



Livingston County Comprehensive Plan

Year 2020 Update

Revised November 11, 2004

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A Foreword to the Livingston County Comprehensive Plan

A reason that comprehensive planning is so important is that it is carried out by local government, the level of government that directly interacts with citizens most frequently. It is the local government that regulates zoning and land use.

Most of the land in Livingston County is privately owned. Although we have a strong tradition of private property rights in this country, we also recognize that there must be limits to the use of an individual piece of property; locating a heavy industry, a race track or a slaughter-house in a residential area, could damage the quality of life of those living there.

As a result of land use regulations and land use plans the county has been delegated to make decisions about the regulating of activities on its property, largely through techniques called zoning and subdivision regulations. Local planning is important to provide a context for decisions of local government for regulating activities on land located within the county boundaries.

Why do Comprehensive Planning?

Comprehensive planning is a process to layout future land use instead of just letting decisions happen without a direction. Comprehensive planning is a land use tool that allows the county to look at what has happened with county development in the past and to visualize as to where we want to be as a county in the future.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a general document that helps guide the type, location and appearance of county growth and development, generally over the following 20 years. A comprehensive plan reflects the goals, policies, and intentions for land development in the county. An adopted comprehensive plan provides the foundation for future development related decisions, not limited to but including rezoning, special use permits, subdivisions, and zoning and subdivision text amendment changes.

What is the Difference Between Planning and Zoning?

A land use plan or comprehensive plan attempts to define county goals based on a combination of data, the desires of the public, and wishes of private property owners. Included in a comprehensive plan is a land use map. This advisory map acknowledges desired existing land use and expresses desires for future land uses for properties in the county. One means to implement comprehensive plans is through zoning. The zoning ordinance and different zoning districts may be made to realize the county land use desires, previously expressed in the comprehensive plan and planned use map.

Why is Livingston County updating the Comprehensive Plan?

The current comprehensive plan is over 20 years old, and it is a wise practice to take an in depth look at county land use documents every 15 to 20 years. These documents can also be amended as situations dictate in the years prior to in depth reviews of the county planning documents. A comprehensive plan should lead to more consistent and defensible decision making on land development issues. A comprehensive plan should manage growth so that it does not occur in a haphazard pattern. A comprehensive plan should help preserve the character and natural resources of Livingston County. An updated comprehensive plan should provide a sound basis to update other older land use regulation documents, like subdivision and zoning ordinances.

1.1 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

1.1.1 INTRODUCTION

A planning process is often portrayed as a series of steps which include goal setting, data collection, analysis of problems and opportunities, plan formulation, implementation and evaluation. Of these steps, goal setting is certainly one of the most basic and important. For it is in this state that citizens, local officials, and planners try to provide answers to the most fundamental questions. What do we as citizens of the County and region really want? What visions do we hold for the future quality of life in Livingston County? What decisions will we make to help meet the challenges of **changing land uses**, traffic congestion, the efficient utilization of natural resources, housing needs, and economic stability?

In a very broad sense, there is but one objective which the forthcoming Livingston County Plan is endeavoring to achieve; a broad framework within which decisions affecting both private and public development can be made with the knowledge that the physical and economic growth of the County have been given adequate direction. This is the prime goal of all good planning – whether it be city, county, or regional.

With the basic information presented in Part 2, Background Studies, a subsequent step in the planning process is to derive from this background material a series of goals, which will achieve specifically for Livingston County, the most attractive environment possible. The following goals will serve as a basis for the Comprehensive Plan of Livingston County.

The goals address seven categories; agriculture, residential, commercial and industrial, environmental and natural resources, open space and recreation, utilities, and transportation. Each of the general goals has a set of specific objectives. From these objectives, policy directives can be developed. The directives are then used to implement the objectives through ordinances, regulations, and education. To further the goals of this Plan, it is imperative that cooperation among local governments be fostered through intergovernmental agreements and/or on-going open communication.

Although the Goals and Objectives are general in nature, they can be interpreted flexibly by specific criteria attached to the individual objectives. The Land Use Plan will be continually updated, but the Goals and Objectives are the foundation of the Plan and are less subject to change.

1.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 AGRICULTURAL LAND GOALS

The county will strive to preserve the most productive and suitable land areas for agricultural uses and associated land used by:

- Maintaining the rural character of the County by planning for the preservation of prime agricultural land.
- Recognizing that agriculture is a key element in the County's economic base, and the county will support agriculture as a business and a way of life.
- Recognizing that highly productive prime farmland and other agricultural lands are a finite natural resource and resolve that these prime agricultural areas should be protected and maintained.
- Recognizing that the agricultural usage of such prime farmland is appropriate and in the public interest, while balancing the ability of individuals to continue farming operations.
- Supporting the preservation and expansion of agricultural and natural resource businesses.
- Encouraging the use of soil conservation practices, which will reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and increase farmland productivity.
- In agricultural and other areas susceptible to flooding the county shall take actions control the development of the property to reduce injury and damage from flooding.
- Ensuring that, in areas where agriculture represents a significant land use, the practice of agriculture is not threatened or restricted by adjacent land owners or uses. The County should implement techniques to support agricultural uses such as "right-to-farm" provisions in adjacent subdivision covenants that minimize conflicts between farmers and new residents.
- The County protecting the County's agricultural heritage and vitality.
- The County promoting the County as an agriculturally friendly county.
- Encouraging the protection of prime agricultural lands and while resisting encroachment of development onto them, the county shall recognize that residential development should occur adjacent to existing developed areas, and in those areas that are not economically viable for farming based on such factors as soils, slopes, and tree coverage, and which will not adversely affect the productivity of adjacent agricultural lands. This will eliminate the inefficient sprawling of land use and guarantee the viable life of farming.

1.2.2 RESIDENTIAL GOALS

The county will strive to provide opportunities for an adequate amount of housing to serve the diverse needs of residents in the County and recognize that new residential development should be encouraged in areas which can be served conveniently and economically by the appropriate service facilities by:

- Providing for housing of varied sizes, types and prices in the County.
- Encouraging new development within or adjacent to existing population centers, where necessary services are most efficiently provided, thereby discouraging residential sprawl.
- Providing for the design of residential and neighborhood uses that are free from incompatible land uses.
- Encouraging development, which enhances the local character of the area.

- Providing a quality environment in both rural and non-rural settings.

1.2.3 COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL GOALS

The county shall recognize commercial and industrial land uses are a key element, and one which will foster a fiscally sound and balanced economy by:

- Encouraging the attraction, orientations and expansion of a diverse cross section of industries and businesses to provide a healthy tax base and employment opportunities.
- Encouraging the location of commercial and industrial activities into compatible, attractive and efficient industrial parks and other commercial centers.
- Encouraging commercial and industrial development within or in close proximity to existing population centers for the availability of services and to minimize transportation needs.
- Ensuring that the employment needs of new businesses and industries are compatible with the residents' needs for employment opportunities.
- Encouraging the economic benefit of the high access corridor created by I-55 and US Rt. 24. A concept of an Employment Corridor to attract a wider spectrum of potential employers shall be considered.

1.2.4 TRANSPORTATION GOALS

The county will strive to promote the development of a diversified, integrated, economically feasible and efficient transportation network responsive to the County's needs by:

- Coordinating transportation and land use planning so that various land development activities are compatible with an economically attainable, efficient transportation network.
- Developing practical highway options, which consider the construction of new arterial and collectors but emphasize the improvement and expansion of existing arterial and collectors.
- Cooperating with federal, state, regional, county and local agencies in the development of an effective and efficient multimodal transportation network, emphasizing rail, air, trucking opportunities, and access to barge traffic along the Illinois River provided by port facilities in adjoining counties.
- Considering the inclusion of adjacent multi-use trails as part of any construction or improvement project.
- Designating specific arterial roads as limited access and/or scenic highways.
- Encouraging compliance with the mandates and intent of the Clean Air Act through transportation decisions.
- Designating property development of land adjacent to the Pontiac Municipal Airport.
- Encouraging an education program that will stress the benefits of a community airport to the economic success of local businesses.
- Encouraging higher intensity development in the high access corridor created by I-55.

1.2.5 UTILITY GOALS

The county will promote the availability of utilities that are compatible with existing and future usage, as well as economically feasible and environmentally sound, by:

- Encouraging the most efficient use practicable for all utilities.
- Encouraging the coordinated planning and development of water supply, wastewater, and other utility systems, which are appropriate for existing, and future development needs of the County.
- Encouraging the location and development of utility structures and lines where they are most compatible with the surrounding land uses and the rural character of the County.

1.2.6 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL GOALS

We characterize an open space as “ An area of land that is valued for natural processes and wildlife, for agricultural and woodland production, for active and passive recreation, and /or for providing other public benefits.”

Livingston County will promote the retention of open space for a variety of uses such as recreation, wildlife habitat, historical and archeological preservation by:

- Encouraging the preservation of a sufficient quantity and variety of open space to meet both the recreational, aesthetic and ecological needs of the County.
- Encouraging environmentally supportive recreational uses of lands in floodplains and areas adjacent to waterways and other natural open space systems.
- Encouraging the preservation of historical sites and landscapes, the study of archeological sites, and the expansion of conservation areas.
- Encouraging the use of greenways to establish municipal growth boundaries and recreation corridors and to provide a buffer for adjacent land uses, for example, between farms and municipal growth areas.
- Encouraging the use of creative techniques to preserve permanent open spaces such as conservation easements, which maintain private property values. (Outside Rev.)
- Encouraging the dedication of open space and recreational land in subdivisions.
- Promoting the development of a county-scale recreation/open space facility utilizing the county landfill and surrounding private recreation facilities, and developing a plan to do so.

1.2.7 ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE GOALS

Preserve the ecological integrity and foster the wise and beneficial use of the land, air and water resources in Livingston County, thereby providing every resident a healthful, clean and attractive environment in which to live, work and enjoy, by:

Water Resources

- Recognizing that water and land resources are interconnected and interactive systems.

- Protecting the quality of groundwater and surface waters in Livingston County as sources of potable drinking water, industrial and commercial processes and cooling water supply, and recreational resources.
- Supporting the USDA and State of IL Conservation Reserve Enhancement Programs.
- Promoting watershed management planning that links the interests of private resource users with the need for public health and environmental quality.
- Promote the development of quarry sites as recreational and open space areas, in agreement with owners of the property of these quarries.

Floodplain and Stormwater Management

- Managing stormwater beneficially as a resource on the site where it falls.
- Mitigating the hazards of flooding: loss of life, damage to property, interruption to businesses.
- Maximizing the wise use of flood-prone lands and wetlands.
- Adding value to open space as well developed land.
- Abating non-point pollution sources.

Wastewater Management

- Abating nonpoint sources of pollution by filtering and storing storm runoff from impervious surfaces such as buildings, roads and parking lots, and using prairie grasses on farms to filter runoff and control soil erosion.

Rural Landscapes

- Preventing uncontrolled linear sprawl from population centers into productive agricultural areas.

