



City of Streator Comprehensive Plan

February 21, 2014

STREATOR 

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The North Central Illinois Council of Governments assisted the City with the preparation of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. Much of the content from that Plan was used in this updated document.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Plan

This City of Streator Comprehensive Plan is intended to update the City's 2007 Comprehensive Plan to plan for emerging issues and opportunities. The plan is intended to look 15 to 20 years into the future, providing guidance for a variety of areas, including economic development, housing, community facilities, transportation, parks and recreation, and quality of life. This Comprehensive Plan will allow the City to guide growth, development, and preservation by:

- Identifying areas appropriate for development and preservation over the next 20 years
- Recommending types of future land use for specific areas in and beyond the City limits
- Preserving and enhancing natural areas, cultural resources, and agricultural lands in the area
- Identifying needed transportation, recreational, community facilities, and services to serve the City
- Directing private housing, economic development, and other investment in the City
- Providing detailed strategies to implement Plan recommendations

This planning effort was funded by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (IDCEO) through a grant related to Hurricane Ike in 2008.



Planning Process

In addition to providing sound public policy guidance, a comprehensive plan should also incorporate an inclusive public participation process to ensure that its recommendations reflect a broadly supported future vision. An extensive process of citizen review and approval was critical to the planning process. This included public workshops, interviews, small group discussions, and other meetings, participation, and outreach tools. The public participation process has helped to ensure that the recommendations of this Plan are generally consistent with other adopted local and regional plans, long-standing state and regional policies, and sound planning practices. The City Plan Commission advised on policy and guided the comprehensive planning process.

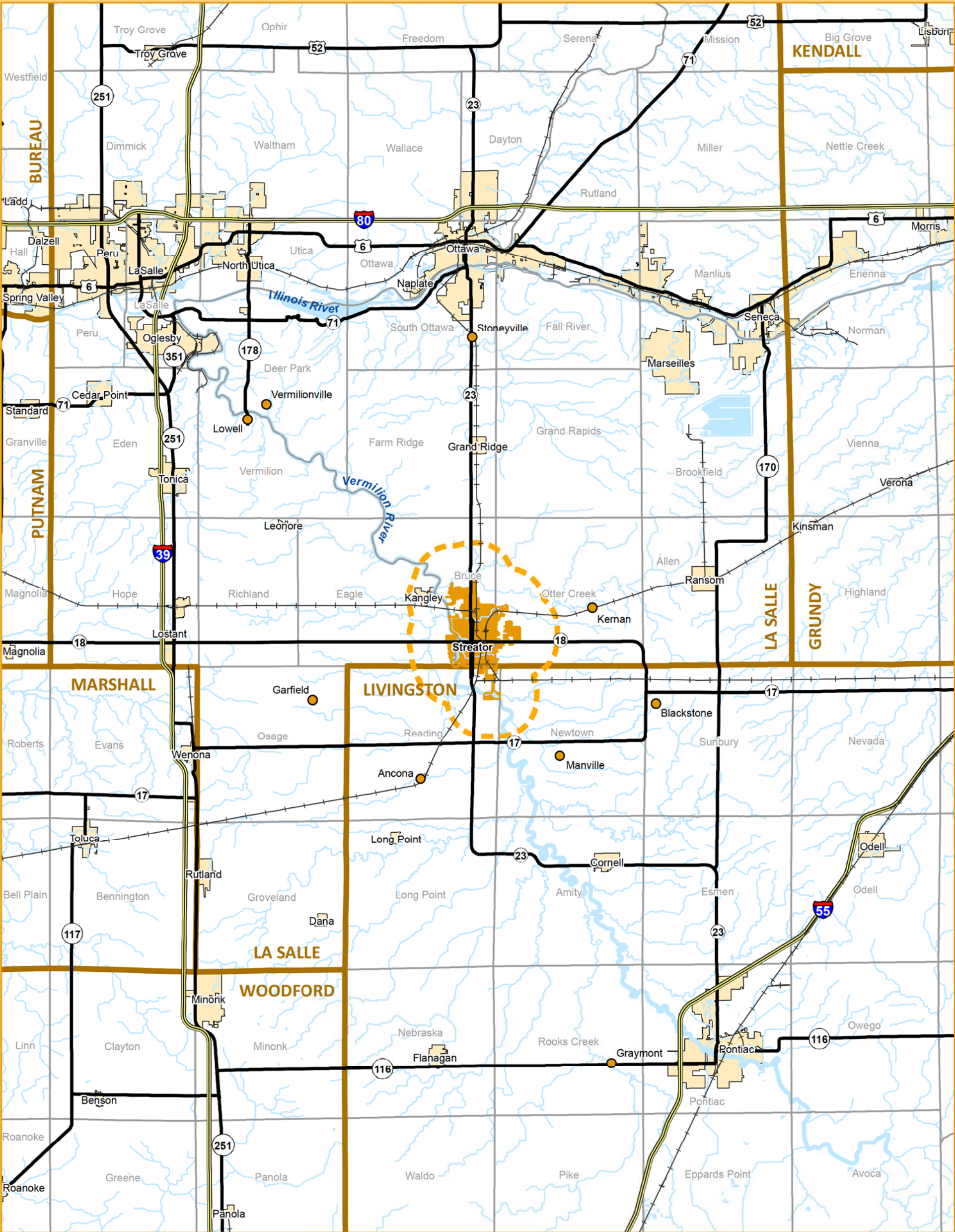
General Regional Context

The City of Streator was officially incorporated as a city by the State of Illinois in 1882. More than 130 years after incorporation, the City of Streator is a small community with a population of around 14,000, covering approximately six square miles. In addition, there are 8,000 to 10,000 people living in the 1½-mile area surrounding the city. Streator is located primarily in the far southern portion of LaSalle County, though a small percentage of the City's residents live in northern Livingston County. Streator has many of the benefits of rural communities: solid schools, quaint parks, affordable housing, a tradition of making quality products, and a fairly compact, walkable downtown. Additionally, Streator has access to major metropolitan areas, as it is located

90 miles southwest of Chicago, 60 miles north of Bloomington, and 60 miles northeast of Peoria. The City also has access to three interstate highways: I-80 is 15 miles north, I-55 is 18 miles east, and I-39 is 12 miles west. It is also well-connected by rail, with two national freight railroads passing through the City.

This Plan includes recommendations for lands within the City's planning area. The planning area for this Plan has been selected as to include all lands in which the City has both a short-term and long-term interest in planning and development activity. The planning area includes all lands currently within the City of Streator and other unincorporated areas within the City's 1½-mile planning area as authorized under Illinois Statutes. The planning area is depicted on Map 1: Regional Location.

To ensure the success of this Plan, the chapters that follow each contain Strategic Initiatives with additional implementation ideas. These initiatives, eight in total, are priority items for implementation and will be essential to achieving the goals of this plan.



Map 1: Regional Location

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Comprehensive Plan

- City of Streator
- Other Cities and Villages
- Hamlets
- Township Boundaries
- County Boundaries

- Streator 1.5 Mile Planning Area
- Rail
- Interstates
- US and State Highways
- Surface Water



0 1 2 4
Miles

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.
Shaping places, shaping change

Date: November 1, 2013

Sources: City of Streator,
US Census Bureau,
Vandewalle & Associates

CHAPTER TWO: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This chapter of the Plan describes trends that help develop an understanding of the changes taking place in and around the City of Streator. It explores Streator's unique position and opportunities as the City looks forward to the future. This analysis was prepared following extensive public input provided throughout this process—summarized in this chapter—and professional insight. Finally, this chapter includes an overall vision, which will guide future preservation, development, and redevelopment over the 20-year planning period. All subsequent chapters of this Plan should be aimed at achieving this vision and capturing the opportunities presented in this chapter.

Population Trends and Forecasts

Streator experienced a nearly 20 percent population loss between 1960 and 2010, as approximately 3,100 fewer people lived in the City at the end of this period. While the 2000 Census figures indicated a slight rise in population for the first time since the 1950s, the 2010 Census shows a population loss of 3.4 percent between 2000 and 2010. In contrast, LaSalle County and Illinois as a whole have generally seen growth since 1960. LaSalle County had a significant population increase in the 1950s before leveling through 1980, and its population has been rising for the past two decades. Illinois noticed considerable increases between the 1950 and 1970 Censuses and again between 1990 and 2000 Censuses. The last decade brought continued growth, although at a lower rate as compared to the previous decade.

Figure 1: City of Streator Population

	Streator	+/- % Change	LaSalle County	+/- % Change	Illinois	+/- % Change
1940	14,930	--	97,801	--	7,897,241	--
1950	16,469	10.3%	100,610	2.9%	8,712,176	10.3%
1960	16,868	2.4%	110,800	10.1%	10,081,158	15.7%
1970	15,600	-8.1%	111,409	0.6%	11,110,285	10.2%
1980	14,791	-5.5%	112,033	0.6%	11,427,409	2.9%
1990	14,121	-4.7%	106,913	-4.6%	11,430,602	0.0%
2000	14,190	0.5%	111,509	4.1%	12,419,293	8.6%
2010	13,710	-3.4%	113,924	2.2%	12,830,632	3.3%

Source: 1940-2010 U.S. Census

The State of Illinois population projections forecast a fairly consistent population gain for LaSalle County through 2030. The county's growth rate is predicted to be 5-5.5 percent between 2015 and 2025, which is more than twice the county's actual growth rate between 2000 and 2010. This is likely an outcome of continued growth spreading from the Chicago metro area. LaSalle County is likely to attract new residents seeking easy access of Chicago with lower cost of living. The population growth projection for the state as a whole is slightly more conservative; the projections show an increase of 3.3-4.1 percent per year between 2015 and 2030.

Figure 2: Population Projections

	LaSalle County	% Change	Illinois	% Change
2015	124,277	5.0%	13,748,695	3.5%
2020	131,155	5.5%	14,316,487	4.1%
2025	137,954	5.5%	14,784,968	3.3%
2030	141,615	2.7%	15,138,849	2.4%

Source: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity projections

Demographic Trends

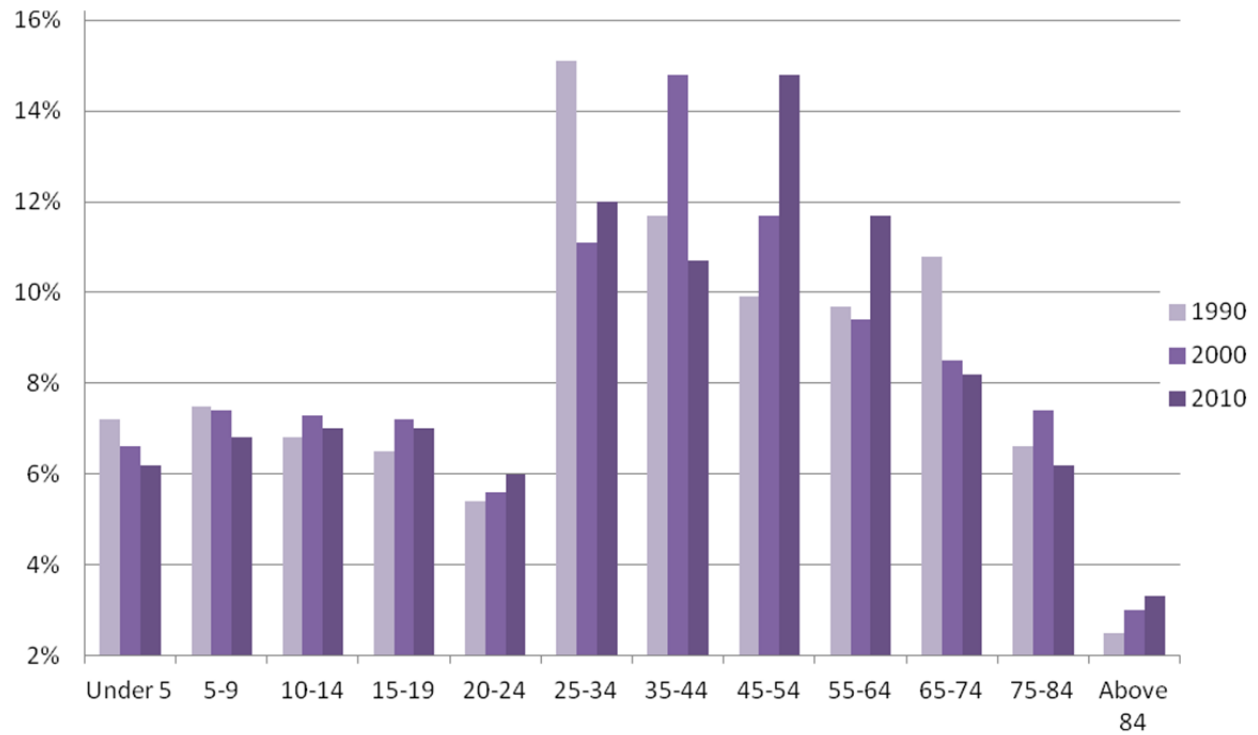
A breakdown of the City of Streator's population by age group from 1990-2010 is presented in Figure 3. Since the 1990 Census, median age has increased by nearly four years, as middle-aged residents have become a larger proportion of the population over time. To illustrate, the proportion of residents aged 45-54 has increased from 9.9 percent in 1990 to 14.8 percent in 2010, while the proportion of residents aged 19 and under has decreased for all age groups since 1990. The proportion of residents 65 and over has not significantly increased since 1990, although the proportion of individuals over 84 has increased slightly.

Figure 3: Streator Population by Age Group

Age Range	1990		2000		2010	
	Total Persons	% of Total	Total Persons	% of Total	Total Persons	% of Total
Under 5	1,017	7.2%	943	6.6%	853	6.2%
5-9	1,058	7.5%	1,043	7.4%	936	6.8%
10-14	954	6.8%	1,035	7.3%	966	7.0%
15-19	916	6.5%	1,021	7.2%	966	7.0%
20-24	760	5.4%	801	5.6%	821	6.0%
25-34	2,138	15.1%	1,575	11.1%	1,640	12.0%
35-44	1,658	11.7%	2,098	14.8%	1,460	10.7%
45-54	1,405	9.9%	1,663	11.7%	2,037	14.8%
55-64	1,376	9.7%	1,321	9.4%	1,606	11.7%
65-74	1,525	10.8%	1,210	8.5%	1,119	8.2%
75-84	934	6.6%	1,057	7.4%	847	6.2%
Above 84	360	2.5%	423	3.0%	459	3.3%
Median Age	36		38.1		39.9	

Source: 1990-2010 U.S. Census

Figure 4: Streator Population Percentage by Age Group



Like LaSalle County, Streator is predominately White. Ethnic and racial diversity has continued to increase in Streator, with a larger proportion of people identifying as Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut, or Asian/Pacific Islander in 2010 as compared to past decades. This composition also held true within the county. In 2010, more than 10 percent of individuals in Streator identified as Hispanic. It is expected that the racial and ethnic composition of Streator will continue to become more diverse in the years to come, as consistent with the national trend.

Figure 5: Race and Ethnic Origin

	White	%	Black	%	Amer. Indian/ Eskimo/ Aleut	%	Asian/ Pacific Islander	%	Hispanic	%
1990										
Streator	13,541	95.9	268	1.9	21	0.1	39	0.3	621	4.4
LaSalle County	103,805	97.1	1,153	1.1	206	0.2	523	0.5	3,249	3.0
2000										
Streator	13,378	94.3	292	2.1	27	0.2	1.0	0.0	942	6.6
LaSalle County	105,896	95.0	1,723	1.5	191	0.2	598	0.5	5,791	5.2
2010										
Streator	12,505	91.2	340	2.5	42	0.3	63	0.4	1,422	10.4
LaSalle County	106,187	93.2	2,186	1.9	289	0.3	778	0.3	9,135	8.0

Source: 1990-2010 U.S. Census

Consistent with the decrease in total population in 2010, Streator had approximately 125 fewer households than in the previous decade, but the number of housing units increased by approximately 122. LaSalle County, on the other hand, saw an increase in both number of households and total number of housing units. The most recent decade shows a slight increase in the proportion of renter occupied housing units in Streator. Likewise, the proportion of owner occupied housing in Streator decreased by 4.2 percent from the previous decade; LaSalle County experienced a very slight decrease in the percentage of owner occupied housing during that period as well. Median family size and median household size decreased slightly in both areas. As noted on Figure 6 below, the median house value in Streator is significantly lower than that of LaSalle County. In both areas, median house values and median monthly rents have risen over the last three decades.

Figure 6: Household Characteristics Summary

	Streator			LaSalle County		
	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010
Total Households	5,665	5,746	5,621	41,284	43,417	45,347
Total Housing Units	6,053	6,149	6,271	43,827	46,438	49,978
Owner Occupied Housing Units	3,982 (70.3%)	4,064 (70.7%)	3,739 (66.5%)	30,224 (73.2%)	32,584 (75.0%)	33,773 (74.5%)
Renter Occupied Housing Units	1,683 (29.7%)	1,682 (29.3%)	1,882 (33.5%)	11,060 (26.8%)	10,833 (25.0%)	11,574 (25.5%)
Persons Per Household	2.45	2.42	2.41	2.53	2.49	2.45
Persons Per Family	3.07	3.07	3.04	3.07	3.04	3.00
Families	3,790	3,715	3,481	29,313	29,840	30,116
Median House Value	\$37,300	\$56,800	\$79,900	\$49,700	\$87,000	\$127,500
Median Monthly Rent	\$219	\$442	\$565	\$324	\$474	\$646

Source: 1990-2010 U.S. Census, 2011 American Community Survey

Like many smaller and rural cities, the overall education level of Streator continues to rise. Fewer than 17 percent of residents have less than a high school diploma, as compared to more than one-third in 1990. The percentage of residents with an associate, bachelors, or graduate degree has also continued to rise over the past three decades. This is likely attributable to the fact of a high school diploma becoming a minimum requirement for most jobs. Additionally, more higher-paying and skilled labor jobs require at least some college experience. Education level in Streator should be expected to continually rise, as employers increasingly require college degrees.

