



# Comprehensive Plan

**Adopted April 17, 2023 by Ordinance No. 2845**





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# Acknowledgments

The City of Wood River would like to thank the participants of this planning process. It is often said that the process of creating the plan is as important as the plan itself. This is certainly the case in Wood River, where residents, staff, elected, and appointed officials came together to have important conversations about the community's future. The following individuals are specifically acknowledged for their important role in the planning process.

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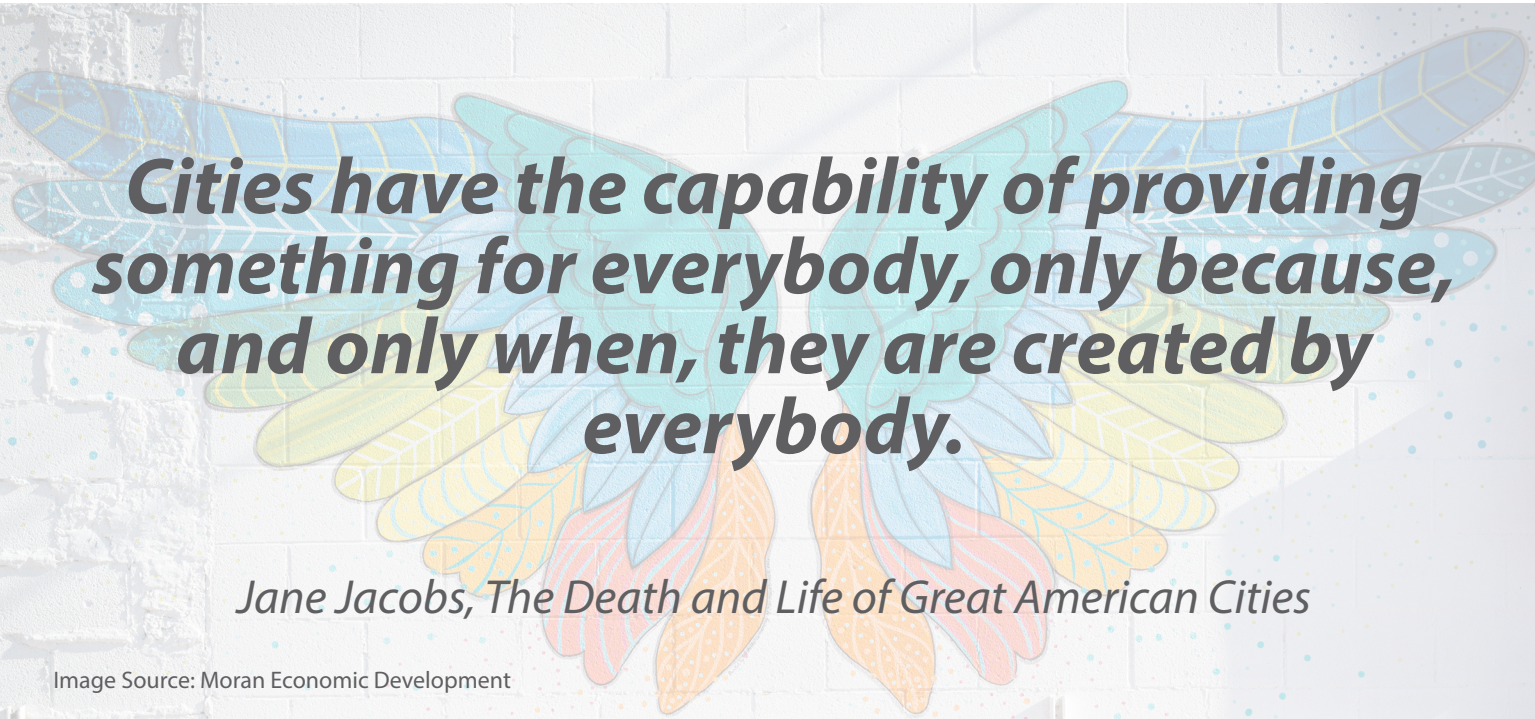
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A special thank you to **Heartlands Conservancy**, for their work on the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan, a counterpart to this Comprehensive Plan and referenced here, throughout.



***Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.***

*Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities*



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# 1 introduction



The City of Wood River is experiencing a renaissance of sorts. With reinvestment downtown and eastward expansion, the City has recognized this as an ideal time to establish a collective vision for its future. This comprehensive plan document provides a clear road map for the City for the next 15-20 years.

A comprehensive plan is a policy document that describes a desired vision for the future. It serves as a decision-making guide upon which existing and future policies will be evaluated. It

establishes a solid foundation for updates to regulatory documents such as the zoning code and the subdivision code for City staff and the City Council.

The plan is a flexible, working document, in which a wide range of community goals are established and recommendations are made on issues concerning physical, environmental, social and economic development of the community. These goals are based on a thorough analysis of existing conditions, as well as the recommendations of

the planning commission and community members.

The City of Wood River Comprehensive Plan is a collective effort to build consensus on the future direction of the City. It is meant to serve as a guide, against which policies and development proposals can be checked to ensure they are consistent with the long term vision. The plan also provides a foundation for updates to the City's zoning and subdivision ordinances.



Moreover, the adoption of a comprehensive plan is an indication that the community cares about the quality of life that it offers its residents and is ready to strategically invest in itself to achieve its vision for the future. This plan is based on an evaluation of existing conditions within the community and public opinion surveys. It is comprehensive in nature, in terms of both topics and geography.

Zoning is the regulatory tool the City uses to control land use. The State of Illinois authorizes local governments to adopt zoning laws under Section 65 ILCS 5/11-12-5 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes. A comprehensive plan provides the basis for zoning regulations and positions a city to make informed land use decisions. Such decisions, if aligned with the comprehensive

plan, are less likely to face negative outcomes if faced with legal challenges.

In addition to providing a basis for regulations that determine the physical form and character of a community, the comprehensive plan is also a guide for decisions about strategic capital expenditures. Such expenditures, which may include investment in utilities or prioritization of street improvements, can be a catalyst to private investment and the long-term well-being of the community.

Public input is critical to the planning process, which is often as important as the plan itself, provides opportunities for the public to participate in the process of creating their community. This public participation, in turn, often

translates to improved implementation outcomes.

This community profile component of the Comprehensive Plan (Section 2) begins with an examination of population and demographic trends. These projections are critical to understanding trends to date and inform the Plan's elements: Housing and Neighborhoods (Section 3), Infrastructure and Mobility (Section 4), Local Economy and Jobs (Section 5), Community Assets and Quality of Life (Section 6), and Land Use (Section 7). An evaluation of each Plan Element is followed by goals and objectives, which provide a path to implementation.

## Framework

The Comprehensive Plan is a living document that is meant to be reviewed annually and updated as needed. Major updates to comprehensive plans, including full re-writes, are done every 10-20 years. However, the implementation strategies should be reviewed annually and used to prioritize work plans and funding strategies.

Each of the six plan elements includes several priorities and action steps. These action steps are further prioritized in Chapter 8 (Implementation), where partner organizations are identified, funding strategies are recommended, and metrics are suggested, which provide a way to track and evaluate plan progress on an annual basis.



# Public Engagement

242 survey responses



6 Meetings

During the comprehensive planning process, the City of Wood River also began its first bicycle- pedestrian plan, an effort led by Heartlands Conservnacy. The ideas and opinions of the public were shared between the

two planning processes and have informed the recommendations of both plans. Priorities and action steps incorporated into the comprehensive plan are aligned with the bicycle-pedestrian plan and recommendations made in

the comprehensive plan will not hinder the vision established in the bicycle-pedestrian plan.





# A Collective Vision of...

...a **prosperous community** that offers a variety of employment opportunities and local services for residents.

...a **resilient community** that works together to **collectively overcome challenges** while supporting residents and businesses.

...a **progressive community** that creates **strategic partnerships** to achieve goals collectively.

...an **active community** with **abundant recreation** opportunities and safe opportunities for walking and bicycling for both recreation and commuting.

...a **safe community** that takes pride in its **strong neighborhoods**.

...a community with **strong schools** that develop the community leaders of tomorrow.

...an **engaged community** where volunteerism is strong and residents play an active role in creating their future community.

...**balancing growth and development** while **preserving local charm** and neighborhood character.





# 2 community profile

The City of Wood River is located in southwest Madison County, Illinois, just 20 miles from the City of St. Louis, Missouri. As part of the St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area, and the largest Illinois population center south of Metro Chicago, the City is

situated on the Mississippi River, just north of its confluence with the Missouri River. State Highway 255 and Illinois Routes 3, 111, and 143 intersect the City and provide excellent accessibility. The City of Wood River is also located less than 5 miles from St. Louis

Regional Airport and has frontage on the Mississippi River.

Founded in 1907, Wood River, then called Riviere du Bois, was the site of Louis Merriweather and William Clark's winter camp during the winter of 1803-1804.





Wood River was incorporated as a Village in 1911 and as a City in 1923. Between 1911 and 1930, the population grew from just 84 residents (1910 Census) to 8,136 residents, an astonishing 9500% increase in population in just 20 years. The significant growth in population was a result of construction of the Standard Oil Refinery, beginning in 1907, focusing on production of kerosene, heating oil, paraffin, and asphalt. Later, with the growth of automobile dependency, the Company focused its production on motor fuels.

At the time, Alton was the closest community, so Standard Oil provided transportation for its employees; however, in just two short years, the community of Wood River had developed around the refinery. Standard Oil helped fund the community's first school, built Wood River's first baseball diamond, and, in 1926, built the first community pool and

roundhouse, which it deeded to the City after construction was completed.

In 1957, the refinery celebrated 50 years of operation with a 50th Anniversary celebration, during which they hosted many community events and open houses over the course of several months.

Throughout the following decades, the company supported the community by hosting recreation leagues such as bowling and golf, sponsored local Boy Scout Troops and the United Way.

Operations ceased in 1981 and years later, in the 1990s, Standard/Amoco merged with British Petroleum (BP) and the company has since worked to clean up the former industrial plant. In 2001, the 800-acre site became a Wildlife Habitat Council Certified Deer Park, which many local

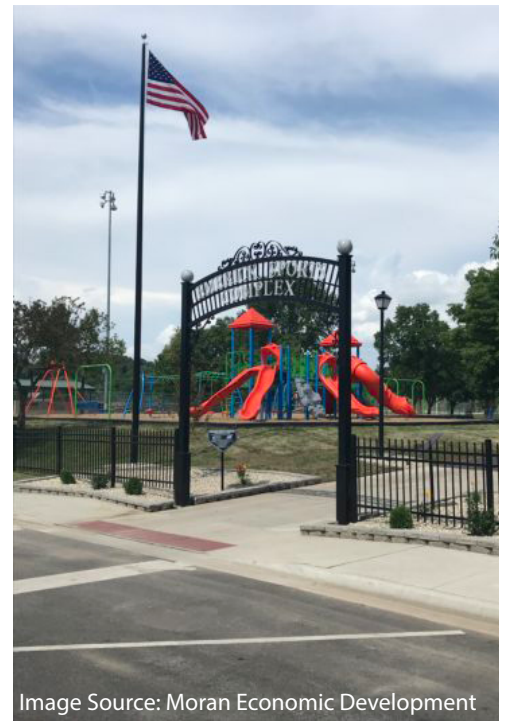


Image Source: Moran Economic Development  
school and organizations visit for educational activities.

The community recreation traditions that began with Standard Oil hold strong today. Wood River boasts several community and regional amenities, including open spaces and parks, which draw many visitors each year. Wood River's

many recreation opportunities draw population, as well. The community is thoughtfully planning for bicycle pedestrian connections not only within the municipal boundary, but also within the greater Metro East trail network. As more residents look to call Wood River home, the City is proving that it prioritizes the quality of life of its residents.



Image Source: The Online Encyclopedia and Digital Archive for Madison County, IL

2.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

Wood River's demographic trends are reflective of the greater Metro East Region.

Since 2000, the City of Wood River has seen a slow decrease in population (Figure 2.1). In 2010, the official population was 10,657, 671 fewer people than 2000. This nearly 6% decrease in population has slowed, however, and recent growth indicates that Wood River's population will increase. The 2020 population is only 1.8% less than the 2010 population. While some projections for 2027 predict a slight decrease in population, the City has seen new residential developments in the last several years, indicating that the population will increase.

Wood River's demographic trends are reflective of the region. Many other border counties, have seen decreases in population that are similar to that of Madison County.

Figure 2.1  
Wood River Population

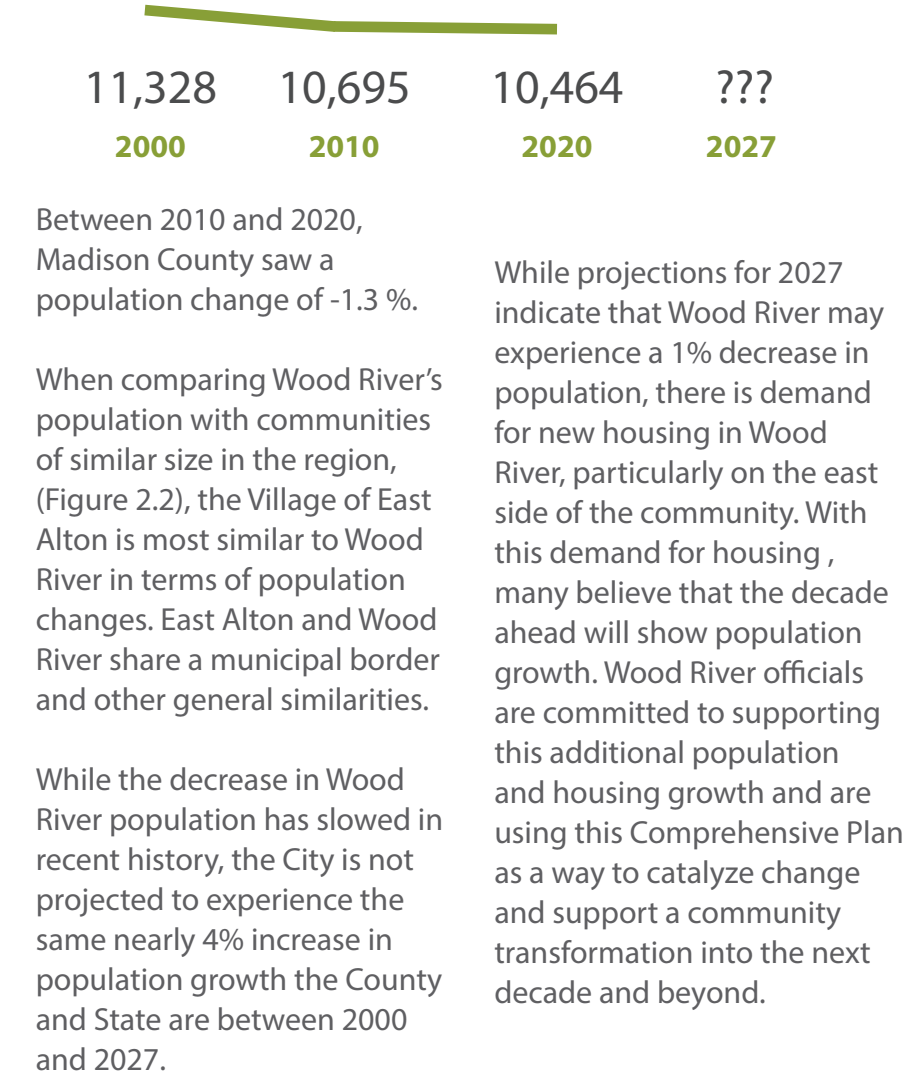


Figure 2.2  
Regional Population



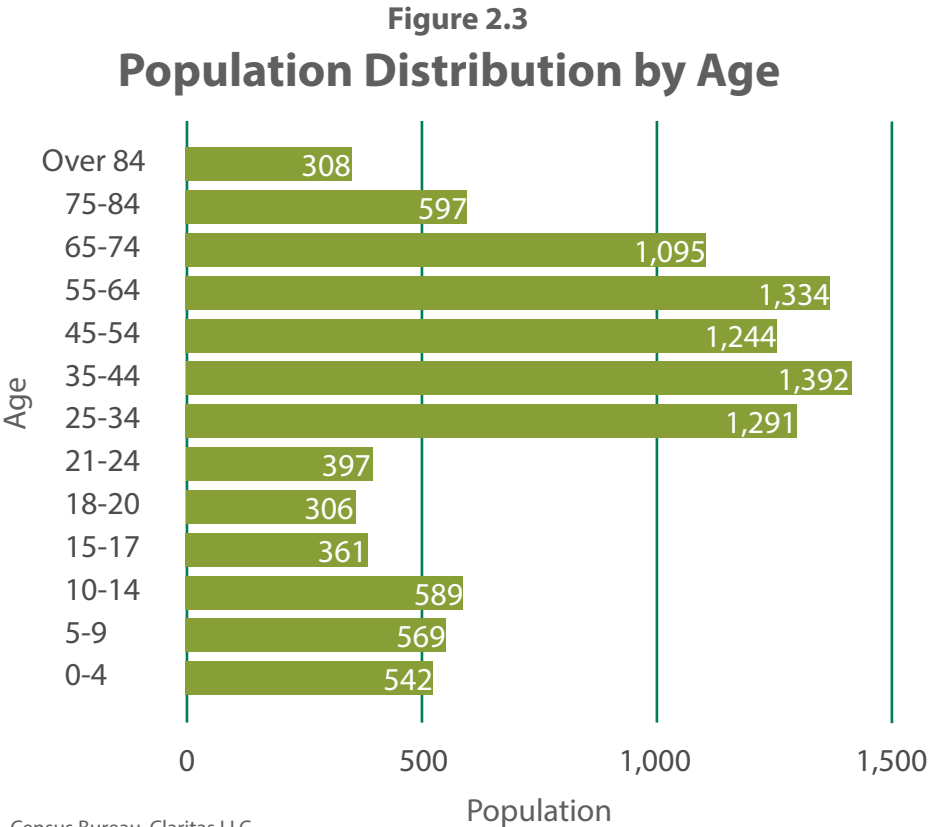
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas LLC



The age distribution of Wood River’s residents (Figure 2.3) indicates that 63% (6,356) of the City’s population falls within the age range of 25-74 years. The largest population segment, with 1,392 people (or 13% of the population) is those aged 35-44 years. Population distribution is similar in the comparison communities.

Population distribution by age provides a picture of the community as a whole and provides an indication of needs as the age cohorts increase in age. There are significantly fewer residents aged 15-24 than residents 25-64, which indicates that there are few late high school and college age people living in Wood River. Not

taking into account in- and out-migration, Wood River will see the need for housing for aging individuals increase in the next 20 years. Beyond that, however, the smaller population of adults and children indicate a decreased need for housing overall in the community.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas LLC

As seen in Table 2.1, Wood River’s population primarily identifies as white, while only 1.91% identify as Black or African American and even fewer identify as some other race. There are slightly more female residents (51.52%) than there are male residents (48.48%).

Table 2.1 - Population by Race		
Race	Total	%
White	9,545	95.21
Black / African American	191	1.91
American Indian / Alaskan Native	34	0.34
Asian	66	0.66
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	1	0.01
Two or more races	47	1.41
Some other race	141	0.47
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas, LLC		

# WALK SCORE

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Walk Score measures the walkability of an address on a scale of 1-100. It is determined primarily by access to amenities by foot. A score 50-69 indicates that some errands can be accomplished on foot, while higher scores indicate that most daily activities do not require a car and lower scores indicate that all daily activities require a car. Walk Scores are not based on the availability of sidewalks alone, but on connectivity, accessibility, and safe crossings when going about daily activities on foot. Many suburbs score between 40 and 70, indicating an expected level of car dependency.



Image Source: © Adobe Stock

# AARP Livability Index

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) ranks communities based on the services and amenities that impact a person's life. On a scale of 1 to 100, the higher the score, the more 'livable' the community. There are seven key factors that contribute to the livability index: housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity. These factors together include 40 metrics and an additional 21 policy issues. Key metrics include items like housing cost burden, drinking water quality, access to libraries, and high school graduate rates. Key policies include complete streets policies, local inclusive design laws, and availability of housing trust funds.

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# SNAPSHOT 2020

**10,464**

Total Population in 2020

**95%**

Caucasian

**\$58,065**

Median Household Income

**42**

Median Age



# neighborhoods & housing

# 3

## 3.1 HOUSEHOLDS

Affordable, quality housing is the foundation of a healthy, strong, and secure community. Quality housing is associated with better educational and health outcomes for children and better mental and physical health for adults.<sup>1</sup> Secure housing leads to secure families and upward mobility of households and the community as a whole.

Corresponding to a projected decrease in total population, the number of households in the City is projected to decrease by 2027 (figure 2.1 and Table 3.1). There were 4,744 households reported in the 2000 census and it is projected that the City will have 4,231 by 2027, a decrease of 513 households.

a **HOUSEHOLD** is all the people that occupy one housing unit. A household can be one person or several.

Although the population decrease seen between 2000 and 2020 is projected to continue, local data indicates that a population upswing may be in the future. Building permit activity is steady and the City has seen more than 30 homes built in the Grand View Hills Subdivision, located on the City's eastern edge, near the intersection of Illinois Route 143 and South Moreland Road. These additional homes were constructed in just the last three years. Using the average household size of 2.85<sup>2</sup>, it can be estimated that this neighborhood alone has added 85 people. With an additional 50 lots platted, an estimated 227 people could live in this subdivision.

Figure 3.1, Household Growth, indicates that while the State of Illinois and Madison County have seen a decrease in household growth between 2000 and 2020 (both a nearly 6%, down to just 1%), the City of Wood River has actually seen households grow

during this time, improving from a -6.07% growth rate to a projected -0.40% in 2027.

The County and State continue to show a slow increase during this timeframe at just above 1%. This data tracks with the data presented in Table 3.1, which demonstrates a loss of population of only 1.8% between 2010 and 2020, compared to a loss of 6% between 2000 and 2010.