Natural Resources

- Preserving and adding value to open space in Livingston County as the cornerstone of agricultural and natural resource wealth and employment
- Integrating open space and outdoor recreation into community and economic development plans.
- Utilizing open space for multiple purposes by promoting the development and/or preservation of greenways; nature and forest preserves; historic, cultural and archeological sites; public and private outdoor recreation areas; and ecologically sensitive habitats in addition to agriculturally productive areas in Livingston County.
- Promoting the identity and character of communities by enhancing natural and rural landscape settings and scenic vistas.
- Recognizing stone is a valuable natural resource to Livingston County, quarrying activities deplete out natural resource of stone. Some considerations should be made as to if a fee can be assessed to partially justify the loss of the natural resource of stone. Though stone is a valuable asset to Livingston County as a soil nutrient, and for road and construction activities, the loss of stone to out of county users may justify a need to consider assessing a fee to those users.

Environmental Incentives

- Using incentives to encourage private owners to make wise land use and environmental management decisions by rewarding desired performance. Land owners benefit by increasing the value of development sites while the preserved open space attains societal goals beneficial to the public-reducing flood losses, preserving farmland, conserving wildlife habitat, and/or expanding recreation areas.

1.2.7.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS

Managing Water Resources Comprehensively

- Mitigating flood hazards by maximizing natural floodplain storage and securing flood-free land for home and building sites.
- Using non-structural measures to manage stormwater, including:
 - Vegetating swales to convey stormwater
 - Slowing the velocity of urban and agricultural runoff

2.0 BACKGROUND STUDIES

Following is a brief discussion of the change in economic and demographic trends in Livingston County. This section is the background for setting out the goals and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan which were contained in section 1.0.

2.1 LIVINGSTON COUNTY - ITS REGIONAL SETTING

Livingston County is located in the northeastern quarter of the State, approximately 100 miles to the southwest of the Chicago central business district and approximately 200 miles to the northeast of St. Louis. The County has an area of 1,046 square miles and a 2000 population of 39,678 (U.S. Bureau of the Census.) The City of Pontiac is the County seat and largest incorporated area with a 2000 population estimate of 11,864.

Livingston County, Illinois



Livingston County lies between two aggressively growing metropolitan areas: Chicago and Bloomington-Normal. While Livingston County lies on the transportation network connecting the two metropolitan areas, the County is little affected by growth pressures emanating from these two areas.

One of the challenges that now faces the County is, therefore, to balance the needs of the rural community with the needs of the numerous cities and towns, and to create a balance between the residential, business, agricultural and industrial growth. The County can achieve this balance through the use of appropriate strategic economic development and land use planning policies which must be created to guide development in the Twenty-First Century.

2.2 LIVINGSTON COUNTY – ITS POPULATION

2.2.1 General Historical Trends

Table 1. 1870 to 2000 Population and Projections to 2010 and 2020, Livingston County

Year	Population	Change in 10 Years	% Change in 10 Years
1870	31,471		
1880	38,450	+6,639	+22.0%
1890	38,455	+5	0.0
1900	42,035	+3,580	+9.3%
1910	40,465	-1,570	-3.7%
1920	39,070	-1,395	-3.4%
1930	39,092	+22	+0.1%
1940	38,838	-254	-0.6%
1950	37,609	-1,229	-3.2%
1960	40,341	+2,732	+7.3%
1970	40,960	+349	+0.9%
1980	40,960	0	0.0
1990	39,301	-1,659	-1.6%
2000	39,678	+377	+0.9%
2010 (projected)	39,979	+330	+0.8%
2020 (projected)	39,127	-852	-2.1%
2010 (projected)*	40,868	+1190	+3.0%
2020 (projected)*	42,911	+2043	+5.0%

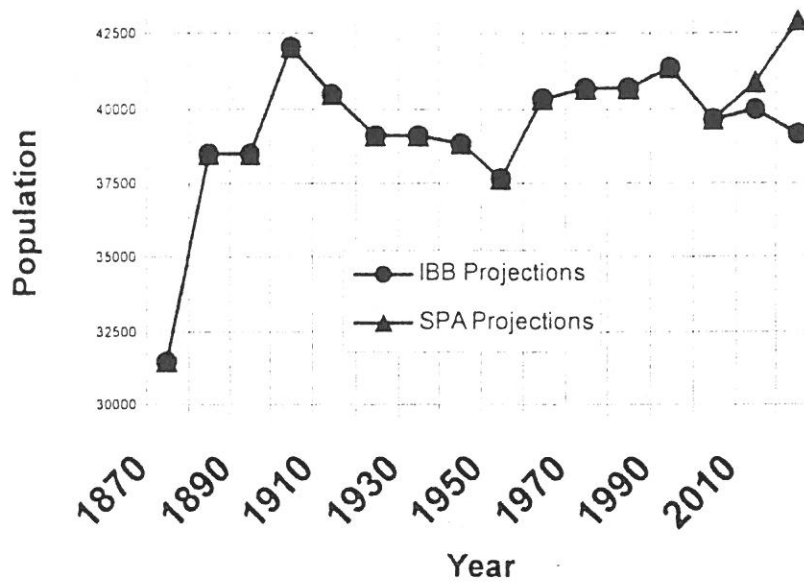
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Illinois Bureau of the Budget, Strategy Planning Associates, Inc.

*Note: Strategy Planning Associates Inc. population projections.

Total population change in Livingston County since 1870 plus population projections for the years 2010 and 2020 are illustrated in Table 1 and Figure 1. During the 1870 to 2000 time period, the population has been extremely stable. The population dropped during and immediately after both world wars. The population remained stable during the great depression, unlike many of the surrounding counties that lost population. The population would be stabilizing at around 37,000 persons, or about 5,000 less than the peak population. The addition of the prison population adds about 2,800 persons to the County population, keeping it close to 40,000. There has been minimal growth in the County as a whole.

2.2.2 Comments On State Of Illinois Population Projections

FIGURE 1. Population Change 1870 to 2000 and Projected to 2010 and 2020, Livingston County

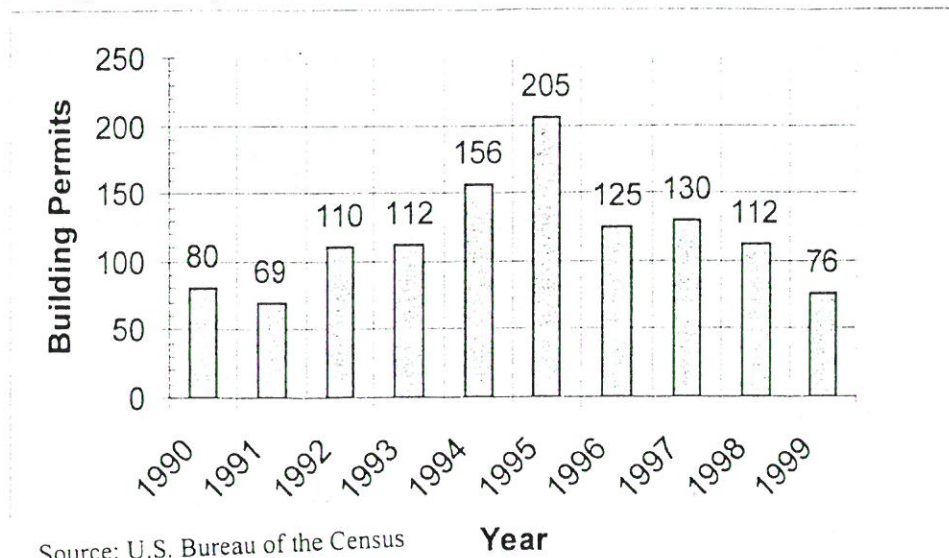


Source: State of Illinois, Bureau of the Budget, Strategy Planning Associates Inc.

The projections completed by the State of Illinois and Bureau of the Budget, illustrated in Figure 1, are reflective of a perceived further decline in the rate of population increase with a nominal decrease predicted for the years beyond 2010. However, Strategy Planning Associates, Inc. projects a mild but substantial growth over the next 20 years. The bases for our projections are building permit activity and a trend of a high percentage of retirees staying in the area. With rural population decline leveling off, the urban growth of the County's larger cities will increase the population. These forecasts have important implications for the policy provisions of the Land Use Plan that will be formulated in due course.

The I-55 corridor that connects Chicago and Bloomington is expected to grow at a faster rate than the surrounding areas. This supports our suggestion that the land use plan should take this transportation corridor into account when planning for industrial and business job creation areas.

FIGURE 2. Livingston County Residential Permit Trends (Municipalities and Unincorporated)



From 1990 to 1999, the unincorporated area of Livingston County added an average of about 30 homes per year or about 90 persons per year based on 3 as an average family size multiplier and building permit data.

Ultimately, the population projections are important to the county for potential future opportunities to apply for grants and other State and Federal assistance for infrastructure development.

COUNTY	1980 POPULATION	1990 POPULATION	2000 POPULATION	REAL CHANGE	
				1980 TO 2000	% CHANGE
Ford	15,265	14,275	14,241	(1,024)	-7.2%
Grundy	30,582	32,337	37,535	6,953	+22.7%
Iroquois	32,976	30,787	31,334	(1,642)	-5.2%
Kankakee	102,926	96,255	103,833	907	+0.09%
LaSalle	112,033	106,913	111,509	(524)	-0.05%
Livingston	41,381	39,301	39,678	(1,703)	-4.3%
McLean	119,149	129,180	150,433	31,284	+26.3%
Woodford	33,320	32,653	35,469	2,149	+6.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Table 2. provides comparative population totals for Livingston and the surrounding counties. Significantly, the table reveals a moderate decline in total population for the counties of LaSalle and Livingston of approximately -5% between 1980 and 1990. During the same period the population of McLean County grew by 22.15% and that of Grundy by 21.6%. Those disparities in the direction and size of change between the counties is, on the face of it, somewhat surprising. However, such disparities can be explained by factors such as Grundy County's proximity to the Chicago metropolitan area and the health of the agricultural, insurance, education and industrial base of McLean County.

This previous table notes that Livingston County lost 4.3% of its population from 1980 to 2000. A mild decline in population is typical of rural counties in Illinois, the rural population declines as farms consolidate and with the general aging of the population.

Table 3. Land Area and Population Density (2000)

COUNTY	LAND AREA (Square Miles)	POPULATION DENSITY
Ford	486	29.3
Grundy	423	88.7
Iroquois	1,118	28.0
Kankakee	679	152.0
LaSalle	1,139	97.9
Livingston	1,046	37.9
McLean	1,185	126.9
Woodford	527	67.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

The population densities of these same counties are shown in Table 3. The respective levels of density of the seven counties range from 29.3 persons per square mile in Ford to 152 per square mile in Kankakee are indicative of their different land use profiles. Ford County has the lowest density at 29.3 per square mile, which is as one would expect for an area where the dominant land use is farming. On the other hand, McLean County is at a more advanced state of suburbanization and accordingly has a much higher resident density level.