Figure 7: Educational Attainment (Population 25 Years and Older)

	Less Than 9th Grade	9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	High School Graduate	Some College, No Degree	Associate Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
1990							
Streator	16.20%	17.90%	40.60%	13.80%	3.70%	5.20%	2.70%
LaSalle County	12.10%	14.80%	39.30%	16.90%	6.40%	7.10%	3.40%
2000							
Streator	10.40%	15.60%	40.60%	18.00%	6.40%	5.60%	3.40%
LaSalle County	6.20%	12.40%	38.60%	22.60%	6.90%	9.00%	4.30%
2010							
Streator	5.70%	10.80%	43.30%	22.00%	8.10%	6.90%	3.20%
LaSalle County	4.00%	8.20%	38.60%	24.30%	9.10%	10.60%	5.20%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census; 2010 American Community Survey

Streator has one of the lowest per capita, median family, and median household incomes in LaSalle County. Though the City's median household income increased by more than 50 percent during the 1990s and by an additional 20 percent in the 2000s, it is still approximately \$5,000 less than that of the county. The low cost of living contributes greatly to these figures. However, it also means that there is less buying power among Streator residents, which could be viewed negatively by prospective retail tenants. The percentage of families living below the poverty line increased slightly in 2010, as it did in the county and statewide.

Figure 8: Income Breakdowns

	Per Capita Income	Median Family Income	Median Household Income	Families Below Poverty Level
1990				
Streator	\$10,147	\$27,273	\$21,993	15.00%
LaSalle County	\$12,337	\$33,226	\$27,093	8.70%
Illinois	\$15,201	\$38,664	\$32,252	9.00%
2000				
Streator	\$16,650	\$43,774	\$33,868	8.30%
LaSalle County	\$19,185	\$49,533	\$40,308	6.90%
Illinois	\$23,104	\$55,545	\$46,590	7.80%
2010				
Streator	\$19,980	\$49,091	\$39,579	9.40%
LaSalle County	\$24,982	\$62,252	\$51,705	8.00%
Illinois	\$28,782	\$68,236	\$55,735	9.20%

Source: 1900-2010 U.S. Census; 2010 American Community Survey

The unemployment rate for LaSalle County fell by more than 50 percent between 1985 and 2005. However, unemployment increased significantly by 2010, an outcome of the global economic recession. In May of 2013, the unemployment rate declined, consistent with the national economic recovery, although it is important to note that monthly employment statistics often fluctuate greatly and are easily influenced by seasonal construction jobs. The State of Illinois unemployment rate for May 2013 was 8.7 percent and was 9.3 percent within the Ottawa-Streator Micropolitan Statistical Area. In comparison, unemployment in LaSalle County is somewhat higher at 9.7 percent.

Figure 9: Labor Force and Unemployment Rate for LaSalle County

	People in the Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
May 2013	57,188	9.7
2010	60,287	13.1
2005	57,986	6.0
2000	57,220	5.8
1995	54,719	7.8
1990	49,925	8.9
1985	51,491	13.5

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

The most common employment sector in Streator is Educational Services, and Healthcare and Social Assistance, applying to 22.3 percent of the workforce. This proportion is consistent with the breakdown of employment by industry for Illinois as a whole. When compared to the rest of the state, a larger proportion of the Streator residents are employed in Manufacturing and in Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities, and a smaller proportion of the Streator residents work in Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services.

Figure 10: Employment by Industry

NAICS Category	Streator		State of Illinois	
	# of Employees	Percentage	# of Employees	Percentage
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining	98	1.6%	63,960	1.1%
Construction	267	4.3%	343,232	5.7%
Manufacturing	1,045	17.0%	775,663	12.8%
Wholesale Trade	200	3.3%	196,738	3.3%
Retail Trade	585	9.5%	659,708	10.9%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	551	9.0%	355,486	5.9%
Information	45	0.7%	135,688	2.2%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	387	6.3%	466,468	7.7%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services	349	5.7%	662,987	11.0%
Educational Services, and Healthcare and Social Assistance	1,369	22.3%	1,337,455	22.1%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services	577	9.4%	524,925	8.7%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	365	5.9%	288,538	4.8%
Public Administration	300	4.9%	232,923	3.9%
Total	6,138	N/A	6,043,771	N/A

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Natural Environment

Understanding the area's natural features sheds light on locational constraints and opportunities for particular land uses. It also provides a framework for future growth. For instance, it is essential to understand the location of environmentally sensitive areas where development is not appropriate. This will prevent severe developmental or environmental problems that may be difficult or costly to correct in the future. Maintenance of these natural features is important for community appearance and the functions they perform for natural communities.

Climate

Streator has a continental climate typical of northern Illinois with warm to hot summers and cold winters. The average winter temperature is 25 degrees Fahrenheit and the average summer temperature is 72 degrees Fahrenheit. The City averages about 38 inches of precipitation a year, including 32 inches of snowfall a year. The average date of the last frost is in mid-to late-April and there are approximately 180 days in the normal growing season. A solid growing season can typically be expected from late April through early October in Streator. Major droughts are infrequent, though recent years have experienced drier conditions than normal and have had a negative impact on the many acres of corn and soybean fields surrounding Streator.

Landforms

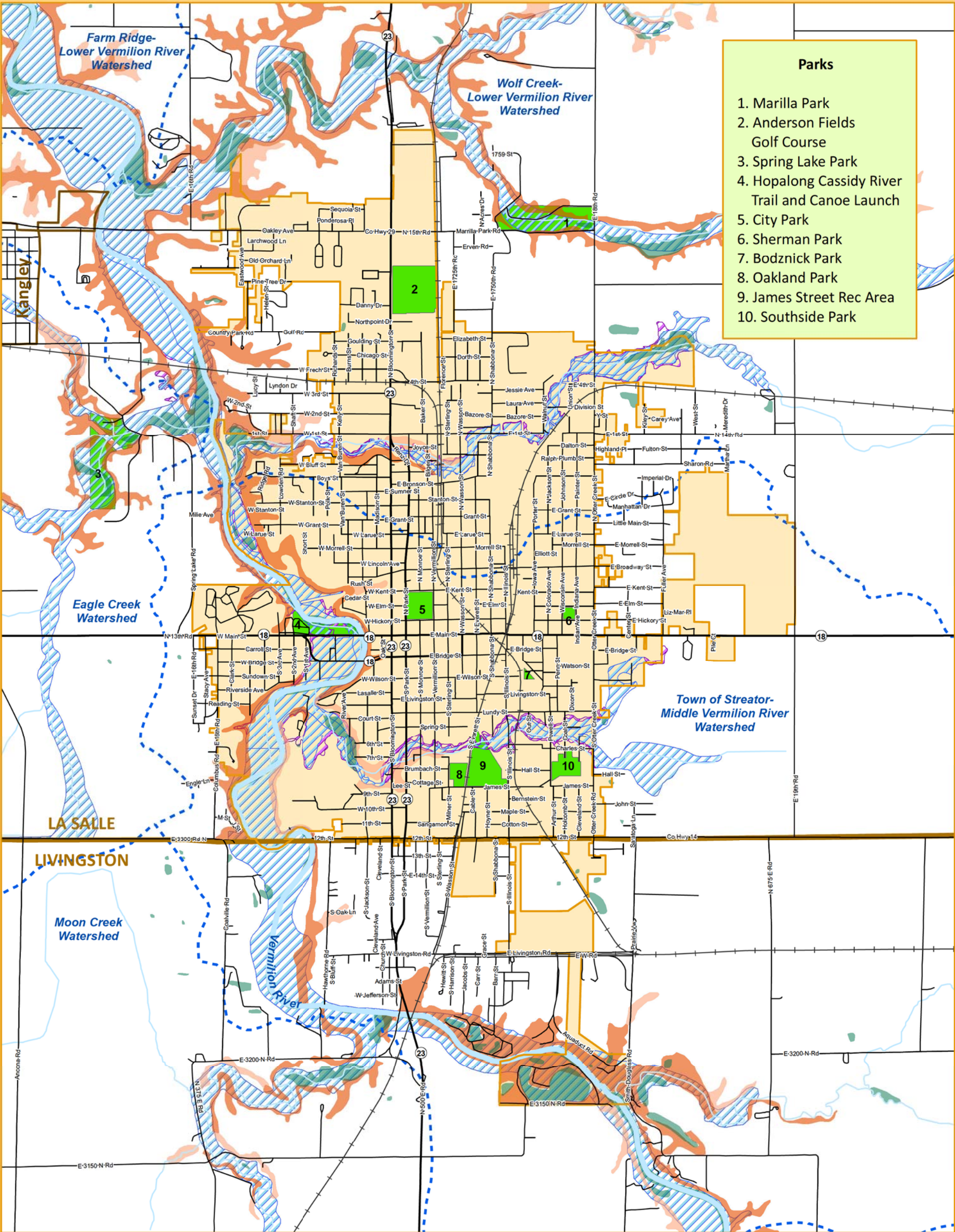
Landforms are important determinants of future growth and development. Slopes that have between 12 percent and 20 percent grade present challenges for building site development, and slopes that exceed a 20 percent grade are not recommended for any disturbance or development. Though much of Streator is relatively flat, the exposed valleys of the Vermilion River and Prairie Creek indicate some interesting landforms and elevation changes. The Cahokia Alluvium is the dominant stratigraphic unit found along those areas. Much of the Streator area consists of the Lemont Formation, which is a massive red to gray diamicton. Other stratigraphic units found in and around Streator include Peoria Silt, Equality Formation, and Carbondale Formation. The areas around the river and creek valleys should be buffered and preserved from encroaching development.

LaSalle County lies within one of the most geologic diverse areas within Illinois. The Illinois River helped shape the valleys that are so picturesque and changed the landscape from a predominant level topography to one that has rolling hills and undulations. Limited exposed bedrock and thick drift is found within the valleys around Streator. The City is within the Bloomington Ridged Plain and features some relatively steep slopes. Loamy till and clayey till deposited as moraines are the surficial deposits in this area. The river basin has well developed rolling moraines within the upper Illinois River area. According to the LaSalle County Soil Survey, the Bloomington Ridged Plain consists mainly of Woodfordian glacial till of Wisconsinian age, and is characterized by low, broad ridges, with intervening wide stretches of relatively flat or gently undulating ground moraines.

Minerals and Soils

LaSalle County was covered by continental glaciers during the Ice Age or Pleistocene. The thickness of the glacial drift varies from as little as 50 feet or less to over 500 feet. Limestone is prevalent along the Illinois River and it is exposed on some bluffs overlooking cities on the river. Illite is the dominant clay mineral in the glacial tills, ranging from 50 to 70 percent. Clay and shale are mined extensively in the county for making tile and brick. Many types of soil can be found within and outside of the Streator city limits. Some of the more frequently found varieties include Elburn silt loam, which is located around the central part of the City and is the most common soil found in LaSalle County. It is found in areas with zero to two percent slopes and is somewhat poorly drained. Other soils within Streator include Orthents, which is a loamy soil that is found in undulating and rolling areas around the Vermilion River. It is not recommended that development or farming occur on Orthents soils. Soil suitability is a key factor in determining the best and most cost-effective locations for new development. Certain soils are susceptible to problems such as slumping, poor drainage, erosion, steep slopes, and high water tables, making them incompatible for development.

Camden silt loam is located primarily in the western half of the City. It can be found in areas ranging from flat to slopes of up to 18 percent. Camden soils are well drained and have moderate permeability. The soils are excellent for raising crops such as corn and soybeans and should be protected from development whenever possible. Rutland silty clay loam is located heavily in the northeast quadrant of the City. These soils are somewhat poorly drained and have moderately slow permeability. Finally, the Streator silty clay loam soils can be located in Streator. They are primarily contained within the northeastern quarter of the City. It is found on sites with limited slopes and the drainage is poor.



- Parks**
1. Marilla Park
 2. Anderson Fields Golf Course
 3. Spring Lake Park
 4. Hopalong Cassidy River Trail and Canoe Launch
 5. City Park
 6. Sherman Park
 7. Bodznick Park
 8. Oakland Park
 9. James Street Rec Area
 10. Southside Park

Map 2: Natural Features

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Comprehensive Plan

- City of Streator
- Other Cities and Villages
- County Boundaries

- Rail
- Local Roads
- State Highways
- Surface Water
- Watersheds

- Parks
- 100 Year Floodplain
- 500 Year Floodplain
- Steep Slopes (12-20%)
- Steep Slopes (Above 20%)
- Wetlands



0 0.25 0.5
Miles

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Shaping places, shaping change

Date: November 1, 2013

Sources: City of Streator,
FEMA, USDA-NRCS, USFWS,
US Census Bureau,
Vandewalle & Associates

Approved Plans

The following adopted plans were reviewed in developing this Plan:

- City of Streator Disaster Plan
- LaSalle County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 2013 Greenway Master Plan
- TIF Improvement Plan
- Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan
- 2013 City of Streator Comprehensive Financial Policies
- Engineering Plans
 - CSO Long Term Control Plan
 - CSO Pollution Prevention Plan
 - Water Quality Monitoring Plan
 - 5-Year Roadway Improvement Plan
 - 2013 Streator Wastewater Facilities Plan
 - City Sidewalk Master Plan (in development)
- Annexation Policy (in development)
- Downtown Redevelopment Plan

Public Outreach

Public outreach was an important component of this planning process. The project included outreach opportunities at each of the key milestones: issues and opportunities identification; evaluation of the opportunities analysis; and feedback on the draft Plan. Techniques included focus group meetings, open houses, and public comment at Planning Commission meetings.

During the issues and opportunities identification phase, the consultant met with four focus groups on May 14, 2013 representing different interests in the community. These focus groups included Hispanic Business Owners and Leaders, Chamber and Key Employers, Downtown Businesses and Realtors, and Civic, Non Profit, Tourism, and Environmental Leaders, with 33 individuals participating. The focus groups provided many important insights that were incorporated into this Plan as summarized below.

Assets and Opportunities

- Schools have good reputation
- Engle Lane Theater
- Main Street and Downtown
- Generosity of community members, volunteerism
- Farmers Market
- Receptiveness of Mayor and City Council to community concerns
- Strong relationships between the schools, City Council, and Chamber of Commerce
- Blue collar town with a good work ethic



- Weber House and Garden
- Railroad
- Spring Lake Park
- Vermilion River and the Greenway Master Plan
- Transit service for seniors (private service, in the planning stage)
- Interest in more constructive activities for young families

Challenges

- Workforce training: Need to develop job skills in Streator residents to match those needed by local employers. Some ideas included pursuing Work Ready Community certification; maintaining an ongoing relationship with students, companies and schools; collaborative programs with Illinois Valley Community College; anticipating technology trends and related training needs; offering more training in the trades.
- Population: Declining total population while diverse, low-income population is becoming a larger proportion of the total population.
- Education: Reduced public school budgets are eliminating sports, arts and music in public schools; recent elementary school closure.
- Mobility: need taxis, bus and/or trains for people without access to a car.

Opportunity Analysis and Vision

Building on the demographic analysis and participation results, this section explores future opportunities for the City of Streator given its unique assets and position within the region. The opportunities analysis may be framed in various ways and at various geographic levels—beginning with the region, moving to the County, and then focusing on the City level. The opportunities raised through this analysis were used to craft the City’s vision and overall goals, and to advise recommendations of this Plan that are both innovative and implementable. The maps on the following pages present Streator’s opportunities, also described below.

LaSalle County Regional Assets and Issues

Centered at the junction of Interstates 80 and 39, LaSalle County is located near direct routes to many of the Midwest’s major population, economic, and innovation centers, most importantly, the Chicago global trade center. Airports in Peoria and Bloomington/Normal are within a 1 ½ hour drive of Streator. The region is served by multiple rail providers and nearby major multimodal hubs. It is also located at the crossroads of several intercontinental transshipment corridors including multiple rail providers. The region also is connected by multiple ports on the Illinois River, which connects the region to the Mississippi River. These transportation options offer access and convenience to the rest of Illinois and beyond.

The region is home to some of the best agricultural land in the world. Because of this and other regional assets, it is likely that the processing and distribution of farm products will remain key to the region’s future. Food processing will continue to be a growth sector, particularly as regional consumers become increasingly concerned with food security. Other key assets at the county level include state-of-the-art broadband infrastructure, a stabilizing employment base, a strategic location for the production of wind energy, and Starved Rock State Park, just east of Peru.

Important economic issues facing the county include a need to increase cooperative regional economic development efforts, the lack of a four-year university, and a mismatch between the

available workforce and the future employment needs of the county. The county also faces concerns about community health and substance abuse. Finally, the county is affected by sometimes unpredictable financial problems and political decisions at the state level.

City of Streator Assets and Influences

Many of Streator's assets contribute to quality of life and make Streator a great place to live. Such assets include a full-service hospital, quality schools, quality parks, the scenic Vermilion River, dynamic special events, a high level of volunteerism and community support, and an affordable housing stock. Other assets are more tied to the economic health of the community. These include the City's proximity to Chicago and other major metro areas, stable major employers, excellent railroad access, and a state-of-the-art I-Fiber network.

Despite these important advantages, the community also faces several key issues such as a growing lower income population drawn by the low cost of living, stressed neighborhoods, concerns about substance abuse and community health, decreasing public school funding, and a lack of youth and senior recreation opportunities. Economic issues include a lack of destinations for visitors and residents, a lack of opportunities for career training and higher education, and the City's distance from interstate highways as compared to neighboring communities. Other concerns include decreasing the impacts of flooding and natural hazards as seen during the flooding caused by Hurricane Ike in 2008. Overall, the City is concerned about improving image at home and within the region as a whole. In order to achieve its vision, the City will have to address these issues.

