CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

EXISTING CONDITIONS
ANALYSIS









This report was prepared by the
McLean County Regional Planning Commission
as Phase 1 of the City of Bloomington's
Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted August 24, 2015

BRING IT, BLOOMINGTON!

PLAN IT. SEE IT. LIVE IT.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2035

Phase 1: Existing Conditions Report

Prepared By

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

In Cooperation with the

CITY OF Bloomington ILLINOIS

Adopted August 24, 2015

The preparation of this report was financed in part through a planning grant from the
U.S. Department of Transportation: Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration

CREDITS

City Council
- Mayor Tari Renner
- Kevin Lower, Ward 1
- David Sage, Ward 2
- Mboka Mwilambwe, Ward 3
- Judith I. Stearns, Ward 4
- Joni Painter, Ward 5
- Karen Schmidt, Ward 6
- Scott Black, Ward 7
- Robert Fazzini, Ward 8
- Jim Fruin, Ward 9

Historic Preservation Commission
- Carson Durham, Chairman
- John Elterich
- Sherry Graehling
- Jeffery Kennedy
- Levi Sturgeon
- Julian Westerhaut
- Brad Williams

Planning Commission
- Stan Cain, Chair
- J. Alan Balmer
- Christopher Cornell
- Rex Diamond
- James Pearson
- Ryan Scritchlow
- David Stanczak
- Charles E. Stuckey
- Kevin Suess
- Rob Wills

Zoning Board Of Appeals
- Mike Ireland, Chairman
- Richard Briggs
- Amelia Buragas
- Robert Kearney
- Barbara Meek
- James Simeone
- William Zimmerman

Steering Committee
- Stan Cain, Chairman
- Georgia Bouda
- Richard Briggs, Vice Chair
- Nora Dukowitz
- David Hales
- Brendan Heffner
- Roberta Herakovich
- Jim Karch
- John Kennedy
- Mike Kimmerling
- Frank Koehler
- Kevin Kothe
- Alex McElroy
- Justine Robinson
- Mark Woolard

Action Research Center - Illinois Wesleyan University

Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council (BN-EDC)

Bloomington-Normal Area Realtors Association

Bloomington & Normal Trades and Labor Assembly

Bloomington School District #87

CIRBN

City of Bloomington
- City Manager's Office
- City Clerks Office
- Economic Development Department
- Fire Department
- PACE Department
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Police Department
- Public Works Department
- Water Department

City of Bloomington Township Assessor

City of Bloomington Public Library

Ecology Action Center

McLean County Health Department

McLean County Chamber of Commerce

McLean County Museum of History

McLean County Recorder's Office

McLean County Regional GIS Consortium (McGIS)

McLean County Wellness Coalition

West Bloomington Revitalization Project

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 5

Executive Summary 7

Chapter 1 Historic Context 19
- Key Findings 20
- Exploration and Settlement 21
- The Railroads Arrive 21
- Immigration 22
- A Turning Point 23
- Modern Times 23
- Suburban Design Standards 23

Chapter 2 Demographics 27
- Key Findings 28
- Population Trends 29
- Age Composition 30
- Racial/Ethnic Diversity 34
- Educational Attainment 35
- Household Income 35
- Household Type 36

Chapter 3 Housing 39
- Key Findings 40
- Housing Unit Types 41
- Homeownership 42
- Median Home Values and Affordability 44
- Relevant Plans, Studies and Ongoing Efforts 47

Chapter 4 Land Use 53
- Key Findings 54
- Growth Patterns 55
- Existing Land Use 56
- Residential Land Uses 58
- Commercial/Office Uses 58
- Industrial Uses 60
- Recreational and Open Space 60
- Zoning 62
- Relevant Plans, Studies and Ongoing Efforts 63

Chapter 5 Economics 69
- Key Findings 70
- Employment 71
- Labor Force Characteristics 72
- Inflow/Outflow 73
- Laborshed and Commute Shed Analysis 74
- Commute 74
- Sales Tax 76
- Property Tax Revenue 76
- Housing Activity 77
- Economic Development Incentives 77
- Relevant Plans, Studies and Ongoing Efforts 79

Chapter 6 Infrastructure 83
- Key Findings 84
- Public Infrastructure 85
- Sanitary Sewer 85
- Stormwater 86
- Water 88
- Transportation 88
- Streets 89
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel 91
- Safe Routes to School 91
- Public Transit 92
- Central Illinois Regional Airport 92
- Rail 93
- Privately Owned Utilities 93
- Relevant Plans, Studies and Ongoing Efforts 96

Chapter 7 Health and Safety 101
- Key Findings 102
- Local Health Concerns 103
- Walkability Analysis 104
- Food Deserts 105
- Parks and Recreation 107
- Public Safety 110
- Fire Protection 110
- Police Department 111
- Relevant Plans, Studies and Ongoing Efforts 113

Chapter 8 Natural Environment 117
- Key Findings 118
- Greenways 119
- Topography, Soils and Land Coverage 119
- Floodplains 123
- Water Supply and Management 123
- Energy 127
- Energy Sources - Impacts & Issues 129
- Renewable Energy 131
- Emerging Energy Issues 133
- Growth and Environmental Impact 134
- Heat Islands & Impervious Surfaces 134
- Solid Waste 135

Chapter 9 Community Facilities 137
- Public Buildings 139

Chapter 10 Regional Context 145
- Regional Water Planning 147
- Enbridge Pipeline Project 148
- Hydraulic Fracturing Oil and Gas 148
- Rail Infrastructure 149
- Automotive 149
- CIRA Expansion 149

New Soccer Venue 149
Health Care Reform 149
Medical Marijuana 149
Alternative Energy 149

Chapter 11 Arts & Culture 151
Key Findings 152
Artists 155
Visual Arts 156
Public Art 156
Performing Arts 156
Organizations Promoting Arts and Culture 160
Historic Sites and Museums 161
Events and Festivals 165

Appendix A GIS Methodology 169

Appendix B Park Services and Facilities 171

Data Sources 173

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to guide the physical planning and development policy for the community over a twenty year horizon. A sound understanding of the existing conditions is the key to developing a meaningful comprehensive plan that can have a long lasting impact on the community.

Identifying existing conditions helps to establish a reference point from which future decisions can be made. By providing a context of facts and framing the key issues, the people involved in the planning process have an understanding of the City and its characteristics.

This Existing Conditions Report is prepared as the first phase of the three-phase comprehensive planning effort for City of Bloomington, Illinois. In its draft format, this report will form the basis for conversations during the next phase of the planning process, the Community Visioning. A final copy of this report, reflecting the community feedback on this report, will be presented to the Planning Commission and the City Council toward the end of Phase 3 for adoption (May/June 2015).

The target audience for this report is community members as well as City of Bloomington staff and elected officials. It is organized into the following chapters:

1. **Historical Context** provides an insight into the roots of community and its influence on urban form.
2. **Demographics** covers the current demographic composition and highlights some future trends.
3. **Housing** identifies a few key characteristics of the housing stock such as type, value, ownership and affordability of housing in Bloomington.
4. **Land Use** discusses growth trends, current land use and zoning.
5. **Economics** reviews the major economic sectors in Bloomington and the Bloomington-Normal metro area, labor force issues and retail sales.
6. **Infrastructure** describes the condition of the City-owned infrastructure such as streets and sewers and also discusses the privately owned utilities such as electricity and gas.
7. **Health and Safety** highlights the impact of land use on health and discusses the public safety services such as fire and police.
8. **Natural Environment** examines the natural resources of Bloomington and the surrounding area.
9. **Community Facilities** identifies both City-owned facilities such as City Hall and the Bloomington Public Library, as well as public and private schools in the area.
10. **Regional Context** provides a perspective on issues at the state and national levels as well as technological or other advances that may have an impact on communities in the near future.

Most chapters are briefly introduced with some key facts about the topic. The key findings in those chapters give the reader a brief snapshot of what to expect within that chapter. A majority of the discussion in the chapter is data-driven. Readers can expect extensive use of location-based analysis using Geographic Information System (GIS). Limitations of the analysis include lack of data at micro scale, data spanning multiple years (2007-2013), and potential errors in compiling local data from a variety of sources.

At the end of most chapters, summaries of relevant plans and other ongoing efforts are provided. This is to ensure that the work done either by the City or other community members is not repeated, but built upon.

Some chapters include relevant news clips. Recent items in the news tend to have an influence on peoples' opinions as we prepare to envision our future. They also provide a context in which the comprehensive planning process takes place.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





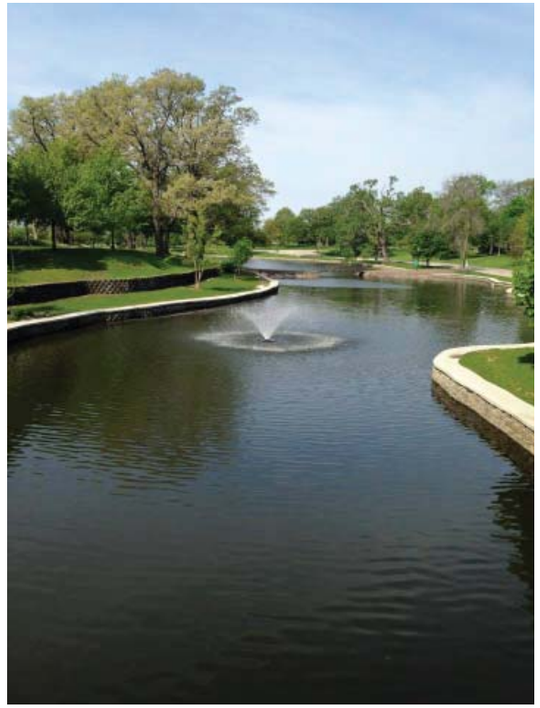




KEY FINDINGS

The City of Bloomington and the Bloomington-Normal metropolitan area have always enjoyed a stable economy in relation to many central Illinois communities as well as the state. This can be attributed to the many strengths of the area such as a strategic location between the population centers of Chicago and St. Louis, accessibility via road and air transportation, major employers, and the quality of neighborhoods and schools. Below are some key strengths identified in this report:

- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Bloomington's population in 2010 was 76,610 and has grown 18.21% since 2000 and 91% since 1970. This growth rate was much higher than many of the surrounding communities.
- The natural environment of Bloomington and the surrounding area exhibits no physical constraints for growth.
- Bloomington's population is becoming increasingly educated. In 2010, 92.9% of the population over the age of 25 years had a high school diploma, 44% of which had a bachelor's degree or higher. Both of these percentages are higher than those of the state. This indicates a highly skilled workforce.
- At a 7.4% unemployment rate, Bloomington's unemployment was much lower than that of the state in 2013. It should be noted that the unemployment rates in Bloomington and the metro area were lower relative to the state during the recent recession (2007-2009).



- The top 20 major employers in the metro area are a mix of sectors including finance, business and professional service, education, health, government, and leisure and hospitality. Together they provided 32,032 full time jobs in 2014.
- Due to its well paying jobs, strategic location, and accessibility via road and rail transportation, the Bloomington-Normal area's primary laborshed is central Illinois, and the secondary laborshed extends as far as Chicago. The new high speed rail project in Normal, once completed, has great potential to expand the primary laborshed.
- The Bloomington-Normal metro area and 20 other central Illinois communities are now served by the Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network (CIRBN) fiber optic network. This new tool provides high speed internet service at affordable cost. This new capability provides the area with new economic development opportunities.
- After reaching an all-time low in 2012, the number of new housing permits in the City increased in 2013. This is an encouraging sign of a rebounding economy.
- Bloomington has a healthy mix of housing types from single-family to multi family; historic mansions to modern homes; 1,500 square feet to 6,000 square feet. This diverse mix of homes caters to the diverse demographics of Bloomington.
- With nine acres of park per every thousand residents and over 25 miles of bike trails in the community, Bloomington provides rich recreational opportunities for all of its residents.
- Bloomington's low crime rate is a sign of a relatively safe community. It should be noted that total crime in 2013 was less than that of 1989.

While these and other attributes make Bloomington the wonderful place it is, there are some areas of concern that need to be addressed to help keep Bloomington's great quality of place.

- Bloomington's demographic profile indicates an aging population. Consistent with national trends, the City's fastest growing age group is 45-64 years. Comprehensive planning is a great place for the community to address questions such as: can Bloomington be a community that allows our seniors to age in place? If so, what qualities make it more livable for them?
- While Bloomington's median household and family incomes were both higher than that of Illinois, they were both lower when compared to year 2000 inflation-adjusted dollars. This is the trend at state and national levels as well. However, it is troublesome to note that the households making less than median income are geographically concentrated in the core of the City.
- In line with national trends, Bloomington's younger population group, 0-19



years, is growing at a slower pace in comparison to the older age group, 45-64. The distribution of this growth is not even throughout the City. The established neighborhoods, primarily served by the landlocked School District 87, are seeing a loss of younger populations. With District 87 serving nearly half of the City, this trend should be a matter of concern for the City and District 87.

- Median home values and median rents are both lower when compared to that of the state averages. However, 23% of all homeowners and 39.1% of renters are burdened with housing costs (paying 30% or more of their household income on housing). The percent of homeowners burdened is higher than that of the state at 17%.
- The majority of the rental properties 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. This can be a sign of blight.

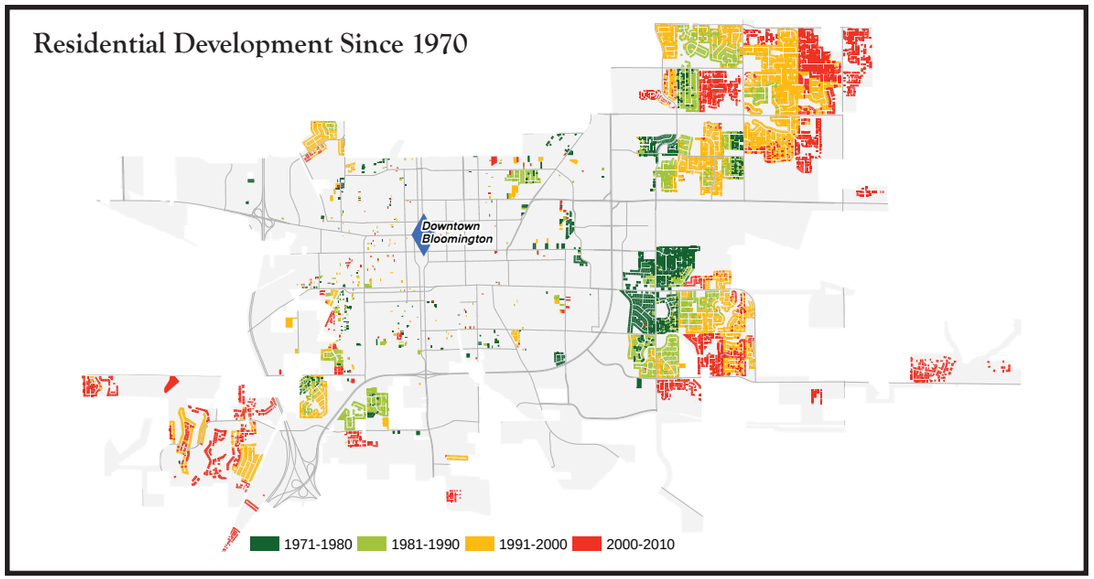
- In 2010, Bloomington's homeownership rate was 62.9%, nearly four and half percentage points lower than that of Illinois. Bloomington's median family income was higher than that of the state by $9,746. Typically, higher median incomes are associated with higher homeownership rates in the community. However, that was not the case in Bloomington. This could be attributed to several reasons such as student populations, transient workforce, or affordability of housing.
- Bloomington has experienced a tremendous amount of growth in the last 50 years. Since 1970, the City's population increased by 91%, its physical boundary increased by 147%, and street mileage has more than doubled. While growth is a positive sign for the City, it is important for the City to manage the growth efficiently so as not to put a burden on City services.
- The City of Bloomington currently has nearly 2,000 acres of vacant land with access to the City's infrastructure such as streets, water and sewer. The City should exercise caution before annexing more land.
- In 2014, the top 20 employers accounted for 32,032 full time jobs to the area economy, 50% of which were contributed by State Farm Insurance Companies. The future outlook of State Farm Insurance is key to the area's economy.
- The majority of the City's existing infrastructure was built between 1950 and 1980. Some of the existing infrastructure is deteriorating to a point where it is not providing an adequate level of service.
- Water usage in Bloomington is 11.5 million gallons per day or 4.3 billion gallons annually. This results in about 22 months of supply derived from the lakes at capacity. This is matter of concern during the drought months.
- The expansion of Bloomington has resulted in conversion of 1,794,624 acres of surrounding farmland since 1970. While convenient to have unlimited constraints for expansion, Bloomington and the metro area's growth poses a threat to the prime farmland in McLean County.
- Sugar Creek, Goose Creek, and Kickapoo Creek are the three major drainage ways in the community, comprising a total of approximately 59 miles. A majority of the creek banks are experiencing erosion.
- About 61.5% of McLean County residents were overweight or obese in 2009. Two major causes of obesity are sedentary lifestyles and access to fresh food. Land use can play a significant role in addressing these issues.
- Several of the low income census tracts predominantly located on the west side of the City are currently designated as food deserts. This indicates a lack of access to healthy food.
- The National Fire Protection Association recommends a response time of six minutes for 90th percentile of calls. In 2013, 73.5% of all fire calls and 63.9% of all EMS calls were responded within six minutes. This is a matter of concern.



Challenges facing Bloomington are not unique. However, the geographic concentration of the issues in the core (inner City), that is primarily served by a landlocked school district makes the situation more complex.

The next several pages contain maps illustrating Bloomington's issues in the Core and their effects on District #87. Given the overall strengths of Bloomington, now is the time to address the core issues facing the community.

There will not be a right, wrong or easy solutions to these complex situations. The approach going forward should be "what is best for Bloomington?" The solutions must come from within the community during the public outreach phase.

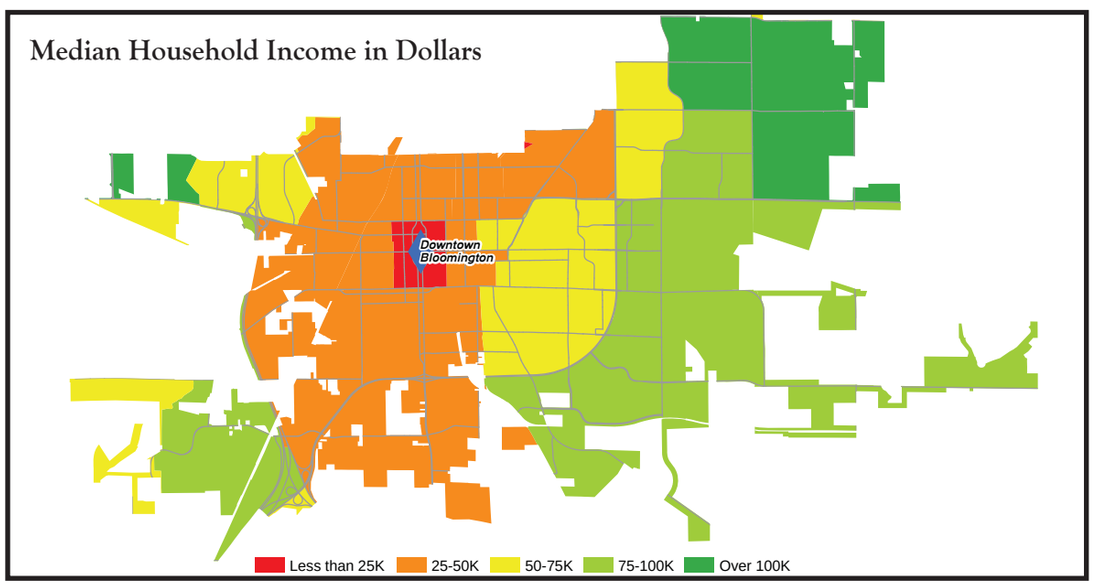


The majority of housing in Bloomington's core area is older

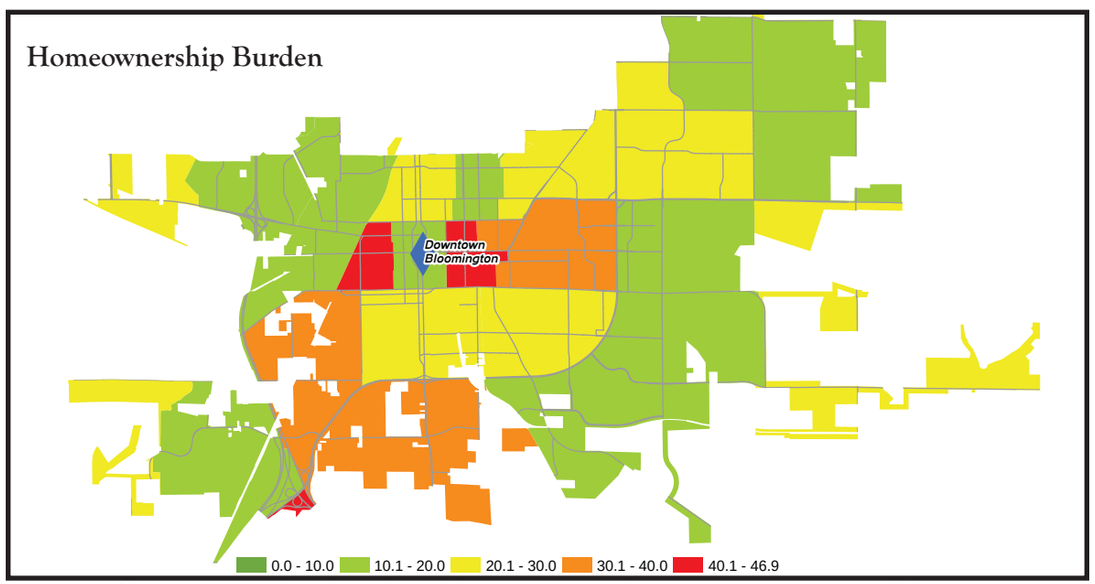
Bloomington's CORE ISSUE

Like many communities across United States, Bloomington's core (inner city) has suffered considerable disinvestment in the last few decades. The City's consolidated plan, Historic Preservation Plan, Downtown Strategic Plan and the West Bloomington Revitalization Project, are a few ongoing efforts by the City and the community to bring the core back to its past glory.

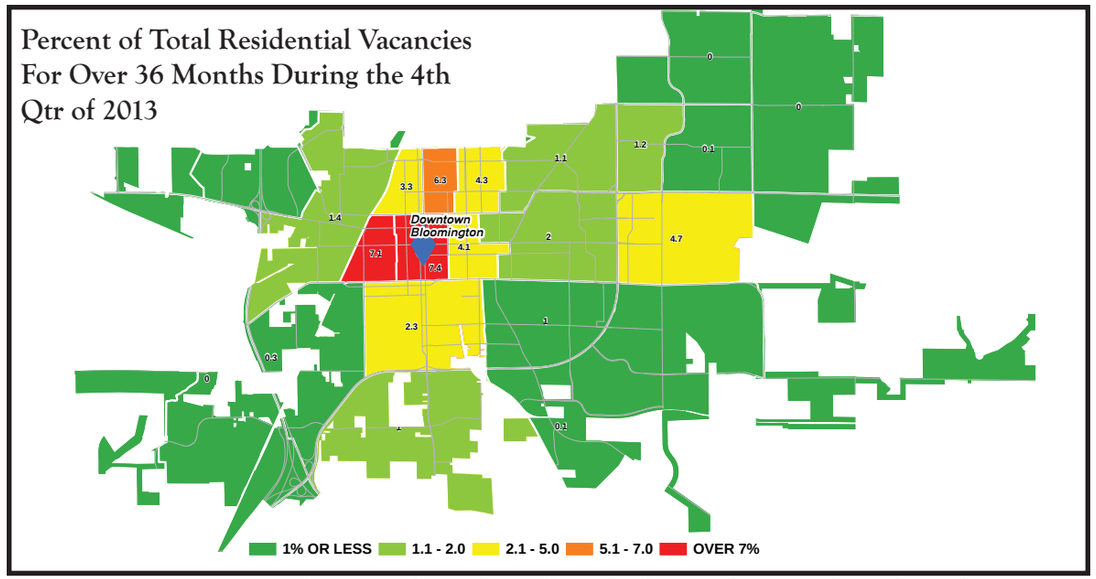
However, due to the complexity and magnitude of this issue, it needs to be addressed much more comprehensively. Depending on the metrics of the issues presented here, the boundaries of the core extend to Interstate 55 on the west and Veterans Parkway on the east. That is nearly 50% of the City. Acknowledging the need to address the inner city issues and defining the boundaries of the core for targeted redevelopment are the critical first steps in addressing this challenge.



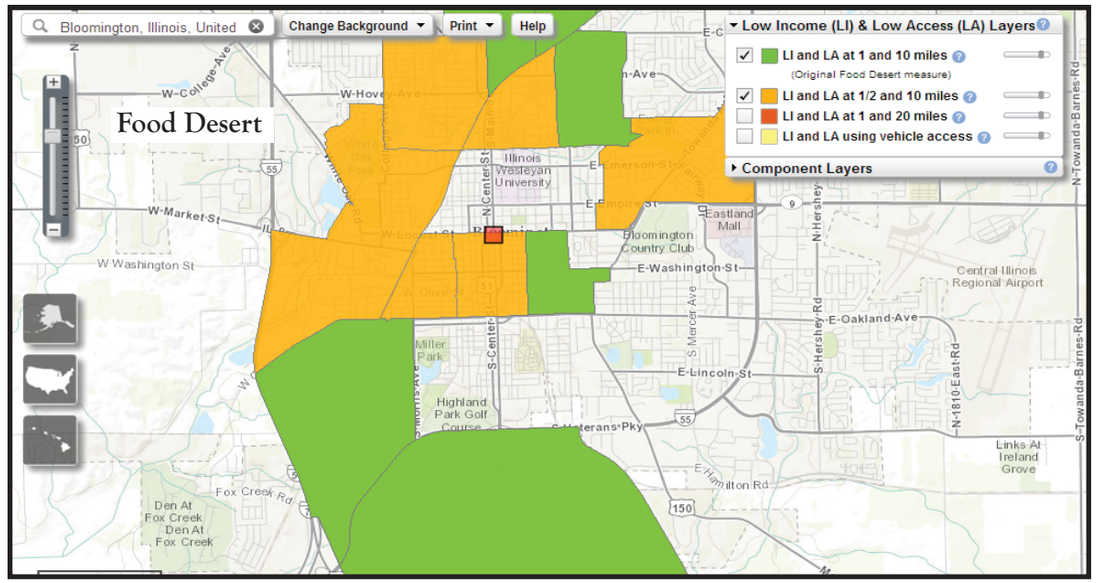
Median incomes in the core are lower than that of the City.



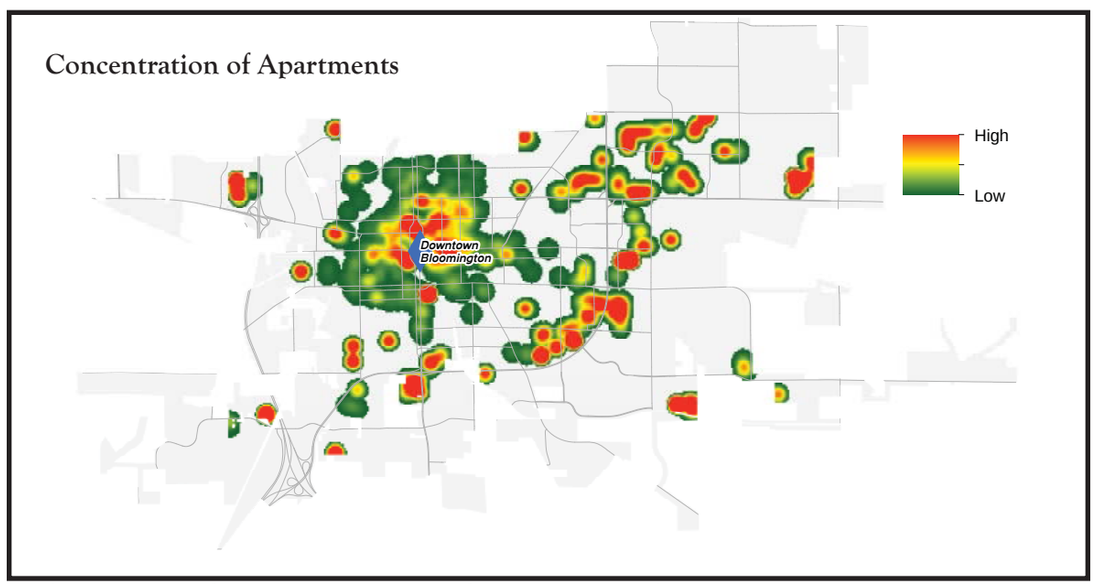
Percent of homeowners burdened with housing costs (paying 30% or more of their income on housing) are more in the core of the City.



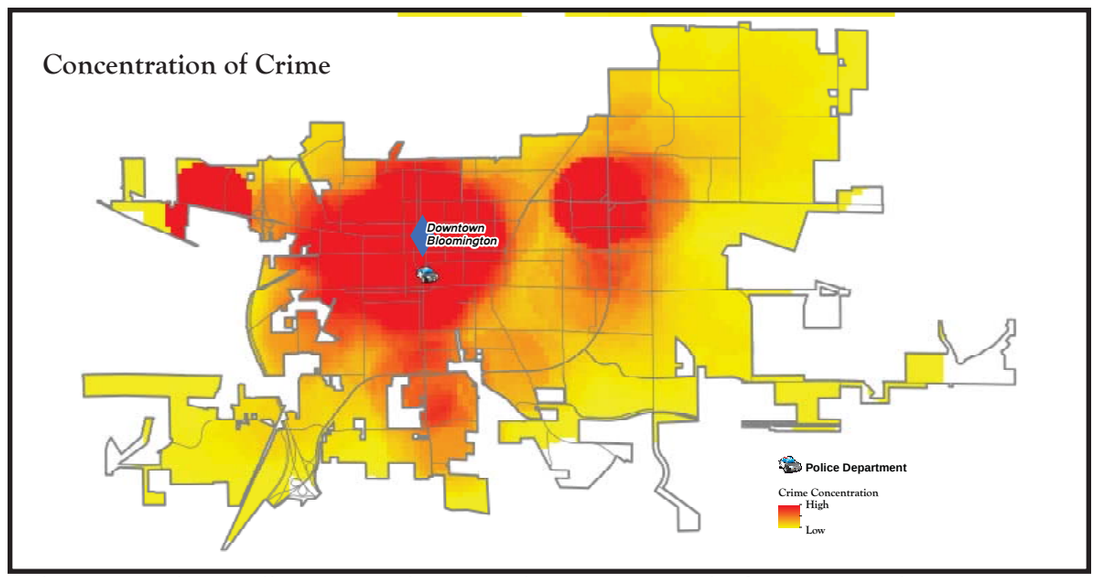
Long term vacancy rates (36 months or longer) are higher in the core than along the periphery. Long term vacancy rates can be a signal of blight.



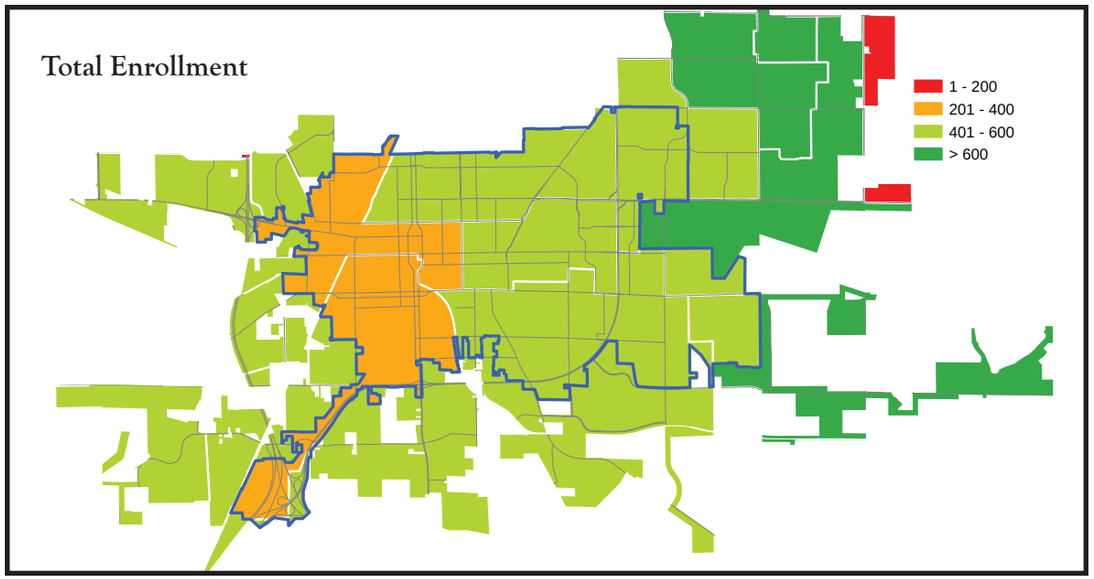
A majority of the west side of the City is classified as a food desert by the United States Department of Agriculture.



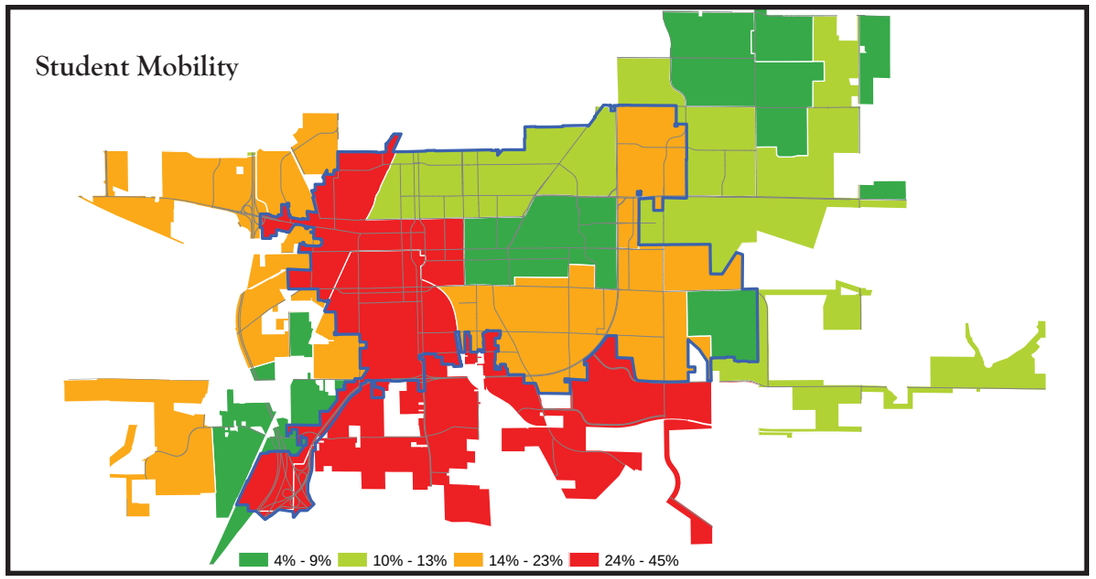
There is a significant concentration of apartments in the inner city.



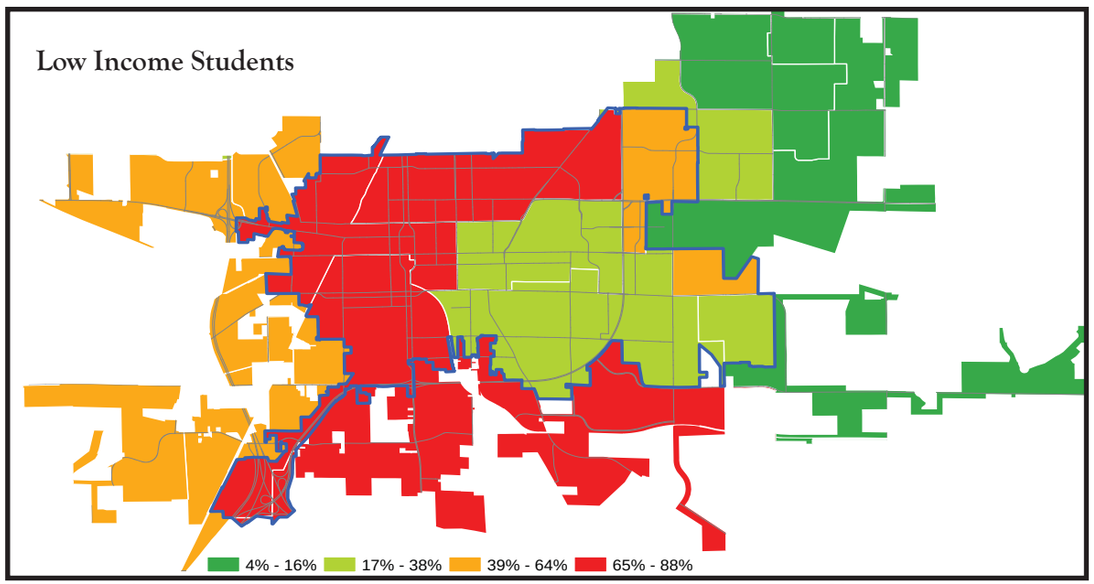
Bloomington's overall crime rate has gone down. 2014 marks fewer crimes than in 1989. However, most crimes are concentrated in the core and correlate with housing densities.



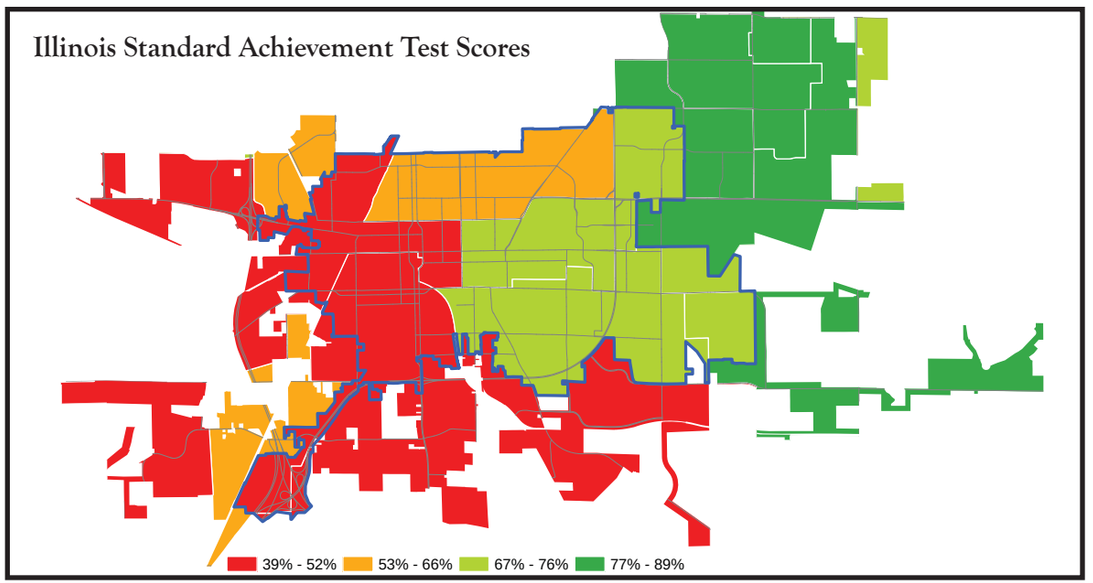
According to District 87, the total enrollment in 2010 is slightly less than that in 2000.



Concentration of the rental units in the core may be resulting in higher student mobility.



Lower median incomes in the core results in an increased percentage of low income students in District 87.

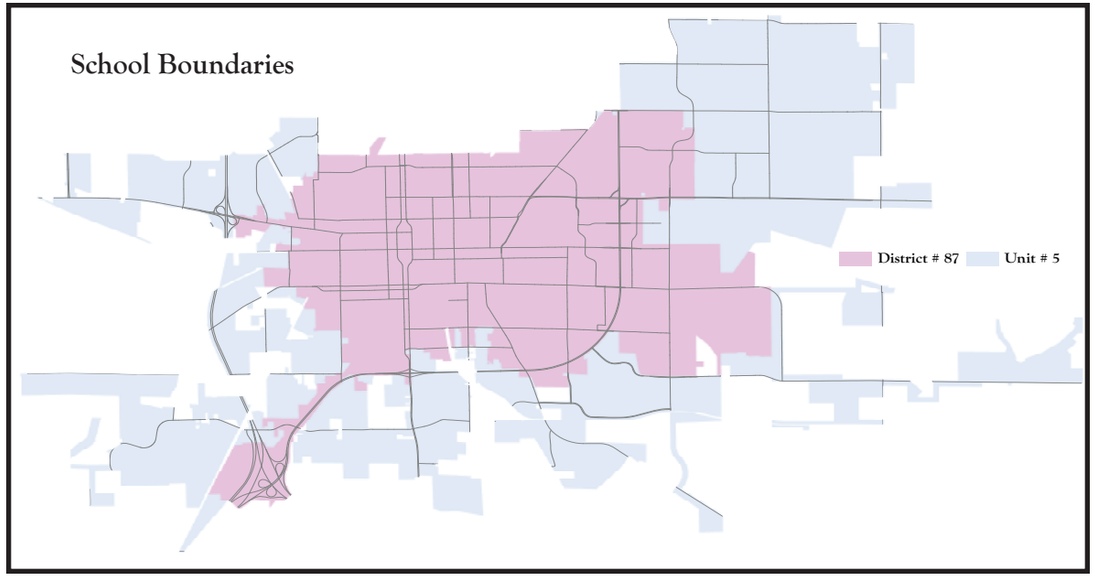


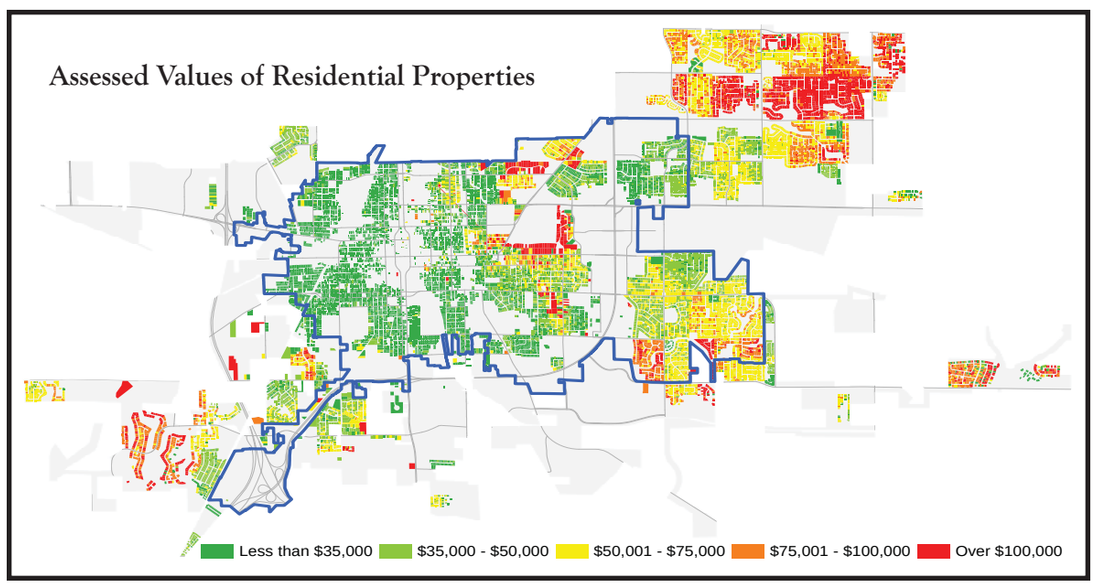
Various social issues facing the youth might result in lower academic performance.

EFFECT ON District 87

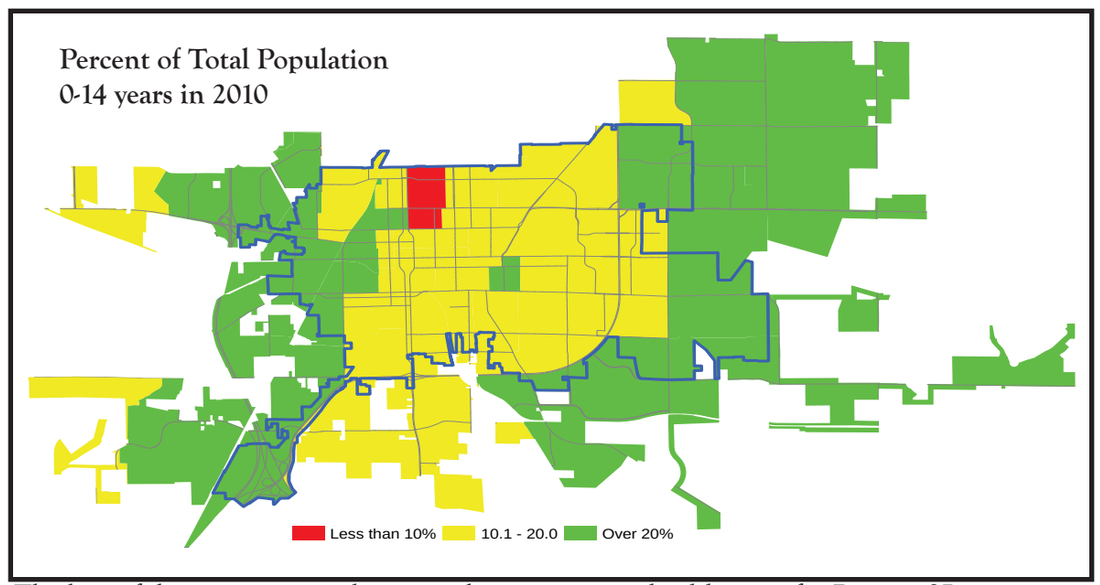
The City of Bloomington has an abundance of excellent public schools. There are two school districts that serve the City, Unit 5 and District 87. Bloomington's core is served primarily by District 87, which is landlocked.

The community issues in the core have a significant negative effect on the schools. The health of the neighborhoods is often related to the quality of the schools in that area. This is particularly true in District 87 where most elementary schools are neighborhood schools. "Is this a school district issue or a community issue?" is one of the several complex questions the community should be prepared to answer during this comprehensive planning process.





The lower assessed value on residential properties might eventually result in decreased revenue for District 87.



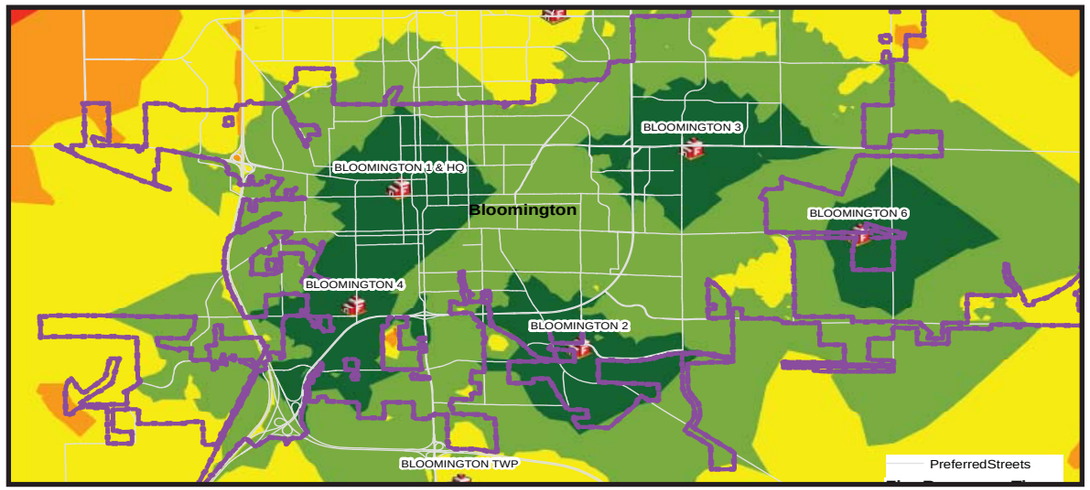
The loss of the younger population in the core is not a healthy sign for District 87.

Bloomington's CORE ASSETS

While there are challenges, Bloomington's core has many unique assets that are crucial to help addresses these challenges. A few of those include the availability of City infrastructure and services, a street network that promotes sustainable living, high tax rate per acre generated due to densities, proximity to employment centers, historically significant homes, Illinois Wesleyan University and a major commercial node, the Downtown.

Currently the biggest asset for the core continues to be the good schools. Bloomington's core is positioned well with unique assets that can be leveraged to make it economically competitive and self sustaining. However, a concerted effort is needed to make the core as vibrant as the rest of the community.

Fire Response Travel Times



The core is currently well served by the City's infrastructure and services. For example, the travel times for fire response in the majority of the core is six minutes or less.

Examples of Representative Street Patterns Before 1970



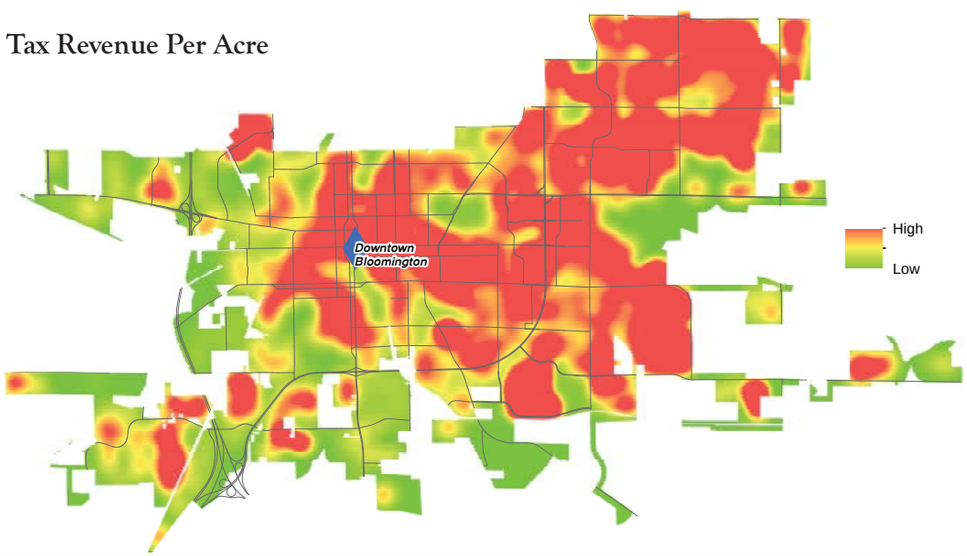
Before 1900
East of Downtown

1901-1920
Whites Place & Clinton Boulevard

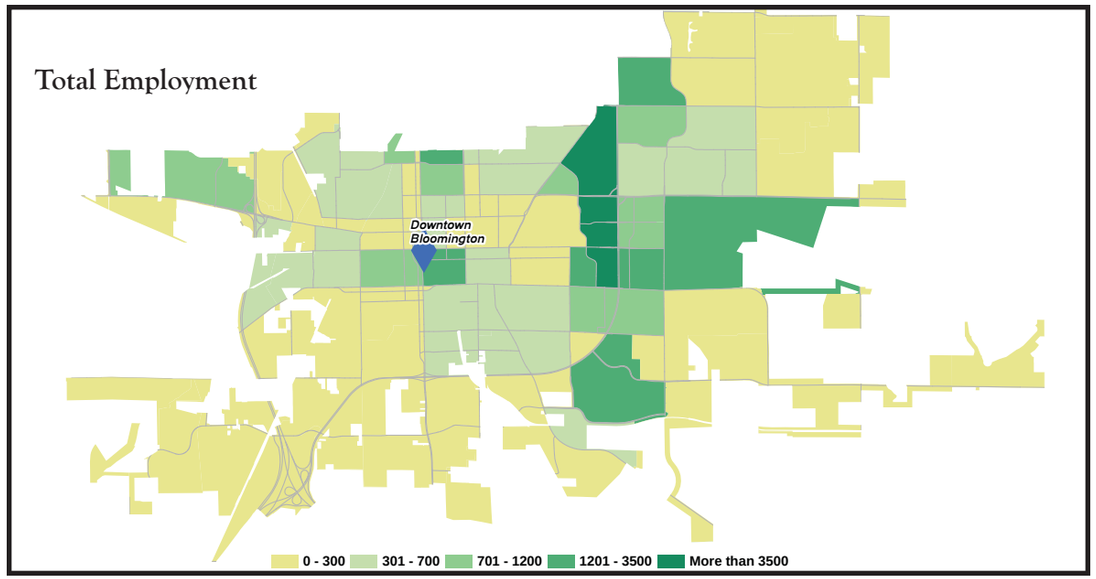
1921-1940
Founders Grove

The core is served by a grid street pattern that encourages travel by both auto and alternative modes, encouraging a sustainable and healthy lifestyle.

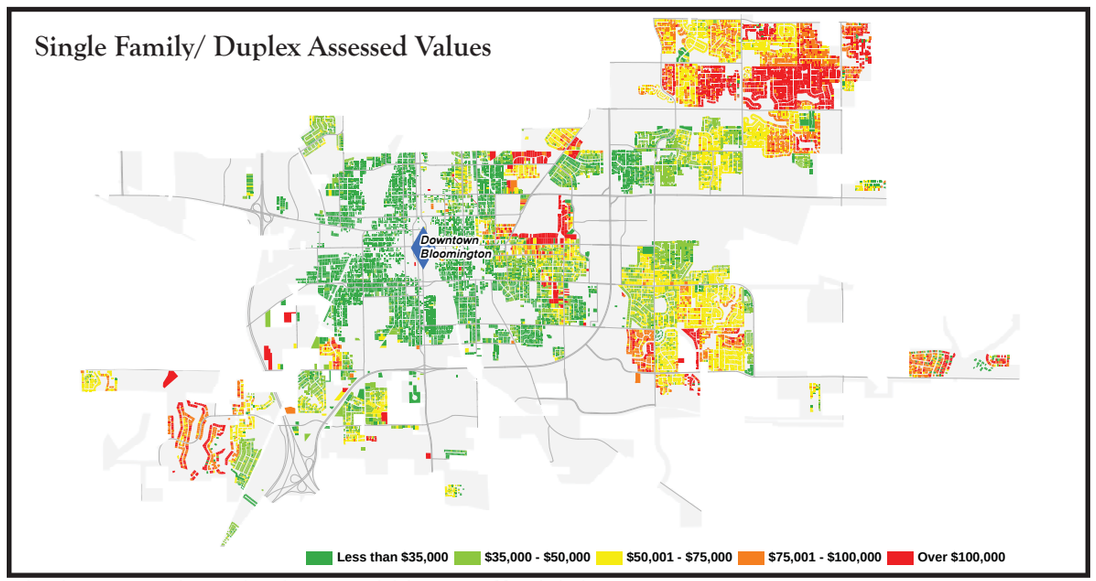
Tax Revenue Per Acre



The core continues to bring in higher taxes per acre. This is partly due to economic activity in Downtown and the higher densities in this area.

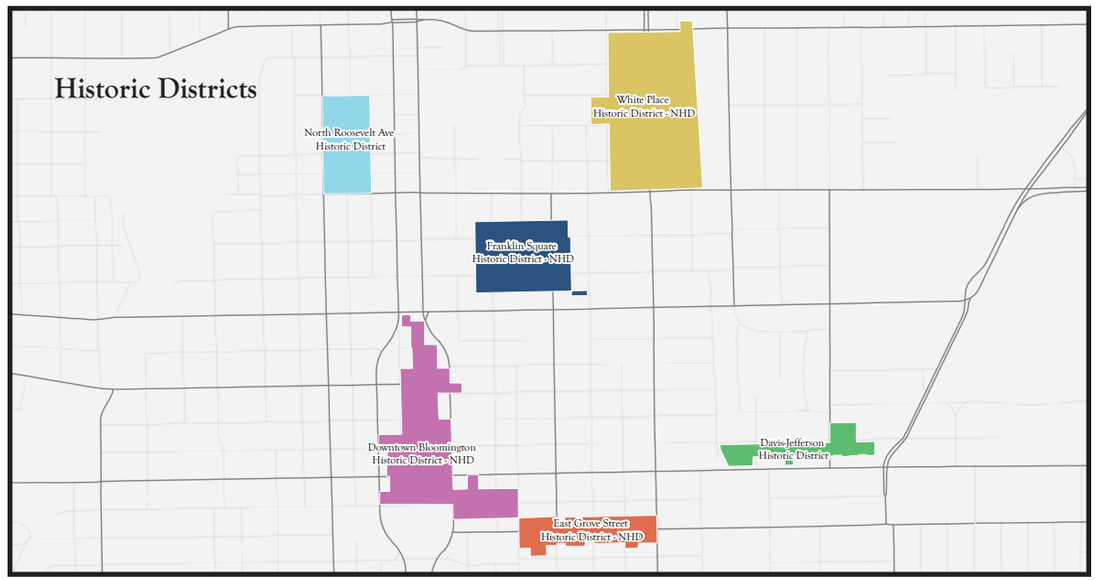


The City of Bloomington continues to house a strong concentration of jobs from major employers to local businesses. It is also well-situated with accessibility to a majority of the employment centers.



The lower residential values could boost affordability.





The core has numerous cultural and historical places that make it unique. These unique assets should be preserved and capitalized.

1 HISTORIC CONTEXT

History helps us understand aspects of the community that puzzle residents and policy makers. For example, why do we have industrial operations in the midst of some residential neighborhoods? Records of an earlier Bloomington explain: the railroad once crossed through those neighborhoods, and adjoining areas were filled with industries that needed the railroad. That railroad is gone, and its land has a new purpose, but the patterns of land use it created are still with us. Knowing our history not only explains how our city grew, but how we can plan for future neighborhoods and anticipate a new Bloomington we can only imagine.

March 2
1839
Incorporated


1853
Arrival of Railroads



1926



KEY FINDINGS

The arrival of the railroads in 1853 gave Bloomington a whole new place in the world. In an era when roads were rough and horsepower wasn't a metaphor, rail connections made travel to Chicago and St. Louis and closer destinations like Peoria and Springfield a manageable undertaking. The bounty of farms and the expanding ranks of manufacturers could find their way to new markets, and people and products from across the world arrived in Bloomington on the rails.

Highly productive farmland wasn't the only resource waiting to be discovered under the tallgrass prairie that surrounded Bloomington. In 1867, coal was discovered on the west side of the city, close to the Chicago & Alton railroad corridor. The present-day highway interchange at West Market Street and Interstates 55 and 74 sits atop the excavated area where coal was mined in Bloomington for sixty years.

Over time the working places for some of Bloomington's residents shifted from the hard physical labor of the 19th century workshop, factory and coal mine, and moved towards life in the shop front or office. A growing and prosperous middle class could afford to hire workers for jobs they might once have done themselves, and the founding of State Farm and the expanding insurance industry continued the shift to white collars from blue.

Bloomington neighborhoods are a case study in changing patterns of development. From the simple grid streets of a 19th-century prairie village, Bloomington accommodated new arrivals, such as railroads and highways into the structure of the City. In the post-war boom years from the 1950s onward, Bloomington has tried variations on the modern suburb, replacing short blocks and right angles with long winding streets fruited with clusters of cul-de-sacs.

EXPLORATION & SETTLEMENT

In the early 1820s, as settlers of European origin migrated into the area that would become Bloomington, they encountered a region already altered by 17th century exploration that followed the Mississippi tributaries north to Lake Michigan, eventually to the future site of Chicago at Fort Dearborn. French explorers established outposts along the Illinois River, including Fort Crevecoeur and later Fort Clark at Peoria.

Down the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, St. Louis was an established city of ten thousand, with a history of Spanish and French control. The monumental land transfer of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 elevated St. Louis as the capital of the Louisiana Territory.



Figure 1.1. Map of Illinois, 1820
John Melish; digital image
© 2000 by Cartography Associates

These new settlers to central Illinois were drawn to a forested area that came to be called Blooming Grove. The groves, timbered areas that grew along rivers and streams crossing the prairie, were desirable locations to both the settlers and the Native American groups in the area. However, peaceable interactions with Native residents meant Blooming Grove could grow as a town, not a fort.

The groves signaled the presence of water, and the timber provided building material and fuel. The wooded areas and prairies were also rich habitats for wildlife, a food source for Native and settler families alike; their remnants still draw hunters today.

Although the early settlers could not have fully understood their good fortune, in their new home they found a balance of factors that proved the foundation for the community's future success. The presence of necessities and the resources soon to be discovered supported the new settlement.

Adapting the prairie landscape for farming revealed that local geology, hydrology and biology had melded to create some of the most productive agricultural land in the world. The wealth of this land became the basis for the wealth of the communities that it fostered. Other resources were present; in the 1860s, coal was discovered, and was mined at the city's western edge for sixty years. The location of Bloomington between Chicago and St. Louis would trigger the mix of geography and politics that brought the railroad to the city, making possible the ever-increasing flow of people, materials, products and cultures that still characterize Bloomington today.

Bloomington's development into a stable city began with sixty acres of land offered by settler James Allin to create the core of the new city and include a site for the McLean County courthouse, establishing Bloomington as the county seat. Mr. Allin's generosity to his new community bore immediate fruit, as the lots were quickly purchased and the first courthouse was built in 1832.[1] Within five years a more imposing courthouse would be built, and be frequented by Abraham Lincoln.

Bloomington's early years saw residents arriving at a steady rate. Dozens of residents became hundreds, and by the 1850 Census Bloomington's population was about 1,600 persons. Population growth was gradual compared with central Illinois cities such as Peoria, which had easier access to the movement of people and goods via river traffic, but growth was comparable to other communities developing in the expanse of prairie between the Illinois and Sangamon rivers.



Figure 1.2 Detail of 1850 Illinois Central Railroad map

Despite relative isolation, new enterprises were establishing themselves in Bloomington, adding to the attractions that would draw new residents. In one notable instance, Illinois Wesleyan University was founded in 1850, bringing a new level of educational and cultural resources to enrich the community.

THE RAILROADS ARRIVE

The Illinois Central and Chicago & Alton railroads both began service to Bloomington in 1853.[2] The Chicago & Alton rail corridor exists today as the Union Pacific rail line through west Bloomington. The Illinois Central line has been remade as a part of Constitution Trail, just west of the Clover Lawn estate of David Davis, and immediately east of Evergreen Cemetery.

The introduction of railroad service to the City had immediate impact. By 1860 the population more than quadrupled. In 1870 Bloomington boasted nearly ten times as many residents than in 1850, after only seventeen years of railroad access to the City.

Footnotes:
1) As illustrated in Fig. 1.3, "Map of Bloomington, 1838," prepared by the McLean County Historical Society from oral histories.
2) The Chicago and Alton railroad operated under several names related to destinations.

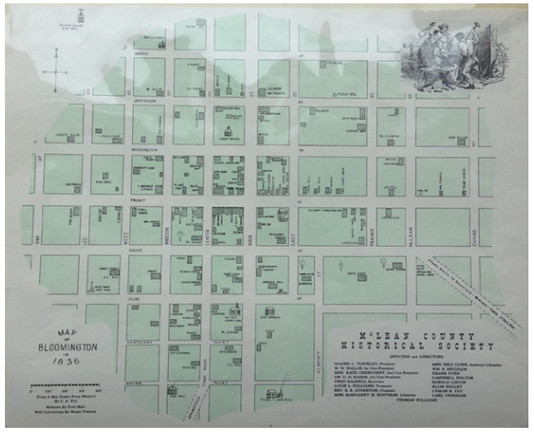


Figure 1.3 Bloomington in 1838
Source: McLean County Museum of History

Beyond population growth, the advent of rail service brought changes to the physical structure of the City. Bloomington, before the railroad, adopted and maintained a traditional city plan common to many towns and cities throughout the Midwest. The courthouse had pride of place in its square at the center of the City, and streets were arranged in a regular grid, oriented to the compass. The city pattern echoed the surveying standards established in the 18th century for territories west of the original colonies, including the Northwest Territory from which Illinois was created.

This urban design was efficient for its users and simple to construct and navigate no matter what type of travel was needed. Pedestrians, equestrians or users of wheeled vehicles could make their way through the street grid easily. Occasional exceptions to the grid pattern, such as the old Springfield Road, signaled that a traveler was heading into less regulated territory. The introduction of the railroad introduced a new component to the City's pattern, one that created physical constraints on City residents and the City itself.

Railroads required infrastructure to support their operations and provide access for passengers and freight customers. Keeping the trains running also required facilities for manufacturing, maintenance, repair and storage of equipment and materials. Railroad tracks also imposed traffic limitations, both to insure safety and, in the case of the Chicago & Alton, by drawing a diagonal line through the street grid.

These needs made a permanent mark on Bloomington's pattern of residential and industrial development. The Chicago & Alton rail yard and workshops on the west side were already a presence in the 1867 plan of the City (Figure 1.5), and remain with us today. The neighborhoods surrounding the rail yards, and the coal mining operations located nearby, developed to accommodate the needs of increasing numbers of workers employed by the industrial concerns that located in the rail corridor. These included ethnic neighborhoods of railroad workers and their families.[3]

The Illinois Central Railroad generally followed a north-south path through Bloomington, but areas adjacent to the line were needed for railroad facilities such as storage and depots, and also became home to a host of commercial and industrial business. Lumberyards, warehouses, coal hoppers, factories and others clustered along the railroad, alongside the rail offices and work areas. These busy (and noisy) locations sat very near the east side neighborhoods of handsome houses belonging to the upper levels of Bloomington society. As noted earlier, this effect on land use persists today, although in the case of the Illinois Central Railroad corridor, the rail itself is long gone.

IMMIGRATION

Advances in technology such as the railroads, and the steel plows brought to market by John Deere, helped to sustain Bloomington's growth and the prosperity of McLean County. Improved access to the outside world, greater manufacturing and agricultural productivity, and the exchange of goods and materials thus continued to expand through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Immigrants carried out much of the labor of these new enterprises, many arriving in the United States from Europe; in central Illinois, there was substantial immigration from Ireland and Germany. These immigrants became the backbone of the labor force building railways through Central Illinois.[4]

As immigrants made their homes in Bloomington, neighborhoods evolved to reflect their specific concerns. In a pattern familiar in immigrant communities across the history of the United States, new arrivals sought to live among others who shared their countries of origin, their language, and the experiences that led them to a new life in America. Neighborhoods also formed around a common religious heritage, as families sought connections through their churches.



Figure 1.4 Railroad Workers, 1854
Source: Bloomington & Normal Trades and Labor Assembly

These emerging ethnic neighborhoods, often developing near employment, continued the traditional neighborhood design that characterized 19th century Bloomington. Churches, schools and shops would define a neighborhood meeting place, and be surrounded by smaller homes on streets arranged in a grid. The structure of some neighborhoods, such as those adjoining the west side rail corridor, was modified to accommodate large-scale industrial or transportation infrastructure.

African-Americans arriving in central Illinois both before and after the Civil War were generally constrained to neighborhoods on Bloomington's west side, a pattern which persisted for many decades. These neighborhoods organized around churches as a unifying force, providing social and economic support as well as spiritual sustenance. Churches and other social organizations provided a path to employment and educa-

Footnotes:
3) "Irish 'Forty Acres' Speaks to City's Railroad Past," Bill Kemp, The Pantagraph, September 18, 2011.
4) *Immigrants in the Valley: Irish, Germans and Americans in the Upper Mississippi Country, 1830 – 1860,* Mark Wyman, Rowman & Littlefield, 1984.



Figure 1.5. Bloomington, Illinois, 1867
Source: Library of Congress

tion when residents were denied opportunity in the community at large.

Over time the ethnic origins of neighborhoods or institutions might fade from memory, or not be known by present-day residents, but the form and function these areas influenced remains in place.

A TURNING POINT

Bloomington in the last hour of June 18, 1900 was a prosperous city of more than 23,000, with a downtown business district surrounding the courthouse. Early on June 19th, fire broke out on East Monroe Street, and spread to the north side of the square. Multiple blocks burned and collapsed. The courthouse was gutted, and would be judged beyond repair and demolished.[5]

With quick recovery as the primary goal, rebuilding was begun. The County replaced the courthouse which served for 75 years before becoming the Museum of History. The rebuilding did not change the physical layout of downtown Bloomington, but rather created new components in the existing pattern of the city.[6]

MODERN TIMES

As Bloomington moved into the twentieth century, variations in the pattern of development were introduced. The 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago had modeled the City Beautiful to the world, and inspired the development of the 1909 Burnham plan for Chicago. The garden city movement was influential in rethinking the nature of residential development, and moving away from the dominant street grid pattern to emphasize the integration of large natural areas within the city, wide boulevards and curving streets that resonated with natural features.

In Bloomington, the development of White Place and the adjoining Clinton Boulevard were prime examples of this style of residential neighborhood.[7] The development of Miller Park also incorporated concepts from the new thinking in landscape design and planning. Although the rectilinear street pattern remained the norm, some residential areas began to incorporate elements of the new design ideas.

SUBURBAN DESIGN STANDARDS

Bloomington shared in the optimistic postwar boom period, and over the next fifty years entered a period of sustained growth in population and incorporated area. Residential development during this period is characterized by several factors. Houses built



Figure 1.6. 1868 Courthouse



Figure 1.7. 1868 Courthouse After 1900 Fire
Source: McLean County Museum of History

Footnotes:
5) "Bloomington's 'Great Fire' of 1900 Quickly Swept Through 45 Buildings," Bill Kemp, The Pantagraph, June 14, 2008.
6) *Bloomington, Illinois: Before and After the Great File of June 19, 1900*, Corn Belt Printing and Stationery, c. 1900.
7) "White Place One of Bloomington's Signature Neighborhoods," Bill Kemp, The Pantagraph, June 27, 2010.

during these years became larger; through the 1940s the typical single-family house had less than 2,000 square feet of space, and often the standard was 1,500-1,750 square feet. During the residential building boom from 1960 to 2005, the size of single-family homes steadily increased, with houses well over 2,000 square feet becoming commonplace. In some neighborhoods, square footage of 3,000 square feet is the norm.

Although lot size did not expand along with house size, neighborhood design did change. In place of the rectilinear street grid, neighborhoods were organized around 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. Generally, though, this style of subdivision for residential use remains the primary form of development in Bloomington.

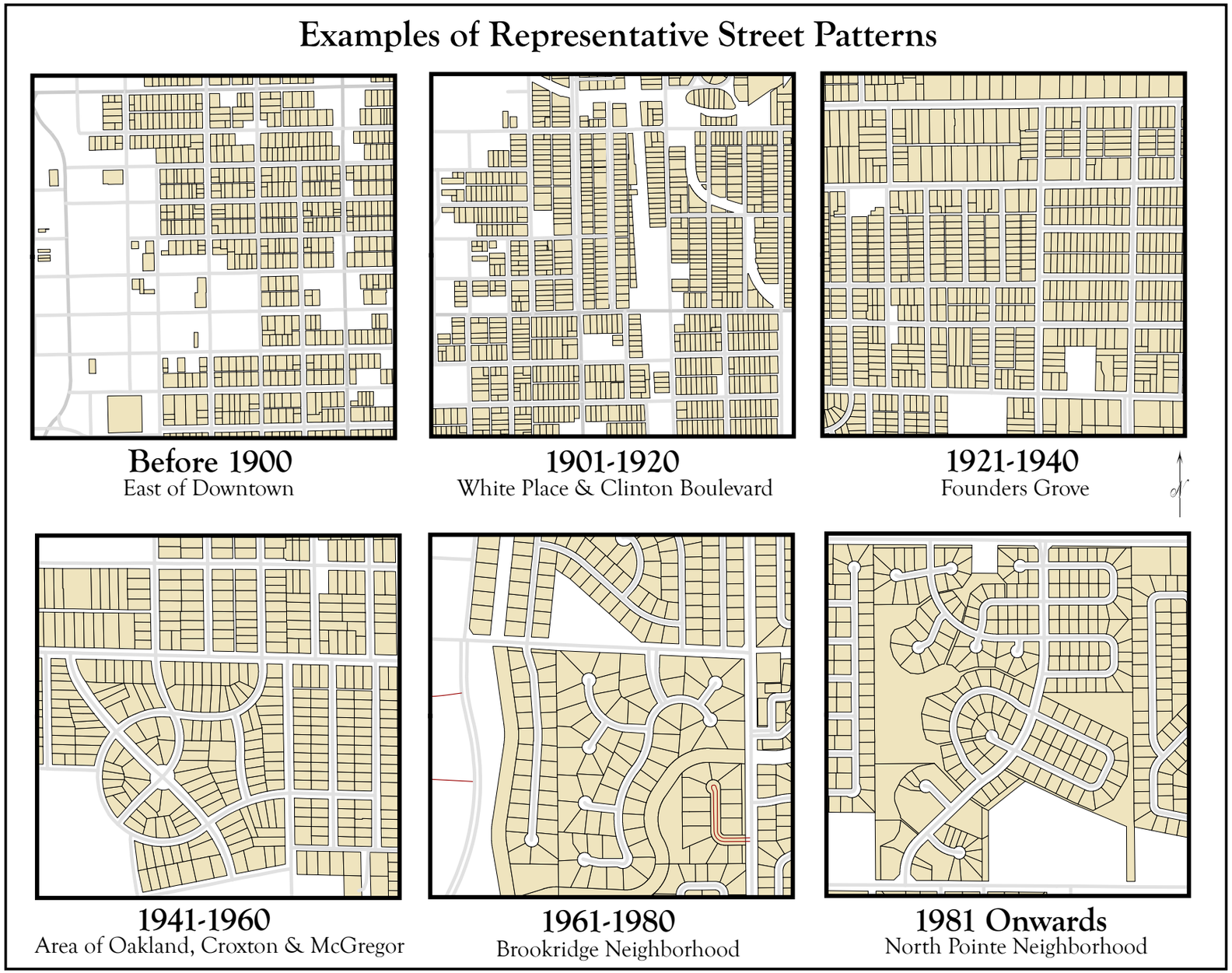


Figure 1.8 Examples of Representative Street Patterns

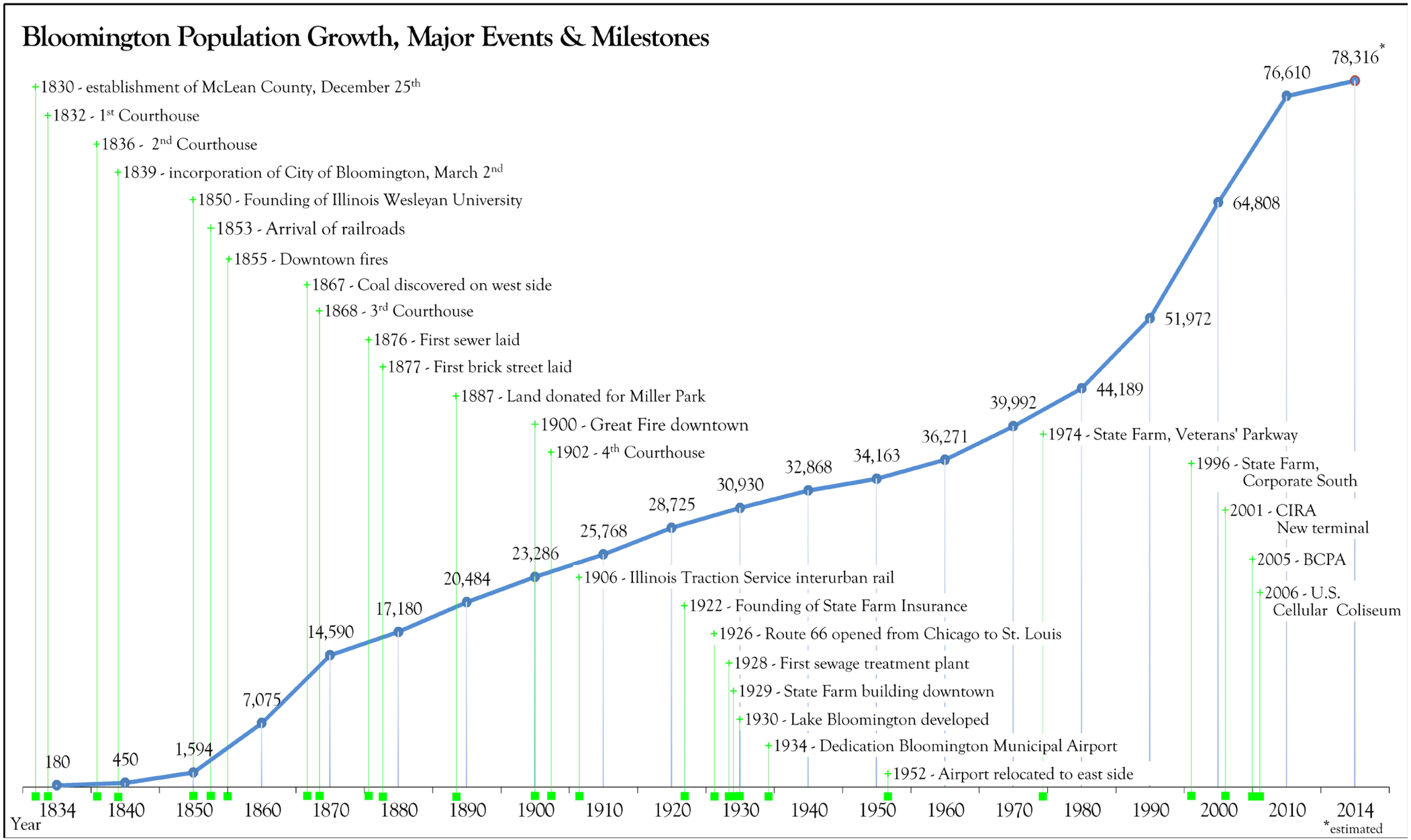


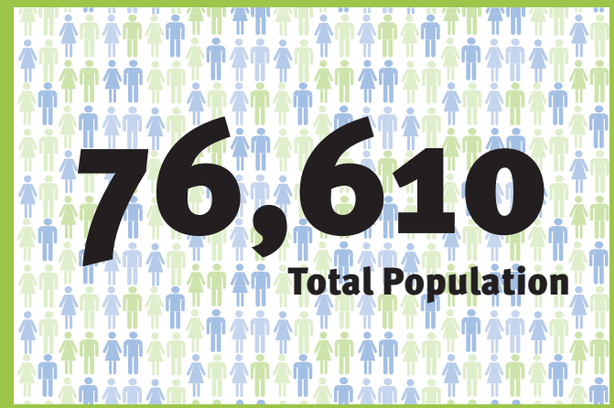
Figure 1.9 Bloomington Population Growth, Major Events & Milestones

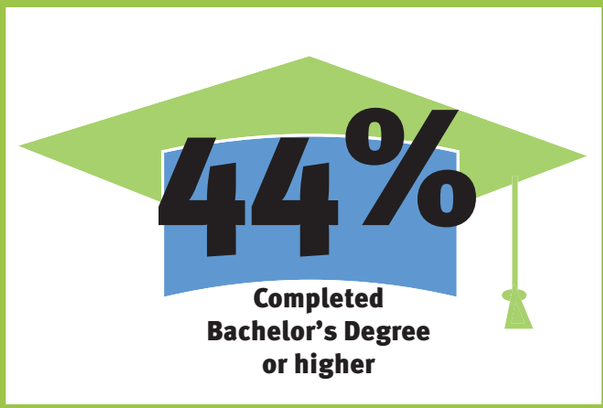
Source: U.S. Census, MCRPC

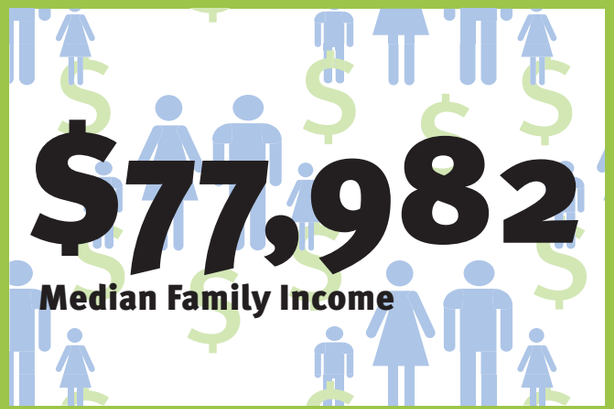
2

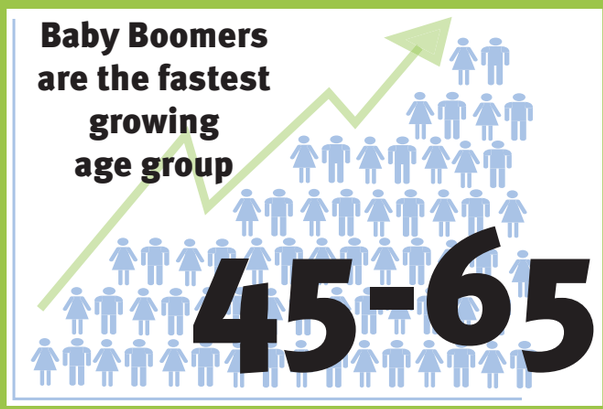
DEMOGRAPHICS

People are the reason for planning. Understanding the composition and distribution of the City's population is an essential first step to evaluate the needs of our citizenry and to plan comprehensively. The population trends, age and racial composition, educational attainment, household type and household income in the City are summarized in this chapter.