Table 4 Population and Households in Cities, Villages, and Townships Livingston County, 1990 and 2000

	1990 Population	2000 Population	1990 Households	1990 Average HH Size	2000 Households	2000 Average HH Size
Amity	968	961	348	2.8		
Avoca	406	407	119	3.4		
Belle Prairie	161	161	49	3.3		
Broughton		193			82	2.35
Campus	137	145			40	3.63
Charlotte	168	168	60	2.8		
Chatsworth	1,186	1,265	586	2.0	533	2.37
Cornell	556	511			205	2.49
Cullom	568	563			248	2.27
Dwight	4,230	4,363	1,675	2.5	1,667	2.48
Emington	135	120			49	2.49
Eppards Point	508	509	127	4.0		
Esmen	360	361	121	3.0		
Fairbury	3,649	3,968			1,544	2.48
Fayette	322	384	107	3.0	138	2.78
Flanagan	1,051	1,083			447	2.29
Forrest	1,124	1,225	562	2.0	470	2.61
Germanville	91	91	33	2.8		
Indian Grove	4,139	4,269	1,530	2.7		
Long Point	543	247	205	2.6	92	2.68
Nebraska	1,424	1,483	512	2.8		
Newton		3,069			1,329	2.25
Odell	1,030	1,014	459	2.2	408	2.49
Owego	302	303	102	3.0		
Pike	295	296	100	3.0		
Pleasant Ridge	288	289	84	3.4		
Pontiac	11,428	11,864	4,323	2.6	4,139	2.39
Reading	2,379	2,384	938	2.5		
Rooks Creek	483	484	179	2.7		
Round Grove	445	448	151	2.9		
Saunemin	399	456	264	1.5	155	2.94
South Streator	180	182				
Strawn	399	104	264	1.5	42	2.48
Sullivan		4,326			1,820	2.28
Sunbury	258	259	88	2.9		
Union		576			204	2.82
Waldo	329	330	105	3.1		
Total	39,301	35,476	13,110	*2.6	13,612	*2.6

*This ratio is based on 1990 and 2000 population of 39,301 and 35,476 respectively to avoid those communities not reporting the number of households in 1990/2000.

The distribution of the population and households in the cities and villages within Livingston County is contained in Table 4. The City of Pontiac, the County Seat, has the largest population by a considerable margin at 11,440. In 1970 Pontiac had 7,632 in population or 18.6% of the County's total. By 2000 Pontiac had a population of 11,864 or 33.44% of the County's total. The Pontiac Comprehensive Plan projects a 1% per year growth rate and a population of 13,132 by 2010 where it would be 32.8% of the County's total population.

Other sizable concentrations are in Dwight, having a population of 4,505 and 1,530 households, and in Indian Grove, Chatsworth and Reading, all with populations in excess of 1,000 and households around or in excess of 500. Table 4 also includes data regarding the average size of households within each of the places identified.

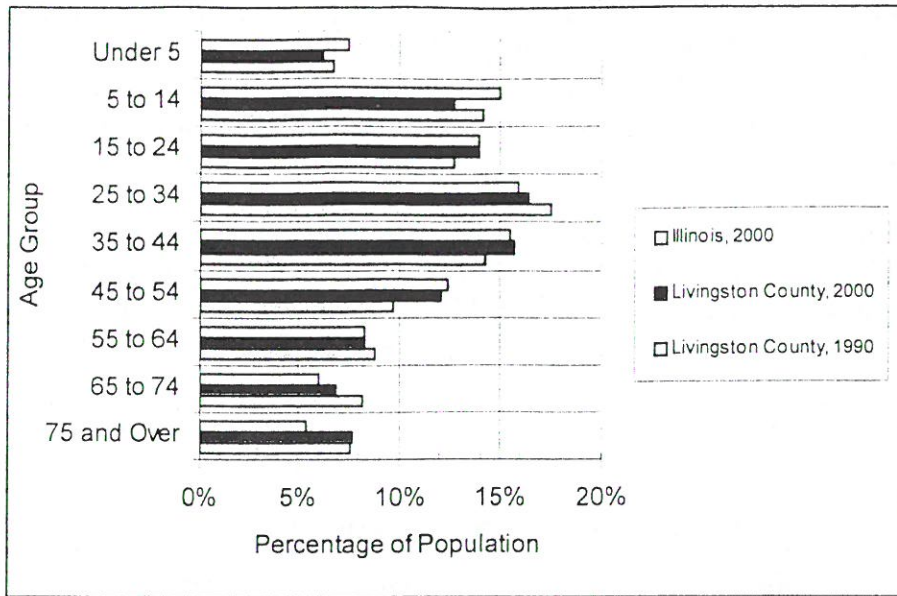
2.2.3 Age Structure

TABLE 5. Age Distribution, Livingston County, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020

Age Group	1990	2000	2010, Proj.	2020, Proj.
0 to 4	2,674	2,377	2,495	2,287
5 to 14	5,571	5,659	5,132	5,047
15 to 24	5,017	5,147	4,991	5,374
25 to 34	6,891	5,212	6,504	6,020
35 to 44	5,615	6,525	5,715	5,792
45 to 54	3,835	5,238	4,956	4,557
55 to 64	3,482	3,461	4,002	4,121
65 to 74	3,221	2,921	2,681	3,265
75 to 84	2,063	2,170	1,728	1,731
85 Plus	932	968	1,048	933
Total	39,301	39,678	39,252	39,127

Livingston County age distribution is displayed in Table 5, with projections for 2010 and 2020, which can be used as a base on future development.

FIGURE 4. Distribution of Population by Age Group, Livingston County: 1990 and 2000 and State of Illinois, 2000

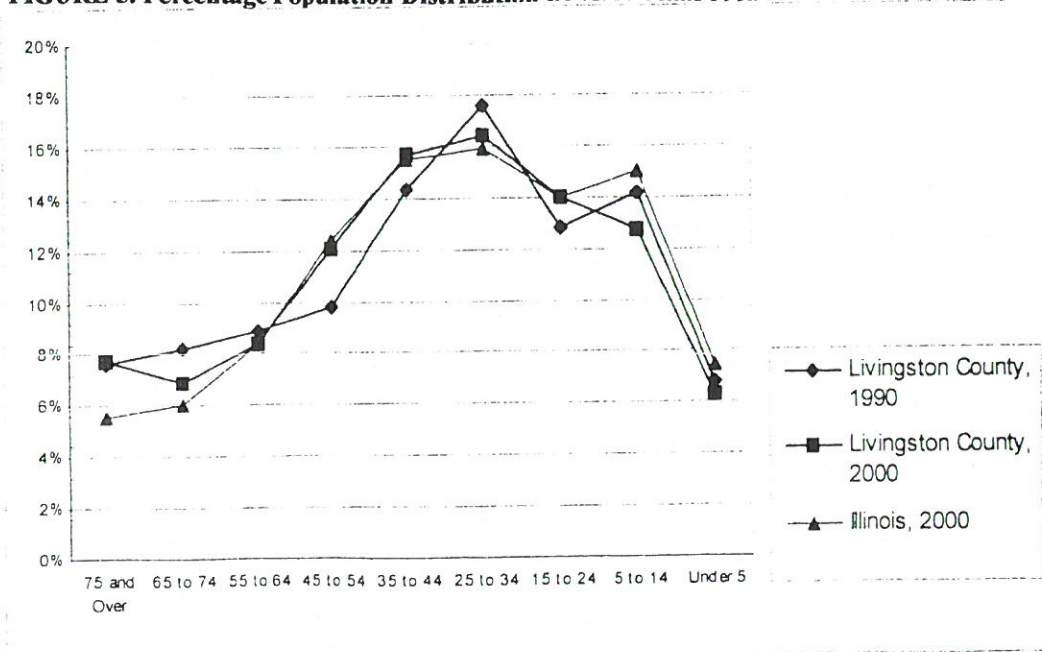


Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Adults between the ages of 25 and 65 are in the majority of the population. There is also an increase in the number of people ages 65 and over, which is indicative of the national demographic trend of an aging population.

From 1990-2000 the number of children dropped. Note that elementary school aged children declined by almost 10% in the 1990s. High school aged children will also trend in that direction. The population projections indicate a stabilizing of the school aged population. We anticipate that an increase in more urbanized districts will coincide with a decrease in the rural districts.

FIGURE 5. Percentage Population Distribution by Age: 1980, 1990 and 2000



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

As shown in Figure 5 the projected population distribution of 2000 follows that of 1990. There is a slight decrease in the percentage of 25 to 34 year olds. In addition, there is also a slight decrease in the number of those aged 55-65.

2.2.4 Households

The increase in the number of households between 1970 and 2000 is illustrated in Table 6. The total number of households has risen from 12,426 in 1970 to 13,737 in 1990, then to 14,374 in 2000. The greatest increase in the number of households took place between 1970 and 1980, an increase of 13.3%. Since that time, the rate of increase in the number of new households has decreased dramatically, resulting in a decrease of 2.4% between 1980 and 1990. By the year 2000, households increased by 4.6%, reflecting new growth in the cities and a declining rate of rural housing loss.

TABLE 6. Households, Livingston County, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000

Year	Households	Real Change	Percent Change
		Last 10 Years	Last 10 Years
1970	12,426	---	---
1980	14,077	1,651	13.3%
1990	13,737	1,651	-2.4%
2000	14,374	637	+4.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

2.3 LIVINGSTON COUNTY – ITS HOUSING

FIGURE 6. Housing Units, Owner vs. Rental

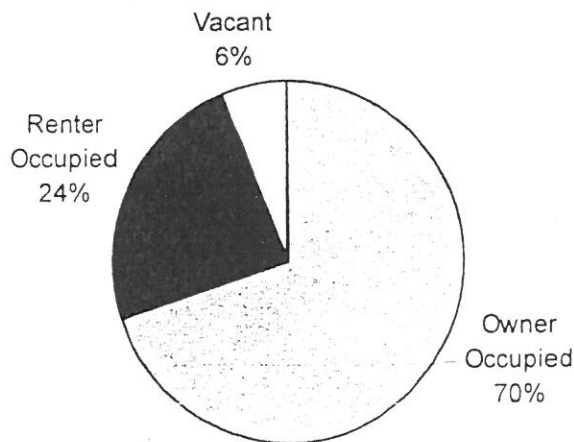


Figure 6 provides an analysis of the County's housing stock by owner occupied versus renter occupied for the year 2000. Out of a total number of 15,297 housing units, 70% (10,655 units) were owner occupied, 24% (3,719) were renter occupied and 6% (923) were vacant.

TABLE 7. Housing Units, by Type of Unit, 2000

	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	15,297	100.0
Units in Structure		
1-unit, detached	11,767	76.9
1-unit, attached	213	1.4
2 units	591	3.9
3 or 4 units	628	4.1
5 to 9 units	427	2.8
10 to 19 units	239	1.6
20 or more units	230	1.5
Mobile Homes	1,202	7.9

U.S. Bureau of Census, Census 2000

The majority of housing units in Livingston – 11,767 or 77% of the total, were single family detached dwellings indicating a strong demand for this type of unit in the county. A total of 8.0% (1,219) of the units were in the 2 to 4 unit category and another 7.6% (1,202) were mobile homes. The rather large number of mobile homes can be partly explained as a lower cost housing alternative, especially utilized by elderly or retired persons, the young, and those starting out in the housing market.

Table 8 provides some more detailed information on selected housing characteristics in Livingston County.