Key Regional Opportunities

Midwest Intellectual Property Management Institute

Lake
Huron

Northern Forests

The System

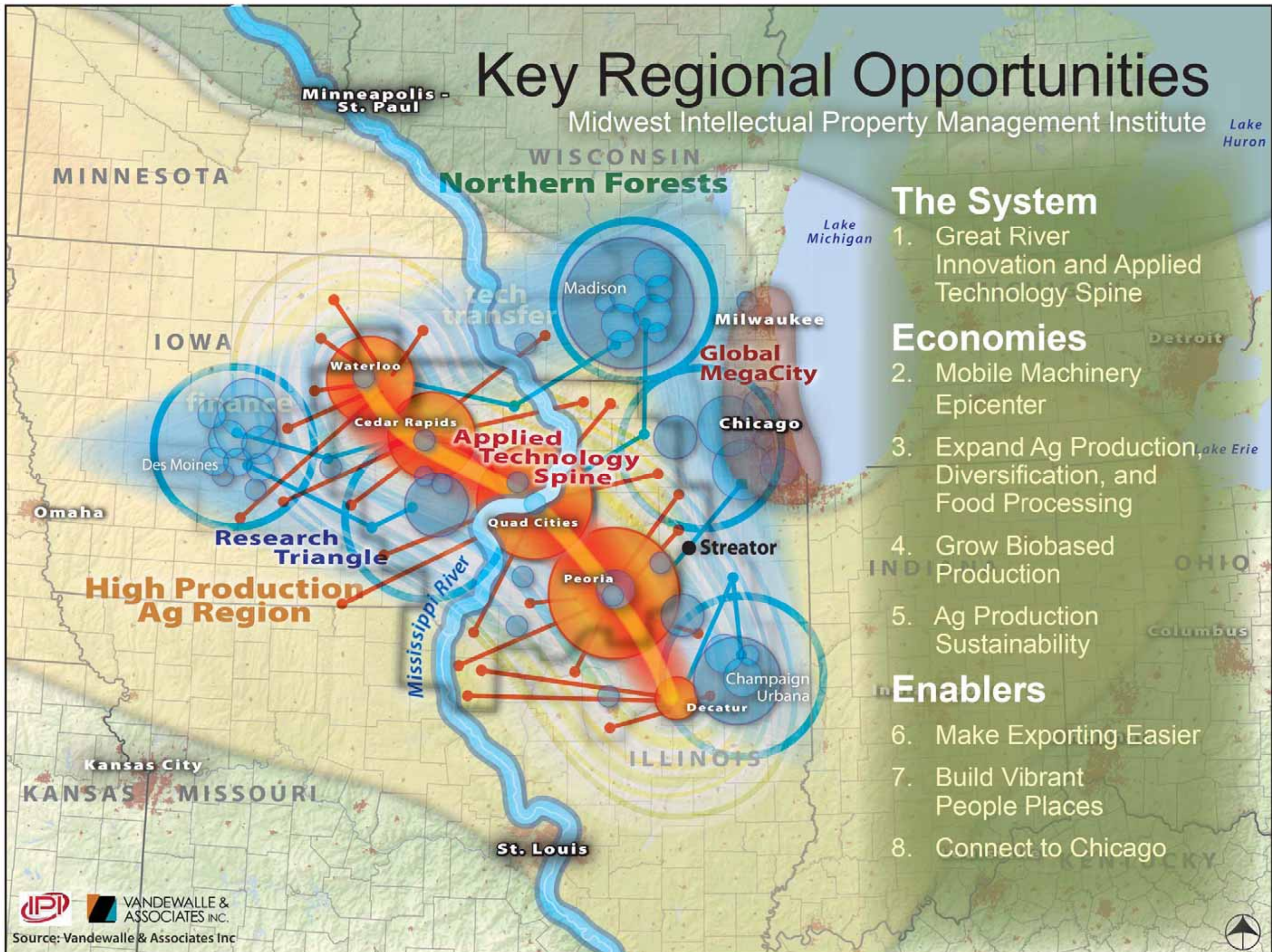
1. Great River
Innovation and Applied
Technology Spine

Economies

2. Mobile Machinery
Epicenter
3. Expand Ag Production,
Diversification, and
Food Processing
4. Grow Biobased
Production
5. Ag Production
Sustainability

Enablers

6. Make Exporting Easier
7. Build Vibrant
People Places
8. Connect to Chicago



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ASSOCIATES INC.

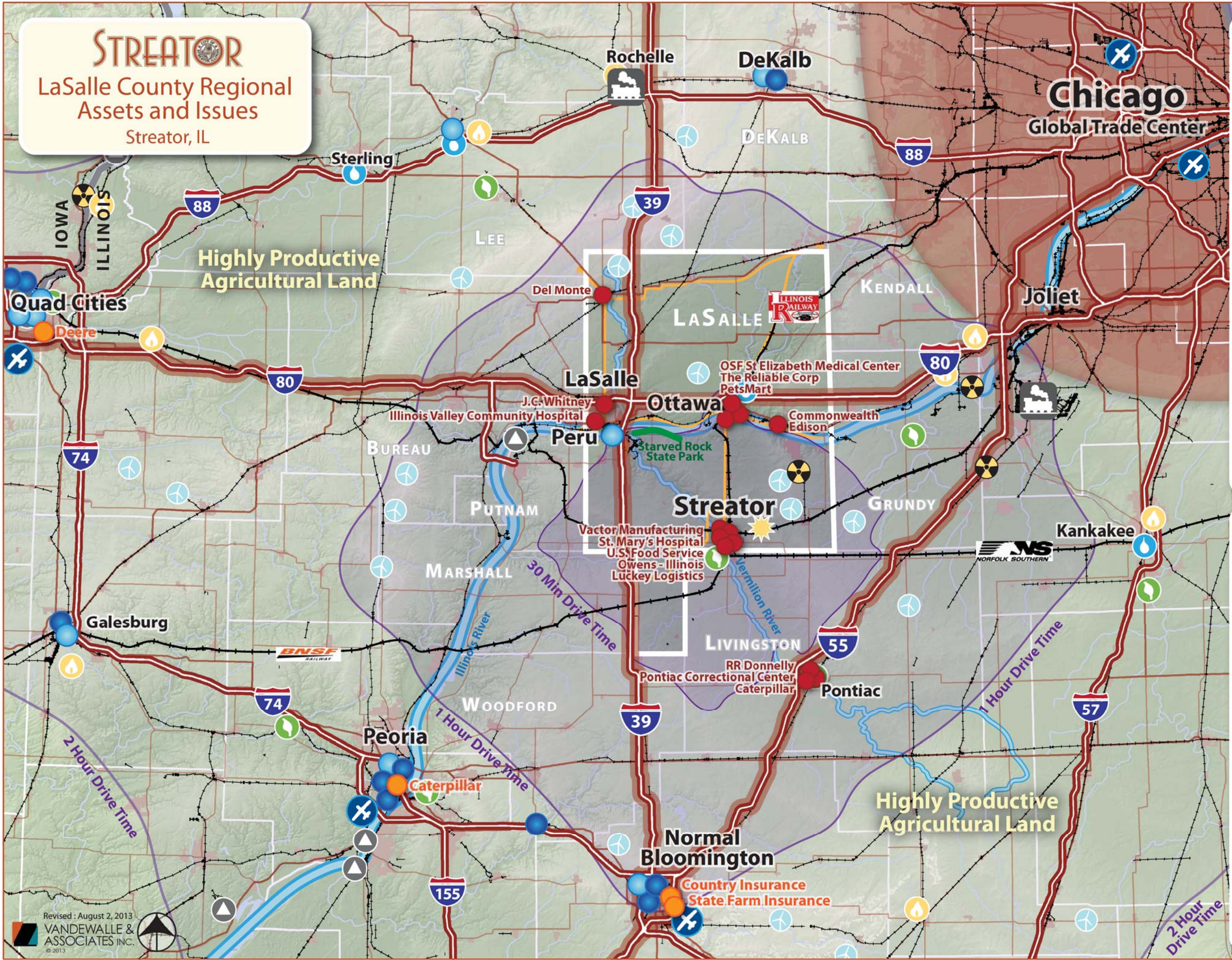
Source: Vandewalle & Associates Inc



STREATOR

LaSalle County Regional Assets and Issues

Streator, IL



- Key Assets

 - Close and well-connected to Chicago global trade center
 - Crossroads of intercontinental transshipment corridors
 - Served by multiple rail providers and nearby major multi-modal hubs
 - Multiple ports on Illinois River connecting Great Lakes to the Mississippi
 - State of the art broadband infrastructure
 - Stabilizing employment base
 - Starved Rock State Park
 - Highly productive soils
 - In the heart of the Illinois wind regime

Key Issues

 - Need to increase cooperative regional economic development efforts
 - Lack of a four-year university
 - State finances and politics
 - Community health and substance abuse concerns
 - Matching available workforce with future employment needs

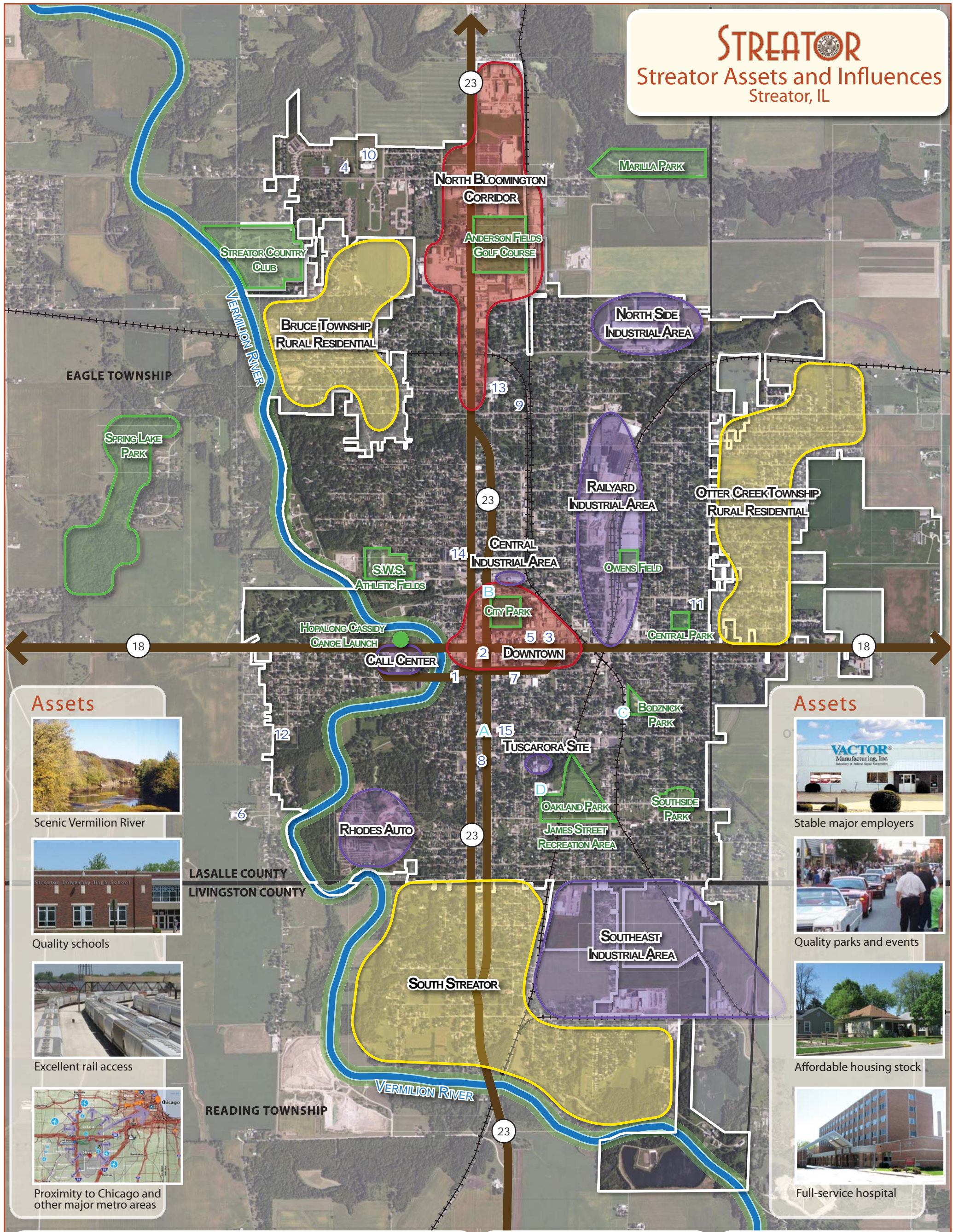
- Legend

 - Fortune 1000 Companies
 - Major Area Employers
 - Four Year Colleges
 - Two Year Colleges
 - Multi-modal Stations
 - Commercial Airports
 - Drive Times from Streator
 - Solar Array
 - Nuclear Plant
 - Wind Projects & Resources
 - Biomass Power Plant
 - Natural Gas Power Plant
 - Hydroelectric Power Plant
 - Coal Power Plant
 - i-fiber Lines (LaSalle County)

STREATOR

Streator Assets and Influences

Streator, IL



Assets



Scenic Vermilion River



Quality schools



Excellent rail access



Proximity to Chicago and other major metro areas

Assets



Stable major employers



Quality parks and events



Affordable housing stock



Full-service hospital

Special Places

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1 CITY HALL/POLICE DEPARTMENT | 9 WEBER HOUSE & GARDEN |
| 2 LIBRARY | 10 CENTENNIAL ELEMENTARY |
| 3 FIRE STATION | 11 SHERMAN ELEMENTARY |
| 4 YMCA | 12 KIMES ELEMENTARY |
| 5 THE MAJESTIC THEATRE | 13 NORTHLAWN JUNIOR HIGH |
| 6 ENGLE LANE THEATRE | 14 STREATOR TOWNSHIP HIGH |
| 7 COMMUNITY CENTER | 15 ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH SCHOOL |
| 8 ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL | |

Closed Facilities

- A ST. ANTHONY'S CHURCH
- B IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH
- C ST. CASIMIR'S CHURCH
- D OAKLAND PARK ELEMENTARY

Legend

- RIVER
- COMMERCIAL AREAS
- EMPLOYMENT/INDUSTRIAL AREAS
- UNINCORPORATED DEVELOPMENT
- PARKS AND RECREATION

Key Assets



Proximity to Chicago and several other major metro areas



Stable major employers



Full-service hospital



Quality parks and dynamic special events



Tremendous volunteer/community support



Excellent railroad access



Scenic Vermilion River



Affordable housing stock



State of the art I-Fiber network



Quality schools

Key Issues

- Lack of career training and higher education opportunities
- Stressed neighborhoods
- Increasing lower income population drawn by low cost of living
- Substance abuse and community health concerns
- Decreasing public school funding
- Continued efforts to improve regional and local community image
- Lack of destinations for residents and visitors
- Need for more youth and senior recreation opportunities
- Not on interstate highway
- Reduce impacts from flooding and other natural hazards

Enhance the City's quality of life

- Capitalize further on residents' outstanding volunteer and community involvement ethic
- Improve the City's housing stock and neighborhood aesthetics
- Work collaboratively to strengthen the education system at all levels
- Develop additional opportunities for adult recreation and cultural activities
- Strengthen the health care system
- Activate the Vermilion River and support recreation, especially biking, hiking, and paddle sports

Engage youth in the community and foster welcoming environment for young families

- Partner with local organizations to expand youth and family recreational programs and offerings
- Encourage young people to stay in Streator or return to begin careers and families
- Work with providers to improve health care services to special populations such as women, people who struggle with substance abuse, and the elderly
- Explore opportunities to reuse recently closed churches and schools to serve neighborhood and community needs

Promote the long-term economic viability of the City

- Improve regional relationships and promote a regional approach to economic development
- Maintain aggressive and responsive local economic development efforts
- Continue open and direct communication between the City and businesses
- Build on the City's municipal equipment manufacturing niche
- Develop strategies to make rail-served sites available and recruit rail uses
- Enhance Downtown Streator as the center of government services, local businesses, and tourism

Make Streator a destination

- Develop a variety of annual events and advertise throughout Illinois
- Continue to improve the community's image among residents and throughout the region
- Recruit a hotel developer
- Develop a tourism strategy
- Implement the Greenways Master Plan
- Investigate development of a major regional attraction
- Prepare a branding and marketing campaign

A Quiet Surprise on the Prairie

"Streator is a quiet city of neighbors who care, located on the central Illinois prairie with a destination downtown, abundant recreational opportunities centered on the Vermilion River greenway, and a diverse and resilient manufacturing history and future."

CHAPTER THREE: LAND USE

This chapter will guide land use decision-making in the Streator area from the City's perspective. It contains a compilation of existing land use information, goals, objectives, policies, and future land use categories to guide the future preservation and development of lands in the City of Streator and its 1½ mile planning area. This chapter includes maps showing existing land uses and recommended future land uses and provides land use data and analysis. Long-range land use planning allows municipalities to phase and guide development in a manner that maximizes positive neighborhood and economic development, maintains and enhances community character, protects sensitive environmental features, promotes revitalization of older parts of the City, and provides efficient municipal services. Land use planning also enables the City to identify lands well-suited for public purposes, such as schools, parks, municipal facilities, major roads, and stormwater management facilities.

Existing Land Use

The purpose of this section is to identify the different types of land use within the Streator corporate limits and the 1½ mile planning area. A study of existing land use was conducted during the summer of 2006 and updated in 2013. The information gathered during this study was obtained from multiple site checks of properties, aerial photographs, topographic maps, and Planning Commission and City staff knowledge of land use within the area.

Categories of land use identified by this study are identified below. Approximate amounts of land area in acres for each category are also described and shown on the Existing Land Use Map on the following page. The acreages identified for each land use category are estimates, and they are intended only to provide a basic representation for the identification of future planning goals and objectives. The map shows the primary use of each parcel of land. The map is intended to indicate a broad overview of the City's growth pattern and the distribution of the various land uses. Each land use category is described in more detail below:

- **Agriculture/Undeveloped:** Identifies areas that are presently undeveloped, sparsely developed, and/or primarily used for farm-related activities. These areas are mostly located outside the City limits within the 1½ mile planning area.
- **Single-Family Residential:** Identifies detached single-family and duplex dwelling units, as well as related storage, recreational, and other accessory units.
- **Multiple-Family Residential:** Includes apartments, senior housing facilities, as well as related storage, recreational, and other accessory units.
- **Commercial:** Includes all types of retail office, and service related facilities where commercial and customer activity is the primary use. Also includes overnight lodging where permanent housing is not the primary priority.