**Table 3.1 Households**

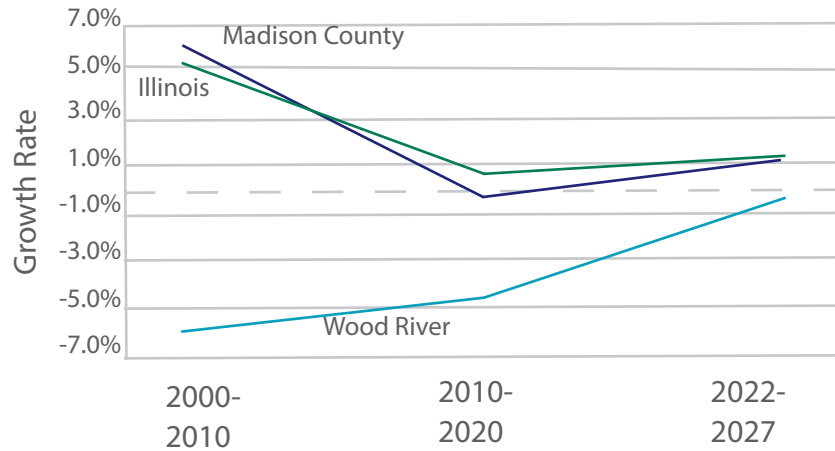
Year	Households
2000 Census	4,744
2010 Census	4,456
2022 Estimate	4,248
2027 Projection	4,231

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas LLC

<sup>1</sup> The Central Importance of Housing. [www.housingmatters.com](http://www.housingmatters.com). November 2, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates. [www.data.census.gov](http://www.data.census.gov).

**Figure 3.1 Household Growth**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas LLC

### 3.2 FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS

Family household trends in the City of Wood River are similar to total population and total household counts and show a slow decrease in number (Table 3.2). The 2000 Census indicates the number of family households is 3,052, and is projected to decrease by a projected 431 by 2027.

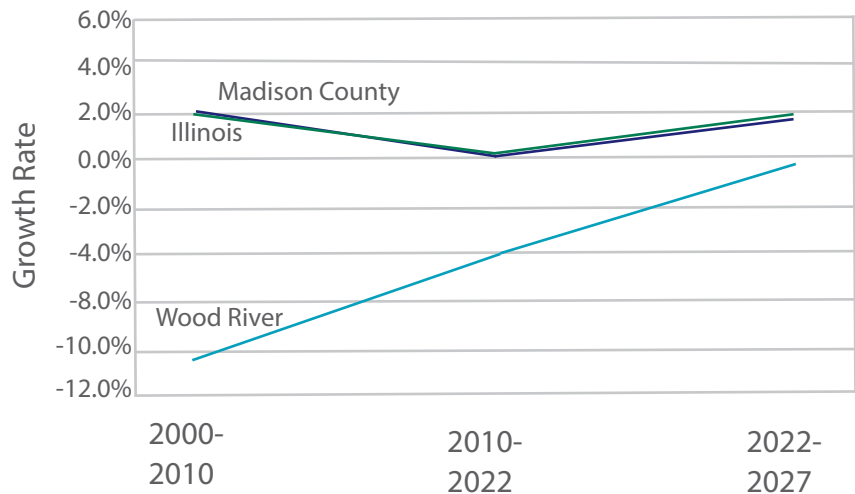
**Table 3.2 - Family Households**

Year	Family Households
2000 Census	3,052
2010 Census	2,740
2022 Estimate	2,631
2027 Projection	2,621

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas LLC

Just as with household growth, family household growth for the City of Wood River has seen a greater decrease (14.2%) in the number of family households than the increase the County (2.58%) and State (2.87%) each are experiencing from 2000 to estimated 2022 (Figure 3.2). While improving, projections from 2022 to 2027 predict the City to continue at a decrease (0.38%), while the County and State will experience slight increases of just above 1%.

**Figure 3.2 Family Household Growth**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas LLC

### 3.3 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

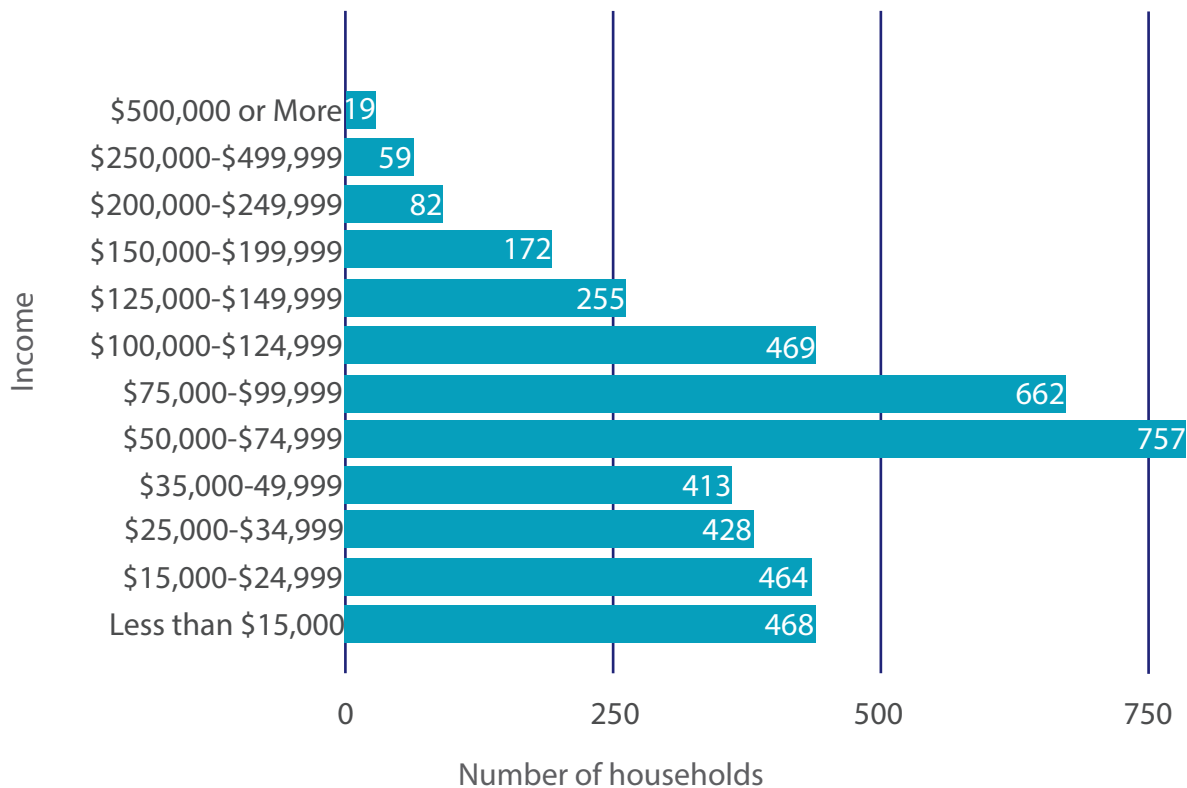
More than 75% of households in the City of Wood River have an annual income under \$100,000 per year (Figure

3.3) with the largest group of households (17.82%) between \$50,000 and \$74,999 in annual income. The next largest group of households (15.58%) earns \$75,000-\$99,999, while the third largest group (11.04%) earns \$100,000-\$124,999. A comparison of surrounding

communities (Figure 3.4) shows that the City has at least 8% more residents that fall in the category of an annual household income of \$24,999 or less than that of Highland and Jerseyville. East Alton runs slightly higher (3%) than Wood River in this category. The City has slightly more households that have an annual income of between \$50,000 - \$74,999, than comparison cities. Wood River's average

household income (\$74,374) is about 20% lower than that of both Highland (\$95,067) and Jerseyville (\$91,372), while the City of East Alton's annual household income (\$64,780) is about 15% less than that of Wood River.

Figure 3.3 Household Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas LLC



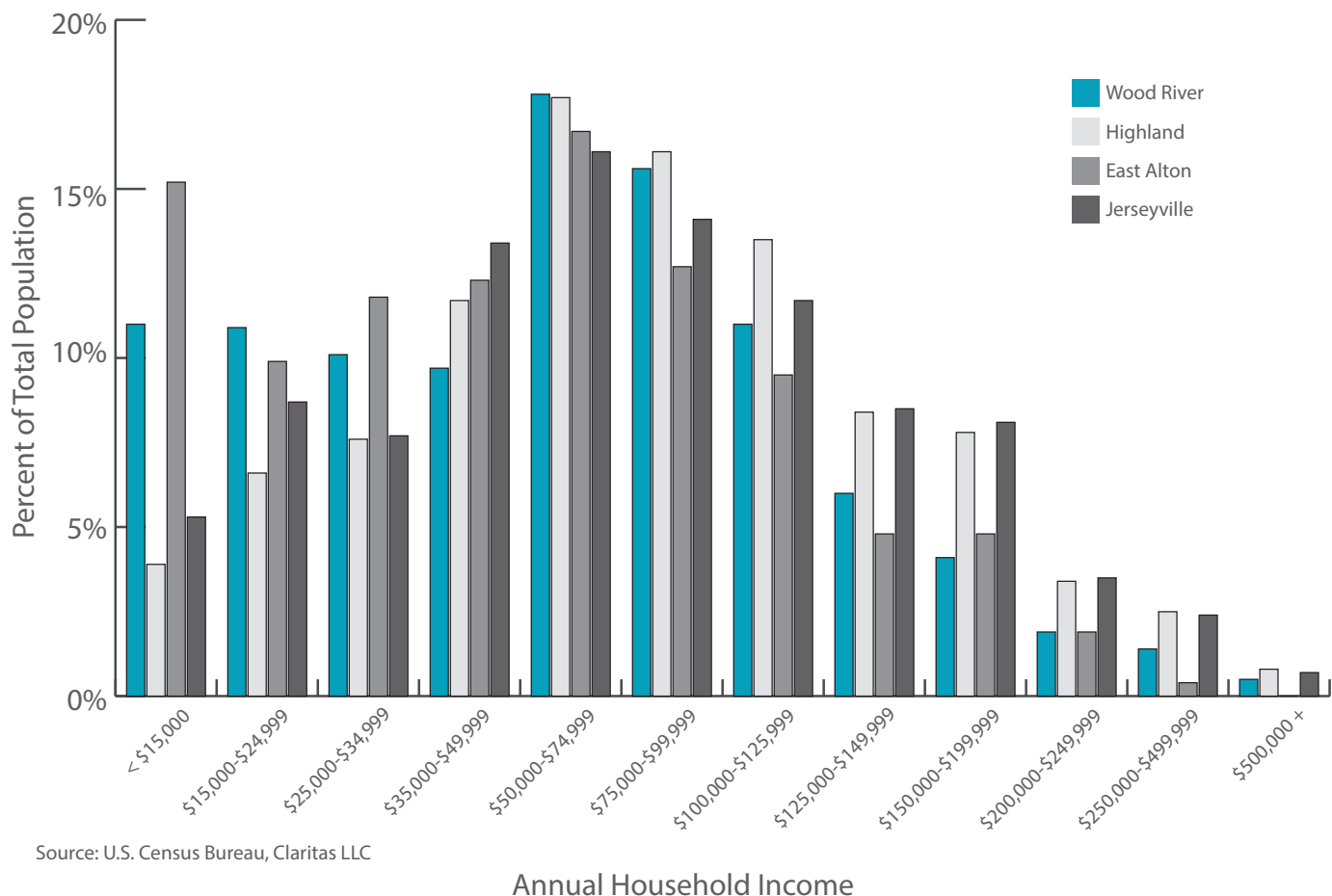
### 3.4 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

More than 75% of households in the City of Wood River have an annual income under \$100,000 per year (Figure 3.4) with the largest group of

households (17.82%) between \$50,000 and \$74,999 in annual income. The next largest group of households (15.58%) earns \$75,000-\$99,999, while the

third largest group (11.04%) earns \$100,000-\$124,999.

**Figure 3.4 Regional Household Income**



In comparison with the County and State, Wood River's average household income (\$74,374) is approximately 23% lower than the County (\$97,036) and about 31% lower than the State (\$107,200) (Figure 3.5).

While only 16% of both the State and County fall below an annual household income of \$24,999, 22% of the City has households within this annual income. On the other side of the income scale, residents

with income above \$200,000 for the State falls at about 12%, while the County (8.8%) and the City (3.7%) experience lower percentages in this higher income category.

3.5 HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Household sizes in the City are primarily small. Most households have two or less persons (Figure 3.5) living in a household (65%). The next most common group is the three-person per household category (16%).

3.6 HOUSING VALUES

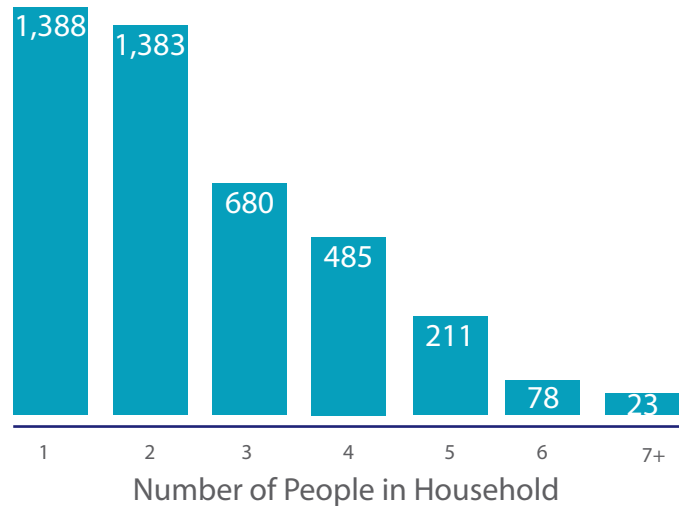
Home values within the City of Wood River (Figure 3.6) show the highest percentage of homes (28%) are valued between \$100,000-\$149,999, with 24% valued between \$80,000-\$99,000. More than half of the homes in Wood River are valued between \$80,000-\$149,000. With 75% of household incomes less than

\$100,000 and an estimated median income of \$61,598, housing in the City of Wood River is relatively affordable for its residents. Based on the common

standard of housing costs (including taxes, insurance, and maintenance) being no more than 30% of the gross monthly income, it is estimated that a household with the median household income of \$61,598 could afford a house that costs approximately \$207,000. A home with this sales price would result in an approximate monthly payment of

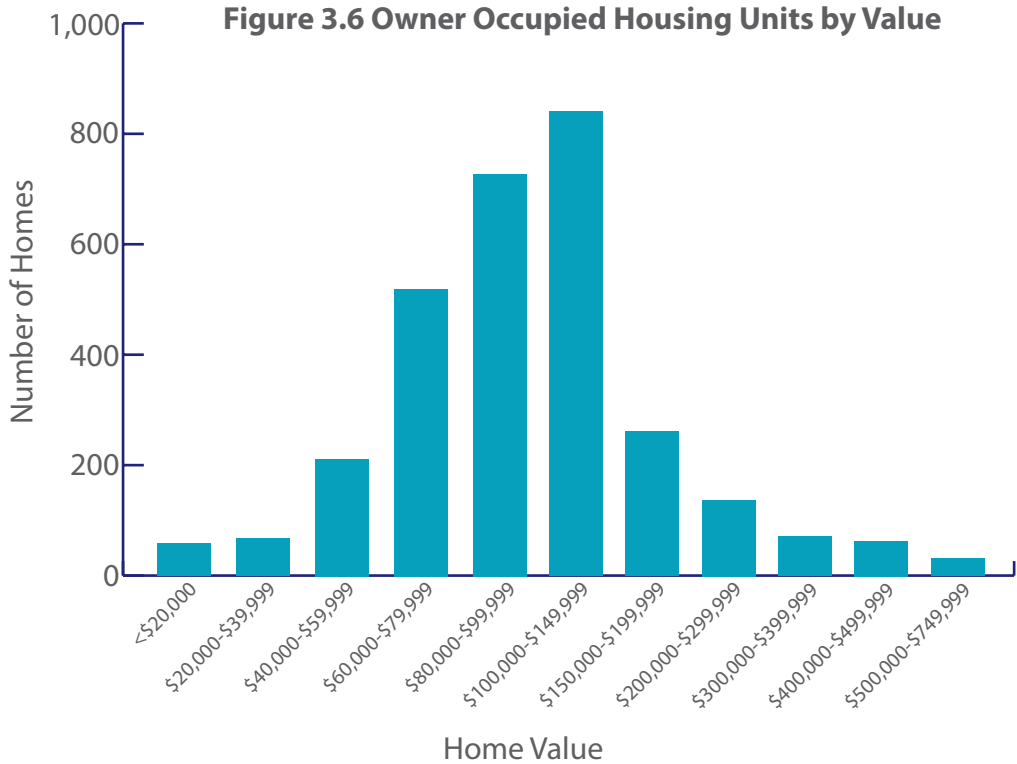
\$1,300, inclusive of taxes and insurance, which is less than 30% of the gross monthly income for a household earning the median income. The City of Wood River spans four school districts, so there will be variation in the tax rate (and resulting tax liability) for homes located in different school districts in the community.

Figure 3.5 Household Size



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas, LLC

Figure 3.6 Owner Occupied Housing Units by Value



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas, LLC

3.7 HOUSING UNIT TENURE

One unit detached housing is the most common housing structure (Table 3.3) in the City (86.13%). A

distant second is housing units that fall within the category of five to nineteen units (3.16%). Structures with three to four

units are the third largest type of structure in the City (2.81%).

Table 3.3 Housing Unit Type		
Type of Housing Unit	Total Housing Units	Percent
1 Unit Attached	41	0.84%
1 Unit Detached	4,198	86.13%
2 Units	125	2.56%
3-4 Units	137	2.81%
5-19 Units	154	3.16%
20-49 Units	113	2.32%
50 or More	0	0.0%
Mobile Home	106	2.17%
Boat, RV, Van, etc.	0	0.0%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas LLC		

3.8 HOUSING UNIT AGE

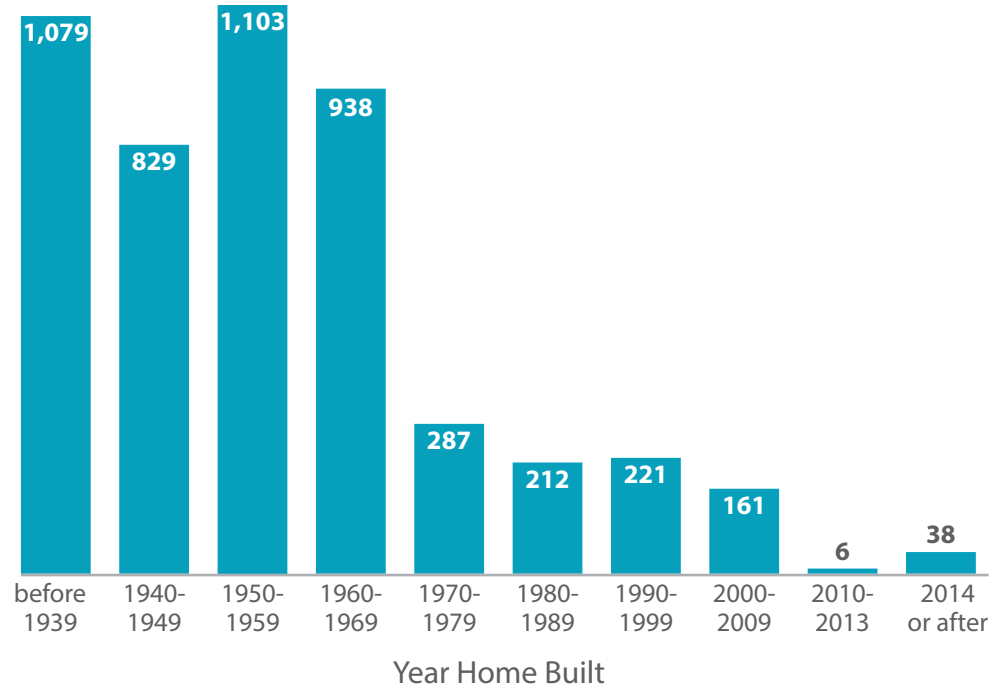
Most of the City of Wood River’s housing stock is more than 50 years old, with 80% built prior to 1969. Figure 3.7 shows that approximately 22% of homes were constructed between 1950-1959, while approximately 21% were built before 1939. Less than 1% of houses in Wood River were built in 2014 or later. The data show that Wood River is projected

to continue to lose population, and therefore, lose households, potentially resulting in higher residential vacancy rates. With most Wood River’s housing stock more than 50 years old, reinvestment in homes is critically important. Housing in Wood River is affordable for most of the population, with a significant number of households spending

less than 20% of their gross monthly income on housing costs. In theory, this results in well-kept homes that provide modern amenities for their residents.



**Figure 3.7 Housing Units by Year Built**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas, LLC



Image Source: Moran Economic Development

# neighborhoods & housing

# PRIORITIES

## Priority 1 | Focus on the Fundamentals

### A. STRONG AND SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

#### 1. Build and maintain social capital.

Social capital has been continuously declining in American cities since the Second World War. However, it is a critically important piece of a community's foundation. These social bonds create trust amongst neighbors and build an individual's network within a community. An example of a strong community network is when neighbors help each other rather than calling the City when grass needs cut or a deck needs repair. It encourages reliance on the network, which can lead to less municipal involvement for small neighborhood concerns which could be addressed without City intervention.

**Social Capital**  
is the network  
of relationships  
that exist in a  
community.

#### 2. Create a sense of ownership and pride in the community.

Volunteerism is the underpinning of an engaged community; a community of creators that work together to create their future community together. Volunteerism breeds community pride and contributes to social capital. **An example is the Belleville Helping Belleville Day**, which is a program of the BASIC Initiative. Belleville Helping Belleville Day annually brings together individuals and organizations across the community to complete several projects that create a positive impact. Volunteers sign up online, and the BASIC Initiative chooses the projects. This annual day of service has a great impact on the physical appearance of neighborhoods and creates a sense of ownership and accomplishment in the community.

The City of Wood River currently gives appearance awards, one each to a business and residence each month from May to September. This is a great way to draw attention to well maintained homes and businesses throughout the community.

#### 3. Activate neighborhood watch groups.

Neighborhood watch groups build accountability and empowerment. The organization required for neighborhood watch programs requires neighbors to talk with each other and organize a communication network between themselves. The structure of neighborhood watch groups creates a communication framework that the police department can use to share and receive information easily from one primary point of contact within each group.

#### 4. Keep neighborhoods clean.

Clean, well-maintained neighborhoods instill pride. Neighborhood cleanups can take the form of cleaning up litter on the streets, cleaning up public or private outdoor spaces, or even cleaning up inside homes. Cleaning up inside homes can have positive health impacts, including safety,

by making homes more accessible for seniors and those with mobility limitations, contributing to a more livable community. **An example is the Granite City Adopt-A-Street Program**, in which volunteer groups partner with the City to cleanup local roadsides, providing a better experience for both residents and visitors. The program involves making application to the Director of Public Works and determining a stretch of local roadway to keep clean. The City then installs road signs with the volunteer group's name and provides safety materials like vests and gloves, for use on clean up days. Volunteers commit to a minimum of three (3) cleanup days each year, one each in the spring, summer, and fall.