TABLE 8. Selected Housing Unit Characteristics, Livingston County, 2000

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total housing units	15,297	100.0	OCCUPANTS PER ROOM		
UNITS IN STRUCTURE			Occupied housing units	14,374	100.0
1-unit, detached	11,767	76.9	1.00 or less	14,063	97.8
1-unit, attached	213	1.4	1.01 to 1.50	254	1.8
2 units	591	3.9	1.51 or more	57	0.4
3 or 4 units	628	4.1			
5 to 9 units	427	2.8	Specified owner-occupied units	8,760	100.0
10 to 19 units	239	1.6	VALUE		
20 or more units	230	1.5	Less than \$50,000	1,380	15.8
Mobile home	1,202	7.9	\$50,000 to \$99,999	4,829	55.1
Boat, RV, van, etc.	-	-	\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,711	19.5
			\$150,000 to \$199,999	575	6.6
YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT			\$200,000 to \$299,999	226	2.6
1999 to March 2000	137	0.9	\$300,000 to \$499,999	37	0.4
1995 to 1998	637	4.2	\$500,000 to \$999,999	2	-
1990 to 1994	661	4.3	\$1,000,000 or more	-	-
1980 to 1989	1,318	8.6	Median (dollars)	79,700	(X)
1970 to 1979	2,171	14.2			
1960 to 1969	1,735	11.3	MORTGAGE STATUS AND SELECTED		
1940 to 1959	3,027	19.8	MONTHLY OWNER COSTS		
1939 or earlier	5,611	36.7	With a mortgage	5,023	57.3
			Less than \$300	19	0.2
ROOMS			\$300 to \$499	364	4.2
1 room	80	0.5	\$500 to \$699	1,265	14.4
2 rooms	363	2.4	\$700 to \$999	1,811	20.7
3 rooms	852	5.6	\$1,000 to \$1,499	1,177	13.4
4 rooms	2,421	15.8	\$1,500 to \$1,999	258	2.9
5 rooms	3,390	22.2	\$2,000 or more	129	1.5
6 rooms	3,234	21.1	Median (dollars)	829	(X)
7 rooms	2,173	14.2	Not mortgaged	3,737	42.7
8 rooms	1,610	10.5	Median (dollars)	301	(X)
9 or more rooms	1,174	7.7			
Median (rooms)	5.7	(X)	SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS		
Occupied housing units	14,374	100.0	AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD		
YEAR HOUSEHOLDER MOVED INTO UNIT			INCOME IN 1999		
1999 to March 2000	2,180	15.2	Less than 15.0 percent	4,108	46.9
1995 to 1998	3,380	23.5	15.0 to 19.9 percent	1,473	16.8
1990 to 1994	2,330	16.2	20.0 to 24.9 percent	994	11.3
1980 to 1989	2,729	19.0	25.0 to 29.9 percent	805	9.2
1970 to 1979	1,761	12.3	30.0 to 34.9 percent	365	4.2
1969 or earlier	1,994	13.9	35.0 percent or more	957	10.9
			Not computed	58	0.7
VEHICLES AVAILABLE			Specified renter-occupied units	3,579	100.0
None	785	5.5	GROSS RENT		
1	5,055	35.2	Less than \$200	221	6.2
2	5,878	40.9	\$200 to \$299	313	8.7
3 or more	2,656	18.5	\$300 to \$499	1,458	40.7
			\$500 to \$749	1,013	28.3
HOUSE HEATING FUEL			\$750 to \$999	172	4.8
Utility gas	10,603	73.8	\$1,000 to \$1,499	61	1.7
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	1,925	13.4	\$1,500 or more	-	-
Electricity	1,578	11.0	No cash rent	341	9.5
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc	210	1.5	Median (dollars)	464	(X)
Coal or coke	-	-			
Wood	42	0.3	GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF		
Solar energy	-	-	HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1999		
Other fuel	5	-	Less than 15.0 percent	927	25.9
No fuel used	11	0.1	15.0 to 19.9 percent	516	14.4
			20.0 to 24.9 percent	444	12.4
SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS			25.0 to 29.9 percent	358	10.0
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	39	0.3	30.0 to 34.9 percent	228	6.4
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	62	0.4	35.0 percent or more	714	19.9
No telephone service	414	2.9	Not computed	392	11.0

-Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

An analysis of the housing stocks in Livingston and those in surrounding counties reveals that the County would appear to possess a healthy housing supply with a variety of dwelling units and a low proportion that are substandard in nature. The moderate median value and relatively high median monthly rent suggest a strong demand for housing in Livingston, which would appear to compare favorably with the housing situation in neighboring counties.

TABLE 9. Source of Sewer and Water to Housing Units

Water Supply		Sewer Service Supply	
Public System or Private Company	10,982	Public Sewer	8,965
<u>Individual Well</u>		Septic Tank or Cess-pool	5,063
Drilled	2,453	Other Means	337
Dug	824		
Other Source	106		
Total	14,365		14,365

Source: Livingston County Public Health Department

Approximately 1/2 of the homes in Livingston County have septic fields and the other 1/2 are on public sewer systems. Generally, homes with public sewers are located in incorporated areas and homes with septic fields are in unincorporated areas. About 76% of the homes are on a public or private system with the remainder using individual wells. With the environmental concerns over potential damage from individual well and septic systems, there is an emphasis to direct housing development to areas with sewer and water utilities.

TABLE 10. Water and Wastewater Systems in Communities within Livingston County

Community	Water System	Wastewater Treatment
Ancona	No	No
Blackstone	No	No
Campus	Yes	No
Chatsworth	Yes	Yes
Cornell ¹	Yes	No
Cullom	Yes	No
Dwight	Yes	Yes
Emington	No	No
Fairbury	Yes	Yes
Flanagan	Yes	Yes
Forrest	Yes	Yes
Graymont	No	No
Long Point	No	No
Manville	No	No
Odell	Yes	Yes
Pontiac	Yes	Yes
Reading	No	No
Reddick	No	No
Saunemin	Yes	No
Strawn	Yes	No
South Streator	Yes	No ²

Source: Livingston County Public Health Department

¹Has received a wastewater system planning grant.

²Is currently in the design phase of a wastewater treatment system.

The above table reveals that the larger incorporated communities have a water system and a wastewater treatment system. Though the majority of the communities have some form of a water treatment system, but a majority of the communities do not have a waste water treatment facility.

2.4 LIVINGSTON COUNTY – ITS ECONOMY

2.4.1 The Economic Base

Before providing an analysis of specific aspects of the economy of Livingston County, it is first necessary to introduce the concept of the economic base of a particular geographical area. As a general rule, the nature of appraising the economic base of a community is to gather all relevant information regarding those activities that are the primary economic players in a community. Such activities are those that provide the core employment and income around which the remainder of the economy circulates. The economic base of a community may include agricultural and/or industrial concerns but regardless of its nature, any multiplier effect within a particular economic area, such as income generated from retailing activity, will have as its point or origin a basic economy. Cultural, historical, and geographical factors are all important influences in the precise composition of the economic base and the relative representation of its constituent elements.

2.4.2 The Industrial Base

In the western world, the industrial base usually accounts for the largest proportion of an area's wealth and toward the general prosperity of its inhabitants in the form of both net income and employment. It is the industrial base through activities such as the manufacturing of goods that acts as the bedrock for economic growth and technological advancement. The success of a particular area's industrial economy, such as Livingston County's, depends largely upon its ability to retain and attract a work force with the requisite skill levels to perform the functions involved in the various stages of production of goods and services. The County may want to pursue the expansion of its' industrial base by utilizing the County's agricultural products in an industrial pursuit. Agricultural production provides a base for the industrial production. It is more than the production of foodstuffs, it also influences marketing, transportation, fuels, and numerous other products.

TABLE 11. Civilian Labor Force, December 2000

	Employed Persons
Civilian Labor Force	20,198
Employment	19,591
Unemployment	607
Unemployment Rate	3.0%

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

In the year 2000 the reported total civilian labor force in Livingston County was 20,198. Out of this labor force, 607 persons or 3% were unemployed. The low unemployment rate indicates a healthy economy.

Livingston County does not attract a large quantity of employees from outside of the County to fully replace those it loses to outside areas of employment. Such a situation is common place for many of the counties surrounding the Chicago metropolitan area, and is by no means unique to Livingston.

TABLE 12. Occupations of Livingston County Labor Force Participants, 1990

OCCUPATION	#	%
Management, professional, and related occupations.....	4,507	25.1
Service Occupations.....	3,303	18.4
Sales and office occupations.....	3,945	22.0
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.....	208	1.2
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations.....	1,706	9.5
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations.....	4,283	23.9
INDUSTRY		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining.....	1,049	5.8
Construction.....	986	5.5
Manufacturing.....	3,800	21.2
Wholesale trade.....	475	2.6
Retail trade.....	1,886	10.5
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities.....	997	5.6
Information.....	245	1.4
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing.....	979	5.5
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services.....	782	4.4
Educational, health and social services.....	3,503	19.5
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services.....	1,119	6.2
Other services (except public administration).....	847	4.7
Public administration.....	1,284	7.2

TABLE 15. Present and Projected Industry of Employment, 1996 to 2006

Industry Group	1996 Employed Persons	Percent Distribution	2006 Projected Change	Potential Effect on Livingston County
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries	2,606	15%	-0.1%	-3
Mining	117	0%	-13.7%	-6
Construction	556	3%	+9.7%	+54
Manufacturing, Non- durable Goods	2,043	12%	+14.0%	+286
Manufacturing, Dura- ble Goods	2,256	13%	-0.4%	-10
Transportation, Com- munications and other Public Utilities	536	3%	+11.6%	+62
Wholesale Trade	2,982	17%	+10.0%	+299
Retail Trade	2,448	14%	+11.3%	+277
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	517	3%	+3.1%	+16
Services: Business and Repair	419	2%	+40.3%	+169
Services: Personal	101	0%	+16.8%	+17
Services: Entertainment and Recreation	91	0%	+27.5%	+25
Services: Health	1,265	7%	+20.6%	+260
Services: Other Profes- sional	1,096	6%	+21.4%	+235
Government	1,429	8%	+6.9%	+99
TOTAL	17,204	100%	+9.3%	+1,591

Source: Department of Employment Security

Table 15 represents employment by industry in Livingston County, the State projection for changes in the industry in the period from 1996 to 2006 and finally the effect of the change applied to Livingston County.

Table 15 represents employment by industry in Livingston County, the State projection for changes in the industry in the period from 1996 to 2006 and finally the effect of the change applied to Livingston County.

While agriculture is the main and dominant land use in Livingston County, when compared to other employment categories, agriculture is one employer category that can be compared to other major employers. Agriculture, as now structured in Livingston County, will be less labor intensive, as more proficient farming methods are adapted. In seeking to increase employment to match the county's population the focus must be on areas other than agriculture or alternatively, a restructuring of the agriculture industry.

The growing industrial groups are wholesale trade manufacturing nondurable goods, retail trade, health services and other professional occupations. Manufacturing has the highest projected increases. Agriculture and mining are projected to decline. The above projections reflect state wide averages. It is a good first step in estimating future employment. A suggested next step is to evaluate the specific attributes of Livingston County and refine the projections to reflect local conditions.

2.4.3 The Commercial Base

Retail Sales.

One of the most lucid indications of the direction, extent, and rate of economic change in the county are trends in its commercial retailing activity.

While inflationary forces have obviously been represented to some extent in this increase, they have been low to moderate during this time period, and therefore cannot be wholly targeted as the only factor at work. An indication of the appropriateness of such an assertion is the corresponding decline in the number of firms over the same period from 414 firms in 1977 to 399 in 1992, coupled with a consistent number of resident persons per outlet. Total retail sales and number of firms have therefore decreased.

