- # of outreach meetings and events, and participation at those meetings ↑
- # dollars received in grants by Bloomington Police Department ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

Neighborhood watch groups, Illinois Prairie Community Foundation, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club

- Youth Intervention Specialist
- Recovery Court
- Coffee With a Cop
- Community Presentations (ID theft, drug prevention presentations, etc.)
- Block Parties
- Community Events (Bike Rodeos, etc.)
- Presentations/Tours for Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, School Groups Neighborhood Watch
- Crime Detection Network
- Staff Traffic Advisory Council (STAC) Explorers Program
- YouthBuild Partnership
- Minority and Police Partnerships (MAPP)
- Buckle Buddy
- Financial Institutions Security Administration (FISA)
- Focus Meetings
- Citizens Academy
- Community Forums: Breaking Barriers, etc.
- Not In Our Town (NIOT)
- Neighborhood Walks

Coffee with a Cop

PS-1.4 Improve the physical environment to enhance public safety.

- Crime ↓
- Crime in public spaces ↓
- CPTED Program instituted
- BPD involvement in development review process

PS-1.4a The BPD will continue to coordinate with the City's Community Development Department (formerly PACE). Use the nuisance abatement programs as part of the Problem Oriented Policing model. Neighborhood Focus Teams will work with code enforcement officers to address property conditions at repeat calls for service locations as well as blighted neighborhoods throughout the City, as staffing levels permit. *Bloomington Police Department, medium*

PS-1.4b Work with the community development department to establish a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) program. *Bloomington Community Development, medium*

PS-1.4c The police department will continue to be involved in the development review process. *City of Bloomington, Bloomington Police Department, short*

City of Bloomington, City of Bloomington Community Development Department, neighborhood watch groups

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

is defined as a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior through environmental design. CPTED strategies rely upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts by affecting the built, social and administrative environment.

CPTED programs have law enforcement officers, architects, city planners, landscape and interior designers, neighborhood organizations and resident volunteers on the team to design and maintain a physical environment that positively influences human behavior.

The CPTED theory is based on four principles: natural access control, natural surveillance, territoriality, and maintenance. For example, creating vibrant urban centers, well-used parks and walkable neighborhoods puts more "eyes on the street," making these areas safer. Fostering neighborhood pride in residential areas and encouraging pedestrian activity on the streets and in public areas create a more active and cohesive community with safety benefits as well. These kinds of activities could increase the perception of safety and act as a crime deterrent.

Large windows promote casual supervision of sidewalk

Porches and sidewalk encourage interaction between neighbors

Paving and architectural treatments define public and private zones

Good pedestrian-scaled lighting on street

Low landscaping and fences define property lines without creating hiding places

PS-1.5 Develop strategies to address high crime areas.

PS-1.5a Crime Intelligence and Analysis Unit (CIAU) and Command Staff will analyze geographic regions of the City to identify locations with a high density of criminal incident reports and high priority types of crimes. Multi-point crime analysis techniques will be utilized to identify, map, and resolve community problems. *Bloomington Police Department, ongoing*

PS-1.5b Expand the use of security cameras, prioritizing high crime areas. *Bloomington Police Department, short*

PS-1.5c Continue to engage neighbors and community groups to address safety and security issues in the high crime areas. *Bloomington Police Department, medium*

PS-1.5d Expand community awareness on roles, responsibilities and limitations of Bloomington Police Department. *Bloomington Police Department, ongoing*

PS-1.5e Explore opportunities to offer internships/college credit to college students and use them as a resource to create education materials and campaigns consistent with BPD strategies and initiatives. *Bloomington Police Department, medium*

METRICS	PARTNER AGENCIES
• Crime ↓ • # of security cameras throughout the City ↑ • # of neighborhood watch groups ↑ • # of outreach events and programs with the public ↑	YMCA, neighborhood watch groups, neighborhood organizations, local colleges and universities

Figure 9-3. City of Bloomington Concentration of Crime

See Existing Conditions Report, City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan for detailed explanation.
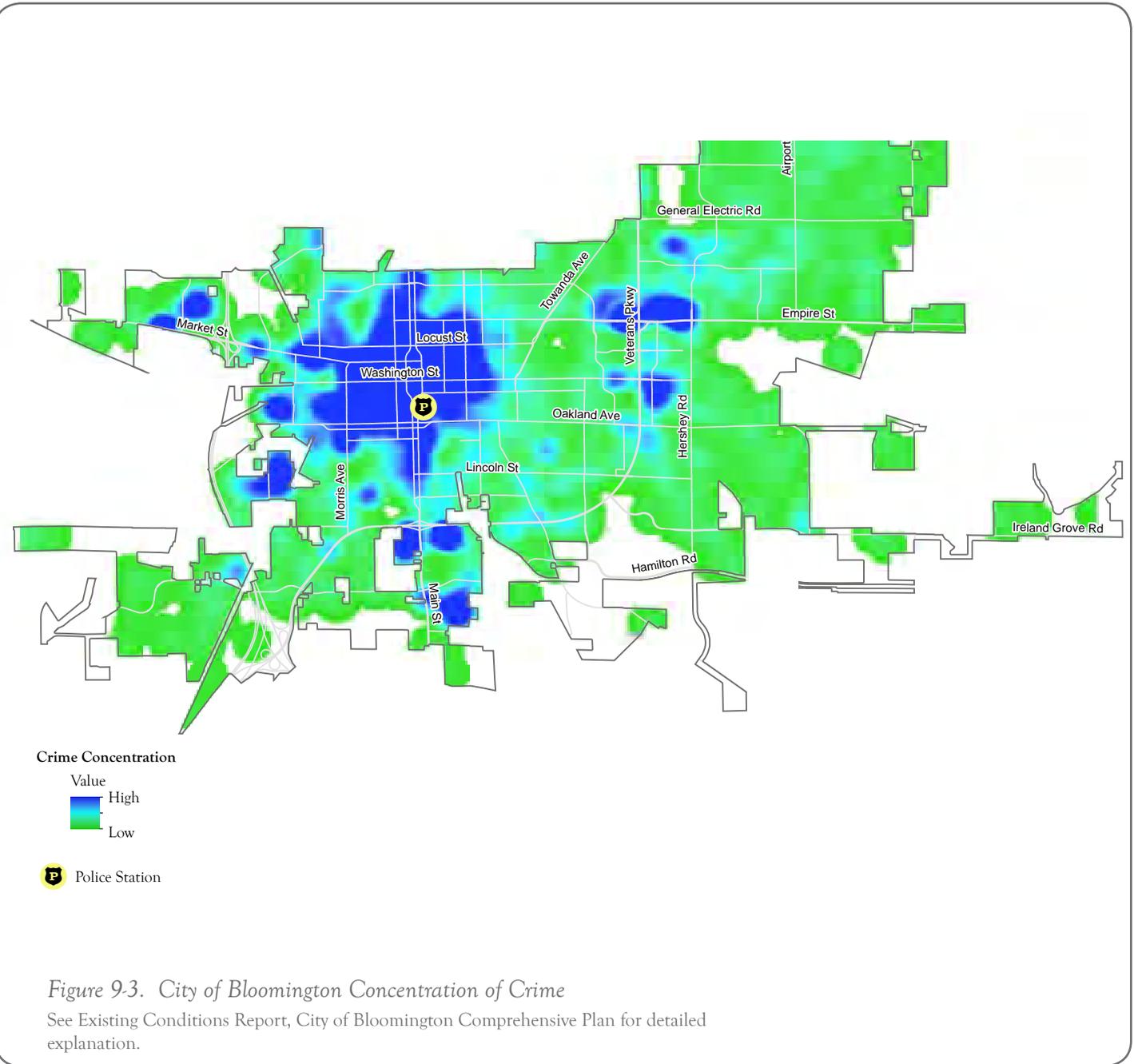
PS-2. Plan and provide for fire and emergency facilities adequate to protect health, life, safety, livelihood and property for current and future citizenry and businesses in the City.

PS-2.1 Establish a six minute response time for at least 90% of Fire and EMS calls.

PS-2.1a Continue to include the characteristics of emergency vehicles in the design and implementation of any new construction or roadway improvements. *Bloomington Fire Department, ongoing*

PS-2.1b Installation of emergency preemption on all traffic signal devices on the major thoroughfares as identified within a valid and reliable traffic count analysis. *Bloomington Fire Department & Bloomington Police Department, medium*

PS-2.1c Add another ambulance company into service staffed with two firefighter/paramedics, and when an ambulance company is placed into service, consider the reduction of service areas for each in-service ambulance company with the objectives of reduction of travel times and an Ambulance Unit Hour Utilization that does not exceed the UHU of .30. *Bloomington Fire Department, long*

PS-2.1d Reevaluation of fire station locations. *Bloomington Fire Department, ongoing*

PS-2.1e Education to the public through community outreach and programming. *Bloomington Fire Department, short*

PS-2.1f Monitor on a monthly basis the established performance measurement criteria standards, response time standards and related performance measurement criteria for both fire and EMS response times. *Bloomington Fire Department, ongoing*

PS-2.1g Monitor on a quarterly basis company station and availability, thereby creating benchmark performance standards to support vehicle and personnel distributions for the entire response area. *Bloomington Fire Department, ongoing*

PS-2.1h Investigate placing/creating an engine company at Station Three to ensure the northeast quadrant has adequate coverage. *Bloomington Fire Department, medium*

PS-2.1i Upgrade existing ELS engines to ALS engines and truck companies to help support the growing demand for emergency and medical services, which would shorten the time between the call for assistance and patient care. *Bloomington Fire Department, medium*

PS-2.1j Conduct business case development to research cost of adding an additional fire station. Determine what other services or "nice to haves" could be reduced or eliminated to enable the "have to have" safety response time. *Bloomington Fire Department, ongoing*

PS-2.1k Adopt building code amendments that require commercial occupancies to connect with the City fire alarm monitoring service. *Bloomington Fire Department, ongoing*

METRICS

- % of calls responded to within 6 minutes ↑ - Goal a minimum of 90%
- UHU of all EMS vehicles at all times - Goal 0.30 or under
- ISO Rating - stay where it is (2) or 1
- Engine company at Station 3
- # of upgraded fire engines ↑
- # of commercial occupancies that connect to the City fire alarm monitoring service ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

City of Bloomington, Bloomington Police Department, City of Bloomington Community Development Department

	Unit Hour Utilization During a 24-Hour Shift (One Week Sampling)								Average
Station	Unit	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
Hdqts	Engine 1	.13	.14	.04	.06	.08	.02	.06	.08
	Engine 5	.02	.15	.06	.04	.07	.02	.03	.06
	3N16	.49	.23	.21	.33	.51	.31	.44	.36
Station #2	Engine 2	.15	.06	.00	.04	.07	.00	.03	.05
	3N53	.10	.16	.13	.30	.20	.07	.13	.16
	M3	.03	.04	.10	.00	.18	.12	.06	.08
Station #3	Truck #3	.15	.14	.02	.00	.09	.07	.13	.09
	3N102	.23	.10	.31	.00	.16	.14	.17	.16
Station #4	Truck #4	.20	.19	.03	.08	.15	.00	.02	.10
	3N51	.14	.23	.15	.12	.24	.23	.15	.19
Station #6	Engine #6	.19	.02	.00	.00	.03	.00	.02	.04

Table 9-1. Unit Hour Utilization (UHU)
Source: Illinois Fire Chiefs Association Report

BFD EMS 1 Non Transport Chase Vehicle

BFD Engine 2 ILS Engine

BFD Medic 4 Transport ALS Ambulance

Bloomington Fire Department Programs

- The Bloomington Area Career Center uses fire department facilities and firefighters to train the students in their fire science program.
- The Fire Department precepts most of the paramedic students from Heartland Community College and any other paramedic or basic EMT class.
- The Department also participates in school fire drills for schools in the City limits.
- Teaches CPR to various businesses in the community
- Provide fire extinguisher training at no cost to most of the schools and nursing homes as well as other businesses in the community.
- The Bloomington Fire Department responds with four Advanced Life Support ALS ambulances on a daily basis. These ambulances have two paramedics assigned to them; paramedics are the highest trained emergency medical responder on the Department.

- Provide fire safety training to schools and other groups.
- The Department also responds with one ALS Chase vehicle. This is a non-transport response vehicle with one paramedic onboard. This vehicle is used to supplement the ambulance medics or to provide a field upgrade when our chase vehicle responds to assist communities that have a lower level of service.
- The Department also has one Intermediate Life Support Engine Company that is assigned to the far east station #6. This unit responds to calls in their area to provide a high level of care until the transport ambulance can arrive and transport the patient. All other units are Basic Life Support, BLS response vehicles. These vehicles also provide a quick response to the patient and then provide care until the paramedics arrive.

PS-3. A comprehensive emergency preparedness plan.

PS-3.1 Ensure the safety of Bloomington's residents in an emergency situation.

- Updated emergency preparedness plan
- # City staff/departments trained in emergency response ↑

PS-3.1a Update the City's emergency preparedness plan. *City of Bloomington, medium*

PS-3.1b Conduct necessary training with City staff for emergency response. *City of Bloomington, short*

PS-3.1c Explore an internship as an inexpensive way to manage the research and recommendation that could be presented to the city council. The plan would need to address different contingencies as needs will differ (for example, physical devastation from tornado versus pandemic with widespread contagion and needs for medical care). *City of Bloomington & local universities, medium*

Bloomington Fire Department, Bloomington Police Department, McLean County, Local colleges and universities

PS-3.2 Integrate the City's emergency preparedness plan with the County's emergency preparedness plan.

- Integrated City/County Emergency Plan

PS-3.2a Continue to participate in the region-wide discussions. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PS-3.2b Integrate with McLean County and State of Illinois Emergency Preparedness Plans. *City of Bloomington, medium*

McLean County, McLean County EMA

PS-4 Intergovernmental Cooperation

PS-4.1 Enhance existing intergovernmental cooperation across all public services.

- Creation of JELC Committee

Town of Normal, McLean County

PS-4.1a Inform the protocols to all involved. *City of Bloomington, short*

PS-4.1b Review all mutual aid agreements for police and fire with neighboring emergency service organizations on a yearly basis. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PS-4.1c Explore the possibility of creating a joint emergency liaison committee (JELC) between City of Bloomington, Town of Normal and the County for better integration of public safety services. *City of Bloomington, medium*

PS-4.1d Advocate at the state and national levels for legislations affecting public safety. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

Existing Programs and Opportunities for the Future

- **Dispatch**: Town of Normal and McLean County currently use the McLean County Emergency Telephone Communications (METCOM) for dispatch of fire, EMS and police and sheriff. Normal Fire and the Sheriff's Department operate on the Starcom 21 Radio System. Bloomington Fire Department recently transitioned into the Starcom 21 Digital Emergency Radio System for its dispatch to provide better radio coverage and improve the communications with Town of Normal fire department. Each of Bloomington's units, have MDT's as well as GPS location Devices that enable tracking of the vehicles and allow the Bloomington Dispatch Center to dispatch the nearest Fire or EMS unit. Normal Fire is adding this feature to its units as well and in the future this may allow the two agencies to provide more efficient services to both communities.
- The dispatchers currently use a priority dispatch system that standardizes the way calls are handled, such as Alpha level for lower priority calls, to Delta or Omega level for higher priority calls. A Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) interface between METCOM and the City could also enhance the dispatch of the closest units between Bloomington and Normal in the future and allow automatic aid to improve response times.
- **EMA**: The McLean County Area Emergency Management Agency serves to coordinate relief in the event of a disaster in McLean County. The agency currently has a staff of 30 which includes an executive staff, command staff, field operations division, and search and rescue division.

VISION

Bloomington's public infrastructure will provide a solid foundation for the City's quality of life and economic prosperity.

Infrastructure is the core of what cities provide for their residents – streamlined access to their everyday needs. Clean water, power and fuel, movement from place to place and other services are usually provided so seamlessly that only their rare absence reminds us of the complexity of the systems that bring them to our homes and respond when we flip a switch or open a tap.

Supporting its people, Bloomington is a many-layered construct of interlaced cables, pipes, wires, streets, tiles, drains, filters, buildings, open spaces and electromagnetic waves, some provided directly by the City and others operated by public utilities or private corporations. Much of this network is usually invisible to residents. Generally, underground systems such as water mains, sanitary and storm sewers, fuel and power lines and telecommunications equipment is installed long before residents move into their new neighborhoods. The condition and performance of very visible elements of city infrastructure, such as streets, sidewalks and surface stormwater detention facilities, often generate substantial resident concerns.

Public infrastructure is as costly as it is omnipresent, and demands significant and continuing investment to remain functional. As is true for government at all levels across the country, Bloomington is confronting the budgetary demands of current infrastructure needs as well as the immense reinvestment needed to upgrade deteriorating systems and maintain them at acceptable levels of service. The Department of Public Works has advised that significant funding will be needed simply to bring existing infrastructure to appropriate levels of repair; this applies to multiple systems such as sewers, streets and stormwater management. Preparing for future water needs will also require major investments at the local and regional level.

The critical component of infrastructure investment is ongoing costs. Each investment must be considered in terms not only of the initial cost of construction or installation, but also the continuing costs of maintaining and upgrading required over the service life of the investment. While creating new infrastructure is often regarded as a form of economic development, this type of development imposes long-term and unavoidable costs to the City. Such investments should be carefully evaluated, and the initial and ongoing costs weighted against reasonable expectations of benefits to be realized, a process discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

The installation and ongoing management of these systems requires continuing regional consultation and cooperation among governmental agencies and private entities. For example, while the City of Bloomington handles sanitary and storm sewers that serve the City, staff must constantly communicate with the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District, whose facilities are impacted by the sewer system's output, as they are by the Town of Normal.

Because infrastructure impacts the City both in what it provides and how much it costs, this plan considers the subject in three sub-groups listed below, each of which had a working group assigned to consider issues and needs in greater detail:

- **Utilities**
- **Transportation**
- **Community Facilities**

During the working group deliberations, some concerns common to all types of infrastructure emerged. In some instances, goals and objectives important for all infrastructure have been identified with one or more sub-groups as appropriate to their content. Definitions of these subject groups and the specific issues arising from them are discussed below.