KEY FINDINGS

One of Bloomington's biggest assets is its well-educated population, with 92.9% of its 25 years and over population being high school graduates and 44% of them with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Bloomington's median household and family incomes were both higher than that of Illinois in 2010. However, they were both lower when compared to year 2000 inflation-adjusted dollars. While this is the trend at state and national levels, it is troublesome for Bloomington as households with less than median incomes are concentrated in the core of the City.

Bloomington's demographic profile indicates an aging population. Consistent with national trends, the City's fastest growing age group is 45-64 years. This comprehensive plan should ensure Bloomington's seniors can age in place.

In line with the national trends, Bloomington's younger population group, 0-19 years, is growing at a slower pace in comparison to the older age group, 45-64. The distribution of this growth is not even throughout the City. The established neighborhoods, primarily served by the landlocked School District 87, are seeing a loss of younger populations. This trend should be a matter of concern for District 87 and the City's core.

POPULATION TRENDS

According to the U.S. Census, Bloomington's population was 76,610 in 2010. Figure 2.1 shows the population by decade since 1970. In the last 50 years, Bloomington's population grew by over 91%, its twin city Normal grew by nearly 99% and the region defined by McLean County grew by more than 62%. The McLean County Metropolitan Statistical Area is one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the state.

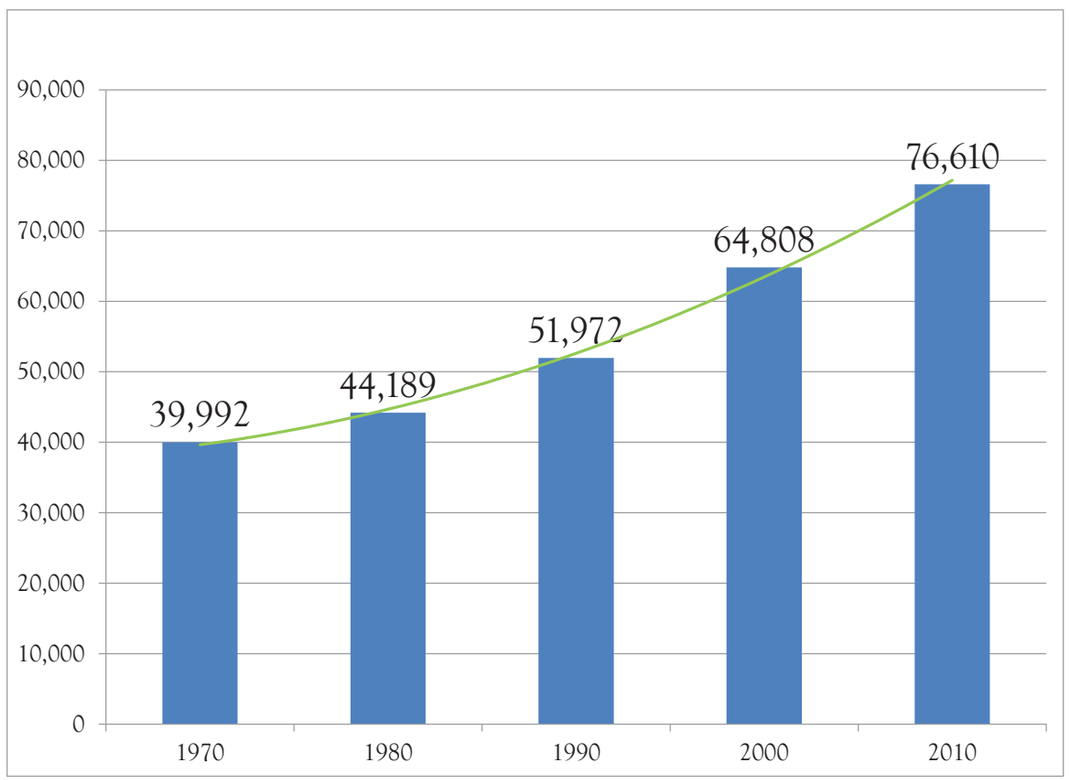
As illustrated in Figure 2.2, the greatest period of Bloomington's growth was during the 1990s when the population increased by nearly 25%. While Bloomington will continue to see population growth in the coming decades, the rate of growth will likely decrease.

This is consistent with the national growth trends and well exceeds the state and midwestern trends. According to 2010 Census Population and Distribution Change: 2000 to 2010 briefs[1], the percentage growth of population was the highest in the 1990s at 13.2%. The growth rate in the last decade is comparable to the 1980s. Population in the midwest grew by 3.9%, and that of Illinois increased 3.3%.

With this increase in population, the composition of the City's population has changed over time. Understanding the demographic makeup of the City is the critical first step to

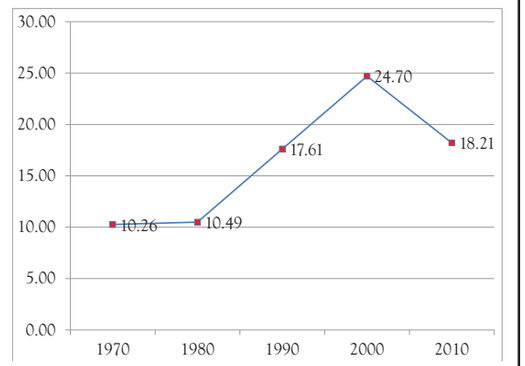
- conducting a meaningful comprehensive planning process and producing a plan that is relevant to the community for the

Figure 2.1 City of Bloomington Population 1970 - 2010



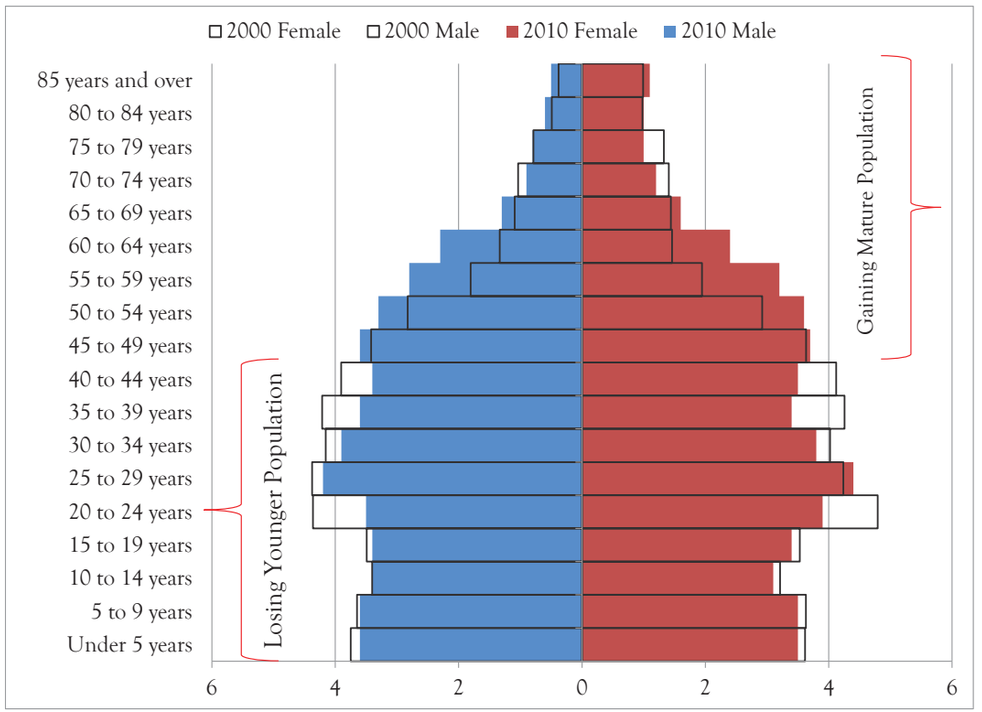
Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2.2 City of Bloomington Rate of Growth



Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2.3 Percent Population by Age and Sex 2000 to 2010



Source: U.S. Census

Foot Note: 1) Full brief can be accessed at http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-01.pdf

Figure 2.4 Population by Age and Sex 2000 and 2010 for Bloomington

	Census 2000						Census 2010					
	Number			Percent			Number			Percent		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Total population	64,808	31,413	33,395	100.0	48.5	51.5	76,610	37,280	39,330	100.0	48.7	51.3
Under 5 years	4,774	2,430	2,344	7.4	3.7	3.6	5,377	2,724	2,653	7.0	3.6	3.5
5 to 9 years	4,717	2,364	2,353	7.3	3.6	3.6	5,402	2,724	2,678	7.1	3.6	3.5
10 to 14 years	4,285	2,204	2,081	6.6	3.4	3.2	4,964	2,578	2,386	6.5	3.4	3.1
15 to 19 years	4,550	2,262	2,288	7.0	3.5	3.5	5,226	2,617	2,609	6.8	3.4	3.4
20 to 24 years	5,934	2,827	3,107	9.2	4.4	4.8	5,734	2,712	3,022	7.5	3.5	3.9
25 to 29 years	5,583	2,836	2,747	8.6	4.4	4.2	6,617	3,241	3,376	8.6	4.2	4.4
30 to 34 years	5,299	2,693	2,606	8.2	4.2	4.0	5,964	3,017	2,947	7.8	3.9	3.8
35 to 39 years	5,489	2,731	2,758	8.5	4.2	4.3	5,349	2,781	2,568	7.0	3.6	3.4
40 to 44 years	5,202	2,530	2,672	8.0	3.9	4.1	5,257	2,577	2,680	6.9	3.4	3.5
45 to 49 years	4,571	2,216	2,355	7.1	3.4	3.6	5,581	2,742	2,839	7.3	3.6	3.7
50 to 54 years	3,724	1,831	1,893	5.7	2.8	2.9	5,337	2,563	2,774	7.0	3.3	3.6
55 to 59 years	2,431	1,170	1,261	3.8	1.8	1.9	4,545	2,129	2,416	5.9	2.8	3.2
60 to 64 years	1,811	865	946	2.8	1.3	1.5	3,562	1,729	1,833	4.6	2.3	2.4
65 to 69 years	1,641	707	934	2.5	1.1	1.4	2,222	1,025	1,197	2.9	1.3	1.6
70 to 74 years	1,584	672	912	2.4	1.0	1.4	1,661	722	939	2.2	0.9	1.2
75 to 79 years	1,371	511	860	2.1	0.8	1.3	1,361	575	786	1.8	0.8	1.0
80 to 84 years	954	318	636	1.5	0.5	1.0	1,226	456	770	1.6	0.6	1.0
85 years and over	888	246	642	1.4	0.4	1.0	1,225	368	857	1.6	0.5	1.1
Median age (years)	32.4	31.4	33.4	(X)	(X)	(X)	34.1	33.3	35.0	(X)	(X)	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

near and long term; and

- making accurate forecasts of future population levels and distribution.

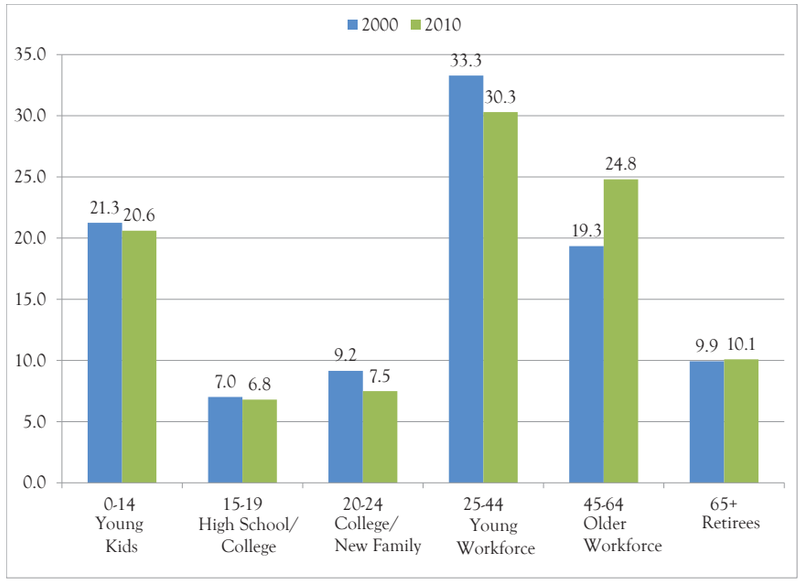
AGE COMPOSITION

The age composition of the population within a city can provide insight into the types of facilities and services that may be needed in the future, such as schools and senior centers.

Change in the median age is an important indicator of the shift in composition of the City. As indicated in Figure 2.3 and Figure 2.4, Bloomington's demographic profile indicates an aging population. Bloomington's rapidly increasing age groups between 2000 and 2010 were 45-49 (22.1%), 50-54 (43.3%), 55-59 (86.9%), 60-64 (96.6%), 65-69 (35.4%), 80-84 (28.5%) and 85+ (37.9%). As shown in Figure 2.6, this trend is consistent with the state and national trends, and Bloomington by comparison to them is younger. According to 2010 U.S. Census Bureau Age and Sex composition briefs[2], the older working age population (45 - 64) grew at a faster rate than populations under the

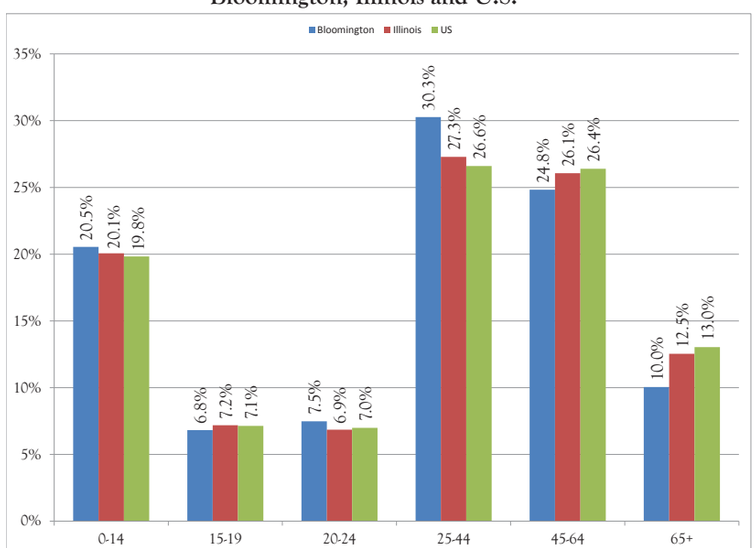
Foot Note: 2) Full brief can be accessed at http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-03.pdf

Figure 2.5 Percent Population by Age Groups 2000 to 2010, Bloomington



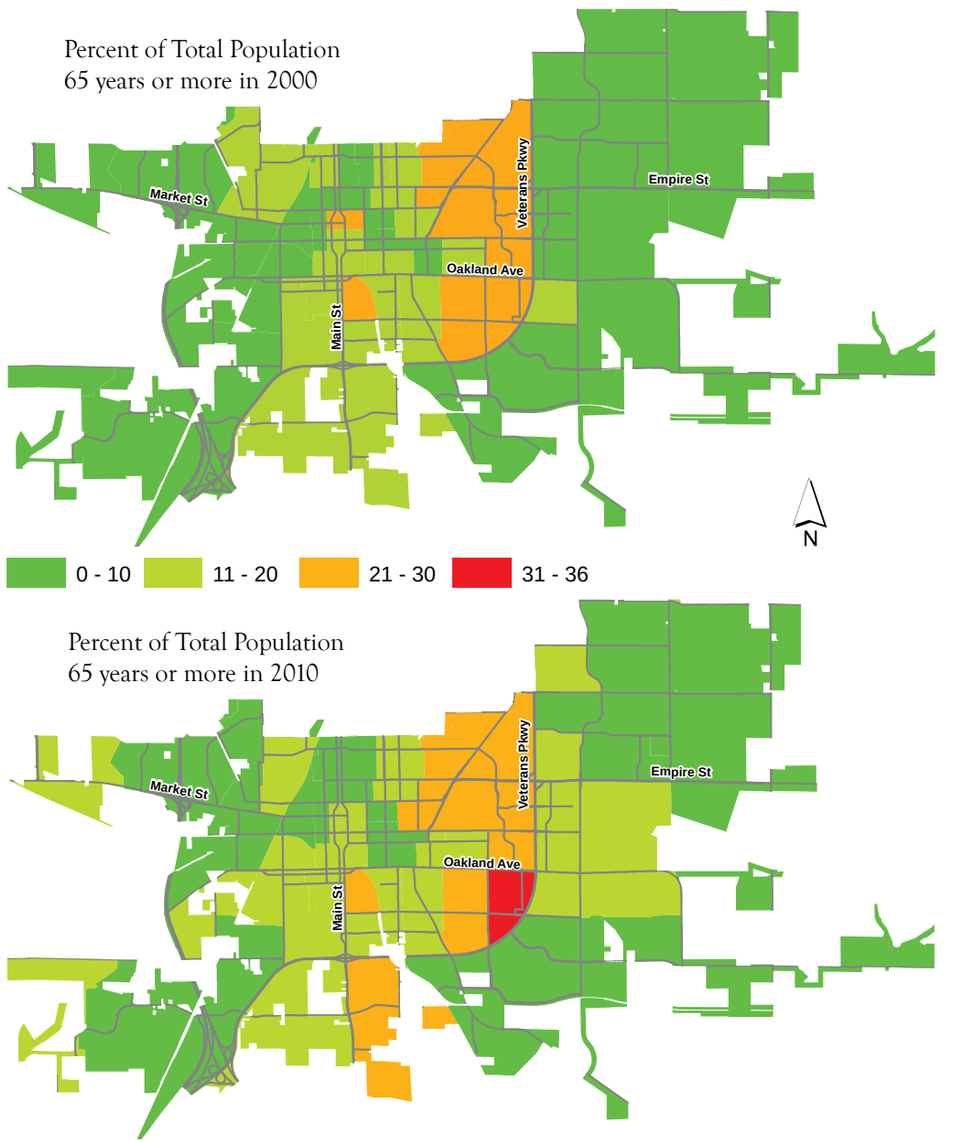
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2.6 Percent Population by Age Groups 2000 to 2010 Bloomington, Illinois and U.S.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2.7 Bloomington's Senior Population Concentrations



Data Source: Census, NHGIS
Information Level: Census Block Group

age of 18 and between 20-44. This is directly attributable to the aging baby boom generation.

The impact of this pronounced shift in age composition will be strong in the coming decades. The community should be prepared to answer complex questions relating to the City's aging population during this comprehensive planning process.

Can Bloomington be a community that allows our seniors to age in place? If so, what qualities make it more livable for seniors? Given their diverse backgrounds and characteristics, what kinds of housing and community service accommodations do our seniors need? Should local policy encourage the building of special housing units for the elderly or increase their economic capacity to compete for housing in the open market? What impact will an increasing number of older persons have on the local economy and the transportation system?

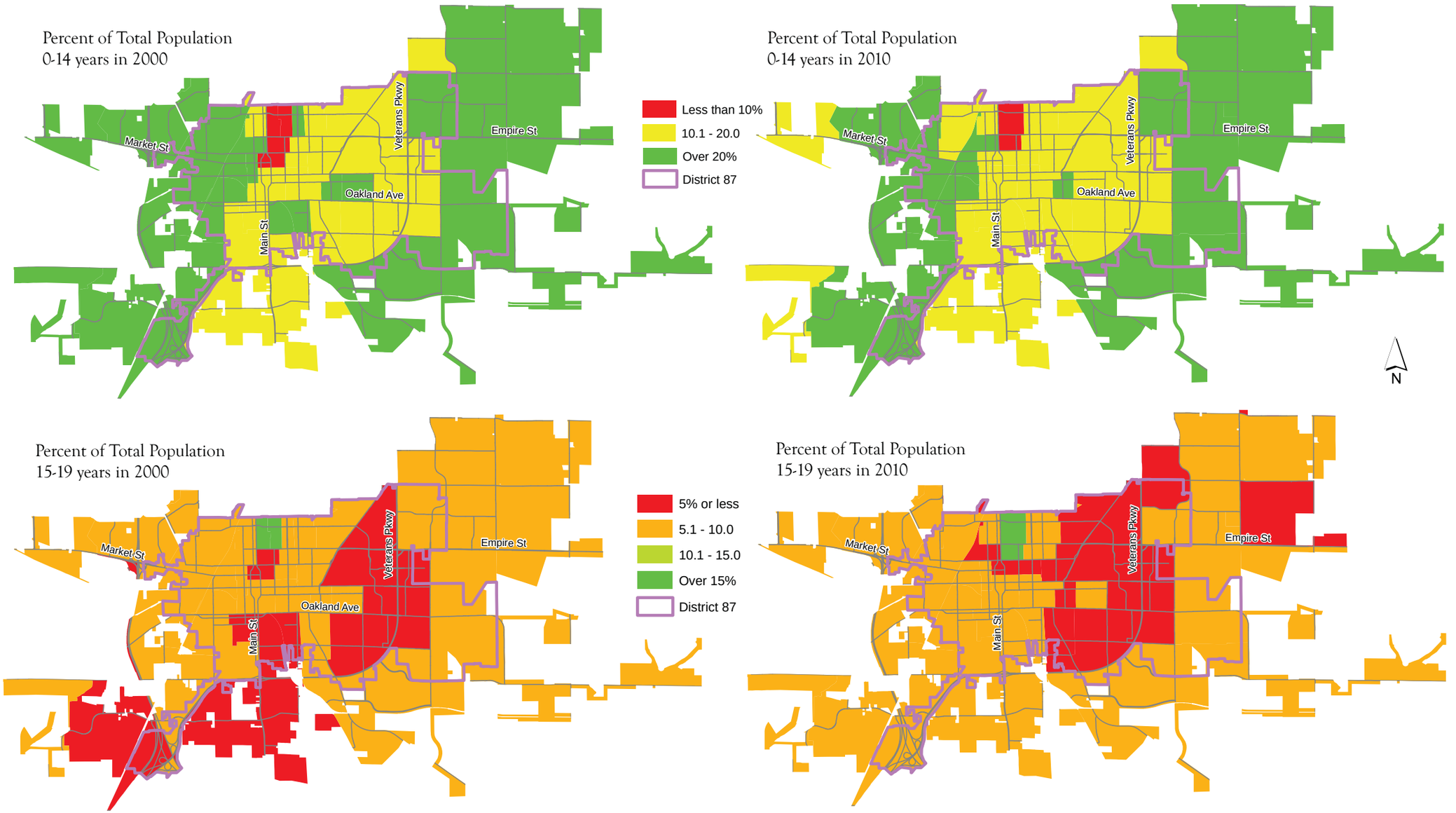
Along with aging issues, this plan should pay close attention to the younger demographic and their geographic distributions. Between 2000 and 2010, the age groups 0-14 and 15-19 grew on average less than 15%. This increase is not equally distributed

Figure 2.8 Population by Race and Ethnicity 2000 and 2010, Bloomington

	Census 2000		Census 2010		Change in Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total population	64,808	100.0	76,610	100.0	
One race	63,654	98.2	74,392	97.1	
White	55,032	84.9	59,353	77.5	-7.4
Black or African American	5,602	8.6	7,770	10.1	1.5
American Indian and Alaska Native	115	0.2	231	0.3	0.1
Asian	1,958	3.0	5,343	7.0	4.0
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	28	0.0	28	0.0	0.0
Some other race	919	1.4	1,667	2.2	0.8
Two or more races	1,154	1.8	2,218	2.9	1.1
Three or more races	76	0.1	79	0.1	0.0
HISPANIC OR LATINO					
Total population	64,808	100	76,610	100	
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	2,150	3.3	4,308	5.6	2.3
Not Hispanic or Latino	62,658	96.7	72,302	94.4	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

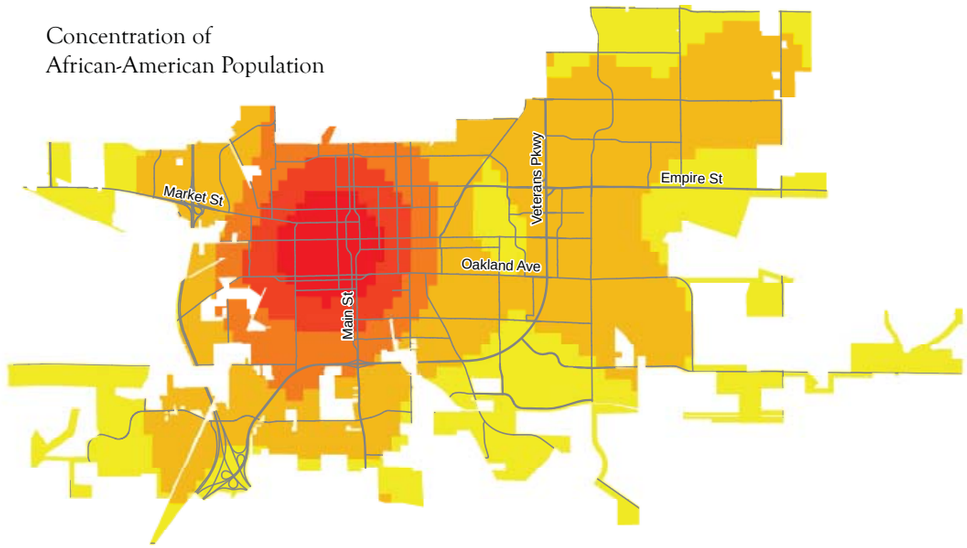
Figure 2.9 Bloomington's Young Population Concentrations



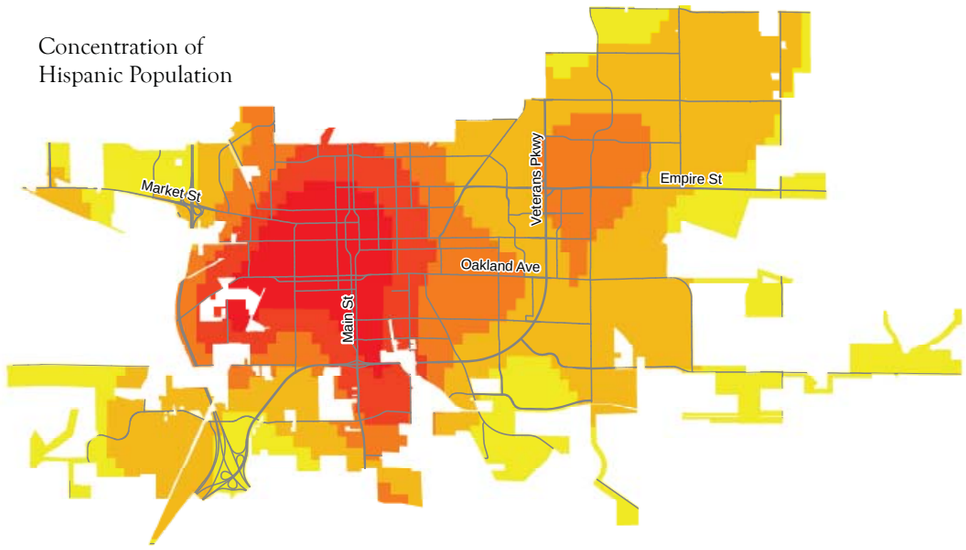
Data Source: Census, NHGIS
Information Level: Census Block Group

Figure 2.10 Bloomington's Ethnic Population Concentrations

Concentration of
African-American Population



Concentration of
Hispanic Population



Concentration of
Asian Population

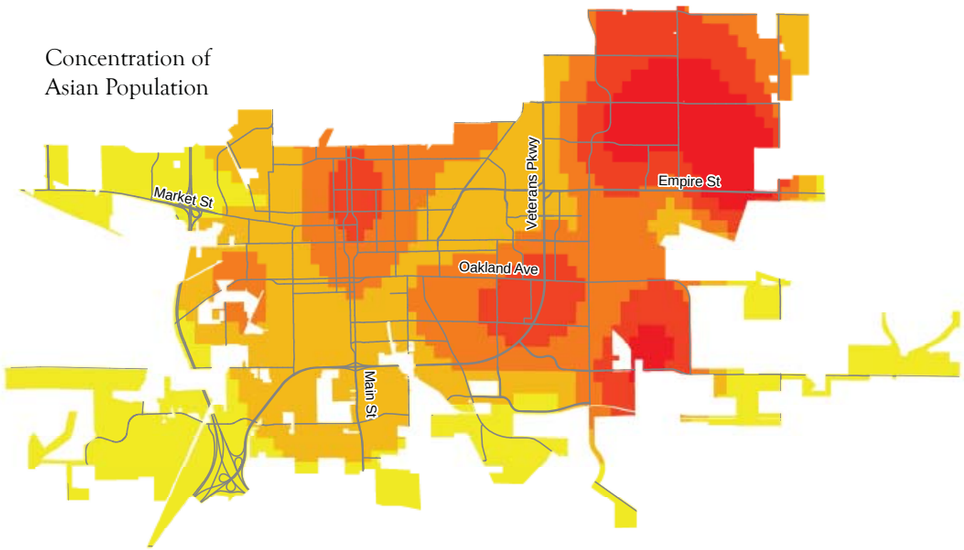
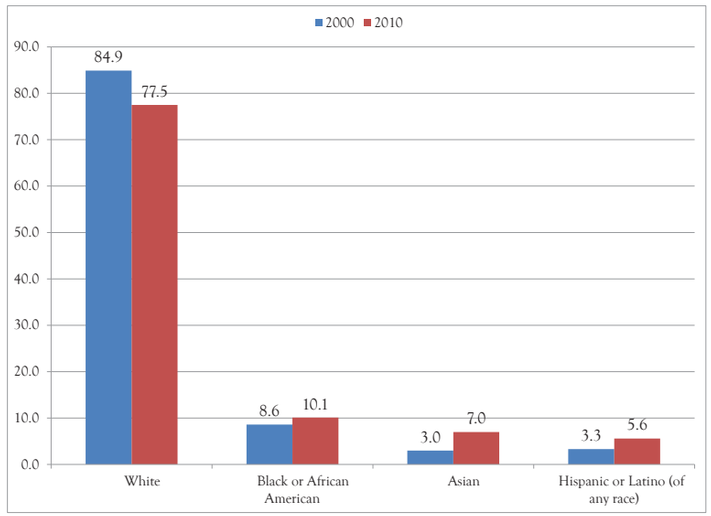




Figure 2.11 Percentage Change in Racial Composition



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

throughout the City.

As shown in Figure 2.9, the concentration of younger populations in Bloomington is increasing along the edges of the City and decreasing in the inner city. This phenomenon could be due to the new residential development happening on the outer edges of the City.

School District 87, which primarily serves the inner city, is landlocked. According to District 87, the number of students enrolled in the district decreased from 5,730 in 2000 to 5,526 in 2010. District 87 encompasses nearly half of the City and most of its mature neighborhoods. For the health of this school district and the health of Bloomington's core, the issue of changing demographics within District 87 should be carefully considered during this comprehensive plan.

RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY

The City's population has continued to diversify over the last few decades. At 77.5%, the white population is the largest group in the City, although the percentage of the white population declined between 2000 and 2010 by over 7%. This trend is in line with state and national trends. According to the 2010 U.S. Census briefs[3], the percentage of the white population in the U.S. in 2010 decreased from 75.1% in 2000 to 72.4% in 2010.

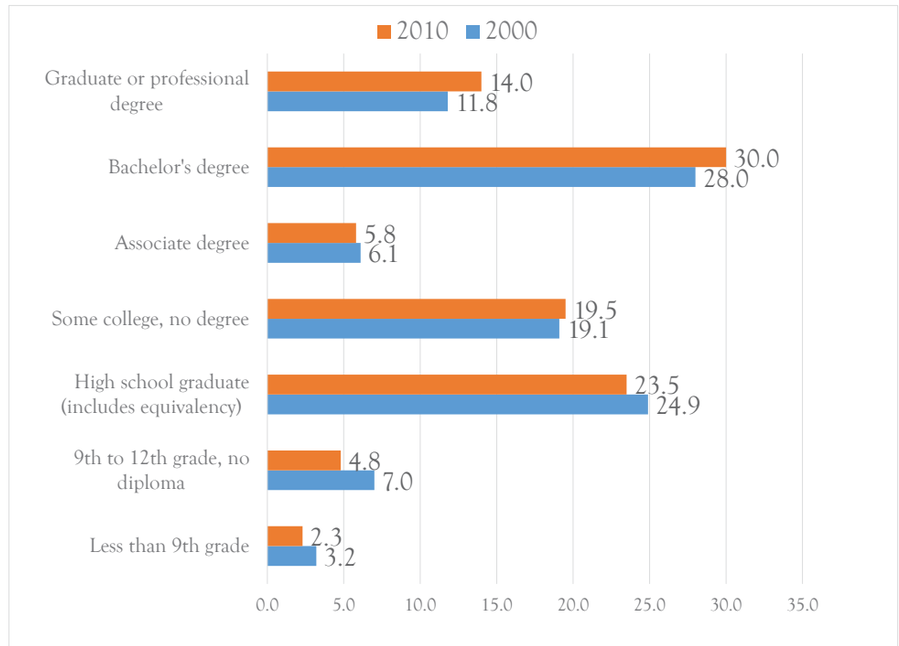
With a 4% increase since 2000, the Asian population is the fastest growing racial group in Bloomington followed by African-American at 1.5%.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines Hispanic or Latino as an ethnicity and not a race. A person of Hispanic origin may be of any race, meaning that an individual has both a racial and ethnic classification. The Hispanic or Latino population in Bloomington increased by 2.3% from 2000-2011.

Figure 2.10 presents a graphical representation of three major racial/ethnic group concentrations in Bloomington. As shown in from this map, the African-American population has somewhat of a higher concentrations in the core of the City. Asian population concentrations are along the eastern fringes of the City, along Veterans Parkway, and in the northern part of the core.

Concentrations of Hispanic ethnicity are in the core and the south-central parts of our community. While it is not uncommon to see residential concentrations of racial/

Figure 2.12 Percentage Change in Educational Attainment for Bloomington



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

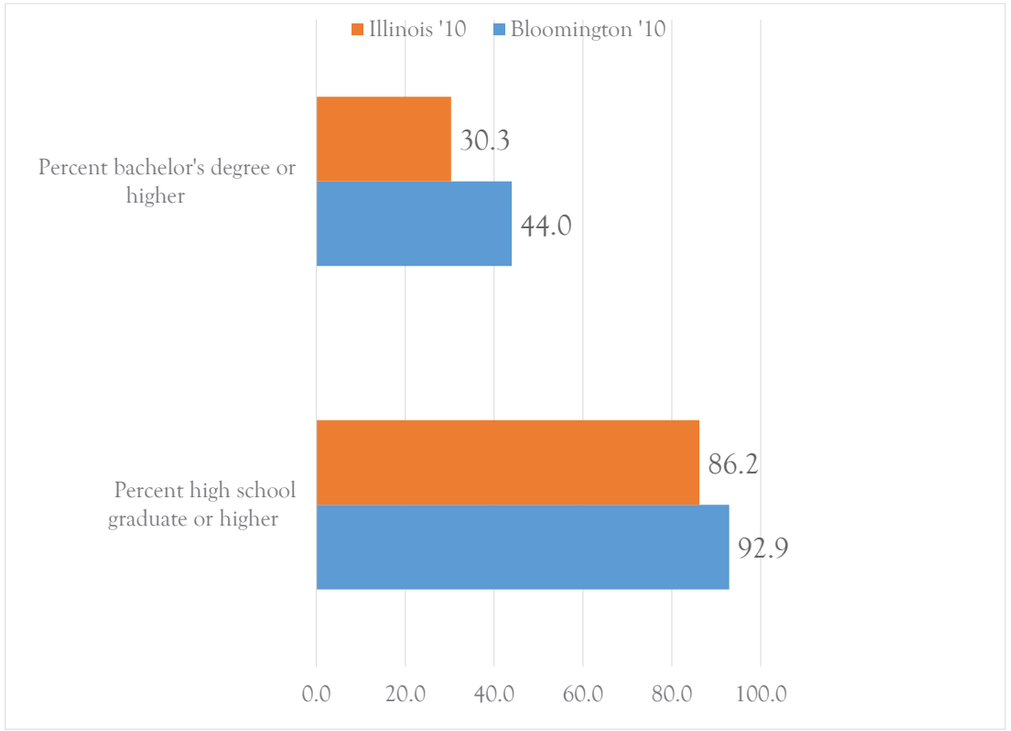
Figure 2.13 Educational Attainment of Population Over 25 years, 2000 - 2010, Bloomington and Illinois

Educational Attainment, 25 years and older	Bloomington 2000		Bloomington 2010		Illinois 2000		Illinois 2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Population 25 years and over	40,943		47,370		7,973,671		8,345,982	
Less than 9th grade	1,305	3.2	1,075	2.3	597,684	7.5	503,807	6.0
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	2,865	7.0	2,294	4.8	882,759	11.1	647,196	7.8
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	10,193	24.9	11,155	23.5	2,212,291	27.7	2,324,361	27.9
Some college, no degree	7,823	19.1	9,245	19.5	1,720,386	21.6	1,737,964	20.8
Associate degree	2,498	6.1	2,754	5.8	482,502	6.1	605,770	7.3
Bachelor's degree	11,444	28.0	14,219	30.0	1,317,182	16.5	1,573,705	18.9
Graduate or professional degree	4,815	11.8	6,628	14.0	760,867	9.5	953,179	11.4
Percent high school graduate or higher	(X)	89.8	(X)	92.9	(X)	81.4	(X)	86.2
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	(X)	39.7	(X)	44.0	(X)	26.1	(X)	30.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS and SF3

Foot Note: 3) Full brief can be accessed at http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-02.pdf

Figure 2.14 Educational Attainment, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS and SF3

ethnic minorities in any community, a good understanding of the racial and ethnic distributions of our community helps promote equality, social cohesion and inclusion.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The education level of a community's population indicates the skill and ability of the community's workforce. As evident from Figure 2.12 and Figure 2.13, Bloomington's citizenry has become increasingly more educated since 2000. Nearly 93% of the population over the age of 25 years has a high school diploma, 44% of which have a bachelor's degree or higher. These numbers are up by 3.1 percent and 4.3 percent respectively since 2000. As shown in Figure 2.14, the percentage of high school and college graduates is significantly higher in Bloomington than that of the state of Illinois.

Bloomington's populace is its biggest asset. A highly educated community can be a great economic development tool to attract new jobs and businesses to Bloomington. This comprehensive plan must underscore that fact.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a "household" as the people who live in a single housing unit as their usual residence, and a "family" as a group of two or more people who share a residence and who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Understanding the household income trends is an important factor for planning the City's future. Income can be a major determining factor for aspects such as retail spending and homeownership. Retailers frequently look at a community's income profile to determine their future markets.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, median household income and median family income in Bloomington during 2010 were $56,510 and $77,982 respectively. As shown in Figure 2.15, Bloomington's median household income was slightly higher than the state's median income, but the City's median family income was $9,746 above the state's median family income.

Figure 2.16 shows a decrease in percentages of lower income bracket households and increase in higher income bracket households. This trend should not be mistaken as an increase in disposable income. As shown in Figure 2.15, the City's median household and family incomes are $4,400 and $2,050 lower than Census 2000 inflation adjusted dollars. This indicates that people have to earn more to maintain the same lifestyle as

Figure 2.15 Median Household and Family Income, 2000 - 2010, Bloomington and Illinois

	2000 (2010 Inflation Adjusted Dollars)		2010 Dollars	
	Bloomington	Illinois	Bloomington	Illinois
Median household income (dollars)	60,910	61,033	56,510	55,735
Median family income (dollars)	80,032	72,764	77,982	68,236
Per capita income (dollars)	32,424	30,266	31,046	28,782
Number of Households	26,734	4,592,740	30,078	4,769,951
Number of Families	15,937	3,125,318	17,785	3,161,547

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS and SF3

a decade ago. As illustrated in Figure 2.20, this is consistent with the national decline in median household income.

This can become an issue particularly to households with less than median incomes. Figure 2.17 shows the distribution of median income in dollars adjusted to 2010 inflation. As seen in this map, the area of the City generally located between Bunn Street to the east and Interstate 55/74 on the west has concentrations of households with incomes less than the community median income.

While Bloomington as a whole has median household incomes above the state of Illinois median, it is not uniformly distributed throughout the City. There is a stark contrast in the median income of the households in the core of the City as compared to the outer edges. This comprehensive plan should acknowledge this and commit to addressing this troubling trend and resulting social inequality.

HOUSEHOLD TYPE

The needs of family households can be different from that of non-family households. Understanding this information is needed to respond to their individual needs. According to the 2010 Census, Bloomington has 59.1% family households and 40.9% non-family households, which has changed little since 2000. The number of family households in Bloomington is 6.7% lower than the state average. The average family size in Bloomington has grown from 3.04 in 2000 to 3.12 in 2010.

Figure 2.17 Median Household Income in Dollars, Bloomington

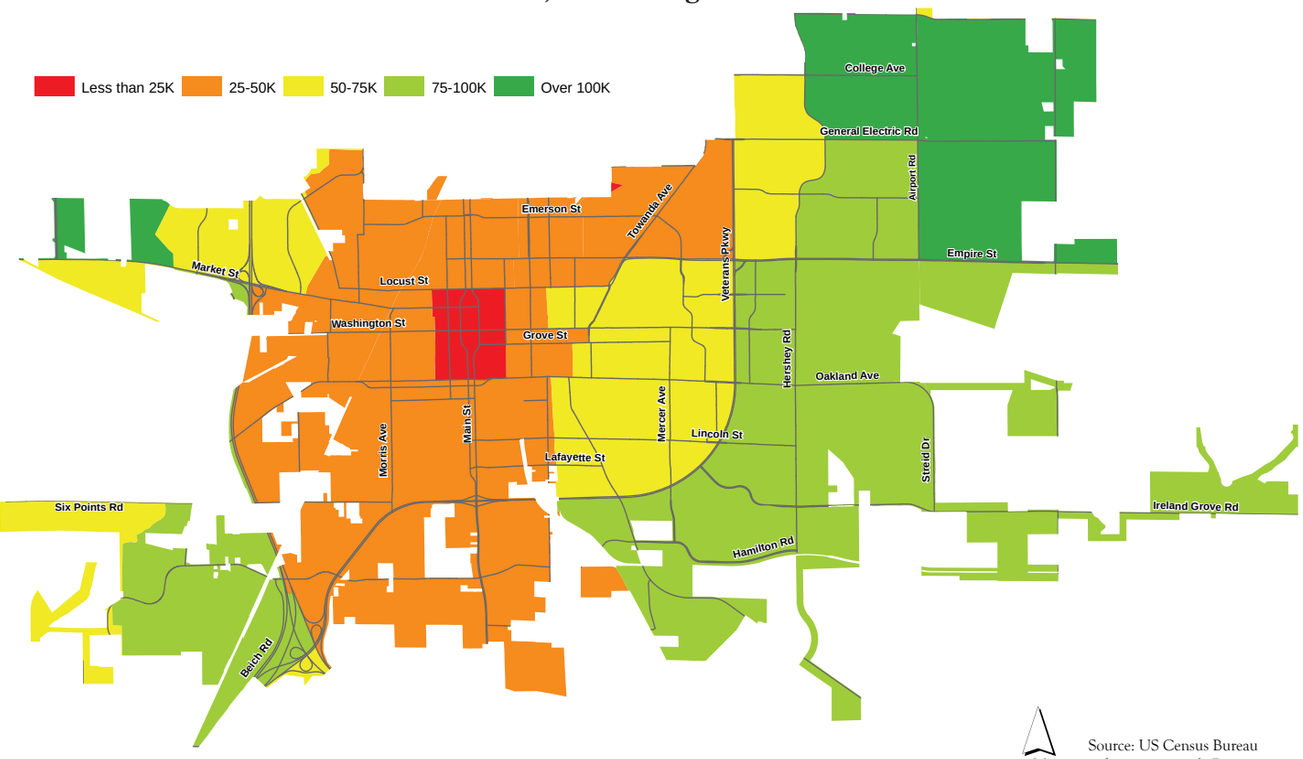


Figure 2.18 Household Type and Average Size, 2000 - 2010, Bloomington and Illinois

	Bloomington 2000		Bloomington 2010		Illinois 2000		Illinois 2010	
	Numbers	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Numbers	Percent	Numbers	Percent
Total households	26,642		30,078		4,591,779		4,836,972	
Family households (families)	15,724	59.0	17,785	59.1	3,105,513	67.6	3,182,984	65.8
Nonfamily households	10,918	41.0	12,293	40.9	1,486,266	32.4	1,653,988	34.2
Householder living alone	8,748	32.8	9,847	32.7	1,229,807	26.8	1,346,312	27.8
Households with individuals under 18	8,627	32.4	9,364	31.1	1,663,878	36.2	1,619,862	33.5
Households with individuals 65 years	4,720	17.7	5,361	17.8	1,064,919	23.2	1,168,353	24.2
Average household size	2.34	(X)	2.41	(X)	2.63	(X)	2.59	(X)
Average family size	3.04	(X)	3.12	(X)	3.23	(X)	3.20	(X)

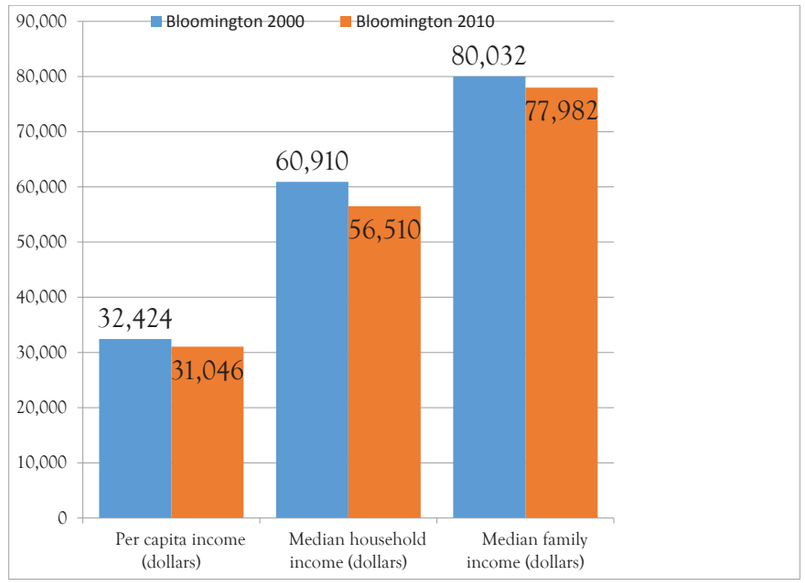
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS and SF4

Figure 2.16 Median Household and Family Income, 2000 - 2010
Bloomington and Illinois

	2000		2010		
	Number	%	Number	%	% Change
Households	26,734		30,078		
Less than $10,000	2,026	7.6	1,837	6.1	-1.5
$10,000 to $14,999	1,474	5.5	1,419	4.7	-0.8
$15,000 to $24,999	3,179	11.9	2,787	9.3	-2.6
$25,000 to $34,999	3,244	12.1	3,228	10.7	-1.4
$35,000 to $49,999	4,262	15.9	3,771	12.5	-3.4
$50,000 to $74,999	5,686	21.3	5,905	19.6	-1.7
$75,000 to $99,999	2,821	10.6	3,889	12.9	2.3
$100,000 to $149,999	2,717	10.2	4,296	14.3	4.1
$150,000 to $199,999	664	2.5	1,555	5.2	2.7
$200,000 or more	661	2.5	1,391	4.6	2.1
Families	15,937		17,785		
Less than $10,000	476	3.0	463	2.6	-0.4
$10,000 to $14,999	444	2.8	428	2.4	-0.4
$15,000 to $24,999	1,201	7.5	997	5.6	-1.9
$25,000 to $34,999	1,616	10.1	1,254	7.1	-3.0
$35,000 to $49,999	2,310	14.5	1,784	10.0	-4.5
$50,000 to $74,999	4,067	25.5	3,577	20.1	-5.4
$75,000 to $99,999	2,345	14.7	2,982	16.8	2.1
$100,000 to $149,999	2,300	14.4	3,692	20.8	6.4
$150,000 to $199,999	628	3.9	1,434	8.1	4.2
$200,000 or more	550	3.5	1,174	6.6	3.1

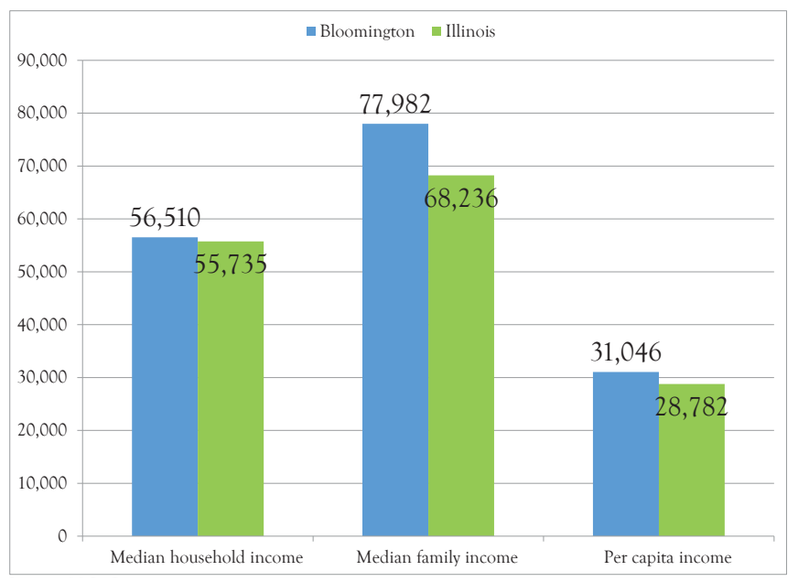
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS and SF3

Figure 2.19 Median Household and Family Income, 2000 - 2010, Bloomington



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS and SF3

Figure 2.20 Median Household Income 2010, Bloomington and Illinois

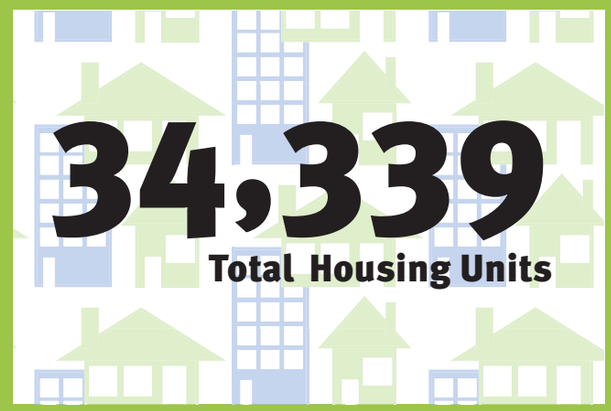


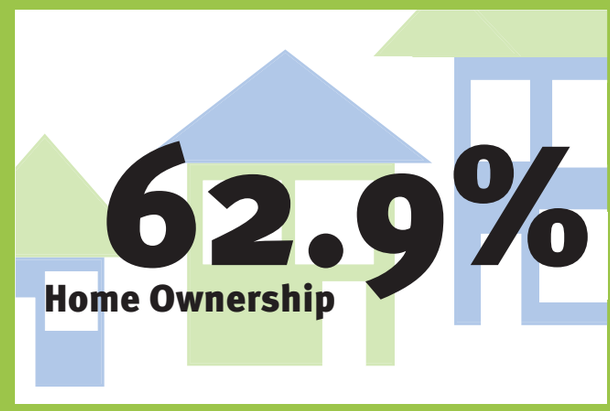
Source: U.S. Census

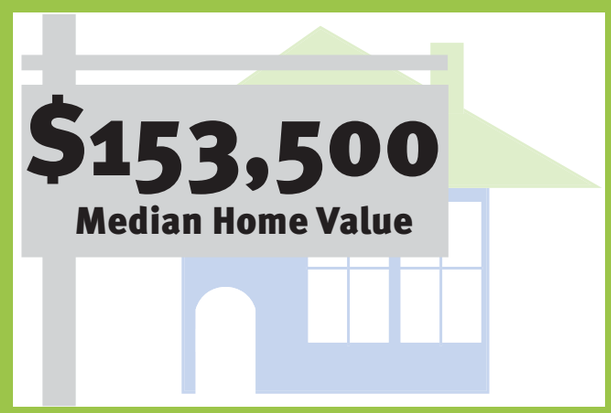
3

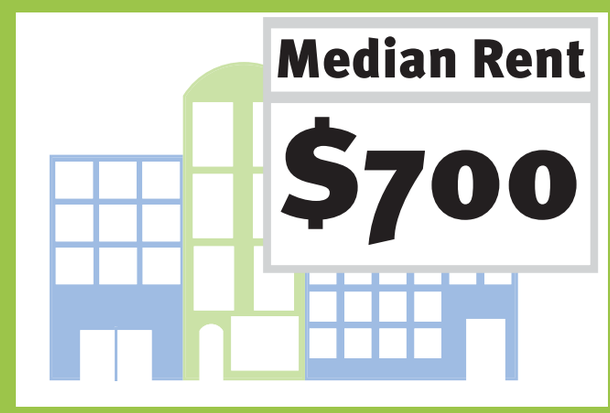
HOUSING

The quality of housing and housing characteristics such as housing type, values, ownership, and rentals all have an impact on the quality of neighborhoods and the desirability of a place to live. Housing also impacts the potential for future development of the City. As such, communities have a strong interest in providing high quality housing. This section examines various characteristics of Bloomington's current housing stock.









KEY FINDINGS

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 and needs additional investigation.

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, correlating with the locations of major employment centers.

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.

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.

The U.S. Census defines a housing unit as "a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied (or if vacant, is intended for occupancy) as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building and which have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall."

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Bloomington had 34,339 housing units in 2010, an increase of 5,908 units since 2000. 92.2% of those units were occupied and 7.8% were vacant in 2010. Home occupancy was 1.5 percentage points lower than 2000 and the vacancy rate was 1.5 percentage points higher. In 2010, homeownership was 62.9%, similar to that of 2000 which was 63.1%. Figure 3.1 shows the Census 2000 and 2010 housing occupancy and tenure statistics for Bloomington and Illinois.

Due to the importance of housing data for neighborhood level planning, MCRPC conducted a parcel level housing analysis based on a variety of locally available datasets as explained in Appendix A. This analysis accounted for 36,053 housing units at the end of 2013. To compare the number of units to Census 2010 information, the 735 new permits issued for residential units shown in Figure 3.2 were deducted. At 35,315 units, there were 976 more units than that of Census 2010 counts.

Some of this discrepancy can be attributed to the errors in data gathering. Further investigation needs to occur to ensure that Bloomington's housing units are being accounted for accurately by the U.S. Census Bureau. For the purposes of this study, Census data will be utilized to compare Bloomington housing information to that of the state or surrounding communities, while data gathered at the parcel level by MCRPC will be utilized to analyze trends at a much finer scale than census tract.

HOUSING UNIT TYPES

Variety in housing type is one of the key ways to provide living options that appeal to people in all stages of life, from young college graduates to families to senior citizens.

Bloomington has a variety of housing choices. Figure 3.4A shows the geographic distribution of single family, duplex, multi-family, mobile homes and group living. Figure 3.3 provides a detailed breakdown on number of acres and units by type of housing unit. As is evident from this table, single family homes account for the majority of housing units in Bloomington with 57.41% of all residential units. This is followed by multi-family at 30.15%, duplex at 6.94%, mobile homes at 5.24% and group living at 0.27%. It should also be noted that over 450 acres of land improved for residential purposes within the City limits currently sit vacant. This can be attributed to the recent crash of the housing market and the national recession (2007-2009). This is expected to change with the improving housing market. As shown in Figure 3.5, the number of new construction permits started to increase in 2013 after an all time low in 2012.

Figure 3.1 Housing Occupancy and Tenure Comparisons, 2000 - 2010

	BLOOMINGTON				ILLINOIS			
	2000		2010		2000		2010	
HOUSING OCCUPANCY	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total housing units	28,431	100	34,339	100	4,885,615	100	5,296,715	100
Occupied housing units	26,642	93.7	31,663	92.2	4,591,779	94	4,836,972	91.3
Vacant housing units	1,789	6.3	2,676	7.8	293,836	6	459,743	8.7
Homeowner vacancy rate (percent)	2.1		2.2		1.5		2.5	
Rental vacancy rate (percent)	8.1		10.2		6.2		9.1	
HOUSING TENURE								
Occupied housing units	26,642	100	31,663	100	4,591,779	100	4,836,972	100
Owner-occupied housing units	16,802	63.1	19,904	62.9	3,088,884	67.3	3,263,639	67.5
Average household size of owner-occupied units	2.59		2.53		2.76		2.69	
Renter-occupied housing units	9,840	36.9	11,759	37.1	1,502,895	32.7	1,573,333	32.5
Average household size of renter-occupied units	1.92		2.05		2.37		2.38	

Source: Census Table DP1

Figure 3.2 New Residential Permits, 2010 -2013

Year Permit Issued	Single Family Residential Permits	Apartment Units
2010	178	3
2011	134	84
2012	47	75
2013	123	91
Total new permits from 2010-2013		735

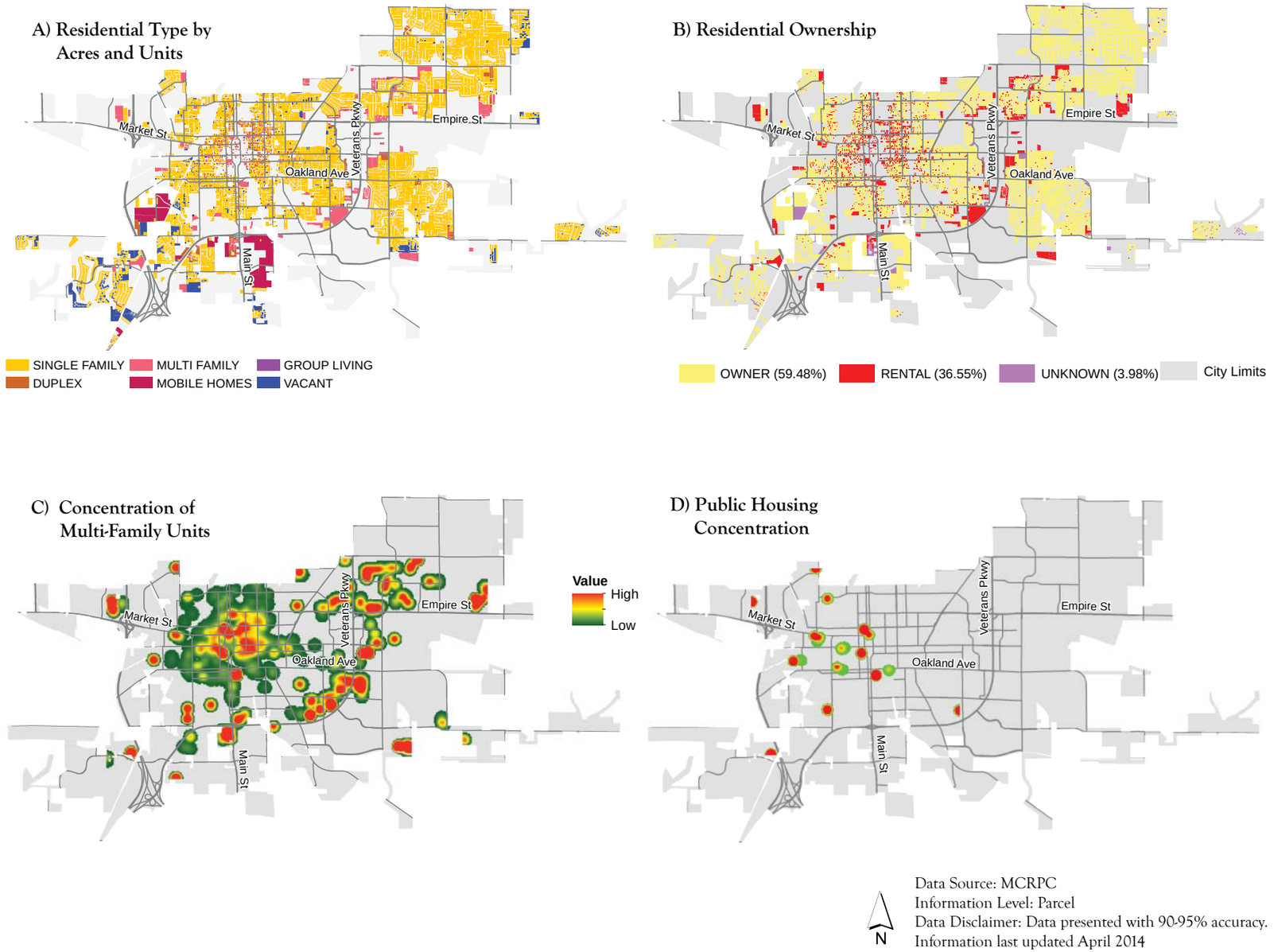
Source: City of Bloomington, PACE Department

Figure 3.3 Number and Acreages of Various Residential Uses in Bloomington

	Acres	Number of Units	Percent of units	Units/ Acre
Total	6,259.1	36,053		
Single Family	4,723.7	20,697	57.41	4.4
Duplex	219.7	2,501	6.94	11.4
Mobile Homes	322.4	1,888	5.24	5.9
Multi Family	540.0	10,871	30.15	20.1
Group Living	2.3	96	0.27	NA
Vacant	451.0			

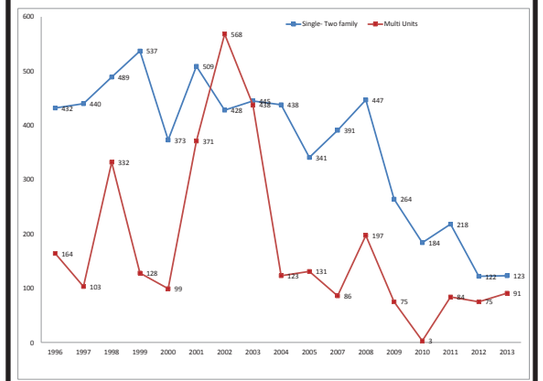
Source: MCRPC

Figure 3.4 Housing Units Analysis



Data Source: MCRPC
Information Level: Parcel
Data Disclaimer: Data presented with 90-95% accuracy.
Information last updated April 2014

Figure 3.5
New Residential Unit Permits in Bloomington



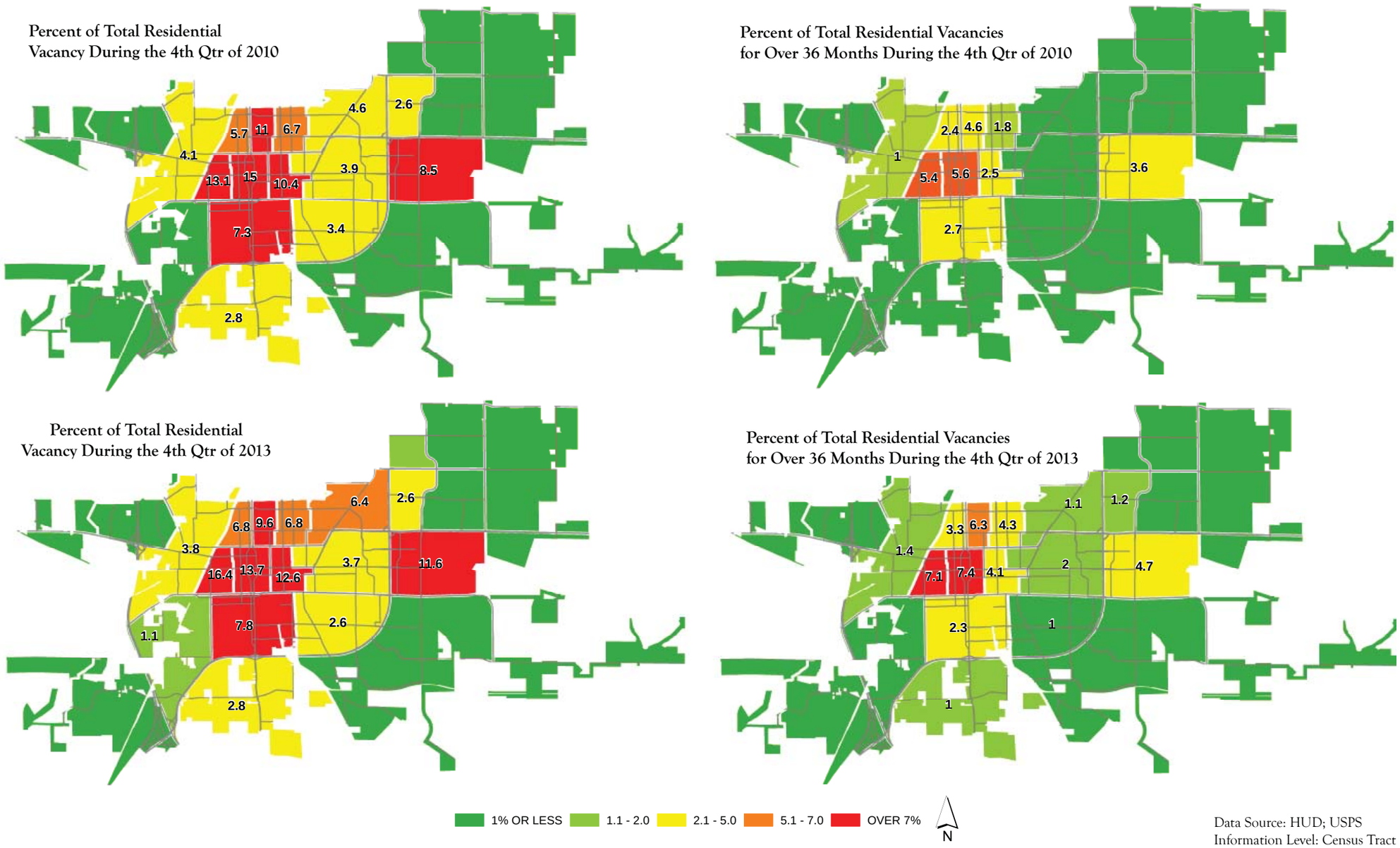
Source: City of Bloomington, PACE Department

HOMEOWNERSHIP

According to the 2010 Census, 62.9% of all housing units in the City were ownership units. Higher median family income is typically associated with higher rates of homeownership. Despite higher than state median family incomes, Bloomington's homeownership rates are lower compared to that of the state.

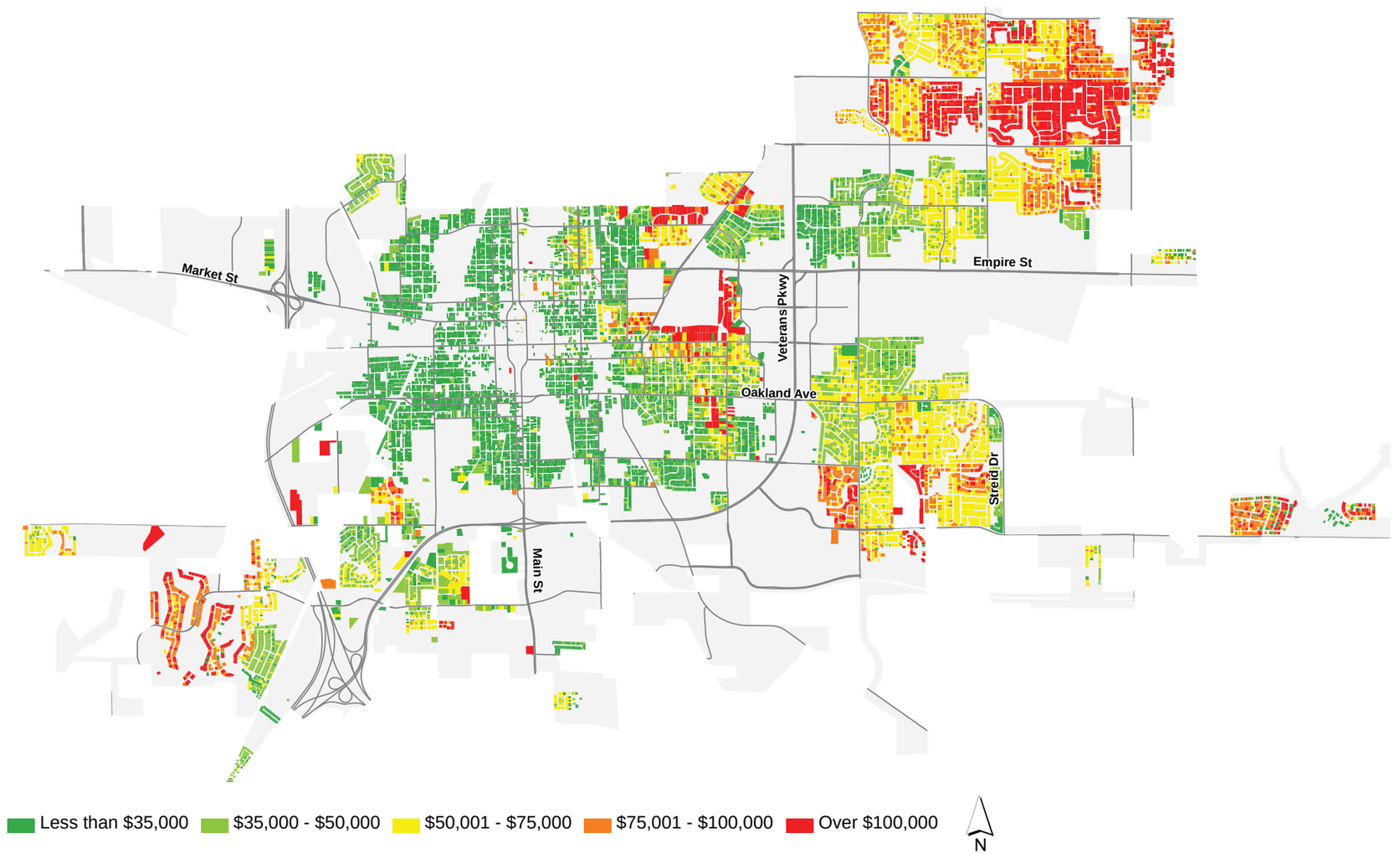
As illustrated in Figure 3.4B, homeownership is not evenly distributed throughout the City. There are higher concentrations of rental properties in the core of the City and along Veterans Parkway. Figure 3.4C highlights the concentration of apartment units. As shown in the map, apartments are concentrated in the core of the City (generally bound by Emerson Street on the north, Oakland Avenue on the south, Linden Street on the east and Morris Avenue on the west), along Veterans Parkway and on the northeast

Figure 3.6 Residential Vacancy Analysis, City of Bloomington



Data Source: HUD; USPS
Information Level: Census Tract

Figure 3.8 Assessed Values of Single-Family and Duplex Homes



Data Source: City of Bloomington Township Assessor
Information Level: Parcel

part of town (generally bound by Empire Street to the south, Airport Road to the east, G.E. Road to the north and Veterans Parkway to the west). Also evident from the map, the majority of the City's public housing is concentrated in the core of the City.

Rental properties tend to have higher vacancy rates than that of the ownership units. Long-term vacancies can be a signal of blight. Figure 3.6 shows the vacancy comparisons by census tract from 2010 to 2013. Consistent with the geographic concentrations of rental properties, the percentage of total vacancies and percentage of long-term vacancies (36 months or over) increased from 2010 to 2013 in the core.

MEDIAN HOME VALUES AND AFFORDABILITY

According to Census 2010, the median home value in Bloomington was $153,500 and median rent was $700. As shown in Figure 3.7, Bloomington's median home values were lower than that of Illinois. Figure 3.8 shows the distribution of assessed values in Bloomington. Please note that the assessed values are typically one-third of the fair market values.

According to the Census white paper "Who can afford to live in a home [4]," housing affordability is considered to be 30% or less of the household income. When households spend more than 30% of their monthly income on housing they are considered "burdened."