You may note this information on the distribution of retail sales, by the community of point of sale, during the 4th quarter, 1999. With \$423,533 in sales tax, representing \$800,000 in retail sales, the City of Pontiac represents 61.6% of the retail sales in the County. Pontiac which contains only 27.5% of the County's population is the commercial center of the County and the traditional shopping area for the rest of Livingston County. Inversely, the commercial sector of the City of Pontiac is dependent on a sales territory well beyond the city's boundaries. People in the County shop in places like; Kankakee, Joliet, Morris, Streator, Bloomington/Normal and Champaign/Urbana. However, retail commercial activity in Livingston County is robust enough to withstand adverse changes in general economic conditions, and where a decline has occurred in recent years a recovery has followed.

Income growth in Livingston County is expected to outpace its neighbors with a healthy 8 to 9.99% increase in household income over the 5 years from 2000 to 2005. In this comparison Livingston County's income growth is on par with McLean and Marshall Counties while outpacing all other neighboring counties. It is important to note that income growth is expected to happen at a greater rate along the I-55 transportation corridor, of which Livingston is a part of, than in counties without this feature. This is not surprising given that direct access to I-55 is an attribute that is expected to draw business opportunities and jobs to Livingston County.

TABLE 22. Distribution of Disposable Income 1994 to 2000

Town	Sales Tax	Aggregate Expenditures within 1 mile	Number of Households within 1 mile	Sales Tax per Household within 1 mile
Chatsworth	\$16,263	\$22,364	647	\$25.14
Cornell	\$2,634	\$9,454	273	\$9.65
Dwight	\$151,557	\$63,606	1,583	\$95.74
Fairbury	\$134,903	\$59,024	1,446	\$93.29
Forrest	\$21,409	\$19,252	524	\$40.86
Long Point	\$261	\$4,351	130	\$2
Odell	\$5,983	\$15,335	403	\$14.85
Pontiac	\$423,533	\$169,217	4,110	\$103.05

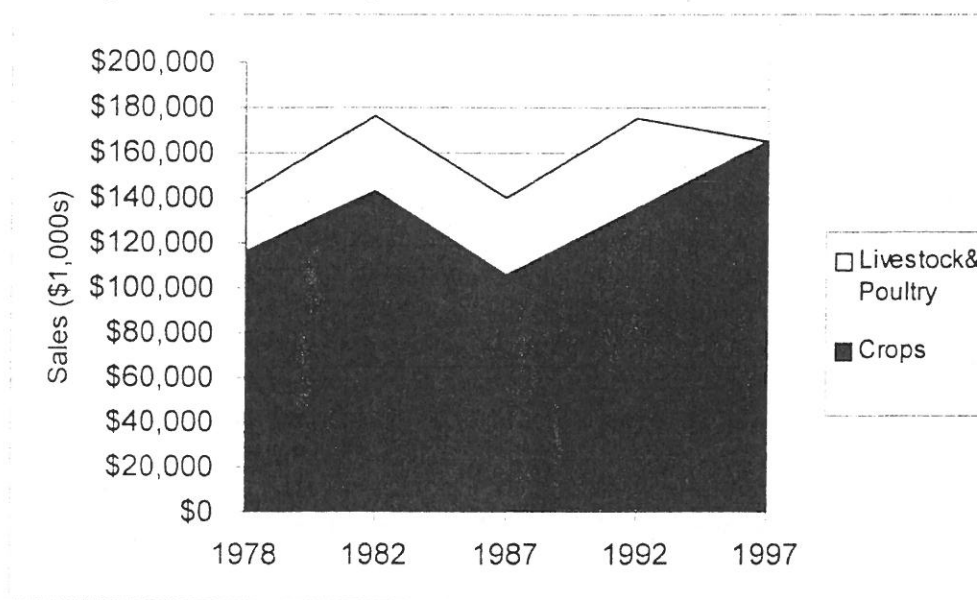
Table 22 summarizes the distribution of disposable income from 1994 to 2000 within 1 mile of the communities of: Chatsworth, Cornell, Dwight, Fairbury, Forrest, Long Point, Odell, and Pontiac. The disposable income of the resident population is an important element of any attempt to understand commercial economic activity in any geographical area.

As expected, the three larger cities: Dwight, Fairbury, and Pontiac, are more successful at capturing the retail market in the county. While the towns of Chatsworth, Cornell, Long Point, and Odell all do not capture large amounts of sales tax money per household. Therefore, a consideration for more economic development for these communities to capture more sales tax money should be measured.

2.4.5 The Agricultural Base

Livingston County's agricultural base remains central to the County's economic and cultural life. Farming is by far the largest single land use accounting for approximately 92% of all land within the County. As such it plays a key role in the social activity within the County. The overwhelming dominance of agriculture as a land use owes much to the agricultural quality of the land base (Important Farmlands Map, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1980). Included in the land base are the majority of the County's natural resources including wetlands, watercourses, aquifer recharge areas, wooded areas, steep slopes, mineral resources, prairie remnants, and wildlife habitats. As an export industry, agriculture drives a whole set of secondary economic activities and, in doing so, contributes significantly to the overall economic well-being of the County

FIGURE 10. Agriculture Production by Value of Sales



Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

An analysis of agricultural production by value of sales is set out in Figure 11. This shows that the value of total farm sales for Livingston County at 1997 prices was \$160,00,000 divided by 620,000 acres equating to approximately \$258/acre of farmland. This compared favorably with the sales of goods in the surrounding counties and highlights the importance of the agricultural economy in Livingston. The extent of the increases of the two decades or so is reflective both of the effect of improved agricultural techniques on production and also on the inflationary pressures on prices through a given period of time.

TABLE 23. Average Size of Farms (Acres)

County	1987	1992	1997
Ford	407	490	572
Grundy	396	423	435
Iroquois	393	439	479
Livingston	368	408	445
Kankakee	358	387	423
LaSalle	324	367	372
McLean	389	439	472
Woodford	270	304	325

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Table 23 sets out the average size of farms for Livingston and the neighboring seven counties.

The average farm size is consistently getting larger. The average size of farms in Livingston has grown from 368 acres in 1987 to 445 acres in 1997, the latter representing among the largest average of the counties analyses. We anticipate the trend to continue, but for the average to begin to level off as the advantages of economies of scale become less apparent as farms reach the optimum size, although the acre value for this is difficult to predict. The trend towards larger and subsequently fewer farms is a national trend. Similarly there is a trend towards fewer families living on the farm. The average valuation of land and buildings data is perhaps the most startling.

**TABLE 24. Average Valuation of Land and Buildings (\$Per Farm)
(Source U.S. Census of Agriculture)**

County	1987	1992	1997
Ford	\$519,051	\$789,625	\$1,257,005
Grundy	\$576,012	\$948,046	\$1,317,055
Iroquois	\$507,617	\$665,116	\$1,108,775
Kankakee	\$510,843	\$732,634	\$1,102,218
Lasalle	\$523,158	\$761,637	\$1,013,034
Livingston	\$647,786	\$667,955	\$1,110,614
McLean	\$355,439	\$918,538	\$1,278,398
Woodford	\$454,171	\$606,187	\$953,959

Table 24 shows that between 1987 and 1997 Livingston County's land use value rose from \$647,786 to \$1,110,614. Although the production of crops is the bulk of the Livingston County land use, they are a declining source of employment. Statewide employment in agricultural of crops is projected to lose 11.7% of employment between 1988 to 2000. Agricultural production of livestock is similarly expected to lose 8%. Agricultural services are expected to grow by 21.2%. Improved production and harvesting methods, rather than declining demand, contributed to the job loss.

Some of the lost jobs are expected to be reclaimed in agricultural services, but gains there will amount to about 1/3rd of the number lost in production.

Livingston witnessed a sharp rise in the value of its crop production between 1969 and 1978 from \$41.20 million to \$116 million in 1978. Again it is safe to say that part of this somewhat dramatic rise can be attributed to high levels of price inflation during the seventies but also due to improved agricultural techniques. The value decreased during the period from 1978 to 1987 but was much more modest going from \$116.35 million to \$105.48 million. The low inflation during a period of economic slump during this period coupled with a reduced impact of agricultural technique improvements were undoubtedly important factors. From 1987 to 1992 agriculture sales value rose to \$175.2 million. A similar pattern of change in the value of crop production is evident for the surrounding counties. In Kankakee, however, the value of crops actually increased between 1978 and 1987 from \$76.78 million to \$80.48 million, but increased to \$105.2 million by 1992. Between 1992 and 1997 the value of the crops for Livingston County dropped from \$175.2 million to \$165.50 million in 1997. In addition the late 1980's brought drought conditions to the County, which also may have had an affect on crop values as compared to the other counties.

The above analysis would seem to indicate a thriving and stable agricultural economic base in Livingston County. While urban growth will occur in the next 20 years, it will have little overall impact of the dominance of the agriculture land use within Livingston County. The importance of agriculture is demonstrated by its dollar value to the County and the fact that this has continued to grow throughout the study period. It is anticipated that agriculture will continue to play both vitally important economic and cultural roles.

2.5 EXISTING LAND USE

The existing land use study is an important component of the planning process. The spatial distribution of land use presents a composite picture of existing County development at a given point in time and provides many valuable insights into understanding County development trends and related problems. In order to establish future courses for the development of land in the county, important features such as concentrations of housing, business, and industry as well as their direction of growth must be understood. Although the comprehensive planning program is for the unincorporated area (planning area), if the proper coordination is to be achieved between urban and rural development, it must be based on a general understanding and knowledge of the land use within the incorporated areas as well. The study was conducted by analyzing the changes that have taken place since the original Comprehensive Plan completed in 1973, interpretation of aerial photography, and field inspection with County staff.

The total area of the county is 669,620 acres or 1,046 square miles making it fourth largest County in the state. Of this total, 98% is unincorporated. The county's 15 municipalities occupy approximately 20 square miles of land area. Since the majority of the developed land in the County is located within or adjacent to Pontiac, Dwight and Streator, the remainder of the planning area has a predominantly rural character

According to the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Survey, approximately 620,000 acres (92.6%) is used for cropland, 12,400 acres (2.0%) for pasture, 6,700 acres (1.0%) is woodland, and 2,486 acres are water areas. These four categories of land use account for the major portion of the land in the county – 641,586 acres or 1,002 sq. miles (95.8%). For planning purposes, this distribution points to the importance of farming activity in the county, especially since 92% of the soil types are classified as prime farmland.

As might be expected, since the County has an excellent road network in the unincorporated area based on the one mile grid, including an interstate highway, major state routes, County, Township, Municipal and other local roads. Another transportation network in the county is five rail lines. Land consumed in the county for transportation accounts for about 2.5% of the land area.

Generally, past growth has occurred in a quite orderly way – that is, urban type development (residential, commercial, and industrial) has been well contained within existing incorporated areas and the rural open character of the county has been preserved.

On the other hand, recreation uses represent a very small percent of the land area due mainly to the total lack of large open space reserves or state parks. The municipalities, as well as the County as a whole, are lacking in public recreation areas in relation to their population.