Primary concerns regarding infrastructure focus on preserving existing facilities rather than extending systems, cost management and equity. Residents responding

EXISTING CONDITIONS

- The City currently has 250 miles of sanitary sewer, 83.2 miles of combination sewers, 77 miles of drain tile, 240 miles of storm, 12 miles of force drain and 1.7 miles of paved ditch.
- 323 miles of City maintained streets; approximately 60 miles of Highways and Interstates.
- 25 miles of alleys
- Approximately 300 miles of water distribution systems
- 37 miles of Constitution Trail (25 miles in Bloomington)
- 423 miles of sidewalks of which 15 miles are rated below 5
- There are two critical cost issues in infrastructure management – the initial cost of construction/installation and continuing maintenance and upgrade cost for the life of the facility.
- Bloomington must push forward in the regional effort to locate and develop new sources for municipal water.
- The master plan documents for the sanitary sewer and stormwater systems estimate costs for maintenance and improvement at $136 million dollars over 20 years.
- Improvement of streets to a condition rating of "good" would require $60 million over five years; the City Council has ordered a repair and maintenance program to aim for an overall rating of "fair."
- Bloomington has good telecommunications infrastructure, and benefits from the Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network (CIRBN).

- Bloomington will grow responsibly with careful consideration of the long-term benefits and costs of the public infrastructure.
- Bloomington will be proactive in assessing water requirements now and in the future.
- Ongoing investment in sanitary and storm sewers will provide systems which function efficiently and protect the local environment.
- Bloomington residents benefit from a wide array of community facilities that offer recreation, entertainment, sports, city events and cultural resources for the entire community.
- Bloomington's state of the art transportation network will provide residents access to all their needs and enhance the region's economic competitiveness.
- Bloomington will become more accessible through an expanded public transportation system.
- Bloomington recognizes the challenge of evolving energy resources and supports the use of energy alternatives.

to the community survey and working group members want to see established needs, moderation and cost-consciousness as standards for evaluating infrastructure improvements. In particular, survey respondents and working group members want growth and development targeted in areas already served rather than defaulting to undeveloped areas requiring new public infrastructure. This approach leverages the benefits of investment already made, rather than demanding additional spending. The goals for infrastructure also focus on community equity with the aim to distribute infrastructure improvements throughout Bloomington, so that all sections of the City benefit in equal measure from public expenditures.

Infrastructure goals and objectives also address the question of systems management in our digital age. The comprehensive plan supports the continued use of the regional Geographic Information System (McGIS) to monitor and manage the complex interactions of infrastructure through the community and the region. In an ongoing process, the McLean County Regional Planning Commission manages and local governments contribute to a database of infrastructure elements which incorporates their location, size, function, age and other characteristics. This information can be analyzed in conjunction with other GIS data sets including property boundaries, natural features such as lakes and streams, elevation, land use, population and many others. This information allows City staff and local and regional interests to quickly understand infrastructure resources and conflicts. Much of this data is available for public access through a web-based mapping utility provided by the McLean County GIS at the Regional Planning Commission.

Throughout the discussion of infrastructure issues, working groups noted the variety of expertise on very complicated issues available in the community. Group members acknowledged high levels of technical expertise and observations brought to the working groups by members active in the management of utilities and other infra-structure systems. These included City staff from various departments as well as participants from other organizations.

The contributions of these experts prompted the goal that community input, awareness and education on infrastructure and related matters should include a city forum for infrastructure innovation and management. This is envisioned as a web-based interface between City staff and the public and other stakeholders, serving as a designated point of contact for questions, comments and suggestions for service improvements, cost considerations and ideas for innovation flowing between all interested parties. This goal was articulated in slightly different forms with respect to different categories of infrastructure but the central concept was consistent throughout. Bloomington residents want ongoing communication with and information from the City about services and an opportunity to bring their own knowledge, expertise and concerns to bear on solutions to infrastructure challenges confronting the City.

Working groups also discussed creating equitable rate structures for certain utilities, notably with respect to water. Generally, consideration should be given to income-based pricing for utility services on a sliding scale. This would allow for economically disadvantaged households to provide a share of the costs without putting residency in Bloomington out of their reach. Other rate structure changes could include charges based on distance so that residents of core areas are not burdened for the continuing costs of providing services to outlying neighborhoods. Infrastructure objectives encourage creative thinking and innovative solutions for managing the costs and financing of utilities infrastructure as well as for its design, construction and maintenance.

UTILITIES

Some utilities infrastructure is directly owned and managed by the City, while others are public utilities designated by the state, or private companies subject to state and federal regulations. City utilities include water, sanitary sewer and storm sewers. Others include energy providers, including electric and gas companies, and telecommunications providers, such as telephone companies, cable communications and internet services.

Public Utilities

Management of City-owned utility infrastructure must meet the challenge of aging systems needing aggressive repair and maintenance combined with limited public funds with which to address those needs. This concern is also an issue for regional utility providers. Portions of Bloomington's water system rely on century-old pipe networks, and the water supply is contained in surface reservoirs that are subject to drought and other environmental and engineering pressures. Similarly, sections of the sanitary sewer system in the City's historic core still combine sanitary and storm drainage functions. Coping with the consequences of that outdated system is a continuing drain on City resources. The public response to outreach regarding the comprehensive plan included considerable comment on the condition of streets and sidewalks and the need for repairs that are immediate and lasting.

Although residents understand that repair rather than reconstruction of aging facilities is done due to budgetary pressure, there is concern that this approach will be more costly over time. As is true across the country, years and decades of minimal investment in critical infrastructure have reached a point where substantial investment is needed to correct earlier neglect and prepare for future needs. This concrete crisis is magnified by the constrained fiscal resources available. Having failed to maintain essential infrastructure demands during decades of growth and affluence, Bloomington's bill comes due at a time when the City is less prepared to manage the maintenance backlog. In the midst of these issues, the Department of Public Works engages in a notable example of program transparency through publication on its website of discussion and details regarding many of the issues with City infrastructure, planning efforts, budget considerations and specific work carried out.

Sanitary Sewer and Stormwater Management

Bloomington manages a sewer system that spans decades in operation. As illustrated in the City sewer map, much of the sewer operating in the older core of the City is combined sewer, which carries both sanitary sewer outflow and stormwater to treatment plants. During periods of high stormwater flow, such as during prolonged or heavy rainstorms, the combined output of the system can exceed the capacity of the treatment plants to process. In those circumstances, wastewater overflow, including untreated waste, toxic materials and debris, can be released directly into surface water such as streams through what are termed combined sewer overflows (CSOs). This is undesirable and subject to regulation and remediation but less so than the possibility of sanitary sewers backing up into homes and businesses. Such point-source water pollution is regulated under the Clean Water Act, through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, which has issued permits to Bloomington for the operation of five current CSOs. Both Bloomington and the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District (BN-WRD) are obligated to report CSO events to the public.

Bloomington has undertaken an ongoing program to eliminate the remaining CSOs, an expensive process in which a parallel sanitary sewer is built and the existing combined sewer is converted to use for stormwater. As of mid-2015, two CSOs are being remediated at a cost of approximately $10 million, and three remain to be addressed. The City has also developed master plans for management of sanitary and storm sewers. The goals for sewer management were developed with expert guidance from the staffs of the Bloomington Department of Public Works and the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation Dis-

Figure 10-1. Department of Public Works project at a combined sewer overflow location
Source: City of Bloomington Department of Public Works

trict. The goals focus on adoption and regular updating of the master plans, continued cooperation between the City and BNWRD, and regulatory compliance and system monitoring. The City has primary responsibility for some goals and BNWRD for others as part of their regional efforts. All rely on close coordination between Bloomington, Normal and BNWRD.

A major goal of the comprehensive plan is to revitalize the established older neighborhoods in the core of Bloomington including the Downtown. The established areas have older infrastructure including some installations more than a century old. These areas are more likely to experience service failures, lessening their appeal for revitalization. Upgrading and maintaining the infrastructure in older neighborhoods is a key element in achieving the goal of revitalizing them. Although potentially very costly, as in the case of CSO mitigation, infrastructure improvements in these areas are essential underpinnings to attracting private sector participation and successfully recapturing these neighborhoods in the City's core.

Water

A sufficient supply of safe water is essential – without water a community cannot survive. We are fortunate our area is not experiencing the cycle of historic droughts and floods which continue to devastate agriculture, industry and economic conditions for millions in the Southwest and California. Bloomington's Water Department manages the infrastructure which delivers potable water from the treatment facility at Lake Bloomington to users within the City and in other areas which have contracted for City water service. As with other public infrastructure, particularly systems which operate partially underground, there are ongoing maintenance and upgrading requirements. As with the sanitary and storm sewers, expansion of the City's service area adds initial costs for new installation and the aggregated continuing cost of maintaining the overall water system.

As with other infrastructure, these costs are somewhat mitigated by adherence to compact development principles and practices that fully use the existing system and reduce the demand for new installations that will serve only a limited number of residents. In addition to considering the water system impact on City finances, the goals and objectives regarding water service also consider the cost to City water users. Because water is an essential service, consideration should be given to income-based pricing for water service so that economically disadvantaged households are not burdened with excessive costs for a necessary commodity.

The working group for utilities also examined issues relating to future water demand and sourcing as did the Natural Environment Working Group. Please see Chapter 8 for more discussion of future water supply needs and resources.

OTHER UTILITIES

The core services provided by the City are joined by private-sector providers and public utilities managed at the state level, each adding to the mix of wires, pipes, conduits, switches and other equipment required to sustain modern life.

Communications

In recent years the dividing line between some types of providers has blurred, particularly in telecommunications services.

As needs for data exchange have increased, priorities for communications customers have shifted away from traditional telephone service and towards packages that include voice and data transmission combined with broadcast and cable programming and internet streaming capabilities. The one certainty for these utilities and their customers is that services and delivery mechanisms will continue to change and evolve. Recognizing that fact, goals for such utilities focus on broadening access to state-of-the-art telecommunications services throughout the community ensuring that all Bloomington residents enjoy the educational, economic and personal benefits these technologies offer.

Energy

Energy providers also confront a new world of services and expectations. Currently, Ameren Illinois and Corn Belt Energy provide electric power services in Bloomington, while Nicor Gas provides natural gas. These companies, and others serving smaller niche energy markets, maintain substantial local infrastructure networks which require investment and maintenance, and affect energy costs for consumers. Goals and objectives with regard to energy concentrate on improving energy efficiency, controlling costs and increasing use of renewable energy sources for all uses.

The preference for alternative energy and cost controls reflects in the City's 100% renewable power purchase through electricity aggregation. These objectives apply to energy consumption by the City and efforts by the City to encourage residents and businesses to improve their energy efficiency. Bloomington and Normal contracted with the Ecology Action Center to study greenhouse gas emissions and contributing activities, such as energy generations and use, including use by the municipal governments. The initial report, the Bloomington-Normal Greenhouse Gas Inventory, established baseline data for 2008. While the per capita emissions for Bloomington-Normal are lower than state and national averages in 2008, the report identifies existing community initiatives that contributed to that result. It also notes steps that can further improve air quality, including energy and transportation management.

UEW-1. Provide quality public infrastructure within the City to protect public health, safety and the environment.

UEW-1.1 Maintain the existing City operated infrastructure in good condition.

METRICS		PARTNER AGENCIES

METRICS

- Rate Study
- GIS inventory of all City infrastructure
- Risk Assessments of all infrastructure (PASER for Streets and sidewalks) (PACP for Sewers) (Flow Rating for water distribution systems)

UEW-1.1a Continue prioritization of maintenance and expansion of the existing infrastructure over building new. Develop an infrastructure assessment and inventory procedure to guide maintenance/upgrades and expansion. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.1b Provided a framework for implementing operations and maintenance best practices, and maximizing the usable life of City assets. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

UEW-1.1c Define the enabling factors for operation and maintenance such as funding, capabilities and governance. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

UEW-1.1d Implement rates and fees for all City operated infrastructure structured to recover costs (including construction, operation and maintenance). - Conduct a rate study -Follow the industry standard benchmarks (such as AWWA for water) for targets over cash to debt ratio, months of operating fund reserves, etc. - Investigate sliding scale for utility payments to factor in both usage as well as ability to pay. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

PARTNER AGENCIES

Local engineering firms, Developers, BNAR

UEW-1.2 Expand City's infrastructure, as needed, while supporting the overall goal of compact growth and vibrant urban core.

METRICS

- Density (pop/sq. miles) ↑
- # of developments within the service area of existing systems ↑
- # of developments outside the service area of existing systems ↓
- Infrastructure capital investments, maintenance and emergencies tracked by ward

UEW-1.2a Ensure that all areas of the City are equitably served by the City's infrastructure. Implement cost sharing programs/up sizing assistance for infill development. Investigate a sliding tap on fee based on distance to the edge of the system (the farther a development from the existing system, the more they pay). *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

UEW-1.2b Prioritize new development where City services are available or can be extended efficiently and economically. This can be done through annexation policies and development review process. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.2c Promote compact and orderly development of infrastructure consistent with the overall goals of this comprehensive plan. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

Developers, BNAR, Habitat For Humanity, WBRP, Neighborhood organizations in the Regeneration and Preservation areas

PACP Pipe Rating

The National Association of Sewer Service Companies (NASSCO) Pipeline Assessment Certification Program (PACP) established methods to rate the condition of gravity pipelines. The methods utilize the PACP system of scoring defects or observations through closed-circuit television (CCTV) inspection of pipelines.

Structural defects and operation and maintenance (O&M) defects or observations are identified and assigned a grade. Per the PACP Condition Grading System, condition grades range from a scale of 1 to 5 based on the severity of the defects.

The City's draft sewer and storm water master plan recommends the City develop a Business Rate Exposure (BRE) rating that takes into account Consequence of Failure (COF) and Probability of Failure (POF). COF takes into account the criticality of systems function. Example: systems serving hospitals or running under major highways are rated higher. POF takes into account the age, material, structural and other factors into consideration. BRE rating helps the City with prioritization of maintenance, repair and replacement actions.
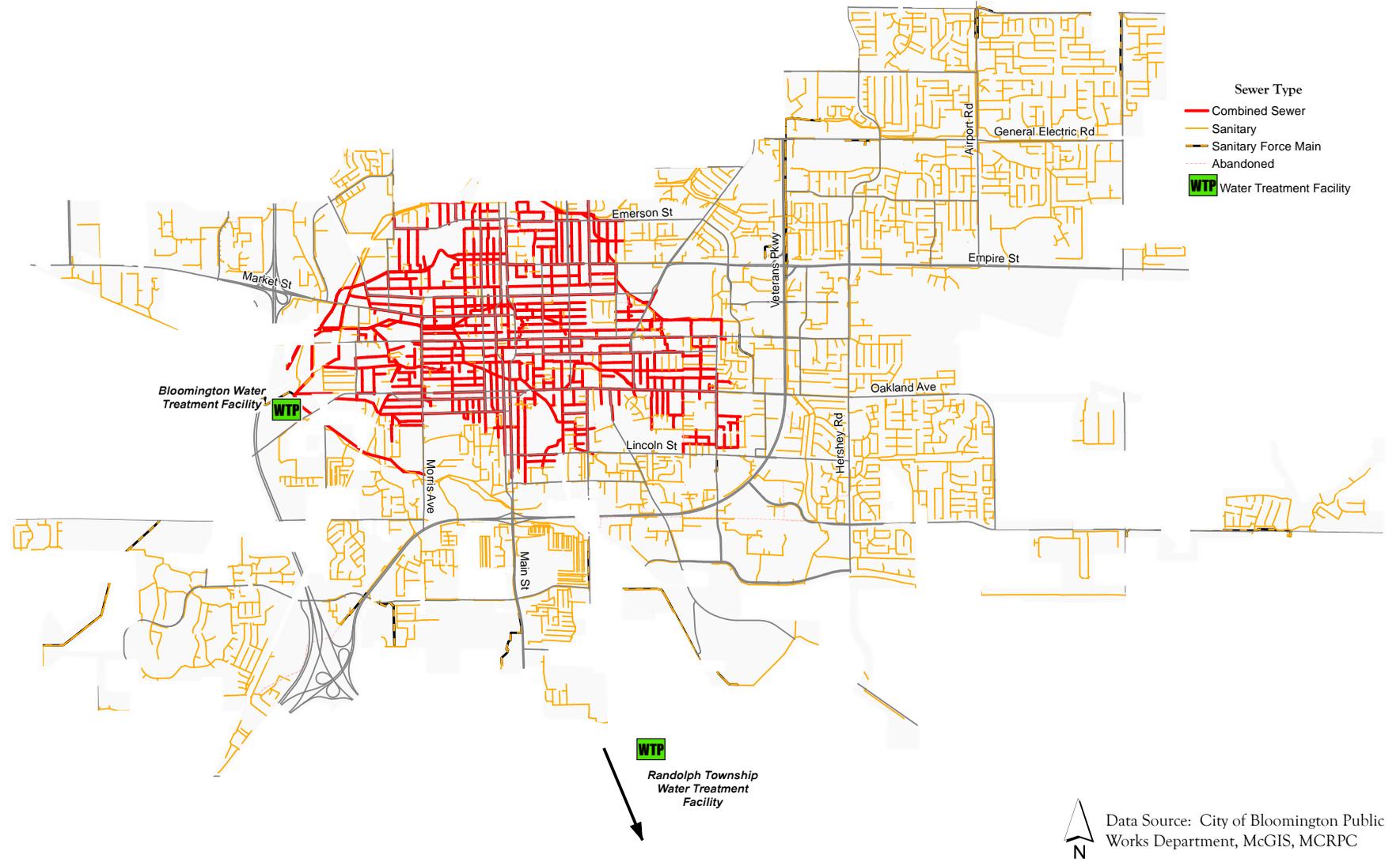
Figure 10-2. Residential Sanitary Sewer System

UEW-1.3 Work cooperatively with other public and private utility service providers operating in the City to address mutual concerns and needs.