Foot Note: 4) Who can afford to live in a home: http://www.census.gov/housing/census/publications/who-can-afford.pdf

Monthly owner costs include mortgage, second mortgage and/or home equity loans, real estate taxes, homeowners insurance, condo fee (if applicable), mobile home cost (if applicable), electricity, gas, water and sewer, and other utilities.

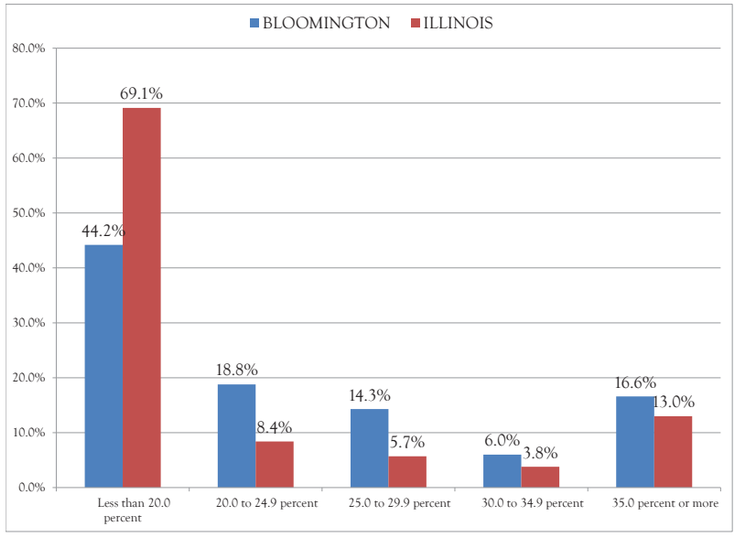
Monthly gross rent costs include contract rent and electricity, gas, water and sewer, and other utilities.

This paper also points out that prior to the mid 1990s the federal housing enterprises (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac) would not purchase mortgages unless the principal, interest, tax, and insurance payment (PITI) did not exceed 28% of the borrower's income for a conventional loan and 29% for an FHA-insured loan, however have become less stringent in the years since.

The paper clarifies that many households whose housing costs exceed 30 percent of their incomes are choosing to devote a larger share of their incomes to larger, more amenity-laden homes. These households often have enough income left over to meet their non-housing expenses. For them, the 30-percent ratio is not an indicator of a true housing affordability problem but rather a lifestyle choice. For those households at the lower rungs of the income ladder, however, the use of housing costs in excess of 30 percent of their limited incomes as an indicator of a housing affordability problem is as relevant today as it was four decades ago.

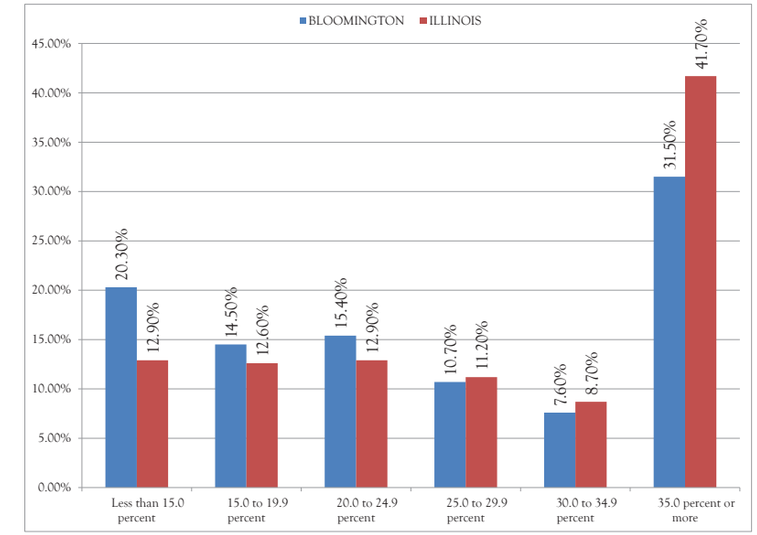
As illustrated in Figure 3.10, nearly 23% of Bloomington home owners are burdened. This number is considerably higher than the 17% percent of residents burdened at

Figure 3.9 Mortgage Payment as Percent of Household Income



Source: Census Table DP04

Figure 3.10 Rent Payment as Percent of Household Income



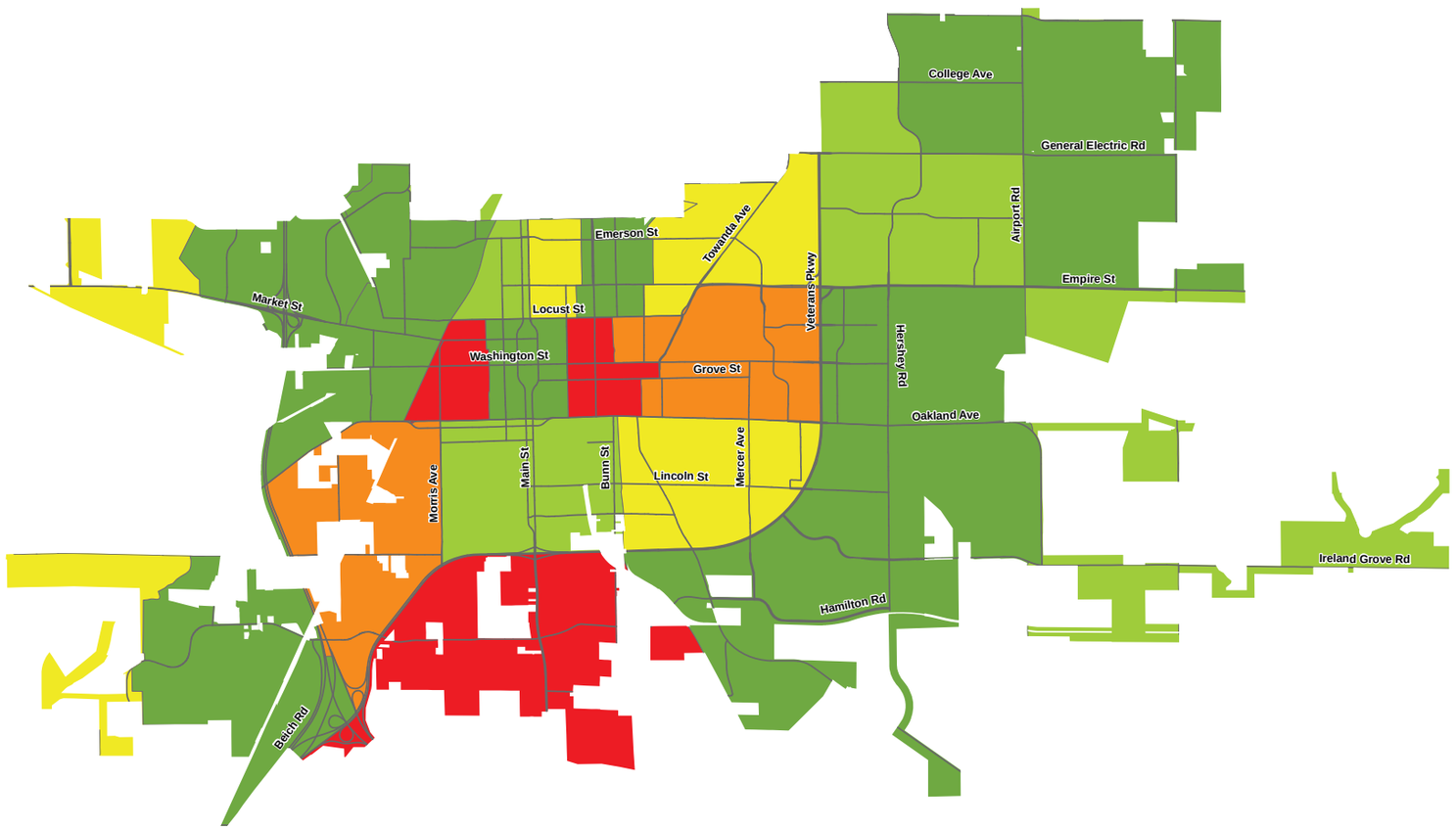
Source: Census Table DP04

Figure 3.7 Median Home Values, Mortgage Status and Mortgage and Rent as Percent of Household Income

	Bloomington 2010 Census		Illinois 2010 Census	
Median Home Value for owner occupied units (Dollars)	153,500		202,500	
MORTGAGE STATUS				
Housing units with a mortgage	14,305	72.5%	2,296,372	69.6%
Housing units without a mortgage	5,430	27.5%	1,004,319	30.4%
Median Mortgage (Dollars)	1,417	(X)	1,692	
SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME (SMOCAPI)				
Housing units with a mortgage (excluding units where SMOCAPI cannot be computed)	14,286		995,278	
Less than 20.0 percent	6,314	44.2%	688036	69.1%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	2,688	18.8%	83,642	8.4%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	2,046	14.3%	56,295	5.7%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	863	6.0%	38,141	3.8%
35.0 percent or more	2,375	16.6%	129,164	13.0%
Median Rent (Dollars)	700	(X)	834	(X)
GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME (GRAPI)				
Occupied units paying rent (excluding units where GRAPI cannot be computed)	9,824		1,367,513	
Less than 15.0 percent	1,990	20.3%	176,488	12.9%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	1,426	14.5%	172,159	12.6%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	1,511	15.4%	176,020	12.9%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	1,053	10.7%	152,973	11.2%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	750	7.6%	119,068	8.7%
35.0 percent or more	3,094	31.5%	570,805	41.7%

Source: Census Table DP04

Figure 3.11 Homeownership Burden



Percent homeowners with mortgages paying more than 30% of their HouseHold income on mortgage.

Data Source: Census ACS
Information Levvel: Census Tract

the state level. Also illustrated in Figure 3.10, 39.1% of all renters in Bloomington are burdened. These numbers are considerably lower than those of the state at 50%. Based on the *2014 Community Needs Assessment* conducted by the United Way of McLean County, lack of affordable rental properties was an identified problem.

As can be seen on Figure 3.11, there is a concentration of homeownership burden on households in the core of the City with lower median incomes.

RELEVANT PLANS, STUDIES & ONGOING EFFORTS

UNITED WAY - 2014 COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT (CAN REPORT)

The United Way led a collaborative effort to conduct the needs assessment in health and human services throughout McLean County. Primary and secondary data sources were utilized to conduct this effort. This study was aimed at gathering the following information:

- Community challenges/issues
- Strengths in the health and human service system
- Weaknesses in the health and human service system
- Gaps in services
- Duplications of services
- Underused or unrecognized resources/ services
- Recommendations/opportunities for improvement

The following **strengths** were identified:

Income and Poverty:

- Most pleased with Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) services
- Lower percentage of people under 18 in poverty than state and nation
- New, collaborative efforts
- Median income higher than state and nation

Housing and Homelessness:

- Many services for people experiencing homelessness
- Caring community members
- 2/3rds of McLean County residents are homeowners

Employment:

- Many high paying jobs exist in the community
- Health care support and health practitioner occupations are the fastest growing fields
- Unemployment rate lowering since 2010

Health and Health Care:

- Health services for people with low income
- Increased attention to mental health
- Community health assessments and health improvement plans

Child and Youth Development:

- Strong educational system
- Existing after-school programming
- Many youth volunteering and giving back to community

Senior, Caregivers, and People with Disabilities:

- Many helpful, supportive organizations
- High satisfaction with K-12 schools, supportive services, and senior social groups.
- Fewer than 3% of survey respondents who needed services did not receive those services

Criminal Justice:

- Consideration of expansion of housing for people with mental illness.
- Crime rate dropping.
- Problem solving courts.

Transportation:

- Cooperation between transportation service providers
- Connect Transit ridership grew 21% between 2009 and 2013
- Planning for alternate transportation

Common Themes:

- Many health and human services
- Dedicated individuals in health and human services system.

The following **challenges** were identified by this study

Income And Poverty:

- Unawareness of poverty
- Difficult to get off public aid
- Applying for and maintaining public aid is cumbersome

Housing and Homelessness:

- Expensive rental housing
- Limited subsidized housing
- Long waits for vouchers
- Shelters at capacity
- Requests for emergency funds exceeds funds available

Employment:

- Access to good paying jobs for low skilled workers
- Need for skill training
- Many barriers to full-time work (health issues, caregiver, transportation)
- Discriminatory hiring process.

Health and Health Care:

- Poverty is a risk factor for health
- Rural residents have difficulty accessing health care (transportation)
- Availability of psychiatrists (particularly for children)
- Funding and coordination for mental health services
- Access to preventative oral health services

Child and Youth Development:

- Additional career development and training opportunities
- More affordable, after-school youth program options
- Graduation rates dropping
- Parental engagement

Senior, Caregivers, and People with Disabilities:

- Respite care for caregivers
- Unawareness of available services (individual and provider)
- More permanent, supportive housing
- Stigma as a barrier to employment

Transportation:

- Transportation outside of McLean County
- Transportation for people <60 with no medical need
- Inconvenient bus times
- Need for expanded bus routes
- Car breakdowns are a major barrier for getting to work

Criminal Justice:

- Cycle of incarceration for people with mental illness
- Perception of high crime and drug use
- Racism toward Hispanic population

- Ex-offender reintegration into society (e.g., finding housing and employment)

Common Themes:

- Collaboration and cooperation among health and human service providers
- Awareness of available services
- Poverty as a risk factor
- Transportation

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON CONSOLIDATED PLAN (2010-2015)

The City of Bloomington receives approximately 1 million dollars in federal and state funding through Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Federal Continuum of Care funds for the homeless, and IHDA's new App grant.

To satisfy the requirement of these formula grants the City is required to submit a 5 year consolidated plan and an annual Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The latest consolidated plan is FY 2010-2015. This strategic, data driven plan is intended to describe the housing and community development needs of the low to moderate income residents, outline the strategies to meet the needs, and list all resources available to implement the strategies. Below are some findings of that plan.

AFFORDABILITY

- In 2008, 8,377 households could not afford fair market rent.
- Fair market rent outpaced median income between 2007 and 2008.
- Annually, there are 300 families on the Section 8 Waiting List.
- Vacancy rate for market rent apartments increased from 6.6% in 2000 to an estimated 11.5% in 2008.
- In 2008, approximately 9% of Bloomington's population was living below the poverty line.
- According to HUD's CHAS data for 2000, there were no vacant units for sale affordable for those households at 30% of median and below.

HOMELESSNESS

- The number of homeless being served by the Housing Benefits Specialist and Homeless Outreach Worker programs (both housed at PATH) increased 58% in single individuals from June 2004 - May 2009.
- An emergency homeless shelter was completed in 2009, and has had waiting lists of up to 40 men and women.
- In addition to the American Red Cross of the Heartland's Short Term disaster relief service, as of 2009 there were six facilities in Bloomington-Normal that offered emergency shelter facilities for the homeless.
- The total number of people experiencing homelessness served by the McLean County Continuum of Care from June 2007 - May 2008 was 1,093.

Overall, this plan indicates the need for affordable housing within the City and McLean County. This plan is scheduled for an update early 2015. The comprehensive plan process should work

Figure 3.12 Vacant and Occupied Buildings

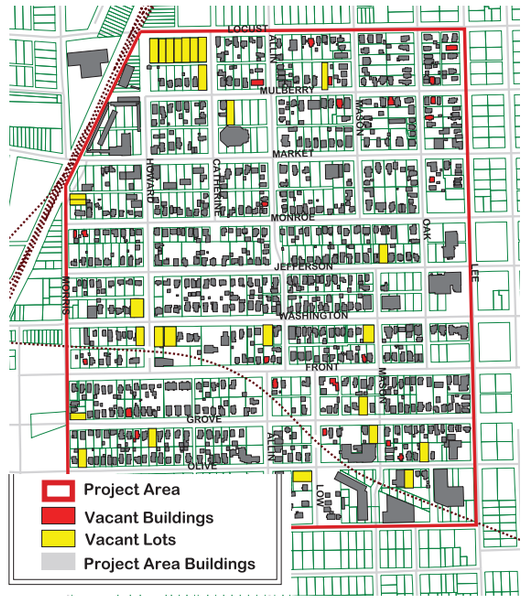


Figure 3.13 Rental Properties

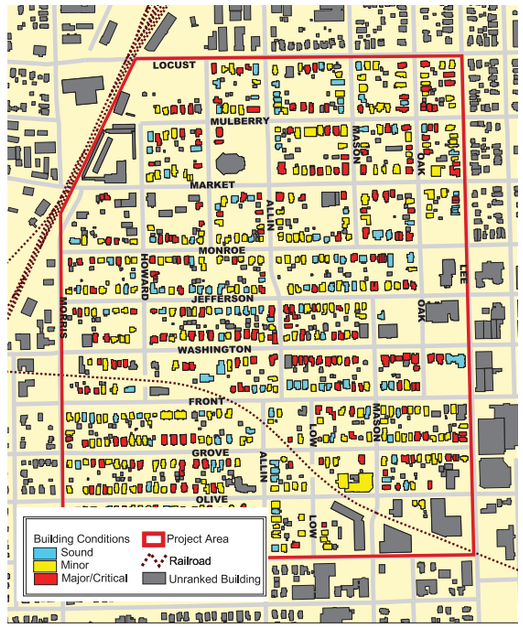


Figure 3.14 Grade of Rental Properties

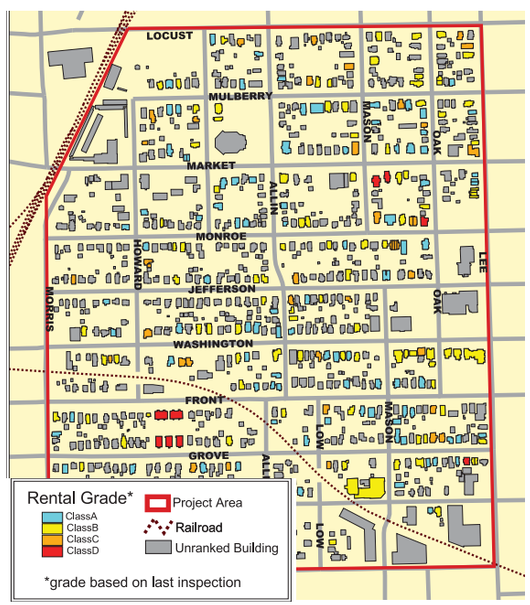
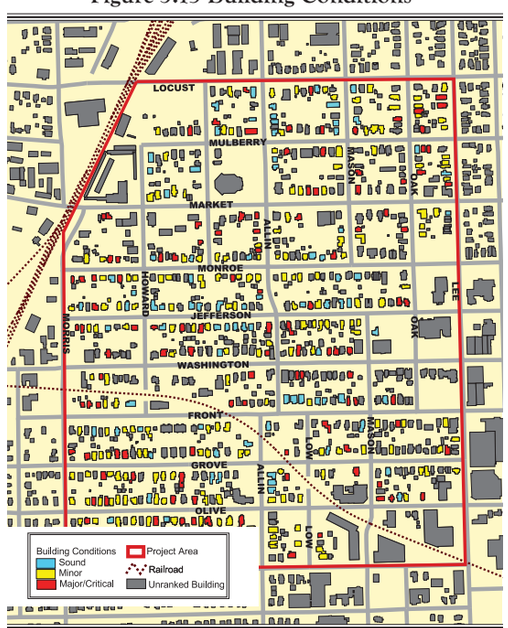


Figure 3.15 Building Conditions



Source: Building Conditions Report, MCRPC

closely with the consolidated planning efforts to ensure efficient use of CDBG funds in Bloomington.

BUILDING CONDITIONS REPORT (2008)

CDBG funds may be used in designated slum and blight areas. In an effort to direct this ever shrinking pot of funds to the area that is truly in need, the City of Bloomington conducted a building conditions analysis in the previously designated slum and blight area with the intentions to strategically plan and target that area for revitalization. Information gathered through that study is presented in form of various maps (Figures 3.12 - 3.15). This information is at least five years old.

A COMMUNITY IN BLOOM (2010) - CONDUCTED BY ILLINOIS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY, ACTION RESEARCH CENTER

The Affordable Housing Needs Assessment of West Bloomington (2010) was an update of a similar assessment completed in 2004. The assessment was in response to a request from Habitat for Humanity of McLean County, and to account for changes in the economy and housing market from 2004-2010. Information was collected from both local and national organizations to gather data for the assessment.
The report highlights:

- West Bloomington infrastructure is outdated and does not adhere to current city codes.
- 20% of homes in West Bloomington are not linked to a designated water system and share a connection to the water system with another home.
- The assessment suggests that, to improve the infrastructure of West Bloomington, and promote development, developers need to be attracted to West Bloomington, and shown it is a good investment. It also reported that there is a lack of affordable housing in West Bloomington.

Plan Recommendations:

- Expand the number of affordable housing units
- Incentivize Landlords to keep up properties
- Find Sites to Build on/Utilize the Community Block Grant
- Include Infrastructure Projects in Development

WEST BLOOMINGTON STRATEGIC PLAN (2010)

Based on the building conditions report, the West Bloomington Plan was initiated by the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council (EDC) and the City of Bloomington in 2010 with a vision to revitalize this area located in the heart of the City. The West Bloomington area is made up of the long-established neighborhoods Olde Towne and Gridley, Allin & Prickett (GAP).

Through community input, key issues such as safety, housing, infrastructure, youth,

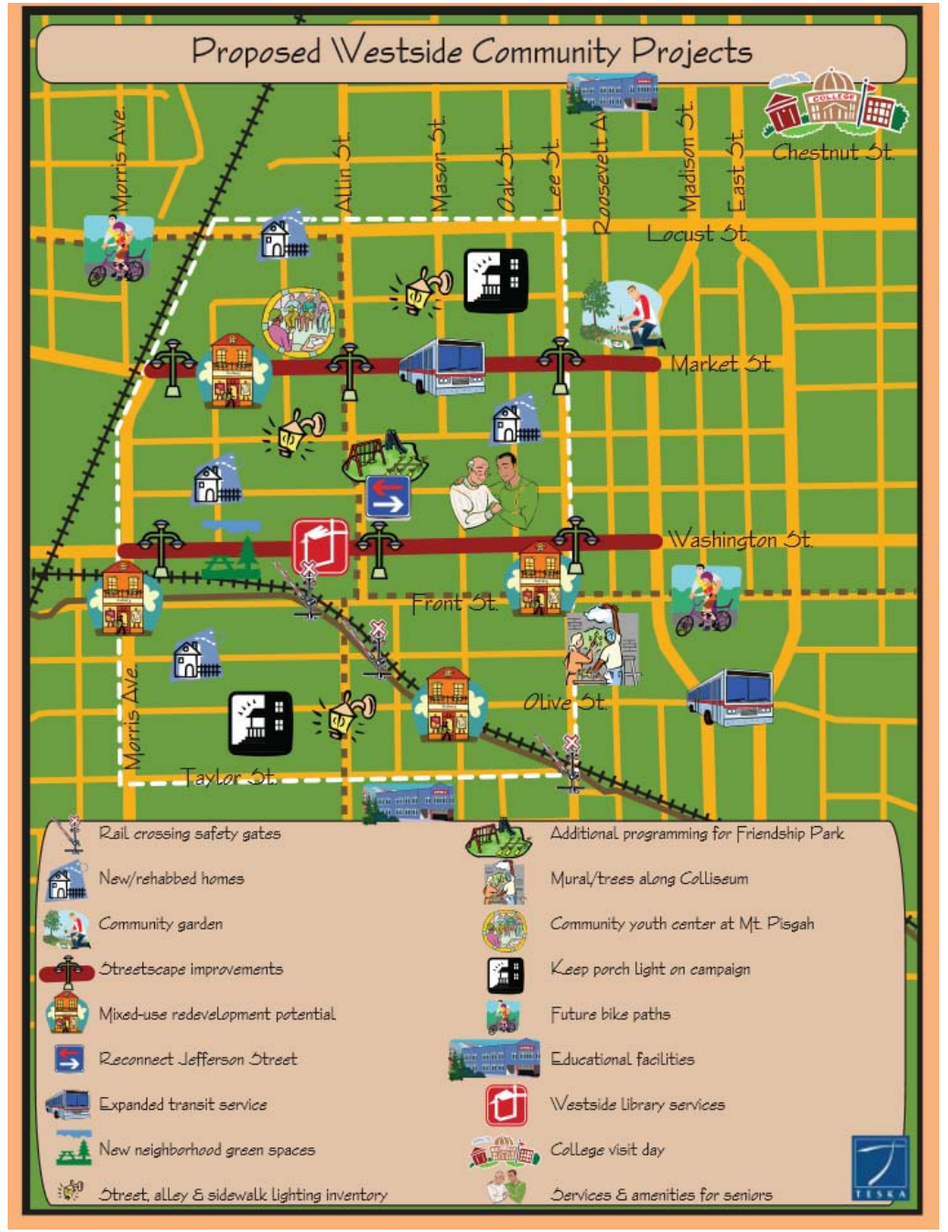


Figure 3.16 Proposed Westside Community Projects
Source: West Bloomington Strategic Plan

education, and economic development were identified. The following six strategies were developed to revitalize the area:

1. Community Greening: Give our community a special and unique sense of place by living sustainably and in harmony with nature
2. Youth: Create a nurturing and supportive community environment for all our youth
3. Safety and Well-being: Transform the west side into a safe, harmonious and healthy community
4. Economic Development: Grow existing businesses, attract new businesses, and expand workforce development training throughout our west side community.
5. Housing: Provide a broad range of housing types to provide safe, decent, and affordable shelter for people of all ages and incomes, particularly society's most vulnerable.
6. Education: Create a west side community where everyone is able to achieve his or her potential

Under each strategy, several short, medium, and long term implementation projects were identified to accomplish the goals. Figure 3.16 identifies various projects proposed by the strategic plan.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN (2004)

In 2004, the City of Bloomington prepared an update of its Historic Preservation Plan, detailing the history of the City of Bloomington, Its historic neighborhoods, and the importance of historic preservation. Recommendations made in the plan include:

- Complete a comprehensive intensive survey of all historically, culturally and architecturally significant, pre-1951 properties in the City of Bloomington.
- Designate the City of Bloomington Department of Planning and Code Enforcement as the permanent location for the storage of historic preservation related records and information.
- Refine the Historic Preservation Commission's operational procedures to maximize its effectiveness.
- Request the funding of a larger budget to assist the Historic Preservation Commission in the performance of its duties.
- Increase public education and awareness activities to educate and involve citizens from many areas of the community in historic preservation.
- Continue to review the Historic Preservation Commission's policies, procedures and ordinance at five-year intervals and revise the same when necessary.
- Continue to integrate the Bloomington historic preservation planning process into the comprehensive planning process for the City of Bloomington and the County of McLean.

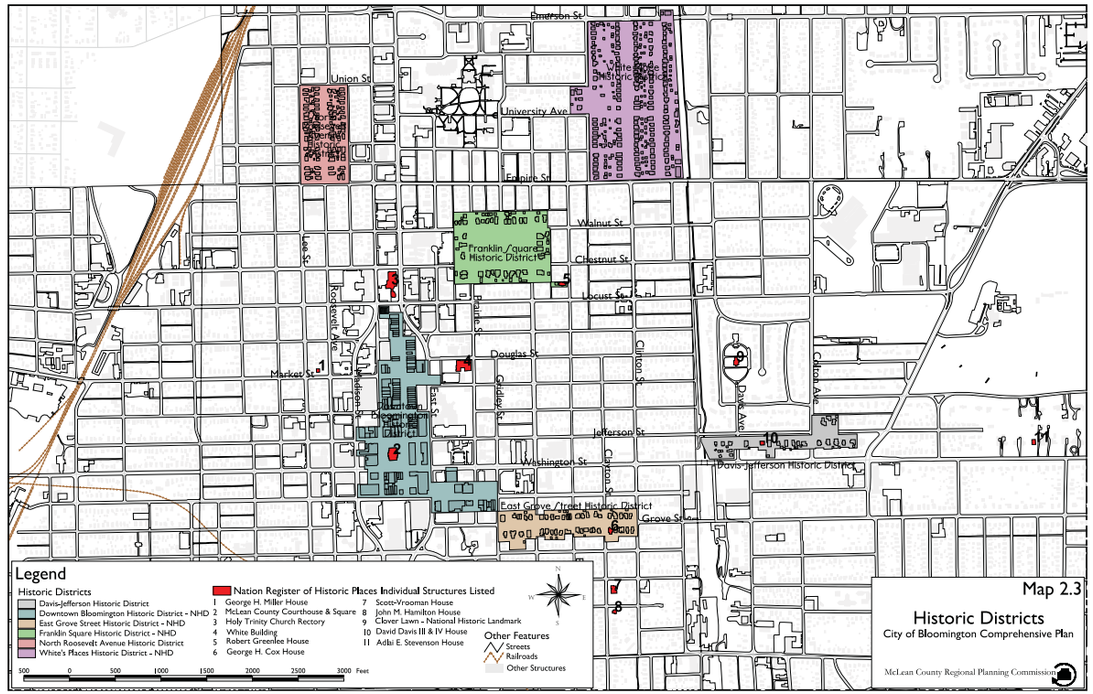


Figure 3.17 Historic Districts in Bloomington
Source: City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, 2005

RECENT NEWS



Figure 3.18 Excerpt from The Pantagraph, July 31, 2013

4

LAND USE

Providing for the efficient use of land is a major planning consideration. To assess the City's future land use needs, an analysis of historic growth patterns and present land use patterns is important. Growth and development occurring within Bloomington requires the conversion of vacant and agricultural land to more intensified urban uses. The process determines the community's future urban form, its infrastructure, attractiveness, and desirability, as well as its fiscal sustainability. This chapter will investigate the historic land use patterns, existing land use and zoning.

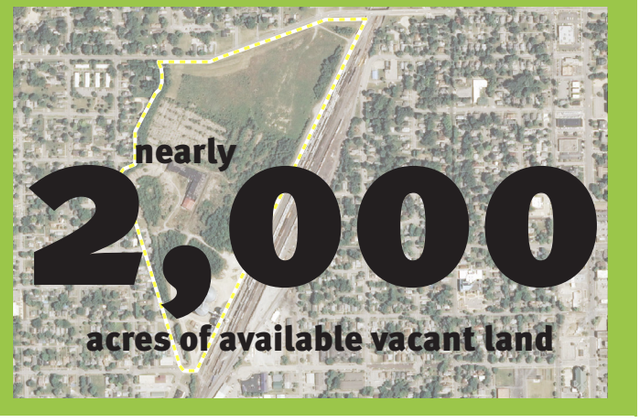
Physical Growth

2.5X

since 1970







KEY FINDINGS

Bloomington has experienced a tremendous amount of growth in the last 50 years. Since 1970, the City's population has increased by 91%, its physical boundary increased by 147% and street mileage has doubled. During this time, the population density decreased by 850 people per square mile. While growth is a positive sign for the City, it is important for the City to manage the growth efficiently so as not to put a burden on City services.

The City currently has a diverse mix of land uses and zoning. This diversity of land uses is healthy and balances costs generated by one with the revenues generated by others, contributing to the fiscal health of Bloomington.

The City of Bloomington currently has nearly 2,000 acres of vacant land with access to the City's infrastructure such as streets, water and sewer. Land designated for residential purposes alone is about 450 acres. Depending on the type of housing units, it can accommodate anywhere between 1,826 to 8,342 new residential units.

The City currently has over 900 acres of land developed as parking lots. As expected, the majority of these parking lots are along the main transportation corridor serving the commercial and office uses. The comprehensive plan should investigate whether or not that is the highest and best use of the prime real estate in Bloomington.

GROWTH PATTERNS

Bloomington has experienced substantial growth over the last 50 years with its growth rate peaking in the '90s at nearly 25%. As shown in Figure 4.1, most of the growth during that time frame occurred to the east and south. Bloomington's growth is limited to the north by its twin city, the Town of Normal.

From 1970 to 2010, the City's population nearly doubled. During this time frame, the City physically grew by 147% and the street mileage increased by 107.5%, resulting in decreased density. As shown in Figure 4.2, at the current density of 2,815 persons per square mile, Bloomington is denser than most comparable central Illinois communities except Champaign. However, it should also be noted that most of the these communities experienced little to no growth, while some experienced a loss in population during this time frame.

While annexations bring in addition-

Figure 4.2 Central Illinois Communities Population Per Square Mile

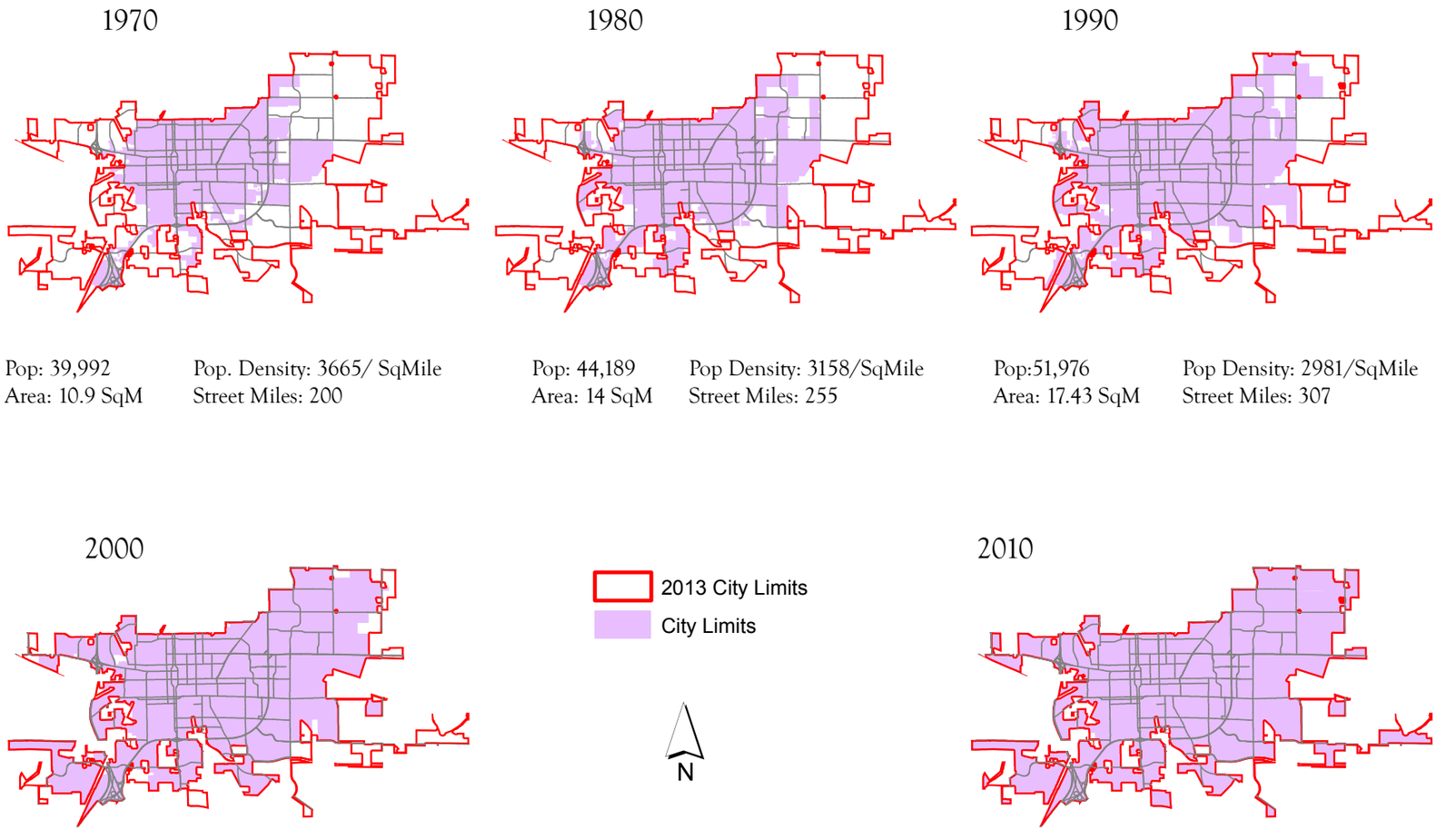
City	Persons per square mile
Champaign	3,613.2
Bloomington	2,814.8
Peoria	2,395.6
Springfield	1,954.4
Danville	1,846.3
Decatur	1,802.8

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 4.1 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

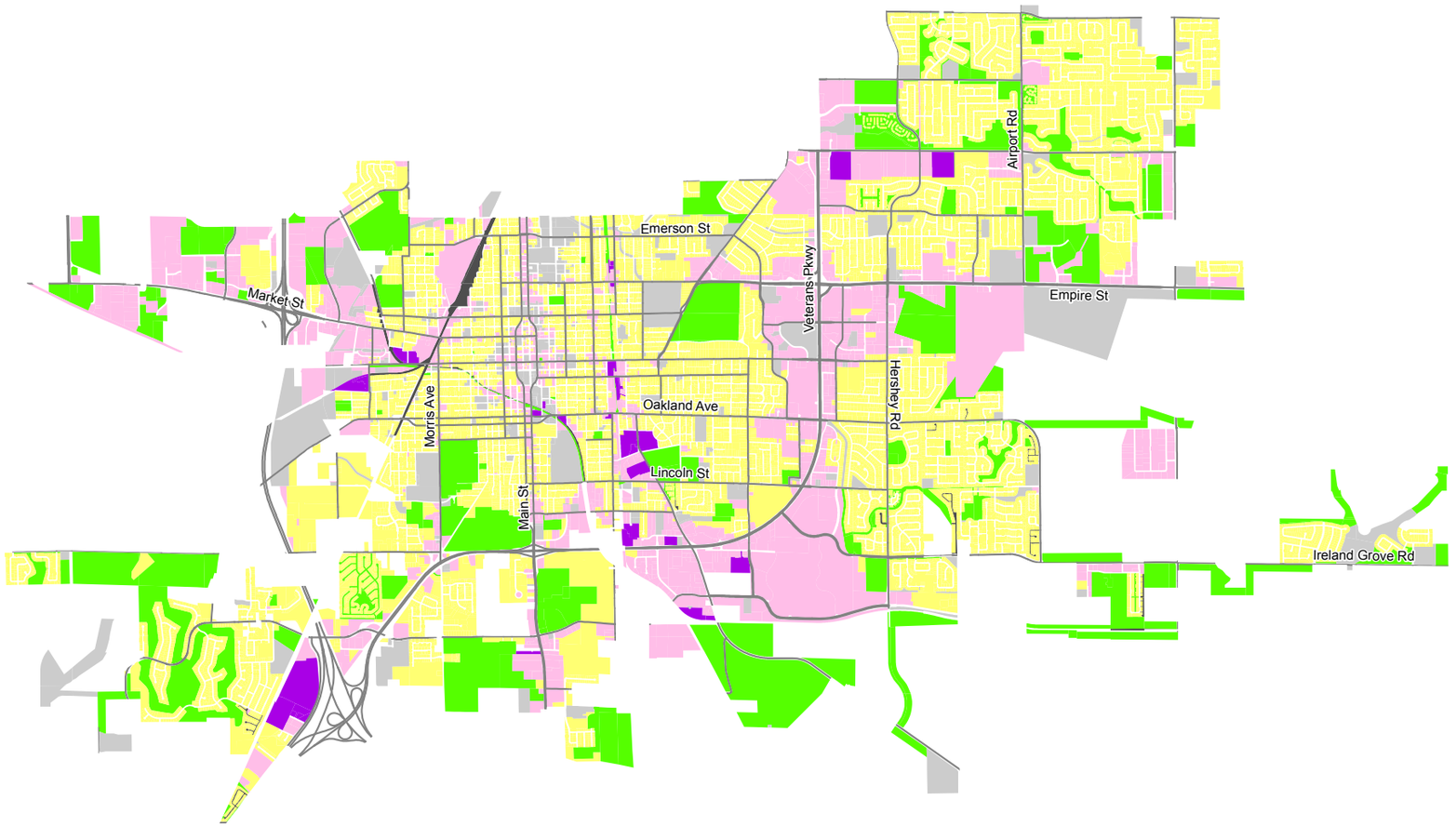
1990: Pop:51,976 Area: 17.43 SqM Pop Density: 2981/SqMile Street Miles: 307

2000: Pop:64,808 Area: 24 SqM Pop Density: 2701/SqMile Street Miles: 383

Data Source: Census, City of Bloomington, MCRPC

2010: Pop:76,610 Area: 27 SqM Pop Density: 2815/SqMile Street Miles: 415

Figure 4.3 City of Bloomington Existing Land Use



Note: Since mixed uses accounted for less than 1.5%, they were coded under the predominant use.

Data Source: MCRPC
Information Level: Parcel
Data Disclaimer: Information presented with 90-95% accuracy. Information last updated April 2014

al revenue, growth of urbanized land also puts pressure on City services and thus on the City budget. In the wake of the recent recession (2007-2009), understanding the fiscal impact of future developments should be a priority during this comprehensive planning process. A fiscal impact analysis of development should become an aspect of this comprehensive plan process.

EXISTING LAND USE

The existing land use map is a database graphical depiction of how land and the structures on the land are currently being used. The existing land use map is an important tool in identifying conflicting and inefficient land uses, as well as the parameters placed by the physical environment and community infrastructure on the evolving land use of the community. The existing land use analysis can also determine the use capabilities of vacant and open land, as these hold the greatest opportunities for accommodating anticipated growth.

Figure 4.3 is the City of Bloomington's existing land use map, updated by MCRPC in April of 2014 for the purposes of the comprehensive plan. A variety of data sources were used to verify the land use by parcel. Appendix A contains the list and process applied. For the purpose of this analysis, land uses are categorized as:

- **Residential**, which includes single family, duplex, multi-family, group living quarters, mobile home parks, and vacant lots developed for residential use
- **Commercial/office**, which includes retail

commercial, office space, and vacant lots developed for commercial or office use

- **Industrial**, which includes light and heavy industrial use structures
- **Public/semipublic**, which includes government buildings, schools, churches, cemeteries, and other public places
- **Recreational/Open Space**, which includes parks, playgrounds, undeveloped open space and detention ponds within the City limits
- **Transportation**, which includes roads and railroads

Figure 4.5 Number and Acreages of Various Residential Uses in Bloomington

	Acres	Number of Units	Percent of units	Units/ Acre
Total	6,259.1	36,053		
Single Family	4,723.7	20,697	57.41	4.4
Duplex	219.7	2,501	6.94	11.4
Mobile Homes	322.4	1,888	5.24	5.9
Multi Family	540.0	10,871	30.15	20.1
Group Living	2.3	96	0.27	NA
Vacant	451.0			

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 4.6 Potential Residential Units on Existing Residential Vacant Land

Vacant Acres	451	
Single Family	1,826	:@4.4 Units/Acre
Duplex	4,731	:@11.4 Units/Acre
Multi Family	8,342	:@20.1 Units/Acre

Source: MCRPC

Figure 4.4 Available Vacant Land with Existing Infrastructure



Data Source: MCRPC
Information Level: Parcel

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

As shown in Figure 4.3, residential uses account for a major share of the City's area. Of the City's 6,259 residential acres, 5,808 acres, or 92.7%, are developed. A majority of this area is developed as single-family units. Currently, 451 acres of land improved for residential purposes is vacant. Figure 4.4 highlights a few areas of the City that hold the vacant improved land with access to City's infrastructure.

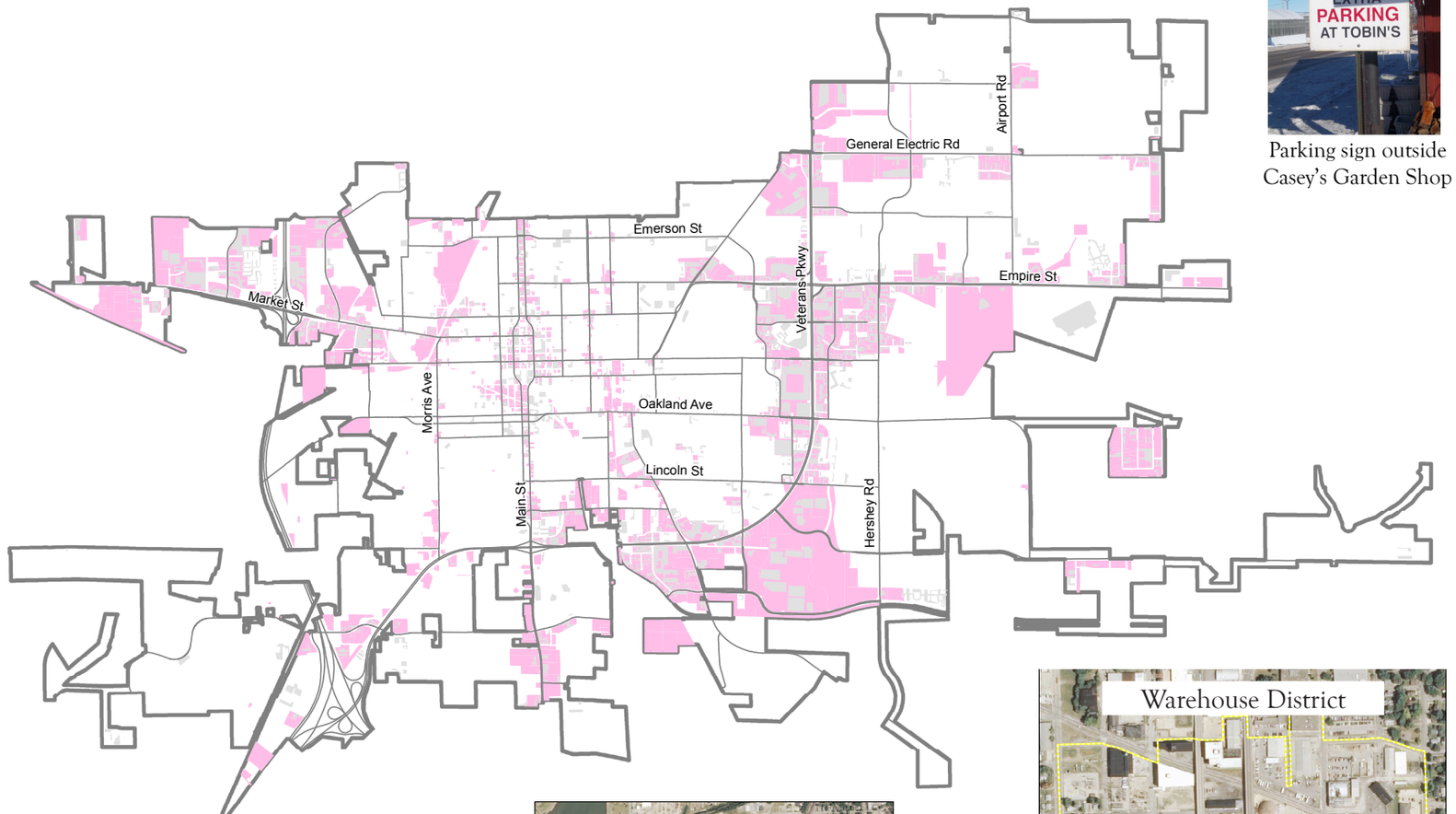
These vacant lots could be the result of the recent recession (2007-2009). According to the Housing and Urban Development Authority (HUD), the National Housing Market Summary for the 4th Quarter of 2013[6] indicates strong growth in both single-family and multi-family units. As discussed in the housing chapter, the increasing number of housing permits in Bloomington is expected to continue. The City should give careful consideration to the existing vacant land prior to annexing additional land for residential purposes. As shown in Figure 4.6, based on the type of new residential development, the existing vacant land in the city can accommodate anywhere between 1,826 to 8,342 new housing units.

COMMERCIAL/OFFICE USES

Currently 3,164 acres or 18.23% of developed land in the City is commercial or office use. The commercial and office land uses in the City are primarily concentrated

Foot Note: 6) http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/pdf/NationalSummary_4q13.pdf

Figure 4.7 City of Bloomington Commercial and Office Land Uses



Parking sign outside Casey's Garden Shop



Railyard on the west side of the City

Data Source: MCRPC
Information Level: Parcel
Data Disclaimer: Data presented with 90-95% accuracy.
Information last updated April 2014

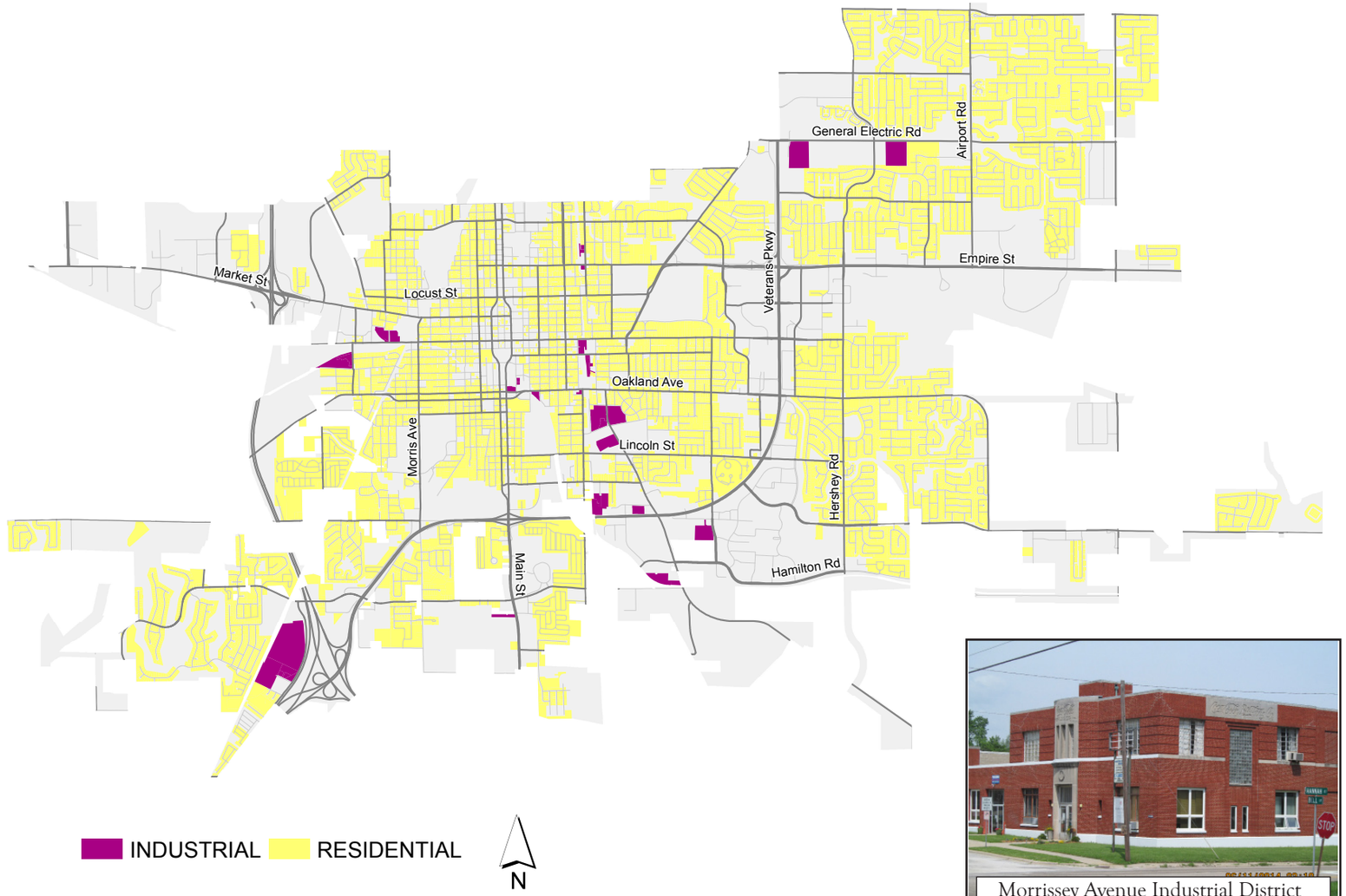
in the Downtown area and along the major transportation corridors, such as Veterans Parkway, U.S. Route 51, Empire Street (Route 9) and the intersections of Interstate 74 and Market Street, and U.S. Route 51 and Hamilton Road. With the exception of Downtown, the majority of these land uses are regional in nature and are typically auto-oriented. As illustrated in Figure 4.7, 725 of the 3,164 acres, or nearly 22% of it, is occupied by parking lots. There are several businesses within the City (see sign outside Casey's Garden Shop) currently sharing parking lots. Available parking, future parking needs, and related regulations should be carefully examined during this comprehensive plan to ensure the highest and best use of the prime commercial land available in Bloomington.

Bloomington also has a healthy dose of neighborhood-scale commercial land uses throughout the City. Examples of these include South Hill neighborhood commercial and near east side neighborhood commercial.

In the last few years, the City placed an increased emphasis on returning the Downtown to its past glory as a regional commercial center. The *Downtown Bloomington Strategy*, the *Main Street: A Call for Investment*, *Downtown Hotel Feasibility Study*, and the *Downtown Streetscape Master Plan* are planning activities undertaken since the last comprehensive plan update in 2005. Summaries of these plans are presented at the end of this chapter. The comprehensive plan should build on the existing plans rather than re-create them.

While a complete list of available

Figure 4.8 City of Bloomington Industrial Land Uses in Relation to the Residential Land Uses



Morrissey Avenue Industrial District

Data Source: MCRPC
Information Level: Parcel
Data Disclaimer: Data presented with 90-95% accuracy.
Information last updated April 2014

vacant properties developed for commercial purposes is not available, there are pockets of concentrated vacant lands such as the railyard on the west side and the warehouse district Downtown that should be carefully examined during this comprehensive planning process.

INDUSTRIAL USES

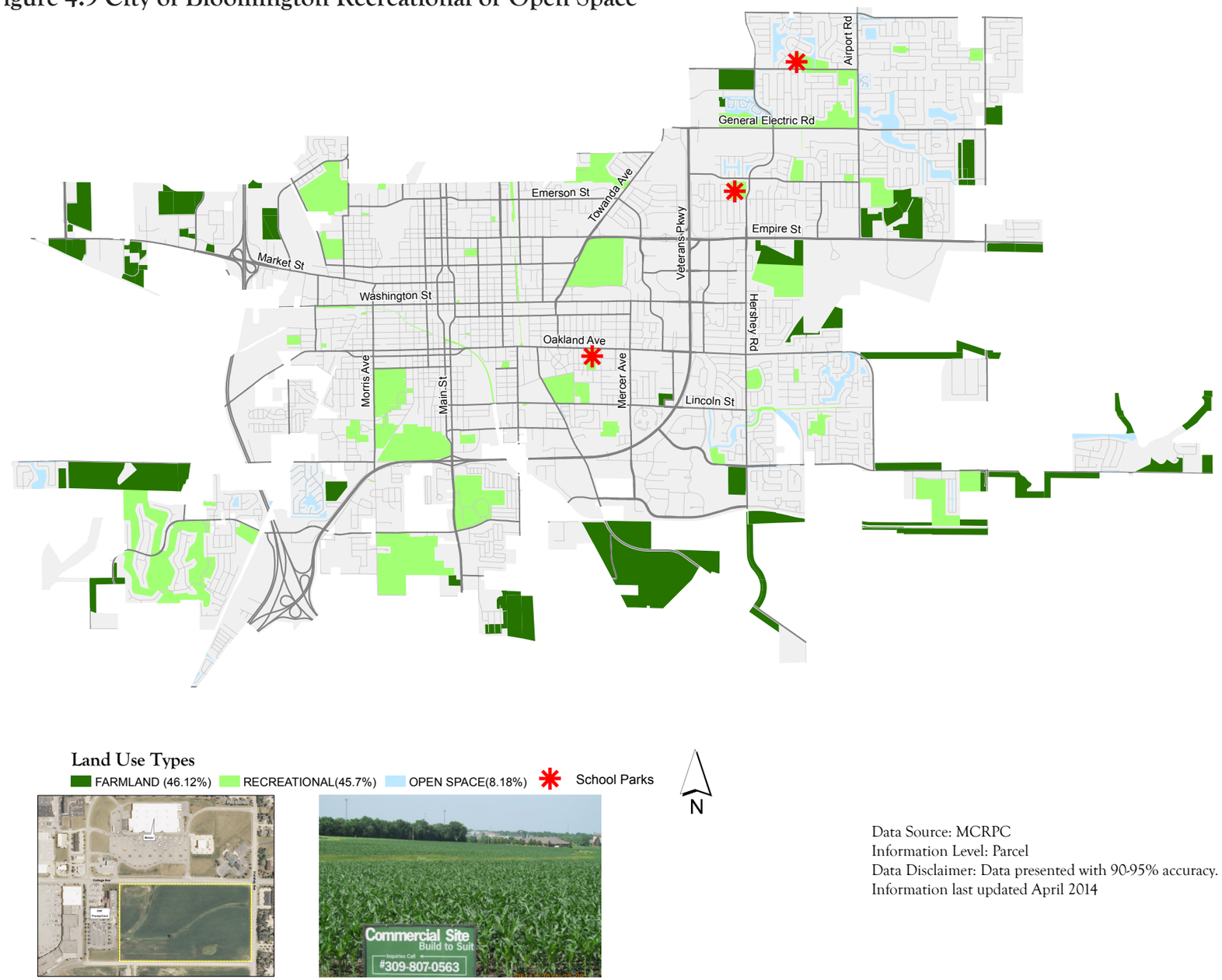
Currently, 230 acres of the City's developed land is being used for industrial purposes. At 1.32%, this is the smallest land use category in the City. There is a lot of potential for expansion of these uses. As shown in Figure 4.8, the industrial land uses are now surrounded by residential uses. While they have co-existed for some time now, these two land uses have the potential for conflict. This comprehensive plan should examine these areas closely.

RECREATIONAL AND OPEN SPACE

The City currently has 3,057 acres or 17.62% of land used as recreational, developed as open space, or undeveloped. Currently 1,397 acres or 45.7% of this land is used for recreational purposes. Approximately 8.2% of this land is developed as detention ponds or other open spaces around residential developments. Currently, 1,410 acres of the land annexed to the City is used as farmland. Over 400 acres of that land is currently zoned for commercial purposes.

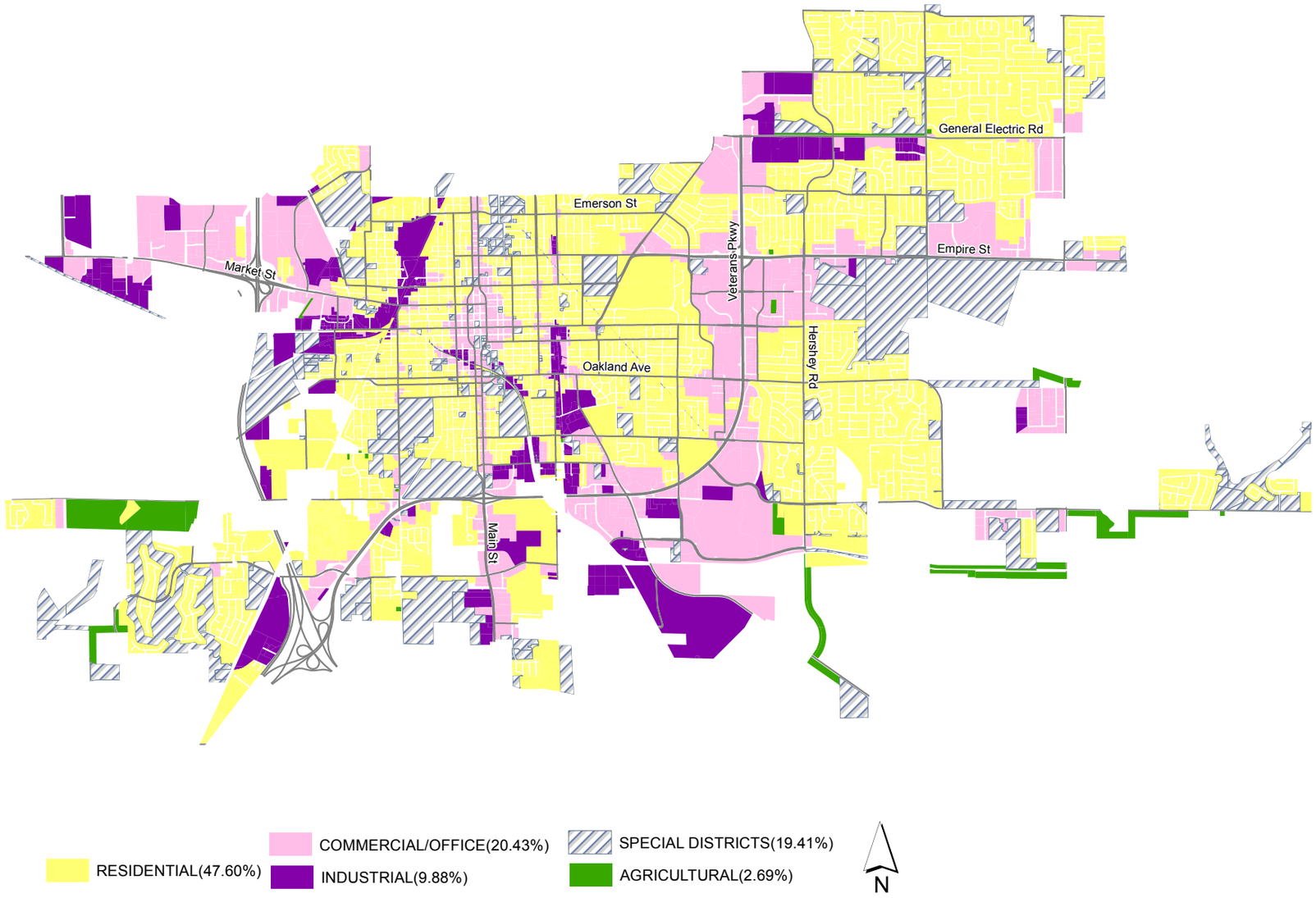
As illustrated in Figure 4.9, a majority of the annexed land currently being farmed is on the fringes of the City but surrounded by development and could easily gain access to the City's infrastructure. The use and zoning

Figure 4.9 City of Bloomington Recreational or Open Space



Data Source: MCRPC
Information Level: Parcel
Data Disclaimer: Data presented with 90-95% accuracy.
Information last updated April 2014

Figure 4.10 City of Bloomington Zoning Classification Map



Data Source: MCRPC
Information Level: Parcel
Data Disclaimer: Information last updated April 2014

ZONING CLASSIFICATION MAP

RESIDENTIAL includes: R-1A Low density single family district, R-1B Medium density single family district, R-1C High density single family district, R2 Mixed residence district, R-3A medium density multiple family district, R-3B High density multiple family district, R4-Manufactured home park district, GAP-1, GAP-2, GAP-3 and GAP-4

COMMERCIAL/OFFICE includes: B-1 Highway business district, B-2 General business district, B-3 Central business district, C-1 office district, C-2 Neighborhood shopping district, C-3 Community regional shopping district, GAP -5 commercial, cottage commercial, Iconic apartment.

INDUSTRIAL includes: M-1 Restricted manufacturing, M-2 General Manufacturing, W1-Warehouse district and GAP-6 Warehouse.

AGRICULTURAL includes A-Agricultural district

SPECIAL DISTRICTS include: S-1 University District, S-2 Public Lands and Institution District, S-3 Aircraft noise impact district, S-4 Historic preservation district, S-5 Airport District

of this land should be carefully evaluated before annexing more land. This will ensure harmonious development and efficient use of City resources.

ZONING

The City regulates the use of land to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its people. Land use is regulated through a zoning ordinance and land development tools such as subdivision regulation and building codes. For the purposes of this study, the zones are classified into Residential, Commercial/Office, Industrial, Agricultural, and Special Districts.

As outlined in Figure 4.11, the City of Bloomington has a diverse mix of zoning and land uses. This diversity provides the City with a healthy tax base.

However, it should be noted that the current land uses and the current zoning did not always match. It is not uncommon for communities to have such discrepancies. Typically, these discrepancies occur in the older parts of the City, where some of the uses that may not be permitted by current regulations existed beforehand. These are typically allowed to function under the "grandfather" clause. This may sometimes lead to difficulties with revitalization efforts in the older parts of the city and must be examined carefully during this comprehensive plan. The Historic Preservation District and the Aircraft Noise District are both overlay zones. This means they add additional regulation to the underlying zones. The zoning ordinance allows for a Traditional Neighborhood District Zone (TND) which was not yet used anywhere in the City.

Figure 4.11 Breakdown of the City's Existing Zoning

Zone Type	Zone Acres	% Of Total Zoning	City's Current Zoning	Acres	% Within Each Zone
Residential	6,797.92	47.60%	R-1A Low Density Single Family Residential District	335.90	4.94%
			R-1B Medium Density Single Family Residential District	1,835.97	27.01%
			R-1C High Density Single Family Residential District	2,629.95	38.69%
			R-1 H Single Family Manufactured Home Residence District	36.22	0.53%
			R-2 Mixed Residence District	1076.80	15.84%
			R-3A Medium Density Multiple Family Residence District	248.62	3.66%
			R-3B High Density Multiple Family Residence District	265.30	3.90%
			R-4 Manufactured Home Park District	334.00	4.91%
			GAP 1 Estate House, Manor	1.66	0.02%
			GAP 2 House, Estate House, Manor	7.00	0.10%
			GAP 3 Iconic, House, Manor, Apt on corners	22.92	0.34%
			GAP 4 Iconic, House, Manor, Rowhouse, Apt on corners	2.47	0.04%
Agricultural	384.26	2.69%	A- Agricultural District	384.26	100%
Commericial/Office	2,917.43	20.43%	B-1 Highway Business District	2178.00	74.65%
			B-2 General Business District	191.36	6.56%
			B-3 Central Business District	72.83	2.50%
			C-1 Office District	321.50	11.02%
			C-2 Neighborhood Shopping District	21.17	0.73%
			C-3 Community Regional Shopping District	128.22	4.39%
			GAP 5 Commercial, Cottage Commercial, Iconic Apartment	3.55	0.12%
Industrial	1,410.42	9.88%	M-1 Restricted Manufacturing	1196.96	84.87%
			M-2 General Manufacturing	191.78	13.60%
			W-1 Warehouse District	20.20	1.43%
			GAP 6 Warehouse District	1.45	0.10%
Special	2,723.16	19.41%	S-1 University District	64.54	2.37%
			S-2 Public Lands and Institution District	2024.58	74.35%
			S-3 Air Craft Noise Impact District (overlay)	NA	
			S-4 Historic Preservation District (overlay)	NA	
			S-5 Airport District	634.00	23.28%

Source: MCRPC

RELEVANT PLANS, STUDIES & ONGOING EFFORTS

DOWNTOWN BLOOMINGTON STRATEGY

A *Downtown Bloomington Strategy* was prepared by Farr Associates in 2013 and a draft document was adopted by the Bloomington City Council in February 2014. The study area identified in Figure 4.12 was closely studied for this project. This plan has engaged the community to identify their vision for Downtown Bloomington and what they perceive to be the biggest threat to its existence. The following general themes and concerns emerged from the community input:

- A great desire for a vibrant, welcoming, beautiful, safe, clean, and fun Downtown
- A vision for Downtown as a tourist destination; emphasis on preserving and enhancing the historic assets of Downtown
- Demand for Downtown to embrace pedestrian orientation and alternative modes of transportation, especially bicyclists and pedestrians
- Concern over economic competition with auto-oriented commercial areas in the region and need for economic development and improved assistance for small or start-up businesses
- Concerns with safety, vagrancy, and cleanliness
- Frustrations with parking availability
- Worry over a lack of leadership, management, and funding to carry out the goals of the plan

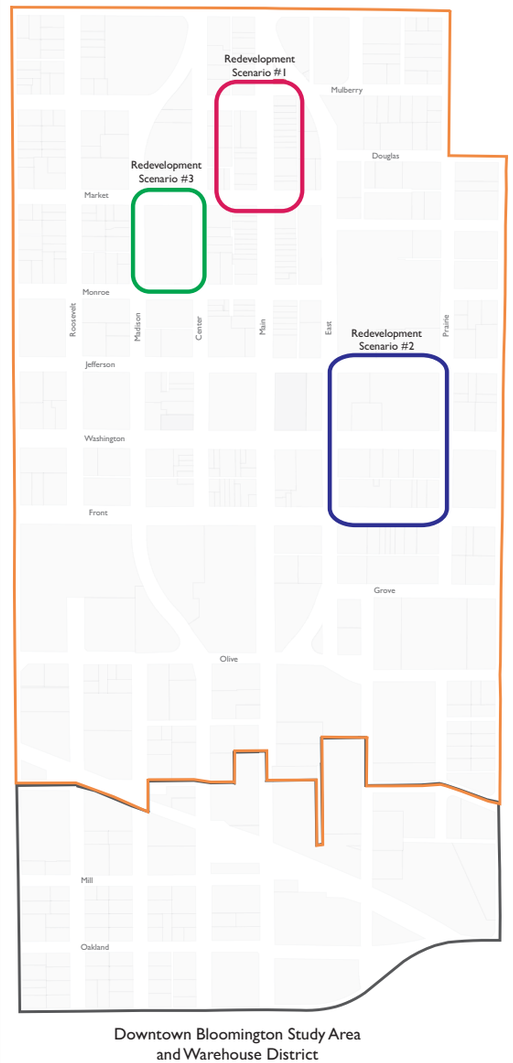
As outlined in Figure 4.12, three redevelopment scenarios were investigated. A further market analysis revealed unmet demand for retail, housing, office, and hotel space.

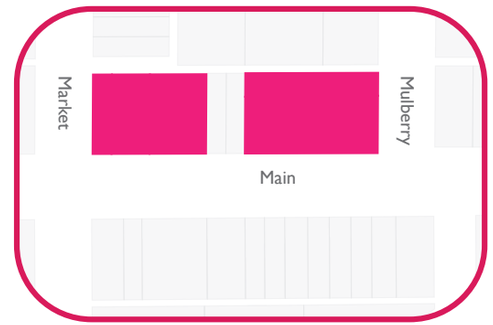
- There is current demand for an additional 500 households in Downtown and an additional 500-600 by 2030.
- There is current unmet demand for nearly 38,000 square feet of retail, with an additional 36,000 square feet by 2030.
- Market analysis identified the need to conduct a deeper study for the hotel feasibility (later conducted by the city)

Based on the community input and market analysis, the downtown strategy has developed short, mid-range, and long term goals and objectives in eight different areas.

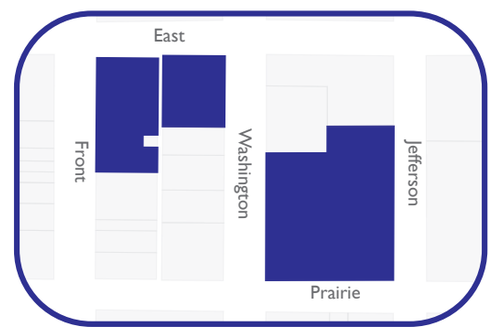
- Leadership: Engage strong leadership and achieve consensus on how to maintain, regulate, manage, and redevelop Downtown.
- Historic preservation: Protect, preserve, and restore the historic resources in Downtown
- Economic development: Build a healthy Downtown economy that offers diverse employment, retail, cultural, and entertainment opportunities.
- Land use and development: Create a successful mix of land uses, including res-

Figure 4.12 Downtown Bloomington Study Area and Warehouse District

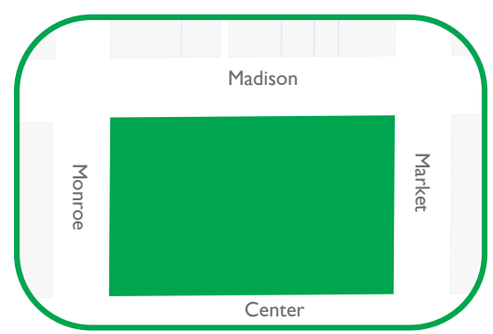




REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIO #1



REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIO #2



REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIO #3

Source: *Downtown Bloomington Strategy Report*

idential, retail, office, service and institutional, in the appropriate locations in the Downtown area

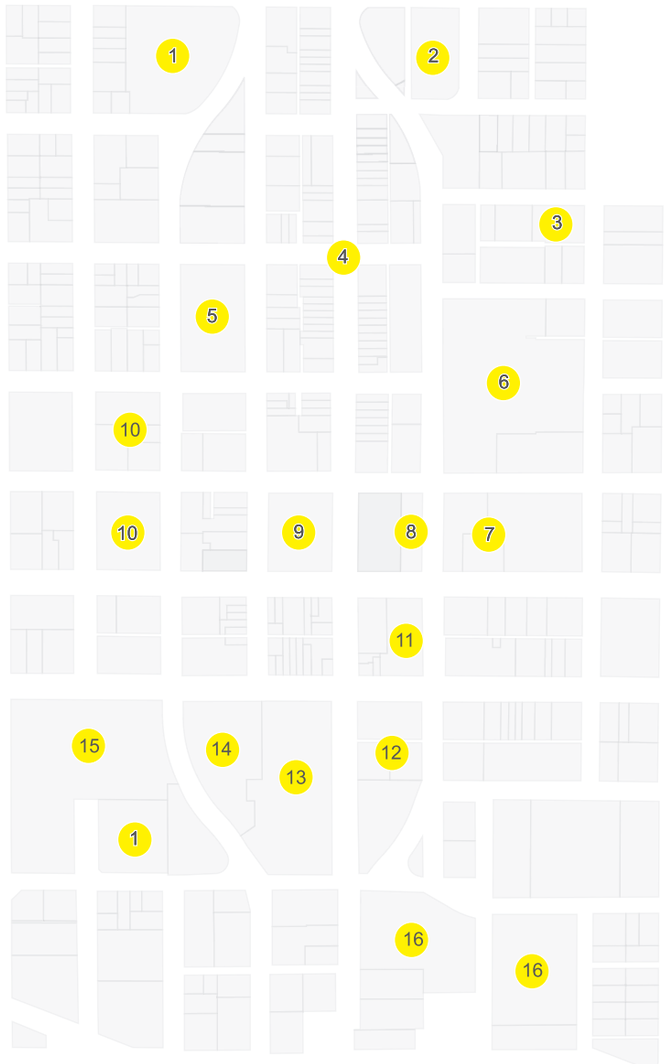
- Urban design and aesthetics: Create a unified vision for the Downtown that will encourage investment from developers and business owners, and patronage from residents
- Clean and safe: Maintain a clean, attractive, orderly, and safe downtown
- Walkability: Develop an integrated transportation system that favors pedestrians and cyclists while also providing for safe movement of people and goods via motor vehicles and alternate transportation
- Parking: Provide and manage an appropriate amount of parking to realistically meet the needs of residents and businesses without negatively effecting land use, streetscape, and use of transit

MAIN STREET: A CALL FOR INVESTMENT (2007)

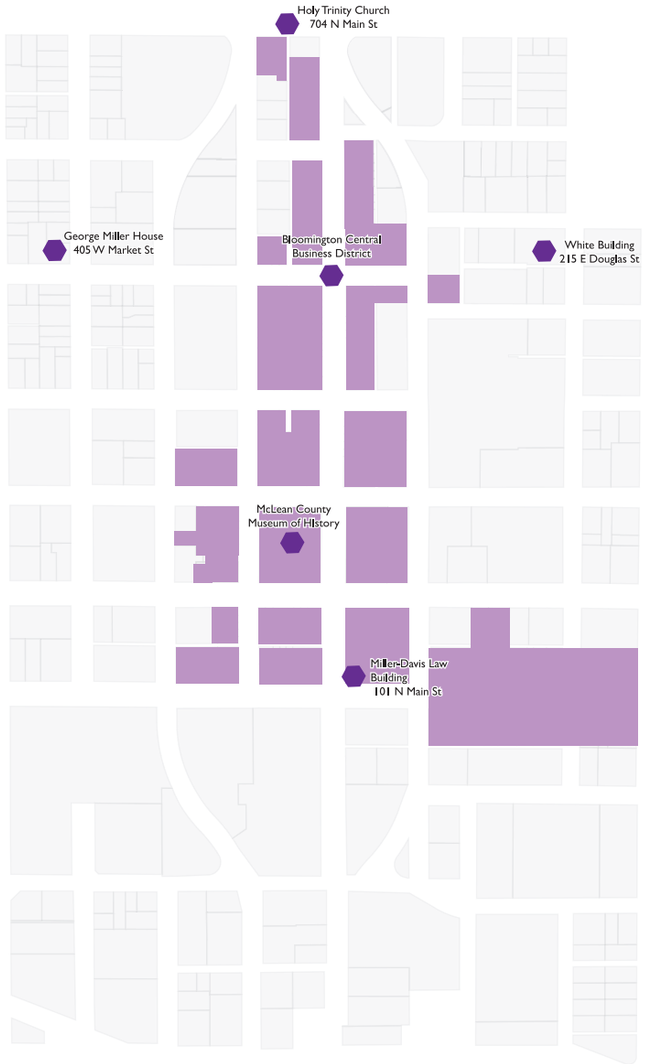
Main Street: A Call for Investment was spearheaded by the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal, Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, and Advocate BroMenn Regional Medical Center, as major stakeholders in the future of Main Street.