## B. DESIRABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

### 1. Well-maintained and occupied homes.

In the 2020 Census, there were 422 vacant homes in the City of Wood River—a vacancy rate of 8.5%. This is slightly higher than Illinois' vacancy rate of 7.8%. Vacant housing not only leads to high crime rates and lack of property maintenance, but it can be discouraging to neighboring homeowners who take pride in keeping a well-maintained home. The Wood River Police Department currently tasks two officers with patrolling neighborhoods and reducing 'quality of life' crimes—e.g. nonviolent, nuisance behaviors—that can breed uncertainty and dissatisfaction within neighborhoods. The City should continue to prioritize funding for these police positions and encourage officers to participate in neighborhood activities. Developing a tracking system for property maintenance calls could also be helpful to better understand if certain neighborhoods or city blocks are more affected than others. Well-maintained homes encourage maintenance and reinvestment, whereas poorly maintained (or even vacant) homes lead to further disrepair and more vacancy. Moreover, long-term vacancy ultimately result in declining property values, which translate to less tax revenue for the City, positioning the City to make a decision whether to increase their tax rate to maintain the same amount of services, or to consider the hard decision of whether to cut services. **An Example is the City of Decatur's Small Home Improvement Program (SHIP).** The City partnered with a foundation to seed the fund, which provides small home repair grants (up to \$15,000) to residents of owner-occupied homes in low-moderate income neighborhoods. For those on fixed incomes or for households with little disposable income, the additional funding provides a means to make small repairs such as new roofs, windows, or heating and air conditioning systems. The City of Wood River is currently developing a similar income-based program, aimed at exterior home repairs.

### 2. Neighborhood Amenities.

Amenities such as parks, schools, and even shade trees, increase the livability and desirability of a neighborhood. Residents that live in neighborhoods with these amenities, say they are more engaged in their neighborhood, feel safer walking at night, and are more likely to say their community is an excellent place to live. They are even willing to pay more for homes with such amenities. Research shows<sup>1</sup> that neighborhood amenities are also associated with community satisfaction and trust. For small and mid-size communities like Wood River, this could translate to better access to community-wide amenities. Ensuring walkability and bikeability to important destinations such as schools, parks, grocery stores, and the public library.

### 3. Housing that meets the current and future needs of residents.

Eighty percent (80%) of the homes in Wood River were constructed prior to 1969, with only 1% built after 2014. The older housing stock that comprises most of the City is frequently smaller, with only a one-car garage and the classic two-bedroom, one-bathroom layout. While these homes are usually high quality in terms of construction, they are often not accessible (e.g. walk in showers, few

<sup>1</sup> The Importance of Place: Neighborhood Amenities as a Source of Social Connection and Trust. May 20, 2019. American Enterprise Institute.



steps) for older residents and the mobility impaired. Likewise, today's young families often desire separated bathrooms for guests and larger, more open living spaces. Many new homes are being built along Wood River's eastern border, which provide more options for residents, albeit at often a higher cost. One example of a program used for encouraging modernization and rehabilitation of existing housing stock is the **Decatur Contractor's Program**, in which the City of Decatur improves 150-300 homes over a 2-year period. The program is essentially a bulk-bid program, whereby qualified contractors bid on bulk work for homes identified as part of the program. For example, one contractor could be responsible for replacing 50 roofs under one contract. This cost savings could be an incentive for home remodel and rehabilitation throughout the City.

## Priority 2 | Guide Future Growth

### A. SUPPORT INFILL DEVELOPMENT

The City of Wood River has some opportunity for infill development. Infill development is more financially beneficial for the City because infill homes utilize existing city- owned and maintained sanitary sewers, water lines, and streets. It will cost the same to maintain this infrastructure over time regardless of whether new homes are built on vacant lots. However, the value of vacant lots goes up tremendously when a new home is constructed, so the City will generate more in tax revenue to maintain the same infrastructure. Compared to fringe development, or development along the city's borders, the infrastructure required to reach the new development will be costly to maintain and often the tax revenue generated by new residential subdivisions does not cover the cost of infrastructure maintenance over time. Infill development should be prioritized and incentivized.

### B. PROMOTE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Housing is a regional issue. Wood River should look to promote housing opportunities not only for its existing residents, but for potential residents who may live in nearby communities. There may be gaps in the regional housing market that Wood River could easily fill. Affordable housing is one of those gaps. In the resident survey, 85% of Wood River residents noted that low cost of living and low property taxes were two of the key factors in deciding to live in Wood River. The city's close proximity to St. Louis and to regional destinations like Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) and nearby employment centers, and its three state highways and one interstate highway, provide excellent access to the region.

An example is Collinsville's First Time Homebuyer Program, which provides income-based homebuyer assistance up to \$5,000 for down payments for qualifying individuals. The City of Collinsville also provides assistance via their **Single Family Home Conversion Program**, which provides up to \$5,000 for down payment assistance when converting a previously registered rental house to an owner-occupied home. The programs can be used together to leverage assistance for qualifying individuals looking to purchase their first home in Collinsville.

### C. UPDATE ZONING AND LAND DEVELOPMENT CODES TO ACHIEVE HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS

#### 1. Encourage mixed use in some neighborhoods, especially downtown.

Mixed use neighborhoods promote an efficient use of infrastructure and spur revitalization, leading to neighborhood vitality and sense of place. Mixed use neighborhoods promote walkability and lead to healthier communities.



## **2. Allow for infill development.**

While the neighborhoods around downtown are mostly built-out, new home construction in these neighborhoods often requires variances for lot sizes, setbacks, lot coverage, or the like. Since infill development on existing platted lots is a priority, the City should take proactive steps to allow for homes to be constructed on infill lots, such as evaluating zoning bulk regulations to ensure homes can be built without variances, or making sure local contractors are aware of infill opportunities.

# **Priority 3 | Build neighborhood character and develop sense of place**

## **A. DEVELOP THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO BE LEADERS IN THE COMMUNITY**

Wood River has several community organizations that are working toward creating a better community. Namely, the Wood River Enrichment network, the Downtown Business Owners Group, and the Economic Development Committee, are three groups who are each doing their part to bring prosperity to Wood River. In order for these organizations to function as effectively as possible, the City should bring leaders of each organization together periodically to discuss needs and areas of focus. These meetings should also involve aspects of leadership training, building skills like conflict resolution and relationship building. Biannual meetings would provide a sounding board for new ideas, promote for strategic partnerships, and ensure that each organization is working collaboratively toward the greater good. It will amplify the actions of each group by creating a space for new ideas and collaboration.

Another aspect of organizational leadership is building character. Wood River schools already practice character education, focusing on one word of character each month: integrity, trustworthiness, perseverance, cooperation, self-discipline, fairness, citizenship, caring, respect, responsibility, peace, and empathy. To further ingrain the principles of these words into everyday life in Wood River, the City Council (and other organizations) could also adopt the character words, mentioning them at meetings, and incorporating them into City meetings, the City newsletter, and social media accounts.

## **B. PLACEMAKING**

Placemaking is the practice of strengthening connections between people and places. In practice, placemaking looks like people coming together to create places-- outdoor cafe seating, a shaded bench in the park, or public art--where people collectively feel safe, connected, comfortable, and engaged. Creating places can happen with or without City involvement, but there is always an element of creativity and imagination involved. While the City may focus on big picture placemaking elements, such as infrastructure for a park or safe intersections, the everyday residents are the ones who are often more creative, starting festivals, parades, and even creating public art. These often-perceived small acts are the heartbeat of the community and should not be dismissed as unimportant in the scope of city-building.

The preservation of historic features is valuable not only to a community's sense of place and identity, but it can also be a great economic development strategy. More is written about this topic in Section 6, Quality of Life and Community Assets.

### Table 3.4 - Neighborhood & Housing Implementation

Priority	Term	Relative Cost	Potential Performance Measures	Key Partners
<b>Priority 1 - Focus on the Fundamentals</b>				
A1. Build and maintain social capital	Ongoing	Low	Number of organizations Number of community events	Residents and business owners, schools, churches and religious institutions, City
A2. Create sense of ownership and pride in community	Ongoing	Low	Number of and Location of Appearance Awards (awarded or nominated)	WREN, DBOG, non-profit organizations, City, residents, business owners
A3. Activate neighborhood watch groups	Ongoing	Low	Number of Watch Groups Number of police calls	Residents and business owners, schools, churches and religious institutions, City, Police Dept.
A4. Keep neighborhoods clean	Ongoing	Low	Adopt a Street program, tons of waste collected by street cleaning	Neighborhood organizations and watch groups, HOAs, schools, businesses, City
B1. Well maintained and occupied homes	Mid	Low	Vacancy rate, annual number of "quality of life" crimes, track property maintenance calls	Residents, landlords, police, City
B2. Neighborhood amenities	Long	Mid	Number of parks within walking distance, miles of sidewalks, urban tree cover	City, neighborhood organizations
B3. Housing that meets current and future needs	Long	Mid	City's overall EAV, average home sale price	City, Realtors, Contractors
<b>Priority 2 - Guide Future Growth</b>				
A. Support infill development	Mid	Low	Code updates approved, building permits issued	City, contractors
B. Promote housing opportunities	Mid	Low	Number of rental properties, Number of owner-occupied properties	City, realtors, contractors
C1. Encourage mixed-use in some neighborhoods, especially downtown	Short	Low	Number of properties converted to mixed-use	City, developers, DBOG, EDC
C2. Allow for infill development	Short	Low	Number of building permits issued	City, developers
<b>Priority 3 - Build Neighborhood Character and Develop Sense of Place</b>				
A. Develop the capacity of local organizations to be leaders in the community	Mid	Low	Number of participants in organizations, number of leadership training meetings, number of people attending leadership training meetings	WREN, Schools, City, DBOG, EDC
B. Placemaking	Mid	Low	Number of events, public art installations	WREN, DBOG, EDC, City,

Abbreviations: City = Various City departments, such as Building & Zoning, City Clerk, Parks Dept, HOA = Homeowners' Association, WREN = Wood River Enrichment Network, DBOG = Downtown Business Owners Group, EDC = Economic Development Committee

# 4 infrastructure & mobility

The City of Wood River's Public Services staff manages all aspects of the City's infrastructure. Wood River was incorporated as a Village in 1910 and as a City in 1923. The community grew from just 84 residents in 1910 to more than 8,000 by 1930. The vast majority of Wood River's growth took place during this 20-year period, and housing and infrastructure has to keep pace. Like many other communities in the region, much of the original infrastructure exists today, including brick or clay sanitary sewer lines and galvanized steel water lines. While this infrastructure has served the community well for a century or more, maintaining it can be costly and upgrades, even costlier.

The City of Wood River's Public Services Department maintains more than 73 miles of water lines, more than 56 miles of sanitary sewer lines, 80 miles of roads, and 42 miles of alleys. In addition to this public utility and transportation infrastructure, the Department maintains and operates out of four (4) buildings, including the Water Treatment Plant, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Street Department, and Public Services Administrative building. The Public Services Department will need to add additional workers in the coming years to keep pace with existing and future development projects.

Wood River's gas and electric services are provided by Ameren, while various phone and cable services are available to residents

with AT&T and Charter being the key providers. The City offers curbside trash and recycling pickup through Republic Services. Bulk item disposal is available for a small fee. In addition, although not a service provided with trash pickup, the City does provide several free and fee options for landscape and yard waste.

The City maintains a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), which identifies key infrastructure reinvestment projects for a rolling 5-year period.

While some maintenance is needed, such as new roofs at the 14th Street and 100 Anderson facilities, increasing staff in the Public Services Department is needed to keep pace with current and planned future workloads.



## 4.1 WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

The City of Wood River's water treatment plant was constructed in 1964 and provides safe drinking water to more than 4,500 customers through its 73 miles of water lines. The system's water lines range from newly installed to approximately 100 years of age and are constructed of PVC, copper and cast iron. Water supply derives from five active wells that pump water from the sand-and-gravel Aquifer beneath the City. Average daily demand for water is 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD), meaning the system pumps, on average, 1.5 million gallons of water each day, with peak demand around 2.1 MGD. The City is well-positioned for future growth with an overall system capacity of 5.5 MGD capacity and underground storage of 500,000.

Because the distribution system is comprised of pipes of varying ages, there is an ongoing need to perform maintenance and/or replace lines.

The City has three water towers that pressurize the system. Collectively, they hold approximately 1.5 million gallons of water. Tower 1, the oldest of the three towers and located downtown, was built in 1928 and is in poor condition. Estimates show that it should be replaced within the next 10 years. Towers 2 and 3, built in 1964 and 2006, respectively, are both in good condition.

The City is currently evaluating its water lines to determine if any are lead. Minerals in water can corrode lead lines, releasing small amounts of lead into the potable water supply in homes and businesses. The inventory of the City's water lines will be complete by April 2023.

Another consideration for the water distribution system is the source of water. Wood River's water source consists of several high capacity pumping wells located primarily in the western side of the community. However, several wells also exist at the former BP/Amoco Refinery site.

These wells currently pump water and as a result, create a cone of depression around each well. This water is sent directly to the wastewater plant for treatment and discharge. When the wells stop pumping, the water table level changes, creating a ripple effect throughout the system, requiring adjustment of the wells the City relies on for its drinking water. The elimination of the former refinery's wells at some future date will affect not only the water system, but the wastewater system, as well, resulting in large financial implications for the City.



Image Source: Moran Economic Development



## 4.2 WASTEWATER SYSTEM

The City also owns and maintains a wastewater treatment plant. The plant collects and treats wastewater from 56 miles of sanitary sewer lines. Wastewater effluent that has been treated is released into the Mississippi River.

The City's wastewater treatment system requires special consideration in the next several years. The system currently largely supported by the 1.2 million gallons per day (MGD) that flow IN from the former BP/Amoco Refinery site. Losing this inflow will result in additional capacity;

however, it will also result in significant financial shortfall for plant operations. Because the treatment plant is in need of upgrades within the next 10 years, it is critical that operationally and financially, the City prepare for the loss of this inflow and income.



Image Source: Google Maps

## 4.3 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The City of Wood River is part of three watersheds, all draining to the Mississippi River. Most of the City is located in the Wood River Watershed, while the eastern portion of the community is located in the Indian-Cahokia Creek Watershed and the western edge, along the Mississippi River, is located in the Portage des Sioux Watershed. A watershed is an area in which water drains to a common point, like a stream or river. Water drains downhill, so topographical maps are important to understanding the flow of

water within a community. Both flow (amount and direction) and quality of surface water are important to consider when planning for the future. The City currently manages stormwater in a series of underground pipes that carry water to the Mississippi River, where it is discharged.

The City has undertaken several stormwater projects in recent years, the most notable being the expansion of a detention basin between 6th Street and 9th Street. Creating a larger stormwater

basin at this location resulted in the removal of several hundred homes from the floodplain, making flood insurance unnecessary and reinvestment in properties more worthwhile. The City has plans to expand this detention basin on the east side of 9th Street, further improving the management of stormwater in the area. Ongoing maintenance includes mowing the basin and keeping it free from debris.

Another major stormwater project the City has undertaken in recent

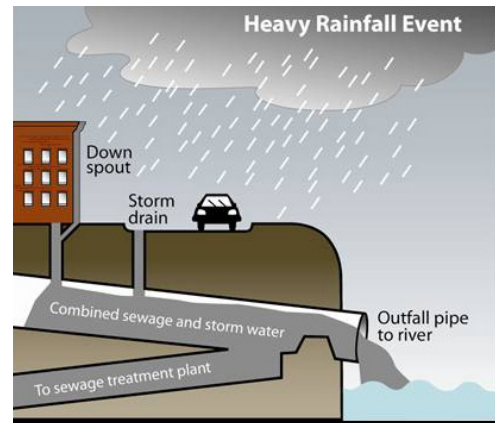
years is the East End Detention Pond. This detention basin, located between Illinois Route 143 and Old Alton Edwardsville Road, just east of Federico Kia, is regional in nature, meaning that stormwater from several parcels in eastern Wood River is directed to this basin to alleviate flooding. Additionally, the completion of this project resulted in several parcels being removed from the FEMA designated flood plain, making way for new economic development opportunities.

Another important upcoming stormwater project is the expansion of the 6th Street detention basin. This project will begin in 2024 and will eliminate the last remaining portion of FEMA designated flood plain from the City.

Some sanitary sewer lines are combined with storm sewers, funneling storm water into the sanitary sewer lines, forcing it to be treated along with the

wastewater at the plant. These combined sewers are problematic because the storm water reduces capacity for treatment of actual wastewater at the plant. More importantly, however, the combined sewers mean the system reaches capacity much quicker in high rain events, resulting in combined sewer overflows (CSOs) that contain not just storm water runoff, but wastewater, as well. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) regulates combined sewers through their CSO Control Policy, requiring cities with combined sewers to develop Long Term Control Plans (LTCP) for separating storm and sanitary sewers. The City of Wood River has adopted a LTCP and continues to work toward eliminating CSOs within the community.

Over the last several years, the City has reduced the number of CSO overflow points by half, from 65 to approximately 30. In the



*In heavy rain events, combined storm and waste water may backup and cause overflows at storm drains, as well as leave the system at the outflow point.*  
Image Source: USEPA

next 5 years, the City will reduce the number even further, with a goal of no more than 20 by 2028. Most notably, the City recently completed the Hawthorne, Central, and Madison Flooding / Sewer Separation Project and will begin the State Street Sewer Separation project in 2023. Eventually, all of the CSOs will be eliminated. There is currently only combined sewer discharge point, which is the Mississippi River.





4.4 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The City of Wood River owns and maintains more than 122 miles of local roadways and alleys, while the major arterials, including Illinois Route 143, Illinois Route 3, and Interstate State Highway 255, are owned and maintained by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Figure 4.1 shows the roadway network in and around Wood River, as well as the functional roadway classifications, which are used to determine roadway design (e.g. road width, shoulder width), frequency of maintenance, and

eligibility for federal transportation funds. In addition to maintaining the roadways themselves, signal maintenance of four signalized intersections is the responsibility of the Public Services Department, as well.



Image Source: BBC News

Figure 4.1 Functional Classification of Roads

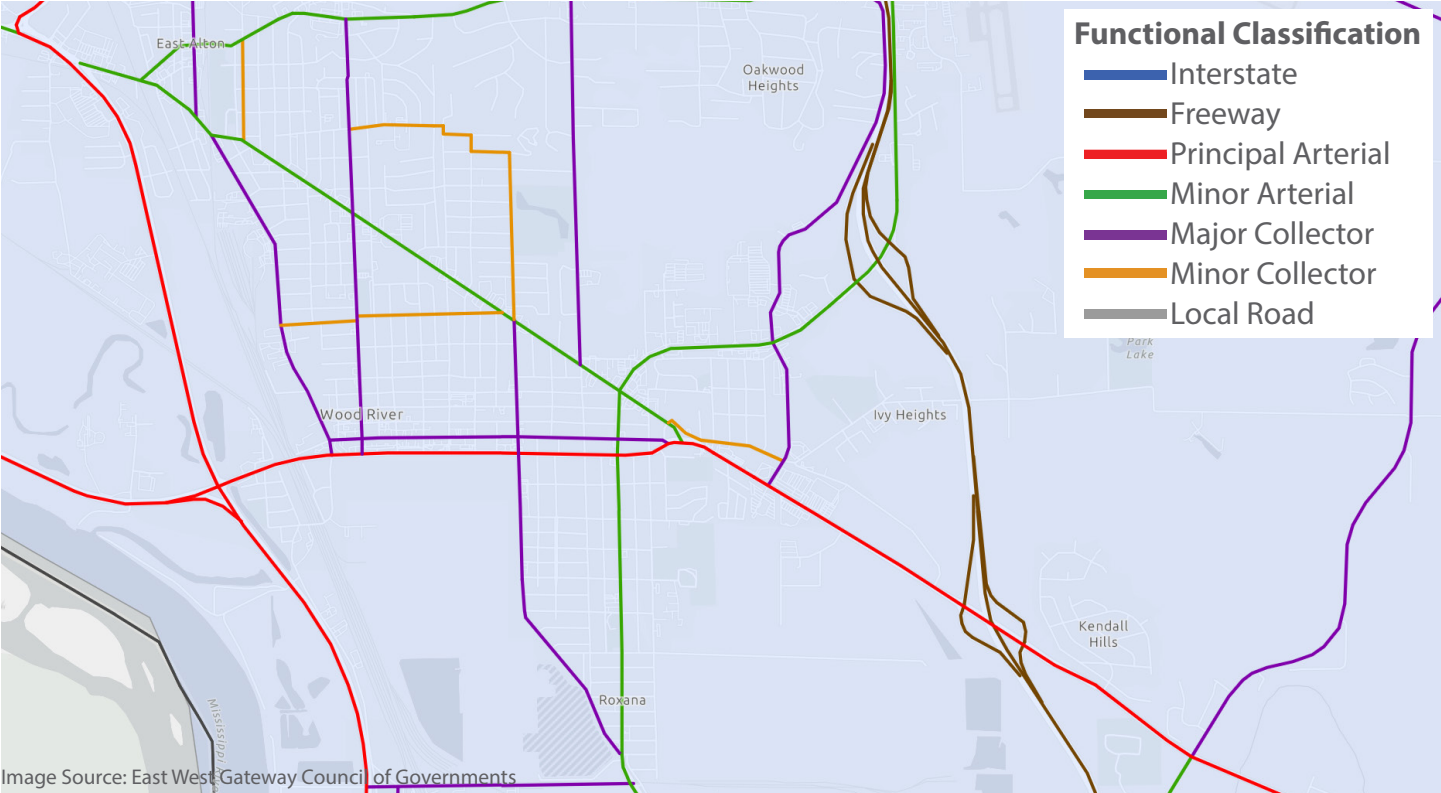


Image Source: East West Gateway Council of Governments

Arterial	Collector	Local Road
Non-access controlled, carries high volume of vehicles, promotes inter-regional transportation.	Non-access controlled, carries moderate volume of vehicles, distributes local traffic to arterials.	Provides access to individual homes and businesses, carries lowest volume of vehicles.



## Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan

The City of Wood River engaged Heartlands Conservancy to create a bicycle-pedestrian master plan. The planning process encouraged residents to think about how they currently move around the City and consider what elements of local mobility need improvement. Residents discussed connectivity, safety, and convenience, and established the following general goals:

- » Establish Wood River as a keystone in the regional bicycle-pedestrian network
- » Provide safe crossings at railroads, highways, and state routes
- » Enhance walkability and pedestrian amenities in Downtown Wood River
- » Focus on connections between neighborhoods, schools, parks, and downtown
- » Improve bikeability and walkability in business corridors
- » Encourage everyday multimodal transportation
- » Promote Wood River's safe and welcoming multimodal network



### WOOD RIVER Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

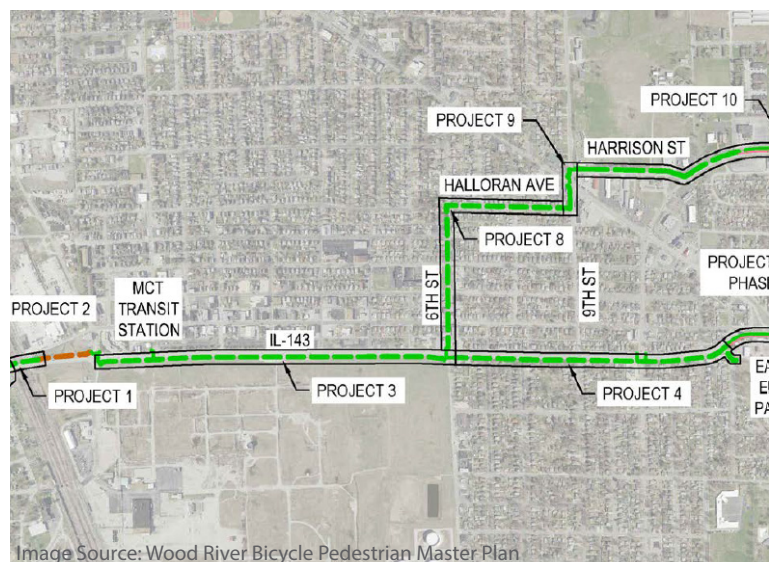


Image Source: Wood River Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan

# infrastructure & mobility

# PRIORITIES

## Priority 1 | Support Future Growth

### A. MAINTAIN THE CITY'S INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT FUTURE GROWTH

#### 1. Strategically reinvest in infrastructure.

The Public Services Department maintains a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), which identifies infrastructure projects for a rolling 5-year period. The CIP is updated annually and includes the following components for each project: cost estimate, operational/maintenance costs, timeline, revenues from project (if any), funding sources, and prioritization. The CIP also identifies large capital purchases such as vehicles or other equipment used to maintain infrastructure.

Several upcoming infrastructure investments are planned, including a new 12" sanitary sewer connection to 12th Street and the expansion of one regional detention pond near 9th Street. The regional detention basin project will better control stormwater runoff, potentially resulting in more infill available for development.

#### 2. Utilize Annexation Agreements.

As the City expands eastward, the use of annexation agreements (sometimes called pre-annexation agreements) should be considered. Annexation agreements will secure land for future annexation into the City and can be a good way to identify future pathways for utility and roadway extensions. In Illinois, annexation agreements are valid for a period of 20 years, after which, the property will be annexed or the annexation agreement will need to be renewed. Annexation agreements can also be used to create public private partnerships whereby land owners agree that any building activity done on their unincorporated land will be done to the City's development standards, even before the property is annexed. With growth on the far eastern edge of the community, this is a useful tool to be able to provide utilities and regulate development for land that may develop in a leapfrog pattern, meaning there may be gaps of undeveloped land between developed property. Leapfrog development is not cost effective for infrastructure and should be avoided. A compact, linear growth pattern is a better solution not only for infrastructure costs, but for walkability and neighborhood connectivity, as well.

## Priority 2 | Prioritize Mobility

### A. ENHANCE CONNECTIONS THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY.

The City of Wood River has taken the first steps toward encouraging alternate transportation modes by creating a Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan. The Master Planning process has started the conversation about bikeability and walkability and Wood River residents are invested in seeing improvements in this area within the community. During the planning process, topics such as safety and accessibility were discussed, as well as more complex topics like mode-shift. Mode-shift refers to the culture shift from car-centric to bike/walk-centric, where residents will think first about walking bicycling to reach nearby destinations, instead of driving. The plan promotes convenience, flexibility, and safety.

### B. REVIEW DESIGN STANDARDS

Subdivision design standards require developers to build infrastructure, such as roads and sidewalks, to certain minimum standards. The City's Subdivision Code should be evaluated to ensure that new developments are required to connect not only to existing sidewalk infrastructure (see 'cul-de-sac through connection' p. 31), but to Madison County Transit trail infrastructure, as well. One of the goals of the Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan is to establish Wood River as a keystone in the regional trail network, and requiring these connections of new development will aid in this effort. The Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan includes several strategies for achieving this status, including the development of a cohesive, uniform wayfinding sign system, coordination of construction projects with neighboring municipalities, and the promotion of Wood River's cultural and historic resources with trail and pedestrian access.

Another aspect of design standards to evaluate is requirement of sidewalks. The minimum right-of-way width for new residential subdivisions is 50 feet with a minimum road width of 22 feet, measured from back of curb to back of curb, and sidewalks are only required on one side of the street. Adding a requirement for sidewalks on both sides of the street would increase walkability, as would the standard width of 5 feet, rather than 4. Likewise, creating a maximum roadway width would limit the City's future maintenance liability (less pavement, lower cost) and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. This is especially recommended in areas where there are large front setbacks, since driveways will hold more cars and the need for parking on both sides of the street is reduced. Studies have shown that as drivers increase speed, their cone of vision decreases, resulting in a less safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and even other drivers<sup>1</sup>.

### C. ADA TRANSITION PLAN

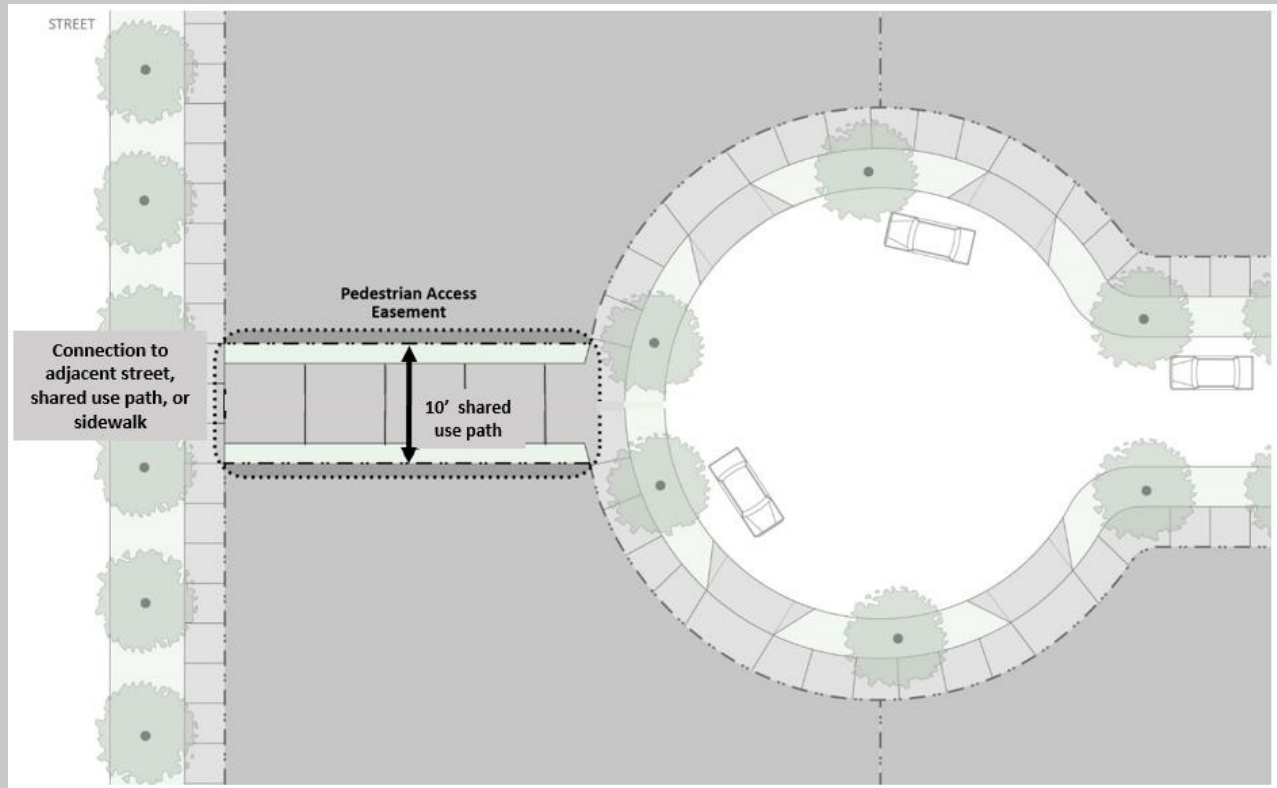
The City of Wood River already has an ADA Transition Plan. The plan is an important piece of understanding mobility in the Community. While the goal of the plan is to make the community accessible to all residents, the priorities should be evaluated with an eye toward accommodating growth of Wood River's senior population. In coming years, the senior population will increase, requiring accessible sidewalks and infrastructure. Prioritization of areas near senior housing, grocery stores, parks, and other community assets should be the focus. In addition to the required public infrastructure considerations of the ADA Transition Plan, the City should consider developing an associated ADA Housing Plan to evaluate and assist residents with making modifications to homes that may be necessary for an aging population.

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<sup>1</sup> Speck, Jeff. (2018). *Walkable City Rules*. Island Press.



## Cul-de-sac Through Connection



*Pedestrian connection from neighborhood to adjacent street.*

## Priority 3 | Environmentally Conscious Design

Emphasizing environmentally conscious design has far-reaching impacts, not only on infrastructure but on quality of life. Studies have shown that native trees and landscaping add value to both commercial and residential developments.<sup>1</sup> Requiring developers to plant native trees as part of all new developments, should be considered when making adjustments to the Subdivision Code.

In addition to native plantings, the incorporation of more green spaces in both residential and commercial developments will have positive economic and infrastructure results. Bioretention areas have been shown to reduce capital maintenance costs and have a positive impact on biodiversity.

The City of Wood River has an opportunity to position itself as a regional "green" leader by supporting environmentally friendly, sustainable infrastructure and community design solutions. Prioritizing environmentally conscious design will also demonstrate that the City's historic identity as a community built around the petroleum industry, while significant, has evolved to respond to current preference and demand for sustainable and resilient infrastructure, alternate mobility options, and innovative community design.

<sup>1</sup> Durani, Ana. (June 14, 2021). *Branch Out! How Trees Can affect the Value of a Home*. Realtor. <https://www.realtor.com/advice/home-improvement/how-trees-can-affect-the-value-of-your-home/>

**Table 4.1 - Infrastructure & Mobility Implementation**

Priority	Term	Relative Cost	Potential Performance Measures	Key Partners
<b>Priority 1 - Support Future Growth</b>				
A. Maintain the City's infrastructure to support future growth				
1. Strategically Invest in Infrastructure	Long	Varies	Road miles improved, sewer and/or water lines replaced, capacity of stormwater detention installed, miles of sidewalks replaced, etc.	IDOT, Madison County, City
2. Utilize Annexation Agreements	Mid	Low	Number of agreements, Number of acres included in annexation agreements	Unincorporated property owners, City
<b>Priority 2 - Prioritize Mobility</b>				
A. Enhance connections throughout the community	Long	Mid - High	See Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan	See Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan
B. Review Design Standards	Mid	Mid	Ordinances updated	City
C. ADA Transition Plan	Ongoing	Mid	Infrastructure upgrades made	City
<b>Priority 3 - Environmentally Conscious Design</b>				
A. Emphasize environmentally conscious design	Long	Low	Tree canopy cover, amount of green space, native plantings	City, developers

Abbreviations: City = Various City departments, such as Building & Zoning, City Clerk, Parks Dept, HOA = Homeowners' Association, WREN = Wood River Enrichment Network, DBOG = Downtown Business Owners Group, EDC = Economic Development Committee

# 5 local economy & jobs

Historically, Wood River's economy was built around the original Standard Oil Refinery, which began construction in 1907 and was operational by 1908. Most of the company's original employees lived in Alton at the time, but, as homes were built near the refinery, families relocated and the City of Wood River was incorporated in 1923. The vast majority of homes in Wood River, along

with its central downtown, were constructed during this period to accommodate the rapid increase in population.

While the mid-century trends of sprawl and suburban growth led to a decline in downtowns across the nation, Wood River's downtown is experiencing the beginning of a transformation. Local entrepreneurs are investing in historic buildings and new

businesses are opening. Residents and visitors alike are beginning to *See the Good in Wood River*.

Today, Wood River's economy is an integral part of the larger Riverbend Region, home to 200,000 residents living in 13 communities, which generate more than \$1.7 billion in sales annually.



Standard Oil Refinery, 1907. Source: Library of Congress

## 5.1 EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Forty-seven percent (47%) of the population aged 16 and over are employed, the majority for private sector businesses (Table 5.1). Half of Wood River's residents are employed in professional or office jobs, while labor/industry and farming service jobs make up the other half, at 30% and 18%, respectively (Table 5.2).

**Table 5.1 Population by Employment Classification**

Classification	Total	%
For-Profit	3,729	75.7
Non-Profit	334	6.8
Local Government	331	6.7
State Government	212	4.3
Federal Government	51	1.
Self-Employed	265	5.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas, LLC



Many employment opportunities exist within or near Wood River. Figure 5.1 indicates that almost 65% of employed residents commute less than 30 minutes to work. With travel time to St. Louis being as little as 30 minutes one way, residents have a wide range of employers options within a reasonable distance. Nearly 30% of residents are employed within a 15-minute commute of their home. Wood River's close proximity to a range of employment opportunities provides excellent quality of life benefits.

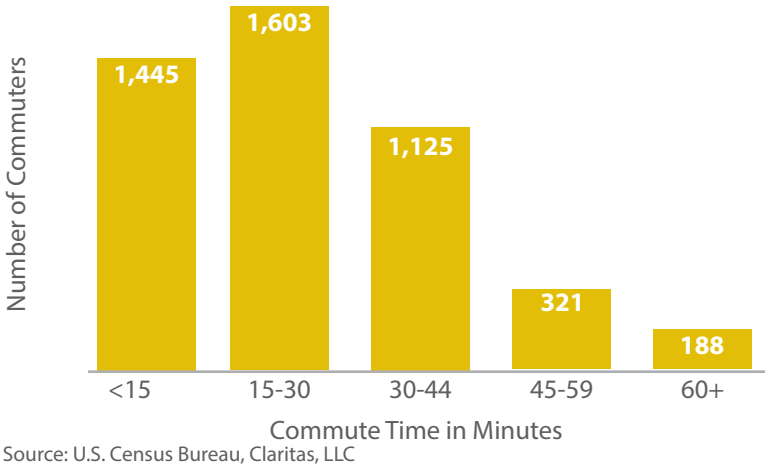
Workers in the City of Wood River mostly commute in single-

Table 5.2 Population by Occupation		
Occupation	Total	%
Office & Professional	2,471	50.2
Labor & Industry	1,523	30.9
Service & Farming	931	18.9
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas, LLC		

passenger vehicles, with most (87.4%) commuting alone. (Table 5.1). There is an opportunity for the workers commuting 15 minutes or less to find an alternate mode of transportation to and from work. Ways to encourage this mode shift are covered in

more detail in the City's bicycle-pedestrian plan but, generally, focusing infrastructure investment on safe crossings and connections between neighborhoods and business corridors are key to realizing more non-automobile commuters.

Figure 5.1 Travel Time to Work



5.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

One of the economic development tools used by the City of Wood River is Tax Increment Financing (TIF), a means created by the State of Illinois to promote the economic development or redevelopment of high priority areas within a community. TIF Districts allocate a portion of property taxes paid by property owners within the district to a special fund—the

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Tax Increment Allocation Fund, which is managed by the City. These funds provide a means to finance public infrastructure improvements and eligible redevelopment activities by providing economic incentives to businesses that will undertake improvements within the District.

In a TIF District, the incremental property tax (the tax above the

base value of property when the District is established), goes entirely to the municipality. This increment is dedicated to the payment of redevelopment costs. In short, anticipated increase in real estate tax revenues from property development and improvement are used to finance the improvements themselves. At the end of the TIF District’s 23-year life, all real estate tax revenues,

including increments generated, are again shared proportionately by the taxing bodies based on their individual tax rates. In some instances, municipalities may want to extend the life of the TIF beyond the original 23 years. This can only be achieved with the support of the taxing districts and Illinois Legislature's approval.

Historically, Wood River has utilized TIF for redevelopment projects and currently has one active tax increment finance district, TIF 3, which was established in 2019 and is slated to expire in 2042.

Another special economic development district used by the City of Wood River is the Riverbend Enterprise Zone. The State of Illinois allows the designation of certain areas as Enterprise Zones, in which eligible businesses are afforded certain incentives, such as sales tax abatement on building materials and property tax abatement. Because the Riverbend Enterprise Zone spans several communities, the Madison County Community

Development Department administers the Zone.

Last but not least, the City of Wood River has four Business Districts. In each of these districts, the City levies an additional 1% sales tax on certain good (except prescription and nonprescription medications, medical devices, and most groceries. For a complete list, refer to the Business District Plans prepared for each of the City's Business districts.

The map in Appendix A (p. 67) indicates the locations of the Riverbend Enterprise Zone, Wood River TIF 3, and four different business districts. A larger map is available in Appendix A. In addition to using these economic development tools, the City of Wood River should also work to leverage its grant funding. With the City's low-moderate income population, there is more opportunity for grant funding not only for infrastructure projects, but for housing and community development projects.

Retail Market Power (RMP)

measures the difference between the supply and demand in a specific geography, in this case the municipal boundary of the City of Wood River. The opportunity gap, or the difference between supply and demand, indicates opportunities for in-demand retail sectors that do not have adequate supply within the market area, and similarly indicates retail sectors that are saturated within the local economy.

An opportunity gap of more than \$0 (a positive opportunity gap) indicates a need for additional supply, or a sector that could support additional growth within Wood River. An opportunity gap of less than \$0 (a negative opportunity gap) indicates the market demand has been met and there is no additional need for retail grown in this sector.

Nielsen's Retail Market Power statistics are derived from two major sources of information. The demand is from the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE Survey, or CEX), fielded by the US Bureau of

### **Tax Increment Finance**

- Property tax rebate
- Reimbursement of eligible redevelopment expenses
- Combination of tax and eligible expense rebate
- Redevelopment Agreement between City and developer required

### **Enterprise Zone**

- Sales tax abatement on building materials
- Property and utility tax abatement
- Business income tax credits
- Apply to Madison County Community Development Department

### **Business District**

- Rebate of all or a portion of additional 0.25% - 1% sales tax
- Redevelopment Agreement between City and developer required

Labor Statistics. The supply data is from the Census of Retail Trade (CRT), which is made available by the US Census. Additional data sources are incorporated to create both supply and demand estimates, and then generate the opportunity gap data.

The RMP data allows for the comparison of the supply and demand to determine potential sources of revenue growth. An opportunity gap appears when household expenditure levels for the City are higher than the corresponding retail sales estimates. This difference signifies that resident households are meeting the available supply and supplementing their additional demand potential by going outside of the City. The opposite is true in the event of an opportunity surplus which occurs when the levels of household expenditures are lower than the retail sales estimates. In this case, local retailers are attracting residents from other areas to their stores.

While the full report can be found in Appendix B, the top categories for which there is an opportunity gap are clothing stores and home furnishing stores. Wood River

I absolutely love living in Wood River. New businesses and places to eat would be a great addition!



Image Source: Wood River Economic Development Facebook Page

has one of the lower sales tax rates of 7.85% (8.85% in Business Districts)<sup>1</sup> in the region, which is attractive to retailers looking to add new stores.

The City has made strides toward promoting economic development with the help of the recently created Economic Development Committee, a community organization established in 2020 with the goal of attracting businesses to Wood River. Additionally, other grassroots business organizations have formed, namely the Wood River Enrichment Network and the Downtown Business Group. These groups host events such as the chili cookoff and food truck festival, drawing large crowds to downtown. The Wood River Firefighters Association even held the first Halloween parade. These events have not only helped create a new sense of community

in Wood River, but they have attracted visitors, as well. Working with local chambers and tourism organizations, Wood River has established itself as a business and family friendly community. Opportunity for redevelopment abounds in Wood River. The largest and most talked-about redevelopment site is the former refinery site, located south of Illinois Route 143 between 6th Street and Illinois Route 3. The refinery owns more than 800 acres here, as well as all of the land in Wood River that fronts the Mississippi River. When the refinery closed in the 1990s, Amoco / BP began a cleanup effort in compliance with EPA requirements. Over several decades, the cleanup project stalled and eventually the planned remediation of the site halted prior to completion, even after Amoco spent \$30 million on the effort. Today, the site remains



contaminated, while being held by Amoco/BP.

Another redevelopment opportunity is the site of the Wood River Business Park, which

consists of 100 acres available for manufacturing and light to heavy manufacturing. With close proximity to State Highway 255, the St. Louis Regional Airport, and its key location in the fastest

growing logistics hub in the country (see Sec. 5.3), there are many possibilities for growth in the Wood River Business Park.



Image Source: Moran Economic Development

### 5.3 WORKFORCE

Because local economies are regional in nature, workforce and job opportunities must be approached within this regional framework. Wood River is located within minutes of the nation's leading warehousing and logistics center, including Lakeview Commerce Park, Northgate Industrial Park, and the Gateway Commerce Center. Combined, these warehouses employ more than 10,000 and have an annual economic impact of more than \$1.3 billion annually. The warehousing and logistics industry in Madison County employs more than 5 times as many people as the industry does in other parts of the nation.

Building on this important sector of the economy, the multi-modal

freight sector is projected to increase 74% in the greater St. Louis area by 2045.

The Madison County Employment and Training Department, which is located in Wood River and employs more than 100 workers itself, offers career counseling, job search assistance, and training for high growth job sectors. Madison County is also part of the Madison-Bond-Jersey-Calhoun workforce Innovation Board (WIB). This local WIB is one of 26 that are located throughout the State of Illinois, charged with evaluating and meeting the workforce needs of Illinois workers and employers.

Not only is Wood River well-positioned for job opportunities, it offers entrepreneurs an

opportunity to become part of its renaissance. The City of Wood River is just six (6) miles from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. This close proximity means that the businesses should be marketing to faculty and students and that recent graduates looking for a place to start their own business should look no further than Wood River, a more affordable, yet just as historically significant community, to start their business. Because downtown Wood River is not yet fully occupied, commercial lease rates (and purchase rates) are significantly less than that of nearby Edwardsville. Furthermore, fees are less and it's often faster to open a business in Wood River than it is in surrounding communities.



## 5.4 COMMUNITY BRAND

The catchphrase *See the Good in Wood River* has been used to create positive momentum in and around the community. This phrase has been shortened to the hashtag #GoodRiver and is used across social media platforms to build the community's brand.

# #GoodRiver



Looking forward  
to seeing more  
"Good" River!

The City should continue to work toward a unified brand that will gain recognition regionally as investors look for new business locations and residents look for new housing opportunities.

The City also sends twice yearly newsletters and will begin monthly business highlights that will tell the story of all the good happening in Wood River.