UEW-1.3a The City shall continue to encourage, where feasible, the co-location of public and private utility distribution facilities. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.3b Coordinate with internal and external utility service providers through regular information exchange and cooperative planning of utility infrastructure where feasible. Schedule infrastructure repair with other utilities to promote efficiency and minimize service disruption. This model currently exists between the City departments. Example: Public works and water departments coordinate water main replacement and street repair projects when and where feasible. Extend this model to work with other utility providers when feasible. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.3c Continue coordination between Public Works and non-municipal utilities regarding facility installation, above and below ground. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.3d Integrate utilities plans and facilities access in the development review process where feasible. *City of Bloomington, short*

UEW-1.3e Work closely with the utility providers where feasible to provide standard levels of services sufficient for existing development and future growth. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

UEW-1.3f Work closely with all utilities to promote the use and design of energy efficient practices such as the use of energy efficient street lighting. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.3g Coordinate with natural gas utilities regarding management of their facilities in City jurisdiction including management of maintenance and service extension requirements. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

UEW-1.3h Continue to maintain GIS dataset for municipal and other utility facilities and equipment locations, where feasible, coordinated with the MCRPC regional GIS government-access intranet (government-access) mapping application. *MCRPC, ongoing*

UEW-1.3i Increase coordination between the City and the private utility companies to locate the utilities underground where feasible and cost effective. *City of Bloomington, short*

UEW-1.4 Encourage increased accessibility to state-of-the-art telecommunications and broadband networks.

UEW-1.4a Require cooperation between telecommunications providers, including location of nodes and transmitters in accordance with State & Federal regulations. Stipulate wireless & WiFi broadcasting that does not interfere with other bands, including safety and law enforcement, common devices or sight lines. Create a regional telecom/broadband plan to proactively address the issue. *City of Bloomington, short*

UEW-1.4b Stipulate easement/right of way location for new construction and upgraded infrastructure for provisioning of existing and proposed telecommunications & broadband services. Include access for existing and proposed services in all new construction. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

UEW-1.4c Periodically review and enforce permits/contracts/franchise agreements with the service providers. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.4d Encourage competition for telecommunications and broadband services by prohibiting exclusionary contracts. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

The Need for Speed

A NEW FRAMEWORK for TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY for the 21st CENTURY
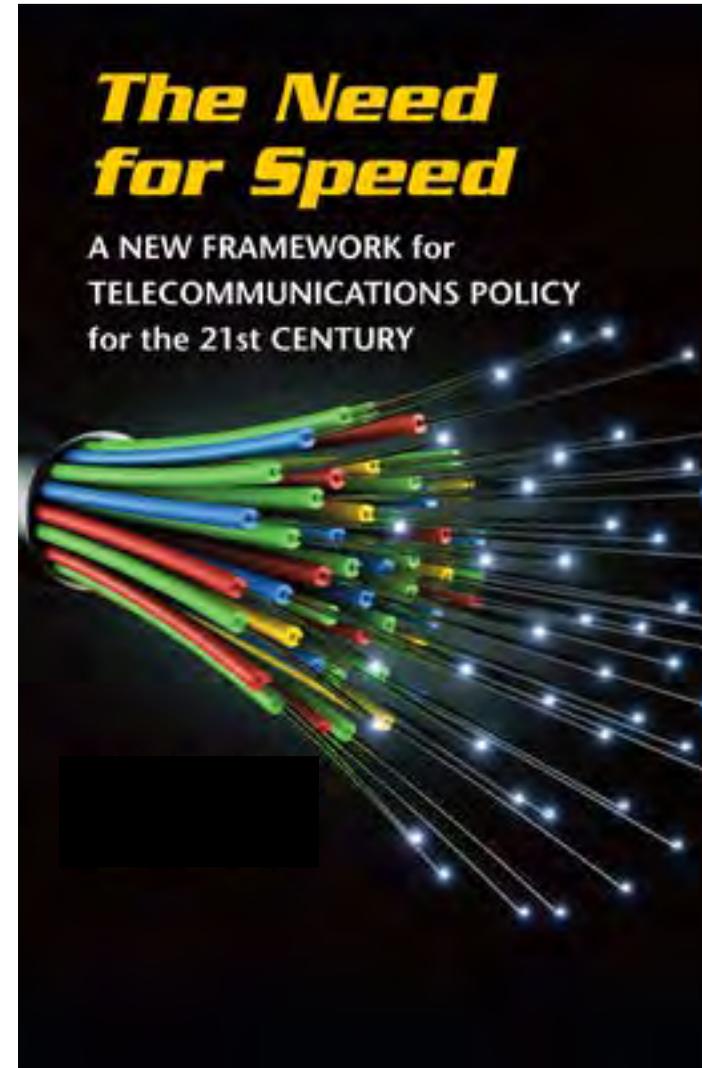
UEW-1.5 Reliable water supply and distribution system that meets the needs of the current and future residents.

- Gallons of non-revenue water ↓
- Per capita water usage ↓
- Business water usage ↓
- Water plan updated every five years
- Adoption of variable water rate structures

BNWRD, EAC, Regional Greenways Committee, Urban Watershed Committee

UEW-1.5a Update the City's water master plan periodically to account for changing economics, population growth and technological advances. *Bloomington Water Department, ongoing*

UEW-1.5b Continue leak detection program for distribution system and continue installation of compound meters where appropriate to minimize non-revenue water. *Bloomington Water Department, ongoing*

UEW-1.5c Upgrade and maintain the water supply, storage and distribution system. *Bloomington Water Department, short-medium*

UEW-1.5d Maximize efficiency of water usage from all municipal sources and maintain data regarding water usage. *Bloomington Water Department, short-medium*

UEW-1.5e Promote and support water conservation efforts. Investigate and implement rate structures that cover the utility's fixed cost while providing a detectable conservation price signal. Consider sliding rate structure based on usage for residential and non-residential (with tailored exceptions for businesses where water usage is critical for operations such as nurseries). *Bloomington Water Department, ongoing*

UEW-1.6 Continue to participate in regional efforts to establish a sustainable and responsible water supply.

See Healthy Community - Natural Environment Subsection

Figure 10-3. Water Supply Exploration Areas
Source: City of Bloomington, Interim Water Supply Plan, January 2010

Figure 10-4. Future Regional Water System
Source: City of Bloomington, Interim Water Supply Plan, January 2010

UEW-1.7 Reliable and efficient collections systems (sanitary sewer, combined sewer, and storm sewer systems) to protect public health, safety and the environment.

UEW-1.7a The City shall actively work with BNWRD and adjoining local jurisdictions to manage, regulate and maintain the regional sewer and stormwater system with continued adherence to USEPA guidance and permit requirements. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.7b Adopt and implement City's sewer and stormwater master plans. Periodically review and update the sewer and stormwater master plans. *City of Bloomington, short-ongoing*

UEW-1.7c Assess reduction of hydraulic capacity @ SEWWTP, potential for SSO events (illegal as per Clean Water Act), growth limitations on east side due to collection system capacity being consumed by I/I. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.7d Mitigate impacts of excessive infiltration and inflow (I/I) on separate sanitary sewer system including source reduction. Carefully evaluate the results of the City's source reduction pilot program near Arcadia Drive to evaluate the costs and benefits to our region. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.7e Ensure capacity for combined sewer system service area to handle infill growth. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.7f Continue mitigation of CSO outfalls where engineering design change is possible. A successful example in our community is the CSO lagoon, a joint funded project between the City and BNWRD. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.7g Continue maintenance of existing detention basins, and in the future, implement regional stormwater detention facilities for the longterm fiscal sustainability. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.7h Monitor and mitigate urban stream-bank erosion. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.7i Protect against erosion and nutrient losses. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.7j Continue work to eliminate Maize Field CSO's. *City of Bloomington,short-medium*

UEW-1.7k Explore options to provide stormwater detention for areas at the south end of downtown. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

UEW-1.7l Continue to separate sanitary and stormwater flows. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.7m Continue monitoring private stormwater systems for maintenance and integration with City stormwater management. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-1.7n Follow the FAA guidelines for location of detention basins around the airport. The City should work closely to ensure no new wet-bottom detention basins are installed within 10,000 feet of airport property. This can be included as a regulation in the airport overlay zoning. *City of Bloomington, short*

METRICS

- Full compliance with NPDES
- Miles of stream bank restored ↑
- Nutrient loss ↓

PARTNER AGENCIES

BNWRD, Town of Normal, Village of Downs, McLean County, CIRA

UEW-2. Promote and facilitate energy conservation and alternate energy generation and resources.

UEW-2.1 Reduce municipal and community energy use by at least 20% by 2035.

METRICS		PARTNER AGENCIES

- Per capita energy usage ↓

UEW-2.1a Continue to adopt building codes that include high energy efficiency requirements. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-2.1b The City shall encourage economically feasible diversity among energy sources to avoid over-reliance on any single source. *City of Bloomington, short*

UEW-2.1c Encourage the exploration of innovative and alternative technologies regarding energy generation and conservation (i.e. waste to energy, urban wind, solar, bio). *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

EAC, Ameren, Corn Belt

UEW-2.2   Ensure at least 25% of energy use comes from renewable energy sources.

METRICS		PARTNER AGENCIES

- Percentage of total energy consumption from renewable energy sources ↑

UEW-2.2a Continue to purchase 100% green energy through the municipal aggregation contracts when economically feasible. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

UEW-2.2b Investigate and pursue green energy purchase for the City facilities aggregation contract when economically feasible. *City of Bloomington, short*

UEW-2.2c Create programs to promote alternate energy generation such as community solar and PACE programs. *City of Bloomington, short*

UEW-2.2d Encourage conversion of the landfill site into a solar park after its closure in 2017. *City of Bloomington, short*

UEW-2.2e Encourage the use of alternate energy during any brownfield redevelopment. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

EAC, Homefield Energy (Aggregation Energy Provider), Ameren, Corn Belt, Wind farms, Landfill owners

UEW-3. Education and increased public awareness regarding utility, energy and water issues.

UEW-3.1 Provide educational and engagement opportunities.

UEW-3.1a Establish an innovation forum for information exchange regarding utilities, energy and water concerns. *City of Bloomington, short*

- Information forum established

UEW-3.1b Continue to educate the community on energy, water and utility related issues. *EAC, ongoing*

MCRPC, EAC, Utilities, Town of Normal

Information Forum As Envisioned by the Working Group

Vision: When citizens imagine innovative solutions, they need a forum within City government where they can work with City planners to create the processes whereby new ways can effectively integrate themselves with existing Utilities, Energy and Water systems and governing methods. The Information Forum would encourage new, private and novel methods that could support:

- The desire of citizens to employ cost-effective, creative and safe methods to improve how, when and where they use utilities, energy and/or water.
- The goal of the city to better manage sewer and stormwater collection.
- The community's goal to become ever more efficient in its use of energy.
- The goals of citizens, businesses and City government to make available more effective local communication technology without introducing inordinate costs.

Mission: The Information Forum needs to find the right balance of city employees or departments and knowledgeable community experts who could support the desire of citizens, or a citizen group, to implement their plans for an alternative energy, water harvesting, or wastewater handling designs. This city department should resolve to say, "Let's figure out if and how we can do what you propose," rather than saying, "That's not how we do things," or "That's never been done before."

TRANSPORTATION

Few aspects of infrastructure are as exposed and utilized as the components of the transportation system. The comprehensive plan looks at the user's experience of transportation in Bloomington, as well as technical issues and standards that provide guidance in evaluating how well transportation works. In the public outreach process, participants were especially vocal in their demand for maintenance of streets and sidewalks. Bloomington residents and businesses also have concerns regarding air and rail travel and especially the future of the public transit system, Connect Transit. Concerns include service issues, increasing costs and financing barriers.

There are many ways to measure the performance of the transportation system and evaluate its condition. The task for City staff and other agencies is identifying the most reliable information and reviewing and analyzing it consistently and continuously. One important goal is the development of data-driven policy and implementation carried out so results can be tested and compared. This applies to methods of management, use of materials, assessment of transportation demand and other aspects of the system. The City has begun this process through the development of master plans for streets, sidewalks and bicycle facilities, as well as plans for special concerns such as brick street preservation and management. The comprehensive plan does not replicate the work done on these master plans but incorporates them and encourages adoption of those still pending and full implementation of their recommendations. Similarly, the comprehensive plan aligns with regional transportation plans that deal with the transportation systems throughout McLean County.

Transportation does not stop at the city limits and can only work well when movement between places is transparent for the user. The plan recognizes and promotes the ongoing process of coordination and cooperation between the City and the Town of Normal, McLean County, Connect Transit, CIRA, and state and federal level transportation agencies, facilitated through the Regional Planning Commission. Among other results, this process allows the local governments to access federal and state funding for transportation improvements for

Functional Classification of Streets and Roads

Functional classification is a tool developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation to sort sections of the street network based on how many vehicles they carry, posted speed limit, and access to other routes, or to destinations. A street's function is also reflected in its design characteristics, such as the number of lanes, whether it has curbs and gutters, or other features that support its function such as turn lanes with signals. As a general rule, arterials provide maximum travel efficiency or mobility while collectors and local streets provide direct access to adjacent land.

Table 10-1. Functional Classification, General Characteristics, and Use in Bloomington		
Classification	Characteristics	Local Example
Interstate/Other Freeways and Expressways	High speed travel with controlled access, no signals, wide lanes; freeways and expressways may have slightly greater direct access	Interstate 55/74; U.S. 51 South to Decatur
Principal Arterial	Provide rapid travel through metro areas, serve major activity centers, connect with interchanges and intersections	Veterans Parkway
Minor Arterials	Serve trips of moderate length within an area, preferably spaced between 1/8 to ½ mile apart at lower speeds	Oakland Avenue, Towanda Avenue
Major Collector	Serves both mobility and land access in higher density areas, providing connections through portions of the city but also direct land access to commercial and residential uses with signalized intersections	Clearwater Avenue, West Washington Street
Minor Collector	Serves mobility and density in lower density areas	None in City of Bloomington
Local Street	Provides access to individual properties and uses, generally do not provide through travel	Residential streets

Some work on the classified roads and streets is eligible for funding through various federal grant programs administered by the Federal Highway Administration. Such funding has been used throughout Bloomington, including projects on Hamilton Road, the Morris-Veterans Parkway intersection, the streetscape improvements in the Downtown Area, and many others. Details of funding commitments are published annually in the Transportation Improvement Program developed by the McLean County Regional Planning Commission.
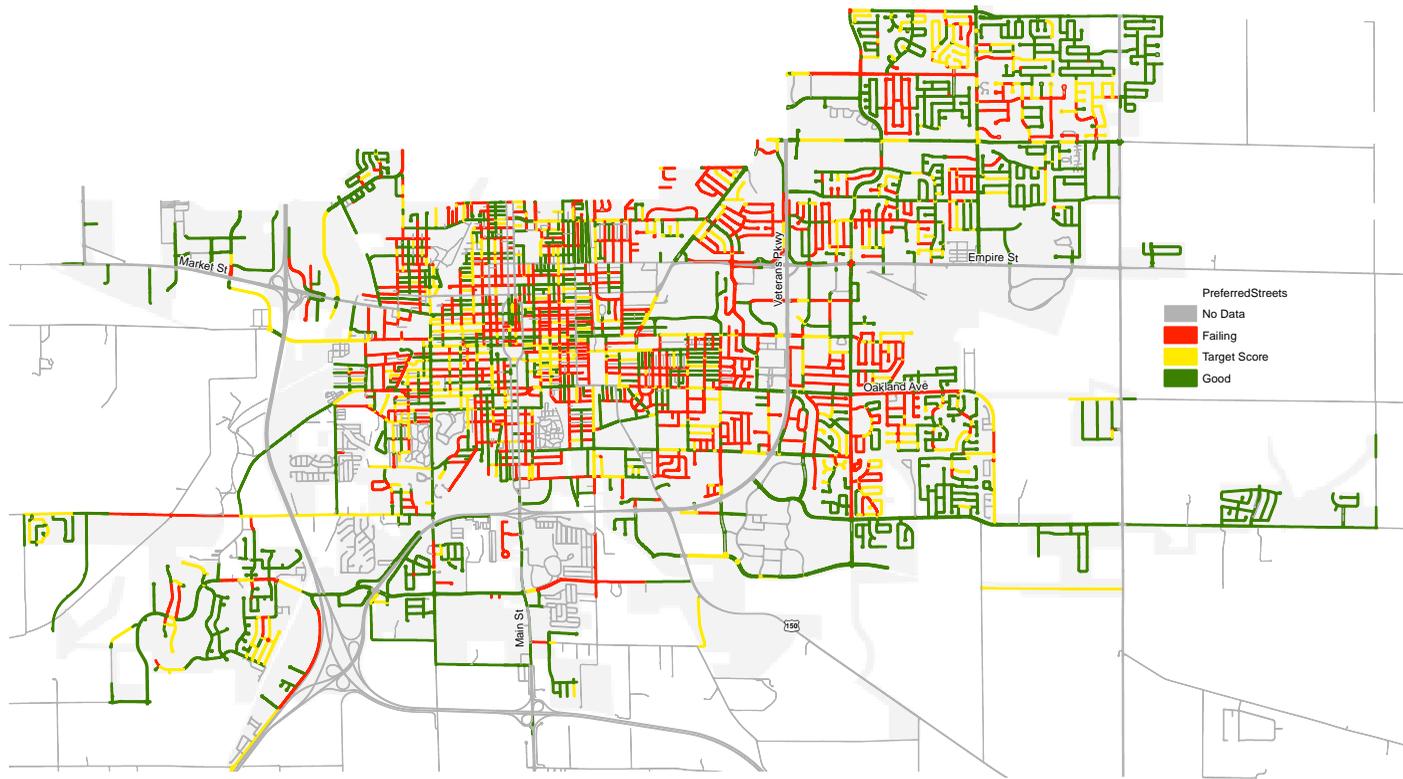
Figure 10-5. Street Rating in Bloomington
For data source and other details refer to the Existing Conditions Report

PASER RATING

The PASER scale is a 1-10 rating system for road pavement condition developed by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Transportation Information Center. PASER uses visual inspection to evaluate pavement surface conditions. When assessed correctly, PASER ratings provide a basis for comparing the quality of roadway segments. A primary advantage to this method is roads may be assessed quickly, possibly even by "windshield survey."

Bloomington Public Works uses this rating system to rate their streets and sidewalks. Public Works strives to maintain their streets at the rating of five or above (a "fair" rating). Approximately 30% of the City streets and 15% of the sidewalks are below this rating. Public Works estimated a minimum of $6.5 million per year to maintain the streets at five or better.

Street Rating   **Sidewalk Rating**

8   10

5   5

2   1

certain streets as well as funding for transit and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The intergovernmental coordination process is also important in coordinating with other agencies such as police, fire and emergency management, to ensure the transportation system allows for access in emergency situations. Planning for and implementing transportation projects is a continuing exercise in balancing current system conditions and future demand for expensive and complex infrastructure.