The Main Street plan was initiated to consider planning for Main Street along its entire path through Bloomington and Normal (from Interstate 55 on the north to Veterans Parkway on the south), considering changes to Main Street's function resulting from the growth of the community. Acknowledging that the once primary north-south ar-

Figure 4.13 Downtown Bloomington Study Area



1. Phoenix & Lincoln Towers
2. Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts
3. East Douglas Apartments
4. Mixed Use Core
5. Market Street Parking Garage
6. Second Presbyterian Church
7. PNC Bank Facilities
8. State Farm Fire Company Building
9. McLean County Museum of History
10. Pantagraph
11. Government Center
12. Lincoln Garage
13. Law & Justice Center
14. McLean County Health Department
15. U. S. Cellular Coliseum
16. City Hall, Police Department, Library Complex



Important Locations in Downtown Bloomington Study Area

National Historic District with Historic Places Downtown Bloomington Study Area

Source: *Downtown Bloomington Strategy Report, 2013*

terial and main commercial corridor has been supplanted in those roles by other facilities, it considers planning for the corridor in the context of the neighborhoods it connects and what functions it can fulfill. It also makes specific proposals regarding zoning and land use regulations, and improved mobility, including multimodal use, intersection improvements, parking, and transit availability in the Main Street corridor.

For each element of the plan, land use and transportation characteristics are identified for sections of the corridor within Bloomington. In examining the existing conditions on Main Street in Bloomington, the study defined zones of the corridor based on adjacent uses. Recommendations for land use regulation and development policy were based on the zones, which include the following as shown in Figure 4.14:

- Division Street south to Locust Street, largely influenced by IWU;
- Locust Street south to Taylor Street, encompassing Downtown Bloomington, and examined in greater detail in a the Downtown Bloomington Strategy
- Taylor Street south to Veterans' Parkway, South Bloomington, and areas with residential and commercial uses.

The plan's recommendations for the Main Street Corridor in Bloomington fall in the categories noted above, and include:

- Development and proper location of new housing of various types

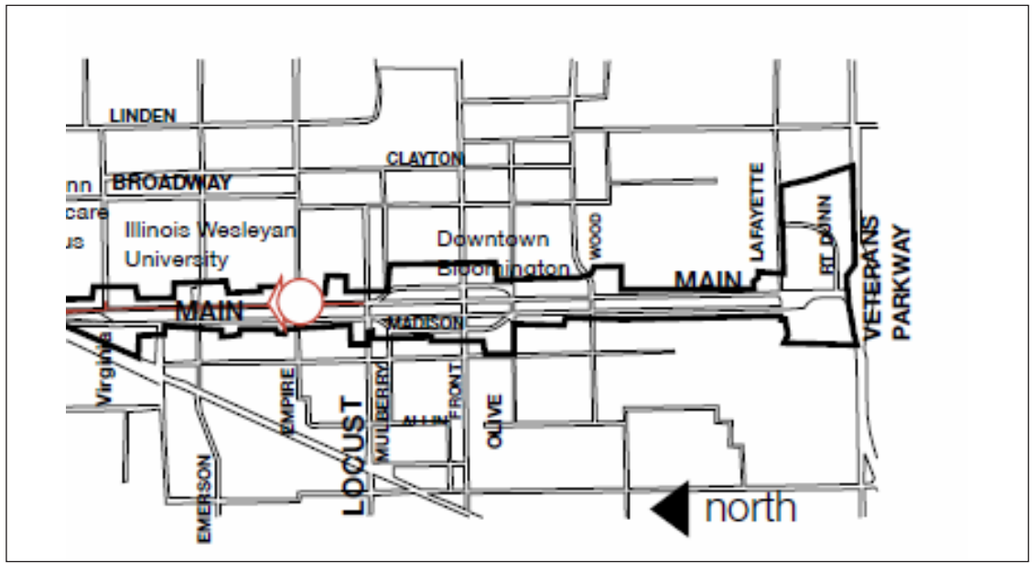


Figure 4.14 Division through Veterans Parkway Study Area
Source: *Main Street: A Call for Investment*



Intersection of Empire and Main Streets as it currently exists.

Figure 4.15 Existing Conditions at North Bound Empire Street & Main Street
Source: *Main Street: A Call for Investment*



Intersection of Empire and Main, if developed as part of a mixed-use commercial node along the Corridor.

Figure 4.16 Recommendations for Improvements at North Bound Empire Street & Main Street
Source: *Main Street: A Call for Investment*

- Mixed use development with retail and housing.
- Concentrated retail nodes to enhance walkability
- Better auto-oriented development.
- Improved community gateways
- Mobility improvement through multi-modal street design, including bicycles
- Parking improvements
- Improved access to transit, and promotion as an alternative
- Pedestrian access and circulation
- Street redesign

The City has implemented some of the recommendations for transportation-focused improvements, such as bicycle accommodations Downtown. The City plans further implementation through the bicycle plan under development and other initiatives.

The City and other participants conducted a study regarding the feasibility of recommended improvements to the transportation elements of the Main Street plan and the *Main Street Transportation Improvement Feasibility Study.*

HOTEL FEASIBILITY STUDY (2014)

The City hired the services of HVS Consulting to conduct the feasibility study for the hotel and the conference center in Downtown Bloomington. This study indicated:

- An unaccommodated demand, especially during the weekdays
- A $14.2 million gap in funding that indicates this cannot be a profitable private-only venture.
- If moving forward, the City must find a way to fund the gap.
- A caution with changing market conditions was noted.

RECENT NEWS


PANTAGRAPH.COM

67° Clear

Weekly Forecast

News | Sports | Opinion | Obituaries | Photos | Entertainment | Life | Contests | Deals

Hot Topics: Women of Distinction • Holiday Trash Pickup • B-N Garage Sales • Heartland Wind Turbine • Missing Girl

City, new mayor focus on downtown

Recommend 0 Tweet 0 +1 0 Pin it Share Print Email

LORI ANN COOK-NEISLER, The Pantagraph

Alderman Rob Fazzini, right, talks with Mayor Tari Renner in January 2014.

Buy Now

March 16, 2014 7:00 am • Rachel Wells rwells@pantagraph.com (0) Comments

BLOOMINGTON - Last year was one of new faces, new plans and renewed energy for the City of Bloomington, as an April election brought a new leader and a wave of new initiatives.

Excerpt from The Pantagraph, March 16, 2014


PANTAGRAPH.COM

67° Clear

Weekly Forecast

News | Sports | Opinion | Obituaries | Photos | Entertainment | Life | Contests | Deals

Alexander Lumber can help make your Dream Home a Reality! Click he

Hot Topics: Women of Distinction • Holiday Trash Pickup • B-N Garage Sales • Heartland Wind Turbine • Missing Girl

Home / News / Local News

City amends liquor code, creates entertainment, stadium licenses

Recommend 2 Tweet 1 +1 0 Share Print Email

December 16, 2013 8:15 pm • By Rachel Wells | rwells@pantagraph.com (1) Comments

BLOOMINGTON — The city's liquor code will more clearly define the types of businesses allowed to sell liquor after the City Council approved changes that also added two new license classifications.

The City Council met Monday evening, a week earlier than usual due to the Christmas holiday next week. No meeting is scheduled for Dec. 23.

Aldermen in an 8-0 vote approved the changes designed in part to better accommodate businesses selling alcohol that are neither taverns nor restaurants. Ward 3 Alderman Mboka Mwilambwe was not present.

Mayor Tari Renner, who proposed the measure, assured aldermen the changes would not change the "de facto moratorium" on new tavern licenses downtown but will help eliminate businesses with restaurant licenses that operate more like taverns.

Excerpt from The Pantagraph, December 16, 2013

5

ECONOMICS

All aspects of life in the City are affected by the economy. The economic outcome of any city over the span of the next 20 to 25 years is uncertain. However, such uncertainty does not negate the need to understand the past trends and make meaningful forecasts into the future to accommodate growth in an economically sustainable way. This chapter discusses the City's past and present employment, workforce, industries and other economic characteristics.

40,937
Total Labor Force

7.4%
Unemployment Rate

Labor Shed
greater than
50
miles

Centrally
located and
Connected



KEY FINDINGS

The City of Bloomington and the Bloomington-Normal metro area generally enjoy a stable economy with consistently lower unemployment rates than the rest of the state. This can be attributed to the City's strategic location in the state, its accessibility via surface and air transportation, and its major employers and highly-skilled workforce.

The top 20 major employers in the area are a mix of sectors including finance, business and professional service, education, health, government, and leisure and hospitality. In 2014, the top 20 employers accounted for 32,032 full time jobs to the area economy. State Farm accounts for 20% of the local area employment and its future outlook is key to the area's economy.

Bloomington and Normal share a fair amount of economic activity. Of the 56,352 workers employed in Bloomington, 14.5% live in Normal and of the 33,304 jobs held by people living in Bloomington, 17% are in Normal.

Due to its well paying jobs, strategic location, and accessibility via road and rail transportation, the Bloomington-Normal area's primary laborshed is central Illinois and the secondary laborshed extends as far as Chicago. The new high speed rail project, once completed, has immense potential to expand the primary laborshed.

EMPLOYMENT

The condition of a region's labor force is an important indicator of the health of its economy. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the City of Bloomington's labor force in 2013 was 40,937 and its unemployment rate was 7.4%. The Bloomington-Normal metro area had a labor force of 88,052 and an unemployment rate of 7.3% during that time. In line with population growth, Bloomington's labor force is growing, and has increased by 6.34% from 2004 to 2013. However, there is a decline in the labor force in the Bloomington-Normal metro area since 2010. This could be due to aging workforce, increase in disability, people moving out of the area or completely dropping out of the labor force. Decreasing labor force is a matter of concern for local economic development.

The City of Bloomington and the Bloomington-Normal metro area enjoy a stable economy and consistently lower unemployment rates than that of the state. Several central Illinois communities, along with the state and the nation all had high unemployment rates following the recent recession (2007-2009). As illustrated in Figure 5.1, Bloomington and the metro area were relatively stable during that time frame.

Bloomington's stable economy can be attributed to its strategic location, accessibility, major employers and highly skilled workforce. Since its incorporation, Bloomington's location and accessibility significantly contributed to its growth and prosperity (see Historic Context chapter). The City is centrally located within the State of Illinois, approximately midway between Chicago and St. Louis, and between Champaign-Urbana and Peoria. The region is served by Interstate highways 39, 55, and 74 along with three state and U.S. highways. The transportation system for people and goods is further enhanced by the Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA).

Another important consideration in assessing a community's economy is the type of employment available in the region and the future outlook for employers. As illustrated in Figure 5.4, the majority of the area residents are employed in the professional and business services sectors. The Bloomington-Normal Metro areas largest employers are a mix of the finance and professional services sector, government sector, education and health sector, and the leisure and hospitality sector. During the 1st quarter of 2014 B-N By the Numbers event, the out-

Figure 5.1
Labor Force in Bloomington, Bloomington-Normal Metro Area and Illinois, 2004-2013

	Bloomington		B-N metro area		Illinois	
Year	Labor Force	Unemp Rate	Labor Force	Unemp Rate	Labor Force	Unemp Rate
2004	38,497	4.6	85,061	4.5	6,365,454	6.2
2005	39,320	4.3	86,919	4.3	6,404,298	5.8
2006	40,108	3.7	88,317	3.6	6,526,568	4.6
2007	40,831	4.0	89,780	4.0	6,660,238	5.1
2008	41,208	5.2	90,412	5.0	6,672,681	6.4
2009	41,761	7.4	91,335	7.1	6,598,735	10.0
2010	43,073	7.9	92,401	7.8	6,616,840	10.5
2011	42,440	7.3	91,096	7.2	6,575,390	9.7
2012	41,783	7.2	89,843	7.1	6,569,711	8.9
2013	40,937	7.4	88,052	7.3	6,554,200	9.2

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

Figure 5.2 Major Employers in B-N Metro Area

Top 20 Major Employers, 2014	
Company Name	Total FTE
State Farm Insurance Companies	14,765
Illinois State University	3,289
COUNTRY Financial	1,949
Unit 5 Schools	1,576
Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing	1,251
Tek Systems	1,131
OSF St. Joseph Medical Center	1,012
McLean County	812
Advocate BroMenn Medical Center	791
City of Bloomington	765
Afni, Inc.	705
District 87 Schools	703
Heritage Enterprises	525
Illinois Wesleyan University	471
Nestle USA	450
GROWMARK, Inc.	446
Bridgestone/Firestone Off-Road Tire Co.	435
Town of Normal	371
Heartland Community College	308
The Baby Fold	277
Total	32,032

Note: Companies highlighted in red are located in Bloomington.
Source: BN EDC

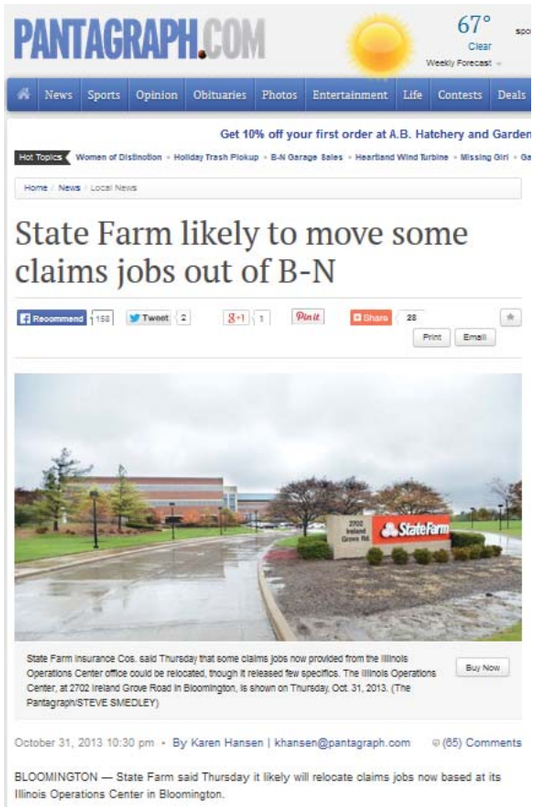
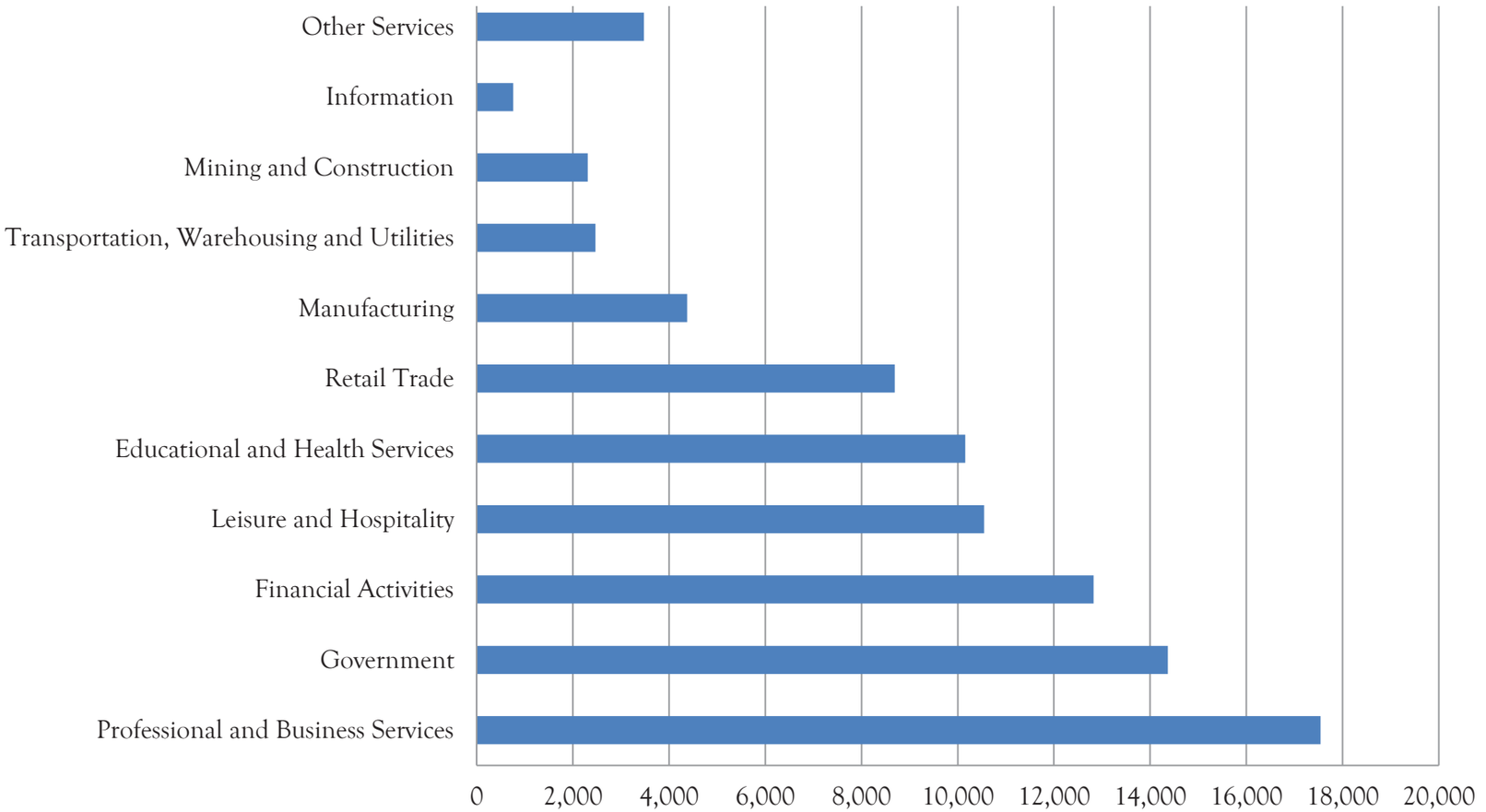


Figure 5.3 Excerpt from The Pantagraph, October 31, 2013

Figure 5.4 Employment by Industry, Bloomington-Normal Metro Area; 2013



	Professional and Business Services	Government	Financial Activities	Leisure and Hospitality	Educational and Health Services	Retail Trade	Manufacturing	Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	Mining and Construction	Information	Other Services
Series1	17,542	14,367	12,825	10,550	10,158	8,692	4,375	2,467	2,308	758	3,475

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

look on the leisure and hospitality sector was positive and that of the Government and the Business & Professional Services sectors was negative in Bloomington-Normal metro area.

The education sector, besides directly providing a substantial number of jobs, offers a wealth of resources and training for residents and area employers. Figure 5.2 lists the area's top 20 employers. Seven of the top 20 major employers are publicly funded.

The top 20 employers together provide 32,032 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs in the area. In recent months, State Farm Insurance Companies announced to move some jobs out of the Bloomington- Normal area. With 14,765 direct full time jobs, State Farm Insurance Companies is by far the largest employer in the area and its future outlook is key to the area economy.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) for classifying the industries of employment. The following definition is used for the word "industry": "An industry consists of a group of establishments primarily engaged in producing or handling the same product or group of products or in rendering the same services."

LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Location selection for new businesses and expansion plans for existing businesses can be heavily influenced by labor force issues, particularly the availability of skilled labor, training of the workforce, and relocation of key employees. These factors are becoming increasingly more important in terms

of maintaining economic competitiveness.

The Census Bureau defines the labor force as the population 16 years or over. A good understanding of the labor force, where they live and work and how they commute all have implications on the community's economy. Due to lack of availability of current data to analyze these characteristics, Census 2000 selected economic characteristics tables and the Census 2001 origin destination tables were used.

INFLOW/OUTFLOW

As can be seen in the graphic below, of the 56,352 employed in Bloomington, 19,434 or 34% live and work in Bloomington. The remaining 76% come from outside the City. However, when observing the inflow and outflow patterns of the County, 62.41% of all the 83,730 employed live and work in the County. This, along with the laborshed and commute shed analysis, suggests the twin cities of Bloomington and Normal share a fair amount of economic activity. It is very important for Bloomington's comprehensive planning process to recognize that its competitiveness is augmented by its metro region.

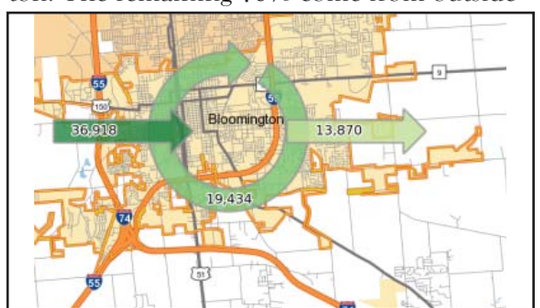


Figure 5.5 Inflow/Outflow Analysis for Bloomington

Worker Flows

- 36,918 - Employed in Selection Area, Live Outside
- 13,870 - Live in Selection Area, Employed Outside
- 19,434 - Employed and Live in Selection Area

Data Source U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2011).

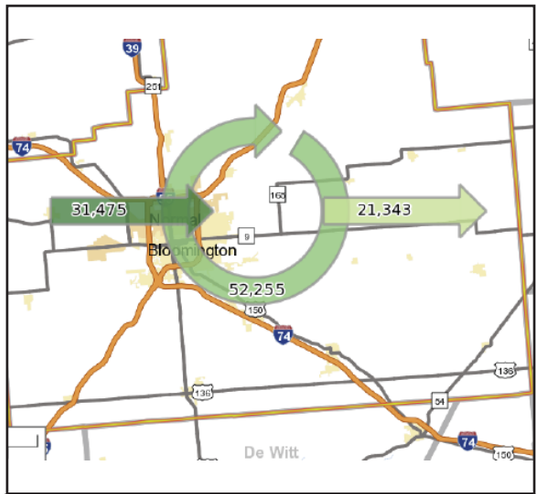


Figure 5.6 Inflow/Outflow Analysis for McLean County.

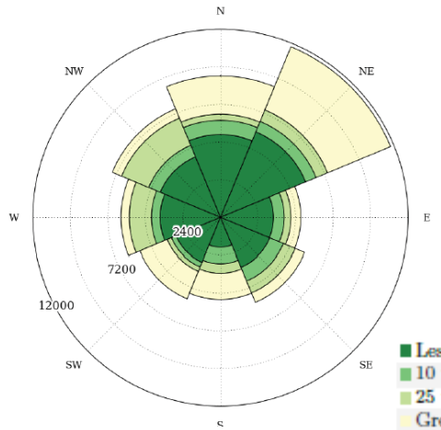
Worker Flows

- 31,475 - Employed in Selection Area, Live Outside
- 21,343 - Live in Selection Area, Employed Outside
- 52,255 - Employed and Live in Selection Area

Data Source U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2011).

Figure 5.7 LABOR SHED AND COMMUTE SHED ANALYSIS

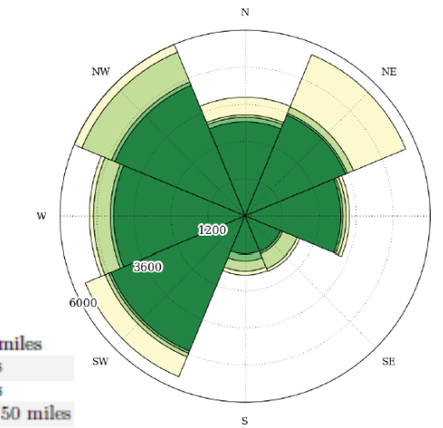
PEOPLE WORKING IN BLOOMINGTON WHERE DO THEY LIVE?



Distance	2011 Count	2011 Share
Total Primary Jobs	56,352	100.0
Less than 10 miles	30,982	55.0
10 to 24 miles	5,955	10.6
25 to 50 miles	6,620	11.7
Greater than 50 miles	12,795	22.7

	2011	
	Count	Share
Total Primary Jobs	56,352	100.0%
	Count	Share
Bloomington city, IL	19,434	34.5%
Normal town, IL	8,156	14.5%
Chicago city, IL	1,078	1.9%
Peoria city, IL	777	1.4%
Heyworth village, IL	769	1.4%
Le Roy city, IL	653	1.2%
Pekin city, IL	400	0.7%
Springfield city, IL	399	0.7%
Decatur city, IL	372	0.7%
Champaign city, IL	371	0.7%
All Other Locations	23,943	42.5%

PEOPLE LIVING IN BLOOMINGTON WHERE DO THEY WORK?



Distance	2011 Count	2011 Share
Total Primary Jobs	33,304	100.0
Less than 10 miles	25,683	77.1
10 to 24 miles	863	2.6
25 to 50 miles	2,941	8.8
Greater than 50 miles	3,817	11.5

	2011	
	Count	Share
Total Primary Jobs	33,304	100.0%
Bloomington city, IL	19,434	58.4%
Normal town, IL	5,669	17.0%
Peoria city, IL	633	1.9%
Chicago city, IL	473	1.4%
Springfield city, IL	446	1.3%
Champaign city, IL	309	0.9%
East Peoria city, IL	262	0.8%
Decatur city, IL	250	0.8%
Morton village, IL	203	0.6%
Pontiac city, IL	140	0.4%
All Other Locations	5,485	16.5%

Data Source for Inflow/OutFlow analysis, commute distance and directionality analysis: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2011).

Figure 5.8 City of Bloomington Work Area Profile, 2011

City of Bloomington Work Area Profile Report 2011		
	Count	Share
Total Primary Jobs	56,352	100.0%
Jobs by Worker Age		
Age 29 or younger	12,300	21.8%
Age 30 to 54	34,213	60.7%
Age 55 or older	9,839	17.5%
Jobs by Earnings		
$1,250 per month or less	9,859	17.5%
$1,251 to $3,333 per month	17,570	31.2%
More than $3,333 per month	28,923	51.3%
Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector		
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	100	0.2%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	0.0%
Utilities	125	0.2%
Construction	1,525	2.7%
Manufacturing	1,713	3.0%
Wholesale Trade	1,572	2.8%
Retail Trade	4,319	7.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	884	1.6%
Information	614	1.1%
Finance and Insurance	11,911	21.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	393	0.7%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,769	4.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	10,226	18.1%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	4,495	8.0%
Educational Services	1,962	3.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	5,655	10.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	470	0.8%
Accommodation and Food Services	4,421	7.8%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	1,806	3.2%
Public Administration	1,391	2.5%

Data Source: Census

LABORSHED AND COMMUTE SHED ANALYSIS

A laborshed is defined as the area or region from which an employment center draws its commuting workers. A commute shed is defined as the area or region where people living in a certain community are willing to travel to work.

While Bloomington's primary laborshed and commute shed is within central Illinois, both these areas extend well over 50 miles. Currently, Bloomington draws nearly 2% of its workforce from Chicago while 1.5% of people living in Bloomington work in Chicago. Once the high speed rail project is completed, the workforce commuting to and from Chicago may increase.

Figure 5.9 Labor Force Commuting Information

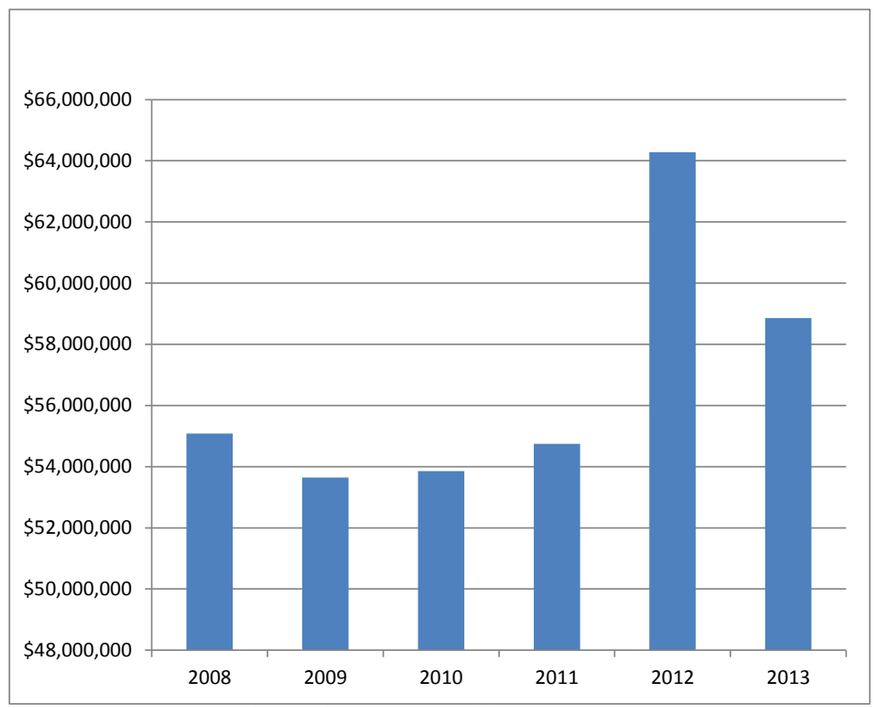
COMMUTING TO WORK		
Workers 16 years and over	100	39,354
Car, truck, or van – drove alone	81.3	79.90%
Car, truck, or van – carpooled	10.3	9.90%
Public transportation (including taxicab)	1.4	2.00%
Walked	3.5	3.70%
Other means	0.8	1.50%

Source: Census 2000

COMMUTE

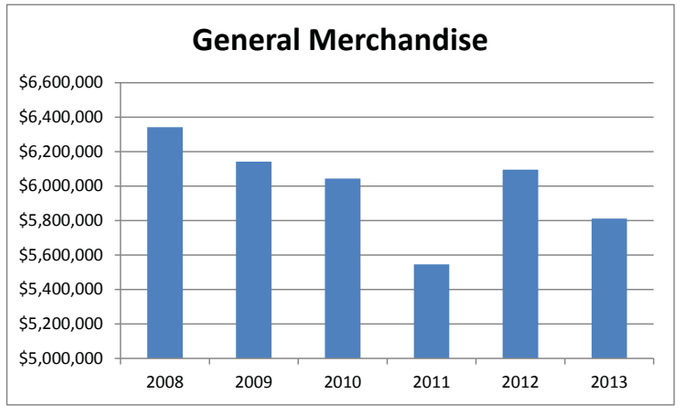
As shown in Figure 5.9, nearly 80%

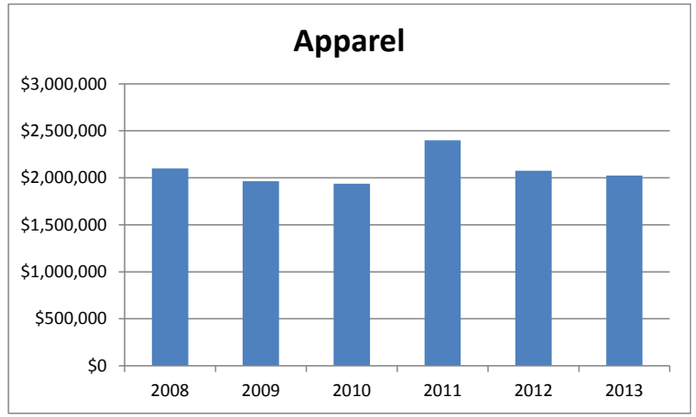
Figure 5.10 City of Bloomington Retail Tax Receipts, State Portion only

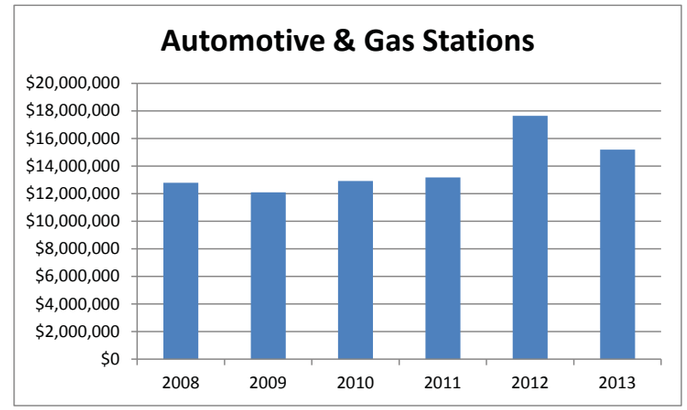


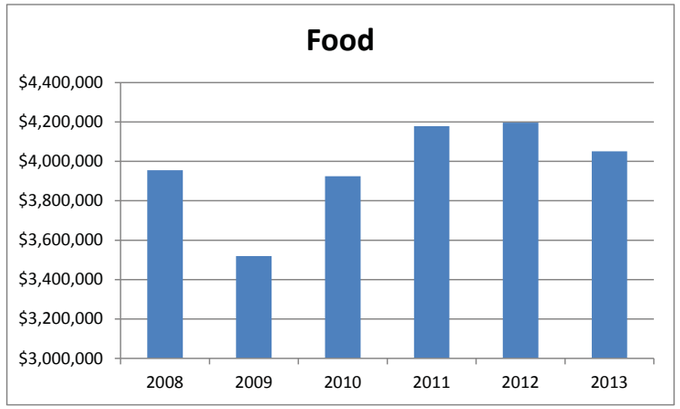
Source: Illinois Department of Revenue; Compiled by BN EDC

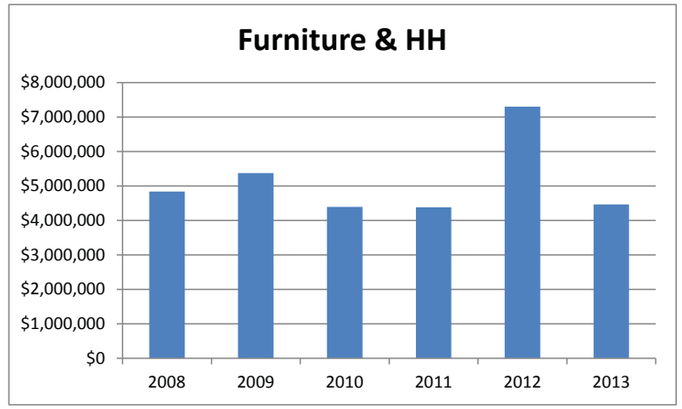
Figure 5.11 City of Bloomington Retail Sales by Sector

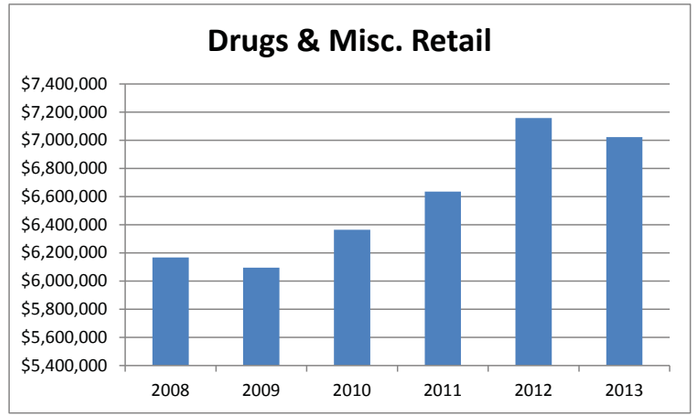


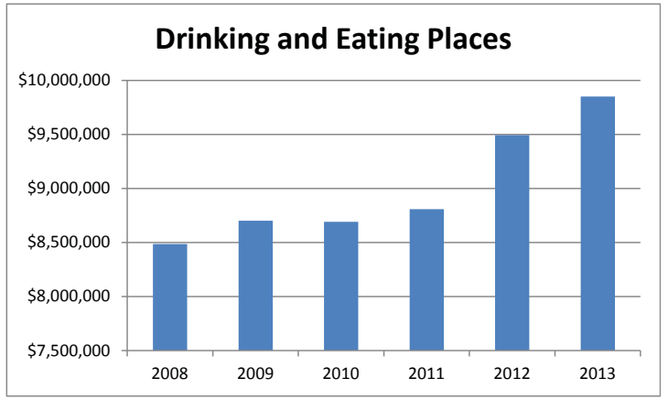


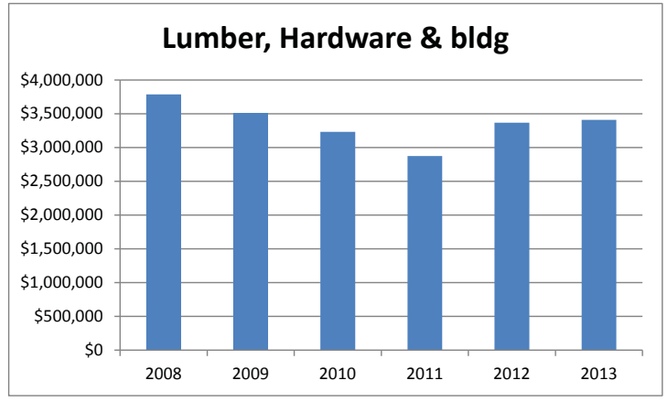


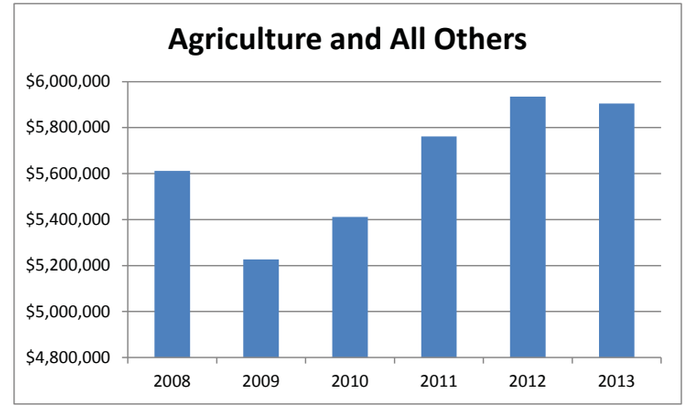












Source: Illinois Department of Revenue; Compiled by BN EDC

Chart 5.13 New Construction and Resale Value in McLean County



Source: Bloomington Normal Area Realtors Association; Compiled by: BN EDC

Chart 5.14 New Construction and Resale Units in McLean County



Source: Bloomington Normal Area Realtors Association; Compiled by: BN EDC

of Bloomington's workforce drove alone to work. This trend of driving alone puts immense burden on our transportation system and land use.

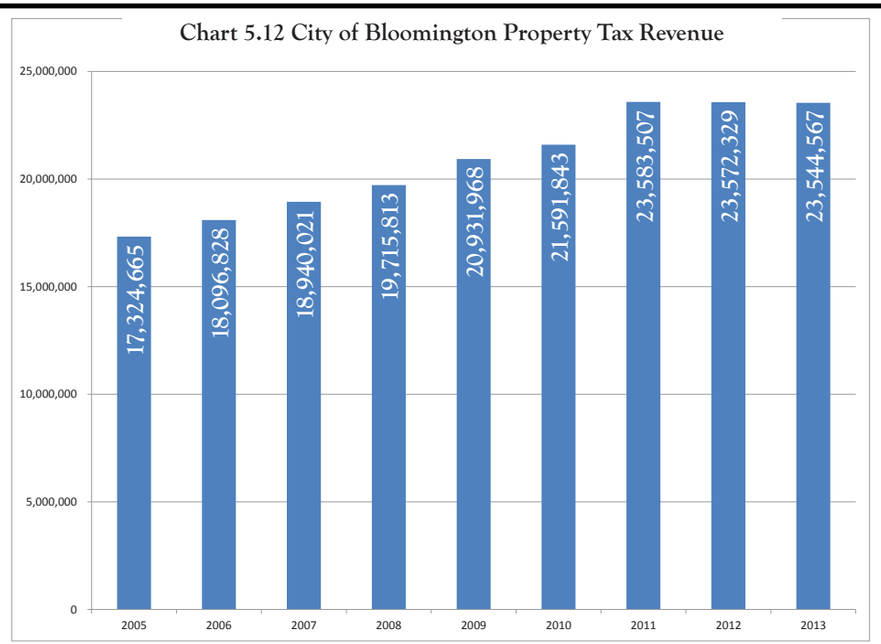
SALES TAX

Sales tax is one of the most important revenue sources for the City. As can be observed in Figure 5.10, Bloomington's 2013 sales tax revenue is lower than that of 2012. According to Ken Springer of the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council, it is not a major concern. "2012 is an outlying year when compared to that of the previous years. The sales of furniture and household items were much higher, which happens to be a one-time purchase. Higher automotive sales in 2012 might have been the result of people holding back on such purchases during the recession. 2013 sales tax revenue is in line with the past trends."

PROPERTY TAX REVENUE

Property tax revenue is one of the major revenue streams for the City. According to the City of Bloomington, 2012-2013 Comprehensive Annual Finance Report (CAFR), property tax revenues made up nearly 29% of the general revenue stream. As shown in Figure 5.12, these funds have been flat since 2011. Given the trends in development, this should be expected.

Chart 5.12 City of Bloomington Property Tax Revenue



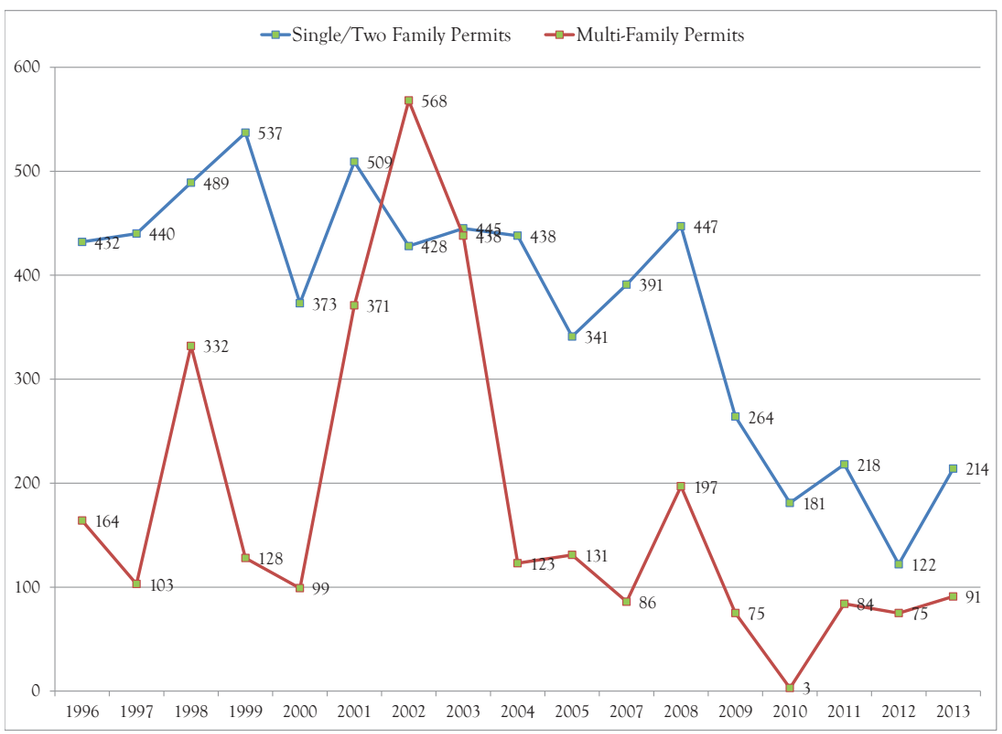
Source: City of Bloomington CAFR

HOUSING ACTIVITY

Housing activity is one of the strongest economic indicators in the community. As discussed in the housing chapter, Bloomington and the metro area enjoyed a relatively stable economy during the recent economic recession. However, it was not completely immune to the downturn in the housing market.

As illustrated in Figures 5.13 through 5.15, following a trend of decline, the number of new units built and the number of resales on existing units in the area are increasing again. Chart 5.16 also indicates a decline in annual mortgage defaults since 2010.

Figure 5.15 Bloomington New Building Permits, 1996-2013



Source: City of Bloomington, PACE Dept.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

The City of Bloomington uses an economic development incentive package to attract or retain high quality developments to the city that are consistent with City's comprehensive land use and strategic plans. Incentives are application based and will be evaluated on a project by project basis using criteria such as return on investment (ROI) to the City and impact of the proposed development on the surrounding area.

As illustrated in Figure 5.20, Bloomington currently targets six areas in the City for specific economic development efforts. The City also has an enterprise zone managed by the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council. E-zones are contiguous boundaries of no more than 15 square miles that afford businesses located within the boundaries a discrete package of tax incentives. These incentives include:

- A state sales tax exemption on building materials
- A boost to the Illinois investment tax credit



Figure 5.17 Enterprise Zone - I-55/174
Source: B-N EDC

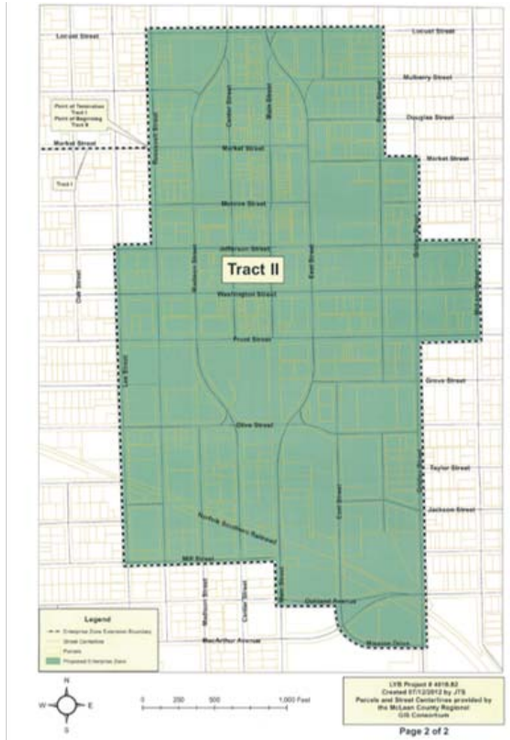
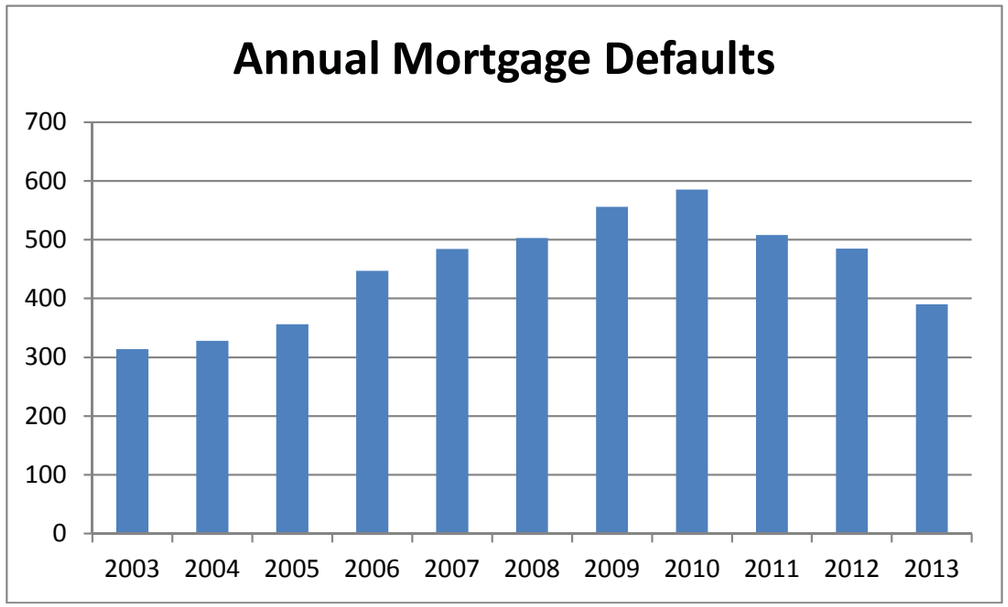


Figure 5.18 Enterprise Zone - Downtown
Source: B-N EDC



Figure 5.19 Enterprise Zone - Empire Street/Route 9
Source: B-N EDC

Figure 5.16 Annual Mortgage Defaults



Source: McLean County Recorders Office; Compiled by: BN EDC

Figure 5.20 City of Bloomington Economic Development Target Area Map



Source: City of Bloomington Economic Development Department

RELEVANT PLANS, STUDIES & ONGOING EFFORTS

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON STRATEGIC PLAN

The goals of this plan include:

- Initiate retail retention and recruitment efforts to expand the commercial tax base and relieve the tax burden on residential tax payers
- Actively collaborate with regional economic development organizations and efforts to promote capital investment and job creation
- Establish Downtown Bloomington Strategy and relevant priorities
- Consider the economic development ramifications when planning for public services and facilities
- Improve the financial viability of properties and programs owned, managed or funded by the City (tax payer dollars)
- Enhance the overall quality of life in the City to in turn promote economic growth
- Ensure the economic development investments result in increased employment and add economic value to the City

FORGING AHEAD (EDC'S STRATEGIC PLAN)

EDC's first five year initiative *Navigating a New Direction* (2006-2011) helped create or retain 1,000 local jobs and more than $1 billion in new capital investment into McLean County. To continue that momentum they are now implementing their second five-year initiative *Forging Forward*, which started in 2012.

The four major strategies of this 3.5 million dollar initiative include:

- Targeted new business recruitment
- Existing business assistance, support and expansion
- Community enhancement and advocacy
- Economic information and communication

KEY METRICS

- Assist in creation of 1,500 new jobs, with more than 50% of the positions paying at or above the McLean County median wage of $34,736 annually
- Attract five new basic sector/interstate commerce companies into the area
- Assist 100 existing businesses in expansion, support and retention of jobs
- Facilitate $150 million in new capital investment

Current Resources provided/facilitated by EDC:

- Site Location Assistance: Location One Information Service (LOIS)
- Relocation assistance
- Financing and incentive program
- McLean County Revolving Loan Fund
- Micro-Enterprise Loan Fund, which ranges from $1,000 to $15,000
- Venture funds and angel capital
- Partnership programs with the SBA and other funding groups
- Enterprise zone
- Specialized local and state tax incentives
- Workforce training in collaboration with Heartland Community College's Workforce Development Center
- Research assistance
- B-N By The Numbers - quarterly update on economic progress of McLean County
- CEO Coffee - monthly event highlights a different topic each month as it relates to our local economy
- Community Leaders Breakfast - an annual event celebrating the leadership, the community and the accomplishments of EDC

CERTIFIED WORK READY COMMUNITY

The McLean County CWRC initiative is a partnership between ACT, Inc. and several local entities including the McLean County Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Council, McLean County Community COMPACT, McLean County Unit 5 School District, Regional Office of Education 17 and Heartland Community College. The initiative is a county-wide adoption of ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate Plus. McLean County is the first county in the State of Illinois to receive Certified Work-Ready Community status by ACT.

NCRC Plus helps individuals document and improve their job-related skills and paves the way to better jobs and higher wages. It also helps employers make better hiring decisions, resulting in reduced training time and cost, lower turnover and higher productivity. Lastly, it helps us as a community measure and close skill gaps and market the quality of our workforce to outside companies.

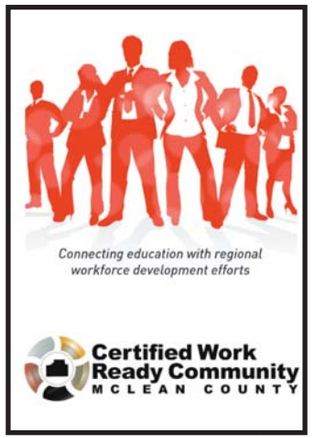


Figure 5.21 CWRC Pamphlet

ONE VOICE

One Voice is a non-partisan coalition created by the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council (EDC) in 2006. It is a pro-community campaign that brings together leaders from the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal, McLean County, surrounding rural communities, labor, local educational institutions and local private businesses in support of specific economic development projects and issues in McLean County. The goal of the campaign is to make McLean County a stronger economic force

and a better place to live. Each spring, the One Voice Task Force travels to Washington, D.C. to meet with our congressional delegation. Prior to the trip, the delegation selects one to three issues or projects within McLean County to focus on for each year's trip. The delegation then meets with legislators and agency officials in order to request funding, information, support or other types of assistance for each of the selected projects/issues.

Past projects and policies have included:

2014: Mental Health

- Funding for a short-term residential crisis facility
- Support for psychiatric services
- Housing needs

2013: Agribusiness Policy

- Provide agricultural producers with a clear road map to the future when it comes to tax policy
- Invest in critical infrastructure that grows the agricultural economy. Investment and improvement of locks and dam upgrades on the river systems are vital
- Passage of a multi-year Farm Bill is essential

2012: Transportation Policy

- Growth of rail systems by creating high speed rail corridor, improve freight rail, and connect rail to surrounding communities and the Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA)
- Enhance funding for the maintenance of roads, highways and bridges
- Develop and maintain mass transit, bicycle and pedestrian opportunities within Bloomington-Normal
- Promote the Central Illinois Regional Airport (CIRA) to retain current businesses, and attract new business

2011 Projects

- McLean County Recovery Court
- ISU/EDC Business Incubator
- Community-Scale Food Waste Composting
- "Encounter on the Prairie" Exhibit Renewal
- Bloomington rail yard redevelopment
- Historic Route 66 Trail System

2010 Projects

- MyEntre.Net Rural Entrepreneurship Program
- Village of Downs/City of Bloomington Water Project
- Community-Scale Food Waste Composting
- U.S. Highway 136 Development

2009 Projects

- Village of Downs/City of Bloomington Water Project
- Lexington Wastewater Treatment System ($400,000 received to date)
- McLean County Business Incubator ($795,000 received to date)
- McLean County Museum of History Exhibit
- MyEntre.Net Rural Entrepreneurship Program
- Normal Multi-Modal Transportation Center ($1,000,000 received to date, plus $22 million TIGER grant)

2008 Projects

- Bloomington Regional Creativity Center for the Arts ($338,000 received to date)
- Lexington Wastewater Treatment System
- McLean County Business Incubator
- Normal Multi-Modal Transportation Center

2007 Projects

- Bloomington Cultural District
- Heartland Community College Workforce Development Center
- McLean County Business Incubator
- Normal Multi-Modal Transportation Center

LIGHT-READY GROUP

The Light-Ready Consortium is a technology cluster group comprising top IT and IT-related stakeholders in McLean County. The Consortium's mission is to position Bloomington-Normal as the premier technology ecosystem in Illinois for connecting, attracting, retaining and developing world class technology talent and opportunities. The consortium is developing strategies to: 1) market and brand our community's technology assets, 2) connect community stakeholders and engage in joint opportunities around technology, 3) educate via creating, coordinating and hosting technology-related programming, and 4) drive key technology initiatives forward for the betterment of McLean County.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The recent recession had many negative impacts on communities across the state and nation. Central Illinois communities are no exception. With the economy improving, many of these communities are working harmoniously and coming back stronger than before.

While Bloomington-Normal and McLean County enjoyed a relatively stable economy during the recession, the area was not immune. To be competitive, the metro area is in need of a unified vision to maintain its competitive edge.

A public/private partnership effort to develop an economic development strategy to make the Bloomington-Normal area resilient in turbulent economic times and more competitive for new and expanding capital investment and job growth is underway.

This effort is expected to be conducted during the same time frame as the Bloomington comprehensive plan process. These efforts should be coordinated with each other.

RECENT NEWS



Figure 5.22 Excerpt from The Pantagraph, February 25, 2014

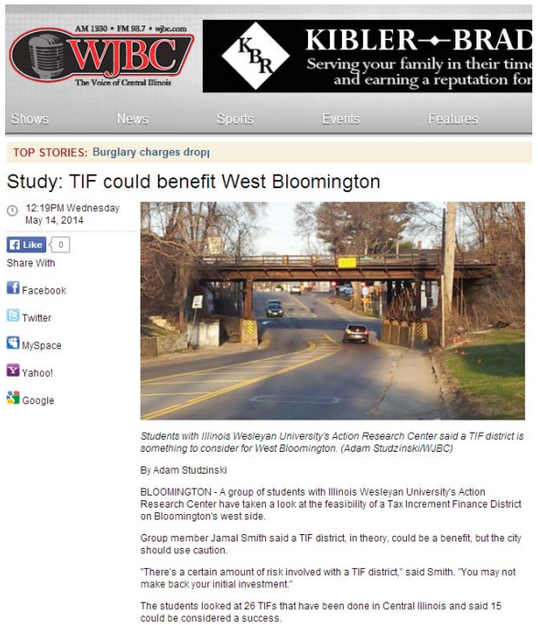


Figure 5.23 Excerpt from wjbc.com, May 14, 2014



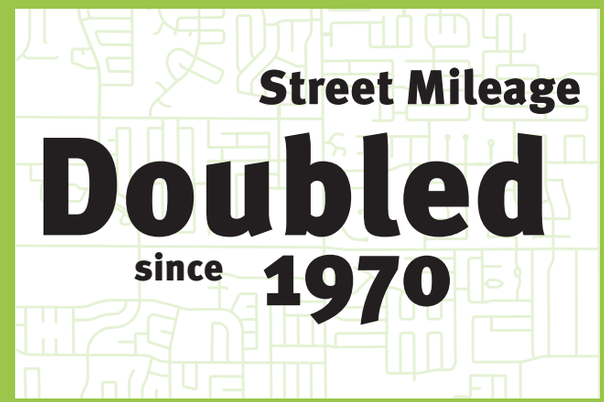
Figure 5.24 Excerpt from The Pantagraph April 28, 2014

6

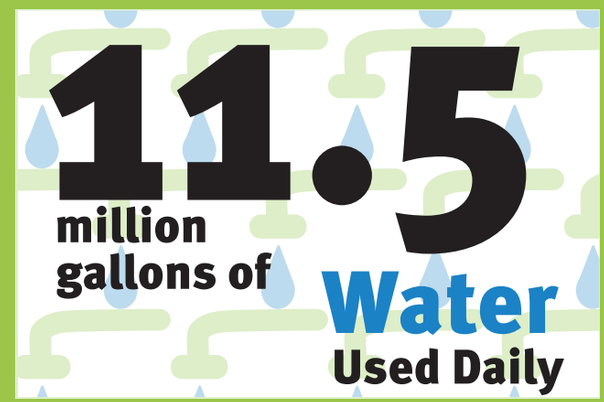
INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is the backbone for development of the community. Bloomington's physical infrastructure is its greatest resource, representing economically useful capital. It is also a challenge because it is aging. As is the case in communities across the United States, the City has underinvested for decades, deferring maintenance, replacement, and necessary upgrades.

This chapter discusses public infrastructure such as roads, sanitary and storm sewers, water supply, public transit, railroads, and the airport. It will also discuss private utilities such as electric, gas, telecommunications and fiber optic networks operated in the City.



70%
of streets rank at or above **Fair Rating** street condition



664
miles of **Sewers**

KEY FINDINGS

Like many communities across the country, Bloomington is confronting the key issue about infrastructure management – it must consider not only the initial cost of construction, but also the cost of maintenance over the life of the infrastructure element. The current system must be maintained, and system expansion must also be maintained. The earlier these aggregated costs are incorporated into planning, the better the outcome.

Bloomington's continuing study of water resources is more important than ever – the maximum capacity of the reservoirs would sustain current users for less than two years without recharge. A serious regional effort to diversify the water supply sources is needed.

The City's sanitary sewer and stormwater master plans estimate system improvement costs at a staggering $136 million. The primary cost driver is the rehabilitation of the sanitary sewer system, including the management of the combined sewer facilities in the City's older core.

Bloomington is served by two electric power utilities, Ameren Illinois and Corn Belt Energy. Although currently a majority of the City is served by Ameren Illinois, developing areas will be served by Corn Belt Energy. Currently Corn Belt customers pay up to 40% more than Ameren customers.

Despite ongoing discussion about infrastructure policy, there is no one definition of the word "infrastructure." For the purposes of this study, the word "infrastructure" is used to refer to systems that connect to our homes, schools, workplaces, and public facilities. Some of these systems are owned, operated and maintained by the City, such as city owned streets, while others are privately owned and operated, such as electric utilities. This chapter will discuss the public infrastructure followed by the private utilities. Infrastructure raises issues that go beyond the physical systems; these issues will be addressed in Chapter 8 of this report, Natural Environment.

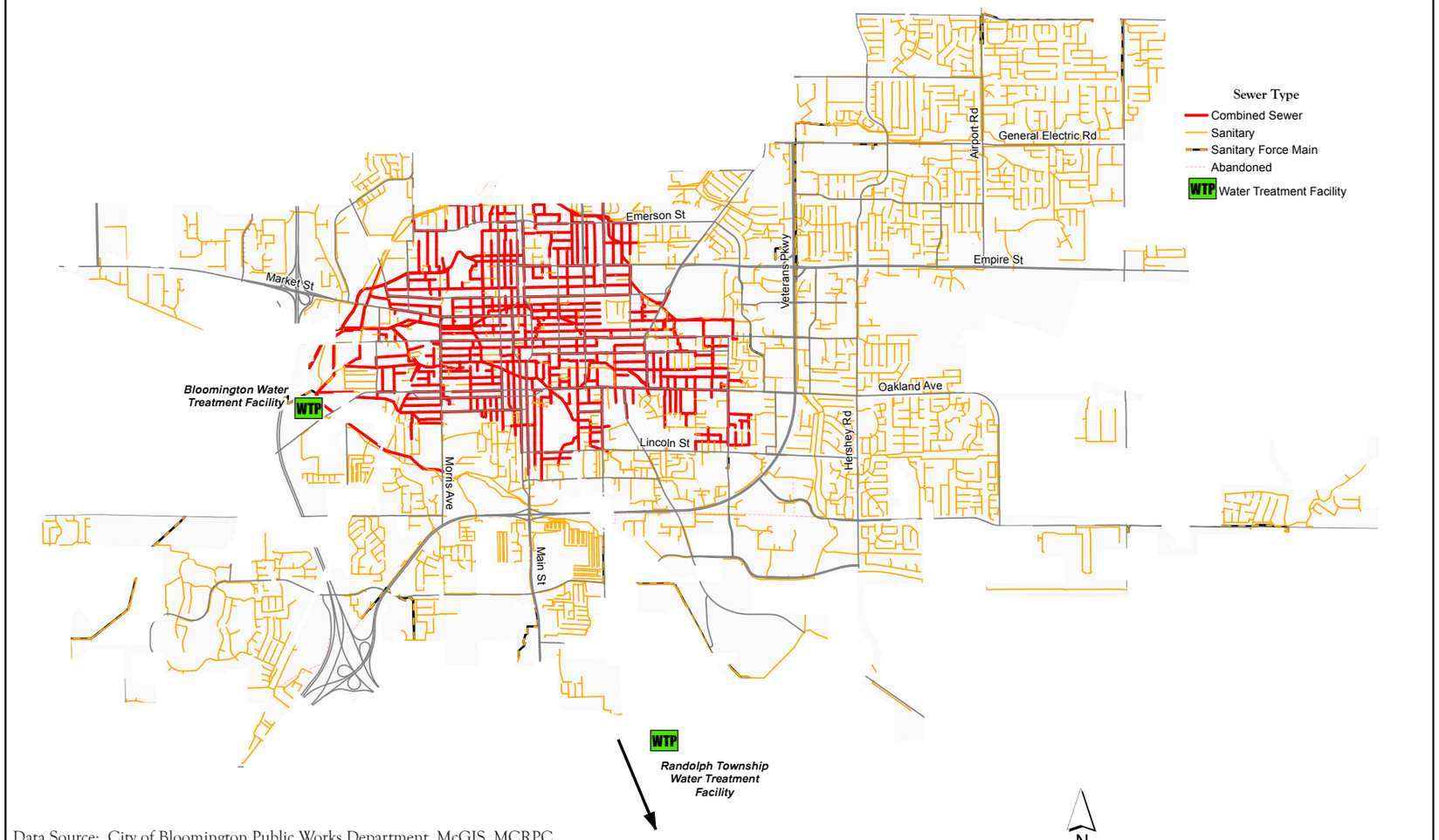
PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

The City of Bloomington, like most municipalities, provides a package of services to residents that are delivered through physical connections to recipients, including underground features like pipes and surface facilities such as streets.

In recent years, the departments of Public Works (DPW) and Water (BWD) have analyzed the infrastructure used for service delivery and developed study or management plans to address aging systems and continuing maintenance. This chapter will refer to their work as related to specific infrastructure categories.

A key outcome from these efforts is the renewed understanding that all infrastructure management must consider and incorporate continuing costs of system maintenance, as well as the continuing maintenance requirements of any system expansion. Existing capacity requires upkeep and eventual replacement, and new capacity requires these as well as initial investment for construction or installation. These requirements must be built into the planning and budgeting process at the earliest opportunity.

Figure 6.1 Residential Sanitary Sewer System Map



Data Source: City of Bloomington Public Works Department, McGIS, MCRPC

SANITARY SEWER

DPW manages the infrastructure and operations of the sanitary sewer system, which includes all public elements of the wastewater collection system (such as pipes, lift stations, sewer lines and manholes) designed to convey municipal sewage to a wastewater treatment facility. Pipes carrying water which requires treatment are part of the sanitary sewer system. The Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District (BNWRD) operates the wastewater treatment plants that serve the Bloomington and Normal sanitary sewer systems. Figure 6.1 shows the areas of combined sewers and sanitary lines. As illustrated in the above figure, combined sewers,

which carry both sewage and stormwater, were once a standard sewer installation. Unfortunately, during periods of heavy rain, the combined flow in these sewer lines would exceed the capacity of the pipes to the treatment plant, and back up into basements instead. To prevent this extremely undesirable outcome, the traditional solution was the creation of combined sewer outflows, or CSOs. This approach created a new problem, in that these overflows release the combined stormwater and untreated sewage directly in waterways such as Sugar Creek.

Figure 6.2
Current Mileage of Sewer Type

SEWER TYPE	MILES
COMBINATION	83.20
DRAIN TILE	77.04
PAVED DITCH	1.73
SANITARY	250.00
SANITARY FORCE MAIN	12.00
STORM	240.00

Source: City of Bloomington Public Works

Regulations under the Clean Water Act require that the city take steps to remove the CSOs, which it has done. DPW reports that four of the seven CSO locations have been corrected since 1996, and work continues on the remaining locations. Correction consists of separating the outflow lines from the storm sewer and sanitary sewer systems, and ensuring that the latter is directed to the treatment plants. Stormwater is conducted separately into the stream network.

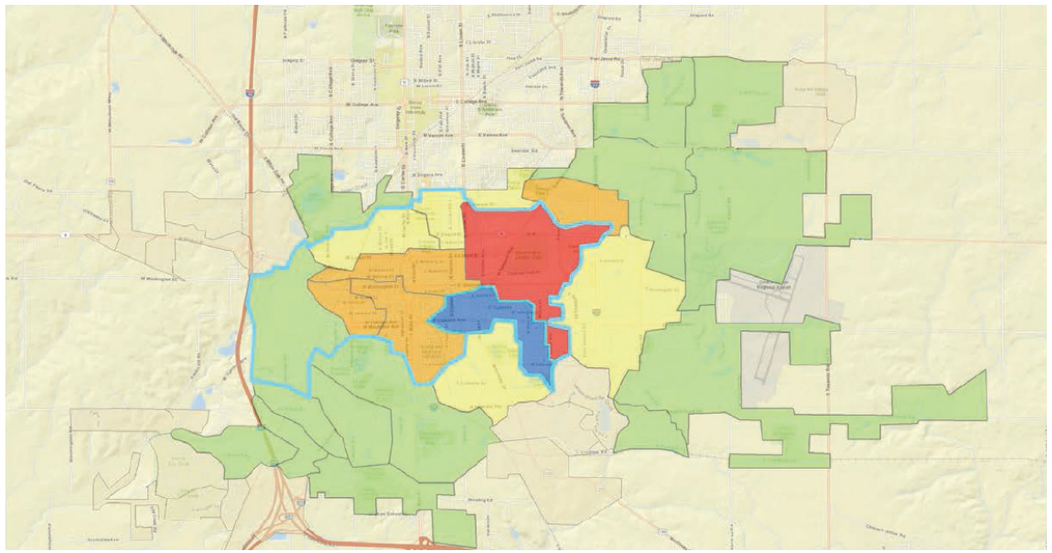
The City hired the services of Foth Consultants to conduct a *Sewer and Storm-Water Master Plan*. A draft version (not adopted by the City Council by the time of this report) of this plan was submitted to the City in early 2014. The plan identified $83 Million in investments over the next 20 years for the sanitary sewer improvements. Major recommendations include:

- Reduce inflow/infiltration in collection system
- Replace undersized sewers
- Avoid premature expansion of treatment plants
- Reduce potential for combined sewer overflows
- Continue combined sewer separation program

The excessive inflow and infiltration ("I/I") entering the sewer system at the south wastewater treatment plant is a concern. Because of I/I issues during wet weather, the collection system conveys higher flows to the south east waste water treatment plant (SEWWTP), exceeding its capacity. At such times the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District (BNWRD) diverts flows from the east side interceptor to the City's older sewers. This practice places a burden on the City's west side sewer treatment plant.

From a comprehensive planning perspective, this issue might pose a challenge to future development on the southeast portion of the City, if not addressed. The comprehensive planning process should work closely with DPW as they implement the sanitary master plan.

Figure 6.3 Flooding From Basement Drain Heat Gradient Density Map



Source: Draft Sanitary Sewer and Storm Water Master Plan; Foth Consultants

STORMWATER

The stormwater system collects water runoff and conducts it to outflows into the regional stream network. There are multiple components, including detention basins, street drains, drainage swales and other means to drain water into the system, contain it until the system capacity can handle it, and discharge it into streams. As with other systems, continuous monitoring and maintenance is required.

Two particular complications arise in this process, the first being interruptions in the drainage system, and the second the introduction of contaminants into the collected storm water as it enters and moves through the system, which are then released into the stream network.

The Sewer and the Storm Water Master Plan identified $36 Million in investment to improve the City's storm water system over the next 20 years. It recommends four phase specific actions to the Oakland Avenue watershed, highlighted in Figure 6.3, as it has the highest density of stormwater issues mainly due to the combined sewer system.

This plan pointed out severe issues of erosion along the stream banks. It also noted that both public and private detention ponds lack maintenance and could potentially increase the risk of flooding and pose a threat to the quality of surface water.

The comprehensive plan can play a major role in establishing land use policies that help alleviate erosion issues and promote

sustainable land development.

The stormwater system is unusual in that the public can assist in maintaining it, which the City encourages. DPW publishes recommendations for the public to aid in maintaining the stormwater infrastructure, suggesting that residents can make sure that drainage swales are clear of debris, that trash and yard waste be kept away from storm drains and that any other obstructions to the

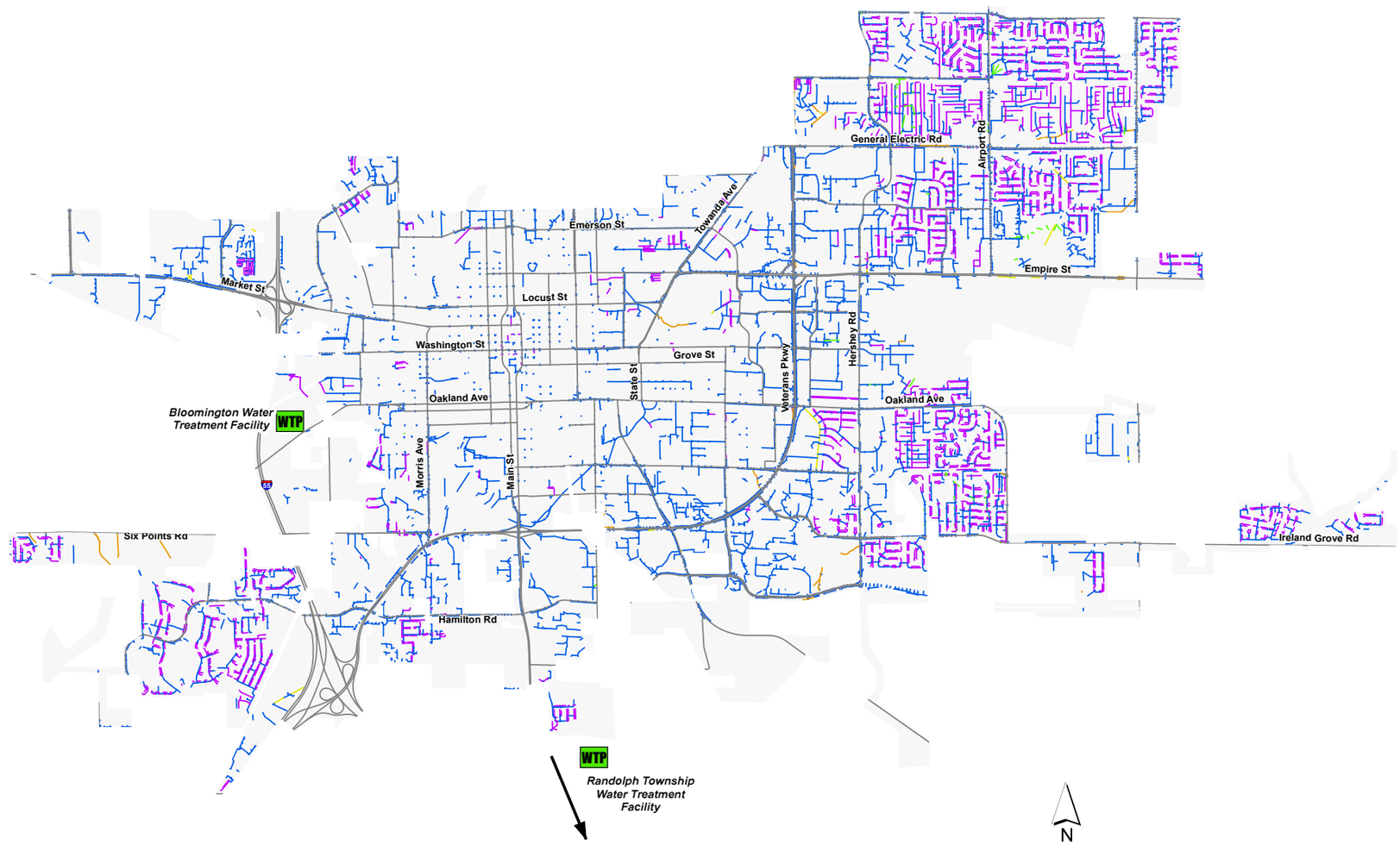


Figure 6.4 Prevent Clogged Drains
Source: City of Bloomington, DPW

drains and curb areas are removed. More generally, changes to structures, additions such as decks and patios and modifications to the slope of the property can be carried out to minimize the effects on stormwater drainage. Managing the landscape to reduce erosion also helps to reduce the amount of sediment accumulating and potentially clogging the stormwater system.

As illustrated in Figure 6.4, DPW also asks for public cooperation in keeping the stormwater flow free of contamination. This includes limiting the use of household or lawn and garden chemicals that will be

Figure 6.5 Residential Storm Sewer Map



Data Source: City of Bloomington Public Works Department, McGIS, MCRPC

washed into the system by the rain and thus contaminate streams.

WATER

Bloomington has developed its water infrastructure over many decades, with perhaps the most ambitious element of the system being the development of Lake Bloomington as a reservoir in 1929. The City currently obtains water from both Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake, pumping it to the Lake Bloomington Treatment Plant and out to customers in the city and several other jurisdictions.

The two lakes have a combined drainage area of 131 square miles, and a combined capacity of 22,900 acre-feet, or 7,461,997,678 gallons. It should be noted that environmental conditions, such as drought, can and have left the lakes well below capacity in recent years. The *2010 Interim Water Supply Plan* notes that water use is 11.5 mgd (million gallons per day). That figure results in an annual usage of approximately 4.3 billion gallons, or about 22 months of supply derived from the lakes at capacity.

The 2010 water supply plan assessed the current water system and made recommendations for future action. The plan noted the recurring issue of excessive nitrate levels in Lake Bloomington, and recommended improvements to the pumping system and nitrate monitoring. The plan also recommends developing policies for water conservation, procedures for water management during periods of drought, and continued involvement in regional water planning.

The plan notes that water systems that rely solely on surface reservoirs are increasingly vulnerable, and that alternative sourcing from groundwater should be developed. The City is pursuing groundwater sourcing as an element of the system and testing well impacts in proximity to the treatment plant. Although discussion of sourcing from the Mahomet Aquifer is ongoing, using the aquifer as a supply source would not correct the nitrate issues at the treatment plant. (see Figure 6.6 for water supply planning options).