- **Industrial:** Includes areas where light manufacturing, mining, research facilities, production plants, warehousing, and wholesale businesses are located.
- **Institutional:** Includes land use for schools and associated school grounds, municipal buildings, other government-owned land and facilities, and religious facilities.
- **Parks and Recreation:** Includes primarily undeveloped or preserved land used for parks, recreation, conservation, and other outdoor or nature-related activities.
- **Open/Unused/Undeveloped:** Includes land that is currently vacant, not devoted to any usable land use, is not in agricultural production, or has not been developed.



Approximately 3,840 acres of land are currently within the Streator corporate limits, including roads, utilities, or bodies of water. Much of the land use outside of the City limits and within the 1½ mile boundaries is agricultural, not currently developed, or vacant. Though there are some vacant parcels within the City limits, most of the properties have been developed at one time and may be in a transition phase where the land is or will be changing uses. Single-family residential uses make up the majority of the land area in Streator. The following table shows a breakdown of the land within the City of Streator.

Figure 11: Existing Land Use Breakdowns

Existing Land Use Category	City of Streator Percent of Total*	1 1/2-Mile Planning Area Percent of Total**
Single-Family Residential	38.8%	8.5%
Industrial	10.7%	1.7%
Commercial	7.7%	0.2%
Agricultural	7.5%	85.4%
Institutional	5.4%	0.2%
Parks/Open Space	3.3%	0.7%
Multi-Family Residential	2.2%	0.4%

* Totals do not sum to 100%, because surface waters and transportation rights-of-way are not included in the above land use categories.

**These estimates are based on available GIS data and do not include the Village of Kangley.

Future Land Use

This section of the Plan has the ambitious intent of guiding land use and development in the City through the next 20 years. Map 4, the Future Land Use map, is the centerpiece of this chapter and the Plan's land use direction. Map 4 was prepared based on an analysis of a variety of factors, including overall development trends, location and availability of vacant land in the City, location of areas logical for future development based on existing development, environmental constraints, public and property owner input, and this Plan's overall vision (see Chapter Two: Issues and Opportunities).

The Future Land Use map and related policies described below should be used as a basis to update the City's regulatory land use tools, such as the zoning map. They should also be used as a basis for all public and private sector development decisions. These include annexations, rezonings, conditional use permits, subdivisions, extension of municipal utilities, and other public or private investments. Changes in land use to implement the recommendations of this Plan will generally be initiated by property owners and private developers. In other words, this Plan does not automatically compel property owners to change the use of their land.

Not all land shown for development on Map 4 will be immediately appropriate for rezoning and other land use approvals following adoption of this Plan. Given service demands and other factors, careful consideration to the amount, mix, and timing of development to keep it manageable and sustainable is essential. The City advocates the phased development of land that focuses growth in areas and types that advance the vision of the community and can be efficiently served with transportation, utilities, public services, and other community facilities.

Illinois Statutes specifically allow cities to prepare plans for lands both inside and outside their municipal boundaries. To effectively manage growth, this Plan identifies desirable land use patterns within the existing City limits and in unincorporated areas around the City. This approach recognizes that City (and regional) growth and economic health can be either facilitated or impeded by the patterns of growth and preservation in adjacent areas.

Annexation

In addition, the City has the power to annex adjacent unincorporated lands. The City has explored annexing some of the rural residential neighborhoods outside of but adjacent to the City's municipal boundaries. Residents of these neighborhoods benefit from City services yet do not pay City taxes. Additionally, failing septic systems in some of the subdivisions may necessitate annexation so that these neighborhoods can connect to the City of Streator's sanitary sewer system.

Three locations have been identified as priority future annexation areas. These are depicted on Map 4, Future Land Use. They include rural residential development located in the following general areas:

1. Along the northwest border of the City in Bruce Township
2. Along the east central border of the City in Otter Creek Township
3. Along the west central border of the City in Eagle Township

A 2002 annexation study prepared by the Center for Governmental Studies at Northern Illinois University suggested that annexation would add to the tax base of the City of Streator. It was estimated that annexing the three areas described above would have the potential to add approximately \$435,000 in property tax revenue (based on the data available in 2002). When both

revenues and costs were taken in consideration, the fiscal impact over a ten-year projection period was determined to be positive, at approximately \$49,000. In 2002, these three areas included nearly 700 households.

There are a number of different statutory methods for annexing property set forth by the Illinois Municipal Code. One method requires an annexation petition signed by majority of owners within the unincorporated area to be annexed. Annexation can also occur through a referendum held within the unincorporated area. A third method permits a municipality to involuntarily annex property of 60 acres or less if that property is “wholly bounded” by that municipality’s boundaries. Finally, special legislation allows the City of Streator to involuntarily annex land adjacent to its municipal boundaries if the structures and improvements on that land are found to be polluting the waters of the State. Although methods of involuntary annexation exist, the City of Streator Annexation Policy (in development) encourages voluntary annexations whenever possible.

Pre-annexation agreements are typically used when a city annexes a large piece of property owned by one individual. Such agreements, which are mutually agreed upon by both the city and the property owner, describe the future use and development of the newly-annexed land as well as the provision of city utility services to the property. The City of Streator Annexation Policy (in development) recommends the use of pre-annexation agreements between the City and property owners petitioning for annexation.

Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Policies

New/Revised Goal

1. Promote a future development pattern that contains a sustainable mix of land uses to serve the needs of a diverse City population and business community.

New/Revised Objectives

1. Support land uses and development designs that help to enhance Streator’s identity and a sustainable future.
2. Protect City long-term growth interests during and beyond the planning period.
3. Promote a mix of housing types in all new neighborhoods, rather than segregating different housing types in different parts of the community.
4. Develop neighborhoods as interconnected places focused around parks, schools, neighborhood shopping, and other neighborhood facilities.
5. Provide sufficient improved business and industrial sites for the City to be competitive in attracting, retaining, and helping to grow high quality businesses and industries.

New/Revised Policies

1. Actively promote infill development and redevelopment where opportunities exist as a means to improve neighborhood conditions, increase local economic and shopping opportunities, and make use of existing infrastructure investments.
2. Prioritize development in areas with existing utilities or sewer service area designation.
3. Ensure logical transitions between potentially incompatible land uses. Whenever possible, avoid locating potentially conflicting land uses adjacent to each other. Where necessary, buffer potentially incompatible uses through landscaped buffers, open space uses, or less intensive uses.

4. Work to preserve the value of existing City neighborhoods through concerted efforts towards maintenance and reinvestment.
5. Working in cooperation with surrounding communities, maintain productive agricultural lands and open spaces in areas surrounding the City that are not intended for development over the planning period.
6. Where City neighborhood plans do not exist, require large landowners wishing to develop a portion of their property to prepare a master plan for future use of their entire contiguous ownership parcel for City approval, along with connections to adjacent properties.
7. Require developers to coordinate development plans with adjoining property owners so that there will be an efficient system of streets, stormwater facilities, utilities and other public facilities.
8. Pursue the annexation of the three unincorporated residential areas depicted on the Future Land Use map in accordance with the City of Streator Annexation Policy.

Strategic Initiative

Modernize Development Regulations

Evaluating redevelopment regulations such as zoning and land division ordinances is one of the best first steps to implement this Plan. While it requires strong political will to institute higher standards, updated zoning requirements would enhance the built environment gradually over time and make Streator comparable to other communities in the region. Improving the quality of development in the City can also improve Streator's image, increase tax base, and create a better first impression for visitors. A comprehensive evaluation and revision of the subdivision and zoning ordinances would be necessary to fully implement this Plan. Issues that could be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- Analysis of both the zoning and subdivision ordinances to allow for multiple forms of housing developments and to ensure that all types of potential development can be accommodated in Streator.
- Consider creating another residential zoning district that allows for larger lot development as a way to transition the level of density.
- Point-based landscaping requirements for buildings, street frontages, paved areas, and bufferyards.
- Exterior buildings materials requirements including prohibiting low quality materials such as cinder blocks and composite boards.
- Design guidelines for downtown buildings to protect historic character.
- Minimum property maintenance standards for all buildings.
- Clear and predictable development processes including submittal requirements.

Future Land Use Categories

Each of the future land use categories shown on Map 4 is described below. Each future land use category description includes where that type of land use should be promoted in that category.

- **Single-Family Residential:** This future land use category is intended for existing and planned groupings of single-family detached residences that are served by public sanitary

sewer and water systems. Small public and institutional uses— such as parks, schools, churches, and stormwater facilities—may also be built on lands within this category.

- **Multi-Family Residential:** This future land use category is intended for a variety of residential units focused on multiple family housing (3+ unit buildings), usually developed at densities that exceed six units per acre and served by public sanitary sewer and water systems. Single-family detached housing, attached single-family residences with individual entries (e.g., townhouses, rowhouses), and small public and institutional uses—such as parks, schools, churches, and stormwater facilities—may also be within lands mapped in this category.
- **Planned Neighborhood:** The Planned Neighborhood future land use category is intended to provide for a variety of housing choices and a mix of non-residential uses such as parks, schools, religious institutions, and small-scale shopping and service areas. This is really a collection of different land use categories listed in this chapter. Planned Neighborhoods should be carefully designed as an integrated, interconnected mix of these use categories. They are by no means intended to justify an “anything goes” land use pattern. Overall, the composition and pattern of development should promote neighborhoods that instill a sense of community with their design.

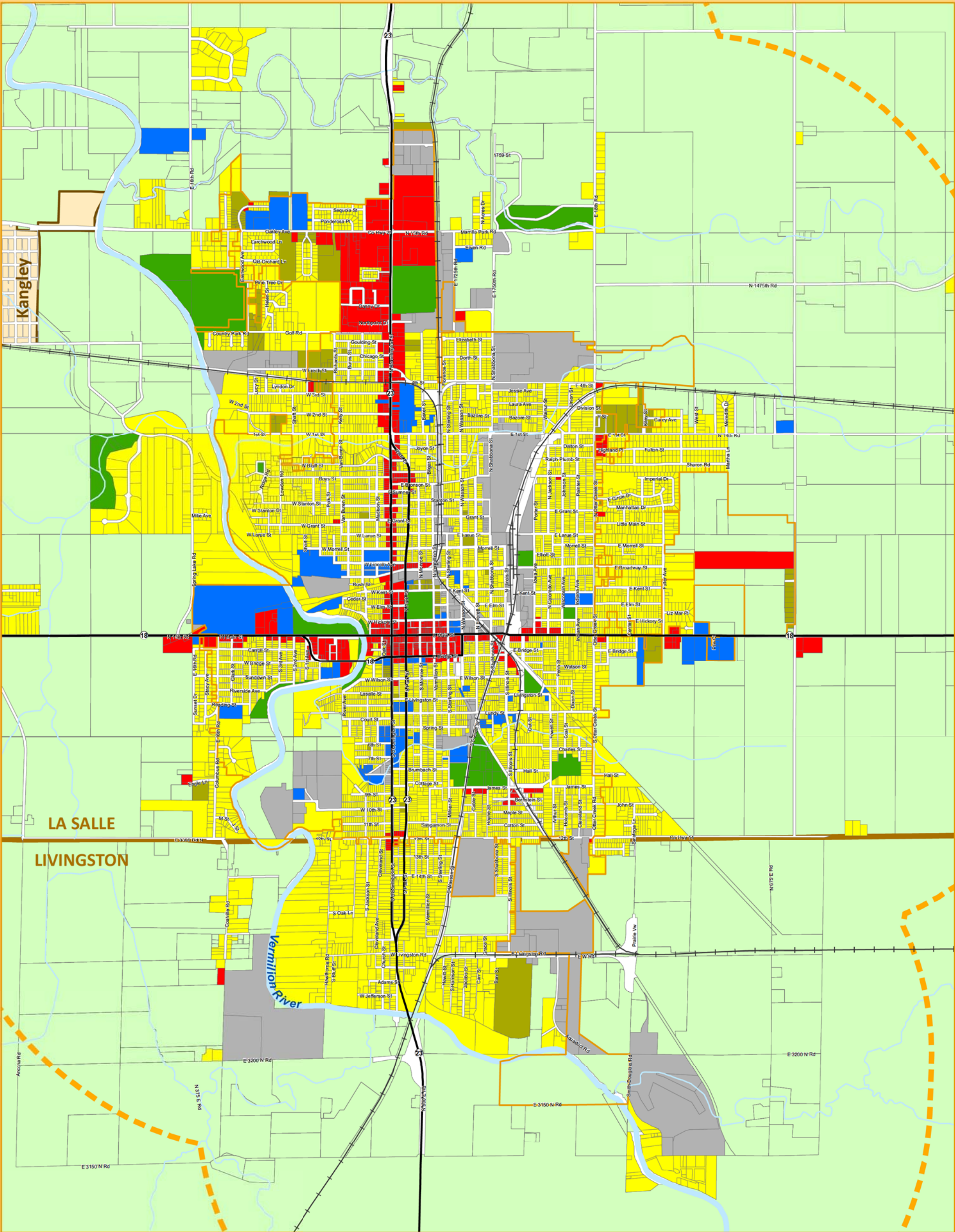
The Planned Neighborhood concept encourages a mix of single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, institutional, and parks and open space uses. Maintaining a minimum percentage of single-family residential uses has the effect of dispersing higher density development throughout the community and limiting the concentration of any one type of development in any one area. Appropriate commercial uses include neighborhood-oriented shopping opportunities such as a small grocery store, barber shop, bakery, or pharmacy; smaller employment opportunities (usually located on the edges of these neighborhoods); and educational facilities (usually elementary schools) for area residents.

- **Commercial:** This future land use category includes large-scale commercial, service, and office land uses, including national and regional retailers, which serve the entire community and people from nearby communities on public sewer, public water, and other urban services and infrastructure.
- **Downtown:** Downtown Streator is intended to be the civic, social, and commercial hub of the community. The Downtown future land use category is mapped over the historic downtown area. This category is intended for a mix of retail, commercial service, office, institutional, and residential (mainly upper stories) uses arranged in a pedestrian-oriented environment with on-street parking; minimal building setbacks; and building designs, materials, placement, and scale that are compatible with the character of existing



development. The Streator Downtown Strategic Plan will further guide the development of lands in this category.

- **Industrial/Manufacturing:** This future land use category is intended to facilitate manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution land uses with controlled outdoor storage areas, with moderate landscaping and signage, served by public sewer, public water, and other urban services and infrastructure. General Industrial areas are mapped on the City's east side, near the Downtown, and in the Southwest Industrial Area.
- **Institutional:** This future land use category is designed to facilitate large-scale public buildings, schools, religious institutions, power plants and substations, hospitals, and special care facilities. Future small-scale institutional uses may also be located in areas planned for residential, commercial, , industrial, mixed, or traditional neighborhood uses, while larger-scale institutional uses should generally be avoided in planned residential or Planned Neighborhood areas.
- **Parks and Open Space:** This future land use category includes park and public open space facilities devoted to playgrounds, play fields, trails, picnic areas, and related recreational activities, and conservation areas.
- **Agricultural:** This future land use category is intended to preserve productive agricultural lands and protect existing farm operations from encroachment by incompatible uses. This category focuses on lands actively used for farming. It also includes woodlands and other open space areas. Lands in this category also include farmsteads, agricultural-related businesses, and limited residential development at densities at or below one home per 35 acres.



Map 3: Existing Land Use

STREATOR
Comprehensive Plan

- City of Streator
- Other Cities and Villages
- County Boundaries
- 1.5 Mile Planning Area

- Rail
- State Highways
- Surface Water

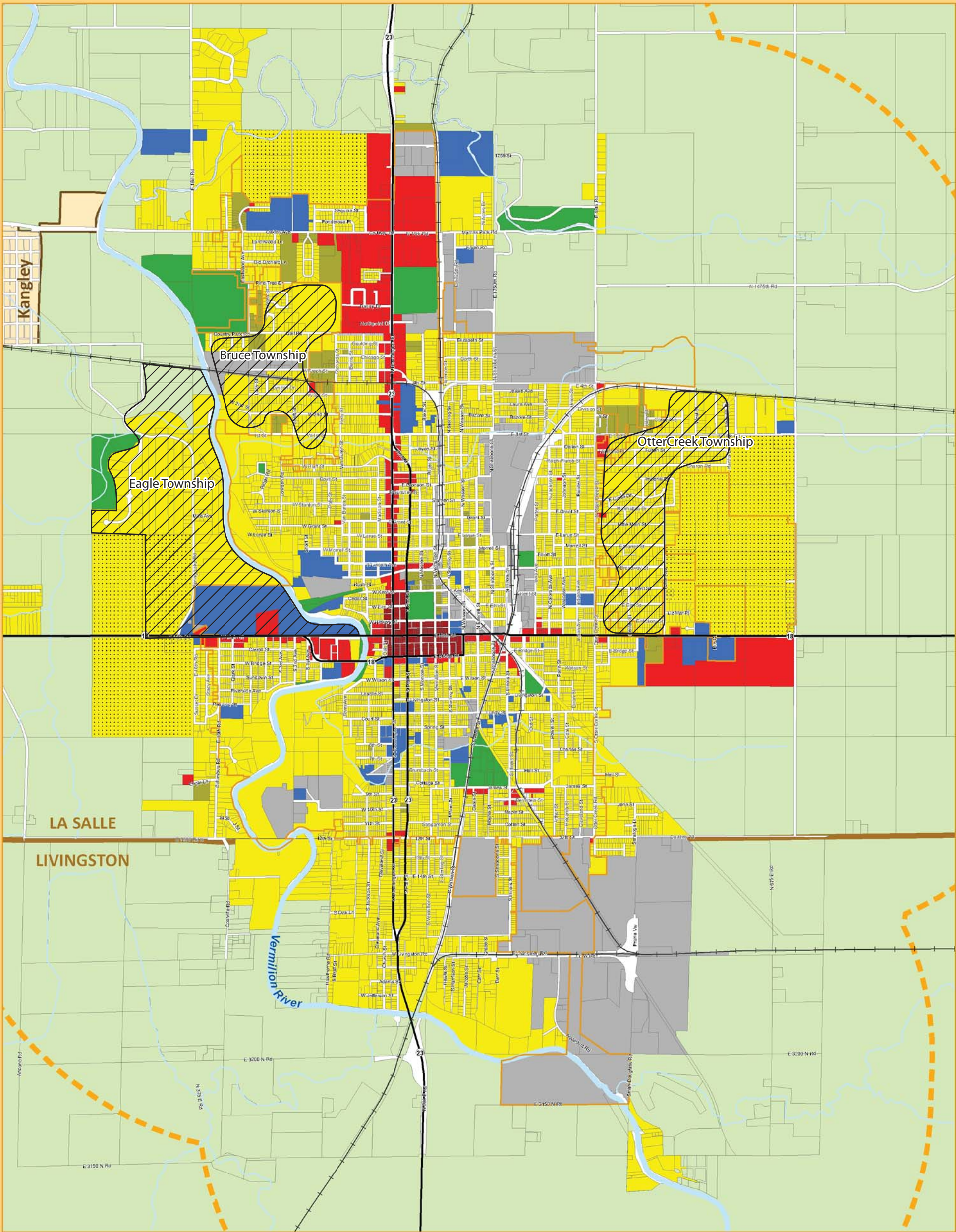
- Single Family Residential
- Multi Family Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial/Manufacturing
- Institutional
- Agricultural/Undeveloped
- Parks and Open Space

0 0.25 0.5
Miles

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.
Shaping places, shaping change

Date: November 18, 2013

Sources: City of Streator,
US Census Bureau,
Vandewalle & Associates



Map 4: Future Land Use

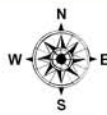
STREATOR

Comprehensive Plan

- City of Streator
- Other Cities and Villages
- County Boundaries
- 1.5 Mile Planning Area
- Future City Annexation Area

- Rail
- State Highways
- Surface Water

- Single Family Residential
- Multi Family Residential
- Planned Neighborhood
- Commercial
- Downtown
- Industrial/Manufacturing
- Institutional
- Agricultural
- Parks and Open Space



0 0.25 0.5
Miles

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.
Shaping places, shaping change

Date: November 18, 2013

Sources: City of Streator,
US Census Bureau,
Vandewalle & Associates

CHAPTER FOUR: HOUSING

This chapter establishes goals, policies, and strategic initiatives to assure that there is an adequate supply of decent housing to meet present and future demand. The policies and recommendations also support the interest in achieving high-quality neighborhoods.