The transportation system is also a readily identifiable source of emissions that reduce air quality. This is a regional concern and one that will be pursued directly in ongoing regional transportation planning.

Public Transit

Public transit service provided by Connect Transit is of great concern for many residents of Bloomington. The comprehensive plan supports the transit system goals of increased frequency of service, wider availability of service and greater mobility through transit for everyone.

Connect Transit is the primary agency for transit goals, assisted by the City, the Town of

Normal, the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration. As noted in the box at right, federal funding for transit derives from the Highway Trust Fund and thus a solution returning the Trust Fund to solvency will benefit Connect Transit.

Among the operation goals for transit is the improvement of transfer areas and information distribution to riders. Connect Transit is seeking funding to initiate a Downtown Bloomington transfer center improvement project to address this goal. Connect Transit is also pursuing plans to create bus stop locations, enhanced where possible with shelters and other amenities and to increase and modernize the fleet to enable expansion of services throughout Bloomington-Normal.

Goals also include increasing coordination between the City and Connect Transit regarding proposed development at an early stage in the development review process. City staff would benefit from ongoing notification by Connect Transit regarding operational changes, such as route revisions and site selection for bus stops and transfer centers. Early and substantive coordination between the City and public transit

State and Federal Funding Challenges

Many of Bloomington's streets are functionally classified through the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration and thus are eligible to use federal transportation dollars for improvements. Unfortunately, eligibility does not guarantee funding, and the process for awarding funding is increasingly competitive.

Various agencies within the U.S. Department of Transportation administer funding allocated to states, population centers and transportation facilities. The last fifteen years have seen tens of millions of dollars in federal investment in local alternative transportation termini, including the Central Illinois Regional Airport and the multimodal rail and transit center in Uptown Normal. Federal transportation policy is explicit in supporting projects that improve the transportation system but which also boost economic development in the region. These investments are the result of coordinated effort on the part of the local governments to bring transportation funding to Bloomington-Normal.

In some instances, state funding may also be allocated for projects in our area, usually for projects on facilities over which the state has jurisdiction, such as Veterans Parkway, and U.S. Highways 51 and 150, and Illinois Route 9.

Federal grants for highways, streets and mass transit are distributed from the Highway Trust Fund, established by Congress in 1956. The Trust Fund is financed from federal fuel tax revenues. The national gas tax has not been raised since 1993, and in recent years Congress has had to authorize the transfer of general revenue funds in the Highway Trust Fund to carry out the obligations it approved in federal transportation programs. Although many assume increased fuel prices mean higher revenues from fuel tax, the fuel tax is a flat sum per gallon rather than a percentage of the sale and does not rise with prices. However, higher fuel prices mean fewer miles driven, further reducing available revenue.

In addition, changing driving habits, improved fuel efficiency and the growing use of alternative fuels not subject to the tax have reduced Trust Fund revenues. For several years, Congress has investigated alternative ways to inject revenue into the Highway Trust Fund. As of mid-2015 Congress has not found an approach that is technologically possible and publicly acceptable.

Funding continues to be allocated through various programs, and Bloomington continues to use this resource for projects in the City. The current iteration of the federal transportation funding authorization is known as MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century), currently being extended by Congress and awaiting reauthorization. Programs noted in Table 10-2 are authorized through MAP-21. As of July 2015, Congress was continuing extensions of MAP-21 while considering both short and long-term reauthorization.

can also foster development of transit-oriented development using the Bloomington zoning code provision for Traditional Neighborhood Districts. Transit-oriented development (TOD) employs many of the defining characteristics of traditional neighborhood development (TND) while facilitating access to transit service.

Aviation

The Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA) joins with Bloomington and Normal in continuing to build the airport as the aviation connection of choice in the region. CIRA is especially interested in pursuing the goal of extensive and ongoing coordination with the City to forestall development activity that impinges on airport operations. This includes restricting temporary or permanent construction or equipment which exceeds height limitations required by the Federal Aviation Administration, and the design and management of wildlife attractants such as detention basins within 10,000 feet of CIRA's operations.

CIRA currently has some 700 acres of land ready for commercial development, including land

Table 10-2. Selected Federal Transportation Funds, Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration

MAP-21 Program Name	Acronym/ Section #	Program Activities
Surface Transportation Program – Urban	STP-U	Construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, resurfacing, restoration, preservation, or operational improvements for highways, bridges, tunnels, alternative fuels, umbrella for other specific programs
Transportation Alternatives Program (formerly ITEP)	TAP	Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, safety improvements for non-drivers, community improvement, Safe Routes to School
Highway Safety Improvement Program	HSIP	Any strategy, activity or project on a public road consistent with the State Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) and corrects or improves a hazardous road location or feature or addresses a highway safety problem.
National Highway Performance Program	NHPP	Construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, preservation, or operational improvements of National Highway System segments.
Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act	TIFIA	Designed to fill market gaps and leverage substantial private co-investment by providing projects with supplemental or subordinate debt.
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program	CMAQ	Transportation projects likely to contribute to the attainment or maintenance of a national ambient air quality standard
Bus and Bus Facilities Program	§5339	Provides funding to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities
Urbanized Area Formula Grants	§5307	Provides grants to urbanized areas to support public transportation. Funding is distributed by formula based on the level of transit service provision, population, and other factors; includes former JARC program
Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities	§5310	Provides formula funding to increase the mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities; includes former New Freedom program

suitably positioned for aviation-related uses such as the FedEx hub. Given the restrictions on adjacent uses to airport operations and the potential for disrupting the airport, new development projects, or both, CIRA involvement in the City's review of development proposals in these areas is essential.

Since the spring 2015 opening of the FedEx freight hub at CIRA, the airport has entered a new era of air freight operations. Cooperation with Bloomington in monitoring surface traffic generated by the hub and future freight operations will aid in ensuring that CIRA remains easily accessible for all users far into the future.

Pedestrians and Bicycle Users

Goals and objectives for transportation infrastructure serving pedestrians and bicycle users include the ongoing implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan adopted by the City in spring 2015. That plan establishes a network of bicycle facilities and routes throughout Bloomington to promote commuter as well as recreational bicycle use in the City. The comprehensive plan supports implementation of these objectives and specifically

provides guidance for expanding the network of complete streets in the community.

For both pedestrians and bicyclists, the comprehensive plan goals focus on developing the transportation network to improve access and safety. Enabling walking and biking in Bloomington as broadly as possible also contributes to goals set forth in Chapters 4 and 11.

The goals and objectives for transportation address all transportation modes and the ways in which they interact, with support for multimodal transportation and intermodal facilities such as CIRA. The plan considers transportation for freight as well as people and how demand may change over time as new technologies arise. The goals for transportation in Bloomington direct the City towards wise and proactive stewardship of the existing transportation system and careful decisions for future expansion that exemplify imagination as well as restraint in the use of public resources.

Major Planned Transportation Projects in Bloomington

Planning for new streets and roads is a complicated and lengthy process. Like all new infrastructure, streets are expensive and must meet safety standards, use appropriate and tested materials and construction methods, and must be able to function under a wide range of conditions. Before building major streets or highways, studies are often done to be sure the facility is designed and positioned correctly and will not trigger unexpected safety or travel consequences. Large-scale transportation projects must be planned far in advance of construction due to their complexity and cost. The planning process includes an assessment of need for the project and criteria for establishing that the need is current and properly defined.

Bloomington has a number of potential projects programmed with designs and funding complete. There are also planned projects that do not yet have funding and may require further study, and potential projects that require coordination with state and federal transportation agencies to initiate evaluation and study.

The projects below range from current to very long-range, and at some level, each has been found to meet a community need. Very complex projects are described in stages, reflecting how eventual construction might proceed. Many of these projects remain in planning stages and may not be built, built as described, or as shown in Figure 10-6.

1. South Hershey Road
Southern extension to Morrissey Drive/U.S. 150, south to Old Colonial Road; intersects near Unit 5 Evans Jr. High; requires agreement to be negotiated with Norfolk Southern Rail for crossing; construction may be phased.

2. East Hamilton Road
Eastern extension of Hamilton Road to Cheneys Grove Road; this is contingent on the completion of Hamilton

Road across southern Bloomington from Veterans Parkway to Towanda-Barnes Road. This extension will also cross the Norfolk Southern rail line.

3. Mitsubishi Motorway/U.S. 150
- Extension from West Market Street/IL Route 9 to County Highway 32; extends Mitsubishi Motorway along the western edge of Bloomington.
- Southern extension from County Highway 32 to Shirley I-55 interchange 154; creates a western expressway between I-74 interchange 125 to I-55 interchange 154.

4. East Side Highway
Please note that none of the initial stages of an East Side Highway phased construction are within the current incorporated area of Bloomington, nor are they currently funded for design or construction.
- Interchange at I-74 and expressway to U.S. 150; in the initial phase of this project in proximity to Bloomington, an interchange on I-74 and travel lanes to U.S. 150 will be built.
- Interchange at U.S. 150; the next phase is the construction of an interchange at Morrissey/U.S. 150 and travel lanes to Hamilton Road.
- Interchange/intersection at the extended Hamilton Road; this phase would connect Interstate 74 to Towanda-Barnes Road.

5. West Oakland Avenue
This project is conceptual and has not yet been programmed for a study of feasibility.
- Realignment at I-55/74; this project would re-align West Oakland Avenue to permit the construction of an interchange on I-55/74
- Interchange with I-55/74; this project would construct a full-access interchange with West Oakland Avenue.
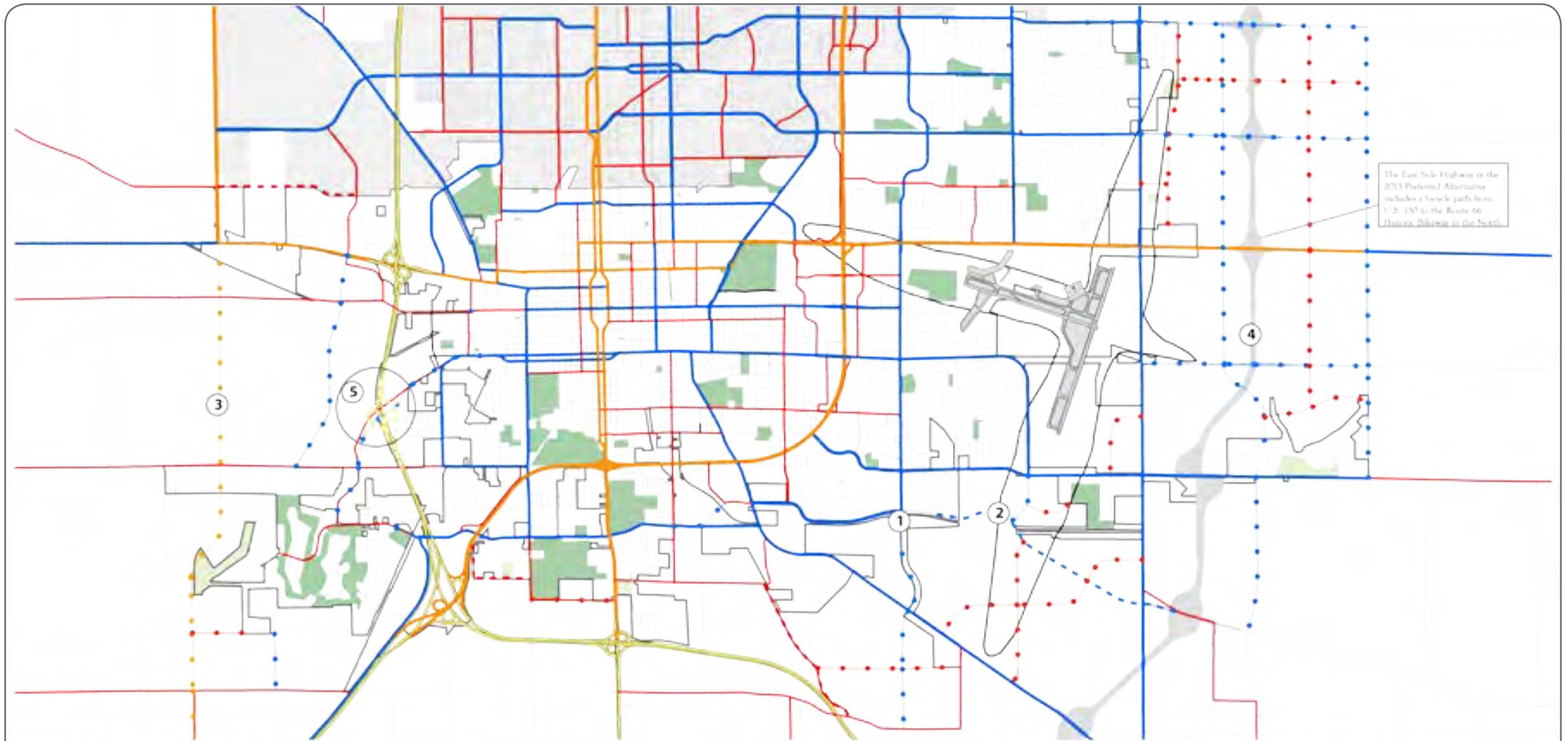
*Figure 10-6
Proposed Transportation
Improvements*

TAQ-1. A safe and efficient network of streets, bicycle-pedestrian facilities and other infrastructure to serve users in any surface transportation mode.

TAQ-1.1 Maintenance and development of a continuous network of arterial, collector and local streets that provides for safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services between existing and proposed residential areas and major activity centers, maximizes walkability, and provides multimodal linkages to the state and interstate highway system.

METRICS

- Improved roadway Level of Service
- # of strategic street connections to improve the overall network completed as identified in Figure 10.6 ↑
- # of new bridges with bike/ped improvements ↑
- PASER rating of arterial, collector and local streets ↑
- Bicycle level of service on local streets ↑
- Creative financing mechanisms
- Subdivision codes revised to promote connectivity as needed
- Adopted regional Complete Streets policy
- # of miles of Complete Streets ↑
- # of miles of Complete Streets on classified system ↑
- PASER rating on sidewalks ↑
- Mileage of sidewalks ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

IDOT, Town of Normal, McLean County, City of Bloomington, MCRPC, developers, Friends of Constitution Trail, Bicycle advocacy groups
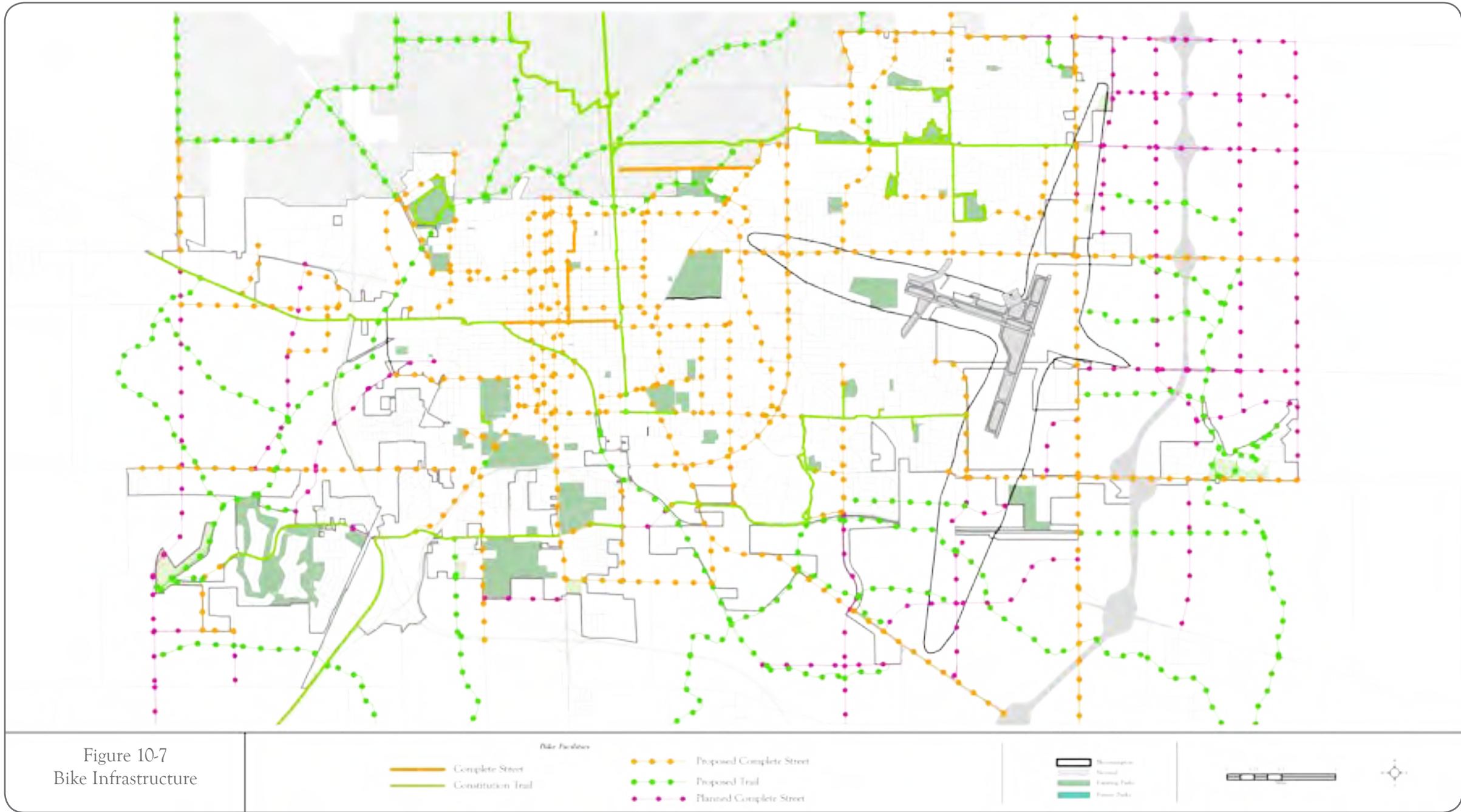
TAQ-1.1a Install street systems accommodating alternative modes of transportation whenever practical. *Bloomington Public Works, short/ongoing*

TAQ-1.1b Implement cost-sharing arrangements among public and private entities to distribute the economic burden of infrastructure improvements, including acquisition of right-of-way. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-1.1c Continue and document cooperation and coordination on transportation infrastructure management among governments, nonprofits, and businesses across the region. *MCRPC, ongoing*

TAQ-1.1d Obtain federal and state funding to support maintenance and expansion of streets. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-1.1e Participate in ongoing regional advocacy for sustainable funding sources for transportation infrastructure. *MCRPC, ongoing*

TAQ-1.1f Promote the use of connectivity in the local street network. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-1.1g Formulate and adopt a regional complete streets policy consistent with the land use plan and adopted regional transportation plans. *MCRPC, short*

TAQ-1.1h Continue implementation of design standards for local street alignment and configuration that sustain neighborhood character, improve safety, and incorporates passive disincentives for diversion from collector and arterial streets. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-1.1i Ensure that private streets meet City code requirements including those in Planned Unit Developments. *City of Bloomington, short*

TAQ-1.1j Engage the public through organized walking and biking activities including commuter challenges, alternate modes use tracking and educational resources regarding transportation alternatives. *MCRPC, short/ongoing*

TAQ-1.1k Establish bicycle-related traffic violation code and ticket diversion program. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-1.1l Incorporate sidewalks and other infrastructure into the classified system. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

TAQ-1.2 Data-driven transportation infrastructure policy and management.