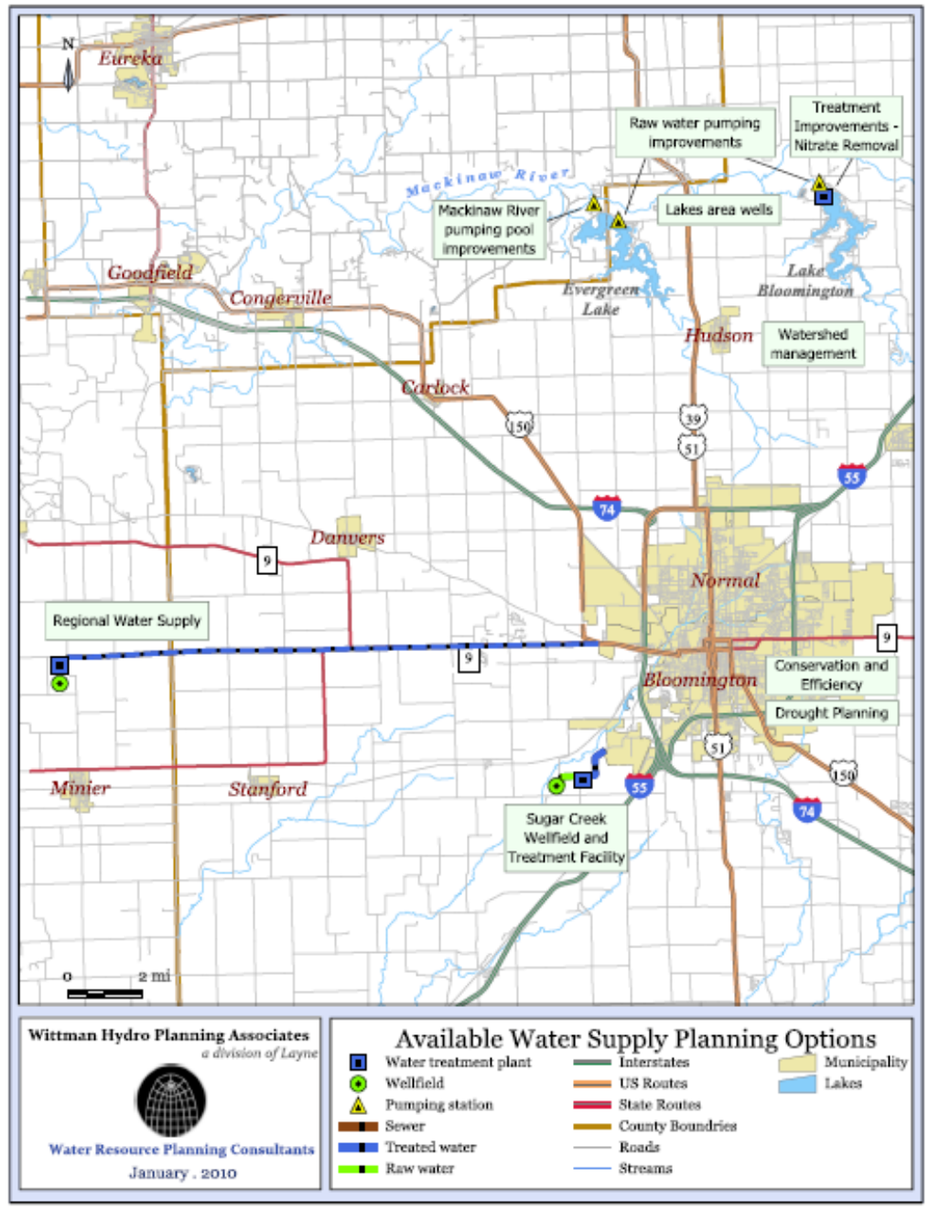
In addition to considering supply and treatment issues, the City must also consider delivery to users. This system includes the transmission mains from the treatment plant, pumping stations and various storage facilities located around the city, as well as the network of water mains that carry the supply to water customers. The system is monitored to evaluate conditions and determine repair needs. Water main breaks are a continuing occurrence, in a system installed over many decades, and were particularly troublesome during the harsh winter of 2013-2014. Damage to water systems not only interrupts supply, but can also cause damage to adjacent systems below ground and at ground level.

The need for continuing assessment and maintenance of the water delivery system is no less urgent than the effort to secure an adequate future water supply for the community.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation infrastructure is both

Figure 6.6 Available Water Supply Planning Options for the City of Bloomington



Data Source: City of Bloomington Water Department

highly visible and highly complex. It includes elements as simple as the sidewalk, and as intricate as a bridge, a railway crossing or a regional airport. The system includes whatever technology is used to traverse it, from trains and airplanes to motorized vehicles to bicycles, to one's very own feet. It includes the many signals, signs, pavement markings, railroad gates, and airport control towers needed to guide its use. It includes the materials used to build its various elements, ranging from gravel to integrated circuits, and its construction and maintenance draws from many disciplines.

As with other City infrastructure, the Department of Public Works continues to assess the balance of repair, maintenance and capacity expansion needed in the transportation system, and to plan for the required expenditures.

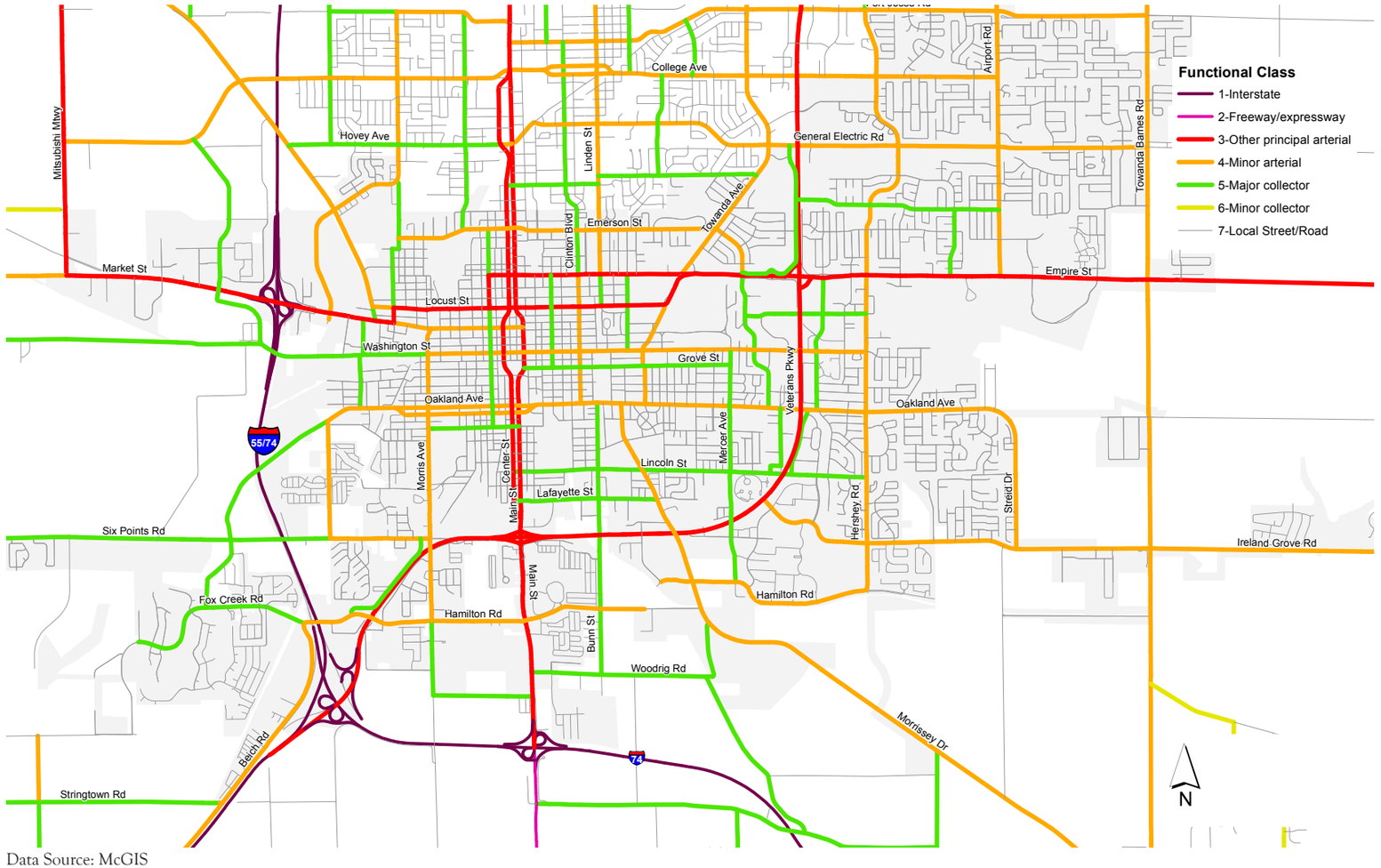
STREETS

The street network is a basic transportation system of any community. Like other communities, Bloomington's street network is an extensive and diverse mix of local streets and classified streets such as minor collectors, major collectors, minor arterials and major arterial streets. The street network also connects the community to the surrounding region and beyond. In Bloomington, these connections include three interstate highways, U.S. Route 51 to the south, and several thoroughfares such as state and county highways, which are maintained by the County or IDOT.

Another aspect of the classification system is that federal transportation funds may be used for certain projects on classified streets, but not on local streets. People often ask why the City is spending scarce resources on large street projects when other streets need immediate repairs. Often this is because the large project has federal funding allocated in the budget, and has deadlines for the use of that funding. Federal transportation dollars cannot be used for maintenance projects, and for the most part are not available for projects on local streets.

The City street network includes several principal arterial facilities, including Main Street (Business 51), Route 9, U.S. Route 150 and Veterans Parkway (Business 55), which cross substantial portions of the city and provide access throughout Bloomington. Figure 6.7 illustrates the distribution of classified streets in Bloomington. Other City streets are designated as local streets, and are

Figure 6.7 Functional Classification of Streets



Data Source: McGIS

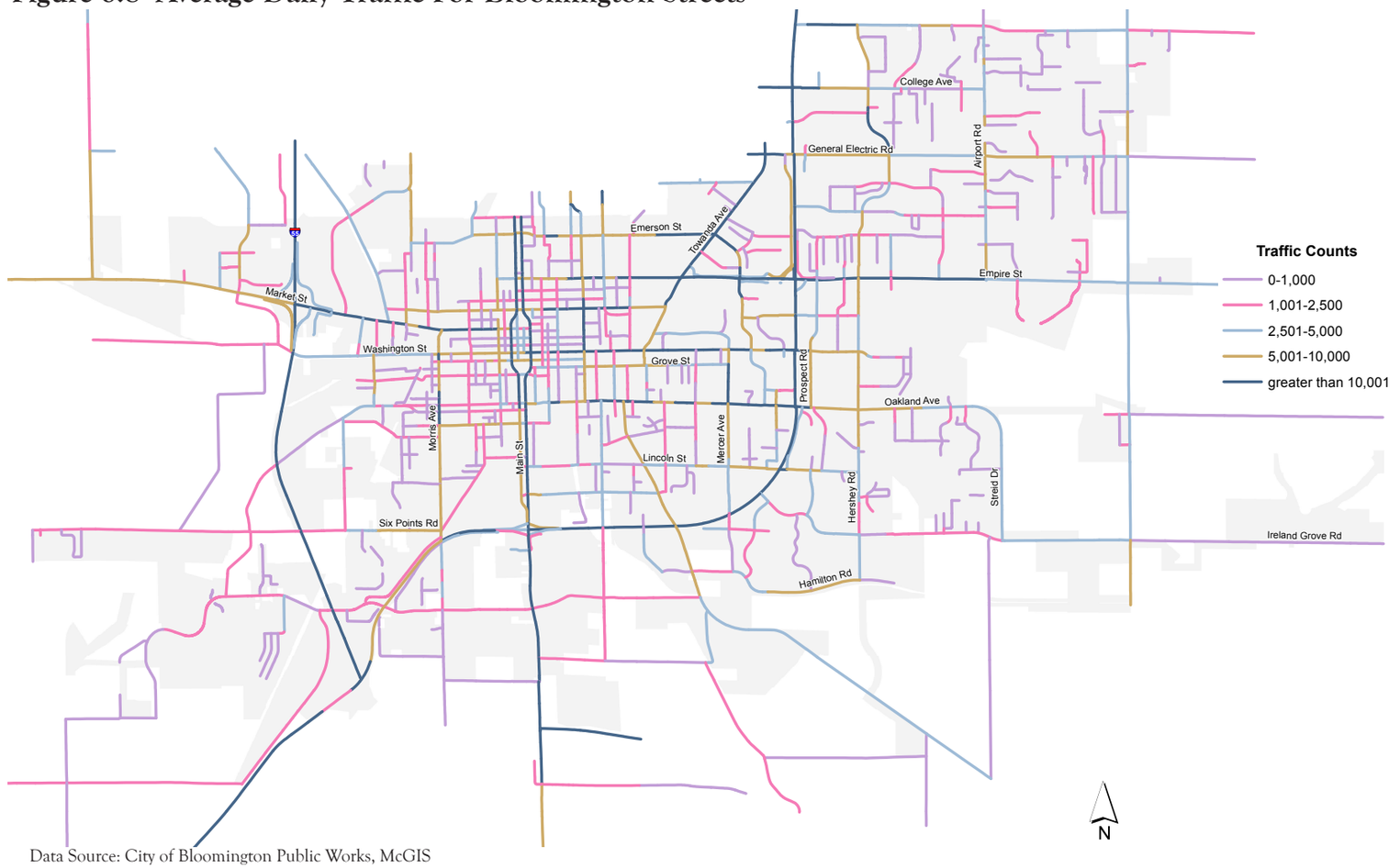
not subject to the rules that apply to classified streets.

Bloomington has identified community gateways at the City's edge where the transportation system defines the most concentrated points of entry, and thus establishes first impressions of Bloomington for visitors. As shown in Figure 6.9, the primary gateways include the Interstate 55/74 interchange on West Market Street, U.S. Route 51 from the south, Central Illinois Regional Airport on Empire Street (Route 9), and North Main Street (Business Route 51) at Division Street. Figure 6.9 also illustrates some secondary gateways to Bloomington. These are locations where travelers are not as directed to routes crossing through the City core, and may be included to limit their travel to Veterans Parkway. The City applied for a federal highway enhancement grant to create a community gateway at the Market Street interchange, but did not receive a grant. The funding source, now known as the Transportation Alternatives Program, may still be a source for future funding of such projects. Further analysis of the gateway concept may assist in developing a consistent approach to welcoming visitors to Bloomington.

Bloomington works with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to monitor the volume of traffic on City streets. IDOT conducts a periodic traffic count, which was last collected in 2010. The next IDOT count will be done in 2015, and will provide improved data to support implementation of priorities set in the comprehensive plan. The City also collects traffic volume information relating to requests for installation of traffic calming submitted to the Staff Traffic Advisory Committee (STAC). This information is added to the data from the IDOT survey to produce the Bloomington Traffic Volume Map, available on the City website. As a result, the map shows traffic counts collected over a period of several years. The traffic map shown here (Figure 6.8) aggregates the data across time to show generally where high traffic volume occurs.

High traffic volumes sometimes lead to a higher incidence of vehicle crashes and injuries. IDOT collects crash information from police incident reports, and local agencies use the information to analyze locations at which crashes are most common. Not all crashes occur at high volume locations, and in those instances the staff examines the location and the information about the crash to determine if aspects of the street, traffic signals or other factors may create an unsafe situation that needs corrective action. This identification and review of crash

Figure 6.8 Average Daily Traffic For Bloomington Streets



Data Source: City of Bloomington Public Works, McGIS

incident locations is the basis for a proposal in the *2012 Long-Range Transportation Plan for the Bloomington-Normal Urbanized Area* (2012 LRTP) that IDOT and local governments consider formal corridor studies of these areas. Such studies would identify any structural causes or design issues contributing to traffic crashes, and outline corrective action.

Facing increasingly damaged streets in recent years, the DPW discussed street maintenance and repair policy options with the City Council. Using the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system, the DPW reported that bringing the street network to a PASER score of "good" would require $60 million over five years. At the Council's direction, DPW formulated a street repair and maintenance program aimed at achieving the median PASER score of 5, or "fair.". This rating shows approximately 30% of the street pavement that is rated below the "fair" score of 5. Much of the program consists of using various pavement preservation technologies to extend street life. Figure 6.11 provides the PASER rating. As of June 2014, a similar plan is being considered for ongoing sidewalk repair.

DPW has also developed a management plan for the surviving brick streets in Bloomington. A three category system to rank brick street conditions, and classifies them as needing restoration, repair or reconstruction. The City Brick Street Strategic Plan describes the criteria for brick street preservation, and is available for review on the DPW web page.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL

Working with the League of Illinois Bicyclists, Bloomington is currently developing a bicycling master plan, which is expected to be completed in the Fall of 2014. Some recommendations are already being implemented, such as the designation of "sharrows," shared street space for bicycles and motorized vehicles, on various streets.
The bicycling plan will discuss the interface between Constitution Trail and streets judged to be bike-friendly, to allow bicycle users to navigate the City freely.

Constitution Trail is the premier bicycle facility in the Bloomington-Normal area. The trail celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2014, and has grown to more than forty miles of paved surface. Shared with pedestrians, Constitution Trail follows the old Illinois Central rail corridor, extends eastward to multiple residential neighborhoods, connects to schools and parks, and extends west towards Danvers, southwest to Fox Creek Road and southeast to the State Farm Corporate South complex.

The Friends of Constitution Trail offer a detailed map of the Trail and adjacent amenities. Illustrations of the constitution trail, planned trail extensions, and possible future trail extensions to extend the Constitution Trail into natural areas surrounding the community are shown in the Health and Safety chapter.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Bloomington is pursuing another category of funding support for bicycle infrastructure, through the federal "Safe Routes to School" (SRTS) program. This funding is available for construction of bicycle facilities for schools as well as education programs for children, enforcement of relevant traffic laws, encouragement of bicycling and walking, and monitoring of outcomes. The engineering component of the program funds trails and other infrastructure for improved safety.

Bloomington has applied for funding to create trail access to Benjamin Elementary School in the Grove subdivision. This project would develop a trail between the two sections of the Grove, and take advantage of an

Figure 6.9 Community Gateways, City of Bloomington

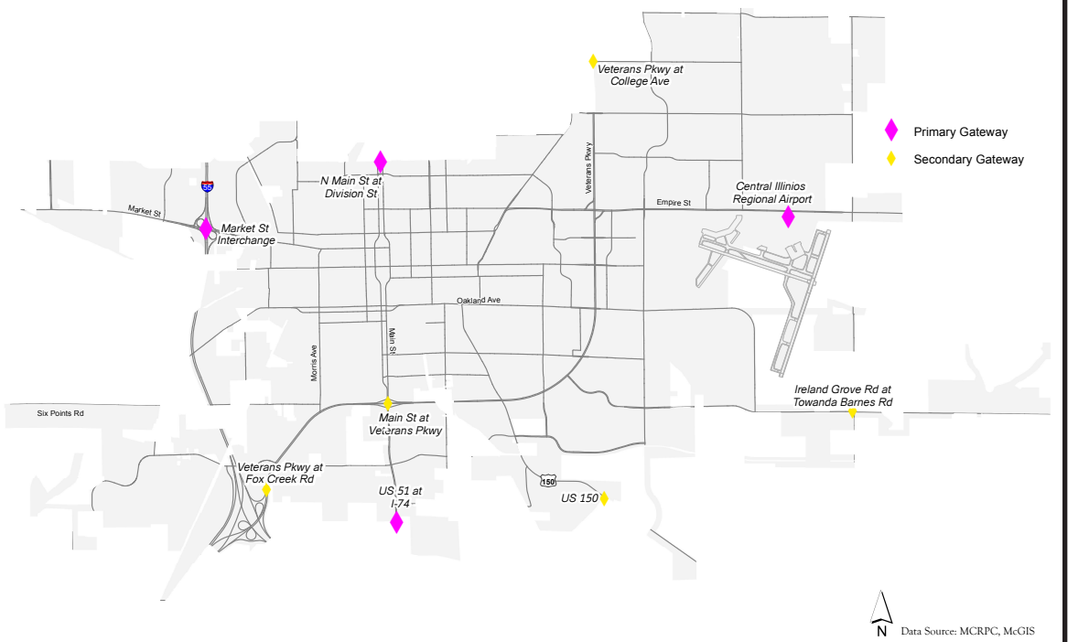




Figure 6.10
Proposed Trail Access to Benjamin Elementary School
Source: City of Bloomington Safe Routes to School grant application, 2014

existing bridge and underpass to create safe access to the school through the Kickapoo Creek restoration area and a future park, as illustrated in schematics submitted with the application, as shown in Figure 6.10.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Substantial infrastructure investments in local public transit have led to service reconfiguration and equipment additions, and a new identity for the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System as Connect Transit. The most significant investment was the construction of a new facility on the west side of Normal, which is designed to satisfy operation needs well into the future. In the last three years Connect has undertaken route revisions, conducted a study of future funding needs for operations and capital investment, and continued with a vehicle expansion program to enable service enhancements. The Board of Trustees, on which Bloomington and Normal have representation, continues to review proposals for organization changes, including the possibility of configuring the transit system as a transit district. The primary identified need for Connect Transit is stable and dedicated funding to permit further expansion and replacement of aging vehicles.

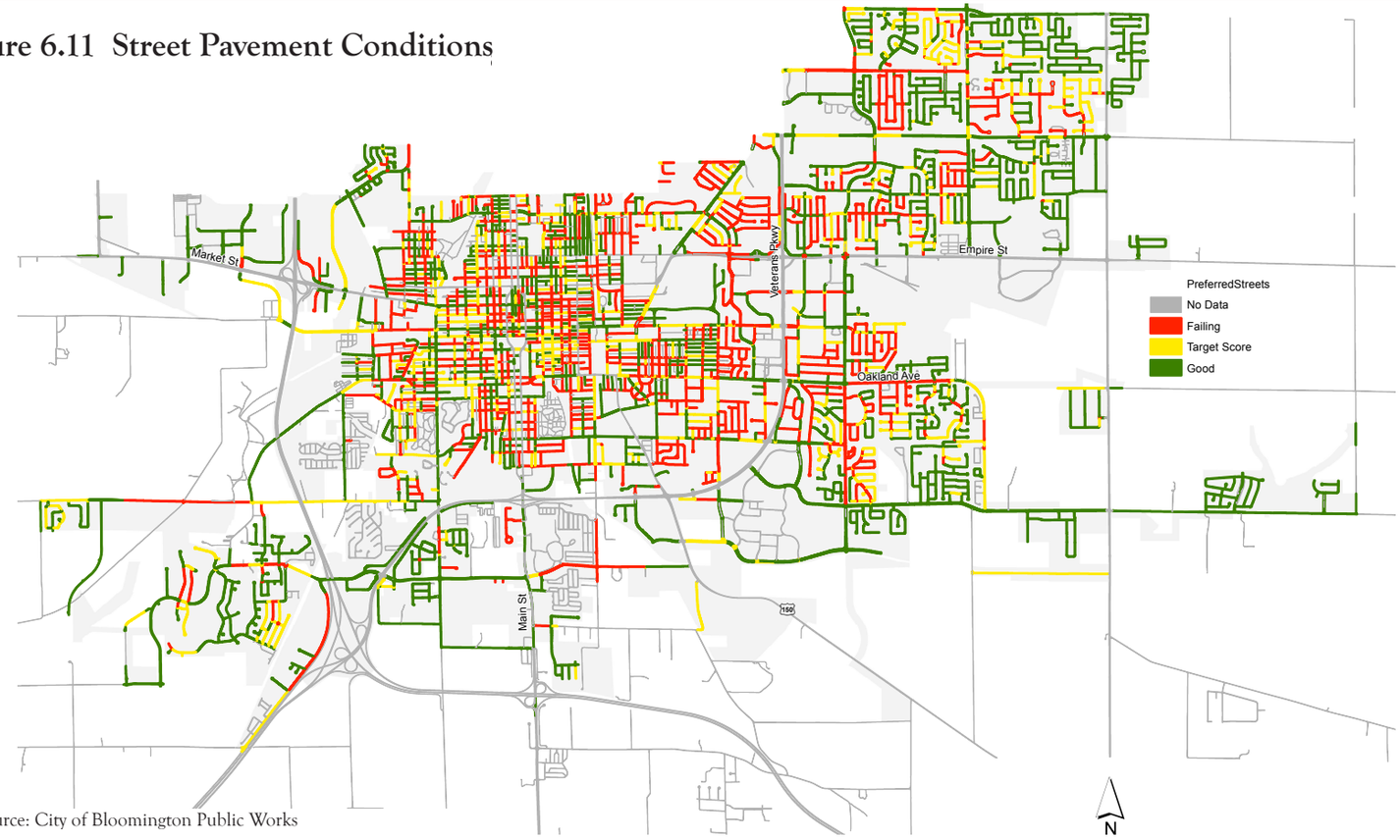
Connect Transit operates eleven fixed routes, including a revised route that now serves the State Farm Corporate South campus. The transit system also provides Redbird Express service on routes through and surrounding the Illinois State University campus. Connect has continued its universal access program with several local colleges and Illinois State University.

Connect Transit also operates as Connect Mobility, providing paratransit services, and other services using paratransit vehicles. The public transit system also works cooperatively with not-for-profit agencies providing transportation services.

CENTRAL ILLINOIS REGIONAL AIRPORT

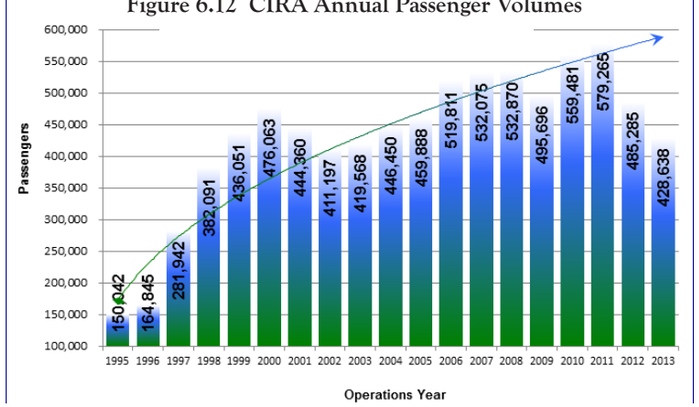
Bloomington is a partner in the Airport Authority (AA) that oversees airport operations at the Central Illinois Regional

Figure 6.11 Street Pavement Conditions



Data Source: City of Bloomington Public Works

Figure 6.12 CIRA Annual Passenger Volumes



Source: CIRA

Airport (CIRA). CIRA has benefited from a series of infrastructure investments over the past fifteen years, including the construction of a substantially larger terminal east of the original site. Some reconfiguration of the terminal and adjoining parking was required as a result of restrictions that followed the September 11, 2001 attacks, before the terminal was opened on November 5, 2001. The terminal has nine boarding gates, most of which have jetways to accommodate larger aircraft. Two runways, 8,000 feet and 6,525 feet in length, also allow service by larger jets. The airport serves passenger and freight operations.

CIRA is currently served by four airlines serving seven direct destinations. Services realigned after AirTran, the first airline to fly direct from Bloomington to Atlanta and Orlando, ceased operations at CIRA.

Airline Carriers	Destination
American	Chicago, IL Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX
Delta	Atlanta, GA Detroit, MI Minneapolis, MN
Allegiant	Orlando, FL
Frontier	Denver, CO Orlando, FL

As shown in Figure 6.12, after a peak in passenger volume in 2011, annual passenger volume has declined. Recently, an expansion of airport freight operations was begun with the development of a new hub facility for FedEx, which will relocate from the Peoria airport to CIRA. FedEx indicates that the CIRA hub will provide earlier delivery times, later pickup times, and expand the FedEx delivery service area.

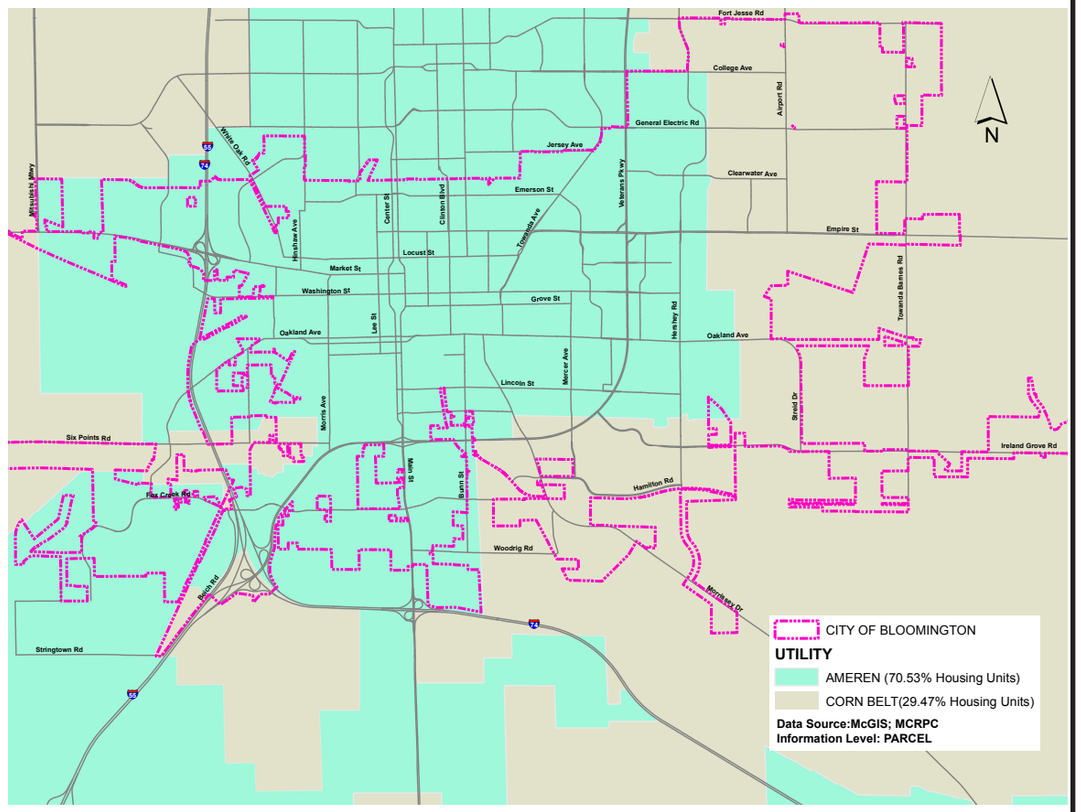
The AA is interested in spurring new private investment in the community through the development of CIRA property. Looking toward both aeronautical and non-aeronautical development, the AA hopes selective long-term development will help sustain and attract new jobs for the community. Working closely with the Economic Development Council, the AA is also requesting the expansion of the enterprise zone to facilitate development in the airport area, and interest warehousing, logistics and transportation companies in locating near CIRA.

The comprehensive planning process is a great time to partner with CIRA to address the land use related issues surrounding the airport property such as airspace protection, interference of electronic signals, excessive light emanation, and wildlife attractants.

RAIL

Amtrak provides passenger service on the Union Pacific rail lines from Chicago to St. Louis, through Uptown Station in Normal, which also serves Connect Transit for service into Bloomington. Work continues on the implementation of high-speed passenger rail service to Bloomington- Normal. The Bloomington-Normal Amtrak service consistently serves a high volume of passengers, and the substantial investment in the multimodal and intermodal Uptown Station is expected to support continued growth, especially as high-speed rail service becomes more extensive.

Figure 6.13 Electric Service Territories



Freight service is provided by the Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific railroads operating through the Bloomington-Normal urban area. Norfolk Southern has six freight trains that pass through the urban area daily. Union Pacific traverses the urban area from the Northeast to the Southwest. Rail lines in Bloomington continue to work with the railroads to solve issues regarding rail operations in the city, including traffic and connectivity issues created by rail bridges and crossings. Bridge replacement, the development of new rail crossings and safety infrastructure for high-speed rail are continuing points of discussion.

PRIVATELY OWNED UTILITIES

A number of privately owned utilities such as electric, gas, telecommunications and broadband are all critical for our community. The majority of these operate on user fees.

Electricity

The City of Bloomington is served by two electricity service providers, Ameren Illinois Corporation (Ameren) and Corn Belt Energy Corporation (Corn Belt). Each service provider has a designated territory for distribution of power to homes and businesses. The service providers buy power from a third party supplier and transfer the cost to the end user.

Ameren is a publicly traded utility and is regulated by the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC). Corn Belt is a local cooperative formed in 1939, mainly to serve the rural parts of McLean County, and is governed by a board of directors.

As is Illustrated in Figure 6.13, 70.53% of Bloomington households are currently with Ameren, with 29.47 % in Corn Belt territory. It should be noted that the majority of newer developments in the City and future growth areas are in the Corn Belt service territory.

Illinois law allows municipalities and counties to purchase electricity on behalf of the residential and small-business utility customers (businesses using no more than 15,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity a year) within their corporate limits. This is referred to as "Municipal Electric Aggregation".

Bloomington's residents passed a referendum in early 2013 allowing the City to buy electricity on their behalf. Due to the low prices obtained through the aggregation program, Bloomington residents in Ameren territory pay up to 40% less per Kwh in comparison to that of Corn Belt customers.

Natural Gas

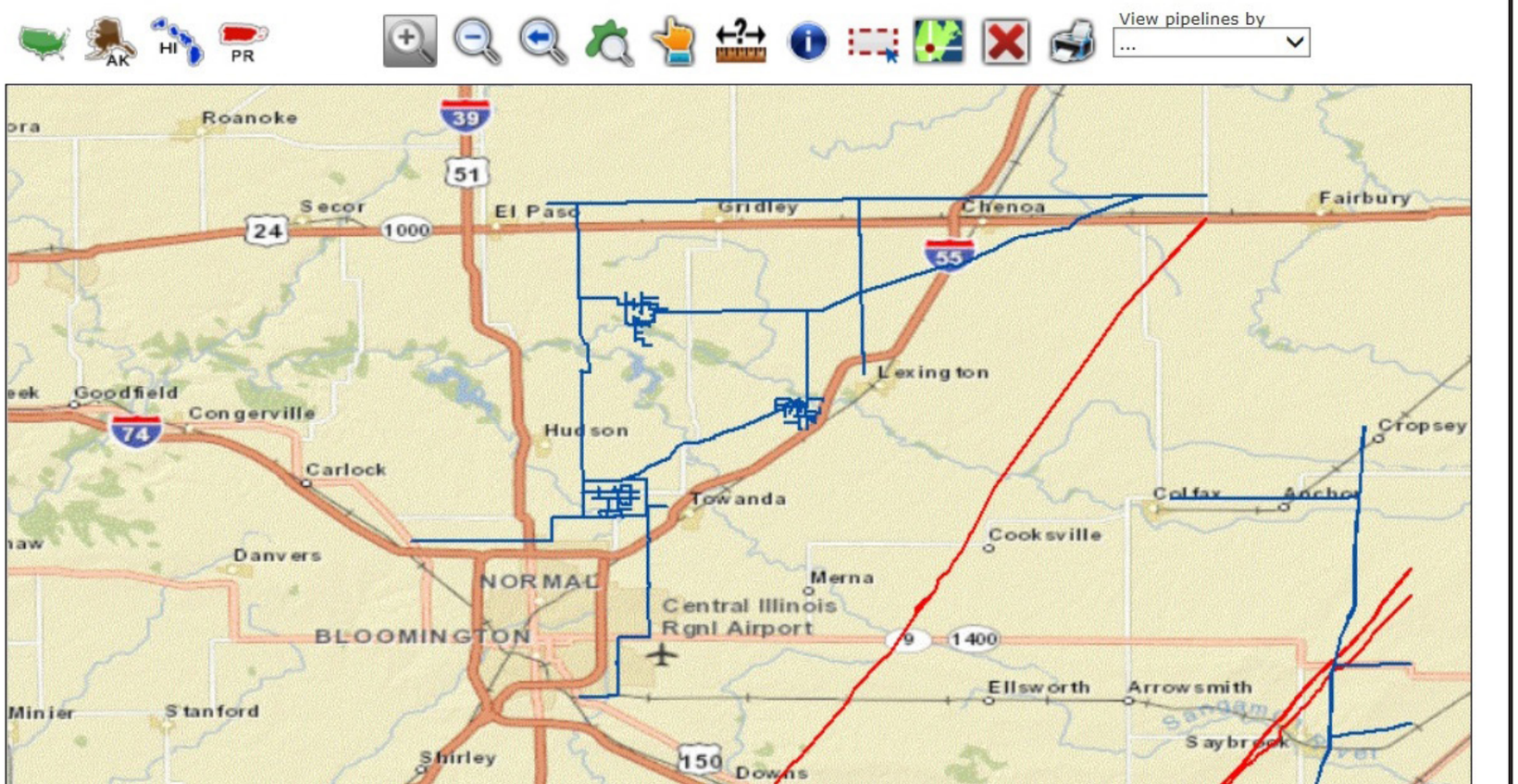
Nicor Gas is the primary natural gas utility in Bloomington. Being a midwestern community where cold months begin in November and the last killing frost can occur in mid-May, natural gas is an essential commodity in Bloomington.

However, natural gas is not produced in the area. It is transported to the Bloomington area by pipelines and stored in underground aquifers for supply during the winter months.

While gas pipelines are underground and unnoticeable for the most part, they pose a potential threat to the surrounding environment and life. The Transportation Research Board (TRB), special report 281 "Transmission Pipelines and Land Use" published in 2004[8] found:

1. Pipeline incidents have potential for significant impact on life, property, and the environment.
2. Just as transmission pipelines pose a risk to their surroundings, so does human activity in the vicinity of pipelines pose a risk to pipelines. These risks increase with

Figure 6.13 Gas Transmission Pipelines and Hazardous Liquid Pipelines



Source: National Pipeline Mapping System

Foot Note 8): TRB Special Report 281: http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/sr/sr281.pdf

growth in population, urban areas, and pipeline capacity and network.

3. Land use decisions can affect the risks associated with increased human activity in the vicinity of transmission pipelines.
4. Pipeline safety and environmental regulation have generally focused on (a) the design, operation, and maintenance of pipelines and (b) incident response. They have not directed significant attention to the manner in which land use decisions can affect public safety and the environment.
5. For the most part, state and local governments have not systematically considered risk to the public from transmission pipeline incidents in regulating land use.
6. Risk-informed approaches are being used effectively in other domains (e.g., natural hazard mitigation, industrial hazard mitigation, nuclear reactor and waste disposal programs, tanker safety). These techniques are also being used to address other aspects of pipeline safety (e.g., pipeline integrity), but they have not been used to make informed land use decisions.
7. Currently, decision makers lack adequate tools and information to make effective land use decisions concerning transmission pipelines.
8. Many different forms of pipeline easements are in effect, and the terms and conditions vary widely. To the extent that an easement lacks clarity, enforcement of the right-of-way is more difficult.
9. Encroachments and inappropriate human activity within the right-of- way can adversely affect pipeline safety. There appears to be variability in the quality and extent of inspections, maintenance, and enforcement of right-of-way.

This report also provided a wide variety of recommendations to mitigate the risks associated with the pipelines in urban areas. In Figure 6.13, the blue lines indicate natural gas lines and the red lines indicate hazardous liquid lines. As can be observed, Bloomington has gas transmission pipelines running through the dense urban settings. While new regulation cannot change much of the existing condition, the plan can certainly prepare us for the new pipe lines potentially coming to the area. This comprehensive plan should address the potential environmental issues related to the pipelines as well as safety from a land use perspective.

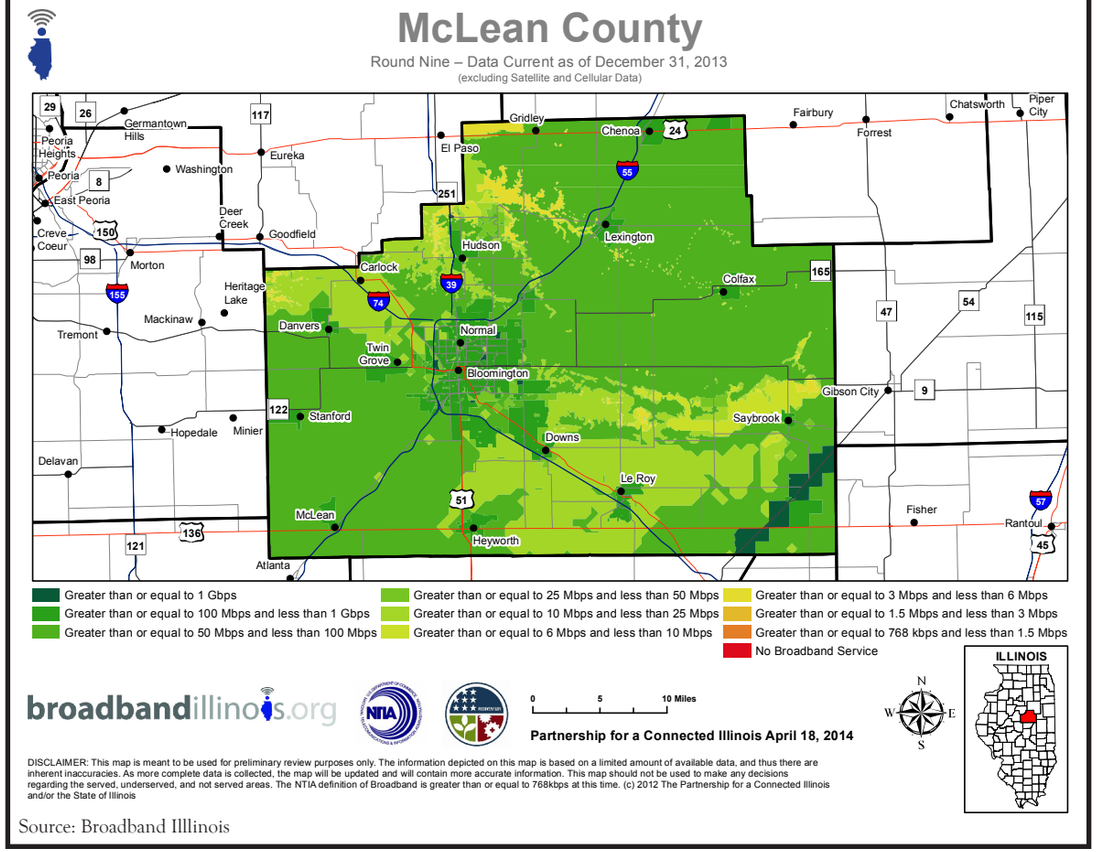
Telecommunications and Broadband

The City of Bloomington and the metro area is well served by telecommunications infrastructure and holds a competitive edge in certain areas such as fiber optics.

According to broadbandillinois.org, Bloomington is served by 17 different providers and technologies from DSL to satellite and cellular.

The B-N metro area and 20 other central Illinois communities are also served by the Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network (CIRBN) fiber optic network. This new tool enhances the capability of expanding the economic development opportunities in the community. The comprehensive plan process should engage the technology community to identify ways to capitalize on this asset.

Figure 6.14 Broadband Connectivity and Speeds



Source: Broadband Illlinois

In the 21st century, faster speed internet or broadband has become a necessity. As indicated in Figure 6.14, Bloomington has internet speeds equal to or exceeding 1 Gigabytes per second. While coverage in the area may not be a problem, a digital divide might still exist. The digital divide refers to inequality in quality and access to technologies and the internet. A survey conducted through Illinois Wesleyan University Action Research Center confirmed that the digital divide is a problem in District 87 and exposed the complexities of the issue. This study also proposed school and community-based solutions to address the issue. The comprehensive plan should also take the issue of the digital divide into consideration.

RELEVANT PLANS, STUDIES & ONGOING EFFORTS

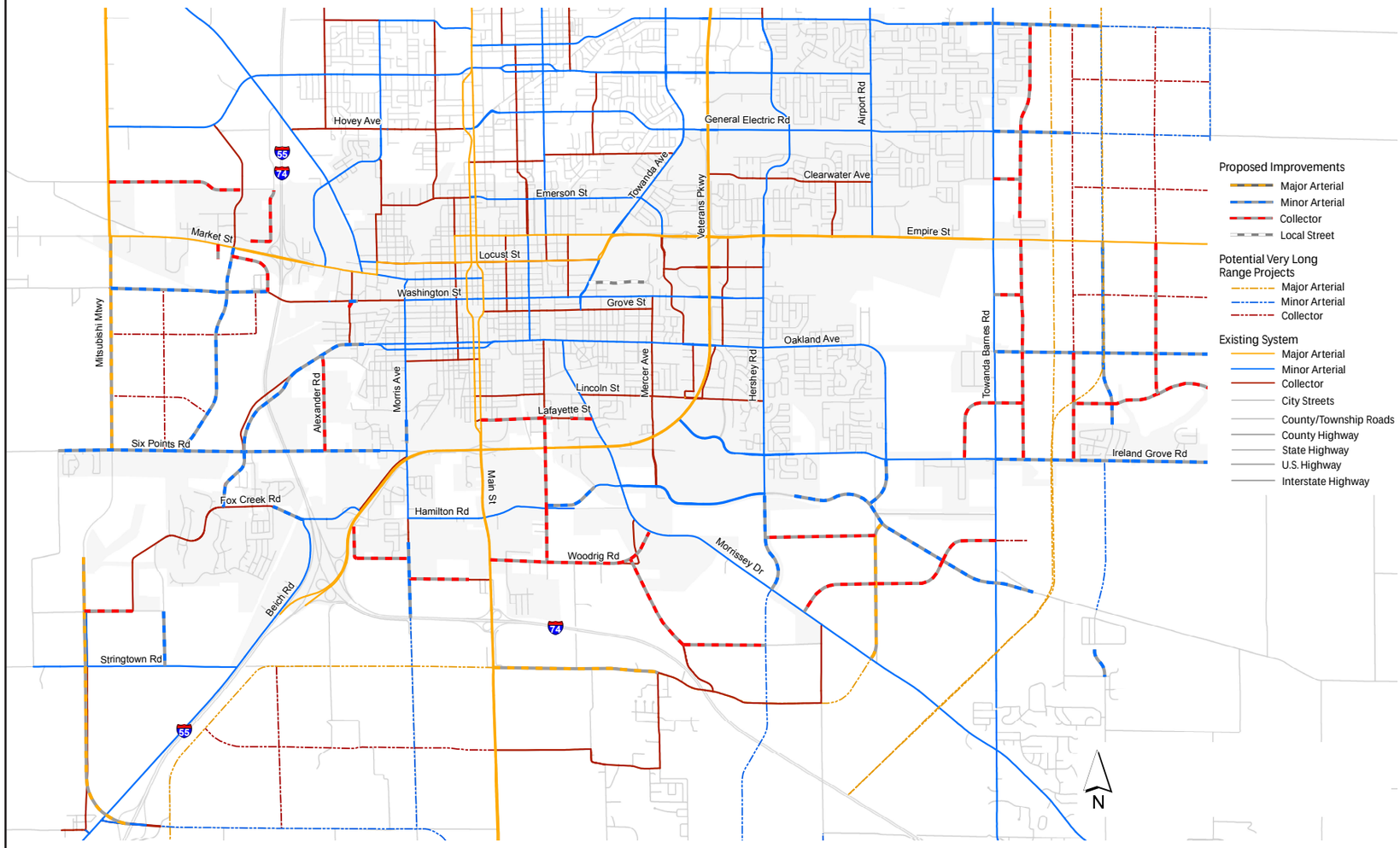
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION TO THE MID-21ST CENTURY: LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2040

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Bloomington-Normal urbanized area is developed by the McLean County Regional Planning Commission, and updated and revised every four to five years. The LRTP considers all transportation modes, and the infrastructure and operational funding required to sustain the system. The current 2040 plan was adopted in October 2012.

The plan documents both short-term programmed transportation improvements, as reflected in the annually revised transportation improvement program, and longer term planned improvements anticipated in later years. The plan also estimates the cost of all projects, and provides a budget framework for determining funding sources and the ability of funding to provide for total costs. For the first time, the LRTP 2040 also considers the cost of maintaining the transportation system, and considers priorities for system maintenance. Federal standards for the LRTP require that it demonstrate fiscal constraint, a finding that funds are available to meet program needs, so project priority is also considered.

The LRTP establishes current transportation system conditions as a baseline for

Figure 6.15 Potential Roadway Improvements



Source: City of Bloomington, MCRPC

evaluating needs over the planning period. This analysis includes roadways, transit service, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and rail and air for passengers and freight. The plan process also included a detailed public survey regarding current transportation behavior and preferences.

The plan establishes performance measures for goals and objectives. These are reviewed on a continuing basis to evaluate progress on or completion of goals.

The plan has developed goals, objectives and strategies in three categories:

- Sustaining safety and security
- Sustaining mobility and access
- Sustaining quality of life

For each goal and contributing objectives, the plan specifies performance measurement standards which are periodically reviewed by MCRPC staff and the Transportation Technical Committee.

As illustrated in Figure 6.15, potential projects within the City include:

- Extension of bike-pedestrian trail system along stream networks
- Modification of Ireland Grove Road-Towanda Barnes Road intersection
- Completion of Hamilton Road east to Towanda-Barnes Road
- Extension of Hershey Road south and design and construction of a rail crossing to accommodate the extension
- Future Interstate 55 interchange at Oakland Avenue, and associated street realignment

MAIN STREET TRANSPORTATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

A review of *Main Street: A Call for Investment* resulted in a decision by the participants in that planning process to move forward with technical analysis of the plan's recommendations that related specifically to the transportation functions of Main Street. This study would not address the land use and economic development aspects of the plan. It would examine the specific suggestions for adapting and improving the street itself, through reconfigured pavement cross-sections, recommendations to accommodate public transit, pedestrians and bicycle users, and other modifications.

The study is grounded in a statement of purpose for Main Street:

- Main Street supports all modes of transportation.
- The roadway and surrounding corridor must be multimodal, and require an integrated modal approach, such as Complete Streets, as defined in the Illinois statute.
- Main Street must be planned and designed to accommodate both current and future transportation and land uses.

The study reviewed local comprehensive and transportation plans, and consolidated the recommendations reflected in those and in *Main Street: A Call for Investment* to 27 key transportation-related proposals for which feasibility would be evaluated. These included proposals for roadway improvements, parking, bicycle facilities, pedestrian accommodation and transit.

The study evaluated Main Street by segments, of which three are in Bloomington as a whole or in part. They include the sections of Main Street defined by the following cross-streets:

- College Avenue in Normal, to Locust Street in Bloomington
- Locust Street to Oakland Avenue, incorporating Downtown Bloomington
- Oakland Avenue to Interstate 74

For each segment, the study includes analysis of existing conditions and an evaluation of the suggested improvements as applied to the segment. For each segment, the report offers desirable design elements, an analysis of the tradeoffs between currents conditions and the suggested improvements, analysis of specific traffic patterns, and an analysis of the most feasible improvements for implementation. The plan report also illustrates street cross-sections deemed most suitable within each segment. Finally, an alternatives analysis for each segment is presented.

Planning for Downtown Bloomington at the ward level should include a detailed review of the recommended improvements, which focus on modifying traffic patterns to enhance both pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular access, particularly with respect to the Center for the Performing Arts and the U.S. Cellular Coliseum, as well as access improvements for businesses in the downtown area.

Ongoing efforts

- The current development of the Bloomington Bicycle Plan addresses some bicycle access issues raised in the Main Street Feasibility Study.
- Connect Transit is applying for funding to improve the transfer stop on Front Street.

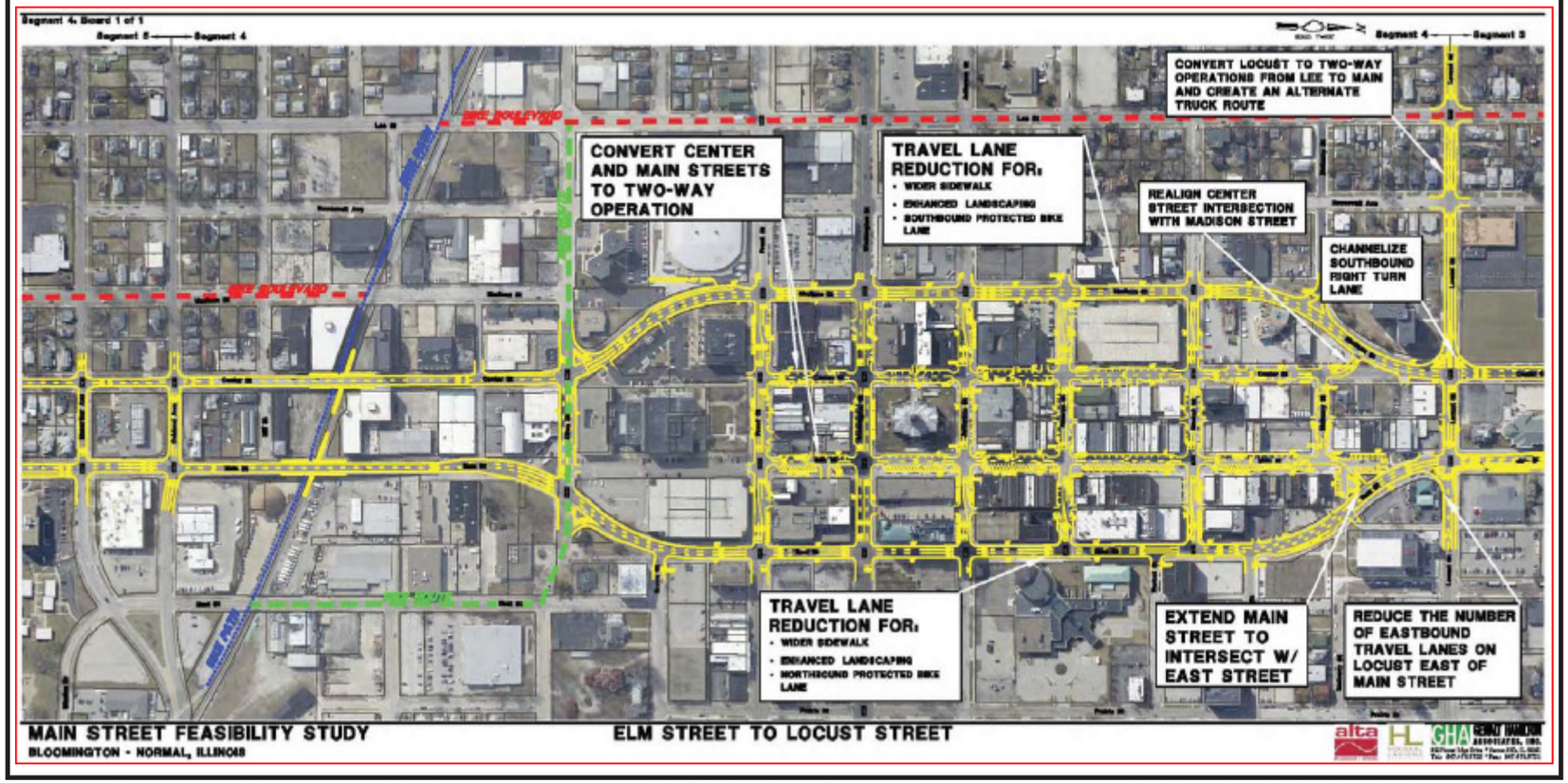
EAST SIDE HIGHWAY PHASE 1 ENGINEERING: PROJECT STATUS

Over the past fifteen years, the city of Bloomington has been a core participant in the ongoing study of a proposed East Side Highway, conceived as a connection between the east side development areas and the rest of the urban area. This proposal has been part of long-range transportation planning for the community since 1994, and has received considerable public attention and comment.

The project as currently proposed (Figure 6.17) would provide Bloomington with an additional direct connection to the interstate system, to Interstate -74 between Bloomington and Downs. Bloomington interchanges on the highway would also be available at, from south to north, Morrissey/Route 150, at the future intersection of Hamilton Road/Towanda-Barnes Road/Cheneys Grove Road, Ireland Grove Road, Empire Street/Route 9, GE Road and Fort Jesse Road. Refinement of the highway includes interchange design, inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian trail elements and linkages, and integration of the highway into adjacent neighborhoods.

The current study has used an extensive and iterative process to evaluate the envi-

Figure 6.16 Street Improvement Concept, Main Street Feasibility Study



ronmental impacts of the proposed highway, including impacts on existing development, and most importantly on agricultural land. The study considers the relationship between future conversion of agricultural land through new development, a process already in evidence through the construction of the Eagle View, Harvest Pointe, and the Grove subdivisions. Both the corridor study and the Environmental Assessment have featured extensive public outreach programs.

EAST SIDE HIGHWAY ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

In 2010, McLean County initiated the final study phase for the East Side project, the Environmental Assessment (EA) conducted in compliance with the requirements of the Federal Highway Administration. The EA, now in its final stages, has reexamined the findings of the corridor study, as well as variations on the corridor options previously evaluated, and the no-build option. The study complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires projects using federal funding to integrate socio-economic and environmental values into the decision making process. The study has also considered transportation demand strategies, compatibility with transit, support of alternate modes of transportation, location of a specific alignment, roadway geometry, and interchange types. Completion of the EA and approval by federal agencies will result in a specific alignment with a centerline, and the identification of preliminary right-of-way needs.

It is important to note that no funding for the East Side Highway project is in place for substantial action beyond the Environmental Assessment. However, the completion of the study will enable future planning for implementation should the highway be needed to meet future growth. Further information and current project status is available at the project website, eastsidehighway.com.

Potential impacts on Bloomington:

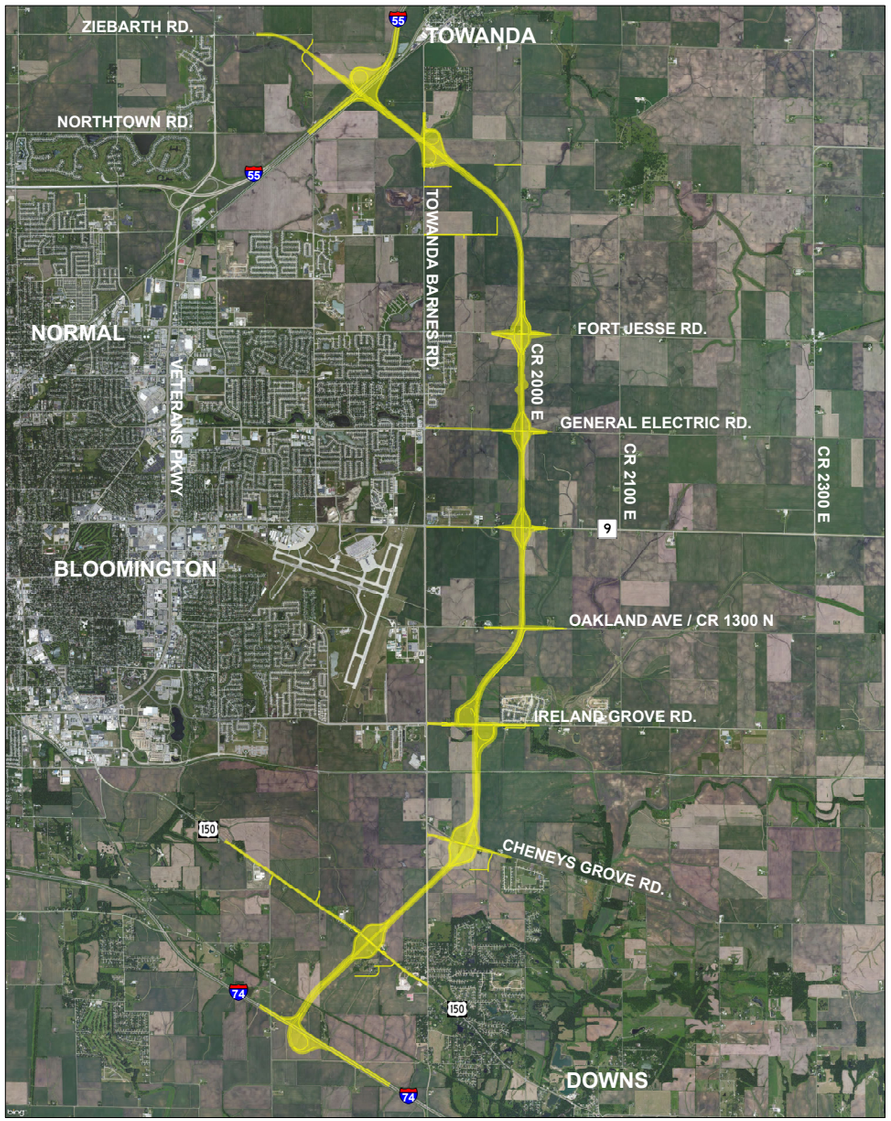
- Enhanced regional access to CIRA, including more direct interstate access for freight distribution
- Access to State Farm corporate campus areas in southeast Bloomington
- Connectivity to east-west transportation network
- Connection of bicycle trail element to existing and future trails and neighborhoods

DIGITAL DIVIDE SURVEY REPORT

In December 2013, Illinois Wesleyan University Action Research Center conducted a survey of District 87 teachers to determine the "digital divide" among District 87 students. The digital divide is defined in the report as "inequality in quality and access to technologies and the internet." The survey posed questions on student internet access, internet use, and whether they felt the digital divide was a concern in District 87.

The survey responses showed that the

Figure 6.17 Eastside Highway Preferred Alignment



Source: Clark Deitz

digital divide is an issue in District 87 that needs to be addressed.

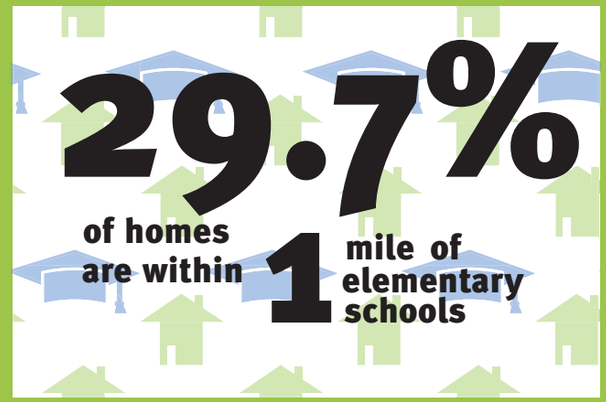
The report concluded that there is a significant portion of District 87 students that do not have internet access at home, putting them at a disadvantage compared to their classmates with internet access.

Recommendations in the plan to address the digital divide include community and school based approach:

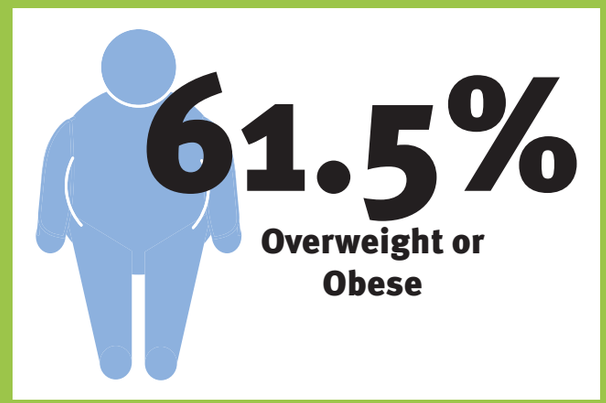
- Community-wide access to low-cost internet
- More time for students in computer labs
- Laptop rentals
- More supervised computer access at school, or at before and after school locations

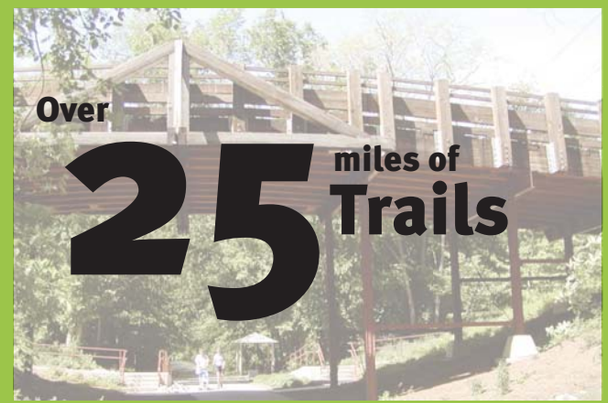
7 HEALTH & SAFETY

Protecting the community's health and safety is a major role of the government. This chapter will discuss the current health issues facing the community and public safety infrastructure, crime and related issues.









KEY FINDINGS

Obesity and overweight is an epidemic plaguing the United States today, and McLean County is no exception. About 61.5% of McLean County adults were overweight or obese in 2008 (39.5% overweight and 22% obese). Two major causes of obesity are sedentary lifestyles and lack of access to fresh food. Land use decisions can play a significant role in addressing these issues.

As Bloomington exists today, not many residents can easily walk to a park, grocery store, or school. The land uses are segregated to inhibit walkable neighborhoods.

Several of the low income census tracts, predominantly located on the west side of the Bloomington, are currently designated as food deserts by U.S. Department of Agriculture.

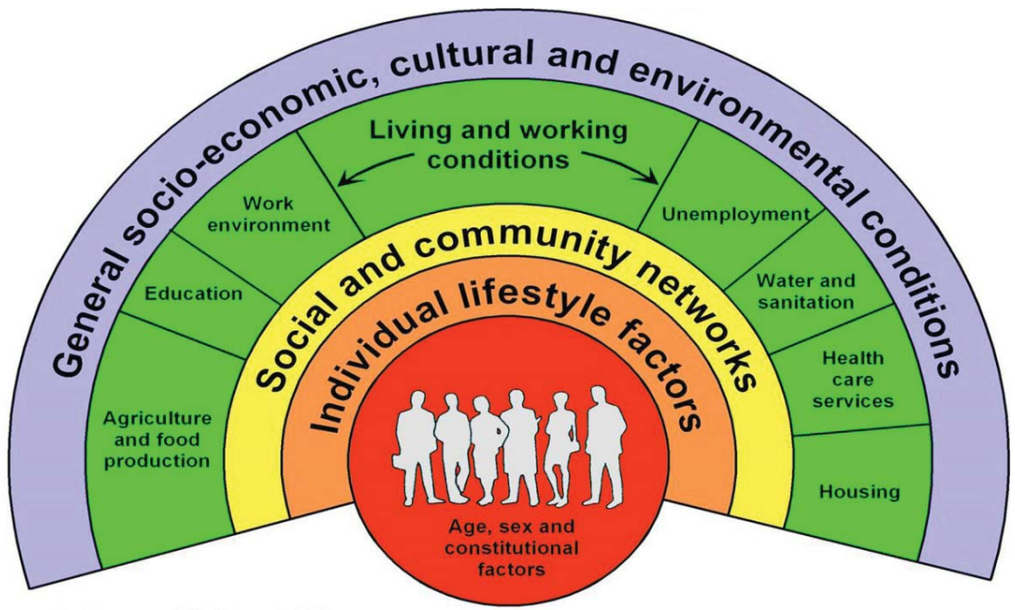
The National Fire Protection Association recommends a response time of six minutes for 90 percentile of calls. In 2013, only 73.5% of all fire calls and 63.9% of all EMS calls were responded to within six minutes. This is a matter of concern.

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, American cities began to urbanize at a rapid pace. The densities in cities caused sanitation issues, and comprehensive planning emerged to help address the resulting public health issues. Land regulation tools, such as zoning, were created to help reduce congestion and improve sanitation and are still in use today. Those early plans fulfilled their intended purpose.

After the initial crisis resolution, comprehensive plans morphed into land use and development control. Most of the public health aspects were handled by public health officials. These two fields diverged quite a bit in the last century.

Today we are facing a different set of public health issues that include obesity and mental heath. As illustrated in Figure 7.1, several factors influence health. Given the complex relationship between health and built environment, cities across the United States are realizing that it is time to work closely with public health professionals to address this issue comprehensively.

Although topics such as alternate transportation, parks, and recreation were addressed in the previous comprehensive plans, health as a subject has not been talked about on its own in Bloomington. Topics on active living were addressed thoroughly in the City's Parks Master Plan. McLean County Health Department continues to be the lead entity in the health planning efforts in Bloomington-Normal and McLean County.



Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991

Figure 7.1 Factors Influencing Health

LOCAL HEALTH CONCERNS

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, enacted on March 23, 2010, required all tax-exempt hospitals to conduct community health needs identified through the assessments. The two major hospitals in McLean County, OSF and Advocate Bromenn, completed these in 2013. Obesity and mental health were among the top three to five concerns identified by these assessments.

As part of the Illinois Project for Local Assessment of Need (IPLAN), the McLean County Health Department completed its fourth five-year work plan for 2012-2017 to fulfill the certification process for local health departments. This plan also identified obesity and mental health as two of its top three health priorities for McLean County.

Obesity

Obesity is defined as having a Body Mass Index (BMI) equal to or greater than 30. For adults the calculation for BMI uses a person's height and weight. For children and teens, the calculation is more precise, using height, weight, age, and gender.

According to the County's health plan, 22% of adults and 5.1% of youth were obese in 2008. In the same year 39.5% of adults and 11.1% of youth were over weight. Physical inactivity and unhealthy eating habits contribute to obesity issues. Being overweight or obese puts adults and kids at increased risk for more than 20 chronic diseases including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, asthma, sleep disorder and orthopedic problems.

Mental Health

According to the County's health plan mental illness can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, race, or income. National statistics indicate 1 in 20 people have a severe and persistent mental illness.

In McLean County, an estimated 20% of population is at risk for having a mental health episode in their life. Suicide calls to the local social service support line, PATH, increased from 410 in 2007 to 920 in 2010.

National research consistently shows that direct contact with nature leads to increased mental health and psychological development. This is one of the areas where comprehensive planning can influence mental health aspects. Promoting accessibility is yet another major aspect of mental health that can be addressed through this plan.


PANTAGRAPH.COM

81°
Scattered Clouds
Weekly Forecast

News Sports Opinion Obituaries Photos Entertainment Life Contests Deals

Hot Topics Short power outage • Burning car • Downtown hotel • Malaysian plane • Country Life • Comedy clu

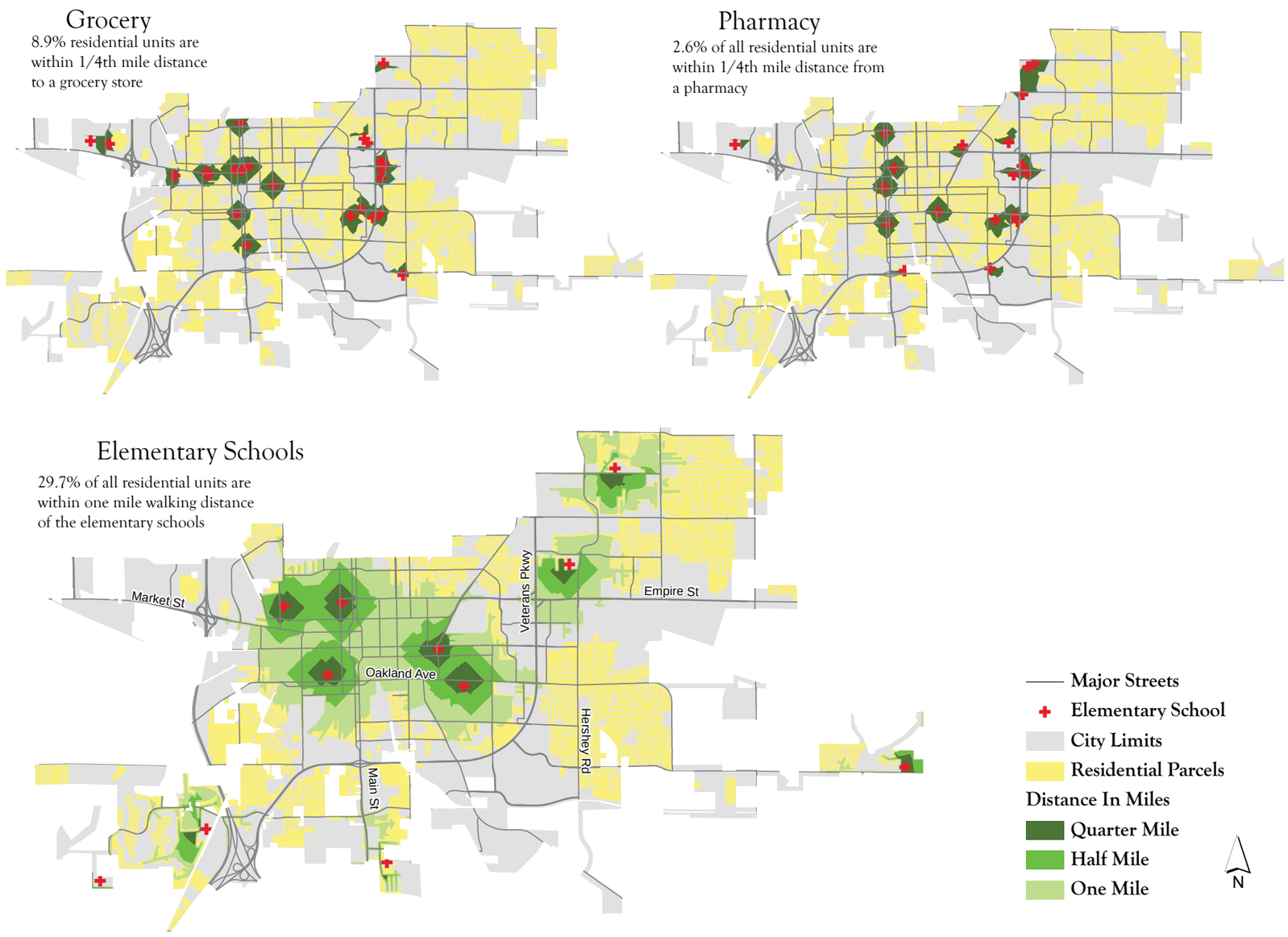
Executive: Poor mental health services reflect badly on county

Log In Tweet 1 +1 0 Share 1 Print Email

June 27, 2014 9:21 am • Edith Brady-Lunny eblunny@pantagraph.com (0) Comments

Figure 7.2 Excerpt from Pantagraph, June 27, 2014

Figure 7.3 Walkability Analysis for Grocery Stores, Pharmacies, and Elementary Schools in Bloomington



Source: MCRPC

WALKABILITY ANALYSIS

With 61.5% of McLean County residents being overweight or obese, it is clear that this is one of the biggest health problems that can potentially be addressed by the comprehensive plan.

One of the major causes of obesity is a sedentary lifestyle. To examine how well our land use patterns support an active lifestyle, MCRPC conducted a preliminary walkability analyis using the locations of frequently visited places like grocery stores, pharmacies, schools, and parks. The nationally accepted standard for walking to grocery stores, pharmacies, and parks is one-quarter mile, while the standard for walking to schools is one mile or less.

As shown in Figure 7.3, given the current distribution of residential properties, only 8.9% of residential households can walk to a grocery store and 2.6% to the nearest pharmacy. Nearly 29.7% of all residential units are within one mile of an elementary school. Please note that this analysis does not take into consideration the condition of the sidewalks, the intensity of traffic, or perception of safety, all of which have a major impact on the ability of these households to walk or use other modes of transportation besides an automobile.

It should also be noted that newer development patterns on the east and the southwest sides of the City are designed to be auto-oriented.

FOOD DESERTS

Although Bloomington sits at the heart of a very productive agricultural region, the crops produced are primarily used for livestock feed and industrial processing for products ranging from corn syrup to ethanol. These products are important to our area producers' financial stability, but do not leverage the fine farm ground surrounding Bloomington to feed people directly.

Interest in buying and using locally-produced food is well-established in our community, as the continuing success of the farmer's markets, increase in the number of Consumer Supported Agriculture (CSA's) and the appearance of local produce in area stores attests.

Access to fresh food is an important factor contributing to obesity. Lack of access to fresh food is a more acute problem for families in poverty. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has conducted an analysis to identify "food deserts" based on income level and access to fresh food. This analysis is conducted at the census tract level and defines "low income" census tracts as:

- The tract's poverty rate is 20 percent or greater; or
- The tract's median family income is less than or equal to 80 percent of the statewide median family income; or
- The tract is in a metropolitan area and has a median family income less than or equal to 80 percent of the metropolitan area's median family income.