**Annual Downtown Wood River Trick or Treat**  
October 26, 2022



# local economy & jobs

# PRIORITIES

## **Priority 1 | Business Friendly Community**

### **A. EASE THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

Eliminating barriers to opening a business in Wood River is a top economic development priority. There can be confusion when renovating an older building, especially when uses change and new codes apply. Offering a development meeting between City staff, business owners, and the architecture/engineering and construction team can eliminate any misunderstandings of what is required in terms of building modifications and inspections. This type of meeting also allows the development team to develop a relationship with City personnel.

### **B. BENCHMARK DATA**

The City's economic development activities should be a cornerstone of the Wood River Economic Development policy. Data to be collected and tabulated annually includes: number of new businesses, total investment, location of new business, number of full time and part time jobs created. This information will allow Wood River to understand its position within the regional economy, which is useful when planning for economic growth and development. This data can be shared annually via the City website.

### **C. DEVELOP A BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION (BRE) PROGRAM**

A BRE program will allow the City to understand any business barriers that may exist, such as commercial lease rates, expanding businesses, finding qualified workers, etc. For now, a BRE program of sorts is happening informally, when City employees or elected officials see business owners around town and strike up a conversation, inquiring how business is going. However, bringing formality to this process and tracking data will result in the ability to see trends that may have before gone unnoticed, and will allow City staff and the Council to make more informed decisions about economic development in the future.

### **D. DEVELOP A BUSINESS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**

A mentorship program can be incredibly useful for first-time business owners, providing resources and a network in the local business community. The City does not have to take on this responsibility on its own, however. Partner organizations like the Wood River Enrichment Network, Downtown Business Owners Association, and the Economic Development Committee, should take the lead on this task.

### **E. EXPAND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE BASE**

Developing resources with organizations like SCORE, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). These programs provide support for the new and existing businesses, offering a network of experienced professionals to help problem solve, troubleshoot, plan for the future, and review existing business practices. While the SCORE



organization has only a St. Louis Chapter, mentors are located throughout the region. Building a relationship with the local chapter would provide an excellent resource for local entrepreneurs. Likewise, the local SBDC is located on the campus of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. The SBDC offers advising services, as well as workshops and seminars for new and existing businesses. Additionally, the SBDC holds an annual Start Up Challenge, where startups from the region compete to win \$10,000 prize to be used in starting their business. Community organizations like the Wood River Enrichment Network, Downtown Business Owners Association, and the Economic Development Committee could connect business owners with SBDC Resources.

## **Priority 2 | Grow and Diversify the Local Economy**

### **A. ENCOURAGE LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS**

Local entrepreneurs are the foundation the local economy. They contribute to the community identity and their businesses play to the emotional connection between people and place. Entrepreneurs create jobs, invest in the local community (often through sponsoring sports teams and donating to community organizations), and help the environment by providing additional services close to home. Local entrepreneurs are also ingrained in the community. These business owners care about the schools, the library, the condition of the streets, and the parks. This sense of ownership, not only of their business but of their city, is the backbone of a strong community.

### **B. STRATEGICALLY INCENTIVIZE REINVESTMENT**

Focusing incentives on certain geographies or industries is a non-regulatory way to ensure development is aligned with the comprehensive plan. The City should consider adopting an economic incentive policy that provides more tax increment financing (TIF) incentives to particular types of businesses, such as those providing living-wage jobs, or services that are needed in the community. Incentives could also be strategically provided to those who are aesthetically upgrading their portion of important business corridors, like Edwardsville Road (see Priority 4).

## **Priority 3 | Develop the Workforce of Tomorrow**

### **A. CEO PROGRAM AT EAST ALTON / WOOD RIVER HIGH SCHOOL**

Tomorrow's world is dependent on today's young leaders. The Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) program is funded by community business and is open to high school juniors and seniors. The program offers a select group of individuals an opportunity to start their own business while being mentored by businesses in the community. The program is offered at several other area high schools and is an excellent way to build entrepreneurial thinkers who will help the community thrive.

### **B. FOCUS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ON GROWING INDUSTRIES**

#### **1. Madison County Employment and Training.**

The Madison County Employment and Training Office, located in Wood River, provides excellent benefits for individuals looking to develop job skills and training through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Department provides tuition reimbursement, funding equipment and tools, and job search assistance after graduation.

## **2. Local WIB.**

The Madison-Bond-Jersey-Calhoun Workforce Improvement Board (WIB) convenes leaders in the local economy to plan for future workforce needs. Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA) #22, which includes the riverbend area of the larger Workforce Improvement Board region, creates updates to their workforce plan every two years. The plan details how the regional workforce needs will be met in the coming years, focusing on topics like workforce, education, and growing industry sectors.

## **3. Enterprise Zone Incentives.**

A portion of the City of Wood River is located in the Riverbend Enterprise Zone. Businesses that are located in the Riverbend Enterprise Zone are eligible for financial, training, and general assistance. The program is designed to support business growth and expansion. Application must be made to the Madison County Community Development Department, who administers the program.

While the City itself does not have jurisdiction over these programs, it can make sure local businesses have the information and resources they need to utilize them.

# **Priority 4 | Aesthetically Enhance Business Corridors**

## **A. FOCUS ON DOWNTOWN**

### **1. Establish design guidelines.**

Design Guidelines provide a framework for the character of redevelopment in the downtown area. The guidelines themselves are not regulatory in nature, but rather, provide guidance for property owners who are making decisions about the appearance of their buildings. While the zoning code provides strict requirements that must be met, the guidelines describe an overall character or aesthetic, and let the property owner decide how it is achieved. An example is a guideline that states that new buildings built downtown must include windows that span 75% of the storefront, while the exact location and style of said windows can vary.

### **2. Flip the stop signs.**

This is an infrastructure-related task based on an economic goal. Requiring both the east- and west-bound traffic lanes of Ferguson Avenue to stop at each intersection with a north-south street in the downtown area would create just enough traffic to generate interest (and safety). In this sense, traffic is said to be like cholesterol<sup>1</sup>--good cholesterol is necessary for life, but too much bad cholesterol will kill you. As more businesses open downtown, cars will drive slower, stopping at every block. Ideally, these drivers and passengers will stop, walk, and become pedestrians and customers, slowly creating a destination.

### **3. Amend the Zoning Code to allow mixed-use buildings downtown.**

The Zoning Code currently prohibits apartments above commercial buildings in the downtown business district. Amending the zoning code to allow for this use with a Special Use Permit eliminates a barrier to the kind of development desired by the City. Downtown living encourages walkability and provides clients and customers for downtown businesses.

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<sup>1</sup> Sueuteville, Robert. February 6, 2019. *Good Congestion, Bad Congestion*. Congress for the New Urbanism. <https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2019/02/06/good-congestion-bad-congestion>

#### **4. Consider a Special Service Area.**

Funding physical improvements as well as regulatory and policy amendments in downtown areas can be challenging. A Special Service Area (SSA) provides a funding mechanism for such items. The SSA is a special district with an additional property tax that can be used for physical improvements, development of design guidelines, facade improvement programs, and even marketing.

#### **B. UPDATE SIGN CODE**

Signage contributes to the overall character of a community. Too much signage can appear messy and detract from the character of the built environment while too little signage can make wayfinding difficult. Just as the design and character of buildings can be regulated by design guidelines, signage can, too. While strict regulatory policies are important for controlling signage, creating policies that are in keeping with the desired look and feel of a particular business corridor can elevate the area. It is recommended that the City evaluate the sign code to determine if updates are necessary.

#### **C. REQUIRE LANDSCAPING TO ENHANCE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS**

The benefits of landscaping in commercial corridors are many. Attractive landscaping has been shown to attract more customers and increase property values. Landscaping can also be used to provide a means to shade (and cool) outdoor spaces and even provide a site-specific solution for stormwater management. When new businesses locate in existing commercial corridors, there is an opportunity to require additional landscaping. Over time, this additional environmental and aesthetic improvement will elevate the corridor as a whole, raising property values and attracting new businesses and customers. Furthermore, using native plantings in landscaping will reduce watering needs and maintenance.



**Table 5.3 - Local Economy & Jobs Implementation**

Priority	Term	Relative Cost	Potential Performance Measures	Key Partners
<b>Priority 1 - Business Friendly Community</b>				
A. Ease the business development process	Short	Low	Feedback from new business owners	City, Business Owners, WREN, DBOG, EDC
B. Benchmark data	Short	Low	Number of new businesses, total investment, location of new businesses, number of full-time and part-time jobs	City, WREN, DBOG, EDC, business owners
C. Develop a business retention and expansion program	Short	Low	Number of BRE meetings annually, businesses retained, business expansions	City
D. Develop business mentorship program	Short	Low	Number of participants in program, feedback from participants	City, DBOG, EDC, business owners
E. Expand the economic development resource base	Mid	Low	Number of participants in programs, feedback from participants	City, DBOG, EDC, business owners, SCORE, SBDC
<b>Priority 2 - Grow and Diversify the Local Economy</b>				
A. Encourage local entrepreneurs	Short	Low	Number of new businesses	City, DBOG, EDC
B. Strategically incentivize reinvestment	Short	Varies	Number, type, and location of incentives provided	City
<b>Priority 3 - Develop the Workforce of Tomorrow</b>				
A. CEO Program	Mid	Low	Development of program, students enrolled in program	City, School District
B1. Madison County Employment and Training	Short	Low	Number of businesses assisted, number of workers trained	City, Madison County Employment and Training, EDC
B2. Local WIB	Short	Low	Attend meeting of LWIA#22, participate in planning process	City, MBJC WIB, EDC
B3. Enterprise Zone Incentives	Short	Low	Number of businesses assisted	City, Madison County
<b>Priority 4 - Aesthetically Enhance Business Corridors</b>				
A1. Establish design guidelines	Mid	Mid	Number of participants in planning process	City, DBOG, EDC
A2. Flip the stop signs	Short	Low	Number of stop signs re-oriented, traffic counts, downtown customer traffic	City, DBOG, EDC
A3. Amend the Zoning Code to allow mixed-uses	Short	Low	Zoning Code amended	City, DBOG
A4. Consider a Special Service Area	Long	Mid	District created, area of district, projects funded by district	City, DBOG, EDC
B. Update Sign Code	Mid	Mid	Sign Code updated	City, DBOG, EDC
C. Require Landscaping to Enhance Commercial Corridors	Mid	Low	Landscaped area per commercial lot	City, EDC

Abbreviations: City = Various City departments, such as Building & Zoning, City Clerk, Parks Dept, WREN = Wood River Enrichment Network, DBOG = Downtown Business Owners Group, EDC = Economic Development Committee, MBJC WIB = Madison Bond Jersey Calhoun Workforce Improvement Board SBDC = Small Business Development Center, SCORE = Service Corps of Retired Executives

# 6 community assets & quality of life

## 6.1 CITY SERVICES

The City of Wood River's government center, City Hall, is located at 111 N. Wood River Ave. This one-story brick building was built in 1975 and houses the City's administrative offices, including the Finance Department, Building and Zoning Department, and the office of the City Clerk.

The Building and Zoning Administrator also serves as the Chief of Police and as such, has an office in the police department at 550 Madison Avenue.

The City Council Chamber is also located in City Hall. This is where the City Council, and

many other boards, committees, and commissions hold regular meetings. Not only do members of the public visit City Hall regularly for these meetings, but to open water, sewer, and trash accounts, pay bills, and apply for occupancy permits.





## 6.2 PUBLIC SAFETY

The Wood River Police Department consists of eighteen Sworn Officers, eleven employees in dispatch, and administrative staff. The City is divided into districts in which a uniformed police officer is assigned to and tasked with connecting with the people living in the community.

As part of the St. Louis Metropolitan Major Case Squad and Southern Illinois Child Death Investigation Task Force, the Wood River Police Department has a range of resources to protect its residents. In 2021 alone, more than 1,685 hours of training were completed by Department employees.

The Wood River Police Department has agreements to provide emergency 911 dispatching to five different incorporated communities,

including the Village of South Roxana, Village of Roxana, Village of Hartford, Village of East Alton, and Village of Bethalto. Wood River also provides 911 dispatch services for the Village of South Roxana Fire Protection District. In 2021, total dispatched calls for service were 44,616 (22,455 for the City of Wood River only), which makes the Wood River Consolidated Communications Center the fourth busiest dispatch center in Madison County, Illinois.

In addition to providing police services to the community, the Wood River Police Department also hosts fundraising events for the Wood River Police Association (a 501(c)3) and school-related drug-free programs.

In recent years there has been a shift to more proactive policing, resulting in more accurate crime

reporting procedures. Although data shows that the calls for service have gone up, it is noted that the shift toward community policing contributes to an overall improvement of the quality of life for people living and working in the City of Wood River.

The State of Illinois continues to adopt new policing mandates that often go unfunded. Additional officers will be needed to keep pace with changes to policing and a growing community. While the Wood River Police Department overall is well positioned, the City's economic growth, community demand, facility and equipment needs, and the need to meet the State mandates will further emphasize the necessity for continued support from the City of Wood River.



Image Source: <https://woodriver.org/government/services/wood-river-police-department/>



The Wood River firehouse is located at 501 E. Edwardsville Road and is the home to 10 full-time firefighters and up to 16 paid-on-call (POC) or volunteer firefighters. The department is led by two full time administration chiefs. The department operates on 24-hour shifts and exceeds minimum staffing requirements of two employees per shift, providing three, instead, while supplementing with paid-on-call firefighters. All personnel are state certified to the Firefighter II level, which exceeds state standards, and all full-time firefighters are also paramedics.

Annual emergency incident volumes have grown year-over-year, with the total number of incidents reaching 2,064 in calendar year 2022. The City also assists on calls in nearby communities as needed. On average, 72%-75% of the total call volume are medical calls. The Fire Department relies on a private ambulance service if patients require transfer to local hospitals, as the department does not maintain its own ambulances.

In fall of 2022, the City partnered with Lewis and Clark Community College to train young firefighters. The department also provides community education opportunities to local schools and businesses on how to prevent fires.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) collects information on municipal fire protection efforts in



communities throughout the United States. In doing so, the ISO visits each community and analyzes relevant data using a Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS), assigning a Public Protection Classification between 1 and 10. Class 1 generally represents superior property fire protection, and Class 10 indicates that the area's fire-suppression program does not meet ISO's minimum criteria.

By classifying communities' ability to suppress fires, ISO helps communities evaluate their public fire-protection services. The program provides an objective, countrywide standard that helps fire departments in planning and budgeting for facilities, equipment, and training. By securing lower fire insurance premiums for communities with better public protection, the program provides incentives and rewards for communities that choose to improve their firefighting services. The Wood River Fire Department improved

its rating from a 4 to a 3 in 2022, which is attributed to its well-maintained water system, as well as the department's track record of fire inspections and assistance with building plan review. Many area communities are in the 3-5 ISO Range, meaning Wood River is a regional leader in fire safety.

While the Wood River Fire Department provides excellent fire protection and paramedic services, the department also assists the Building & Zoning Department with plan review, business inspections, zoning compliance, and code enforcement. As such, the Fire Department plays a critical role in ensuring a safe environment for residents and visitors.

As discussed in Section 4, Infrastructure, the larger the overall footprint of Wood River grows, particularly to the east, the longer response times will be to these parts of the community. Careful planning is necessary not just from an infrastructure perspective, but from a fire service perspective, as well, to maintain an the level 3 ISO rating.

As the Fire Department looks to the future, it should plan for facility improvements to the existing 1986 Fire Station, as well as a potential new station (and the personnel to staff it) on the City's eastern edge. As population has grown to the east, the existing Fire Station, which was once centrally located, is now positioned in the western portion of the City.

### 6.3 PARKS AND RECREATION

The Wood River Parks and Recreation Department's mission is to provide wholesome recreation to the entire range of citizens in Wood River and the surrounding communities. To this end, the City has seven parks, consisting of over 300 acres, offering a wide variety of amenities. The largest and most notable is Belk Park, pictured below. Belk Park is a 234-acre park that is home to an 18-Hole Championship Golf Course, drawing golfers from across the greater St. Louis region. Approximately 30,000 rounds of golf and 50 tournaments are played at Belk Park Golf Course each year. The golf course and park were created from a generous land donation from the Belk family in 1954.

More recently, a one-mile walking path around the lake was added as a Belk Park amenity. Additional Wood River parks ranging from one to 28-acre areas include Brushey Grove Park, Central Park, East End Park, Emerick Sports Complex, West End Park and Wood River Soccer & Skate Park. Park amenities give residents picnicking options with shelters, bathrooms and BBQ grills, as well as playgrounds and basketball, soccer and baseball/softball sports fields and courts.

The City's Parks & Recreation services also provide several opportunities for all ages to participate in recreation activities and special events. The City offers recreation amenities for youth and adults, including adult

softball, senior lunches, and even Pinterest Parties, where small groups gather to complete a craft project each month. Youth programs include flag football, gymnastics, volleyball, baseball and softball, basketball, soccer, and summer camps. This focus on youth activities is aligned with the broader community goal of developing character through sports.

The Wood River Parks department maintains the buildings and grounds of all park facilities. The department also applies for grants to expand and improve City parks. Most recently, the City received a \$450,000 grant to build a new playground in Central Park in 2023, which will include a challenge course and



Image Source: Moran Economic Development





Image Source: © Adobe Stock

an ADA accessible playground. Local businesses have also been known to donate funds for park improvements, modeling the true collaboration.

In 2021, the City received a \$2.5 million grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Park and Recreational Facility Construction grant program (known as the PARC grant).

Upgrades are currently taking place at the Roundhouse and a new Recreation Center is being constructed. The Wood River Rec Center is an \$11 million 35,000 square foot facility that will house indoor court areas, gymnastics

facilities, a walking and jogging track, dressing and shower facilities, community rooms, outdoor ball fields and a splash pad, as well as new offices for the Parks and Recreation Department. The City has, until now, used the Round House, the only indoor facility, for all its recreation needs, meaning only one event could take place at a time. With the new Recreation Center, gymnastics can be offered at the same time basketball is being played, while walkers enjoy the track. This means a significant increase in opportunities for recreation for all residents.

The new Recreation Center will be located at the same location as the former aquatic center, next to the Round House in Central Park.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Park Metrics guide finds that on average, American communities are served by 9.9 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents, and one park for every 2,277 residents. With 10,464 residents, Wood River should have a minimum of 103 acres and 4 parks, but it boasts nearly three times the amount of recommended parkland (292 acres) and seven parks.



Image Source: AAIC, Inc.



***Belk Park Golf Course***, an 18-hole championship golf course that attracts more than 50,000 visitors each year. One of the most popular golf courses in the greater St. Louis region, it was recognized as Golf Digest's "Places to Play-4 Star Award." Each year, the facility hosts numerous banquets and rehearsal dinners.





## 6.4 HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Riverbend Region has a rich history; from the early civilization of Cahokia and the winter camp of Merriweather Lewis and William Clark's Expedition in 1804, to a community built around manufacturing in the early 20th Century. Wood River may not be known for its modern history, but the community that developed around Standard Oil Company should not be overlooked as an asset for the future. Operations began in 1908 and by 1909, the village of Wood River was developing around the refinery.


Standard Oil funded the first community school in 1909 and formed the first volunteer fire department. Like other manufacturing communities in the area, namely, Leclaire, the company also funded recreation facilities, including the original Roundhouse and community pool.

Most notably, between 1910 and the early 1920's the Standard Oil Company purchased 24 Sears, Roebuck & Co. homes to give to employees. The City of Wood River has one of the largest concentrations of Sears homes today, most of which are located in the 100 and 200 blocks of South 9th Street. Recognized historic properties offer many benefits to current residents, including a tax freeze for improved properties. The City should consider creating a local historic

district, not only to preserve this historically significant housing, but to encourage maintenance and rehabilitation through tax incentives. Subsequently, an ordinance enacting preservation



regulations would be adopted, ensuring that architectural details are preserved and the original of the character of the neighborhood is not lost over time.

**MAKES ITS OWNERS PROUD**



**The ARGYLE** **Honor-Built** **\$1,759<sup>00</sup>**  
No. 7018 "Already Cut" and Fitted.

See Description of "Honor-Built" Houses on Page 7.



**THE ARGYLE** Modern Home is a bungalow whose exterior appearance suggests extra fine interior arrangement and furnishings. The front elevation, as you glance at it, bespeaks richness and comfort on the inside. A glance at the illustrations of the living room and dining room proves this conclusively. Note the bookcase colonnade, the beamed ceiling, the massive brick mantel with the built-in bookcase on the side. Note also the extra depth of the living room and dining room, nearly 30 feet long. "A \$6,000.00 house," you might say, and you would not be very far wrong, if it were built in the ordinary way. Yet by our modern merchandising methods we are able to furnish the materials so that you can build it for a great deal less.

Built at:  
Hellertown, Penna.,  
Toledo, Ohio,  
Detroit, Mich.,  
Bridgeport, Conn.,  
Garvin, Minn.,  
Niagara Falls, N. Y.,  
Rantoul, Ill.

Write for names of people who have built this bungalow.

Read Complete Description on the Opposite Page.

**SEARS ROEBUCK AND CO. CHICAGO-PHILADELPHIA**

Image Source: Sears, Roebuck & Co. Honor Built Modern Homes. Chicago, 1921, 38.





Historic Sears, Roebuck & Co. homes located on South 9th Street in Wood River. Historic details, such as rafter tails, are still visible in this image. These details add character and to each home and to the neighborhood. Designation of this area as a historic district, and subsequent adoption of an historic preservation ordinance, would preserve these unique and valuable architectural details.

Image Source: Moran Economic Development



## 6.5 EDUCATION

The level of educational attainment can be attributed to the City's access to higher education. Within a 60 mile radius there are numerous large (enrollment of 2,000+) institutions, ranging from nationally accredited technical universities to nationally acclaimed public and private Universities.

In addition to easy access to higher education, residents also have access to a number of Pre-K through 12th grade education institutions. The Wood River community spans over numerous public school districts to include East Alton Elementary #13, Lewis & Clark Elementary School, Wood River-Hartford #15, East Alton-Wood River High School #14, Roxana #1 and Edwardsville #7. The community is also home to two private school programs, St. Paul Lutheran Preschool and William M. Bedell Achievement and Resource Center.



Image Source: Moran Economic Development



Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Image Source: St. Louis Public Radio

Access to three elementary schools (K-5), three middle schools (6-8) and three high schools (9-12) is seen as a challenge by many members of the community. Because each school district levies taxes to fund school operations, tax bills vary widely across the community.

In addition to the outstanding primary and secondary educational facilities locating within the City of Wood River, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) is located just minutes from the City. More than 15,000 students are enrolled in SIUE's undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degree programs.<sup>1</sup>

Only 3,000 SIUE students live on-campus, so there is ample opportunity for Wood River to provide housing to the many

students living off-campus. Wood River is also located centrally between the primary SIUE campus and the SIUE School of Dental Medicine in Alton, which is a boon to both students and faculty looking to be in close proximity to both campuses.