- Data gathering mechanism established to gather data on the alternate modes usage
- # of transportation modes represented in regional travel demand modeling ↑
- # of educational events/materials on transportation ↑
- Point-of-contact established in the Public Works Dept. for investigating emerging technologies in transportation and infrastructure
- Accidents ↓

IDOT, Town of Normal, McLean County, City of Bloomington, MCRPC, Developers, Friends of Constitution Trail, Bicycle advocacy groups

TAQ-1.2a Educate public officials and the public regarding transportation system infrastructure costs, maintenance requirements and program funding. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-1.2b Create a City staff information forum/point of contact regarding investigation of emerging technologies and impact of transportation. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

TAQ-1.2c Conduct and expand transportation modeling across multiple modes to enable better transportation policy and execution. *MCRPC, ongoing*

TAQ-1.2d Collect data to support the transportation modeling scope and capability, employing emerging data collection technology. *MCRPC, ongoing*

Travel Demand Modeling

The McLean County Regional Planning Commission manages a traffic volume projection system called a travel demand model for the urbanized area in McLean County, including Bloomington, Normal and their surroundings. This system correlates traffic volumes, trip origin and destination data, population density and the location of primary destinations with a real or proposed street network configuration, and using the Geographic Information System as a platform, predicts how the network will perform. The model output data establishes the Level of Service for streets and an index of how well the street achieves its task in the network. Using this model, engineers and planners can assess alternatives before expensive road work is done.

Traditionally, travel demand models have concentrated on motor vehicles. In recent years a better understanding of the connections between types of transportation has come to the fore. Models now reflect transit, pedestrians, freight traffic and other travel modes. To better reflect local travel behavior and needs, plan goals include augmenting the regional model with the capacity to model alternative travel modes.

TAQ-1.3 Safe and efficient off-road bicycle trails integrated with direct on-road routes, connecting residential areas to activity centers, developing areas and all other modes of transportation. (See Figure 10-6 Bike Infrastructure, page 204)

TAQ-1.3a Allocate resources for implementation of the recommendations in the City's bicycle master plan regarding both on-street routes and trail/sidepaths. *City of Bloomington, short*

TAQ-1.3b As specified in the Bicycle Master Plan, implement expansion of the pedestrian-bicycle trail system to provide greater access and interconnection with other travel modes and report to BPC. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

TAQ-1.3c Install a network of way-finding signage. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

Figure 10-7
Bike Infrastructure

Bike Facilities

Complete Street

Constitution Trail

Proposed Complete Street

Proposed Trail

Planned Complete Street

TAQ-1.4 Pedestrian safety for users of all transportation facilities.

TAQ-1.4a Adopt and implement the Sidewalk Master Plan. *City of Bloomington, short*

TAQ-1.4b Provide a sidewalk system that provides safe routes to schools. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

TAQ-1.4c Provide pedestrians with safe access throughout the transportation network, facilitating access to facilities such as transit, businesses, parks and neighborhood centers. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

IDOT, Town of Normal, McLean County, City of Bloomington, MCRPC, Friends of Constitution Trail, bicycle advocacy groups, Connect Transit, District 87, Unit 5

What are "Complete Streets"?

Complete Streets serve everyone, whether walking, cycling, riding public transit or driving a motorized vehicle. Complete Streets should be designed and used to enable safe access for everyone, either on the street itself or while using sidewalks, paths or trails within the transportation right-of-way. Complete Streets should serve users of any age, ability or preferred type of transportation.

The Illinois Department of Transportation supports the use of Complete Streets and leaves local communities options in creating them. Bloomington can implement the goal of Complete Streets suited to local conditions. Figure 10-6 identifies the current, proposed and planned complete streets.
- *Current Complete Streets: Streets that currently accommodate all modes of travel*
- *Proposed Complete Streets: Currently a street segment exists but bike facilities and/or sidewalks are needed*
- *Planned Complete Streets: When a street is built, it should be designed to accommodate all modes of travel.*

Accommodating bicycle users is typical in a Complete Street, and the Bloomington Bicycle Master Plan provides multiple ways of achieving this for existing and future streets. Bicycle use of streets can take the form of bike routes, bike lanes, sidepaths, shared lane markings and combinations of these approaches, all supplemented by off-street trails. Please see the Bicycle Master Plan at the "Bicycling in Bloomington" page in the Public Works section of www.cityblm.org.

TAQ-1.5 Plan for appropriate and safe access to major surface transportation facilities, including arterial and collector streets.

METRICS

- Adoption of the access management plan
- Access management included in development review process

TAQ-1.5a Update and adopt existing draft access management ordinance. *City of Bloomington, short*

TAQ-1.5b Incorporate access management regulations into transportation network design and implementation process. *City of Bloomington, short*

TAQ-1.5c Implement access management regulations and principles into development review process. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

IDOT, Town of Normal, McLean County, City of Bloomington, MCRPC

TAQ-1.6 A transportation network that facilitates prompt emergency response and management.

METRICS

- # of traffic preemption units ↑
- Response times of fire and police calls ↓

TAQ-1.6a Coordinate surface infrastructure design and implementation between the Public Works and Fire departments. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

TAQ-1.6b Use facility design that maximizes emergency access, including design and placement of traffic calming devices and provides access to emergency and medical facilities. *Bloomington Public Works, ongoing*

TAQ-1.6c Use traffic preemption on major thoroughfares for emergency vehicles to facilitate emergency response; adaptive transportation technology and traffic management. *Bloomington Public Works, short-medium/ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

IDOT, Town of Normal, McLean County, City of Bloomington, MCRPC, Developers, Friends of Constitution Trail, Bicycle advocacy groups, Connect Transit, District 87, Unit 5, McLean County EMA, hospitals

TAQ-2. Transit development provides an alternative of choice for the general population and support for the transit-dependent.

TAQ-2.1 Expanded urban transit system to provide improved route coverage, more frequent route service (headways), extended service hours and schedules, accessible for transit-dependent riders and those with special needs and challenges, including the economically disadvantaged, persons without access to automobiles, the elderly, people with disabilities and regional access to urban area services.

METRICS

- Ridership ↑
- # of transit bus stops ↑
- # of households within 1/4th mile of a bus stop ↑
- Frequency of service on transit routes ↑
- Longer Connect Transit service hours
- Sunday transit service
- Transit connectivity analysis included in development review process
- # Connect transit funding ↑
- # multimodal hubs completed ↑
- # of transit-oriented development projects implemented ↑
- Data inventory regarding mobility needs
- Database of community facilities that can benefit from transit access, ex: social services
- # of multimodal improvements ↑
- # of transit multimodal connections created ↑

PARTNER AGENCIES

IDOT, Town of Normal, McLean County, City of Bloomington, MCRPC, Connect Transit

TAQ-2.1a Support and participate in continuing Connect Transit route development and bus stop location consistent with the land use plan and adjacent land uses. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

TAQ-2.1b Reduce route headways, expand service hours, including Sunday service. *Connect Transit, ongoing*

TAQ-2.1c Implement route extensions to serve broader geographic areas of the City. *Connect Transit, ongoing*

TAQ-2.1d Include Connect Transit in development review to promote transit service awareness and access to new development. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-2.1e Include transit operational requirements (i.e. bus stop locations and shelters, street configuration) in development review process. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-2.1f Explore alternate funding models and sources to support service expansion. *Connect Transit, ongoing*

TAQ-2.1g Develop multimodal transit hubs. *Connect Transit, short*

TAQ-2.1h Implement transit-oriented development. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-2.1i Continue participation in the human services transportation planning process. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-2.1j Collect and analyze data regarding demand for paratransit and other mobility services to improve transit service for the transit-dependent. *Connect Transit, ongoing*

TAQ-2.1k Institute multi-modal transportation improvements, including transit options to support and complement planned areas of development. *Connect Transit, ongoing*

TAQ-2.1l Facilitate communication between urban and rural transit systems. *MCRPC, ongoing*

TAQ-2.1m Facilitate Connect Transit multimodal connections. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*
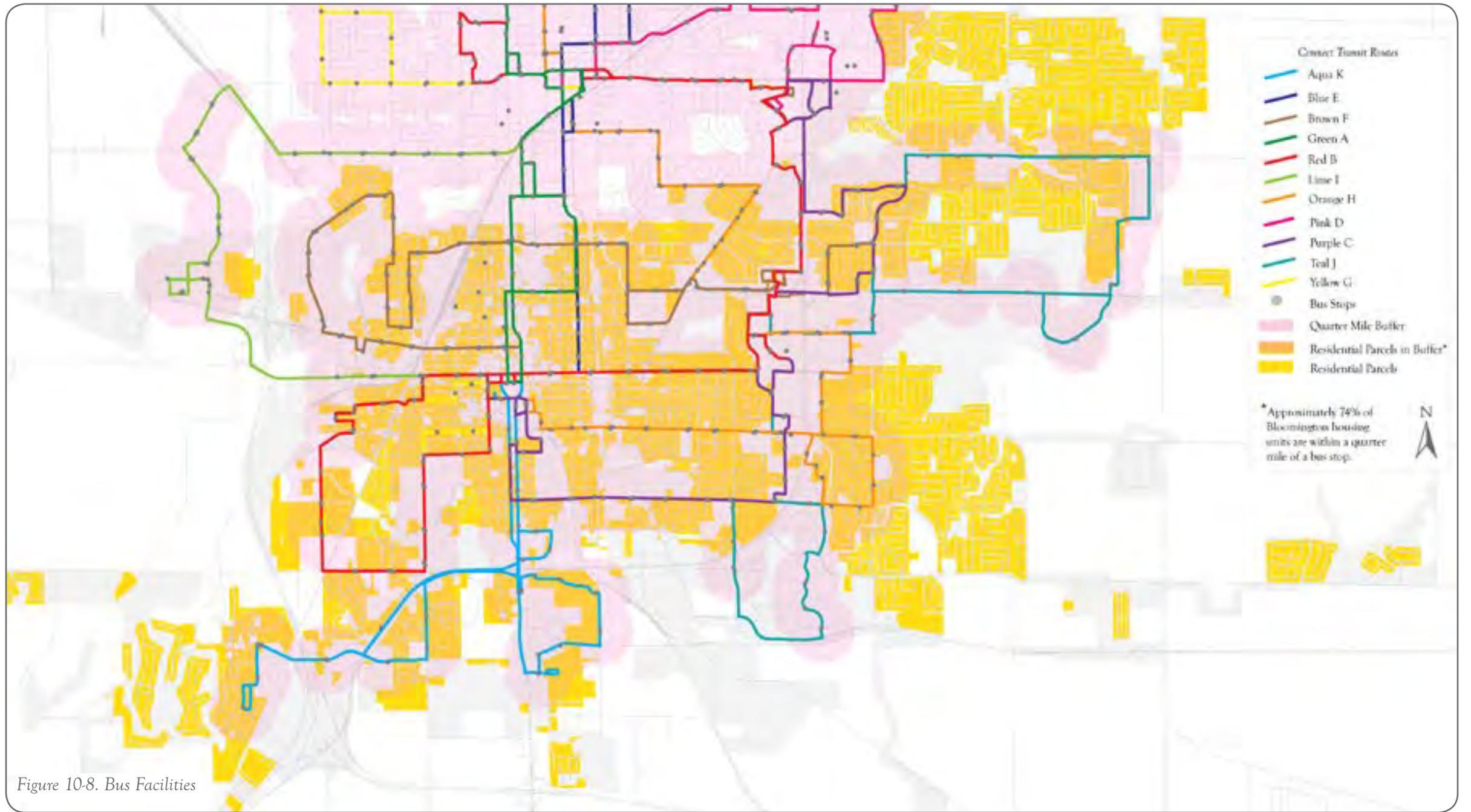
Figure 10-8. Bus Facilities

TAQ-3. Air transportation serves the needs of local and regional residents and businesses to connect regionally, nationally and internationally.

TAQ-3.1 Central Illinois Regional Airport is the primary air transportation center for passengers in the region.

- # of flight connections available through CIRA ↑
- # of passengers using CIRA annually ↑
- Adoption of an airport overlay zone
- Inclusion of CIRA land use limitations in development review

TAQ-3.1a Continue to support CIRA maintenance and expansion of service availability for passengers. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-3.1b Use development review to coordinate with CIRA regarding transportation and land use conflicts. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

IDOT, Town of Normal, McLean County, City of Bloomington, MCRPC, CIRA

TAQ-4. Rail transportation serves passenger needs for local and regional residents and businesses to connect regionally, nationally and internationally.

TAQ-4.1 Passenger rail connections to other cities that provide optimum safety, mobility, convenience and efficiency.

METRICS

- # of high-speed rail stops in B-N annually ↑
- Ridership ↑

TAQ-4.1a Continue coordination and cooperation with implementation of high speed passenger rail service. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-4.1b Integrate passenger rail facilities in land use and municipal transportation planning. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

IDOT, Town of Normal, MCRPC

TAQ-4.2 A safe and efficient regional commuter system that connects Bloomington and other central Illinois communities in order to provide viable alternative transportation between communities.

METRICS

- Regional commuter rail feasibility study
- # of intercity bus trips and connections annually ↑
- Ridership ↑

TAQ-4.2a Evaluate recommendations of Peoria-Bloomington-Normal commuter light rail report including route and station locations. *City of Bloomington, short*

TAQ-4.2b A safe, economical and efficient intercity bus transportation system that connects existing and potential bus users with major and minor destinations. *IDOT, ongoing*

TAQ-4.2c Participate in further regional study of a central Illinois commuter system. *MCRPC, medium*

PARTNER AGENCIES

IDOT, Town of Normal, MCRPC, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

TAQ-5. Safe and efficient movement of freight by motor vehicle, rail and air, in the community and serving local, state, national, and international markets.

TAQ-5.1 Maximize efficient freight movement and intermodal capacity to serve local and regional users.

- Biennial report of freight inventory
- Biennial analysis of freight capacity requirement
- Assessment of freight management impacts in City development review
- Inclusion of CIRA freight capacity in City street improvement program

TAQ-5.1a Create an ongoing inventory of freight traffic by mode and capacity of intermodal transfer nodes. *MCRPC, short term/ongoing*

TAQ-5.1b Evaluate anticipated freight capacity requirements. *MCRPC, ongoing*

TAQ-5.1c Coordinate freight management facilities with land use in development review. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ-5.1d Use development review to coordinate with CIRA regarding air freight demands for surface transportation capacity. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

IDOT, Town of Normal, McLean County, City of Bloomington, MCRPC, developers, CIRA

TAQ-6. Reduce air pollutants and other impacts produced by transportation.

TAQ-6.1 Ongoing reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from transportation sources.

- Annual greenhouse gas emissions produced by City ↓
- City use of renewable energy for transportation ↑
- Participation in regional air quality improvement program ↑
- Single-occupant vehicles on arterial routes ↓

TAQ-6.1a In cooperation with regional partners, adopt and implement a transportation greenhouse gas reduction program. *MCRPC, short/ongoing*

TAQ-6.1b Reduce the use of fossil fuel and support renewable energy use in City vehicles and transportation facilities. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

TAQ6.1c Through intergovernmental coordination, reduce the use of fossil fuel and support renewable energy use in Connect Transit vehicles and facilities. *City of Bloomington, short/ongoing*

TAQ6.1d Encourage use of renewable energy in all transportation modes to reduce emissions. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

TAQ6.1e Promote public understanding of and discourage single-occupacy vehicle use. *MCRPC, short/ongoing*

IDOT, Town of Normal, McLean County, City of Bloomington, MCRPC, developers, Friends of Constitution Trail, bicycle advocacy groups, Connect Transit, District 87, Unit 5, McLean County EMA, hospitals,CVB, EDC, CIRA, EAC

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Understanding the goals for Bloomington's community facilities requires a definition of the concept at hand – the collection of buildings, open spaces and service areas that comprise the City's public service infrastructure, as well as the special-purpose facilities that provide entertainment, educational opportunities and improved quality of life for everyone.

Publicly available spaces the City of Bloomington employs to carry out City operations and provide services and programs include:

- facilities owned or controlled by the City
- those to which the City has access through agreements with other public and private entities
- facilities which serve multiple functions that include providing services and programs
- buildings and open-air spaces such as parks

City-owned facilities include workaday venues such as City Hall and the Government Center, emergency response headquarters and stations for fire and police, operations facilities for City departments such as Public Works and Water,

and community gathering places such as the Bloomington Public Library, Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts and U.S. Cellular Coliseum. Bloomington also owns numerous parks, golf courses, recreational facilities, community centers and unique locations like Davis Lodge at Lake Bloomington. Each of these places makes its contribution to the quality of life enjoyed by Bloomington's residents and provides a base for the people who provide City services.

The plan also considers the role of venues not owned by the City but used for public events or programs that Bloomington participates in or sponsors. Foremost among these are the school properties of District 87 and Unit 5, which serve important functions in their neighborhoods and for the community as a whole. When paired with playgrounds, sports fields or City parks, schools are a catalyst for neighborhood activities and development that create new choices for residents and create the flourishing atmosphere that enhances a sense of place. The plan calls for out-of-the-box thinking and heightened coordination between City departments, school districts, social service agencies and other

organizations whose activities serve community needs or blend with community activities.

Other public spaces provide community enrichment as well, as exemplified by the McLean County Museum of History, the facilities at Illinois Wesleyan University, the YWCA and YMCA, Western Avenue Community Center and the McLean County Health Department. Each of these locations contributes to Bloomington's well-being and vitality through their cooperation in City programs and initiatives.