"Low access" to healthy food is defined as being far from a supermarket, super-

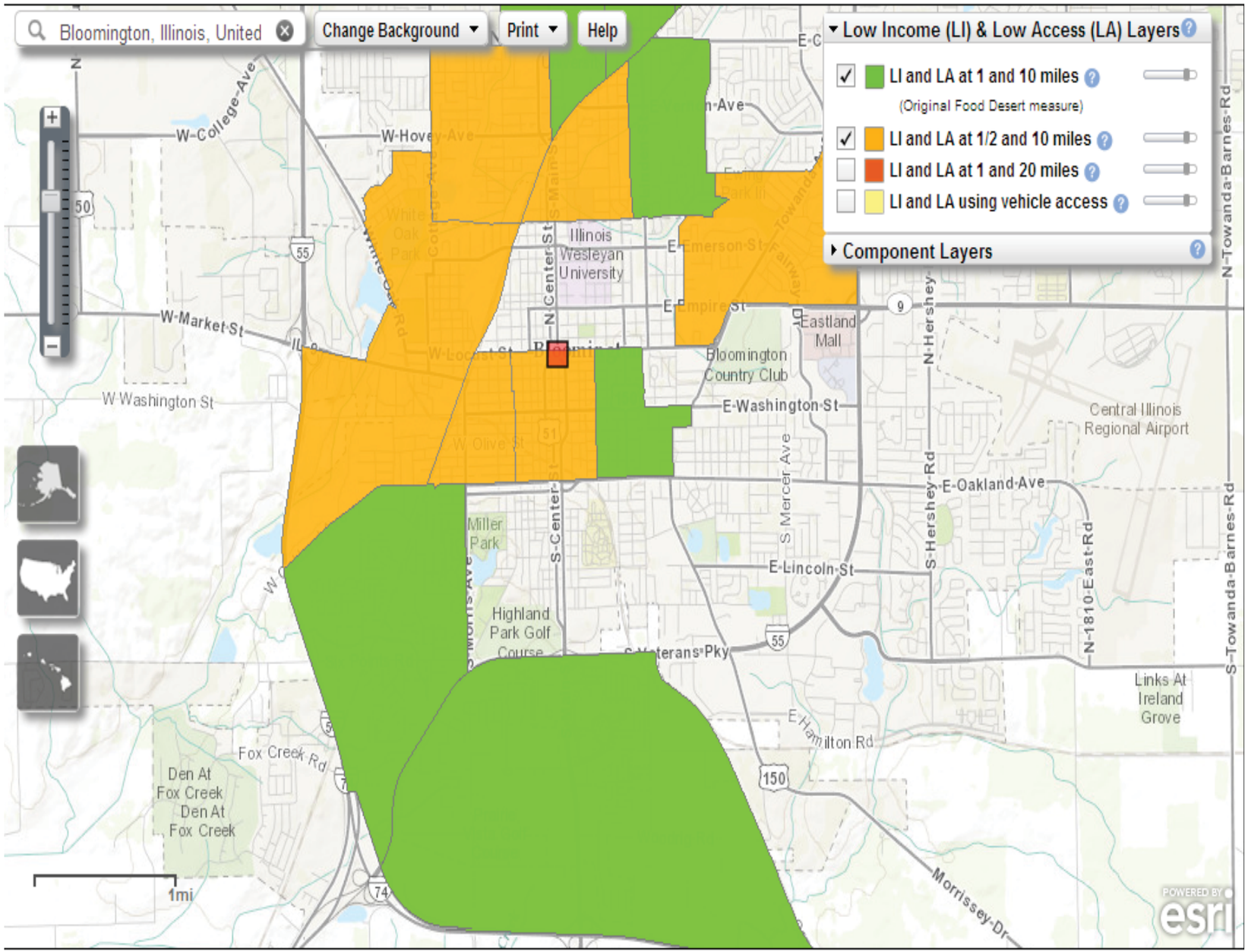


Figure 7.4 Food Desert Map
Source: USDA

center, or large grocery store.

A census tract is considered to have low access if a significant number or share of individuals in the tract is far from a supermarket.

As shown in Figure 7.4, a majority of the west side of Bloomington is a food desert. Grassroots efforts in the Bloomington-Normal metro area are underway to bring awareness to this issue and provide solutions, such as the McLean County Wellness Coalition and Green Top Grocery.

The City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department currently leases out 45 garden plots in the City's existing community garden at the corner of Hershey Road and Ireland Grove Road. These garden plots are very popular and fill up within 48 hours of opening for registration. Figure 7.5 illustrates area community gardens.

The comprehensive planning phase is the right time to look at urban farming and local food issues in collaboration with ongoing community efforts. The plan can promote the increase in available local food through a number of actions, including:

- Support for neighborhood and community gardens
- Continuing and expanding the farmer's market
- Fostering urban agriculture in suitable areas of the City
- Working to support food producers at the urban margin through development management to protect the local agriculture that feeds us all

Creating and sustaining access to



Figure 7.5 Farmers Gardens in Bloomington-Normal Metro Area
Source: McLean County Wellness Coalition

locally-produced food should be a core element of the comprehensive plan, as we explore Bloomington's future as a health-sustaining city.

PARKS AND RECREATION

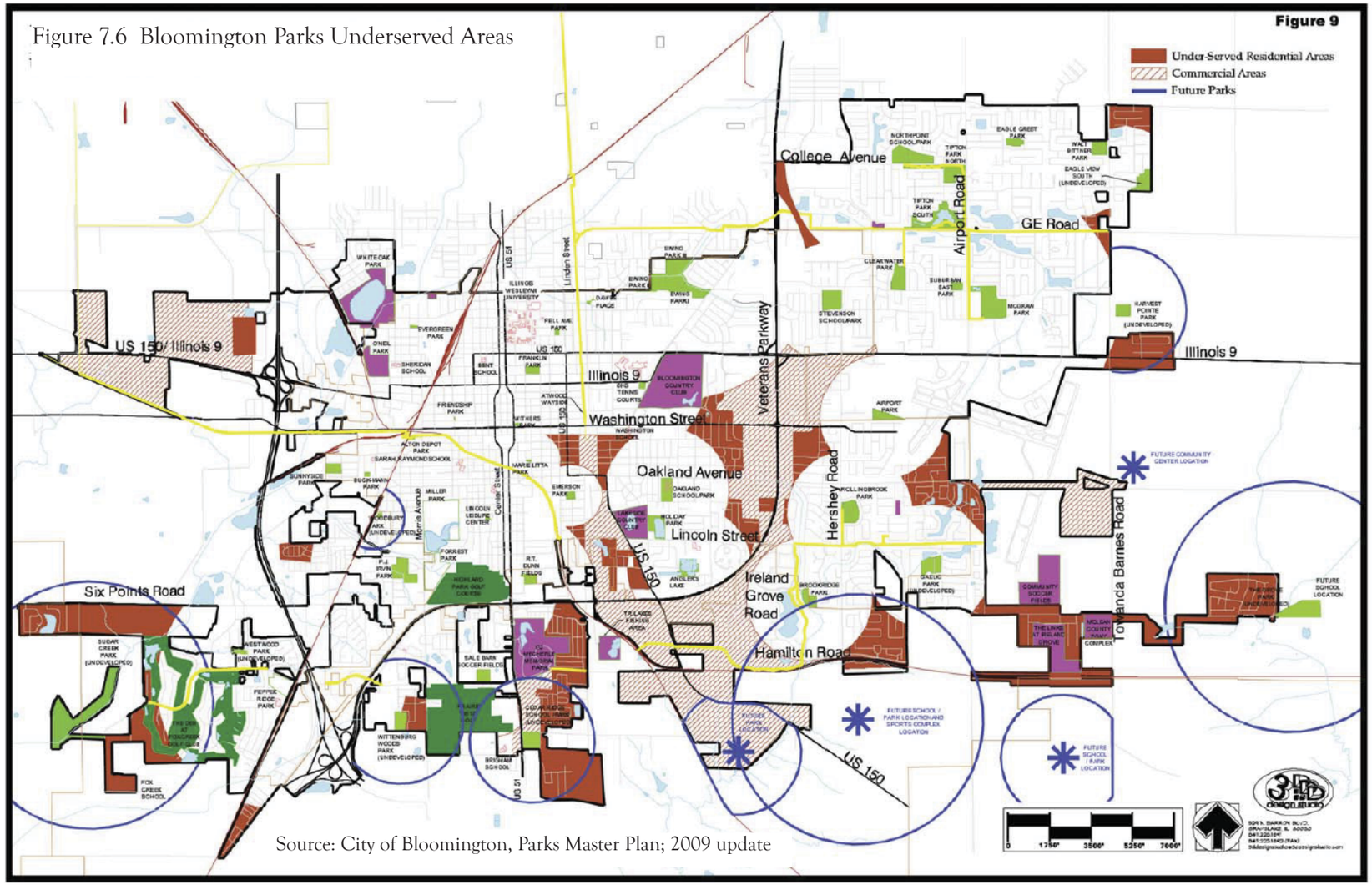
The City of Bloomington has a wide variety of parks and recreation facilities, neighborhood parks, community parks, and a regional park within the community. The City's existing park locations and service areas are shown on Figure 7.6.

In addition to these facilities, the City operates three municipal golf courses, as well as other recreation facilities that offer alternative or specialized activities and opportunities, such as Lake Bloomington. Lake Bloomington is primarily a water source for the City but does offer some recreational activities. The City also has a system of multipurpose trails, including the City's segments of the Constitution Trail. The City's parks offer a variety of playground equipment and athletic fields in neighborhood settings. In addition, public school facilities provide added park and recreation space for residents.

In 2009, the City of Bloomington hired the services of 3DD Design Studio to update the *2005 City of Bloomington Parks Master Plan*. The intent of this update was to reflect the trends in outdoor sports and recreation.

At the time of the plan, there were nine acres of park per 1,000 residents. The American Planning Association recommends 12.5 percent of any City's land area be designated for parks and open space. The National Recreation and Parks Association suggests a ratio of 10 acres of open space per 1,000 residents. If all open space is included, the City would meet the 10 acre standard. However, it would fall short if only "parks" were included by approximately 75 acres, and approximately 150 acres to meet the community center and soccer complex goal. This update which was adopted in January of 2010. This plan reached out to many segments of the community and has made several recommendations to improve the parks and recreational areas in Bloomington. This plan is currently five years old and is ready for an update. Below is the summary of the parks master plan update from 2009:

Figure 7.6 Bloomington Parks Underserved Areas



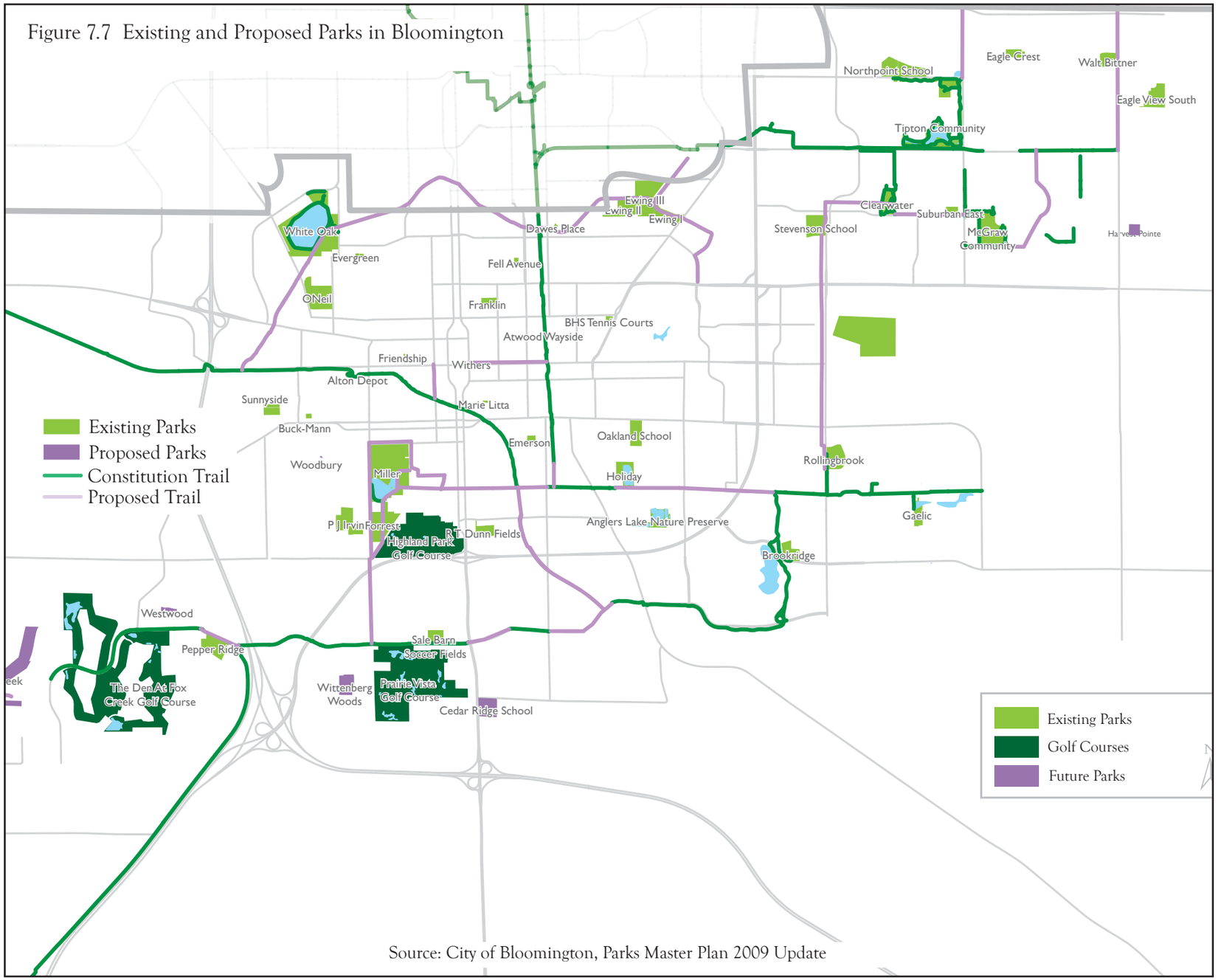
Source: City of Bloomington, Parks Master Plan; 2009 update

- Areas underserved by developed out-

door parks include areas far southeast and southwest of Bloomington, as well as south of Veterans Parkway along U.S. Route 51. Figure 7.6 provides additional information.

- Most playgrounds cater to 10-year-old and above age groups. Age appropriate equipment for 2-5 and 5-10 year age groups should be made during the transition to any newer equipment
- Walking/jogging/biking trails were identified as the most important recreational activity enjoyed by Bloomington residents. Several important extensions of the Constitution Trail would allow this system to move towards a regional loop trail. Links to existing and future parks should be considered while lengthening the trail. Figure 7.7 illustrates the proposed connections and links.
- There was strong support for a large sporting complex that could host a variety of sports tournaments. Given the central location of Bloomington-Normal, this 130 -150 acre field has the potential to become a regional draw.
- Outdoor water play and swimming are still very popular. The City is lacking in the type of water play supported by the trends. Tipton and Holiday Parks have this type of interactive play. The City should consider converting O'Neil Park pool into a zero depth aquatic facility, and features similar to the Tipton North water play area
- Ice skating and hockey are highly sought after activities within the Blooming-

Figure 7.7 Existing and Proposed Parks in Bloomington

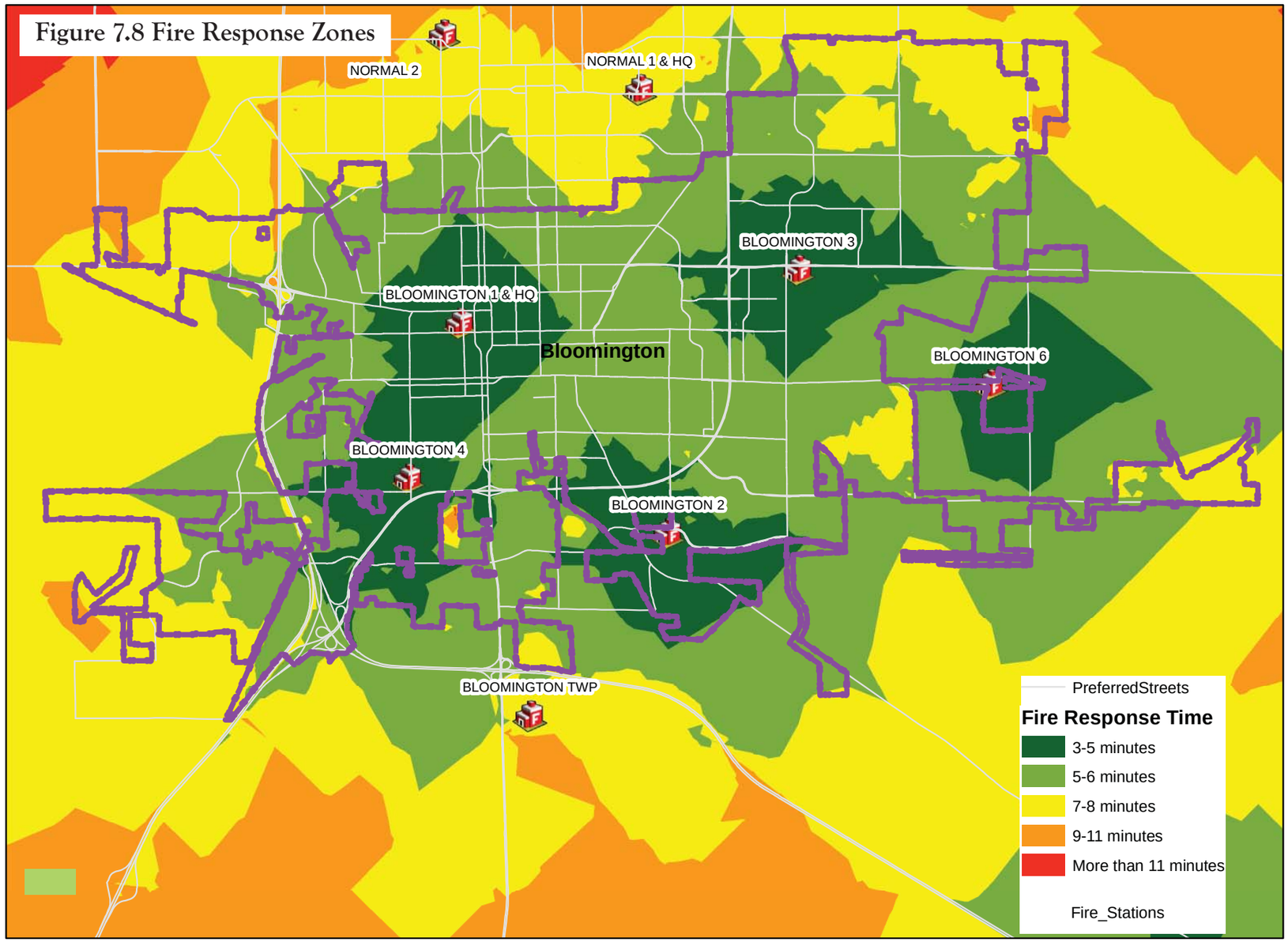


Source: City of Bloomington, Parks Master Plan 2009 Update

ton-Normal area. Support for a second sheet of ice was demonstrated in both user groups
- Tennis and sand volleyball opportunities are identified as lacking in the current inventory.

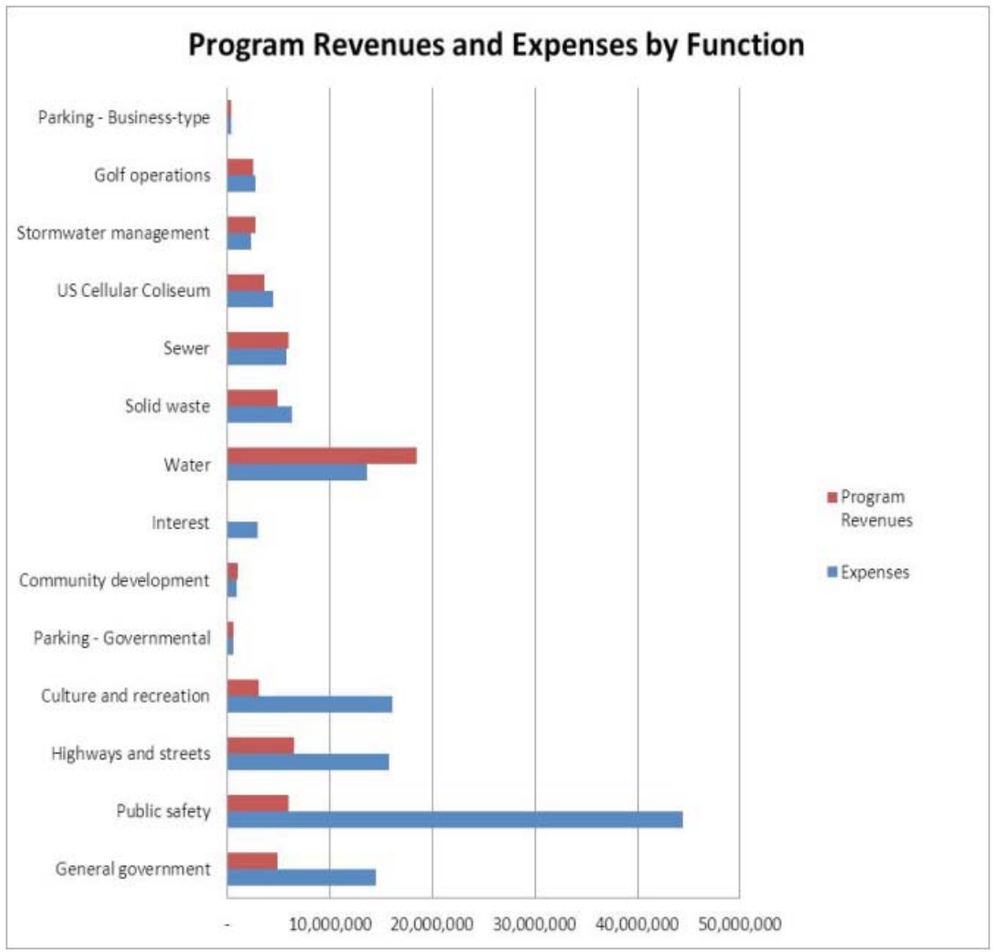
Recommendations for improvements include:
- Improving the overall park and trail system
- Protect existing parkland and natural areas from encroachments of incompatible uses
- Ensure effective use of existing parks and recreational facilities
- Provide diversified parks and recreational facilities and programs with maximum accessibility and safety
- Maximize the use of the natural areas within the city for recreational, educational and aesthetic purposes while ensuring their quality
- Expand street tree planting program
- Provide educational opportunities for youth
- Encourage the development of green corridors to improve aesthetics along transportation corridors, improve water quality, restore habitat, restore wetlands, protect lake edges, and manage flood plains effectively
- Recharge the groundwater aquifer through the use of responsible storm water management techniques and construction of marshes and wetlands
- Advance lifelong learning by linking

Figure 7.8 Fire Response Zones



Data Source: ETSB/METCOM; Information analysis: McGIS

Figure 7.9 City of Bloomington Expenses



Data Source: City of Bloomington 2014 CAFR

Figure 7.10 Unit Hour Utilization During a 24-Hour Shift

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	.27	.15	.12	.24	.23	.15	.19
Station #6	Engine #6	.19	.02	.00	.00	.03	.00	.02	.04

neighborhoods to schools and parks
- Manage and restore natural areas

The majority of the location-specific improvements were for the east side of Bloomington south of Route 9, as well as Oakland Avenue near the airport and Ireland Grove Road. There are also plans for trail extensions in these areas which could take advantage of abandoned railroad right-of-way in the Route 150 Corridor. A section of trail has already been planned to connect The Grove Subdivision with Benjamin School with the design including the Kickapoo Creek watershed. Also as part of the plan, the City suggests improvements and recommendations to existing parks in its parks inventory. The City will continue to add mileage to Constitution Trail with an emphasis on urban connectivity as funds become available.

PUBLIC SAFETY

As can be seen in Figure 7.9, the City of Bloomington spends the majority of its budget for public safety. This includes the City's fire and police departments, and 911 dispatch center, which is separate from that of the County.

FIRE PROTECTION

According to the City of Bloomington Fire Department, the City is currently served from five manned fire stations, one of which is in partnership with the Central Illinois Regional Airport. With the exception of Fire Station Number 6, all fire stations have an ambulance at the location.

The National Fire Protection Association recommends a response time of six minutes for 90 percentile of calls. The response time is inclusive of one minute dispatch time

and one minute for turnaround time, leaving four minutes for travel time. As can be seen in Figure 7.8, certain parts of the City are not within the 6-minute fire response time.

According to the Bloomington Fire Department (BFD), 73.5% of all fire calls and 63.9% of all EMS calls were responded to within six minutes during 2013. The 90th percentile response times for fire was 8.1 minutes and EMS was 9.0 minutes. Additional ways to address this issue can be evaluated in the comprehensive planning process.

According to the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE), a fire station not available for 80% of the time cannot be expected to perform at the 80th percentile. Unit Hour Utilization (UHU) is a measure used to quantify the availability of service. Acceptable UHU range is 0.25 to 0.3 for a traditional fire station. As illustrated in Figure 7.10, the headquarters fire station's UHUs are consistently higher than the acceptable measures. Depending on the days and times, other stations show higher than acceptable UHUs. This means that even if the caller lives within the four minute travel time, it may take longer to receive the service. Several factors such as road condition, layout, traffic flow, and time of the year all have an impact on UHU factor along with caller's location. Fire and emergency response is a big part of the quality of life in the community. Newer development areas are at a severe risk. The planning process should work closely with the BFD to analyze the situation and address it comprehensively.

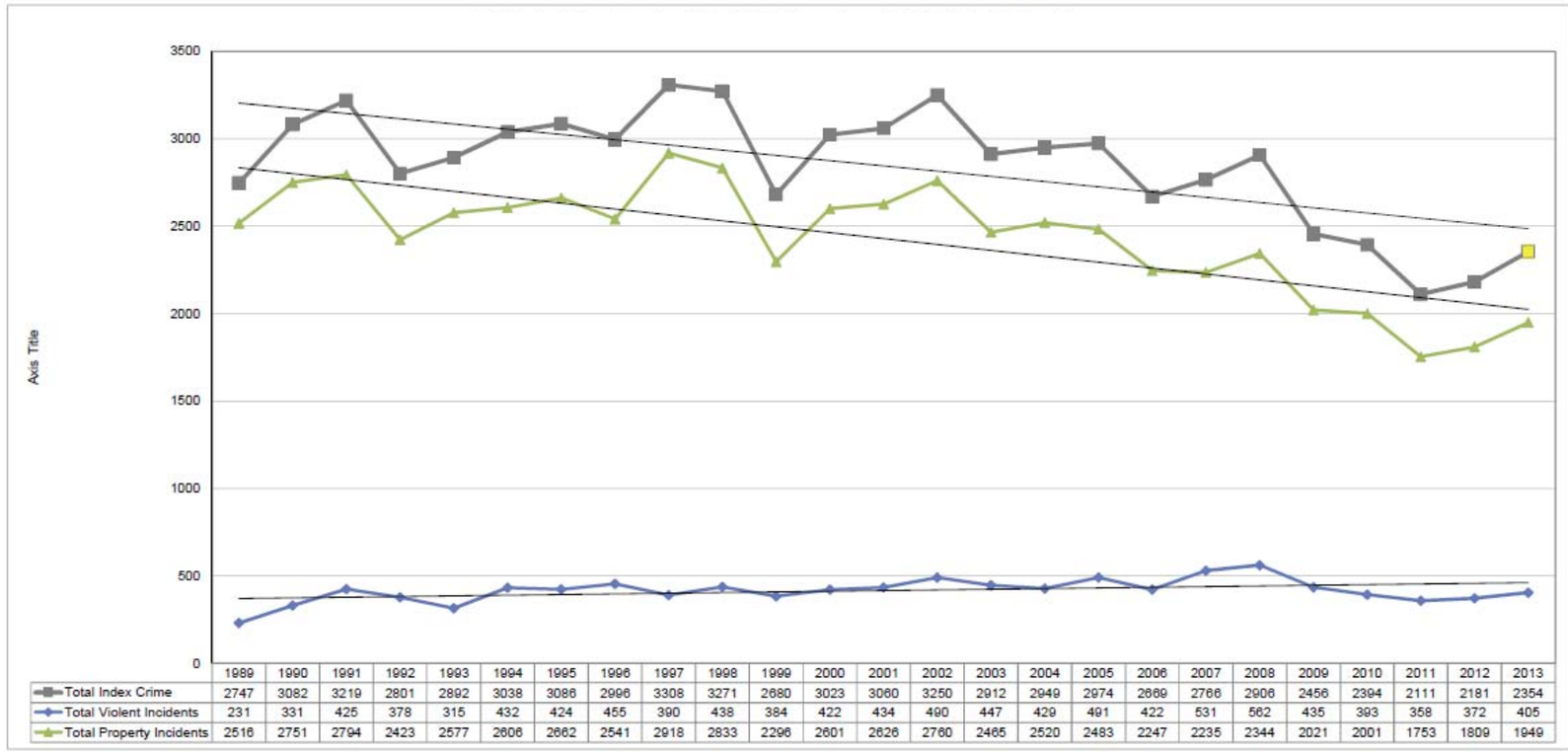
POLICE DEPARTMENT

The crime rate in Bloomington is relatively low compared to the surrounding communities. As is illustrated in Figure 7.11, Bloomington's total crimes in 2013 were below 1989 numbers. The Police Department deserves great credit for their efforts in improving safety in Bloomington. They employ Problem Oriented Policing (POP) as their primary strategy, in which the police work hand-in-hand with the community to understand community needs and develop customized solutions.

In 2012, the police department adopted its second three-year strategic plan. Problem Oriented Policing (POP) was emphasized again in this plan. The goals that are most relevant to the comprehensive plan include:

- Reduce crime and the fear of crime, using geography-based analysis and enhanced intergovernmental cooperation
- Increased communication with the community through several channels, including surveys of public satisfaction and focus group meetings with residents, as well as expanded public information options
- Reduction in youth and adult gang crime, through gang awareness training, Project Safe Neighborhoods, graffiti removal and

Figure 7.11 Total Index Crime Based on Illinois UCR Procedures 1989 to 2013 with Trendlines



	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total Index Crime	2747	3082	3219	2801	2892	3038	3086	2996	3308	3271	2680	3023	3060	3250	2912	2949	2974	2669	2766	2906	2456	2394	2111	2181	2354
Total Violent Incidents	231	331	425	378	315	432	424	455	390	438	384	422	434	490	447	429	491	422	531	562	435	393	358	372	405
Total Property Incidents	2516	2751	2794	2423	2577	2606	2662	2541	2918	2833	2296	2601	2626	2760	2465	2520	2483	2247	2235	2344	2021	2001	1753	1809	1949

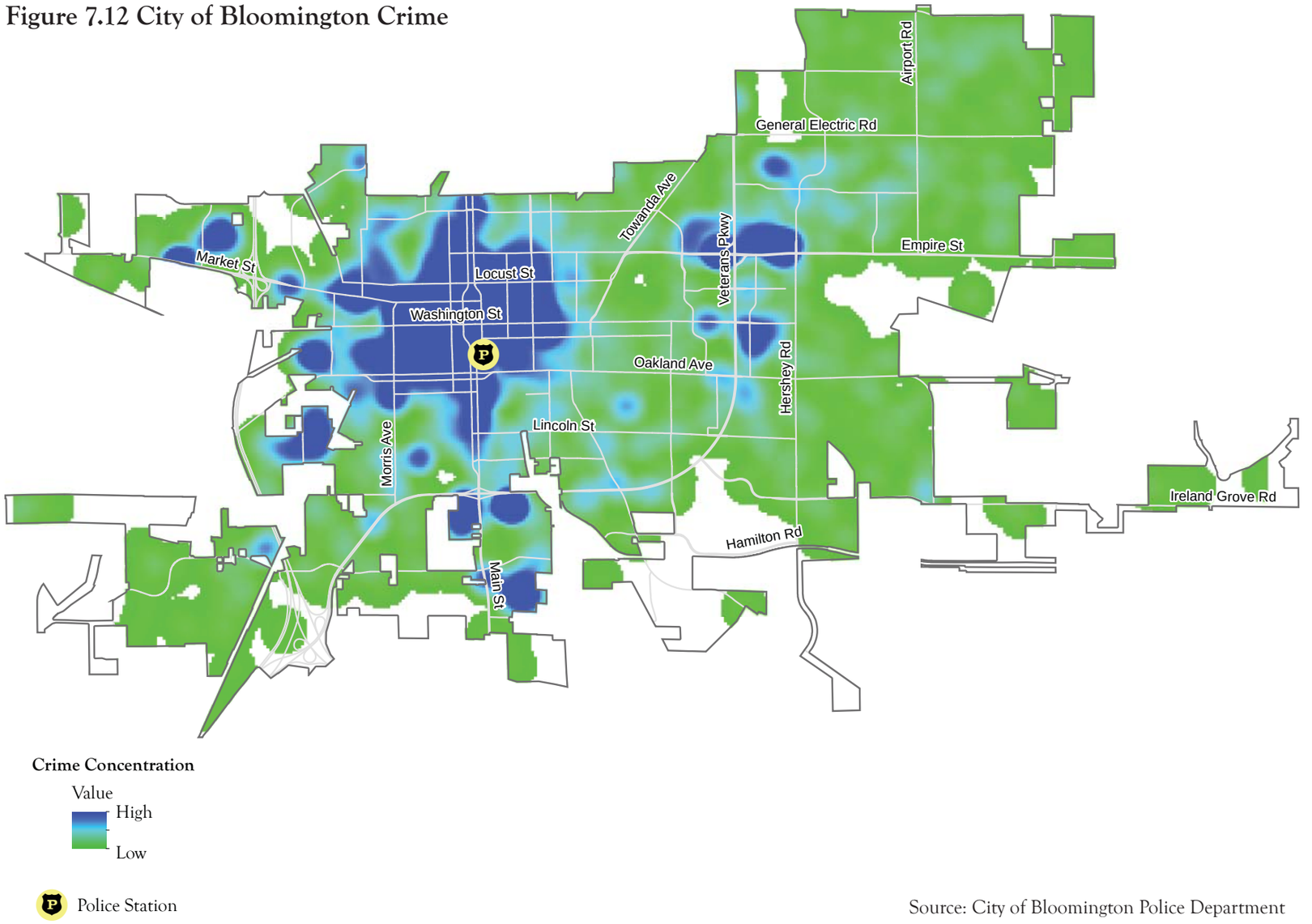
other community activities

- Improve the quality of life in neighborhoods, encouraging collaborative efforts with City departments and community, using direct contact with residents in problem locations, enforcement of alcohol ordinances, and public education on alcohol issues
- Enhanced traffic enforcement and identification of crash location concentrations
- Enhance community and police partnerships, through formal and informal collaborative relationships with community members and other departments
- Participation in community programs, including bi-monthly citizen meetings by the chief of police, support for agencies working on crime reduction, and redesign of the BPD website and use of social media for better community information
- Enhance public relations with the community regarding police operations

Active community outreach is one of the many things BPD does to accomplish their goals. BPD organizes bi-monthly "Chief's Focus" meetings, intended to learn first hand information from concerned citizens and neighborhood groups. BPD attends an average of 15 to 20 neighborhood and community meetings a month. Social media is actively used by BPD to learn from the community and frequently share accurate information with the public.

Figure 7.12 depicts Part 1 crimes such as homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and burglary, in Bloomington from 2009-2013. As is clearly illustrated in this figure, while the overall rate of crime is low in the City, crime is concentrated in the core. This concentration correlates with the densities of housing in that area. Like other measures, this is a concern for Bloomington's mature neighborhoods and its core.

Figure 7.12 City of Bloomington Crime



Source: City of Bloomington Police Department

RELEVANT PLANS, STUDIES & ONGOING EFFORTS

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, enacted on March 23, 2010 required all tax-exempt hospitals to conduct community health needs identified through the assessments. The two major hospitals in McLean County, OSF and Advocate Bromenn, completed these in 2013. The assessments were conducted in three phases.

- Phase 1- Data Assessment: Community health needs were assessed based on secondary data including census data and data from the hospital records;
- Phase 2- Community engagement: Key stakeholders were engaged and primary data was gathered. Concerted efforts were made to target at risk populations in the region;
- Phase 3- Needs prioritization: Health needs were prioritized based on criteria such as:
  1. Seriousness of the need and short term urgency,
  2. Long-term importance to the community,
  3. Degree to which the effective programs/ community partners/ community assets were available to address the need, and
  4. Percent of population with that need as well as trends and future forecasts.

OSF HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT (1)

Health needs prioritized

1. Obesity
2. Risky behavior
3. Mental Health
4. Healthy Behavior
5. Access to Health Services
6. Dental

Demographic observations directly relevant to the comprehensive plan by this assessment include

- Elderly Population: Increase in individuals aged 60-64 and 75-74 during the years 2007-2010 were noted.
- Poverty: Poverty rates among single family households were significantly higher than those of married couples. Poverty rates in McLean County among all individuals decreased from 2007 to 2010 despite a recession.

ADVOCATE BROMENN (2)

Health needs prioritized

1. Obesity
2. Mental Health
3. Oral Health

Demographic observations directly relevant to the comprehensive plan by this assessment include

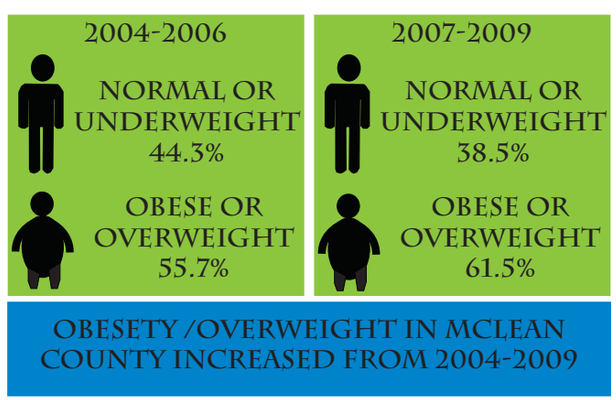
- Percent of persons living below poverty level in McLean County is 13.4%, slightly higher than the state's average of 13.1%.
- Percent of population receiving Medicaid in McLean County has risen steadily from 5.8% in 2004 to 13.8% in 2010.

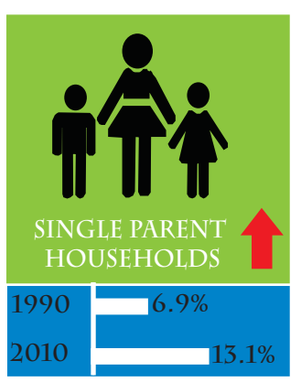
MCLEAN COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH PLAN (CHP) (3)

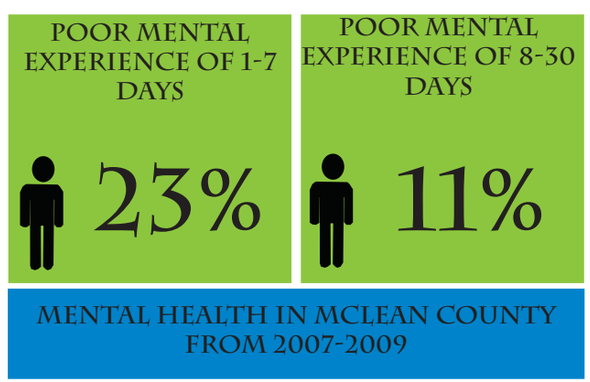
As part of Illinois Project for Local Assessment of Need (IPLAN) McLean County Health Department completed its fourth five year work plan for 2012-2017 to fulfill the certification process for local health departments. The overarching goal of this plan is to improve health and reduce the risk of death and disability by encouraging health awareness and promote healthy lifestyle choices. McLean County Health Department's Community Health Advisory Committee (CHAC) along with its community partners like the health care providers, community agencies, schools, businesses, faith community and the media works to identify health problems, set goals and objectives, develop and implement strategies to address the health problems.

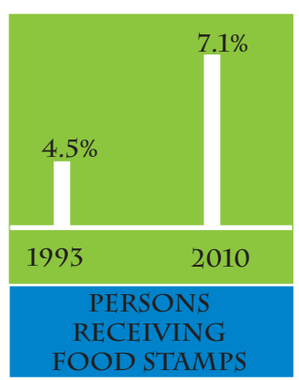
Needs Assessment of Health Indicators

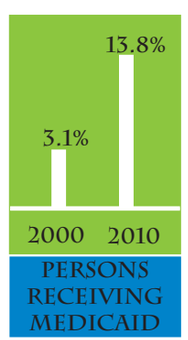
Through a variety of secondary data, CHAC identified 21 preliminary health concerns. After thorough discussion and analysis, the following three concerns were prioritized











based on the size and the seriousness of the problem and the effectiveness of the intervention to address the health problem:

1. Obesity
2. Mental Health
3. Oral Health

A number of outcome objectives, impact objectives, intervention strategies and metrics were established to address the above mentioned health concerns.

CHP also recognized the importance of the following areas to help achieve the goals and objectives:

1. Maintain and expand its partnerships
2. Continue to seek alternate funding
3. Focus on risk factor reduction
4. Utilize data to influence

a. Policy changes
b. Choice of interventions
c. Behavior/lifestyle changes in the community

Observations by this plan relevant to the comprehensive plan:

- McLean County Health Department stresses the need of community partnership and ownership of the CHP for its effective implementation. CHAC formed the implementation task forces to help move the planned interventions forward.
- Percent of single parent households rose from 6.9% in 1990 to 13.1% in 2010.
- Percent of population below the poverty line increased from 9.7% in 2000 to 14.4% in 2010.
- At 6.9%, McLean County's unemployment was at its highest in 2010.
- Economic disparities continue to exist among race/ethnic groups in McLean County.
- Median income of single parent households are significantly lower than McLean County's median income.
- Blacks and Hispanics live in greater poverty than the white population.
- Median age continues to rise although a slight decrease has occurred in the growth of the >65 age group.
- There was a 10.7% increase in individuals receiving Medicaid in 2010 in comparison to 2000.
- At 7.1% currently, McLean County has shown a consistent increase in the percent of population receiving food stamps in comparison to 4.5% in 1993. Percentage increases at the state level are two times greater than the McLean County.

Environmental Health/ Occupational Health/ Injuries data analysis:

- Over the 10-year span sampled, McLean County accounted for approximately 8% of the waste collected in the State of Illinois. This can be attributed in part to no household hazardous waste collection (HHW) events occurring in central Illinois since 2009. The plan urges the need to have these events to avoid burning, drain disposal and incorporated into landfill waste streams.
- McLean County is in the Zone 1 geographic region for indoor radon levels. The average radon level has increased to 6.9 pCi/L from 5.5 pCi/L in 2004.
- With 12.2 motor vehicle crash-related deaths per 100,000 population in 2007, McLean County was above the Illinois average for the same year.
- There was one pedestrian-related death in 2008 (0.6 deaths per 100,000 of the population) and none in 2009.
- This lower pedestrian death rate in McLean County was attributed to sidewalks and Constitution Trail that expands to several neighborhoods.

Footnotes:
1. OSF St. Joseph Community Health Assessment: http://www.osfhealthcare.org/osflib/about/CHNA/bloomingtonCHNA-full.pdf
2. Advocate Bromenn Community Health Needs Assessment: http://www.advocatehealth.com/documents/CHNA/BroMennCHNA1-14.pdf
3. McLean County Community Health Plan

8 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Natural resources are positive components of any development and add value where integrated appropriately into development projects. This harmonious coexistence begins with a good understanding of our natural environment.

This chapter will examine topics such as air quality, water resources, energy resources, floodplains, stream bank erosion, local food and urban gardening. It will also identify the potential environmental concerns or threats such as gas pipelines and hydraulic fracturing.









KEY FINDINGS

Bloomington 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.

As calculated by the Ecology Action Center, as of 2008 residents of 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.

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.

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.

The natural environment is comprised of vegetation, soils, water, plants, wind, energy and air. Also included as part of the natural environment are all living things that interact within this sphere. In other words, it is the habitat in which all living things exist. It is contrasted with the built environment, which comprises components of materials that are created by human society. This chapter will examine the present local natural environment and what it means to future planning for the City of Bloomington.

This chapter considers the natural resources on which City services depend and which provide the raw materials for those services. Natural resources may also be used by public utilities and private companies to provide services, such as energy. While the natural environment influences how we live in Bloomington, the existence of an urbanized area like the City of Bloomington also produces impacts on the surrounding natural environment.

GREENWAYS

Greenways are defined as a linear open space, natural corridor (such as a riverfront, stream or valley), or railroad right-of-way converted for recreational use. It can also be a natural or landscaped course for pedestrian or bicycle passage, or a connector for linking parks, nature preserves, cultural features or historic sites with populated areas.

The City, the Town of Normal and McLean County engage in an ongoing planning process to examine the relationship between the natural environment and urban development. This process produced the *McLean County Regional Greenways Plan.* Updated and approved in September of 2009, the *McLean County Greenways Plan* established a vision for a regional system of greenways which includes the City of Bloomington. The plan urged that all municipalities within the County make conservation and the environment a priority through the use of best management practices when possible. The need to preserve and expand all types of open spaces is important for a community like Bloomington. Conservation techniques were urged on all development of open space as well as increased public education efforts of how the built and natural environment can function together. "Priority" greenway development was insisted that included the development and restoration of waterways, natural areas, and human-made green space that may be developed in various areas determined to be environmentally "threatened." Priority greenways exhibit at least one or more of the following features: benefits multiple communities, completes an existing greenway, creates new connections, assists wildlife, preserves water quality, prevents flood damage, buffers an existing preserve, is located in a scenic or historic area, provides a trail extension opportunity or has special implementation potential as a greenway (see Figure 8.1).

Some of the goals and objectives of the plan include the adoption of local erosion control ordinances, completion and update of watershed studies for both Evergreen Lake and Lake Bloomington watersheds, continued expansion of local and regional trail systems and promotion of "green building" techniques and guidelines in new development projects.

Most conservation areas within the urban boundaries are privately developed and owned. There are conservation areas in the Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake watersheds but those areas are also privately owned or owned and maintained by McLean County Parks and Recreation. The Park-Lands Foundation owns and maintains two conservation areas in the Lake Bloomington watershed (Merwin Preserve and Lexington Prairie) and three conservation areas in the Evergreen Lake area (Chinquapin Bluffs, Letcher Basin and Ridgetop Hill Prairie Nature Area).

County conservation areas which lie within the reservoir watersheds include Deer Island, Lake View, Mallards Bay, Six-Mile Creek, Southeast Conservation Area, Southwest Conservation Area and White Oak.

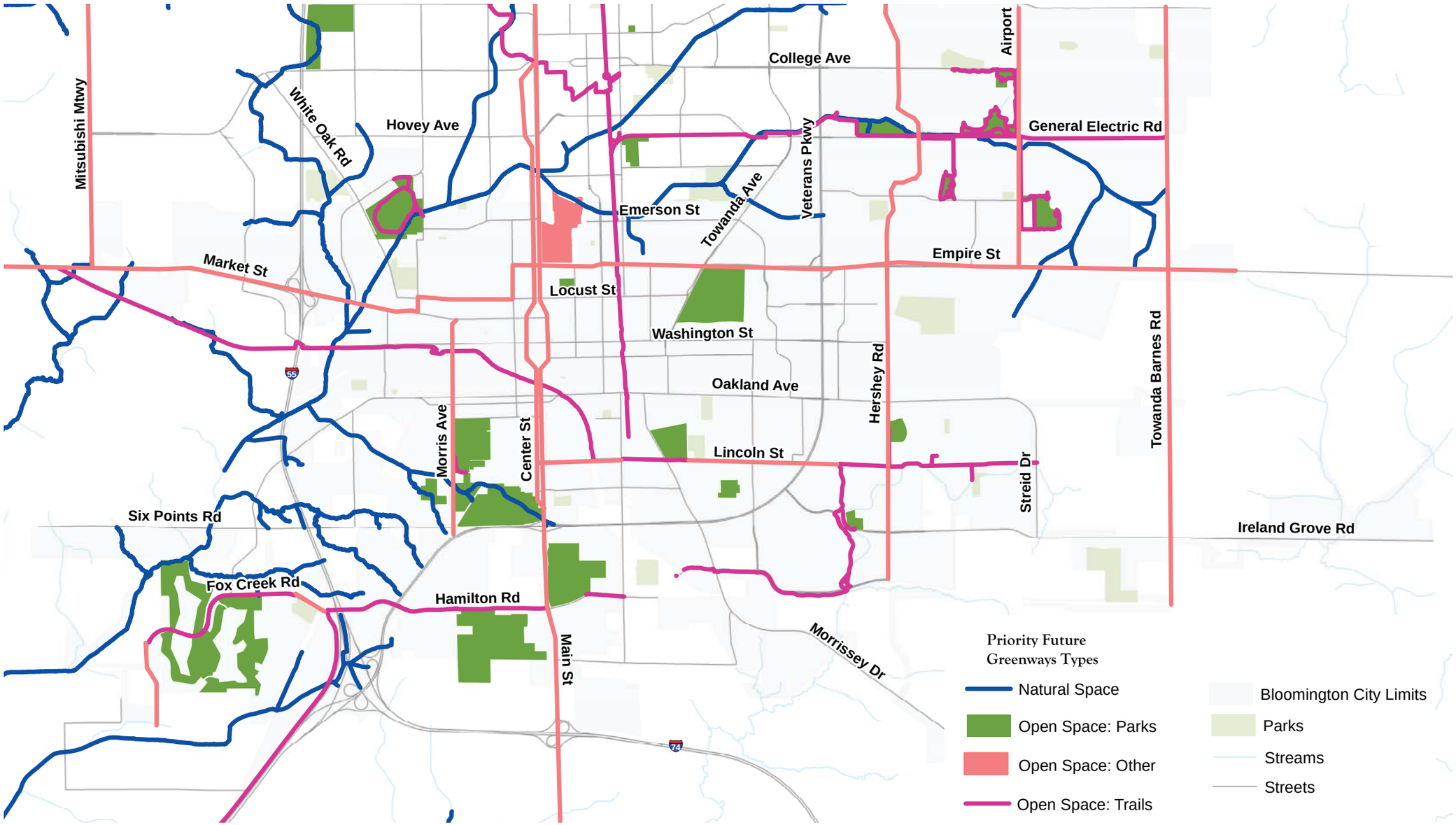
TOPOGRAPHY, SOILS AND LAND COVERAGE

The terrain within the City of Bloomington is highly compatible for most urban development. The topography allows for gravity flow sewers in the majority of the City, although lift stations are necessary in some areas of the City where the terrain is steeper than normal. Development on very flat land can cause "ponding" or flash flooding and on highly-sloped areas can produce erosion hazards during building, street or road construction projects. Most of McLean County and the City is located within the glacial till plain that is prevalent in central Illinois. Land is nearly level or gently rolling with some instances of steeper slopes being present adjacent to stream valleys and drainage ways as along Sugar Creek at the City's southwestern edge. Other low-level topography can be found along the streams, creeks and tributaries that flow within the City boundaries. Higher elevations of the City can be found where glacial moraines are present. These areas include Prairie Vista Golf Club (southern section), Downtown Bloomington, and the Central Illinois Regional Airport and the Far East side (see Figure 8.2).

According the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the City is dominated by soil types that require special designs, construction or maintenance practices to maintain structural integrity and building safety. Many of the local soil types drain poorly and special care must be taken to ensure the drainage capacity is improved.

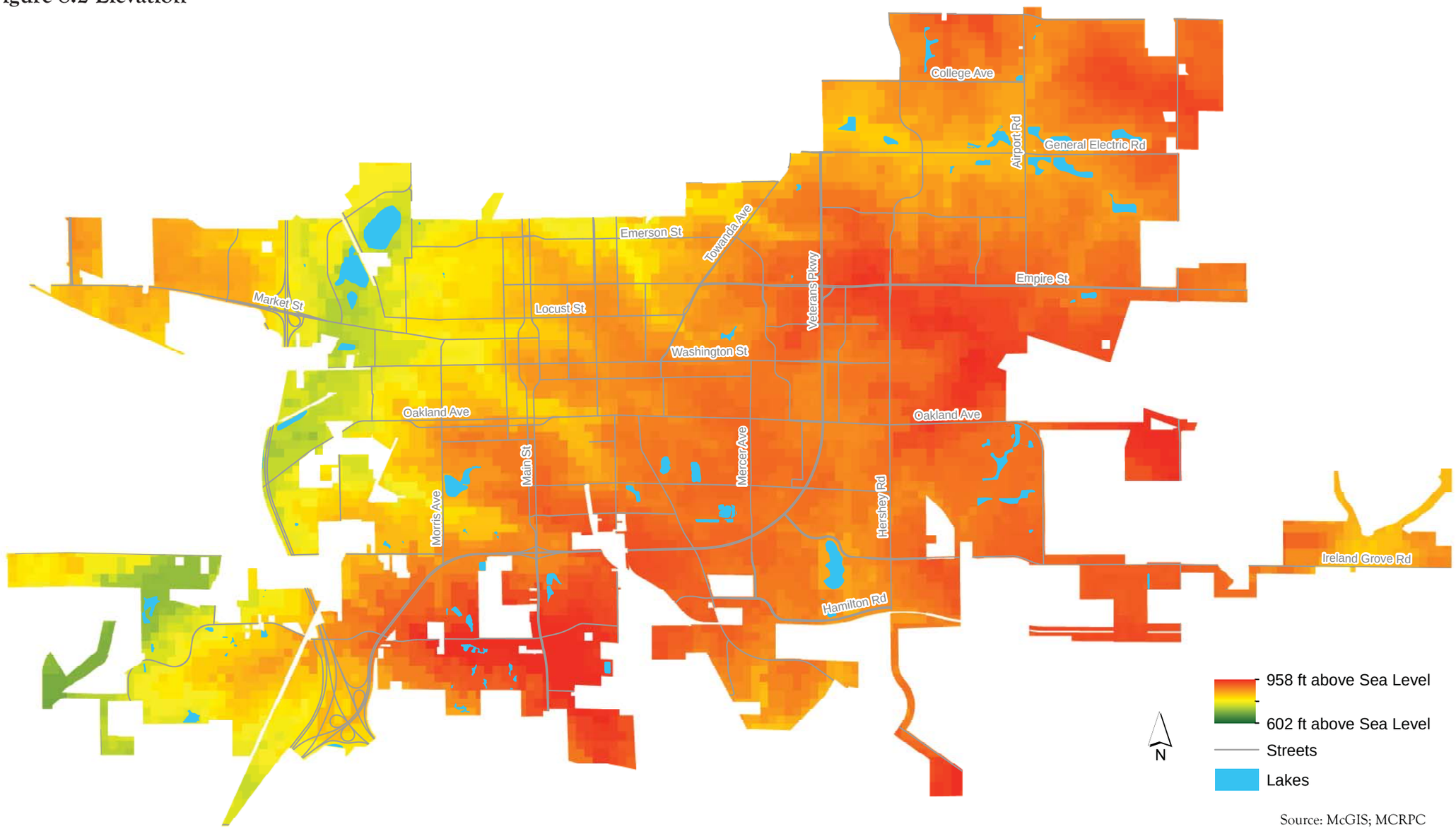
However, the City's subdivision ordinances provide safeguard provisions to overcome any physical limitations of the land. For example, all residential construction must comply with the City's stormwater utility regulation which stipulates steps to improve urban drainage and prevent flooding. When building, landowners and developers are required to comply with a requirement to present the City with an erosion control plan outlining measures they will take to prevent erosion and sediment runoff on site. The City has the added option to require more stringent measures if lots are found to be even more susceptible to drainage problems.

Figure 8.1 Priority Greenways



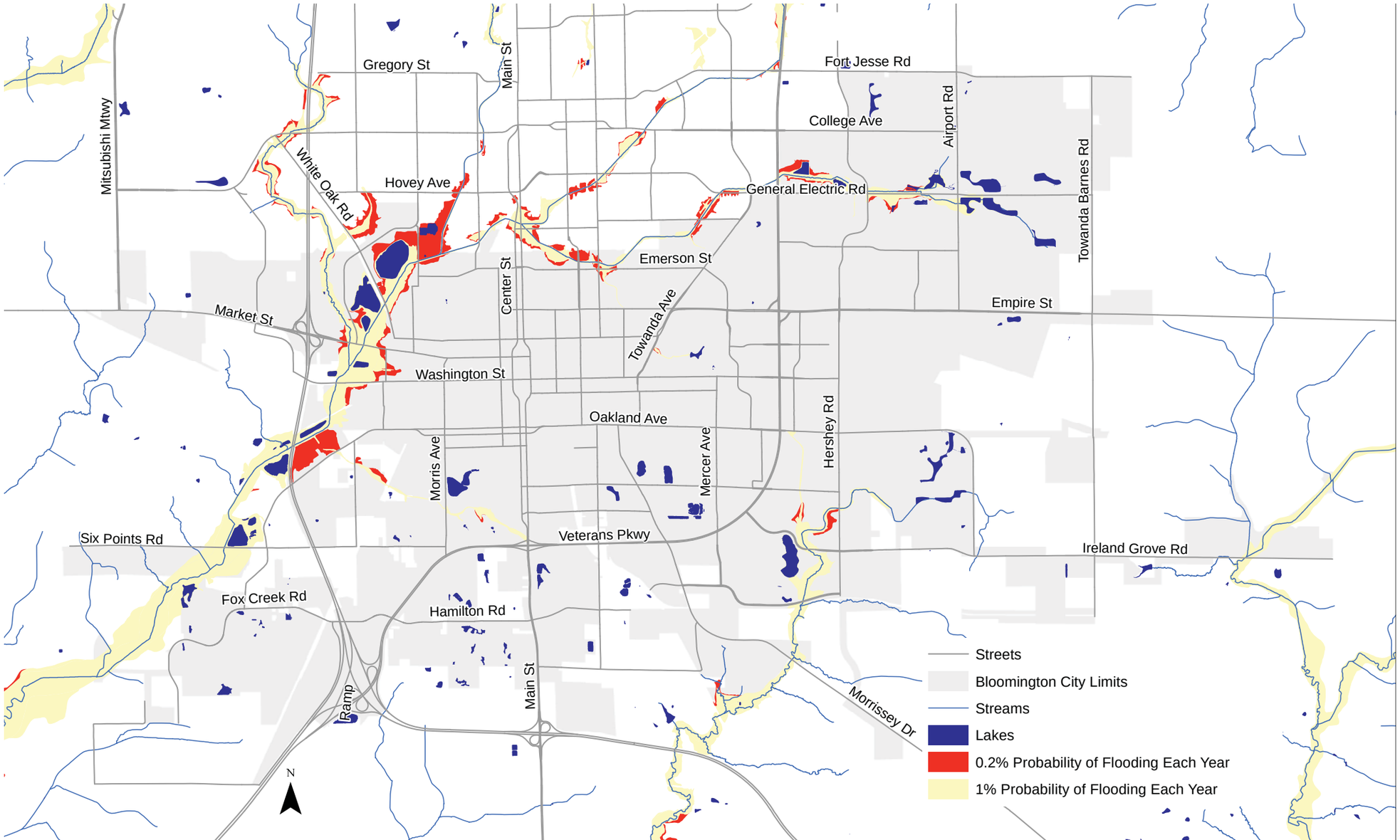
Source: McGIS

Figure 8.2 Elevation



Source: McGIS; MCRPC

Figure 8.3 Flood Hazard Areas



Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency, McGIS

FLOODPLAINS

Floodplains provide an important natural area for drainage. When left in a natural state, a floodplain can function as a natural drainage area for stormwater runoff as well as provide an area for wildlife habitat, trails and a scenic area within the urban area. Because of these reasons and the fact that floodplains are not conducive for development, construction of any type should be prohibited in or near a designated floodplain (see Figure 8.3).

If for any reason construction is required in or near a floodplain, the project must be insured under the National Flood Insurance Act. The City has made every effort to conform to these regulations. Bloomington's floodplain is generally located along the north, south and southwest areas of the City. Its floodplain area is the tributaries and small streams of Sugar Creek. The floodplain is inter-dispersed in narrow areas in the north central section of the City. Although it does not sit within the immediate City boundaries, segments of the Kickapoo Creek have been identified as flood hazard areas, particularly just to the southwest of the City (see Figure 8.3).

Communities utilize stream buffer ordinances to protect the flood plains. McLean County adopted a stream buffer ordinance in July of 2010 for the unincorporated areas. The Town of Normal also incorporated a similar ordinance in April of 2008. These ordinances assigned numerical designations to local streams and waterways which are used to identify flow and flood potential of area waterways along with best management practices for addressing flood and pollutant potential during storm events. Enforcement rules and penalties for owners who fail to address these concerns is also part of the ordinance. The City of Bloomington has not yet adopted a stream buffer ordinance.

WATER SUPPLY AND MANAGEMENT

Sources of drinking water include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs and wells. The City of Bloomington's primary sources for water are Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake. The raw water from the lakes is treated at the Lake Bloomington Water Treatment Plant and delivered to customers in Bloomington, Towanda, Hudson, and Bloomington Township.

Average daily pumpage from Bloomington water sources is approximately 11.5 million gallons per day (MGD). Both lakes have a combined drainage area of 131 square miles and a combined capacity close to 7.5 billion gallons.

The Lake Bloomington reservoir is fed by runoff from 70 square miles of land while the drainage area for Evergreen Lake is 41 square miles. In 1988 and 2005, the area experienced significant droughts. These events alerted the City to two areas of concern, finding new sources for water to support population growth and addressing high nitrate levels in Lake Bloomington. The City initiated a Water Supply Plan that takes into consideration available water supplies, water quality, management and water infrastructure.

Historically, nitrate levels in Lake Bloomington have seasonally exceeded EPA regulatory standards. The majority of the watershed area for both of the city's reservoirs lies in active agricultural areas, which can add nitrates and additional pollutants to the potential water supply. The reservoirs can lose a fraction of their volume to siltation.

As part of the compliance agreement with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), the City maintains regulatory compliance of nitrate levels by careful reservoir management.

The City water department has partnered with the Nature Conservancy, area landowners and various other institutions and organizations to build "constructed wetlands" to study the causes of nitrates. These wetlands, built in targeted agricultural fields, have been proven to remove over 50 percent of inflowing nitrates from underground tiles that would likely enter the watersheds of Six Mile and Money Creeks.

Other potential reservoir pollutants include pollution that originates in a specific location, such as industrial or factory waste/runoff (point source pollution) and pollution that comes from more than one source (non-point source). Examples of non-point source pollution are pollutants that drain into the watersheds such as lawn fertilizers, car oils, trash, agricultural runoff (pesticides, herbicides, animal waste), and urban runoff (rain water that comes from draining from buildings, sidewalks, streets and parking lots). (EAC) Urban runoff is a threat to watersheds because it can change water flow paths. Watersheds rich in natural filtration from soils, sands and plants need to be preserved or maintained. When this is not possible, every effort should be made to include natural plantings and natural drainage features to the built environment to reduce the effects of urbanization that adversely affect the potential water supply.

In April of 2004, the City approved the Storm Water Utility fee. The fee created a major source of dedicated revenue which supports stormwater management in an equitable manner. Residential properties are assessed the fee based on the gross size of their parcels while commercial, industrial and institutional customers pay based on the estimates of each parcel's impervious areas. The money assessed from this fee is used to support stormwater management.

City of Bloomington staff undertook a strategic water study to address the issue of supply. The study focused on long-term water demand, supply and management and a forecast for future water needs, which includes potential use of the Mahomet Aquifer. The City also adopted as "emergency response ordinance" which addresses steps and actions to be taken in occurrences of future water emergencies. Efforts have also been made requiring all septic systems on Lake Bloomington property to be brought up to current code when a lake lease transfer takes place. Another recommendation of the study was the implementation of a long-term lake management program in partnership with the University of Illinois that addresses nitrogen, phosphorus and other potential pollutants.

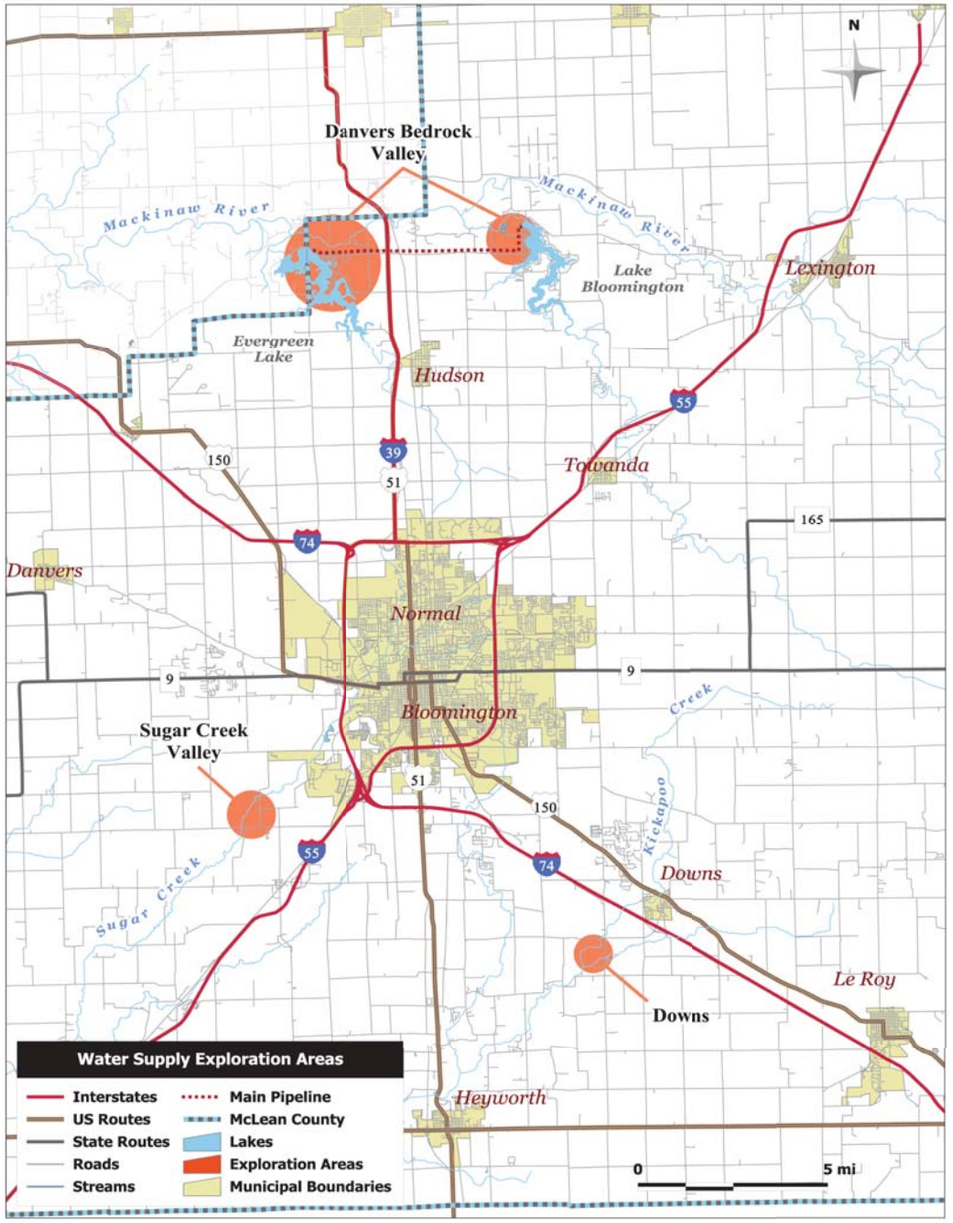


Figure 8.4 Water Supply Exploration Areas
Source: City of Bloomington, *Interim Water Supply Plan*, January 2010

The study also recommended the development of a water conservation plan that identified water conservation measures such as separate rates to encourage the reduction of water usage. High-level users would be charged a different user rate than average or low-use customers.

To address the need for additional water supply, the City has increased the capacity of Evergreen Lake by one-third (one billion gallons). The City has also developed the Mackinaw River pumping pool which can pump water from the Mackinaw River into Evergreen Lake under certain conditions as outlined by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit. Since 1994, the City has been exploring additional water supplies throughout McLean County. The effort has entailed an aggressive test drilling initiative due to a groundwater research project which identified potential underground water locations (see Figure 8.4). Some observation wells have been in place for close to 20 years.

Test wells have been drilled after intense study of subsurface conditions. During the process, careful attention is paid to the materials extracted from the test "hole" that may indicate acceptable water volumes. This process develops what is known as a "log" for future reference. Depending on the results, some test sites will be developed into monitoring wells for future exploration. The best situation for establishing a well is when an aquifer is discovered below a shallower aquifer that surrounds an operable domestic well.

The Mahomet Aquifer is a groundwater source for water that stretches just beyond the Illinois River to the west all the way to the eastern border of Illinois (see Figure 8.5). Several cities and counties within the aquifer use it for a primary water source. The supply is used by municipalities and for irrigation purposes. Daily usage estimated by the Illinois State Water Survey stands at approximately 100 MGD. Population projections suggest that by 2020, the aquifer may increase usage by an additional 100,000 gallons a day meaning close to 900,000 people could be pumping water from the aquifer daily. This includes additional demands from Bloomington as well as Springfield, Decatur and Danville.

The Illinois State Water Survey estimates the sustained daily yield for the Mahomet Aquifer could result in over-usage in any localized area if the aquifer is not resupplied during times of high water usage or in instances of drought. The Mahomet Aquifer Consortium is a group of local representatives keeping a line of communication open with the ISWS to monitor the situation closely.

For the foreseeable future, the City plans to utilize its two reservoirs as its primary sources for water. No matter how much high-quality, low nitrate water could be tapped from the Mahomet Aquifer or other sources, the City must still meet its nitrate standard at its water treatment plant. At present, there is no reasonable or economically feasible way to pump water from the Mahomet Aquifer to be blended at the treatment plant. The City has no financially feasible option other than removing the nitrate with

present treatment equipment. The alternative would be to construct a new wastewater or dilution system which is cost prohibitive.

The surface water supply in Bloomington has been designed to provide over one year's worth of water. If additional water is needed in the near future, a likely first option for a secondary supply will come from the development of a high capacity well-field at the McLean-Tazewell County line area as well as utilizing already-mentioned back-up water sources (see Figure 8.6).

As previously mentioned, the City's reservoir system is fed by water from local watersheds. A watershed is defined as a basin-like landform that descends into lower elevations and stream bodies. The "shed" carries rain water into creeks, rivers and ditches. This water can also be channeled into soils and groundwater which makes its way into

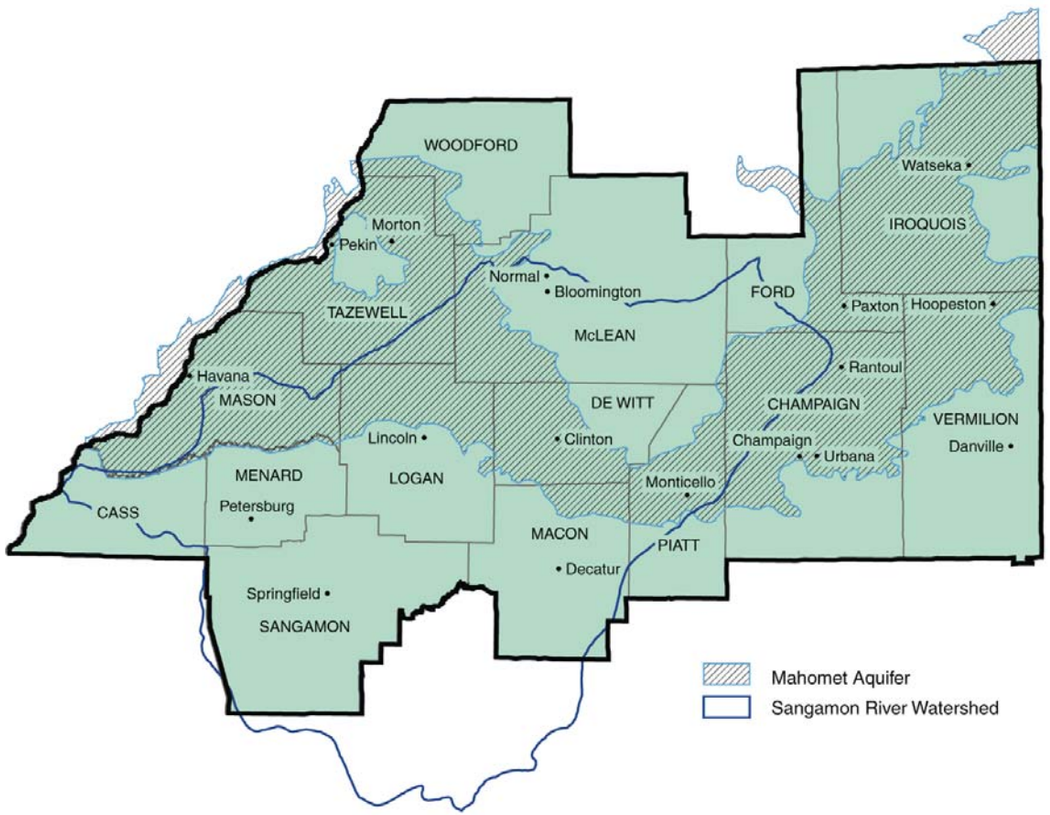


Figure 8.5 Mahomet Aquifer
Source: Mahomet Aquifer Consortium

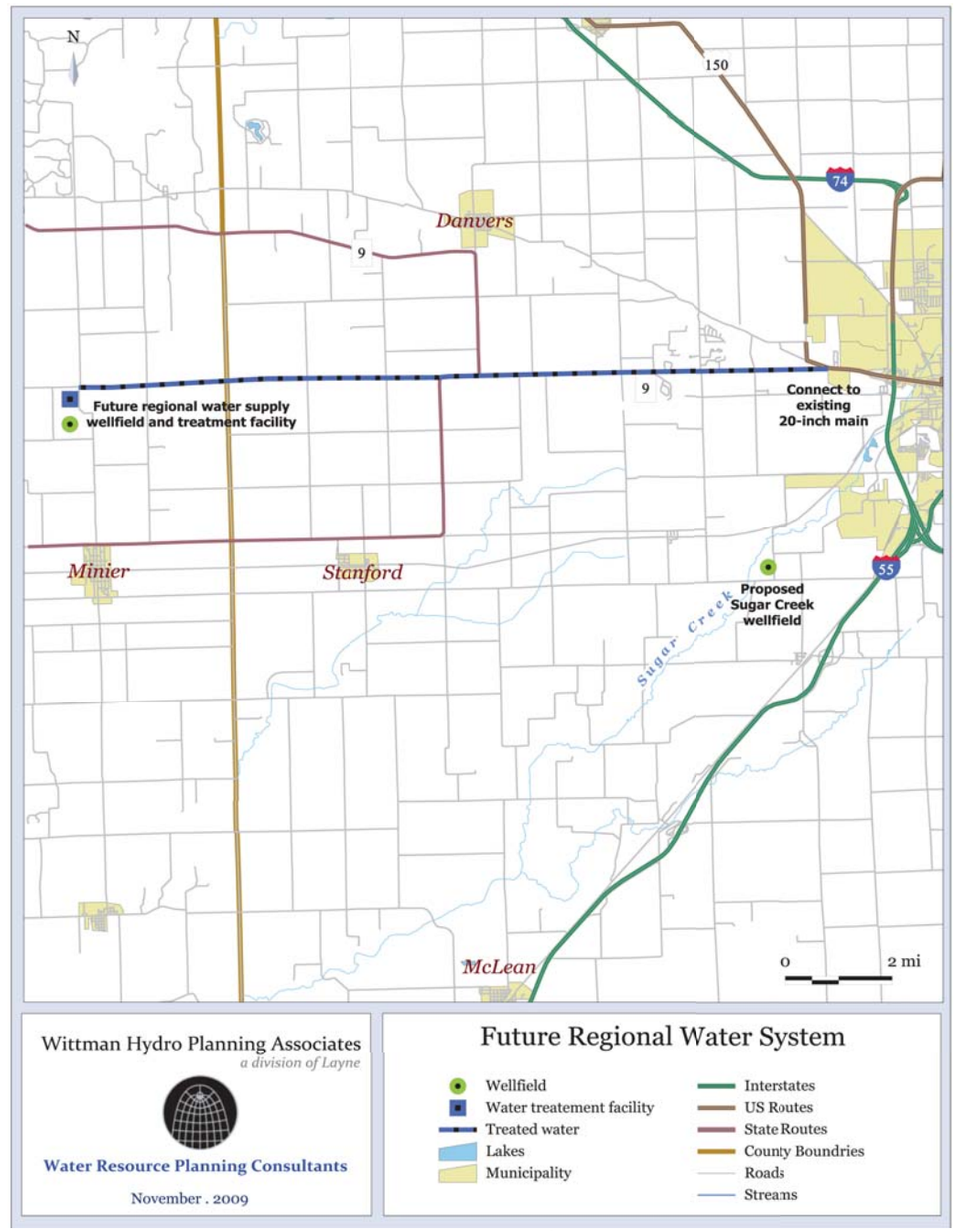
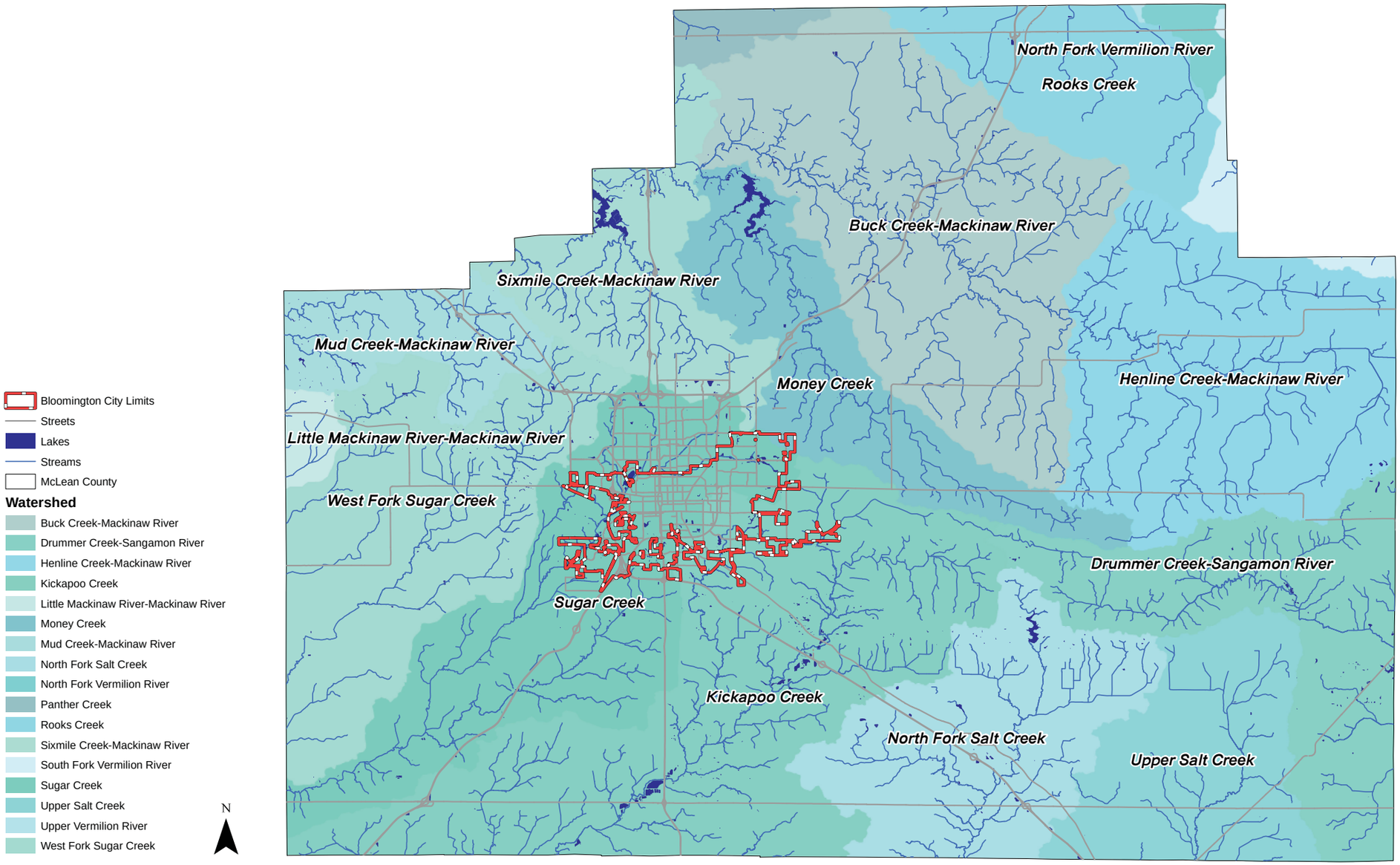


Figure 8.6 Future Regional Water System
Source: City of Bloomington, *Interim Water Supply Plan*, January 2010

Figure 8.7 Streams and Watersheds



Source: McGIS

larger water bodies.