Topographic relief in the county is generally low, with most of the County nearly level or gently sloping. The areas with the greatest relief are along the Vermillion River in the north half of the County and in a small area east of the Village of Strawn. The County is drained primarily by the Vermillion River and its tributaries with the exception of the northwest part, which drains to the Mazon River and its tributaries and in a small area the southwest part that drains south into the Mackinaw River.

2.6 TRANSPORTATION

There are five rail lines that run through the county. These include the Bloomer Shippers Connecting Railroad, which runs through the southwest corner of the County. The Union Pacific Railroad (Amtrak), which runs through the center of the County from north to south. The Toledo, Peoria, and Western Railroads run through the south of the County. The Norfolk Southern Railroad is located in the northern part of the county. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad runs south from the town of Streator into the northwest part of the County. Amtrak makes stops at both Dwight and Pontiac. There is a proposed high-speed rail line, which would run through the County. Currently there are plans to put a stop in Pontiac and Dwight. The County should work on maintaining rail stops as a continued transportation options for the residents of Livingston County. Freight loading is adequate for the County to compliment its extensive transportation system. Interstate 55 (I-55) runs through the County. These are interchanges at Dwight, Odell, and Pontiac. This number of interchanges is adequate for the county, at this time.

An effort to promote commercial development around the interchanges on I-55 should be addressed by the County. The County is also served by the City of Pontiac Municipal Airport, which presents another avenue of transportation with the potential to offer more services.

2.7 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This is an appropriate time to update the Land Use Plan. Numerous trends are coming together pushing Livingston County in new directions. The majority is now urban rather than rural; the agricultural economy is changing; much of the county population is within commuting range of the western/southwestern Chicago region jobs; and housing is remaining stable. The Background Studies analyze these and other issues to help the County plot its future. Several of the principle findings are:

- **REGIONAL SETTING:** Livingston County is located in northeastern Illinois, southwest of the Chicago metropolitan area. Livingston County lies between two aggressively growing metropolitan areas Chicago and Bloomington-Normal. While Livingston County lies on the transportation network connecting the two metropolitan areas the County is little affected by growth pressures emanating from the two metropolitan areas. To date the county has seen little affect by growth pressures. The commuting range to Bloomington/Normal is a 30 minute drive from Pontiac. Also Peoria is about 60 miles west the center of the county. The placement of the County in relation to these two cities are important in the locating of businesses and housing.
- **POPULATION DYNAMICS:** The Pontiac area accounts for about 1/3 of the population of the entire County. Similarly, roughly a third of the total number of urban house-holds in the county are located in the Pontiac area.

UPDATE NEXT SECTION

- **HOUSING DYNAMICS:** Out of a 2000 total number of housing units of 15,297, 10,655 (74%) were owner occupied, 3,719 (26%) were rental units with about 923 (6%) being vacant. The majority of housing units in Livingston – 11,767 or 77% of the total, were single family detached dwellings indicating a strong demand for this type of the unit in the County. A significant number of units (1,219 or 8%) were in the 2 to 4 unit category and 7.9% were mobile homes. The rather large number of mobile homes can be partly explained as a lower cost housing alternative, especially utilized by elderly or retired persons.
- **AGRICULTURE CHANGES:** Agriculture is still a main staple in the Livingston County economy. However, many employed in the farming industry are also employed elsewhere during the farming off-season.
- **COMMERCIAL SECTOR:** Livingston County has retail sales about 10% lower than the state average and surrounding counties of Kankakee, Kendall, and LaSalle but higher than the more urbanized Will and Dekalb counties.

- The retail commercial activity in Livingston County is robust enough to withstand adverse changes in general economic conditions and where a decline has occurred in recent years, a recovery has followed.
- **LOCAL EMPLOYMENT:** Manufacturing is the main employer for the County. It should also be recognized that Education, Health, and Government occupations are also key employers located in Livingston County. Though agriculture land use is the predominant land use, **direct agricultural employment can be determined to account for less than 10 % of the population.** Many county businesses and services, at least in part, also serve the agricultural industry, which accentuates the value of agriculture to Livingston County. The versatility of farm related employees is also recognized in that many farm related employees have other seasonal employment that contributes to the overall employment of the county, and such employment opportunities should be sought and retained in the County to supplement farm employees incomes and to enhance the vitality of the county's employment.

3.0 LIVINGSTON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This Livingston County Comprehensive Plan lays out recommendations, both broad and specific, regarding growth in the County.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Comprehensive planning has been a continuous function of Livingston County government for thirty-three years. Planning related activities began when the Livingston County Board of Supervisors created the Regional Planning Commission in 1968. Formal County planning began thereafter and resulted in the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan in March of 1973 and the adoption of the County's first zoning ordinance, which went into effect February 1, 1974.

In 1985, the Illinois legislature enacted the Local Land Resource Management Planning Act, Illinois State Statutes, Chapter 50 ILCS 805. This important legislative initiative added strength to the ability of counties and municipalities to engage in intergovernmental planning activities.

This Livingston County Land Use Plan: Year 2020 Update is a guide to be used for the management of the County's resources. There are many issues affecting quality of life that transcend municipal and township boundaries. Environmental quality knows no artificial boundaries. Any desire to develop county-wide systems and networks for open space, recreation and economic development requires county-wide cooperation and planning. Yet this plan recognizes that site-specific land use decisions are the responsibility of the individual jurisdictions in which the land is located. This is a dynamic, comprehensive, and significant document, and deviations from it should not be made without careful consideration.

3.2 PLAN PURPOSE

The Plan serves the following four purposes:

1. To preserve prime farmland.
2. To promote the wise and practical use of property.
3. To Save Taxpayers Money

By directing change, the Plan enables local and county governments to direct the allocation of public services and utilities in a cost effective manner. This plan does not support sprawl development, which results in the most expensive growth pattern.

4. To Maintain or Improve the County's Quality Image

Our County, with its rivers and creeks, farmland, and quality communities, has a unique character. This character is an influence on the County's reputation as a high quality area.

Maintaining this image as we continue to grow is important to the future economic health of the County.

Interviews with Livingston County residents suggest that the County's favorable reputation as a desirable area depends upon preserving its rural, country atmosphere, control of local schools, reasonable travel times to places of employment and the lack of congestion in the County.

Even though the County is prized for its rural, country atmosphere, during the last 30 years the housing and employment in Livingston County has been shifting from rural to urban. As more of the population is living in the **larger population centers** and working in non-agricultural jobs, they seek urban amenities, balanced with a rural atmosphere. The county's communities will continue to compete with other parts of the region by **seeking to** provide urban amenities to the mobile population. These urban amenities are often very basic such as shopping possibilities, to libraries and entertainment, to restaurants and to the more sophisticated such as **advanced communication connections**.

5. To preserve our natural resources.

6. To Build on The County's Natural and Economic Assets

To name a few; Livingston County has a thriving agricultural economy, within reasonable proximity to major metro areas, a major interstate (I-55), several rail lines, and numerous prosperous municipalities. Identifying and building on these existing assets is a key to a prosperous future for Livingston County.

7. To Lead to Improved Land Use Regulations

This Plan provides a realistic and legally defensible rationale on which County and municipal zoning and subdivision regulations may be based. This Plan recommends that all new major developments that take place in the next twenty years be within or in close proximity to or **within** the existing communities in Livingston County. Yet the County will remain open to the approval of special uses to enhance the development of agriculturally related endeavors in agricultural areas. This will provide all land owners, municipalities, and the County with a degree of certainty concerning the future development potential of any property, including the probability of obtaining the necessary zoning changes, annexation approvals and public services required for development. The municipalities and the County will then be in a much better position to maintain consistent land use regulations, to coordinate activities which affect land use decisions, and to defend such regulations and decisions in court.

3.3 LAND USE PLANNING PROGRAM

This Land Use Planning Program is composed of three segments being analysis, plan update, and implementation. Our analysis phase involved an inventory and review of factors such as existing land use, population characteristics, transportation services and economic base data that have influenced the present growth and development of Livingston County.

Our Plan update phase include a review of the previous Plan, a review of recommendations and land use allocations based on findings of background studies, the analysis of existing land use that including municipal data, the review of municipal land use plans and meetings with municipal officials that led to the formulation of a series of updated long-range Land Use Goals and Objectives. This plan update phase also included the development of a Plan map that in broad terms sets forth land use goals and patterns which will recognize a need for compatible relationships between various privately and publicly held lands to achieve balanced land use patterns that allows development that may broaden the tax base, stabilize and enhance property values, and enhance the natural attractiveness of the County.

The third implementation segment is a broad classification encompassing legal devices available under Illinois Statutes, local zoning and subdivision ordinances, other property development documents and continuous planning.

This Plan should not be construed as a rigid model, which denies variation, but rather, as a flexible guide from which thoughtful local and individual project planning may stem. Unforeseen or previously unrecognized problems usually manifest themselves following the development of a land use plan. This is normal when the planning process is brought to bear within any area with unpredictable potential growth. Since planning is a process, it is necessary that the Plan be reviewed annually and updated at least every five years.

Three major land uses in the unincorporated area of the County are agriculture, residential, and open space areas. Most of the major commercial and industrial areas are located within the municipalities. One of the Plan's primary goals is the protection of prime farmland. The Plan promotes the protection of farmland because conversions to other uses have the greatest impact on the County's rural character and the economic stability of the agricultural community.

Related to this goal is the concept of water resource management. Whenever possible, point and nonpoint source discharges of pollutants into ponds, rivers and streams should be reduced.

TABLE 26. Point and Nonpoint Sources of Pollution

<p>Point Sources: Conventional wastewater treatment plants Combines sewer overflows Industrial plants Illegal septic pumpage dumping Yard waste dumping Mining operations Landfills Feed lot and livestock runoff Illicit connections to storm sewers</p>	<p>Nonpoint Sources: Construction site soil erosion Agricultural soil erosion Agricultural chemical runoff Lawn chemical runoff Acid rain from air pollution Impervious surface runoff, including oils, grease, gasoline spills, tire wear, de-icing salts, etc. from roadways driveways, and parking lots Hydrologic modifications: for example, Stream canalization, wetland filling and Draining, etc.</p>
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3.4 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The year 2020 population projection of 42,900 is based on growth trends over the past five decades and analysis of building permit activity over the last ten years. These projections reflect growth around those municipalities located adjacent to or in close proximity to I-55 interchanges. This growth is based on a speculation of the continued development of the Chicago Metro area which continues its growth to the south and west of the metro area. The growth in the Bloomington/Normal, Peoria, and Champaign/Urbana areas, all located within a driving distance of portions of Livingston County may also contribute to the growth of certain areas of the county, while relatively less growth is expected in the more rural townships.

3.5 THE LAND USE PLAN

3.5.1 AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

The majority of land in unincorporated Livingston County falls into the agricultural land use category, and although the area allocated to agricultural land use has been reduced somewhat as compared to the 1973 Plan, cropland and pasture still represent 95 percent of the total area. Lands within these areas are generally zoned agricultural.

“Agriculture” represents large, contiguous areas of farmland composed of predominantly prime soil types. Farm operations tend to be large in size, utilizing modern farm technology. A commitment to future agriculture has been made through large capital investments.

Furthermore, prime soils and other agricultural lands and sub soil minerals constitute a finite natural resource, which should be protected and maintained. The formation of designated Agricultural Protection Areas is encouraged.