The evaluation of community facilities includes appropriate locations for diverse types of facilities. Those which serve the entire community, such as the Bloomington Public Library, should be located in the City core, preferably in the Downtown district. This area of Bloomington is accessible, and the concentration of facilities intended for all community members increases their ease of use. Facilities intended to function at a neighborhood scale should be distributed across the City in an equitable manner so all residents can make use of them wherever they may live in Bloomington.

The primary focus of the

goals for community facilities is maintaining a balance between providing the services and facilities needed in Bloomington and the cost of such services. A balance must be struck between facilities serving existing developed areas and provision for new facilities to serve future growth. The City has an obligation to provide community facilities equitably to all its residents. In so doing, there must be equity in the distribution of the costs generated.

Responding to these concerns requires a mix of funding instruments and tools, consistent with the City's budget constraints and general priorities. Facilities which contribute to the welfare of all can reasonably be provided for through general revenue, while more localized facilities, such as neighborhood parks, may be supported by impact fees assessed on new development. In some instances the assessment of user fees for certain facilities or activities (such as golf courses) may bridge the gap between economic reality and community wishes.

Goals for community facilities include direct attention to maintaining an appropriate cost-benefit ratio between community services and the revenue

required to sustain services. The plan recommends serious examination of available resources and establishing the most cost-effective approach to providing and maintaining community facilities. Balanced investment in facilities should also acknowledge that some, such as police and fire services, are vital to public safety and health and have priority. Objectives to support other public facilities may include greater use of public-private partnerships to better balance public investment with private interests.

Funding for community facilities must combine with other City needs in a financially sustainable capital improvement plan. Many factors drive the capital funding process beyond simply the total budget available. The City must consider setting project priorities within the constraints of total funding as well as funding sources limited to particular uses. Priority may be given to investments which expand the lifespan or benefit from existing facilities, such as co-locating a park or community center with a public school. Undertaking a major street project may reduce fire and police response times in the area, creating multiple improvements with one investment.

Designing shared locations for facilities, such as combining a school with a park, community center, library branch or health care facility can substantially improve the cost-benefit ratio of the facility and services provided. Taking a regional approach to community facilities through sharing locations and facilities offers benefits to all participating communities. For example, emergency response could be improved through the use of fire stations in certain locations operated on a shared basis by Bloomington and Normal. Capital improvement may also take advantage of tools for project and financial management which maximize the return on public investment in facilities. Shared facilities, or those in close proximity, may also benefit from TIF districts or economic empowerment zones.

Greater efficiency in developing community facilities present the opportunity for additional efficiencies in energy use. As we have discussed with respect to all infrastructure planning, long-term investments require consideration of initial costs but even more critically the impact of use and maintenance over time. Facilities planning and investment should

look to reduction in energy usage and costs for the facility itself and consider the possibilities found in energy technologies. Facility location should be considered by proximity to existing infrastructure and facilities with coordinating uses and by responsible use of land with minimized environmental impact.

A counter-example to the benefits of facility co-location is the demonstrated cost of development that is not compact and contiguous to existing development and infrastructure. Prior experience in Bloomington has shown sprawl development produces costs that are unlikely to be recaptured. As with rising price tags for streets and sewers in outlying areas, this principle applies to community facilities as well. Compact development practices and a focus on infill leverages previous investments and increases the utility of new facilities.

As with the transportation system, especially public transit, and as shown by the cooperation between the City and other entities in past development and infrastructure projects, providing community facilities that both meet the public need and protect the public purse is best managed at the regional level. Costs shared are costs reduced, and

there are many opportunities for cooperation in this area. Among the most popular community facilities in Bloomington-Normal is Constitution Trail, which is developed and managed in cooperation between the two municipalities with input from passionately engaged citizens and general public support. As Bloomington grows and adapts to new economic conditions and constraints, the goal of regional partnership in developing community facilities offers broader benefits and shared responsibilities. Ultimately, any decision to expand community facilities must weigh whether the investment is justified if existing unmet needs persist in the community.

CF-1. Continue to provide quality public facilities and services.

CF-1.1 Provide adequate City services for current and new annexations.

- Direct service provision departments and related facilities are adequately funded and staffed according to industry standards
- Level of service for various neighborhoods identified ↑

CF-1.1a Ensure City services such as police, fire and public works maintain adequate service levels within existing corporate boundaries. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

CF-1.1b Set realistic expectations of the level of service that can be provided in the "sprawl areas" and new annexations. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

CF-1.1c Approach community facility maintenance, upgrades, replacements and relocations with considerations of overall cost effectiveness. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

Developers, Realtors, Local engineering firms, Unit 5

CF-1.2 Ensure the community facilities provide the greatest cost-benefit ratio to the population served.

- Documented guidance on cost-benefit analysis
- Capital costs to service new developments ↓
- Operating costs to service new developments ↓

CF-1.2a Ensure new development occurs first in those locations where city services and facilities can be economically and efficiently provided, and prevent premature development of areas which are more difficult to serve. Develop cost-benefit analysis guidance for developers and require such analyses as part of the development process. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CF-1.2b Analyze the City's ability to effectively and economically serve the community. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CF-1.2c Identify and communicate the true costs and benefits of building and maintaining new community facilities. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CF-1.2d Identify the costs and benefits (fiscal and social) of all community facilities and take appropriate action on facilities whose costs outweigh the benefits. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

Unit 5, Developers, MCRPC

CF-1.3 Place emphasis on facilities that encourage the development of a vibrant core.

METRICS

- Concentration of community facilities in the Core ↑

CF-1.3a Encourage the community facilities that are currently located in Downtown to remain and/or expand in that location, where cost effective. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CF-1.3b Seek partnerships with other private and not-for-profit entities to locate their facilities in Downtown (ex: YMCA, Green Top, year-round farmers' market). *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

BPL, McLean County, McLean County Museum of History, Downtown Bloomington Association, Other community anchors looking to locate in the vicinity of Downtown (at the time of this plan, those were YMCA, Green Top Grocery, Boys and Girls Club)

CF-1.4 Focus resources on maintaining and developing facilities that support the goal of contiguous and compact growth.

CF-1.4a Ensure that new development in Emerging Areas accommodates community facilities such as parks and schools within its center or edge to promote compact development. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

METRICS

- # of new neighborhoods supporting the compact walkable neighborhood model. ↑
- # of new housing units within 6 minute response zone of an existing fire station. ↑
- # of housing units within 1/4 mile of the parks. ↑
- # of housing units within 1 mile of a school. ↑

CF-1.4b Prioritize capital improvements to spur new developments in areas that can leverage existing community facilities such as fire stations. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

PARTNER AGENCIES

Developers, Unit 5
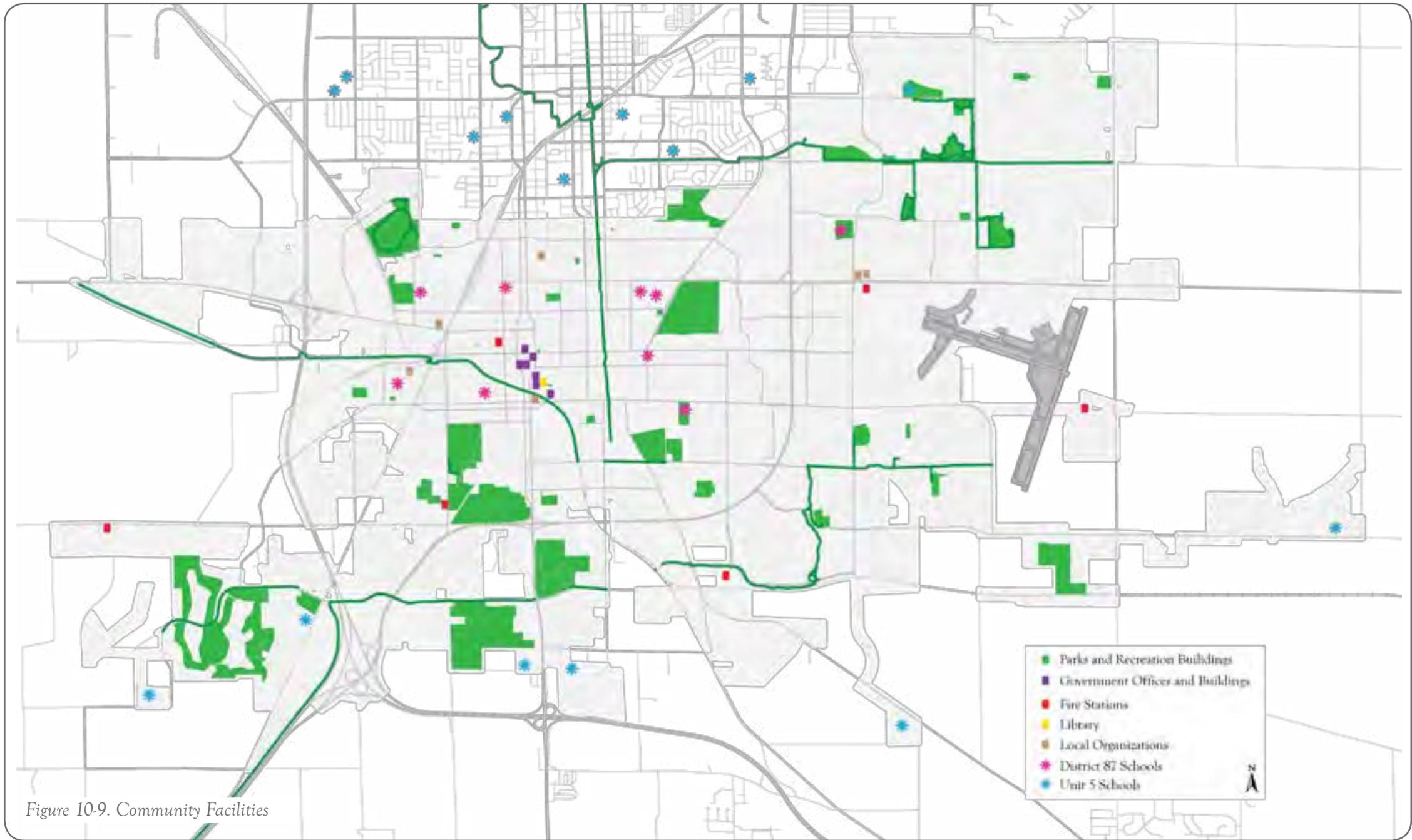
Figure 10-9. Community Facilities

Legend:
- Parks and Recreation Buildings
- Government Offices and Buildings
- Fire Stations
- Library
- Local Organizations
- District 87 Schools
- Unit 5 Schools

CF-1.5 Develop a City facilities master plan.

- City facilities master plan created
- City facilities master plan adopted
- Resources allocated for capital improvements ↑

CF-1.5a Identify facilities most in need of repair, upgrades, expansion, replacements or building new. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

CF-1.5b Develop a sustainable and long-term budget plan to address the needs identified in the aforementioned master plan. *City of Bloomington, medium-long*

Developers, Unit 5

CF-2. Provide public services in a fiscally, socially and environmentally responsible manner.

CF-2.1 Seek opportunities to co-locate community facilities to maximize efficiencies in service provision and reduce capital and operating costs.

- # of co-locations between agencies ↑
- # of resources saved by co-locating (dollars, staff or other) ↑

CF-2.1a Explore the merits and demerits of joint fire/EMS facility for the City of Bloomington and Town of Normal on the northeast side of the community. *City of Bloomington, medium-long*

CF-2.1b The City and the school districts should engage in joint planning for capital improvements (parks, schools, infrastructure improvements, etc.). *City of Bloomington, medium-long*

CF-2.1c Gather input from interested parties (public, private and not-for-profit) to ensure all options for currently unavailable services be considered for inclusion in expansion of any community facility. ex: Library and/or BCPA expansion. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CF-2.1d Ensure that any community facility expansion project includes a review of potential additional services which could be made available through that facility where fiscally, socially and environmentally appropriate. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

Town of Normal, District 87, Unit 5, Bloomington Public Library, Connect Transit, McLean County, McLean County Museum of History, Local not-for-profits

Figure 10-10. Age of Public Schools Serving Bloomington

PRAIRIELAND

NORMAL COMMUNITY HIGH

FAIRVIEW

GROVE

NORMAL COMMUNITY WEST HIGH

PARKSIDE JR HIGH

SUGAR CREEK

NORTHPOINT

PARKSIDE

KINGSLEY JR HIGH

CHIDDIX JR HIGH

OAKDALE

COLENE HOOSE

GLENN

STEVENSON

SHERIDAN

BENT

BLOOMINGTON JR HIGH

BLOOMINGTON HIGH

WASHINGTON

SARAH RAYMOND SCHOOL OF EARLY EDUCATION

IRVING

OAKLAND

BENJAMIN

PEPPER RIDGE

CEDAR RIDGE

BRIGHAM ELEMENTARY

FOX CREEK

EVANS JR HIGH

School Year Built
- Over 100 years
- 50 - 100 years
- Less than 50 years

School District
- District 87
- Unit 5
- Other

CF-2.2 Reduce City facilities' environmental footprint.

- Usage of overall energy, gas, and harmful chemicals ↓
- Alternative energy use per capita ↑
- # of recycling programs in community facilities ↑
- Recycling in all community facilities

BPL, contractors

CF-2.2a Ensure new buildings adhere to common standards for energy efficiency, balancing cost-effectiveness with environmental stewardship. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CF-2.2b Emphasize usage of the native plants and trees on public grounds. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CF-2.2c Seek ways to reduce usage of harmful chemicals in public buildings and on public grounds. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CF-2.2d Facilitate recycling in all community facilities. *City of Bloomington, short-long*

CF-2.2e Track energy use and costs for major municipal facilities. *City of Bloomington, medium-long*

CF-2.2f Investigate the merits and demerits of Energy Performance Contracting to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy costs for all City facilities. *City of Bloomington, short*

CF-2.2g Carefully consider energy efficiency, alternative energies, and reduction of maintenance costs when expanding, remodeling, or building new community facilities. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CF-2.2h Carefully consider re-use of existing materials during expansion of community facilities. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

CF-2.2i Use life-cycle costing in purchasing decisions made by the City. *City of Bloomington, ongoing*

Energy Performance Contracting (EPC)

EPC is a turnkey service sometimes compared to design/build construction contracting that provides customers with a comprehensive set of energy efficiency, renewable energy and distributed generation measures and often is accompanied with guarantees the savings produced by a project will be sufficient to finance the full cost of the project. A typical EPC project is delivered by an Energy Service Company (ESCO) and consists of the following elements:

- Turnkey Service – The ESCO provides all of the services required to design and implement a comprehensive project at the customer facility from the initial energy audit through long-term Monitoring and Verification (M&V) of project savings.
- Comprehensive Measures – The ESCO tailors a comprehensive set of measures to fit the needs of a particular facility and can include energy efficiency, renewables, distributed generation, water conservation and sustainable materials and operations.
- Project financing – The ESCO arranges for long-term project financing that is provided by a third-party financing company. Financing is typically in the form of an operating lease or municipal lease.
- Project Savings Guarantee – The ESCO provides a guarantee that the savings produced by the project will be sufficient to cover the cost of project financing for the life of the project.

CF-2.3 Ensure universal access to facilities that are open to the public.

- # of ADA-accessible facilities ↑

CF-2.3a Make sure that community facilities conform to ADA and other universal design standards. *City of Bloomington, short-medium*

CF-2.3b When co-locating services in structures not controlled by the City, ensure universal access and the health and safety of occupants. *City of Bloomington, short-long*

All agencies providing public access

CF-3. Pursue solutions for unmet and emerging community needs.

CF-1.1 Take a regional approach whenever feasible.

From the viewpoint of many residents, the twin cities of Bloomington and Normal function as a unified community. Residents of this community do not notice the political boundaries. Throughout the outreach process, many respondents expressed interest in heightened coordination between these communities, the County, school districts and other taxing bodies.

The working group addressing this topic intentionally left the action items from this goal open. Regional thinking and efficient use of public dollars should be part of every major capital investment. Providing community facilities that both meet the public need and protect the public purse is best managed at the regional level. Costs shared are costs reduced, and many opportunities arise for such cooperation. Public officials and policy makers should not only be receptive to those but constantly seek those opportunities.

Government Center in Downtown Bloomington that houses the City and the County offices. It is an example of facility co-location and regionalism.

11. FUTURE GROWTH & LAND USE PLAN

The land use plan directs the implementation of the goals and objectives in the comprehensive plan. Specifically, the plan takes the goals expressed for many aspects of the City's future (Chapters 4 through 10) and assigns them a physical place in the community and a place in time as anticipated growth occurs. The land use plan includes the uses represented in built areas or established neighborhoods, and indicates areas that require renewed attention, revitalization and new investment. It also illustrates uses and development types in the current developed area that will evolve over the life of the plan. Considering land surrounding Bloomington which might in future become part of the City, the land use plan indicates uses and development scenarios that best implement the preferred future composition of the City as described in the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

As is true of the comprehensive plan itself, the land use plan is advisory in nature, but provides guidelines for City staff, the Bloomington Planning Commission and the City Council in considering and approving development proposals, as well as changes to the City's infrastructure and facilities which the City itself initiates. The comprehensive plan is not intended to give detailed instructions for the specific use of every parcel of land in or added to Bloomington over the next twenty years. That function is fulfilled by the City ordinances and policies, aligned with the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan, administered by City staff and decided by the Planning Commission, Zoning Board and the Council.

As outlined in Chapter 2, the plan forecasts a slower rate of population growth over the next five to ten years. In the Existing Conditions Report it was shown that a majority of the projected population growth could be housed within the current City limits. However, the land use plan illustrates the allocation of far more land for development than expected population and employment growth will demand. This is done to provide a range of options to satisfy future needs and retain some flexibility in uncertain future conditions. This approach also provides broader location choices for specific proposals that are consistent with the comprehensive plan, while reducing the potential for land speculation.

HISTORY OF LAND USE AND STREET PATTERNS

Bloomington's historical growth and development created patterns of land use that are still with us. Examining the evolution of the City's land use not only shows how the City grew but how we can plan for future neighborhoods and anticipate the effect of new land uses not yet present in Bloomington.