The fabric of a healthy, sustainable neighborhood is created through the interaction of neighborhood conditions, existing assets, residents' priorities and capacities, and the level of neighborhood support and leadership. All neighborhoods, new and old, require attention and tending to ensure that pieces of the fabric do not fray. When it does, mending the fraying pieces becomes a priority.

Housing Framework

Streator has a very affordable and aging housing stock. It consists primarily of single-family detached dwellings. Much of the housing in the City is in good condition, but there are some homes beginning to show signs of deterioration. There has been little new residential development in Streator within the past 20 years. As seen in the table below, more than 72 percent of the homes in the City have a value of less than \$100,000. This percentage far exceeds that of any comparable nearby city. The City's median value of an owner-occupied housing unit is \$79,900, which is one of the lowest figures within north central Illinois. The City's median value in 2000 was \$56,800, meaning that the overall housing stock increased in value by over 40 percent over the previous decade.

Figure 12: Median Housing Value by Category Percentage

Value	Streator	Ottawa	Peru	Pontiac	Illinois
Less than \$50,000	14.4%	3.5%	3.5%	9.7%	6.7%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	58.5%	23.7%	32.5%	43.8%	13.8%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	16.2%	31.9%	28.0%	23.1%	14.2%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	6.9%	18.3%	19.6%	14.3%	15.8%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	2.4%	15.0%	13.7%	6.1%	22.1%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	0.9%	5.9%	2.4%	1.5%	18.7%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	0.0%	1.5%	0.3%	1.1%	7.2%
\$1,000,000 or more	0.7%	0.2%	0.0%	0.4%	1.6%
Median Value	\$79,900	\$133,200	\$119,700	\$96,300	\$198,500

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Streator predominately has detached single-family housing units. More than four out of every five housing units are of this variety. Nearly 15 percent of the housing consists of multi-family residential. A smaller subsection of the City lives in mobile home communities. The housing composition is fairly similar to most of the other notable nearby cities as indicated below. There is not a considerable need for multi-family housing in Streator because of the exceptional affordability of most single-family housing.

Figure 13: Housing Units in Structure by Category Percentage

Units in Structure	Streator	Ottawa	Peru	Pontiac	Illinois
1-unit detached	81.4%	69.2%	78.7%	68.3%	58.5%
1-unit attached	1.0%	5.2%	2.1%	2.1%	5.8%
2 units	2.3%	5.3%	6.2%	3.2%	5.9%
3 or 4 units	3.7%	5.4%	3.5%	5.3%	6.8%
5 to 9 units	4.3%	2.3%	4.4%	7.1%	6.1%
10 to 19 units	1.3%	4.3%	2.6%	2.3%	4.0%
20 or more units	3.1%	6.0%	2.4%	6.9%	10.0%
Mobile home	3.0%	2.3%	0.1%	5.0%	2.7%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Streator has a noticeably aging housing stock. Slightly more than nine percent of the homes in the City have been constructed since 1990. Streator has lagged behind other comparable communities that have experienced more residential growth over the previous two decades. Streator is estimated to have 107 housing units built after 2005. Comparatively, Ottawa and Peru are estimated to have 298 and 220 post-2005 units respectively.

About 70 percent of the housing in Streator is 50 years of age or older. The lack of new housing is a large reason why the median housing price is so much lower than that of the surrounding cities. Additionally, the median incomes in Streator are lower, which does not allow for the types of housing improvement projects that are often needed to maintain and upgrade older homes. A large percentage of the homes in the City are rather sound structurally and their solid construction has allowed the majority of them to last as long as they have. However, an aging housing stock is further compounded by populations that is increasing in age and have difficulty maintaining their homes. This fact along with the aging stock can lead to a deficiency of housing options, which is often not appealing to families that may consider moving to the area.

Figure 14: Housing Unit Age by Category Percentage

Age of Structure	Streator	Ottawa	Peru	Pontiac	Illinois
2005 or later	1.7%	3.4%	4.4%	0.8%	4.0%
2000 to 2004	2.1%	7.9%	6.6%	4.5%	6.8%
1990 to 1999	5.3%	9.7%	6.7%	9.0%	10.6%
1980 to 1989	2.8%	8.3%	2.9%	10.6%	8.8%
1970 to 1979	7.9%	11.1%	8.6%	12.8%	14.5%
1960 to 1969	10.1%	8.1%	12.2%	13.9%	11.9%
1950 to 1959	19.7%	13.9%	16.2%	15.3%	13.4%
1940 to 1949	13.1%	8.9%	8.3%	5.7%	6.9%
1939 or earlier	37.3%	28.8%	34.2%	27.4%	23.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 U.S. Census



Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Maintain and enhance the housing options for current and future residents.

New/Revised Objectives

1. Promote high quality, safe housing and living environments that enhance existing neighborhoods, maintaining reasonable densities and promoting sustainable owner-renter ratios.
2. Require City neighborhoods to be served by a full range of urban services and close to key destinations for residents.

Objective Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Increase the variety of housing opportunities.

New/Revised Policies

1. Ensure housing opportunities for all income groups, including a greater supply of mid- to high-level rental options.
2. Work with developers of new larger subdivisions at early stages to enhance the City's architectural variety and integrity.
3. Develop a uniform park signage program to better call attention to park amenities and policies.
4. Continue to update the City's Disaster Plan and keep an open dialogue with local, state, and federal emergency response agencies to ensure that residents have access to and can utilize emergency response programs to assist in pre- and post-disaster mitigation and response efforts.

Policies Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Promote rehabilitation and maintenance of the existing housing stock.
2. Enforce a minimal property maintenance code for all houses within the City.
3. Consider applying for grants that can help lower income residents finance the rehabilitation of their homes.
4. Consider becoming a home rule community.
5. Encourage the use of infill construction on vacant or underutilized lots or to reconstruct homes that are considerably dilapidated.
6. Encourage residential growth that diversifies the City's demographic groups and wage earners.
7. Direct new residential development to areas where public infrastructure is already located or planned.
8. Attempt whenever possible to maintain the City's grid network while only allowing a minimal number of cul-de-sacs.

The following policies from the 2007 Comprehensive Plan have been completed:

- ✓ Strengthen code enforcement and building inspections, including funding for these activities.
- ✓ Require parks to be created with all new residential developments or a fee in lieu for the construction of parks in other areas of the City as a way to maintain the supply of recreational space for all residents.
- ✓ Require buffers or transitions between commercial/industrial districts and residential areas.

Strategic Initiatives

Improve the City's Housing Stock and Neighborhood Aesthetics

Rehabilitation of the existing housing stock will be a major priority for the City. The property taxes are relatively high at this point, due primarily to a lower than desired sales tax base. Attracting businesses that can contribute greater sales taxes revenues will significantly reduce the City's reliance on property taxes. This, in turn, will make it more financially feasible for many families to undertake the types of structure improvements that are necessary or desired. A revolving loan fund (RLF) can be created that would set aside money for residents to rehabilitate their homes utilizing low-interest loans. The purpose of a RLF is to support and stimulate private investment. Often, a maximum income level is established to ensure that residents have a greater need for the loan than others with more financial means.

Part of the deterioration of the housing stock can be attributed to absentee landlords that are not willing or do not have the financial means to invest in their properties. There is generally a lack of interest on behalf of absentee landowners to maintain their buildings. The City should consider holding a referendum to become a home rule community, which would allow the City to take greater action against those who do not maintain their properties. Under home rule, the State would grant the City more powers than they currently have, allowing for more innovative and responsive solutions to problems that may be more specific to Streator.



The City should consider applying for a grant to undertake a housing rehabilitation project. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP) provides grants to local governments to assist them in financing economic development, public facilities, and housing rehabilitation projects. The program is targeted to assist low-to-moderate income persons by creating job opportunities and improving the quality of their living environment. The City could apply for up to \$350,000 towards homes that have a demonstrated need for rehabilitation. The City should target a specific area that does not exceed the income threshold and has a large percentage of its homes in need of repair. Gradual strengthening of each neighborhood will dramatically change the appearance of the structures in Streator and improve quality of life for residents.

The City should also consider developing a program to inform its elderly population of the availability of the numerous state and federal grant programs available for seniors to improve and rehabilitate their homes, and assist them with the application process. Numerous programs exist that cater to the elderly, including USDA Rural Housing Repair and Rehabilitation Grants and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Supportive Housing for the Elderly Rental Assistance Program. The strong volunteer effort of the community can also be leveraged to achieve this type of rehabilitation through additional programs such as Habitat for Humanity.

Require Neighborhood Development Plans in Advance of Development

The Land Use chapter includes a description of the Planned Neighborhood future land use category, which is intended to provide for a variety of housing choices and a mix of non-residential uses such as parks, schools, religious institutions, and small-scale shopping and service areas. These areas are mapped on Map 4 for future development in different parts of the City.

The complexity of Planned Neighborhood areas suggests the preparation of detailed neighborhood development plans to further guide development of these areas. A neighborhood development plan would be prepared by a developer, a group of property owners, or the City, in advance of the approval of individual subdivision plats within the area it covers.

Neighborhood development plans specify in greater detail land use mix, density, street layouts, open space, and stormwater management than are possible within this Comprehensive Plan. They also suggest important connections between individual property ownerships and future subdivision plats. These neighborhood development plans would ideally be adopted as a detailed component of the City's Comprehensive Plan once completed.

Figure 15: Preparing Neighborhood Development Plans – A Recommended Process

The following planning process has a proven track record of success:

- I. Analysis: A wide variety of site specific information must be collected about both existing and emerging conditions:
 - A. Establish and confirm the full neighborhood design process, including the creation of an adhoc or blended oversight committee including and/or reporting to the Plan Commission and City Council.
 - B. Collect existing map and plan data for the area and its surroundings related to parcels, topography, soils, land cover and uses, utilities, transportation, recreation, public services, plan recommendations, zoning and property ownership.
 - C. Evaluate the existing and emerging real estate market.
 - D. Employ meaningful public participation to help identify opportunities & constraints, and to help create a vision for the area.
 - E. Conduct property owner, agency, and stakeholder interviews.
- II. Plan: Based on the results of the Analysis phase, prepare a detailed Neighborhood Development Plan as derived from the consideration of a Preliminary Concept Plan, Alternative Concept Plans where options are many, and a Refined Draft Neighborhood Plan:
 - A. Refine and confirm the neighborhood vision.
 - B. Draft and confirm a Preliminary Concept Plan depicting the general arrangement of land uses, development character, main roads and stormwater management facilities, pedestrian & bicycle networks, and the open space system. For more complex neighborhoods with a variety of options, produce and confirm one or more Alternative Concept Plans.
 - C. Present Preliminary Concept Plan or Alternative Concept Plans for review by the public, stakeholders, agencies and the committee. An alternatives Open House with rating sheets is an excellent method to receive general public input.
 - D. Produce and confirm a Draft Neighborhood Development Plan based on the responses to the Preliminary or Alternative Concept Plans.
 - E. Refine and adopt the Neighborhood Development Plan, and ultimately integrate it into the Comprehensive Plan as an amendment.
- III. Implementation: Following neighborhood development plan adoption, establish and apply the appropriate regulatory and procedural foundation to ensure full implementation:
 - A. Facilitate developments consistent with that plan.
 - B. Establish zoning districts and boundaries in compliance with the plan.
 - C. Review proposed land divisions, conditional use permits and planned developments based on conformance with the plan, including consideration of land use pattern, density/intensity, community character, and infrastructure recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE: PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

This chapter is intended to describe the City's existing parks and identify ways to improve the park supply in the future. Parks and open spaces connect residents to the natural environment and are important to public health and quality of life in Streator.

Parks and Open Space Framework

Streator has a solid system of parks and recreational areas. There are over 168 acres of public park space within the City limits. The schools provide additional recreation space, with Streator High School holding more than 20 acres of fields.

City Park

City Park is located in the heart of the City, on the north perimeter of the downtown. It is primarily a passive recreation area with large oak trees that provide shade to much of the park. New playground equipment installed in 2012 is available, though additional equipment should be considered. The park's 10.8 acres are utilized during summer festivals and as an informal gathering place.

Spring Lake Park

Spring Lake Park, pictured at right, contains 37.2 acres and is the City's largest park. In 2008, community members received the Governor's Hometown Award, which recognizes citizen-spearheaded projects involving volunteer time and money, for restoring the park, which had been neglected for more than a decade. Improvements included cleanup, new trails, a parking lot, permanent steps, and a popular swinging bridge that crosses the small creek. The park is visited regularly and holds considerable potential as a restored natural area with multi-use trails and public restrooms.



Vermilion River Greenway Trail Park/Hopalong Cassidy River Trail

Land was donated at Water Street for a small park next to the Vermilion River. It can be utilized for fishing or to enjoy the moving water. Hopalong Cassidy River Trail and canoe launch is located along Illinois Route 18 on the west side of the City on the Vermilion River. The park, which provides public access to the river, is heavily utilized during the summer as it is a prime location to access the river and its recreational opportunities. Almost 14 acres of public park space are located here.

Marilla Park

Marilla Park is a small wooded area on the City's far north side that contains beautiful topography. It is the City's second largest park. The park contains benches, slides, swings, a backstop, grills, picnic shelters, picnic tables, and restrooms. A new 18-hole Frisbee golf course installed in 2012 has quickly become a popular attraction in the area.

Bodznick Park

Bodznick Park contains 4.5 acres and is adjacent to the Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks in the City's southeastern quadrant. It is heavily utilized for softball games.

Oakland Park

Oakland Park contains 5.5 acres on the south side of the City. The park was heavily damaged during the 2009 tornado, but it has been re-landscaped through volunteer efforts. Amenities include shelters, picnic tables, grills, a slide, swings, and tot swings.

Southside Park

Southside Park contains 9.1 acres and is located near the southeast borders of the City. A few baseball diamonds can be found within this park.

Pocket Parks

A small pocket park is located at the intersection of Livingston and Wasson Streets. This park was a donation to the City by Julia Armstrong.

Heritage Park, located at the intersection of Main and Monroe Streets downtown, was installed and is maintained by the Streator Downtown Business Owners Association. It features several dedication and commemorative plaques, sitting benches, and a replica Kerr street clock which plays music during the holiday season.

Sherman Park

Sherman Park is a small neighborhood park that contains 2.1 acres and is located on the City's east side at the intersection of Hickory and Johnson Streets. It contains numerous playground items, a shelter, and passive recreation areas.

Anderson Fields

Anderson Fields Golf Course is a 32-acre nine-hole course located on Illinois Route 23 on the north side of the City. It receives a considerable amount of use during the warmer months, with up to 20,000 rounds per year. Rates are very affordable for residents and non-residents alike. The clubhouse, which was completely reconstructed in 2008, serves a variety of food and beverage options and has become an eye-catching architectural and landscape feature on the City's north side. The golf course does



not have room for expansion, because adjacent lands are developed for other uses. In addition, the Streator Country Club is a semi-private, nine-hole golf course located on the far northwest side of the City.

James Street Recreation Complex

The James Street Recreation Complex, originally planned in 1974, was finally constructed in 2008. The park boasts one regulation major league field, three softball/tee-ball fields, and one football field. The park also contains over one mile of walking paths and a restroom/concession building. The utilization of the park was complicated by the 2009 tornado but has continued to grow in recent years. The park's concrete walking paths are also gaining popularity as both a walking and dog-walking destination.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Maintain recreational opportunities for people of all ages and expand the program offerings as the demographics of the City evolve.

New/Revised Objectives

1. Prepare a 5-year park and open space plan to identify locations for future parks and plan for future recreation needs. The plan's recommendations will guide the acquisition, preservation, and development of land for parks, recreation trails, and other open spaces to meet the changing needs of the City's residents.