Areas designated as “Agriculture” have top priority for protection. Residential development is incompatible with agricultural operations because of the intensity of farming practices. Residential development in this category is discouraged. The selling of lots along rural roadways for residential use shall also be discouraged.

Agriculture is a key element in the County’s economic base. The county will remain open to the enhancement of this key economic base considering property development that may be related to the processing of agricultural products, which can add value to farm products, and possibly create jobs and income for Livingston County Residents. This job creation and income then can enhance the economy with added value by having money circulate through the county business and financial institutions adding to the economic well being of the county as a whole.

Rural residential subdivisions may be located in the “Agriculture” areas where slope, mature and extensive tree cover, or poor soils restrict agricultural activities.

Plan map designation of this land use category does not preclude the ability of an individual to request rezoning. The Livingston County Zoning Ordinance should be referenced for the unincorporated portions of the County to determine allowable uses and rezoning requirements. The County has no jurisdiction in incorporated areas that have their own municipal plans and zoning ordinances that govern in those areas. The County encourages intergovernmental agreements and continued cooperation on land use issues.

3.5.2 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Residential areas in the Land Use Plan will be designed to provide and protect the quality of life for all residents of the County. A quality environment is one that is free from public health hazards such as impure air, water, and/or inadequate sewage and waste disposal. To this end, appropriate service facilities must be provided for all residential areas. The choice of appropriate service facilities will depend on the characteristics of the individual site and the type of development under consideration. In general, the areas indicated on the Plan Map for residential uses should be served by community water and waste water systems. In those areas of the county that have no reasonable expectation of community-type sewer and water main systems, individual well and septic systems may be considered for individual lots.

The Plan recognizes and proposes that the majority of new residential development will occur within the existing municipalities or adjacent areas that will be annexed. Such development will allow for the most convenient and economic provision of services. The Plan also encourages the infilling of existing vacant parcels and lots in municipalities and in existing subdivisions in unincorporated areas. Development on existing parcels is considered preferable to any changes in zoning which create new modes of development or expand the boundaries of existing subdivided areas.

Some major developments in residential land use patterns from the 1973 Livingston County Comprehensive Plan reflect the planned residential areas from the 1973 plan and recent Plans adopted by the City of Pontiac and the Village of Dwight and the City of Fairbury.

The Dwight Plan projects additional residential land use east and south of the existing village boundaries, and to the west adjoining to the Dwight Country Club area.

In the Pontiac planning area, additional residential land use is considered in all directions moving out from the present city boundaries, but confining all residential development east of I-55. An area south of IL Rt. 116 and east of I-55 has been changed from residential to business park and commercial.

The City of Fairbury Plan proposes residential development adjoining the Village in all directions except along the US Rt. 24 corridor. The County Plan limits the residential area to approximately one-half mile in each direction.

This Livingston County Comprehensive Plan encourages new residential development to be consistent with the existing local character. Proposed new developments should be evaluated for compatibility with regard to such parameters as architectural design, street layout, lot size, setback requirements, sight lines and water and sewer or septic utility development. The soils for any proposed development site must be evaluated for conformance with the Health Ordinances of the County. Techniques including planned unit developments and traditional neighborhood designs are encouraged to help in defining local character, while allowing for compatible variations to occur.

This Plan encourages the establishment of residential and neighborhood units that are also affordable to the County's population and work force. Innovative techniques to encourage the development of high-quality, affordable housing options are recommended.

3.5.3 BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Significant business and commercial concentration areas are proposed on the Plan Map. These areas are located primarily near the I-55 interchanges and will provide locations for highway oriented uses such as motels, restaurants, and automobile and truck sales and service establishments. Being located along I-55 Pontiac and Dwight will continue to serve the traveling public along with serving their citizens. Also, Odell being located along I-55 may have an opportunity to make the most of its location and pursue development along this corridor.

We support the wise development of these commercial, business, and industrial areas. In order to provide traffic safety, these areas should be located and designed for convenient access from an appropriate road system, with provisions for adequate off street parking for vehicles.

One of the goals of this Plan is to encourage the enhancement and vitality of the existing downtown areas within the municipalities in the county. It is a goal to have these downtown areas to serve or continue to serve as quality shopping areas serving the needs of their communities.

3.5.4 INDUSTRIAL LAND AND EMPLOYMENT USES

Industrial use is evolving as we enter the 21st century. This Plan proposes a broader definition of "Employment Corridors". A broader list of uses, that may include, but would not be limited to, office space, laboratories, businesses, medical facilities and so forth should be allowed. Mixed use development should be encouraged.

The attraction of desirable employment corridors within the county is a fundamental objective of this Land Use Plan. Additional employment expansion is desirable to promote the economic growth of the county and a simultaneous broadening of the tax base to provide better municipal and county facilities and services, and employment opportunities for county residents.

A well defined zoning ordinance designating the types of employment uses allowed, and requiring strict adherence to the county regulations, can be instrumental in acquiring employment operations that will be an asset to the county.

Unlike prohibitive zoning concepts, which bar certain kinds of industrial activity from certain industrial zones, performance standards lend themselves to a permissive type of zoning. In effect, by utilizing performance standards, almost any industry can be located in a given industrial area if its performance conforms to certain criteria governing tolerable levels of smoke, dust, noise, glare, odor, vibration, and other nuisances. The specific kind of industrial/employment activity is not as important today as the degree to which the above factors are brought under control through technological and planning measures. This approach may make it possible to locate sizable non-nuisance-type employment districts in proximity yet separate from agricultural and residential uses. Some employment districts can also be developed as transitional zones to insulate "heavier" industry from other uses in the general vicinity.

Industrial plant and office layouts may require that more land be allocated to individual buildings, since users now consider landscaped settings for buildings, off-street parking space, loading facilities, and space for expansions as important elements of a location. Further growth of an employer must be provided for in advance if economies are to accrue from building an organized complex rather than scattered plants. Modern developments tend to grow horizontally instead of vertically, require relatively large amounts of land. Many companies frequently acquire five times or more land that is actually needed for their initial building operations. The norm for plan site acreage in an industrial park is one-third each for buildings, open paved areas, and landscaped ground. Through zoning regulations the necessary space can be guided into proper land use patterns.

The requirements for industrial/employer locations vary with the type of industry, but generally include the following factors:

- Fast and convenient access to good transportation facilities by rail and highway and air.
- Reasonable location with respect to labor supply and raw material markets;
- An adequate amount of suitable land, free from foundation and drainage problems, with a sufficient reserve for future growth;
- An adequate and reliable supply of utilities – water, waste disposal, power, and fuel;
- Protection from encroachment of residential or other land uses; and
- Location so as to minimize obnoxious effects on neighboring non-industrial/employment land uses, including traffic routes so that traffic will not pass through residential areas.

This Plan designates a major intermittent industrial/employer area in the unincorporated area of the County in a proposed industrial corridor that extends from the IL Rt. 23/I-55 interchange, near Pontiac, northeast along I-55 to the northern boundary of the County. This corridor would incorporate the industrial areas proposed by the Pontiac and Dwight comprehensive Plans.

From a transportation standpoint, this corridor in the center of the county is ideally located. This corridor is served directly by two railroads (the Union Pacific and the Norfolk Southern), and is in close proximity to State Routes 47, 17, 23, 116 & 170, and four existing interchanges with I-55. In addition, Pontiac has recently developed a new municipal airport near the I-55 / IL Rt. 23 interchange.

This airport facility currently includes a 5,000 foot lighted asphalt runway. Expansion plans include an additional 3,600 foot crosswind runway.

In addition to the I-55 large industrial/employer area, the Plan designates an industrial/Employer corridor along US Rt. 24 west of Fairbury, and projects that all of the county's communities along this route will have the potential for industrial/employer development in and around their communities, especially agricultural related businesses.

Although not a traditional industrial use, the Pontiac and Dwight Correctional Facilities, operated by the State of Illinois, are large employers in the County, and efforts should be made to maintain these non-traditional uses.

3.5.5 PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE LAND USE

The character of Livingston County is reflected, to a notable degree, in the quality of its community facilities – its schools, parks, libraries, churches, hospital and medical facilities and governmental services. This is because they are apt to be among the foremost factors in a citizen's mind when giving thought to their community. Beyond the consideration of civic pride, a high standard of design and efficiency in the development of adequate community facilities has other advantages. In a competitive situation, for instance, those areas in the County vying for desirable new developments and capital investments that have attractive and properly functioning community facilities will have a marked advantage. The Plan recognizes that the majority of these facilities will be located in the municipalities.

The Land Use Plan for Livingston County recognizes the need of providing adequate space for major public and private recreation areas. During the next decade, the residents of the County will have an opportunity to determine the desirability of their County as a place of residence for generations to come. The characteristic American assumption has always been that there will be plenty of green space. It is essential that recreational lands be nearby where they can effectively serve local populations. It is important to recognize that the potential more rapid the growth of the County, acknowledges a need for actions to provide and preserve public open spaces. Livingston County has developed a greenway plan to address these needs. The pursuit of the goals of a new greenway plan will enhance the recreation/tourism areas along the Vermilion River and in other areas of the county.

The development of a greenway plan goals will enhance the recreation/tourism industry as the third leg of the economic development program, in addition to the agriculture and industrial/business legs of an economic development program.

Because of the County's close proximity in terms of travel time to the Chicago Metropolitan Area, the proposed recreational open space system may also serve the needs of this larger area. According to population projections, by 2020 the Chicago/Northeastern Illinois area population will increase by 1,700,000 persons bringing the total to approximately 9,000,000. In order to provide these people with private recreational facilities within short driving distance, a tremendous increase in the amount of parks, camping facilities, conservation areas, and other recreational facilities may be required, which may provide the County with an opportunity to capture tourism dollars.

This Plan illustrates the approximate locations of lands that may be reserved as recreational open space. The provision for open space was carefully related to the existing land use pattern, the Land Use Plan, and the Thoroughfare Plan. Priorities for open space development should be based not only on availability of lands, but also on the suitability of the land for development proposed by reason of location and recreational value. Ponds, creeks, wooded lands, and areas having interesting topography have been included where possible. In addition, historical sites and structures are the County's connection with its past and should be preserved whenever possible.

Potential recreational open spaces within the County are numerous. Those areas having the highest priority for development should be the flood plains along the Vermilion River, and major creeks, which traverse the County. Quarry areas may also be considered as potential recreational open spaces.

The largest open space area proposed by the Plan extends along the entire length of the Vermilion River. During the wet season the river can be used for canoeing, thereby opening up the entire length of the river to being traversed. It is one of the few streams left in northern Illinois that is relatively unpolluted and if siltation and runoff could be reduced, a fine fishing stream may develop.

The plan designates an area that would provide the county with a tremendous potential for recreation/tourism. This area incorporates the Livingston Landfill, the Humiston Woods Nature Center, Thresherman's Park, parts of the Vermilion River and Wolf Creek, and the land adjacent to the IL Rt. 23/I-55 Interchange.

Applying ecological principles to the design of the landfill can produce immediate and long term recreational benefits that may facilitate the development of a major County-wide recreational and tourism area.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

The previous sections of this Livingston County Comprehensive Plan are extremely important; however, implementation of the Plan is crucial. While new and improved implementation techniques may be developed by the planning profession over time, most of the recommendations expressed in this Plan can be accomplished with existing regulatory tools and by recognizing the critical role that all government bodies including the municipalities play in land resource management in the County.