Bloomington's development began with 60 acres of land used to create the core of the new city, including a site for the McLean County courthouse, which established Bloomington as the county seat. In its early growth, Bloomington maintained a traditional city plan common to many towns and cities throughout the Midwest. Streets were arranged in a rectilinear grid oriented to the compass using the surveying standards established in the 18th century for the Northwest Territories. This urban design was (and remains) efficient for its users and simple to construct and navigate for any type of travel. Pedestrians, riders or users of wheeled vehicles could find their way easily. The arrival of the rail-roads introduced a new component to the city's pattern, altering it by drawing a diagonal line through the street grid.

As Bloomington moved into the twentieth century, variations in the pattern of development were introduced, shifting from the typical grid to include wide boulevards and occasional curved streets. The development of Whites Place and Clinton Boulevard were examples of this new style of neighborhood. The rectilinear street pattern and the more expansive style were both in evidence well into the twentieth century. Longer block lengths and less regular access made travel less direct.

In the optimistic postwar boom period and through to the opening decade of the 21st century, Bloomington experienced sustained growth in population and area, most notably in the closing decades of the period. Houses built during these years grew larger. In the 1940s the typical single-family house had
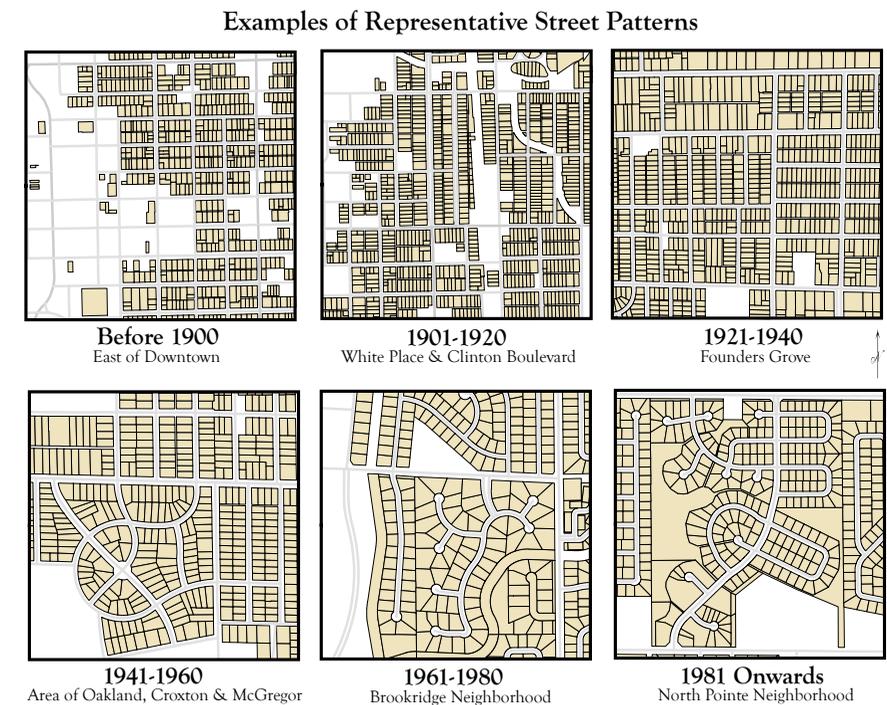
Examples of Representative Street Patterns

Before 1900
East of Downtown

1901-1920
White Place & Clinton Boulevard

1921-1940
Founders Grove

1941-1960
Area of Oakland, Croxton & McGregor

1961-1980
Brookridge Neighborhood

1981 Onwards
North Pointe Neighborhood

Figure 11-1. Examples of Representative Street Patterns

less than 2,000 square feet of space. Often the standard was 1,500-1,750 square feet. In the building boom from 1960 to 2005, the size of single-family homes steadily increased, with houses well over 2,000 square feet being routine. In newer neighborhoods, square footage of 3,000 square feet or more became the norm.

Lot size did not expand at the rate of house size, but neighborhood design did change. Neighborhoods were accessed by a central collector street with smaller streets connected only to that collector, many cul-de-sacs, and few connections to the larger street network. Residents thus have longer trips to and from home. Recently the City has required that subdivision design allow for better connectivity. This style of subdivision for residential use remains the primary form of housing development in Bloomington and the most commonly available style of housing.

CORE VALUES

The Bring It On, Bloomington! outreach that received over 2,000 responses formed the critical framework and helped set clear priorities for Bloomington's future growth and development. These include valuing the following with respect to land use:

Bloomington's small town feel with big city amenities:
- Supporting preservation of established neighborhoods, prioritized over development of new areas, to keep Bloomington's neighborhoods vital, connected and affordable.

Dynamic neighborhoods:
- Supporting development carried out equitably throughout Bloomington and providing a range of housing choices for people of all ages and income levels;
- Development centered on the educational, cultural and historic resources contributing to a high quality of life;
- Dissolving the physical, economic and social divide between the East and West Sides.

Solid infrastructure:
- Supporting compact development patterns and development contiguous to Bloomington's existing developed area, reducing infrastructure burdens;
- Redevelopment in areas with available infrastructure;

- Use of existing resources and infrastructure over building new;
- Immediate investment in the upkeep of current assets;
- Careful and thoughtful consideration of expansion;
- Evaluation of ongoing costs and benefits.

Healthy Community:
- Supporting policies promoting use of existing City resources and infrastructure over new development to fully leverage municipal investments already made;
- A small footprint that will foster multi-modal transportation and protect the natural environment to maximize connectivity between neighborhoods.

These core values and preferences inform the land use plan.

LAND USE MAPS

This section presents the future land use categories and the existing and future land use maps. The Future Land Use Map for the existing built areas is defined slightly differently than the emerging or future areas.

The land use map is a graphical representation of the priorities and policies expressed in the comprehensive plan. Like all maps, it is inherently symbolic. The map is not intended as a prediction regarding individual properties but should instead be read at the block or neighborhood scale. Also, it is important to remember the map shows land use designations across a span of time. A specific land use category may not be implemented until well into the twenty-year span of the plan horizon. As the comprehensive plan is updated at regular intervals, changing conditions or events may prompt reconsideration of some land use designations.

Land use categories shown in the current developed area of the City generally reflect either existing use in established areas likely to retain that use through the plan horizon, or evolving uses in areas where revitalization or redevelopment is anticipated, or where adjacent infill development may prompt use changes. Land has been allocated for development or redevelopment as shown in the land use map.

Managing the Existing Built Environment

The use of Bloomington's existing development resources, of compact development patterns, and

expansion only in areas contiguous to the City are clear mandates of the comprehensive plan. The land use plan implements this core guidance by focusing on developing infill and redevelopment within the City's current boundaries. Infill and redevelopment opportunities should be the highest priority for development activity, along with the build-out of areas already platted but not yet completed. These include underutilized land or properties, undeveloped areas, and areas that require redevelopment to satisfy existing or planned uses. Some of these designated areas should be further studied. Smaller target area plans should be prepared and adopted before development proposals are approved to ensure the proposals are consistent with the goals of comprehensive plan and integrate well with their surrounding neighborhoods.

A new feature in this plan is the designation of certain existing development as **mixed use areas**. In some instances this designation reflects facts on the ground, as sections of the City already boast a combination of residential, commercial and corporate uses. The principal example of this designation is the Downtown Bloomington

District. Extensive evaluation of its future as a complete neighborhood with a wide array of attractive amenities, it is considered as an important area for economic development. Other areas designated for mixed use result from shifts in neighborhood character over time, or locations near employment centers or major transportation corridors.

The land use plan map illustrates development corridors along major streets that offer strong potential for mixed use and commercial development or redevelopment. These include the mixed use Downtown District, West Market Street to Avalon Way, Towanda Avenue, East Empire from Towanda Avenue to Towanda-Barnes Road and Veterans' Parkway.

As with redevelopment projects, proposals along these corridors should be carefully evaluated to ensure consistency with the comprehensive plan. Since corridor development takes advantage of transportation facilities, proposals should be reviewed to identify any transportation conflicts they may trigger, and to facilitate access through alternative transportation, particularly public transit.

Land Use Designation in Existing Urban Areas

The generalized land use patterns and their locations throughout the city show appropriate land uses for the future, not necessarily the uses in place today. However, in most cases, the current land use is often identified as the appropriate future land use in the existing urban areas.

Residential land uses include all residence types, except those located in the Mixed Use designation. Residential use includes any household or designated group, residing in single-family, multifamily or manufactured housing. Established residential neighborhoods have generally been categorized by their current density. It should be noted that density in older residential neighborhoods is generally greater than in suburban-style subdivisions. This category does not include dormitory residences, which are included in the Institutional/Infrastructure designation.

- *Low Densities* (under 8 units per acre) represented with light yellow

- *Medium Densities* (8 to 20 units per acre) represented with tan
- *High Densities* (>20 units per acre) represented with bright yellow
- *Special Residential Activities* (retirement communities, assisted living and similar residential uses) represented with pebbled tan

Mixed land use, represented with brown, designates areas where multiple uses share spaces, including individual buildings, blocks or districts. These areas can include residential, institutional and commercial uses, the latter including retail, services, offices and other businesses. Not all mixed use areas will include all the possible uses. Because different uses often generate activity at different time of day, multiple land use types located together in mixed use areas to allow shared use of resources, such as parking.

Commercial land uses include business-related uses targeting both small- and large-scale market areas, and includes health care providers of all types at scales smaller than regional health institutions.

- **Neighborhood Commercial** - Businesses expected to draw customers from their immediate surrounding area are located in Neighborhood Commercial areas. These may include small office uses and is represented with red.
- **Regional Commercial** - House businesses attracting customers or employees from throughout the community, or from elsewhere in the region. Regional Commercial is represented with medium red.

An important aspect of identifying these areas is the level of transportation and service access required. Neighborhood scale business should be able to operate without creating congestion or hazards on the streets and parking locations within the neighborhood. Regional Commercial locations require sufficient access for the volume of employees and customers expected to visit in the regular course of business. Given the concentration of people using these locations, they must be accessible to utilities and public services including emergency response services.

Employment Center land use includes large offices or office complexes or industrial or manufacturing uses that are destinations for many employees. These areas are represented in purple. Employment Centers serve larger corporate and industrial operations. This category describes corporate campuses or industrial complexes that have substantial land area and service access at the highest levels. Large employment centers are oriented to access for employees rather than the general public.

Industrial and manufacturing land use encompasses facilities which either transport, warehouse or dispose of raw materials, components, finished products or solid waste. Industrial operations may involve raw and manufactured materials processing, including agricultural materials, as well as management, transportation or storage. Manufacturing may include the management of raw materials or components, product assembly and product distribution, transportation and warehousing. This category also includes solid waste management, processing, recycling, transportation and disposal. It may include management of solid waste sourced from other municipalities.

These activities require substantial infrastructure support to function. Operation of these facilities generally involves local impacts including noise, potential exposure to potentially injurious materials or by-products and transportation congestion. Consequently, industrial and manufacturing areas should be located away from residential areas and other land uses vulnerable to the anticipated impacts.

Institutional land use, represented with blue, includes both public and private institutional entities. The City of Bloomington itself is the primary public institution, and its facilities are given this designation. This includes City facilities such as fire and emergency response not in mixed use areas. It also includes City facilities used to provide utility services such as sanitary and storm sewers and water. Public institutions not necessarily connected to the City include school properties, County and BNWRD properties and public utilities such as telecommunications, gas, and electric and other power generation and distribution facilities. Certain entertainment or sports venues not in mixed use areas may also be regarding as institutional uses. Private institu-

tions include non-public schools and higher education institutions, hospitals and large regional medical centers, cultural institutions, museums and cemeteries and associated facilities.

Travel/Movement land use, represented in gray, encompasses all land uses associated with transportation in any form or mode, for the movement of people as well as goods and materials. This area includes the Central Illinois Regional Airport, railroad and street or highway right-or-way, as well as facilities for public transportation, public and private bus services and other transportation facilities. Also included are on-street facilities oriented towards person-powered transportation modes, for pedestrian or bicycling use, including bike lanes, sharrows and similar installations.

Recreational land use, represented with light green, includes areas used for participatory sports and recreational activities open to people, such as parks, playgrounds, outdoor and indoor facilities for specific sports and seasonal recreational areas. This category includes the Constitution Trail and

similar facilities. Although the trail is a transportation facility and link between transportation modes, this designation recognizes its function as a multipurpose recreational venue. Venues designed primarily for spectators of sports are included in the institutional land use category.

Conservation land use, represented with dark green, is characterized by areas set aside for environmental preservation or restricted from development due to land characteristics. This includes land within designated flood zones, riparian buffers, areas designed for environmental mitigation, nature preserves, conservation easements, wet bottom detention ponds and other protected areas. Conservation areas designated for the protection of endangered species may also be included in this category. These areas may provide incidental access for people.

Land Use Designations and Guidance for Emerging Areas

While infill should be the City's first priority, there will be development pressure in the new growth areas. The land use map defines new development areas based on their proximity to the

incorporated area, level of access to City services and other service connections and transportation access. For these areas, the map illustrates six types of new or potential development:

- *New Neighborhoods*
- *Conservation Neighborhoods*
- *Commercial Activity Centers*
- *Employment Centers*
- *Civic*
- *Future Development Areas*

The land use plan designates more land for development than is expected to be needed during the time span of the plan. This includes land at the margins of the growth area that currently does not have any urban uses and does not have access to core City services or sufficient transportation access to support development. While these areas offer potential for development, they are unlikely to be ripe for development activity or supported by municipal services in the near term.

Neighborhoods

New neighborhoods should be complete with safe and convenient access to the goods and services needed in daily life. This includes a

variety of housing options, grocery stores and other commercial services, quality public schools, public open spaces and recreational facilities, affordable active transportation options and civic amenities. An important element of a complete neighborhood is that it is built at a walkable and bikeable human scale, and meets the needs of people of all ages and abilities.

Residential neighborhoods may be designated as conservation development where the neighborhood is designed to function within areas with environmentally sensitive features without triggering damage to those features. Other residential neighborhoods may employ traditional neighborhood design or transit-oriented development patterns reminiscent of the older neighborhoods in the City core. In rare instances, the City may annex pre-existing residential development that is currently located outside the current incorporated area but is surrounded by the City.

Specific neighborhood design approaches, chosen through consideration of their location and the features of the land are characterized by:

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) – This choice uses the features of residential neighborhoods developed before 1940. TND neighborhoods are built on a well-connected street network. TND features walkable dimensions, neighborhood centers and public spaces. Housing types, sizes and styles may vary within the neighborhood. Bloomington has enacted a Traditional Neighborhood District ordinance establishing requirements and design standards for this type of development in the City. Older neighborhoods adjoining Downtown demonstrate these characteristics.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) – TOD neighborhoods share the characteristics of traditional neighborhoods but focus on neighborhood access to transit services. Transit Oriented Development in Bloomington will require close coordination with Connect Transit to ensure the location is suited to this development type, that the neighborhood is configured to allow transit access, and provides the level of transit service needed.

Conservation Neighborhoods - Conservation neighborhoods are used in areas with environmentally sensitive features. The conservation subdivision is designed to fit structures within portions of the site less susceptible to damage while protecting environmentally sensitive site features and areas. The protected areas become an open space amenity for the subdivision. Current examples in Bloomington include Tipton Trails and The Grove subdivisions.

Though the characteristics of each neighborhood vary, there are common elements that make every neighborhood complete. The following neighborhood principles will guide the neighborhood development in emerging areas to achieve the high-quality urban environments.

- *Excellence in Design:* Pursue innovative and progressive design. Design should balance competing priorities and meet multiple needs without compromising quality.
- *Context:* Respect and respond to an area's immediate context. Responsive, place-based design helps create distinctive places that are compatible with surroundings, ecologically sustainable and inclusive of all people.
- *Identity:* Develop and maintain inviting and engaging public spaces that encourage social interaction between different types of people. Create a welcoming civic atmosphere.
- *Choice:* Offer a range of housing choices with varying sizes, densities, style and age. Housing types, though different, should be designed to relate to each other to create vibrant and cohesive streetscapes.
- *Definition:* Define the neighborhoods with a center and an edge to keep them from sprawling. Civic gathering spaces such as parks and schools, transit stops and higher density housing are typically located at the center forming a neighborhood activity center, while commercial land uses, major through fares and bodies of water like lakes and streams form the edge.
- *Size:* Can vary by design. Size ranges between 250 to 400 acres and should be no more than ¼-mile radius from the center.
- *Connectivity:* Have a walkable layout with streets that connect in a logical manner throughout the neighborhood, to adjacent developments and other key destinations for seamless transitions. Maintain a connected street network that accommodates the needs of users of all modes of transportation and connects to all land uses.
- *Sustainability:* Use best practices in sustainability to reduce impacts on the environment. Facilitate naturalized storm water management. Recreational areas could be co-located with natural features while respecting and enhancing natural features such as topography, creeks, wetlands and native plant species.
- *Commercial Activity Centers:* Locations where commercial, entertainment, service and other activities come together. They are major commercial areas with a variety of large format retailers, restaurants, offices and services. They are located along arterial streets near interstate interchanges and draw local residents as well as users from surrounding communities. They are primarily commercial in nature, though they may include a mix of employment and residential uses as well. Though they are auto oriented, these centers should be designed to accommodate transit, bicycles and pedestrians with integrated transit and pedestrian facilities. The principles listed below will guide the development of these centers.

New Commercial Activity Centers

Commercial activity centers use strategic locations between residential neighborhoods or other uses. Commercial activity centers feature good transportation access and neighborhood scale commercial hubs for grocery stores, drug stores, retail, and service business to serve the surroundings areas. Activity centers located on or at intersections of high-volume streets may include businesses expected to draw from larger areas or from regional traffic. Larger activity centers may serve large sections of the city as well as a regional customer base.

- *Parking:* Shared between businesses and should adhere to a maximum number of parking spaces, not the minimum. Parking will be located to the side or rear of the building where possible. Expansive parking lots

NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGNS

Typical Suburban Development Pattern

Significant features of suburban style development area are

- Major thoroughfares bound the residential neighborhood area and residential lots are not allowed to front directly onto these roadways.
- Residential lots back to the major thoroughfares, and cul-de-sacs are used to provide access to residences from interior streets rather than directly from the major roadways.
- Collector streets collect traffic from the cul-de-sac's and are not continuous, which discourages cut-through traffic.
- Elementary schools often do not serve just one but several neighborhoods, as well as some neighborhoods from surrounding communities, and hence, can produce higher volumes of traffic within the neighborhood. This creates the need to place schools closer to the major thoroughfares surrounding the neighborhood.