The University is recognized as a NCAA Division 1 member of the Ohio Valley Conference. SIUE's outstanding academic and athletic programs should be celebrated by Wood River. The University has reported that students spend, on average, \$11,000 annually on housing, household expenses, food, and entertainment, which translates to an economic impact of more than \$150 million annually.



# community assets & quality of life

# PRIORITIES

## Priority 1 | Build the Community Brand

### A. BUILD UPON AND FURTHER INGRAIN THE 'GOOD RIVER' BRAND

Establishing Wood River's brand and effectively marketing it will strengthen the City's image and recognition. Building on #GoodRiver, Wood River's brand should portray its affordable cost of living, support of local entrepreneurs, and its central location in the St. Louis region. Branding is not only important for external audiences, but it builds civic pride. Through both the comprehensive and bicycle-pedestrian planning processes, the City of Wood River has honed its identity, and it should be packaged in a way that current residents and outsiders recognize and support.

## Priority 2 | Emphasize Education

### A. IMPROVE RELATIONSHIP WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Wood River is in the challenging position of spanning multiple grade school districts and high school districts. Portions of Wood River are located in the Roxana Community Unit School District, East Alton School District, Wood River Hartford School District, and the Edwardsville School District. This is a community wide challenge because within the same close knit community, there are three high schools with different graduation rates, grade schools whose ability address childhood poverty varies by district, and young people who may not develop relationships with students not in their district. While the City can't solve these issues and has no jurisdiction over school district matters, branding the community and instilling a sense of community pride can help overcome these challenges.

### B. LONG LIVE THE LIBRARY

While various school districts may divide the community, the Wood River Public Library is the educational and community-oriented institution that brings them back together. Survey results show great praise for the public library and its amenities and programs. It is a resource and learning hub for students from all school districts in Wood River. A key strategy for weaving the library even more into everyday life is to focus on the connections between the core of downtown and the library. This particular stretch of Ferguson Avenue (from Second Street to the Library) should be evaluated to ensure zoning regulations allow for the redevelopment of vacant lots and require that it be done in character with the surrounding area and in a way that prioritizes pedestrians.

## Priority 3 | Prioritize Parks and Open Spaces

### A. NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Parks provide spaces where people can socialize, enhance the local environment, and promote wellness within the community. While most homes in Wood River are located within a short distance of a park, it's important to incorporate parks into new residential developments that develop on the eastern edge of town. Often new low-density residential developments are designed with larger lots and omit public open spaces; however, incorporating public spaces like parks into all new neighborhoods means that even if a neighborhood is located away from the historic downtown core, there is still a park within walking distance. Convenient access to a park also increases property values, by a magnitude of up to 10% for those properties located closest to the park.

### B. CONNECTED PARKS

Efforts should be made to enhance infrastructure that provides bike and pedestrian connections between parks. Within the region, the Madison County Transit trail network connects several parks, but within Wood River, wide sidewalks, safe intersections, and wayfinding will improve connectivity.

### C. ACCESSIBLE PARKS

While efforts have been made to provide accessible playground equipment and enhance accessible walking paths, there is always more to be done. Park accessibility should be woven into annual capital planning and grant funding should be leveraged whenever possible.

## Priority 4 | Build on Special Events

### A. SUPPORT NEW AND EXISTING SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events are an opportunity to build community. While support for existing events such as the Halloween Parade, Chili Cookoff, and Farmers' Market is critical for continued success, City support of new events is just as important. Community events encourage resident participation and take a community to prepare, host, and cleanup. They can attract regional attention and bring out-of-town guests. The average resident might now know that holding a new event just takes some outside of the box thinking and collaboration with neighbors. This could be a new food festival, a fall festival, or even a holiday light walk. Hosting a wedding vendor show at the Belk Park Golf Course could also showcase the facility, bringing out of town guests.

### B. CAPITALIZE ON CROWDS

Businesses have a huge opportunity to attract new customers when events are held in town. It would be beneficial for the business networks that already exist to share calendars to ensure all local businesses are aware of potential crowds, not only for staffing reasons, but also for marketing opportunities.

## Table 6.1 - Community Assets & Quality of Life Implementation

Priority	Term	Relative Cost	Potential Performance Measures	Key Partners
<b>Priority 1 - Build the Community Brand</b>				
A1. Build upon and further ingrain the "Good River" brand	Ongoing	Low-Mid	Brand recognition survey, social media engagements	City, EDC
<b>Priority 2 - Emphasize Education</b>				
A. Improve relationship with school districts	Ongoing	Low	Quality of relationships	City, School Districts
B. Long Live the Library	Ongoing	Low	Number of visitors, participants in library programs	City, Library
<b>Priority 3 - Prioritize Parks and Open Spaces</b>				
A. Neighborhood Parks	Long	Mid	Trail and sidewalk connections added, amount of green space preserved in new subdivisions	City
B. Connected Parks	Long	Mid	Trail and sidewalk connections added, wayfinding signs added	City
C. Accessible Parks	Long	Mid	Number of accessibility improvement projects, number of parks impacted	City
<b>Priority 4 - Build on Special Events</b>				
A. Support New Special Events	Long	Low-Mid	Number of attendees, number of new events	City, DBOG, EDC, WREN,
B. Capitalize on Crowds	Short	Low	Business sales during events, number of events, customer traffic during events	City, DBOG, EDC

Abbreviations: City = Various City departments, such as Building & Zoning, City Clerk, Parks Dept, WREN = Wood River Enrichment Network, DBOG = Downtown Business Owners Group, EDC = Economic Development Committee



# land use

# 7

The Land Use element examines existing land uses and establishes the pattern of future land uses, identifying areas of infill, new development, and preservation within the City of Wood River. The policies identified in this

section ensure that both new and infill development are managed in a way that supports population projections and align with goals identified in this comprehensive plan. Before the creation of a future land use

map, it is important to evaluate development constraints and development opportunities, both of which play a pivotal role in determining the use of properties within the City of Wood River.

## 7.1 LAND USE AND ZONING

When planning for future land use, it is important to distinguish between land use and zoning. The land use classification of a property is how it's currently being used. Land use classifications are typically general in nature and include single family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and parks categories. Future land use classifications will follow these land use categories, as well. Future land use can be planned in a detail-oriented parcel-by-parcel

manner, or with broad strokes and fuzzy boundaries, which allows for more flexibility in zoning and development outcomes.

The purpose of the Future Land Use Plan and Map is to guide the City's zoning decisions and to assist with monitoring adherence to the comprehensive plan. Planning for future land use is a way to maintain and elevate the character of new development projects. The Future Land Use Plan aligns development project decisions with goals set forth in

the comprehensive plan. It is only a guide and not a development standard.

Zoning, on the other hand, is a development standard--a regulatory tool that provides parcel-level use and bulk standards. These site-specific regulations ensure compatibility with surrounding properties and prevent incompatible uses and structures within the districts. The zoning code is the primary tool used to implement the vision set forth in the comprehensive plan.

## 7.2 PLANNING AREA

In order to plan for future growth beyond the existing City boundaries, both the existing land use and zoning of the land within a 1.5-mile radius of the existing corporate limits should be considered. Appendix C (p. 69) shows the existing land uses of the unincorporated properties

within a 1.5-mile radius of Wood River's corporate limits, which consists of property to the north and east sides of the corporate boundary. The primary uses to the north of the City are residential, and to the west are undeveloped and agricultural uses. The current county zoning

for these unincorporated areas is shown in Appendix D (p. 70). Similar to the land uses, the majority of the property on the northern side of the City consists of residential districts, and the western portion as an agricultural district.

### Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

Illinois State Statute 65 ILCS 5/11 Division 12 authorizes municipalities to exercise both planning and subdivision authority within unincorporated areas. In areas where no boundary agreement exists and municipal ETJs overlap, each municipality's jurisdiction extends to the median line equidistant from its boundary and the boundary of the nearest municipality.

## 7.3 DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Planning for future land uses must be done within the context of the existing constraints and opportunities of a community. Planning done without first understanding existing limitations and opportunities growth, will result in unrealistic goals and an impractical work plan. An evaluation of constraints in Wood River yields several findings:

### »Landlocked

The City is mostly landlocked, save the east side of the City, where the existing boundary stretches to Moreland Road. While this may be seen as a constraint, limiting options for greenfield development, there are ample opportunities for redevelopment, which is not only more

environmentally friendly, but can be as cost effective as green field development, since road and utility infrastructure are already in place.

### »Limited population growth

While population growth has been and is predicted to be stagnant and slightly declining, there is not unlimited capacity for development. Because of this constraint, the City should strategically focus resources where the greatest impact will be seen, such as reinvesting in existing neighborhoods and existing commercial areas.

### »Edwardsville Road Corridor

The Edwardsville Road Corridor is a typical commercial corridor,

containing several large retail and restaurant businesses setback from the street with large parking lots between the road and the building. Opportunities exist for the redevelopment of several of these sites, either as they are, or subdivided further to allow for additional buildings to share the same parking lot. Utilizing existing infrastructure to support economic growth translates to more revenue and fewer infrastructure maintenance costs for the City.

Key development opportunities in Wood River include:

### »Amoco/BP Site

The largest opportunity for redevelopment is the former BP

site, an 800-acre brownfield site located at the southwest quadrant of intersection of Madison Avenue and S. 6th Streets. While BP owns this property, it has eliminated its operations and the property has been vacant for nearly 40 years.

BP does have a track record of supporting the City of Wood River; it donated \$6.5 million for the new Police Department, and helped with sewer separation projects in the Poets Row' area of the City, near Central and Hawthorn Avenues. The BP/Amoco site occupies 17% of the total land area of the City of Wood River. This significant property has frontage on the Mississippi River to the west, is adjacent to the Madison County Transit (MCT) Wood River Station to the northwest, and is bisected by the Confluence Trail, a bike-walk trail that connects Alton to Granite City and the McKinley Bridge, making St. Louis City accessible without a vehicle. This is a critical

site within the City and within the region. The redevelopment of this site will not only be a catalyst for the City of Wood River itself, but for the Riverbend region as a whole. Steps to realizing this site redevelopment include:

- Establish a consistent point of contact and maintain relationships with Amoco/BP
- Assess environmental constraints specific to this site
- Consider the role the City will play in the redevelopment project, including the initiation of any code changes necessary to support a large-scale mixed use development in this area
- Evaluate economic incentives that are available and appropriate for a development of this magnitude, including grant funding
- Continue to foster relationships with BP/Amoco,

urging them to actively toward redeveloping the property.

### »Downtown

Downtown Wood River is on the cusp of becoming a thriving community center. The City should continue to support business locating in the downtown area. Downtowns are the heart and soul of every community, and reflect the local values and character of a community. From community events to one-of-a-kind businesses, each and every downtown offers a unique experience. Wood River has experienced much interest and growth in its downtown area in recent years. There is great potential not only for economic growth in the downtown area, but for residents to reconnect with their community and become an active participant in creating the future of Wood River.



***Co-Creators produce the interesting, the memorable, the unique the fun and the lovable aspects of our community.***

*Peter Kageyama, For The Love of Cities*



## 7.4 LAND USES

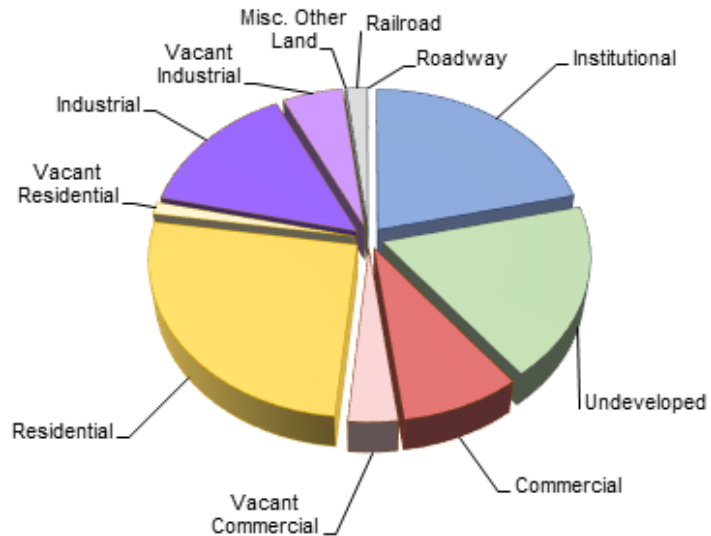
Understanding existing land use patterns within the City of Wood River is the first step in creating a plan for future land use. Figure 7.3 depicts the variety of land uses that exist in Wood River, by acreage, and corresponds to Appendix E, Existing Land Use Map (p. 71). Similarly, appendices E, F, and G (p.71-73) , respectively, depict vacant and occupied parcels that are classified as commercial, residential, and industrial, respectively.

Identifying future land uses, as seen in Appendix I (p. 75) is a proactive way to influence and encourage future development that is aligned with the vision set forth in this Plan.

### » Residential Land Uses

The residential land use classification can be defined as all real property used or held for human habitation containing one or more dwelling units including rooming houses with facilities assigned and used for living. Additionally, the designation includes accessory land, buildings or improvements incidental to such habitation and used exclusively by the residents of the property or their guests. Incidental accessory land, buildings or improvements would include garages, sheds, in-ground swimming pools, tennis courts, etc. Residential land uses make up approximately 26% of the total acreage in the City, and approximately 80% of the parcel classifications. Vacant residential

Figure 7.3 Existing Land Use by Acreage



parcels make up 4.7% of the parcel classifications, and 1.2% of the total acreage.

### » Commercial Land Uses

The commercial land use classification can be defined as all real property used or held for use for business purposes and not specifically included in another class. Approximately 9% of the total acreage and 13% of the parcels within the City are used for commercial purposes. Vacant commercial parcels make up 1.4% of the total parcels in the City, and 3.5% of the acreage

### » Institutional Land Uses

The institutional land use classification can be defined as all property which is totally exempt from taxation. This

classification includes municipal or county uses, educational uses, charitable uses, religious uses, and use by authorities (Housing, Utility, Electric, Sewer, Water, etc.). Approximately 5% of all parcels and 21% of the acreage in the City are classified as institutional.

### » Industrial Land Uses

The industrial land use classification can be defined as all real property used or held for use for business and manufacturing purposes and not specifically included in another class. Approximately 14.3% of the total acreage and 0.7% of the parcels within the City are used for industrial purposes. Vacant industrial property makes up 5.2% of the total acreage, and 0.3% of the City's parcels.

## 7.5 ZONING

The zoning district map shown in Appendix J (p. 76) corresponds with the City's Zoning Code, with the districts defined as follows:

### *A Agricultural*

The Agricultural District is intended to maintain and enhance areas that are best suited for agricultural pursuits. This zoning is also intended to serve as a holding zone for lands where future urban expansion is possible, but not yet appropriate due to the lack of urban facilities and services. The preservation of agricultural land is intended to prevent urban sprawl, control the public costs of providing urban services and reduce urban/rural conflicts which arise as a result of premature development of rural areas. This district is further intended to preserve open space and natural resource areas.

### *R-1 Single-Family Residential*

The R-1 Single Family Residential District is intended to preserve and stabilize single-family dwellings and neighborhoods that were developed at a low density and for persons having different social needs and incomes. The regulations are also intended to promote the development of new single-family dwellings and to protect such neighborhoods from uses and developments which are incompatible or disruptive to the nature of this district.

### *R-2 Single-Family Residential*

The R-2 Single Family Residential zoning is intended to preserve

and stabilize single-family dwellings and neighborhoods that were developed at a slightly higher density than the R-1 district. This allows the provision of housing for persons with different social needs and incomes. These regulations are also intended to promote the development of new single-family dwellings and to protect such neighborhoods from uses and developments which are incompatible or disruptive to the nature of this district.

### *MR-3 Two-Family Residential*

The Two-Family Residential District is intended to establish and preserve residential neighborhoods with single and two-family residences. These regulations are intended to encourage the development of two-family dwellings (duplexes) and the various uses that are compatible with such developments.

### *MR-4 Multiple-Family Residential*

The MR-4 Multiple-Family Residential District is intended to establish and preserve neighborhoods containing predominantly multiple-family dwellings which provide a wide range of housing while maintaining a moderate density level. This district is also intended to promote the development of new multi-family areas and the uses compatible with such developments in order to accommodate all persons desiring this type of residential environment.

### *MR-5 Multiple-Family Residential*

The MR-5 Multiple-Family Residential District is intended to establish and preserve neighborhoods containing predominately multiple family dwellings. These dwellings will be built at a density equal to or greater than that permitted in the MR-4 districts. This district is also intended to promote the development of comparable new areas and the uses compatible with such developments.

### *MH Manufactured Home Park*

The MH Manufactured Home Park Residential District is intended to accommodate manufactured home parks in those areas of the community where such a use will be compatible with existing and projected development. This district should be adequately served by sewers, water service, streets, police and fire protection, and should be developed in a manner to provide safe and ample living areas.

### *BD Downtown Business District*

The BD Downtown Business District is intended to establish and preserve the downtown business area that was developed in the earlier years of the City's history. This district is intended to promote a pedestrian-oriented space that is convenient and attractive for a wide range of retail uses and business, including governmental and professional offices which provide a variety of services to the general public. The intent of this district is to preserve the existing downtown area in the manner in which it was

developed; therefore, this district will not be expanded, nor will any additional districts of this zoning be formed.

#### **B-1 Neighborhood Business**

The B-1 Neighborhood Business District is intended to preserve and promote the small commercial enclaves that are located within or on the fringe of residential areas. These small-

scale businesses will not generate a significant amount of traffic and serve as a convenience to the residents of the immediate neighborhood. It is the intent of this district to establish an area where businesses that are complimentary to residential districts may locate.

#### **B-2 Community Business**

The B-2 Community Business District is intended to establish and develop locations for commercial and retail businesses that are frequented by a small, consistent number of customers who reach the individual business establishments primarily by automobile. The customers are generally not at the business for an extended period of time.

## *Section 1-3 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Wood River*

**Purpose.** *The purpose of this Zoning Ordinance is to guide development in accordance with existing and future needs and in order to protect, promote and improve the public health, safety, morals, convenience, order, appearance, prosperity, and the general welfare of the citizens of Wood River. These regulations are made in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.*

#### **B-3 Highway Business**

The B-3 Highway Business District is intended to accommodate and promote strip commercial developments and other compatible uses. Because these businesses generally draw their patrons from the motoring public, they require direct access to major streets and large lots for off-street parking and loading. These businesses are usually frequented by many people who often stay for extended periods of time.

#### **WRBP Wood River Business Park**

The Wood River Business Park is intended as a Business Unit Development with varied enterprises normally segregated under specific use districts.

Although facilities located in this district are varied, they will exist in harmony and compliment the environmental atmosphere of the Business Park. The Wood River Business Park (WRBP) is to be bounded by Illinois Route 3 on the East, Illinois Route 143 on the South, and the corporate limits of the City on the West and North. There shall be no additional WRBP districts established in this municipality.

#### **I Industrial District**

The I Industrial District is intended to provide areas where light industry, research facilities, warehouses and wholesale businesses may locate without detriment to the remainder of the community. These areas readily

provide the factors needed by the businesses classified as industrial and will enable these businesses to provide their required services without disrupting the surrounding uses.

#### **CR Conservation/Recreation**

The CR Conservation/Recreation district is intended to designate and develop places of recreation and leisure for the residents and visitors of this municipality. It is the intention of this district to preserve and enhance the natural conditions of these areas so that they may provide a recreational value to all residents.



# land use PRIORITIES

## Priority 1 | Modernize Code Standards

### A. MODERNIZED CODES ARE THE BASIS FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

#### 1. Mixed-use zoning.

Mixed-use zoning should be incorporated into the Zoning Code, particularly in the Downtown Business District. Special focus should be given to whether mixed uses should require a Special Use Permit or be permitted by right, both of which have benefits. Keep in mind that updates to the B-1 District will have ripple effects on parking requirements when making the code change.

#### 2. Review Zoning Districts.

The Zoning Districts listed on pages 60-61 of this Plan are those that are currently in the Zoning Code. The City should evaluate whether each of the zoning districts listed in the Zoning Code is used or will be used in the implementation of this Plan. For example, the City may find that not all of the residential districts are applicable and could easily be combined into one single-family district and one multi-family district.

#### 3. Enhance Landscape Requirements.

Landscape requirements should be added to the zoning code, not only to enhance redeveloping commercial areas, but for new subdivisions, as well. Landscaping increases property values and attracts customers, while elevating whole corridors. In considering landscaping requirements, the City should also strongly consider requiring native plants, since these require less ongoing maintenance and promote biodiversity.

## Priority 2 | Prioritize the Natural Environment

### A. IDENTIFY PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

1. Identifying physical development constraints such as flood plains, wetlands, and undermined areas. While some of these features can be mitigated, others should be avoided due to increase environmental hazards, such as flooding.

## **Priority 3 | Develop Annexation Strategy**

### **A. WORK WITH PROPERTY OWNERS FOR ANNEXATION AGREEMENTS**

1. Annexation to the east will be the primary way the City of Wood River gains land area. As discussed in Section 4, properly managing growth in this direction is vital for the City's financial health and for maintaining quality, connected neighborhoods. A proactive approach to annexation is necessary to set the stage for the growth over the next 20 years. Adherence to Wood River's development standards should be woven into annexation agreements, so that when properties not contiguous to the City are developed, they are developed to City standards.

## **Priority 4 | Plan for Future Land Use**

### **A. RELY ON FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

1. The future land use map (FLUM) is a tool best utilized frequently and updated regularly. It should be referenced with each application for a zoning variance or a special use permit. It should guide the City's economic development actions and provide a foundation for better public and private decision making with regard to investment infrastructure, housing, and transportation elements. The FLUM should be reviewed periodically and updated as needed, to account for changes in the economy and to keep pace with evolving community goals.