Objectives Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Attempt to serve each area of the City with recreational opportunities.
2. Create a network of greenways and trails that promote walking and bicycling.
3. Coordinate a regular update of the City's parks equipment with the capital improvements plan.

New/Revised Policy

1. Collaborate with citizen stakeholders, land owners, and state organizations to implement the 2013 Greenway Master Plan.
2. Build a skate park in James Street Park.
3. Create a uniform park signage program to better call attention to park amenities and policies.

Policies Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Determine an appropriate area of at least two acres within the northeast and northwest areas of the City to place a neighborhood-level park.
2. Analyze each underserved or vacant property in the City for their potential to provide for park space.
3. Utilize the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development grant program to leverage city funds for the acquisition and/or creation of additional parkland.

4. Connect pedestrian trails with important city facilities such as City Hall, the library, parks, and schools.
5. Maintain open corridors adjacent to and near the Vermilion River and other tributaries as open space for pedestrian use.
6. Maintain open dialogue with the Illinois Department of Transportation to locate a pedestrian trail adjacent to a possible widening of Route 23.
7. Continue to maintain and improve the Anderson Park Golf Course property as a unique asset to the City.
8. Prioritize the oldest and least safe equipment and set aside funding to replace the equipment.
9. Set minimum standards for the level of safety for the park equipment that meet the requirements of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. The equipment must not be used when it falls below the minimum level.

The following policies from the 2007 Comprehensive Plan have been completed:

- ✓ Continue the park dedication component currently in place for all new residential subdivisions or a fee-in-lieu provision that would create satisfactory space and amenities for the new residents.
- ✓ Create a partnership with the local utility companies to utilize easements for pedestrian trails.

Strategic Initiatives

Develop Additional Opportunities for Adult Recreation and Cultural Activities

Participants in the focus groups identified deficiency in recreational activities for adults in the community. Streator offers the standard social activities like bowling, movie theaters, golf courses, and private community service organizations, but there are still many opportunities to expand the city's recreational offerings for adults. The City could consider providing or expanding adult sports leagues, affordable boat rentals, an ice rink, movies in the park, and live music venues. The City could establish a park district to fund such activities as well as the additional youth and family recreational offerings described below.

Partner with Local Organizations to Expand Youth and Family Recreational Programs and Offerings

Schools are dropping extracurricular activities and “extras” like art and music, forcing parents to send their children to other communities for private lessons. In Streator, retired art teachers are doing private lessons. A parents group is establishing a nonprofit to fund the band program. The two main private providers of youth and family recreation are the YMCA and the Community Center. The Streator Community Center is an active presence in the community. The Community Center organizes activities for youth, softball tournaments, special events, and fundraisers for charitable causes in addition to its many other activities. The Streator YMCA offers various fitness and sports opportunities for kids, including the Streator Stingrays swim team.

While the Streator YMCA provides many options for youth interested in athletics, other types of programming are needed as well. Focus groups described an overemphasis on sports in the community and identified a need for a wider variety of recreational options for youth. Currently

the City does not offer any recreational programming. By and large, it has become an expectation that cities will provide programming for youth and family recreational programs and activities, and many other cities near Streator provide such offerings. Not only is it important to the quality of life in Streator, but it is also important to attract and retain new residents and employers.

The City should work with private organizations to expand recreational offerings citywide. This effort would probably not require a city parks department, but it would benefit from the creation of a full-time or part-time City position to coordinate community recreation offerings. This staff person would manage City-run recreational programming, work with private recreation providers like the YMCA and the Community Center, coordinate scheduling and the sharing of facilities, minimize overlapping or competing programming, and ensure that a diverse range of activities were offered for a variety of age groups. Whether City-run or privately run, recreational programs should be affordable to Streator residents and should be well-advertised and marketed. When the City develops new and improves existing parks and trails, this is an opportunity to expand youth and family recreational offerings in the community. For example, improvements to James Street Park could include a skate park, which would provide children and adolescents with a new recreation option.



Future Park and Trail Recommendations

It is recommended that neighborhood-level parks be located within close proximity to every household in the City. Neighborhood parks are one acre or less in size and serve residents within a 10-minute walk or half-mile radius. These parks are the easiest to add to the overall parks system because they are small and do not have to be heavily equipped. They do not significantly add to the total park acreage but they greatly enhance the quality of life for those living nearby and provide neighborhood children a place to play safely. Every park should be connected to the surrounding neighborhood by sidewalks or dedicated walk/bicycle trails.

The City should consider purchasing vacant lots within the northeast or northwest portions of the City. Underutilized or vacant lots are usually perfect candidates for small neighborhood parks. A new park increases the livability of a neighborhood and can increase nearby property values. The parks do not have to be heavily landscaped or contain numerous recreational amenities. They should contain signage and enough lighting to maintain a safe atmosphere.

There is not a dedicated pedestrian path in any part of the City, and only a minor percentage of the streets contain sidewalks. For these reasons, Streator is not as pedestrian-friendly as it could be. Along with requiring park space to be dedicated within new developments, the City should work closely with developers to create a recreation path. The City should create paths that lead to public access points with the Vermilion River. The Greenway Master Plan is an important first step to improving Streator's walkability and recreation offerings.

Additionally, the City should consult with the local utility companies about utilizing the utility companies' rights-of-way as pedestrian paths. Some of the best available space is often adjacent to large electrical lines because the land would not be utilized for any other use. Such long corridors

are well suited for recreation trails. If Illinois Route 23 is widened to four or five lanes, the City should push for the creation of a trail that would parallel the road toward Ottawa. In Ottawa, there could be opportunities to connect the trail with the I&M Canal path, which travels from LaSalle to Joliet.

To create additional park space, the City should make the most of the various grant programs offered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The program most suitable for the City is the Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant. The City could apply for a matching grant for the acquisition of land or for park development. The competitive program has benefited numerous communities in Illinois and the City should take advantage of it to support its efforts to increase or develop the amount of park space in Streator.

Much of the playground equipment in the Streator parks is showing signs of age and could be replaced. The City should analyze the equipment at each park to prioritize which equipment should be replaced first. The City should also consider building a skate park at James Street Park.

The City should pursue partnerships with the area schools to make use of the parks and open spaces on their properties. Though the citizens that live near the schools utilize the outdoor areas, formal recreational programs could further utilize the parks and create additional opportunities for the residents. There should be many options available for people of all ages. The City could embrace co-op programs with Ottawa if there is not enough participation within Streator for a certain desired program.

These recommendations could be the beginning of a municipal park and open space plan to proactively account for the City's future park and recreation needs. Future park planning should guide the acquisition, preservation, and development of land for parks, recreation trails, and other open spaces in the City to meet the needs of a growing and changing population. Such recommendations would also serve to protect and enhance the community's natural resource base into the future. These plans typically focuses on recommendations for development over the next five-year period, but also addresses the long-range park and open space needs of the community (20 years in the future).

CHAPTER SIX: QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life is a critical component in attracting and retaining residents and employers and plays a significant role in maintaining a healthy tax base. This is an area of special focus for Streator, which is why this chapter is dedicated to this subject.

Quality of Life Framework

Quality of life is difficult to define. It is a combination of amenities, quality housing and neighborhoods, a diverse and vibrant downtown, parks and trails, arts and culture, services, the built environment, safety, and educational opportunities.

Some key quality of life components are listed below:

- Location in the region: Streator has only a handful of major destinations of its own, but has good access to other destinations and communities in the region.
- Health care: There is a lack of healthcare services for women and the elderly. Substance abuse is a growing problem in the community.
- Services and retail: Streator is a full-service community with large chain retailers like Walmart, Walgreens, Radioshack, and Aldi. It is lacking nicer hotel accommodations and small upscale boutique retail.
- The Weber House: Pictured at right, this Tudor Cottage and English garden is a hidden treasure, as it is unknown to many residents and not yet celebrated by the community at large.
- Employment: Streator has several good employers, but a large portion of the workforce is unskilled and unable to take advantage of many of the available jobs.
- Education: Both the public and parochial schools in Streator are good, but the City has no institutions of higher education. The nearest IVCC campus is in Ottawa.
- Recreation: The City has many good offerings for outdoor active parks and provides some limited access to the Vermilion River. However, recreational program coordination is lacking.
- Housing stock: Overall, Streator's housing stock is very affordable, but it is aging and maintenance is a growing problem.



Goals, Objectives, and Policies

New/Revised Goals

1. Enhance the City's quality of life.

New/Revised Objectives

1. Promote high quality, safe housing and living environments to attract new families.
2. Address aging infrastructure, especially streets and sidewalks in neighborhoods, to promote private reinvestment.
3. Provide community services and facilities in a logical, reliable, energy-efficient and cost-effective manner to serve a compact development pattern.
4. Promote downtown as the specialty retail, service, residential, and event district of the community.
5. Strengthen the local workforce by improving the accessibility and quality of education, job training, transportation, and housing for employees.
6. Cultivate and celebrate Streator's robust volunteer ethic and encourage residents to be connected to their neighborhoods and the community.
7. Improve community health, especially addressing women's health care services and substance abuse issues.

New/Revised Policies

1. Explore a variety of creative means to retain and draw young people to Streator, including housing component (e.g., provide a variety of options and costs) and an employment component (e.g., entry-level jobs in a variety of industries with room for advancement).
2. Work collaboratively with local schools on issues of mutual concern, such as adaptive reuse of decommissioned school buildings, community health, and joint services and facility usage.
3. Collaborate with local employers, high schools, and IVCC to identify and meet workforce education and training needs in order to support local businesses.
4. Partner with health care providers to improve and modernize women's health care services locally.
5. Partner with community organizations to develop a strategy to curb problem drinking and drug abuse through education, support groups, a wider range of available activities for young people, and other initiatives.
6. Capitalize on the Weber House and Engle Lane as local treasures that draw visitors to Streator.
7. See other chapters of this Plan for policies related to Housing, Economic Development, and Parks and Open Space.

Strategic Initiatives

Encourage Young People to Stay in Streator or Return to Begin Careers and Families

In recent years, many communities have discussed strategic approaches to attract and retain young professionals and young families. Through this Plan, the City should demonstrate its openness to talent, commitment to quality of life improvements, and prioritize the attraction and retention of young people to the community. Diversity in the City's social structure is important in maintaining a healthy and vibrant community. Young professionals and families contribute to a healthy age

balance, local economic development through innovation and human capital, and vitality in the community. The young people who live in the community today are the ones who are most likely to establish roots and remain here to start and raise their families. It can be a particular struggle for smaller and even mid-sized cities to attract and retain these demographic groups. Even larger cities have grappled with the out-migration of young college graduates, reporting a loss of a large percentage of their post-college-age residents to larger metro areas like Chicago. Communities that do retain and attract young people have a broad range of characteristics, and many of these are the same qualities that contribute to a community's high quality of life.

The City should continue to work to provide a range of housing options in the community. The City already has many housing options affordable to first-time homebuyers, something that is particularly important to young families and to some young professionals. In addition, the City should implement the initiatives related to rehabilitation of the City's housing stock in Chapter Four: Housing. Finally, the City can accommodate the needs and desires of young professionals in its Planned Neighborhoods. Properly executed, Planned Neighborhoods provide many of the elements that young professionals and young families seek: a range of housing types (including high quality starter homes/condos/apartments and opportunities to "move-up" within the same neighborhood), quality construction to assure a return on investment, open space and recreational facilities, and accessibility to neighborhood-scale shopping and services. The City should encourage the development of most new residential neighborhoods as Planned Neighborhoods, following the guidelines presented in Chapter Three: Land Use.

Education is a fundamental factor for young families that are deciding where to live. The City's public and private schools are an important asset, and the City should work to enhance and support the schools whenever possible. The City should continue to cooperate with school administrators and teachers so that the schools maintain their good reputation and remain important community asset in the future.

The City should also seek to attract former Streator residents who moved away to pursue higher education. Along with the other initiatives in Chapter Seven: Economic Development, the City should also seek to attract employers who are looking to hire college graduates. This would encourage Streator natives to return to their hometown to raise families after receiving their degrees.

Attracting and retaining young residents and families go hand-in-hand with other quality of life initiatives, and improving quality of life depends on the implementation of the other strategic initiatives in this Plan. Therefore, it is essential to implement all eight groups of strategic initiatives.

Develop a Variety of Annual Events and Advertise Throughout Illinois

The City should continue to work with the Streator Tourism Council, SACCI, Streator Downtown Area Businesses, the schools, and other community organizations to promote and plan events for local residents and tourism development. These community events and programs should celebrate the history and culture of the City, attempting to increase attendance from both residents and visitors. Currently there are several popular events that may provide a foundation for this effort:

- The Streator Community Center organizes Fall Fest in September. This family-friendly event includes a Farmer's Market, Flea Market and Vendor Booths, and children's activities including hayrack rides, a straw maze, a petting zoo, jumping castles, live entertainment, and games. Some unique events include the Frog Jumpin' Contest (bring your own frog), the Watermelon Seed Spitting Contest, and Outhouse Races.

- The Dream Machines Car Club hosts the Roamer Cruise Night on Labor Day weekend. This event, held on Main Street, attracts 15,000-20,000 people annually.
- Streator Park Fest, also sponsored by the Streator Community Center, is an outdoor festival held in May that includes a carnival, crafts, music, family activities, food, and a parade.
- Streator 4th of July.



These events could be expanded and advertised throughout the state to attract a larger audience and bolster Streator's status as a tourist destination. Potential new events to consider include an art fair, regional musicians festival, 5-K run to benefit a local cause or initiative, and a healthy community event. See the box below for an example of such an event.

It is important to note that community events do not necessarily generate a lot of revenue for the City, especially in the early years. Typically, such events break even or make a marginal profit due to the high cost of community services (e.g. sewer and water, security, traffic control, medical treatment, clean-up, and damage to public property). However, as the events grow and develop, and as Streator continues to improve its hotel offerings and other options for tourists, such annual events may evolve into an economic development tool over the years. Aside from revenue generation, other important benefits of successful, well-run annual events include stimulus for improved downtown service and retail offerings, increased sales for local vendors, businesses, restaurants, and hotels, and increased community pride.

Continue to Improve the Community's Image among Residents and Throughout the Region

Civic improvements also contribute to community image. When done right, major city projects have been known to contribute to a sense of pride among residents and cause visitors to leave with a positive view of the community. The City is investing in some of these areas right now, through proposed improvements to the downtown as outlined in the Downtown Strategic Plan and the development of a greenway as described in the Greenway Master Plan. In the future, strategic investment in the riverfront may transform the river into an important destination for residents and visitors alike. The City should continue to identify key future destinations such as these and invest in their improvement. In addition, the preservation of historic and cultural resources fosters a sense of pride, improves quality of life, and provides an important social and cultural continuity between the past, present, and future. The City should seek to protect and preserve historic resources in the community wherever possible.

The strategic initiative described above will also play a role in people's perception of Streator. Annual or seasonal events that appeal to a wide variety of people can be especially effective in communities with great social, ethnic, and economic diversity and can play an important role in boosting a city's self-image. The processes used to plan and carry out these can also play a key role in increasing collaboration, social capital, and civic participation, all of which improve residents' attitudes toward their communities. Promotion of these events and positive coverage in the local media after the events occur will also impact how residents of the larger region view Streator.

Case Study: Open Streets for a Fun and Healthy Community


A *ciclovía* is a car-free event that encourages people to walk, skate, run, bicycle, exercise, and socialize. Typically this involves closing a major street to cars and opening it to people for an entire day. The events are free, open to the public, and welcoming to people of all ages. The concept, originally developed in Bogotá, Columbia, has been adopted in many cities nationwide. In Minneapolis, four different *ciclovía* events are held each summer, each at a different location in the city. The event series has been dubbed Open Streets. The Minneapolis Open Streets events include activities such as bike workshops, information booths for local health and community organizations, games for kids, live music, art vendors, food vendors, free bicycle repair, and even activities for pets. *Ciclovía* events in other cities have offered free health screenings, smoking cessation information, cooking demonstrations, farmers markets, Zumba classes, yoga classes, and more. By promoting healthy living, local businesses, sustainable transportation, and civic pride, a *ciclovía* would simultaneously work toward many of the goals outlined in this Plan.

CHAPTER SEVEN: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This chapter of the Plan contains information, goals, objectives, policies, and recommended programs to promote the retention and stabilization of the economic base in Streator. Because a successful economic development strategy must consider a community's position within a broader economic and geographic region, this chapter was developed with that regional perspective in mind. Streator's location on two primary state thoroughfares that travel in each direction to interstate highways and three railroads are solid influences when attracting industrial development.

Economic Development Framework

Streator has a rich industrial tradition that dates back to the 19th century. The City's workers create products that are vital to the day-to-day lives of many people around the country. Streator was once the leading manufacturer of glass products, which were *originally fabricated in classic brick buildings on Route 18*. Today, the top employers include:

- Vactor Manufacturing is the City's largest employer, with 530 employees. The company is the world's top producer of heavy-duty, truck-mounted, municipal sewer cleaning equipment. The company's 200,000 square foot headquarters is on the far southern side of town near the intersection of Livingston Road and Illinois Street. Vactor Manufacturing was founded in 1911 under the name Myers-Sherman. During the early 1960s, the business began to design, patent and manufacture a line of sewer and catch basin cleaners for the municipal public works market. In 1969, it introduced the first combination sewer cleaner to combine water jetting and vacuuming action.
- 
- St. Mary's Hospital is an acute care facility with 97 Certificate of Need (CON) approved beds located in Streator. St. Mary's Hospital is sponsored by the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis and is one of 13 affiliates of Hospital Sisters Health System (HSBS), a multi-institutional healthcare system that owns and operates eight hospitals in Illinois and five in Wisconsin. The hospital offers a comprehensive range of healthcare services and employs approximately 450 people at several locations throughout the City. The main hospital campus is located on Spring Street near Route 23, south of downtown.
 - The third largest employer in Streator is U.S. Foodservice. The large distribution center on Quality Lane and 12th Street near the City's southern border has approximately 360 employees. The company provides food for many different business sectors, including restaurants, schools, healthcare providers, and hotels. U.S. Foodservice is one of the country's largest foodservice distributors and has annual revenues around \$15 billion per year.
 - Owens-Illinois Glass Container, Inc. manufactures glass bottles at a site on the northeast side of the City. Owens-Illinois employs about 250 people and is the fifth largest employer in Streator. The company invented the first automatic bottle-making machine in 1903. Today's plant can make two million bottles each day on the three shifts. It uses two furnaces to make the glass and four machines to mold it, which uses only a fraction of the plant's 660,000 square feet of space.