McLean County contains 17 of these watersheds (see Figure 8.7). The city reservoirs are mainly supplied by water flowing into the Evergreen and Lake Bloomington watersheds by the Six Mile Creek-Mackinaw River, Money Creek and Buck Creek-Mackinaw River watersheds. It is of the utmost importance that these watersheds are continually monitored for supply and pollutants in order that the cleanest water possible is flowing into the reservoirs. The City is making continuous efforts to do so by establishing watershed restoration projects in the area as well as implementing test projects to improve best management practices. (i.e., Bloomington's Grove at the Kickapoo Creek Restoration Wetland).

ENERGY

The natural environment of McLean County and the area around Bloomington offers a broad array of local energy sources. Some have been exploited since early in the City's history, and others have only recently been recognized and used. Each of these resources comes with its own set of benefits and concerns in terms of the energy provided, the impact of the extraction of the resource, and the impact of the use of the resource to generate energy. Each is also dependent upon the development of the appropriate infrastructure to process, produce and transmit the resulting energy.

Energy production and consumption starkly illustrate the complex relationships among natural resources, environmental capacity and urban growth. In Illinois, nearly half of electricity generation is produced by nuclear power (see Figure 8.8). Nearly an equivalent amount of electricity is produced from coal-fired generating plants. Both nuclear and coal electricity generation produce environmental impacts and long-term consequences.

A substantial portion of our energy usage is in the form of fossil fuels (see Figure 8.9). This includes petroleum products, natural gas and coal, either used in electricity generation, or as fuel for vehicles and industrial and farm equipment.

In evaluating the planning implica-

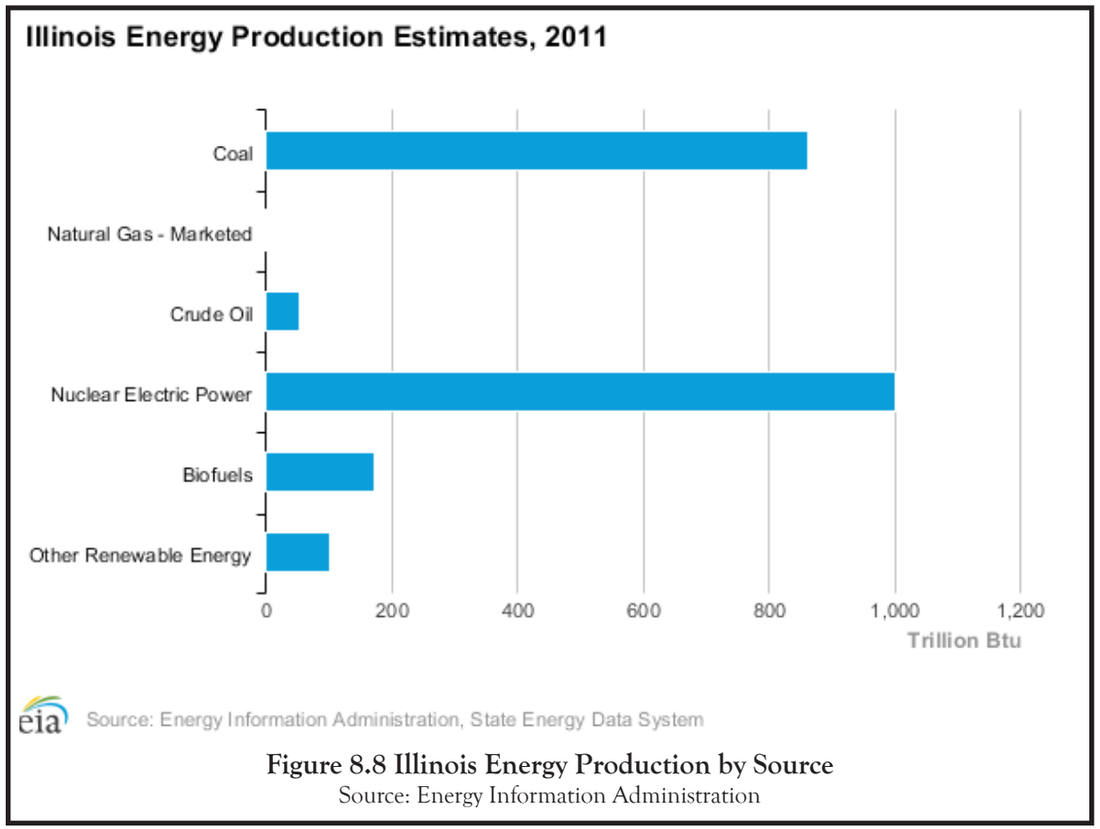


Figure 8.8 Illinois Energy Production by Source
Source: Energy Information Administration

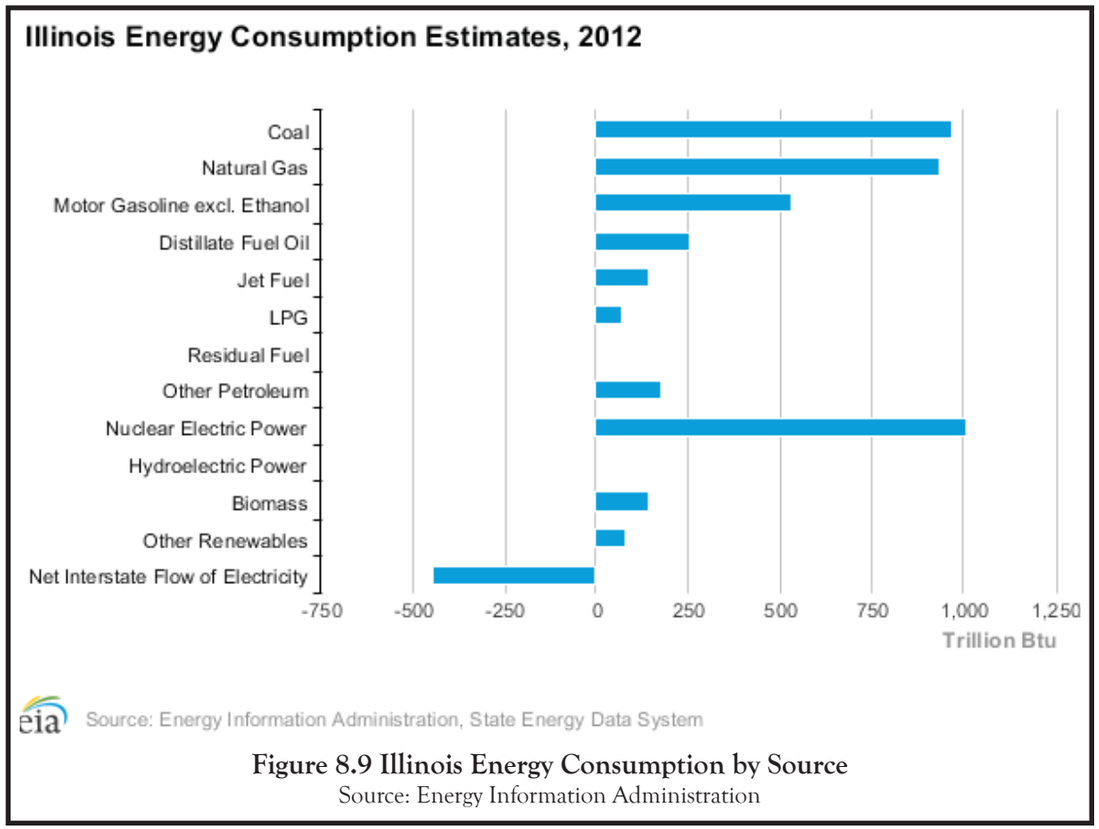


Figure 8.9 Illinois Energy Consumption by Source
Source: Energy Information Administration

tions of energy production and consumption for the City, it is important to remember that the energy market is large-scale; energy produced locally is transmitted through regional and national systems, and costs are determined at a global scale. Similarly, decisions regarding the equity and safety of energy production are based in state and national policy, on which regional and local interests may have little influence. For Bloomington, a focus on impact mitigation and lower-impact alternative energy sources may best identify energy issues on which the City can exert direct influence.

Fossil Fuel Use and Environmental Impact

Among the issues raised regarding the use of fossil fuels is the connection to greenhouse gas production and impacts on air quality. The use of fossil fuels is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.[1] As shown in Figure 8.10, at the national level large scale-energy usage such as electricity generation predominantly through the use of fossil fuels, industry and transportation comprise 80% of greenhouse gas emissions. Use by individuals and business outside the industrial sector and agriculture account for the remaining 20%. EPA notes that land use, land use change, and forestry in the United States is a net greenhouse gas sink and offsets approximately 15% of these greenhouse gas emissions. As noted above, the proportion of nuclear electricity generation in Illinois is well above the national average, thus shifting the allocation of greenhouse gas sources for the state. The extensive agricultural land use in the state (less directly tied to fossil fuel use) may produce proportionately higher emissions than are found nationally.

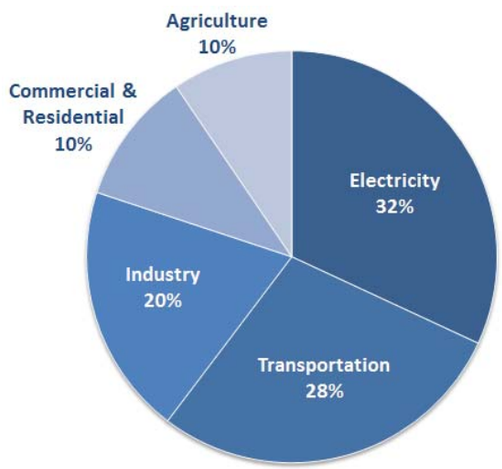


Figure 8.10 Total U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Economic Sector in 2012
Source: *Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency at http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/sources.html.

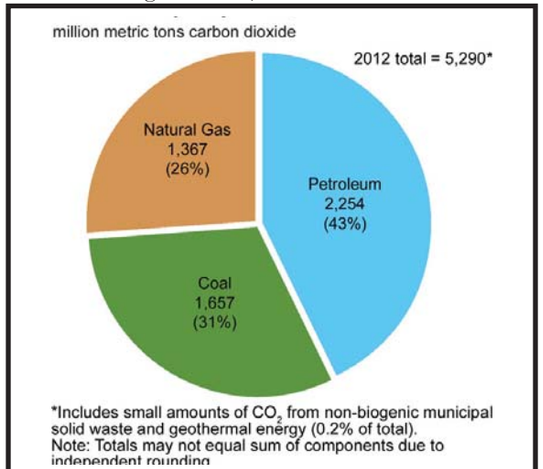


Figure 8.11 U.S. Energy-Related Carbon Dioxide Emissions by Major Fuel, 2012
Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Monthly Energy Review*, preliminary 2012 data

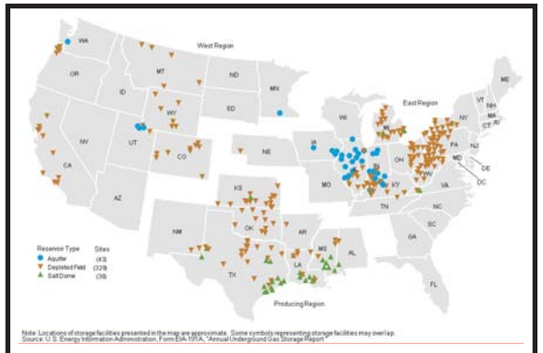


Figure 8.12 Distribution of Natural Gas Storage Facilities, by Type
Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Underground Gas Storage Report*

To bring the energy picture into local perspective, the Ecology Action Center (EAC) has conducted a study of local conditions, the Bloomington-Normal Greenhouse Gas Inventory, which examines the energy uses of the local governments and other sectors and assess greenhouse gas emissions for the urban area. The study was prepared for the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal, and uses 2008 as its baseline data year.

Using an accepted aggregate measurement that includes weighted values for carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, and excluding other greenhouse gases that contribute a very low percentage of emissions, the EAC analyzed energy uses by local governments, and commercial, residential and industrial users. With respect to electricity use, the analysis correlated to the emission of metric tons (or 2,204.6 pounds) of carbon dioxide equivalent greenhouse gases. The data used is provided by the electric utilities.[2] For Bloomington, the analysis resulted in the following distribution of emissions, where MT CO2e denotes the total metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions due to electricity use in the base year.

Footnotes:
1) U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy, at http://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/index.cfm?page=environment_where_ghg_come_from
2) See Bloomington-Normal Greenhouse Gas Inventory for a detailed discussion of the methodology and data limitations.

Figure 8.13
Emissions Due to Electricity Use

Use Sector	2008 MT CO2e	% of total emissions
Commercial	496,919	61%
Industrial	40,126	5%
Residential	249,932	31%
Local Government	23,709	3%
Total emissions	810,687	

Source: Ecology Action Center, Bloomington-Normal Greenhouse Gas Inventory, June 2014.

Commercial and residential users produce 92% of Bloomington's greenhouse gas emissions resulting from electricity use. Local government use and industry produce the remaining 8%.

The inventory also calculates the source of emissions due to transportation, based on total vehicle miles traveled by specified entities, and by fuel types. Emissions due to transportation are overwhelmingly sourced from the private sector. In considering the emissions produced by the local governments through use for transportation, noted in Figure 8.13, in the baseline year the City was producing triple the greenhouse gas emissions as the Town of Normal due to transportation activity. This level of emissions through City transportation use was disproportionately high compared to use by Normal. (In 2010 Bloomington was nearly 50% larger in land area than Normal, and nearly 1½ times as populous, but in the baseline year the City was producing three times as much greenhouse gas emissions as the Town as a result of transportation.

Figure 8.14
Emissions Due to Transportation, Private and Public Sector Users

Sector	Fuel Type	2008 MT CO2e	% of total emissions
Mixed residential, commercial, industrial (VMT)	not specified	420,453	98%
Amtrak	not specified	594	0.1%
Connect Transit	diesel	3,114	0.7%
City of Bloomington	diesel, gasoline	3,334	0.8%
Town of Normal	diesel, gasoline	1,060	0.2%
BNWRD	diesel, gasoline	144	0.0%
Total Emissions		428,699	

Source: Ecology Action Center, Bloomington-Normal Greenhouse Gas Inventory, June 2014.

The EAC report also examines community scale emission inventory results, and concludes with a comparison of 2008 per capita greenhouse gas emissions for the urban area, Illinois and the United States. The Bloomington-Normal per capita emission level of 17.3 MT CO2e is slightly below the Illinois level of 18.6 MT CO2e, and appreciably below the U.S. per capita emissions level of 22.2 MT CO2e.

ENERGY SOURCES – IMPACTS & ISSUES

The finding in the Ecology Action Center report that local greenhouse gas production as of 2008 is lower than state and national averages is an encouraging development, although it should be tested against other measurements of energy demand between 2008 and the present day. These measurements may include but need not be limited to construction activity, industrial production levels and economic activity. More recent data on energy demand for comparison to 2008 may also be useful in evaluating policies with respect to energy management. The EAC report notes several initiatives to address greenhouse gas emission reduction, including the development of the City of Bloomington Bicycle Plan.

The various energy sources available to Bloomington also present challenges and issues beyond the direct environmental impact of their use. Current issues arising with respect to specific energy sources are discussed below.

Natural Gas

McLean County does not produce natural gas locally, but geologic structures here provide for significant natural gas storage capacity. Nicor Gas Company (Nicor) maintains underground natural gas storage reservoirs at several locations in northern McLean County. These storage facilities take advantage of deep aquifer formations of porous rock sequestered under an impermeable rock cap, within which natural gas can be stored under pressure.[3] As shown in Figure 8.12[4], Illinois is a primary location for gas storage in aquifers.

The storage of natural gas allows Nicor to maintain supply to accommodate seasonal variations in demand, and to regulate the volume of natural gas in the pipeline system.

Use of the underground storage capacity relies upon pipeline systems and an injection facility north of Normal.

One potential impact of underground natural gas storage mirrors the impact of naturally-occurring gas deposits. This can include migration of natural gas into public and private water wells, which can in turn make the wells unusable as a water source. This is of concern to users of private wells, but may also have implications for ongoing water supply planning.

Footnotes:
3) "The Basics of Underground Natural Gas Storage," U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy, at http://www.eia.gov/pub/oil_gas/natural_gas/analysis_publications/storagebasics/storagebasics.html.
4) U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy at http://www.eia.gov/cfapps/ngqs/images/storage_2011.png.

Although the Nicor gas storage areas are not in proximity to the City, elements of the pipeline network are, and the entire system is an important component of the energy infrastructure that influences the quality of life for City residents. While the geology of McLean County provides a local resource for natural gas management, it also creates some constraints on development. Nicor has expressed concerns regarding urban growth in close proximity to its injection facility and monitoring wells, due to maintenance procedures not compatible with adjacent residential uses. While this is not an immediate concern for the City at the moment, being primarily an issue for the Town of Normal, the Nicor facilities are relatively close to Lake Bloomington, and have regional impacts that all municipalities in McLean County should consider.

As noted above, the transmission and use of natural gas produces greenhouse gas emissions, including methane, as a result of system leakage occurring during transmission and use[5]. No gas system can be completely free of leaks, therefore proper safety and maintenance practices are important not only for Nicor itself, but for the health and safety of the local governments and their residents. Continuing communication between Nicor and City staff is an element in monitoring the components of local natural gas infrastructure, and preserving the environmental integrity of the area it occupies.

Footnote:
5) See note 1, page 124.

Oil

As is the case with natural gas, McLean County does not produce oil or petroleum products. However, the construction of the Enbridge, Inc. Southern Access Extension Pipeline, expected to be completed in 2015, will carry crude oil through our area, to the east and south of Bloomington (see Figure 8.13). The Enbridge project has been in development for several years, and has been approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission, which also granted Enbridge the power to use eminent domain proceedings to facilitate the acquisition of the needed corridor for the pipeline, which will cross eight counties in central Illinois.

As currently described by Enbridge, the pipeline will cross Money Creek, which flows into Lake Bloomington, and the Mackinaw River and tributaries, a secondary source for the water supply system. As the pipeline begins service, Bloomington's interest in maintaining the integrity of the City's water supply merits monitoring of pipeline management, directly and through McLean County and the appropriate state and federal agencies. There are also opportunities for the City to work with area environmental advocacy groups in monitoring and evaluating the operation of the pipeline. The Enbridge pipeline project has garnered significant public interest and concern during the pre-construction period, and a continuation of the that discussion during the planning process is warranted.

As noted above, petroleum product use, particularly in electricity generation, transportation and agriculture, creates greenhouse gas emissions, which are a continuing issue for the health of the community.

Coal

As noted in the Historic Context chapter, Bloomington was a coal-producing city for some sixty years, beginning just after the Civil War and continuing well into the 20th century. Figure 8.14 illustrates the extent of coal mining on the west side of Bloomington between 1867 and 1927. During this period, coal was the dominant fuel for industry, commerce, residential and transportation use, and local production had a local market as well as export potential. In the 21st century, coal remains an essential national resource, with massive mining operations in the mountain west and Appalachia supplying national and international demand, with additional production across the southern plains and Midwest. As of 2012, Illinois was the fifth largest coal producing state in the nation, producing slightly more than one-tenth the tonnage of Wyoming, the most productive coal state[6]. As discussed above, in Illinois coal produces half of electric power generation. Coal mining continues as a viable industry in central Illinois, notably at the Viper Mine operating at Elkhart and

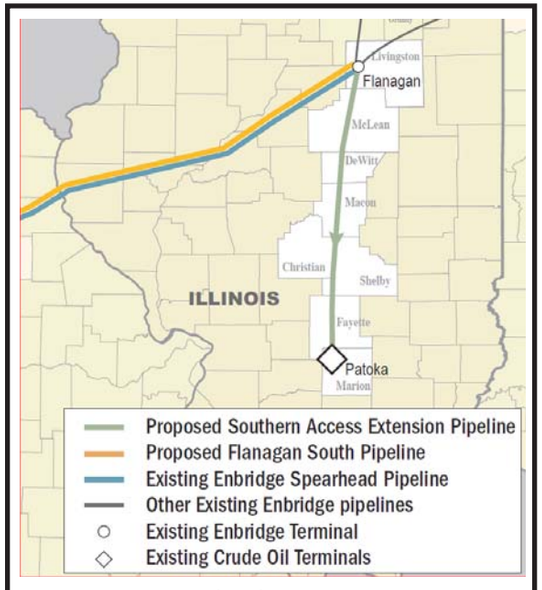


Figure 8.15 Enbridge Inc. Project Map, Southern Access Extension Pipeline
Source: Enbridge, Inc.

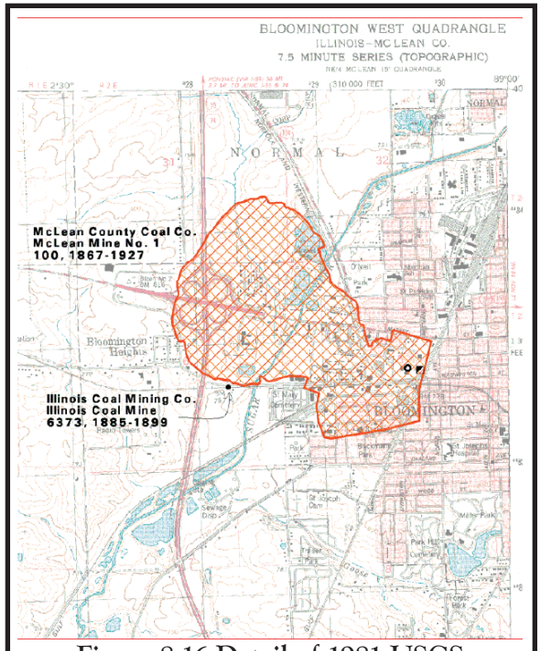


Figure 8.16 Detail of 1981 USGS Bloomington West 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map
Source: *Directory of Coal Mines in Illinois*, Chenoweth & Louchios, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois State Geological Survey, 2004

Williamsville, although the bulk of Illinois coal production is in southern Illinois.

It has been nearly ninety years since the benefits and detriments of coal mining have directly affected the City of Bloomington. It is unlikely that this industry will re-emerge in the foreseeable future, but as global demand for energy intensifies, planning for the City's future should evaluate the contingencies.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

The range of available energy sources will continue to be dominated by fossil fuels, but renewable energy is a growing force in McLean County. Bloomington residents and businesses have an increasing array of options available to incorporate the use of renewable energy in their day-to-day lives.

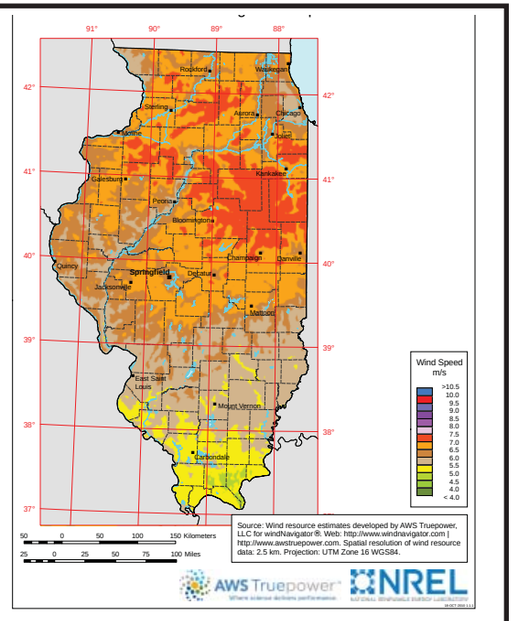


Figure 8.17 Illinois - Annual Average Wind Speed at 80m
Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Biofuels

Bloomington is surrounded by the bounty of McLean County farmland, a source of the City's prosperity and economic stability for more than 150 years. In recent decades, the production of corn and soybeans has found new markets in biofuels, including ethanol and biodiesel. This shift provides new revenue sources to farmers, and has generated new types of processing as companies move into biofuel production. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Illinois is the third largest producer of ethanol among the states, and biodiesel production capacity in Illinois is second only to Texas."[7]

The use of crops for fuel rather than food is a continuing source of controversy, and combined with questions about the efficiency and environmental cost of biofuel manufacturing processes, is likely to remain a point of contention.[8] While the debate continues, the use of renewable energy such as biofuels is now an accepted component of the energy supply.

The use of farm products to manufacture biofuels is supported by state and federal incentive programs. In 2007 state law was enacted creating the Illinois Power Agency to establish energy procurement plans incorporating required levels of renewable energy sources. This agency also oversees the municipal electric aggregation program.[9] Specifically, the state renewable portfolio standard: "... requires that investor-owned electric utilities with more than 100,000 Illinois customers obtain 25% of retail sales from renewable resources by May of 2026, with at least 75% of the requirement from wind and 6% from solar photovoltaics (PV)."[10]

There are a number of federal programs supporting the use of renewable energy, including grants, tax credits, loans and research and development assistance.[11] Several programs provide specific incentives for the manufacture and use of biofuels, and for development of additional biomass resources for use in biofuels. Domestic production of biofuels is regarded as a strategy to improve the nation's energy security and advance energy independence for the United States.

The evolving use of agricultural land to produce both food and energy also produces a new calculus of land value, an issue for Bloomington when annexing farmland into the City is proposed. Much of the area identified for the future development of Bloomington is currently in agricultural use. Discussion during the planning process may evaluate the appropriate balance in economic and environmental terms between land converted to urban uses, and land remaining in agricultural production of food and fuel, especially when viewed through the fiscal impact analysis of development in the City.

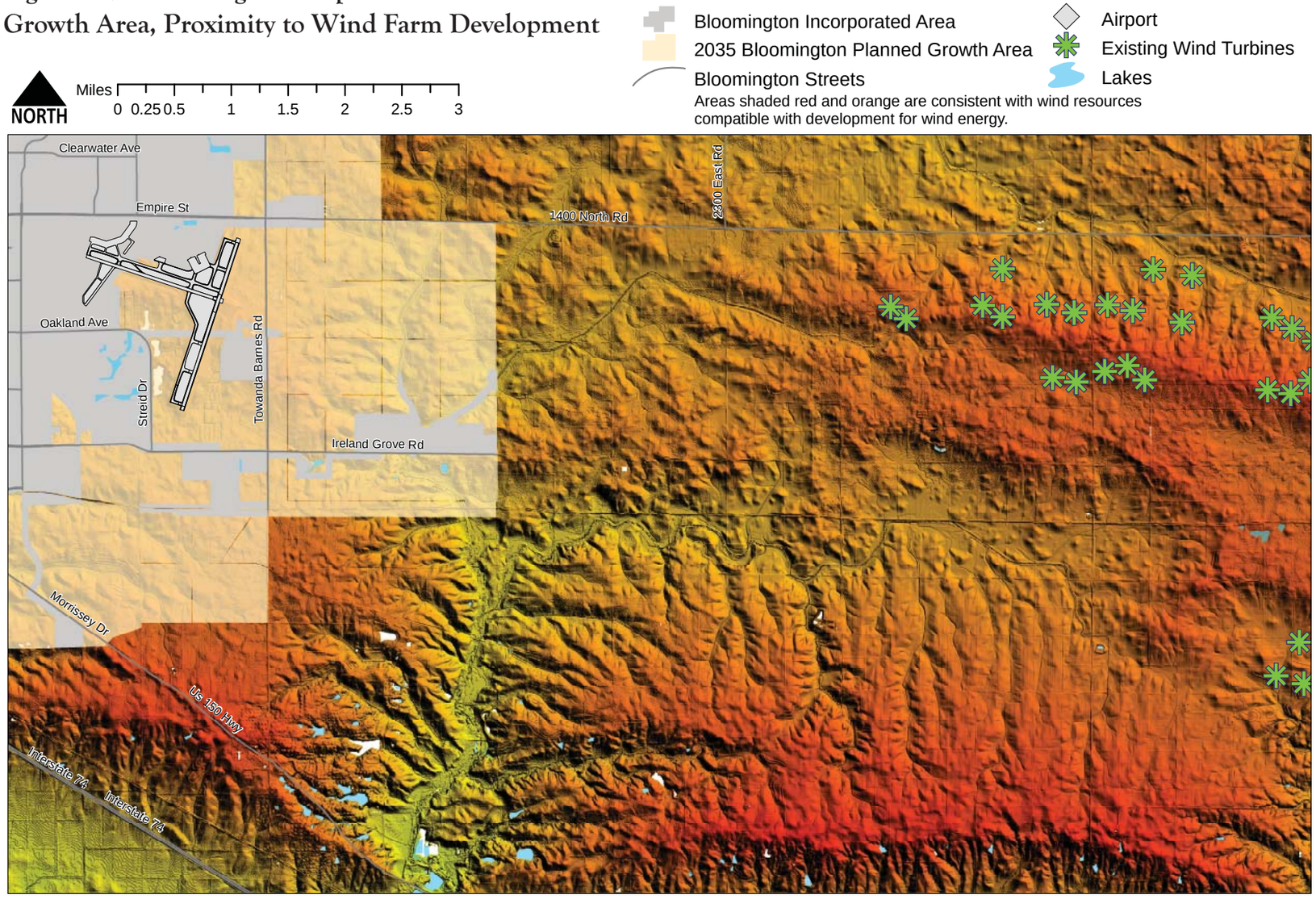
Wind Energy

As construction of the Twin Groves wind farm in eastern McLean County began, City residents found themselves sharing Route 9 with trucks hauling the enormous turbine blades and towers from the rail yards on the west side to their locations five miles east of Towanda-Barnes Road and onward to the County line. Now the turbines are simply part of the scenery, visible from many points on the east side of the City as they track the wind. While not everyone agrees on the aesthetic qualities of the turbines, they have created a new energy industry in our area. If development of Twin Groves and related wind projects continue as originally envisioned, much of the eastern half of our county will be dotted with wind turbines.[12] We have come a long way from the windmills used to power wells and pumps once common across the prairie landscape.

The Twin Groves and White Oak wind farm projects highlight the emergence of Illinois as a wind energy center. As ob-

Footnotes:
6) U.S. Energy Information Administration at http://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/index.cfm?page=coal_where.
7) U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy at http://www.eia.gov/state/analysis.cfm?sid=IL
8) "The Transportation Nexus: Ethanol Is a 'Food vs. Fuel' Issue," Knowledge@Wharton, University of Pennsylvania, July 10, 2013, at http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/the-transportation-nexus-ethanol-is-a-food-vs-fuel-issue/
9) Illinois Power Agency website at http://www2.illinois.gov/ipa/Pages/default.aspx.)
10) U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy at http://www.eia.gov/state/analysis.cfm?sid=IL
11) U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy at http://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/index.cfm?page=renewable_home#tab3.)

Figure 8.18 Bloomington Corporate Limits and Growth Area, Proximity to Wind Farm Development



Source: MCRPC

served by the U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Wind generation is the primary renewable resource for electric power generation in Illinois. The state's wind resource potential is ranked 15th in the nation; however, by the end of 2012, it was one of the top five states in the nation in terms of wind capacity installations with more than 3,500 megawatts of generating capacity online."[13]

Considerable wind resource remains to be utilized. As illustrated in Figure 8.16, much of McLean County has the same level of wind capacity as the areas where wind farms are now in place. Although the announced plans for the area may not come to fruition in precisely the form suggested, the availability of the resource and advancing technologies, as well as the transmission infrastructure in place, support the anticipation of future development around Bloomington.

In the years following the construction of Twin Grove additional wind energy development has expanded across central Illinois. For Bloomington, the spread of wind energy prompts consideration of two issues, continued eastward growth of the City, and policy regarding small-scale wind power infrastructure within the urban area.

The annexation and development of the Grove subdivision on Ireland Grove Road brought the City limits to within ap-

Footnotes:
12) "Central Illinois may gain 2,000 turbines in 5 years," M.K. Guetersloh, Daily Pantagraph, October 6, 2010.
13) http://www.eia.gov/state/analysis.cfm?sid=IL

proximately three miles of the westernmost installed wind turbine at Twin Groves (see Figure 8.18). McLean County has established regulations regarding distance between wind turbines and residential uses, which may be a factor in future annexation decisions by the City, particularly if further wind farm development does occur.

The planning process also offers an opportunity to evaluate the evolving technologies for residential and commercial scale wind energy installations within the city, and consider policy for what is often called "urban wind." Wind turbine design for small-scale use is a growing field, and rather than replicating large turbines in smaller form, designs now include vertical-axis turbines and noise-reduction features.

EMERGING ENERGY ISSUES

The rapidly changing energy landscape in Illinois and the nation has triggered several issues for which Bloomington has an opportunity to consider policy preferences. Although some matters will require governmental cooperation at multiple levels to reach solutions, the City has the opportunity through the planning process to consider the best approach to these issues for Bloomington.

Hydraulic Fracturing

The emergence of hydraulic fracturing, better known as fracking, to extract additional oil or gas from a well has garnered considerable attention in recent years. The process requires injection of large quantities of pressurized fluid to break apart the subterranean rock and allow the oil and gas to flow into the well structure. This process is thought to allow fracking products to migrate outward from well structures. Components in fracking fluid have been detected in aquifers adjacent to wells subjected to the process, and the disposal of the fluids has become a separate environmental concern. Formulas for the fluids used are regarded as proprietary information by drilling companies, which complicates efforts to track the migration of the fluids and assess their impact.

Fracking is also associated with surges in seismic activity in areas not known for earthquakes. A study published in July 2014 by researchers from Cornell University and the University of Colorado[14] links the use of wastewater injection in the fracking process to earthquake swarms in Oklahoma, which has become the second most seismically active state in the country since intensive fracking activities began in 2008.[15]

There has been some interest in using fracking for oil drilling in McLean County, and the issue was brought to the McLean County Zoning Board of Appeals in 2011, only to have the matter withdrawn before a hearing. Although the state enacted oil and gas drilling regulations in 2013, there is concern that the Illinois Department of Natural Resources does not have the staff needed to properly administer the regulations.[16] In view of possible impacts from fracking on potential water supplies of interest to Bloomington for future regional water planning, the City is warranted in giving careful attention to the implementation of the state law and requests to drill locally.

Air Quality

The recent Bloomington-Normal Greenhouse Gas Inventory prepared by the Ecology Action Center (discussed above) provides a detailed analysis of the challenges to air quality in the urban area created by greenhouse gas emissions resulting from fossil fuel use, in the baseline year 2008. The report provides agencies at several levels with data for future comparison and analysis. As part of its transportation planning program, the McLean County Regional Planning Commission works with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to track current air quality performance and formulate plans to maintain or improve local air quality. Through these plans, actions may be taken to manage transportation activity to bring about improvement in overall air quality, in recognition of the substantial portion of air pollution that is produced by the transportation system. EPA also regulates other sectors, such as electric utilities, with respect to air quality requirements.

EPA conducts air monitoring to determine the levels of pollutants identified in the Clean Air Act and the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) in a given area. The NAAQS are applied to six "principal pollutants," which include carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), Ozone (O_3) particulate matter (PM) and sulfur dioxide (SO_2) Figure 8.15 illustrates 2013 daily aggregated levels of the primary pollutants recorded by the Bloomington-Normal area monitoring station, Ozone and PM 10 particulates. The monitoring station is located on the ISU campus in Normal. The EPA engages in ongoing assessment of the air quality standards, and the FHWA works with regional agencies like MCPRC to manage compliance with programs to maintain or achieve required air quality standards.

The Bloomington-Normal urban area is currently classified under federal law as an "attainment area," which means that the measured levels of the primary pollutants falls below the levels that violate the air quality standards.[17] This status may change to "non-attainment" should Congress revise the acceptable levels of pollutants defined in federal law. Designation as a non-attainment area would require that MCRPC, local transit agencies and local government initiate a complex planning process to reduce pollutant levels and monitor progress in returning to compliance with air quality standards.

As illustrated in the EAC Bloomington-Normal Greenhouse Gas Inventory,

Footnotes:
14) Keranen et al., "Sharp increase in central Oklahoma seismicity since 2008 induced by massive wastewater injection," Science, July 2014.
15) Hailey Branson-Potts, "Study links Oklahoma earthquake swarm with fracking operations," Los Angeles Times, July 3, 2014.
16) Illinois has hired few workers to oversee fracking, Daily Pantagraph, July 9, 2014.

air pollution is released by a wide variety of sources. While many sources are beyond the regulatory control of municipalities like Bloomington, the EAC report notes that the community is already engaging in projects and planning to improve quality of life and lessen impacts on the natural environment.

GROWTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Although the components of the natural environment are important to the comprehensive plan on their own merits, the core of concern for Bloomington is at the point where the City's development intersects and impacts environmental resources. This is particularly true for resources critical to the survival of the community, such as water. Although current demographic data suggest a slower rate of growth for Bloomington than was experienced in the 1990s, growth continues today and in the future. To support the City's long-term interests, the comprehensive planning process evaluates benefits and impacts.

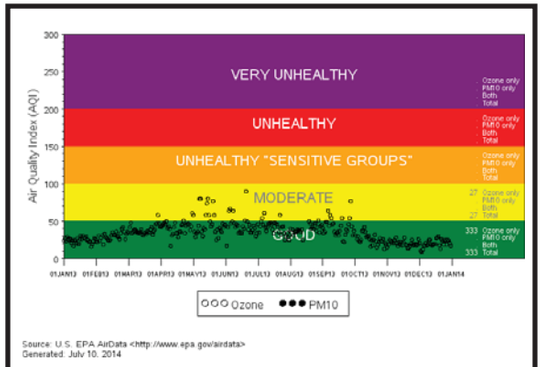


Figure 8.19 Daily Ozone and PM10 AQI Values, Bloomington-Normal, IL, 2013
Source: U.S. EPA

Bloomington continues to plan for water resources to support future growth of residents and business. As the city grows, demands for water for all uses grow with it, placing increasing pressure on water treatment and supply infrastructure. There are significant costs when adding new infrastructure to support demand, and maintaining the existing water system to leverage the investment it represents. The City recognizes that both environmental and fiscal viability are challenged by these demands, and implementation of actions recommended the 2010 Water Supply Plan is one step towards meeting the challenge. Because water is a regional resource, continued work on coordinated water supply planning, and the implementation of the resulting recommendations is essential to Bloomington's future. As noted in the 2010 water supply study, planning for water demand and supply must also account for issues arising from the agricultural land uses that surround the City and affect water quality and infrastructure.

Bloomington is also proactive in addressing impacts due to stormwater; the Department of Public Works has given the City Council a clear picture of the needs and associated costs to deal with existing stormwater impacts, and has formulated a master plan to manage the process. As public works staff has noted, action is costly, but failure to act will be even more costly. Another finding from the public orks planning efforts is the ratcheting cost of system maintenance over time, as discussed in the Infrastructure chapter.

Stormwater impacts on residents and surrounding areas grow with the City. As streets and parking lots are paved, and buildings are roofed, the increase in impervious surfaces accelerates water runoff and intensifies the impact of storms. In addition to its effect within Bloomington, increased stormwater volume has downstream impacts, triggering erosion and introducing increased levels of pollutants into streams and rivers. As with water supply and treatment, stormwater management continues to be a regional issue, with regional solutions needed to avoid negative impacts on the natural environment.

Another critical impact of growth is demand for conversion of land from agricultural to urban use. Bloomington has consistently expanded its incorporated area at a higher rate than that of its increase in population, often annexing substantial tracts that were in active agricultural production. The farm ground that surrounds the City is an irreplaceable natural resource, adapted over the last 150 years of settlement to become a vital economic and commodity engine. Once development displaces agricultural use, all the possible future production from the land is lost. Comprehensive planning can define the balance between expansion and preservation, and establish Bloomington's land use priorities.

HEAT ISLANDS & IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

Urban centers of all sizes and structure are susceptible to "heat island" effect. On hot summer days, roof and pavement temperatures can be 50 to 90 degrees warmer than the surrounding air. This phenomenon can affect a community's environment and quality of life due to introducing unnatural and additional heat into the human environment. This can result in increased energy consumption, elevated emissions and greenhouse gases and impaired water quality.

Higher than normal pavement and rooftop surfaces can be responsible for heating stormwater runoff. Rainwater temperature can increase an average of 25 degrees on impervious surfaces on hot and humid days. This heated stormwater generally becomes runoff, draining into storm sewers and other outlets that eventually finds its way into streams and other waterways. Water temperature affects aquatic life and ecosystems. According to USEPA, these rapid temperature changes can be stressful and even deadly for some aquatic species. Warm weather temperatures combined with impervious surfaces (buildings, pavement and parking lots) and urban heat islands can increase energy demand in urban centers for all types of commercial and residential cooling needs. These factors increase not only normal electrical demand but needs for electricity during peak usage periods. This can contribute to overloading the electrical system contribut-

Footnote:
17) EPA monitoring measures at various times and seasons, and produces individual and aggregated measurements as defined in the air quality regulations.

ing to brownouts or blackouts. Some energy providers opt for implementing controlled or rolling brownouts during such high demand periods to avoid power outages.

According to the Ecology Action Center, concrete and asphalt structures cannot absorb heat and water as well as a natural landscape. As the natural landscape is replaced by the built environment, steps must be taken to address the problems that can occur from development. According to the Ecology Action Center, the built environment can be a threat to watersheds as it can change the path and speed of water flows from runoff and storm events. If stormwater cannot be absorbed into the ground, it becomes runoff which can lead to erosion of streams and creeks. Stormwater can also be contaminated as it picks up debris as it flows.

SOLID WASTE

In Bloomington alone, the City services approximately 26,000 solid waste customers every week which includes single-family, apartment complexes and mobile home parks. This includes weekly refuse (trash) collection, bi-weekly single stream recycling, weekly curbside bulk waste collection, drop-off recycling collection, drop-off large item collection and yard waste collection. In December of 2009, the City began limiting the number of bulk loads collected for free due to budget constraints. In 2009, the City also eliminated free collection of sod, dirt, concrete, rock and shingles.

Daily tonnage of garbage has declined from a high of just over 20,600 in 2007 to a low of under 17,705 in 2013 (see "Total Tons of Daily Garbage-COB Solid waste Program Analysis-2013). Collection of recyclables has increased from 2,173 total tons in 2007 to just over 3,500 tons in 2013 (see Total Tons Recyclable Collection-COB Solid Waste Program Analysis-2013). This has resulted in an overall savings of just over $160,000 in landfill fees. In FY 2013, close to $612,000 has been added to the City solid waste program. Bulk waste collection continues to be the most costly service from the city solid waste program at just over 56 percent while daily garbage collection costs account for another 24 percent.

Through an intergovernmental agreement, the Ecology Action Center (EAC) is designated as the solid waste agency for all local governments within McLean County. Services provided by the EAC, include but are not limited to: public education and outreach, solid waste planning, administration of non-traditional recycling programs, coordination of household hazardous waste collection and technical services such as calculation of community- wide waste generation and recycling rates.

Through the McLean County Solid Waste Program, the EAC seeks to help local residents and businesses reduce waste, increase recycling and promote the proper disposal of hazardous wastes. One measure of progress toward these goals is the annual recycling rate. The current goal is 40 percent of all solid waste generated, which the overall area is making significant progress towards.

A 2014 "waste audit" conducted by EAC of the B-N urban area found that close to 73% of all waste collected was non-recyclable waste. Most materials including aluminum, glass, and plastics are being properly recycled with composition rates of materials remaining similar to previous studies. However, significant volumes of recyclable paper products are still being improperly disposed of which is consistent from findings of previous audits. That stated, Bloomington residents continue to recycle a majority of their waste that can be recycled. The EAC continues to review possible programming that can address non-traditional recycling programs such as textiles and food waste or increased emphasis on "source reduction."

McLean County Landfill #2 is scheduled for closure in 2017 due to reaching capacity of close to four million cubic yards of waste. This will eliminate a local waste site that has a permitted disposal area of just over 43 acres and a permitted landfill capacity of 55 acres. Total annual disposal throughout the life of the landfill has differed. Annually more than 300,000 cubic yards or over 90,000 tons of waste is dumped in the landfill, translating to over 300 tons of waste being dumped daily. (Landfill Capacity in Illinois-State of Illinois). Community leaders are currently discussing viable options which may include transporting some waste out of county once the landfill is closed.

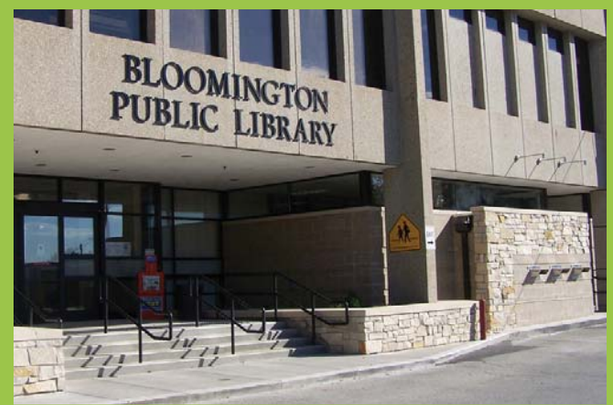
9 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

This chapter provides an overview of community facilities including City offices, library and schools.









PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Public buildings addressed in this section include the City Hall, Government Center, police station, fire stations, library, Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, U.S. Cellular Coliseum, and public service facility.

City Hall

Constructed in 1963, City Hall is one of the City's oldest public buildings. It is located on East Olive Street, well-situated on the southeast side of the downtown, just north of the police station (see Figure 9.1). It contains approximately 42,000 square feet and houses a number of municipal offices including those of the Mayor, City Manager, City Legal Department, City Finance Department and the Computer Services Department. Some City departments are located nearby in the Government Center. The Water Department is located in a facility on West Division Street.

Government Center

In 2003, the City entered into a joint venture with McLean County in the acquisition of an office building at the southwest corner of Washington and East Streets. Redeveloped as the Government Center, the building is home to several City departments including Parks and Recreation, Planning and Code Enforcement (PACE) which includes the Building Safety, City Planning, Community Development, and Facilities Management Divisions, Public Works, and the Bloomington Board of Election Commissioners. City staff in the Government Center also have access to building facilities such as conference rooms and large meeting areas. Coordination with other local agencies, such as the County Department of Building and Zoning, the County Clerk, the County Supervisor of Assessments, and other county administrative offices, is facilitated by the shared building.

Police Department

The Bloomington Police Department is located on South East Street in downtown Bloomington, just south of City Hall and north of the Public Service Facility. First occupied in 1997, the facility encompasses 42,000 square feet on three floors. Also located on the premises is a three story parking garage. BPD is currently staffed by 123 sworn officers and 34 civil support staff.

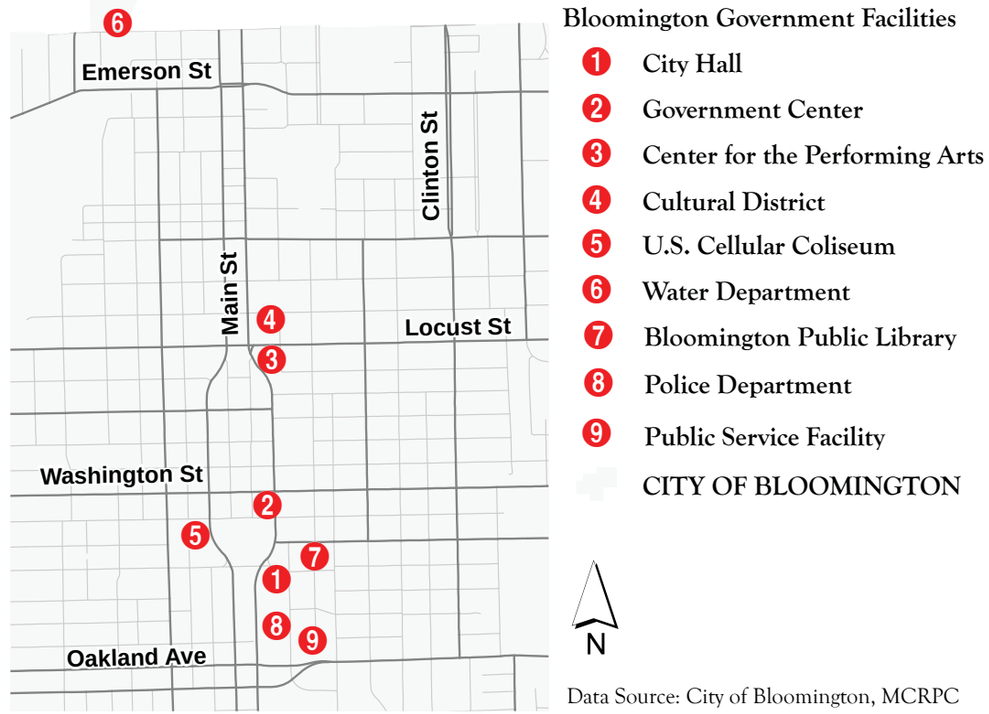
Fire Stations

Please refer to Chapter 7, Health and Safety for detailed discussion on locations of the fire stations, fire response zones and related issues.

Library

The Bloomington Public Library is located in proximity to a number of other public buildings. Built in 1977, it is located in the downtown area on Olive Street, just east of City Hall. It is a member of the Alliance Library System and has full access to all of its resources. An example of the benefits of this system is the Interlibrary Loan System that spans from county to county between the borders of Indiana and Iowa. The Bloomington Public Library currently serves a total population of the Golden Prairie Public Library Districts (GPPLD). GPPLD includes the communities of Arrowsmith, Bloomington, Dale, Dawson and Old Town townships. When compared with desired standards, it is evident that the Bloomington Public Library is currently deficient in a number of areas and that these deficiencies will intensify as the community continues to grow unless corrective actions are taken. The library is currently exploring various options to expand its current facilities.

Figure 9.1 Community Facilities, City of Bloomington



Data Source: City of Bloomington, MCRPC

Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts

In July of 2001, the City acquired the Scottish Rite Temple (Consistory) located at East and Locust Streets. As the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA), and in conjunction with the McLean County

Art Center, the building anchors the Downtown Cultural District. The Cultural District was developed as a major attraction for the downtown area, including a new park and other amenities for users of the Center for the Performing Arts.

U.S. Cellular Coliseum

The U.S. Cellular Coliseum is a multi-purpose facility located on Front Street between Center and Lee Streets. The facility opened to the public in 2006, and includes a sports and entertainment venue, food services and associated concessions, and an indoor ice skating rink. The facility is home to the Bloomington Thunder minor league ice hockey team, the Bloomington Flex minor league basketball team, and the Bloomington Edge, a professional indoor football team.

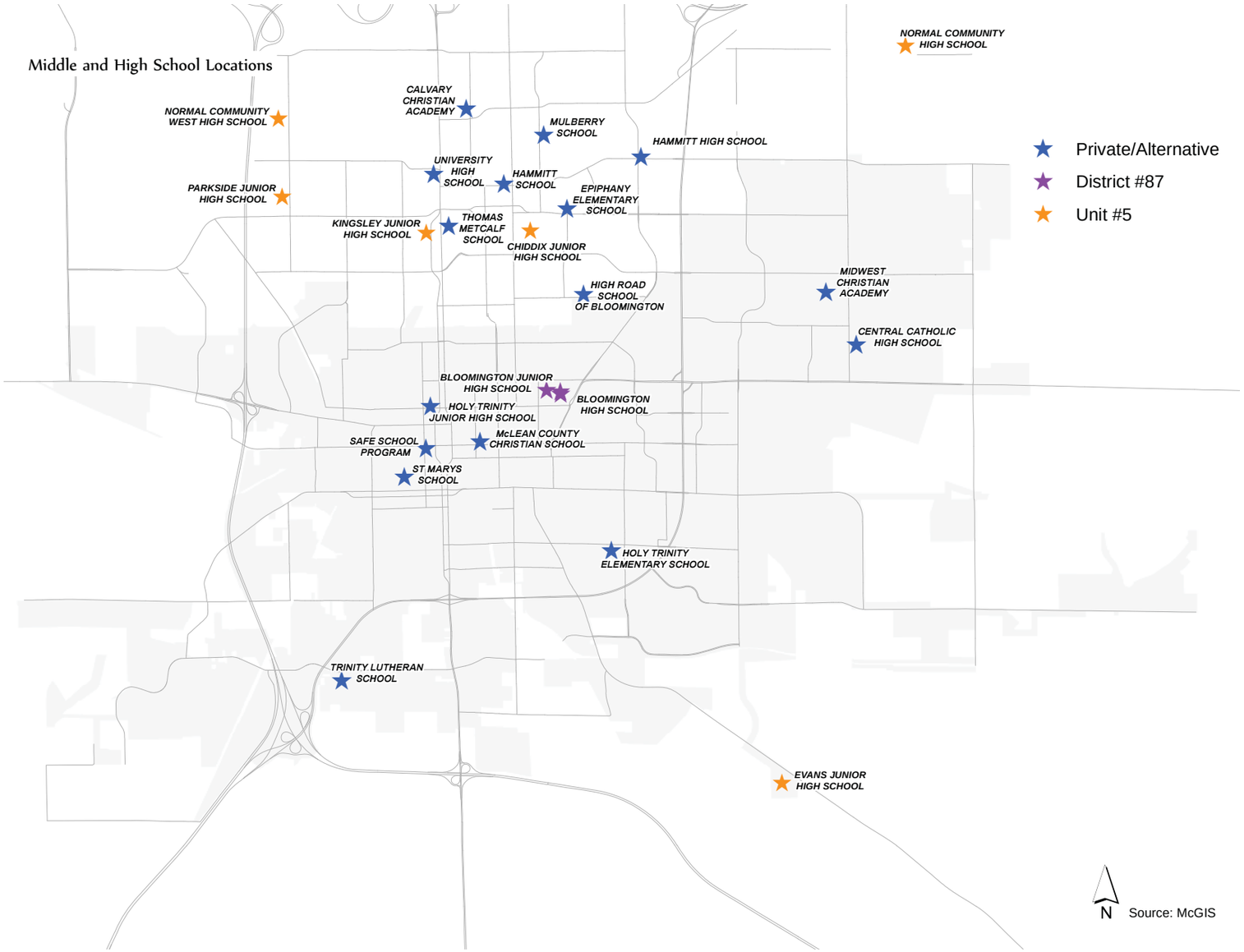
Public Service Facility

The public service facility was built in 1965 and occupies approximately 29,000 square feet on South East Street behind the Police Station. The facility is equipped to store traffic signs, equipment, some carpentry applications and public works vehicles. It serves as a meeting place for employees who pick up their vehicles in the morning. There is also an on-site solid waste transfer system that is certified by the Environmental Protection Agency. Also on the premises is a salt storage facility capable of storing 6,200 tons of salt.

Water Department Facility

A new water department facility was

Figure 9.2 Public and Private Schools Serving Bloomington Children



Data Source: McGIS

constructed in 2003 on the north side of Division Street, just west of the railroad tracks (see Map 2.7). This facility houses water department offices and water system maintenance facilities and supplies.

Parks

Please refer to the Health and Safety chapter for the location and description of parks and recreational activities in Bloomington.

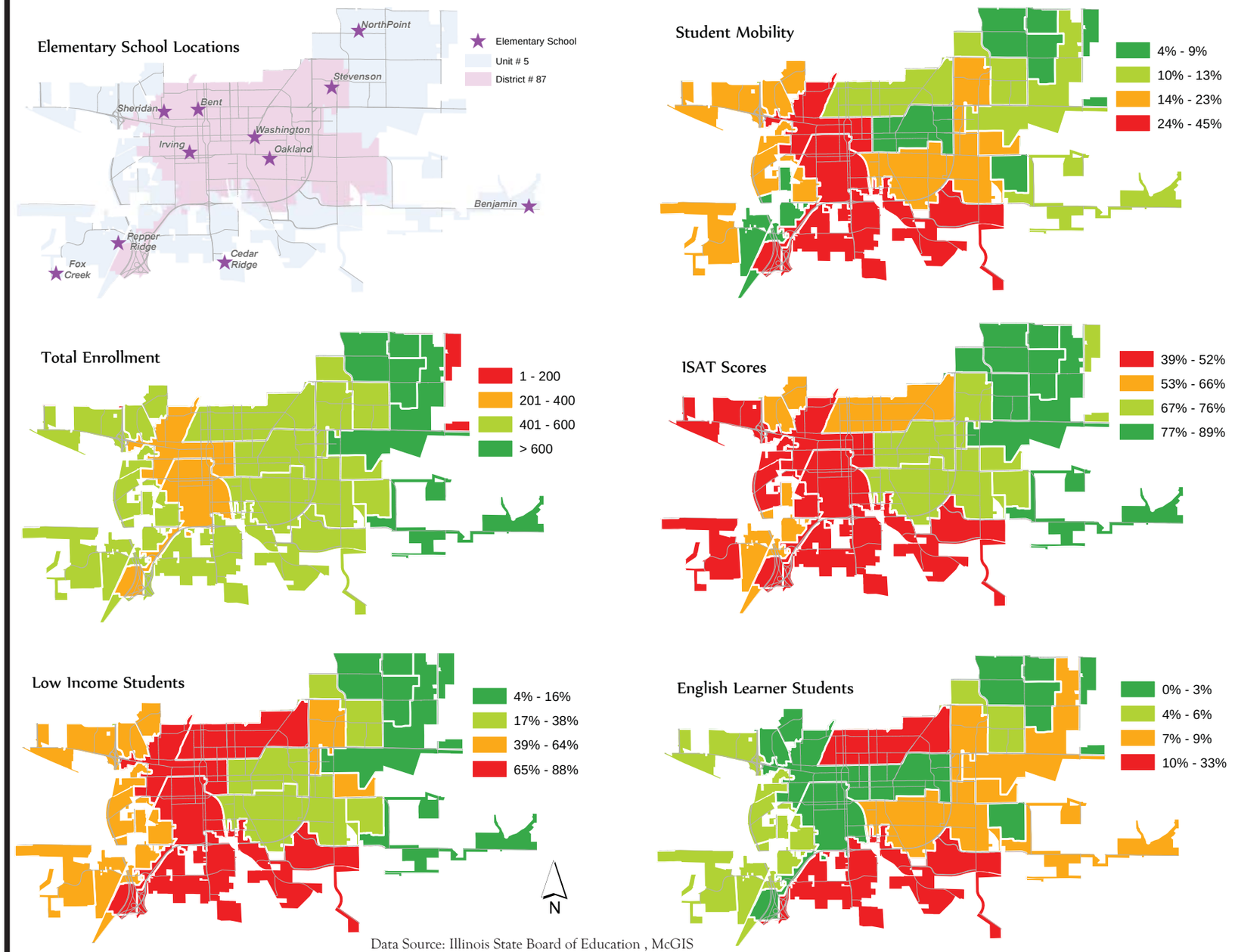
Schools

The City of Bloomington has an abundance of excellent public school facilities. The two school districts that serve the City of Bloomington are Unit 5 and District 87.

As shown in Figure 9.3, District 87 contains six elementary schools, one elementary education center, one middle school and one high school. It serves the core areas of Bloomington. Unit 5 contains five elementary schools, two middle schools and two high schools serving the outlying areas of Bloomington and has the potential of serving the City's areas of outward expansion. Bloomington also contains parochial schools.

Under the recent School Funding Reform Act of 2014, the state funding distribution formula for school district funding was changed. The new formula places weight on student social characteristics and the availability of local funds through property taxes for the state funding distribution. Under this formula, both District 87 and Unit 5 are expected to lose 15% to 17% in state fund-

Figure 9.3 Elementary Schools in Bloomington



Data Source: Illinois State Board of Education , McGIS

ing, partly due to levels of property revenues generated locally. While it is positive to note that the community is affluent, it does not negate the fact that these budget cuts will place severe burden on the school districts.

As illustrated in Figure 9.3, the core areas (inner city) of Bloomington, served primarily by District 87 have lower total enrollment numbers. According to District 87, the number of students enrolled in the district decreased from 5,730 in 2000 to 5,526 in 2010. A number of social factors such as low income students and English Language Learners also have an impact on academic performance, which is reflected in the ISAT scores. Figure 9.3 clearly illustrates how the social aspects within the core are having an impact on the schools.

Schools play a huge role in shaping the community. It is critical to work closely with the school districts during the comprehensive planning process to collectively address the educational issues.

Bloomington has Illinois Wesleyan University, located in north central Bloomington. Other higher educational opportunities in the area include Illinois State University, Heartland Community College and Lincoln Community College. They provide significant benefits to the Bloomington-Normal and McLean County community. Collaboration between local governments, the universities and economic development agencies, mediated through the planning process, can aid in using university resources to encourage forward-thinking economic development that focuses on emerging industries.

10 REGIONAL CONTEXT









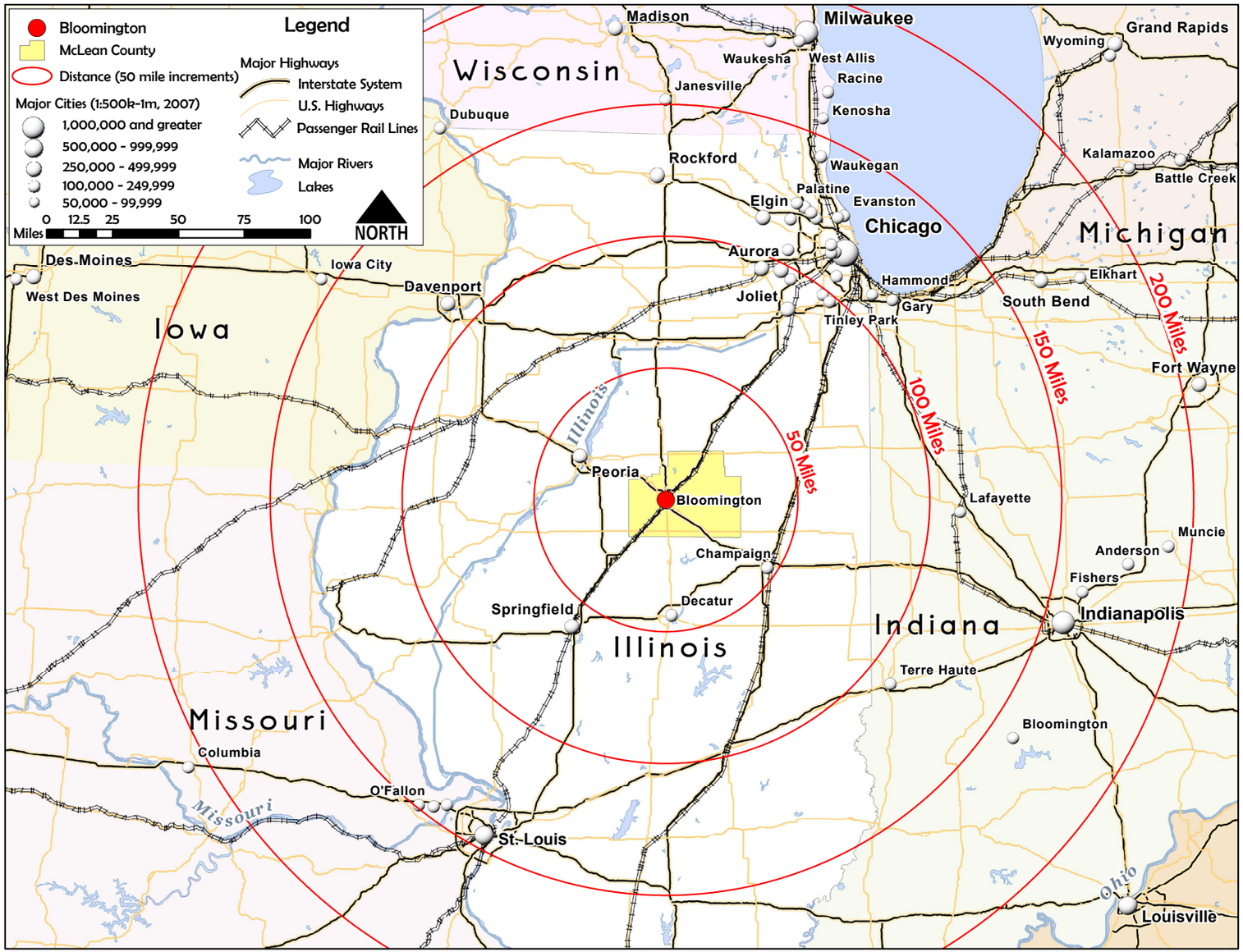
Bloomington occupies an advantageous position at the crossroads of our region, the core of the Central Illinois concentration of population, surrounded by highly productive agricultural land, and the nexus of substantial economic, infrastructure and transportation resources. The City's many connections with the surrounding region engender a complex set of interests that extend beyond the City boundaries. Some concerns reflect potential impacts on Bloomington from exterior interests, others impacts Bloomington may have on surrounding areas, and some involve interrelating impacts.

REGIONAL WATER PLANNING

In recent years Bloomington and other local governments have engaged in an ongoing process of planning for future water supply for residents as well as commercial, industrial and agricultural use. The need to plan for this essential resource grows ever more urgent, as we anticipate serving a larger population of individuals and business requiring water, and as we see the serious impact of sustained drought in Illinois and across the country. An improved understanding of regional hydrology in the era of climate change is also needed. Continued planning to secure adequate water resources in the context of regional interests can be addressed in the comprehensive plan through discussion of several aspects of water sourcing and protection, including the following:

- Regional supply studies – what further study should be conducted and implemented under the comprehensive plan

Figure 10.1 Regional Context



Source: McLean County Regional Planning Commission

to evaluate future need, and determine future water sourcing?

- Mahomet Aquifer – how effectively can Bloomington (and other McLean County entities) make use of the aquifer?
- Potential impacts of Clinton landfill status – what action should Bloomington and regional partners take to assess the concerns relating to hazardous waste contamination of the Mahomet Aquifer from materials in the Clinton Landfill?

ENBRIDGE PIPELINE PROJECT

(Southern Access Extension Pipeline to Crude Oil Terminal at Patoka)

- Current project status

The Illinois Commerce Commission has ruled that Enbridge, Inc. (a Canadian corporation) may use the eminent domain process to obtain right-of-way from property owners with whom the company has not arranged the purchase of property. This may result in a delay in the construction of the pipeline through McLean County, as property takings issues make their way through the courts. However, the decision of the ICC creates an immediate need to consider the local and regional impacts of the pipeline project, on Bloomington and on McLean County.

- Planning for environmental impacts

The proposed pipeline route will cross the Mackinaw River and Money Creek, with possible direct impact on the City of Bloomington water supply at Lake Bloomington, and supplemental supply from the Mackinaw River. Other Enbridge projects have experienced pipeline failures resulting in substantial surface water contamination. A proactive approach to planning for potential environmental impacts is necessary to protect Bloomington's interests, as well as the interests of other regional governments. The Enbridge project is also discussed in the Natural Environment chapter.

HYDRAULIC FRACTURING OIL AND GAS

Proposals have been put forward to conduct hydraulic fracturing (fracking) operations to produce oil in McLean County. In other parts of Illinois and in other states, the use of fracking to produce natural gas and oil has resulted in substantial environmental impacts, particularly on the integrity of local waters supplies. Evaluating the potential impacts of fracking operations and the materials used in the process is important for Bloomington and the region, as we consider how to manage our resources.



The Google® autonomous car, coming soon to a street near you?



Figure 10.2 High Speed Rail From Chicago to St.Louis
Source: Midwest High Speed Rail Association (www.midwesthsr.org)

RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

Railroad infrastructure lies at the center of Bloomington's history and economic development, and the City, region and state are beginning a new era of rail development and access, of which the new high speed passenger service is simply a beginning. Elements of future rail development in Bloomington and the region may include the following elements:



- High Speed Rail - ≈ 110 – 125 mph
  - Current Implementation, Chicago to St. Louis via Uptown Station, Normal
  - Future statewide rail service and connections
- Very High Speed Rail - ≈ 175 – 225 mph via Uptown Station, Normal
  - Requires corridor alternatives study
  - Implementation of new rail technologies
  - Regional Commuter Rail – connecting to HSR and VHSR through Uptown Station from Peoria, Champaign-Urbana, Danville, Decatur

Future rail development for both passenger and freight traffic requires a careful regional process, working with the private sector, to maximize capacity while minimizing negative impacts on the City.

AUTOMOTIVE

While Bloomington grapples with the demands of our car-oriented culture, and providing for alternative energy sources for cars, new technology is beginning to shift the future of the automobile. Google's recent announcement of its self-driving car, designed without passenger-usable steering, acceleration and braking, is a hint of an industry to come. What impact will this emerging technology have on local transportation systems, on manufacturers shifting to autonomous cars, and on our local companies that insure those cars? Industry leaders across the board are weighing in, and the stakes are high for local governments.

CIRA EXPANSION

The Central Illinois Regional Airport is established as a critical link to destinations and markets around the world. The comprehensive plan process is an ideal forum in which to consider future needs and impacts and evaluate how CIRA anticipates meeting future needs. The potential use of the airport as a primary freight hub as well as a passenger facility requires study and discussion of impacts for the City and the surrounding region.

NEW SOCCER VENUE

The loss of the soccer field complex adjoining the airport has triggered the need for a replacement venue. The comprehensive plan process can be used to evaluate needs for Bloomington and the region, consider appropriate locations that best serve the needs, and review the availability of funding for a new facility, possibly to include a community center.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Bloomington-Normal is a regional center for health care providers and services, and thus has a core interest in the implementation of health insurance reform and its impact on access to health care, including the preventive health care services that are a significant element of the Affordable Care Act. Bloomington City departments and local agencies, including the McLean County Health Department and local health and wellness agencies. MCRPC has initiated collaborative discussions with many of these agencies, which can be folded into the comprehensive plan process to support the development of local and regional objectives in providing the best possible health care services to the community.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA

Bloomington's PACE staff has initiated discussion with the Planning Commission regarding evaluation of City ordinances to accommodate the new state laws regarding the cultivation and distribution of marijuana for approved medical uses. As this evaluation by the City continues, the planning process can also consider what steps Bloomington may wish to take should Illinois follow the example of Colorado and Washington, and allow broader access to marijuana for non-medical users, subject to any restrictions established in state statutes.

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

With the installed base of wind energy facilities, McLean County is already established as a center for alternative energy technology and production. An effort to focus on technology-based employment should include alternative energy production and manufacturing, both to take advantage of new market opportunities, and to position the region to move beyond fossil fuels. Such a focus may also lessen the need to exploit hydrocarbons through hydraulic fracturing for oil and natural gas.

11

ARTS & CULTURE

Bloomington-Normal is a community that fosters creativity. The community has multiple venues dedicated to visual and performing art exhibitions; community events and festivals; and local and national history, creating a vibrant artist population, enriching cultural experience, and historical significance. Residents and visitors are often unable to capture the full essence of the community, resulting from insufficient promotion and a lack of public awareness. As a result, Bloomington's artistic and cultural value remains a hidden gem. Throughout the Bloomington-Normal community there is an abundance of opportunities to explore and be enchanted.

over **900** Working Artists





Average of
12,000
at the
Illinois Shakespeare Festival

KEY FINDINGS

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.

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.

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.

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.

Across the country, communities have come to recognize the importance of arts, culture, and history as necessary elements to be interwoven into the fabric of a community. Each element plays an important role in fostering the success of a community. The arts have the power to inspire and connect people and cultures through all media such as music, dance, theatre and the visual arts. When a community's arts scene flourishes, residents and tourists alike find themselves in the midst of a desirable atmosphere. Arts and culture distinguish a community, creating a unique experience and enhancing the quality of life.

These elements expand beyond their initial intrinsic quality of life benefits; they also 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. According to the National Endowment for the Arts, arts and cultural production contributed more than $698 billion to the U.S. economy, 4.32 percent to the U.S. Gross Domestic Product in 2012. Over 4.7 million people were employed through arts and cultural productions, and those jobs had a ripple effect: every 100 jobs created from the demand for the arts leads to an additional 62 jobs in other fields Partnering with the arts helps businesses "recruit talent," "put your company in the spotlight," "advance corporate objectives and strategies," "foster critical thinking," "engage your employees," "embrace diversity and team building," "say thanks," and "contribute

MAP OF CULTURAL AMENITIES IN DOWNTOWN BLOOMINGTON



to the economy and quality of life." The economic impact of the arts can be felt locally as well as nationally: McLean County residents spent about $418 per capita in selected categories of arts-related expenditures in 2013, as compared to $346 in Peoria County, $356 in Macon County, $383 in Sangamon County, and $388 in Champaign County[1].