**Table 7.1 Land Use Implementation**

Priority	Term	Relative Cost	Potential Performance Measures	Key Partners
<b>Priority 1 - Modernize Code Standards</b>				
A1. Mixed Use Zoning	Mid	Low	Codes amended, total area available for mixed-use development, density in downtown district	City, DBOG
A2. Enhance Landscape Requirements	Mid	Low	Total area landscaped, percent landscaped area required for commercial lots	City, EDC
<b>Priority 2 - Prioritize the Natural Environment</b>				
A. Identify Physical Development Constraints	Short	Low	Annual review of constraints	City
<b>Priority 3 - Develop Annexation Strategy</b>				
A. Work with property owners for annexation agreements	Mid	Low	Number of annexation agreements, total land area within agreements	City, unincorporated property owners
<b>Priority 4 - Plan for Future Land Use</b>				
A. Rely on Future Land Use Map (FLUM)	Ongoing	Low	Number of rezoning requests	City

Abbreviations: City = Various City departments, such as Building & Zoning, City Clerk, Parks Dept, WREN = Wood River Enrichment Network, DBOG = Downtown Business Owners Group, EDC = Economic Development Committee



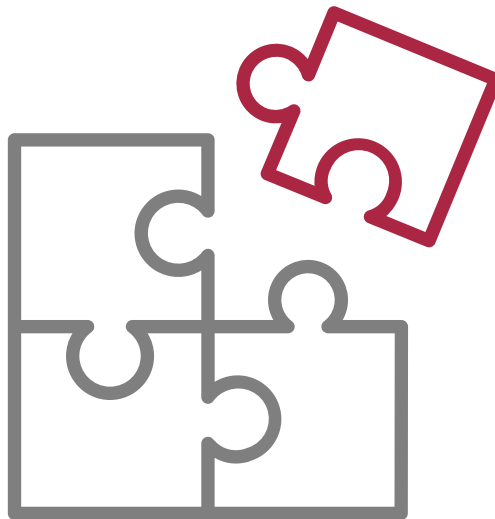
# implementation

Arguably the most important art of the planning process is implementing the comprehensive plan after completion is implementation. Without a clear strategy for implementing the plan, it will 'sit on the shelf' and not be useful to those that created it and those that rely on it to make investment decisions within the community.

The Tables at the end of each

chapter should be used as a guide to assist in prioritization and implementation of plan goals. Each of the tables provides information on whether the priority action is achievable in the short-, mid-, or long-term, and whether the relative cost is low, mid or high. Additionally, the tables provide lists of potential partners as well as potential performance measures. As the

City Council, Plan Commission and City staff embark on annual work plans, the potential performance measures should be considered and additional measures should be added as necessary. Likewise, potential partners may be added or changed depending on which groups are active and which partners make the most sense to work with in the short-, mid-, and long-term.



## 8.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility to implement the Comprehensive Plan and make the vision a reality is not the responsibility of one person or department, but rather, successful implementation of this comprehensive plan relies on many people in different roles working together.

The City Council's primary role is to determine the priorities of City initiatives and corresponding budgets. The Plan Commission acts in an advisory role, making recommendations to the City Council and preparing an annual progress report for the City Council to review, while City

staff, manage the day-to-day implementation of the plan. City staff support the Plan Commission and City Council and are often the first stop for those wishing to start a development project, reviewing proposals to ensure alignment with the comprehensive plan.

Role of the City Council	Role of the Plan Commission	Role of City Staff
Set annual priorities and budget in alignment with comprehensive plan	Annually review plan	Monitor day-to-day projects
Refer to and rely on plan for decision making	Report progress to City Council	Review compatibility of individual project proposals with plan
Ensure alignment of CIP and other long range plans with comprehensive plan	Make recommendations about updates to the City Council	Prioritize plan goals when meeting with developers and residents
Provide direction to Plan Commission & Staff	Educate partners about implementation	Manage and draft plan amendments and development regulations
Seek partners for implementation	Work with staff to review planning programs and ensure compatibility with comprehensive plan	Seek partners for implementation
Champion the plan	Seek partners for implementation	Negotiate intergovernmental or other agreements necessary to implement the plan
	Champion the plan	Champion the plan

## 8.2 Partners

Successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan relies on the public and on partner organizations within the community. The City relies on these partners to invest in the community, starting new businesses, purchasing homes, and creating the neighborhoods that people call home. Implementation of long-range plans works when partners, including the public, are engaged in both the planning process and the implementation process.

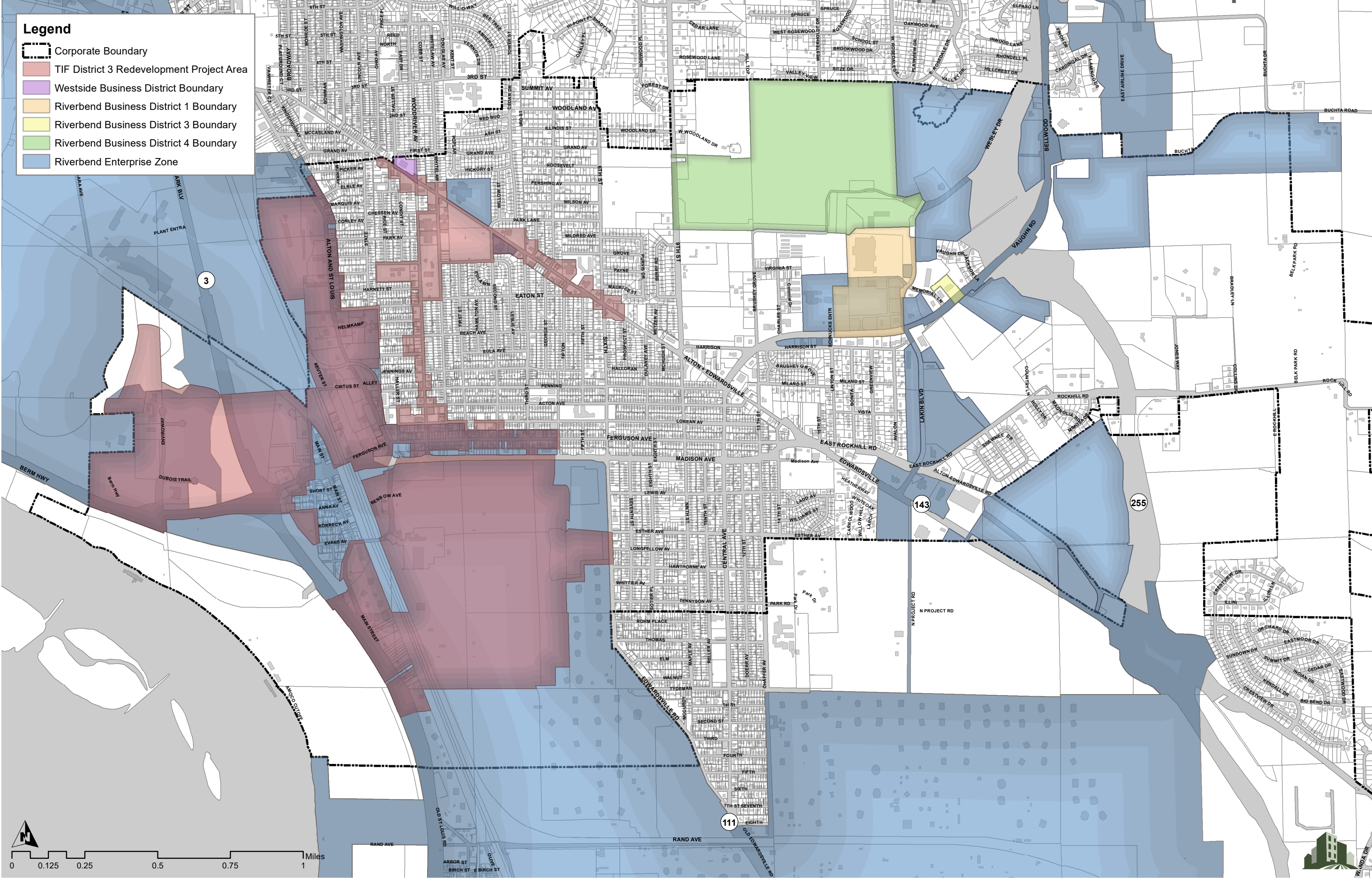


and strategies and review of achievements against the overall plan on an annual basis. The Implementation Table provided at the end of each section lists potential metrics, partner organizations, priority actions, and relative cost of implementation.

These tables should be used as a tool to guide funding and staff efforts over the course of the plan. They can be updated and modified to include new partners or shifting priorities as a result of funding availability or other factors the City Council considers when annually reviewing the plan.

## 8.3 Ongoing Monitoring

Implementing the priorities set forth in the comprehensive plan requires monitoring of goals



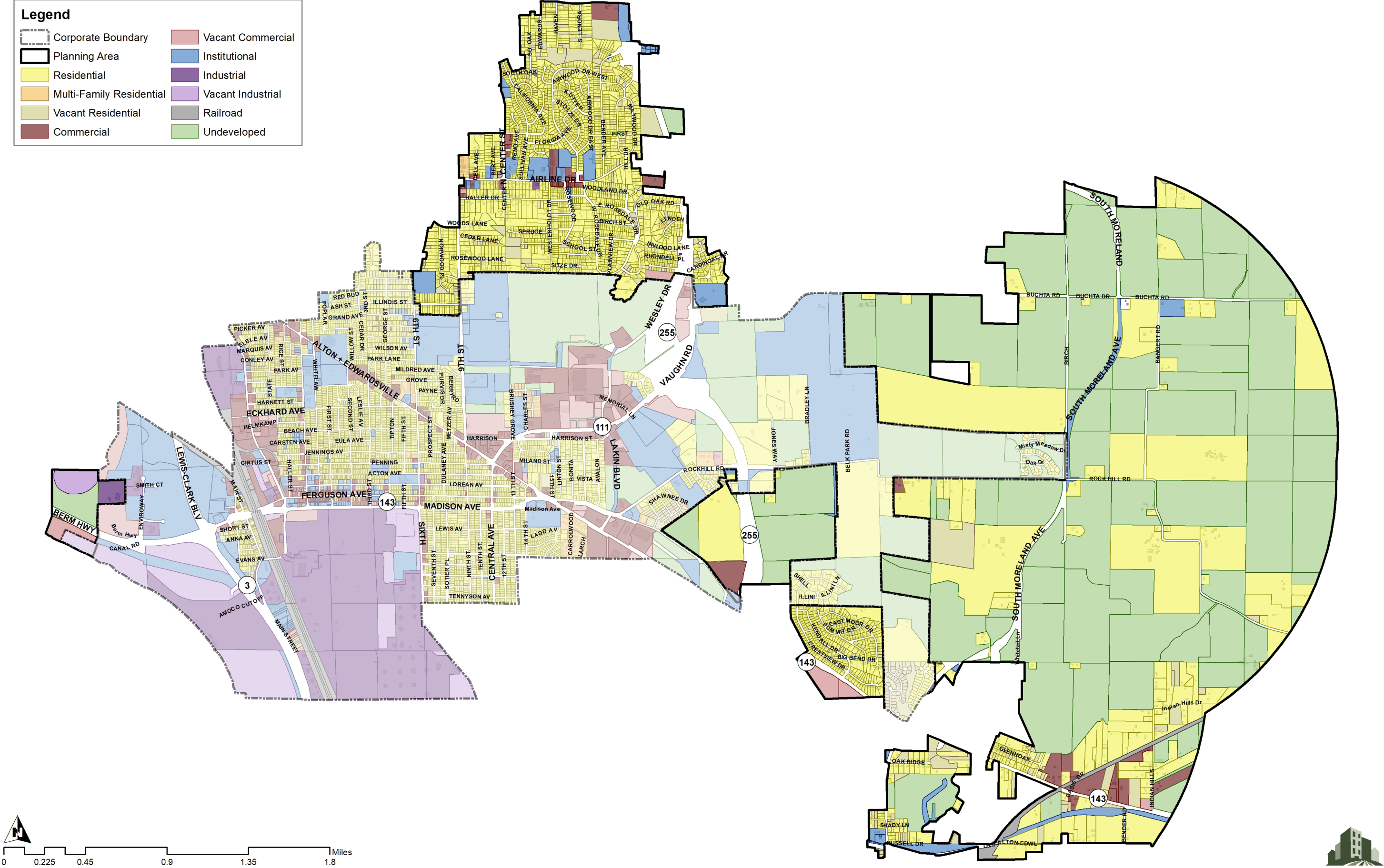


Appendix B - Retail Opportunity Gap

Industry Sector	2022 Demand (\$)	2022 Supply (\$)	Opportunity Gap/Surplus (\$)
<b>Totals</b>			
Total retail trade including food and drink (NAICS 44, 45 and 722)	184,780,167	262,297,705	-77,517,538
Total retail trade (NAICS 44 and 45)	167,147,732	237,382,293	-70,234,561
<b>Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers</b>			
Motor vehicle and parts dealers (NAICS 441)	37,065,936	120,533,221	-83,467,286
Automobile dealers (NAICS 4411)	30,749,851	102,952,971	-72,203,120
New car dealers (NAICS 44111)	27,369,980	99,643,865	-72,273,885
Used car dealers (NAICS 44112)	3,379,871	3,309,106	70,765
Other motor vehicle dealers (NAICS 4412)	3,148,955	13,904,211	-10,755,256
Recreational vehicle dealers (NAICS 44121)	1,226,808	192,347	1,034,461
Motorcycle, boat, and other motor vehicle dealers (NAICS 44122)	1,922,147	13,711,864	-11,789,717
Boat dealers (NAICS 441222)	729,175	5,380,081	-4,650,906
Motorcycle, ATV, and all other motor vehicle dealers (NAICS 441228)	1,192,972	8,331,783	-7,138,811
Automotive parts, accessories, and tire stores (NAICS 4413)	3,167,129	3,676,039	-508,910
Automotive parts and accessories stores (NAICS 44131)	1,999,608	2,409,753	-410,144
Tire dealers (NAICS 44132)	1,167,521	1,266,287	-98,766
<b>Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores</b>			
Furniture and home furnishings stores (NAICS 442)	3,841,111	436,707	3,404,404
Furniture stores (NAICS 4421)	1,835,836	410,632	1,425,204
Home furnishings stores (NAICS 4422)	2,005,275	26,075	1,979,200
Floor covering stores (NAICS 44221)	1,198,200	10,726	1,187,474
Other home furnishings stores (NAICS 44229)	807,074	15,348	791,726
Window treatment stores (NAICS 442291)	39,930	0	39,930
All other home furnishings stores (NAICS 442299)	767,144	15,348	751,796
<b>Electronics and Appliance Stores</b>			
Electronics and appliance stores (NAICS 443)	2,174,661	1,607,704	566,958
Household appliance stores (NAICS 443141)	539,515	102,018	437,497
Electronics stores (NAICS 443142)	1,635,146	1,505,686	129,460
<b>Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers</b>			
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (NAICS 444)	12,674,594	20,619,587	-7,944,993
Building material and supplies dealers (NAICS 4441)	11,022,174	17,477,344	-6,455,170
Home centers (NAICS 44411)	6,088,809	9,990,582	-3,901,773
Paint and wallpaper stores (NAICS 44412)	373,127	54,860	318,266
Hardware stores (NAICS 44413)	926,731	59,466	867,265
Other building material dealers (NAICS 44419)	3,633,507	7,372,436	-3,738,929
Lawn and garden equipment and supplies stores (NAICS 4442)	1,652,420	3,142,242	-1,489,823
Outdoor power equipment stores (NAICS 44421)	332,048	249,586	82,462
Nursery, garden center, and farm supply stores (NAICS 44422)	1,320,371	2,892,656	-1,572,285
<b>Food and Beverage Stores</b>			
Food and beverage stores (NAICS 445)	24,310,290	28,375,258	-4,064,968
Grocery stores (NAICS 4451)	21,744,858	26,843,862	-5,099,004
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores (NAICS 44511)	20,782,506	25,721,075	-4,938,569
Convenience stores (NAICS 44512)	962,352	1,122,788	-160,435
Specialty food stores (NAICS 4452)	620,562	0	620,562
Meat markets (NAICS 44521)	187,773	0	187,773
Fish and seafood markets (NAICS 44522)	73,735	0	73,735
Fruit and vegetable markets (NAICS 44523)	128,750	0	128,750
Other specialty food stores (NAICS 44529)	230,304	0	230,304
All other specialty food stores (NAICS 445299)	107,941	0	107,941
Beer, wine, and liquor stores (NAICS 4453)	1,944,870	1,531,396	413,474
<b>Health and Personal Care Stores</b>			
Health and personal care stores (NAICS 446)	10,874,630	13,745,339	-2,870,709
Pharmacies and drug stores (NAICS 44611)	9,442,585	12,267,096	-2,824,511
Cosmetics, beauty supplies, and perfume stores (NAICS 44612)	631,484	782,102	-150,618
Optical goods stores (NAICS 44613)	301,020	25,335	275,686
Other health and personal care stores (NAICS 44619)	499,541	670,807	-171,266
Food (health) supplement stores (NAICS 446191)	175,292	342,664	-167,372
All other health and personal care stores (NAICS 446199)	324,249	328,142	-3,894
<b>Gasoline Stations</b>			
Gasoline stations (NAICS 447)	12,957,334	15,848,455	-2,891,121

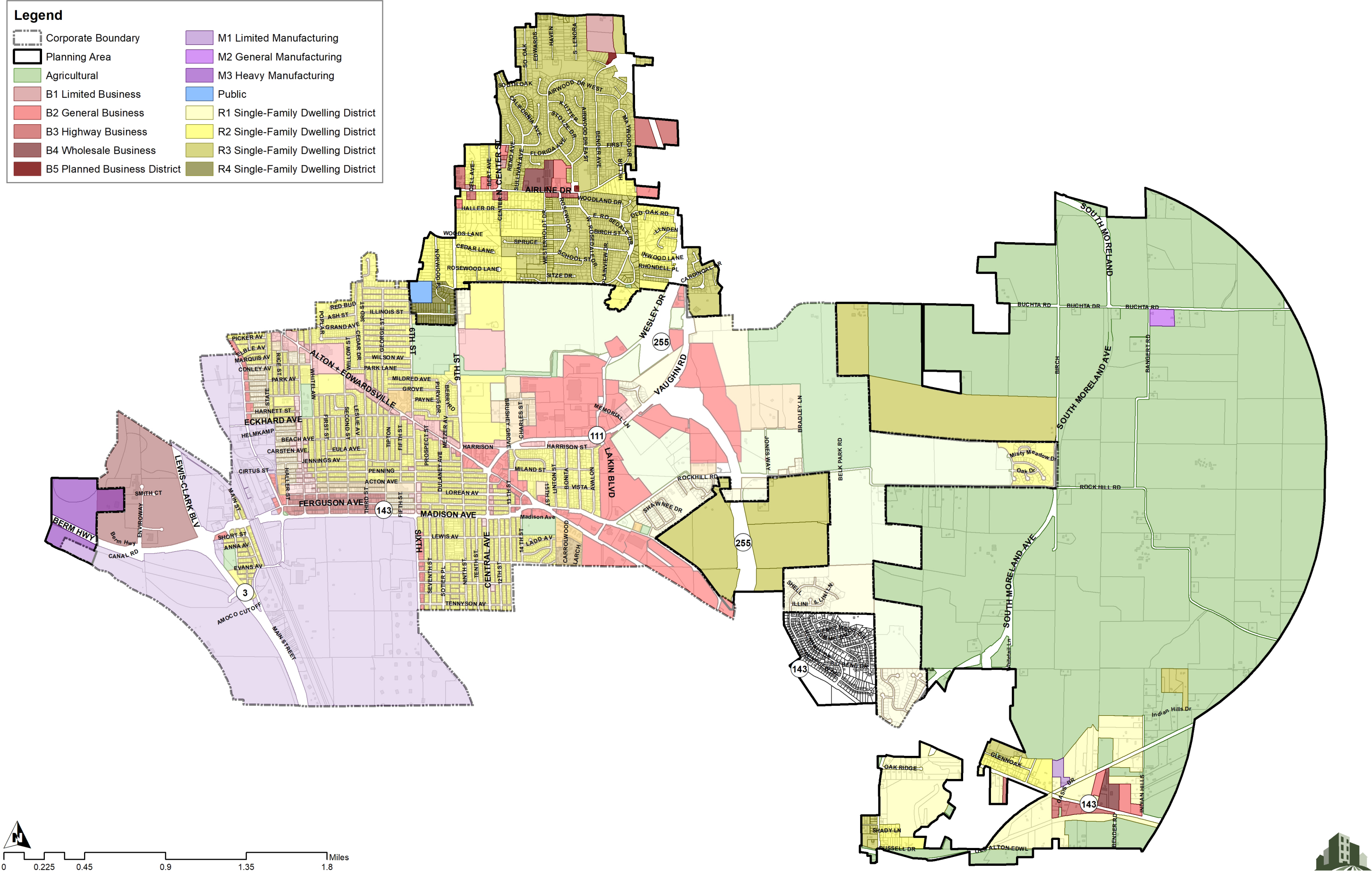
<b>Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores</b>			
Clothing and clothing accessories stores (NAICS 448)	5,826,646	1,124,574	4,702,071
Clothing stores (NAICS 4481)	3,832,157	163,071	3,669,087
Men's clothing stores (NAICS 44811)	145,166	0	145,166
Women's clothing stores (NAICS 44812)	704,260	52,280	651,980
Children's and infants' clothing stores (NAICS 44813)	146,582	0	146,582
Family clothing stores (NAICS 44814)	2,294,503	56,801	2,237,702
Clothing accessories stores (NAICS 44815)	183,517	0	183,517
Other clothing stores (NAICS 44819)	358,129	53,989	304,140
Shoe stores (NAICS 4482)	852,312	961,504	-109,192
Jewelry, luggage, and leather goods stores (NAICS 4483)	1,142,177	0	1,142,177
Jewelry stores (NAICS 44831)	741,774	0	741,774
Luggage and leather goods stores (NAICS 44832)	400,402	0	400,402
<b>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument, and Book Stores</b>			
Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, and book stores (NAICS 451)	2,369,974	954,145	1,415,829
Sporting goods, hobby, and musical instrument stores (NAICS 4511)	2,131,608	350,275	1,781,333
Sporting goods stores (NAICS 45111)	1,485,373	188,876	1,296,497
Hobby, toy, and game stores (NAICS 45112)	468,232	161,400	306,832
Sewing, needlework, and piece goods stores (NAICS 45113)	76,249	0	76,249
Musical instrument and supplies stores (NAICS 45114)	101,755	0	101,755
Book stores and news dealers (NAICS 4512)	238,366	603,870	-365,504
Book stores (NAICS 451211)	220,698	603,870	-383,172
News dealers and newsstands (NAICS 451212)	17,668	0	17,668
<b>General Merchandise Stores</b>			
General merchandise stores (NAICS 452)	21,360,887	29,530,016	-8,169,129
Department stores (NAICS 4522)	2,540,857	704,197	1,836,661
Other general merchandise stores (NAICS 4523)	18,820,030	28,825,819	-10,005,789
Warehouse clubs and supercenters (NAICS 452311)	17,019,477	27,575,585	-10,556,108
All other general merchandise stores (NAICS 452319)	1,800,553	1,250,234	550,319
<b>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</b>			
Miscellaneous store retailers (NAICS 453)	3,835,984	3,128,905	707,079
Florists (NAICS 4531)	163,748	0	163,748
Office supplies, stationery, and gift stores (NAICS 4532)	761,448	0	761,448
Office supplies and stationery stores (NAICS 45321)	320,477	0	320,477
Gift, novelty, and souvenir stores (NAICS 45322)	440,971	0	440,971
Used merchandise stores (NAICS 4533)	503,077	74,226	428,851
Other miscellaneous store retailers (NAICS 4539)	2,407,711	3,054,679	-646,968
Pet and pet supplies stores (NAICS 45391)	778,199	135,295	642,903
Art dealers (NAICS 45392)	310,236	53,094	257,142
Manufactured (mobile) home dealers (NAICS 45393)	213,013	138,648	74,365
All other miscellaneous store retailers (NAICS 45399)	1,106,263	2,727,641	-1,621,379
Tobacco stores (NAICS 453991)	444,891	1,505,834	-1,060,943
All other miscellaneous store retailers (except tobacco stores) (NAICS 453998)	661,371	1,221,807	-560,436
<b>Non-store Retailers</b>			
Non-store retailers (NAICS 454)	29,855,685	1,478,381	28,377,304
Electronic shopping and mail-order houses (NAICS 4541)	27,875,868	1,086,825	26,789,043
Vending machine operators (NAICS 4542)	194,752	0	194,752
Direct selling establishments (NAICS 4543)	1,785,066	391,556	1,393,510
Fuel dealers (NAICS 45431)	1,107,590	176,221	931,369
Other direct selling establishments (NAICS 45439)	677,475	215,335	462,141
<b>Food Services and Drinking Places</b>			
Food services and drinking places (NAICS 722)	17,632,435	24,915,411	-7,282,977
Special food services (NAICS 7223)	1,411,351	870,172	541,179
Food service contractors (NAICS 72231)	1,115,806	578,907	536,899
Caterers (NAICS 72232)	269,167	291,265	-22,098
Mobile food services (NAICS 72233)	26,378	0	26,378
Drinking places (alcoholic beverages) (NAICS 7224)	559,834	1,646,543	-1,086,709
Restaurants and other eating places (NAICS 7225)	15,661,250	22,398,697	-6,737,447
Full-service restaurants (NAICS 722511)	7,813,206	10,773,010	-2,959,804
Limited-service restaurants (NAICS 722513)	6,656,375	11,523,390	-4,867,015
Cafeterias, grill buffets, and buffets (NAICS 722514)	169,634	13,594	156,040
Snack and non-alcoholic beverage bars (NAICS 722515)	1,022,034	88,702	933,332