- Luckey Logistics provides shipping, storage, repackaging, and other services related to bulk plastic. Located west of the City on Route 17, the company employs approximately 150 people and has a warehouse and a rail yard within the City with space for 160 railcars.

Four prominent business parks are located within the City limits or the 1½ mile planning area. Both Streator Industrial Park and Westgate Industrial Park are next to Vactor Manufacturing on 12th Street. Eagle Point Business Center is located on Route 18 just outside of Streator. Streator Industrial Warehouse Facility is located on the City's north side. Each business park has space available, have utilities ready for connection, and most have rail access adjacent to the park.

Commercial establishments can be found in most areas of the City, though the prime locations are along Routes 23 and 18 and within the downtown. Route 23 north of downtown is the primary shopping destination area within the City, due primarily to its widened transportation corridor and the City's highest average daily traffic totals. Route 23 has the majority of chain retail stores. Some stores have begun to show signs of deterioration and are in need of revitalization. This is typical of older commercial districts. Many smaller downtowns have experienced this phenomenon at some point in their city's history and the trend is difficult to withstand without extraordinary efforts.

Downtown

The downtown encompasses many square blocks and at one time was the City's primary shopping destination. It has since lost a lot of its customers to the retailers located along the Route 23 corridor. Given its unique qualities and history, the downtown offers tremendous potential for the future. Specific recommendations for this important strategic area can be found in the Downtown Strategic Plan.

Economic Development Programs

The Streator Area Enterprise Zone is a development incentive for commercial or industrial businesses looking to construct new buildings or expand or renovate existing buildings. Eligible participants can receive a four-year abatement of half of the property taxes following the completion of the project. The program offers an investment tax credit of 0.5% against the state income tax for investment in qualified property within the zone. A jobs tax credit per employee is available if the employees hired are certified as dislocated workers or economically disadvantaged. Finally, a sales tax exemption is also available for the existing 7.5% tax on building materials purchased within LaSalle or Livingston Counties.

There are two Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts currently within the city limits. One is small and only encompasses the Bill Walsh automobile dealership area. The second TIF district encompasses the majority of the downtown and central business district as well as the north 23 corridor. The second TIF was completed in 2008 and should be a solid economic development incentive. TIF support could spur private redevelopment through the assistance with building renovation or construction. Other possible locations for a TIF district would be on the east side of the City that includes some underutilized, dilapidated, or vacant industrial buildings, including a large former glass factory, and on the western industrial corridor. TIF is a tool that should be used in those areas that could use the assistance to stimulate growth.

The City also has a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) that provides low-interest loans to projects that create or retain jobs. The City should expand the use of this fund and use it more aggressively to support economic development within the community.

Economic Development Partners

Streator has a variety of partners working on economic development efforts as described below.

- Streator Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SACCI): a private organization that serves the needs and concerns of the business community of Streator. SACCI works with the City of Streator to retain, expand, promote, and attract businesses and industries within the City.
- Streator Downtown Area Businesses: a business group that started in 1998 and boasts 40 to 45 members. The organization takes on improvement projects, promotes the City in general, and hosts events downtown.
- Streator Tourism Council promotes Streator events and destinations.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Maintain a high-paying job base of diverse companies while strategically looking for growth industries that would match the assets that the City has to offer.
2. Become a more viable local and regional competitor in the attempt to capture a greater percentage of sales taxes.

Objectives Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Retain the existing industrial base that has helped define Streator for decades.
2. Minimize the impact of industrial operations on adjacent land uses.
3. Create a highway commercial corridor that appeals to both residents and visitors to Streator.
4. Further distinguish the central business district as a destination location.

New/Revised Policies

1. Limit the frequency of curb-cuts and require adjacent commercial developments to share access drives.
2. Continue to update the City's Disaster Plan and keep an open dialogue with local, state, and federal emergency response agencies to ensure that residents have access to and can utilize emergency response programs to assist in pre- and post-disaster mitigation and response efforts.
3. Engage with the agricultural community to create opportunities for ag-tourism, market local foods, support ag-related businesses, and help sustain a strong agricultural industry into the future.
4. See the Downtown Strategic Plan for policies and initiatives to reinvigorate that critical part of Streator.

Policies Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Continue to meet with the existing companies on a regular basis to discuss any particular needs that should be addressed by either entity.

2. Support a strong marketing effort through SACCI to showcase the advantages of locating businesses in Streator and the financial savings that are available.
3. Strengthen the business attraction and retention components of the City and SACCI websites.
4. Create incentives that would make it more financially feasible for new businesses to locate in Streator or existing businesses to enhance obsolete facilities and create new products.
5. Encourage any existing companies to upgrade their facilities by utilizing any current or future financing assistance.
6. Ensure that the existing infrastructure is adequate to support the current businesses and that areas planned for industrial uses have the necessary utilities either in place or nearby.
7. Coordinate with Streator High School and Illinois Valley Community College to utilize their facilities and increase the abilities and attractiveness of prospective Streator employees.
8. Encourage big box stores to locate within the northern Route 23 area where large parcels of land are available.
9. When feasible, reuse vacant or underutilized commercial facilities.
10. Attract stores to the area that are either not currently available or do not sufficiently capture the available market.
11. Ensure that sufficient infrastructure capacity is available to sustain any level of growth along Route 23.

The following policies from the 2007 Comprehensive Plan have been completed:

- ✓ Require a high degree of building design and site design standards for all new industries.
- ✓ Require the buffering of industrial uses from other less intensive uses such as residential and parks.
- ✓ Create a more manageable scale by locating new buildings closer to the street and locating parking lots to the sides and rear of buildings.
- ✓ Require pedestrian connections within all developments and internal sidewalks within larger developments.

Strategic Initiatives

Implement the Downtown Strategic Plan

The City began a planning process to create a Downtown Strategic Plan at the same time as this comprehensive plan update. Doing both planning processes at the same time was a great opportunity to align planning efforts and ensure that the two plans mutually reinforce one another. While the Downtown Strategic Plan contains the complete details, the key recommendations from that plan include:

1. Improve buildings and streetscape.
2. Create additional destinations for residents and visitors.
3. Establish a formal organizational structure for managing the downtown.

4. Collaborate with local and regional partners to create an entrepreneurship program.
5. Increase the development of new residential units.

These recommendations intersect with and support the recommendations and goals of this Comprehensive Plan. Implementing the initiatives advanced in the Downtown Strategic Plan will be central to achieving the goals of this Plan; just as implementing the initiatives of this Plan will be important to the success of the Downtown Strategic Plan.

Maintain Aggressive and Responsive Local Economic Development Efforts

The City recognizes that its current employers, economic development partners, economic development programs, and downtown planning efforts are a core part of its economic strategy. Often through partnerships, the City will seek to capitalize on these attributes and improve local conditions to enhance its economic environment. At the same time, the City will direct limited economic resources in directions that best meet unmet community needs, raise the standard of living and quality of life for Streator residents, and advance the City's overall vision and goals as expressed through this Plan. The City seeks to do this in the following manner:

- In order to support business retention, the City should continue regular personal visits with local businesses to understand facility changes, employee training needs, future challenges, business attitudes toward the City, and to identify needs for City resources. The City should continue work with the SACCI, Streator Downtown Area Businesses, Streator Tourism Council, and other organizations to address the solve immediate business concerns and issues to promote a healthy and vibrant business community. Other business retention strategies include: surveys, publications of newsletters to local businesses, and involvement of local business owners or managers on local boards and commissions.
- Continue to aggressively use TIF and the other economic development programs mentioned above to promote desirable new development and redevelopment.
- Work to establish job training programs to better match the skills of Streator high school graduates to the needs to local employers. The City should partner with the school district, the Illinois Valley Community College, and local businesses in this effort. Strategies would include identifying current and future skills training needs, determining the type of programs needed, identifying locations for classes in Streator or establishing distance learning programs, promoting these programs at the high school level, coordinating with existing job training skills in the high school(s), and establishing scholarships or financial aid programs. See the box on the following page for an example of a job training program.

Case Study: Waukesha County Technical College's Dual Enrollment Academy

A new pilot program in Wisconsin may be a good model for a potential jobs training program in Streator. Waukesha County Technical College has established a pilot program offering high school students manufacturing-related skills training in welding and metal fabrication, tool and die, and information technology. Students in the one-year program, known as the Dual Enrollment Academy, spend a majority of their school days at the technical college while also completing high school requirements and 20 to 24 college credits. The program also includes a seminar on résumé writing, interviewing, and personal branding to help students secure a job.

Upon completion of the program, the participating students will receive industry-recognized "workplace certificates" in addition to high school diplomas. Area industry leaders were very involved in developing the criteria for the workplace certificates. Students may seek employment immediately upon graduation or continue onto college.

The Dual Enrollment Academy is funded by the State of Wisconsin's Department of Workforce Development and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. Each entity contributed \$77,576, and Waukesha County Technical College contributed about \$235,000 toward the program.

Not only does the program benefit high school students interested in working in technical fields, but it also benefits manufacturers seeking qualified workers and the economy of the region as a whole. Availability of skilled workers may influence an employer's decision to either maintain or expand their operations in a region. One Milwaukee-area company has already committed to hiring ten students who finish the tool and die program.

Engage the Agricultural Community

Streator is surrounded by prime farmland, and the City has a history as a service center to agriculture. Although a very small percentage of Streator residents work directly in farming and other agricultural fields, Streator's location makes it important for the City to connect to this industry and community. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the processing and distribution of farm products will likely remain important to the future of Streator and the region in general.

Nationally, there has been a growing interest in and demand for locally-grown food. Consumers are increasingly interested in knowing where their food comes from, expressing a preference for the reduced environmental impact associated with food grown close to home, and developing a familiarity with the farmers that grow the food they buy. This interest provides an opening to better connect City residents to the agricultural community that surrounds them. Several opportunities to do this are already in place. The Streator Farmers Market is a setting where residents can establish relationships with local producers. The Farmers Market could also potentially connect local producers with retail and restaurant owners in Streator, broadening the availability of local products available to Streator residents. Collaboration with the LaSalle County 4-H as well as the Future Farmers of America chapters in Streator High School and Woodland High School is another way to continue the City's agricultural tradition and support connections with the agricultural community.

The City may wish to engage with the agricultural community to help ensure that local leaders, developers, and farmers alike understand how land use decisions impact the viability and strength of local agriculture. Development regulations should support the protection of agricultural land and should support keeping farmland in active production.

This effort could be coordinated with the development of a major regional attraction such as an ag-tourism or energy tourism center, as recommended in the Downtown Strategic Plan. For example, the City could develop an agricultural education center, like the Ag Discover Center described below. This attraction would educate the public to the importance of agriculture and help the community recognize and appreciate its past and future ties to agriculture. The planning and development of such a center would also provide the City with another opportunity to collaborate with the agriculture community.

The box below describes an example of how other agriculture industry proponents in the Midwest have come together to advance the future of agriculture through education and innovation.

Case Study: Southern Wisconsin Agricultural Group

Agriculture in the Midwest faces considerable challenges in the future, including decreasing funding for activities that promote youth engagement in agriculture, decreasing awareness and appreciation of the agriculture industry by consumers and policy makers, and a need to cultivate the future agricultural workforce. The Southern Wisconsin Agricultural Group (SWAG) is a nonprofit organization formed to proactively address the challenges facing the agriculture industry. The vision of SWAG is to ensure a continuum of agriculture engagement focused on protecting the cultural and economic benefit of all aspects of agriculture. It is supported by an Advisory Council comprised of representatives of the agriculture industry, the public sector and other non-Ag, public sector businesses. It is endorsed by major agricultural businesses and other public and private partners.

SWAG's primary initiative – the Midwest Agriculture Education & Innovation Complex, in Evansville, Wisconsin – seeks to promote agriculture through agricultural education, agricultural protection, and agricultural engagement and promotion. The Complex will be a physical space that includes an agriculture research lab developed by Blackhawk Technical College, research acreage, ongoing workforce training facilities, agri-business incubator opportunities, and expo facilities intended to house events and programming for youth organizations such as FFA and 4-H. It will also include an Ag Discovery Center: a high-tech, hands-on interactive learning experience that exposes youth, parents, students, educators, and consumers to the importance of agriculture and the advancements that are taking place in the industry. The Ag Discovery Center will also serve as a showcase for the agriculture industry to expose consumers and Ag professionals to new technologies and innovations that help farmers safely produce more food with fewer resources.

Some of these individual programs could be undertaken in Streator. For example, Illinois Valley Community College and the Streator Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry could work together to provide agriculture research labs, research acreage and host workforce training. The City could help to establish a nonprofit organization like SWAG to support the future of the agriculture industry. Such an effort would require buy-in and commitment from a number of stakeholders and communities of interest, both Ag- and non-Ag-related. More information about SWAG is available at WhyAgMatters.com.

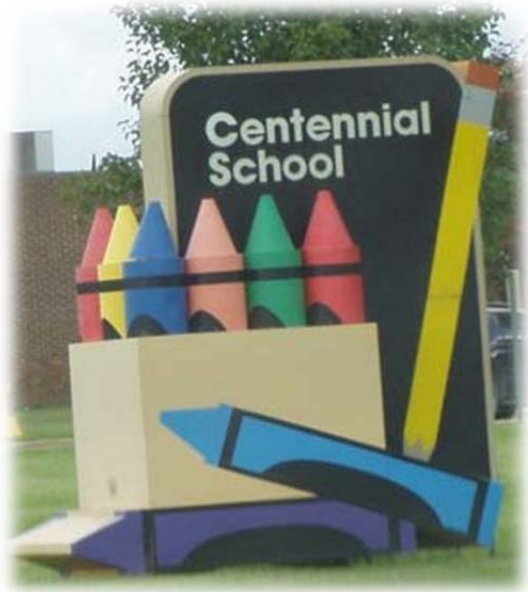
CHAPTER EIGHT: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

Community facilities and public utilities comprise the framework for servicing existing development and future growth in the Streator area. This chapter contains information regarding existing utilities and community facilities, including location, use, and future needs. This information is used to inform goals, objectives, and policies.

Educational Facilities

Ten schools can be found in Streator and five school districts house the City's youths. Streator High School is located just north of downtown on Illinois Route 23. It recently had a \$32 million building expansion project completed in 2007 that added a new common area, library, additional classrooms, and a band room. While the structure has been in use for many years, it has served the community well and figures to survive throughout the life of this plan. The school is one of the pillars of the City and is home to approximately 1,070 students and 130 teachers and staff members. In addition, Woodland Unit School District serves the portion of Streator located in Livingston County.

Streator Elementary District has four public elementary and junior high schools: Centennial Elementary School, Kimes Elementary School, Northlawn Junior High School, and Sherman Elementary School. Together, these schools house nearly 2,000 students. The schools will likely see slow growth over the next ten years. The school district is in the process of creating a strategic plan. Two private elementary schools are located in Streator, Rhema Christian Academy and St. Michael the Archangel. Approximately 250 students attend private schools in Streator. Many of these schools, both public and private, are located within entirely residential areas and are the centerpieces of the neighborhoods. Schools play a unifying role in each of these neighborhoods and help foster community.



Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC) in Oglesby is located within 25 minutes of Streator. It offers post-high school educational opportunities for youths as well as adult education classes. The city should continue to work with IVCC to broaden the classes offered to create a workforce that will be able to meet the needs of any type of business. Online courses should also be pursued through IVCC.

Health Care Facilities

In 1887, Streator was bustling with the activities of coal mining, glass manufacturing and smelting, but had no hospital to care for the citizens. The city fathers appealed to the Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, and three sisters came to Streator that year and established a temporary hospital.

Today, St. Mary's Hospital is an acute care facility with 97 beds. Sponsored by the Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, St. Mary's Hospital is one of 13 affiliates of Hospital Sisters Health System, a multi-institutional healthcare system that owns and operates eight hospitals in Illinois and five in Wisconsin.

St. Mary's Hospital is a regional provider for a seven-county area in Central Illinois and one of Streator's largest employers. The hospital generates about \$48 million in revenue annually.

St. Mary's Hospital offers a comprehensive range of healthcare services including 24-hour emergency services, cancer treatment, cardiac rehabilitation, cardiovascular services, diagnostic imaging, general surgery, home health, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, physical and occupational therapies and ongoing community and patient education.



Municipal Operations and Infrastructure

The City Hall houses many of the City's personnel as well as serving as the police department headquarters. The building is ideally located at the intersection of Routes 18 and 23 on the southwest side of the downtown area. The reutilization of an old school property has suited the City well, and the addition of a satellite parking lot north of the building has helped for larger community meetings. The ADA compliance and HVAC system of the building, however, need to be addressed.

There is a need for a new police station and 911 dispatch center that would be separated from the City Hall. Technological changes and Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations have made a separate facility desirable. The city has considered constructing a \$4.5 million facility near the new fire station. It would include additional meeting space and kitchen facilities. Once the police station is completed, a senior center could be added to the building. Currently, 24 full-time police officers are employed. The City has addressed the high number of animal complaints by hiring two part-time animal control officers. The new fire station was completed during October 2005 and replaced a 100-year-old facility. It is located on Wasson Street on the east side of town. The new station should provide the necessary space and equipment for the department for the foreseeable future. Fifteen full-time fire fighters work in Streator. There is also the need for a new public works facility that can handle the space and equipment needs of the City. This need was established as a priority during the 2013 renewed strategic plan session.

Other institutional buildings include an historic post office located within the downtown. Though parking is an issue at the building, the structure's appearance is difficult to replace. The city's historic Carnegie Library, expanded and made ADA compliant in 2012, is also located within the downtown.