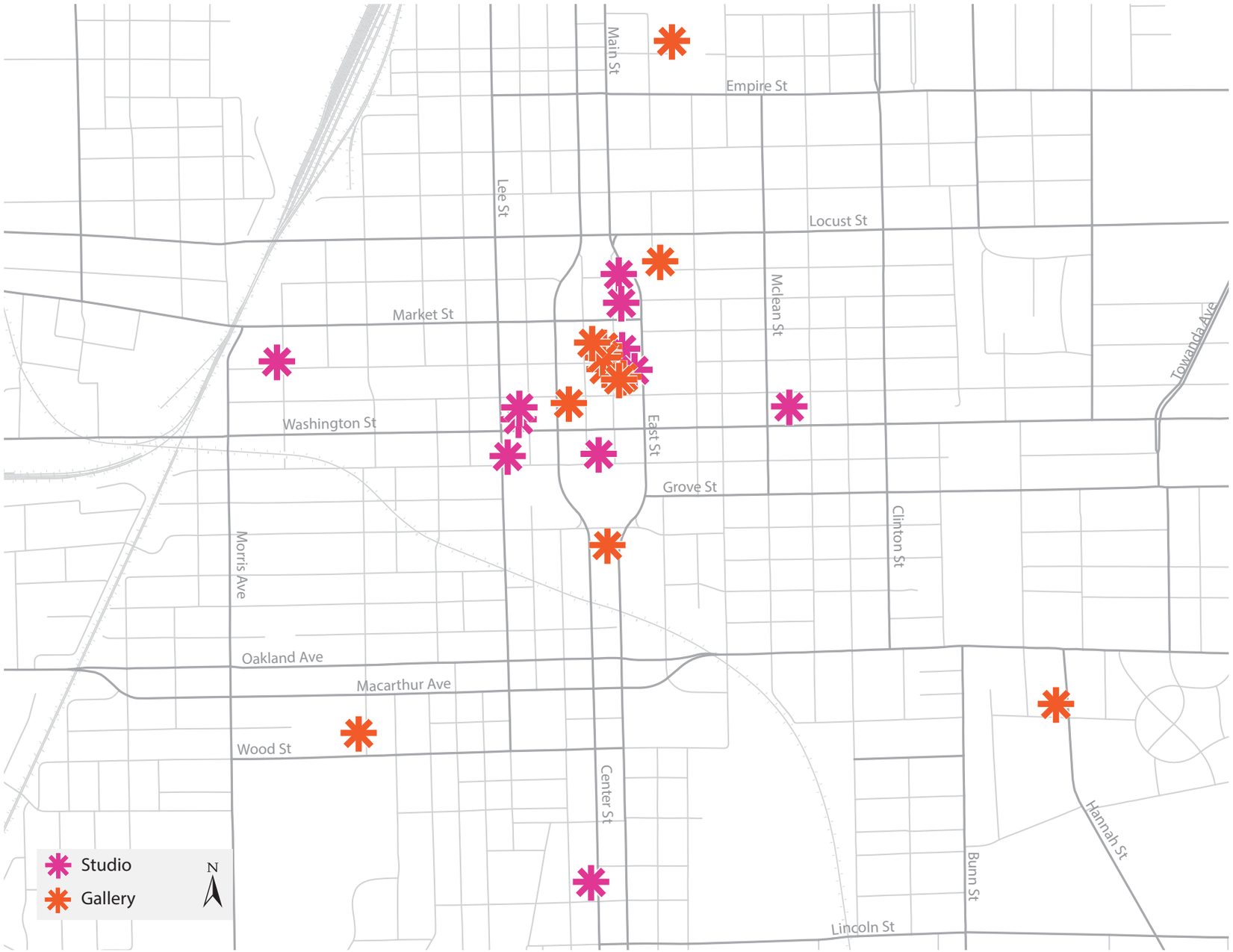
There are abundant opportunities to experience arts, culture, and history in Bloomington-Normal, at a variety of venues and through a variety of media. The most thriving area of arts, culture, and history within the community is Downtown Bloomington, which contains Bloomington-Normal's highest density of artistic and cultural amenities. Downtown includes the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA), a performing arts venue and City department dedicated to promoting arts and culture in the community; the McLean County Museum of History; the US Cellular Coliseum; and an assortment of other studios, galleries, and venues. This density of cultural activity represents an opportunity for the City to officially promote Downtown as the City's cultural district. A well-supported district with boundaries stretching across the entire Downtown area could serve as a powerful marketing tool.

Beyond Downtown Bloomington, there are many additional opportunities to be exposed to arts, culture, and history across the community. Bloomington-Normal's two universities, Illinois State University and Illinois Wesleyan University, offer unique contributions to the development and incor-

poration of arts, culture, and history as a college community. The universities are leaders in fostering environments that allow ideas to cascade into the community. Continuing to develop partnerships between the City and universities can provide residents, students, and visitors the opportunity to experience this artistic, cultural, and historical community.

Beyond Downtown Bloomington, there are many additional opportunities to be exposed to arts, culture and history across the community. Many of these opportunities come through the community's excellent education systems. Bloomington-Normal has four higher education institutions—Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, Heartland Community College, and Lincoln College. These colleges and universities produce high-quality art and are leaders in fostering a creative culture that allows ideas to cascade into the community. Continuing to develop partnerships between the City and universities can provide residents, students, and visitors the opportunity to experience

MAP OF GALLERIES AND STUDIOS



Footnotes:

1) National Endowment for the Arts. (2015). *Surprising Findings in Three New NEA Reports on the Arts.* Available at http://arts.gov/news/2015/surprising-findings-three-new-nea-reports-arts

2) Americans for the Arts. (2015). *8 Reasons to Partner with the Arts.* Retrieved from http://www.partnership-movement.org/the-movement/

3) Americans for the Arts. (2015). *Local Arts Index – Where I Live.* Available at http://www.artsindexusa.org/where-i-live. Accessed 3 April 2015. The categories in question were: entertainment admission fees, recorded media, musical instruments, photographic equipment and supplies, and reading materials.

this artistically, culturally, and historically rich community.

Primary and secondary education students in Bloomington-Normal also have many opportunities to be exposed to the arts. Each year, an estimated 15,000+ students from pre-K through high school participate in arts enrichment programs hosted by local arts organizations such as the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA), McLean County Arts Center (MCAC), and others. These programs help keep the arts alive and thriving in each new generation.

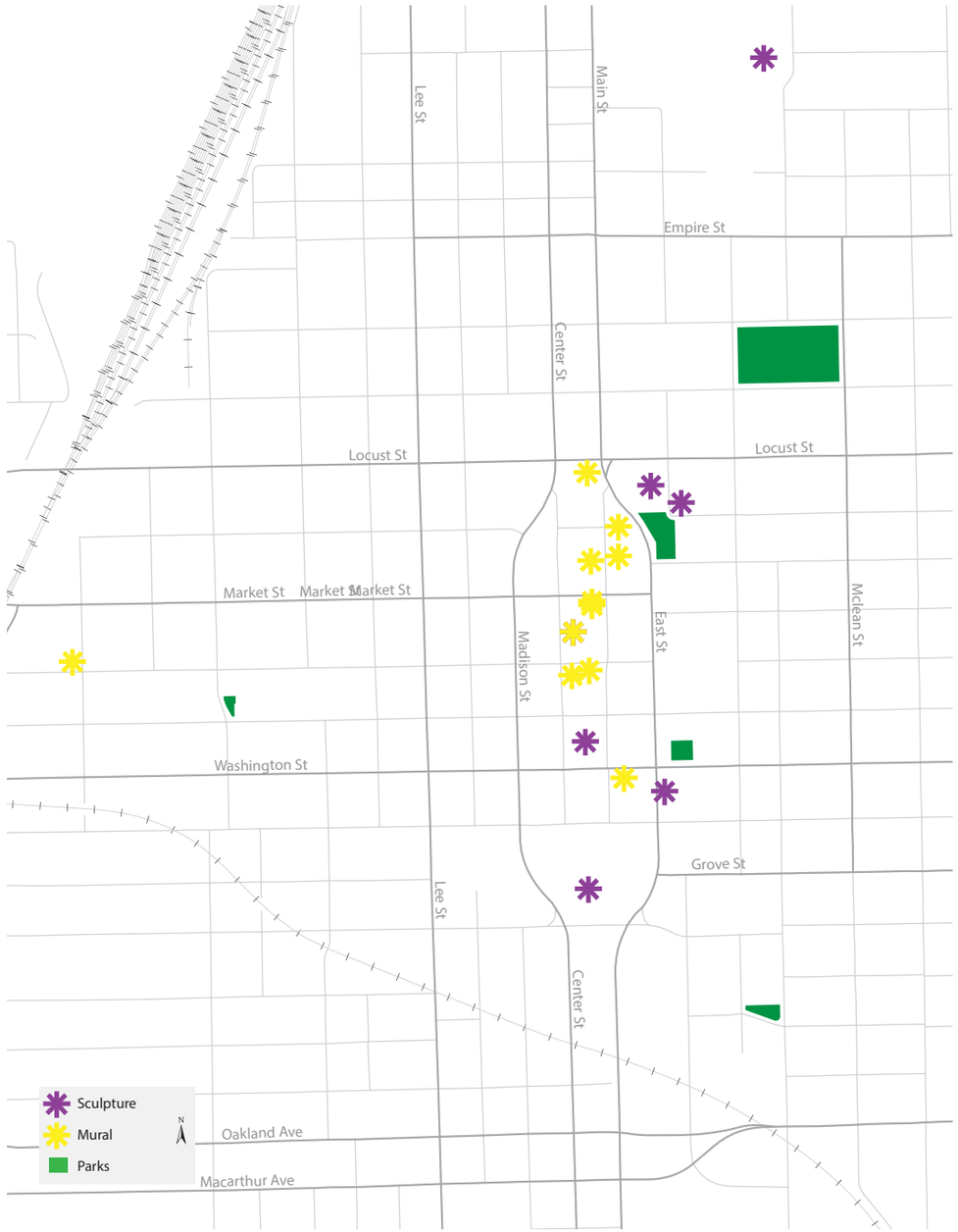
ARTISTS

Bloomington-Normal hosts a vibrant community of artists. Professional, semi-professional, and amateur painters, photographers, musicians, actors, designers, sculptors, glassmakers, metalworkers, jewelers, woodworkers, writers, and more call Bloomington-Normal home. Many of these artists own their own businesses and have been rooted in the community for a long time. Their presence in the community is difficult to measure

Footnotes:

4) National Endowment for the Arts. (2013). Artists by Metropolitan Statistical Area Residence. Available at http://arts.gov/artistic-fields/research-analysis/data-profiles/data-profile-1/dp1-nea-tables-eeo-2006-2010-data . These numbers are based on 5-year American Community Survey estimates (2006-2010). ACS figures have a larger margin of error than those of the 10-year Census and must thus be treated more cautiously. The NEA includes actors, announcers, architects, fine artists, art directors, animators, dancers, choreographers, designers, and other entertainers in its count of total artists.

MAP PUBLIC ART



precisely but is clearly substantial. Workforce estimates based on the American Community Survey suggest that roughly one percent of the Bloomington-Normal MSA labor force are employed in artistic professions. This percentage is comparable to estimates for Decatur (0.6%), Springfield (0.9%), Peoria (1.2%), and Champaign-Urbana (1.4%) . Other talented artists are not captured by labor force data due to amateur or student status.

The difficulty of quantification does not make it any less apparent that Bloomington-Normal has a strong, well-established community of artists. Over the course of the next 20 years, Bloomington's challenge is to promote and support this community at the local and regional levels to make arts and culture an even greater contributor to the area's high quality of life.

VISUAL ARTS

There is a strong presence of visual art and artists in Bloomington. Artists bring Bloomington to life by producing art in various media that is displayed in a number of studios and galleries throughout the community. Many of these studios and galleries are located Downtown. Approximately 30 working studios are clustered in Downtown; as of 2015, ten of these regularly open their doors to the public for the Downtown Art Walk, one of the First Friday events put on by the Downtown Bloomington Association. Another popular First Friday event is the Area Arts Showcase, started in May of 2012, where studios open and additional sidewalk events are held. Other studios are open periodically for lessons or special occasions. Some of the local artists who work Downtown also reside in the same buildings that house their studios and galleries.

Other visual art venues can be found throughout the community. The colleges and universities are particular hotbeds of artistic activity. Illinois State University (ISU), Illinois Wesleyan University (IWU), and Heartland Community College all have public galleries that display art produced by faculty, students, and local artists. Many university art students remain in the community upon graduation, bolstering the ranks of working artists in Bloomington-Normal.

PUBLIC ART

Local artists have helped bring Bloomington to life by celebrating its art, culture, and history through displays of public art. A diverse array of statues, sculptures, and murals are on display throughout the community for residents and tourists. Through these works of art, artists give back to the community. In addition to making Bloomington more aesthetically pleasing, many of the pieces provide opportunities for residents and tourists to learn about the community's culture and history.



With the assistance of the City of Bloomington, the Downtown Bloomington Association has established a Mural Committee within their existing Design Committee. The Mural Committee reviews design applications and select projects to be pursued.

PERFORMING ARTS

The Bloomington-Normal area has a multitude of performing arts venues. Major Downtown venues include the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA), the Castle Theatre, and the US Cellular Coliseum, which host high-quality concerts, plays, and other events. Additional venues can be found beyond Downtown and throughout the community, including the stately Ewing Manor & Cultural Center, Normal's Corn Crib, the Normal Theater, and the Miller Park Pavilion. These venues host a wide variety of music, dance, theatre, and other performing arts events.

In addition to the various community venues, ISU and IWU are significant contributors to the performing arts scene in Bloomington-Normal. Each year the universities put on quality music, dance, and theatre productions, while their facilities also attract nationally known acts. The Heartland Theatre Company, the Community Players, and Illinois Theatre Consortium are three additional community organizations that produce professional-quality plays throughout the year.

Bloomington Center for Performing Arts (BCPA)
Concerts by the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, popular musicians, comedians, and ballet companies; Bruegala, the city's annual craft beer festival; musicals; and a variety of other events all happen at BCPA. The theatre can seat 1,320 patrons throughout the main floor and balcony, and the downstairs ballroom/banquet hall can accommodate 1,000.
Website: http://www.cityblm.org/?page=7



Bloomington-Normal Community Concert Band (CCB)
Sponsored by the Bloomington Parks and Rec Department, the CCB has around 70 volunteers from the Central Illinois area. The band performs at a variety of venues throughout the year, including Miller Park, Wesley Methodist Church, Westminster Village, and every-Thursday-night summer concerns in Franklin Park, as well as parades in Lexington, Hudson, Towanda and other locations.

Castle Theatre
Rich in architectural details such as gilded columns, ornate friezes and art deco-inspired chandeliers, the Castle is the perfect link between Bloomington's past, present and future. First opened in 1916 as a 1,000-seat theater, the Castle was a jewel in the series of gens created by the legendary theater builders Balaban & Katz, original inventors of the classic movie palace. For decades, the property served as one of the area's premier destinations. The Castle has been restored to its former glory with a $1.5 million renovation. With a diverse mix of live music, corporate, public and private events, the Castle is poised to once again strike the right note in the future of Bloomington's cultural life.
Website: http://www.thecastletheatre.com/about-the-castle/



Community Players Theatre
Community Players is a charitable, nonprofit theatrical organization dedicated to the idea that live theater enhances the quality of life for our audiences, our participants, and the community. The Community Players present six productions, both musical and non-musical, per season, and host auditions that are open to everyone in central Illinois, regardless of age or previous theater experience.
Website: http://www.communityplayers.org

Heartland Jazz Orchestra
Formed in 1999, The Heartland Jazz Orchestra (HJO) is dedicated to preserving and furthering the classical music of America, Jazz. Their concerts feature some of the finest musicians in Central Illinois, who join with regional and national artists to create a wide variety of Jazz experiences for our communities.
Website: http://hjojazz.com/

Heart of Illinois Chorus
Heart of Illinois Chorus is a membership organization of female singers, who meet to practice, perform, socialize, and have fun. The Chorus provides entertainment and music education for our community. The group performs two annual shows at Illinois Central College in East Peoria. In the spring of every year, Heart of Illinois Chorus participates in the Midwest Region 3 chorus competition, whose winners travel to the International Competition.
Website: http://www.hoichorus.com/

Heartland Theatre
Heartland Theatre Company has been a professional-quality, non-profit organization since 1986. Besides presenting a season of five plays each year, Heartland hosts an annual 10-Minute Play Festival and a one-act competition and workshop for Midwest playwrights. Heartland occasionally partners with local universities and organizations to offer historical or musical theatre to the community.
Website: http://heartlandtheatre.org

Illinois Barbershop Harmony Society
The Illinois Barbershop Harmony Society district is one of seventeen regional districts within the Society, and has ushered ten quartets, four senior's quartets, and three choruses to the coveted International Gold. In addition to competing at the district and national levels, the local district also provides a number of educational and coaching opportunities for young artists through the programs such as Youth In Harmony and IDAH.
Website: http://www.illinoisdistrict.org/about-us/

Illinois State University Braden Auditorium
See "Illinois State University" in the Organizations Promoting Arts and Culture section.

Illinois State University School of Theatre and Dance
See "Illinois State University" in the Organizations Promoting Arts and Culture section.

Illinois State University School of Music
See "Illinois State University" in the Organizations Promoting Arts and Culture section.

Illinois Symphony Orchestra
The Illinois Symphony Orchestra (ISO) is a full-sized, regional orchestra based in central Illinois. The ISO serves as a vital cultural resource, an educational partner, and an invaluable enhancement to the quality of life in Bloomington-Normal and Springfield. In its Bloomington performances, the ISO performs at the BCPA and Second Presbyterian Church in Bloomington. Having numerous performance locations enables the orchestra to bring diverse repertoire and live musical experiences to audiences of all ages and backgrounds in both urban and rural settings.
Website: http://www.ilsymphony.org

Illinois Theatre Consortium
The Illinois Theatre Consortium is a non-profit theatre organization that serves three unique theatre companies: the Illinois Voices Theatre, New Route Theatre, and Seedling Theatre. These companies strive to give opportunities to all artists interesting in performing, designing, direct/write, and much more.
Website: http://www.itconstage.org/About%20Us.html

Illinois Wesleyan Civic Orchestra
See "Illinois Wesleyan University" in the Organizations Promoting Arts and Culture section.
Website: http://blogs.iwu.edu/iwco/

about-the-orchestra/

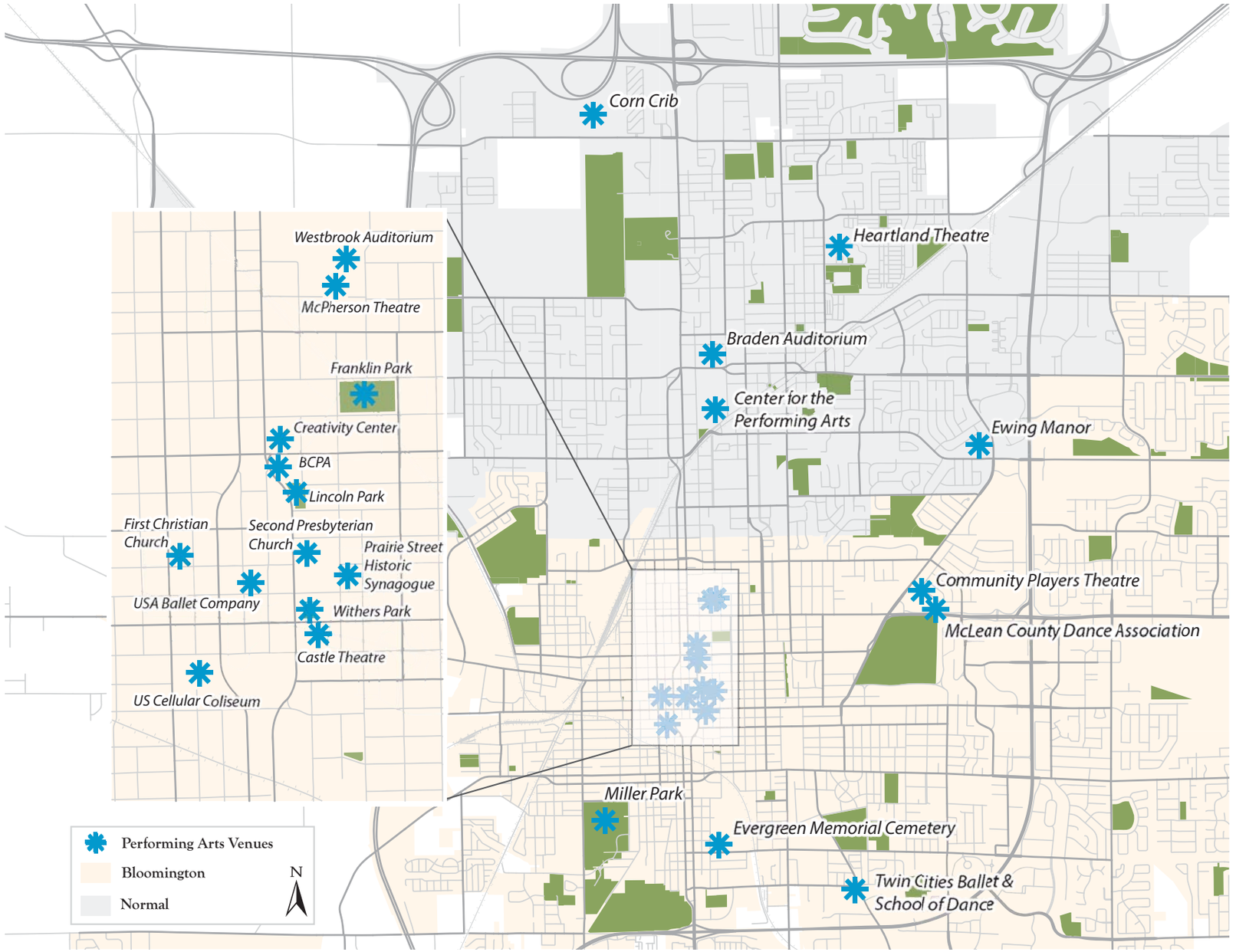
Illinois Wesleyan School of Music
See "Illinois Wesleyan University" in the Organizations Promoting Arts and Culture section.
Website: https://www.iwu.edu/music/about-us/

Illinois Wesleyan School of Theatre Arts
See "Illinois Wesleyan University" in the Organizations Promoting Arts and Culture section.
Website: https://www.iwu.edu/theatre/; https://www.iwu.edu/theatre/box-office.html

McLean County Dance Association
The McLean County Dance Association offers a harmonious, diverse environment that fosters creativity and appreciation of the art of dance, offering classes in ballet, modern, jazz, tap, creative, hip-hop and musical theater. Two performance companies are affiliated with The Dance Association: Bloomington Ballet and Contemporary Dance Theatre.
Website: http://www.mcleancountydance.org/

Prairie Fire Theatre
Prairie Fire Theatre is a unique musical experience. The brainchild of local artist Robert Mangialardi, Prairie Fire is a theatrical group dedicated to bringing professional first-rate musical theatre and light opera to the local community. Prairie Fire has staged three to four musical theatre events each year since

MAP PERFORMING ARTS VENUES



incorporating in 1998. The majority of these performances are held on the campus of Illinois Wesleyan University, but the company prides itself in taking musical theatre to non-traditional community settings.
Website: http://www.prairiefiretheatre.org/

Sound of Illinois Chorus
The Bloomington chapter of the Illinois District of the Barbershop Harmony has brought barber shop harmony to audiences in Central Illinois since its founding in 1942. Many international champion quartets have appeared on the SOI stage, which has always been the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts. The SOI is a regular performer in Bloomington's Concert Under the Stars series at Miller Park; the Sounds of Christmas program in December, organized by The Music Shoppe of Normal, promoted by WJBC Radio, and hosted by State Farm Insurance Companies. The Sound of Illinois also organizes and finances a day-long festival each fall that provides free vocal education and training for Central Illinois high school music educators and their students. Held in Bloomington-Normal, the workshop also receives support from the Illinois District of BHS and Region 5 of Sweet Adelines International.
Website: http://soundofillinois.org

Sugar Creek Cloggers
The Sugar Creek Cloggers are a clog dance group which performs at fairs, festivals, reunions, and other events throughout Central Illinois. Clogging is a uniquely American form of dance originating in the Appalachian Mountains. The influences of English step-dancing, Irish jigs, German high kicks, Indian ceremonial dances, and buck dances of African Americans are all clearly evident in modern clogging. Beginner lessons are offered twice a year.
Website: http://www.sugarcreekcloggers.org

Twin Cities Ballet and School of Dance
Twin Cities School of Dance, provides community residents the opportunity to receive quality dance instruction for all ages. A primary focus is on classical ballet technique, which provides a strong foundation for all other dance forms. Other classes offered include tap, jazz, latin jazz, hip hop, modern, lyrical, performance, and Zumba. The professional background of the artistic directors provides the more serious student with the knowledge and training necessary to prepare for a career in dance.
Website: http://www.tcbdance.com

US Cellular Coliseum
The U.S. Cellular Coliseum hosts a variety of events including concerts, family shows, ice shows, motor sports and trade shows. Attached to the arena is the Pepsi Ice Center, which is a public ice rink run by Bloomington Parks & Rec. The center features open skating, lessons and hockey leagues and is also the home of the State Farm Holiday Classic, one of the largest coed high school holiday basketball tournament in the nation. The Coliseum is publicly rentable for private meetings and wedding receptions.
Website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Cellular_Coliseum

USA Ballet and Academy
The USA Ballet Academy is an internationally acclaimed ballet school in the Bloomington/Normal community. The Academy features classes in a wide variety of styles, including two-week-long intensive studies during the summer months and a youth ensemble for ages 8 to 17. USA Ballet also provides children's workshops and outreach programs.
Website: http://www.usaballet.us/

Wrainbow Ballroom & Dance Studio
The Wrainbow Ballroom is a locally-owned and operated social ballroom dance lesson facility located in Bloomington. Lessons include a combination of International and American Smooth dance styles in addition to ballroom Latin dances.
Website: http://wrainbowballroom.com

33rd Illinois Volunteer Regiment Band
An authentic re-creation of the actual Civil War-era band that was mustered at Illinois State Normal University in 1861, the 33rd Illinois Volunteer Regiment Band has performed for historic programs, school events, and civic events throughout the Midwest, including many performances in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Ohio, Kentucky, and Wisconsin. The band also plays at military balls and conducts education programs that address the history of the Civil War era brass band movements and the evolution of brass instruments. The band's uniforms, sewn from natural wool fibers, are authentic in every detail and are patterned from actual specimens worn by the Union soldier. The authenticity in dress presents the audience with the most accurate appearance possible.
Website: http://33rdband.com

Galleries
Various galleries throughout Bloomington-Normal host music series and other workshops in addition to showing visual exhibits. Galleries include the McLean County Art Center, Cometogetherstudios, Eaton Gallery, and Timothy Kent Gallery.

Parks
Community residents and visitors have the opportunity to visit and enjoy great music throughout the summer at various local parks. Lincoln Park, Withers Park, Franklin Park, and Miller Park are all great venues to hear summer concerts.

Restaurants–
Restaurants and cafés are always popular venues to come out and hear live music performances. The Coffee Hound and Epiphany Farms Restaurant are two local businesses that support various music groups. Local bars such as Baxter's, Maguire's, Fat Jack's, and Six Strings also offer live music throughout the year.

Religious Institutions
Many religious organizations throughout Bloomington-Normal host musical and theat-

rical events put on by local community members and organizations. These venues include 2nd Presbyterian Church, First Christian Church, and the North Prairie Street Historic Synagogue.

Other venues – Bloomington Public Library hosts a summer concert series with various performers for adults and children alike to enjoy. The McLean County Museum of History hosts a variety of theater, music and special events throughout the year.

ORGANIZATIONS PROMOTING ARTS AND CULTURE

Many private and public organizations throughout Bloomington-Normal are dedicated to advocating for arts and culture in the community. Some of these organizations focus on promoting arts and culture to residents and tourists; however, among these organizations there is no unified, comprehensive calendar for events. To optimize the arts and culture experience in Bloomington-Normal, creating a single community events calendar – accessible from all sites – is essential to increase awareness and sponsoring the artistic and cultural community. Other organizations in the community work to incorporate arts and culture into existing community programs for local residents.

Area Arts Round Table (AART)
The Area Arts Round Table is a consortium of local arts groups that work to promote the artistic and cultural life in the Bloomington-Normal Community. The mission of this organization is "Stimulating Arts Participation by Encouraging Cooperation and Building Leadership in the Arts Community." The AART provides information to community members about current, local arts and culture events. On the AART website, events are posted to a calendar and are organized by category. The AART has a variety of committees to be involved in as well as many opportunities for members.
Website: http://www.areaartsroundtable.org/

Bloomington-Normal Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)
The CVB is a publicly funded organization that provides Bloomington-Normal residents and tourists with information pertaining to all facets of life within the community. Each year the CVB publishes a visitor guide containing local amenities, including major arts and culture attractions and a calendar of events happening throughout the area.
Website: http://www.visitbn.org

Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA)
The BCPA is not only a venue; it is the City's primary cultural arm. Aside from the concerts and other events it holds, the BCPA supports a variety of arts and culture activities throughout the area. It also works with the volunteer Cultural District Commission, which meets each month at the Creativity Center, the BCPA's administrative offices, to advise the BCPA on arts and culture issues.
Website: http://www.cityblm.org/index.aspx?page=378;
http://www.cityblm.org/index.aspx?page=472

Conexiones Latinas de McLean County
The Conexiones Latinas de McLean County is a non-profit organization is dedicated to serving Latino families in Bloomington-Normal and McLean County. Through educational as well as arts and culture programming, volunteers work to provide families



with more opportunities and celebrate the Latino community.
Website: http://conexionesmc.org/

Downtown Bloomington Association (DBA)
The DBA is a non-profit organization that works to enhance and revitalize Downtown Bloomington. F1rst Fr1days (First Fridays) is the DBA's largest community-based event, which unites businesses and residents with fun opportunities to experience local arts and culture. During the summer months, the DBA hosts the Farmer's Market which includes farm products and exhibiting artists.
Website: http://downtownbloomington.org/

Illinois State University (ISU)
Illinois State's College of Fine Arts offers a wide variety of academic programs. The School of Theatre and Dance provides pre-professional training to dedicated young actors, dancers, designers, directors, and educators for both graduates and undergraduates. The School of Music offers ten programs for undergraduates and six for graduates, encompassing performance, composition, music business, and even music therapy. The School of Art offers five undergraduate and three graduate programs for a diverse array of media and career options. ISU's several public venues help it to be perhaps the single largest contributor to the Bloomington-Normal arts and culture scene. The ISU Center for Performing Arts hosts a full calendar of musical, theatre, and dance productions, while the University Galleries and Transpace Gallery hold exhibitions of student and faculty work that are open to the public. Ewing Manor, which is owned by the Illinois State University Foundation, hosts the well-regarded Illinois Shakespeare Festival, an ISU-run project jointly supported by the School of Theatre and Dance and the College of Fine Arts. Braden Auditorium, with its 3,457 seats, is one of the largest venues in town and hosts Broadway shows, touring companies, concerts, ballets, conferences, and other events.
Website: http://finearts.illinoisstate.edu/

Illinois Wesleyan University (IWU)
A highly rated national liberal arts university,

Illinois Wesleyan is unusual among small liberal arts schools in that it has a separate Fine Arts college within the university. This allows fine arts students to obtain an uncommonly full-featured arts education while still being a part of the broader liberal arts experience. Within the College of Fine Arts, the School of Theatre Arts, School of Music, and Ames School of Art all offer pre-professional degrees. Theatre students perform a wide variety of repertoire from theatre to musicals and dance, several of which are student-run productions. Music students have opportunities to hone their skills through ensembles including the Collegiate and University Choirs, Symphonic Winds, Titan Band, Chamber Singers, and brass, woodwind, string, and percussion chamber ensembles. School of Art students explore their personal creative potential in a challenging atmosphere, with courses offered in ceramics, drawing, painting, graphic design, printmaking, photography, sculpture, and glass. All three schools give students the chance to share their art with their fellow students and the general public. Theatre performances at the McPherson, Phoenix (black box), and E. Melba Johnson Kirkpatrick Laboratory Theatres; concerts at Westbrook Auditorium and venues around the community; and exhibitions in the Merwin and Wakeley Galleries are all open to the public.
Website: https://www.iwu.edu/arts/

McLean County Arts Center (MCAC)
The McLean County Arts Center presents approximately twelve exhibitions yearly, including the annual Holiday Treasures exhibition and the Amateur Competition and Exhibition, which showcases the best amateur artists from the region. During April and July, the organization hosts the Spring Bloom and Sugar Creek Art Festivals, respectively. The Center also offers art classes, artist lectures, workshops for children and adults and associated performing and literary arts presentations. The rental and purchase of artwork is made possible through the Center's Sales & Rental Gift Gallery.
Website: http://www.mcac.wildapricot.org/

McLean Home and Community Education Group
Purpose of the McLean County Home and Community Education (HCE) is to provide educational opportunities and the exchange of ideas while promoting leadership abilities and friendship in our local community. The HCE strives to enhance the lives, homes, family and community of McLean county and Central Illinois. This is accomplished through personal and community enrichment programming, fine arts workshops and shows, philanthropic ventures and the organization of various units/clubs that meet throughout the year to bring everything together.
Website: http://www.mcleanhce.org

Normal Community Activity Center
The Normal Community Activity Center, with the support of the Town of Normal, provides programs for children and seniors and is a publicly rentable space for meetings and performances. The Community Activity Center is also home to the Heartland Theatre and contains historic materials from the Illinois Soldiers and Sailors Children's School Historical Society.
Website: https://www.normal.org/Facilities/Facility/Details/31

Western Avenue Community Center
WACC is an organization that provides services for families that live on the West Side of Bloomington. Some of these events include art/cultural enrichment programs.
Website: http://www.westernavenuecc.org

HISTORIC SITES AND MUSEUMS

Bloomington-Normal has nearly two hundred years of local history to preserve and appreciate. As described in Chapter 1 (Historic Context), Bloomington evolved in the mid-19th century from a small pioneer settlement to a steadily growing town centered on railroads, coal, small farms, and a university (Illinois Wesleyan University, founded in 1850). Bloomington's growth occurred during a tense and pivotal period in American history, as railroads transformed the nation's economy and geography and increasingly bitter debates around slavery and states' rights pushed the nation toward civil war.

Small though it was, Bloomington played its part in these broader regional and national goings-on. The town's central location within the state helped it attract the Illinois Central and Chicago and Alton rail-

National Register of Historic Places
Bloomington and Normal, Illinois

Bloomington

- Bloomington Central Business District
- Chicago & Alton Freight depot
- Clover Lawn (aka David Davis Mansion)
- David Davis III and IV House
- East Grove Street District
- Franklin Square
- George H. Cox House
- George H. Miller House
- Holy Trinity Church Rectory and Convent
- John M. Hamilton House
- McLean County Courthouse and Square
- Miller-Davis Law Building
- Robert Greenlee House
- Ruben M. Benjamin House
- Scott-Vrooman House
- Stevenson House
- US Army Aircraft C-53-DO-41-20124
- White Building (aka Heberling Building)
- White Place Historic District

Normal

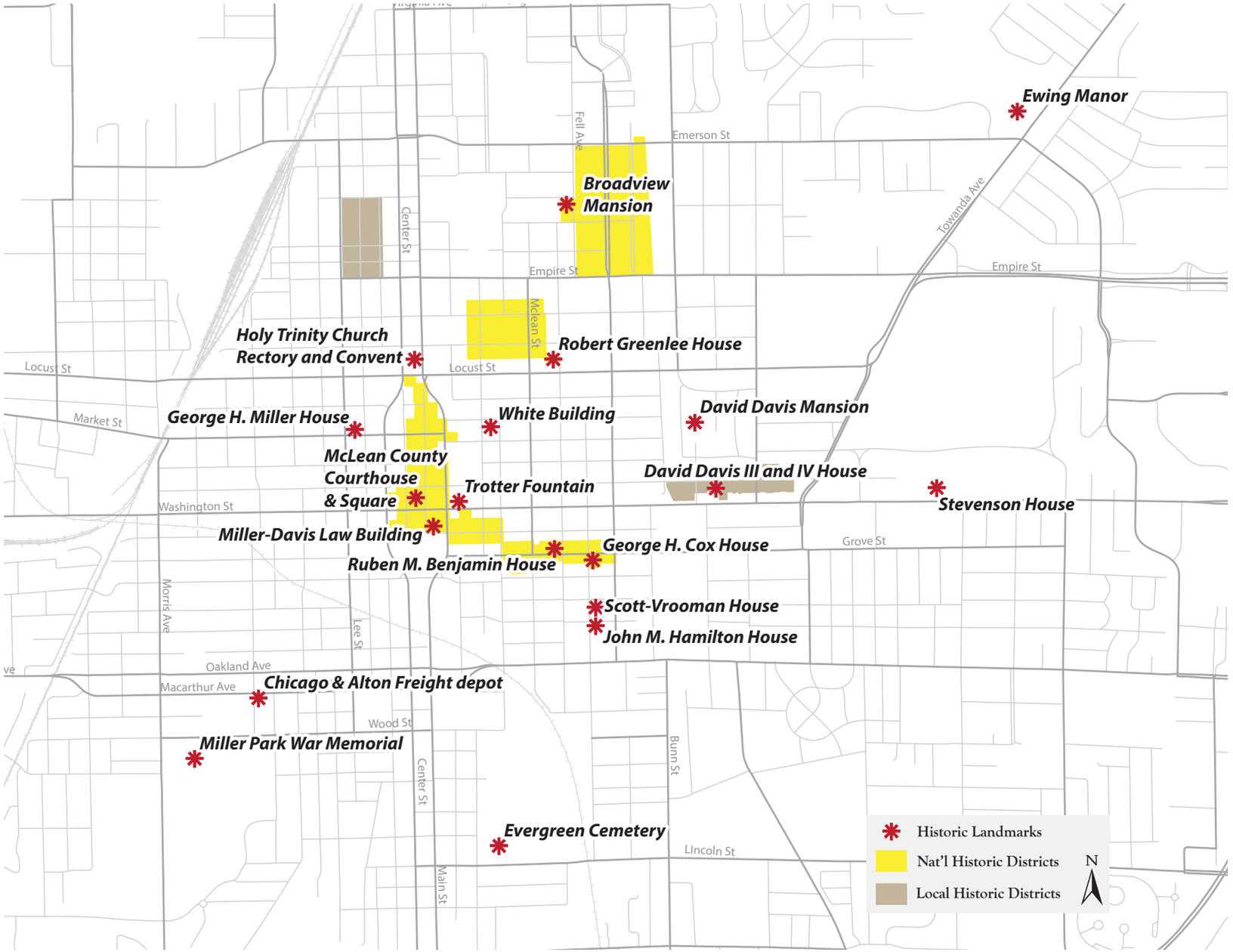
- Camelback Bridge
- Cedar Crest Addition Historic District
- Jesse Fell House
- John W. Cook Hall
- Normal Theater
- Sprague's Super Service

roads, and Chicago and Alton's Bloomington rail shops manufactured the cars, ties, and equipment that made the line run. The arrival of the railroads and the discovery of coal on the town's outskirts spurred immediate and dramatic growth and put Bloomington on the map. Meanwhile, the towering figure of the era, Abraham Lincoln, left an indelible imprint on Bloomington. Bloomington was one of the larger towns in Illinois' Eighth Judicial Circuit, where Lincoln built his career as a lawyer and met many of his greatest friends and supporters, including local moguls Jesse Fell, David Davis, and Asahel Gridley, among others. Lincoln's successful arguments on behalf of the Illinois Central Railroad facilitated the growth of that and other railroads in Illinois. More famously, Bloomington was the site of Lincoln's famous "Lost Speech," and where Fell convinced the rising star of the fledgling anti-slavery Republican Party to run for President.

The years leading up to the Civil War saw the birth of Bloomington's sister town of Normal. Founded by Fell as North Bloomington in 1854, the new town grew around the Illinois State Normal School (founded in 1857), after which it was renamed "Normal" in 1865. The school eventually became Illinois State University and has long been one of the cornerstones of the Bloomington-Normal community.

Like innumerable towns throughout the United States, Bloomington-Normal's culture absorbed and was absorbed by waves of immigrants and pioneers during the second half of the 19th century. Irish, Scotch-Irish,

MAP OF HISTORIC LANDMARKS & MUSEUMS



German, and African-American pioneers established communities in Bloomington-Normal. Many of the neighborhoods that grew up around them are still here today, composing the community's historic core.

In the 20th century, the coal mines and railroads faded away, but the rise of State Farm (founded 1922), Route 66 (which opened from Chicago to St. Louis in 1926), and interstates 55 and 74 replaced those fading icons as major contributors to growth and the shifting of the City's culture.

Bloomington-Normal's historic legacy lives on today through a variety of sites and neighborhoods, representing distinct historic periods and architectural styles. The National Register of Historic Places lists a total of twenty-five historic sites and districts for the Bloomington-Normal community, nineteen in Bloomington and six in Normal. Many of Bloomington-Normal's buildings go back to the mid-19th century, and Bloomington today has more buildings with a historical connection to Abraham Lincoln than Springfield, where he lived and practiced law. The McLean County Museum of History and groups of interested citizens such as the Old House Society work with the City of Bloomington, other local governments, and various private entities to maintain these heritage resources and our community's historical memory.

Bloomington Central Business District*
Downtown Bloomington's Central Business District has been at the center of much of Bloomington-Normal's most significant historical activity. Many of the pre-1900 buildings have been replaced or were burned down in the 1900 fire that devastated Downtown. Still, a number of historically significant sites, including the **Miller-Davis law offices*** and the **bank building owned by Lincoln supporter Asahel Gridley**, anchor the ongoing revitalization of a district that has retained much of its character since the days of Lincoln's famous "Lost Speech" (given in 1856 in Downtown Bloomington). At the heart of the Business District, the **McLean County Museum of History*** in the former Courthouse building serves as an impressive architectural centerpiece and repository of historical knowledge.
Website: http://downtownbloomington.org/about-us/our-history/

Broadview Mansion/Immanuel Bible Foundation
Constructed in 1906 for the Van Leer family, the Broadview Mansion originally served as both the Van Leer home and a meeting place for Christians of differing denominations who wished to share and grow in their faith. Upon her passing in 1949, Mrs. Van Leer left the entirety of the estate to the Immanuel Bible Foundation under the stipulation that it be used as a non-denominational center for religious, musical and artistic resources. Today, the estate houses the Van Leer Academy of Music and Art, which provides voice, art and poetry lessons to local citizens. The Immanuel Bible Foundation also provides a number of fellowship opportunities for both men and women and oversees a large sacred music repository and lending library.
Website: http://www.ibfoundation.org/#



Camelback Bridge*
This wooden bridge, originally built in 1906 by the Illinois Central Railroad to allow traffic to pass over the rail line, gets its name from its unique humped shape that gives it its popular name. Today, the bridge allows vehicular traffic to pass over the Constitution Trail, which was built along the former railroad right-of-way. It is distinctive not only for its shape but for its Phoenix columns and King Post pony truss.
Website: http://gis.hpa.state.il.us/pdfs/201083.pdf (National Register of Historic Places nomination form); http://mchistory.org/research/resources/findingaids/places/camelback-bridge.php

Chicago and Alton Freight Depot*
Located in the railyard complex in northwestern Bloomington, the Chicago and Alton Freight Depot is a reminder of the vital role the railroads played in sparking Bloomington's early growth. The Chicago and Alton Railroad, which connected Chicago with St. Louis, maintained its primary shop complex in Bloomington due to Bloomington's convenient location roughly halfway between the two ends of the line. The shops were Bloomington's main employer for the latter half of the 19th century; today, the area is largely abandoned, and the Freight Depot is one of the few intact remnants of a key period in Bloomington's history.
Website: http://www.mchistory.org/old/find/camisc.html#scope; http://www.pantagraph.com/news/local/railyards-land-targeted-for-revitalization-project/article_528265fa-52aa-11e0-a61e-001cc4c002e0.html

Clover Lawn/David Davis Mansion State Historic Site*
The David Davis Mansion State Historic Site is the restored and preserved home of David Davis, a judge and political ally of Abraham Lincoln whom Lincoln appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Victorian-style home has been converted into a museum, where visitors can take guided tours of the home and discover the substantial impact Davis and his family had on local and national history. The estate is also home to the Upper Garden, also known as Sarah's Garden. Created in 1872, Sarah's Garden was modeled after classical Italian gardens of the 17th century and the formal English gardens of the 18th century. To this day, the garden remains a unique and beautiful part of David Davis Mansion State

Note: * denotes inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places

Historic Site.
Website: http://daviddavismansion.org



East Grove Street Historic District*
Designated a Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places, the 400-700 blocks of East Grove Street in Bloomington contain a number of historically significant houses, some of which date back to before the Civil War. Two of these, the **Ruben M. Benjamin House*** and **George H. Cox House***, are themselves on the National Register. Representing a variety of period architectural styles, these beautiful homes remain some of Bloomington's most desirable places to live.
Website: http://gis.hpa.state.il.us/pdfs/201435.pdf (National Register of Historic Places nomination form)

Evergreen Cemetery
The Evergreen Memorial Cemetery, founded in the early 1820's, is a historic cemetery nestled in the heart of Bloomington. The 87-acre cemetery's simple entrance gives way to winding avenues, towering trees and an elaborate mausoleum. It is a wonderful example of preservation, culture and tradition in Central Illinois. Notable Bloomingtonians buried in Evergreen include Vice President Adlai Stevenson I, Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson II and Supreme Court Justice David Davis.
Website: http://www.evergreen-cemetery.com

Ewing Manor



Inspired by the worldwide travels of its first owners, prominent Bloomingtonians Hazle Buck Ewing and Davis Ewing, the architecture and landscaping of the Ewing Manor (built between 1927 and 1929) reflect a diverse set of styles. The estate contains impressive Channel-Norman-style residential buildings; an amphitheater, which hosts the well-regarded Illinois Shakespeare Festival; and two gardens, the Moriyama Japanese Garden (1982) and the Genevieve Green Gardens (2007). The Ewing Manor was bequeathed to the Illinois State University Foundation upon the passing of Hazle Buck Ewing in 1969.
Website: http://ewingmanor.illinoisstate.edu

Franklin Square*
Located a few blocks north of Downtown Bloomington, Franklin Square contains exclusively pre-20th century homes that are built in a variety of architectural styles ranging from Victorian (Queen Anne and Georgian Revival) to Italianate and Romanesque. These ornate houses have been home to many of Bloomington's most prominent residents. Individual houses of note include the Burr House; the Lillard House; the McClure House; the Fifer-Bohrer house, home of Illinois Governor Joseph Fifer; and the Dodson-Stevenson House, home of Vice President of the United States Adlai E. Stevenson I. During the summer months, the park in the center of Franklin Square serves as a recreational area, featuring a number of parades, concerts and gatherings.
Website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franklin_Square_(Bloomington,_Illinois)

McLean County Museum of History*
The McLean County Museum of History is located in Bloomington's former courthouse, an impressive American Renaissance-style building in the heart of Downtown. The Museum's collection, which contains over 19,000 historical objects and 11,000 historical texts, is organized into five permanent exhibit galleries and two rotating galleries touching on local history. The building itself was finished in 1903 and features a limestone-clad facade and a dome modeled after that of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Beneath the dome is a three-story tall rotunda that is elaborately decorated with paintings, mosaics and sculpture. The Museum provides regular programming and tours, as well as original research, tied to its mission of education and preservation of the history of the local community.
Website: http://www.mchistory.org/index.php

Miller Park War Memorial
The great centerpiece of the Miller Park War Memorial is the McLean County Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument. Designed as a replacement for the deteriorating Civil War monument in Franklin Square, this monument was dedicated to the memory of local participants of each major American war prior to its completion in 1913. With eight bronze plaques and over 6,000 inscribed names, Bloomington and McLean County residents who lost their lives in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Black Hawk War, the Mexican War, the Civil War and the Spanish-American War are recognized. The monument also contains three bronze statuettes entitled 'Picket,' Anxiety,' and 'The Color Bearer.' These were sculpted by Frederick C. Hibbard of Chicago. The surrounding sidewalks contain the inscriptions of the names of those killed or missing action.
Website: http://www.pantagraph.com/news/imposing-miller-park-monument-dedicated-memorial-day/article_eff6979a-a464-5535-b665-7593e31ed3de.html



Prairie Aviation Museum
Located next to the Central Illinois Regional Airport, the Prairie Aviation Museum is currently home to almost a dozen military planes and helicopters of entirely different eras and manufacturers. There are a number of different exhibits and displays that are certain to pique the interest of any level of flight enthusiast. The Museum also hosts a number of educational events each year and provides social dinners and galas for its donating and volunteering membership.
Website: http://prairieaviationmuseum.org

Scott-Vrooman House*
More commonly referred to as the Vrooman Mansion, the Scott-Vrooman house is the historic home of Julia Scott Vrooman (1876-1981) and her husband, Carl, a prominent Bloomington couple whose circle of friends included political figures like President & Mrs. Wilson, Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt, Julia's cousin Adlai Stevenson II, William Jennings Bryan, and many European Heads of State. After Julia died in 1981, most of her estate was donated to charity, and the house itself became a popular bed and breakfast.
Website: http://vroomanmansion.com/history.html



Stevenson Home*
Also known as the Ives House, this house was the childhood home of Adlai Stevenson II, a two-time presidential candidate and ambassador to the United Nations, and his sister Elizabeth Stevenson Ives, who continued to live in the home as an adult. The home was designed by Arthur Pillsbury, a noted Bloomington architect.
Website: http://gis.hpa.state.il.us/pdfs/200776.pdf (National Register of Historic Places nomination form)

Trotter Fountain
Located in Downtown's Withers Park, the Trotter Fountain was willed to the city by James Trotter, an Irish immigrant whose family members became active, prominent citizens of Bloomington. Sculptor Lorado Taft, who later taught at the Art Institute of Chicago and is officially recognized by the American Academy of Arts and Letters, designed the Trotter Fountain. The fountain was dedicated officially on May 30th, 1911, and depicts Native American children at play. Mr. Taft explained that the placement of the fountain in the playground of the library park represents the children of the past, present, and future.
Website: http://trotterfountain.wix.com/trotter-fountain-bloomington#

EVENTS & FESTIVALS

Every year Bloomington-Normal hosts over 25 annual community events and festivals. Each festival provides a unique experience for residents and tourists, adding to Bloomington-Normal's rich artistic presence, cultural value, and historical background. One of Bloomington-Normal's claims to fame is the ever-popular Illinois Shakespeare Festival. In addition, Bloomington-Normal is home to the Gamma Phi Circus, the oldest collegiate circus in the United States. On the local scale, residents enjoy community-based events such as the Downtown Bloomington Association's monthly F1rst Fr1days (First Fridays) and the annual summer Farmers' Market.

American Passion Play
Travel back in time over 2,000 years and experience the story of Christ and His apostles through the American Passion Play. Come out to the BCPA and watch the historic biblical story unfold, right before of your eyes. Featuring live animals, colorful costumes and scenery, and pipe organ music, the Passion Play travels around the U.S. but comes home to Bloomington-Normal to honor this tradition for its 92nd season.
Time: Spring (March/April)
Location: BCPA
Website: http://www.americanpassionplay.org/

Bloomington Criterium
Come out and race along the streets of Bloomington in the Bloomington Criterium, hosted by the Bloomington-Normal Jaycees. Grab your bikes and helmets and ride on down for a fun time. After the race, head over to the Bruëgala Festival in downtown Bloomington.
Time: Summer (August)
Location: Downtown Bloomington
Website: http://blmcrit.com/

Bruëgala - A Festival of Beer
Come out and celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Bruëgala Beer Festival, hosted by the Bloomington Normal Jaycees. For patrons over the age of 21, this festival is full of great music, delicious food, and tasty beer. Spend time on the lawn or inside the BCPA and choose from over 200 craft beers and 50 wines to sample.
Time: Summer (August)
Location: BCPA

Website: http://www.bruegala.com/

Celebrate America – Holiday Spectacular Concert
A concert to celebrate America, filled with dancing, singing and a little history, this concert is held on the 4th of July and produced by the Holiday Spectacular organization. The show is packed with dozens of singers, tappers, and even some elected officials, who remind us why we celebrate this holiday. It's a grand night to come together as a community. A few songs have become Celebrate America perennials, such as the tightly choreographed, flags-waving-in-the-breeze You're a Grand Ole Flag and the stirring Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor. After the show, in the gathering dusk, many move their lawn chairs closer to the lake and stay for the fireworks.
Date: Summer (July)
Location: Miller Park Pavilion

Cultural Festival
The festival's primary purpose is to promote and foster appreciation for a variety of cultures through entertainment and educational activities. It's also a forum for other community organizations to promote and conduct positive activities for civic, patriotic, educational and social purposes. It is further intended to provide good, wholesome, fun activities and entertainment in a facility atmosphere. The free festival is a wonderful weekend with a little bit of something for everyone. One of the main treats for those with an appetite is access to several food vendors with offerings visitors can't resist. The food vendor lineup provides everything from the traditional festival fare of corndogs and elephant ears to deep fried ice cream.
Time: August
Website: http://www.pantagraph.com/special-section/summer-fun/cultural-festival-returns-to-bloomington-in-august/article_1360e2a6-87da-11e0-9b1e-001cc4c002e0.html

Corn Crib
The Corn Crib is a multi-purpose stadium in Normal, Illinois. It is primarily used for baseball and is the home of the Normal CornBelters of the Frontier League. The



ballpark has a capacity of 7,000 and is located on the campus of Heartland Community College, where it also hosts their baseball, softball, and soccer teams. The Corn Crib also presents an evening concert series during the summer.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Corn_Crib

David Davis Mansion Events
The David Davis Mansion hosts a multitude



of historical and cultural events open to the community year round. With opportunities to explore, learn, and be entertained through history, the community is enriched by the Mansion's presence, as it hosts celebrations including Lincoln's Birthday, the Glorious Garden Festival, the Champagne British Car Show, Antique Auto Exhibition, and Christmas at the Mansions Tour.
Website: http://daviddavismansion.org/programs/

Evergreen Cemetery Walk
Every October, Bloomington's past awakens at Evergreen Cemetery, just in time for Halloween. Through the collaboration of Evergreen Cemetery, McLean County Museum of History, and Illinois Voices Theatre, community members embark on a one mile-long tour through the cemetery, learning about the history of their home and individuals who greatly impacted McLean County. The cemetery is brought to life through costumed actors' portrayals, providing a new medium for history through the art of theatre.
Time: Fall (October)
Location: Evergreen Cemetery
Website: http://www.mchistory.org/learn/programs/cemwalk.php

Farmers Market
Every Saturday morning from 7:30 am to noon during the summer and autumn months, residents of Bloomington come to the local farmers market put on by the Downtown Bloomington Association. Located in the historic Downtown square, customers enjoy shopping for goods at this producer-only market, including fresh local produce, baked goods, fine arts, plants, and more. In addition to shopping, there are new musical performances each week, as well as frequent cooking demos and a Kid's Zone full of activities.
Time: Summer/Autumn (May - Oct.)
Location: Downtown Bloomington
Website: http://downtownbloomington.org/farmers-market/

Festival of Trees
The Festival of Trees is a family-centered holiday event for the community. Proceeds from the Festival go toward serving the children and families of The Baby Fold. Visitors enjoy a venue of custom-designed trees, a large selection of celebrity items, a gingerbread village, unique centerpieces, wreaths, and holiday table settings.
Time: Winter
Website: http://thebabyfold.net/

First Fridays (F1rst Fr1days)
On the first Friday of every month, the Downtown Bloomington Association hosts

events for community members to learn about and experience local arts and culture first hand. Local businesses open their doors for people to come shop, dine, and experience the best of Bloomington! From live music to free samples, there are plenty of things for people of all ages to enjoy. Previous First Friday events have included February's Tour de Chocolat, May's Area Art Showcase, November's Downtown Art Walk, and December's Once Upon a Holiday.
Time: Year Round
Location: Downtown Bloomington; Specific locations TBD
Website: http://downtownbloomington.org/

Franklin Park Summer Concerts
Conductor Michael Wallace and the Community Concert Band perform a wide variety of music including marches, overtures, show tunes, dance music, and traditional selections. Concerts are held on Thursdays from 7:00 – 8:00 pm in Franklin Park.
Time: Summer
Website:http://4.17.232.139/parks/Programs-Events/Cultural-Arts/cultural-music.htm

Gamma Phi Circus
The Gamma Phi Circus was founded at Illinois State in 1929, by Clifford "Pop" Horton. It is the oldest collegiate circus in the United States, with members going on to participate in well-known circus groups, including Cirque du Soleil, Circus Vargus and many others. Gamma Phi has distanced itself from the fraternity label to focus on being an arts performance organization. The group travels around the country to perform, in addition to hosting local performances. Gamma Phi circus is entertainment for all ages. The circus is always in town!
Website: http://gammaphicircus.illinoisstate.edu/

GLT Summer Concert
GLT Summer Concert is an annual outdoor concert in Downtown held on the second Saturday of June. The streets are closed around the McLean County Museum of History square, allowing for lawn chair seating on the street and lawn. Free and open to all, the GLT Summer Concert offers an eclectic lineup of the best blues, swing jazz, and bluegrass/folk performers of the day. Walk-around beer/wine garden and festival food available.
Time: Summer
Location: Downtown Bloomington
Website: http://wglt.org/events/summer_concert.shtml#sthash.9QZnHfnW.dpuf

Holiday Spectacular
Sponsored by the Pantagraph, the Holiday Spectacular is a Central Illinois tradition. Holiday Spectacular, Inc. enriches the lives of people in our community by encouraging them to audition and participate in our productions as actors and singers. The production is directed by both professional and amateur individuals whose goal and challenge is to provide a quality production. All planned productions are original works of art. They are written by local playwrights, and the music selection and choreography are designed specifically for each show.
Time: Winter (December)
Location: Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts
Website: http://holidayspectacular.org/

Illinois Shakespeare Festival
Recognized in media and scholarly journals in Chicago, New York, and England, the Illinois Shakespeare Festival provides entertainment for all ages. Performed on a stage located at the Ewing Cultural Center in Normal, the Festival puts on four productions both inspired and written by William Shakespeare. In addition to theatre performances, this summer-long event has scene tours, live music, and ice cream socials. Grab some lawn chairs and be enchanted at this summer long festival!
Time: Summer (July/August)
Location: Ewing Cultural Center
Website: http://thefestival.org/

Jaycee Christmas Parade
Come Christmas time the streets of Bloomington-Normal come alive with the annual Bloomington-Normal Jaycee's Christmas Parade. Each year a different theme is picked filling the streets of Christmas cheer.
Website: http://www.bnjaycees.org/events/christmas-parade/

Lincoln's Festival
Explore Bloomington to find all things Lincoln-related during Lincoln's Festival. Visit the McLean County History Museum and David Davis Mansion to participate in the Looking for Lincoln Tour; walk to Franklin Park to see historic reenactments, play period style games, or shop for antiques; or see a Civil War reenactment on Illinois Wesleyan's Ames Library Lawn. Carriage and wagon rides, tours, and much more are available for the whole family to enjoy!
Time: Summer (July)
Website: http://home.comcast.net/~leighton.cook/LincolnsFestival/

Looking for Lincoln Walk
The Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition is a wonderful opportunity for Illinois communities to celebrate their shared histories and connections to Abraham Lincoln. Ranging across the state, communities have developed interactive programs for participants to learn about the connections their communities had to President Lincoln in addition to their local histories. An adventure to the McLean County History Museum and David Davis Mansion provide members of McLean County with a fun day of history to learn about their community and its connection to President Lincoln.
Time: Year Round
Location: McLean County History Museum; David Davis Mansion
Website: http://www.lookingforlincoln.com/home

Martin Luther King Jr. National Holiday Gospel Festival
Illinois Wesleyan University hosts the Martin King Luther Gospel Festival year as a dedica-

tion to civil rights and King, who spoke twice on Illinois Wesleyan's campus. This festival celebrates King's legacy through gospel music and dance performances from organizations all over Illinois.
Time: Winter (January)
Location: Illinois Wesleyan University
Website: https://www.iwu.edu; https://www.iwu.edu/news/2015/events/gospel-festival.html

McLean County Fair
There is never a lack of things to do at the McLean County Fair. Come out for 4-H events in addition to delicious food, free entertainment and even a carnival!
Time: Summer (August)
Location: McLean County Fair Grounds
Website: http://www.mcleancountyfair.org/

Miller Park Outdoor Summer Concert Series
Great music combined with warm summer nights offer a perfect evening to be out under the stars with family and friends. The concerts are on various Sunday and Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm at the Miller Park Bandstand.
Time: Summer
Location: Miller Park Pavilion
Website: http://4.17.232.139/parks/Parks-Facilities/MP-bandstand.htm

Northern Exposure Blues Festival
The Northern Exposure Blues Festival is designed for blues and guitar lovers alike. With performances from Chicago blues musicians, guitar clinics and vendors along the streets, this festival is great for the musician at heart. Even bring your ailing guitar in for an assessment by owner of Guitar Remedies, and festival's creator Todd Seefeld.
Time: Summer (August)
Location: BCPA
Website: http://www.cityblm.org/index.aspx?page=360

Sounds of Christmas
The Sounds of Christmas is a long-standing tradition during the holiday season, hosted by State Farm in the atrium of their corporate headquarters. The community's most gifted musicians donate their time and talent to present this concert and, along with State Farm's generosity, make it possible to offer this concert for free.
Time: Winter (December)
Location: State Farm Hall
Website: http://wglt.org/events/sound-schristmas.shtml#sthash.27ZIRCEq.dpuf

Spring Bloom Arts Festival
The Spring Bloom Arts Festival is one to make a tradition. Sponsored by the McLean County Arts Center, this festival brings a variety of exhibits and artists to Bloomington-Normal for patrons to enjoy. With plenty of food, music, activities, and original artwork, there is no shortage of fun opportunities to celebrate Spring!
Time: Spring (April)
Location: McLean County Fairgrounds, Interstate Center
Website: http://www.mcac.wildapricot.org/SBAF

St. Patrick's Day Parade
Sponsored by the McLean County Irish Heritage Society, WJBC, Easter Seals, and Uptown Normal, this annual tradition is a great way to show your Irish spirit and "share some green" with Easter Seals, an organization that helps provide services to children with disabilities. Have your green ready for the ENORMOUS Irish flag at the head of the procession. Parade goers feed the flag by tossing their donations in to support the cause. The event is free to onlookers and parade participants as well.
Website: http://www.normal.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=902

Sugar Creek Arts Festival
Attracting over 100 artists from across the country, the Sugar Creek Arts Festival comes to life on the streets of Uptown Normal. The festival is a juried art show that displays all disciplines of art for community members to enjoy. Come out to enjoy art and other activities during this weekend-long art festival.
Time: Summer (July)
Location: Uptown Normal
Website: http://www.mcac.wildapricot.org/SCAF

Sweet Corn Blues Festival
There's no better way to send off summer than at the Sweet Corn Blues Festival! Eat endless amounts of sweet corn while jamming to some red hot blues music. Vendors line the streets with booths dedicated to arts and crafts and more delicious food. This festival is one the whole family can enjoy! So grab your bikes and ride to Uptown Normal and don't miss any of the fun. Sponsored by the Town of Normal, Uptown Partners, and public radio station WGLT.
Time: Summer (August)
Location: Uptown Normal
Website: http://wglt.org/events/sweetcorn.shtml

3rd Sunday Market
On the 3rd Sunday during the months of May to October, Midwestern collectors come out to the Market to shop for antiques, crafts, collectibles, and more. Booths are set up both inside and outside, with over 450 vendors representing 17 states. This market has been a Bloomington tradition for over 25 years. No matter if you're looking for collectable memorabilia; art; or furniture, clothes, and linen, stop by this market full of antique treasures.
Time: May-October
Location: Interstate Market
Website: http://www.thirdsundaymarket.com/

APPENDIX A: GIS METHODOLOGY

For parcel level housing and land use information

To conduct a detailed analysis at the neighborhood level, information on housing and land use is critical. Since this level of information is not readily available, MCRPC staff created it as part of the Bloomington comprehensive plan project. The majority of the land use and housing analysis presented in the existing conditions report was conducted using this data set. Here is a step by step detail on how it was created in GIS

1. Selected the parcels within the city limits of Bloomington. This generated 25,835 parcels.
2. Several attributes needed specifically for housing and land use analysis were created using the local databases listed in Table 1

A. Units: Number of units per parcel is necessary to compute the total number of units within the City limits. Where applicable data was joined by Parcel PIN, if no PIN was available, data was geocoded by address.

Senior and Homestead exemptions indicated that there was only one unit existed on a given parcel.

- Along with the fact that rental property existed on that parcel, the rental data provided the number of units for rental properties.
- The garbage data was used to further verify the units and populate the filed when information was missing.
- The new building permits helped primarily to populate the potential units on newer lots.
- Lastly, Census block level information is used to double check the total number of units per block. At this step, a discrepancy between Census information and local information was discovered. Staff then carefully applied a variety of checks, such as visual verification and phone calls, to understand these discrepancies. The majority of these discrepancies were resolved. However, according to Census 2010, Bloomington has 34,339 housing units. The local data generated 35,315 units in that same time frame. Some of this discrepancy can be attributed to the errors in various local databases. However, there was information in certain Census Blocks, that based on local knowledge is inaccurate. This discrepancy will be further investigated during this comprehensive planning process.

B. Type: The type of dwelling (single family, duplex, multi family, mobile home or group living) was also determined using the data bases listed in Table 1.

4. Ownership: This field has values "owner" or "renter".

- Data from City of Bloomington Township Assessor (Bloomington Parcel Assessments) and the data sets from City of Bloomington PACE department (Rental Properties from Landlord Rental Permits and New Building Permits (2007-2013) was used to populate this field, while others were used to verify.

C. Land Use: The process to determine land use begun by using the City of Bloomington Township Assessor (Bloomington Parcel Assessments) use code. This provided data mostly to determine residential, vacant residential or commercial, and commercial properties. Properties with no use code required further visual verifications.

D. Zoning: The zoning was determined by using City of Bloomington's Zoning Shapefile.

TABLE 1
DATABASES USED IN THE PROCESS

- City of Bloomington Township Assessor (Bloomington Parcel Assessments),
- McLean County Supervisor of Assessments (Homestead and Senior Exemptions),
- City of Bloomington PACE department,
  - Rental Properties from Landlord Rental Permits and New Building Permits (2007-2013),
- City of Bloomington Public Works (Address data from Garbage Removal),
- US Census Bureau housing units by Census Block Group.

APPENDIX B:
PARK SERVICES & FACILITIES

Source: City of Bloomington Parks Summer 2014 Program Guide

Park Services & Facilities

* Restroom or Porta Potty available
** Porta Potty available June & July

L = Lighted

		Basketball Court	Fishing Lake	Football Field	18-Hole Golf Course	Meeting Room	Multi-purpose Area	Nature Area	Picnic Shelter	Playground Equip	Sand Volleyball Ct	Soccer Field	Softball Diamond	Swimming Pool	Tennis Court(s)	Water Spraygground	
1.	Airport Park	3010 Winchester Dr	●				●		●	●		●	●					
2.	Alton Depot Park	101 S Western Ave							●	●								
3.	Angler's Lake	1017 S Mercer St		●				●										
4.	Atwood Wayside *	303 N Robinson St							●									Trail Head
5.	BHS Tennis Courts	606 Towanda Ave													8L			
6.	Bittner Park	3807 Rave Rd	●						●	●			●					
7.	Brookridge Park	2904 Ireland Grove Rd	●				●		●	●		●						
8.	Buck-Mann Park	116 Weldon St	●							●								
9.	Clearwater Park *	2716 Clearwater Ave	●						●	●	2	●						
10.	Constitution Trail																	24-Mile Linear Park
11.	Eagle Crest Park	2506 Chesapeake Ln	●						●	●								
12.	Emerson Park	717 Bell St								●								
13.	Evergreen Park	1205 Forrest St								●								
14.	Ewing Park I *	1420 Towanda Ave						●	●	●								Hedge Apple Woods
15.	Ewing Park II *	1001 Ethell Pkwy							●	●			2					
16.	Ewing Park III	901 Jersey Ave			●							●						
17.	Fell Avenue Park	1301 Fell Ave	●						●	●								
18.	Forrest Park *	1813 Springfield Rd							4	●								4 Fire Rings
19.	Franklin Park **	302 E Chestnut St								●								National Historic Site
20.	Friendship Park	719 W Jefferson St							●	●								
21.	Highland Park *	1613 S Main St				●	●											Golf Shop
22.	Holiday Park	800 S McGregor St.		●					2	●				●				
23.	P.J. Irvin Park *	1601 McKay Dr						●	●	●								
24.	Marie Litta Park	317 S Gridley St							●	●								
25.	McGraw Park *	3202 Cornelius Dr							●	●		●	●		6L	●		Lighted Baseball Field
26.	Miller Park *	1020 S Morris Ave		●					●	●			●		3	●		Pickelball courts
27.	Northpoint School Park *	2602 E College Ave	●		●				2	●		●	●					Butterfly Garden
28.	Oakland School/Park	1605 E Oakland Ave	●							●			2					
29.	O'Neil Park *	1515 W Chestnut St	●				●		●	●			2	●	3L			Skate park, baseball field
30.	Pepper Ridge Park *	2502 Fox Creek Rd	●						●	●		●	2L					
31.	Prairie Vista Golf *	502 W Hamilton Rd				●	●											Golf Shop, Driving Range
32.	Rollingbrook Park *	1002 S Hershey Rd	●					●		●	●		●	●		3		Inline Hockey Rink
33.	R.T. Dunn Fields **	109 E Lafayette St			●								●					
34.	Sale Barn Soccer Fields *	401 W Hamilton Rd											2					
35.	Stevenson School Park *	2106 Arrowhead Dr	●					●	●	●				●	3L			
36.	Suburban East Park **	3011 Lisa Ave	●						●	●		●	●					
37.	Sunnyside Park	407 E Erickson Ave	●							●			●					
38.	The Den at Fox Creek *	3002 Fox Creek Rd				●	●											Golf Shop, Driving Range
39.	Tipton Park North *	2201 Stone Mountain Blvd	●					●	●	●		●	2			●		Born Learning Trail
40.	Tipton Park South	2410 G.E. Rd		●				●	●	●								Life Trail System
41.	White Oak Park *	1514 N Cottage Ave		●	●		●	●		●	●		●	●				1-mile Walking Trail
42.	Withers Park	204 E Washington Ave																Picnicking
43.	Lincoln Leisure Center *	1206 S Lee St																
44.	Miller Park Pavilion *	1020 S Morris Ave																
45.	Miller Park Zoo *	1020 S Morris Ave																
46.	Park Maint. Facility	1813 Springfield Rd																
47.	Parks & Rec Office *	115 E Washington St																
48.	Pepsi Ice Center *	201 S. Roosevelt St																
49.	White Oak Comm. Room	1514 N Cottage Ave																
50.	Sugar Creek Park																	*Future Park*
51.	Gaelic Park	3102 Cave Creek Rd	●	●				●	●	●		●	●					Bocce/Baggo

DATA SOURCES

- 2014 Community Assessment (CAN Report), United Way, 2014
- A Community in Bloom, Illinois Wesleyan University Action Research Center, 2010
- An Assessment of Deplomentand Staffing - Bloomington Fire Department Report prepared by Illinois Fire Chief's Association
- Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council (B-N EDC)
- Broadband Illinois - www.broadbandillinois.org
- Building Conditions Report, City of Bloomington, 2008
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- Bloomington-Normal Baseline GHG Inventory report, June 2014 prepared by Ecology Action Center
- Census Population and Distribution Change: 2000 to 2010 briefs, U.S. Census, 2010
- Center for Public Safety Excellence - ???
- City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, McLean County Regional Planning Commission, 2005
- City of Bloomington Consolidated Plan, 2010-2015
- City of Bloomington Parks
  - Master Plan, 3DD Design Studio, 2005
  - Parks Master Plan Update, City of Bloomington, 2009
- City of Bloomington Storm Water and Sanitary Sewer Master Plans 2014 (Draft)
- City of Bloomington Strategic Plan, City of Bloomington, 2010
- City of Bloomington Water
  - Interim Water Supply Plan, Wittman Hydro Planning Associates, 2010
- City of Bloomington Zoning Ordinance
- City of Bloomington Subdivision Regulation
- Community Health Assessment: Advocate BroMenn Medical Center, 2013
- Community Health Assessment: OSF St. Joseph Medical Center, 2013
- Comprehensive Annual Finance Report (CAFR), City of Bloomington, 2012-2013
- Downtown Bloomington Strategy, Plan Draft, Farr Associates, November 2013
- East Side Highway Environmental Assessment, Clark Deitz, 2009
- East Side Highway Phase 1 Engineering: Project Status, Clark Dietz, 2009
- Historic Preservation Plan, City of Bloomington, 2004
- Illinois State Rail Plan
- Illinois State Transportation Plan
- LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2011)
- Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division
- Long-Range Transportation Plan for the Bloomington-Normal Urbanized Area 2040, MCRPC, 2012
- Main Street Transportation Improvement Feasibility Study, Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc., 2010
- Main Street: A Call for Investment, Farr Associates, 2007
- Map of Illinois, 1820, John Melish; digital image © 2000 by Cartography Associates
- McLean County Community Health Plan, McLean County Health Department
- McLean County EMS Implementation Plan
- McLean County EMS Strategic Plan
- McLean County Treasurer's Office - Tax Information
- McLean County Regional GIS Consortium (McGIS)
- McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC)
- McLean County Wellness Coalition
- National Housing Market Summary for the 4th Quarter of 2013, Department of Housing and Urban Development
- National Pipeline Mapping System
- Navigating a New Direction: Strategic Plan, Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council, 2006-2011
- The Pantagraph:
  - "Grant to revitalize housing in west side neighborhood" The Pantagraph, 31 July 2013
  - "State Farm likely to move some claims jobs out of B-N" The Pantagraph, 31 October 2013
  - "City amends liquor code, creates entertainment, stadium licenses" The Pantagraph, 16 December 2013
  - "RR Donnelley wants to open Twin City tech hub" The Pantagraph, 25 February 2014
  - "City, new mayor focus on downtown" The Pantagraph, 16 March 2014
  - "Budget back on council agenda" The Pantagraph, 28 April 2014
- Strategic Plan, Bloomington Police Department, 2012-2015
- Sustainable Transportation to the Mid-21stCentury: Long—Range Transportation Plan2040, McLean County Regional Planning Commission, 2012
- Transportation Research Board (TRB), special report 281 "Transmission Pipelines and Land Use," 2004
- U.S. Census Bureau
  - 1970-2010, Table: P-12, P-12A, P-12B, P-12D, P-12H, SF3, SF4, & ACS
  - 2000 & 2010 Geographies
  - American Community Survey (ACS)
  - OnTheMap Application
  - Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin: 2010
  - Table DP-04, Table DP-1 - Year???
  - "Who can afford to live in a home," 2007
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- United States Postal Service (USPS)
- West Bloomington Strategic Plan, Teska Associates, 2010
- WJBC: "Study: TIF could benefit West Bloomington" WJBC, wjbc.com, 14 May 2014

McLEAN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION & STAFF

Commissioners

George Benjamin, Chairman
County of McLean

Mary Jefferson, Vice Chairman
Town of Normal

Michael Buragas
City of Bloomington

Mary Kramp
City of Bloomington

Linda Olson
County of McLean

Mark Pritchett
Unit School District #5

Jennifer Sedbrook
Charter School District #87

David Selzer
County of McLean

Carl Teichman
Town of Normal

Tyler Wrezinski
Water Reclamation District

VACANCY
Airport Authority

Staff

Vasudha Pinnamaraju, AICP
Executive Director

Rick Nolan
Community Planner

Jennifer Sicks
Land Use/Transportation Planner

Melissa Dougherty-O'Hara
Community Planner

Scott Fowler
Public Outreach Coordinator

Khalid Hasan
G.I.S. Director

William Jackson
G.I.S. Coordinator

Teresa Casselman
Office Manager

MCRPC

McLean County Regional Planning Commission
115 E. Washington Street, Suite M103
Bloomington, IL 61701
(309) 828-4331
MCRPC@mcplan.org

http://www.mcplan.org

McLean County Regional Planning Commission

@McLeanCountyRPC