Appendix C - Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) Existing Land Use



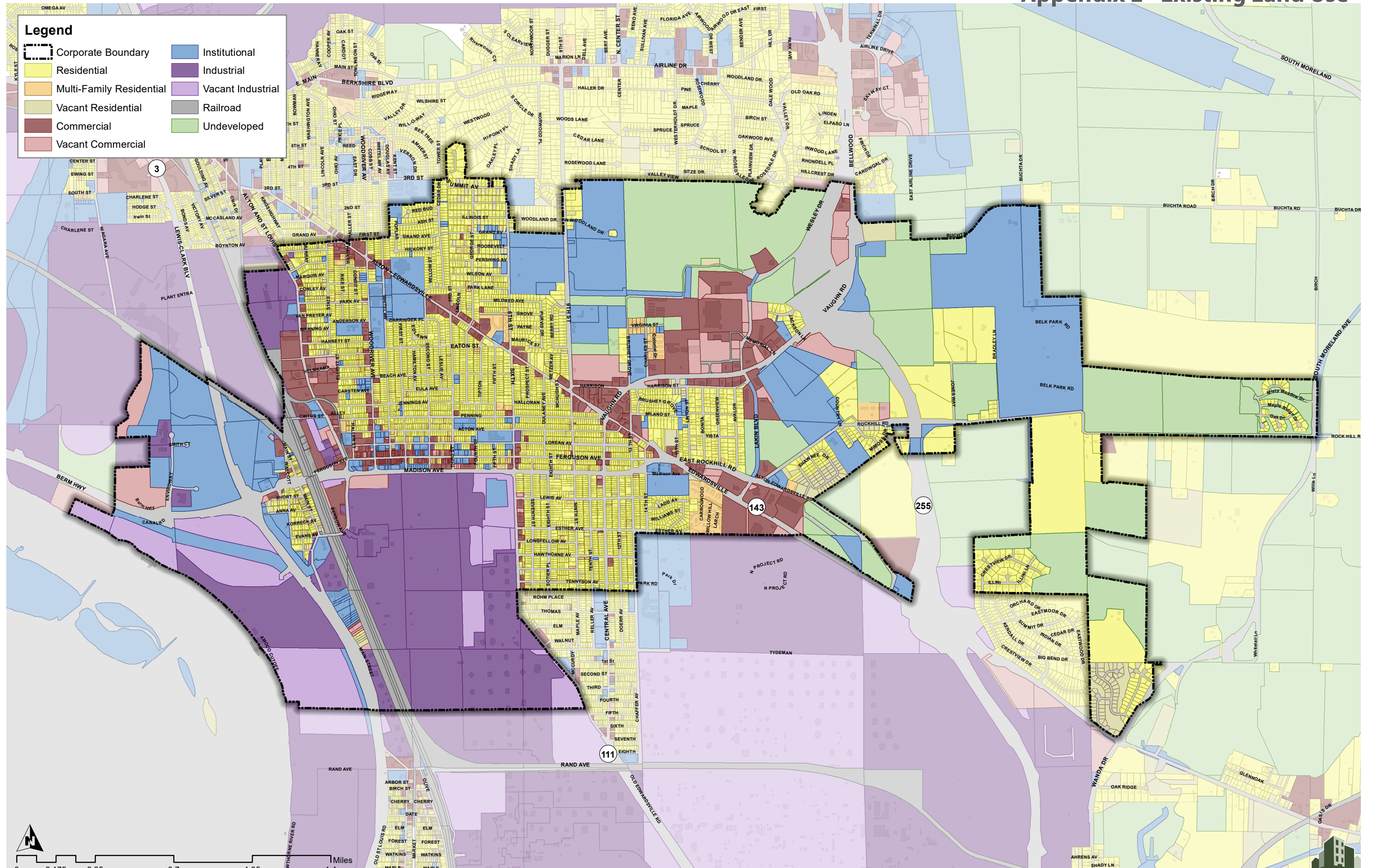


Appendix D - Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) Zoning Districts





## Appendix E - Existing Land Use

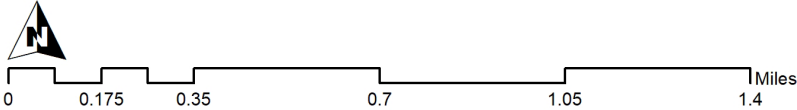
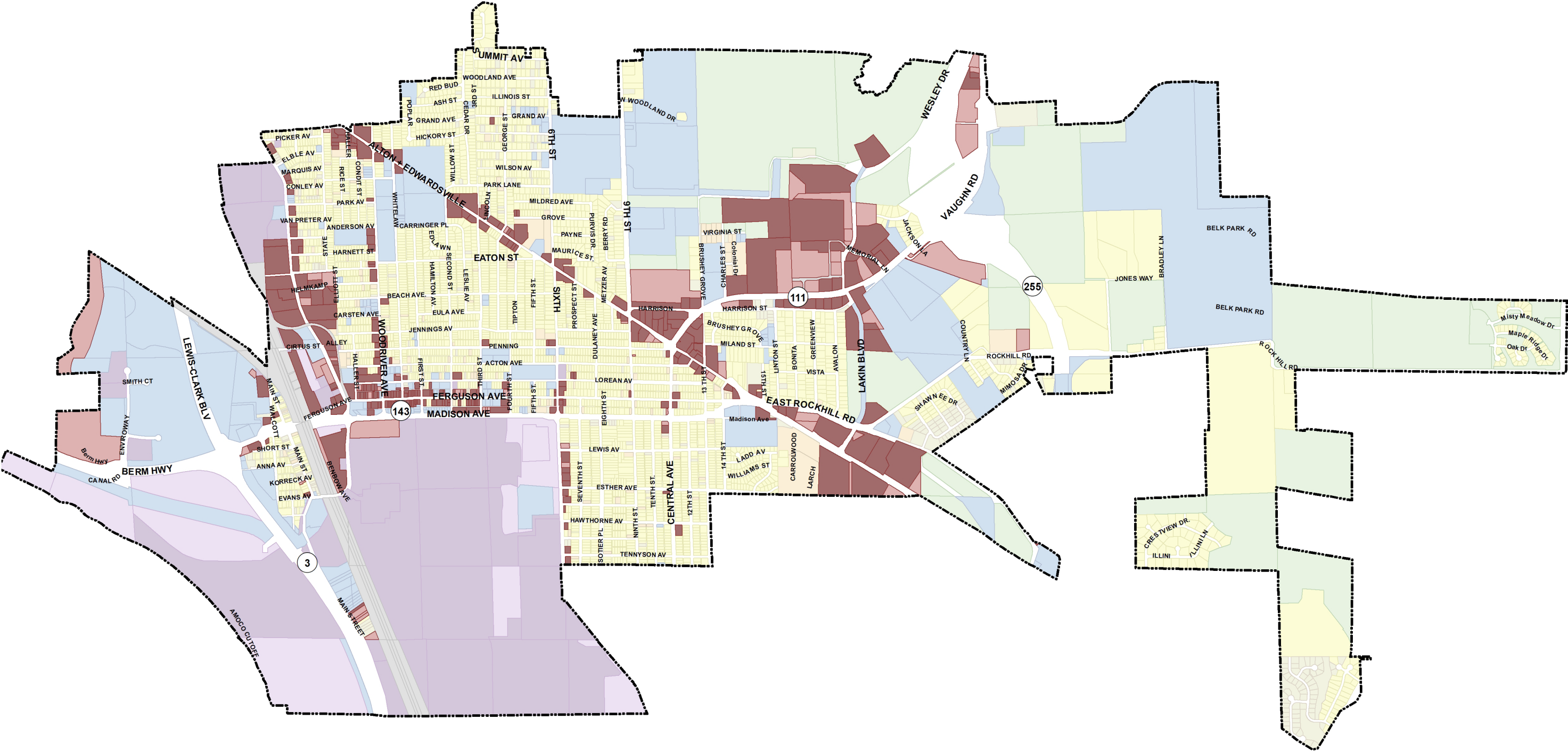


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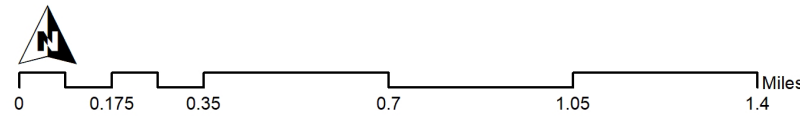
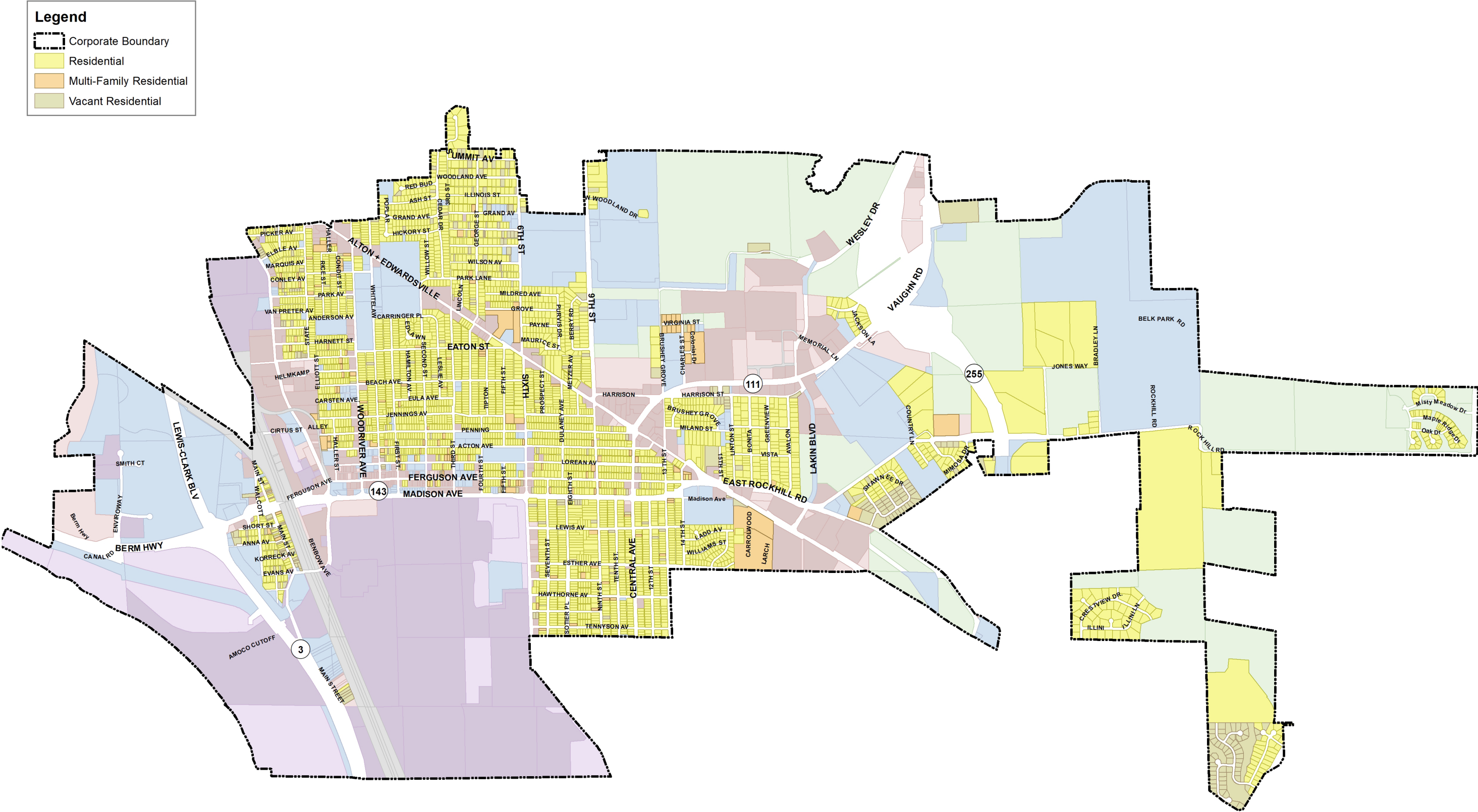
Corporate Boundary

Commercial

Vacant Commercial







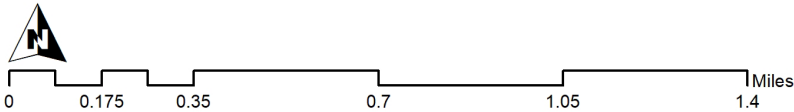
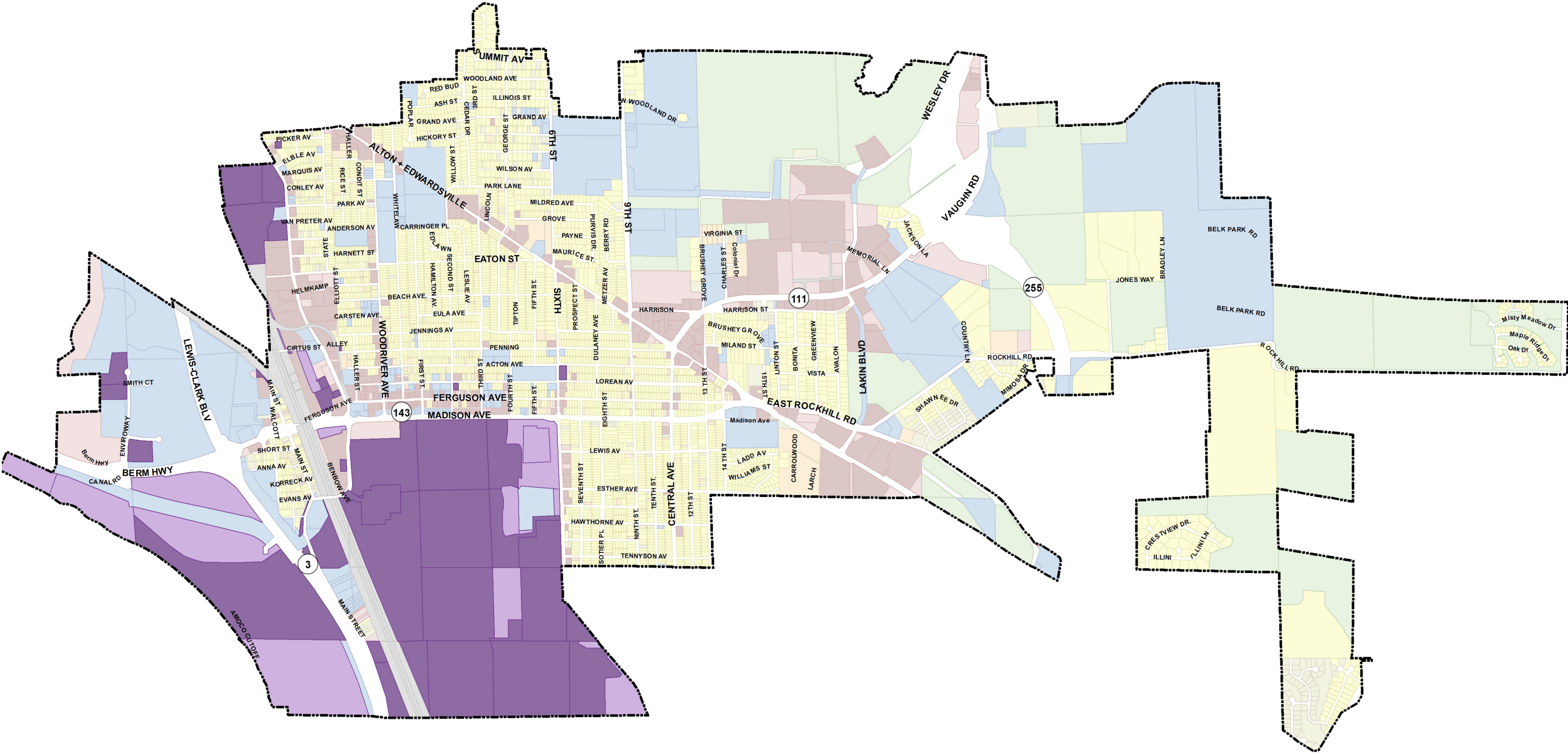


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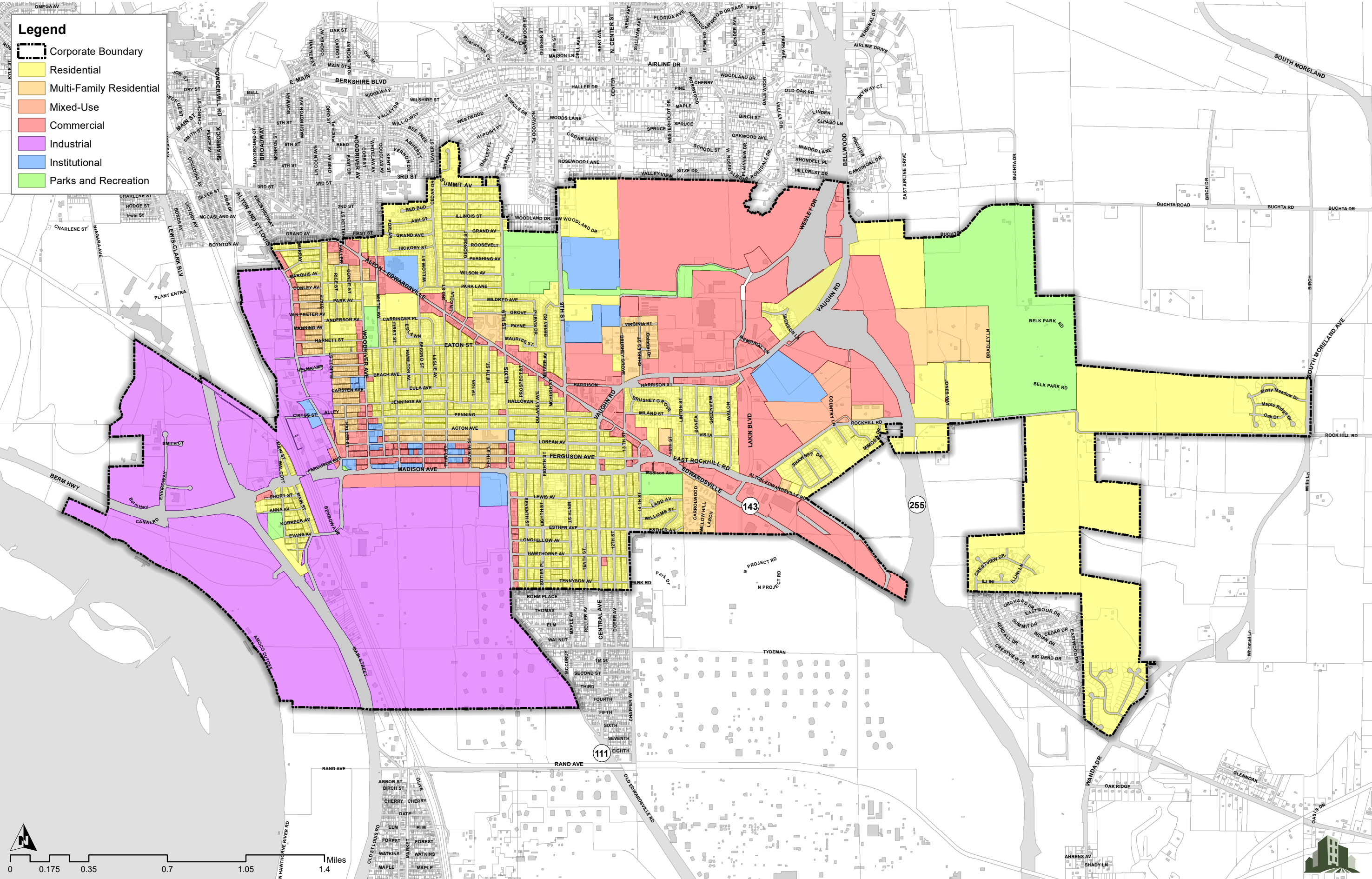
Corporate Boundary

Industrial

Vacant Industrial



## Appendix I - Future Land Use





**Legend**

Corporate Boundary	B-2 Community Business
R-1 Single Family	B-3 Highway Business
R-2 Single Family	Downtown Business
MR-3 Multi-Family	Wood River Business Park
MR-4 Multi-Family	I Industrial
MR-5 Multi-Family	A Agricultural
MH Mobile Home	CR Conservation/Recreation
B-1 Neighborhood Business	