Illustration above shows a typical example of this type of development in Bloomington. Though this design allows for safe subdivisions with proper setbacks and desired density levels for single-family development in the City, given the distance traveled, it is challenging for multimodal access in this arrangement.

A Local Example: Northpointe Subdivision

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND)

The main characteristics of a traditional neighborhood design (TND) are

- Grid street layout, tree-lined streets and alleys.
- Approximately 1/4th or 1/3rd of a mile from the center to the edge, a size that is considered to be optimal for a neighborhood that can be walked within 5 to 10 minutes at an easy pace.
- Pedestrian-oriented environment with landscape elements.
- Higher densities than suburban

A Local Example: Dimmitt's Grove Neighborhood

developments with structures that have lesser street setbacks so as to create a more distinctive street edge and a more definitive border between public and private spaces.

- A variety of housing types, jobs, shopping, services, public squares, mixed-use neighborhood centers and public facilities inter-mixed within the neighborhood, all within close proximity.
- A network of interconnecting streets and alleys that are smaller than conventional streets.
- A neighborhood center area that serves as a focal point of the neighborhood and contains retail, commercial, civic and public services that are arranged around a central element (i.e. public square).

Cluster Design or Conservation Oriented Development

The most important aspect of cluster design in subdivisions is the conservation of open space. This concept is used to provide open space or to preserve environmentally sensitive areas. It helps to create rural character in neighborhoods. A cluster design creates large pockets of planned open space by requiring mandatory clustering of development in certain areas. This method of neighborhood development utilizes increased development densities in some areas of the subdivision by decreasing development densities in other areas. Permanent open space is thereby set aside, and the overall density of the subdivision remains the same. Tools such as conservation easements, transfer of development rights (TDR); purchase of development rights (PDR) and density bonuses may be used to help create a clustered type neighborhood. This design can be used in conjunction with traditional neighborhood design or suburban style street pattern. While there are no conservation oriented developments in Bloomington, Tipton Trails and The Grove subdivisions are close examples that incorporate some environmental features such as prairie patches and bio swales (see aerial imagery of Tipton Trail above).

There are no true conservation developments in Bloomington. The examples that come close are Tipton Trails and The Grove subdivisions that incorporate some environmental features

should be divided into smaller parking areas with landscaped islands and buildings. These islands are designed to absorb storm ater and sized to accommodate mature shade trees and provide bicycle parking.

- **Plaza:** Building should be organized around a public plaza or open space to foster civic interaction.
- **Connectivity:** Internal circulation routes should be public streets. Logical sidewalk connections should be located between buildings and through parking lots. Layout should encourage walking between businesses.
- **Multimodal access:** Include transit facilities and a transit hub where demand shows that it is needed. Ensure sidewalk/bike path connections between buildings on campus and through parking lots to surrounding neighborhoods and commercial areas. Ensure a variety of housing options within a mile.
- **Sustainability:** Use best practices to reduce impacts on environmentally sensitive areas. Facilitate naturalized stormwater management.
- **Mixed Use:** Accommodate a

mix of uses within buildings to utilize the existing infrastructure efficiently. Retail and residential uses can share parking facilities as peak hours do not substantially overlap.

Employment Centers: Employment centers are concentrated areas of office or industrial uses that are a destination for residents and employees from the community and the surrounding area. Employment centers should include outdoor relaxation space for employees as well as transit and pedestrian connections to nearby neighborhoods and commercial areas. Buildings should be sited and designed to be compatible with each other. Because many residents also work in these areas, residential uses are an important component used to balance the location of jobs and housing.

Employment centers are larger parcels of land intended for office or corporate campus uses and intended to address concerns that economic development efforts for Bloomington-Normal are hampered by a lack of such sites ready for development by in-migrating companies expected to employ a significant number of workers. As

Bloomington's historical experience has shown, accommodating the access needed for such facilities requires that they be located on major transportation corridors, but also with alternative transportation facilities, transit access and nearby residential districts, to reduce the need to commute by car.

Large-scale employment sites are also economic development tools expected to aid in recruitment of new businesses bringing substantial new employment opportunity to Bloomington. The following principles will guide the development of the employment centers:

- **Context:** Respect and respond to an area's immediate context. When they are surrounded by neighborhoods, special consideration should be given to lighting, parking and traffic flow concerns.
- **Parking:** Divide expansive parking lots into smaller parking areas with landscaped islands and buildings. These islands will be designed to absorb storm water and sized to accommodate mature shade trees and provide bicycle parking.
- **Multimodal access:** Include

transit facilities and a transit hub where demand shows that it is needed. Ensure sidewalk/bike path connections between buildings on campus and through parking lots to surrounding neighborhoods and commercial areas. Ensure variety of housing options within a mile.

- **Healthy Living:** Provide active open spaces including pedestrian and bike paths on campus to promote healthy lifestyle for the employees.
- **Sustainability:** Use best prac-

tices to reduce impacts on the environmentally sensitive areas. Facilitate naturalized storm water management and make it as an amenity.

Future Use Development Areas: Land areas not adjacent to Bloomington's incorporated area or which do not have access to critical City services. Given the projections for growth in population and housing demand discussed in Chapter 2, it is unlikely these areas will be needed for development within the time horizon of this comprehensive plan.

Figure 11-2. Land Use Acreage by Tiers

Figure 11-3
Future Land Use

Proposed Land Use

Built Areas

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Special Residential Activities
- Mixed Use
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Employment Centers
- Institutional
- Conservation
- Parks & Recreational Space
- Transportation

Emerging Areas

- New Neighborhood
- Conservation Neighborhood
- Employment Center
- Commercial Activity Centers
- Civic
- Future

Figure 11-4
Land Use Priorities

Tier 1 — Vacant and under-utilized land for infill development or redevelopment within the City. Unincorporated land surrounded by incorporated areas. Platted areas for future development of existing subdivisions but not built out to completion.

Tier 2 — Land immediately adjacent to the City's incorporated area, and with access to all City services.

Tier 3 — Land adjacent to incorporated area but with limited access City services.

Future Use — Land not contiguous to incorporated area and without access to City services.

These areas should be revisited in the next 5-year plan update.

DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

The land use plan prioritizes development in tiers, to achieve the core values. These include

- Tier 1: Includes vacant and underutilized land for infill development or redevelopment within the City, unincorporated land surrounded by incorporated areas, and areas platted for future development of existing subdivisions but not yet built out to completion. Tier 1 totals approximately three square miles, which is roughly equivalent to the City's annexations during the period from 2000 to 2010. This area total does not include redevelopment areas designated as Tier 1, as these areas may currently be occupied. Currently vacant land not identified on Figure 11-4 or land that might become vacant within the incorporated limits of Bloomington also falls under Tier 1.

- Tier 2: Land immediately adjacent to the City's

Figure 11-5 Corporate Boundary Changes, 1970-2010

91% Increase in Population
147% Increase in Corporate Area

107.5% Increase in Street Miles
850 Fewer People per Square Mile

1970

Pop: 39,992
Area: 10.9 SqM

Pop. Density: 3665/ SqMile
Street Miles: 200

1980

Pop: 44,189
Area: 14 SqM

Pop Density: 3158/SqMile
Street Miles: 255

1990

Pop:51,976
Area: 17.43 SqM

Pop Density: 2981/SqMile
Street Miles: 307

2000

Pop:64,808
Area: 24 SqM

Pop Density: 2701/SqMile
Street Miles: 383

2013 City Limits
City Limits

N

Data Source: Census,
City of Bloomington, MCRPC

2010

Pop:76,610
Area: 27 SqM

Pop Density: 2815/SqMile
Street Miles: 415

incorporated area, and with access to all City services. Land designated as Tier 2 totals approximately six square miles, similar to the amount of land annexed in Bloomington between 1990 and 2000, a period of rapid growth and development in the City.

- Tier 3: Land adjacent to incorporated area but with limited City services. Tier 3 provides approximately six additional square miles of land for development, should it be needed if growth accelerates beyond currently anticipated levels. Development in these areas would require additional infrastructure investment.

- Future Use: Land not contiguous to incorporated area and/or without access to critical City services.

Overall, and without considering the land designated for future growth, the priority development tiers provide more available land over the next twenty years than was annexed for development from 1990 through 2010, a twenty-year period which saw substantial growth in Bloomington.

The process of defining and applying priorities considers the long-range nature of the comprehensive plan and the extensive City resources required to seek out and support appropriate new development activity. This approach helps achieve compact development, leverage Bloomington's investment in city services and keep growth contiguous to the City.

It is important to note that a major development proposal, such as the location of a large employer that represents a substantial change in circumstances for the City with respect to employment growth, would be likely to trigger a re-examination of development priorities and a possible amendment of the comprehensive plan.

Figure 11-4 illustrates the breakdown of land use categories by tiers. A careful observation of that chart reveals that a higher percentage of land area has been allocated for employment centers in Tiers 1 and 2. This is an acknowledgment that the City of Bloomington is well supplied with residential land use to accommodate the current population. Future residential growth will follow the employment growth.

Site Location: West of Interstate 74 between Market Street and Six Points Road.

Purpose of this study was to compare and contrast two types of development patterns
- Suburban Development pattern that is encouraged by the current regulations
- Development pattern that is a combination of Traditional Neighborhood Design and Conservation Design

Findings
- The Traditional Neighborhood Design coupled with Conservation design resulted in a healthy, cost effective development.
- City's current codes and regulations do not encourage, but in fact make it very difficult or in some instances prohibit, Traditional Neighborhood and Conservation Design.
- Continue to use the intergovernmental development review process to encourage smart growth in the community.

Summary of the Development Impact Study for McLean County adopted in 2005. Complete study can be accessed at www.mcplan.org
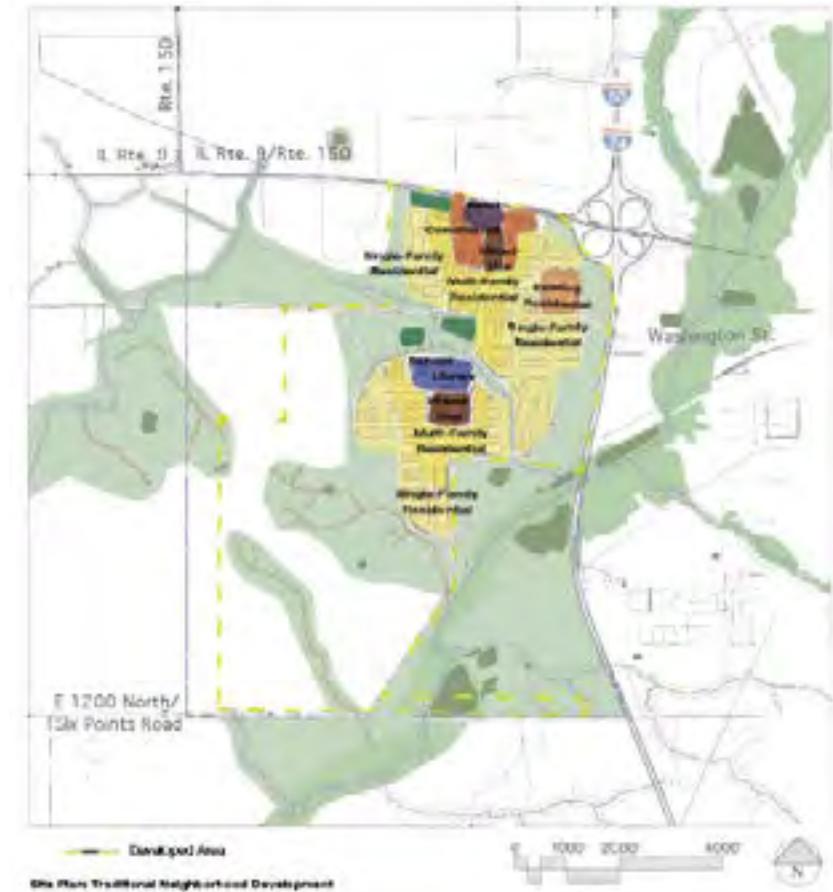
Figure 11-6. Subarea plan showing desired uses, densities, transportation connections, community facilities and the type of development.

SUB AREA PLANNING

While the act of subdividing a piece of real estate and placing the physical features is predominantly a function of the private sector, the design can be heavily influenced by the regulations placed by the public sector. Cities have and should continue to use this power to create well-designed neighborhoods that provide a setting for residents to develop a strong sense of belonging, which is promoted by their interactions with one another.

Currently in Bloomington, residential neighborhood development is predominantly driven by the private sector. Developers are typically required to take some elements identified in long range plans such as major transportation corridors and flood plains into consideration during the subdivision design process. However, a number of other elements, as outlined in the guidance for new neighborhoods, need to be coordinated to achieve cohesive neighborhoods that provide good rate of return on public investment. This comprehensive plan encourages the City to create and adopt sub area plans in the designated emerging areas. Sub area plans are like neighborhood plans for the unincorporated areas. They identify more precise locations for various densities of housing, commercial areas, parks, schools, regional detention ponds, fire stations, and other community facilities. The City should include all the stakeholders while creating these plans. Figure 11-6 is an example of a sub area plan on the west side of Bloomington.

SUMMARY

Chapters 4-10 of this comprehensive plan document outline a wide array of goals for Bloomington's future, objectives to be pursued and met to secure that future, and numerous suggested actionable items to accomplish and achieve the objectives. Throughout these steps, the plan identifies departments or agencies with the primary responsibility for realizing the goals. The plan also identifies potential partners in this effort. In many instances, entities other than the City are assigned to specialized or technical objectives in the plan.

Responsibility and Accountability

The responsibility for the implementation of the comprehensive plan and its land use plan rests with the City of Bloomington, its administration and staff, led by the Community Development Department, the Bloomington Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals, and ultimately with the Bloomington City Council. The policies and directives established in the plan and the tasks that flow from them are designed for orderly distribution of the work of implementation. Performance metrics are recommended to establish benchmarks for implementation and to evaluate success in achieving the goals and objectives. The evaluation process should acknowledge that re-examination of this plan should take place five years from its adoption.

Throughout the plan, reflecting the many areas of overlapping concern and initiative, goals and objectives are cross-referenced or combined as a guide for full implementation and an acknowledgment of the layered complexities of Bloomington's present day and future.

Staff Committees

As noted in the goals and objectives, an initial step in carrying out the comprehensive plan is the establishment of staff committees from the relevant administration and department positions to review the plan elements and allocate tasks and ongoing evaluation to staff best able to carry them out. This is similar to the work of existing staff committees that manage the application of City policy to management and operational issues. Some tasks described in the plan may already be performed by staff, which offers guidance as to how other tasks should be assigned. Ideally, ongoing tasks discussed in the plan should become a part of the work programs of City administrators and staff for eventual review by the Planning Commission and the City Council. A critical task is the annual or biannual compilation and publication of a progress report on the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In addition to keeping Bloomington's officials apprised and informing the public about the work in progress, these reports will provide important information for the next update of the comprehensive plan.

The Staff Committee will have the benefit of data and task tracking tools created during the planning process. The comprehensive plan goals, objectives and actionable items are compiled in a tracking spreadsheet. Each identified actionable item also includes, to the extent possible:

- Designation of lead departments or agencies for the action;
- Identification of partner agencies;
- Anticipated timeline for action;
- Metrics to measure completion, and;
- Identification of possible funding sources for the task.

The Staff Committee may use this tool as the basis for allocating tasks among City departments, tracking progress and any revisions needed for action items, establishing databases to support the creation of periodic progress reports and incorporating information received from the public, and facilitating analysis of outcomes of implementation. This compilation also supports the work of revamping City ordinances and regulations to align with the comprehensive plan discussed below.

Alignment of City Code with Comprehensive Plan

One category of implementation tasks noted throughout the plan is the revamping of Bloomington codes, ordinances, regulations and policies to reflect the content

of the comprehensive plan. Completing this task will satisfy some goals and objectives and clarify the City's intent with respect to development policy and its administration. It will also streamline the work of the Planning Commission, the Zoning Board and the City Council in evaluating and deciding development matters through the lens of the comprehensive plan. During the revision of the regulatory tools, which may take some time to complete, the City's consideration of development can continue with elements of the existing codes and ordinances. Examples of existing tools are listed below.

- The Gridley, Allin & Prickett form-based code, which provides for neighborhood-scale objectives in the plan; this code also reflects the understanding that these regulations can and should be constructed for adaptations in specific neighborhood conditions and circumstances;
- The Traditional Neighborhood District ordinance, which provides specific guidance for the implementation of the traditional and transit oriented neighborhood development

proposed in the plan;
- The Planned Unit Development code, which provides flexibility for implementation for eligible projects, facilitating plan objectives;
- The B3 Central Business District zoning as applied mixed use development in Downtown Bloomington, which may be amended to explicitly accommodate residential uses in the district, and;
- The Historic Preservation Commission and Code, which can be employed to implement the many objectives relating to Bloomington's historic central neighborhoods and resources.

These tools can be employed immediately, as the City of Bloomington begins its implementation of the comprehensive plan.

APPENDIX A:
FIGURES & TABLES

TABLES

BEST PRACTICES & FUNDING MECHANISMS

APPENDIX B: PARTNER AGENCY ACRONYMS

AART	Area Arts Round Table
BACC	Bloomington Area Career Center
BCPA	Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts
BHA	Bloomington Housing Authority
BPD	Bloomington Police Department
BPL	Bloomington Public Library
CIAM	Central Illinois Arena Management
CIRA	Central Illinois Regional Airport
COB	City of Bloomington
CVB	Bloomington-Normal Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
DBA	Downtown Bloomington Association
DCEO	Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
ECIAAA	East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging
EDC	Economic Development Council of the Bloomington-Normal Area
IDOT	Illinois Department of Transportation
IHPA	Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
IPLAN	Illinois Project for Local Assessment of Needs
ISU SBDC	Illinois State University Small Business Development Center
IWU ARC	Illinois Wesleyan University Action Research Center
LIFE-CIL	Life Center for Independent Living
MCAC	McLean County Arts Center
MCC	McLean County Chamber of Commerce
MCCA	Mid Central Community Action
MCHD	McLean County Health Department
MCMH	McLean County Museum of History
MCRPC	McLean County Regional Planning Commission
BNRA	Bloomington-Normal Realtors Association
PATH	Providing Access To Help
WBRP	West Bloomington Revitalization Project

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