Infrastructure construction and maintenance has been and must continue to be a priority for the City. The City has recognized this by establishing and updating numerous infrastructure planning documents including the CSO Long-Term Control Plan, the 5 Year Roadway Capital Improvement Plan, and the 2013 Streator Wastewater Facilities Plan among others. Additional

planning that has been critical to the city has been cooperative work done with LaSalle County to develop and adopt the LaSalle County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Planning like this is essential so that the City can prepare and improve its infrastructure to operate effectively and mitigate impacts from natural hazards such as the floods of 2008. These planning efforts, both routine and in response to the floods of 2008, have helped the City to identify problem areas and infrastructure needs to help mitigate adverse effects caused by these types of events. These needs are:

- To continue to maintain the City's sewer system in accordance with the CSO Operation and Maintenance Plan.
- To implement the projects called out in the 2013 Wastewater Facilities Plan, which outlines planned sewer projects, intended to rehabilitate and improve the City's sewer facilities.
- To upgrade or remove roadway structures that do not effectively convey storm water flow.
- The separation of storm and sanitary sewers in the Coal Run Creek Interceptor Basin.

The development of these needs followed an analysis of the impacts of the floods of 2008 that showed firstly that the residents of the southwest area of the City served by the Coal Run Creek combined sewer interceptor suffered additional flood-related damage as a result of basement sewer back-ups. Additionally, flooding caused by a handful of undersized roadway bridge structures impacted both residential housing units and local commerce, as localized flooding that could have been avoided with properly-sized structures caused the closing of streets and additional impact to homes.

Other Facilities

iFiber was developed to address the issue of limited broadband capacity, speed, and service in nine counties of northwest Illinois. iFiber is a provider of extremely high speed (1Gb) network transport services to both the public and private sector. It provides subsidized access directly to eligible public sector organizations such as schools, community colleges, libraries, healthcare facilities, municipalities, county and public safety facilities. This service was installed in Streator in 2013.

Seven cemeteries are located in Streator, located throughout the City.

The Streator YMCA is a modern facility that serves some of the resident recreation needs. It contains an Olympic-size swimming pool, basketball court, racquetball court, and has physical fitness programs for all age groups.

Streator has an aging infrastructure system that has seen many updates. There has been a substantial need to update the infrastructure to not only attract new development and growth, but to keep up with the needs of the existing community. It would be difficult to support new development without extensive upgrades to the water and sanitary sewer lines. The water treatment plant does have the capacity to handle current needs but could have problems when new development arrives and puts a strain on the existing facility. The city should ensure that all annexed areas have sanitary sewer access.

Illinois American Water Company, (IAWC) owns and operates the water treatment facilities and the water main infrastructure/distribution systems within the City of Streator and surrounding area. IAWC, Streator District, currently employs 15 water professionals. The City Departments

involve the IAWC in projects that may impact the water system. Street repairs, infrastructure work, development and other projects that may affect the water systems are planned together in a coordinated manner. In 2005 IAWC and the City of Streator signed a "Discontinuance Agreement," contracting IAWC to shut off the supply of water to any premises at which the user charges for sewer services supplied by the City are more than 30 days late. This agreement has allowed the City to collect delinquent sewer service charges.



IAWC has ongoing, annual, and five-year Capital Investment Plans. The annual capital plan is implemented with both local staff and with support from the Engineering Department, (e.g. Engineering and local staff managed completion of a multi-million dollar upgrade to the water treatment facility in 2011). IAWC installed/replaced more than 10,425 feet of water main between the years of 2000 - 2007, with more scheduled capital improvements over the upcoming years. The construction of the West Side Water Storage/ Booster Pump Project was completed in 2008.

Streator has a combined sanitary and storm sewer system. Combined systems were easier to construct than separated sewer lines. This presents problems during times of large storms when the treatment system has trouble managing the amount of flow that results. The city rebuilt large portions of the Prairie Creek and Coal Run Creek Interceptors during the early 1990's. One of the most important goals of this plan is to continue pursuing the separation of the combined sewer system.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

New/Revised Goals:

1. Coordinate utility and community facility systems planning with the land use, transportation, natural resources and recreation needs of the City.
2. Improve the City's high quality of life through access to a wide range of sustainable public services and facilities.
3. Move toward the establishment of a new Public Works facility.

New/Revised Objectives:

1. Supply community services and facilities in a logical, reliable, energy-efficient and cost-effective manner to serve a compact development pattern.
2. Assure that the costs for new community services, facilities, and utilities are distributed equitably.
3. Respect natural features and conditions in the design and location of orderly utility extensions.

New/Revised Policies

1. Continue to utilize and maintain the existing library as one of the City's structural treasures.
2. Continue to regularly update the City webpage to ensure greater access to information.
3. Move toward completion of the Coal Run Creek Interceptor Project, as detailed in the Coal Run Creek Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation and Separation Facilities Plan, generated through DCEO funding related to Hurricane Ike in 2008.

Policies Recommended from Previous Plan

1. Consider the various alternatives to creating new space for the police department, including the construction of a new police station.
2. Strengthen each of the schools including the influential attachment that each school has with the neighborhood it is located. Allow greater use of the schools by the neighborhood residents.
3. Work with each of the schools and Illinois Valley Community College to determine challenging and innovative curriculum offerings that will further bolster the educational opportunities for residents of all ages.
4. Continue regular updates of the City's capital improvements plan to prioritize decision-making and as a means of financial analysis.
5. Strengthen the existing water and sewer lines within underserved annexed areas before constructing new lines merely for prospective development.
6. Mandate that no new development occurs without the proper infrastructure already being in place or that the new infrastructure will be more than satisfactory to support the growth.

Strategic Initiatives

See other Chapters in this Plan for strategic initiatives related to community facilities and utilities, particularly Chapter Six: Quality of Life and Chapter Five: Parks and Open Space.

CHAPTER NINE: TRANSPORTATION

Streator and the surrounding region is served by multiple forms of transportation, including highways, railroads, and waterways. These are imperative in guaranteeing that industrial development has the proper means with which to transport goods and services.

Transportation Framework

Highways

Streator is accessed from a north-south direction by Illinois Route 23 and via the west and east from Illinois Route 18. Interstate highway access is available within 20 minutes from each direction. Interstate 39 is approximately 12 miles west of Streator, the country's most heavily traveled limited-access highway, Interstate 80, is approximately 20 miles north, and Interstate 55 is about 20 miles to the east or south. This regional transportation availability ensures that industry is not far from being able to ship and receive goods quickly and efficiently. The access to these highways provides commuting times to Chicago, Rockford, the Quad Cities, and Bloomington/Normal of about 90 minutes and to Des Moines, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, and St. Louis in about four hours. Additionally, Streator is about 15 miles south of Ottawa, the county seat of LaSalle County and about 30 miles northwest of the county seat of Livingston County, Pontiac.

There are three basic functional classifications of roads: Arterials, collectors, and local roads. Each classification serves an important purpose to move people in and around the county and city efficiently. In addition, these classifications are based primarily on their average daily traffic and not on unusual traffic patterns that may cause more traffic on a given day. These major roadways move vehicles in and out of a city. They act as connections to major points and other major traffic generators. Arterials are meant to carry more than 5,000 vehicles per day or 500 vehicles per hour. On-street parking is generally prohibited and driveways and curb cuts are kept to a minimum. They are usually intended to serve a high degree of mobility and a lower degree of access. Two such roads meet this definition in Streator: Illinois Routes 23 and 18.



The purpose of the collectors is to provide for the movement of traffic through the City on a more local basis. They act as the connection between arterials and smaller residential streets. Ideally, collectors transport vehicles quickly to arterials with the least amount of necessary intersections. Generally, a wide array of development occurs on collectors. It can range from heavy manufacturing industries to low density residential development. Collector roads typically carry between 2,000 and 8,000 vehicles per day and are usually two lanes wide. Collector roads generally have a balance between mobility and access. Collectors in Streator include but are not limited to 1st Street, Broadway Street, 12th Street, Shabbona Street, and Otter Creek Road.

The third category of roads, local, is intended only for the access to housing or neighborhood commercial establishments. They are not constructed for any other type of land use. Speed limits are intentionally kept to a minimum to ensure a safe environment for citizens and pedestrians in the area and to minimize the number of additional vehicles from using the roads.

The city has some unique brick streets. Though the City has not viewed the preservation of the brick streets as a priority due to the high cost and need to repair other streets, it should identify the most repairable streets and attempt to rehabilitate them. Brick streets are costly to maintain, need regular maintenance, and can cause problems with snow plows, but there is an ambiance to them that cannot be replaced.

Less than half of the streets in Streator have curbs and gutters; most of those that do not are located in older residential areas.

Parking

Downtown Streator is a fairly sizable area that encompasses many square blocks. On-street parking is the most readily available type. There is not a large supply of off-street parking spaces or lots. The demand for parking in the central business district is typically highest on weeknights and weekends when the most people are available to do their shopping or to run their errands. Often, there is an abundance of available spaces on the weekdays.

Gateways and Signs

Streator has city entrance signs coming from each direction of Routes 18 and 23. The signs are rather simple with a message of “Welcome to Streator.” The brown signs with white lettering and green and red outlines are large enough for passing traffic to easily read. There are no messages or symbols on the signs that could convey a local institution or landmark.



Railroads

Two main national freight railroads pass through Streator. The Burlington Northern/Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad travels in an east-west manner, though it passes through Streator in a north-south direction. This is one of the busiest railroad lines in the country and connects the City with Chicago and Kansas City. Considerable amounts of freight pass through the City daily. The Norfolk Southern Railway has a shorter line that passes through Streator and connects with an industrial plant in Hennepin to the end of the line in western Indiana. This line does not have the daily frequency like the BNSF does. The Illinois Rail Net is a spur rail line that runs to Ottawa.

Having such freight traffic on multiple lines passing through Streator has its benefits and its problems. The lines are a great attraction for industrial development. They allow goods to be shipped in a timely and efficient manner to most metropolitan areas in the Midwest and around the country. However, the rail lines also take away from residential cohesion. They effectively divide neighborhoods and act as a separation or a visible barrier among the residents. The lines also create scattered industrial development. While the freight transportation is certainly viewed as a positive for the City, they do create land use planning difficulties.

No passenger rail lines serve Streator. The nearest Amtrak rail stations are located within a half hour drive in Dwight or Pontiac.

Waterways

There are no major navigable bodies of water that pass through Streator. The largest river is the Vermilion River, which flows in a southeast-northwest direction into the Illinois River. The Vermilion is a river known for its canoeing and kayaking activity. It often has a very good current that creates exciting recreational opportunities. The Illinois River is approximately 15 miles north of Streator and is one of the major east-west navigable bodies of water in the state. It provides access to the Des Plaines River and eventually can connect to Chicago and Lake Michigan. It moves downstream to the Mississippi River, St. Louis, and New Orleans.

Air Service

The nearest commercial airport is Central Illinois Regional Airport in Bloomington/Normal. Chicago's Midway and O'Hare International Airports are within two hours of Streator.



Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Continue making Streator an accessible destination for all forms of pedestrian, vehicular, and rail transportation.

Objective Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Improve the safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of the local road network.

Policies Recommitted from Previous Plan

1. Closely follow the annual transportation improvements denoted within the capital improvements plan.
2. Do not allow unnecessarily wide right-of-ways on new collector streets or local roads.
3. Prioritize all local street repairs and make repairs to bridges that could disrupt the local Streator economy.
4. Consider construction of curbs and gutters with new water and sewer line improvements.
5. Create better sidewalk and walking path linkages between the parks, schools, downtown, and other public buildings.
6. Support and encourage coordinated efforts to provide transportation alternatives for individuals without access to their own vehicles including the elderly, disabled, and low-income people.

The following policies from the 2007 Comprehensive Plan have been completed:

- ✓ Encourage new parking lots be located to the side or rear of buildings to partially eliminate the unsightly look of large expanses of parking and consider shared parking lots for new commercial development.

- ✓ Require curbs, gutters, and sidewalks in all new subdivision design to increase walkability and neighborhood character.

Strategic Initiatives

Develop Strategies to Make Rail-Served Sites Available and Recruit Rail Uses

Industrial sites near rail lines are attractive to site selectors and manufacturers, because they see rail as a cost-effective and efficient way to move raw materials and finished products. Identifying useful rail-served sites and making them available to new rail uses would attract new manufacturers to Streator. This would grow the City's tax base and support the already strong rail presence.

An important early step is to establish a close working relationship with staff at both the BNSF and the Norfolk Southern Railroads. The railroads have staff members specializing in industrial development who can help identify the best way to prepare a rail-served site and attract industries that use rail. They can also help identify potential rail-served industrial sites, ensure the site meets the railroads' design, construction, grading and materials standards, and help with site development.

Like any type of redevelopment, preparing rail-served sites typically demands proactive planning and coordination. Careful planning, site assessment, public-private partnerships, redevelopment incentives, and persistence are required, possibly over a number of years. Some of the steps involved in this type of detailed planning and implementation process include:

- Identify goals and objectives for the rail-served sites.
- Inventory existing rail-served sites.
- Prioritize individual sites within the area.
- Conduct a market assessment for priority rail-served sites.
- Prepare a redevelopment strategy and detailed plan map.
- Seek out grants and other sources of capital to help offset the costs of preparing the sites.
- Aggressively pursue implementation through techniques like the establishment of TIF districts, blight elimination, possible brownfield remediation, possible site acquisition, consolidation, demolition, and developer recruitment.



CHAPTER TEN: IMPLEMENTATION

The City will realize its vision through a coordinated, continuous program of Plan implementation, evaluation, and update. The purpose of this chapter is to identify high-priority implementation steps, timeframes, and responsible parties and to develop a process for subsequent amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. The detailed implementation table provides a list of major actions to implement this Plan.

Plan Advancement and Awareness

This Plan is intended to be used by government officials, developers, residents, and others interested in the future of the City to guide growth, development, redevelopment, and preservation. The City intends to constantly evaluate its decisions on private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions against the recommendations of this Plan.

This Plan will only have value if it is understood, supported, and used by the community. It is critical that the City make concerted efforts to increase community awareness and education on this Plan. To this end, efforts may include:

- Prominently displaying the Opportunity Analysis and Vision, Future Land Use map, and other Plan materials at City Hall, the Library, or other community gathering places.
- Ensuring that up-to-date materials are easily accessible on the City's website.
- Speaking to community organizations and school groups about the Plan.
- Regularly presenting implementation progress reports to the City Council, Plan Commission, and other municipal bodies, based on the indicators included later in this chapter.
- Incorporating Plan implementation steps in the annual budget process, and strategic planning efforts.
- Encouraging all City commissions and staff to become familiar with and use the Plan in their decision making.
- Reviewing and assessing the Plan by reviewing performance against the implementation priorities described later in this chapter.

City Council

The Streator City Council is the ultimate authority on policy formulation for the community. It adopts the budget, passes local ordinances, and develops planning policy under direction of the Mayor. City Council support is essential for effective functioning of the Comprehensive Plan. To implement the Plan, the Council will administer the zoning and subdivision ordinances through future development issues. The City Council should examine creative ways to implement the Comprehensive Plan. Different funding sources should be looked at for all projects. The City should also look for traditional and nontraditional professional and labor resources. In order to assist in the implementation of this plan, the City Council should continue developing a 5-year capital improvements plan, which should be reviewed and updated each year.

Planning Commission

The Streator Planning Commission consists of a chairman and six other members, who are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. The Commission is established to advise elected officials on direct planning matters, while representing the overall views of the community. The Planning Commission has the power to prepare and recommend to the City Council this Comprehensive Plan for the City's present and future development and redevelopment.

State of Illinois statute also grants the Planning Commission the following additional powers: To recommend changes from time to time in the official Comprehensive Plan; to prepare and recommend to the City Council from time to time, plans for specific improvements in pursuance of the official Plan; to give aid to the City officials charged with the direction of projects for improvements suggested in the official Plan; and to promote the realization of the official Plan.

The Planning Commission's most important responsibility is to ensure that the Council is aware of the community's viewpoints on direct planning issues. The Commission acts as the mediator between the public and elected officials, spending time researching, studying, listening to public opinion and comment, and making recommendations to the Council that reflect the community's vision.

Updating the Plan

The Streator Comprehensive Plan, in whole or in part, may be amended from time to time, as necessary and as the Planning Commission and the City Council deem appropriate. Because of the timeliness of the information and goals presented in this plan, this document must be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary, ideally every four to five years. New objectives and policies, along with added or amended maps and information, must be added.

Prioritized Implementation Initiatives

Figure 16 provides a list of strategic initiatives identified in this Plan that the City intends to complete to implement this Plan, subject to City Council decisions and other priorities that may emerge. Often, such actions will require substantial cooperation with others, including community organizations, residents, and other governmental entities.

These initiatives should be the priority implementation steps for the next three years. The Planning Commission will review these initiatives annually and in 2016 will conduct a more thorough evaluation of this Plan.

Figure 16: Implementation Initiatives

Plan Location	Initiative	Lead and Partners
Chapter 3: Land Use	Modernize development regulations	Planning Commission
Chapter 4: Housing	Improve housing stock and neighborhood aesthetics	City of Streator, Neighborhood Associations
Chapter 5: Parks and Open Space	Develop additional opportunities for adult recreation and cultural activities	City of Streator, Streator YMCA, Streator Community Center, Schools
	Partner with local organizations to expand youth and family recreational programs and offerings	City of Streator, Streator YMCA, Streator Community Center, Schools
Chapter 6: Quality of Life	Encourage young people to stay in Streator or return to begin careers and families	City of Streator, SACCI, Developers, Schools
	Develop a variety of annual events and advertise throughout Illinois	City of Streator, SACCI, Streator Tourism Council, Streator Downtown Area Businesses
	Continue to improve the community's image among residents and throughout the region	City of Streator, SACCI, Streator Tourism Council, Streator Downtown Area Businesses
Chapter 7: Economic Development	Maintain aggressive and responsive local economic development efforts	City of Streator, Streator Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Illinois Valley Community College, Schools
Chapter 9: Transportation	Develop strategies to make rail-served sites available and recruit rail uses	City of Streator, SACCI, Railroads