In order to carry out the long range goals and to realize the recommendations of the Land Use Plan, a great deal of concerted effort will be required over a period of years. The first step involves an awareness by the citizenry of the need to improve their County through cooperative and systematic action. The active participation of many individuals, organizations, and public officials is vital to the implementation of the Plan.

The Land Use Plan as set forth on the preceding pages and the Plan map has little or no value unless it is implemented. Therefore, the success of the Plan will be dependent, to a large extent, on proper administrative action to carry out its proposals and recommendations – especially enforcement of the various regulating ordinances. It will be effective and useful only if active steps are taken to carry out its proposals and recommendations so they can be used by the citizens of Livingston County in making every day decisions. Every community is developed as the result of countless individual decisions such as: to buy or sell land; to subdivide land; to build homes, businesses, industries, schools, and other community facilities; and to construct streets and install utilities. Each day decisions are made that will affect the future of the County. They are made by the landowners, lawyers, developers, realtors, public officials and private citizens. Whether these individual actions will add up to a well developed, attractive and economically sound County will depend in large measure on how well they are related to the County's objectives and plans. Successful implementation of the Plan can only be accomplished through adequate legislative and administrative tools, public support and enthusiastic leadership.

The Livingston County Board's Agriculture and Zoning Committee has taken the responsibility of leading the update process of this plan, after the Livingston County Planning Commission, which is, by law only an advisory body and does not have the legislative power necessary to implement it, began the process of reviewing the need to update the comprehensive plan. Therefore, the County Board shall consider passing all planning recommendations made during this plan update process and take the necessary steps to effectuate them and give them legal status.

To help implement the objectives of the Land Use Plan, it is recommended that the following steps be taken to:

1. Adopt and enforce a comprehensive revision to the Zoning Ordinance as soon as possible.
2. Continue to update and enforce subdivision regulations.
3. Develop a Planning Program to work with local communities to develop detailed small area plans.

4. Develop a good education and public relations program to promote the long range objectives of the County and gain wide public understanding and support of the Plan, and to integrate the education and public relations program into a process to keep the Plan up to date.
5. Recognize the language in the August 2004 draft of the Livingston County Trails and Greenways Plan as an accompanying document to the Livingston County Comprehensive Plan. In reviewing the Livingston County Comprehensive Plan this Livingston County Trails and Greenways Plan draft can be reviewed as a companion document that provides a historical perspective as a link to this visionary trails and greenway plan that is in part addressed in the comprehensive plan.
6. Recognize the Livingston County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system. Agriculture is one of the few essential industries, in that people must eat. Our county has been blessed with productive soils, a favorable weather climate and hard working farmers. Agriculture has played an integral role in the development of our culture. The influence of agriculture extends into the global economy, as the world's population continues to increase agriculture is likely to grow in strategic importance. The LESA system is an evaluation tool that provides an avenue for decision makers to first consider the potential consequences of converting agricultural lands into other uses. The LESA program provides a means to approve intelligent development of land.
7. Recognize the Livingston County Ordinance for Regulating Development in Floodplain Areas as a tool to help mitigate adverse consequences property and persons living in flood prone areas in times of flood related disasters.

4.1 ZONING ORDINANCE

A Zoning Ordinance, including a Zoning District Map, reflects within the limitations of zoning the recommendations of the Land Use Plan for the future distribution of land uses within the County. The prime objective of zoning is to achieve the best possible environment in which people can live and work. Under this broad objective, zoning regulations have four specific purposes: to promote health, safety, and the general welfare; to assure orderly development; to protect existing property improvements; and to conserve and enhance land values throughout the County.

The zoning ordinance, which is based upon the Land Use Plan, has as one of its objectives the protection of the best agricultural lands from urban encroachments and directing that development into suitable areas where public utilities and community facilities can become available in the future on an economical basis. All counties, whether they are rural or urban, are confronted with problems of change and growth. Planning and zoning provide the means of solving many of these problems or preventing their occurrence.

Illinois began moving in the direction of zoning for rural areas in 1929 when the legislature adopted the Regional Planning Act. This act provided for the creation of regional planning commissions to prepare plans for the coordinated and harmonious development of areas larger than a single municipality. In 1933 the Illinois legislature gave to counties the authority to establish building or set back lines along all public roads and streets outside the boundaries of incorporated areas. The purposes of this act were to promote public safety and to avoid or lessen congestion on existing traffic arteries.

It was soon realized that further legislation was necessary if Illinois counties were to be able to regulate and restrict the location and use of buildings for the purposes of "promoting the public health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare," and to help conserve the values of property throughout the respective counties. Thus, on June 28, 1935, the first Illinois general County Zoning Act was passed which enabled the County boards to adopt comprehensive restrictions over the use of land and buildings. However, the authority to zone was restricted to the unincorporated area of each County.

This 1935 Illinois zoning legislation gave counties the power to regulate the location and uses of buildings for commercial, industrial, residential and other uses. In addition, the act granted to County boards the authority to regulate the intensity of such uses; to establish building or setback lines to divide the County's unincorporated area into zoning districts of appropriate number, shape, area, and classes, and to regulate the permissible uses and the intensity of such uses in each district; and to prohibit uses, buildings, or structures which are incompatible with the character of the individual districts.

However, the act sets forth three specific areas, which are excluded, from zoning regulations. First, as is true of zoning generally, any buildings or uses of land which are lawfully in existence when the zoning ordinance becomes effective are permitted to continue, even if the zoning regulations make such buildings or uses "non-conforming." However, the continuation of such nonconforming uses or buildings may be bound by certain restrictions governing moving, repair, alteration, or the use of the buildings. Secondly, counties are denied authority by Illinois statutes to impose regulations with respect either to land used for agricultural purposes or to buildings or structures used for agricultural purposes located upon such land. The only zoning requirement to which such buildings or structures may be made to conform is building or setback lines. Third, Municipal Comprehensive Plans suggest land uses for the 1 ½ mile planning area around each municipality. Land with this planning area is subject to municipal subdivision regulations. A municipality's Plan should be reviewed and the municipality should be provided an opportunity to review and comment on all zoning requests within its planning area. The County Plan has taken into consideration Municipal Comprehensive Plans on file with the County.

4.2 SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The County subdivision regulations should state the rules for the preparation of plats, for the dedication of land for public uses, for the paving of streets, for the installation of utilities, and for other physical elements of the environment which affect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the County. In short, the subdivision regulations are aimed at insuring a reasonable division of land and good construction details.

Through the combined provisions of the subdivision regulations and the zoning ordinance, effective use of land and good design can be achieved.

4.3 CONTINUATION OF THE PLANNING PROGRAM

The Land Use Plan should not be thought of as final in its details and objectives. Changing conditions which cannot be foreseen at this time may call for modifications and amendments to the Plan from time to time. However, these changes should be made only after careful study and sufficient consideration. An annual review of the Plan for the purpose of comparing original planning with current development and goals will greatly aid in keeping the Plan up to date. The Planning Commission should, in addition to such annual review, be responsible for analysis of plans and proposals for individual public or private developments as they relate to the objective of the Plan.

Background material, too, should be kept current. Periodic updating of population, employment, housing, and economic characteristics will provide the Planning Commission with statistics on which to base planning revisions. The existing land-use map should be updated periodically by field survey and by analysis of building permits and new property development.

Provision should be made for continuing professional planning assistance to aid the Planning Commission during the period following the adoption of the Plan. A time important to its effectuation. The long range aspects of planning, as well as short-range problems such as the review of subdivision applications or zoning amendments, can best be solved if the Planning Commission is provided with professional planning help to the extent it deems necessary.

It would be valuable for all persons that may be affected by this plan to become generally familiar with, and interested in, the Plan. Since this plan may be in effective document for several years interest should not wane once the Plan is officially adopted. If planning goals are to be attained, the support of the entire community is desired. Therefore, in addition to keeping the Plan up to date, the Planning Commission should also keep the county's citizens well informed on current planning with any major changes to the existing pattern of land uses, which can be publicized by the Planning Commission through local publications.

4.4 IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

This Land Use Plan for Livingston County is a call to action. The Plan serves as a "living and working" document that provides a framework for action. The problems, needs and opportunities facing the County have been identified and analyzed in the Plan. A comprehensive Policy Framework has been recommended that can guide decision makers in solving problems, meeting needs and fulfilling opportunities. Implementing the recommended policies will require the commitment of government officials to overcome barriers that impede implementation and to create a process for securing opportunities for sustainable development.

- Community Involvement. Reach out to the local municipalities, businesses, farmers, and concerned citizens and encourage them to act cooperatively and proactively using the policy framework as a building block for integrating individual decisions with community interests.
- Systematic and Expert Review. Create a process for the systematic review of planning, zoning, economic development and environmental enhancement decisions with the use professional experts as needed in the planning process to overcome the barrier of lack of knowledge.
- Incentives. Provide incentives for individuals and businesses to direct their private resources to achieve common goals by using the policy framework to distinguish Livingston County as an attractive place to live and work.
- Flexibility. Implement opportunities as they arise by applying the policy framework in a flexible manner that can redirect narrowly focused priorities into a broader context that integrates sustainable economic and environmental objectives.

An environmental ethic, a strong sense of community involvement, well reasoned incentives, and professional expertise will help unite the County's leadership and give decision makers better choices and solutions.

4.5 IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

A fundamental concern in Livingston County, like many rural agricultural counties throughout Illinois and the Midwest, is that decisions are frequently made that impact upon the environment. A long range, well reasoned environmental policy for all of Livingston County can provide guidelines for preserving and improving the air, streams and land while also promoting sustainable economic growth consistent with preserving the rural character and life styles of Livingston County residents.

Both guiding principles and implementation processes will lead to cleaner air, cleaner water, better management of wastes, enhancement of biodiversity and open space, and development of a more sustainable economy, society, and way of life.

4.6 CHECKLIST ANALYSIS FOR PROPOSED LAND USE CHANGES

The following is a point analysis that should be used by the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Commission, and County Board to ensure a consistent evaluation of land use changes and an ongoing review of the base criteria in the Plan.

- Does the land use change fulfill a significant need in the area?
- Will the land use change be beneficial to the general welfare, safety, and health of the residents of the immediate area and the general population of the County?
- Will the land use change constitute a precedent of an incompatible use and be a detriment to adjacent property?
- Will the land use change create an isolation of the specific land use?

- Will the land use change adversely influence living conditions due to the creation of a new pollution source?
- Will the land use change adversely influence adjacent property values?
- Will the land use change contribute to unsafe traffic patterns or undue congestion?
- Will the land use change alter the population density pattern and increase the load on public facilities?
- Will the land use change adversely affect a valuable natural resource of the County?
- Will the land use change conflict with existing commitments or planned public improvements?
- Will the land use change create additional environmental problems due to soils, vegetation, slope or floodplain?
- Is the land use change consistent with municipal plans (if applicable)?
- Will the land use change result in private investment, which would be beneficial to the redevelopment of a deteriorated area?
- Is the land use change located where the needed infrastructure services have been or can be provided?
- Is the subject property physically suitable for the purpose of the land use change?
- Will the relief of a hardship for an individual property owner create a detriment to public welfare?